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THE BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF OCTOBER 1944. STRATEGICAL AND TACTICAL ANALYSIS. VOLUME II. OPERATIONS FROM 0719 OCTOBER 17TH UNTIL OCTOBER 20TH (D-DAY)

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13. ABSTRACT

This second volume in the chronology of the Battle for Leyte Gulf follows immediately upon the preliminary stages covered in Volume 1, a study of which is vital to an understanding of these later developments. It focuses on the operations of the Seventh Fleet advance forces in Leyte Gulf preceding D-Day and on the Japanese responses to these moves. The Allied offensive and Japanese defensive missions are defined and their implementation described in detail. Diagrams and explanatory records of events depicted therein follow the main text.

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OCTOBER 1944

STRATEGICAL

AND

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VOLUME II

OPERATIONS

FROM 0719 OCTOBER 17TH

UNTIL OCTOBER 20TH (D-DAY)

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By

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Considerable valuable information concerning Japanese naval and air operations was received from the Army Historical Division Far Eastern Command and from Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN attached to that division.

Commodore Bates, for his part, checked and evaluated the above data, personally collected all data other than the above, consulted ranking American officers who participated in the battle or in its planning, wrote the manuscript, and prepared all analyses and comments, resulting therefrom.

FOREWORD

This analysis of the 0719 October 17th - 2400 October 19th phase of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, which embraces in general the operations of the SEVENTH Fleet advance forces in Leyte Gulf prior to D-day and the Japanese reactions thereto, was prepared by the Naval War College. It follows directly the preliminary phases including the Battle off Formosa which were analysed in Volume I, a knowledge of which is essential for the proper understanding of Volume II. It is based on information from both Allied and Japanese sources which is wider and more complete than that available to writers on this subject up to this time. It endeavors to maintain at all times, the viewpoint of the commanders of the units on both sides.

Complete information from all sources was not available to this analysis. This is especially true of Japanese Army and Navy aircraft in the Philippines and of Japanese submarine operations and dispositions. It is also true concerning the thought processes which motivated the principle Japanese senior commanders. All known sources of such information in the United States and in Japan were examined with only limited success. New facts and circumstances, therefore, may come to light from time to time which may change some of the analysis produced herein.

In view of the critical nature of this analysis an effort has been made in certain important situations to place the critic in the position of the commander in order to obtain the latter's point of view. In employing this system it is realized that although the critic can often succeed in placing himself sufficiently near the position of the commander for any practical purposes, in many instances he may not succeed in doing so.

Because of the nature of the Allied victory at Leyte Gulf and the numerous controversies which have arisen concerning it, as complete a study as possible of the operations of this phase has been provided.

This advance phase, as well as the preliminary phases, which preceded it were a continuing test of the combat ability of the various commanders on both sides. The pages of history have invariably revealed defects in command in similar situations and it would have been surprising had such defects not appeared in these operations.

This battle reaffirmed the lesson so often forgotten--that the test of battle is the only test which proves the combat ability of commanders. The ability or lack of ability of the various commanders in the art of war became apparent. Valor alone was shown to be insufficient, for valor

is not an attribute of only one race, but is an attribute and a heritage of many races. The indispensable qualification for command, the art of war, was shown to be the ability in combat to apply the science of war to active military situations.

The present senior officers of the Navy are well aware of the reasons for changes in established doctrines and in the developments of new ones. But this cannot necessarily be said of the commanders of the future, who very probably will be inexperienced in command in war.

Finally, all comments and criticisms, the more important of which are emphasized herein by the employment of capital letters, are designed to be constructive. By indicating what appear to be sound and unsound decisions, and the apparent reasons for arriving at them, it is hoped to provoke earnest thought among prospective commanders and thus to improve professional judgment in command.

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ALL TIMES IN THIS ANALYSIS, EXCEPT ALLIED DISPATCH TIMES

ARE ZONE TIME (-9)

ALLIED DISPATCH TIMES ARE GREENWICH CIVIL TIME

PRINCIPAL COMMANDERS

ALLIED

(a) Southwest Pacific Area.	
Commander Southwest Pacific Area (COMSOWESPAC)	General MacArthur, Douglas A., USA
Chief of Staff	Lt. General Sutherland, Richard K., USA
Commander Allied Air Force SOWESPAC (COMAIRSOWESPAC)	Lt. General Kenney, George C. (AC), USA
Chief of Staff	Brigadier General Beebe, Royden E., (AC), USA
Commander Allied Naval Forces SOWESPAC (CANFSOWESPAC)	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Schaeffer, Valentine H., USN
Commander SEVENTH Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT)	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Schaeffer, Valentine H., USN
Commanding General SIXTH Army	Lt. General Krueger, Walter, USA
Chief of Staff	Brigadier General Decker, George H., USA
Commander Central Philippines Attack Force (CTF 77)	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Schaeffer, Valentine H., USN
Commander Bombardment and Fire Support Group (CTG 77.2)	Rear Admiral Oldendorf, Jesse B. USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Bates, Richard W., USN

Commander Escort Carrier Group (CTG 77.4)	Rear Admiral Sprague, Thomas L., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Carson, Joseph M., USN
Commander Dinagat Attack Group (CTG 78.4)	Rear Admiral Struble, Arthur D., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Abdill, Everett W., USN
Commander Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group* (CTG 77.5)	Commander Loud, Wayne R., USN
Commander Northern Attack Force (CTF 78)	Rear Admiral Barbey, Daniel E., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Noble, Albert G., USN
Commander Palo Attack Group (CTG 78.1)	Rear Admiral Barbey, Daniel E., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Noble, Albert G., USN
Commander San Ricardo Attack Group (CTG 78.2)	Rear Admiral Fechteler, William M., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Sprague, Albert T., Jr., USN
Commander Southern Attack Force (CTF 79)	Vice Admiral Wilkinson, Theodore S., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Powell, Paulus P., USN
Commander Attack Group ABLE (CTG 79.1)	Rear Admiral Conolly, Richard L., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Moore, Walter E., USN

* Since no Chief Staff Officer was assigned CTG 77.5 this function was performed as additional duty by Lieutenant Roy E. Daly, USNR.

Commander Attack Group BAKER (CTG 79.2)	Rear Admiral Royal, Forrest B., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Dugan, Paul F., USN
Commander Submarines SEVENTH Fleet	Rear Admiral Christie, Ralph W., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Nichols, Philip G., USN
Commander Submarines West Australia (CTF 71)	Rear Admiral Christie Ralph W., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Nichols, Philip G., USN

(b) Pacific Ocean Areas.

CinC Pacific Ocean Areas (CINCPOA)	Admiral Nimitz, Chester W., USN
Chief of Staff	Vice Admiral McMorris, Charles H., USN
Commander Western Pacific Task Forces	Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr. USN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Carney, Robert B., USN
Commander THIRD Fleet (COMTHIRDFLT)	Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr. USN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Carney, Robert B., USN
Commander FIRST Carrier Task Force (CTF 38)	Vice Admiral Mitscher, Marc A., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Burke, Arleigh A., USN
Commander Forward Area Central Pacific Task Force (CTF 57)	Vice Admiral Hoover, John H., USN
Chief of Staff	Captain Scull, Herbert M., USN

Commander Shore-Based Air Force Forward Area (CTF 59)	Major General Hale, Willis H., (AC), USA
Chief of Staff	Colonel Carr, Lawrence J., (AC), USA
Commander Submarines Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC) (CTF 17)	Vice Admiral Lockwood, Charles A., USN
Chief of Staff	Commodore Comstock, Merrill, USN

(c) China-Burma-India Area.

CG Army Forces CBI	General Stilwell, Joseph W., USA
Chief of Staff	Brigadier General Cannon, Robert M., USA
CG FOURTEENTH Air Force	Major General Chennault, Claire L., (AC), USA
Chief of Staff	Brigadier General Glenn, Edgar E., USA
CG TWENTIETH Bomber Command	Major General LeMay, Curtis E., (AC), USA
Chief of Staff	Brigadier General Upston, John E., USA

JAPANESE

Commander-in-Chief Combined Fleet	Admiral Toyoda, Soemu, IJN
Chief of Staff	Vice Admiral Kusaka, Ryunosuke, IJN
Commander Mobile Force	Vice Admiral Ozawa, Jisaburo, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Obayashi, Sueo, IJN
Commander Main Force	Vice Admiral Ozawa, Jisaburo, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Obayashi, Sueo, IJN

Commander FIRST Striking Force	Vice Admiral Kurita, Takeo, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Koyanagi, Tomiji, IJN
Commander SECOND Striking Force	Vice Admiral Shima, Kiyohide, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Matsumoto, Takeshi, IJN
Commander Advance Expeditionary Force	Vice Admiral Miwa, Shigeyoshi, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Nishina, Kozo, IJN
Commander Southwest Area Force	Vice Admiral Mikawa, Gunichi, IJN
Chief of Staff	Vice Admiral Nishio, Hidehiko, IJN
Commander THIRD Southern Expeditionary Force (Philippine Force)	Vice Admiral Mikawa, Gunichi, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Shimamoto, Kyugoro, IJN
Commander FIFTH Base Air Force	Vice Admiral Teraoka, Kimpei, IJN
Chief of Staff	Captain Odahara, Toshihiko, IJN
Commander SIXTH Base Air Force	Vice Admiral Fukudome, Shigeru, IJN
Chief of Staff	Rear Admiral Sugimoto, Ushie, IJN
CinC Southern Army	Field Marshal Terauchi, Hisaichi, IJA
Chief of Staff	Lt. General Iimura, Jo, IJA

C.G. FOURTEENTH Area Army	General Yamashita, Tomoyuki, IJA
C.G. FOURTH Air Army	Lt. General Tominaga, Kyoji, IJA
Chief of Staff	Lt. General Terada, Seiichi, IJA

INTRODUCTION

Volume I of the study of the Battle for Leyte Gulf covered the preliminary operations of this battle on both the Allied and Japanese sides until 0719 October 17th, 1944. This was the moment when Japanese lookouts on Suluan Island, at the entrance to Leyte Gulf, made a contact report on Allied surface forces entering Leyte Gulf.

These Allied surface forces were the advance forces of the SEVENTH Fleet which had been ordered, commencing D-3 day* (October 17th) to prepare the way for the seizure of certain areas on Leyte Island by the SIXTH Army preparatory to seizing the Philippines.

(A) The Allied effort in seizing the Philippines was designed to cut the Japanese lines of communication to the rich sources of strategic material in the Southern Resources Area (Philippines, Netherlands East Indies, Burma, Malaya), and thereby fatally disrupt the Japanese war economy which was, even at this time, in serious shortage. This shortage was due in a large part to the remarkably effective submarine campaign which the Allies had been conducting against Japanese sea borne lines of communications for the past several years, and in a lesser part to the more recent operations of the Allied carrier and shore based aircraft. As has been pointed out in Volume I this had affected the Japanese economy and the Japanese military machine with a creeping paralysis, so that the shortage of oil alone had already had a serious effect on the division of Japanese naval forces at a most inopportune time. Owing to the fact that the Japanese oil stocks in the Empire were very low, it had become necessary to base the principal units of the Combined Fleet at Lingga Anchorage, Netherlands East Indies, where there was an abundance of oil. However, this could not be done with the Japanese carrier forces at this time because there was a shortage of trained carrier pilots and of replacement aircraft. Until these pilots had completed their training and the replacement aircraft could be obtained, the carrier force would have to remain in the Empire. CinC Combined Fleet was therefore forced to divide his fleet so that the carrier forces remained in the Inland Sea while the heavy surface forces based at Lingga.** As a consequence, these two principal forces were at the time of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, roughly 2500 miles apart.

The date of the operation had been advanced by the Joint Chiefs of Staff exactly two months ahead of the original schedule (December 20th) because new intelligence showing an unexpected weakness in the enemy air resistance in the Leyte area had been discovered by COMTHIRDFLT in his

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* Although COMSOWESPAC employed the term A-day rather than D-day, the latter is employed throughout this analysis to follow the more familiar military usage.

** The Campaigns of the Pacific War, USSBS, July 1st, 1946, Chapter XII, page 280.

September air strikes against the central Philippines. This advancement would both further the progress of the war by many months and simplify arrangements for future operations.*

This Allied effort was spearheaded by a powerful amphibious force, strong in both naval and air power, which, as an initial move in the operations for the capture of the Philippines, was to seize beachheads on the coast of Leyte. It was supported by:

(1) air strikes by the planes of the THIRD Fleet which had already hit Japanese land-based air power in Nansei Shoto, Formosa and Luzon. These planes had struck Okinawa very heavily on October 10th, northern Luzon lightly on October 11th, Formosa very heavily on October 12th and 13th, heavily on October 14th, and Luzon lightly on October 14th and 15th. In these strikes these planes supported by the planes of the TWENTIETH Bomber Command (B-29) had succeeded in destroying, except for the T-Force, one-third of the operational aircraft of the SIXTH Base Air Force which air force was composed of the naval land-based air units in Formosa, Nansei Shoto, and southern Kyushu and attached army air units, and roughly three-fourths of the operational aircraft of the T-Force which was a special attack force of the SIXTH Base Air Force trained to conduct both night and adverse weather attacks. Likewise, the air strikes of the THIRD Fleet had succeeded in destroying numerous operational aircraft of the FIFTH Base Air Force, which was composed of the naval land-based air units in the Philippines, and of the FOURTH Air Army which was composed of the Army air units in the Philippines.

(2) large numbers of submarines which, (a) in so far as the Pacific Fleet was concerned, had been deployed along the normal track of Japanese merchant shipping at this time, and possibly of naval shipping as well, to and from the Empire along the Nansei Shoto to the Philippines, although some submarines, notably those off Bungo Suido had been assigned reconnaissance duties primarily, and (b) in so far as the SEVENTH Fleet was concerned, had been deployed partially to provide reconnaissance, and partially to continue the basic operations against Japanese shipping. The above Allied submarines had been successful in contacting some merchant ships, in sinking several and in torpedoing, in Empire waters, two destroyers (FUYUTSUKI, SUZUTSUKI). On October 15th the submarines in Luzon Strait and in the Nansei Shoto were ordered to assume a special reconnaissance deployment presumably because a fleet action was believed imminent. Otherwise submarine operations were uneventful.

(3) limited numbers of land-based aircraft operating from the Marianas, Palau, Morotai, and Chinese bases. Of these aircraft, those employed primarily in assault operations were the planes of the TWENTIETH

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* Introduction to Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NavPers 91974), prepared by US Naval War College 1953, pages xxxix and xl.

Bomber Command based in China which had struck Formosa heavily on October 14th and lightly on October 16th.

In strategic command of all forces in the SOWESPAC area was COMSOWESPAC with his headquarters at Hollandia but who at this time was in the cruiser NASHVILLE, en route to Leyte.

(B) The Japanese effort was designed to prevent the extension of Allied power into the Philippine - Formosa - Nansei Shoto line because should that line be pierced the lifeline of Japanese economy to the Southern Resources Area would be broken. This was clearly stated for the Fleet by CinC Combined Fleet when he said "Should we lose in the Philippines Operations, even though the fleet should be left, the shipping lane to the south would be completely cut-off so that the fleet, if it should come back to Japanese waters, could not obtain its fuel supply. If it should remain in southern waters, it could not receive supplies of ammunition and arms."* This was, of course, equally applicable to Formosa and the Nansei Shoto. The Japanese effort was spearheaded by the Combined Fleet, which with its powerful naval power including its air power, both land and carrier-based, was to repel any attempt by the Allies to make an amphibious landing anywhere in the above mentioned Japanese lifeline. It was supported by army aircraft and by army ground troops.

In order to repel the Allied forces which, as has been pointed out above, had been boldly attacking their outlying bases along the Nansei Shoto - Formosa - Luzon line the planes of the Japanese SIXTH Base Air Force, FIFTH Base Air Force and FOURTH Air Army had been conducting operations to destroy the carriers of the THIRD Fleet. In these operations they had succeeded in heavily damaging two Allied heavy cruisers (HOUSTON and CANBERRA) but otherwise their operations had been unsuccessful, although they made claims of vast successes. In accomplishing these limited results they suffered losses in aircraft and pilots which were so heavy as to seriously endanger the success of any further counter operations.

In strategic command of all naval forces including naval air forces, was CinC Combined Fleet with his headquarters at Hiyoshi (Tokyo), but who at this time was at Takao, Formosa. In strategic command of all Army ground and air forces in the Philippine area was CinC Southern Army.

* * *

A Brief Narrative of the 0719 October 17th - 2400 October 19th Phase of the Battle for Leyte Gulf

The preparations by the Allied forces for the seizure of certain areas on Leyte Island (Tacloban and Dulag areas) consisted in general of plans:

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* The Campaigns of the Pacific War, USSBS 1946, Chapter XII, page 281.

(a) by the advance forces, for (1) the seizure of Suluan Island, southern Homonhon Island, and northern Dinagat Island in Leyte Gulf, the bombardment of Japanese positions, especially those within the selected landing areas, (2) night harassing fires, (3) the clearance of the objective area of mines, (4) the making of a hydrographic survey and the installation of navigational aids, (5) the clearance of beach obstacles, and (6) a study of the beach conditions in the landing areas to ascertain the feasibility o of landing in the selected areas, as well as to obtain vital data concerning the character of the beaches for the amphibious commanders.

(b) by the covering and support forces, for (1) the destruction of Japanese land-based aircraft and air bases by sustained carrier air strikes against Luzon and the Visayas, (2) the destruction of Japanese shipping by aircraft and submarines, and (3) reconnaissance by both aircraft and submarines.

The preparations by the Japanese forces for the defense of any area in the Philippines (known as SHO One) consisted in general of plans:

(a) by the land-based air forces for an initial withdrawal and dispersal of the air forces to reduce losses from Allied attacks with defense to be effected in part by small scale air attacks against the Allied task force. Then, once the Allied landing area had been determined and on the day prior to the estimated date of Allied landings, the air forces were to initiate and maintain full scale attacks upon the Allied carrier force and the Allied invasion force.

(b) by the submarine force for the interception of the enemy and the gaining of control of the invasion area by attacking aircraft carriers, battleships and troop convoys in that order.

(c) by the surface forces for (1) the penetration by the principal surface force (FIRST Striking Force), presently at Lingga - Singapore, of the Allied landing area on the date of the Allied landing where it was to destroy first, the enemy surface forces in opposition, and second, the Allied transports and (2) for a diversion by the Main Force which was to lure the Allied carrier force to the northeast (away from the landing area), and carry an attack against it from the flank.

(1) Operations on October 17th.

(a) Allied

The Allied advance forces which had commenced arriving off Leyte at 0719, were unable to accomplish all of their planned objectives on this date because the weather remained very bad and approached typhoon proportions. The wind continued to increase in intensity, the visibility was low, and the seas and rainfall were both heavy, making operating conditions difficult and flying conditions highly unsatisfactory. However,

despite this, the landing on Suluan Island and that on Northern Dinagat Island were made as planned, but the landing on Homonhon Island was delayed until the next day.

Minesweeping operations were conducted on a very limited scale because the sweep gear, owing to the above weather conditions, was constantly fouling. Mines were discovered in Area SWEEP (the entrance area) only, and twenty-seven chemical horn moored mines were swept there.

The Allied amphibious forces continued uneventfully on towards Leyte where they were to effect a landing on October 20th.

On this date, (a) the Allied submarine SKATE verified to CTF 17 her report of the previous evening that the Japanese SECOND Striking Force, which she had sighted at 2050, was heading northerly at the time of contact and (b) the Allied submarine ESCOLAR operating in Tsushima Strait was lost some time after 2300. Except for this, Allied submarine operations were uneventful.

COMTHIRDFLT, who, with three task groups (38.1, 38.2 and 38.3), was operating to the eastward of Luzon Strait conducted forenoon searches to the west and north to endeavor to locate the SECOND Striking Force, but to no avail, and at about noon correctly decided that the Japanese were retiring and did not intend to engage in battle at this time. He therefore reassigned his task groups to insure better air support for the advance force now in or approaching Leyte Gulf. At this time he estimated that enemy surface ship activities would consist largely of Tokyo Express operations and therefore advised COMSOWESPAC that effective support by THIRD Fleet against the Tokyo Express depended upon early detection of these forces prior to their entry into the Sulu or Celebes Seas.

Meanwhile the TWENTIETH Bomber Command during the forenoon attacked Formosa (Takao Area) with twenty-four B-29's, and TG 38.4 also during the forenoon, attacked Luzon (Manila-Clark area) with 121 planes.

(b) Japanese.

It will be recalled that at 0719 the Japanese had sighted the Allied Advance Force off Leyte Gulf. As a consequence CinC Combined Fleet, who was at Takao, immediately ordered a fleet alert for SHO One (Philippines). This indicated that he was concerned lest an Allied landing occur in the Philippines. The Japanese made preparations for the penetration operation, and ordered the FIRST Striking Force to advance immediately from Lingga-Singapore to Brunei.

CinC Combined Fleet now decided to return to his headquarters at Hiyoshi and, en route, arrived at Shinchiku, where he learned that his Chief of Staff had advised that the penetration operation was

planned for October 22nd. He also learned that Commander FIRST Striking Force, since he planned to fuel at Brunei, could not meet this date and Commander Main Force, because of the necessity for obtaining his planes which would not be available before October 20th, likewise could not meet it. He therefore decided to remain at Shinchiku until the situation had clarified.

Meanwhile the Japanese High Command, which felt that the Allied landing appeared to be part of an invasion move against the central and southern Philippines, and which had received information of four enemy carrier groups off Formosa - Luzon, commenced concentrating the principal air strength of the SIXTH Base Air Force in Formosa preparatory to moving it to the Philippines, restored CARDIV THREE air units still in Japan and CARDIV FOUR air units at Oita and Kagoshima Air Bases capable of operating from carriers to CARDIV THREE and transferred the T-Force, which was sadly depleted, from the SIXTH Base Air Force to CinC Combined Fleet.

During the day the FIRST Striking Force at Lingga-Singapore, the Main Force in the Inland Sea, and certain submarine units also in the Inland Sea, continued preparations for sortie; the SECOND Striking Force, in the late afternoon arrived at Amami O Shima and commenced fueling; the four submarines en route Okinawa were directed to waters east of Luzon. The SIXTH Base Air Force was regrouping and moving its strength from northern bases to Formosa preparatory to moving to the Philippines, which was inherent in the SHO Plan.

(2) Operations on October 18th.

(a) Allied.

On this day the weather improved markedly, flying conditions became normal and the sea conditions in the gulf now permitted continuation of the preliminary operations which were behind schedule. As a consequence the Allied advance force succeeded in landing on Homonhon Island - no Japanese were found there; Group ABLE of Fire Support Unit SOUTH and UDT Unit SOUTH passed through the minefield in Area SWEEP without casualty and headed for bombardment stations off Dulag where, during the forenoon, in coordination with air attacks from the escort carriers the enemy batteries behind the southern beaches were silenced and where the underwater teams (UDT) found the beaches suitable for landing; during the time of the above operations Group BAKER of Fire Support Unit SOUTH, Fire Support Unit NORTH and UDT Unit NORTH also passed through the minefield in Area SWEEP without casualty and rejoined the southern group; meanwhile, (a) the minesweeping operations had continued resulting in the sweeping of fifty-three additional chemical horn moored mines in Area SWEEP giving a two-day total of eighty--no mines were found in other areas swept this day--and (b) the escort carriers had struck Cebu with two strikes of seventy planes each, had provided combat air patrol over the surface forces in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf, air support for the UDT operations and air strikes to assist in the bombardment operations.

The Allied amphibious forces continued uneventfully on towards Leyte, although there was some concern over a report by the submarine BREAM to the effect that she had contacted an enemy force of three or four heavy units on a northeasterly course at the northern entrance to Makassar Strait. This was a false contact but this fact was not known.

In addition to the above report by the BREAM the Allied submarine STERLET reported contacting at 1115 two heavy cruisers, one light cruiser and six destroyers in the vicinity of Amami O Shima (SECOND Striking Force), and the BLUEGILL sank one transport and two cargo ships; the RATON two cargo ships all out of separate convoys of nine-ten merchant ships.

At 1903 CTF 17, presumably because COMTHIRDFLT had reported that the prospects of fleet action were poor, directed those submarines which on October 15th had been ordered to assume a special reconnaissance deployment, to return to their original patrol stations and to resume regular patrols. Also on this date the commander of the submarine wolf pack (BESUGO, RONQUIL, GABILAN) stationed off Bungo Suido with orders to prevent the undetected sortie of enemy task forces through Bungo Suido, decided that these orders no longer applied and reassigned his submarines in such manner as to leave Bungo Suido almost entirely uncovered by Allied submarines.

COMTHIRDFLT, feeling that the situation was temporarily stable issued plans for the rotation of his carrier groups for fuel, ammunition and airplane replenishment, provisions and repairs. TG 38.1 was to retire to Ulithi on October 22nd for this purpose.

TF 38 on this day operated as follows: (a) TG 38.1 hit, in general, the Clark Field area in central Luzon with two successive air strikes preceded by two fighter sweeps, employing a total of 119 sorties for all purposes. TG 38.4 hit the Clark Field area with an air strike supported by a fighter sweep; the Manila area with an air strike, and the shipping in the Manila area with an air strike preceded by a fighter sweep. A total of 223 sorties were made for all purposes. The last strike (CHARLIE) encountered bad weather north of Manila. This caused the ENTERPRISE planes to make a wide detour, which resulted in a shortage of fuel, and nine planes were lost but most of the crews were recovered after a long search. Both task groups conducted negative searches over San Bernardino Strait (b) TG 38.2 made strikes against northern Luzon hitting the Laoag-Aparri area with two air strikes preceded by a fighter sweep employing a total of 209 planes and (c) TG 38.3 fueled and received replacement aircraft and pilots.

During the day Reinforcement Group TWO (TG 78.7) departed Hollandia and Motor Torpedo Boat Group (TG 70.1) departed Kossol Passage, for Leyte.

(b) Japanese

Since increasingly large Allied forces were appearing in the Leyte Gulf area and since clearly diversionary operations were continuing to be made against Car Nicobar Island, CinC Combined Fleet continued to remain at Shinchiku in order to remain in contact with the developing situation and to ascertain if possible whether or not the operations in the Leyte area forecast an Allied landing there or elsewhere in the Philippines. However, in view of the fact that there was nothing significant in the forenoon operations, he departed by air for Hyoshi at about 1100 but was grounded in the late afternoon at Omura, Kyushu by bad weather.

During the forenoon his Chief of Staff transferred CRUDIV SIXTEEN, presently with the FIRST Striking Force to the SECOND Striking Force, and then transferred the augmented SECOND Striking Force to the SW Area Force for counter-landing operations against Allied invasion attempts in the Philippines.

Also during the forenoon his Chief of Staff issued a tentative plan wherein he estimated that there was a strong possibility of an Allied landing in the Tacloban area, and tentatively set October 24th as X-day for the penetration operations. This new date was chosen because both the FIRST Striking Force and the Main Force were unable to meet the earlier date of October 22nd.

Later in the day Imperial General Headquarters (Navy Section) decided that there would be a landing in the Philippines and the Chief of Naval General Staff activated SHO One at that time (1701). Likewise, Imperial General Headquarters (Army Section) activated SHO One for the army but the army activation was not to be effective until 0000 the following day.

During the day the FIRST Striking Force sortied from Lingga - Singapore commencing at 0100 and headed for Brunei via a circuitous route between Anambas and Great Natoena Island; the SECOND Striking Force which had completed fueling at Amami O Shima sortied that base at 0530 and headed for Mako; the Main Force in the Inland Sea continued preparations for sortie and Commander Main Force, expecting SHO One or Two to be activated, issued instructions to his command concerning the forthcoming operations of the Main Force should this occur; the FIFTH Base Air Force continued operations in defense of the Philippines by launching seventeen sorties against Allied carriers as well as against Allied shipping in Leyte Gulf, and by preparing base facilities for the deployment of the SIXTH Base Air Force to the Philippines; the SIXTH Base Air Force continued its preparations for moving its principal strength to the Philippines; the FOURTH Air Army continued its operations in defense of the Philippines and the incorporation of air reinforcements; and the Advance Expeditionary Force continued preparations to sortie the eight submarines

of the B Group on the following day. Meanwhile, the four submarines (A Group) which had been ordered to the area east of the Philippines were en route to that area.

(3) Operations on October 19th:

(a) Allied

As a consequence of the excellent weather, the operations of the Allied advance forces in the Leyte Gulf continued most satisfactorily. Fire Support Unit South carried out its scheduled bombardments. Fire Support Unit North also conducted its scheduled bombardmetns and conducted UDT reconnaissance of the northern beaches which were found suitable for landing. Owing to meager intelligence concerning suitable military targets and to the fact that there were very few visible targets, area fire was employed. No enemy fire was directed against the heavy ships although, in the Tacloban area, there was intense and sporadic small arms, mortar and light artillery fire directed against the UDT's, APD's and supporting destroyers. Meanwhile (a) the minesweeping operations continued resulting in the sweeping of 110 additional chemical moored mines in Area SWEEP giving a three-day total of 190 mines--no mines were found in other areas swept this day and (b) the escort carriers (1) during the forenoon struck Negros with one strike of seventy-two planes (2) during the afternoon struck Panay with one strike of forty-three planes, (3) provided combat air patrol over the surface forces in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf, air support for the UDT operations and air strikes to assist in the bombardment operations.

The Allied amphibious forces continued on toward Leyte Gulf uneventfully. Because that portion of Area SWEEP which had been swept was in the vicinity of Desolation Point on Dinagat Island the amphibious forces prepared to enter the gulf by passing close to that point. Reinforcement Group Three still remained at Hollandia.

During the day Allied forces made contacts on enemy combatant forces as follows: (a) the TRIGGER at 1400 off northeast Formosa on four enemy heavy cruisers and five destroyers on a westerly course, (b) a China-based plane at 1405 off southeast Hainan Island on one carrier, two cruisers and three destroyers on a northwesterly course and (c) Central Pacific aircraft at about noon on two Japanese submarines, one about 500 miles, the other about 592 miles to the eastward of Luzon.

Except for the TRIGGER contact, Allied submarines on this day made no important contacts and sank no shipping.

At 1907 CTF 17, presumably believing that the enemy was retiring, directed the GABILAN, which was operating off Okinoshima, to guard the approaches to Kii Suido thus leaving Bungo Suido, except for the extreme western portion, completely unguarded.

During this day COMTHIRDFLT became more than ever of the opinion that the Japanese would employ Tokyo Express operations to reinforce their garrison on Leyte. However, possibly because (a) of the contacts this day on Japanese forces by the TRIGGER, and by a China-based plane and on the previous day by the BREAM in Makassar Strait and (b) the Allied landing would occur on the following day, he cancelled orders for TG 38.1 to retire to Ulithi for logistic replenishment and issued orders which would keep his carrier task groups in position to cover and support COMSOWESPAC's operations in the Leyte Gulf area.

TF 38 on this day operated as follows: (a) TG's 38.1 and 38.4 hit in general central Luzon with TG 38.1 attacking airfields in the Manila and Clark areas and TG 38.4 enemy shipping in Manila Bay. Three successive air strikes preceded by one fighter sweep employing a total of 351 sorties for all purposes were made. In addition, TG 38.4 made a morning and afternoon search over San Bernardino Strait which searches were negative, and flew forty-seven sorties from the ENTERPRISE to search for unrecovered pilots from the water landing on the previous night, (b) TG 38.2 fueled and received replacement aircraft and pilots, and (c) TG 38.3 operated independently in a position east of Luzon.

With the conclusion of this day, the advance operations in Leyte Gulf were essentially completed; the objective area was now ready for the assault landings to be made on the following day, and the amphibious units which were to make the assault were already penetrating into Leyte Gulf.

(b) Japanese

Owing to the continuance of the bad weather which had forced him to stop at Omura, CinC Combined Fleet remained there during the night. He awaited the results of the morning searches with concern since the possibility of an enemy landing in strength was far from remote.

Shortly after 0800 he commenced receiving contact reports. These reports showed at (a) 0800 three regular carriers, three escort carriers, twelve cruisers and destroyers and about forty small craft in Leyte Gulf, (b) 0812 four, later changed to five, carriers off Lamon Bay, (c) 0830 thirty merchant ship types escorted by four cruisers or destroyers about 180 miles east of Tacloban, (d) 0845 three carriers and eight other ships about 120 miles southeast of Tacloban, (e) 0850 one escort carrier, three battleships, seven cruisers, and several destroyers 130 miles east of Tacloban, (f) 0912 thirty merchant ships off southeast Samar, (g) 0930 three carriers and five battleships 280 miles northeast of Lamon Bay, (h) 1010 two carriers and two cruisers about 350 miles northeast of Lamon Bay and (i) 1220 a large group of merchant ships 580 miles southeast of Manila. From these contacts he could see that nine - ten carriers were operating in the vicinity of Lamon Bay and eleven carriers and escort carriers in

the vicinity of Leyte Gulf, a total of twenty-one carriers which was an increase of eight over the thirteen reported October 16th. At this time Japanese intelligence data listed an invasion force of eleven carriers and 100 transports in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf. It seems correct that it was about this time that the Japanese High Command finally decided that the Leyte landing was to be the main landing and not a diversion as estimated by their intelligence section or a reconnaissance in force as estimated by the Army.

CinC Combined Fleet knew that Japanese forces were acting in accordance with previous orders. The FIRST Striking Force had passed between Anambas and Great Natoena Islands on the previous evening and by midnight of this day had arrived off Dangerous Ground. The Main Force, scheduled to sortie the following day, continued preparations in the Inland Sea. The SECOND Striking Force, under the command of SW Area Force, had entered Formosa Strait and was approaching Mako. The Advance Expeditionary Force (Submarines) had sortied six submarines (B Group) with orders to proceed to the area east of the Philippines and join the four submarines (A Group) that were already en route.

The FIFTH Base Air Force continued operations for the defense of the Philippines by launching five sorties against the Allied shipping in Leyte Gulf and by launching long range searches which contacted, within range, most of the Allied forces approaching the Leyte area. The SIXTH Base Air Force continued to regroup and concentrate on Formosa and commenced operations for the SHO One decisive battle. Commander SIXTH Base Air Force on this day issued orders for the SHO One decisive battle. He directed his command to move to the Philippines on October 21st and 22nd, to launch attack operations on October 22nd or 23rd and he advised the principal commands that the SIXTH Base Air Force had at 0800 on Formosa 395 aircraft of which 223 were operational. The FOURTH Air Army continued its operations in defense of the Philippines by launching five strikes against Allied shipping off Tacloban and by conducting short range air searches which supported the long range searches of the FIFTH Base Air Force.

The Japanese High Command now learned from reports from the combat area that an Allied landing during the forenoon had been repulsed in the Tacloban area and that the Allies were continuing their diversionary operations in the Car Nicobar area.

During the afternoon Combined Fleet Headquarters knew that (a) the SIXTH Base Air Force in Formosa consisted of 395 planes of which 223 were operational, (b) the Southern Army planned to move about three battalions of reinforcements from the Visayas to Leyte and (c) Japanese intelligence had reported three cruisers and eighty transports in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia, and about seventy ships including six carriers, fourteen battleships, twenty cruisers, thirty destroyers and thirty transports plus two hospital ships in Seeadler Harbor, Manus, Admiralty Islands.

As a result of the intelligence received and of their own analysis, the Chief of the Naval General Staff informed the Chief of the Army General Staff that the Navy was making preparations for the Combined Fleet penetration into Leyte Gulf. Surprisingly, this plan was now opposed by the Chief of the Army General Staff who proposed that the Navy adopt a policy of conserving fleet strength. The Navy insisted in substance that (a) it wished to carry out the Leyte penetration operation in order to destroy the Allied invasion forces; (b) as a consequence of this action, a decisive fleet engagement might occur; (c) if it did not fight it out now, it would be forced back to Japanese waters and would meet the fate of the Italian Navy; and (d) if it did not take the offensive now, the war would be lost. The Navy further pointed out that the Navy Minister approved of this plan.

The Army in reply stated in substance that the Army desired the Navy to refrain from an operation which would risk destruction of the fleet, since (a) the chances of success were slight; (b) should the fleet be destroyed, the Allies would gain control of the South China Sea and the East China Sea; and (c) since the Combined Fleet had no carrier aircraft, a part of the land-based air strength would have to be diverted to provide air cover for the fleet, which would be disadvantageous. The Army further stated that, even if the Navy suffered the fate of the Italian Navy, it could not be helped.

As a result of the above disagreement no conclusions were arrived at. The Navy, therefore, persisted in going ahead with plans for the penetration operation--the Army, on the other hand, persisted in opposing such an operation.

Later during the day the Army received intelligence which reported eighty-two Allied carriers of various types. This estimate appears to have been given little weight in Japanese estimates.

CHAPTER I - ALLIED OPERATIONS, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

(A) Operations of COMSOWESPAC.

COMSOWESPAC, who was in the NASHVILLE with TU 77.1.2 was closing CTF 77 who was in the WASATCH with TU 77.1.1. The latter unit had already rendezvoused with TF 79.

CTF 77 desired that (a) TU 77.1.2 rendezvous with CTU 77.1.1 thus forming TG 77.1 (Flagship Group) and (b) the flagship group thus formed proceed to Leyte with TF 79 in order to (1) take advantage of the surface and air protection thus afforded, (2) utilize CTF 79's aerologist in conjuction with CTF 77's, (3) permit COMSOWESPAC to be present at the initial main landings, and (4) permit communication between himself and COMSOWESPAC without unnecessarily breaking radio silence.*

Sometime in the afternoon he received a dispatch from his headquarters at Hollandia (to CAAF SOWESPAC, who was with him in the NASHVILLE) advising (a) that the runways at Morotai would not permit institution of Search Plan FOX prior to daylight October 19th, and (b) directing that, pending the establishment of Search Plan FOX (Revised) from Morotai over Sulu - China Sea Sectors ONE, TWO and THREE, (1) the present PB4Y searches (from Biak) were to be extended over the same area to maximum range and (2) a night PBY search from Morotai over the same area to maximum range was to be initiated immediately.**

Then at about 1839*** he received a dispatch from COMTHIRDFLT advising that (a) effective support by the THIRD Fleet against the Tokyo Express would depend on timely information of its approach, (b) the best chance for early action required detection prior to the entry of the Tokyo Express into the Sulu or Celebes Seas, and (c) from his standpoint, observation of the approaches to Balabac Strait as far to the southwest as possible, and of the approaches to Mindoro Strait, was most important.****

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* Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, USN (Ret), Written comment, February 9th, 1955, to Commodore Richard W. Bates, USN (Ret), Head of World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 170102 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

*** The time of receipt of many Allied dispatches has been generally unavailable to this analysis. Often the time of receipt is known for one command but is not known for other commands. In order to compensate for this, it has been assumed from an average time of receipt of a number of important dispatches that, unless otherwise stated, important dispatches concerning operations were received by action addressees in one half hour. Such assumed times of receipt are indicated by the phrase "at about." While this assumption may seem somewhat generous, a study of this analysis will show that the result of later receipt (such as one hour or more) would have caused little or no change in the basic study.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

IN THIS CONNECTION IT SEEMS WISE AT THIS POINT TO DEFINE TOKYO EXPRESS. THIS WAS AN OPERATION DEVELOPED BY THE JAPANESE AT GUADALCANAL WHEREIN THEY ENDEAVORED TO REINFORCE THAT BASE WITH GROUND TROOPS AND MATERIAL, EMPLOYING COMBATANT SHIPS ONLY. ORIGINALLY IT WAS A HIGH SPEED OPERATION BUT, LATER, IT EMBRACED LOW SPEED OPERATIONS AS WELL. IT WAS DUBBED "TOKYO EXPRESS" BECAUSE WHENEVER EMPLOYED IT OPERATED ON A REGULAR SCHEDULE.*

Whether COMSOWESPAC considered that COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch had been motivated by his headquarters dispatch, above referred to, is not stated. However, it is logical to assume that he gave COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch serious consideration. But, it seems clear that he took no action on it this day since no dispatches thereon were issued by him.

At 1839, he directed that, effective 0900 D-2 day, CANF SOWESPAC would, in addition to neutralizing hostile air forces on Mindanao, attack hostile air facilities and shipping in the Visayas west of the line extending from Canauayor Island to the east coast of Camiguin Island, east coast of Bohol Island, Olango Island, northeast tip of Cebu to the southeast tip of Masbate (Appendix III). He further directed that, for the coordination of air and naval action, CAAF SOWESPAC was to notify task force and task group commanders of TF's 77, 78 and 79, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 38, and task group commanders of TF 38 of the approximate times of all strikes westward of the above line, giving twenty-four hours' notice, as practicable, prior to the strikes. Subsequent to 0900, D/1 day, CANF SOWESPAC was to inform CAAF SOWESPAC of all Allied surface units operating west of the above line, with the probable locations, giving at least twenty-four hours' advance notice.**

The above extension of the Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC operating area was primarily in furtherance (a) of the prior provision that when bombers were established on Morotai neutralization by CAAF SOWESPAC would be extended to the Visayan area (exclusive of Leyte and Samar so long as the escort carriers were present)*** and secondarily (b) of CTF 77's decision to assign to CTG 77.4 the task of striking the western Visayas as well as providing direct air support in the objective area on October 18th, and to adjust covering support on the following days in accordance with developments.**** This task had been given to the escort carriers by CTF 77 after COMTHIRDFLT had altered his air schedule for the fast carriers of TF 38 to exclude the western Visayas October 18th and 19th. Therefore, COMSOWESPAC probably reasoned that since CTF 77.4 would not be able to completely

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* Statement of Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, USN (Ret) who, at the time of the capture of Guadalcanal in 1943, was COMSOPAC, to Commodore Richard W. Bates, USN (Ret), Head of World War II Battle Evaluation Group, January 28th, 1952.

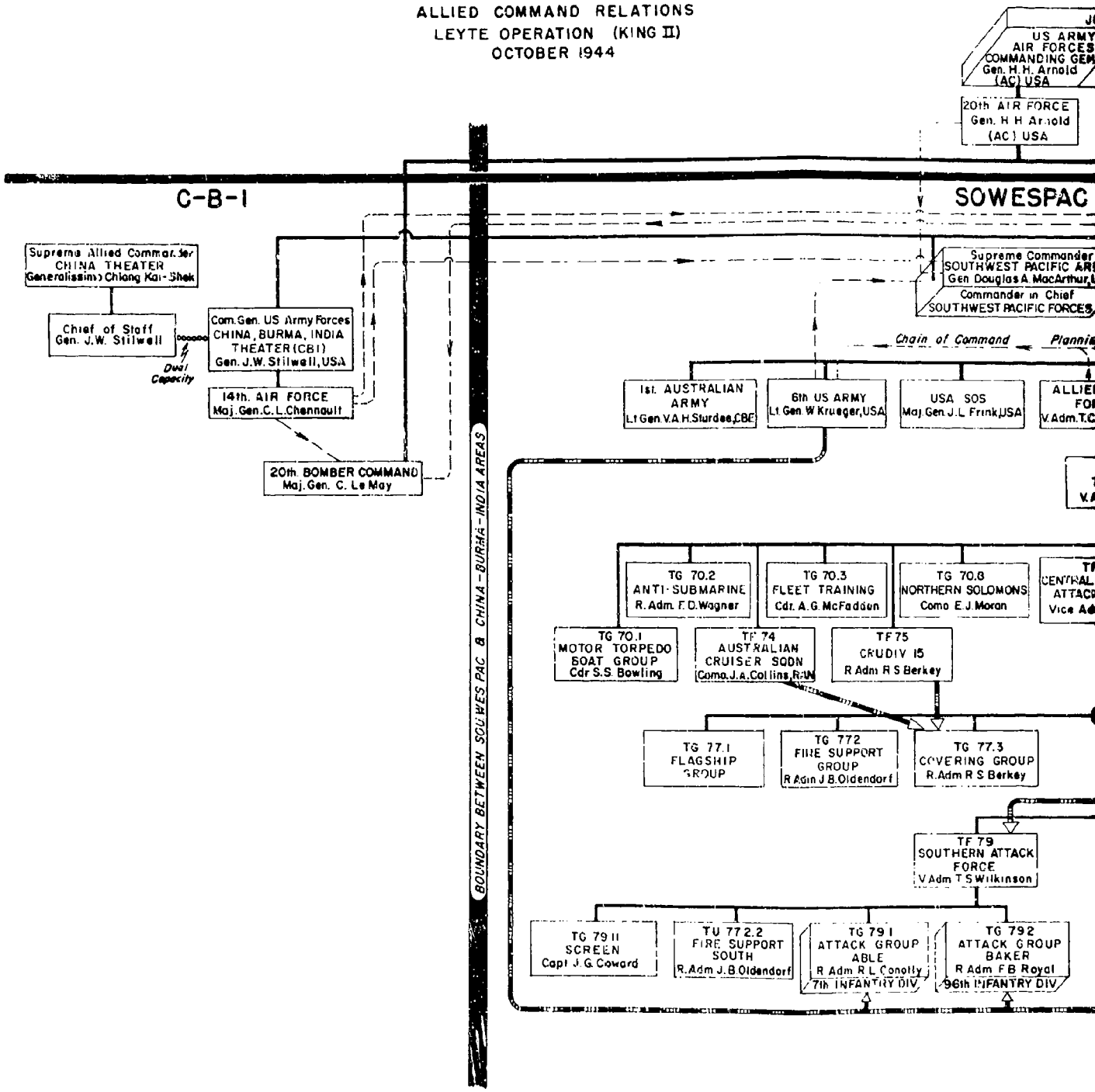
** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170939 October 1944, to CAAF SOWESPAC, CANF SOWESPAC, info CG FIFTH Air Force, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 77, etc.

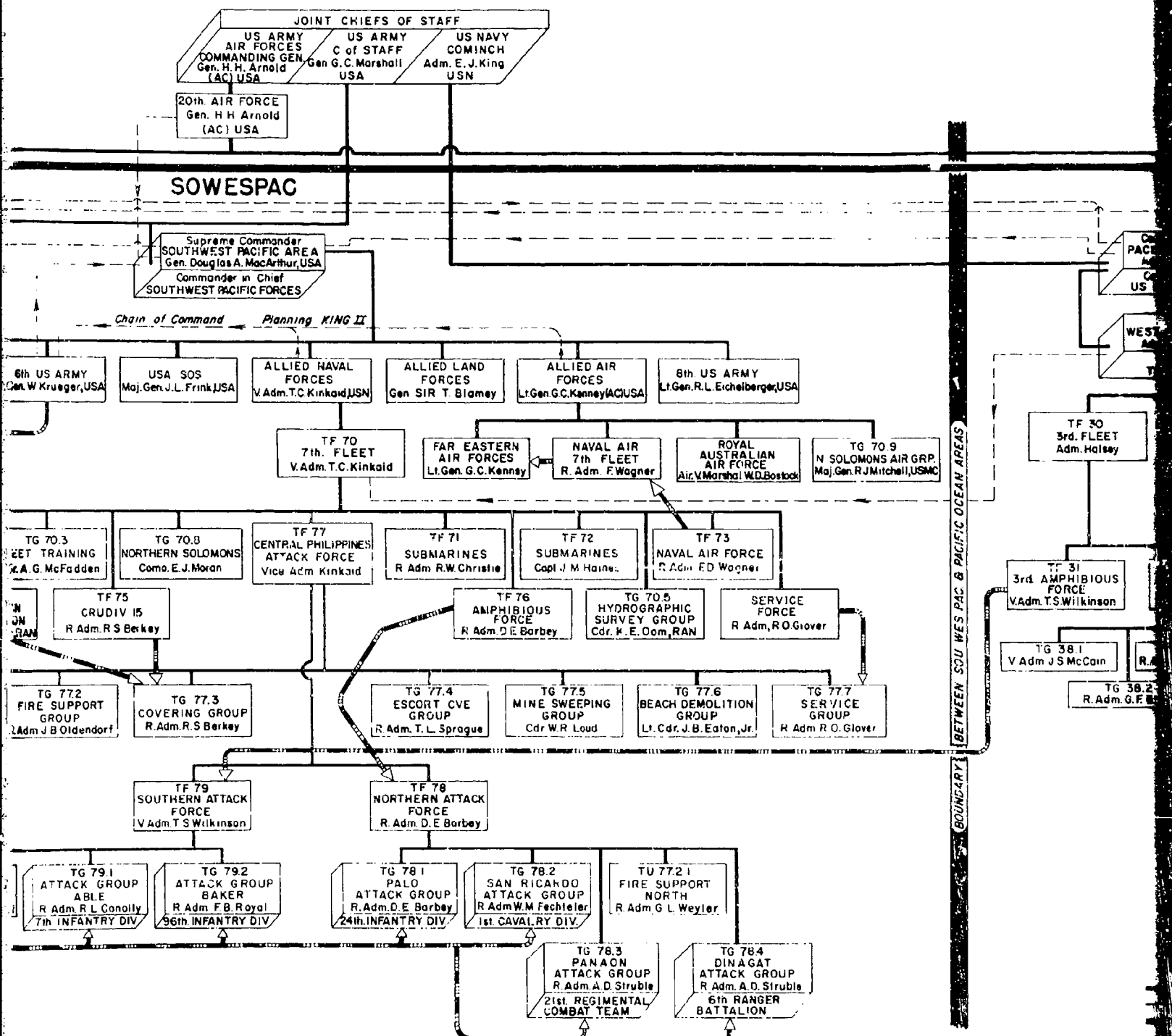
*** CAAF SOWESPAC Operating Instructions (Revised) No. 71/1, October 4th, 1944.

**** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944, to CTG's 77.2 and 77.4 info COMSOWESPAC.

CONFIDENTIAL

ALLIED COMMAND RELATIONS
LEYTE OPERATION (KING II)
OCTOBER 1944




JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
US ARMY AIR FORCES COMMANDING GEN. Gen. H. H. Arnold (AC) USA
US ARMY C of STAFF Gen G.C. Marshall USA
US NAVY COMINCH Adm. E.J. King USN
20th AIR FORCE Gen. H H Arnold (AC) USA
SOWESPAC
Supreme Commander SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, USA
Commander in Chief SOUTHWEST PACIFIC FORCES
Chain of Command
Planning KING II
6th US ARMY Gen. W Krueger, USA
USA SOS Maj. Gen. J.L. Frink, USA
ALLIED NAVAL FORCES V. Adm. T.C Kinkaid, USN
ALLIED LAND FORCES Gen SIR T. Blamey
ALLIED AIR FORCES Lt. Gen. G.C. Kenney (AC) USA
8th US ARMY Lt. Gen. R.L. Eichelberger, USA
TF 70 7th. FLEET V. Adm. T.C. Kinkaid
FAR EASTERN AIR FORCES Lt. Gen. G.C. Kenney
NAVAL AIR 7th FLEET R. Adm. F. Wagner
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE Air V. Marshal W.D. Bostock
TG 70.9 N SOLOMONS AIR GRP. Maj. Gen. R.J. Mitchell, USMC
TG 70.3 EET TRAINING A.G. McFadden
TG 70.8 NORTHERN SOLOMONS Como. E.J. Moran
TF 77 CENTRAL PHILIPPINES ATTACK FORCE Vice Adm Kinkaid
TF 71 SUBMARINES R Adm R.W. Christie
TF 72 SUBMARINES Capt J.M. Haines
TF 73 NAVAL AIR FORCE R Adm E.D Wagner
TF 75 CRUDIV 15 R Adm. R.S Berkey
TF 76 AMPHIBIOUS FORCE R Adm. D.E Barbey
TG 70.5 HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY GROUP Cdr. K.E. Oom, RAN
SERVICE FORCE R Adm, R.O. Glover
TG 77.2 FIRE SUPPORT GROUP Adm J.B Oldendorf
TG 77.3 COVERING GROUP R. Adm. R.S Berkey
TG 77.4 ESCORT CVE GROUP R. Adm. T.L. Sprague
TG 77.5 MINE SWEEPING GROUP Cdr W.R Loud
TG 77.6 BEACH DEMOLITION GROUP Lt. Cdr. J.B. Eaton, Jr.
TG 77.7 SERVICE GROUP R Adm R.O. Glover
TF 79 SOUTHERN ATTACK FORCE V Adm T.S Wilkinson
TF 78 NORTHERN ATTACK FORCE R. Adm. D.E Barbey
TG 79.1 ATTACK GROUP ABLE R Adm R.L Conolly 7th INFANTRY DIV.
TG 79.2 ATTACK GROUP BAKER R Adm F.B. Royal 96th. INFANTRY DIV.
TG 78.1 PALO ATTACK GROUP R. Adm. D.E Barbey 24th. INFANTRY DIV.
TG 78.2 SAN RICARDO ATTACK GROUP R Adm W.M Fechteler 1st. CAVALRY DIV.
TU 77.2.1 FIRE SUPPORT NORTH R. Adm G.L. Weyler
TG 78.3 PANAON ATTACK GROUP R. Adm A.D. Struble 21st. REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM
TG 78.4 DINAGAT ATTACK GROUP R. Adm. A.D. Struble 6th RANGER BATTALION
BOUNDARY BETWEEN SOU WES PAC & PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
TF 30 3rd. FLEET Adm. Halsey
TF 31 3rd AMPHIBIOUS FORCE V. Adm. T.S. Wilkinson
TG 38.1 V Adm J.S McCain

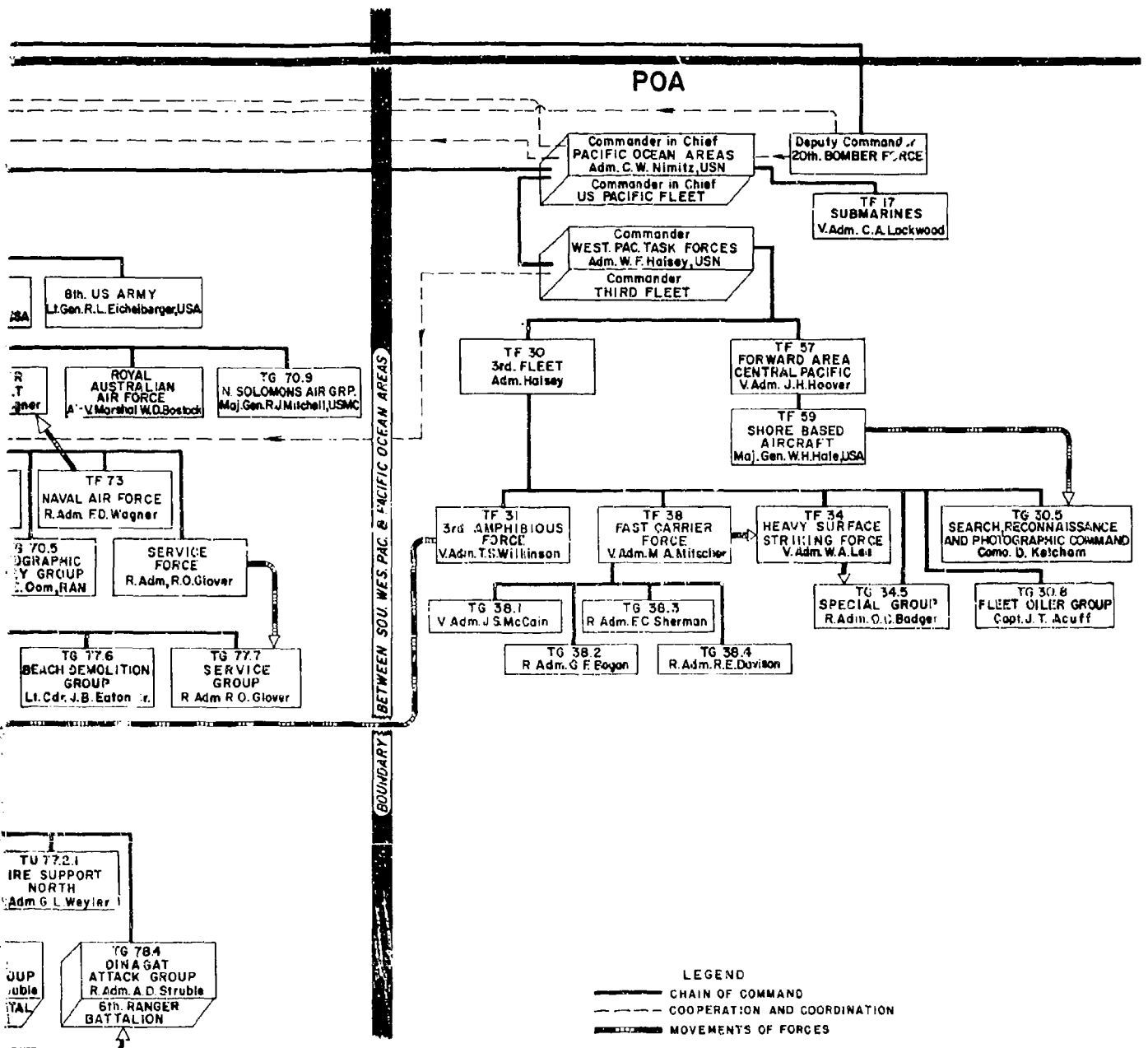


PLATE I

348369 O - 55 (Face p. 2)

neutralize enemy airfields and destroy enemy shipping in the western Visayas and at the same time provide adequate direct air support in the objective area he would require assistance. Consequently, he issued the necessary instruction for his land-based aircraft to attack the western Visayas.

At 2400 COMSOWESPAC in the NASHVILLE, escorted by the ABNER READ and BUSH (TU 77.1.2) was bearing 121°(T) distance 650 miles from Leyte Gulf.

(1) Operations of Commander SEVENTH Fleet.

Commander SEVENTH Fleet, who was also Commander Allied Naval Forces SOWESPAC and CTF 77, (Plate II) and therefore was in TU 77.1.1, appears to have taken no unusual action as COMSEVENTHFLT on this date.

Actually, as COMSEVENTHFLT, operating under the title of CTF 77, he handled in WASATCH only those SEVENTH Fleet operations directly connected with KING II* since he had delegated control of other SEVENTH Fleet operations as well as overall administration of the SEVENTH Fleet to his Deputy Commander at Hollandia.**

COMMANDER SEVENTH FLEET AS AN INFORMATION ADDRESSEE ALSO RECEIVED COMTHIRDFLT'S 170909*** BUT HE LIKEWISE APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN NO ACTION ON IT SINCE HE HAD SUBMARINES STATIONED IN THE GENERAL AREAS REFERRED TO. WHILE THE DISPOSITION OF THESE TF 71 SUBMARINES WAS NOT IDEAL - AS DISCUSSED IN VOLUME I - AND DID NOT GIVE THE POSITIVE DETECTION DESIRED BY COMTHIRDFLT IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE SAME REASONS WHICH MOTIVATED THEIR ORIGINAL DISPOSITIONS ON OCTOBER 15TH STILL OBTAINED.****

(a) Operations of CTF 77 (Central Philippine Attack Force).

CTF 77 in the WASATCH with TU 77.1.1 continued on with TF 79. He also does not appear to have taken any important action on this date since (1) his operations so far were proceeding according to plan and (2) he did not expect that major elements of the Japanese fleet would be involved in opposition to the Allied landings at Leyte. That the latter is true is borne out by the statement in the Intelligence Annex for his basic plan which reads as follows: "It is not believed that major elements of the Japanese fleet will be involved in the present operations".*****

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* COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 130055 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CINCPAC, COMTHIRDFLT, C. G. 6th Army, COMINCH, etc.

** Rear Admiral Clifford E. Van Hook, USN.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

**** CTF 71 Dispatch 101426 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

***** CANF SOWESPAC Operation Plan 13-44, Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Annex M.

Naturally, he was concerned about the operations of his advance forces because he knew the weather in the objective area was increasingly bad.

At about 1203 he received word that despite the bad weather the landings had been made on Suluan Island.* This was a welcome report because the weather conditions had indicated a possibility that advance force operations for the 17th might have to be delayed.

During the past twenty-four hours he had received from COMTHIRDFLT a number of dispatches which modified that officer's dispatch of October 15th wherein he stated he would be unable to provide fast carrier support for KING II until further notice.** These modifications were essentially that COMTHIRDFLT was now able to provide some carrier support which he would gradually increase until October 20th when, the tactical situation permitting, TF 38 would have returned to its basic plan.*** These dispatches were a source of satisfaction for he had only limited carrier forces within TG 77.4 and these aircraft would be required in support of the landing operations on D-day. (October 20th).

He now decided to modify his dispatch of October 15th wherein he had directed CTG 77.4 to strike the western Visayas on October 17th, 18th and 19th.**** He therefore at 1258 advised CTG 77.2, who was his advance force commander and CTG 77.4, his escort carrier group commander, of these changes and directed CTG 77.4 to strike the western Visayas on October 18th and to adjust covering support on following days in accordance with developments.*****

While studying COMTHIRDFLT's plans, as well as those of other commanders associated with KING II, with relation to his own plans, CTF 77 observed that he had received no report from Commander Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC as to the results of strikes made by that command on the Mindanao area in accordance with COMSOWESPAC's instructions.****** He therefore, at 1301, advised that commander that complete neutralization of Mindanao was vital to success of KING II, and requested that he be provided with a resume of previous strikes and an immediate report of intended strikes and results thereof.*******

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* CTG 77.2 Dispatch 170233 October 1944 to CTF 17.
** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 150233 October 1944 to CINCPOA and COMSOWESPAC.
*** COMFIRSTCARTASKFORPAC (CTF 38) Operation Order No. 11-44, Serial 00020, October 1st, 1944.
**** CTF 77 Dispatch 150542 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CINCPOA, etc.
***** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG's 77.2 and 77.4.
****** COMSOWESPAC Operation Instruction No. 70, September 21st, 1944.
******* CTF 77 Dispatch 170401 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

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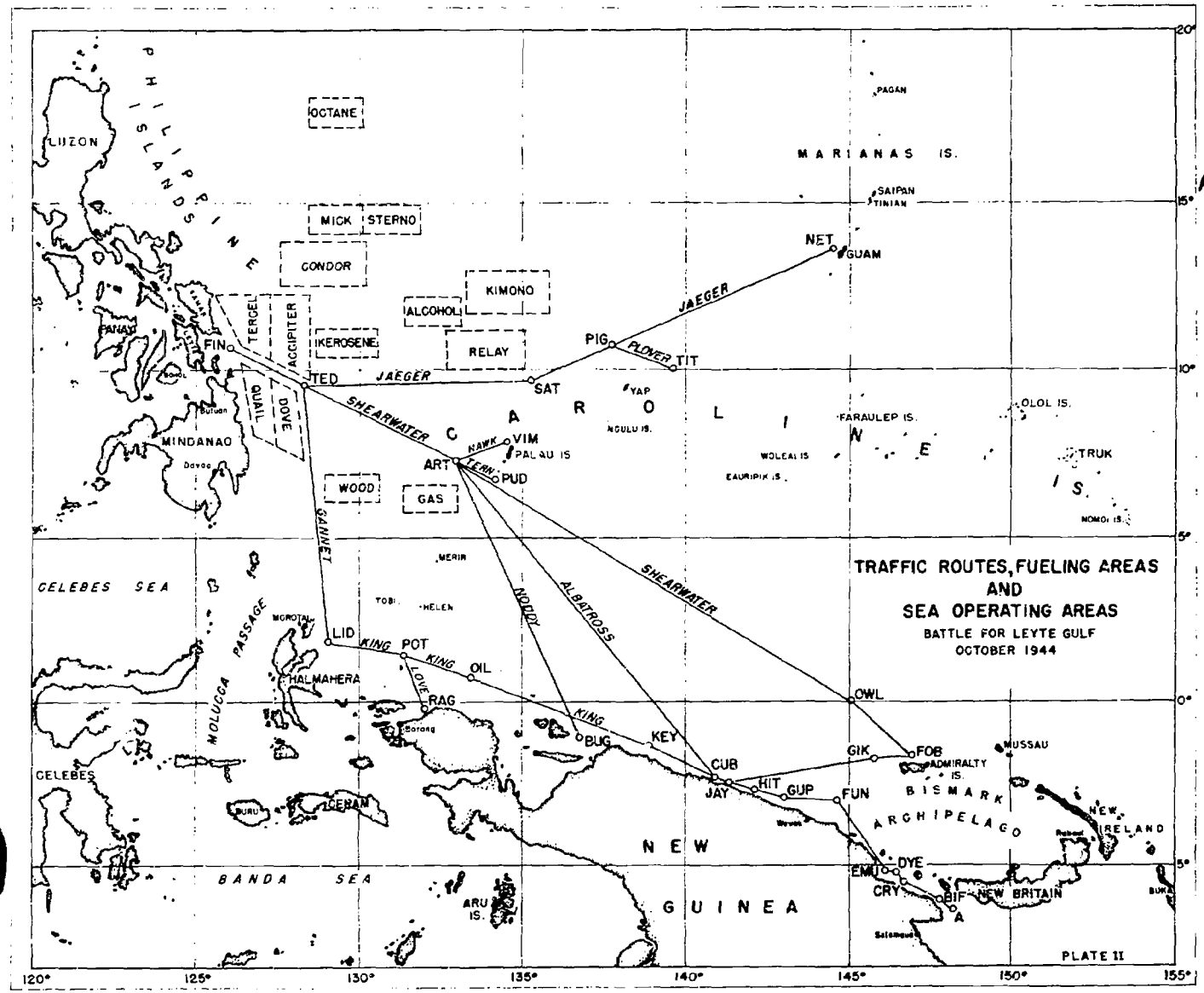

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About 2045 he received further word from CTG 77.2 advising that the Suluan operation had been highly successful, that thirty-two Japanese had been captured there; that the northern Dinagat Island operation had been made and had been unopposed; that the landing on Homonhon Island had been delayed until the following day, that Area SWEEP had been swept with negative results and that the sweep of the main channel had commenced with no reports as yet. Best of all, CTG 77.2 had reported that on the morrow he expected to proceed according to plan.* This indicated that that commander had the situation in hand.

(1) Operations of Advance Force.

The advance force consisted of TG's 77.2 (Bombardment and Fire Support Group), 77.4 (Escort Carrier Group), 77.5 (Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group), 77.6 (Beach Demolition Group) and 78.4 (Dinagat Attack Group). This advance force, which was commanded in the objective area by CTG 77.2 although such command was not clearly delineated in the basic orders, was assigned the general mission of destroying the enemy personnel, installations, and facilities along the east coast of Leyte in the vicinity of the landing beaches, and on the entrance islands to Leyte Gulf by gunfire, aerial bombardment, minesweeping and underwater demolition and by landing on Suluan, Homonhon and Northern Dinagat Islands, in order to assist in the seizure and occupation of Leyte area. It was scheduled to arrive off the eastern entrance to Leyte Gulf (Point FIN) on D-3 day (October 17th) — D-day was October 20th — and was assigned tasks by CTG 77.2 to prepare the way for the actual landings as follows:**

(a) TG 77.2 to destroy enemy personnel, installations, and facilities on the east coast of Leyte in the vicinity of the landing beaches; to cover the operations of the minesweeping groups; to cover the operations of the underwater demolition teams and to support the landings on the entrance islands.

(b) TG 77.4 to destroy enemy personnel, installations and facilities on the islands of Homonhon, Dinagat, Suluan and Hibuson and along the east coast of Leyte; to provide air cover for the units of the task organization; to operate generally during high visibility in areas QUAIL and TERCEL and during night and low visibility in areas ACCIPITER and DOVE. (Plate II)

(c) TG 77.5 to sweep Leyte Gulf and adjacent waters for contact, magnetic and acoustic mines and to buoy all shoal spots and water dangerous to navigation.

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* CTG 77.2 Dispatch 171115 October 1944 to CTF 77.

** COMCRUDIV 4 (CTG 77.2) Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 0008, October 5th, 1944.

(d) TG 77.6 to destroy underwater obstacles along the east coast of Leyte in the vicinity of the landing beaches.

(e) TG 78.4 to land troops and equipment in designated areas of Dinagat Island and Homonhon Island and to seize Suluan Island. Suluan Island originally was to be bombarded only, but on October 12th the C.G. SIXTH Army directed that this island was to be seized D-3 day, the installations and hostile forces destroyed and then the island was to be evacuated.* The troops to be employed in these advance operations, the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion, were trained for amphibious operations at Finschafen, New Guinea during period June 17th - June 29th.

In accordance with these tasks the advance forces operated from 0719 October 17th until 2400 October 17th as follows:

(a) Operations of CTG 77.2** (Bombardment and Fire Support Group)

CTG 77.2, with TG 77.2, continued on toward Leyte. CTG 77.6, with TG 77.6, was in company. The weather still remained bad. At 0432, having received a request from CTG 77.4 to cancel air operations for that day he approved this request.*** By 0800 the wind had increased in intensity, the seas and rainfall were both heavy. Visibility had been reduced to about 2500 yards, making flying conditions unsatisfactory. Having decided to permit the operation to continue, he awaited with interest reports from the Commander Dinagat Attack Group. The landing on Suluan Island had been scheduled for 0600 with air support to be provided by CTG 77.4 which air support would not now be available. There was considerable concern within the flagship as to whether or not Commander Dinagat Attack Group had been able to proceed with the landing.

At 0858 this concern was relieved when CTG 78.4 reported "landing was made and final objective reached with no opposition on Black Beach THREE on Suluan." (Plate III)

At 0918 CTG 77.2 received word from Commander Dinagat Attack Group that the weather at Suluan Island was: Wind twenty-nine knots, 287°(T) with gusts to forty knots, ceiling zero, raining heavily.

At 0935 CTG 77.2 authorized CTG 77.4 to retire on course 120°(T) to avoid the center of the typhoon.

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* CTF 77 Dispatch 130527 October 1944 to CTG 78.4; also CTG 78.4 Dispatch 121622 October 1944 to CTF 77; also C.G. SIXTH Army Report of the Leyte Operation October 20th-December 25th, 1944, pages 23-24.

** Unless otherwise indicated information here obtained from Action Report CTG 77.2 (COMCRUDIV 4), Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

*** War Diary COMDESRON 47 October 17th, 1944.

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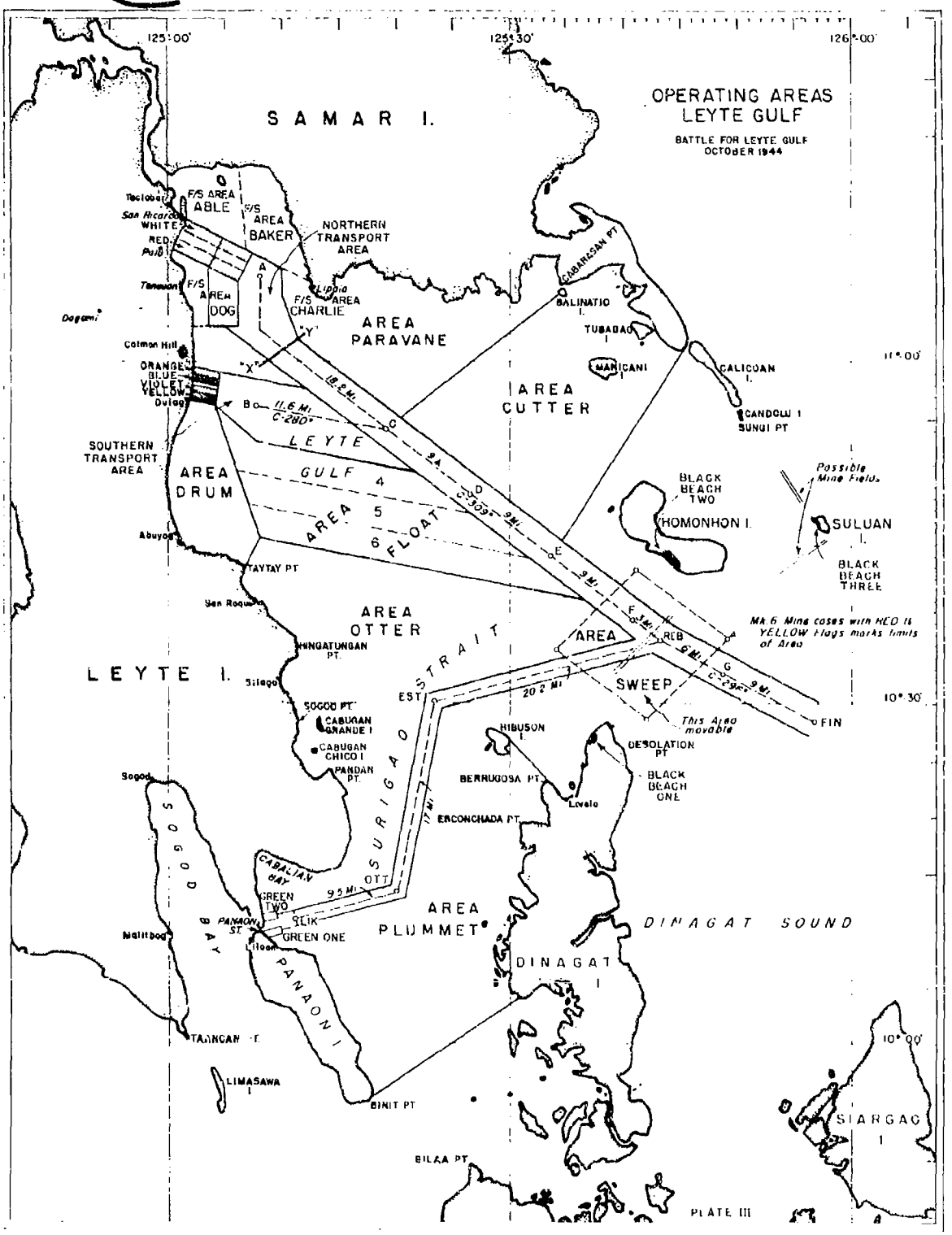

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At 0942 he received word that TG 77.5, less five straggling YMS's, was in the objective area.

At 1133 he reported to CTF 77 that communications were very bad, that a disturbance of near typhoon proportions was expected to continue for the next forty-eight hours with next twenty-four hours increasing in intensity with its center believed to be seventy-five miles to north moving 290°, speed ten knots. He further reported that landings had been made and objectives reached on Suluan Island without opposition; that the sea was rough, the ceiling zero, that small ships and carriers were making heavy-weather and that air operations were out of the question.*

At 1248 the CONY reported having contacted land bearing 238°(T) distant thirty-four miles. This was Siargao Island.

At about 1328 he learned that TG 77.4 had been instructed by CTF 77 to strike the western Visayas on the following day and to adjust the covering support as necessary on the succeeding days. This was of considerable importance to him since it might reduce the number of direct support aircraft available for the advance operations.

At about 1330 he received word from CTG 78.4 that the landing had been made on Black Beach ONE (Dinagat Island) but that only about 35% of the stores had been landed because of weather.**

At about 1534 he received a dispatch from CTF 77 directing that certain targets be destroyed as soon as practicable and indicated in particular the Japanese headquarters, the town of Dagami, and numerous fuel dumps.*** These were evidently considered essential to military success since COMSOWESPAC had stressed the desirability of avoiding naval gunfire on the native villages or where the natives would suffer.****

At 1725 TG 77.2 crossed the 100 fathom curve. Land was not visible and position was fixed by radar.***** He now at 1742 changed course to 120°(T) to parallel CTG 77.4's course.

Nothing more of any importance occurred until 1809 when CTG 77.2 received word from CTG 77.4 that TG 77.4 was still retiring on course 120°(T) speed eight knots but would be in the designated launching area by 0530 October 18th as scheduled.

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* CTG 77.2 Dispatch 170233 October 1944 to CTF 77.

** Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably November 1944.

*** CTF 77 Dispatch 170604 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.

**** Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, Enclosure C, undated but probably November 1944.

***** War Diary TALBOT October 17th, 1944.

By 2000 CTG 77.2 could see that the weather and the sea appeared to be abating. About this time he received word from CTG 78.4 (Dinagat Attack Group) that but two of the three scheduled landings had been made. He now learned (a) that landings had been made on Suluan Island, where thirty-two Japanese had been captured, and on northern Dinagat Island which had been unopposed (b) that owing to failure of the sweep gear, the landing on Homonhon Island had been delayed first for two hours, and later until the following day, and (c) that Area SWEEP had been swept with negative results. This was quite a surprise since it had been expected that moored mines would be discovered in this area, and for that reason a clearance sweep rather than an exploratory sweep had been ordered.

At 2015 he advised CTF 77 of the known results and stated that (a) the sweep of the main channel had commenced with (as yet) no reports but that sweeping operations in general had been delayed by weather, and (b) he expected to proceed according to plan.*

At about 2051 he received a dispatch from COMSEVENTHFLT which provided new intelligence concerning the location of enemy defense batteries.**

At 2340, with TG 77.2, he changed course to 298°(T) and headed toward the entrance to Leyte Gulf. He was very anxious to expedite the preliminary operations since almost one day of minesweeping had been lost and he did not wish to delay D-day.

During this day Commander Support Aircraft (CSA) in the HUGHES was to have controlled the combat air patrol, antisubmarine patrol and support aircraft in the objective area, and the Fighter Director Officer (FDO) in the BENNION was to have controlled fighter direction.*** However, the flying conditions were so bad that no Allied aircraft were flown and therefore neither of these commanders exercised the above functions.

(b) Operations of CTG 77.4 (Escort Carrier Group).

CTG 77.4 proceeded ahead of TG 77.2 in order to carry out (a) the scheduled air strikes in support of the landings scheduled for this date on Suluan, Northern Dinagat and Homonhon Islands, (b) the air cover for the minesweepers and (c) the strikes against the western Visayas ordered for D-3, D-2 and D-1 days. This latter task had been assigned by CTF 77 on October 15th when he received word from COMTHIRDFLT that he

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* CTG 77.2 Dispatch 171115 October 1944 to CTF 77.

** COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 171121 October 1944 to CTF 77, CTG 77.2.

*** COMCRUDIV 4 (CTG 77.2) Operation Plan No. 2-44, Serial 0008, October 5th, 1944 (Annex D, Air Plan).

would be unable to provide air support for KING II until further notice.* CTF 77 had given as the primary objective of these Visayan strikes "the destruction of Japanese aircraft and combatant ships" and had directed CTG 77.4 to adjust the air support schedule as necessary.**

He had available for strategic and tactical support of the forces in the objective area three task units of four carriers each (TU's 77.4.1, 77.4.2, and 77.4.3). The other six carriers of TG 77.4 had been assigned to special escort units for succeeding echelons of amphibious shipping scheduled to arrive in the objective area on D-day (TU's 77.4.14 and 77.4.34) and D+1 day (TU 77.4.24).***

The three main task units of TG 77.4 had been assigned the following areas (Appendix III):

(a) During daylight, TU 77.4.1 (Panaon Carrier Group) to operate to the southeast of Leyte Gulf, south and east of a line running 060°(T)-240°(T) through the point, Latitude 10°-43'N, Longitude 126°-00'E; TU 77.4.2 (Southern Carrier Group) to operate to the east and northeast of the entrance to Leyte Gulf, between two lines both running 060°(T)-240°(T) through the points of Latitude 11°-07'N, Longitude 126°-00'E, and Latitude 10°-43'N, Longitude 126°-00'E; TU 77.4.3 (Northern Carrier Group) to operate to the east and southeast of the southern end of Samar, north of a line running 060°(T)-240°(T) through a point Latitude 11°-07'N, Longitude 126°-00'E.

(b) During the night, TU 77.4.1 was to retire in the northern portion of areas QUAIL and DOVE, well clear of route SHEARWATER; TU 77.4.2 to retire in areas TERCEL and ACCIPITER, south and east of a line bearing 045°(T) from Point FIN, north and well clear of route SHEARWATER; TU 77.4.3 to retire in areas TERCEL and ACCIPITER, north and west of a line bearing 045°(T) from Point FIN.***

However, the above assigned operating areas were modified for the period D-3 to D-day by CTG 77.2 who directed that the escort carrier group operate generally during high visibility in areas QUAIL and TERCEL, and during night and low visibility in areas ACCIPITER and DOVE.

CTG 77.4, in view of the unfavorable flying conditions, advised CTG 77.2 of this fact, and requested authority to cancel air operations for the day. This request was approved at 0432 by CTG 77.2.**** CTG 77.4 then, at 0445, cancelled flight operations for this day.*****

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 150149 October 1944 to CTF 77.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 150542 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, all TFC's and TGC's SEVENTH Fleet.

*** CTG 77.4 Operation Plan No. 2-44, Serial 00075, October 5th, 1944; CTG 77.4 Action Report, Leyte Operations, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

**** War Diary COMDESRON 47 October 17th, 1944.

***** War Diary COMCARDIV 25 October 17th, 1944.

At 1000 he received authority from CTG 77.2 to retire to the eastward and at that time changed course to 120°(T) and speed to eight knots.

At about 1328 he received a dispatch from CTF 77 advising him of the planned movements of TG's 38.1, 38.2, and 38.3 and 38.4 and directing him on the following day to strike the western Visayas on October 18th and to adjust the covering support as necessary on the succeeding days.*

At 1900 he changed course to 310°(T) and increased speed to nine knots to insure arriving at the 0615 launching point on time.**

Nothing further of importance occurred during the remainder of the day.

(c) Operations of CTG 77.5 (Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group).

It will be remembered that CTG 77.5 had been conducting minesweeping operations since 0610 October 17th when he had commenced operations in the approaches to Black Beach THREE on Suluan Island. It will also be remembered that these minesweeping operations had been completed at 0710 and had been negative. Meanwhile minesweepers which were to sweep the approaches to Black Beach ONE on Dinagat Island were approaching that area, and his other minesweepers which had been delayed by weather were also approaching their designated sweeping areas.

He was in a difficult situation since the weather was worsening. It was clear to him that his minesweepers would encounter great difficulty in sweeping the areas planned for that day since the sweep gear was constantly fouling and would, in many cases, be lost. However, despite this unsatisfactory situation, he boldly continued operations. As will be shown later, he succeeded in accomplishing limited results and swept twenty-six chemical horn moored mines.*** The operations of his minesweepers, which will be discussed more or less fully because of the nature of minesweeping operations and because of the difficulties encountered owing to the bad weather, were as follows:

(1) Operations of Minesweeping Unit.

(a) Suluan Island - Homonhon Island Unit.

This unit, consisting of the HOWARD, PALMER, CHANDLER and SANDS, which had completed its sweep of the approaches to Black Beach THREE at 0710, reported at 0745 to CTU 77.4.2 for sweep operations in

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* CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG'S 77.2 and 77.4.
** Action Report CTU 77.4.1 Leyte Operation, October 12th-29th, 1944.
*** War Diaries TOKEN, VELOCITY, SCOUT, PURSUIT, REQUISITE and SAGE, October 17th, 1944.

the Homonhon area. These sweep operations were delayed because of the worsening weather and the loss of paravanes.*

At 1405, despite this weather which was now approaching typhoon intensity with wind and sea from the west, this unit commenced sweeping off Black Beach TWO at Homonhon Island. Since the CHANDLER had lost her sweep gear, only the HOWARD and PALMER were able to sweep. However, the PALMER, at 1405, also lost her sweep gear, so that the HOWARD was left alone. The HOWARD's sweep, which was completed at 1630 and was negative, was, because of weather conditions, about 1500 - 2500 yards to seaward of the desired path. The sweep group then was detached from TU 78.4.2, headed into Leyte Gulf at 1745, and at about 2100 rejoined TU 77.5.1 (Sweep Unit ONE). Meanwhile, at 1739, the HOWARD had had to jettison her sweep gear because sea conditions made it impossible to recover it.**

(b) Northern Dinagat Island Unit.

The HOVEY (F), HAMILTON, LONG and SOUTHARD commenced sweeping the approaches to Black Beach ONE at 0759 and completed sweeping at 1000 with negative results. The four sweepers then, at 1051, commenced a clearance sweep of the main channel between Homonhon and Dinagat Islands and the transport areas off Tacloban and Dulag, Leyte Island known as the Tacloban - Dulag approach channel. They completed sweeping the southern half of Tacloban - Dulag approach channel at 1650 with negative results.***

This unit sighted one enemy single engine plane at 0955 and one two-engine plane at 1208 which planes were obviously reconnaissance planes.***

At about 2100, the Dinagat Island Unit was rejoined by the Suluan - Homonhon Island Unit.***

(c) BREESE and PREBLE.

These two ships remained outside Leyte Gulf but in the vicinity of the entrance (Point FIN) and awaited information regarding the limits of the suspected minefield in Area SWEEP, in order to lays buoys marking these extremities, or to lay other buoys as necessary. However, no call to lay buoys was received. Meanwhile, the PREBLE received orders to assist YMS 71, which was having navigational difficulties,

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* War Diary HOWARD, October 17th, 1944.
** War Diaries HOWARD and PALMER, October 17th, 1944.
*** War Diaries HOVEY, HAMILTON, LONG, SOUTHARD, October 17th, 1944

and heard other YMS's reporting trouble but was unable to locate or assist them.

(d) Sweep Units TWO and THREE were directed on D-3 day to commence a clearance sweep of area "SWEEP" in Leyte Gulf, to a depth of sixty feet. Area SWEEP was a movable area whose limits were to be adjusted along the axis of the approach to channel depending upon the actual location of the suspected double mine lines.* Therefore, these sweep units had first to determine the northern and southern limits of the minefield, if it in fact existed.

(1) Sweep Unit TWO, consisting of the AM's ZEAL (F), TOKEN, TUMULT, VELOCITY and SCOUT, was to make a clearance sweep of the northern half of this area. It arrived at 0915 in the vicinity of Area SWEEP, at 0931 commenced streaming minesweeping gear** and at 1130 commenced sweeping. However, both the ZEAL and the VELOCITY were unable to sweep due to loss of sweep gear and sweeping was discontinued until 1353 when the SCOUT and the TOKEN, with the TUMULT as mine destruction vessel, recommenced sweeping in Area SWEEP. At 1750 sweep operations were discontinued for the day having swept seven chemical horn moored mines. All of these mines were swept by the SCOUT.**

(2) Sweep Unit THREE, consisting of the AM's REQUISITE (F), PURSUIT, REVENGE, SAGE and SENTRY, was to make a clearance sweep of the southern half of this area. It arrived Leyte Gulf at 0922 and at 0927 commenced sweeping as scheduled. At 1720 it discontinued sweeping having swept nineteen chemical horn moored mines.***

(e) Sweep Units FOUR, FIVE, SIX and SEVEN, composed of all YMS's less five YMS's which were delayed in arrival at Leyte Gulf owing to weather difficulties,**** conducted sweeping operations in accordance with CTG 77.5's plan.***** Since the numbers of the five YMS's which were delayed in arrival are not known, and since they gradually staggered into the gulf and rejoined their units, the sweep units are indicated as being complete, although this is not necessarily correct. Sweeping was conducted as follows:

(1) Sweep Unit FOUR (YMS's 1, 81, 140 (F) and 319), Sweep Unit FIVE (YMS's 238, 243, 286, 293, 335, 398 (F)) and Sweep Unit SIX (YMS's 6, 39, 49, 52, 340 (F), 342) arrived in Leyte Gulf and at 1200 passed Point REB and commenced exploratory sweeping of Area FLOAT for moored and acoustic mines to a depth of sixty feet. No mines were discovered. Sweeping operations were completed about sundown.

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* CANFSWPA Operation Plan No. 13-44, Annex E, Appendix 3.
** War Diaries TOKEN, VELOCITY, SCOUT, October 17th, 1944.
*** War Diaries PURSUIT, REQUISITE and SAGE, October 17th, 1944.
**** Action Report CTG 77.5, Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 28th, 1944.
***** CTG 77.5 Minesweeping and Hydrographic Survey Order No. 20-44, Serial 00101, October 1st, 1944.

(2) Sweep Unit SEVEN (YMS's 70, 71, 73, 314 and 341 (F)) arrived in Leyte Gulf, and at 1200 passed Point REB and commenced exploratory sweeping of the southern transport area for moored and acoustic mines to a depth of thirty feet. No mines were discovered. Sometime during the late afternoon and more nearly around 1730 YMS 70 foundered, because of the heavy seas. Sweeping operations were discontinued about sundown.*

* * *

AS MENTIONED EARLIER, THE MINESWEEPING OPERATIONS ON THIS DATE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL TO SHOW THAT THE SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION OF PRE-D-DAY MINESWEEPING CAN BE SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZED BY UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS, IN THIS CASE, ADVERSE WEATHER. THIS COULD, IN TURN, FORCE A DELAY IN D-DAY WITH (A) THE POSSIBLE RESULTING CONFUSION TO THE ATTACKING FORCES AND THE PROBABLE INCREASE IN LOSSES SUSTAINED THROUGHOUT THE OPERATION AND (B) THE PROBABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE ENEMY'S SITUATION THROUGH THE GAIN IN TIME. THE DIFFICULTIES ABOVE NOTED, SUCH AS THE LOSS OF THE SWEEPS, CLEARLY INDICATE THE CONTINUING NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE MATERIALS AND METHODS OF MINESWEEPING SO THAT THE EFFECTS OF WEATHER AND OTHER UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES MAY BE REDUCED TO A MINIMUM. THE FACT THAT THE MINESWEEPING, DESPITE THE ABOVE HANDICAPS, WAS EFFECTIVE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE KNOWLEDGE WITHIN TG 77.5 REGARDING THE SWEEPING OF CONTACT MINES AND TO THE ART WITH WHICH THIS KNOWLEDGE WAS EMPLOYED.

(2) Operations of Hydrographic Unit.

Little information is available concerning the operations of TU 77.5.2 (Hydrographic Unit) on October 17th, but it appears correct to say that they entered Leyte Gulf with the YMS's and commenced laying buoys to mark the shoal areas.

(d) Operations of CTG 77.6 (Beach Demolition Group), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTG 77.6, with TG 77.6, remained in company with CTG 77.2 throughout this period. Nothing of importance occurred excepting that the APD's had difficulty operating in the heavy seas which forced CTG 77.2 to reduce speed to twelve knots.**

(e) Operations of CTG 78.4 (Dinagat Attack Group), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

It will be recalled that at 0719 the units of TG 78.4 were heading toward the objective area where they were to land

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* Action Report CTG 77.5, Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

** War Diary TALBOT October 17th, 1944.

troops and equipment in designed areas of Dinagat Island and Homonhon Island and to seize Suluan Island.

The weather was bad and had been increasingly ugly since 0100. The waves were increasing in size and the visibility was decreasing.

CTG 78.4, WHO HAD RECEIVED NO INSTRUCTIONS FROM CTG 77.2 TO DELAY THE OPERATIONS, REALIZED THAT THAT COMMANDER, WHO WAS WELL ASTERN, DESIRED THE SCHEDULED LANDING OPERATIONS TO PROCEED IF IT WAS AT ALL POSSIBLE. SINCE HE WAS THE COMMANDER ON THE SPOT HE FURTHER REALIZED THAT THIS WAS A DECISION WITHIN HIS COMPETENCE ALONE. HE RESOLUTELY DECIDED (A) TO CONTINUE THE OPERATIONS HOPING THEREBY TO GAIN SOME IF NOT ALL OF HIS OBJECTIVES AND (B) TO LEAVE IT TO THE JUDGMENT OF CTU 78.4.2 AND CTU 78.4.4 AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THEY COULD ACCOMPLISH THEIR ASSIGNED TASKS.

In order to accomplish his objectives, CTG 78.4 had organized his forces as follows:*

(1) TU 78.4.1 Black Beach ONE Unit (Dinagat Island) composed of the HUGHES (FF), STACK, ROBINSON, GALLUP, WARD, KILTY, SCHLEY, and HMS ARIADNE. "A" Company, SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion was embarked in the SCHLEY,** "B" Company, TWENTY-FIRST Infantry Regiment, in the ARIADNE,*** and "E" and "F" Companies, SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion, in the WARD.****

(2) TU 78.4.2 Black Beach TWO Unit (Homonhon Island) composed of the LANG(F), ROSS, BISBEE(F), and HERBERT. "B" Company, SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion, was in the HERBERT.

(3) TU 78.4.3 Close Covering Group, composed of the DENVER, COLUMBIA, ROBINSON, ROSS, A.W. GRANT, and BRYANT.

(4) TU 78.4.4 Black Beach THREE Unit (Suluan Island) composed of the DENVER, A.W. GRANT and CROSBY. "D" Company, SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion, was embarked in the CROSBY.***** Three minesweepers, HOWARD, PALMER and CHANDLER and the SANDS were temporarily attached to this unit.

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* Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably November 1944.

** War Diary SCHLEY, October 17th, 1944.

*** Action Report ARIADNE, Philippine Operation, Serial 1015/08, October 26th, 1944.

**** Action Report WARD, Dinagat Operation, Serial 0404, October 20th, 1944.

***** Action Report COMCRUDIV 12, Bombardment and Support of Landing on Suluan Island, Serial 0149, November 2nd, 1944.

Landing operations were effected as follows:

(1) Black Beach THREE.*

At 0750, CTU 78.4.4 set the landing hour for 0820. Shortly after this, the three minesweepers and the SANDS, having completed sweeping were returned to CTG 77.5.

After a short bombardment by the DENVER the CROSBY landed her troops in four boats on the beach at 0820 and reported at 0833 that she had made no contact with the enemy. At 0821 the DENVER completed her fire support operations. At 1010 the CROSBY reported to CTU 78.4.4, in part, that the troops had been received royally by about 100 natives, that thirty-two enemy prisoners had been taken, and that American losses had been one dead and two wounded.

In view of increasing weather an effort was now made to withdraw the Ranger company, but all four boats broached.

Since the troops could not be withdrawn CTU 78.4.4 directed the A.W. GRANT and the CROSBY to rejoin the DENVER and then at 1249 withdrew the ships of Black Beach THREE Unit from the area.

At 1830 the DENVER rejoined CTG 77.2 in the area to the east of the entrance to Leyte Gulf. The A.W. GRANT escorted the CROSBY to join CTG 78.4 and then rejoined CTG 77.2.

At 1940 the COLUMBIA and BRYANT, which had been operating in the area of Point FIN, rejoined CTG 77.2, at which time, since the ROBINSON was with the minesweepers inside Leyte Gulf, and the ROSS had joined TU 78.4.2, TU's 78.4.3 and 78.4.4 were dissolved.**

(2) Black Beach TWO.***

In view of the difficulties incurred by the minesweepers assigned to this beach, CTU 78.4.2 recommended at 1134 that operations be delayed until the weather had subsided. CTG 78.4 then ordered a delay if conditions were bad. By 1340, weather conditions had become so bad that it became necessary to delay the operations until the following morning (October 18th).

During the night this unit patrolled off the entrance to Leyte Gulf.

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* Action Report COMCRUDIV 12, Bombardment and Support of Landing on Suluan Island, Serial 0149, November 2nd, 1944.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 12, Bombardment of Leyte Island by CRUDIV 12, Serial 0143, November 4th, 1944, pages 2 and 3.

*** Action Report BISBEE, Dinagat Attack Group, no serial, November 4th, 1944.

(3) Black Beach ONE.

At 0741, TU 78.4.1 arrived off the beach and conducted scheduled bombardment of designated targets on Dinagat Island. Between 0900 and about 1030 CTU 78.4.1 landed, on Black Beach ONE,* the landing force consisting of Company "B" of the TWENTY-FIRST Infantry Regiment, and Companies "A", "E", and "F" of the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion. No opposition was encountered. After unloading about 35% of the stores (more could not be unloaded because of weather conditions), CTU 78.4.1, at 1437, retired the unit to the eastward of Desolation Point, Dinagat Island, for the night.

Meanwhile, at 1121, the ROBINSON had been detached to support the minesweepers inside Leyte Gulf.

(2) Operations of CTF 78 (Northern Attack Force), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTF 78 in the BLUE RIDGE, with TF 78 (less both the Dinagat Attack Group (TG 78.4) and reinforcement Groups ONE, TWO and THREE (TG's 78.6, 78.7, 78.8)), plus the Close Covering Group (TG 77.3), continued toward Leyte Gulf via routes ALBATROSS and SHEARWATER. TG 78.6 continued on toward Leyte Gulf independently while TG's 78.7 and 78.8 remained at anchor at Hollandia.

At this time (0719) CTU 77.4.34 was providing air cover not only for TF 78 but also for the Landing Craft Movement Group (Tractor Groups ABLE and BAKER of the Southern Attack Force (TF 79)) which was proceeding toward Leyte, heretofore without air cover,** and which TF 78 had closed during the night to about fifteen miles.

At 1200 the oiler group (TU 77.7.1) consisting of the oilers SALAMONIE, SARANAC and ASHTABULA (F) escorted by the BOWERS, WITTER and WHITEHURST which had been sighted at 0600, now took fueling station in the van of TF 78, and at 1305 commenced fueling the cruisers of the Close Covering Group (TG 77.3) and those TF 78 escorts that had not been topped-off during the forenoon by the cruisers. Fueling was completed at 1702.***

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* War Diaries WARD, SCHLEY, October 17th, 1944; also Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably November 1944; Action Report WARD, Dinagat Operation, Serial 0404, October 29th, 1944; Action Report KILTY, Dinagat Operation, October 27th, 1944

** Action Report CTU 77.4.34, Support of Leyte Operation, October 12th - November 1st, 1944, Serial 0154, November 5th, 1944.

*** Deck Log BOISE, October 17th, 1944; also War Diary SALAMONIE, October 17th, 1944.

The GAMBIER BAY and KITKUN BAY flew sixteen ASP and twenty-four CAP sorties from sunrise minus thirty minutes (0535) until sunset (1756) with negative results.*

At 2400 TF 78 was bearing 119°(T) distant 387 miles from Leyte; TG 78.6 was bearing 126°(T) distant 795 miles from Leyte; while TG's 78.7 and 78.8 continued to remain at anchor at Hollandia.

(3) Operations of CTF 79 (Southern Attack Force), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

It will be recalled that CTF 79 had sailed his force from Manus toward Leyte Gulf via route SHEARWATER in two echelons consisting respectively of the landing craft and the transports.

The Landing Craft Movement Group, comprising the Tractor Groups of Attack Groups ABLE and BAKER, which had departed Manus on October 11th, with their screen, was formed in a single disposition with COMDESRON FIFTY-FOUR in REMEY as Screen Commander (CTU 79.11.3) and OTC, SOA eight knots. The second echelon consisting of the transports had departed Manus on October 14th, SOA twelve knots, and was formed into two groups, with their escorts. Transport Attack Group ABLE (OTC, CTG 79.1 in the APPALACHIAN) was stationed ten miles ahead of Transport Attack Group BAKER (OTC, CTG 79.2 in the ROCKY MOUNT). CTG 79 in the MOUNT OLYMPUS was with Group ABLE.

Air escort (SAGINAW BAY and PETROF BAY) had been provided the Transport Groups only; the plan called for the escort carriers (GAMBIER BAY and KITKUN BAY) assigned to TF 78 to extend air cover over the Tractor Group of TF 79 when these two groups met in the vicinity of Point ART on D-3. Inasmuch as CTF 79 sailed his force in two groups, the operations of these groups will be treated separately until they combine at the objective area on D-day.

(a) Operations of Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79.

At 0719 October 17th the seven destroyers of DESRON FIFTY-FOUR were fueling from the oilers SALAMONIE, SARANAC and ASHTABULA (F), (TU 77.7.1), which operations had commenced at 0700. They completed fueling at 0950 and resumed their screening stations.**

Movement to the objective area was proceeding according to plan, and at 2400 the Landing Craft Movement Group was bearing 114°(T) distant 377 miles from Leyte Gulf.

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* Action Report CTU 77.4.34, Support of Leyte Operation, October 12th - November 1st, 1944, Serial 0154, November 5th, 1944.

** War Diary COMDESRON 54, October 1944.

(b) Operations of Transport Groups.*

CTG 79.1 and CTG 79.2, plus TU 77.1.1 (Fleet Flagship Unit) and TU 77.4.14 (CVE Escort Unit), continued toward Leyte Gulf along route SHEARWATER, with TG 79.1 in the lead ten miles ahead of TG 79.2, and TU 77.1.1 between the two transport groups.

During the day nothing unusual occurred. Various transports exercised at streaming and recovering their paravanes.

The weather continued clear and pleasant, with gentle southeast winds and smooth sea.

CTU 77.4.14 (PETROF BAY and SAGINAW BAY) maintained from thirty minutes before sunrise until sunset a combat air patrol of four VF, an anti-snooper patrol of four VF, and an anti-submarine patrol of four VT. In addition, an evening sweep (two VF and two VT) was made 125 miles ahead, returning to base at sunset. Results were all negative.**

At 2400 the Transport Groups of TF 79 bore 115° (T), distant 540 miles, from Leyte Gulf.

(b) Operations of CTG 70.1 (Motor Torpedo Boat Group), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTG 70.1 in the OYSTER BAY with TU's 70.1.3 and 70.1.6 (plus the HALF MOON which was included in the movement to the objective area) remained at anchor at Kossol Passage, Palau.***

(c) Submarine Force SEVENTH Fleet.

(1) Operations of CTF 71 (Submarines, West Australia) (Plates IV, V, VI, VII).

The submarines of TF 71 operated normally. Except for the BATFISH no new instructions were given to any of the command on this day which would make any change in the general overall deployment and therefore the comments made in Volume I concerning the inadequacy of the SOWESPAC submarine deployment to accomplish adequately the assigned objectives still obtained. No contacts of unusual importance were made although Japanese aircraft on patrol were observed by submarines operating off central Luzon.

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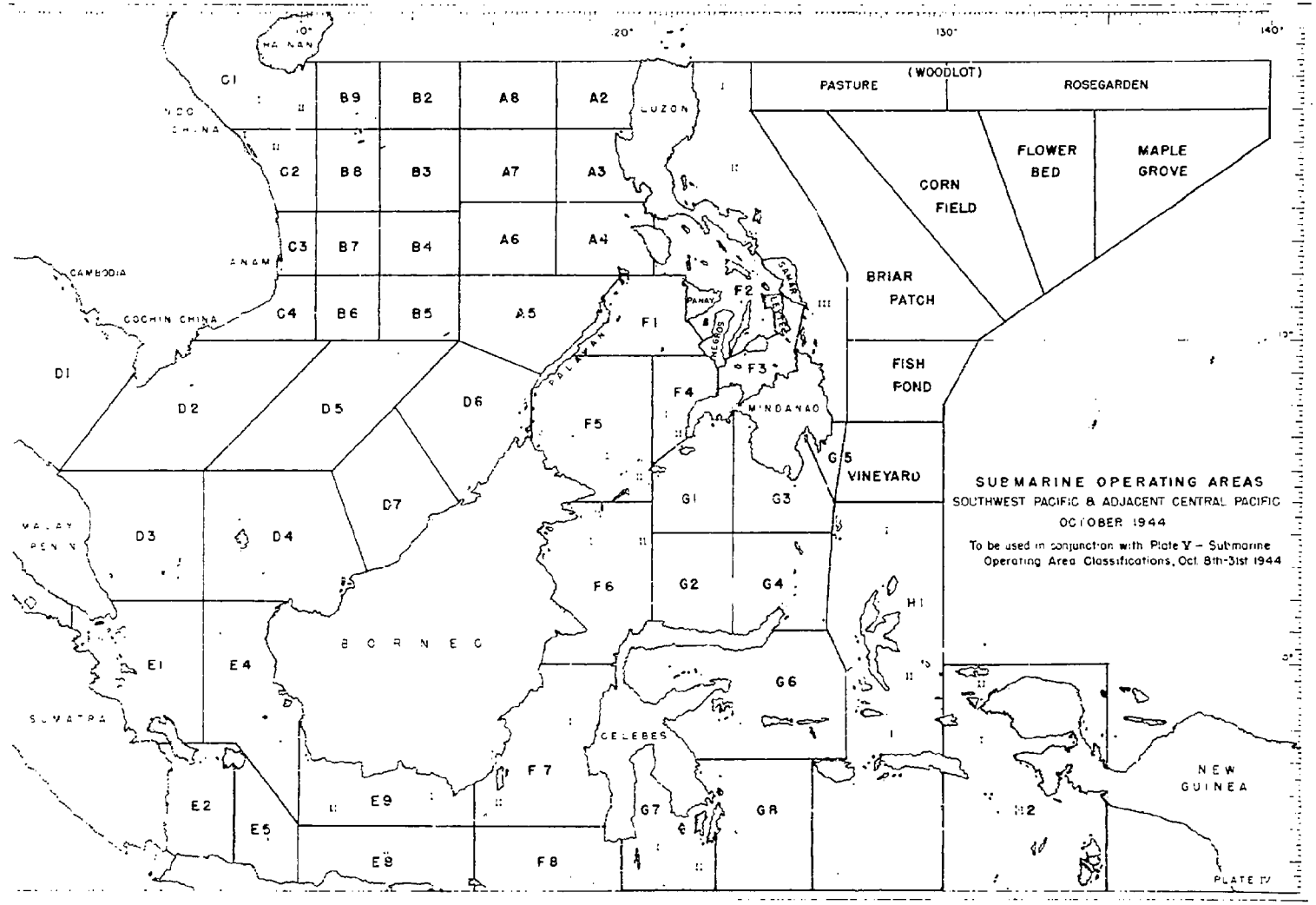
* Action Report CTG 79.1, Participation in Amphibious Operations for the Capture of Leyte, P.I., Serial 00454, October 26th, 1944; also Action Report CTG 79.2, Leyte Operation, Serial 0032, November 4th, 1944.

** Action Report, CTU 77.4.14, Leyte Operation, Serial 026, November 4th, 1944.

*** War Diary CTG 70.1, October 17th, 1944.



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CTF 71 was aware of the advanced Allied landings on this day and was alert to keep his submarines informed of any shipping movements by the Japanese. Among other things he informed (a) the Luzon boats, BONEFISH, ANGLER, LAPON, and RATON, that a southbound transport with an escorting destroyer and air cover had been sighted rounding Cape Bojeador the previous day and was following the fifty-fathom curve at thirteen knots* (b) all submarines that the TANTALUS was one day out of Fremantle and would be routed via Exmouth Gulf, Lombok Strait, Java Sea, and Karimata Strait to patrol Areas D-3 and D-4, west of meridian 108°-00'E,** and (c) the ROCK and BERGALL that a change had been made in the radio frequency being employed by the Liberator search planes from China, and advising that these searches would be made twice daily commencing at 2000 (from Huiling Island) and repeated every twelve hours.***

Due to the POLLOCK breaking down at Mios Woendi, and the necessity of returning her to Pearl Harbor for repairs, he had on the previous day transferred the CERO, which was also at Mios Woendi, to TF 72, where she was to replace the POLLOCK for a special mission. He directed the CERO that, upon completion of her special mission, she was to consider herself returned to him and was to proceed to Pearl Harbor.****

During the late afternoon he received a dispatch from CTF 17, advising that, due to the operations of TF 38, BLACKFIN, which was to be transferred to TF 71, would be delayed a few days and that CTF 17 would later send him the exact date of Op-Control transfer.***** The BLACKFIN, which at this time was en route to Area A-8 in SOWESPAC****** had been ordered to retire to Area PARLOR until further notice in order to remain clear of COMTHIRDFLT's operation area.*******

At 1723 he advised the Commanding Officer TANTIVY that (a) he was to break radio silence to report any contact with enemy combatant ships such as cruisers or larger (b) if she sighted a large task force the sending of the contact report was of primary importance and (c) if the contact was smaller than a cruiser he was to attack first if possible.******** Since these dispatch instructions were quite similar to the orders issued by CTG 71.1********* as well as by CTG 71.7**********

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 161801 October 1944 to TG's 71.1 and 71.7.

** CTF 71 Dispatch 170614 October 1944 to TG's 71.1 and 71.7

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 170519 October 1944 to TG 71.1.

**** CTF 71 Dispatch 161823 October 1944 to CTF 72; CTG 71.5.

***** CTF 17 Dispatch 170609 October 1944 to CTF 71.

****** CTF 17 Dispatch 110237 October 1944 to CTG 17.7.

******* War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of First War Patrol, Serial 021 December 4th, 1944; also CINCPOA Dispatch 150932 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

******** CTF 71 Dispatch 170823 October 1944 to TG 71.7, Z4L/1 and TANTIVY.

********* Annex A to CTG 71.1 Operation Plan 1-44, September 1st, 1944, para. 2121.

********** Annex A to CTG 71.7 Operation A-44, September 15th, 1944, para. II, Radio Security.

(Commander British and Netherlands submarines) it is assumed that it was sent in reply to a query, or because CTF 71 felt that possibly the basic orders required clarification. In this connection it is to be noted that this dispatch was sent to TG 71.7.

Finally, he issued an information serial to his submarines that the latest reports indicated that the Japanese Striking force had again refused to play with Admiral Halsey's "first team."*

The operations of the submarines in this volume will generally be discussed as groups assigned to a particular area or as individual submarines depending on which arrangement appears the more desirable. They will be discussed chronologically as presented in CTF 71's dispatch of October 10th, wherein he advised COMSEVENTHFLT as to the planned disposition of TF 71 submarines, as discussed in Volume I of this analysis and as shown in Plate VI. However, submarines operating in areas south of the Java Sea such as the SIRDAR which was operating in Sunda Strait, and submarines which had broken down, such as the RAY, which was en route to Mios Woendi for repairs will not normally be included. Contacts on shipping will be indicated only if important -- in general over 500 tons.

In discussing the submarine operations the following considerations have been guiding factors:

(1) Effective average contact ranges.**

(a) On independent merchant ships.

(1) Radar.

(a) Surface - six miles.

(b) Submerged - none.

(2) Periscope - five miles.

(3) Sonar - QB/JK two and one-half miles JP three and three-quarter miles

(b) On escorted combatant ships.

(1) Radar.

(a) Surface - ten miles.

(b) Submerged - none.

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 171056 October 1944 to TG 71.1.

** Submarine Warfare Instructions, USF-9 Navy Department 1946, page 16-5, para. 1604.

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SUBMARINE OPERATING AREA CLASSIFICATIONS

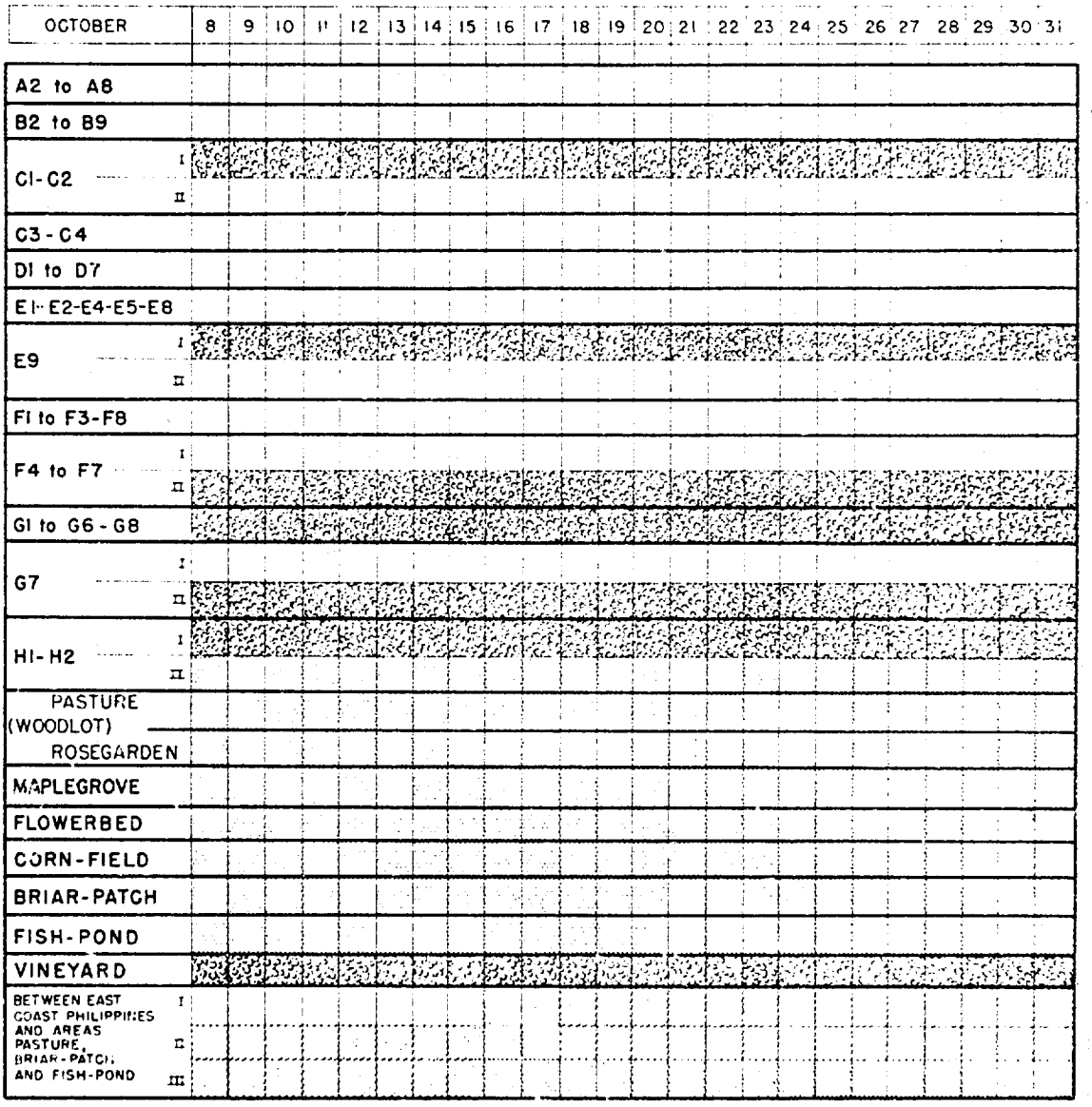
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC & ADJACENT CENTRAL PACIFIC

OCTOBER 8 th. – 31 st. inc. 1944

(APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX "L" TO CANF, SWPA OP-PLAN 13-44)

COMSOWESPAC ZONE NOTICES 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11

All areas submarine patrol zones unless otherwise indicated.
Dotted areas indicate air surface zone
Hatched areas indicate joint zone
Mottled areas indicate blind bombing zone



☆ Woodlot divided into Pasture and Rosegarden 0928 October 12th.

PLATE V

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(2) Periscope - six miles.

(3) Sonar - QB/JK five and one-half miles.
JP seven and one-half miles.

(2) Basic instructions by dispatch:

(a) At 0052 October 11th all submarines of SOWESPAC were directed as follows:

Events next fifteen days necessitate that you do not depart assigned areas without giving us prior notice. Some adjustments of areas and extensions of patrol will probably be necessary. Those now en route home, keep on coming.*

(b) This was followed at:

(1) 1418 October 11th by instructions to RAY, info others, which included the phrase "early advice movements enemy combatant ships is extremely important",**

(2) 1707 October 11th by instructions to BLUEGILL and ANGLER, info others, which included the phrase "early advice movements combatant units important",***

(3) 2129 October 16th by instructions to TANTIVY, info others, which included the phrase "advise earliest feasible any enemy combatant vessel contacts".****

(c) The above messages under (a) and (b) should have clearly indicated to all submarine commanders the nature of forthcoming events even if, as seems most likely, they did not know of the Leyte operation.

(a) BREAM and RATON.

These two submarines, which were to constitute a coordinated attack group (wolf pack) when on station, were independently en route to their patrol stations in Areas A3-A7 (Plate IV) off west coast Luzon. They were far apart. On this day the BREAM, which was the southernmost, continued to pass through Makassar Strait remaining on the surface both day and night***** except as necessary to avoid enemy aircraft

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 101552 October 1944 to all submarines.
** CTF 71 Dispatch 110518 October 1944 to all submarines.
*** CTF 71 Dispatch 110807 October 1944 to all submarines.
**** CTF 71 Dispatch 161229 October 1944 to all submarines.
***** War Patrol Report BREAM, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 021, November 22nd, 1944.

and succeeded between 0719 and 2400 in advancing some 110 miles toward her station.

Meanwhile, the RATON headed for Mindoro Strait. During the forenoon at 1020 she made contact on a submarine which she was unable to identify, but which appears to have been the NAUTILUS.* She operated submerged until 1725 when she surfaced to pass through Mindoro Strait. She completed transit at 2300, at which time her commanding officer decided that since he would be unable to reach his designated area before dawn, he would patrol off Cape Calavite until the next night.*

THE REASON GIVEN FOR REMAINING OFF CAPE CALAVITE IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE THE SOLE REASON, NOR IS IT LIKELY THAT IT WAS THE REAL REASON. THE REAL REASON CAN BE FOUND IN HIS BASIC ORDERS, WHICH NOT ONLY FAILED TO GIVE A DATE ON WHICH HE WAS TO BE ON STATION BUT ALSO DIRECTED HIM TO "EXPLOIT TRAFFIC LANES AND FOCAL POINTS EN ROUTE TO AND FROM AREAS".** SINCE THE ENTRANCE TO MINDORO STRAIT WAS A DISTINCT FOCAL POINT AND WOULD LIKELY BE GOOD HUNTING GROUND FOR JAPANESE SHIPPING, IT SEEMS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THIS WAS THE COMMANDING OFFICER RATON'S REAL REASON FOR REMAINING THERE. IN MAKING THIS DECISION HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE MESSAGES LISTED UNDER "BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BY DISPATCH", REFERRED TO ABOVE.

IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT HE DID NOT REALIZE THAT CTF 71 HAD REPORTED THAT HE WOULD BE IN THE AREA A3-A7 ON OCTOBER 15TH, AS STATED BY COMSOWESPAC TO CINCPOA BY DISPATCH ON OCTOBER 11TH.*** WHY CTF 71 GAVE SUCH INDEFINITE ORDERS TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER RATON IS NOT KNOWN ALTHOUGH IT IS KNOWN THAT HE GAVE SIMILAR ORDERS TO ALL SUBMARINES OF TG 71.1 WHICH INCLUDED THE BREAM. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HE HAD BEEN AFFECTED BY THE CONCEPT THAT NO MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD BE INVOLVED IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIED LANDINGS AT LEYTE, AND THEREFORE FELT THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR HIS SUBMARINES TO BE ON STATION AS PLANNED.**** INSTEAD, THEY WERE TO SINK MERCHANT SHIPPING AND TO OPERATE AS USUAL EN ROUTE TO STATION. IF THIS WAS HIS MOTIVATION IT WAS UNSOUND, SINCE IT CAUSED VACANCIES TO BE CREATED IN THE ALLIED DEFENSIVE SUBMARINE SCREEN, INFORMATION OF WHICH HAD NOT BEEN TRANSMITTED TO THE INTERESTED COMMANDERS, NOTABLY COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPOA AND COMTHIRDFLT.

Neither the BREAM now the RATON made any contacts of importance on this day.

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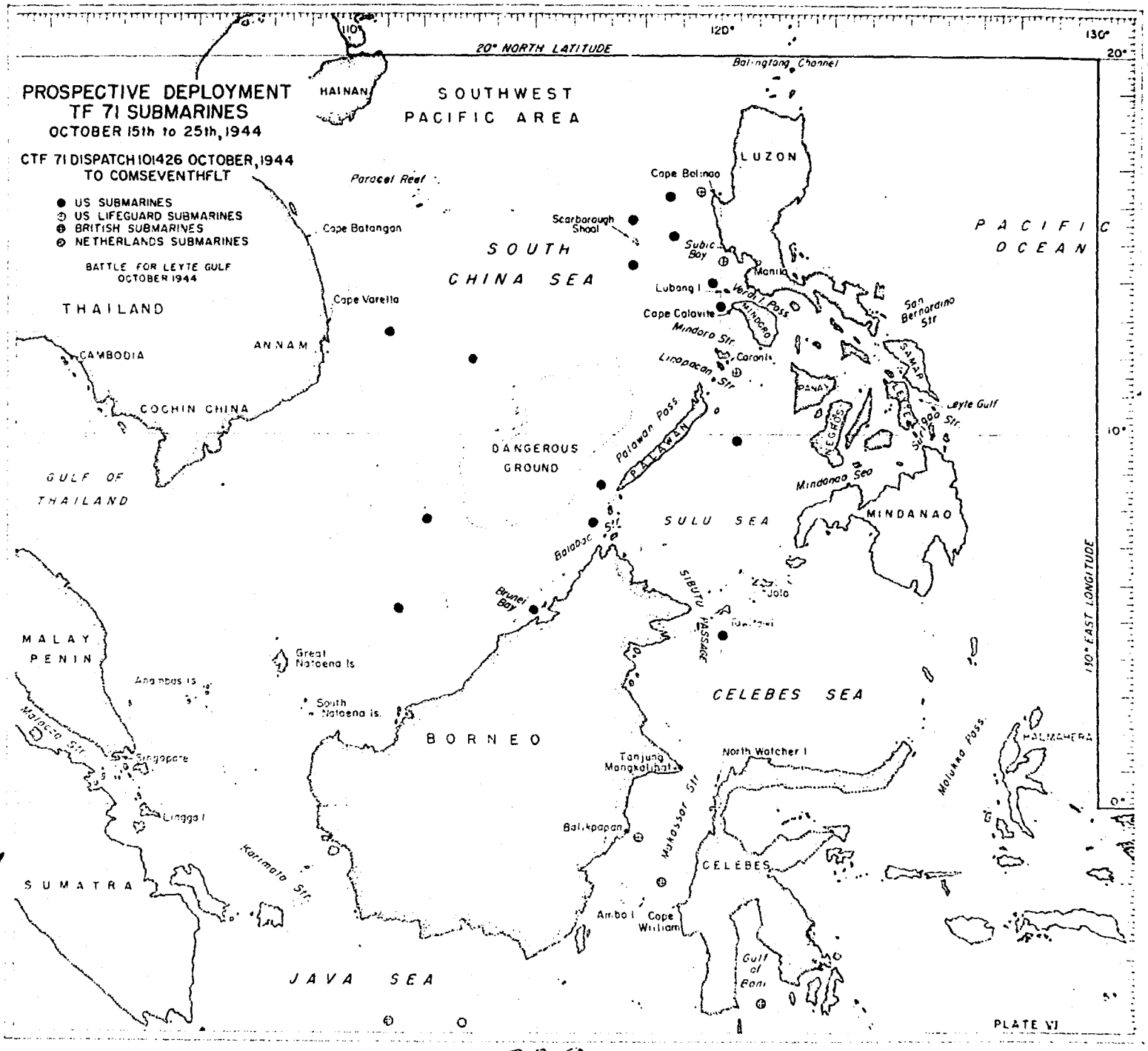
* War Patrol Report RATON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, December 1st, 1944.

** CTG 71.1 Operation Order 141-44, October 5th, 1944 to RATON.

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 101426 October 1944 to COMSEVENTHFLT and COMSOWESPAC.

**** CANF SOWESPACAREA Operation Plan 13-44, Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Annex M.



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(b) ROCK and BERGALL.

These two submarines had been directed to patrol a line from Cape Varella (Annam) eastward to North Danger Shoal; the ROCK to patrol to the eastward, the BERGALL to the westward of Longitude 112°-00'E. While on patrol these two submarines were to act, in a sense, as lifeguards for China-based planes which were conducting a daily search in support of KING II.* The BERGALL, which was on station, patrolled her station on the surface** while the ROCK, which was not as yet on station, proceeded slowly toward North Danger Shoal.*** She remained submerged during the day and surfaced at 1912. Neither submarine made any important contacts.

(c) BLUEGILL and ANGLER.

These two submarines, which were operating as a coordinated attack group (wolf pack) under the Commanding Officer BLUEGILL, continued their patrols. The ANGLER patrolled between Lubang Island and Cape Calavite (Mindoro) while the BLUEGILL patrolled a NW-SE line from the NW coast of Lubang Island to the northern boundary of Area A-4. During this day the ANGLER operated submerged while during the night she operated on the surface. She made no important contacts.**** The BLUEGILL also operated submerged during daylight but surfaced at 1740. She contacted at 1800 two destroyer escorts on antisubmarine patrol about twelve miles to the northwest. She maintained contact without closing, presumably because the commanding officer correctly felt it unwise to expose his position and thereby prevent proper reconnaissance.*****

(d) DACE and DARTER.

These two submarines operated as a coordinated attack group (wolf pack) under the Commanding Officer DARTER. During the day they operated submerged, during the night they operated on the surface. On this day the DACE patrolled the entrance to Balabac Strait until about 1930 when she surfaced and then departed the area and headed for a rendezvous in Palawan Passage with the attack group commander. At 2330 she rendezvoused with the DARTER, which had been patrolling east of Royal Captain Shoal in Palawan Passage. She was then directed by the wolf pack commander to exchange stations and to patrol Palawan Passage at the northern limit of Area A-6. This exchange of station operation, while standard within the submarines for the purpose of rotating patrol areas and thus giving each submarine a similar opportunity for contacts, was incorrectly done since it

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 160456 October 1944 to CTG 71.1.

** War Patrol Report BERGALL, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 0102, November 8th, 1944; Deck Log BERGALL, October 17th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report ROCK, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 016, November 11th, 1944; also Deck Log ROCK, October 17th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report ANGLER, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09, November 9th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report BLUEGILL, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 039, November 25th, 1944.

and succeeded between 0719 and 2400 in advancing some 110 miles toward her station.

Meanwhile, the RATON headed for Mindoro Strait. During the forenoon at 1020 she made contact on a submarine which she was unable to identify, but which appears to have been the NAUTILUS.* She operated submerged until 1725 when she surfaced to pass through Mindoro Strait. She completed transit at 2300, at which time her commanding officer decided that since he would be unable to reach his designated area before dawn, he would patrol off Cape Calavite until the next night.*

THE REASON GIVEN FOR REMAINING OFF CAPE CALAVITE IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE THE SOLE REASON, NOR IS IT LIKELY THAT IT WAS THE REAL REASON. THE REAL REASON CAN BE FOUND IN HIS BASIC ORDERS, WHICH NOT ONLY FAILED TO GIVE A DATE ON WHICH HE WAS TO BE ON STATION BUT ALSO DIRECTED HIM TO "EXPLOIT TRAFFIC LANES AND FOCAL POINTS EN ROUTE TO AND FROM AREAS".** SINCE THE ENTRANCE TO MINDORO STRAIT WAS A DISTINCT FOCAL POINT AND WOULD LIKELY BE GOOD HUNTING GROUND FOR JAPANESE SHIPPING, IT SEEMS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THIS WAS THE COMMANDING OFFICER RATON'S REAL REASON FOR REMAINING THERE. IN MAKING THIS DECISION HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE MESSAGES LISTED UNDER "BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BY DISPATCH", REFERRED TO ABOVE.

IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT HE DID NOT REALIZE THAT CTF 71 HAD REPORTED THAT HE WOULD BE IN THE AREA A3-A7 ON OCTOBER 15TH, AS STATED BY COMSOWESPAC TO CINCPOA BY DISPATCH ON OCTOBER 11TH.*** WHY CTF 71 GAVE SUCH INDEFINITE ORDERS TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER RATON IS NOT KNOWN ALTHOUGH IT IS KNOWN THAT HE GAVE SIMILAR ORDERS TO ALL SUBMARINES OF TG 71.1 WHICH INCLUDED THE BREAM. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HE HAD BEEN AFFECTED BY THE CONCEPT THAT NO MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD BE INVOLVED IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIED LANDINGS AT LEYTE, AND THEREFORE FELT THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR HIS SUBMARINES TO BE ON STATION AS PLANNED.**** INSTEAD, THEY WERE TO SINK MERCHANT SHIPPING AND TO OPERATE AS USUAL EN ROUTE TO STATION. IF THIS WAS HIS MOTIVATION IT WAS UNSOUND, SINCE IT CAUSED VACANCIES TO BE CREATED IN THE ALLIED DEFENSIVE SUBMARINE SCREEN, INFORMATION OF WHICH HAD NOT BEEN TRANSMITTED TO THE INTERESTED COMMANDERS, NOTABLY COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPOA AND COMTHIRDFLT.

Neither the BREAM now the RATON made any contacts of importance on this day.

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* War Patrol Report RATON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, December 1st, 1944.

** CTG 71.1 Operation Order 141-44, October 5th, 1944 to RATON.

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 101426 October 1944 to COMSEVENTHFLT and COMSOWESPAC.

**** CANF SOWESPACAREA Operation Plan 13-44, Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Annex M.

(f) GUITARRO

This submarine continued on through Makassar Strait toward her patrol area in the Sulu Sea south of Latitude 11°-00'N. She operated submerged during daylight hours and on the surface during darkness. She made no contacts of consequence.*

(g) TANTIVY.

This submarine which was proceeding submerged to patrol area F-7 (Makassar Strait) south of Latitude 2°-00'S surfaced at dark and at 2300 commenced passage through Lombok Strait. She made no contacts.**

(h) STOIC and ZWAARDVISCH.

The STOIC conducted antishipping patrol in area E-5 and the ZWAARDVISCH conducted similar patrol in area E-8. Both of these patrol areas were in the Java Sea. While no information is available as to the exact locations of these two submarines CTF 71's daily submarine plot for October 1944 locates them in about the center of their areas. They appear to have made no contacts of consequence.

(i) STURDY.

This submarine departed area E-7 (Gulf of Boni) on this date and headed for Fremantle.***

(j) GURNARD.

This submarine which had been directed to patrol areas D-4 and D-7 proceeded on through the Java Sea toward her patrol station. She operated submerged throughout the day in order to avoid detection since she planned to pass through Karimata Strait on the night of October 18th. She surfaced at 1948. No contacts of consequence were made.****

(k) BATFISH.

The BATFISH, which had been undergoing minor repairs at Darwin departed that base at 1530 and headed for her patrol area A-8 via

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* War Patrol Report GUITARRO, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 044, November 16th, 1944.

** War Patrol TANTIVY, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, no serial, November 4th, 1944.

*** War Diary CTF 71, Daily Dispositions Submarines Based Western Australia.

**** War Patrol Report GURNARD, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 030, November 17th, 1944.

the Flores Sea, Makassar Strait, Sibutu Pass, and Mindoro Strait.* She proceeded on the surface and only submerged when forced to do so by Japanese aircraft.** At 1905 she commenced transiting the pass to the east of Timor and prior to midnight had entered the Banda Sea.** Apparently while at Darwin she had received new orders which changed her patrol area from D-5 and D-6 to A-8. This is shown by the dispatch from CTG 71.1 issued on the following day which advised all submarines of the BATFISH's new schedule.* She operated on the surface and made no contacts of consequence.

(l) STORM.

This submarine was en route on the surface to her patrol station in Area G-7 (Gulf of Boni) where she appears to have been the replacement for the STURDY.*** At 2400 she was in the Sawu Sea about one hundred miles southwest of Ombai Passage. She made no contacts of consequence.****

(m) TANTALUS.

The TANTALUS was en route to Exmouth Gulf, Australia, for fuel prior to departure for her patrol station in South Anambas Islands. She had departed Fremantle the previous day (October 16th). She made no important contacts.***

(n) Lifeguard Submarines.

There were four lifeguard submarines: BONEFISH, COD, LAPON, and PADDLE.

The BONEFISH, which operated in general on the surface, patrolled her lifeguard station off Cape Bolinao at the entrance to Lingayen Gulf.*****

The COD, which operated on the surface, patrolled her lifeguard station on Area A-3 off Subic Bay.******

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* CTG 71.1 Dispatch 181122 October 1944 to TG 71.1

** War Patrol Report BATFISH, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 057, December 1st, 1944.

*** War Diary CTF 71, Daily Dispositions Submarines Based Western Australia.

**** War Patrol Report STORM, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, COMSUBSEVENTHFLT Serial 00355, December 11th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.

****** War Patrol Report COD, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 06, November 20th, 1944; also Deck Log COD, October 17th, 1944.

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JAPANESE NAVAL & MERCHANT SHIP LOSSES☆ EFFECTED BY T.F. 71 SUBMARINES IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC - SOUTH OF LAT. 18°-30' N. OCTOBER 1944

SOUTH CHINA SEA

OCTOBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	TOTAL
ANGLER														1																		
ASPRO		1					1																									
BERGALL													1														1					
BLUEGILL																		3														
BONEFISH														1																		
CABRILLA	2					1		1	1																							
COD					1																											
DACE														2												1						
DARTER																										1						
FLASHER				1																												34
GUITARRO																															2	
HAMMERHEAD	3									1										2												
LAPON																		2														
RATON											1																					
RAY																										1						
ROCK							1			1																						
HAWKBILL + BAYA									1																							
HAWKBILL + BECUNA																																
TOTAL	5	1	0	1	1	1	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	34

☆Sinkings include all merchant ships of 500 or more gross tons and all naval ships.
(Prepared by Joint Army - Navy Assessment Committee) February 1947.

PLATE VII

26 (c)

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The LAPON, which operated submerged during daylight and on the surface at night, patrolled her station about fifteen miles northeast of Quiniluban Island in the northern part of the Sulu Sea.*

The PADDLE, which operated on the surface or submerged, as the situation demanded, continued to operate in Makassar Strait.**

None of these submarines received lifeguard calls and none made important contacts, although the BONEFISH and the COD contacted on radar, and sometimes sighted, numerous enemy planes.

(o) Submarines Retiring from the Area.

The submarines retiring from the area, notably BAYA, CAVALLA, HAWKBILL, BECUNA, FLASHER, HOE, SEA ROVER, SPITEFUL, TELEMACHUS and STURDY made no contacts of consequence on this day.

(2) Operations of CTF 72 (Submarines, East Australia), 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

Since the three submarines NAUTILUS, NARWHAL and CERO, which operated in SOWESPAC north of the NEI barrier islands, were engaged in special missions only, the operations of these submarines will, as stated in Volume I, be omitted from this analysis.

(2) Operations of CAAF SOWESPAC, 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

At 0719 on October 17th Commander Allied Air Forces, SOWESPAC, was embarked, with COMSOWESPAC, in NASHVILLE en route to Leyte in order to expedite the early establishment of land-based aircraft in the objective area, since he was dubious of the ability of carrier-based planes to maintain the required air support.*** (See Discussion, Volume I, page 35).

Meanwhile, his command continued to function normally from its headquarters at Hollandia.*** He issued no instructions of consequence during this day.

Somstime in the afternoon he received a dispatch from General Headquarters at Hollandia advising (a) that the runways at Morotai were reported

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* War Patrol Report LAPON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 44, October 31st, 1944.

** War Patrol Report PADDLE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 018, November 1st, 1944.

*** CAAF SOWESPAC letter to COMSOWESPAC July 11th, 1944, contained in Air Evaluation Board SOWESPAC Leyte Campaign, June 1945, page 23.

as not premitting institution of Search Plan FOX prior to daylight October 19th, and (b) directing that, pending the establishment Search Plan FOX (Revised) from Morotai over Sulu - China Sea Sectors ONE, TWO, and THREE, (1) the present PB4Y searches (from Biak) were to be extended over the same area to maximum range and (2) a night PBY search from Morotai over the same area to maximum range was to be initiated immediately.*

At about 1909 he received a dispatch from COMSOWESPAC which directed that, effective 0900 D-2, Allied air forces would attack hostile shipping in the Visayas west of the line Canauayor Island (Latitude 09°-01'N, Longitude 124°-51'E) -- east coast of Camiguin Island — east coast of Bohol - Olango Island - northeast tip Cebu - southeast tip Masbate** (Appendix III). This was in furtherance of the prior provision that when bombers were established on Morotai, CAAF SOWESPAC would extend neutralization to include the Celebes Sea and Visayan area, exclusive of Leyte and Samar, while escort carriers were present.***

The extension of his area of operations was undoubtedly welcome to CAAF SOWESPAC, for it presented an opportunity for his forces, which had until this time been conducting supporting air operations in the fringe areas, to play a more active role in isolating Leyte from the rest of the Philippines.

As to aircraft in position to reach the Visayas, CAAF SOWESPAC had at Morotai on October 17th twenty-seven medium bombers (B-25's) and ninety-one fighters (fifty-two P-38's and thirty-nine P-47's) (Volume I, Table 1). The number of fighters included those required for local defense.

(a) Operations of C.G. FIFTH Air Force, 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

C.G. FIFTH Air Force, from his headquarters at Biak, continued his operations on this date in accordance with his support objective. He continued:

(1) Neutralizing operations against hostile naval and air forces and shipping in the Mindanao area south of Latitude 08°-45'N,**** although how he "neutralized" shipping is not explained, since shipping, per se, cannot be neutralized. These operations consisted of attacking enemy shipping facilities and installations in the Davao area of Mindanao, employing fifty-nine B-24's from Biak (which strike the Japanese reported as having dropped their bombs about six kilometers at sea from Davao airfield

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* GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 170102 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170939 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, CANF SOWESPAC, info COMFIFTHAIRFOR, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 77, etc.

*** CAAF SOWESPAC Operating Instructions (Revised) No. 71/1, October 4th, 1944.

**** Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC Operating Instructions (Revised), No. 71/1, October 4th, 1944.

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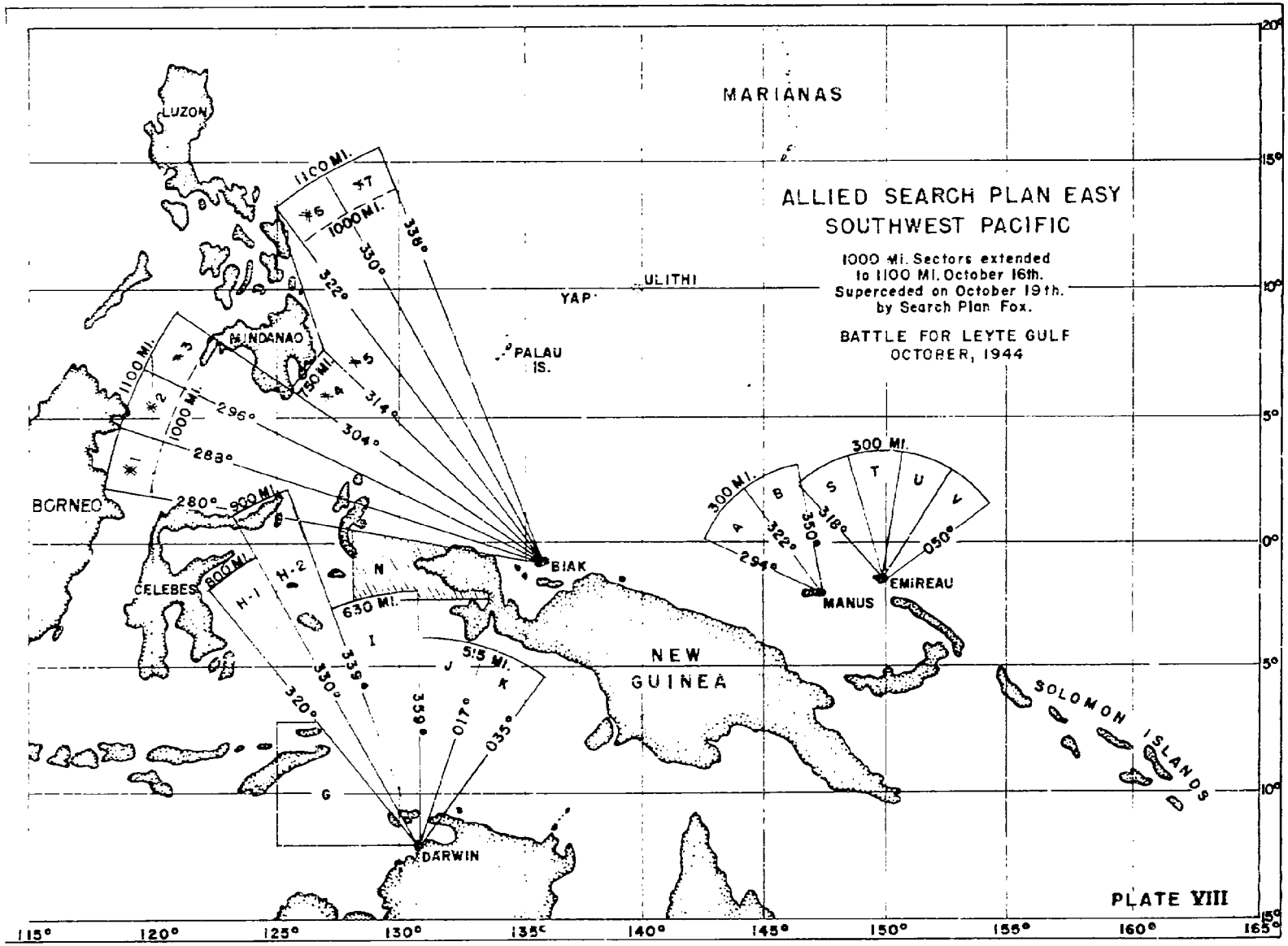

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No. 1)* and attacking targets of opportunity in the Zamboanga area, employing fifteen P-38's from Morotai;**

(2) Air search and reconnaissance operations as required in current plans.*** These operations consisted of (1) searches, under Search Plan EASY, to be discussed under TF 73, and (2) night sea searches of the central Philippines. These searches were accomplished by four XB-24's (LAB-24's) from Biak, which searched the Sibuyan and Mindanao Seas and, except for sighting one large and two small ships in the Sibuyan Sea, were negative;**

(3) Photographic operations.*** These consisted of photographing, among other places, Davao and Balikpapan for reconnaissance purposes, and Mindoro for mapping purposes.**** These operations had been underway for some time. Davao was important since the largest concentration of air facilities in Mindanao was in that area with a capacity of more than 500 planes. Balikpapan was important because it was a source of fuel.

C.G. FIFTH Air Force conducted numerous other operations on October 17th, but these will not be discussed since they had no direct bearing on the Leyte operation.

(b) Operations of THIRTEENTH Air Force, Northern Solomons Air Group, and Royal Australian Air Force Command.

As stated in Volume I, since (1) the THIRTEENTH Air Force was not directly involved in the Battle for Leyte Gulf but rather in relieving the FIFTH Air Force of responsibilities in the rear areas as the latter moved into the objective area, and (2) since, except for their part in the Allied plan for land-based air reconnaissance discussed in Volume I under Allied Air Search and Reconnaissance, the Northern Solomons Air Group and the Royal Australian Air Force Command were concerned primarily with operations in the rear areas to protect existing bases and destroy enemy forces in by-passed areas, the operations of these three commands will be dropped from further discussion in this analysis.

(c) Operations of CTF 73 (Naval Air Force), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTF 73, who was operating generally under CAAF SOWESPAC AC as discussed in Volume I of this analysis, and who had been operating his searches in accordance with Search Plan EASY, continued to so operate on this day. (Plate VIII and Diagram "B").

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* War Diary Commander 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, NOC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** A-2 FIFTH Air Force, Report on Activities, October 17th, 1944.

*** Allied Air Force SOWESPAC Operating Instructions No. 71, September 24th, 1944.

**** Fragmentary Field Order No. 291, Headquarters FIFTH Air Force, October 17th, 1944.

All planes, except one plane from Owi, made a one hundred per cent coverage of their sectors with negative results. The Owi plane was forced to land at Morotai, and since no report of its search is available, its search effectiveness is not known.*

(B) CINCPAC - CINCPOA, 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

(1) Western Pacific Task Forces.

(a) Operations of COMTHIRDFLT.

It will be remembered that COMTHIRDFLT, who was also Commander Western Pacific Task Forces, had been operating with TG's 38.2 and 38.3 in Latitude 21°-25'N, Longitude 127°-25'E and that TG 38.1 had been operating in Latitude 21°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E since about 0500.

Since all three of these task groups had launched air searches at dawn, COMTHIRDFLT awaited the results of these searches. He knew that the searches should reach their outer limits by about 0830 or earlier and he therefore appears to have awaited until after this time before issuing new instructions to his command.

Diagram B shows that TG 38.2's search duplicated the northern portion of the search being conducted at this same time by CTG 38.1. While the reason is not entirely clear, the duplication was probably caused by the looseness of COMTHIRDFLT's instructions to CTG 38.1. It will be remembered that on the previous evening he had directed CTG 38.1 to proceed to vicinity Latitude 21°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E to arrive at 0500 October 17th and to launch a search to the west and northwest.** But what did that mean? CTG 38.1 evidently interpreted these orders to mean to search from 260°(T) to 360°(T) to a radius of 300 miles whereas COMTHIRDFLT appears to have expected him to search from possibly 270°(T) to 315°(T). Had COMTHIRDFLT directed CTG 38.1 to conduct a search through a definite sector which he established by degrees rather than by points, which, in modern naval usage, means a general rather than a specific direction, it is likely that such duplication would not have occurred.

That COMTHIRDFLT realized some four hours later that his dawn search instruction to CTG 38.1 had been loosely drawn seems clear, for, as has been shown in Volume I, he, at 0007, had ordered that commander by urgent dispatch to advise him immediately of the sectors he expected to search at dawn, and of his estimated 0700 position.*** The duplication appears to have resulted either from the fact (1) that CTG 38.1 did not receive this dispatch or received it too late to act on it, or (2) his reply was not

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* A-2, FIFTH Air Force, Report of Activities, October 17th, 1944.
** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 161104 October 1944 to CTG 38.1.
*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 161507 October 1944 to CTG 38.1.

received by COMTHIRDFLT in time to be effective. The former seems to be the more correct, since no record of a reply is available to this analysis.

It will be observed that COMTHIRDFLT issued these instructions directly to CTG 38.1.

It might be well to digress here for a moment to point out that his action in so doing was not unusual but was instead his normal practice in this operation, particularily after the torpedoing of the CANBERRA October 13th. Because of this torpedoing he felt it necessary to depart considerably from the original employment schedule* prepared by CTF 38 and issued his instructions directly to the task group commanders rather than through CTF 38.

He stated later that he did this because he felt that he could thereby exercise his command more effectively than he could by issuing instructions through CTF 38, who was his immediate subordinate in the direct chain of command. He further stated that in deciding to operate in this fashion he had been greatly influenced by the following factors: (1) he was physically in the NEW JERSEY and therefore physically within TF 38, (2) except for his land based aircraft his combat command consisted primarily of that task force, (3) the resulting reduction of radio traffic incident to direct control of the task groups, (4) the limitation of dispatches to one task group only which would reduce the radio traffic necessary to accomplish his plans, (5) the resulting denial to Japanese radio intelligence of contacts on more than one task group and (6) the superior communication facilities in the NEW JERSEY to those in the LEXINGTON.**

THIS PRACTICE OF COMTHIRDFLT DIFFERED FROM THE NORMAL U.S. NAVAL PRACTICE OF ISSUING ORDERS THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.

WHAT IS THE CHAIN OF COMMAND? IT IS NOTHING MORE THAN A SERIES OF LINKS THROUGH WHICH RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY ARE TRANSMITTED. BY MEANS OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND A COMMANDER IS ENABLED TO REQUIRE OF HIS IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES AN EXPENDITURE OF EFFORT WHICH, IN THE AGGREGATE, WILL INSURE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS OWN OBJECTIVE. HE THUS ASSIGNS THE

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* This employment schedule (Annex "C" to COMFIRSTCARTASKFORPAC (CTF 38), OpOrd 11-44 of 1 October 1944) prescribed the movement, logistics (fueling and replacement of planes and pilots), and the detailed employment of each of the carrier task groups of TF 38. Among other items it allocated the target areas for each task group; specified the strikes by "deckloads" and the fighter sweeps by the number of planes and prescribed the air searches by limiting bearings and distances.

** Statement of Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey USN (Ret), COMTHIRDFLT during Leyte Operation to Commodore R. W. Bates USN (Ret), Head World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College, January 3rd, 1955.

SUBORDINATES TASKS AND HOLDS THEM DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR EXECUTION WITHOUT, HOWEVER, DIVESTING HIMSELF OF ANY PART OF THE INITIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

IN THIS CONNECTION IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT WHILE IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT A COMMANDER SHOULD NOT COMMAND IN THE MANNER BEST SUITED TO HIS PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, OR TO THE DEMANDS OF THE SITUATION, THE LESSON OF HISTORY IS THAT WHERE THE COMMANDER DELEGATES HIS AUTHORITY THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND RESULTS MAY BE EXPECTED IN GENERAL TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN WHERE HE BY-PASSES HIS IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES.

At 0916 having received no contact reports either from his tack group commanders or from his search planes and having completed his plans for the employment of TF 38 for the next three days, COMTHIRDFLT advised his task group commanders that his general plan was as follows: TG 38.4 to strike Luzon on that day; TG 38.1 to reinforce TG 38.4 and then both task groups to strike Luzon on October 18th and 19th; TG's 38.2 and 38.3 to remain in general support until the situation clarified. He further advised his command that, in his opinion, his trap, which had consisted in employing TG 30.3 as a lure to entice the Japanese forces into battle, had failed and that the Japanese forces had lost interest (in this operation) and had retired.*

While, from the above, it is apparent that COMTHIRDFLT had now dismissed the idea that his trap might lure major Japanese forces into battle, it is also apparent that he had not dismissed the possibility of some action by Japanese surface naval forces. This latter deduction is based on the fact that he held two carrier task groups in general support "until the situation clarifies" rather than assign them the strike missions designated in the original employment schedule.

Actually, the original employment schedule called for the employment (a) on October 17th, of TG 38.1 in strikes against Leyte - Cebu - Negros and of TG's 38.2, 38.3 and 38.4 in strikes against Luzon; (b) on October 18th, of TG 38.1 in strikes against the Leyte - Samar area, of TG 38.2 and TG 38.3 in fueling, and of TG 38.4 in strikes against Cebu - Negros; (c) on October 19th, of TG 38.1 in fueling, of TG 38.2 in strikes against Panay and Negros, of TG 38.3 in strikes against Cebu, Negros and Leyte, and of TG 38.4 in fueling and (d) on October 20th, of TG's 38.1 and 38.4 in air support of Leyte, and of TG's 38.2 and 38.3 in strategic support of the operations.**

This view is further supported by COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch instructions issued at 0922, wherein he stated that "unless tactical situation requires immediate change, fast carrier group will be employed as

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170016 October 1944 to all TFC's THIRDFLT.

** COMFIRST CARTASKFORPAC (CTF 38) Operation Order No. 11-44, Serial 00020, October 1st, 1944.

TABLE 1
LIFEGUARD SUBMARINES RESCUING AIRMEN DURING THE PERIOD
0719 OCTOBER 17TH to OCTOBER 31ST

TASK FORCE 17								
OCTOBER	0719 17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
SAURY		0-1						
TASK FORCE 71								
BONEFISH			0-1 E-1					

TASK FORCE 17								
NONE								
TASK FORCE 71								
OCTOBER	25	26	27	28	20	30	31	
HARDHEAD						0-1		

0 - Officer E - Enlisted

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indicated."* He directed (a) TG 38.1 to proceed from its present area (Latitude 21°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E) in time to rendezvous with TG 38.4 in Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 123°-30'E at 0600 the following morning (October 18th) and further directed these two groups to conduct sustained strikes against Luzon on October 18th and 19th; (b) TG 38.2 to proceed to reference point "N" (Latitude 18°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E) to arrive at 2400 that day, and to operate in that vicinity until necessary to proceed northwest corner Area OCTANE (Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 128°-20'E) in order arrive that corner 0700 October 19th where rendezvous with the oiler group and fuel. After fueling to rejoin TG 38.3 in vicinity reference point "P" (Latitude 17°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E) at 2400 October 19th; (c) TG 38.3 to proceed to arrive northwest corner Area OCTANE at 0700 October 18th, where rendezvous with oiler group and fuel. Upon completion of fueling, to proceed to vicinity Point "P" to arrive by 2400 October 18th. Then TG's 38.2 and 38.3 were to operate in the vicinity of Point "P" on October 20th; (d) TG 38.4 to conduct sustained strikes against Luzon on October 17th, and, in company with TG 38.1, to conduct sustained strikes against Luzon area on October 18th and 19th, after which to proceed to approximate position Latitude 11°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E, to arrive 0600 October 20th. On this date to provide direct air support for Leyte operations, after which to proceed to Point MICK (Latitude 15°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E) to arrive at 0800 October 21st to receive fuel. Point MICK was the northeast corner of Area MICK.*

FROM THE ABOVE IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT COMTHIRDFLT WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN RESCHEDULING THE OPERATIONS OF HIS CARRIER GROUPS IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT RETURN THEM TO THE BASIC EMPLOYMENT SCHEDULE.

THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY HIS FEELING, PREVIOUSLY REFERRED TO, THAT PERHAPS THE JAPANESE FORCES HAD NOT FINALLY RETIRED AND THAT THERE STILL MIGHT BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BATTLE, BROUGHT ON POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE ALLIED ADVANCE FORCES IN THE LEYTE AREA COMMENCING THAT VERY MORNING. CERTAINLY, AS IS SHOWN LATER, HE WAS ALERT TO THE PROBABILITY OF TOKYO EXPRESS OPERATIONS.

This, when added to his fuel requirements, apparently influenced him to consider it more practicable to have all of TF 38's strikes scheduled for October 17th, 18th and 19th made against Luzon, rather than against Luzon and the Visayas on October 17th, and against the Visayas on October 18th and 19th.

WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT ON OCTOBER 15TH, AFTER HE HAD NOTIFIED COMSEVENTHFLT THAT NO FAST CARRIERS WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT KING II UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, HE HAD RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THAT COMMANDER ON THE

* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170022 October 1944 to CTF 38, CTG's 38.1, 38.2, 38.3, 38.4.

SAME DAY TO PROVIDE CARRIER TASK FORCE ASSISTANCE AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE CONSISTENT WITH DEVELOPMENTS, IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT HE HAD NOT AS YET DETERMINED ADEQUATELY THE ENEMY'S CAPABILITIES AND THEREFORE IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS ASSIGNED TASK "TO DESTROY ENEMY NAVAL AND AIR FORCES APPROACHING THE PHILIPPINES AREA" HE HAD MADE THE COMMAND DECISION THAT HE COULD BETTER EXECUTE THAT TASK FROM HIS PLANNED POSITIONS THAN FROM THOSE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED. THIS DECISION APPEARS SOUND.

At about 1115 he received a dispatch from CTG 30.3 wherein that commander requested fuel on October 18th, reported the status of his command as regards fuel and seaworthiness and stated his confidence that he could make Ulithi with the HOUSTON providing reasonably good weather prevailed.* COMTHIRDFLT, as a consequence of this dispatch, directed CTG 30.8 to provide the oilers as requested.**

At 1252 he advised CINCPOA of the results achieved by TF 38 and TG 30.3 during October 14th - 16th wherein he claimed destroying large numbers of enemy aircraft. Actually, although he did not know it, the claims appear excessive, based on Japanese reports. For example, on October 16th CTG 30.3 claimed destroying forty-four planes whereas the Japanese admitted only twenty-seven. This might have had an adverse effect on future planning. In this dispatch COMTHIRDFLT also advised CINCPOA "Enemy fleet reluctant and enemy air forces seem to be having trouble scraping up attack groups. All THIRD Fleet ships reported by radio Tokyo as sunk have now been salvaged and are retiring toward the enemy.***

This estimate of the Japanese situation was correct. The Japanese SECOND Striking Force, which was the only Japanese surface force at sea, had retired to the vicinity of Amami O Shima, and Japanese land-based aircraft on Formosa was being re-organized and regrouped for transfer to the Philippines.****

At some time later, having heard nothing from CTG 38.4, who was striking Luzon (Manila and Legaspi), but feeling confident that the air strikes had been fully effective else he would have received word otherwise by urgent dispatch and also feeling that TG 30.3 was reasonably safe from air attacks (a) from Formosa and the Nansei Shoto because of range limitations (they were over 400 miles away), and (b) from Luzon because he had scheduled heavy air strikes against Luzon airfields on the following day (October 18th) by TG's 38.1, 38.2 and 38.4, he decided it was unnecessary

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* CTG 30.3 Dispatch 170145 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 10, Report of Salvage of CANBERRA and HOUSTON Serial 0032, November 30th, 1944, Page 14.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170352 October 1944 to CINCPAC and COMSOWESPAC info COMINCH, all TFC's THIRDFLT and SEVENTHFLT.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary Kanoya Detachment, 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

to maintain TG 30.3 in its present strength. He therefore, at 1302, directed CTG 30.3 to detach, after dark, COMCRUDIV THIRTEEN (CTG 30.3) with the SANTA FE, MOBILE, BIRMINGHAM, and DESDIV 100 (COGSWELL, CAPERTON, INGERSOLL, KNAPP) and to return with these ships to TG 38.3.*

At about 1328 he received CTF 77's dispatch advising TF 77 as to COMTHIRDFLT's planned operations of TF 38 aircraft for next three days and directing the escort carrier commander to strike the western Visayas on October 18th and to adjust covering support on following days according to developments.** Although these instructions did not fit in with his plans COMTHIRDFLT took no action on them since (a) they did not interfere with his own plans, and (b) he knew that CTF 77 would receive his later modifications presently.

COMTHIRDFLT, throughout his covering operations against Nansei Shoto, Formosa and northern Luzon, as shown in Volume I of this analysis, was very conscious of the importance of his logistics notably fuel oil, aviation gasoline, and replacement planes and pilots. He was therefore constantly directing CTG 30.8 (oiler group) to changes in the fueling rendezvous so that there might be no unnecessary delay in refueling and replacement of planes and pilots. In line with this thought, he at 1248, directed CTG 30.8, in essence, as follows: To maintain nine oilers, one aircraft replacement escort carrier, and one escort carrier in Area OCTANE from October 17th until after fueling TG 38.3 on October 18th, then to reduce the number of oilers to six until further orders, to return the replacement escort carrier to Manus for reloading after replenishing TG 38.2 on October 19th; and to provide six oilers, one escort carrier and one replacement escort carrier for replenishing TG's 38.1 and 38.4 at Point MICK at 0800 on October 21st.***

THESE ACTIONS OF COMTHIRDFLT CLEARLY POINT UP THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING THE UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT GROUPS (IN THIS CASE TG 30.8) AS WELL AS THE MOBILE SUPPORT GROUPS (AS DEFINED IN THE NAVAL OPERATIONAL PLANNING MANUAL)**** UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE TASK FLEET OR TASK FORCE COMMANDER. FOR, AS IS SHOWN CONTINUOUSLY IN THIS STUDY, BY THIS CONTROL COMTHIRDFLT'S FREEDOM OF ACTION WAS MARKEDLY INCREASED. HE WAS ENABLED THEREBY TO SHIFT HIS COMBAT FORCES AT WILL SINCE, BY ALSO SHIFTING THE UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT GROUPS, AND IN CERTAIN SPECIFIC CASES ONE OR MORE MOBILE SUPPORT GROUPS AS WELL, HE COULD ASSURE THAT SUCH COMBAT FORCES WERE PROVIDED WITH THE NECESSARY LOGISTICS. LACKING THIS OPERATIONAL

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* Action Report COMCRUDIV 13, Repc of THIRDFLT Salvage Group, October 13th-17th, 1944, Serial 0086, October 28th, 1944; also COMTHIRDFLT Dispatches 160346 and 170402 October 1944 to CTG 30.3.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG's 77.2 and 77.4, info COMTHIRDFLT.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170348 October 1944 to CTG 30.8.

**** Naval Operational Planning Manual NWP 11, Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1953, Article 632.

CONTROL HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN FORCED TO EITHER (A) LIMIT HIS OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO CONSERVE FUEL OIL, AVIATION GASOLINE AND PLANES, (B) REDUCE HIS COMBAT STRENGTH BY ROTATING HIS TASK GROUPS TO ULITHI OR OTHER DESIGNATED ANCHORAGES FOR REPLENISHMENT OR (C) WITHHOLD ACTION UNTIL HE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCE OF ADEQUATE REPLENISHMENT AT THE DESIRED LOCATIONS.

ALSO OF IMPORTANCE IS THE FACT THAT COMTHIRDFLT, KNOWING THAT CINCPAC WOULD HAVE THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES AND PLANES (MOBILE SUPPORT) AT EITHER MANUS OR ULITHI, WAS ABLE TO DIRECT THE RELOADING OF HIS REPLENISHMENT GROUPS AND, ON OCCASIONS, HIS COMBAT GROUPS AT THOSE POINTS.

At 1628 he directed COMCRUDIV TEN to assume command of TG 30.3 upon departure COMCRUDIV THIRTEEN.*

At 1722, having heard nothing concerning enemy forces to the northward and westward and therefore being satisfied that there was little to be concerned about from that quarter, and possibly having received word that the initial landings on the entrance islands to Leyte Gulf had, in general, occurred on schedule, he re-estimated the situation. He correctly decided that it was unwise to permit TG 38.2 to operate in a non-productive capacity on October 18th and, therefore, he modified CTG 38.2's orders and directed him to proceed from his 2400 position October 17th to the vicinity of Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 123°-45'E, to arrive by 0800 October 18th, there to launch a fighter sweep and two deck-load strikes against the Laoag - Aparri area of northern Luzon completing the operation prior to 1600. Thereafter, CTG 38.2 was to proceed to the fueling rendezvous specified for October 19th.**

COMTHIRDFLT was, of course, interested in the attack being made this day on Formosa by the B-29's of the TWENTIETH Bomber Command, which were to strike Einansho Airdrome as a primary target and Takao Harbor as a secondary target.*** However, now that the possibility of a fleet action, because of which this B-29 strike had been requested, had greatly diminished, his interest was no longer as keen as heretofore. He, of course, realized that successful B-29 strikes by reducing the enemy's ability to interfere with the operations of CTF 77's advance forces in the Leyte area would reduce the demand which might be made on his fast carriers. It is not known at what time he received the report from the TWENTIETH Bomber Command stating that (a) the strike had been made on Okayama, Heito **Airport** and Takao **Harbor**, rather than on Einansho and (b) it had been successful with only weak opposition encountered.**** However, when this report was received, presumably on this day, it must have been of considerable interest to him

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170728 October 1944 to CTG 30.3 and COMCRUDIV 10.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170822 October 1944 to CTG 38.2.

*** CINCPOA Dispatch 162207 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

**** TWENTIETH Bomber Command Tactical Mission Report Nos. 11 and 12, October 23th, 1944.

for it indicated either that (a) the air strikes by TF 38 had been very successful indeed since Japanese air defense was weak or (b) the Japanese had moved their planes elsewhere and this indicated a possibility of movement to Luzon or (c) the Japanese had decided to refuse combat at this time or (d) a combination of the above.

At 1809 COMTHIRDFLT advised COMSOWESPAC as follows: "Effective support by THIRD Fleet against "Tokyo Express" will depend on timely information on approach. Detection prior to entry into Sulu or Celebes Sea will give best chance of early action. From my standpoint observation of the approaches to Balabac as far to the southwest as possible is most important as is also the approaches to Mindoro."*

It is not clear what motivated COMTHIRDFLT to issue this dispatch. It may have been due (a) to the fact that he did not feel that the SOWESPAC submarines — the planned locations of which he had known since October 11th** — were stationed in adequate numbers properly to protect Balabac and Mindoro Straits, and employed this method to cause COMSOWESPAC to re-examine the disposition of his submarines; (b) to the receipt of a dispatch from GHQ SOWESPAC to Commander Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC, wherein GHQ advised that commander that, since the runways at Morotai would not permit the establishment of Search Plan "FOX" from Morotai over the Sulu - China Seas sectors prior to daylight October 19th, he was to extend present PB4Y searches from Biak over the same area to maximum range and to initiate immediately PBY search from Morotai over the same area, also to maximum range;*** or (c) to his own re-estimate made that day.

IN ANY EVENT, IT IS IMPORTANT IN THAT IT DEFINITELY SHOWS THAT COMTHIRDFLT WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A "TOKYO EXPRESS" BEING EMPLOYED BY THE JAPANESE TO REINFORCE THEIR GROUND FORCES AT LEYTE, AND, BY OMISSION, ALSO SHOWS THAT HE HAD LITTLE EXPECTATION THAT MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD OPPOSE THE LEYTE OPERATION. THIS WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONCEPTS OF THE ALLIED HIGH COMMAND, PREVIOUSLY POINTED OUT REPEATEDLY IN VOLUME I OF THIS ANALYSIS, THAT MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIED LANDINGS AT LEYTE.**** COMTHIRDFLT APPEARS TO HAVE REVERTED TO THIS CONCEPT ON THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 16TH WHEN THE JAPANESE FORCES WHICH HE WAS EXPECTING TO ENGAGE HAD RETIRED. HE NOW KNEW, OF COURSE, THAT INSTEAD OF MAJOR ENEMY FORCES, THE JAPANESE FORCES WHICH HE HAD CONSIDERED TO BE A FLEET HAD CONSISTED OF BUT THREE CRUISERS AND SEVEN DESTROYERS

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 111346 October 1944 to CINCPOA, info COMTHIRDFLT, CANF SOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC.

*** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 170102 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

**** CANF SOWESPAC Operations Plan 13-44, Serial 0002214, September 26th, 1944, ANNEX M, brought up to date by CTF 77 Dispatch 160611 October 1944; also Intelligence Summary HQ AAF SOWESPAC. Serial 245, October 15th, 1944, para. 4.

(SECOND STRIKING FORCE), AND THAT, SO FAR AS HIS PRESENT INTELLIGENCE REVEALED, MOST OF THE JAPANESE CARRIERS WERE STILL CONCENTRATED IN THE EMPIRE AND THE BATTLESHIPS AND CRUISERS WERE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AREA, WITH NO MAJOR FLEET UNITS IN THE PHILIPPINES.* ACTUALLY THIS INTELLIGENCE, WHICH HE HAD RECEIVED FROM COMSEVENTHFLT THE PREVIOUS DAY, WAS ONLY PARTIALLY CORRECT, SINCE THE JAPANESE BATTLESHIPS AND HEAVY CRUISERS WERE STILL IN THE LINGGA-SINGAPORE AREA.

COMTHIRDFLT HAD HAD LONG EXPERIENCE IN THE CAMPAIGNS IN THE SOLOMONS, COMMENCING WITH GUADALCANAL. HE HAD REALIZED THERE THAT THE JAPANESE OPERATIONS IN DEFENSE OF THEIR ISLAND BASES HAD NOT EXTENDED TO FLEET ACTION BUT HAD INSTEAD EMBRACED PRIMARILY "TOKYO EXPRESS" OPERATIONS. IN VIEW OF THIS EXPERIENCE, HE NOW VISUALIZED SIMILAR OPERATIONS FOR THE REINFORCEMENT OF LEYTE AND DESIRED THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE ADVANCE INFORMATION OF THE MOVEMENT OF SUCH FORCES SO THAT HE MIGHT TAKE PROPER CORRECTIVE ACTION.

THIS ESTIMATE OF COMMANDER THIRD FLEET THAT THE JAPANESE WOULD ATTEMPT TO REINFORCE LEYTE BY TOKYO EXPRESS OPERATIONS HAD CONSIDERABLE MERIT. WHILE UP TO THIS TIME THE JAPANESE HAD NOT ORDERED SUCH OPERATIONS IT IS TRUE THAT ON THE FOLLOWING DAY THEY DID ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS FOR COUNTER-LANDING OPERATIONS WHICH MAY HAVE ENVISAGED THE TOKYO EXPRESS CONCEPT.**

(1) TF 38 (Fast Carrier Force), 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

(a) Operations of CTG 38.1.

At about 0952 CTG 38.1, who was operating in Latitude 21°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E, received orders to join CTG 38.4 off southern Luzon in Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 123°-30'E at 0600 on the 18th and, with that group, to strike Luzon, October 18th and 19th.***

His command at this time consisted of the WASP, HORNET, MONTEREY, CHESTER, PENSACOLA, SALT LAKE CITY, SAN DIEGO, OAKLAND, CASSIN, DOWNES, DUNLAP, FANNING, CASE, CUMMINGS, McCALLA, MARSHALL, WOODWORTH, IZARD, CONNER, and BROWN.

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* COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 160611 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Commanders FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739; also CafS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170022 October 1944 to CTG 38, CTG's 38.1, 38.2, 38.3, 38.4.

At 1147 he recovered the special search consisting of eighteen VF from the WASP, which had been launched at 0558 to search a 300-mile sector from 260°(T) to 360°(T) for enemy surface units, in compliance with COMTHIRDFLT dispatch instructions.* The results of the search were negative.** The limits of this search appear to have been CTG 38.1's interpretation of COMTHIRDFLT's directive to search to the west and northwest. As is discussed under "Operations of COMTHIRDFLT" this caused some confusion.

Throughout the day flying conditions in the area of TF 38.1 were average.

At 1806 CTG 38.1 changed base course to 205°(T), increased speed to twenty-five knots and headed for his 0600 rendezvous with CTG 38.4, in Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 123°-30'E.***

During the day TG 38.1 maintained, in general, a CAP of twelve to sixteen VF and a SNASP of four-VF-four VT.

Plane losses were one VF**** and one VB,***** both operational. All personnel were recovered by the CASSIN.******

(b) Operations of CTG 38.2 and CTG 38.3, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

TG 38.2 consisting of BUNKER HILL, HANCOCK, INDEPENDENCE, INTREPID, IOWA, NEW JERSEY, HOUSTON, VINCENNES, MIAMI, TINGEY, HICKOX, HUNT, LEWIS HANCOCK, HALSEY POWELL, CUSHING, COLAHAN, UHLMANN, BENHAM, YARNALL, TWINING, STOCKHAM, WEDDERBURN, and TG 38.3 consisting of ESSEX, LEXINGTON, PRINCETON, LANGLEY, WASHINGTON, SOUTH DAKOTA, MASSACHUSETTS, ALABAMA, RENO, CLARENCE K. BRONSON, COTTON, DORTCH, GATLING, HEALY, PORTERFIELD, CALLAGHAN, CASSIN YOUNG, IRWIN, PRESTON, LAWS, LONGSHAW, MORRISON, continued to operate northward of TG 30.3 where they provided air cover for that task group. They continued to operate in this area until early afternoon when they commenced steaming on southerly courses in order to attain a position from which they could cover TG's 38.1 and 38.4.

At 0915 CTG 38.2 recovered the eight VF and four VB that had been launched at 0558 from BUNKER HILL to search the sector 315°-355°(T) to a radius of 260 miles to look for Japanese surface forces. This search was negative.

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 161104 October 1944 to CTG 38.1.
** War Diary CTG 38.1, October 1944.
*** Deck Log WASP, October 17th, 1944.
**** War Diary MONTEREY, October 16th, 1944.
***** Action Report WASP, Operations Against Okinawa, Leyte, etc. October 2nd-27th, 1944, Serial 0040, October 28th, 1944.
****** War Diary CASSIN, October 17th, 1944.

At 1000 he recovered the eight VF and four VB which had been launched at 0558 from the ESSEX to search sector 355°-035°(T) to a radius of 260 miles. The results were negative.

At 1114 the CAP from TG 38.3 intercepted and shot down an enemy two-engine land bomber 100 miles bearing 225°(T) from the disposition.*

At 1400 the SNASP destroyed an enemy carrier-type reconnaissance plane in approximate position Latitude 22°-30'N, Longitude 128°-30'E.

At 1800 TG 38.2 was detached from the fleet disposition** and proceeded independently on course 203°(T) to the vicinity of Latitude 18°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E, where it arrived at midnight October 17th.

At 1812 CTG 38.3 set course 150°(T), speed seventeen knots, and proceeded towards his 0700 fueling rendezvous for October 18th. At 2130 he changed course to 200°(T).

During the day TG 38.2 maintained a local CAP of twelve VF and a SNASP of four VF-four VB/VT; TG 38.3 local patrols consisted of CAP of eight VF and a special SNASP of eight VF-four VB/VT. In addition, commencing at noon, each task group provided a CAP of twelve VF (a total of twenty-four at one time) over TG 30.3.***

The INDEPENDENCE maintained a night CAP of two VF(N) from sunset until 2136.****

There was no evidence of any enemy air activity in the vicinity of TG's 38.2 and 38.3, other than the two Japanese search planes that were destroyed.

Plane losses were one INTREPID VF which crashed. The pilot was recovered.

(c) Operations of CTG 38.4, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTG 38.4 with TG 38.4 consisting of FRANKLIN, ENTERPRISE, SAN JACINTO, BELLEAU WOOD, NEW ORLEANS, BILOXI, MAURY, GRIDLY, HELM, MUGFORD, RALPH TALBOT, PATTERSON, BAGLEY, WILKES, NICHOLSON, SWANSON and

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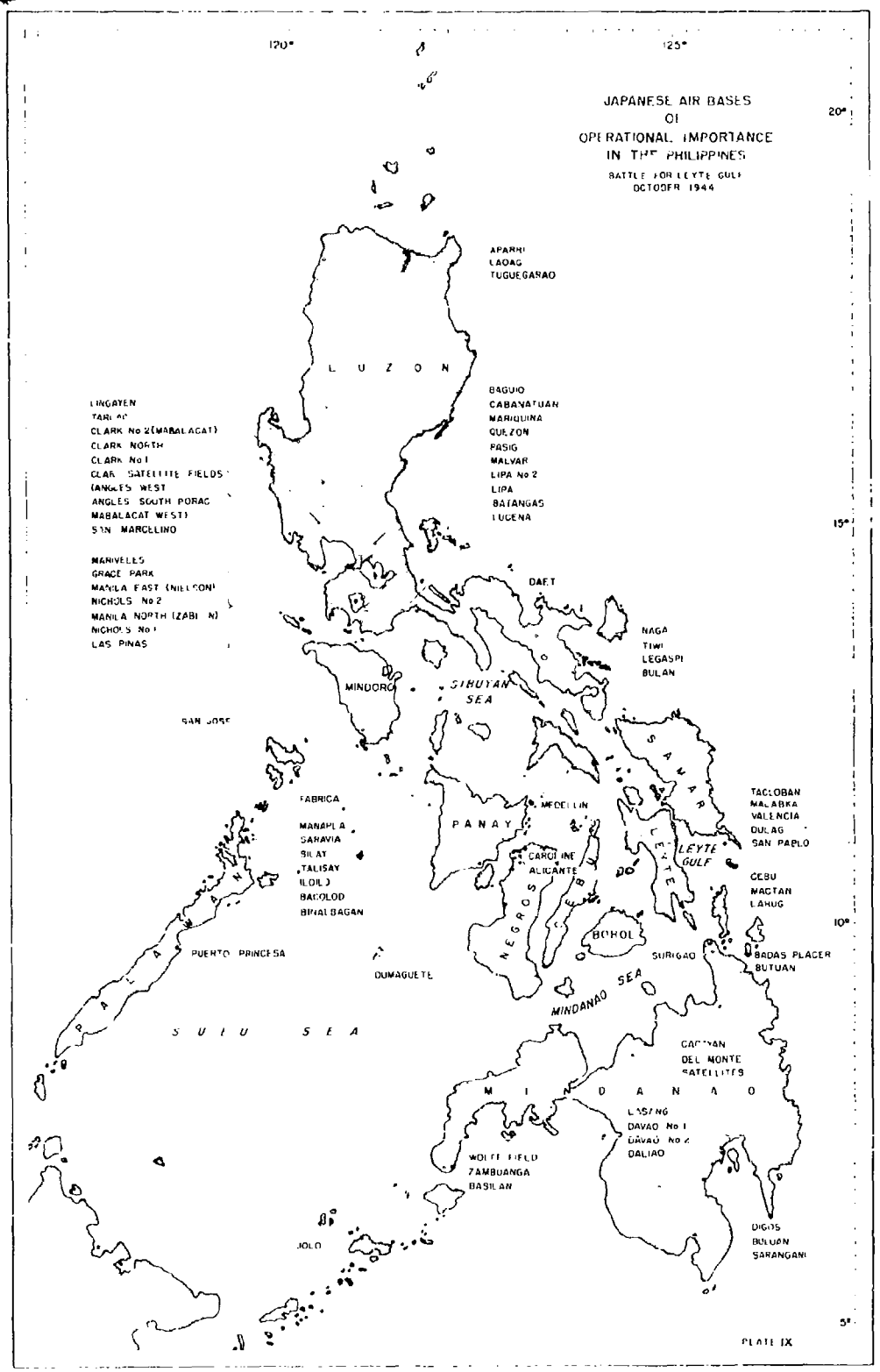
* War Diary CTG 38.3, October 1944.
** War Diary LANGLEY, October 1944.
*** Naval War College Analysis of Action Reports, Aircraft Action Reports, and War Diaries.
**** Action Report INDEPENDENCE, October 1944, Serial 0017, November 2nd, 1944.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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McCALL (Temporarily with TU 30.8.5), continued operating in the waters to the eastward of Manila. He was principally interested in the results achieved by his fighter sweep of twenty VF which he had launched at 0550 to strike the Manila area,* and by his strikes ABLE (sixteen VF, nineteen VB and fifteen VT) which he had launched at 0616 to strike Clark and Mabalacat airfields* which were neighboring airfields, and BAKER (sixteen VF, twenty VB, and fifteen VT) which he launched at 0700 to strike Legaspi airfield.*

At 0817 the four night fighters which had been on a heckler mission over Legaspi were recovered after an uneventful morning. Japanese reports make no comment concerning this operation.

The fighter sweep which arrived over the Manila area at 0800 and which was recovered between 1010 and 1106 did not achieve surprise. Instead it was intercepted by numerous enemy fighters. However, the enemy opposition was so ineffective that the Allied fighters were able to accomplish their objectives without suffering any losses whatsoever. They claimed shooting down twelve Japanese fighters.**

Although the visibility conditions over both Clark and Mabalacat airfields were poor,** Strike ABLE, which was recovered between 1050-1106, was reported to have been highly effective. The pilots claimed destroying nine planes in the air and thirty planes on the ground.**

Likewise Strike BAKER, which was recovered between 0950 and 1150, was considered to have been equally effective. However, this strike, which was launched under satisfactory weather conditions encountered poor visibility at the target due to haze, fine mist and rain from frequent squalls.** It met no enemy opposition and observed no enemy planes on the ground, indicating that the planes had been retired. Its principal targets were, therefore, the airstrip and buildings at Legaspi.**

In connection with Allied claims above there is no Japanese data available with which to confirm or deny the pilot reports.

During the day CTG 38.4, in accordance with a directive from COMTHIRDFLT to reconnoiter San Bernardino Strait, reconnoitered that

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* Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operation Against the Enemy at Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944; also Aircraft Action Report Commander Air Group 13, October 17th, 1944, forwarded by FRANKLIN, Serial 077, November 6th, 1944.

** Aircraft Action Report Air Group 13, October 17th, 1944, forwarded by FRANKLIN, Serial 077, November 6th, 1944; also Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations Against the Enemy at Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944 Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944.

strait twice. The first reconnaissance mission, consisting of two VT, was launched at 0557 and recovered at 0848;* the second, consisting of two VF and two VT, was launched at 1404 and recovered at 1647.** I both cases the reports of the pilots were negative. It is of interest that the afternoon reconnaissance groups were protected by fighters, whereas the morning group had no fighter protection.

THIS CHANGE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DUE TO THE REALIZATION BY CTG 38.4 THAT IT WAS UNWISE TO DISPATCH TORPEDO PLANES WITHOUT FIGHTER PROTECTION TO RECONNOITER AN AREA CLOSE TO THE ENEMY AIRFIELDS.

It would appear that COMTHIRDFLT's directive to reconnoiter this strait only was based upon four incentives: (a) CINCPOA's October 15th message to COMSOWESPAC, wherein he requested that the Pacific Ocean exits to both San Bernardino and Surigao Straits be reconnoitered to maximum extent possible commencing daylight October 16th;*** and (b) the fact that (1) he knew that the submarines had been removed on October 12th;**** (2) he knew that, since CTG 77.2 with the advance forces would be off Leyte on the morning of October 17th, search of the Surigao Strait exit would be unnecessary; and (3) COMTHIRDFLT was expected to cover and support COMSOWESPAC in the KING II operation.***** It appears pertinent to point out here that item (a), above, had been requested by CINCPOA because there were rumors of strong enemy fleet reactions, whereas by this date, October 17th, the thought of such fleet reactions had largely subsided; although, judging from the San Bernardino reconnoiter order, the enemy capability of debouching raiding forces through that strait was recognized. His dispatch later in the day to COMSOWESPAC concerning a "Tokyo Express" operation, discussed earlier under Operations of COMTHIRDFLT, is in line with this thought.******

Sometime during the early evening, CTG 38.4 received COMTHIRDFLT's 1722 dispatch to CTG 38.2, wherein that commander was directed to strike Laoag - Aparri commencing 0800 October 18th.******* That this was pleasing to CTG 38.4 is obvious, for reporting the days operational summary to CTF 38 at 2143, he stated: "Will be glad to have company in our hitherto private war."********

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* Action Report SAN JACINTO, Operations Okinawa, Jima, Formosa, Luzon and Visayas, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0043, October 31st, 1944.

** Action Report BELLEAU WOOD, Action Against Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Luzon and Visayas, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0170, November 3rd, 1944.

*** CINCPOA Dispatch 150341 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

**** War Patrol Report PARCHE, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 78, December 2nd, 1944.

***** CINCPOA Operation Plan No. 8, Serial 000851, September 27th, 1944.

****** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

******* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170822 October 1944 to CTG 38.2.

******** CTG 38.4 Dispatch 171243 October 1944 to CTF 38.

Plane losses by TG 38.4 from all causes were one VF, one VT. Personnel losses were two pilots, two aircrewmen missing.* One pilot and two aircrewmen were recovered by the WILKES.**

During the day's operations, two two-engine land bombers were shot down by the CAP; one at 0750 twenty-three miles from the task group, the other at 1126 fifty miles from the task group.*** Although numerous bogeys were observed, none approached the formation. CTG 38.4 continued operating in the same general area of the day's operations, preparatory to making strikes on the following day against Luzon in company with CTG 38.1.****

(2) Operations of CTG 30.3 (Salvage Group), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

CTG 30.3 continued on course 130°(T), speed four knots,***** toward Ulithi. At 0807 he changed course to 120°(T).******

During the forenoon he transferred seven pumps****** to the HOUSTON and topped off his destroyers to between forty-five and sixty-two per cent. Since his fuel was now low in his heavy ships -- his cruisers and carriers averaged between thirty-eight and fifty-four per cent -- he at 1045 requested COMTHIRDFLT and CTG 30.8 to direct the fueling group to rendezvous on the following day at 0900, in Latitude 19°-18'N, Longitude 127°-29'E.*******

At about 1000,******* he received word from COMTHIRDFLT that the trap, for which TG 30.3 was bait, had failed and that the Japanese Fleet had retired.******** This removed the tension in his command which had existed since the previous afternoon when COMTHIRDFLT had informed him by dispatch that the enemy was 200 miles to the north of him and not to worry, to which he had commented in reply, "not worrying,********* just wondering and waiting for further information." Although he had received

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* Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations Against the Enemy, Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944; also Action Report FRANKLIN, Operation Against the Enemy, Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0039, October 31st, 1944.

** War Diary COMDESRON 6, October 1944.

*** Action Report SAN JACINTO, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0043, October 31st, 1944.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170022 October 1944 to CTF 38, CTG's 38.1, 38.2, 38.3, 38.4.

***** CTG 30.3 Dispatch 170145 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, CTG 30.8.

****** Action Report CTG 30.3, Report of THIRD Fleet Salvage Group, October 13th-17th, 1944, Serial 0086, October 28th, 1944.

******* Action Report COMCRUDIV 10, Report of Salvage of CANBERRA and HOUSTON, Serial 0032, November 30th, 1944.

******** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170016 October 1944 to CINCPOA, TG 30.3, etc.

********* CTG 30.3 Dispatch 160850 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

further information a little later to the effect that the enemy was 430 instead of 200 miles from his task group the tension, although relieved, had persisted to a degree until now.

During the afternoon he transferred the personnel remaining on the HOUSTON to four of the cruisers and to four of the destroyers.

In addition he transmitted a number of urgent dummy messages.*

That these messages had some effect on the Japanese is clear for the Takao Communications Unit later that evening reported in part that between 1200 and 2000 an enemy task group southeast of Formosa had sent out seven urgent messages.* No action appears to have been taken by the Japanese except to launch an ineffective search in this area the following day.

At 1435 the CABOT launched a search of four VF-four VT** to search the sector 235°-310°(T) to a distance of 200 miles. The search which returned at about 1800 was negative.

At 1538 CTG 30.3 advised COMTHIRDFLT as to the seaworthiness of his command, notably of the HOUSTON, which he reported as in poor, but not dangerous, condition.***

During the day CTG 30.3 maintained a CAP of eight VF and a SNASP of four VF-four VT over his task group.** This was augmented commencing at noon and continuing until sunset by a CAP of twenty-four VF of which twelve were from TG 38.2 and twelve from TG 38.3. Owing to the distance between TG 30.3, TG 38.2 and TG 38.3 and the requirement of relieving on station over TG 30.3 a CAP of about fifty-six planes was available over TG 30.3 at about 1500.

Enemy aircraft were shot down as follows:

At 1020 one carrier-type attack plane bearing 250°(T) distant seventeen miles and at 1539 a two-engine land-bomber bearing 240°(T) distant twenty miles from the task group.****

The 1020 plane appears to have been a Japanese search plane which was searching a 400 mile sector, 110°-125°(T) from Garan Bi

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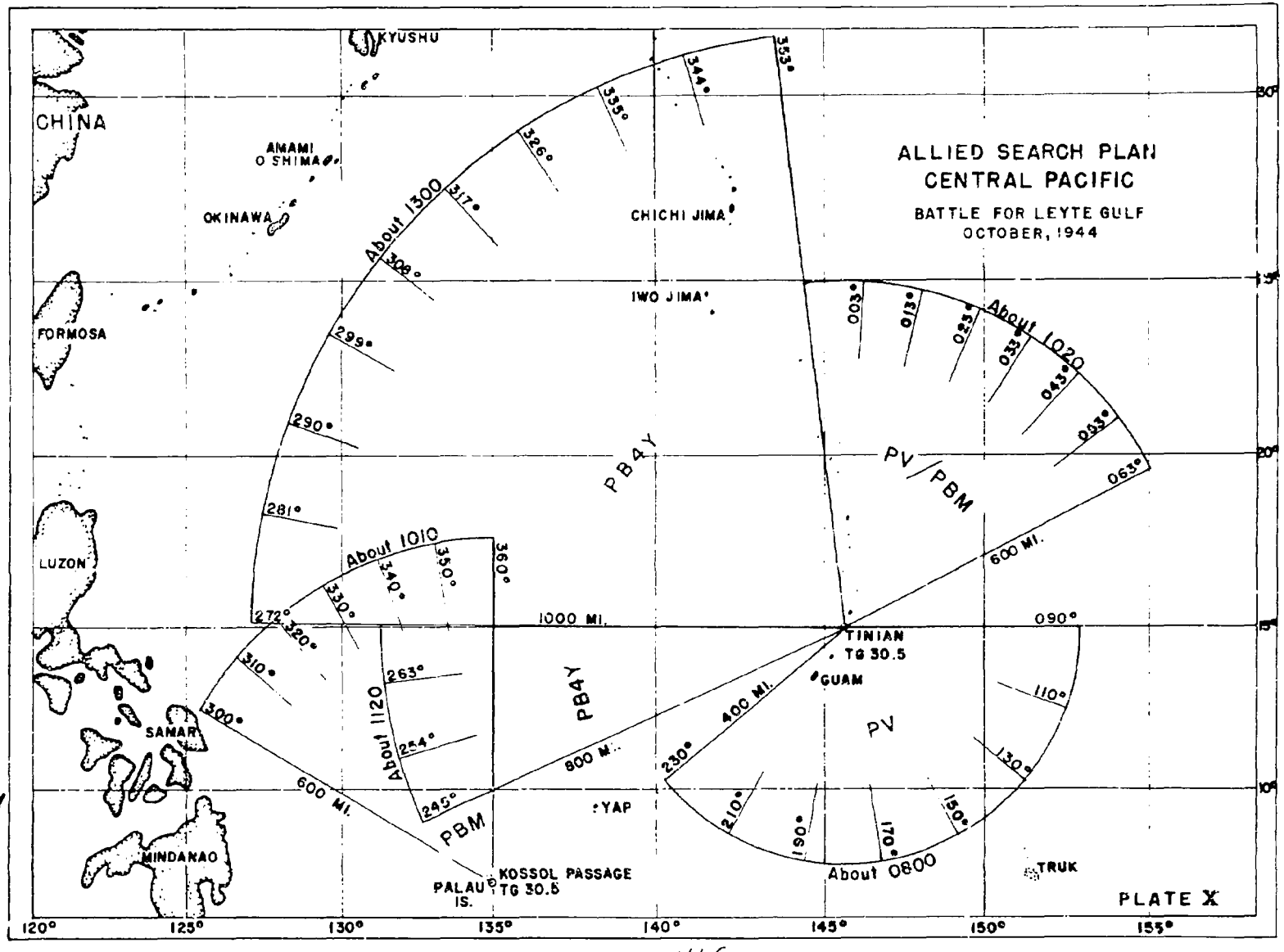
* Commander Takao Communications Unit Dispatch 172130 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces, Detailed Action Report No. 2. Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th-November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

** Action Report CABOT, Air Cover for TG 30.3 from October 14th to October 18th, 1944, Serial 063, October 18th, 1944.

*** CTG 30.3 Dispatch 170658 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

**** Aircraft Action Report Commander Air Group 29, October 17th, 1944.


ALLIED SEARCH PLAN
CENTRAL PACIFIC
BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF
OCTOBER, 1944
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL
KYUSHU
CHINA
AMAMI O SHIMA
OKINAWA
CHICHI JIMA
IWO JIMA
FORMOSA
LUZON
SAMAR
MINDANAO
PALAU IS.
KOSSOL PASSAGE TG 30.5
YAP
TINIAN TG 30.5
GUAM
TRUK
About 1300
About 1010
About 1120
About 1020
About 0800
PB4Y
PBM
PV/PBM
PV
1000 MI.
600 MI.
800 MI.
400 MI.
600 MI.
090°
063°
PLATE X
120°
125°
130°
135°
140°
145°
150°
155°

(TG 30.3 was at the outer extremity of this sector) and which the Japanese reported as having failed to return;* the 1539 plane cannot be identified as Navy and therefore was probably an Army search plane.

At 1845** CTG 30.3 received instructions from COMTHIRDFLT to detach CRUDIV THIRTEEN with DESDIV ONE HUNDRED after dark that night in time to rendezvous with CTG 38.3 at 0700 October 18th in Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 128°-20'E.*** In this dispatch COMTHIRDFLT advised that he would not make further reductions in TG 30.3 until about October 19th or 20th. This dispatch, which was sent operational priority at about 1300, was received at 1845, or almost six hours later.

Sometime later he received a dispatch from COMTHIRDFLT directing COMCRUDIV TEN to assume command of TG 30.3 upon the departure of COMCRUDIV THIRTEEN.****

At 2230 COMCRUDIV THIRTEEN with CRUDIV THIRTEEN (SANTA FE, BIRMINGHAM, MOBILE) and DESDIV ONE HUNDRED (COGSWELL, CAPERTON, INGERSOLL, KNAPP) departed TG 30.3** and headed for the 0700 rendezvous with CTG 38.3 and the fueling group.***

TG 30.3 was now organized as follows: (a) TU 30.3.1, CANBERRA (MUNSEE towing), HOUSTON (PAWNEE towing), DESDIV NINETY-TWO (BOYD (F), COWELL, GRAYSON), THE SULLIVANS, STEPHAN POTTER, (b) TU 30.3.2, BOSTON (FF), WICHITA (F), CABOT, COWPENS, BURNS, BELL, CHARRETTE, MILLER.**

The remainder of the evening until 2400 was uneventful.

(3) Operations of CTG 30.5 (Air Search, Reconnaissance and Photographic Group), 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

TG 30.5, which was under the operational and administrative control of CTG 30.5 (Commander Fleet Air Wing ONE) based in the HAMLIN (AV-15) at Ulithi, was composed of six Navy seaplane squadrons, ten seaplane tenders (four AV and six AVP) and five land-based Navy squadrons, comprising a total of 196 land and tender-based aircraft (Volume I, table 7). As has been pointed out in Volume I, it was a component of the Forward Area, Central Pacific until October 2nd, when Commander THIRD Fleet removed it from that command and placed it directly under his own command. Its mission involved air search, photographic coverage and reconnaissance, air-sea rescue and attacks on targets of opportunity as the occasions arose, as well as coverage for TG 30.3 when it came within range of Palau-based aircraft.

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* Detailed Action Report No. 1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 13 (CTG 30.3), THIRD Fleet Salvage Group, October 13th-17th, 1944, Serial 0086, October 28th, 1944.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170402 October 1944 to CTG 30.3.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170728 October 1944 to CTG 30.3, COMCRUDIV 10.

As is shown in Plate X and Diagram B, CTG 30.5's patrol planes were flying daily searches as follows:

(a) From Kossol Passage, Palau, a sector search between 300°-360°(T), to a distance of 600 miles, by tender-based patrol planes.*

(b) From Tinian-Saipan, four sector searches, by land and tender-based aircraft:

(1) Between 245°-272°(T) to a distance of 800 miles.**

(2) Between 272°-353°(T) to a distance of 1000 miles.**

(3) Between 353°-063°(T) to a distance of 600 miles.***

(4) Between 090°-230°(T) to a distance of 400 miles.***

These searches, which were in effect on October 17th, were negative with the exception of the search in sector 335°-344°(T), which, at 1215, contacted a Japanese AK and attacked it, reportedly leaving it in a sinking condition. This same search observed at 1227 in a position bearing 342°(T), distant 350 miles from Iwo Jima, two enemy single-engine aircraft, but was not attacked by them.****

(4) Operations of CTF 59 (Commander Shore-Based Aircraft, Forward Area, Central Pacific), 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

Although it was noted in Volume I that this command would be dropped from further discussion, the following resume is included for the information of those who do not have that Volume available for reference.

THE SAME SITUATION IN REGARD TO THE LACK OF ADEQUATE AIR BASES WITHIN OPERATING RADIUS OF THE OBJECTIVE AREA WHICH PREVAILED IN THE CASES OF ALLIED AIR FORCE, SOWESPAC, ALSO CONFRONTED CTF 59. ALTHOUGH CTF 59 HAD A TOTAL OF 455 AIRCRAFT AS OF 0719 OCTOBER 17TH (VOLUME I, TABLE 6), THE ATTACK CAPABILITIES OF THESE AIRCRAFT COULD NOT BE EMPLOYED IN SUPPORT OF THE ALLIED LANDINGS AT LEYTE, BECAUSE THERE WERE NO SUITABLE AIR BASES FROM WHICH TO PROJECT THIS ATTACK POTENTIAL. THEREFORE, THE MISSIONS WERE, FOR THE MOST PART, CONFINED TO BASE DEFENSE AND THE NEUTRALIZATION OF BY-PASSED ENEMY BASES.

As has been pointed out in Volume I, CTF 59 was a subordinate command of CTF 57 (Commander Forward Area, Central Pacific). By

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* War Diaries, VPB-16, 202, 216, October 1944; also War Diaries POCOMOKE and MAKINAC, October 1944.

** War Diaries VPB-102, 116, 117, October 1944.

*** War Diaries, VPB-4, 150, 151, October 1944.

**** Action Report No. 5, VPB-117, October 17th, Serial 083, October 17th, 1944, forwarded by COMFAIRWING ONE, Serial 0109, November 13th, 1944.

prior arrangement, CTF 57 operated directly under Commander Western Pacific Task Forces for the Leyte operation until October 23rd, when his command reverted to the control of CINCPOA.

The following attack tasks were assigned TF 59 on October 15th in compliance with Commander Western Pacific Task Forces directives:*

"(1) Exert maximum air effort against the Bonins to interdict enemy air operations in that area, commencing October 16th.

"(2) Make every effort to effect neutralization of enemy air activity at Yap in order to prevent Japanese reconnaissance of THIRD Fleet base at Ulithi."

In accordance with the above directives, CTF 59 intensified the bombing attacks against the Bonins by Saipan-based B-24's which had been bombing the Volcano and Bonin Islands since September. On October 17th, eleven B-24's attacked Haha Jima, with unobserved results, and again on the 18th, nineteen B-24's attacked shipping in that area, getting two direct hits on an AO and a large AK. These attacks were continued throughout the month whenever weather conditions permitted. Likewise, Yap became the principal target for medium range strikes by Peleliu-based F4U's, and from mid-October on, was hit daily.

Angaur was not ready to be used as a base for B-24's until October 24th, at which time twenty-eight B-24's of the 494th Heavy Bombardment Group completed transfer to that island from Saipan. However, their operations were limited, by lack of fuel facilities, to twelve sorties per day until the installation of gasoline tank farms was completed on November 5th. On October 25th, the B-24's were alerted by CTF 59 for possible action against enemy fleet units, but such action did not eventuate.**

The above discussion constitutes the extent of operations by TF 59 during October. Inasmuch as these operations had no direct bearing on the Battle for Leyte Gulf, they will be dropped from further study.

(2) Operations of CTF 17 (Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet), 0719 - 2400 October 17th (Plates XI, XII, XIII).

In this volume, in a manner similar to that employed in Volume I, the operations of TF 17 submarines connected with KING II will be discussed under the various groups, such as CONVOY COLLEGE, rather than by individual submarines. Since many of the orders issued to the SUBPAC

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* CINCPAC and CTF 57 War Diaries, October 1944.

** War Diary, Commander Forward Area, Central Pacific (CTF-57) October 1944; War Diary, Commander Garrison Air Force, Western Carolines (TG 59.6), October 1944.

submarines throughout KING II by CTF 17 or by the wolf pack commanders are not available to this study, and were probably destroyed by burning,* this analysis must necessarily comment more upon the dispositions from day to day than upon the orders received which resulted in such dispositions, although whenever the orders are available -- whether in dispatch form or found in the patrol reports -- they will be commented upon. On October 17th, submarines were either on station in compliance with previous orders, were on their new stations, or were proceeding to their new stations in compliance with CTF 17's dispatch orders of October 15th which he had issued in support of COMTHIRDFLT's expected fleet action.

During the early morning of this day, CTF 17 was particularly interested in the movements of the Japanese SECOND Striking Force, which the SKATE had observed on the previous day as "heading northerly", and as a consequence of which he had queried the SKATE to ascertain whether or not the "heading northerly" was correct. This was important information, since, if it was true, it likely meant that this Japanese force was retiring, in which case the fleet action expected by COMTHIRDFLT would probably not occur. It also indicated that perhaps the SECOND Striking Force was heading for the Inland Sea, in which case the only Allied units in the area which might intercept this force were TF 17 submarines.

Meanwhile, at about 0946 he likely received COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch to CINCPAC, wherein COMTHIRDFLT stated that Japanese surface forces had lost interest in his trap--he had been employing TG 30.3 as a lure to entice Japanese forces into battle--and had retired.**

Sometime about 0947 he received the long-awaited reply from the SKATE, which stated that (a) the heavy ships had been tracked on course 320°(T), and the destroyers on 030°(T), (b) they were effecting a rendezvous, and (c) the final course of the formation was "definitely northerly."***

WHILE WHAT HAPPENED AT THIS TIME IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR SINCE THERE IS LITTLE INFORMATION THEREON AVAILABLE TO THIS ANALYSIS IT SEEMS HIGHLY PROBABLE FROM THE ACTIONS OF THE SUBMARINES CONCERNED THAT CTF 17 OPERATED ABOUT AS FOLLOWS:

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* Information available was obtained from COMSUBPAC; Commanding Officer Submarine Base, New London, Conn.; Chief of Naval Personnel (for ships' logs); Officers-in-Charge, Naval Records Management Centers, Alexandria, Va., and Mechanicsburg, Pa.; Director, Naval Records and History; Submarine Operational History, World War II, Submarine Operations in World War II, by Theodore Roscoe; and finally, from the Patrol Reports of the various submarines. Out of all these sources, only limited and very sketchy information was obtainable concerning the operation plans and orders, and in many cases the dispatch orders had already been destroyed by burning. There were no War Diaries.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170016 October 1944, to CINCPAC.

*** SKATE Dispatch 162244 October 1944 to CTF 17.

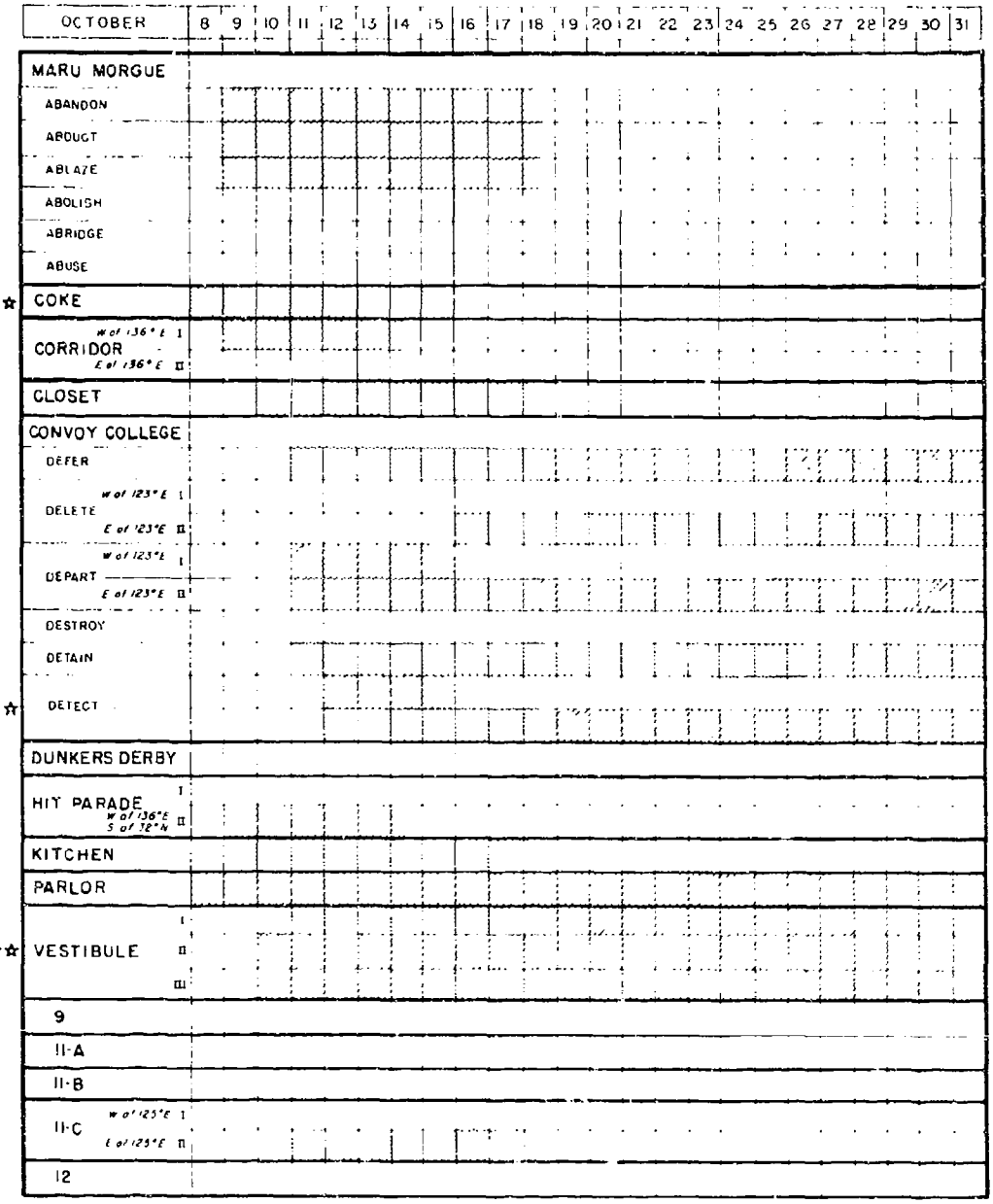
SUBMARINE OPERATING AREA CLASSIFICATIONS

WESTERN PACIFIC

OCTOBER 8 th – 31st inc. 1944

CINCPOA ZONE NOTICES 35,38,40,42,44,45,47

All areas submarine patrol zones unless otherwise indicated
Dotted areas indicate air surface zone [ ]
Hatched areas indicate joint zone [ ]



☆ COKE is a fueling area (Lat 19°N, Long 139°E) Not shown on Plate XII

☆☆ Until 0001 October 16th DETECT divided at 122°E After that date divided at 123°E

☆☆☆ Until 0001 October 16th VESTIBULE divided at 21°N After that date zone (II) established between 20° 30 N and 21° N

PLATE XI

"HE REESTIMATED THE SITUATION AND NOTED THAT, WHEREAS THE EASTERN ENTRANCE TO THE INLAND SEA VIA BUNGO SUIDO WAS BLOCKED BY THREE SUBMARINES, THE APPROACH TO THE WESTERN ENTRANCE (SHIMONOSEKI STRAIT) VIA THE CHANNEL BETWEEN FUKAE SHIMA AND KYUSHU WAS WIDE OPEN. HE THEREFORE DECIDED TO CLOSE THIS CHANNEL AGAIN, EMPLOYING THE THREE SUBMARINES ESCOLAR, PERCH AND CROAKER, WHICH ON THE 15TH HE HAD ORDERED TO TSUSHIMA STRAIT, AND ISSUED DISPATCH ORDERS TO THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER TO THIS EFFECT."

THIS ACTION WAS SOUND, FOR, AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT IN VOLUME I, IT WAS UNWISE TO LEAVE THIS AREA UNWATCHED SINCE IT WAS A LIKELY ROUTE FOR THE MOVEMENT OF JAPANESE COMBATANT FORCES WHETHER ADVANCING OR RETIRING. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHEN HE SENT THIS DISPATCH, SINCE THERE IS NO MENTION OF ITS RECEIPT BY EITHER THE PERCH OR THE CROAKER. HOWEVER, IT WAS EVIDENTLY RECEIVED BY THE ESCOLAR, SINCE BOTH THE PERCH AND THE CROAKER STATE THAT AT 2300 THEY RECEIVED ORDERS FROM THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER TO PROCEED TO STATIONS IN THE ABOVE FUKAE SHIMA - KYUSHU CHANNEL.

IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER OR NOT CTF 17'S DISPATCH SOLELY DIRECTED THE CLOSING OF THIS CHANNEL, OR AT THE SAME TIME DIRECTED THAT A SUBMARINE BE STATIONED IN THE CHANNEL BETWEEN SHIMONO SHIMA AND UKU SHIMA.

WHATEVER THE INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY CTF 17 AT THIS TIME, THAT COMMANDER MAY VERY WELL HAVE REGRETTED THAT HE HAD FAILED TO SUPPLY SUBMARINES TO THE NAGASAKI - SASEBO AND HIT PARADE AREAS IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS TO INSURE DETECTION OF ENEMY FORCES MOVING TO AND FROM THE EMPIRE.

At 1509 CTF 17 realizing that, owing to the operations of the THIRD Fleet, the BLACKFIN would be delayed for a few days in joining TF 71, advised CTF 71 to that effect.*

(a) CONVOY COLLEGE.

Submarines operating in CONVOY COLLEGE were: SAILFISH, ICEFISH, SAWFISH, PARCHE, DRUM, SEA DRAGON, SHARK, BLACKFISH, SNOOK and COBIA. CTF 17 had directed these submarines to deploy in the above order from north to south (along a north - south line) from the southern tip of Formosa to Cape Bojeador in order to block Luzon Strait against enemy forces which might attempt to pass through. He had also directed each submarine to patrol a rectangle sixty miles east and west, and twenty-one miles north and south (Diagram "B"). He further had directed three of these submarines (SAILFISH, ICEFISH and SAWFISH), which were on lifeguard duty, to man their rectangles after completing their lifeguard duties.** These duties, for all but the SAWFISH, appear to have been completed after the B-29 strikes on the 16th, although the lifeguard submarines do not appear to have learned this until after midnight October 16th.

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 170609 October 1944 to CTF 71.

** CTF 17 Dispatch 150931 October 1944 to all submarines concerned.

By 0719 October 17th, all of these submarines were approximately on station. They operated submerged during daylight, on the surface during darkness. The designation of the SAWFISH, ICEFISH and SAILFISH as life-guards had caused a gap of about forty-five miles to exist between the SAILFISH and the PARCHE, because the ICEFISH, as will be discussed later, had difficulty in reaching her assigned rectangle.

During the day, the submarines operated more or less within their rectangles, although the gap between the SAILFISH and the PARCHE remained. The SAILFISH operated in the northern rectangle until 1927, when, because of radio difficulties, the Commanding Officer headed south to contact a friendly submarine. He wished CTF 17 to know that the SAILFISH was unable to make a contact report by radio, and further that she had recovered twelve downed carrier aviators. As a consequence of this action, by midnight two forty-five-mile gaps had developed: one between the ICEFISH and Formosa, the other between the ICEFISH and the SAILFISH.

THIS DECISION OF THE SAILFISH TO LEAVE HER RECTANGLE, WHICH WAS ALSO HER APPROXIMATE LIFEGUARD STATION, AND TO PROCEED SOUTH WAS OF DOUBTFUL CORRECTNESS, SINCE BY SO DOING SHE LEFT HER RECTANGLE ENTIRELY UNGUARDED DURING THE NIGHT HOURS. SHE KNEW THAT THE SAWFISH WAS STILL ON LIFEGUARD PATROL,* AND PROBABLY KNEW THAT THE ICEFISH WAS LIKEWISE ON LIFEGUARD PATROL, SINCE SHE HAD LOOKED FOR THE ICEFISH IN THE ICEFISH RECTANGLE DURING THE NIGHT AND HAD FAILED TO CONTACT HER.* THEREFORE, THE COMMANDING OFFICER MUST HAVE REALIZED THAT HIS MOST LIKELY CONTACT WAS THE PARCHE, WHICH WAS IN THE FOURTH RECTANGLE FROM THE NORTH AND CONSEQUENTLY SOME SIXTY MILES TO THE SOUTH. WOULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN MORE CORRECT FOR THE SAILFISH TO HAVE REMAINED ON STATION TO INSURE THAT HER RECTANGLE WAS BLOCKED (SHE STILL HAD HER TORPEDOES) AND TO HAVE LEFT ONLY IN CASE ENEMY FORCES OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE PASSED TO WARRANT HER DEPARTURE IN ORDER THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE HER CONTACT REPORT TRANSMITTED BY ANOTHER FRIENDLY SUBMARINE? CERTAINLY BOTH CTF 17 AND COMTHIRDFLT CONSIDERED THAT SHE WAS IN HER ASSIGNED RECTANGLE.

Save for the above difficulty of the SAILFISH, none of the CONVOY COLLEGE submarines except the ICEFISH experienced any unusual difficulty.** The ICEFISH, which shortly after midnight*** had contacted the SAWFISH and had received orders to discontinue lifeguard duties and to take station in her rectangle, did not reach her station during daylight because she was held down by contacts with Japanese patrol vessels and aircraft.****

The locations of the SHARK are assumed locations, since she was lost on October 24th with all records.

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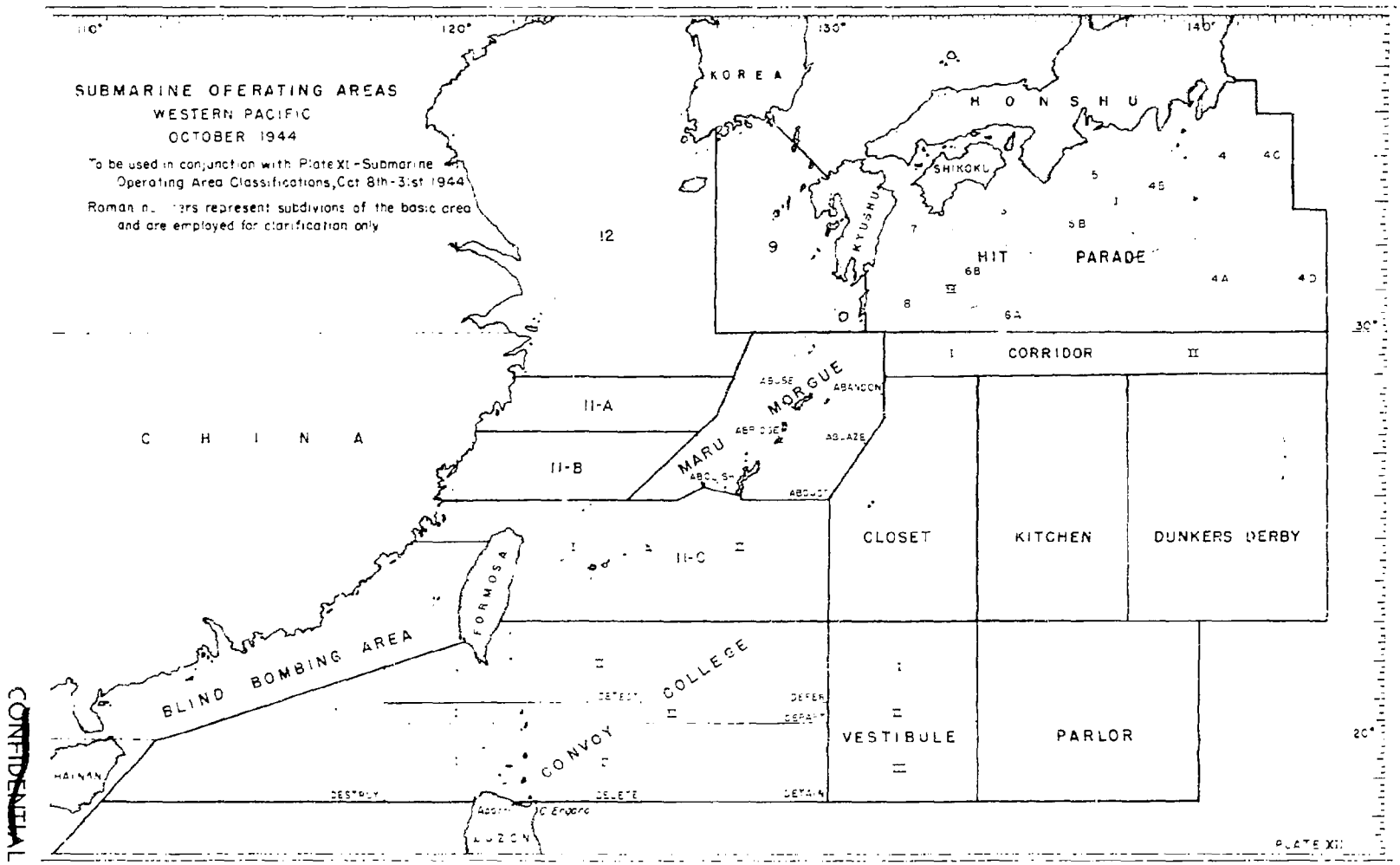
* War Patrol Report SAILFISH, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, Serial 037, December 11th, 1944.

** War Patrol Reports of submarines concerned.

*** Deck Log ICEFISH, October 17th, 1944.

**** War Patrol ICEFISH, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 011, November 13th, 1944.



CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

To the eastward of CONVOY COLLEGE in Area PARLOR was the BLACKFIN, which was preparing to pass through Luzon Strait in CONVOY COLLEGE en route to report to CTF 71 for duty. The BLACKFIN was being delayed in Area PARLOR by order of CTF 17 in order to clear COMTHIRDFLT's operating area.* She made no contacts.

(b) Northwest Coast Formosa.

The TANG was the sole Allied submarine operating in the area northwest of Formosa. The commanding officer had been directed to operate in Area 11-C and, if he so desired, to join the coordinated attack group (wolf pack) SILVERSIDES, TRIGGER and SALMON, also operating in that area but operating northeast of Formosa. Instead, he chose to operate to the northwest of Formosa, and at this time was off the China coast in the vicinity of Haitan Island. Sometime during this day, since he had made no important contacts and had sunk no shipping, he decided to shift his operations to the center of Formosa Strait.**

(c) Northeast Coast Formosa.

The SILVERSIDES (F), SALMON and TRIGGER comprised a coordinated attack group (wolf pack) which was operating in Area 11-C, and in particular in that portion of the area just northeast of Formosa, in order to intercept enemy shipping which was reportedly moving to and from the Empire along either side of the Nansei Shoto and along the east or west coasts of Formosa. These submarines operated submerged during the daytime and on the surface at night.

During this day the deployment of this wolf pack was designed to prevent the undetected passage of Japanese shipping through the channels between the southwestern end of the Nansei Shoto and northeast Formosa. This deployment was reinforced by CTF 17, who, on October 15th, had ordered the WHALE and the SEAHORSE to clear the THIRD Fleet operating area by a movement to the westward and to take station also at the southwest end of the Nansei Shoto,*** in Latitude 24°-00'N, Longitude 123°-00'E,**** in anticipation of a sortie by the Japanese Fleet.***

During daylight all five of these submarines remained submerged in their 0719 positions. When darkness fell they made the movements depicted on the chart. No contacts of any importance were made.

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* War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report TANG, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, no serial, September 10th, 1945.

*** War Patrol Report WHALE, Report of NINTH War Patrol, Serial 017, October 30th, 1944.

**** CINCPOA Dispatch 150932 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

(d) MARU MORGUE

The submarines patrolling the MARU MORGUE were, moving clockwise from the north: the BARBEL in Area ABANDON, where she had been directed to operate along the eastern edge; the SKATE in ABLAZE, where she had been directed to patrol in the vicinity of Latitude 27°-30'N, Longitude 130°-45'E; the SAURY in ABDUCT, where she had been directed to patrol close in to Okinawa; the BURRFISH in ABOLISH, where she also had been directed to patrol close in to Okinawa; the STERLET in ABRIDGE, where she had been directed to operate in the center of her area; and the SEA DOG in ABUSE, where she had been directed to operate along the western edge.

These submarines had been assigned these stations by CTF 17 on October 15th when COMTHIRDFLT had announced that he was expecting a fleet action with major Japanese forces, and all submarines had been directed to remain on these stations until further orders.*

It will be observed that during the day only the SKATE, BURRFISH and SEA DOG were on station. The BURRFISH, with the intention of returning the next day, retired from Okinawa during the night presumably for the purpose of charging batteries and avoiding radar detection during the period she was surfaced. The BARBEL, instead of patrolling the eastern edge of Area ABANDON, was more nearly south of center; the SAURY, instead of being close in to Okinawa, was some thirty-five miles away; and the STERLET, instead of being in the center of her area, was well on the western edge.

THE STATIONING OF THE FOUR NORTHERLY SUBMARINES (BARBEL, SKATE, STERLET, SEA DOG) WAS BASED UPON THE NORMAL TRACK, AT THIS TIME, OF JAPANESE SHIPPING TO AND FROM THE EMPIRE ALONG THE NANSEI SHOTO, AND IT WAS HOPED THAT, SHOULD JAPANESE COMBATANT FORCES MOVE SOUTH, THEY WOULD MOVE ALONG THESE TRACKS.** THIS HAD PROVEN TO BE REASONABLY CORRECT ON THE PREVIOUS DAY IN SO FAR AS CTF 17 WAS CONCERNED, SINCE THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY THE SKATE. HOWEVER, THIS WAS ON THE RETIREMENT OF THAT FORCE AND NOT ON ITS SORTIE SOUTH. ACTUALLY, BOTH THE BARBEL AND SKATE HAD FAILED TO CONTACT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, SINCE ITS SOUTHERLY COURSE HAD BEEN SOME FIFTY MILES TO THE EASTWARD OF THE EASTERN BORDER OF AREA ABANDON.

THE COMMENTS OF THE MARU MORGUE DISPOSITIONS (VOLUME 1, PAGES 172-175) CONCERNING THE INADEQUACY OF THESE DISPOSITIONS FOR THE LIMITED NUMBER OF SUBMARINES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN STILL VALID ON THIS DATE.

During the forenoon, at 0947, the SKATE replied to CTF 17's dispatch 161925 wherein that commander had queried the SKATE as to whether the ships she had contacted were heading northerly.*** The SKATE,

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 150312 October 1944 to all submarines MARU MORGUE.

** CTF 17 Operation Order 301-44, Serial 00809, September 6th, 1944, to SKATE; also CTF 17 Operation Order 316-44, Serial 00830, September 12th, 1944, to STERLET.

*** CTF 17 Dispatch 161925 October 1944 to SKATE.

JAPANESE NAVAL & MERCHANT SHIP LOSSES☆ EFFECTED BY T.F. 17 SUBMARINES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC-NORTH OF LAT. 18°-30' N. OCTOBER 1944

OCTOBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	TOTAL
POLAR CIRCUIT																																
SEAL																															1	1
HIT PARADE																																
GABILAN																															1	4
TREPANG	1										1																					
TRIGGER, SALMON, STERLET																																
AREA 9 & 12																																
CROAKER																									1					1		3
DUNKERS DERBY																																
KINGFISH																									1			2				5
SNAPPER																																
MARU MORGUE																																
SEA DOG																										2						3
STERLET																																
AREA 11-C *(FORMOSA STR.)*																																
TANG																									3	2						7
CONVOY COLLEGE																																
DRUM																													2			
HALIBUT																												1				
HOE																																
ICEFISH																									1				1			
POMFRET		1																														
SAWFISH																									1							
SEADRAGON																										3						19
SEAHORSE							1																									
SNOOK																									1	2						
WHALE							1																									
JALAO + CARRIER PLANES																																
TOTAL	3	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	9	6	3	2	0	0	1	1	42

☆ Sinkings include all merchant ships of 500 or more gross tons and all naval ships
(Prepared by Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee) February 1947

PLATE XIII

in her reply, stated that she had tracked the destroyers on course 030°(T) and the heavy ships on course 320°(T), that they were rendezvousing, and that the final course was definitely northerly.* In surfacing at 0737 to transmit her reply, the SKATE encountered airplanes and radio jamming interference and was forced to dive twice, with the result that the message was not finally transmitted until 0937. At 1135 the SKATE was bombed unsuccessfully by one or two enemy patrol planes. The Commanding Officer decided to remain submerged throughout the remainder of daylight.**

At 2100 the Commanding Officer SAURY decided to look for an aviator who had been downed on October 16th in Latitude 26°-35'N, Longitude 130°-35'E,*** and therefore headed to the eastern edge of his area to endeavor to locate him. He stated that he did this because (a) no cancellation of orders to look for the downed aviators had been received, and (b) dispatch reports indicated that the Japanese were running for cover instead of battle.****

THIS WAS PROBABLY A DIFFICULT DECISION FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER SAURY TO MAKE, SINCE IT REMOVED HIM EVEN FARTHER--NOW 160 MILES--FROM OKINAWA. BUT WAS IT CORRECT? IT WOULD APPEAR NOT, FOR SAURY'S OPERATIONS WERE IN SUPPORT OF A STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: THE PROTECTION OF ALLIED FORCES ENGAGED IN KING II. SHE HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO TAKE STATION CLOSE TO OKINAWA PRESUMABLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPORTING ENEMY NAVAL FORCES LEAVING OR ENTERING NAKAGUSUKU WAN (LATER KNOWN AS BUCKNER BAY), AND HAD BEEN FURTHER DIRECTED TO REMAIN THERE UNTIL FURTHER ORDERS.***** IF JAPANESE FORCES WERE RETIRING, WAS IT NOT STILL IMPORTANT TO HAVE REMAINED CLOSE TO OKINAWA, SINCE THESE FORCES COULD BE EXPECTED TO PASS CLOSE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF JAPANESE AIRCRAFT AND SURFACE FORCES THERE? THE SAME COMMENT APPLIES TO THE RETIREMENT OF THE BURRFISH WHICH HAD RETIRED TO THE NORTHWARD TO A DISTANCE OF SOME FORTY MILES FROM OKINAWA. IN BOTH OF THESE CASES, THE DEPARTURE OF THE SUBMARINES FROM THEIR ASSIGNED STATIONS WAS NOT KNOWN TO THEIR SUPERIORS.

All of these submarines patrolled submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness, with the exception of the SKATE and the SEA DOG. The SEA DOG endeavored to remain on the surface at all times, and generally succeeded. However, on occasions she was forced to submerge temporarily. The SKATE has been discussed previously.

Except for the SKATE's operations, the MARU MORGUE submarines patrolled uneventfully.

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* SKATE Dispatch 162244 October 1944 to CTF 17.

** War Patrol Report SKATE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 052, November 2nd, 1944.

*** CTF 17 Dispatch 160811 October 1944 to SAURY.

**** War Patrol Report SAURY, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 023, November 29th, 1944.

***** CTF 17 Dispatch 150312 October 1944 to All Submarines MARU MORGUE.

Meanwhile, the BILLFISH, which had been patrolling northwest of Iwo Jima, received orders at 2100 to proceed at best speed to the Nansei Shoto area, where she was to relieve the SKATE at sunset October 21st.*

(e) Nagasaki - Sasebo.

The three submarines assigned to this area, the ESCOLAR (F), PERCH and CROAKER, were operating in Tsushima Strait. They were operating as a coordinated attack group (wolf pack), as shown on Diagram "B", with the wolf pack commander in the ESCOLAR. The movements of the ESCOLAR are not exactly known, since she was lost with all hands after 2300 on this day or early the following morning, probably by striking a mine, of which a number had been observed in the area. She had been in Latitude 33°-44'N, Longitude 127°-33'E, and had reported, presumably at 2300, that she was heading for Latitude 33°-44'N, Longitude 129°-06'E.**

It seems highly probable that sometime after the ESCOLAR had surfaced (probably about 1830), the wolf pack commander received orders from CTF 17 directing him to block the passage between Fukae Shima and Kyushu. As a consequence, at about 2300 he directed the PERCH and the CROAKER to move into stations as follows: (a) PERCH south of Nagasaki,*** (b) CROAKER in Latitude 32°12'N, Longitude 129°-38'E.**** It is likely that the station for which the ESCOLAR was heading at 2300 was the new location which the wolf pack commander had chosen for that submarine with relation to the new stations ordered for the PERCH and the CROAKER.

THESE STATIONS, AS ASSIGNED, ARE DIFFICULT TO COMMENT ON, SINCE THE ORDERS TO THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY AND MAY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED. HOWEVER, FROM THE DIAGRAMS, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT IF THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER HAD RECEIVED ORDERS TO PATROL THE AREA BETWEEN FUKAE SHIMA AND KYUSHU, PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE RETIRING SECOND STRIKING FORCE, HE SHOULD HAVE MOVED THE ESCOLAR INTO THAT AREA AS WELL AS THE PERCH AND THE CROAKER. THIS WOULD HAVE EFFECTIVELY CLOSED THE CHANNEL, SINCE THE CHANNEL AT THE 100-FATHOM CURVE IS ABOUT SIXTY MILES WIDE. TWO SUBMARINES ARE NOT ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS EFFECTIVELY. THE STATIONING OF THE ESCOLAR IN THE CHANNEL BETWEEN SHIMONO SHIMA IN THE NORTH AND UKU SHIMA TO THE SOUTH WAS CLEARLY OF LITTLE VALUE, SINCE IN THIS POSITION SHE WAS UNABLE TO DETECT ENEMY FORCES APPROACHING THROUGH THE SOUTHERN PASSAGE.

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* War Patrol Report BILLFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 088, November 27th, 1944.

** U.S. Submarine Losses, World War II, Prepared by Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 1946, page 131.

*** War Patrol Report PERCH, Report of THIRD War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report CROAKER, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 027, November 10th, 1944.

ALSO, INASMUCH AS THE ESCOLAR WAS NOW SOME NINETY MILES FROM THE PERCH AND THE CROAKER, THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER COULD NO LONGER EXERCISE COMMAND IN THAT CAPACITY. IT WAS POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, FOR THE PERCH AND THE CROAKER TO OPERATE AS A WOLF PACK, BUT NO INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED BY THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER TO THIS EFFECT.

IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO PATROL NOT ONLY THE CHANNEL BETWEEN FUKAE SHIMA AND KYUSHU, BUT ALSO THE CHANNEL BETWEEN SHIMONO SHIMA AND UKU SHIMA, HIS DISPOSITION WAS ABOUT AS EFFECTIVE AS THE LIMITED NUMBER OF SHIPS PERMITTED. IF THIS WAS THE CASE, THE FAULT LAY WITH CTF 17, WHO HAD SUPPLIED INSUFFICIENT SUBMARINES TO PATROL ADEQUATELY THE VITAL SEA AREAS LEADING TO SHIMONOSEKI STRAIT, RATHER THAN WITH THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER.

Upon receipt of the orders from the wolf pack commander at 2300 to proceed to these new stations, the PERCH and the CROAKER departed present areas immediately and headed for their new stations at about fifteen knots.*

The patrols of the PERCH and the CROAKER on this day were uneventful. The patrol of the ESCOLAR likewise appears to have been uneventful, at least up to 2300.

(f) HIT PARADE.

The submarines in the HIT PARADE were assigned to two definite areas. These were (1) the approaches to Bungo Suido and (2) the approaches to Tokyo Bay.

(1) The approaches to Bungo Suido.

As discussed in Volume I (page 182) of this analysis, the approaches to Bungo Suido were being guarded by a coordinated attack group (wolf pack) consisting of the BESUGO (F), RONQUIL and GABILAN. Since their arrival on station, these submarines had rotated stations once. At 0719 October 17th, the BESUGO was in the western sector of the approaches to Bungo Suido, the GABILAN in the central (or middle) sector, and the RONQUIL in the eastern sector. The latter submarine operated about five miles south of Okino Shima in poor visibility and heavy seas.** All submarines operated submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness. Their mission was to prevent the undetected sortie of enemy task forces through Bungo Suido.***

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* Deck Logs PERCH and CROAKER, October 17th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report RONQUIL, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 038, November 28th, 1944.

*** CTF 17 Operation Order 328-44, September 25th, 1944, to BESUGO, GABILAN and RONQUIL.

ALTHOUGH THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO OPERATE IN AREAS SEVEN AND EIGHT, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT HE HAD REALIZED SOMETIME BEFORE THAT HE COULD NOT PREVENT THE UNDETECTED SORTIE OF ENEMY TASK FORCES THROUGH BUNGO SUIDO UNLESS HE STATIONED HIS WOLF PACK IN AREA SEVEN AS NEAR TO THE ENTRANCE TO BUNGO SUIDO AS POSSIBLE. FOR THIS REASON HE HAD BEEN OPERATING IN THAT AREA SINCE ABOUT OCTOBER 12TH. AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT IN VOLUME I, THE SUBMARINES WERE INSUFFICIENT IN NUMBER, BASED ON THE EFFECTIVE AVERAGE CONTACT RANGES,* AND TOO LOOSELY COORDINATED TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS. THIS IS CLEARLY SHOWN IN DIAGRAM "B", WHERE TWO ADJACENT SUBMARINES (BESUGO AND GABILAN) WERE AS MUCH AS FORTY MILES APART AT MIDNIGHT. SINCE THEY WERE FREE TO OPERATE AT WILL WITHIN THEIR OWN SECTORS, THE COORDINATION WAS NECESSARILY LOOSE.

The patrols of the BESUGO and GABILAN on this date were uneventful, although the RONQUIL observed three search planes in the forenoon and one in the afternoon.**

(2) Submarines in the approaches to Tokyo Bay.

The above approaches were guarded by two submarines, the TAMBOR and the GREENLING. The TAMBOR was patrolling twenty miles east of Miyake Shima,*** the GREENLING between Omai Zaki and Kozu Shima.**** Both submarines generally patrolled submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness or reduced visibility. However, on occasions, during daylight they operated at surface radar depth; that is, so that their radar antennae were clear of the water.*****

THE WEATHER CONDITIONS WERE NOT GOOD, THERE BEING PATCHES OF GROUND FOG WITH ACCOMPANYING REDUCED VISIBILITY. THE LOCATIONS OF THESE TWO SUBMARINES WERE CLEARLY INADEQUATE TO CLOSE THE APPROACHES TO TOKYO BAY. IN VOLUME I (PAGES 182, 183), IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT ONE SUBMARINE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GUARDING THE CHANNEL TO THE WESTWARD OF O SHIMA, AND TWO TO THE EASTWARD. THE COMMENT THEN MADE WAS EQUALLY APPLICABLE ON THIS DAY. WHY THEY CHOSE THESE POOR STATIONS IS NOT KNOWN, SINCE THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED TO OPERATE IN WATER 100 FATHOMS OR GREATER AND, IF NECESSARY, TO PURSUE THE ENEMY INTO SHALLOW WATER.****** THEY HAD BEEN FURTHER ORDERED, IN THEIR

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* Submarine Warfare Instructions, USF 9, Navy Department 1946, page 16-5, para. 1604; also Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, pages 81 and 182

** War Patrol Report RONQUIL, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 038, November 28th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report TAMBOR, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, Serial 08019, November 30th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report GREENLING, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, no serial, November 23rd, 1944.

***** Submarine Warfare Instructions, USF 9, Navy Department 1946, page 4-4, para. 413.

****** CTF 17 Dispatches 121853 October 1944 to GREENLING, and 141029 October 1944 to TAMBOR.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS, THAT, WHERE THE ENEMY WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SHALLOW WATER ROUTES CLOSE TO THE COAST, THEIR PATROLS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED CLOSE INSHORE AT COASTAL FOCAL POINTS.* THE ENEMY WAS OPERATING IN THIS FASHION IN THIS AREA; THEREFORE, SHOULD NOT THE TAMBOR HAVE BEEN OPERATING IN THE WATERS EAST OF O SHIMA, AS DID HER IMMEDIATE PREDECESSOR THE SEA DEVIL, AND SHOULD NOT THE GREENLING HAVE BEEN OPERATING IN THE WATERS TO THE WESTWARD OF O SHIMA? THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE SEA DEVIL STATED IN 1953 THAT, DURING HIS PATROL, HE HAD OPERATED IN THESE WATERS WITH NO UNUSUAL DIFFICULTY AND HAD EVEN GONE INTO SAGAMI NADA** (TOKYO BAY). UNFORTUNATELY, THE COMMANDING OFFICER SEA DEVIL DID NOT TELL HIS RELIEF OF THESE FACTS BECAUSE IT WAS THE USUAL PRACTICE OF THE SUBMARINES AT THIS TIME TO DEPART THEIR AREAS ON A DESIGNATED DATE, ON WHICH DATE THEIR RELIEF WAS EXPECTED TO ENTER THE AREA. THIS CONSTITUTED THE RELIEF. THERE WAS NO VISUAL CONTACT BETWEEN THE SUBMARINES. AS A RESULT, AN "ALONGSIDE" RELIEF WAS NOT MADE. THEREFORE, THE SEA DEVIL (AS DID THE TREPANG) HAD DEPARTED THE AREA WITH MUCH INFORMATION WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN OF GREAT VALUE TO HER RELIEF.

WHILE THIS METHOD OF RELIEVING WAS THE USUAL PRACTICE IN TF 17 AT THIS TIME, AND WHILE CTF 17 UNDOUBTEDLY HAD REASONS WHICH HE CONSIDERED SOUND FOR NOT MAKING "ALONGSIDE" RELIEFS--NOTABLY THE DIFFICULTIES OF RECOGNITION AND OTHER CONDITIONS OF SAFETY, IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT THE ABOVE DESCRIBED "USUAL PRACTICE" WAS NECESSARY AT ALL TIMES. DOES IT NOT SEEM CLEAR THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SUCCEEDING PATROLS WOULD HAVE BEEN MARKEDLY INCREASED HAD AN "ALONGSIDE" RELIEF BEEN ORDERED, WHENEVER PRACTICABLE, IN ORDER THAT VITAL INFORMATION MIGHT BE EXCHANGED.

OF COURSE OCCASIONS WILL ARISE WHERE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE RELIEVING SUBMARINE TO HAVE CERTAIN VITAL INFORMATION BUT WHERE IT IS UNWISE OR IMPRACTICAL TO MAKE ALONGSIDE RELIEFS. IN SUCH CASES THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE RETIRING SUBMARINE SHOULD, WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT, TRANSMIT THIS INFORMATION TO THE TASK FORCE COMMANDER FOR RELAY TO THE RELIEVING SUBMARINE OVER THE REGULAR SUBMARINE SCHEDULE.

IS IT NOT LOGICAL TO BELIEVE THAT HAD THE COMMANDING OFFICER TAMBOR MADE AN ALONGSIDE RELIEF OF THE SEA DEVIL, OR FAILING THAT, HAD HE RECEIVED, BY DISPATCH, THE BENEFIT OF THE LATTER'S EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THE AREA HE WOULD LIKEWISE HAVE OPERATED IN THE WATERS EAST OF O SHIMA?

THE PATROLS OF BOTH THE TAMBOR AND THE GREENLING WERE UNEVENTFUL AND NO CONTACTS OF ANY IMPORTANCE WERE MADE. MEANWHILE, THE SEA DEVIL PROCEEDED UNEVENTFULLY TOWARD MAJURO.***

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* CTF 17 Operation Plan 1-43, Serial 0807, June 24th, 1943, Annex B, para. 24.

** Statement of Captain Ralph E. Styles, USN, Commanding Officer SEA DEVIL during KING II Operation, to Commodor R. W. BATES, USN(Ret), Head, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College, September 4th, 1953.

*** War Patrol Report SEA DEVIL, Report of FIRST War Patrol, no serial, undated, but about October 25th, 1944.

(C) China - Burma - India Theater.

(1) Operations of C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

As has been shown in Volume I (Pages 56-58), the operations of the FOURTEENTH Air Force in support of KING II consisted, in the main, of daily reconnaissance by B-24's of the 308th Bomb Group based at Liuchow. This search, which had been requested on October 16th by CINCPAC* to detect movement of enemy naval forces toward the THIRD Fleet's area of operations east of Luzon and southeast of Formosa, was still of some importance since the operations of the THIRD Fleet continued to be in the same general area.

The search was designed to cover that area of the South China Sea bounded on the west by a line between Kamranh Bay and Huiling Island (about midway on the China coast between Hainan and Hong Kong) and on the east by the Lingayen Peninsula, Luzon.** It consisted of two courses, each flown by one B-24 every twelve hours, thus requiring four sorties per day. The courses, as shown on Diagram "B", were as follows:***

East Course: Liuchow to Huiling Island, thence southeast to a point sixty miles northwest of Lingayen, south for sixty miles, southwest for 150 miles, thence northwest to the China coast and Liuchow.

West Course: Liuchow to Huiling Island, thence south 515 miles, passing to the west of Paracel Reefs, then 170 miles northeast, then northward to the China coast and Liuchow, passing to the east of the reefs.

The day search planes departed Liuchow about 0800; the night search planes about 2000.***

THIS SEARCH PLAN WAS DISSIMILAR TO ANY TYPE OF AIR SEARCH IN USE BY THE U.S. NAVY AT THIS TIME, AND THE REASONING ON WHICH IT WAS BASED IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY. IT IS APPARENT THAT IT PROVIDED ONLY A LOW PROBABILITY OF DETECTION OF A MAJOR ENEMY FORCE WHICH MIGHT MOVE TOWARDS LUZON STRAIT FROM THE SOUTH, ALTHOUGH IT GAVE A HIGHER PROBABILITY OF DETECTION OF ENEMY SURFACE FORCES WHICH MIGHT BE MOVING NORTHWARD THROUGH THE CENTRAL SOUTH CHINA SEA.

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT BETTER COVERAGE WOULD HAVE RESULTED FROM A BARRIER PATROL. THIS TYPE OF PATROL, EMPLOYING FIVE FLIGHTS PER DAY WITH A RADAR DETECTION RANGE OF SIXTY MILES, AND EIGHT FLIGHTS PER DAY WITH A RADAR DETECTION RANGE OF FORTY MILES, WOULD HAVE PROVIDED A DETECTION

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* CINCPAC Dispatch 151230 October 1944 to COMNAVGRPCHINA.
** COMNAVGRPCHINA Dispatch 160935 October 1944 to CINCPOA.
*** Letter from Chief, Historical Division, Air University Library, November 8th, 1950, to President, U.S. Naval War College.

PROBABILITY OF EIGHTY-FIVE PER CENT FOR ANY SHIP TRYING TO TRANSIT IT AT ANY SPEED UP TO TWENTY KNOTS.*

Contacts by FOURTEENTH Air Force search planes on October 17th consisted of the following:**

(a) At 1043, a mixed nine-ship convoy, including one or two escort vessels, heading south, Latitude 19°-30'N, Longitude 111°-40'E (off Hainan Island). One enemy patrol-type seaplane was also spotted near the formation, apparently covering the convoy.

(b) At 1700, a six-ship convoy, including one escort vessel, a 5500/7500-ton freighter, two 7000/8500-ton freighter-transports, and two 2000/4500-ton freighter-transports, heading east, Latitude 19°-35'N, Longitude 112°-20'E.

(c) At 2325, three ships, types unknown, Latitude 18°-05'N, Longitude 111°-12'E; also four ships, types unknown, probably heading northwest, Latitude 17°-55'N, Longitude 110°-50'E.

(2) Operations of C.G. TWENTIETH Bomber Command, 0719 - 2400, October 17th.

It will be remembered from Volume I (Page 126) that COMTHIRD October 15th, because of a possible surface engagement with the Japa fleet had advised CINCPOA that no fast carriers would be available t KING II until further notice.*** CINCPOA then requested the TWENTI Command to exert maximum effort against enemy air forces on Formosa e situation clarified.**** Thereupon, the TWENTIETH Bomber Command, w October 14th had completed the last of its two scheduled strikes agai Formosa (the October 11th strike was cancelled because of bad weather) dered two additional strikes for October 16th and October 17th.

The October 16th strike, composed of seventy-three planes, struck Okayama with thirty-three planes, Heito with twenty-five, Takao with one, and miscellaneous targets on Formosa and the China coast with fourteen planes, accomplishing considerable damage (Volume I, Page 50).

The October 17th strike, composed of but twenty-four B-29's, attacked the air depot at Einansho and the harbor area at Takao. The results of the attack on Einansho could not be observed because of cloud cover, but at Takao

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* USF 8, Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1947, Part IV, Chapter XX, paragraphs 2070-2074, inclusive.

** Letter from Chief, Historical Division, Air University Library, November 8th, 1950, to President, U.S. Naval War College.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 150149 October 1944 to CINCPOA, etc.

**** CINCPOA Dispatch 150651 October 1944 to Deputy Commander 20th Air Force and COMNAVGRPCHINA.

six to seven railroad tracks in the marshalling yards were destroyed, two warehouses damaged, and two ships damaged. (Volume I, Pages 50, 51).

THE REASONS FOR EMPLOYING ONLY TWENTY-FOUR AIRCRAFT IN THE FINAL STRIKE BY THE B-29'S IN SUPPORT OF THE LEYTE LANDINGS HAVE NOT BEEN DEFINITELY ESTABLISHED, BUT THE FACTS ARE: (A) A SEVERE SCARCITY OF AVIATION GASOLINE AT THE B-29 ADVANCE BASES IN CENTRAL CHINA IMPOSED SHARP LIMITATIONS ON THE NUMBER OF PLANES THAT COULD BE EMPLOYED;* (B) THE B-29'S, FOR THE MOST PART, WERE COMMITTED TO THEIR PRIMARY MISSION OF STRATEGIC BOMBING IN JAPAN AND OCCUPIED CHINA, AND THE NUMBER THAT COULD BE SPARED FOR ATTACKING FORMOSA WAS EXTREMELY LIMITED;** (C) THE REQUEST ON OCTOBER 15TH FOR ADDITIONAL STRIKES,*** MAKING A TOTAL OF THREE INSTEAD OF TWO AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED, DID NOT ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE PREPARATIONS THAT HAD TO BE MADE FOR EACH MAJOR STRIKE LAUNCHED FROM CHINA BASES BECAUSE OF LIMITED FACILITIES IN THE FORWARD AREA.**** IN ANY EVENT, THE FULL CAPABILITY OF THE B-29'S WAS NOT USED AGAINST FORMOSA IN SUPPORT OF KING II.

Since the B-29's made no further air strikes against Formosa in support of KING II the TWENTIETH Bomber Command will be dropped from further discussion.

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* Director, Library Division, USAF History Section, Air University, Letter, February 23rd, 1951, to President U.S. Naval War College.

** Ibid. November 8th, 1950.

*** CINCPOA Dispatch 150651 October 1944 to Deputy Commander 20th Air Force and COMNAVGRPCHINA.

**** USSBS Report No. 66, The Strategic Air Operations of Very Heavy Bombardment in the War Against Japan, page 7.

CHAPTER II - JAPANESE OPERATIONS, 0719 - 2400 October 17th*

(A) Operations of CinC Combined Fleet

It will be remembered that CinC Combined Fleet, who had been at Shinchiku until October 16th, had, on that date, transferred his headquarters to Takao,** where he could be in close association with his Commander SIXTH Base Air Force. It will also be remembered that he was accompanied on this trip by his Deputy Chief of Staff, his Staff Air Officer, and by Vice Admiral Takijiro Onishi, IJN.*** He was anxiously awaiting reports from the search planes which had been launched that morning in order to discover what Allied forces were remaining within the radius of his search planes and what new Allied forces, if any, had moved into that area during darkness. He knew that on the previous day thirteen carriers had been located southeast of Formosa, which carriers were quite capable of continuing the attacks on that island, as well as of striking the Philippines,

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* (a) During the period of this volume all dispatches herein recorded as from CinC Combined Fleet originated with his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi unless they were prefixed with the words "Special DesOpOrd." Any dispatches so labeled were issued by CinC Combined Fleet himself from Formosa.

(b) The time of receipt of many Japanese dispatches has been generally unavailable to this analysis. Often the time of receipt is known for one command but is not known for other commands. In order to compensate for this, it has been assumed from an average time of receipt of a number of important dispatches that, unless otherwise stated, important dispatches concerning operations were received by action addressees in one half hour. Such assumed times of receipt are indicated by the phrase "at about." While this assumption may seem somewhat generous, a study of this analysis will show that the result of later receipt (such as one hour or more) would have caused little or no change in the basic study.

(c) Japanese Documents are identified in general by WDC and NA numbers. WDC represents the Washington Documents Center, now disestablished, and NA represents National Archives. The translation of certain documents and, notably the NACHI documents which latter documents were recovered from the Japanese heavy cruiser NACHI, sunk in Manila Bay, are identified by the term ATIS which represents the Allied Translater and Interpreter Section SW Pacific Area.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 161151 October 1944 to Combined Fleet, War Diary CRUDIV 7, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** He was likewise accompanied by his personal aide (Admiral Soemu Toyoda, IJN, The End of the Imperial Navy, (Tokyo, April 1950), pages 149-154.)

notably Luzon. His night searches had already made several contacts on what appeared to be two separate task groups; one at 0235 in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E, and one at 0250 in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E.* However, since he had no definite information concerning the Allied intentions and since he had no information concerning the composition of these groups or of their course and speed, it was obviously vital to have the earliest practicable information concerning the Allied strength and movement. He therefore followed the morning searches with more than passing interest. He knew these had been underway for some time from Shinchiku,** Kanoya,*** Okinawa**** and Garan Bi.*****

He knew in addition that, should a contact be made within 250 miles and should conditions be favorable, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force was prepared to attack, since he had directed all air strength present in Formosa to be ready on thirty minutes notice. He also knew that the total operational air strength available for attack at this time consisted of but eighty-eight fighters, forty carrier-type bombers and eight carrier-type attack planes.******

At about 0749, the exact time being indeterminate, he received a dispatch from Commander Naval Lookout Post on Suluan Island, wherein that commander reported:

"One enemy battleship and six destroyers sighted on bearing 065°(T), are penetrating into the strait. 0650."*******

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* Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402; also Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973) prepared by the Naval War College, Operations of CinC Combined Fleet until 0719 October 17th pages 444-448.

** Commander Western Attack Force THREE Dispatch 171352 October 1944 to General Battle Report Addressees, Detailed Action Report No.6, 708th Attack Unit, 762nd Air Group, Searches and Patrols of "Fs" Sectors, October 1st-17th 1944, WDC Documents 160579, NA 12297.

*** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 161923 October 1944, War Diary 51st Air Flotilla October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

**** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Signal Order No. 37 By Telephone to Western Attack Force TWO, War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

***** Detailed Action Report No. 1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

****** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th-23rd, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

******* Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170719 October 1944, presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

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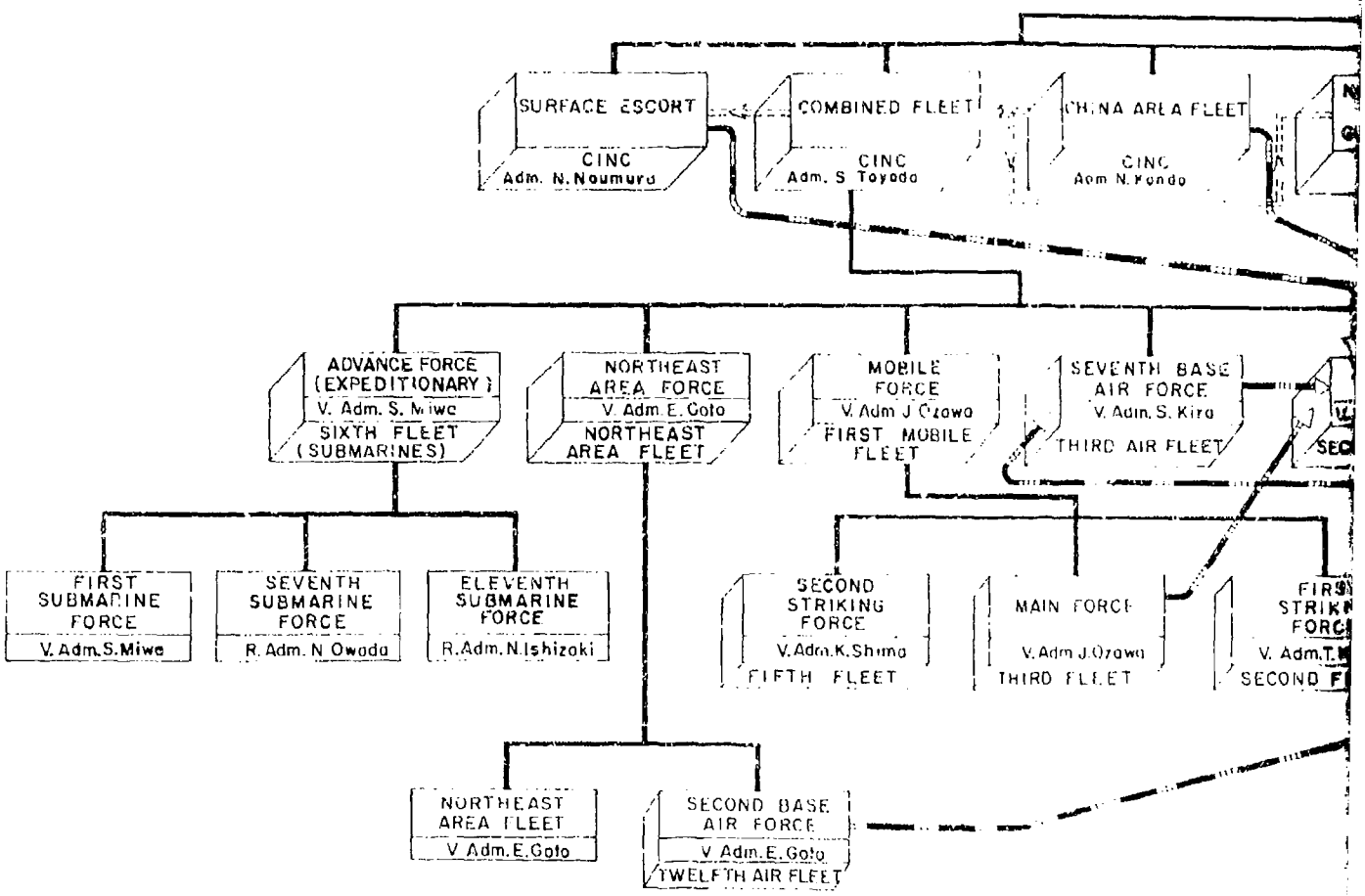
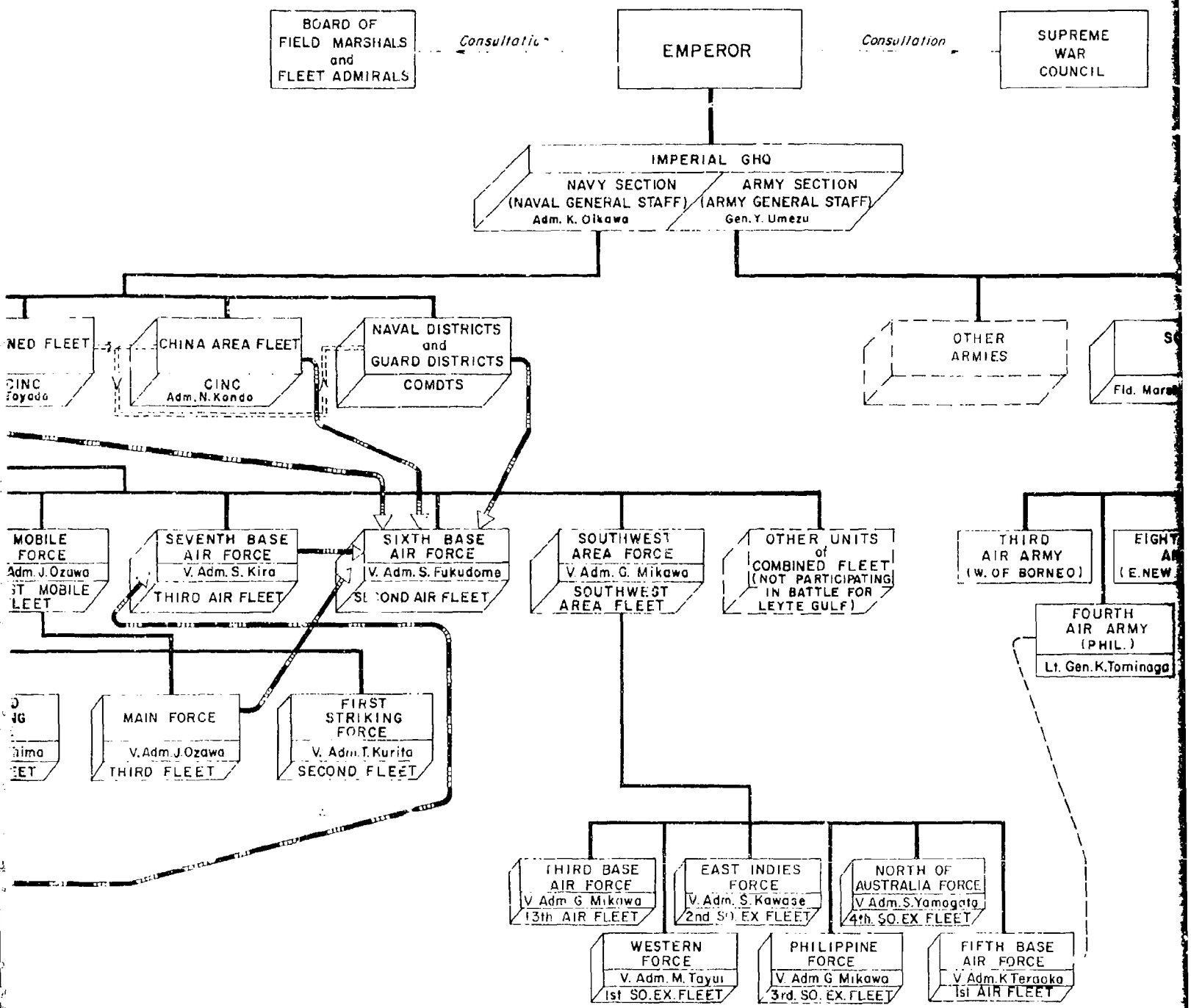
JAPANESE COMMAND RELATIONS
UNTIL 181101 OCTOBER 1944




BOARD OF FIELD MARSHALS and FLEET ADMIRALS
Consultation
EMPEROR
Consultation
SUPREME WAR COUNCIL
IMPERIAL GHQ
NAVY SECTION (NAVAL GENERAL STAFF) Adm. K. Oikawa
ARMY SECTION (ARMY GENERAL STAFF) Gen. Y. Umezu
NED FLEET
CINC Toyoda
CHINA AREA FLEET
CINC Adm. N. Kondo
NAVAL DISTRICTS and GUARD DISTRICTS
COMDTS
OTHER ARMIES
Fld. Mars
MOBILE FORCE
Adm. J. Ozawa
ST MOBILE FLEET
SEVENTH BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. S. Kira
THIRD AIR FLEET
SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. S. Fukudome
SECOND AIR FLEET
SOUTHWEST AREA FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
SOUTHWEST AREA FLEET
OTHER UNITS of COMBINED FLEET (NOT PARTICIPATING IN BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF)
THIRD AIR ARMY (W. OF BORNEO)
EIGHT A (E. NEW
FOURTH AIR ARMY (PHIL.)
Lt. Gen. K. Tominaga
MAIN FORCE
V. Adm. J. Ozawa
THIRD FLEET
FIRST STRIKING FORCE
V. Adm. T. Kurita
SECOND FLEET
THIRD BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
13th AIR FLEET
EAST INDIES FORCE
V. Adm. S. Kawase
2nd SO. EX FLEET
NORTH OF AUSTRALIA FORCE
V. Adm. S. Yamagata
4th. SO. EX FLEET
WESTERN FORCE
V. Adm. M. Tayui
1st SO. EX. FLEET
PHILIPPINE FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
3rd. SO. EX. FLEET
FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. K. Teraoka
1st AIR FLEET

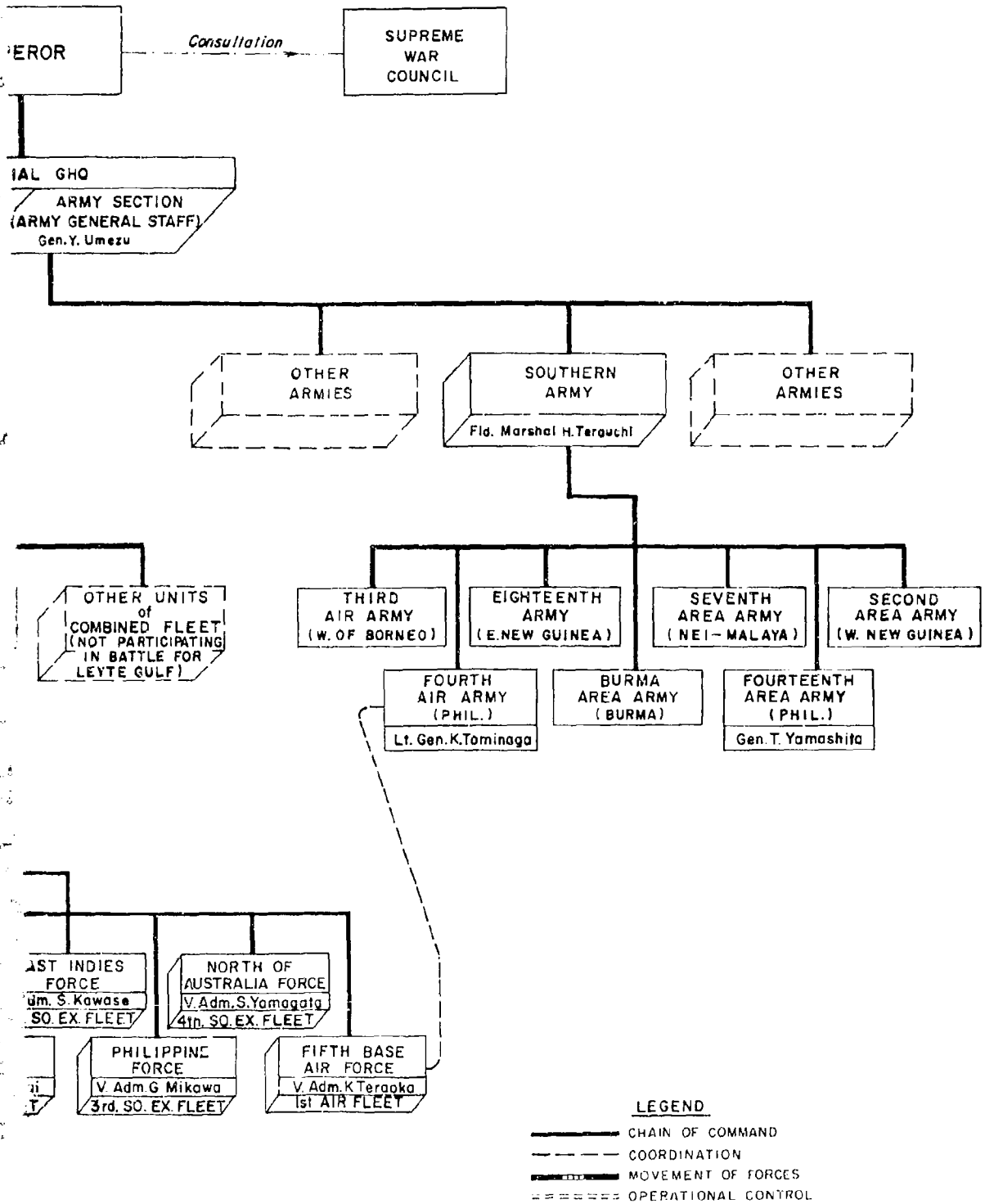


PLATE XIV

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This dispatch alarmed him since he had estimated, long before, that the Allies would launch invasion operations against strategic sectors of the southern Philippines, and might at the same time launch invasion operations against the central and northern Philippines should the counter air action by Japanese land-based aircraft prior to invasion prove ineffective.* The sighting of thirteen Allied carriers on the previous day had shown clearly that the counter air action had failed. Therefore, it is likely that the presence of these ships had alerted him to the fact that invasion operations might develop at any time. The fact that the Allied carriers had not as yet been discovered by his search planes was unimportant, since the presence of the Allied surface forces indicated that Allied carriers in sufficient strength to support the operations of this Allied surface force were necessarily nearby.

THAT THIS IS THE CORRECT ANALYSIS OF THE THOUGHT PROCESS OF CINC COMBINED FLEET SEEMS CLEAR, DESPITE THE FACT THAT ON THE PREVIOUS DAY HE HAD (a) INDICATED TO HIS COMMAND THAT IN HIS OPINION TF 38 OPERATIONS WOULD MOST LIKELY BE CONFINED TO PROTECTIVE OPERATIONS FOR ITS RETIRING DAMAGED SHIPS,** (b) HAD PERMITTED HIS CHIEF OF STAFF'S ORDERS TO COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE TO PREPARE TO SORTIE FOR DECISIVE BATTLE AGAINST TF 38 TO PASS WITHOUT COMMENT, (c) HAD FAILED TO ISSUE ORDERS TO THE MAIN FORCE AND THE SUBMARINE FORCE TO PREPARE TO SORTIE, AND (d) HAD FAILED EITHER (1) TO ORDER OILERS AHEAD TO FUEL THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE SHOULD IT SORTIE, OR (2) TO TRANSFER OILERS TO THAT FORCE SO THAT ITS COMMANDER MIGHT ORDER THEM AHEAD.

IT SEEMS CLEAR BECAUSE OF THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH CINC COMBINED FLEET ACTED. AT 0809, WITHOUT WAITING FOR VERIFICATION OR AMPLIFICATION OF THE SIGHTING REPORT, HE ORDERED A FLEET ALERT FOR SHO ONE (PHILIPPINES).*** HE DID THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT, IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH (SEPTEMBER), HE HAD, UNDER SOMEWHAT SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, RECEIVED A FLASH BUT HIGHLY ERRONEOUS REPORT FROM A LOOKOUT STATION IN THE DAVAO AREA OF THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES THAT A GREAT MANY CAMOUFLAGED AMPHIBIOUS TANKS WERE ADVANCING TOWARD THE DAVAO AIR BASE,**** AND HAD THE HUMILATING EXPERIENCE

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* Situation Estimate at the Start of the Allied Invasion of Palau and Halmahera, September 17th, 1944, Combined Fleet Headquarters, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item B.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 161209 October 1944 (Combined Fleet Special DesOpOrd No. 11) to Commander FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Force etc., War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170809, October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet Special DesOpOrd 14), Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO No. 1 Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th-28th, 1944 WDC Document 161639.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part I, May 1942 - September 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, August 1947, Historical Section, G-2, FEC File No. 805, JS-14.

OF ORDERING AN ALERT* WITHOUT WAITING FOR VERIFICATION OR AMPLIFICATION, WHICH ALERT HE HAD BEEN FORCED TO CANCEL THE FOLLOWING DAY.**

THIS ANALYSIS OF THE THOUGHT PROCESS OF THE CINC COMBINED FLEET IS SUPPORTED SOMEWHAT BY THE COMMENTS MADE LATER THAT DAY BY COMBATDIV ONE, WHO WAS AT LINGGA.*** IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT HOWEVER, THAT THESE COMMENTS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY COLORED BY THE VARIOUS ORDERS ISSUED THAT DAY BY CINC COMBINED FLEET AND BY HIS CHIEF OF STAFF INDICATED THE POSSIBILITY OF A LANDING IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. COMBATDIV ONE WROTE "ALTHOUGH RECENTLY THERE HAS BEEN NO INTELLIGENCE INDICATING A LARGE SCALE INVASION PLAN JUDGING FROM THE SULUAN LANDING AND THE COORDINATED MOVEMENT IN THE CAR NICOBAR AREA, IT CAN BE CONCLUDED THAT THIS IS THE PRELUDE TO A MAJOR LANDING OPERATION IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. ALSO WOULD NOT RECENT MANEUVERS IN THE FORMOSA AREA BE PART OF THAT PREPARATION?"***

The ordering of a SHO One alert was the maximum action that he could take at this time. This was because the authority to designate the area where the decisive battle was to be fought was properly reserved for Imperial General Headquarters,**** in order to insure coordination of effort between the Army and the Navy. The authority to issued an alert was evidently given to CinC Combined Fleet in order that he might facilitate his planning and expedite the preparedness of his naval forces. The alert was to be given when the Allied carrier force had approached the line at which the Japanese had decided to give battle.*****

CinC Combined Fleet now knew that, upon the receipt of this alert, his forces would take the following action:

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 101515 September 1944 to Combined Fleet, War Diary DESRON 11, September 1944, WDC Document 161715, NA 12712.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 110741 September 1944 to Combined Fleet, War Diary DESRON 11, September 1944, WDC Document 161715, NA 12712.

*** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15, 1953) Volume II.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Supplement to OpOrd No. 6, September 5th, 1944, Part I, General Outline of SHO Operations Section A Operational Subdivisions, Paragraph 1, Army Historical Division File HS-18. Item D.

***** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order No. 76, August 10th, 1944 Section VI, Outline of Operations, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, page 16 (NACHI Documents).

(a) Surface Forces - Prepare to sortie at twenty knots on four hours notice.* He knew, of course, that Commander FIRST Striking Force had already been ordered on the previous day by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet to prepare immediately to sortie.**

(b) Base Air Forces - While maintaining contact with the Allied carrier force, concentrate and start deploying to the areas designated in advance for SHO One. He knew that this was in progress since his Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had directed on the previous day that all available SIXTH Base Air Force units were to advance in full strength to Formosa and take position for the SHO Operation decisive air battle,*** which battle was already underway.

(c) Advance Expeditionary Force - Complete preparations to proceed to the combat area. He knew that four of these submarines were already en route for operations against TF 38.****

CINC COMBINED FLEET NOW, IF HE HAD NOT DONE SO BEFORE, REALIZED THE FATAL WEAKNESS OF THE SHO PLAN AS DISCUSSED IN VOLUME I UNDER "JAPANESE PLANS." THE BASIC WEAKNESS THEREIN INDICATED WAS THE NECESSITY TO ATTAIN PRECISE COORDINATION. THIS REQUIRED ADVANCE INFORMATION OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE ALLIED NAVAL AND AIR FORCES OF SUCH EXACTNESS THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO MOVE HIS MAIN FORCE FROM ITS ASSIGNED BASE (INLAND SEA) AND HIS FIRST STRIKING FORCE FROM ITS ASSIGNED BASE (LINGGA) IN SUFFICIENT TIME TO PERMIT THEIR COORDINATION IN THE OBJECTIVE AREA AT THE TIME OF THE ALLIED LANDING. HE REALIZED, OF COURSE, THAT IN THE CASE OF SHO ONE, FOR WHICH HE HAD ALERTED HIS FLEET, THIS WOULD REQUIRE, FOR THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, FOUR OR MORE DAYS, DEPENDING UPON THE OBJECTIVE AREA, AND MIGHT REQUIRE REFUELING.

He had expected to obtain information of Allied surface ship movements when such forces came within range of his search aircraft--600 miles--in the SHO One area. However, since his planes had either been unable to fly

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* Commander Mobile Force Operation Order No. 76, August 10th, 1944, Section VI, Outline of Operations, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, page 16 (NACHI Documents).

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 161405 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force and FIRST Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 350). War Diary ZUZUYA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 160821 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 63), WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** Submarine Operations 1944, Merit Rating Reports for Naval Ship Units, WDC Document 161011; also Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters 1944-1945, Department of Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-15.

in the area to the eastward of the central Philippines or had been unable to detect the Allied forces because of bad weather and low visibility there due to the passage of a typhoon, and since he had not stationed his submarines off the most likely departure points for Allied surface vessels (such as Manus and Hollandia), he should not have been surprised that these surface forces had arrived undetected.

Being now caught unprepared, his situation was desperate, since (a) his Main Force was still in the Inland Sea, with most of the operational strength of its carrier groups scattered from Kyushu to Formosa, and so shattered in the Battle off Formosa that, except for the planes left in Kyushu, they could not be reassembled and regrouped in time to operate from the carriers, (b) his SECOND Striking Force, which was composed of most of the cruiser and destroyer strength not included in the FIRST Striking Force, was in the vicinity of Amami O Shima, but he realized that this was not entirely unsatisfactory, since it could rejoin the Main Force at sea, provided it could be fueled beforehand, although other reasons, such as radio silence might make joining impracticable, (c) his FIRST Striking Force was at Lingga, (d) his SIXTH Base Air Force had lost about three-fourths of the operational aircraft of its T-Force and about one-third of the operational aircraft of its other units,* while the remainder (about 505 planes)** were urgently in need of reorganization and concentration, which operations were now underway,(e) his FIFTH Base Air Force (about ninety-eight planes)*** and the FOURTH Air Army (about 105 planes)**** were in limited strength, and (f) most of his submarines were still in the Inland Sea.

He now awaited further reports concerning Allied operations, not only in the Leyte area, but in other areas of the Philippines as well. He was, naturally, very interested in the reports of his search planes concerning other Allied contacts, since the Leyte operations now underway might be a feint and it was extremely important to discover the chosen Allied invasion point or points as soon as possible. In this connection, he was, of course, interested in the expansion of the Leyte operations, since the central Philippines had been considered as a logical invasion point for some time.*****

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army, Historical Division Document Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

** Operations of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th, 1944.

*** Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th, 1944.

**** Situation Estimate at the Start of the Allied Invasion of Palau and Halmahera, September 17th, 1944, Combined Fleet Headquarters, Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item B.

He did not have to wait very long for additional reports from the Leyte area, since at about 0825 he received a dispatch from Commander Philippine Force wherein that commander reported that "an enemy force of two battleships, two cruisers and six other ships, apparently destroyers, are operating in the vicinity of Suluan Island and are launching landing craft."* This report was partly incorrect, there being no battleships in the area at this time.

About six minutes later (0831) he received a dispatch from Commander Suluan Lookout Post which stated that at 0745 three enemy ships were preparing for landing operations.** This dispatch confirmed, in part, the preceding dispatch.

Also about this time he received a dispatch from Commander Southwest Area Force that Manila had been attacked at 0800 by 100 enemy aircraft, and that Legaspi had been attacked at the same time by fifty aircraft.*** This clearly showed that at least one of the Allied carrier task groups was still within striking range of the northern Philippines.

A few minutes later, he likely received a dispatch from Commander Southwest Area Force wherein that commander directed his command to prepare for the "P" Operation.**** Although what was meant by "P" Operation is not entirely clear, it is understood that it referred to certain local measures to be undertaken by the SW Area Force, and therefore Commander SW Area Force was, by its issuance, preparing his command for the defense of the Philippines. This would be the logical action to be taken by a force commander.

At about 0844 he received a dispatch, presumably from the Naval Lookout Post on Suluan Island, that at 0800 the enemy had commenced landing there.*****

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* Commander Philippine Force Dispatch 170755 October 1944 to SW Area Force, Detailed Action Report No. 13, DESRON 10, SHO Operation, October 17th-31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170801, presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

*** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 216764, (Microfilm).

**** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 170805 October 1944 to All Fleet and Squadron Commanders SW Area, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

***** Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170814 October 1944, presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

What he thought these operations portended is not known, but it seems highly probable that he now felt that invasion at one or more points, including possibly Leyte, was imminent. This seems so since the Allied operations were definitely following not only the usual pattern but the forecast by the Japanese High Command for the invasion of the Philippines. The operations underway at Leyte might well be advance operations designed to prepare the way for an amphibious landing there some days later.

At 0848 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet directed the Advance Expeditionary Force (Submarine Force) to prepare immediately to sortie in full strength to the central and southern Philippines.*

WHILE THE MENTAL REACTIONS OF CINC COMBINED FLEET TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY, IT IS LIKELY THAT HE REALIZED THAT HIS EARLIER DECISION TO COMMIT HIS LAND-BASED AIR FORCES, INCLUDING HIS CARRIER PLANES, TO AN ALL-OUT ATTACK AGAINST THE ALLIED CARRIERS HAD BEEN A SERIOUS ERROR, SINCE IT WAS NOW HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT SHO ONE WOULD BE ACTIVATED PRESENTLY, AND HIS AIR FORCES WERE FAR FROM READY TO CARRY OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE SHO ONE PLAN.

Whatever his thoughts, he observed that the High Command in Tokyo supported his alert, for at about 0850 (the MOGAMI at Lingga received this dispatch at this time)** he received a dispatch issued by his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi which also ordered SHO One alert.*** This showed that the Naval General Staff, with whom his Chief of Staff was in close communication, agreed with his analysis of the developing situation.

At about 0900 he received a contact report on two carriers and nine other ships bearing 085° (T) distant 245 miles from Manila.**** This was TG 38.4

At about 0908 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet advised Commander Main Force that at 0800 that day the enemy had begun landing on Suluan Island and that there was a possibility that they would attempt a large-scale landing in the south - central Philippines. He further advised that should

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170848 October 1944 to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 352), War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** Detailed Action Report MOGAMI, Battle of the Philippines, October 18th-25th, 1944, WDC Document 160463, NA 12653.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170835 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 351), WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

**** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

this occur it would be necessary for the Main Force to lure the enemy task force to the north to facilitate the penetration of the FIRST Striking Force, and therefore the Main Force should speed preparations to sortie with its full strength (including all operational aircraft of CARDIV ONE).*

This was an interesting dispatch, since it indicated how the Naval General Staff expected the surface forces to be employed should SHO One be activated. Certainly the Combined Fleet basic concept for the employment of the Main Force required change, since many of the best pilots in the 634th and 653rd Air Groups had been diverted to land operations with the SIXTH Base Air Force and were no longer available for immediate action with the carriers. CinC Combined Fleet knew that in his basic SHO Plan he had assigned to the Main Force the task of facilitating the penetration of the FIRST Striking Force into the Allied landing area by (a) diverting the Allied carrier task forces (THIRD Fleet) to the northeast and (b) engaging the Allied carrier task forces in a flank attack.** Now it was clear, from the information available to his Chief of Staff, that, owing to the transfer of his pilots, the carriers were no longer able to deliver an effective air attack, and therefore (b) above, could not be carried out successfully. It was also clear from the inclusion of the 601st Air Group, which he knew to be inadequately trained and with very few pilots capable of operating from carriers,*** that the air operations which the Main Force would be able to accomplish would be very limited indeed. Perhaps at this point he thoroughly regretted the transfer of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups to the SIXTH Base Air Force and wondered whether or not some planes of these two air groups were not as yet uncommitted.

At 0928 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet directed the FIRST Striking Force to sortie immediately and advance to Brunei.****

This was in accordance with the basic plans for SHO One and SHO Two, which stated, "As soon as the enemy landing plans are ascertained, the FIRST Striking Force will sortie and proceed towards Brunei or to the

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170908 October 1944 to Main Force, Detailed Action Report ZUIKAKU, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161008.

** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order No. 76, August 10th, 1944, Section II, Concrete Operational Policy, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, Page 5 (NACHI Document).

*** Letter from Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, to Mr. Clarke Kawakami, Translator for World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College about May 23rd, 1952.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170928 October 1944, to Commander FIRST Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 353) Detailed Action Report SHIGURE, Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 21st-27th, 1944, WDC Document 161717 (Part 4), NA 11801.

north-central Philippines".* It seems correct to say that this contemplated Brunei for SHO One, and the north central Philippines for SHO Two. This concept is supported by the Chief of Staff FIRST Striking Force, who stated later in part that in case SHO One was activated, the FIRST Striking Force was to move up to Brunei.**

At 0930 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet directed the WAKATSUKI and SUZUTSUKI which were returning to the Inland Sea from the approaches to Bungo Suido where the SUZUTSUKI had been torpedoed the previous night, to transfer air personnel to the KASHIMA and DISDIV THIRTY, which would then complete the task originally assigned the WAKATSUKI and SUZUTSUKI.***

At about 0945, CinC Combined Fleet received a report which located at 0915 a carrier task group in Latitude 22°-00'N, Longitude 126°-40'E.**** He also received a contact report on a carrier task group bearing 100°(T) distant 360 miles from Takao. This latter group consisted of about twenty ships, including three carriers and three battleships, one under tow, on an easterly course, speed about ten knots.***** Since these contacts were in almost exactly the same location it seems probable that he considered them to be one and the same contact. On this basis he now knew the location of four allied carrier task groups.

Also at about this time he received a report from the Commander 901st Air Group reporting the night search results. In addition to repeating the two contacts previously reported (0235 and 0250) he reported that there was a possibility of a slight error in the 0250 contact report. He also

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* Commander Mobile Force Operation Order No. 76, August 10th, 1944, Section II, Concrete Operational Policy, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, page 5 (NACHI Document).

** Rear Admiral Tomiji Koyanagi, ex-IJN, "The Battle of Leyte Gulf-A Retrospection", MS Translation by Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN (1952). A modified version of this article was published in the United States Naval Institute Proceedings, February 1953 (Vol. 79, No. 2)

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170930 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 466), War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force) Attack on Enemy Task Force Off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409; also Philippine Area Naval Operations Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104.

***** Philippine Area Naval Operation Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army, Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104.

reported the weather in the area of the contacts as partly cloudy, broken clouds, ceiling 2000 meters.*

At 0946 the Chief of Staff advised the Chief of Staff SIXTH Base Air Force and the Deputy Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, who was with CinC Combined Fleet at Takao, that "the enemy landing on Suluan Island appears to be part of an invasion move against the central and southern Philippines. The enemy appears to be launching the invasion in accordance with previous plans, despite the unsatisfactory progress of his Palau invasion operations and the severe losses inflicted on his carrier task forces. It is estimated that there is a strong possibility of a landing attempt by the forces under Halsey's command in the Samar - Leyte area, together with a landing by MacArthur's forces on southern Mindanao, but no definite conclusion has yet been reached. For the present, the FIRST Striking Force has been directed to move up to Brunei."**

THIS DISPATCH, WHILE IN GENERAL LOGICAL, REASONABLE AND RESTRAINED, WAS SURPRISINGLY INACCURATE AS REGARDS THE STATEMENT CONCERNING "THE SEVERE LOSSES INFLICTED ON THE ALLIED CARRIER FORCE." SINCE THE CHIEF OF STAFF WELL KNEW THAT (A) THIRTEEN ENEMY CARRIERS HAD BEEN OBSERVED ON THE PREVIOUS DAY, (B) NONE OF THESE CARRIERS HAD BEEN ATTACKED SINCE BY HIS OWN FORCES, (C) FOUR TASK GROUPS HAD BEEN LOCATED ON THIS DAY,*** AND (D) THESE FACTS WERE WELL KNOWN TO THE ADDRESSEES, IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT HE WAS ENDEAVORING TO MAINTAIN THE FICTION WHICH HAD BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED BY IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS AT 1730 ON THE PREVIOUS DAY THAT THE JAPANESE BASE AIR FORCES HAD GAINED A GREAT VICTORY OVER TF 38 AND HAD SUNK ELEVEN CARRIERS, TWO BATTLESHIPS, FOUR CURISERS, AND ELEVEN UNDETERMINED TYPES.****

IN CONNECTION WITH THESE COMMENTS, IT SEEMS WISE TO POINT OUT HERE THAT JAPANESE INTELLIGENCE RECORDS KEPT BY THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF NOT ONLY LIST THE FOUR TASK GROUPS ABOVE REFERRED TO BUT STATE, IN ADDITION, THAT THESE FOUR TASK GROUPS CONSISTED OF "MORE THAN EIGHT CARRIERS OPERATING IN THE FORMOSA AND PHILIPPINE AREAS."*** IT IS NOT KNOWN WHY THIS INTELLIGENCE

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* Commander 901st Air Group Dispatch 170915 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170946 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Action Report FIRST STRIKING Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** Diary of Vice Admiral Kimpei Teraoka, IJN, August 1st - November 1st, 1944, FIFTH Base Air Force in SHO Operation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 30, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

REFERRED TO THE CARRIERS "AS MORE THAN EIGHT" WHEN CONTACTS ON THE PREVIOUS DAY HAD DISCLOSED "THIRTEEN" CARRIERS IN THREE GROUPS, ONE OF WHICH GROUPS CONSISTED OF SEVEN CARRIERS. TODAY CONTACTS HAD DISCLOSED FOUR CARRIERS IN TWO GROUPS BUT NOTHING WAS KNOWN OF THE CARRIER STRENGTH OF THE TWO TASK GROUPS LOCATED BY THE NIGHT FLYING BOATS AT 0235 AND 0250. COULD NOT ONE OF THESE HAVE BEEN THE SEVEN CARRIER GROUP OF THE PREVIOUS DAY? AND WHAT WAS THE COMPOSITION OF THE OTHER? CERTAINLY THE INDICATIONS WERE THAT THE ENEMY STRENGTH EAST OF FORMOSA WAS INCREASING.*

Sometime in the late forenoon, CinC Combined Fleet received another contact report in an entirely new and hitherto quiet area -- the Nicobar Islands. This was a report from Commander NINTH Base Force in the Singapore area that his command had sighted what appeared to be an enemy task force of eight ships bearing 180° (T), distant 250 miles from Car Nicobar Island in the Nicobar Group.** No time of the contact was given. Some time later, undoubtedly he received amplifying reports which stated that (a) two carriers, two battleships, two cruisers and eight destroyers, supported by more than twenty planes, had attacked Car Nicobar and had carried out gunfire bombardment between 1030 and 1230, and (b) more than ten planes had attacked Nankauri.***

SINCE THEY OBVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED THE NICOBAR OPERATIONS AS PURELY DIVERSIONARY,**** NEITHER CINC COMBINED FLEET NOR THE HIGH COMMAND IN TOKYO TURNED THEIR ATTENTION FROM THE OPERATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES. THEY DECIDED TO LEAVE THAT TO THE ARMY AND NAVY COMMANDERS IN THE AREA WHO WERE JOINTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE AREA.***** THE ALLIES HAD HOPED TO DECEIVE THE JAPANESE INTO THINKING THAT LANDINGS IN THE NICOBARS WERE IMMINENT, AND THEREBY TO FORCE THEM EITHER TO HOLD THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE IN THE LINGGA - SINGAPORE AREA OR TO LAUNCH IT AGAINST THE ALLIED CARRIER FORCE ATTACKING THE NICOBARS, BUT JAPANESE REACTION WAS SLIGHT.******

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SECOND Air Fleet, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division File, Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

** Commander NINTH Base Force Dispatch 170950 October 1944 to Commander Western Force, Detailed Action Report No. 13 DESRON 10, SHO Operation October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1st - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739; Also Detailed Action Report SHIGURE, Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 23rd - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 1[illegible]17 (Part IV), NA 11801.

***** Imperial General Headquarters Army High Command Record Mid-1941 - August 1945, Japanese Monograph No. 45, Page 156, HQ FEC Military History Section Research Division Japanese Monograph No. 45.

****** Report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff by the Supreme Allied Commander Southeast Asia 1943 - 1945, London; His Majesty's Stationary Office 1951, paragraph 283.

It is possible that at about 0959 CinC Combined Fleet received an erroneous report of an air raid on Okinawa which reportedly occurred at 0929, but since this report was recorded solely by the ABUKUMA,* it seems scarcely probable that he received it.

At about 1140 he received a contact report from a Kanoya search plane that at 1110 in Latitude 22°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E there were two carriers, two battleships, and ten other ships proceeding west.** This contact was in the same area as the 0915 contact. Since (a) this plane reported no other contacts and (b) the Japanese reported only four groups on this day and (c) if this 1110 contact is considered as another contact it would be the fifth group reported this date; it therefore seems probable that the Japanese considered the 0915 and 1110 contacts as the same group even though the reported composition was not the same.

CinC Combined Fleet now decided that the situation was becoming somewhat clearer, and that it was unwise for him to remain in Takao, since very important decisions were about to be made in Tokyo and Hiyoshi. He did not believe the Combined Fleet decisions should be entrusted to his Chief of Staff at his headquarters in Hiyoshi;*** he correctly wished to make them himself. He also wished to be in position to direct adequately the operations of the Combined Fleet should SHO One be activated by Imperial General Headquarters. This he was clearly unable to do on Formosa. He therefore, sometime between 1200 and 1230, accompanied by his small staff, departed Takao for Shinchiku, which was his first stop en route to Hiyoshi.**** At the same time Vice Admiral Onishi departed Takao for Manila, where he was to relieve the present Commander FIFTH Base Air Force.***** He appears to have arrived in Manila late that afternoon.

At 1201 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet outlined by dispatch his views regarding the coordinated operations of the FIRST Striking Force and the Main Force in the forthcoming operations. He stated:******

"(1) Assuming that the enemy will make a landing in the Samar - Leyte

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* War Diary ABUKUMA October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** Admiral Soemu Toyoda, ex-IJN, "The End of the Imperial Navy," Tokyo, April 1950, pages 149-154.

**** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

***** Vice Admiral Kimpei Teraoka, IJN.

****** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commanders Mobile Force, FIRST Striking Force, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

area, it is estimated, at the present moment, that the FIRST Striking Force will be able to carry out its penetration just b fore dawn on October 22nd, and that the Main Force, acting in support, will sortie on the morning of the 19th, advancing to the waters east of Luzon Strait by the evening of October 21st. It is desired that the Main Force press sortie preparations on the basis of the above.

"(2) From the time that a sortie is ordered for the Main Force [less JUNYO, RYUHO, DESRON 11 and CARDIV 1 (except air units)] and CORTRON 31 (repeat order to be issued), the operations of all forces are scheduled to be placed under direct command of Commander in Chief Combined Fleet.

"(3) Repeat order will be issued incorporating CORTRON 31 (less an element) in the Main Force."

This was an important estimate since it was the first time that anyone in authority had indicated where or when the Allied landing was likely to be effected. The Chief of Staff quite properly was endeavoring by these instructions so to prepare the Combined Fleet that, should SHO One be activated, the coordination to be effected by all his forces at the Allied beachheads would approximate the basic SHO One timetable as closely as possible.

There is no documentary evidence available to this study which indicates that it had been previously planned that, should a landing be made in the Leyte-Samar area, the FIRST Striking Force penetration was to be effected by passage through San Bernardino Strait. Nevertheless, on the basis of the calculations of the time required for the two shortest feasible routes, and on certain other factors mentioned below, such a plan appears to have existed. The distance from Lingga-Singapore to Leyte Gulf via Balabac Strait and the Mindanao Sea is about 1500 miles, which, at sixteen knots, is only ninety-four hours steaming, whereas the distance via Balabac Strait and San Bernardino Strait is about 1750 miles, which, at sixteen knots, is about 109 hours steaming.

Since the Chief of Staff's Plan called for penetration by the FIRST Striking Force just before dawn on October 22nd, and since departure of the FIRST Striking Force from Lingga could be expected to occur at about 1600 October 17th (Commander FIRST Striking Force had reported on the previous day* that except for the AOBA his command would be ready for sea by about noon on October 17th), the addition of 109 hours--or about four days and thirteen hours--would exactly meet the specifications of the Chief of Staff's plan by positioning the FIRST Striking Force off the eastern entrance to Leyte Gulf at 0500 October 22nd. Therefore, this points to the San Bernardino Strait passage as the planned route.

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 161800 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, WDC Document 161041, NA 11839.

It is not known specifically what departure time was anticipated by the Chief of Staff and, therefore, this calculation is by no means conclusive in itself. However, it has more character when it is considered that Commander FIRST Striking Force was more concerned with being within air search range of Allied land based aircraft than he was with traversing a known submarine threat. As will be shown later, he objected to a route through the Mindanao Sea because it was under surveillance by such aircraft.* Is it not logical to assume then that the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet likewise objected to the Mindanao Sea route?

THIS WAS ALSO A TIGHT ESTIMATE, FOR IN CALCULATING THAT THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WOULD BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT ITS PENETRATION JUST BEFORE DAWN ON THE 22nd, THE CHIEF OF STAFF APPEARS TO HAVE FELT THAT THAT FORCE WOULD PROCEED ON A DIRECT ROUTE BY-PASSING BRUNEI AND, BASED ON EXPECTED FUEL CONSUMPTIONS, WOULD NOT REQUIRE REFUELING EXCEPT PERHAPS THE DESTROYERS FROM THE HEAVY SHIPS. IT MAY HAVE BEEN FOR THIS REASON THAT HE HAD NOT AS YET ORDERED OILERS FROM LINGGA - SINGAPORE TO BRUNEI TO FUEL THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, ALTHOUGH THAT FORCE HAD ALREADY BEEN ORDERED THERE. (IT IS, OF COURSE, ACCEPTED HERE AS A FACT THAT THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET KNEW THAT, EXCEPTING FOR THE NICHIEI MARU, WHICH WAS AT SANA, HAINAN ISLAND, NONE OF THE JAPANESE OILERS OF THE LINGGA - SINGAPORE GROUPS WERE CAPABLE OF REFUELING AT SEA.)** DOES IT NOT SEEM SURPRISING THAT THE CHIEF OF STAFF WOULD HAVE EXPECTED COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE TO PROCEED IN A DIRECT MANNER, SINCE SUCH ACTION WOULD MOST LIKELY ENCOUNTER ALLIED SUBMARINES WHICH COULD BE EXPECTED TO BE LOCATED IN INTERCEPTING POSITIONS ALONG SUCH A ROUTE FROM LINGGA - SINGAPORE TO THE OBJECTIVE AREA? THIS WAS NOT A NEW THOUGHT, FOR, IN THEIR ESTIMATES PRECEDING THE ALLIED INVASION OF PALAU - HALMAHERA IN SEPTEMBER, THE JAPANESE HAD STATED THEIR BELIEF THAT THE ALLIES WOULD INCREASE SUBMARINE ACTIVITIES IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE JAPANESE FROM DEPLOYING THEIR COMBAT STRENGTH TO THE PHILIPPINES.*** ACTUALLY, THE ALLIES HAD STATIONED THE HAMMERHEAD IN THE SOUTHWEST APPROACHES TO BRUNEI, THE DACE IN THE WESTERN APPROACHES TO BALABAC STRAIT AND THE DARTER IN THE WESTERN APPROACHES TO PALAWAN PASSAGE.****

At about this same time the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet received Commander FIRST Striking Force's 171125 dispatch wherein that commander directed the oilers YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU, with escorts, to advance to Brunei

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* Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** Situation Estimate at the Start of the Allied Invasion of Palau and Halmahera, September 17th, 1944, Combined Fleet Headquarters, Department of the Army, Historical Division, Microfilm HS-26, Item B.

**** CTF 77 Dispatch 101426 October 1944 to COMSEVENTHFLT and COMSOWESPAC.

as soon as they had taken on full loads of fuel.* Since these oilers were under direct command of CinC Combined Fleet, does it not seem that this action by Commander FIRST Striking Force indicated an urgency? Whether or not this dispatch alerted the Chief of Staff to the fact that Commander FIRST Striking Force expected to fuel his command from oilers at Brunei is not known, but it should have caused him to re-examine his proposed plans. He probably wondered why Commander FIRST Striking Force had designated a fourteen-knot oiler (HAKKO MARU) and a ten-knot oiler (YUHO MARU) rather than two fourteen-knot oilers.

At about 1245 the Chief of Staff received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch wherein that commander advised that the FIRST Striking Force would sortie from Lingga at 0100 the following morning and would, at sixteen knots and on indirect courses through the South China Sea (which courses were given in this dispatch), arrive at Brunei on October 20th.**

The receipt of the above two dispatches must have given cause for concern at Hiyoshi. It was clear now that the plan which estimated that the FIRST Striking Force would be able to arrive at Leyte before dawn on the 22nd was infeasible and that X-day for the penetration would therefore be considerably delayed; but how long depended upon Commander FIRST Striking Force. Since the entire SHO Plan was keyed to the time of arrival of the FIRST Striking Force in the objective area, the Chief of Staff awaited further advices from that command.

It will be observed that in the Chief of Staff's 171201 dispatch he advised the Combined Fleet of an impending change in the command structure, wherein the FIRST and SECOND Striking Forces, which had heretofore been under the command of Commander Mobile Force, would be under the direct command of CinC Combined Fleet. This was in accordance with a previous recommendation of Commander Mobile Force***.

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171125 October 1944 to HAKKO MARU (FIRST Striking Force DesOpOrd 55), War Diary DESRON 10 October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander Mobile Force, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1st-25th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973; also Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th-27th, 1944 WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

At 1329 the CinC Combined Fleet arrived at Shinchiku* and most likely received there all of the above dispatches which were being transmitted while he was en route and which, therefore had not been received. He also received a report from Tainan that that base had been attacked successfully, commencing at about 1230, by over ten B-29's (actually the strike had been made by twenty-four China-based B-29's), and that the bombing power of the B-29's was tremendous.** Since strikes by China-based U.S. Air Forces against Formosa and Luzon had been forecast on the previous day, it seems likely that this air strike had been anticipated.***

CINC COMBINED FLEET NOW, PROBABLY (A) BECAUSE OF THESE DISPATCHES, (B) BECAUSE OF HIS REALIZATION THAT VITAL DECISIONS CONCERNING THE FUTURE OPERATIONS OF HIS COMMAND WITH RELATION TO SHO ONE WERE BEING FORMULATED BY HIS CHIEF OF STAFF AT HIYOSHI AND LIKELY WOULD BE FIRMED IN A MATTER OF HOURS, AND (C) FEELING THAT (1) HE SHOULD FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF WITH THE DEVELOPING SITUATION SO THAT HE MIGHT BE ENABLED TO MAKE ANY DECISIONS WHICH SEEMED NECESSARY, AND (2) HE COULD ACCOMPLISH LITTLE WHILE EN ROUTE TO HIYOSHI, DECIDED TO REMAIN AT SHINCHIKU UNTIL THE DECISIONS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION HAD BEEN MADE. IF SUCH WERE THE REASONS FOR HIS DELAY AT SHINCHIKU, THEY WERE CERTAINLY SOUND, FOR HE WAS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS OF THE COMBINED FLEET.

At 1338 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet advised interested commands that, in the event of activation of SHO One, transfers in addition to those escort vessels already transferred to the FIRST Striking Force for duty as oiler escorts were contemplated as follows: (a) four escort vessels or destroyers from the FIRST Escort Force to the Main Force for employment as oiler escorts; and (b) most of the available Anti-Submarine Patrol Force in the Inland Sea to the Main Force. He also advised that the KAIYO and SHINYO, both escort carriers, the former operating with CinC Combined Fleet, the latter with the FIRST Escort Force, would for the time being, not be included in either the Main Force or the FIRST Striking Force**** (the FIRST Escort Force was not attached to the Combined Fleet).

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171329 October 1944 to All Commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th-23rd, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

*** Chief of Special Affairs Bureau, Imperial General Headquarters Dispatch 161005 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171338 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Escort Force, etc., Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

THIS DECISION NOT TO TRANSFER THE KAIYO OR SHINYO TO THE MAIN FORCE IS CONSIDERED SOUND, SINCE THE SHO PLAN CONTEMPLATED DIVERSION ONLY FOR THE MAIN FORCE, AND THE ADDITION OF ONE OR BOTH OF THESE ESCORT CARRIERS WOULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED LITTLE TO SUCH DIVERSIONARY EFFORT. CERTAINLY THE FLIGHT DECKS WERE NOT REQUIRED, SINCE THERE WERE AMPLE ACCOMODATIONS AVAILABLE WITHIN CARDIV THREE. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THESE TWO ESCORT CARRIERS, IN SO FAR AS THE MAIN FORCE WAS CONCERNED, COULD BE BETTER EMPLOYED BY CONTINUING THEM IN THEIR ESCORT DUTIES. HOWEVER, THE DECISION IS NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARILY SOUND AS REGARDS THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, SINCE THE SHINYO, WHICH WAS IN THE VICINITY OF HAINAN ISLAND, COULD HAVE ARRIVED, AT THE LATEST, IN TIME TO JOIN THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE PRIOR TO ITS SORTIE FROM BRUNEI. (THE KAIYO WAS IN THE EMPIRE AT THIS TIME).* IN THIS CONNECTION IT WILL BE RECOLLECTED THAT COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE, AS A RESULT OF WAR GAMES CONDUCTED IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, HAD STATED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WITH DIRECTLY COOPERATING AIR STRENGTH; THAT THE PRESENT BASE AIR FORCES COULD NOT BE COUNTED ON TO PROVIDE ANY SUBSTANTIALLY EFFECTIVE DIRECT COOPERATION; AND THAT THERE WAS GREAT PROBABILITY THAT THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WOULD FIND ITSELF CARRYING OUT ITS OWN OPERATIONS ALONE AND UNSUPPORTED. HE THEREFORE ADVOCATED ALLOTING A CARRIER DIVISION TO THE DIRECT SUPPORT OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, SINCE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WAS ASSIGNED TO THAT FORCE.**

WHILE THE CARRIER DIVISION THAT HE VISUALIZED WAS A FIRST-LINE CARRIER DIVISION (CARDIV THREE), DOES IT NOT SEEM CORRECT TO SAY THAT THE ADDITION OF THE SHINYO WITH POSSIBLY TWENTY-FOUR PLANES,*** AND WITH PILOTS TRAINED IN ANTISUBMARINE OPERATIONS, COULD HAVE BEEN A SOURCE OF GREAT STRENGTH TO COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE IN PASSING THROUGH WATERS WHICH HE EXPECTED TO BE INFESTED WITH SUBMARINES?

Again at 1406 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet issued orders to the Combined Fleet in implementation of the SHO One Alert. In this dispatch he directed Commander SIXTH Base Air Force to concentrate in the Formosa area his principal remaining strength (including among other units designated, the attached aircraft of CARDIVs THREE and FOUR), to regroup his forces, and then to move to the Philippines as the situation permitted, at

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* War Diary 931st Air Group, October 1944, WDC Document 160151, NA 12319.

** Commander Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of the Army Historical Division Japanese Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

*** The KAIYO was equipped with possibly 24 planes and made 23.8 knots. (It is assumed that the SHINYO which was considerably larger was at least similarly equipped and of similar speed). "Japanese Naval Vessels at the End of the War", compiled by Shizuo Fukui, Administrative Division, Second Demobilization Bureau, April 25th, 1947.

the same time continuing combat operations. He further directed that CARDIV THREE air units (653rd Air Group) still remaining in the homeland be restored to CARDIV.* This may have been encouraging to the CinC Combined Fleet, because it indicated that his Main Force would not be entirely devoid of air strength.

The order directing that the units of the 653rd Air Group remaining in the homeland be restored to CARDIV THREE resulted from a conference by the senior staff officer of the Mobile Force with Combined Fleet Headquarters, held during the forenoon, wherein it was decided to organize an air group incorporating such planes of the 653rd and 634th Air Groups as had not as yet been transferred from the homeland, together with all planes of the 601st Air Group capable of carrier operations.**

IN MAKING THIS DECISION, COMBINED FLEET HEADQUARTERS HAD HAD TO DECIDE BETWEEN TWO ALTERNATIVES. THESE WERE WHETHER THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS FOR SHO ONE, SHOULD IT BE ACTIVATED, WOULD BE IMPROVED BY RETURNING THE REMAINDER OF THE ABOVE-MEMTIONED AIR GROUPS TO THE MAIN FORCE, OR WHETHER THEY WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY RETAINING THE AIR GROUPS WITHIN THE SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE. WHILE THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET'S REASONING BY WHICH HE DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO RETURN THE PLANES TO THE MAIN FORCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, IT SEEMS CORRECT TO SAY THAT HE DID THIS ON THE BASIS THAT THE LAND-BASED AIR FORCES HAD NOT BEEN EFFECTIVE AND COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO IMPROVE, WHEREAS THE DIVERSIONARY EFFORT OF THE MAIN FORCE MIGHT WELL BE SUCCESSFUL IF IT HAD SUFFICIENT AIRCRAFT TO MAKE IT APPEAR A POWERFUL THREAT.

At about 1420 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet received a dispatch from Commander Main Force, evidently based on the forenoon conference, since its time group preceded the Chief of Staff's dispatch by some sixteen minutes, wherein that commander designated the units to sortie and directed them to complete preparations to sortie immediately. He ordered the remaining air strength of the 653rd Air Group and that portion of the 601st Air Group capable of carrier operations to embark on the carriers of CARDIV THREE. In this dispatch he specifically exempted the 634th Air Group.***

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 355), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258 NA 12593.

** Detailed Action Report Commander Main Force, SHO Operations, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force, Combined Fleet, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO One Operations October 20th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

At 1427 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet transferred the ISUZU, MAKI, AKIKAZE, KIRI, KUWA, and the 931st Air Group from the Anti-Submarine Patrol Force to the Main Force. He also in the same dispatch directed the Main Force (less JUNYO, RYUHO and CARDIV ONE) to be ready for sortie by 0600 October 19th.*

At first glance this order to the Main Force to be ready to sortie at 0600 October 19th appears confusing, since it seems to show that the CinC Combined Fleet either (a) had not received Commander FIRST Striking Force's 171125 or 171215, or (b) had decided to adhere to his own plan as prescribed in his 171201.

It is not believed that either of these possibilities is correct, since in the case of (a) above, over three hours had elapsed since the messages were dispatched; in the case of (b) above, sufficient data was not in the hands of the Chief of Staff to permit him to make firm commitments at this time. Does it not seem more likely that the Chief of Staff, while awaiting direct word from the Commander FIRST Striking Force, considered it well to obtain the maximum readiness within the command?

Some time during the afternoon, Combined Fleet Headquarters at Hiyoshi received word from Commander Main Force that because of the loading of aircraft, the Main Force would be unable to sortie on the morning of October 19th as directed by the Chief of Staff in his 171201, but would be delayed until the afternoon of the following day (October 20th.** Whether or not the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet was aware of this fact before he learned that the FIRST Striking Force would be delayed, is not known. However, it seems unlikely since the number of planes available, the number of qualified pilots, and other logistic matters had to be determined by Commander Main Force before he could establish his earliest departure time.

At 1621 the Chief of Staff restored DESDIV TWO (presumably meaning the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO, which were on an independent mission) to the FIRST Striking Force,*** the third destroyer of the division (the KIYOSHIMO) having remained with the parent force.

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171427 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report KUWA, Battle off the Philippines, October 20th-26th, 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

** Detailed Action Report Commander Main Force, SHO One Operations, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CinC Combined Fleet 171621 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force Commander FIRST Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 467), Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

At about 1655 CinC Combined Fleet received Commander Main Force's dispatch wherein that commander (a) increased the Main Force sortie strength by the addition of the TAMA and the SUGI, and (b) directed that that portion of the 634th Air Group remaining at Oita and Kagoshima Air Bases capable of operating from carriers would also be embarked in CARDIV THREE.*

At about 1726 he received a dispatch from Commander Mobile Force (who was also Commander Main Force), advising his command that on the following morning at 0930 he would shift his flag from the Oita Air Base (headquarters, 653rd Air Group) to the ZUIKAKU.**

At about 1755 CinC Combined Fleet received a dispatch from the Chief of Naval General Staff transferring the escort carrier KAIYO (including escort planes) to CinC Combined Fleet for urgent transportation of air material from the homeland to the Formosa area.***

At 2041 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet cancelled DesOpOrd 466 and directed the KASHIMA and DESDIV FORTY-THREE to operate as scheduled.**** It will be observed that DESDIV THIRTY had been replaced by DESDIV FORTY-THREE (presumably those elements of DESDIV FORTY-THREE remaining in the Anti-Submarine Patrol Force).

At about 2133 he received a dispatch from Commander FIRST Striking Force as follows:*****

"FIRST Striking Force will reach Brunei 1000 October 20th. Supply force (two ships) will reach Brunei early morning October 21st, and fueling (1800 tons)******will be carried out immediately. Fueling will be completed morning October 22nd. If force takes shortest central route and proceeds at

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 171625 October 1944 to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, etc.,(Main Force DesOpOrd 10), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171650 October 1944 to All Flags Mobile Force and CinC Combined Fleet, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

*** Chief of Naval General Staff Dispatch 171725 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander Surface Escort Force (Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Directive 475), General Headquarters FEC Military Intelligence Section, ATIS Document 62239, September 13th, 1950.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 172041 October 1944, War Diary DESRON 10 October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172103 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

****** This was probably 15,800 tons, since that much fuel was delivered to the ships of the FIRST Striking Force.

actual speed of sixteen knots, it will reach waters east of Philippines (vicinity of eastern entrance of strait) night October 24th. (Destroyers will then have 60% of fuel remaining). If it proceeds at actual speed of twenty knots, it will reach the same point by morning October 24th, but destroyers will have only 50% of fuel remaining, necessitating an additional refueling subsequent to sortie from Brunei. At present, however, there is no leeway for arranging to send ahead the necessary tankers."

This was the dispatch for which the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet had been waiting. Since Commander FIRST Striking Force considered it necessary to fuel at Brunei, which fueling would not be completed until about twenty-four hours after the arrival of the oilers at Brunei on October 21st, it clearly and definitely limited the choice of X-day to October 24th at the earliest, even though the Allies should land before that date. This must have been discouraging not only to the Chief of Staff, but to CinC Combined Fleet as well, because it meant that that portion of the SHO Plan which called for "The FIRST Striking force to reach the landing point at the time the enemy invasion force was making its landings" might not be possible of attainment.

CinC Combined Fleet, apparently satisfied that his Chief of Staff was endeavoring to carry out the Combined Fleet basic SHO plans as close as possible, took no action, but awaited developments. However, it is likely that he regretted exceedingly that neither he nor his Chief of Staff had had the vision to spot the oilers ahead of time at Brunei, which was along the anticipated route of advance for the FIRST Striking Force in the event of landings in the Philippines.

Sometime during the day, (a) the exact time being indeterminate, the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet removed the T-Force from the SIXTH Base Air Force and placed it under the direct command of CinC Combined Fleet.*

SINCE IT WAS FREQUENTLY THE PRACTICE OF THE JAPANESE SO TO TRANSFER TO THE DIRECT COMMAND OF CINC COMBINED FLEET ANY SHIP OR UNIT LOST OR DESTROYED, THIS TRANSFER OF AIRCRAFT TO HIS COMMAND EITHER INDICATETES THEIR TEMPORARY DESTRUCTION AS A FIGHTING UNIT OR ELSE WAS A JAPANESE VERSION, IN A LIMITED WAY, OF THE U.S. STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND.

The latter, in view of the attack orders previously issued for the following day, seems to have been the more likely. This is of considerable interest, since it is the first occasion in this study where Japanese air units had been operated directly by CinC Combined Fleet from his Hiyoshi headquarters,

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Chief Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th-23rd, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

(b) CinC Combined Fleet, as well as his Chief of Staff, received a report that four cruisers, three destroyers, thirteen transports, and 110 aircraft had arrived at Morotai,* and (c) the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet advised the Combined Fleet that six enemy submarines were concentrated on the previous day in the Nansei Shoto Area. This was correct, in that there were exactly six Allied submarines - BARBEL, SKATE, SAURY, BURRFISH, STERLET and SEA DOG in that area. Since these submarines were not concentrated and since their stations had probably been largely determined by radio direction finder fixes, as there had been no sinkings, it is believed that the word "concentrated" is here meant to mean within the Nansei Shoto area and not as a single group.

At about 2200 he likely received a dispatch from the Commander Takao Communications Unit reporting (a) having made repeated radio direction finder (RDF) contacts on an enemy task group of six ships in approximate position Latitude 20°-00'N, Longitude 125°-00'E, (b) that the Allied task group had sent out seven urgent dispatches and (c) that the position of this group indicated no change from the previous day.** The dispatches referred to may have been sent by CTG 30.3 in accordance with his directive from COMTHIRDFLT to broadcast urgent dummy messages on the 15th, 16th and 17th in order to assist in luring enemy forces toward TG 30.3.***

(1) Operations of Commander Mobile Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

Commander Mobile Force remained ashore at Oita Air Base and awaited developments. He was familiar with the fact that, despite Imperial General Headquarters' victory pronouncement of the preceding day, the Allies had at least thirteen carriers in at least four task groups operating to the southeastward of Formosa. This showed conclusively that the Japanese land-based air forces had failed. He had been advised as early as October 12th that his Main Force would not be required as a carrier task force in this operation; it was to be accomplished entirely by land-based air forces.**** As a consequence, his best pilots had been transferred to the SIXTH Base Air Force for operations against the Allied carrier forces. Now, since (a) the land-based air forces had failed, and (b) the Main Force was almost completely lacking in carrier air power, the prospect of an Allied invasion, with the ensuing activation of SHO One, gave him cause for great concern.

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* Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force, (SECOND Base Air Force) October 10th-November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 150256 October 1944 to CTG 30.3.

**** Letter from Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer, Mobile Force, to Mr. Clarke Kawakami, Translator for World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College, undated but received Washington, D.C. April 13th, 1953.

He was not concerned particularly with the FIRST Striking Force nor with the SECOND Striking Force, since these commands had been receiving many orders directly from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet; but, in view of the fact that they were technically still under his command, it can be accepted that he followed their activities closely.

WHY THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET ISSUED ORDERS DIRECTLY TO THESE COMMANDS AND THEREBY FAILED TO FOLLOW THE CHAIN OF COMMAND IS NOT KNOWN. PERHAPS HE FELT THAT SINCE HE RECEIVED A RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE, URGING THAT, SHOULD SHO ONE BE ACTIVATED, THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE AND THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE BE PLACED DIRECTLY UNDER THE CINC COMBINED FLEET,* AND SINCE HE PLANNED TO MAKE THIS RECOMMENDATION EFFECTIVE, IT WOULD BE WISE TO ASSUME THE DIRECTION OF THESE FORCES PRIOR TO THE ACTIVATION OF SHO ONE.

IT IS OF INTEREST THAT THIS FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE CHAIN OF COMMAND WAS SIMILAR TO THE BY-PASSING OF CTF 38 BY COMMANDER THIRD FLEET, DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY UNDER "OPERATIONS OF COMMANDER THIRD FLEET, 0719-2400 OCTOBER 17TH," AND THE COMMENTS THEREON REGARDING THE GENERAL INADVISABILITY OF BY-PASSING SUBORDINATES APPLY EQUALLY TO THE JAPANESE COMMAND SITUATION HERE.

At about 0749, Commander Mobile Force received a dispatch sent from the Naval Lookout Post on Suluan Island, reporting "One enemy battleship and six destroyers sighted on bearing 065°. Are penetrating strait, 0650.**

This was disturbing news since it likely forecast an invasion in the Leyte - Samar Area, or at least somewhere in the Philippines, with the ensuing activation of SHO One. His role, in such a case, while it had as yet not been fully defined, was obvious: he would be called upon to divert the enemy to the north. He had arrived at this conclusion as early as September 10th, when he had reported that, in view of the situation of the Main Force with respect to air strength, he considered that it would operate with substantial effectiveness only with respect to its diversionary mission.* By October 12th his air strength had so improved that he might have been able to carry out that portion of his basic mission which called for attacking the enemy carrier forces as well as diverting them. However, on October 12th, as has been previously noted, his principal air groups had been transferred

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* Commander Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

** Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170719 October 1944, presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

almost in toto to the SIXTH Base Air Force and he was now in worse condition as regards air strength than he had been on September 10th.

Therefore, mindful of the fact that all planes and pilots of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups had not as yet been transferred to Formosa, or even to the SIXTH Base Air Force, and realizing that time was now of utmost importance, he immediately dispatched his senior staff officer to Kure* to confer with Combined Fleet Headquarters at Hiyoshi via telephone on the role of the Main Force in the SHO operations.* (Telephone communication between Oita and Hiyoshi had been interrupted.)** As a result of this conference, it was decided that an air group would be organized incorporating those planes of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups which had not as yet been transferred from the homeland, together with all planes and pilots of the 601st Air Group which were capable of carrier operations.* How many planes and pilots would be available he did not know as yet, and therefore he could not estimate with exactness when his command would be ready to sortie.

IN THESE ACTIONS, COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE DEMONSTRATED COMPLETE LOYALTY TO THE OVERALL PLAN. KNOWING THAT THE EFFECT DESIRED OF THE MAIN FORCE IN THE EXECUTION OF THE SHO PLAN WAS THE REMOVAL OF THE ALLIED CARRIER TASK FORCES FROM THE OBJECTIVE AREA BY THE EMPLOYMENT OF DIVERSION, AND KNOWING THAT A DIVERSION WOULD NOT BE PROFITABLE UNLESS IT CONSTITUTED A THREAT OF SUCH IMPORTANCE AS TO CAUSE THE ENEMY TO REAPPORTION HIS FIGHTING STRENGTH TO MEET IT, HE MADE EVERY EFFORT SO TO INCREASE HIS FIGHTING STRENGTH AS TO INSURE THAT THE MAIN FORCE CONSTITUTED SUCH A THREAT. HE THUS HAD MOVED VIGOROUSLY TO ENSURE THAT HIS FORCE WOULD BE IN THE BEST POSSIBLE POSITION--IN SPITE OF THE MANY HANDICAPS IMPOSED BY THE SHORTAGES OF TRAINED PILOTS AND PLANES AVAILABLE--TO CARRY OUT HIS ASSIGNED MISSION. WITHIN THESE TERMS, HIS DECISIONS CANNOT BE REGARDED AS OTHER THAN SOUND.

Since Commander Mobile Force was also Commander Main Force, and since he apparently took no further action on this day in his capacity as Commander Mobile Force excepting at 1650 to advise the various commands that at 0930 on the following morning (October 18th) he would hoist his flag in the ZUIKAKU,*** his further actions will be discussed under Commander Main Force.

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* Detailed Action Report, Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Letter received Washington, D.C. April 13th, 1953, from Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, former Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, to Mr. Clarke Kawakami, translator for World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College, Newport, R. I.

*** Commander Mobile Force Dispatch 171650 October 1944 to All Flags Mobile Force and CinC Combined Fleet, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

(a) Operations of Commander FIRST Striking Force, 0719-2400 October 17th.

Commander FIRST Striking Force remained in his flagship, the heavy cruiser ATAGO, at Lingga. He was ready for sortie in accordance with CinC Combined Fleet's directive of the previous day,* except for (1) the NOSHIRO at Singapore, which would be ready at noon, (2) the AOBA at Singapore, which would be ready by evening, and (3) about ten seaplanes, also at Singapore, which would be returned to their parent ships by noon.**

At this time, since he (a) knew of the thirteen Allied carriers which had been observed off southeast Formosa on the previous day,*** (b) had been advised, also on the previous day, that the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet "was considering sending the FIRST Striking Force for a decisive battle (against the Allied carriers east of Formosa) in order to augment enemy losses,*** and (c) had decided that for various reasons there was little possibility of accomplishing the objective of such a sortie, he probably wondered what developments the new day would bring forth. Certainly the enemy strength indicated continuing operations against the Philippines, but probably not against Formosa, because there had been no carrier-based air strikes there since October 14th.

At about 0844 Commander FIRST Striking Force received Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island's dispatch**** which advised that "Enemy has begun landing. 0800."

At 0845 he received Commander Philippine Force's 170755 dispatch, wherein that commander reported "an enemy force of two battleships, two cruisers and six other ships, apparently destroyers, are operating in the vicinity of Suluan Island and are launching landing craft.*****

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 161405 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force and Commander FIRST Striking Force, War Diary SUZUYA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 161800 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** Philippines Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

**** Commander Naval Lookout Post, Suluan Island, Dispatch 170814 October 1944 presumably to all commands, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

***** Commander Philippine Force Dispatch 170755 October 1944 to SW Area Force, Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

At 0855 he received CinC Combined Fleet's 170835 SHO One Alert issued by CinC Combined Fleet's Chief of Staff from Hiyoshi.* He approved of an alert since it had the effect of cancelling the projected attack against enemy carriers east of Formosa, for which he had been directed to prepare to sortie and which he considered infeasible and instead assigned him the FIRST Striking Force objectives of the SHO One Plan.** These were the penetration of the landing area and the destruction by decisive battle of the Allied support forces, such as the SEVENTH Fleet, which opposed his entry into the landing area, and then after annihilating these forces, the destruction of the transports and embarked troops at the landing point (beachhead).

At about 0913 he likely received CinC Combined Fleet's directive to the Advance Expeditionary Force to prepare immediately to sortie in full strength to the central and southern Philippines.***

At 1000 he received orders from CinC Combined Fleet to sortie immediately and advance to Brunei.****

The problem now arose as to what should be his earliest departure time. Should he depart at noon, when, except for the AOBA, his entire command would be ready to sortie, or should he delay until some other time, and if so, why? He decided to delay until 0100 the following morning. There have been several conjectures as to why at this vital time he delayed his sortie some thirteen hours. There appear to have been two sound reasons:

(a) In the first place, as will be shown later, he desired to leave Brunei fully fueled, in order that he might have reasonable freedom of action in the objective area. Therefore, as there were no oilers at Brunei, it became necessary to send them there. Of the several oilers available, he selected the YUHO MARU and the HAKKO MARU, one capable of fourteen knots and the other ten knots. As has been mentioned earlier, his reasons for

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* CinC Combined Fleet's Dispatch 170835 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 351). Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order No. 76, August 10th, 1944, Section II, Concrete Operation Policy, paragraph A-2(A), ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945 (NACHI Document).

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170848 October 1944 to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 352), War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170928 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force, (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 353), Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

selecting the ten-knot oiler over a fourteen-knot oiler which seems to have been available are not known. That there was some good and sufficient reason must be accepted, for the simplest plotting would have shown that the inclusion of a ten-knot ship would not only delay his later departure from Brunei by about one day, and thereby ultimately determine X-Day, but also such a slow-speed ship would be a much better target for submarines than would the fourteen-knot ship. His choice of the oilers was probably the best he could make at this time.

(b) In the second place, he desired to minimize the submarine threat to the FIRST Striking Force. Since he likely knew the expected departure time of the oilers from Singapore--they had to complete loading--and therefore expected arrival time at Brunei (they arrived on October 21st), he had to arrange his departure, speed and route so as to arrive sufficiently in advance of the oilers as to permit the most expeditious fueling of his force. Thus he had ample time and, since the primary influence was most likely the submarine threat, he decided on a night departure and a circuitous and seldom travelled route in order that he might steam during daylight in the relatively open and less dangerous submarine waters of the South China Sea and might arrive at Brunei in the early morning.

At 1107 Commander FIRST Striking Force received CinC Combined Fleet's 170809 dispatch alert for SHO One issued from Takao.*

Having made his decision to fuel his command at Brunei, Commander FIRST Striking Force proceeded to implement his decision. At 1125 he directed the oilers YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU, escorted by two destroyers of DESRON TEN and one escort ship (ETOROFU) to load a full cargo of fuel at Singapore, proceed ot Brunei and stand by at that port.**

THIS WAS A DELICATE DECISION, BECAUSE THESE OILERS WERE STILL UNDER THE COMMAND OF CINC COMBINED FLEET AND NOT UNDER HIS OWN COMMAND, EXCEPTING PERHAPS AS SENIOR OFFICER PRESENT IN THE AREA. THE FACT THAT AS COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE HE MADE SUCH DECISION SHOWS THAT A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING EXISTED BETWEEN HIM AND CINC COMBINED FLEET OF SUCH NATURE THAT HE FELT AUTHORIZED IN THIS EMERGENCY TO ACT WITHOUT ORDERS AND TO ISSUE THOSE INSTRUCTIONS WHICH HE FELT CINC COMBINED FLEET WOULD HAVE ISSUED HAD HE BEEN PRESENT. SUCH A STATE OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING IS AN ESSENTIAL OF UNITY OF EFFORT.

HE MAY HAVE FELT THAT IN TAKING THIS ACTION HE WAS BEING LOYAL TO

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* Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171125 October 1944 to HAKKO MARU, War Diary DESRON TEN, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

HIS COMMANDER'S PLAN BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT CINC COMBINED FLEET, DEPENDENT ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE SORTIE OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, HAD INDICATED THAT HE TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO TRANSFER TO THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE CERTAIN OILERS, ONE OF WHICH WAS TO BE THE YUHO MARU.* THE HAKKO MARU, HOWEVER, WAS NOT AMONG THOSE SO DESIGNATED.

THAT HE WAS NOT PLEASED WITH THE TENTATIVE NATURE OF THESE PLANS IS INDICATED BY THIS COMMENT IN HIS ACTION REPORT: "THIS RESULTED IN THE UNAVOIDABLE SITUATION OF NECESSARY DIRECTIVES WITH RESPECT TO THE OILERS AND ESCORTS BEING ARBITRARILY PREPARED PRIOR TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT."**

It seems clear that Commander FIRST Striking Force felt that CinC Combined Fleet had estimated the situation incorrectly or had failed to act promptly in that he had not insured that the necessary oilers were sent in advance of the combat units to predetermined advance bases, there to await orders. He had felt on October 16th, for example, when thirteen carriers had been contacted off southeast Formosa and the possibility of an invasion in the Philippines loomed large, that CinC Combined Fleet should have insured that oilers were dispatched to Brunei, since the SHO One Plan called for the advancement of the FIRST Striking Force to that port. In commenting on this, he stated that, owing to the delay in assigning the oilers, the FIRST Striking Force had been forced to waste one whole day waiting for their arrival at Brunei, with the consequent serious effect on his time-schedule which forced him to transit an area infested with enemy submarines.**

IT IS NOT BELIEVED THAT COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE IS ENTIRELY BLAMELESS IN HIS CONDUCT OF THE OILER PHASE OF THIS OPERATIONS. FEELING AS HE DID AS EARLY AS OCTOBER 14TH, THAT AN INVASION OF THE PHILIPPINES WAS INEVITABLE,** AND KNOWING THAT THE OILERS IN THE LINGGA-SINGAPORE AREA WERE NOT CAPABLE OF FUELING AT SEA, HE TOOK NO ACTION WHATSOEVER TO INSURE THAT OILERS WERE NOT ONLY LOADED AHEAD OF TIME BUT WERE ALSO SPOTTED AHEAD OF TIME AT BRUNEI. WOULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN WISER HAD HE QUERIED CINC COMBINED FLEET CONCERNING SUCH OILERS ON OCTOBER 16TH (WHEN TOLD THAT CINC COMBINED FLEET WAS CONTEMPLATING DISPATCHING HIM FOR DECISIVE BATTLE AGAINST TF 38), RATHER THAN TO HAVE WAITED FOR SORTIE ORDERS BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION?

After the battle he stated that this oiler difficulty would not have occurred had Miri, a fuel supply depot on the Borneo coast some eighty-five miles southwest of Brunei, been employed for fueling the fleet. However, because Miri was under control of the Army, he further stated that this would not have been satisfactory unless a clear and definite Army-Navy agreement

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* Chief of Staff Combined Fleet Dispatch 161535 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force, etc.. War Diary NICHIEI MARU, October 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838.

** Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

had been concluded thereon by Imperial General Headquarters. He based this latter thought on his belief that arrangements made locally on the premise that operational requirements were to have absolute priority would be unreliable depending as they necessarily did on local army acceptance.*

Why the ETOROFU was included in the oiler escorts is not explained since this ship still belonged to the FIRST Escort Force. It is assumed that when Commander FIRST Striking Force decided to order the oilers to Brunei he also either decided that the two destroyers were insufficient escort and included the ETOROFU, or included her because she was scheduled to depart for Brunei anyway.

At 1130 he issued orders to his command to be prepared after 1200 to get underway (a) at twenty knots immediately and (b) at twenty-four knots on twenty minutes notice.** It is not entirely clear why he issued such orders. Since he knew that his oilers would not arrive at Brunei before October 21st and that therefore the departure time of the FIRST Striking Force would be delayed, these urgent standby orders must have been issued for some other reason. This other reason may have been his receipt of dispatches from Commander NINTH Base Force (a) reporting a task force of eight ships bearing 180°(T), distant 250 miles from Car Nicobar Island,*** and (b) reporting that Car Nicobar was under attack commencing at 1030 by a powerful carrier task force.**** He cancelled these standby orders at 1141, or eleven minutes later.***** Actually, from the sequence and time of these two orders, it would appear probable that the original standby order had been issued by his staff duty officer and had been cancelled by himself.

At 1200 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 170946 to other Chiefs of Staff wherein the Chief of Staff (a) estimated that the enemy landing off Suluan Island was part of an invasion move into the central and southern Philippines with a strong possibility of a landing attempt by Halsey in Leyte - Samar and by MacArthur on southern Mindanao, but that no definite conclusions had as yet been reached, and (b) stated

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* Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171130 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary TONE, October 1944, WDC Document 160144, NA 11841.

*** Commander NINTH Base Force Dispatch 170950 October 1944 to Commander Western Force, Detailed Action Report No. 13, DESRON 10, SHO Operations, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

***** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171141 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary TONE, October 1944, WDC Document 160144, NA 11841.

that for the present the FIRST Striking Force had been ordered to Brunei.*

This dispatch seems to indicate a lack of urgency at Hiyoshi, and may have had a similar effect on the various commanders, but particularly on Commander FIRST Striking Force, who, but a short time before, had received orders to sortie immediately for Brunei.

At 1205 he directed COMCRUDIV FIVE to carry out air searches as far as the vicinity of Brunei, employing four planes with a scouting front of two hundred miles, along the scheduled routes C1 and C2 of the FIRST Striking Force.**

This dispatch appears confusing and was most likely improperly translated or garbled for the Japanese ship based planes did not have sufficient range to have accomplished the task herein assigned. It seems more likely that this message should read to carry out air searches "in the direction of Brunei" rather that "as far as the vicinity of Brunei." This belief is based on the fact that, as will be shown later, the CRUDIV FIVE planes departed Singapore at 1400 this day on an advance search in the direction of Brunei and returned three and one half hours later.

At 1215 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's directive to the Chief of Staff Main Force, which advised, in part, that the enemy would probably attempt a large-scale landing in the south-central Philippines, in which case it would be necessary for the Main Force to lure the enemy carrier task force to the north to facilitate the penetration of the FIRST Striking Force.***

This dispatch showed that the basic SHO One Plan, in so far as the objectives assigned the principal forces were concerned, was to be effected as planned. Commander FIRST Striking Force realized, of course, that X-day (the day of the Japanese counter-attack) could not be the day of the enemy landing, since (a) the Allied landing would probably occur in a matter of two or three days if the previous pattern of operations obtained in this case, and (b) his command, for reasons to be discussed later, could not arrive in the objective area within that time.

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170946 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171205 October 1944 to COMCRUDIV 5, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170908 October 1944 to CofS Main Force, Detailed Action Report, FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

Also at 1215, having decided on the circuitous course to take to Brunei, he advised CinC Combined Fleet that "The FIRST Striking Force will sortie from Lingga at 0100 October 18th at sixteen knots for Brunei. Course changes en route will be made as follows:

(1) October 18th.

0300 Latitude 00°-33'N, Longitude 104°-42'E, course 065°.

1100 Latitude 01°-28'N, Longitude 106°-40'E. course 010°.

(2) October 19th.

0000 Latitude 04°-50'N, Longitude 107°-14'E, course 070°.

2300 Latitude 06°-52'N, Longitude 113°-03'E. course 130°.

(3) October 20th. Arrive at Brunei."*

He now took no additional action. Having already ordered two oilers to Brunei, and having advised CinC Combined Fleet of the expected date of his arrival at Brunei, he felt that the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet knew that the proposed operations could not be carried out on schedule as planned and therefore no more reports were necessary at this time.

At 1250 he was informed by COMDESRON TEN that the MICHISHIO and NOWAKI were designated to accompany the oilers YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU.**

At 1348 he placed in effect the Number THREE allocation of forces,*** evidently for sortie, and then, at 1400, he directed the FIRST Striking Force to sortie from Lingga for Brunei as follows:

"1. Outline of sortie.

(a) The SECOND Section will depart first, clearing the harbor at 0100 October 18th.

(b) Order of sortie: SECOND Section (as fixed by the section commander), DESRON TWO, CRUDIV FIVE, CRUDIV SIXTEEN, CRUDIV FOUR, BATDIV TWO, BATDIV ONE.

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, etc., Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** COMDESRON 10 Visual Dispatch 171250 October 1944 to DESRON 10, War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171348 October 1944, Detailed Action Report MOGAMI, October 18th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 160463, NA 12652.

(c) If not otherwise ordered, alert cruising disposition Y-8 [not available in its entirety to this study] will be taken upon reaching a point north of Admiral Stellingwerf Reef.

(d) Routes C1 and C2 will be followed to Brunei.

"2. Brunei is designated No. One Alert anchorage."*

At about 1359 he learned that CinC Combined Fleet had arrived at Shinchiku from Takao.**

At 1400 the MICHISHIO and NOWAKI departed Lingga for Singapore.***

Also at 1400 the four CRUDIV FIVE planes commenced their search towards Brunei.****

At about 1420 he received a dispatch from Commander Main Force wherein that commander (a) designated the units to sortie and ordered them to prepare for sortie immediately, (b) directed that the remaining air strength of the 653rd Air Group based at Oita and Kagoshima, together with that portion of the 601st Air Group capable of operating from carriers, be embarked in CARDIV THREE.*****

At about 1436 he likely intercepted CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch directing Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (a) to concentrate his principal remaining strength in the Formosa area, (b) to regroup, and (c) to move up his combat strength to the Philippines; and further directing that those air units of CARDIV THREE remaining in the homeland were to be restored to CARDIV THREE. This must have been gratifying to him, because it gave hope that the depleted Main Force might still be able to decoy Allied carrier forces away

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171400, October 1944, Detailed Action Report SUZUYA, October 18th - 25th 1944, WDC Document 161747.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171329 October 1944 to all commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 13, DESRON 10, SHO One Operations, October 23rd - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161747.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 3, HAGURO, SHO Operations, October 23rd - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161747.

***** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force, FIRST Striking Force, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO 1 Operation, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

from the objective area.*

At about 1457 he likely intercepted CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch incorporating the ISUZU, MAKE, AYIKIZE, KIRI, KUWA, and the 931st Air Group in the Main Force, and directing that the Main Force complete preparations for sortie by 0600 October 19th.**

At 1512 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 171201, wherein the Chief of Staff advised, in part, that "Assuming that the enemy will make a landing in the Leyte - Samar area, it is estimated that the FIRST Striking Force will be able to carry out its penetration just before dawn on October 22nd, and that the Main Force, acting in support, will sortie on the morning of the 19th, advancing to the waters east of Luzon Strait by the evening of October 21st."*** For an indication of his reaction to this astounding message see the later discussion in this section.

At 1618 he received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet stating that, should SHO One be activated, it was planned (a) to transfer four escorts or destroyers from the FIRST Escort Force to the Main Force to escort oilers, (b) to transfer most of the Anti-Submarine Force to the Main Force, and (c) to delay for the time being the transfer of either the KAIYO or the SHINYO to either the Main Force or the FIRST Striking Force.****

During the later afternoon he noted that the AOBA had returned to Lingga, and that at 2030 COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN's flag had been hoisted in her.***** Meanwhile, at 1600, the NOSHIRO arrived at Garan.******

At about 1655, he likely received Commander Main Force's dispatch assigning the TAMA and SUGI to the Main Force and directing that that portion of the air strength of the 634th Air Group remaining at Oita and Kagoshima

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171427 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report KUWA, Battle off the Philippines, October 20th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force, etc., FIRST Striking Force Action Report, SHO Operation, October 16th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171338 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944 WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

***** COMCRUDIV 16 Dispatch 172030 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

****** War Diary NOSHIRO, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

bases and capable of operating from carriers be embarked in CARDIV THREE.*

At 1730 CRUDIV FIVE planes (based on the report of the HAGURO) returned having made no contacts.**

At 1735 Commander FIRST Striking Force received orders from CinC Combined Fleet restoring the two destroyers AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO to the FIRST Striking Force.***

During the day he received the reports of four Allied carrier task groups operating in the waters to the eastward of Formosa - Philippines.**** He also received word of six Allied submarines operating in the Nansei Shoto area on the preceding day.*****

During the late afternoon, the various units of the FIRST Striking Force made preparations for departure. Sortie orders were issued by the subordinate commanders, and every effort was made to insure that the sortie was effectively done.******

At 2005 Commander FIRST Striking Force directed the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO to proceed from Manila to Brunei.*******

At 2103, having estimated the situation carefully and having

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 171625 October 1944 to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, etc. (Main Force DesOpOrd 10), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944 WDC Document 161007.

** Detailed Action Report No. 3, HAGURO, SHO Operations, October 23rd-26th, 1944, WDC Document 161747.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171621 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOp-Ord 461), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947. Department of the Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104.

***** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN(COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

****** COMDESRON 10 Visual Dispatch 171928 October 1944 to DESRON 10, info BATDIV 3, CRUDIV 7, Detailed Action Report No 13, DESRON 10, SHO Operation, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

******* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172005 October 1944 to COMDESDIV 2 and Imperial General Headquarters, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11739.

determined to refuel at Brunei, he advised CinC Combined Fleet of his projected plans.* He stated that his force would reach Brunei 1000 October 20th, that the oilers would reach Brunei early morning October 21st, and that after fueling he would be ready to depart for the designated objective area on the morning of October 22nd. He further stated that if he took the shortest central route and proceeded (a) at sixteen knots he could arrive at the eastern entrance of (San Bernardino) Strait night of October 24th, in which case his destroyers would have sixty per cent of fuel remaining, or (b) at twenty knots he could arrive at the same point by morning October 24th, in which case his destroyers would have only fifty per cent of fuel remaining and would therefore require refueling after leaving Brunei. He ended his dispatch by the statement that time was not available to send ahead the necessary oilers.

At this time Commander FIRST Striking Force was considering three routes. The eastern route was along the east coast of Palawan and thence to Mindoro Strait; the central route was along the west coast of Palawan (through Palawan Passage) to Mindoro Strait; the western route was through the Dnagerous Ground, or possibly around it. As regards the first two routes, there was little to choose between them, since they were approximately the same distance. The third route was obviously much longer. It is assumed that Commander FIRST Striking Force, in referring to the "shortest central route" referred to the route to the westward of Palawan.**

This dispatch is interesting in that it shows:

(a) Commander FIRST Striking Force's decision to fuel his entire command from oilers at Brunei, rather than to fuel destroyers only from the larger ships either en route to or at Brunei, in order that the entire command might leave Brunei for the objective area fully fueled. He clearly based this decision, in part, on the fact that, despite the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's assumption in his 171201 dispatch, the Allied landing points had not as yet been finally determined, and in part on the fact that he had no intention of having his freedom of action impaired by a shortage of oil should a more northern landing be attempted by the Allies, and

(b) Commander FIRST Striking Force's comments on two likely speeds of advance to the eastward of San Bernardino Strait, wherein he compared the resultant fuel situation.

HIS DECISION TO FUEL BEFORE LEAVING BRUNEI SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172103 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

SOUND. THE FUEL CONSUMPTION RATES OF THE JAPANESE SHIPS AT THE VARIOUS SPEEDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY; THEREFORE THE CORRECTNESS OF THE DECISION CANNOT BE ADEQUATELY WEIGHED ON THAT BASIS. HOWEVER, THE FACT THAT HIS DECISION WAS ACCEPTED BY CINC COMBINED FLEET SHOWS THAT THE LATTER EITHER AGREED WITH HIM OR, REALIZING THAT (1) THE MAIN FORCE WOULD NOT BE READY TO SORTIE BEFORE THE TWENTIETH AND (2) THE FINAL ALLIED LANDING POINT OR POINTS HAD NOT BEEN FINALLY DETERMINED, FELT THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO REFUEL ALL SHIPS AT BRUNEI AS CONTEMPLATED BY COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE.

His comments on the resultant fuel situation should the speed of advance be (1) sixteen knots or (2) twenty knots were important in that they gave CinC Combined Fleet some practical figures on which to base his estimate, and should have assisted that commander in the final determination of X-day.

Sometime prior to 2315 he received a dispatch* from COMDESDIV FOUR giving the schedule of movement of the Brunei Fueling Group (YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU, plus escorts) as follows:

(a) 1000 October 18th, depart eastern entrance Singapore Strait.

1100 October 21st, arrive Brunei.

(b) Noon position October 19th, Latitude 03°-00'N, Longitude 108°-13'E.

Noon position October 20th, Latitude 04°-22'N, Longitude 111°-50'E. From these noon positions he could determine the estimated speed of advance of the fueling group as 9.7 knots.

(b) Operations of Commander Main Force, 0719-2400 October 17th.

It will be remembered thatCommander Mobile Force, who was also Commander Main Force, immediately upon receipt of the message reporting an enemy invasion force in the vicinity of Suluan Island on October 17th, had dispatched his senior staff officer to Kure for the purpose of contacting Combined Fleet Headquarters concerning the role of the Main Force in the SHO Operations.**

While awaiting the results of this meeting, Commander Main Force

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* COMDESDIV 4 Dispatch 172245 October 1944, to Commander FIRST Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

received a number of important dispatches. At 0958 he received CinC Combined Fleet's order directing the FIRST Striking Force to sortie immediately and advance to Brunei.* At about 1000 he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch directing the WAKATSUKI and SUZUTSUKI, which were retruning to the Inland Sea from the approaches to Bungo Suido, where the SUZUTSUKI had been torpedoed the previous night, to transfer air personnel and material to the KASHIMA and DESDIV THIRTY, which would then complete the task originally assigned the WAKATSUKI and SUZUTSUKI.**

At about this time the senior staff officer returned and reported that an air group would be organized incorporating those planes of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups which had not as yet been transferred from the homeland, together with all planes of the 601st Air Group which were capable of carrier operations.***

This was a source of great satisfaction to Commander Main Force, since the operational planes which he had hitherto had available for this purpose were all from the 601st Air Group and consisted of sixteen fighters, seven reconnaissance planes and four attack planes.****

Commander Main Force now commenced re-estimating the situation. He had much to do in very little time. He had to determine what planes and pilots capable of carrier operations were available from the 634th and 653rd Air Groups, how soon they could be assembled, where, what repairs, if any, could be made on these planes should they require repairs, what logistics were necessary and where obtainable, and numerous other related problems. It can be assumed that he made every effort to expedite the obtaining of this information and to expedite the preparation of his command for sea. A study of the war diaries of the various units of the Main Force indicates that, excepting for the aircraft of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups, the Main Force was ready for sea by October 18th. Therefore, it was clear to Commander Main Force that his earliest departure time would be determined by the time required to embark the planes of these groups, with their necessary logistics, on his carriers.

Sometime around noon he likely received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch 171125 directing the YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU, with escorts,

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170928 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force, Detailed Action Report SHIGURE, Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 21st - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161717 (Part 4), NA 11801.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170930 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO Operation, October 20th -29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1st - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

to proceed to Brunei when fueled and to wait there.*

About 1231 he received CofS Combined Fleet's dispatch 171201, wherein that commander (a) stated that, assuming the enemy would land in the Samar - Leyte area, he estimated that the FIRST Striking Force would arrive at the landing area prior to dawn of the 22nd, and that the Main Force, acting in support, would sortie on the 19th and be in position to the eastward of Luzon by evening of the 21st, (b) ordered the Main Force to prepare to sortie on that basis, and (c) announced that when the Main Force was directed to sortie, all forces would be under the direct command of CinC Combined Fleet and that some elements of CORTRON THIRTY-ONE, which was operating directly under CinC Combined Fleet, would be assigned to the Main Force to augment its light forces.

By this time Commander Main Force had obtained enough information concerning the planes of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups to realize that he could not meet this schedule, but whether or not he notified Combined Fleet Headquarters is not known, since the records are silent in this regard.

At about 1245 he received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch advising that the FIRST Striking Force would sortie from Lingga the following morning and would arrive at Brunei on October 20th.**

At 1350, having completed his estimate, he directed (a) CARDIV THREE, CARDIV FOUR (less the 634th Air Group), CORTRON THIRTY-ONE (less an element), OYODO, DESDIV SIXTY-ONE (less SUZUTSUKI), and DESDIV FORTY-ONE (less FUYUTSUKI) to complete preparations to sortie immediately and to assemble at Yashima Anchorage; (b) the remaining air strength of the 653rd Air Group and that portion of the 601st Air Group capable of carrier operations to embark on the carriers of CARDIV THREE; and (c) other units to continue their present missions.***

It will be observed here that he has omitted the 634th Air Group. This appears to have been because he had not as yet obtained sufficient data on this group to warrant inclusion of it at this time, and, since it was necessary to expedite preparations of sortie, he temporarily omitted it from his orders.

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171125 October 1944 to HAKKO MARU, War Diary DESRON TEN, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, etc., War Diary CRUDIV 16, October 1st - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 160986, NA 11730.

*** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 ot Main Force, Combined Fleet, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Action Report OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

At about 1359 he learned that CinC Combined Fleet had shifted his headquarters from Takao to Shinchiku.*

At about 1408 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch advising Commander Mobile Force that in the event SHO One operations were activated he planned to transfer (a) four escort vessels or destroyers from the FIRST Escort Force to the Main Force, and (b) most of the available antisubmarine patrol force (CORTRON THIRTY-ONE) to the Main Force. He further advised that the KAIYO and SHINYO (two escort carriers engaged in convoy duties) would for the time being not be incorporated in either the Main Force or the FIRST Striking Force.**

Commander Main Force realized that these transfers were designed to increase somewhat his screening forces which had been seriously depleted (a) on October 12th by the torpedoing of the FUYUTSUKI, (b) on October 15th by the sortie of the SECOND Striking Force with the seven destroyers of DESRON ONE and (c) on October 16th by the torpedoing of the SUZUTSUKI.

At about 1436 he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, directing, among other items, that CARDIV THREE air units still remaining in the homeland were to be returned to CARDIV THREE.***

At about 1457 he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch (a) transferring to the Main Force**** the light cruiser ISUZU and four destroyers (MAKI, AKIKAZE, KIRI, and KUWA) from the Anti-Submarine Patrol Force, and the 931st Air Group from the Escort Force, and (b) directing the Main Force (less JUNYO, RYUHO, and CARDIV ONE) to complete preparation for sortie by 0600 October 19th.

The 931st Air Group, which had been engaged in anti-submarine patrols operating from both escort carriers and shore bases, was, at this time, divided between the escort carriers KAIYO and SHINYO, and certain land bases, notably Oroku on Okinawa.***** It is believed that this dispatch

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171329 October 1944 to all commands, War Diary Commander 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171338 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Escort Force, etc., Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 355), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12593.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171427 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report KUWA, Battle off the Philippines, October 20th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

***** War Diary 931st Air Group, October 1944, WDC Document 160151, NA 12319.

was garbled and that it should have said that certain elements of the 931st Air Group had been so transferred rather than the entire 931st Air Group.

At 1625, having now completed his study of the planes and pilots of the 634th Air Group, and evidently finding that a number of them were available, he directed that that portion of the 634th Air Group remaining at Oita and Kagoshima air bases capable of operating from carriers be embarked in CARDIV THREE, and that it assemble at Oita on October 19th.* In this same dispatch he added the light cruiser TAMA and the destroyer SUGI to the sortie units of the Main Force.* These two ships were the only units of DESRON ELEVEN which appeared to be ready for fleet operations at this time. The remaining four destroyers of this squadron, viz: NOMI, KASHI, KAYA, and HINOKI (the KIRI had been transferred to DESDIV FORTY-THREE), were at Kure. They were not to sortie with the Main Force but were assigned other employment.**

At 1640 Commander Main Force directed his command to embark aircraft on the morning of October 20th as follows: CARDIV ONE aircraft (601st Air Group) on ZUIKAKU; CARDIV THREE and FOUR aircraft (634th and 653rd Air Groups) on ZUIKAKU, ZUIHO and CHITOSE.*** He further directed that the operational aircraft of CARDIV ONE were, after having been armed, to move up to Oita Air Base on October 19th. It will be observed that the carrier CHIYODA was not included in the above plan. This was either an oversight, since she actually carried aircraft on sortie, or it was planned that way for reasons best known to Commander Main Force.

During the day Commander Main Force received the various contact reports which located four of the five Allied task groups operating to the eastward of Formosa - Luzon,**** and also likely received word that on the previous day six Allied submarines were concentrated in the Nansei Shoto, since it was received in the FIRST Striking Force.*****

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 171625 October 1944 to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, etc. (Main Force DesOpOrd 10, Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operation, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

** War Diary DESRON 11, October 1944, WDC Document 161715, NA 12712.

*** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171640 October 1944 to Main Force, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm No. 8-5, JS-104.

***** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

At 1940 COMCARDIV FOUR (HYUGA, ISE) reported ready for sea.*

At about 2133 Commander Main Force received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch 172103 to CinC Combined Fleet wherein he discussed fueling at Brunei and indicated that he could not arrive to the eastward of San Bernardino Strait before October 24th. This date was, of course, satisfactory to Commander Main Force, since he could see that the Main Force would be able to meet it and would therefore not delay the operation.

At 2235 COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE directed the ISUZU to proceed to Yashima Anchorage when she had completed fueling.**

By midnight Commander Main Force had learned that the ZUIHO, CHITOSE and CHIYODA of CARDIV THREE had completed fueling at Tokuyama and had returned to Oita, but that the ZUIKAKU was still at Tokuyama.***

(c) Operations of Commander SECOND Striking Force, 0719-2400 October 17th.

The SECOND Striking Force, at sea to the northwest of Amami O Shima, was scheduled to pass through 29°-00'N, 128°-00'E at 0900.**** At 0719 the force, less the HATSUHARU, was bearing 305°(T), distant sixty miles from the northern tip of Amami O Shima. The position of the HATSUHARU, which had become separated from the force the previous night, is not known definitely but was presumably between Amami O Shima and Kyushu. The weather conditions at this time were: clear, wind east twelve miles per hour, visibility five miles.*****

At 0745, Commander SECOND Striking Force, possibly as a result of intercepting the flash reports of enemy sightings off Suluan, advised his command that the destroyers would now commence entering Satsukawa Bay, Amami O Shima, to refuel.******

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* COMCARDIV 4 Dispatch 171930 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operations, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12605.

** COMCORTRON 31 Dispatch 172235 October 1944 to ISUZU, War Diary ISUZU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** War Diaries ZUIKAKU, ZUIHO, CHITOSE, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1st-31st, 1944, WDC Document 161633, NA 11739.

***** War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

****** SECOND Striking Force Visual Dispatch 170745 October 1944, War Diary USHIO, October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

However, at 0929 he received a report from an unknown source of an air attack on Okinawa.* Since Okinawa was but 100 miles from Amami O Shima, he decided against a daylight entry into that port, and at 1000 directed that entry into port be delayed until night.** He probably considered this a fortunate decision, because but four minutes later the AKEBUKUMA sighted one or more Grumman fighters.* The fighters cannot be identified so there were no Allied planes in the vicinity at this time.

During the forenoon he re estimated the situation. He knew of the Allied landings on Suluan Island at 0800 and of the SHO One alert at 0835.*** Having as yet received no orders, and realizing that such orders would probably be forthcoming, he thought it wise to advise the local commander as to his plans for sortie the following morning so that that commander might have time to prepare antisubmarine plans. He, therefore, while still at sea and long before his planned entry into port advised the local commander that he planned to sortie from Amami O Shima at 0530 October 18th. The local commander then directed the local shore-based air forces, augmented by three subchasers and three minelayers, to provide an antisubmarine sweep commencing at 0300 the following morning for the FIRST Striking Force sortie at 0530.****

At 1027 he observed a large plane which he did not identify, but which appears to have been Japanese, since no Allied planes were operating in this area.*

At 1350 he issued an intelligence report to his command, stating that (a) an enemy force of two battleships, two carriers and five destroyers had commenced landing operations on Suluan Island at 0800, (b) enemy aircraft had been attacking the Philippines and the Nansei Shoto since morning, and (c) SHO One Alert had been ordered at 0835.***** (The reference to air strikes on the Nansei Shoto was obviously based on the report received at 0929. Since no air strikes had been made on the Nansei Shoto, it is not clear why the originator of the incorrect contact report did not cancel it.)

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* War Diary [illegible] October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973,

** Commander [illegible] Striking Force Dispatch 171000 October 1944, War Diary [illegible] October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

*** War Diary DESDIV 7 (USNHO) October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

**** Commander (Command Unknown) Dispatch 171138 October 1944 to Kanoya Air Base, Subchasers, [illegible], War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

***** Commander [illegible] Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to [illegible] Striking Force, War Diary DESDIV 7 (USNHO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

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At about 1420 he received Commander Main Force's dispatch which (1) listed the units of the Main Force, (a) directed that they make immediate preparations for sortie, and (3) directed other ships and units to continue their current missions.* Since the SECOND Striking Force had not been included in the Main Force, he now knew that his basic orders directing him to proceed to Mako in the Pescadores Islands, should enemy carrier groups be still intact and a night attack impossible, were still in effect.**

During the day the weather had been clear, visibility about fifteen miles, wind during the forenoon from the northwest at about twelve miles per hour, shifting in the afternoon to the northeast at about six miles per hour.***

At 1705 the SECOND Striking Force, which had remained to the westward of Amami O Shima, less HATSUHARU, entered Satsukawa Bay, Amami O Shima, and immediately commenced refueling the ABUKUMA and the six destroyers of DESRON ONE present.**** Since no oilers were available, the ABUKUMA and WAKABA fueled from the NACHI, the HATSUSHIMO from the ASHIGARA, and the AKEBONO and USHIO from drums ashore.**** No mention is made in documents available to this study of fueling the two destroyers SHIRANUHI and KASUMI of DESDIV EIGHTEEN, but it is probable that they, being of the 'long-legged' type,***** with a cruising radius of about 5000 miles at eighteen knots, were not fueled at this time.

Commander SECOND Striking Force remained at anchor, on the alert, during the remainder of the day. He knew that four Allied carrier forces had been sighted to the eastward of Formosa,****** and his orders were, in such an eventuality, to proceed to Mako.** Accordingly, at 1941 he directed the HATSUHARU to fuel at either Tokuyama or Kure and thereafter proceed to

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force Combined Fleet, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Action Report OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 162007 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** War Diary DESDIC 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

**** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** Japanese Naval Vessels at End of War, compiled by Shitzuo Fukui, Administration Division, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, April 25th 1947.

****** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

Mako.* At about 2135, he received a dispatch from the HATSUHARU to the effect that her 0500 position the following day was expected to be Latitude 29°-48'N, Longitude 128°-50'E and that she would be on course 220°(T) speed sixteen.** At 2343, he cancelled his previous orders and directed her to proceed independently to Mako.*** Having received no further instructions from either CinC Combined Fleet or his immediate superior (Commander Mobile Force), he prepared to depart Amami O Shima at 0530, October 18th, for Mako.

Sometime during the day he received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet advising the Combined Fleet that six enemy submarines were concentrated in the Nansei Shoto area.**** This was important information as it alerted him to the necessity for taking strong precautions against this menace particularly on sortie.

(2) Operations of Commander Advance Expeditionary Force (Submarines), 0719 - 2400 October 17th.*****

At 0719 October 17th, Commander Advance Expeditionary Force was in the Inland Sea area, probably at Kure. His command was organized into three forces, the FIRST, SEVENTH and ELEVENTH Submarine Forces, consisting of a total of thirty-five submarines. With the exception of four submarines, operating in the area to the eastward of the Nansei Shoto, all submarines except the RO-47 and I-177 were in the Inland Sea conducting training exercises, carrying out operational transport to by-passed areas such as WAKE and NAURU, en route the west coast of the United States, or standing by for sortie.*****

Commander Advance Expeditionary Force had a basic task in the SHO Operations.

"In the event of attack by enemy task forces, to intercept enemy and gain control of the invasion area." ******

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* Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 171941 October 1944 to HATSUHARU, War Diary DESRON 1, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 172343 October 1944 to HATSUHARU, War Diary DESRON 1, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739

**** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

***** Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters, 1944 - 1945, ATIS Document, October 30th, 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-15.

****** Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 87, August 20th, 1944, ATIS Document No. 39, Part VIII, June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

To this end he stressed:

(a) That at the time the Combined Fleet engaged the enemy in decisive battle, the entire submarine force was to be concentrated in the same area;

(b) Submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force were therefore to complete their preparations for battle as soon as possible;

(c) Submarines of the SEVENTH Submarine Force were to continue operational transportation;

(d) Submarines of the ELEVENTH Submarine Force were to expedite training in order to be prepared for the SHO Operations.*

Of these submarines, but sixteen (all in the FIRST Submarine Force) were available for the Leyte operation. These were the I-26, 38, 41, 44, 45, 46, 53, 54, 56, 177, RO-41, 43, 46, 47, 109, and 112. Of these sixteen submarines, four (I-26, 45, 54, 56) were already en route to the waters east of Nansei Shoto,** where, in accordance with orders from CinC Combined Fleet issued on October 11th, they were to operate against TF 38. Meanwhile, as can be observed from Diagram "B", TF 38 had moved several hundred miles to the south. The twelve remaining submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force available for the Leyte operation, I-38, 41, 44, 46, 53, 177, RO-41, 43,46,47, 109 and 112 were, with the exception of the RO 47, in the Inland Sea. The RO-47 and the I-177 had not as yet returned from the Palau area. Actually as has been pointed out in Volume I these two submarines were lost in the Palau area in November.*** The RO-109 and 112, which had been attached to the Kure Submarine Squadron were ordered on this day to report to CinC Combined Fleet for duty**** (with the FIRST Submarine Force).

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* Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters, 1944 - 1945, ATIS Document, October 30th, 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-15.

** Merit Rating Reports for Naval Ship Units (Submarine Operations, October 1944), WDC Document 161011; also Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters, 1944 - 1945, ATIS Document, October 30th, 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-15

*** The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II, List of Combatant and non-Combatant Vessels lost or Damaged in the War, prepared by Military History Section Special Staff GHQ FEC, February 1952.

**** Chief of Naval General Staff Dispatch 171359 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Directives, Vol. IV.

The other nineteen submarines were on other duty as follows:*

(a) FIRST Submarine Force

Three submarines, I-36, 37, and 47, were being equipped for launching KAITEN (human torpedoes), and one, the I-12, was en route to the west coast of the United States.

(b) SEVENTH Submarine Force

Seven submarines, I-361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366 and 367 were engaged in operational transport to by-passed areas.

(c) ELEVENTH Submarine Force

Eight submarines, I-48, 368, 369, 370, 371, RO-49, 50 and 55 were engaged in training and shakedown in the Inland Sea.**

Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, in addition to receiving the CinC Combined Fleet's SHO Alert orders 170809 and 170835, was undoubtedly aware of the enemy sightings at Suluan. At 0918 or earlier, he received CinC Combined Fleet's order to prepare immediately to sortie in full strength to the central and southern Philippines.*** Upon receipt of this order, he directed the four submarines (I-26, 45, 54, 56) then en route to stations east of Nansei Shoto to proceed into the area east of the Philippines. At the same time he directed seven submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force (I-38, 41, 44, 46, RO-41, 43, 46) to sortie about the 19th via Bungo Suido and to proceed to the same area.*

IT SEEMS DESIRABLE AT THIS POINT TO EMPHASIZE THE FACT THAT, FROM DATA AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY, THE MATERIAL READINESS OF THE SUBMARINES DURING THIS PERIOD WAS MOST UNSATISFACTORY. SUBSEQUENT TO THE MARIANAS OPERATIONS, THE MAJORITY OF THE JAPANESE SUBMARINES WHICH WERE NOT ENGAGED IN SPECIAL OPERATIONS, SUCH AS TRANSPORT OPERATIONS TO OUTLYING AREAS, REMAINED IN THE EMPIRE EITHER UNDER REPAIR OR BEING EQUIPPED WITH PROTECTIVE DEVICES. THEREFORE, WHEN, ON OCTOBER 11TH, COMMANDER ADVANCE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE WAS DIRECTED BY CINC COMBINED FLEET TO CONDUCT FULL-SCALE ATTACKS ON THE CARRIER TASK FORCE TO THE EASTWARD OF THE NANSEI SHOTO, HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO MUSTER BUT FIVE SUBMARINES (I-26, 45, 53, 54, 56) OF THE FIRST SUBMARINE FORCE WHICH HE THOUGHT WERE PREPARED TO SORTIE IMMEDIATELY. HOWEVER, HE WAS IN

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* Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters, 1944-1945, ATIS Document, October 30th, 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-15.

** The I-58 may have been attached to this group.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170848 October 1944 to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 352), War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

ERROR, SINCE ONLY FOUR OF THE FIVE ACTUALLY SORTIED; ONE (I-26) ON THE 13TH AND THREE (I-45, 54 and 56) ON THE 15TH.* THE I-53, WHICH DID NOT SORTIE, WAS NOT READY FOR SEA AT THIS TIME.

NOW WITH THE ENEMY PREPARING FOR AN INVASION OF THE PHILIPPINES, WITH THE COMBINED FLEET ON AN ALERT FOR SHO ONE, AND WITH HIS FIRST SUBMARINE FORCE ORDERED TO PREPARE IMMEDIATELY TO SORTIE FOR THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, COMMANDER ADVANCE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE WAS CONFRONTED WITH ANOTHER PROBLEM: APPARENTLY NONE OF HIS SUBMARINES IN THE INLAND SEA WERE READY FOR SEA AND WOULD NOT BE READY TO DEPART BEFORE OCTORER 19TH. THUS, DESPITE OVER THREE MONTHS OF PREPARATION IN THE INLAND SEA, IT IS CLEAR THAT AFTER ORDERS TO SORTIE HAD BEEN ISSUED BY THE CINC COMBINED FLEET ON THE 17TH, SOME FORTY-EIGHT HOURS WERE TO ELAPSE BEFORE ANY SUBMARINES WHATSOEVER WOULD SORTIE. CERTAINLY THIS LACK OF READINESS OF JAPANESE SUBMARINES DID NOT AUGUR WELL FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE IN THE FORTHCOMING OPERATIONS.

During the remainder of the day the seven submarines, plus the I-53, scheduled to sortie to augment the four submarines already at sea and ordered to the Philippine area, continued preparations. Of these eight submarines, the RO-41, 43 and 46 had just returned, about October 15th, from a war patrol in the Palau area.** The necessity for ordering the latter to sea only two days after they had returned to Japan indicates that the other two submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force (RO-109 and 112) were not as yet ready for sea. It also indicates that in the mind of Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, the state of readiness of the RO-41, 43 and 46, and the morale of the crews, if considered, was acceptable.

(3) Operations of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

By 0719 Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, who was based at Takao, had reason to believe that his searches from Okinawa and Shinchiku were underway, and that those from Kanoya and Garan Bi were also underway, although in a somewhat staggered manner. Japanese orders were to inform him should the scheduled searches be delayed, since he, in turn, was required to notify CinC Combined Fleet.***

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* Merit Rating Reports for Naval Ship Units (Submarine Operations, October 1944), WDC Document 161011.

** Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters 1944 - 1945, ATIS Document October 30th, 1947, Department of the Army, Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-15.

*** Combined Fleet Operation Order 82, August 1st, 1944, Regulations and Standard Procedures for Air Patrols by Combined Fleet Base Air Forces; also Combined Fleet Operation Order 86, August 4th, 1944, Air Combat Regulations for SHO Operations, ATIS Document No. 39, Part VIII, June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

These searches were:

(a) Kanoya (Western Attack Force ONE) -- This search, which had been ordered by Commander Western Attack Force ONE on the previous evening to depart Kanoya at 0500, and to search 135°-200°(T) to a radius of 650 miles* clearly encountered difficulties in departing with the result that the planes did not depart on schedule. Instead they departed in a staggered manner. The weather was bad and only two of the seven planes completed the full search. Two other planes searched to 560 and 600 miles respectively, and, as will be shown later, one of these planes made contact on an Allied task group. The three remaining planes discontinued their searches shortly after departure.**

(b) Okinawa (Western Attack Force TWO) -- This search, which departed Okinawa at 0600, covered the sector 115°-185°(T) to 400 miles, except within the sector 145°-165°(T), where the radius of search was extended to 500 miles.***

(c) Formosa (Western Attack Force THREE)

(1) Shinchiku

(a) This search covered the sector 133°-164°(T) to a radius of 250 miles. The plane searching the sector 149°-164°(T) departed at 0445; the plane searching the sector 133°-149°(T) departed, after considerable engine trouble, at 0700.

(b) In view of the difficulties encountered by the above search, a second search was launched at 0600 from Shinchiku to search the area north of a bearing 067°(T) through Garan Bi and west of a bearing 130°(T) through Kiirun.****

(c) Garan Bi -- This search, which was to cover the sector

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* Commander 51st Air Flotilla Dispatch 161923 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, info to Commander SECOND Striking Force, War Diary Commander 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

** Commander Izumi Air Base Dispatch 171822 October 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force, Second Base Air Force, October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch SigOrd 37, October 17th, 1944, (Transmitted by telephone) to Western Attack Force TWO, War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 6, 708th Attack Unit (762nd Air Group), Searches and Patrols of the "Fs" Sector, October 1st - 17th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12297.

065°-159°(T) to a radius of 400 miles, and was to depart at 0600,* had encountered difficulties in departing, with the result that the first plane did not depart until 0710, and the last plane until 0800.**

At this same time, 0719, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had reason to believe that other operations were in effect as follows:

(a) Southern Kyushu (Western Attack Force ONE) -- there were standing by in this area:

(1) On fifteen minutes notice, three two-engine land bombers, five carrier-type reconnaissance planes and one land reconnaissance plane. These planes were to be ready for search and contact scouting.***

(2) On sixty minutes notice, at least thirteen land attack planes armed with torpedoes.****

(b) Okinawa (Western Attack Force TWO) -- On fifteen minutes notice, all operational aircraft were to be prepared to disperse, all fighters were to be ready for interception operations, and five carrier-type reconnaissance planes were to be ready for patrol or search missions.*****

(c) Formosa (Western Attack Force THREE) -- On thirty minutes notice, fifty carrier-type fighters as a fighter striking unit, thirty-eight fighters as escort, and forty carrier-type bombers and eight carrier-type attack planes as an attack unit; a total of 136 planes.******

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* Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 162117 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 69), War Diary Commander 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

** Detailed Action Report, No. 1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 12605.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 6, 11th Reconnaissance Unit, Search East of Formosa, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161445, NA 28445.

**** Detailed Action Report, 702nd Attack Unit (752nd Air Group), October 16th - 19th, 1944, WDC Document 163064, NA 12357.

***** Commander Western Attack Force TWO SigOrd 36, October 16th, 1944, to Western Attack Force TWO (transmitted by telephone), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

****** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army, Historical Section Microfilm HS-22, ItemB; also Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 162117, October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 69), War Diary Commander 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

Since the 901st Air Group headquarters were at Toko in the Takao area it seems correct to say that the commander of that one group, who was monitoring the frequency of the radar equipped flying boats, relayed immediately by telephone to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force all contact reports by those night flying boats. Therefore, it can be assumed that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force knew that his night search by a radar equipped flying boat had made contact on what appeared to be two separate task groups; one at 0235 in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E, and one at 0250 in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E. However, because of the contacts on the previous day (October 16th) he knew that other Allied task groups were in the area. As discussed in Volume I it is probable that he likely estimated that one of these contacts was on the Allied task group retiring slowly to the east (TG 30.3) and the other was on either the seven carrier task groups TG's 38.2 and 38.3) or the four carrier group (TG 38.1).*

Commander SIXTH Base Air Force now awaited anxiously the result of the day's searches. He realized that, because of fatigue and progressively growing disorganization, his own command had been fast losing its value as an effective force, and he now required time for regrouping and to complete the movement of his force to Formosa. He had been making good progress in this regrouping. In view of the movements of the Allied task groups on the preceding day, he was prepared, if necessary, to move the main strength of his SIXTH Base Air Force to Okinawa to attack any Allied task groups which might be covering their retiring damaged ships (TG 30.3) from the north, since Okinawa appeared to be within striking range. For this reason he had alerted his forces on the preceding day to the possibility of moving to that island and attacking the enemy from there.**.

At this time he had available to him 842 aircraft of all types, of which 505 were operational. Of these 505, 314 were operational on Formosa and 191 in Nansei Shoto and Kyushu.***

He knew he could expect little from the Philippines searches, since there was a typhoon making up in the area to the east of the central Philippines, notably Leyte, Samar and southern Luzon, and he probably suspected that many, if not all, of the searches would be cancelled. Fortunately, the

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* Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 161407 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No. 66), War Diary, Commander 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

*** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, Chapter III, Section (g), Composition of Forces and Tasks Assigned, Page 453; also Discussion of Losses of Japanese aircraft October 10th to 0719 October 17th, 1944, pages 449, 450.

weather to the eastward of Formosa, Nansei Shoto and Kyushu appeared to be generally good, although there were numerous squalls in that area.

Since CinC Combined Fleet at this time was also at Takao, it can be assumed that much, if not all, of the information available to him was also available to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force.

At about 0749 Commander SIXTH Base Air Force received a dispatch from the Commander Naval Lookout Post on Suluan Island reporting Allied forces penetrating the Strait.* It is not unlikely that, as a consequence of this dispatch, he was consulted by CinC Combined Fleet as to its significance, and as to recommended counteraction. In view of his close association with CinC Combined Fleet at this time, it seems clear that he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch issued at 0809 ordering a fleet alert for SHO One.**

In response to this alert, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force promptly advised his command of the landing, directed all units to move their entire strength to Formosa, to reorganize in accordance with previous orders, and to prepare for the SHO One deployment to the Philippines.*** He also placed all SIXTH Base Air Force units (except the T-Force) in the Tainan area (Tainan, Jintoku, Kijin, Kobi) under the tactical command of the Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group.****

It is quite likely that he received the additional reports concerning the Allied action from Suluan Island, which commenced coming in. Among these were the dispatches concerning landing operations there.*****

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* Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170719 October 1944 presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170809 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet Special DesOp Ord 14), Detailed Action Report No. 3, YAMATO, SHO One, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 71, October 17th, 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report 256th Air Group, October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 73 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report, Expeditionary Unit (256th Air Group), October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

***** Commander Philippine Force Dispatch 170755 October 1944 to SW Area Force, info to All Fleet and Squadron Commanders Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report No. 13 DESRON 10, SHO Operations, October 17th-31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744; also Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatches 170901 and 170814 October 1944 presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

Also about this time he received a dispatch from Commander SW Area that Manila had been attacked commencing at 0800 by 100 enemy aircraft, and Legaspi by fifty aircraft.* This was important information, since it clearly showed that at least one of the Allied carrier task groups was still within striking range of the northern Philippines.

At about 0850 he received the dispatch issued by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet which ordered SHO One alert,** and at 0928 the dispatch also issued by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet concerning the probability of a large-scale landing in the south - central Philippines, wherein he discussed the function of the Main Force with relation to the FIRST Striking Force.***

At about 0900 he received a contact report from Commander FIFTH Base Air Force reporting an Allied carrier task group bearing 085°(T) distant 245 miles from Manila.****

At about 0945 he received what appears to have been his fourth contact report. This was a contact made by a plane of the EIGHTH Air Division on a carrier task group at 0915 bearing 100°(T), distant 360 miles from Takao, consisting of about twenty ships, including three carriers and three battleships, one under tow on an easterly course, speed about ten knots.*****

Since (a) another report gave the last reported enemy position at 0915 as Latitude 22°-00'N, Longitude 126°-40'E,****** (b) no other task group was reported in this area at this time and (c) the two positions, i.e., the

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* Material for Situation Estimates FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 216764 (microfilm).

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170835 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 351), Detailed Action Report SHIGURE, Battle of Leyte Gulf, October 23rd - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161717 (Part IV) NA 11801.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170908 October 1944 to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report ZUIKAKU, SHO One Operation, WDC Document 161008.

**** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

***** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army, Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104; also Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

****** Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

fourth contact and the last reported enemy position, were about thirty miles apart which could have been due to the fact that Japanese positions based on their grid reporting of their air contacts could be as much as thirty miles apart in a north and south direction, it is assumed that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force concluded that the above reports were one and the same contact.

It is not understood why the Japanese report indicated one ship under tow since there were no ships under tow in this task group. The only ships under tow were the CANBERRA and HOUSTON, and these were with TG 30.3 some 100 miles to the southwest. Perhaps this was a case of over-briefing the pilots on the damaged Allied shipping.

Also at about this time he received a report from his Commander 901st Air Group reporting the night search results. In addition to repeating the two contacts previously reported, the Commander 901st Air Group reported that there was a possibility of a slight error in the 0250 contact report. He also reported the weather in the area of the contacts as partly cloudy, broken clouds, ceiling 2000 meters.*

Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had now contacted three task groups off Formosa - Luzon and had received a report of one task group off Manila. This totalled four Allied task groups. From this he could see that the enemy task force strength east of Formosa was increasing.**

At about 0959 it is possible that he received an erroneous report of an air raid on Okinawa, which reportedly occurred at 0929.*** It is not known what he thought of this report, but since he had expected that the Allies might be within range of his planes from Okinawa, it seems clear that, conversely, he knew that Okinawa might be within range of the Allied carrier planes. It will be recollected that he had received a contact but a few minutes before on an Allied carrier task group, distant some 200 miles from Okinawa, which was within carrier plane attack range.

About the same time there was also a false air raid alert off Formosa, notably in the Tainan area. In view of the serious bombing attacks by B-29's on that area on the preceding day, as well as on October 14th, there was a

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* Commander 901st Air Group Dispatch 170915 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army, Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

*** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 16th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973

marked sensitivity against them, and it is presumed that this sensitivity caused the false alert. At least twenty-two Japanese fighters and fighter-bombers took off between 1000 and 1030 to intercept, and aircraft on the airfields were dispersed. The fighters reported having encountered forty-five B-29's at 1040, which were bombing from 8000 meters, and having attacked them with unascertained results.*

THIS REPORT WAS AS FALSE AS THE ALERT, SINCE THERE WERE NO B-29'S IN THE FORMOSA AREA AT THIS TIME; NEITHER WERE THERE ANY ALLIED PLANES WHATSOEVER. WHY THE JAPANESE AIR GROUP COMMANDERS MADE THIS REPORT IS NOT KNOWN. HOWEVER, WHILE THIS REPORT HAD LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE'S RUNNING ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION, IT IS STRESSED HERE TO INDICATE THE NEED FOR ACCURACY IN CONTACT REPORTS AND TO INDICATE THE POSSIBILITY IN WAR OF OTHERWISE COMPETENT COMMANDERS MAKING ACTION REPORTS WHICH ARE IN MANY RESPECTS UNTRUE. IN THIS CONNECTION, CURRENT U.S. NAVY INSTRUCTIONS STATE, IN PART: (1) NO MORE IMPORTANT DUTY EXISTS THAN THAT OF OBTAINING AND DELIVERING TO THE OTC INFORMATION OF THE ENEMY FORCES;** (2) LOSSES OF SHIPS, PLANES, AND PERSONNEL, AND LOST OPPORTUNITIES FOR DECISIVE DEFEATS OF THE ENEMY, HAVE BEEN NEEDLESSLY SUSTAINED THROUGH FAILURE TO OBTAIN COMPLETE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION, FAILURE TO STATE CLEARLY THE INFORMATION AT HAND, AND DELAYS IN DELIVERING VITAL INFORMATION TO APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL.***

At about 1100 it is probable that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force knew that the "T" Force had launched at 1030 a two-plane search from southern Kyushu to search the sector 123°-153°(T) from Sata Misaki to 300 miles. This search was ineffective, both planes having been turned back by 1120 by bad weather.****

It is not clear what this search was specifically seeking, but since its instruction referred particularly to the vicinity of Latitude 28°-20'N, Longitude 133°-00'E, which area had already been searched by Kyushu-based planes, it seems possible that the first search had reported an undeveloped

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* Combat Action Reports of Air Units, Navy Merit Award Section (252nd Air Group), Formosa and Philippines, October 14th - 25th, 1944, FEC GHQ microfilm,(Tokyo); also Detailed Action Report No. 1, Commander 164th and 165th Fighter Units (653rd Air Group), WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

** Basic Fleet Operational Communication Doctrine (NWP 16), Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, September 1953, paragraph 500.b.

*** Ibid, paragraph 500.c.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 6, 11th Recco Unit, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161445, NA 28445.

contact and that this second search had been initiated to develop this contact.

At about 1140 he received a contact report from one of the Kanoya search planes which reported that at 1110 in Latitude 22°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E it had sighted two carriers, two battleships and ten other ships proceeding west.* This contact appears to have been on TG 38.2 which was some forty miles in a southwesterly direction from the reported contact and was on a northeasterly course. That the Japanese considered this contact to have been made on the same task group as the 0915 contact seems probable since this contact, if not so considered, would give five task groups whereas only four were located on this day by the Japanese.**

At about 1231 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 171201,*** wherein the Chief of Staff advised in part, that "assuming that the enemy will make a landing in the Leyte - Samar area, it is estimated that the FIRST Striking Force will be able to carry out its penetration just before dawn on October 22nd, and that the Main Force, acting in support, will sortie on the morning of the 19th, advancing to the waters east of Luzon Strait by the evening of October 21st."

THIS DISPATCH MUST HAVE BEEN VERY INTERESTING TO COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE, SINCE (A) IT SHOWED CLEARLY THAT THE HIGH COMMAND IN TOKYO HAD NOW TENTATIVELY DESIGNATED THE LEYTE - SAMAR AREA AS THE INVASION AREA, AND (B) IT INDICATED THE NECESSITY FOR EXPEDITING THE REORGANIZING, REGROUPING AND CONCENTRATION OF HIS FORCES PREPARATORY TO MOVING THEM INTO THE PHILIPPINES, SINCE THE DESIGNATION OF THE TENTATIVE LANDING AREA WAS PROBABLY MADE AT THIS TIME FOR PLANNING PURPOSES.

IT APPEARS PERTINENT TO RESTATE HERE THE BASIC TASKS OF THE BASE AIR FORCES IN THE SHO OPERATIONS. THESE WERE TO AWAIT APPROACH OF INVASION FORCES, DRAWING THE MAJOR PART OF THE ALLIED STRENGTH AS NEAR AS POSSIBLE, WHILE CONCENTRATING FORCES, THEN, AT A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY, TO ENGAGE DECISIVELY, DESTROYING THE ALLIES IN COOPERATION WITH AN ALL-OUT CONCERTED ATTACK BY FRIENDLY AIR, ARMY AND NAVY FORCES; TO COMMENCE ALL-OUT ATTACKS ON THE DAY PREVIOUS TO THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE'S PENETRATION OF LANDING AREAS.****

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* Detailed Action Report No.2,Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

** Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operations, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Operation Order 6, September 5th, 1944, Memorandum File of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D; also Army-Navy Central Agreement Concerning SHO Operations Concluded July 24th, 1944, Supplement to Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Directive 435, July 26th, 1944, WDC Document 216769 (Microfilm).

Therefore it was clearly important that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force learn what Commander FIRST Striking Force's plans were for the Leyte-Samar objective area, and whether or not that commander would be able to meet the October 22nd date.

He was unable to discuss this matter with CinC Combined Fleet, for that officer had some minutes before departed for Hiyoshi, via Shinchiku.

At about this time he received a report from Tainan that that base was under attack by over ten B-29's.* From the promptness with which an alert had been made at the time of the false 1000 contact, discussed previously, it appears likely that (a) the attack by the B-29's at this time was expected, and (b) the small number of planes which had attacked was unexpected, since the two previous attacks had numbered many more planes. (The strike on the previous day had reportedly consisted of some ninety-eight planes.)**

At 1245 he received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch 171215,*** wherein that commander announced that he expected to arrive in Brunei on October 20th. This was highly illuminating, since it clearly showed that Commander FIRST Striking Force could not meet the October 22nd date. He awaited a dispatch from that commander to CinC Combined Fleet relative to this situation. However, it is possible that this delay was of great assistance to him, since it gave him more time to concentrate his forces.

At 1359 he learned that CinC Combined Fleet had landed at Shinchiku.****

By about 1400, he had learned from numerous reports that the original report of "over ten" B-29's attacking Tainan was too low. The various reports, if evaluated correctly, should have raised the original estimate to

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B; also Detailed Action Report No. 1, 166th Fighter Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th-21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

** Merit Report, 14th Combined Air Group, Formosa Air Battle, October 10th - 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander Mobile Force, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1st - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973; also Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171329 October 1944 to all commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

about thirty planes,* although the report of the 256th Air Group of twenty-three planes was almost exactly correct. It seems likely that this was his final estimate, since his staff notes do not show change from the "over ten." However, the High Command in Tokyo estimated that sixty planes had attacked.** (Actually, the attack was made by twenty-four China-based B-29's,*** which had been intercepted by at least thirty-three fighters, of which three were lost.) Later in the day he received damage reports which caused him to be highly impressed with the destructive power of the B-29's. One of his staff officers, who that afternoon had inspected Daikozan, Tainan and Takao, noted, "the bombing power of the B-29 is tremendous; adequate counter measures must be planned." ****

At about 1422 he received a report that all the Shinchiku searches had been conducted except that the single plane which had been delayed taking off until 0700 had then been forced back by engine trouble and had not been replaced. Search results were negative.*****

He likewise received the results of the search from Garan Bi: the plane in sector 110°-125°(T) had failed to return; the two planes searching

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* (1) Merit Report 14th Combined Air Group, Formosa Air Battle, October 10th - 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161012, NA 12275; (2) Detailed Action Report, Formosa Detachment (254th Air Group), October 13th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161429, NA 12432; (3) Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Fighter Unit (256th Air Group), October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426; (4) Combat Action Records of Air Units, Navy Merit Awards Section (252nd Air Group), Formosa and Philippines, October 14th - 25th, 1944, FEC GHQ Microfilm (Tokyo); (5) War Diary 653rd Air Group, October 1944, WDC Document 160295, NA 12530; (6) Detailed Action Report 164th-165th Fighter Units (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605; (7) Detailed Action Report No. 1, 166th Fighter Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605; (8) Detailed Action Report No. 1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

** Material for Situation Estimated, FIRST Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** Commander 20th Bomber Command, Tactical Mission Report Nos. 11 & 12, October 28th, 1944.

**** Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

***** Commander Western Attack Force THREE Dispatch 171352 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report No. 6, 708th Attack Unit (762nd Air Group), Searches and Patrols of the "Fs" Sector, October 1st - 17th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12297.

080°-110°(T) both reported enemy carrier planes; the plane searching 125°-140°(T) turned back at 230 miles because of weather; other planes made no contacts.*

Also at about this time he probably intercepted Commander Main Force's dispatch 171350 to most commanders, advising of the composition of the Main Force and directing that the remaining air strength of the 653rd Air Group at Oita and Kagoshima bases, and that portion of the 601st Air Group capable of operating from carriers, was to be embarked in CARDIV THREE.**

Since this dispatch was of great importance to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, in that it removed from his command a large number of carrier planes--he probably did not know exactly how many--does it not seem surprising that he was not listed as an information addressee? Of course, he realized that Commander Main Force had no authority to transfer SIXTH Base Air Force planes to another command, but he knew that the order must have resulted from an order of CinC Combined Fleet. He therefore awaited that order.

He did not have to wait very long, for at about 1436 he received orders from CinC Combined Fleet which directed the transfer of the planes of the 653rd Air Group remaining in the homeland to CARDIV THREE. He also received orders to concentrate in the Formosa area his principal remaining strength, including, among other units designated, the attached aircraft of CARDIV's THREE and FOUR, to regroup his forces, and then to move his strength to the Philippines as the situation permitted, meanwhile continuing combat operations.

By the same order, all parent units of expeditionary units operating under command of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force were directed to assemble such strength as had not been moved up and to dispatch reinforcements to said expeditionary units.***

This order gave Commander SIXTH Base Air Force two separate and distinct basic tasks: (1) to reorganize his forces and move them to the Philippines, and (2) to continue combat operations. While it might appear that these tasks were incompatible, this is not believed to have been the case. Certainly it was necessary to regroup, rebuild, reorganize and assemble on Formosa many of the units of the SIXTH Base Air Force. On the other hand, it was also necessary to give these units protection during this period. As has been pointed out earlier, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, acting on the theory

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* Detailed Action Report No.1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations, October 14th - 21st, 1944, WDC Document 161004, NA 12605.

** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force, Combined Fleet,etc.(Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 355), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group),October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258,NA 12593.

that offensive action would, in general, give better defense than purely defensive action, had alerted an attack force of some 136 planes in southern Formosa to attack, if conditions were favorable, any carrier group that might appear within 250 miles.* Meanwhile, he had gone ahead with his reorganization.

At about 1655 he likely received Commander Main Force's dispatch, wherein that commander advised, in part, that that portion of the 634th Air Group remaining at Oita and Kagoshima bases, and which could operate from carriers, was to be embarked in CARDIV THREE.** Although there appears to have been no confirmatory dispatch issued by CinC Combined Fleet, it was clear to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force that he was to lose these planes as well as those of CARDIV THREE.

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHAT HE THOUGHT OF THE RETURN OF THESE CARRIER PLANES TO THE MAIN FORCE. HOWEVER, SINCE HE WAS ESSENTIALLY A LINE NAVAL OFFICER WITH LITTLE OR NO AVIATION TRAINING,*** IT IS PROBABLE THAT HE VISUALIZED SEA OPERATIONS MUCH BETTER THAN LAND-BASED AIR OPERATIONS EVEN THOUGH HE WAS IN COMMAND OF THE LATTER. SINCE HIS AIR FORCES HAD ALREADY TAKEN HEAVY LOSSES WITHOUT HAVING ACCOMPLISHED SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE ENEMY IN RETURN, IT IS NOT UNLIKELY THAT HE FELT THAT THE RETURN OF THE CARRIER PLANES WAS JUSTIFIED.

A summary of the contacts shows that during the day Commander SIXTH Base Air Force received contact reports on three Allied task groups operating off Formosa - Luzon, and one to the eastward of Luzon. The contacts were (a) at 0235 Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E, (b) at 0250 in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E, (c) at 0830 bearing 035°(T), distant 245 miles from Manila, and (d) at 0915 on bearing 100°(T), distant 360 miles from Takao. He also received a position report at 0915 on a task group in Latitude 22°-00'N. Longitude 126°-40'E, and a contact report at 1110 on a task group in Latitude 22°-05'N, Longitude 127°-25'E. However, these latter reports appear to have been evaluated as the same Allied task group reported in (d). He did not attack any of the carrier task groups off Formosa - Luzon because his nearest contact had been about 260 miles from Okinawa (it was about 350 miles from Formosa). Since it would take some hours to stage through Okinawa (it was over 450 miles to Okinawa) he wisely decided to maintain his attack group on the alert in Formosa.

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, SHO Operations, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171625 October 1944, to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, etc. (Main Force DesOpOrd 10), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

*** USSBS Interrogation, Nav.No.115, Interrogation of Japanese Officials, Interrogation of Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome, IJN, Vol. II, Page 500.

Sometime during the day also, the time not available to this study, the J-Force was removed from his command and placed under the direct command of CinC Combined Fleet.*

In the late afternoon he issued his air instructions for the following day.** These were:

(1) Searches (to be launched as early as possible after dawn):

(a) From Formosa. (1) Six planes to search from Garan Bi the sector 085°-145°(T) to a distance of 400 miles; (2) one plane to search from Karenko on base course 134°(T) to a distance of 250 miles, then sixty miles laterally to the left and to return to Sancho Kaku (NE tip Formosa); and (3) one plane to search from Sancho Kaku via Ishigaki Jima on base course 134°(T) to a distance of 200 miles, then sixty miles laterally to the left and to return to Miyako.

(b) From Kanoya. (1) Four planes to search from that base the sector 155°-190°(T), distance not given (normally 650 miles), and lateral movement to be determined by Commander Western Attack Force ONE.

(c) From Okinawa. The search from this base was to cover sectors as ordered by Commander Western Attack Force TWO.

(2) Attack. All air strength present on Formosa and capable of attacking was to be concentrated and prepared to attack after 0600 on fifteen minutes notice.

(3) Interception. These forces were to be made up of interception-type fighters, army fighters and land reconnaissance aircraft, and were to be on a No. ONE Alert (presumably after 0600).

There was nothing unusual in these searches, with the exception of the single-plane searches from Karenko and Sancho Kaku. These searches covered rectangles in a southeasterly direction from northeast Formosa and were presumably designed to insure that no Allied carrier forces were in that area where they might interfere not only with his operations on Formosa but also with the southerly movements of the SECOND Striking Force.

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* Memorandum Notes of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer SECOND AIR Fleet, SHO Operation, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army, Historical Division Microfilm HS-22, Item B.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 75, October 17th, 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Fighter Unit,(256th Air Group), October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

Sometime after having issued the above instructions, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force received the implementing dispatches wherein his Commander Western Attack Force ONE increased the number of aircraft to search from Kanoya to seven planes (later reduced to six planes),* set the search distance as 650 miles and the time of departure as 0500,** and his Commander Western Attack Force TWO established the air search from Okinawa as: (1) two planes to search the sector 145°-165°(T) to 500 miles, with a lateral movement to the left of sixty miles; (2) one plane to search on course 175°(T) to a distance of 400 miles, with a lateral movement to the left of forty miles; and (3) one plane to search on course 180°(T) to a distance of 400 miles, with a lateral movement to the right of forty miles; the time of departure of all planes as 0530. These latter instructions were issued to the responsible commanders on Okinawa by telephone.***

At about this same time Commander SIXTH Base Air Force issued amplifying instructions fixing the command responsibility on Formosa in the event that he should order interception operations in full strength. In the Taichu and Shinchiku areas, where only all-purpose fighters (Zeros) were based, he named a single tactical commander to command all fighters in each area. In the Tainan-Takao area, where he had both all-purpose fighters and interceptors, he named a tactical commander for each type. He further directed that in addition to destroying attacking enemy aircraft, the commanders were to make an effort to carry out training of junior flying personnel.****

At about 1821 he received Commander Western Attack Force ONE's dispatch wherein that commander directed his command to enforce the No. TWO Alert dispositions and to enforce No. ONE Alert disposition daily from 0500 until 0900.***** Since there appears to have been no order by Commander SIXTH Base Air Force setting the alerts at this time it is assumed that the time of the No. ONE Alert as given for Western Attack Force ONE was followed roughly if not exactly elsewhere within the SIXTH Base Air Force.

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* Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 171932 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 171725 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (Western Attack Force ONE SigDesOpOrd 6), War Diary 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

*** Commander Western Attack Force TWO SigOrd No. 39, October 1944 to Western Attack Force TWO, War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 76, October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Fighter Unit (256th Air Group) October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 171751, NA 12426.

***** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 171751 October 1944 to Western Attack Force ONE (Western Attack Force ONE SigDesOpOrd 13), War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258,NA 12592.

At about 1852 he received a dispatch from Commander Izumi Air Base reporting that (a) the Kanoya searches had all been negative with the exception of the contact at 1110 reported earlier, (b) the plane directed to search the 144°-153°(T) sector from Kanoya had made a forced landing at Miyazaki (Kyushu) and had been unable to make the search, and (c) the plane directed to search the sector 163°-172°(T) had turned back after seventy-three miles because of weather.*

At about 1959 he received a dispatch from Commander Western Attack Force TWO reporting the results of the morning's search from Okinawa.** One plane had searched to but 350 miles, one had been lost at about 1200, one had engine trouble and had turned back, and one had completed the search. No contacts were made. It should be noted here that, whereas this dispatch discusses but four of the seven planes ordered to make this search, it seems clear that the remaining three planes searched; otherwise there would have been a statement to this effect.

At 2019 he instructed the 901st Air Group to launch two radar equipped flying boats at 2100 to search from Garan Bi on search lines 095°(T) and 119°(T) to 450 miles thence fly a cross leg of ninety miles to the left and search back to Garan Bi.***

At about 2133 he likely received Commander FIRST Striking Force's reply to the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 171201.**** Here Commander FIRST Striking Force stated that he would not be prepared to depart Brunei before morning October 22nd, and indicated that he could not arrive off the western entrance to San Bernardino Strait before October 24th.*****

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* Izumi Air Base Dispatch 171822 to SIXTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch 171929 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 172019 October 1944 to 901st Air Group (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 74), Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

***** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172103 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

He now knew that (a) he had about five days in which to regroup his forces and to move to the Philippines, and (b) it was most unlikely that he would be permitted to accomplish this without serious Allied interference at least in the Philippines.

He also knew of the attacks planned by the T-Force Commander for dusk of the following day against the Allied carrier task group last reported at 0915 that morning. The plan consisted essentially of sending out search planes to locate the enemy, and then of attacking with limited numbers of attack planes from both Kanoya and Oroku.*

It seems clear that he could have expected little success from such an attack, since the contact would, by dusk of October 18th, be some thirty hours old, at which time, at the reported estimated speed of ten knots on an easterly course, the retiring enemy task group would be beyond attack range of the nearest Japanese bases.

At about 2200 he received a dispatch from the Takao Communication Unit stating that between 1200 and 2000 an enemy task group of six ships which had been located by direction finders southeast of Formosa (in about Latitude 20°-00'N, Longitude 125°-00'E; no change in enemy's position from the previous day) had sent out seven urgent messages. From Diagram B it is clear that this contact referred to TG 30.3 which at the time was slowly retiring to the southeast. The contact was approximately correct in latitude but was about sixty miles to the westward in longitude.**

By about 2230 he knew that the night radar search planes had taken off from Toko. He noted that the departure time he had specified had not been met; however, his order had been issued only forty-one minutes prior to the specified time of departure.***

About 2330 he received a dispatch**** from the commander of the

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* Commander T-Force DesOpOrds 38 and 39, October 17th, 1944, Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

** Takao Communications Unit Dispatch 172130 October 1944 to Commanders SECOND Striking Force, FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces, Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** Detailed Action Report, 901st Air Group Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

**** Commander 252nd Air Group Dispatch 172300 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force and Commander Western Attack Force ONE, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258. NA 12592.

252nd Air Group reporting the progress being made in the advance of THIRD Air Fleet and 51st Air Flotilla units to Formosa. In this dispatch, he reported that there were at Taichu sixty-three aircraft of various types, of which twenty-five were operational; at Tainan forty-four fighters, of which thirty were operational; and at Taito ten carrier-type reconnaissance planes, of which six were operational, and four carrier-type bombers, of which none were operational. This was a total of 121 aircraft, of which sixty-one were operational. He also reported that there were no maintenance personnel, that the facilities of the Formosa bases were inadequate, and therefore requested immediate shipment by air transport of maintenance personnel and needed supplies, including auxiliary gas tanks, blankets, mosquito nets, etc.

(4) Operations of Commander Southwest Area Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

Commander SW Area Force, who was at his headquarters in Manila, was awaiting the results of the morning air searches conducted by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force and the C.G. FOURTH Air Army, which, by 0719 had reported nothing. He knew that his air searches covering the area to the eastward of Luzon had departed; he also knew that the searches to the eastward of Leyte-Samar had not departed, since the weather in that area was very poor indeed, with low visibility. What he was undoubtedly interested in was the possible presence in the area to the eastward of Luzon of the task group (TG 38.4) which had attacked Luzon on the previous day.

By this time he knew that the SIXTH Base Air Force had contacted two enemy task groups, one at 0235 in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E and one at 0250 in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E.*

Commander SW Area Force at this time commanded the Western Force, East Indies Force, Philippine Force, and North of Australia Force (which forces consisted of light craft only), the THIRD and FIFTH Base Air Forces, and all naval shore installations in the SW Area.** His Western Force was in the Malayan area, his East Indies Force in the Netherlands East Indies, his Philippine Force in the Philippines, and his North of Australia Force in the sea area north of Australia. Since, of the above fleets and base air forces, only the Philippine Force and the FIFTH Base Air Force were actively engaged in the Battle for Leyte Gulf, the discussions will, in general, be confined to the operations of these two commands.

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* Detailed Action Report, Commander 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

** Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 84, August 1st, 1944, Section C, Combined Fleet Operation Orders and Serials, ATIS Document No. 39, Part VIII), June 4th, 1945, page 227 (separate table) (NACHI Document).

IT WILL BE OBSERVED FROM PLATE XIV THAT COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE COMMANDED IN PERSON BOTH THE PHILIPPINE FORCE AND THE THIRD BASE AIR FORCE, WHEREAS THE OTHER FORCES WERE COMMANDED BY SUBORDINATES. THIS COMMAND ORGANIZATION HAD THE SAME INHERENT DEFECT NOTED IN THE COMMENTS ON THE ALLIED NAVAL COMMAND, SOWESPAC. THERE, COMMANDER ALLIED NAVAL FORCES SOWESPAC ALSO COMMANDED THE SEVENTH FLEET AND THE CENTRAL PHILIPPINES ATTACK FORCE; IN OTHER WORDS, TO EMPLOY CURRENT NAVAL SLANG, "HE WORE THREE HATS." HERE, COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE LIKEWISE WORE THREE HATS. THE JAPANESE CONSIDERED THIS UNSATISFACTORY, AND POINTED OUT LATER THAT IT BECAME A GREAT OBSTACLE TO COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE IN EXERCISING OVERALL COMMAND.*

The Philippine force (THIRD Southern Expeditionary Fleet) appears to have consisted at this time of about fifteen subchasers, three minecraft, one gunboat, three transport groups (6th, 9th and 10th), three motor torpedo boat groups (12th, 25th and 31st), two air groups (954th and 955th), a large number of suicide boats, and a few midget submarines. Neither the number nor type of units in the transport and PT boat groups or in the two air groups is known. The latter may have had a few reconnaissance and observation planes. Because other planned base facilities had not been completed, the suicide boats were reportedly located at Corregidor and the midget submarines at Cebu, but whether or not they were actually at these bases is not known since the data thereon is inconclusive. From the above it is clear that the forces available to Commander Philippine Force** for the defense of the Leyte-Samar area were very limited indeed and of nuisance value only.

At about 0749-the exact time being indeterminate-he received a dispatch from Commander Naval Lookout Post on Suluan Island, wherein that commander reported:

"One enemy battleship and six destroyers sighted on bearing 065°(T). Are penetrating strait, 0650."***

This was evidently Allied Task Unit 78.4.4. composed of the light cruiser DENVER, the destroyer A. W. GRANT, the high-speed transports CROSBY and SANDS, and the high-speed minesweepers HOWARD, PALMER and CHANDLER, which were preparing to seize Suluan Island. It will be observed that the Japanese recognition and identification was poor, and that once again they mistook a cruiser for a battleship.

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* Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part I, May 1942 - September 1944, Historical Section G-2, GHQ FEC, File No. 8-5, JS-14.

** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part I, May 1942-September 1944, ATIS Document No. 34486 (undated), Historical Section G-2, GHQ, FEC, File No. 8-5, JS-14; also The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II, prepared by Military History Section Special Staff, GHQ, FEC, February 1952.

*** Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170719 October 1944 presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11792.

Also about this time he received additional reports from Suluan Island which reported additional enemy forces in that area; so, at 0755, as Commander Philippine Force, he informed all commands that "an enemy force of two battleships, two cruisers and six other ships, apparently destroyers, attacked this morning in the vicinity of Suluan Island and are launching landing craft."* This report was incorrect, there being no battleships in the area at this time. It is possible that the two "battleships" were the cruisers COLUMBIA (off Point FIN) and DENVER; the two "cruisers" the destroyers BRYANT (off Point FIN) and A.W. GRANT; the six other ships being the CHANDLER, HOWARD, PALMER, SANDS, and CROSBY, plus possibly the BREESE or the PREBLE, both of which were operating in the vicinity of Point FIN.**

Although Commander SW Area Force may have been surprised by these Allied operations, this seems unlikely, since as early as October 10th, after he had received the reports of the strikes by TF 38 on the Nansei Shoto, his Chief of Staff had forwarded to all commands SW Area Force an estimate of the situation, wherein he stated, in part, that "In view of the concentration of enemy ships in the western New Guinea area, the appearance of enemy submarines west of Luzon, and active enemy air operations against the southern Philippines and Borneo, there is a strong possibility that the objective of the present enemy task force operations is to cut our supply lines and prepare the way for landing operations in the southern Philippines." He further stated that"...If this is the case, it is possible that the enemy will follow up with attacks on Formosa and the Philippines, and a strict alert is therefore necessary."***

During the days following the issuance of this estimate, Allied Operations had proceeded along the lines he had forecast, and both Formosa and Luzon had been heavily hit. In view of the great successes claimed by the Japanese base air forces, it is possible that he may for a time have been shaken in his estimate, but it seems clear that the discovery of thirteen carriers east of Formosa - Luzon on the preceding day had once again alerted him to the possibility of invasion. Now, however, he likely changed his estimate from a landing in the southern Philippines to a landing in the Leyte-Samar area.

Commander SW Area Force then, at 0805, directed his command to prepare

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* Commander Philippine Force Dispatch 170755 October 1944 to SW Area Force, Detailed Action Report No. 13, DESRON 10, SHO Operations, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by Naval War College, page 62a.

*** CofS SW Area Force dispatch 101554 October 1944 to SW Area Force, info CinC Combined Fleet, etc., Detailed Action Report No. 13, DESRON 10, SHO Operations, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

for the "P" Operation.* As has been pointed out previously, what was meant by the "P" Operation is not entirely clear. However, it is understood that it referred to certain local measures to be undertaken by his SW Area Force, and therefore he was, by its issuance, preparing for the defense of the Philippines. This would be the logical action to be taken by the force commander.

At about this time, inasmuch as he was at Manila, he knew that Manila had been attacked at 0800 by 100 enemy aircraft, and Legaspi by fifty aircraft. This clearly showed that at least one of the Allied carrier task groups (TG 38.4) was still within striking range of the northern Philippines.** He presumably reported these air strikes to all commands, since the report was received at Imperial General Headquarters. Actually, these Allied strikes had consisted of 126 sorties.***

At about 0831 he received a dispatch from Commander Naval Lookput Post on Suluan Island reporting that at 0745 three enemy ships were preparing for landing operations.****

At about 0839 he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch wherein that commander ordered a fleet alert for SHO One.***** Also about this time he received Commander SIXTH Base Air Force instructions to that command to move its entire strength to Formosa, to reorganize in accordance with previous orders and to prepare to deploy to the Philippines.****** This projected deployment of the SIXTH Base Air Force was not unexpected. As early as September 25th, CinC Combined Fleet had directed the SIXTH Base Air Force to be prepared to move into the Philippines as demanded by the situation,*******

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* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 170805 October 1944 to SW Area Force and East Indies Force (61st Air Flotilla), War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 17th, 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** Supra Chapter I, Operations of CTG 38.4 from 0719 - 2400 October 17th, 1944.

**** Commander Naval Lookout Post Suluan Island Dispatch 170801 October 1944 presumably to all commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11793.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170809 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet Special DesOpOrd 14), Detailed Action Report No. 3, YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Action, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

****** SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 71 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report 256th Air Group, October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

******* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 252118 September 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 311), Military History Section, GHQ, FEC ltr dated January 10th, 1952 to President, Naval War College.

and on September 27th, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had directed his command, among other items, to be prepared to move up to the Philippines since Imperial General Headquarters anticipated activation of SHO One during or after the last ten days of October.*

At 0847 as Commander Philippine Force, and presumably because of his activation of "P" Operation, he activated the "S" Operation.** It is not known exactly what this operations was, but it seems likely that it referred to certain limited operations to be undertaken by his small surface forces.

At about 0850 he received CinC Combined Fleet's 170835 SHO One Alert.***

At about 0900 he received word that an Allied task group consisting of two carriers and nine other ships had been contacted at 0830 bearing 085°(T), distant 245 miles from Manila.****

At about 0918 he likely received CinC Combined Fleet's directive to the Advance Expeditionary Force to prepare immediately to sortie his submarines in full strength to the central and southern Philippines.***** This was of considerable importance to him because it not only showed that headquarters was anticipating Allied operations in the Philippines, but it also alerted him to the fact that after a few days Japanese as well as Allied submarines would be operating off his shores, and he would have to take measures accordingly.

During the forenoon he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's

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* Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Operation Order No. 13, September 27th, 1944, issued from Headquarters at Kanoya, Southern Kyushu, file of Captain Bunzo Shibata, Senior Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D.

** Commander Philippine Force Dispatch 170847 October 1944 to all flags SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report ZUIKAKU, SHO Operations, October 20th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161008.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170835 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 351), Detailed Action Report, FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSO-ROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170848 October 1944 to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 352), War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

dispatches 170908,* wherein the Chief of Staff forecast a probable Allied landing in the south - central Philippines and estimated that the Main Force would lure the enemy carrier force to the north to assist the FIRST Striking Force in its penetration of the objective area, and 170946,** wherein the Chief of Staff, pinpointing the above, estimated a strong possibility of a landing attempt by Halsey in the Leyte - Samar area and by MacArthur on Mindanao.

At about 0945 he received a report of the sighting of an enemy carrier group east of Formosa bearing 100°(T), distant 360 miles from Takao. With this report he had now received contact reports on four Allied task groups -- three off Formosa - Luzon and one east of the Philippines.***

Also at about this time he received a report from Commander 901st Air Group reporting the night search results. In addition to reporting the contacts previously reported he reported that there was a possibility of slight error in the 0250 contact report. He also reported the weather in the area of the contacts as partly cloudy, broken clouds, ceiling 2000 meters.****

He also, at about 0958, received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch directing the FIRST Striking Force to sortie immediately and advance to Brunei.*****

Sometime after 1137 he received reports that Davao in southern Mindanao was being bombed, commencing at that time, by sixty B-24's. He later learned that these planes had dropped their bombs at sea some five to six kilometers from Davao Airfield No. 1.****** (This strike was actually conducted by fifty-nine FIFTH Air Force B-24's from Biak, which reported having

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170908 October 1944 to Main Force, Detailed Action Report ZUIKAKU, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161008.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170946 October 1944 to CofS SIXTH Base Air Force, Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army, Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104.

**** Commander 901st Air Group Dispatch 170915 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Night Searches, Commander 901st Air Group, October 10 - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170928 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 353), Detailed Action Report SHIGURE, Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 23rd - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161717 (Part IV), NA 11801.

****** War Diary Commander 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

heavily damaged oil installations and dock).*

What Commander SW Area Force thought on this air strike is nowhere stated, but it is likely that, since this was the first air strike of consequence against Davao during October, he was somewhat concerned about a possible landing in that area. Perhaps this was a prelude to MacArthur's landing which had been forecast that very morning by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet. Actually, although this air strike may have had some success in diverting Japanese attention from the Leyte area, it was not planned that way by C.G. FIFTH Air Force. It was intended to be a neutralizing blow to assist in the isolation of the Allied western flank of KING II.**

At about 1140 he received a contact report from a Kanoya search plane which reported that at 1110 in Latitude 22°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E it had sighted two carriers, two battleships and ten other ships proceeding west.***

During the forenoon and early afternoon the Allies landed troops of the SIXTH Ranger Battalion on Black Beach THREE northern Dinagat Island.**** However, since no opposition was encountered and since the Japanese air operations owing to the poor flying weather were very limited, this landing was unobserved.

At about 1231 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 171201, wherein the Chief of Staff advised, in part, that "Assuming that the enemy will make a landing in the Leyte - Samar area, it is estimated that the FIRST Striking Force will be able to carry out its penetration just before dawn on October 22nd, and that the Main Force, acting in support, will sortie on the morning of the 19th, advancing to the waters east of Luzon Strait by the evening of October 21st."*****

Since here was the first concrete estimate of the situation by CinC Combined Fleet's headquarters this dispatch was of great importance to Commander SW Area Force as it estimated, by implication, that the probable enemy

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* Weekly Intelligence Review No. 47, October 15th - 21st, Headquarters, FIFTH Air Force.

** Commander Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC, Operation Instructions, revised, No. 71/1, October 5th, 1944.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force, SECOND Base Air Force, October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

**** War Diaries WARD, SCHLEY, October 17th, 1944; also Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably November 1944.

***** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force, etc., Detailed Action Report Hyuga, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

landing date would be October 22nd. There was much that he had to do and perhaps much more additional that he might be able to do with his air forces and surface forces. But principally he had (a) to locate as soon as possible the Allied amphibious forces which were presumably approaching, (b) to make arrangements for the basing of the SIXTH Base Air Force should it move into the Philippines as seemed likely, (c) to do what he could to strengthen the FIFTH Base Air Force, possibly from the THIRD Base Air Force, and (d) to do what he could with his light surface forces and air forces to interfere with the operations of the Allied advance forces, in the Leyte - Samar area.

About this time he learned from his airmen that as of 1230 one battleship, two cruisers and eight destroyers had been sighted at 1230 westward of Suluan Island.* These ships were evidently the DENVER, BRYANT, A. W. GRANT, CHANDLER, HOWARD, PALMER, SANDS, CROSBY, and PREBLE or BREESE.

Meanwhile he noted that CinC Combined Fleet had moved from Takao to Shinchiku.**

At about 1245 he learned that the FIRST Striking Force would sortie from Lingga at 0100 on the following morning and would arrive at Brunei on October 20th.*** A little later he received word that the Main Force would be unable to sortie from the Inland Sea until afternoon of October 20th. As a result of this information he could clearly see that X-day for the penetration of the Leyte - Samar sea area by the FIRST Striking Force would necessarily be delayed until at least October 23rd. This was important to him since his own activities with his limited forces, would necessarily be extended.

At about 1651 he received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet restoring the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO to the FIRST Striking Force.**** These two destroyers had been temporarily transferred to his command for the purpose of transporting the Headquarters of the THIRTY-FIRST Army from Manila to Saigon but from this dispatch he could see that these destroyers would no longer be available for this purpose.

During the afternoon he likely received the message directing the return to the Main Force of those planes of the 634th and 653rd Air Groups still in the homeland. This was of interest since it possibly reduced the number

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* Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171329 October 1944 to all commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Commander Mobile Force, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1st - 25th 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** War Diary AKISHIMO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

of SIXTH Base Air Force planes which might be sent to the Philippines.* The 171406 message, which was from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, directed, in addition, that the SIXTH Base Air Force was to concentrate in the Formosa area, to regroup, and then to move to the Philippines as the situation permitted.*

Finally, at about 2133 he learned that Commander FIRST Striking Force had advised CinC Combined Fleet that he would be ready to leave Brunei on the morning of October 22nd and would arrive off the eastern entrance to San Bernardino Strait sometime on October 24th depending on the speed of advance chosen.** This limited X-day to October 24th at the earliest.

What action he took during the night to counter operations of Allied advance forces operating in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf is not available to this study, but he seems to have accomplished little or nothing. Perhaps the bad weather had affected his projected operations; perhaps he had decided not to commit his forces at this time, since most, if not all, of the Allied advance forces had retired during the night.

(a) Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, 0719 - 2400 October 17th.

At 0719 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, at his headquarters in Manila, was awaiting the results of his air searches, and was preparing plans for the employment of his aircraft. At this time he had available some 163

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force, FIRST Striking Force, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 7), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007; also CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592; also Commander Main Force Dispatch 171625 October 1944 to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, etc., (Main Force DesOpOrd 10), Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172103 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report, Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11834.

planes, of which ninety-eight were operational.* As yet he had received no contact reports from his own planes. He had reason to believe that some searches for which he was responsible had been launched, notably those searches to the eastward of Luzon, because the weather there was generally good. He knew, of course, that the searches to the eastward of the central Philippines were, in general, not being made, since the weather there was poor for flying. Unfortunately, documentation is not available indicating exactly what searches were flown, what contact reports made, or what other information concerning searches in the Philippines was available to him during this period. Virtually the only Japanese information available to this study is the search plan jointly agreed to by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force and the Commanding General FOURTH Air Army, which was discussed in detail in Volume I of this study.** As previously noted, it has been assumed that this search plan was executed in the absence of indications to the contrary.

He knew by this time that the SIXTH Base Air Force had contacted two, what appeared to be, enemy task groups, one at 0235 in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E, and one at 0250 in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E.***

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* In Volume I of this study (Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, Chapter III, Section (g), Composition of Forces and Tasks Assigned, page 454, also Discussion of Losses of Japanese Aircraft October 10th to 0719 October 17th, 1944, pages 450 - 452) the strengths of the FIFTH Base Air Force and FOURTH Air Army as of 0719 October 17th were constructed by applying their plane losses on October 17th and 18th to the strengths recorded as of 1800 October 18th, thirty-three and sixty-nine respectively. That is, the claims made by the Allies for the two days were corrected by the empirical factors developed in Volume I, divided equally, and added to the later known strengths. This procedure established the operational strength of the FOURTH Air Army at 123 planes and the FIFTH base Air Force at eighty-seven planes. Information recently received from Japan indicated (a) a strength of 105 operational planes in the FOURTH Air Army on October 17th and 18th, (b) a loss of thirty-six planes by the FOURTH Air Army on October 17th and 18th, and (c) the arrival of eight reinforcement planes in the FIFTH Base Air Force on October 18th. Therefore, accepting the computed 109 planes as the total Japanese plane losses for the two days, the FIFTH Base Air Force lost seventy-three planes (109-36). This seventy-three added to twenty-five (thirty-three on hand at 1800 October 18th less the eight received on that day) indicates that as of 0719 October 17th, the FIFTH Base Air Force had an operational strength of nine-eight planes.

** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, Chapter III, Section (a) (3), page 212.

*** Detailed Action Report, Commander 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

The weather was sky 9/10 overcast, wind velocity seventeen knots from northeast, ceiling 8,000 feet, visibility fifteen miles, sea slight with slight swell, which made flying conditions good.

At about 0749 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force received the flash report of enemy forces off Suluan, and thereafter received other reports of operations in that area.

At about 0800 he was aware of the attacks by enemy carrier aircraft in the Manila and Legaspi areas.*

About 0839 he likely received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet ordering SHO One alert.** Whether he took any immediate action is not known, but it is known that a single-engine plane was sighted by the Allied minesweepers in Leyte Gulf at 0955. This would indicate that Japanese reconnaissance planes were in the area, but does not indicate whether they were Army or Navy planes.

At about 0900 he received positive information that Japanese searches were being made to the eastward of Luzon for at that time he received a 0830 contact report on an Allied carrier task group consisting of two carriers and nine other ships bearing 085°(T), distant 245 miles from Manila.** This position was very close to the actual position of TG 38.4. The composition given was clearly in error in that there were four carriers instead of two and thirteen other ships instead of nine.***.

At about 0929 he may have received a report of an air raid on Okinawa.**** Such a report probably made little impression because by this time it was apparent to him that the focus of operations was definitely moving to the Philippines.

During the morning, at about 0945, he received a report of the sighting of an enemy carrier group east of Formosa***** bearing 100°(T), distant

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* Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army, Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104; also Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764, (Microfilm).

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 170309 October 1944 (Special DesOpOrd 14) to Flags Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report No. 3, YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Action, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

*** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo),March 15th, 1953) Vol. II.

**** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

***** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104; also Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579 NA 12409.

360 miles from Takao. With this contact he had now received contact reports on four Allied task groups -- three off Formosa - Luzon and one east of the Philippines.

Some time after 1137 he received word that sixty B-24's (actually there were fifty-nine) had attacked Davao unsuccessfully, their bombs falling into the sea five to six kilometers from Davao No. 1 Airfield.*

At about 1140 he likely received a Kanoya search plane report of an enemy task group at 1110 east of Formosa.**

As a result of the reports of enemy operations in the vicinity of Suluan, he had at sometime during the morning ordered a search from Legaspi to reconnoiter the situation. One plane of this search group -- a two-engined plane -- was sighted by the Allied minesweepers in Leyte Gulf at 1208. This search reported that as of 1230, one battleship, two cruisers and eight destroyers were west of Suluan Island.***

Since the headquarters of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force were in Manila, as were those of Commander SW Area, it is assumed that the various messages received by Commander SW Area were likewise received by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force. The message which most concerned the latter commander was the dispatch CinC Combined Fleet to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, wherein that commander was directed to concentrate on Formosa, to regroup and to move his strength to the Philippines as permitted by the situation.**** This message concerned Commander FIFTH Base Air Force because at 0719, as has been pointed out earlier, planes in his command had consisted of but eighty-seven of all types and he required reinforcement if he was to contribute in any degree toward the defeat of the Allied invasion forces. He knew, of course, that if an element or a major part of the SIXTH Base Air Force was sent to the northern Philippines they would report to him for duty; but should the full strength of the force (505 operational aircraft) deploy to the northern Philippines, a different command situation would obtain. In this case, either he operated in conjunction with Commander SIXTH Base Air

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* War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** Izumi Air Base Dispatch 171822 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, Detailed Action Report No. 2, Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104; also Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Commander Kanoya Detachment War Diary, 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

Force or else Commander SIXTH Base Air Force assumed unified command of both Base Air Forces.*

During the day Commander FIFTH Base Air Force learned, among other items, that (a) three land attack planes which had been transferred to Nichols Field, Manila, from Davao had arrived; (b) between 0605 and 1420 a total of thirty carrier planes had struck Airai in the Palaus; and (c) at about 1230 six P-38's and four B-24's had bombed Sarangani (Mindanao).**

At 1515 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, possibly under instructions from Commander SW Area, launched a strike of thirteen aircraft from Clark Field against the Allied forces operating within Leyte Gulf but the strike was turned back at 1804 by weather, several planes being lost.***

Inasmuch as the search plan**** provided that in the event attacks were received while the enemy position was still undetermined, additional searches would be ordered, it is reasonable to assume that Commander FIFTH Base Air Force ordered some additional searches, but when or where is not available to this analysis.

No further operations are recorded for Commander FIFTH Base Air Force. It can, however, be safely stated that he spent the remainder of the day planning, in conjunction with the Commanding General FOURTH Air Army, for future operations against the enemy invasion force and making arrangements for basing, servicing and utilization of anticipated reinforcements.

THIS WAS NECESSARY SINCE THE ARMY-NAVY CENTRAL AGREEMENT PROVIDED THAT (1) WHEN THE PRIMARY EMPHASIS WAS ON SEA OPERATIONS, THAT PORTION OF THE FOURTH AIR ARMY UNITS ASSIGNED TO SEA ATTACK OPERATIONS WOULD BE UNDER THE TACTICAL COMMAND OF COMMANDER FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE, AND (2) WHEN THE PRIMARY EMPHASIS WAS ON LAND OPERATIONS, THAT PORTION OF THE FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE ARMY WOULD BE UNDER THE TACTICAL COMMAND OF THE C.G. FOURTH AIR ARMY. IT ALSO PROVIDED THAT BOTH AIR FORCES WOULD, BY A "CONCERTED

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* SIXTH Base Air Force OpOrd No.6, September 6th,1944,File of Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Staff Officer, SIXTH Base Air Force, October 10th - 23rd, 1944, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D.

** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** Philippine Area Naval Operations Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104; also Appendix thereto.

**** Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer, FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

UTILIZATION OF FORCES," DESTROY THE ENEMY.* AN IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT, SPECIFICALLY PROVIDING FOR JOINT ACTION PRIOR TO ACTIVATING SHC, PROVIDED IN PART THAT WHEN SURPRISE AND GENERAL OFFENSIVE ATTACKS WERE BEING MADE THEY WERE TO EMPLOY, AS NECESSARY, ALL NAVAL AIRCRAFT OF THE FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE BASED IN THE PHILIPPINES AND MOST OF THE ARMY FIGHTER STRENGTH AND SOME OF THE BOMBER STRENGTH BASED IN THE PHILIPPINES.**

Japanese information concerning planes lost by the FIFTH Base Air Force on this day is incomplete and therefore, in determining the number of planes lost, it has become necessary to evaluate Allied claims on the basis of empirical factors developed in Volume I.*** On this day the Allies claimed that TG 38.4 had destroyed twenty-one planes in the air and thirty on the ground, a total of fifty-one aircraft. This has been evaluated as a total of twenty-five operational aircraft.****

Normally, as developed in Volume I,*** these computed losses would have been equally divided between the FIFTH Base Air Force and FOURTH Air Army. However, if the FOURTH Air Army figure of planes is accepted this arbitrary division of losses for this day is not applicable.

The FOURTH Air Army lost twenty planes (Operations of C.G. FOURTH Air Army 0719 - 2400 October 17th). Based on this fact and on the above computation, the FIFTH Base Air Force, lost but five planes.

This loss reduced the FIFTH Base Air Force operational aircraft to ninety-three and available aircraft to 155. These figures do not include several aircraft which may have been lost operationally this day.

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* Army-Navy Central Agreement Concerning SHO Air Operations, concluded July 24th, 1944, Supplement to Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Directive 435, July 26th, 1944, WDC Document 216769 (Microfilm).

** Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army (Agreement probably made late summer 1944), Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

*** War College Analysis based on claims of CTG 38.4 as corrected by empirical factors derived by analysis, Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, Chapter III, Section (e) (3), Discussion of Losses of Japanese Aircraft, October 10th - 0719 October 17th, 1944, pages 449 - 451.

**** Evaluation equals 21 x .64 (Ratio of actual Japanese losses to Allied claims) ≠ 30 x .64 x .6 (assumed percentage of operational aircraft based on analysis of SIXTH Base Air Force Operations = 13 (approximate) ≠ 12 (approximate) = 25 planes.

(B) Operations of C. G. FOURTH AIR ARMY 0719-2400 October 17th.

C. G. FOURTH Air Army was in his Manila Headquarters maintaining close liaison with Commander FIFTH Base Air Force. He had available some 175 planes of which but 105 were operational.* Prior to 0719 he had launched at least some of the short-range searches for which he was responsible, but he had received no contact reports.

PRIOR TO THIS DATE, THE OPERATIONS OF C. G. FOURTH AIR ARMY HAD BEEN PRIMARILY DEFENSIVE; THE SINGLE EXCEPTION BEING AN ATTACK ON THE ALLIED TASK FORCE WHICH HE HAD ORDERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NAVY ON OCTOBER 13TH,** AND WHICH HAD BEEN ABORTIVE OWING TO BAD WEATHER. HIS BASIC CONCEPT CALLED FOR CONCENTRATING HIS MAIN AIR STRENGTH AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT PRIOR TO LAUNCHING A GENERAL ATTACK IN ORDER TO PREVENT EARLY LOSS OF STRENGTH TO ALLIED ATTACKS. THIS CONCEPT WAS IN ACCORD WITH THE BASIC SHO CONCEPT OF THE MAXIMUM PRACTICABLE CONSERVATION OF AIR STRENGTH UNTIL THE DECISIVE BATTLE HAD BEEN JOINED. HE HAD LEARNED FROM HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE ALLIED STRIKES AGAINST THE PHILIPPINES IN SEPTEMBER THAT IN ORDER TO PRESERVE HIS AIR STRENGTH, IT WAS NECESSARY TO KEEP AS MANY OF HIS PLANES AS POSSIBLE OUT OF CARRIER PLANE RANGE.*** FOR THIS REASON HE DESIGNATED THE MALAY AND SHANGHAI AREAS AS CONCENTRATING POINTS FOR REINFORCING UNITS. THESE PARTICULAR AREAS HAD BEEN CHOSEN TO PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF BAD WEATHER INTERFERING WITH THE MOVEMENT TO THE PHILIPPINES.****

In this connection, he had also moved units of the SECOND Air Division as follows: two heavy bombers (12th and 62nd) regiments to Malaya and two assault (65th and 66th) regiments to north Borneo in order to keep them out of reach of Allied carrier planes.***

Two factors caused some modification in implementing the above concept: (1) the necessity of protecting shipping in order to make possible the build-up of Philippine defenses and (2) the failure of concealment and other passive measures to prevent air losses, making offensive action against Allied carrier forces necessary. The first of these factors led CinC Southern Army in early October to transfer two fighter regiments (26th and 204th) from the THIRD Air

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* Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series, Vol. II).

** FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-489, Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army, Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

*** Philippine Air Operation, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA), paragraph II,B.3.a.2.

**** Ibid, Paragraph II.B.4..

Army to the FOURTH Air Army in order to provide for the defense of Manila shipping* which had been lacking in air protection because of the destruction of most of its fighter units prior to any Allied air attacks in October. The second led to the joint agreement with the Navy concerning operations against enemy task forces** which was to apply prior to the activation of the SHO Operation. This agreement, which was discussed in Volume I,*** called for the FOURTH Air Army in conjunction with the Navy: (a) to conduct searches east of the Philippines, (b) to make joint attacks on enemy carrier forces, and (c) to intercept enemy aircraft attacking the Philippines.

At this time, he had within the FOURTH Air Army three subordinate commands: (a) The SEVENTH Air Division with headquarters in the Makassar area which was organic to the FOURTH Air Army; (b) the SECOND Air Division with headquarters in Manila; and (c) the FOURTH Air Division also with headquarters in Manila. He was also to command (effective upon its departure from the homeland) the THIRTIETH Fighter Group which had recently been organized from "picked strength" of fighter units in the homeland.****

The latter two air divisions had been transferred to the Philippines from Manchuria in mid-May. Upon their transfer, an unusual split in their organization and assignment of responsibilities had been made. All flying units of both divisions had been placed under the commander of the SECOND Air Division while all service units had been placed under the commander of the FOURTH Air Division. The reasons given for this organizational split were (a) to provide for better control of air attacks (SECOND Air Division) and (b) to expedite air base construction (FOURTH Air Division).**** Although not absolute (a few reconnaissance plane units remained in the FOURTH Air Division),***** this split is mentioned here to permit a better understanding of the later assignment of tasks by the C. C. FOURTH Air Army.

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* Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA), paragraph II. B.1.c.

** Agreement Concerning Operations Against Enemy Task Forces concluded by C.G. FOURTH Air Army and Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, date unknown, but believed to be September or early October 1944, contained in Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

*** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NAVPERS 91973), prepared by the Naval War College, Chapter III, page 212.

**** Imperial General Headquarters, Army High Command Record, Mid-1941-August 1945, GHQ, FEC, Military History Section, Japanese Research Division, Japanese Monograph, No. 45 (pages 127 and 149).

***** Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, "Aircraft Strength of FOURTH Air Division," Department of the Army, Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

In order to provide for the incorporation into the FOURTH Air Army of anticipated reinforcements and to serve as a guide in issuing later orders, C.G. FOURTH Air Army caused a draft plan of operations after mid-October to be drawn up by his staff.* Although he had not formally adopted this draft plan prior to the start of the decisive battle, he had distributed it to unit commanders and it was generally followed by the FOURTH Air Army in the conduct of operations.**

Essentially this plan provided for:

(a) The SECOND Air Division to perform FOURTH Air Army missions under the joint agreement and to protect shipping in Manila Bay.

(b) The FOURTH Air Division to conduct antisubmarine patrol and to complete the construction and preparation of air bases.

(c) The SEVENTH Air Division to conduct attacks against Morotai and reconnaissance of western New Guinea.

(d) The incorporation of the THIRTIETH Fighter Group and the assumption by that group of the bulk of current missions of the SECOND Air Division.

It further provided that if enemy landings were started in the central or southern Philippines, virtually all the forces available to C.G. FOURTH Air Army (including the THIRTIETH Fighter Group) were to be concentrated under the command of the C.G. SECOND Air Division and given the mission of destroying the enemy landing convoy. C. G. FOURTH Air Division was to be given the responsibility for antiaircraft defense of the Manila district, while the mission of C. G. SEVENTH Air Division was to remain unchanged.

On the previous day, C. G. FOURTH Air Army had followed this draft plan in issuing Operations Order No. A-497*** to provide for the incorporation of the THIRTIETH Fighter Group. In that order, he had set midnight October 25th as the tentative time for the THIRTIETH Fighter Group to assume its missions.

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* Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, "Draft Plan of FOURTH Air Army Operations after mid-October", Department of the Army, Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA), paragraph II.B.3.b.

*** FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-497, Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

His Chief of Staff, in an amplifying directive* had set the "first ten days in November" as the deadline for the completion of decisive battle dispositions.

SINCE (A) IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (NAVY SECTION) ON SEPTEMBER 21ST HAD ADVISED CINC COMBINED FLEET THAT IT ANTICIPATED THAT THE SHO OPERATION WOULD BE EXECUTED IN THE PHILIPPINES DURING OR AFTER THE LAST TEN DAYS OF OCTOBER,** AND (B) IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) ON SEPTEMBER 22ND HAD ADVISED, AMONG OTHER UNITS, CINC SOUTHERN ARMY, THAT IT ANTICIPATED THAT THE SHO OPERATION WOULD BE EXECUTED IN THE PHILIPPINES IN AND AFTER THE LATTER PART OF OCTOBER***, DOES IT NOT SEEM SURPRISING THAT THIS PERIOD WAS CHOSEN? IT SEEMS CORRECT TO SAY THAT THE NAVY DIRECTIVE AND THE ARMY DIRECTIVE WERE TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES IDENTICAL SINCE THE ARMY DIRECTIVE WENT ON TO SAY THAT "THE COMMANDERS OF THE SOUTHERN ARMY, CHINA EXPEDITIONARY ARMY AND THE FORMOSA ARMY WERE TO COMPLETE THEIR OPERATIONAL PREPARATIONS BY THE LATTER PART OF OCTOBER.*** COULD IT HAVE BEEN THAT C. G. FOURTH AIR ARMY ESTIMATED THAT THIS WOULD BE THE EARLIEST PRACTICABLE TIME IN WHICH THE FOURTH AIR ARMY COULD BE COMPLETELY DISPOSED FOR DECISIVE BATTLE?

As of 0719, his subordinate commanders were operating under the missions outlined in his draft plan of operations. At about 0749 -- the exact time being indeterminate -- he received a naval report of enemy operations at Suluan Island.****

At 0800 as a consequence of these reports he directed Commander SECOND Air Division to reconnoiter immediately the Allied situation in the vicinity of the island and to prepare to attack. However, apparently realizing that the Allied operations might be a feint, he delayed for the time being the planned concentration of his fighter strength in the central and southern Philippines.*****

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* FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-497, Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7, Chief of Staff FOURTH Air Army Directive No. 90.

** Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Directive No. 462, September 21st, 1944 (Dispatch 220920 September 1944), Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Directives, Volume IV, WDC Document 216769 (Microfilm).

*** Imperial General Headquarters, Army High Command Record, Mid-1941-August 1945, GHQ, FEC, Military History Section, Japanese Research Division, Japanese Monograph No. 45, page 147.

**** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944 - 45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA), paragraph III.A.2.

***** Ibid.; also FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-498, October 17th, 1944, Documents from File of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army, Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

At about the same time he was aware of the enemy air attacks in the Manila and Legaspi areas.* He had ordered interception** operations with the result that Japanese fighters were encountered over the Manila area by the attacking aircraft.*** These fighters were presumably commanded by the senior Army brigade commander in accordance with the agreement between C.G. FOURTH Air Army and Commander FIFTH Base Air Force covering interception operations for the period prior to the activation of the SHO Operations.**** This agreement stated: "When combat operations are to be carrier out, the senior Army air brigade commander will exercise temporary unified command over the Army and Navy fighter forces."

Because of his close contact with Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, the C.G. FOURTH Air Army is presumed to have had all important information available to that commander.

He therefore knew of the contact reports on Allied carrier task groups, one of which was to the eastward of Luzon, of the ordering of SHO One Alert by CinC Combined Fleet at 0809 and 0835, of the activities of the Allied advance forces in Leyte Gulf and of their composition, and of the prospective movement of a large number of SIXTH Base Air Force planes into the Philippines. The latter was of particular interest to him since it would increase considerably the defensive air strength in the SW Area.

Sometime during the day, the headquarters of the THIRTIETH Fighter Group arrived in the Philippines.***** He knew, however, that the units assigned to this group were in the Shanghai area presumably en route from the homeland.******

No further operations are recorded for C.G. FOURTH Air Army. It can

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ, FEC, Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Volume II).

*** Action Report CTG 38.4, Operation Against Okinawa Jima, Luzon, etc., October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944.

**** Agreement Concerning Operations Against Enemy Task Forces concluded by C.G. FOURTH Air Army and Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, date unknown, but believed to be September or early October 1944, contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer, FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army, Historical Division, Microfilm hS-7.

***** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I, (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA), paragraph II.B.1.d.

****** Ibid., paragraph III.A.2.c.

however, be safely stated that he spent the remainder of the day planning, in conjunction with Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, for future operations against the enemy invasion force and making arrangements for basing, servicing and utilization of anticipated reinforcements.

During the day the FOURTH Air Army lost twenty operational aircraft in operations in Luzon,* thus reducing the operational aircraft to about eighty-five planes and the available aircraft to about 142 planes.

* The FOURTH Air Army figures show that the Japanese FOURTH Air Army lost sixteen planes on October 18th and that at 1800 that day it had but sixty-nine operational aircraft. Therefore, on the evening of October 17th it must have had about eighty-five operational aircraft. Since FOURTH Air Army figures for the forenoon of October 17th show a total of 105 operational planes--it seems clear that the FOURTH Air Army had lost about twenty planes on October 17th. Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ, FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series, Vol II).

CHAPTER III - ALLIED OPERATIONS, October 18th.

(A) Operations of COMSOWESPAC.

By early morning of October 18th COMSOWESPAC had received preliminary reports on the advance operations in Leyte Gulf. No doubt he was pleased to learn that (1) enemy opposition thus far had been negligible, (2) these operations had proceeded satisfactorily despite unfavorable weather, although heavy seas had prohibited minesweeping and the scheduled D-3 day landing on Homonhon Island, and (3) the storm over Leyte Gulf had moved westward during the night and more favorable weather over the objective area was predicted for October 18th.*

Also by early morning he had received a GHQ SOWESPAC intelligence estimate from the Head of his Intelligence** Section at Hollandia, to his Chief of Staff*** also in the NASHVILLE.**** This estimate informed him, in part, that (a) there were some 19,000 to 20,000 troops including service elements located on the eastern shore of Leyte in three major groupings (1) Tacloban, Palo, Tanauan area -- 3,000 men; (2) San Roque, Dulag, Mayorgac -- 5,500 men; (3) Dagami - Burauen, 8,000 men in central reserve including service elements, with a possibility; (4) of a reserve concentration of 3,000 - 4,000 men in Jaro - Pastrana area; (5) entire southern area of Leyte had been evacuated; (b) his intelligence section (G-2) expected the enemy's best combat troops to be destroyed in forward beach defenses while the reserves, owing to road interdiction, would be unable to move forward; (c) Formosa air attacks and subsequent carrier strikes had reduced enemy air in all adjacent main air centers; and (d) air defense capacity for the Philippines had sharply declined. As regards the Navy it informed him that (a) the FIRST Striking Force was in the Singapore-Brunei area on October 15th; (b) the assignment of oilers to Pescadores suggested sortie to the northward rather than to the eastward into the Philippines; (c) the SECOND Striking Force would refuse fight when aware of Halsey's strength. Finally it stated that Operation KING II could not be stopped in air, on ground, or sea.*****

THIS ESTIMATE WAS CORRECT AS REGARDS THE PROBABLE ACTIONS OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE SINCE THE COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE, IN VIEW OF JAPANESE

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* GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

** Major General Charles A. Willoughby, U.S. Army.

*** Lieutenant General Richard K. Sutherland, U.S. Army.

**** War Diary NASHVILLE October 16th, 1944.

***** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171536 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC (in NASHVILLE).

CONTACTS ON TF 38 HAD LONG SINCE BEEN ORDERED TO TAKE A COURSE NORTH OF NANSEI SHOTO,* HAD FUELED AT AMAMI O SHIMA, AND FINALLY ON OCTOBER 17TH HAD DECIDED TO PROCEED TO MAKO IN COMPLIANCE WITH COFS COMBINED FLEET DISPATCH 162007.**

IT WAS INCORRECT AS REGARDS THE PROBABLE EMPLOYMENT OF NAVAL FORCES IN THAT (A) THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE AS OF OCTOBER 15TH WAS IN THE LINGGA-SINGAPORE AREA AND NOT IN THE SINGAPORE-BRUNEI AREA,*** (B) THE ASSIGNMENT OF OILERS TO THE PESCADORES INSTEAD OF INDICATING A NORTHWARD MOVEMENT OF FORCES INTO THAT AREA, AND NOT AN EASTWARD MOVEMENT INTO THE PHILIPPINES ACTUALLY MAY HAVE INDICATED NOTHING, SINCE THE OILER RYOEI MARU WAS BEING SENT THERE TO REFILL STORAGE TANKS AND NOT BASICALLY TO REFUEL THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE.*** IF ANY OILERS OPERATING IN THE SOUTHERN AREAS OTHER THAN THE RYOEI MARU WERE BEING SENT TO THE PESCADORES AT THIS TIME THE DATA THEREON IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS ANALYSIS.

THIS ESTIMATE IS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IN ITS APPRAISAL OF JAPANESE AIR AND NAVAL POWER, FOR WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT JAPANESE AIR POWER IN FORMOSA AND THE PHILIPPINES HAD BEEN HEAVILY HIT BY ALLIED LAND AND CARRIER-BASED AIRCRAFT, IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT THERE WERE AT THIS TIME IN FORMOSA, NANSEI SHOTO, AND KYUSHU, SOME 505 OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT IN THE SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE ALONE,**** NOT INCLUDING ANY REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT BEING FLOWN IN FROM THE HOMELAND. ALL OF THESE PLANES WERE BEING REORGANIZED AND REGROUPED PREPARATORY TO MOVING TO THE PHILIPPINES.***** IN ADDITION THERE WERE ARMY PLANES IN FORMOSA, CHINA, AND THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES PREPARING TO MOVE INTO THE PHILIPPINES AS REINFORCEMENTS FOR THE FOURTH AIR ARMY.****** SO WHEREAS IT COULD BE STATED CORRECTLY THAT THE DEFENSE CAPACITY HAD DECLINED, IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN POINTED OUT THAT THE ENEMY WAS CAPABLE OF INCREASING HIS DEPLETED AIR CAPABILITY TO ONE OF CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH.

THERE IS SERIOUS QUESTION WHETHER THE ABOVE ESTIMATE, INCLUDING THE FINAL STATEMENT, THAT KING II COULD NOT BE STOPPED IN THE AIR, ON THE GROUND

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 161226 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 162007 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf, NAVPERS 91973, Chapter III, Discussion of Losses of Japanese Aircraft, October 10th-0719 October 17th, 1944, page 449.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 355), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

****** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-1945, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph Japanese Government, October 1946, Volume 46, Part I, (Colonel Matsumae, ex-IJA).

OR ON THE SEA, WAS SOUND IN PRINCIPLE, BECAUSE (1) IT WAS TOO OPTIMISTIC AND THEREBY TENDED TO CONFIRM THE ORIGINAL ERRONEOUS ESTIMATE THAT NO MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PRESENT OPERATION,* AND (2) AS AN INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE IT ERRED IN STATING JAPANESE STRENGTH IN RELATION TO ALLIED STRENGTH, AND THEREFORE MADE A COMPARATIVE RATHER THAN AN OBJECTIVE APPRAISAL, WHICH MIGHT WELL HAVE MISLED THE ALLIED COMMANDERS. IN CURRENT U.S. NAVAL PRICTICE,** IT IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL IN AN INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE THAT THE ENEMY STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS FACTORS BE APPRAISED IN A CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE MANNER RATHER THAN IN RELATION TO OWN FORCES, SINCE THE STRENGTH FACTORS FOR ONE SIDE ARE NOT NECESSARILY WEAKNESS FACTORS FOR THE OTHER SIDE.

During this day COMSOWESPAC seems to have pondered to some extent over COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch 170909 relative to the possibility of "Tokyo Express" operations and the importance of reconnoitering Balabac Strait and other approaches to the Sulu Sea, the approaches to the Celebes Sea, and Mindoro Strait, for, although he had received this dispatch about 1839 the previous day he did not take any action until 1526 when he directed CAAF SOWESPAC, if not already included in the night searches then underway in accordance with his headquarters' dispatch 170102,*** to maintain a special reconnaissance watch over Balabac Strait that night.**** That he took action to cover the southern approaches to the Sulu Sea, is clear for at 1921 COMSEVENTHFLT advised COMTHIRDFLT that COMSOWESPAC had directed coast watchers to report without delay enemy movements or concentrations in Sibuta Passage or Alice Channel***** (Northeastern Borneo). He took no action in regard to Mindoro Strait, possibly because he (a) deemed this area outside the practicable operating radius of his search aircraft from bases available, which was actually the case, and (b) felt that Mindoro, in view of CTF 71 dispatch 101426,****** was adequately covered by the submarines of TF 71.

At 1515 he rendezvoused with CTF 77 in the WASATCH. (Discussed under "Operations of CTF 77, October 18th").

At about 1832 he received word from COMTHIRDFLT that he was striking Luzon with three carrier task groups in fine weather, and that early reports of the preliminary fighter sweep and first strike by CTG 38.2 against Laoag and Aparri in northern Luzon were highly successful and indicated that Japanese resistance and air strength in this area were quite meager.*******

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* CANF SOWESPAC Operation Plan 13-44 Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Annex "M".

** Naval Operational Planning (NWP-11), Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, May 15th, 1953, Article 2032.

*** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 170102 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

**** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180626 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA, COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, etc.

***** COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 181021 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

****** CTF 71 Dispatch 101426 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

******* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180902 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC and CINCPOA.

Sometime during the day he learned that the third and last entrance island (Homonhon) flanking the eastern approaches to Leyte Gulf had been seized without opposition. As a consequence of this and other reports thus far received he at 2211 notified COMINCH that the preliminary landings had been made according to plan -- unopposed.*

Sometime during the evening he received COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice #10 and CINCPOA's Zone Notice #44. The latter notice is discussed under "Operations of COMTHIRDFLT, October 18th" and under "Operations of CTF 17, October 18th.

(1) Operations of Commander SEVENTH Fleet, October 18th.

Commander SEVENTH Fleet appears to have taken on this day no important action relating directly to the operational aspects of the Leyte campaign, either as Commander SEVENTH Fleet or as CANF SOWESPAC. His deputy commander continued administrative control from headquarters at Hollandia, while he himself, as Commander SEVENTH Fleet, continued operational control of SOWESPAC naval forces associated with the Leyte operation from the WASATCH.

Sometime during the early morning he received GHQ SOWESPAC intelligence estimate dispatch 171536,** giving the enemy strength in land, sea and air power and forecasting no enemy opposition of any consequence. This estimate was of importance to him since it confirmed his own estimate of October 16th.*** There were minor differences, of course. However these differences were not great and were concerned principally with aircraft. His own estimate had given figures, whereas this estimate had generalized; his own estimate had given no predictions, whereas this estimate predicted no opposition by land, sea or air sufficient in strength to stop KING II.

At about 1556 he received COMSOWESPAC's dispatch 180626 to CAAF SOWESPAC wherein COMSOWESPAC directed that commander to maintain a special reconnaissance watch over Balabac Strait that night, if not already included in his night air searches.****

At 1921 he advised COMTHIRDFLT that COMSOWESPAC had directed coast watchers to report immediately enemy movements or concentrations in Sibutu Passage or Alice Channel.***** This dispatch is a good indication of the cooperation existing between COMSEVENTHFLT and COMTHIRDFLT at this time.

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* COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 181311 October 1944 to COMINCH, info CNO, CINCPOA, COMSOPAC.

** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171536 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC (in NASHVILLE).

*** CTF 77 Dispatch 160611 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets, info CINCPOA.

**** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180626 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA, COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, etc.

***** COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 181021 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

At about 1945 he received a report from CTG 38.4 wherein that commander reported the successful results of his air strikes in central Luzon notably in the Clark Field area, and reported that his morning and afternoon reconnaissance of San Bernardino Strait had been negative.*

During the evening he received two zone notices:

(a) COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice #10 issued from GHQ SOWESPAC at Hollandia which directed that the Submarine Patrol Zone which had been temporarily established by COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice #8 within a circle of fifty miles radius centered at Tongehatan Point Tawi Tawi (Latitude 05°-21'N, Longitude 120°-10'E) was to remain effective until further notice,** and

(b) CINCPOA's Zone Notice #44, which reclassified submarine operating areas KITCHEN, CLOSET, MARU MORGUE, and 11-C as submarine patrol zones; PARLOR, DEFER, that portion of VESTIBULE lying north of Latitude 21°-00'N and that portion of DETECT and DEPART lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E as joint zones; and DETAIN, that portion of DELETE lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E and that portion of VESTIBULE lying south of Latitude 20°-30'N as air surface zones.***

For reasons unknown to this study, he did not advise CTF 17 or CTF 72 of COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice #10.

(a) Operations of CTF 77 (Central Philippines Attack Force), October 18th.

CTF 77 in company with CTF 79 continued on route SHEARWATER toward Point ART -- about 500 miles east of Leyte Gulf. He was pleased thus far with the reports from his advance force commander (CTG 77.2) that the operation was proceeding to plan. Nevertheless, the possibility of continued unfavorable weather on October 18th was of concern to him, for he knew that the storm of the previous day had hampered minesweeping operations and prevented the landing on Homonhon Island. Sometime during the early morning he received GHQ SOWESPAC intelligence estimate dispatch 171536.**** Since this estimate was very optimistic, and indicated no serious opposition from the enemy, and since he felt that he had caused his submarines to be so stationed and his air searches to be so made as to cover the principal danger areas, such as Balabac Strait, he took no action additional to that already planned. At about 0505, in the vicinity Point ART, he received a weather

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* CTG 38.4 Dispatch 181015 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info COMTHIRDFLT COMSEVENTHFLT.

** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180523 October 1944 to CANF SOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA.

*** CINCPOA Dispatch 180829 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 17, info COMINCH, COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, CTF 71.

**** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171536 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC (in NASHVILLE).

forecast from GHQ SOWESPAC stating that the weather over the Leyte - Samar area was expected to improve on October 18th, with the seas subsiding slowly.*

At 1046 he replied to a request from CTG 77.4, made a few days earlier. CTG 77.4 had proposed in part that he enter Leyte Gulf on D-day with the escort carriers SANGAMON and SANTEE, operate during daylight in the northeast area of the Gulf and anchor at night in the vicinity of the heavy ships, in order to increase early morning and sunset air coverage over the objective area.** He now replied in the negative, stating flatly, "Do not enter Leyte Gulf on D-day."***

He arrived at this decision only after having carefully weighed the various factors involved. He took two days to reply, finally replying only after he had learned the results of the first day's operations of his advance forces and had received weather reports for the Leyte area. He refused CTG 77.4's request with regret. He fully realized that it was most important to have strong air coverage over his forces inside Leyte Gulf at both dawn and dusk, but particularly at the latter time.**** However, he felt that he could obtain the desired cover from the escort carriers without the risk of entering the Gulf because there was nothing to prevent the escort carriers from coming close in for the dawn launchings and dusk recoveries. By close in, he meant closer than twenty-five to thirty miles from Suluan Island.****

Since (a) the basic instructions called for the dusk target combat air patrol (TCAP) to leave stations at 1820 (approximately sunset),***** (b) the planes were normally recovered prior to the expiration of evening twilight, (c) the distance from the vicinity of Suluan Island to the objective areas off Dulag and Tacloban was about fifty-five miles and (d) this long distance would necessarily reduce the time (about twenty minutes) that the planes would be on station during this critical period, does it not seem correct to say that unless the escort carriers commenced making night landing of their TCAP's the ability to obtain the desired cover was doubtful?

The fact that the escort carriers on occasions during the Leyte operation recovered their dusk TCAP's in complete darkness does not alter this concept since the ability to make such recoveries was forced on the escort carriers by the exigencies of the developing situation.******

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* GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

** CTG 77.4 Dispatch 152103 October 1944 to CTF 77.

*** CTF 77 Dispatch 180146 October 1944 to CTG 77.4.

**** Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, USN(Ret), Written comment, February 9th, 1955, to Commodore Richard W. Bates, USN(Ret), Head of World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

***** CTG 77.4 Operation Plan No. 2-44, October 5th, 1944.

****** Action Report CTG 77.4, Comment on Air Operations by Division and Air Group Commanders, October 14th-19th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

The reasons for CTF 77's negative decisions were: (a) It was highly probable that the mine clearance in the area might not be completed on schedule, (b) carriers in Leyte Gulf would make good targets for night attacks by enemy torpedo boats, for his intelligence indicated that enemy torpedo boat operations could be expected, although he later found out that the enemy had none in Leyte Gulf, (c) carriers, being choice targets, would, while in the transport area, attract enemy aircraft to that area since any carriers would be prime targets for enemy air attack at any time, (d) the suggested area, about seventeen miles square, while perhaps providing sufficient sea room to operate two escort carriers and their escorts under usual conditions, would not provide sufficient sea room should an enemy air attack against the carrier group develop, and (e) carrier operations in Leyte Gulf might tend to aggravate the congestion and crowded sea conditions anticipated on the arrival of assault shipping on D-day.*

These reasons seem sound since the disadvantages far outweigh the advantages.

At 1515 TU 77.1.2 (NASHVILLE, ABNER READ and BUSH) took station with TU 77.1.1 (WASATCH, AMMEN, MULLANY) between the two transport groups.

As has been pointed out under "Operations of COMSOWESPAC, October 17th," this now brought together in the same disposition (a) COMSOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC in the NASHVILLE and (b) CTF 77 (who was also CANF SOWESPAC and COMSEVENTHFLT) and the C.G. SIXTH Army in the WASATCH. It was an excellent arrangement since CTF 77 now had within voice signal and shipboard conference range his principal Army commander and his immediate superior in SOWESPAC.

CTF 77 awaited further reports on the progress of the advance operations in the objective area from his advance force commander (CTG 77.2). He kept abreast of these operations by listening in on the various radio circuits, since there is no record of any relevant dispatches sent on this date with CTF 77 as the action or information addressee. He likewise still wondered what action CAAF SOWESPAC had thus far taken in regard to protecting the southern flank by neutralizing Mindanao. At the end of the day, he had as yet received no answer to his request, originated at 1301 the previous day, for a report of previous and intended air strikes in that area.** In regard to air neutralization on the northern flank, he received at about 1832, word that COMTHIRDFLT was hitting Luzon with three carrier task groups under favorable weather conditions and that first reports from the strikes against Laoag and Aparri indicated that enemy air power in northern Luzon was practically non-existent.*** He received no contact reports from Allied search

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* Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, USN(Ret), Written comment, February 9th, 1955, to Commodore Richard W. Bates, USN(Ret), Head of World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 170401 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180902 October 1944 to CINCPOA and COMSOWESPAC, info COMSEVENTHFLT.

aircraft on this date; at about 0818 he received a contact report* from CTF 71 in regard to three large enemy ships sighted at 0300 in Makassar Strait on course 035°(T), speed twenty-three knots, but he appears to have taken no action, probably because (1) these ships were more than a day's steaming away (over 700 miles) and (2) he expected further reports from the Morotai search planes. Moreover, he not only had ample protection against a possible surface action in the four cruisers and seven destroyers of his Close Covering Group (TG 77.3) which were on his left flank proceeding to Leyte with TF 78, but in addition, from his knowledge of Japanese operations, he could feel that the chance of three combatant ships making a daylight approach through open seas against Allied land and carrier-based aircraft was unlikely.

During the day he intercepted numerous dispatches (a) from COMTHIRDFLT (1) regarding the retirement of one of his task groups to Ulithi and the re-grouping of the remaining three groups and (2) in regard to a second typhoon forming in the vicinity of Latitude 14°-00'N, Longitude 136°-00'E, expected to move northwest at ten knots, and the subsequent shifting of the THIRD Fleet fueling area from CCTANE to MICK; (b) from CTG 78.4 regarding the success and progress of the advance landing operations on Dinagat, Suluan and Homonhon Islands, as discussed under the operations of CTG 78.4.

(1) Operations of Advance Force, October 18th.

(a) Operations of CTG 77.2** (Bombardment and Support Group).

At 0001 CTG 77.2 noted that the weather was moderating. The wind had subsided to about twenty knots from 175°(T) and the ceiling had lifted to about 6,000 feet, although the seas still remained high and the visibility remained about two miles. The barometer had risen during the previous evening and remained steady.*** As he steamed on course 298°(T) at fifteen knots to return to Leyte Gulf from his night retirement area, he anticipated that he would find more favorable weather inside the gulf so that he might accelerate the minesweeping and preliminary landing operations and thus offset the delay caused by the typhoon the day before.

At 0010 he picked up CTG 78.4 by radar, bearing 318°(T), distant twenty-three miles, course 282°(T), speed twelve knots, also returning to Leyte Gulf to attempt again to land troops on Homonhon Island.

By 0535 excellent weather conditions obtained, with seas moderate to smooth, ceiling 5,000 feet.

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 172248 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, All TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets, etc.

** All information here, except as otherwise indicated, was obtained from Action Report CTG 77.2 (COMCRUDIV 4), Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

*** Deck Log LOUISVILLE, October 18th, 1944.

At 0637 he received a report from CTG 77.5 which corrected the erroneous report of the previous day. He now learned that (a) twenty per cent of Area SWEEP had been cleared and that twenty-six mines had been swept in this area, instead of the previously-reported negative results; (b) the clearance thus far made in the southern half of the main channel from the mouth of Leyte Gulf to the Tacloban-Dulag area had revealed no mines; (c) very scanty exploratory sweeps in other areas had detected no mines; (d) no areas had been completely swept; and (e) not only had a large number of moored mines been located in Area SWEEP, but many floating mines had been observed in the Gulf as well.

HE NOW HAD AN IMPORTANT DECISION TO MAKE. SHOULD HE WAIT UNTIL THE MINESWEEPERS HAD COMPLETED SWEEPING THE ENTRANCE, THE MAIN CHANNEL AND HIS BOMBARDMENT AREA, AND THEREBY DELAY THE SCHEDULED ADVANCE OPERATIONS AND POSSIBLY D-DAY, OR SHOULD HE RISK THE MINES SO THAT HIS BOMBARDMENT AND UDT (UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM) OPERATIONS MIGHT PROCEED AS PLANNED? IF HE CHOSE THE LATTER PLAN, SHOULD HE PASS THROUGH THE MINEFIELD WITH HIS ENTIRE GROUP (TG 77.2) OR SHOULD HE EMPLOY SMALL FORCES ONLY SO AS NOT TO ENDANGER HIS WHOLE COMMAND IN THE MINEFIELD OR IN LIMITED SWEPT AREAS. HE DECIDED TO RISK PASSAGE WITH GROUP ABLE OF FIRE SUPPORT UNIT SOUTH AND UDT UNIT SOUTH ONLY, AND TO PROCEED INTO THE GULF FOR A PERSONAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SITUATION. HE ALSO DECIDED THAT HE WOULD CONDUCT A TACTICAL SWEEP AHEAD OF THESE UNITS AS THEY ENTERED THE GULF, AND ADVISED CTG 77.5 ACCORDINGLY.

At 0731, with Group ABLE of Fire Support Unit South (LOUISVILLE, MINNEAPOLIS, PENNSYLVANIA, DENVER, NEWCOMB, LEUTZE, BENNION, H.L. EDWARDS, R.P. LEARY, and HALFORD) and UDT Unit South (TALBOT, GOLDSBOROUGH, HUMPHREYS, GEORGE E. BADGER), he left the disposition, formed column, streamed paravanes, and launched planes preparatory to passing through the mine field.

He ordered the remainder of TG 77.2 consisting of (1) Group BAKER of Fire Support Unit South (HONOLULU, COLUMBIA, TENNESSEE, CALIFORNIA, PORTLAND, ALBERT W. GRANT, BRYANT, CLAXTON, THORN, WELLES, less ROSS, which was operating temporarily with CTG 78.4, and ROBINSON, which was with CTG 77.5 in Leyte Gulf), and (2) Fire Support Unit North (MISSISSIPPI, WEST VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, SIGOURNEY, CONY, AULICK) accompanied by UDT Unit North (CLEMSON, BROOKS, RATHBURNE) and the MANLEY, KANE, BELKNAP, OVERTON, which carried demolitions only, to operate under command of COMCRUDIV NINE in the vicinity of Point FIN, ready to enter when directed by TG 77.2.*

At 0900, in the LOUISVILLE at the head of the column, with three minesweepers (ZEAL, TOKEN and TUMULT of MINDIV FOURTEEN) sweeping ahead of the formation, and with SCOUT as mine destruction vessel,** he entered Leyte Gulf, and at 0947 entered Area SWEEP.

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* Action Report COMCRUDIV 9, Seizure and Occupation of Leyte Island, October 18th-21st, 1944, Serial 0091, October 28th, 1944.

** War Diary TOKEN, October 18th, 1944.

At 1123 he received word that exploratory sweeps in Area FLOAT and the transport areas had disclosed no mines.

AT ABOUT THIS TIME, HAVING COMPLETED PASSAGE THROUGH AREA SWEEP, HE NOW HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER TO KEEP THE MINESWEEPERS AHEAD OR TO RETURN THEM TO THEIR MINESWEEPING. HE DECIDED THAT IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE MAIN SHIP CHANNEL HAD BEEN REPORTED CLEAR OF MINES, AND PERHAPS AREA FLOAT AND THE TRANSPORT AREAS AS WELL, THAT HE, WITH GROUP ABLE, WOULD PROCEED ALONE SO AS TO (A) EXPEDITE THE COMPLETION OF MINESWEEPING WHICH WAS ALREADY SERIOUSLY BEHIND SCHEDULE, AND (B) EXPEDITE HIS MOVEMENTS INTO THE FIRE SUPPORT AREA.

At 1135 he detached MINDIV FOURTEEN to continue sweeping operations in Area SWEEP and proceeded up the main channel towards Point CHARLIE. He now had to decide whether to go ahead into partially swept waters in order to obtain some information of the beach conditions or whether to delay until the waters had been completely swept. He realized, of course, that he would only be able to reconnoiter the southern beaches, since, if Fire Support Unit North and UDT Unit North were now ordered to enter the gulf, they could not arrive in time to reconnoiter the northern beaches on this day. This would be so even if the northern beaches had been swept, which in fact had not been done. He also realized that because (1) of the long time it took to pass through the minefield, (2) the danger of passing through the minefield at night, which would probably be greater than the danger of maneuvering in the gulf during the night, (3) the apparent lack of mines in the gulf, and (4) the necessity of proceeding with the advance operations, it would be wise to bring Fire Support Unit North, UDT Unit North, and Group BAKER of Fire Support Unit South into the gulf immediately and retain his entire task group inside the gulf during the night. He therefore decided to (a) conduct the underwater reconnaissance operations off the southern beaches that afternoon, (b) order the remainder of his task group into the gulf immediately, and (c) keep the whole task group inside the gulf that night, and issued orders accordingly.

THE DECISION TO CONDUCT UNDERWATER RECONNAISSANCE OF THE SOUTHERN BEACHES WAS MOST DIFFICULT TO MAKE, SINCE IT WAS REALIZED THAT THE BOMBARDMENT OF THIS AREA SCHEDULED FOR D-3 DAY AND THE FORENOON OF D-2 DAY HAD NOT BEEN ACCOMPLISHED OWING TO ADVERSE WEATHER, AND THE PRELIMINARY BOMBARDMENT FOR THE UDT OPERATIONS WOULD THEREFORE NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE CURTAILED OWING TO THE LIMITED DAYLIGHT WHICH WOULD REMAIN AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF GROUP ABLE IN THE FIRE SUPPORT AREA. CONSEQUENTLY, THE OPERATIONS OF THE UDT TEAMS WOULD LIKELY BE MUCH MORE HAZARDOUS THAN HAD BEEN ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED, AND LOSSES—PERHAPS SERIOUS LOSSES--WERE TO BE EXPECTED. NEVERTHELESS, CTG 77.2 FELT THAT TO DELAY THE OPERATIONS AND THEREBY PERMIT THE ENEMY TO REINFORCE HIS BEACH DEFENSES AS WELL AS HIS DEFENSIVE FORCES OF ALL ARMS MIGHT RESULT IN FAR MORE SERIOUS LOSSES LATER, NOT ONLY TO THE UDT TEAMS BUT TO THE ASSAULT FORCES AS WELL.

WHILE IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT UDT OPERATIONS IN GENERAL SHOULD NOT BE ATTEMPTED UNTIL THE BEACH AREAS HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED, IT IS ALSO RECOGNIZED THAT THERE ARE OCCASIONS WHEN THE SITUATION DEMANDS THAT THE OPERATIONS PROCEED WITHOUT HAVING ACCOMPLISHED THE ABOVE NEUTRALIZATION. THIS DECISION OF CTG 77.2 IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE FALLEN WITHIN THIS CATEGORY AND, DESPITE THE EXPECTED INCREASE IN LOSSES, IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN CORRECT.

After having arrived at Point CHARLIE, in the main ship channel, CTG 77.2 proceeded on through the Southern Transport Area. En route to his firing position he decided that, since the water areas near the beach had not been swept adequately and were in fact being swept at this very time, he would not be justified in closing the heavy ships to the planned firing range of about 7,000 yards from the beach, but would instead have to remain in deeper water. He therefore moved the firing points for the various heavy bombardment vessels out to about 12,000 yards. He arrived at his new firing position in time to commence scheduled shore bombardment by his heavy ships at 1400, while the destroyers NEWCOMB (F), LEUTZE, BENNION, HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS, and RICHARD P. LEARY, under command of COMDESRON FIFTY-SIX, supporting the four APD's (TALBOT, GOLDSBOROUGH, HUMPHREYS, GEORGE E. BADGER) closed to 8,000 yards from shore and opened fire at 1435, advancing to 6,000 yards by 1458.

At 1500 the APD's closed to 3,000 yards, embarked their UDT teams into sixteen LCPR's and sent them to their assigned beach areas.

About this time CTG 77.2 received a report that Sweep Unit SEVEN had completed an exploratory sweep of Area DRUM, with negative results.

At 1600 Group BAKER of Fire Support Unit South, plus Fire Support Unit North and the remaining high-speed transports, commenced entering Leyte Gulf, with MINDIV FOURTEEN once again sweeping ahead. Rendezvous with Group ABLE had been set for 2030, at Point CHARLIE.*

During transit through the minefield, the MISSISSIPPI and the CALIFORNIA each cut an unswept mine with their paravanes. COMCRUDIV NINE in the HONOLULU observed a minesweep kite adrift very close to his flagship, and directed the WELLES (DD 628) to recover it. The WELLES discovered that this kite was fastened to another unswept moored mine, which she destroyed. In addition, two floating mines were sighted close aboard the formation.**

At 1640, upon completion of the underwater reconnaissance off the southern beaches, the UDT teams were recovered and the APD's, with

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* Action Report CTG 77.5, Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Strait and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 9, Seizure and Occupation of Leyte Island, October 18th-21st, 1944, Serial 0091, October 28th, 1944.

their supporting destroyers, withdrew to join the heavy ships of Group ABLE (TU 77.2.2A). Although the enemy opposed the UDT operations with intense small arms, mortar and three-inch fire, the personnel casualties--amounting to three killed and twenty-six wounded--were lighter than expected, and most of these (two killed and nineteen wounded) occurred aboard the GOLDSBOROUGH when she closed the beach to recover three personnel who were wounded when one of her LCPR's was sunk by enemy fire.*

At 1735, Group ABLE ceased shore bombardment. About the same time, word was received from the CHANDLER that Philippine guerrilas had visited that vessel to deliver a message from General Causing of Samar stating that (a) there were no enemy torpedo boats in Leyte Gulf; (b) nearly all enemy aircraft on Leyte had been destroyed; (c) no Japanese on Panaon; (d) Japanese on Samar were concentrated at Lipata, those on Leyte at Tacloban and on the beaches from Tacloban to Abuyog.

At 1815, CTG 77.2 received a report from CTG 77.6 that reconnaissance of the southern beaches had revealed no underwater obstacles or mines and that the beaches were suitable for landing.** The results of the underwater reconnaissance confirmed Allied intelligence in this regard.

At 1832, he withdrew from the bombardment area, formed cruising disposition and proceeded to rendezvous with the remainder of the Bombardment and Fire Support Group, leaving the LEUTZE and the HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS off the southern beaches to conduct night harassing fire, and the ROBINSON and ROSS to cover the minesweep units. Later he was joined at the established rendezvous by the other fire support units and high-speed transports under the command of COMCRUDIV NINE, and conducted night retirement within the gulf in the area between the southern beaches and Hibuson Island.

At about 1902 he received a message from CTG 78.4 reporting that (a) the Commander "D" Company Rangers had reported his mission accomplished on Suluan Island and had enemy documents in his possession but was unable to obtain a Japanese mine chart; (b) all enemy installations on Suluan were destroyed; (c) Allied casualties consisted of one Ranger killed and two seriously wounded; (d) natives reported thirty-two Japanese on Suluan, of which three were believed killed; (e) native guerillas reported seeing mines off the west coast of Suluan; (f) there were no Japanese on Homonhon.***

At about 2212 he received a second dispatch from CTG 78.4 reporting in part that (a) "B" Company of the TWENTY-FIRST Infantry Regiment

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* Action Reports TALBOT (CTG 77.6), Serial 0084, November 10th, 1944; also GOLDSBOROUGH, Serial 28, December 1st, 1944, UDT 8, Serial 041, October 24th, 1944.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 4, Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

*** CTG 78.4 Dispatch 180932 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.

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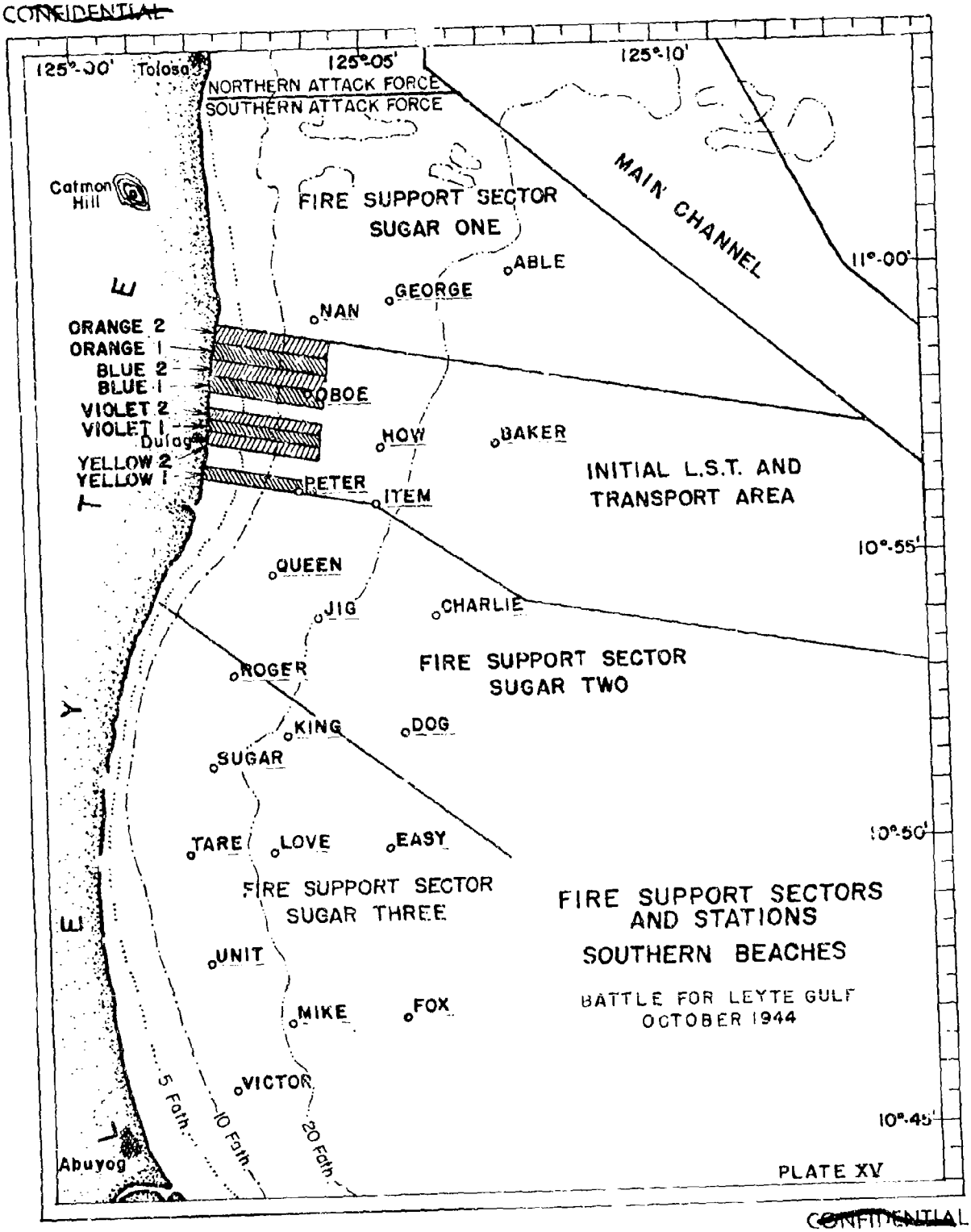

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had been re-embarked from Dinagat Island aboard the ARIADNE, (b) the APD's would be retained by him until the next day, inasmuch as no photographs had as yet been received from CTF's 78 and 79, and (c) that he expected to leave Black Beach ONE at 0700 to make a reconnaissance of Loreto.*

He now reviewed the day's events with satisfaction: (a) the landing finally made on Homonhon at 1045 by CTG 78.4 had disclosed no Japanese; (b) reconnaissance of the southern beaches had revealed no underwater obstacles (the UDT commander at 1815 had reported the beaches suitable for landing); (c) shore bombardment and air attacks had silenced the enemy batteries behind the southern beaches except for sporadic small arms and mortar fire; Dulag Town was burning and in ruins; (d) mine operations were progressing satisfactorily and no mines had been found outside Area SWEEP, which at day's end had been swept fifty per cent and had yielded, thus far, a total of eighty-six moored chemical horn mines. Exploratory sweeps in Areas DRUM and DOG had been completed; (e) fire support and UDT vessels had transitted the mine field without casualty; (f) guerillas had reported no enemy torpedo boats in Leyte Gulf; (g) except for two desultory and ineffective air attacks, one at 0955 near the PREBLE in Sweep Unit ONE by two enemy carrier-type bombers and one at 1845 against the Hydrographic Unit (TU 77.5.2) by three other aircraft of the same type, Japanese air power had not threatened the operations of the advance force.

However, despite the favorable progress and results of the day's operations, he was still behind his tentative schedule of events as set forth in his Operation Plan No. 2-44, since he had conducted shore bombardment and UDT operations against the southern beaches only, whereas the plan had also included the northern beaches. But he was ahead of schedule in regard to the southern beaches, because two days, October 18th and 19th, had been set aside for reconnoitering and demolition work by the UDT Unit South, and this task had been accomplished in only one day.

(b) Operations of CTG 77.4 (Escort Carrier Group), October 18th.

At the start of the day, CTG 77.4 was still on course 310°(T), speed nine knots, returning to his daylight operating area, from which he had retired at 1000 the previous day because of prohibitive flying weather.** He had been ordered by CTF 77 to strike the western Visayas on this day.*** In addition, he had the responsibility for providing direct air support to the advance operations in the objective area.

In contrast to the hectic weather of the previous day, he encountered perfect flying conditions as his task units moved into their

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* CTG 78.4 Dispatch 181242 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.

** Deck Log NATOMA BAY, October 18th, 1944.

*** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG 77.4, CTG 77.2, info COMTHIRDFLT, All TFC's SEVENTHFLT, All TGC's THIRDFLT, etc.

respective operating areas to commence the day's flight operations. He commenced launching aircraft on covering missions as follows:

	Time	Composition	Sorties
(a)	0600	50 VF, 20 VT	70
(b)	1215	45 VF, 25 VT	70
(c)		Miscellaneous Searches: 2 VF, 2 VT	4
		Total Sorties	144

The armament generally consisted of bombs and rockets. The fighters were armed with the standard loading of .50 caliber ammunition.

The morning strike was to have hit Fabrica, Carolina and Alicante airfields on Negros, and Medellin and Lahug airfields on Cebu. However, low ceilings, poor visibility and rain over Tanon Strait prevented it from reaching Negros. The flight leader therefore decided to attack the airfields and shipping in the Cebu area. The flight was recovered at 1050, less one VF from the CHENANGO shot down over Lahug.*

In view of the continuing bad weather over Negros CTG 77.4 directed the afternoon strike to attack enemy airfields and shipping in the Cebu area, probably because (a) he reasoned that the adverse weather encountered to the westward on the morning strike would not have dissipated prior to the arrival of the afternoon strike, and (b) his weather forecast had indicated that the storm over Leyte on October 17th would be centered over the central Visayas on the 18th.** The flight was landed aboard at 1630, with no losses.***

During the day he maintained over the objective area (a) from 0615 until 1730 (1) a CAP of thirty-six VF and an air support group of twenty-four VF and twelve VT, with an air coordinator in a VT; (2) an ASP of two VT over the southern entrance to Surigao Strait; and (3) an ASP of two VT over the eastern entrances to Leyte Gulf; (b) from 1700 until 1820 (sunset) a dusk CAP of twelve VF. All of these planes were under the overall control of ACSA (Advance Commander Support Aircraft) in TENNESSEE, although the CAP was apparently under the direct control of the FDO (Fighter Direction Officer) in BENNION.****

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* Aircraft Action Report No. 1, VC-80, October 18th, 1944, forwarded by CO MANILA BAY, Serial 0103, November 2nd, 1944; also Aircraft Action Report No. 11, VF-26, October 18th, 1944.

** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

*** Aircraft Action Reports VC-27 and VC-80, October 18th, 1944.

**** CTG 77.4 Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 00075, October 5th, 1944; CTG 77.4 Action Report, Leyte Operations, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944; CTG 77.2 Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 0008, October 5th, 1944; War Diary BENNION, October 18th, 1944.

In addition to the above sorties, CTG 77.4 launched at 0610 an antishipping search consisting of two VF's and two VT's from the SUWANNEE, over the northern Mindanao Sea and Tanon Strait as far as the northwest tip of Cebu. The flight landed aboard at 1225, with negative results, except for near-misses on a gunboat and a medium cargo vessel off Tanjay, Negros.*

During the day the air support group made numerous strikes in direct support of the advance operations, notably in support of the UDT teams, in-shore mining operations, and direct support to newly-won beachheads on the entrance island, and shore bombardment of the southern beaches, but the number and details of the strikes made is not available.

At the end of the day's operations, CTG 77.4 evaluated the various reports from his units and estimated that his aircraft had (a) shot down one carrier-type bomber and one two-engine land bomber and destroyed on the ground three carrier-type attack planes, five heavy fighters and six carrier-type fighters, and (b) destroyed one 5,000 ton oiler, three torpedo boats, one submarine chaser, eight barges, and one oil sampan, and damaged one 5,000-ton ammunition ship, three torpedo boats, four large and two medium cargo vessels, as well as two small cargo vessels, two patrol craft, five barges, and five luggers.**

This report was over-optimistic, since, although there is little information available to confirm or refute the claims concerning the destruction of Japanese aircraft except a report that eighty carrier planes had strafed and bombed Cebu airfield between 1400 and 1515 and that two bombs had hit the runway,*** there is definite information which clearly refutes the claims concerning the destruction or damage to Japanese shipping. Post-war reports and analyses of Japanese losses do not indicate that any ships were sunk or even lightly damaged on this day.****

THE REASONS FOR THIS LACK OF SUCCESS WERE (A) THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY AND RESULTANT WASTE OF TIME IN RENDEZVOUSING OVER OPEN WATER AT A GEOGRAPHICAL REFERENCE POINT RATHER THAN A VISUAL REFERENCE POINT, AND (B) TOO MANY INDIVIDUAL PLANES OR SECTIONS FROM VARIOUS SQUADRONS AND CARRIER TASK UNITS MADE RENDEZVOUS AND COORDINATION DIFFICULT; I.E., INSTEAD OF EACH STRIKE GROUP BEING COMPOSED OF PLANES FROM ITS RESPECTIVE CARRIER TASK UNIT AS AN ENTITY, TO RENDEZVOUS OVER THAT UNIT AND PROCEED IN

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* SUWANNEE Action Report, Leyte Operation, Serial 008, November 6th, 1944.

** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operation, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

*** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

**** "The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II", prepared by Military History Section, Special Staff, GHQ FEC, February 1952; Also "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II", prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

COMPANY TO ATTACK DEFINITELY ASSIGNED TARGETS, THE FLIGHT CONSISTED OF A MIXED NUMBER OF PLANES FROM THE DIFFERENT CARRIER TASK UNITS.* IT MUST BE REALIZED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE DECISION BY CTF 77 TO STRIKE THE WESTERN VISAYAS CAME RATHER LATE** AND DID NOT PROVIDE CTG 77.4 WITH MUCH OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ADVANCE PREPARATIONS. SINCE HIS SCHEDULE OF CLOSE SUPPORT OPERATIONS (HIS PRIMARY MISSION) HAD ALREADY BEEN PROMULGATED IN HIS OPERATIONS PLAN NO. 2-44 ON OCTOBER 5TH HE WAS FORCED TO COMPOSE HIS SPECIAL STRIKE GROUPS IN SUCH MANNER AS TO INSURE MINIMUM INTERFERENCE WITH HIS ORIGINAL PLAN.

Japanese air power throughout the day was conspicuous by its absence. Except for the two planes which were shot down and a few more nonaggressive aircraft that were observed over Cebu no enemy aircraft were observed in the vicinity of the objective area or TG 77.2. The lack of enemy activity in the Visayas could have been due to the fact that most of his airfields, being of sod construction, had been made non-operational by the torrential rains accompanying the typhoon moving through the central Visayas.

Local patrols consisted of CAP of four VF and an ASP of four VT over each of the three task units.***

Aircraft losses for TG 77.4 during the day consisted of one VF lost in combat, and one VF and four VT lost operationally.****

On completion of landing the last planes of the dusk CAP at 1948, the three task units of TG 77.4 retired to their respective night operating areas to await and prepare for the next day's operations.*****

(c) Operations of CTG 77.5 (Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group), October 18th.

(1) The various sweep units of TG 77.5 operated as follows:******

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* Aircraft Action Report VC-3, October 18th, 1944, forwarded by Commanding Officer KALININ BAY, Serial 093, October 30th, 1944.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG 77.4, CTG 77.2, info COMTHIRDFLT, All TFC's SEVENTHFLT, All TGC's THIRDFLT, etc.

*** CTG 77.4 Operations Plan 2-44, Serial 00075, October 5th, 1944; also Action Report CTG 77.4, Report of Leyte Operations, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operation, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944; Deck Log MARCUS ISLAND, October 1944; also Aircraft Action Reports VC-26, VC-68 and VC-80.

***** Deck Logs MARCUS ISLAND and NATOMA BAY, October 18th, 1944.

****** Report of Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, CTG 77.5, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

Area (Plate III)	Unit	Type Sweep	Character
Tacloban-Dulag Approach Channel	ONE	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of forty feet.
FLOAT	ONE	Exploratory	Moored and acoustic to a depth of forty feet.
SWEEP	TWO & THREE	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of sixty feet.
Fire Support Area DOG: WHITE & RED Beaches	FOUR & FIVE	Exploratory	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.
Northern Transport Area	FOUR & FIVE	Clearance	Moored, acoustic, and magnetic to a depth of thirty feet.
Southern Transport Area	SIX & SEVEN	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.
DRUM	SIX & SEVEN	Exploratory	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.

Minesweeping operations progressed satisfactorily on this date and considerable gain was made. Nevertheless, the operations were not without difficulty. Several vessels that had parted and buoyed their gear the previous day lost time in retrieving and re-rigging their sweeps. The gear of others fouled on shoals or in sweeps lost and unmarked, or had to be cut because of mines becoming fouled in the gear. The operations of MINDIV FOURTEEN (Sweep Unit TWO) were interrupted twice to make a tactical sweep ahead of the Fire Support Groups and UDT Units South and North as they entered the Gulf at 0900 and 1600 respectively. The services of other minesweepers were lost due to the necessity of assigning them as mine disposal vessels, although this duty was usually given to sweepers whose gear was temporarily inoperative.

At 0637 CTG 77.5, after having received more complete information on the previous day's operations, corrected the erroneous report which he had made to CTG 77.2 on the previous evening and notified that commander that twenty-six (actually twenty-seven) instead of "zero" mines had been swept in Area SWEEP. In addition, he reported (a) that Area SWEEP had been swept twenty per cent (b) a clearance sweep of the southern half of the Tacloban - Dulag approach channel had disclosed no mines, and (c) very scanty

exploratory sweeps in other areas had revealed no mines.*

At 1200, his Minesweep Support Unit, which up until this time had consisted solely of the ROBINSON, was augmented by the ROSS, the latter vessel having been released from TU 78.4.2 at 0950.**

At 2017 he reported to CTG 77.2 that (a) Area SWEEP was fifty per cent swept (b) sixty mines had been swept and destroyed; (c) exploratory sweeps in Areas DRUM and DOG had been completed; (d) clearance sweeps of the Transport Areas had begun; (e) results thus far were negative except for Area SWEEP.* In addition, he had reported previously at 1123 that exploratory sweeps in Area FLOAT and the Transport Areas had disclosed no mines.* At this time CTG 77.5 believed that he had swept during the past two days a total of sixty mines. However, this was incorrect because an analysis of available records shows that TG 77.5 had swept on this day alone fifty-three mines,*** giving a total for two days of eighty mines.

(2) During the day the Hydrographic Unit, assisted by the BREESE, marked shoal areas in the vicinity of Mariquitdaquit Island in the approaches to the northern beaches. At 1837 the GASCOYNE was unsucessfully bombed by three dive bombers. At 2245 the unit commenced patrolling in the adjacent waters.****

(d) Operations of CTG 77.6 (Beach Demolition Group), October 18th.

In view of the importance and direct relation of bombardment and fire-support operations to UDT operations, and also to complete the portrayal of the mental processes and decisions of CTG 77.2 in this regard, the operations of CTG 77.6, embarked in TALBOT, have been discussed under the operations of CTG 77.2.

(e) Operations of CTG 78.4 (Dinagat Attack Group), October 18th.

In contrast to the inclement weather which had prevented a landing on Homonhon Island the previous day as scheduled, CTG 78.4 was pleased to note that by dawn the storm had passed and that the weather was excellent for resumption of the pre-D-day landing operations. The sea was smooth, wind ten knots from 155°(T), visibility good.***** Accordingly, he operated as follows:

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* Action Report COMCRUDIV 4, Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944, page 11.

** Action Report ROSS, Operations Against Leyte, Serial 002, November 1st, 1944.

*** War Diaries, HOVEY, SOUTHARD, HAMILTON, and REQUISITE, October 18th, 1945.

**** War Diary BREESE, October 18th, 1944.

***** Action Report COMCRUDIV 12, Bombardment of Leyte Island, October 18th-24th, 1944, Serial 0143, November 4th, 1944.

(1) BLACK Beach ONE, Dinagat Island.

At 0710 TU 78.4.1 returned off the landing area and completed unloading supplies and equipment during the forenoon for the troops landed the day before; during the afternoon Company "B" of the TWENTY-FIRST Infantry Regiment was withdrawn from Dinagat Island by HMS ARIADNE leaving thereon Companies "A", "E", and "F" of the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion.*

(2) BLACK Beach TWO, Homonhon Island.

At 0905 TU 78.4.2 landed Company "B" of the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion without encountering any opposition. The unloading of troops, supplies and equipment was completed at 1320.** At 1340 the unit having completed satisfactorily its operations on Homonhon Island was dissolved by CTG 38.4.***

(3) BLACK Beach THREE, Suluan Island.

The STACK and CROSBY assisted by the SANDS with her landing boats since the CROSBY boats had been lost on Suluan Island withdrew Company "D" of the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion, completing at 1505.*

At 1832 CTG 78.4 advised CTG 77.2 that, (a) the Commander "D" Company Rangers had reported his mission accomplished on Suluan Island and had enemy documents in his possession, but was unable to obtain a Japanese mine chart; (b) all enemy installations on Suluan were destroyed; (c) Allied casualties consisted of one Ranger killed and two seriously wounded; (d) natives reported thirty-two Japanese on Suluan of which three were believed killed; (e) native guerillas reported seeing mines off the west coast of Suluan; (f) there were no Japanese on Homonhon.****

At 2142 he notified CTG 77.2 in part that, (a) "B" Company of the TWENTY-FIRST Infantry Regiment had been re-embarked from Dinagat Island aboard the ARIADNE, (b) the APD's would be retained by him until the next day inasmuch as no photographs had as yet been received for CTF's 78 and 79, and (c) he expected to leave BLACK Beach ONE at 0700 to make a reconnaissance of Loreto.***

During the night he retired with his task group to the waters east of Point FIN***** (Plate III). He was pleased with the

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* Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably early November 1944; Also War Diary CROSBY, October 18th, 1944.

** War Diary HERBERT, October 18th, 1944.

*** Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated but probably early November 1944.

**** CTG 78.4 Dispatch 180932 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.

***** CTG 78.4 Dispatch 181242 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.

results to date because he had (a) succeeded in capturing easily Suluan Island, (b) had seized the selected beaches on Homonhon and Dinagat Islands without difficulty and (c) encountered no opposition on Dinagat Island. The fact that he had met with little to no opposition on these outlying islands was a source of gratification because he had expected, in view of their commanding locations, to encounter some serious resistence supported by artillery.

(f) Operations of CTG 78.5* (Harbor Entrance Control Group), October 18th.

(1) At 1430 CTG 78.5 in BISBEE established the Harbor Entrance Control Group consisting of the BISBEE and GALLUP. In addition to this he was charged with: (1) regulating and coordinating entrance to the passage through the approach channel, (2) identifying all vessels entering Leyte Gulf, (3) forwarding swept area data, current and channel information to all own force vessels, (4) insuring the safe passage of all friendly vessels through swept channels and the area between Homonhon and Dinagat Islands, (5) collecting current data and promulgating this information to CTF's 77, 78 and 79 and all friendly ships requiring same, (6) keeping the SOPA in the objective area informed of changes in swept areas and of entry and departure of convoys, and (7) maintaining liaison with ground forces on Dinagat and Homonhon Islands and providing support if required.

During the remainder of the day CTG 78.5 collected current and tidal data between Dinagat and Homonhon Islands. He also installed and tested navigational lights on these islands to facilitate entry of the attack forces.

(2) LCT's 343, 344, 430 (F) and 432, which constituted the remainder of CTG 78.5 were en route Leyte in company with CTG 78.1.

(2) Operations of CTF 78 (Northern Attack Force), October 18th.

CTF 78 in the BLUE RIDGE advanced toward Leyte Gulf about ten miles behind the Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79 on course 300°(T) at eight knots,** generally along route SHEARWATER, in company with TF 78 (less both the Dinagat Attack Group (TG 78.4) and Reinforcement Groups ONE, TWO and THREE (TG's 78.6, 78.7, 78.8)) plus the Close Covering Group (TG 77.3).

The movement to Leyte Gulf was proceeding according to schedule (CANF SOWESPAC Operation Plan 13-44, Annex C, Appendix I).

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* All information here, except as otherwise indicated, was obtained from Action Report CTG 78.5, Report of Operations of the Harbor Entrance Control Group, October 18th-24th, 1944, no serial, November 22nd, 1944.

** War Diary FREMONT, October 18th, 1944.

At 0640 TG 78.7 (Reinforcement Group TWO) departed Hollandia, SOA nine knots, and headed for Leyte Gulf. At 1600 the ARETHUSA which had broken down was ordered to return to Hollandia.*

During the day the GAMBIER BAY and KITKUN BAY (TU 77.4.34) provided routine ASP and CAP patrols for TF 78 and the TF 79 Landing Craft Movement Group.** Although these groups were now within reach of enemy search aircraft based in the Philippines, none were sighted either visually or by radar, nor were there any submarine contacts.

At 2400 TF 78 was bearing 117°(T) distant 210 miles from Leyte Gulf; TG 78.6 and TG 78.7 were proceeding along route ALBATROSS, the former group bearing 119°(T) distant 600 miles from Leyte Gulf and the latter group 130°(T) distant 1040 miles; TG 78.8 was still at anchor in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia.

(3) Operations of CTF 79 (Southern Attack Force), October 18th.

At daybreak on October 18th CTF 79 sent a plane from one of the escort carriers to Peleliu (distant ninety miles bearing 090°(T)) to deliver officer messenger mail.*** The nature of the mail is not known, although it is believed to have contained routine dispatches for retransmittal, because TF 79 was observing radio silence, as were also the other forces moving to Leyte.

CTF 79 was satisfied with the movement thus far, since the weather had remained good, his groups were proceeding on schedule, and he had not been threatened by any enemy aircraft or submarines. At 2400 TF 79 was bearing 116°(T) distant 305 miles from Leyte Gulf.

(a) Operations of the Landing Craft Movement Group, October 18th.

The Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79 in accordance with CTF 77's Movement Plan, proceeded along route SHEARWATER toward the objective area, and at 2400 was bearing 110°(T) distant 190 miles from Leyte Gulf.

(b) Operations of the Transport Groups,**** October 18th.

At 0500 the leading transport group (TG 79.1) passed Point ART bearing 000°(T) distant twenty miles, course 296°(T), speed ten

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* Action Report CTG 78.7, Central Philippines Operation, Serial 0176, November 10th, 1944.

** Action Report CTU 77.4.34, Support of Leyte Operations, October 12th-November 1st, 1944, Serial 0154, November 5th, 1944.

*** Action Report CTU 77.4.14, Leyte Operation, Serial 026, November 4th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTG 79.1, Report of Participation in Amphibious Operations for the Capture of Leyte, P.I., Serial 00454, October 26th, 1944.

knots, contacted the oilers SALAMONIE, SARANAC, and ASHTABULA at 0540, and commenced fueling the escorts at 0617.

At 1430 the NASHVILLE, which had departed Hollandia on October 16th with COMSOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC embarked, was sighted approaching from astern, and by 1515 TU 77.1.2 (NASHVILLE, ABNER READ and BUSH) had taken station with TU 77.1.1 (WASATCH, AMMEN, and MULLANY) between the two transport groups.

As pointed out under Operations of CTF 77 this now brought together in the same disposition (a) COMSOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC in the NASHVILLE and (b) CTF 77 (who was also CANF SOWESPAC and COMSEVENTHFLT) and the C.G. SIXTH Army in the WASATCH.

At 1710 fueling of the escorts and the NASHVILLE, having been completed, the oiler unit was detached and the disposition continued on toward Leyte.

Routine patrols consisting of a four VT CAP, a four VF SNASP, and a four VT ASP were flown from daybreak until sunset, and a late afternoon 125 mile search of two VF and two VT along the projected course was made with negative results.*

Nothing further of importance occurred this day, and at 2400 the Transport Groups were bearing 114°(T) distant 312 miles from Leyte Gulf.

(b) Operations of CTG 70.1 (Motor Torpedo Boat Group), October 18th.

CTG 70.1, who had been at Palau since October 15th, departed Kossol Passage with his task group at 1144, October 18th for Leyte via routes HAWK and SHEARWATER, SOA nine knots, in compliance with Annex B to CTF 79 Operation Plan 101-44. The task group was composed of the AGP's OYSTER BAY (F), WACHAPREAGUE and WILLOUGHBY, the AVP HALF MOON, forty-five PT boats, one Army QS boat, and one Navy aircraft rescue boat.**

Nothing further of importance occurred during the remainder of the day, and at 2400 TG 70.1 was bearing 108°(T) distant 487 miles from Leyte Gulf.

(c) Operations of CTF 71 (Submarines, West Australia), October 18th.

CTF 71 at his headquarters at Perth, watched the developing situation. He knew, of course, that in view of the Allied operations in the

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* Action Report CTU 77.4.14, Leyte Operation, Serial 026, November 4th, 1944.

** War Diary HALF MOON, October 18th, 1944; also War Diaries OYSTER BAY, WACHAPREAGUE and WILLOUGHBY, October 18th, 1944.

Leyte area, there might be some counteraction but it is doubtful if he expected counteraction in strength. He awaited contact reports from his submarines.

At about 0430 or perhaps later he received a contact report from the BREAM reporting an enemy force of three or four heavy units in Latitude 01°-07'N, Longitude 119°-24'E, speed twenty-three knots, course 035°(T).* At 0748 he decided that all combatant commanders of the task force level and above in both the THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets and COMINCH as well should be informed of this contact, and sent out a dispatch to that effect as follows:

"Submarine in position Latitude 01°-07'N, Longitude 119°-24'E at 0300 October 18th contacted three large ships, speed twenty-three knots on course 035."**

During the day he received reports of that day's KING II operations from both THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets but what information he actually received and when is not available.

Also during the day he followed the operations of COMTHIRDFLT and listened to the Japanese broadcasts wherein they claimed overwhelming successes against the THIRD Fleet. Feeling that his command might believe some of these claims, he decided to remove any apprehensions and therefore at 1517 advised the command, in part,*** as follows:

"The following is quoted from Admiral Halsey, 'All THIRD Fleet ships reported by Radio Tokyo as sunk have been salvaged and are retiring toward the enemy.'"

At 1956 he advised the BONEFISH that two airmen were down in a rubber boat and indicated the position which at 2000 was eighty-five miles to the northward of the BONEFISH.****

(1) BREAM and RATON.

(a) During this day the BREAM continued on toward her patrol station in A3-A7 (Plate IV). In order to expedite her arrival she cruised, in general, on the surface both day and night. The day passed uneventfully except for two contacts which she reported having made in Makassar Strait. The contacts were only radar contacts and were never sighted. The first

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* War Patrol Report BREAM, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 021-44, November 22nd, 1944.

** CTF 71 Dispatch 172248 October 1944 to all Task Commanders THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 180617 October 1944 to TG's 71.1 and 71.7.

**** CTF 71 Dispatch 181056 October 1944 to TG 71.1 for BONEFISH.

contact made at 0215 showed three pips on the radar screen, bearing 113°(T) distant 19,000 yards and indicated a course of 035°(T) speed twenty-three knots. The BREAM was unable to close and abandoned chase. The second contact made at 0315 showed three small pips on the radar screen bearing 123°(T) distant 7,000 yards. Since the range of these small pips increased rapidly the chase was likewise abandoned.

The Commanding Officer BREAM then decided that the small pips were the escorts of the larger pips although how he arrived at this evaluation is not understood since the small pips were well behind the larger pips and in no manner acting as escorts.

AS A RESULT OF THIS EVALUATION, HE, AT 0345, MADE A CONREPORT TO CTF 71 TO THE EFFECT THAT AT 0300 HE HAD CONTACTED AN ENEMY FORCE OF THREE OR FOUR HEAVY UNITS IN LATITUDE 01°-07'N, LONGITUDE 119°-24'E, SPEED TWENTY-THREE KNOTS, COURSE 035°(T).* THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS CONTACT REPORT MAY HAVE BEEN CORRECT, BUT NONE OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THIS STUDY SUPPORTS IT. INSTEAD IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT THESE CONTACTS WERE "GHOSTS", OR "PHANTOMS." WHILE THE ACTION OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER BREAM IN REPORTING HIS CONTACTS WAS CORRECT, HIS FAILURE TO INDICATE THE FACT THAT THE CONTACT REPORT WAS BASED ON NOTHING MORE THAN AN EVALUATION OF RADAR PIPS IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN HIGHLY INCORRECT, SINCE A RECIPIENT COULD REASONABLY INFER THAT A SIGHTING HAD BEEN MADE WHEN, IN FACT, NO UNITS OF ANY KIND HAD BEEN SIGHTED. THE BREAM MADE NO MORE CONTACTS AND CONTINUED ON TOWARD HER PATROL STATION, ADVANCING SOME 200 MILES ON THIS DAY.

(b) It will be remembered that at 2300 the preceding night the RATON had completed transit of Mindoro Strait and instead of leaving for her station in A3-A7, had decided to remain in the area of Cape Calavite until nightfall of this day, presumably because this was a focal point of Japanese shipping.**

At 0555 she received a contact report from the BLUEGILL to the effect that a convoy of twelve ships was leaving Manila on course 220°(T) speed nine. The RATON headed to an intercepting position but was forced to submerge between 0804 and 1200 because of enemy aircraft. At 1746 she sighted the convoy which consisted of nine large merchant ships with one escort. The visibility was low because of heavy rains resulting from the near typhoon which had interfered with the operations in Leyte Gulf on the previous day. She succeeded in attacking the convoy at 2304 in position bearing 240°(T) distant 104 miles from Cape Calavite, at which time she observed that the escorts had now been increased to three. She fired ten torpedoes and claimed sinking three large cargo ships and a large passenger ship. Actually in this attack she sank two medium cargo ships, the TAIKAI

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* War Patrol Report BREAM, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 021-44, November 22nd, 1944.

** War Patrol Report RATON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, December 1st, 1944.

MARU and the SHIRANESAN MARU.* At 2400 she was preparing to make a second attack.

(2) ROCK and BERGALL.

The BERGALL continued her operations of the previous day; the ROCK, which did not arrive on station until 0708, immediately upon arrival commenced patrolling. Both submarines remained, in general, on the surface, made no important contacts, and received no lifeguard call from the China-based planes.**

(3) BLUEGILL and ANGLER.

These two submarines continued to patrol their assigned stations as on the previous day.

(a) The BLUEGILL spent an eventful day. About 0445 she contacted a convoy of ten large merchant ships and four escorts on course 220° (T), speed eight knots, in position bearing 315°(T), distant fifty-five miles from Cape Calavite. She immediately attempted to make a contact report which was not finally cleared until 0608.

At 0614 she submerged and at 0714 attacked the convoy. She sank one merchant ship and damaged two others. She continued her attacks on the latter two ships operating submerged until 1937 when she surfaced and continued her attacks until 2130. As a result of these attacks, all of which were torpedo attacks (she fired a total of seventeen torpedoes),*** she succeeded in sinking the transport ARABIA MARU, the cargo ships CHINZEI MARU and HAKUROKU MARU.*

(b) The ANGLER on the other hand spent an uneventful day since, having submerged at 0546, she missed receiving the BLUEGILL's contact report. At 1954 she surfaced and proceeded toward the northern end of Lubang Island where she was to exchange stations with the BLUEGILL.****

(4) DACE and DARTER.

These two submarines continued to operate as on the previous day excepting that, since they had exchanged stations, the DACE now patrolled

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* "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II by U.S. Submarines," prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

** War Patrol Report ROCK, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 016, November 11th, 1944; also War Patrol Report BERGALL, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 0102, November 8th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report BLUEGILL, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 039, November 25th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report ANGLER, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09, November 9th, 1944, and War Patrol Report BLUEGILL, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 039, November 25th, 1944.

Palawan Passage while the DARTER patrolled Balabac Strait. The patrols were uneventful.*

(5) HAMMERHEAD.

This submarine continued to patrol in the southwest approaches to Brunei Bay. Her nearest approach to Pulau Kuraman Light was fifty miles which occurred at 2400. She operated submerged during daylight and on the surface after dark. She made no contacts.**

(6) GUITARRO.

During this day the GUITARRO completed transit of Makassar Strait and entered the Celebes Sea. In so doing she advanced about 165 miles toward her station in the Sulu Sea. She operated submerged during daylight and on the surface at night. She made no contacts.***

(7) TANTIVY.

The TANTIVY completed transit of Lombok Strait shortly after midnight. She operated submerged during daylight until 1516 when she surfaced and headed through the Flores Sea toward Makassar Strait. She made no contacts of importance.****

(8) STOIC and ZWAARDVISCH.

These submarines continued their patrol in the Java Sea, but information of their exact location and activities during the 18th is lacking. As before CTF 71's daily submarine plot for this day shows them to be in approximately the center of their assigned areas.

(9) STURDY.

This submarine, having departed her station in the Gulf of Boni in Area G-7, proceeded southwestward to transit Lombok Strait en route Fremantle. There is no information of any contacts.***** Since she has now

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* War Patrol Report DACE, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09, November 6th, 1944, and War Patrol Report DARTER, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 1020, November 5th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report HAMMERHEAD, Report of SECOND War Patrol, no serial, November 2nd, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report GUITARRO, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 044, November 16th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report TANTIVY, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, no serial, November 4th, 1944.

***** War Diary CTF 71, October 1944, Serial 00341, November 25th, 1944.

moved into the area south of the Malay barrier she will be dropped from further discussion but will be included in submarines retiring from the area.

(10) GURNARD.

This submarine continued on through the Java Sea toward her patrol Areas D-4 and D-7. Due to the close proximity of enemy held territory she proceeded submerged during daylight, but surfaced at night. At 2126 she commenced transiting Karimata Strait.* No contacts of importance were made.

(11) BATFISH.

The BATFISH continued on towards her patrol Area A-8. She proceeded on the surface and only submerged when forced to do so by Japanese aircraft. At 1905 she commenced transiting the pass to the east of Timor and prior to midnight had entered the Banda Sea.**

(12) STORM.

This submarine continued on through the Sawu Sea and by 2400 had passed through Ombai Passage and entered the Flores Sea. She made no contacts.***

(13) TANTALUS.

The TANTALUS continued on towards her fueling rendezvous in Exmouth Gulf where she was scheduled to arrive on the following day.**** Information on her activity is meager.

(14) Lifeguard Submarines.

The BONEFISH which operated generally on the surface continued to patrol her lifeguard station off Cape Bolinao. Nothing of importance occurred during daylight excepting that there were indications that Allied air strikes were in progress in the Manila***** area. This was a correct observation since TG's 38.1 and 38.4 were attacking that area.******

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* War Patrol Report GURNARD, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 030, November 17th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report BATFISH, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 057, December 1st, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report STORM, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, COMSUBSEVENTHFLT Serial 00355, December 11th, 1944.

**** War Diary CTF 71, October 18th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, No Serial, November 8th, 1944.

****** Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Visayas, etc., October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944.

At 1950 the BONEFISH exchanged calls with the NAUTILUS. At 2015 she received word from CTF 71 advising as to the location of a rubber boat containing two downed aviators.* This position was about eighty-five miles to the northward. The commanding officer therefore immediately headed for the reported position of the rubber boat. By 2400 he had closed about fifty miles. At this time having received no new lifeguard orders his lifeguard duties expired.

The COD continued to patrol her lifeguard station in Area A-3 off Subic Bay. She patrolled on the surface except when forced down by Japanese aircraft. She observed numerous planes and in particular about thirty friendly dive bombers and fighters. This most likely was CTG 38.4's air strike CHARLIE. No lifeguard calls were received. At 2400 having received no new lifeguard orders her lifeguard duties expired.**

The LAPON which operated on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight continued to patrol her lifeguard station in the vicinity of Quiniluban Island. During the day the visibility was poor the seas were very high. No lifeguard calls were received.***

The PADDLE continued to operate in Makassar Strait. She arrived at her lifeguard station which was about fifty miles east of Balikpapan about dawn. She operated on the surface excepting when forced to submerge by Japanese aircraft. No calls for lifeguard duty were received although radio interception indicated that air strikes were being made on Balikpapan.**** These strikes were being made by the THIRTEENTH Air Force which had reported bad weather in the Balikpapan area.***** Evidently this bad weather did not extend to the patrol area of the PADDLE. At about 1655 she commenced patrolling across Makassar Strait.

(15) Submarines Retiring from the Area.

The submarines retiring from the area notably BAYA, CAVALLA, BECUNA, FLASHER, HOE, SEA ROVER, SPITEFUL, TELEMACHUS, and STURDY made no contacts of consequence. The HAWKBILL arrived at Fremantle and therefore will be omitted from further discussion in this analysis.

(2) Operations of CAAF, SOWESPAC, October 18th.

CAAF SOWESPAC continued in company with COMSOWESPAC aboard the NASHVILLE en route to Leyte, while his staff controlled operations from headquarters at Hollandia. He probably did not anticipate too much air activity this

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* War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, No Serial, November 8th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report COD, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 06, November 20th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report LAPON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 44, October 31st, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report PADDLE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 018, November 1st, 1944.

***** Weekly Intelligence Report No. , HQ FIFTH Air Force, October 1944.

day by his forces in his newly-assigned central Visayas area,* since the weather forecast indicated that the equatorial front which had passed through Leyte on the previous day would be centered over the central Visayas on October 18th.**

Sometime during the early morning he received GHQ SOWESPAC intelligence estimate dispatch 171536.*** It seems logical to believe that he examined this dispatch in relation to (a) his assigned objectives and (b) his instructions to his subordinate commanders, particularly C.G. FIFTH Air Force. The GHQ estimate stated, among other things, that the enemy FIRST Striking Force was in the Singapore - Brunei area on October 15th, yet, Search Plan FOX, which was to be placed in effect at daylight October 19th, did not include any of this area.

WOULD NOT A CHANGE IN THE SEARCH PLAN TO INCLUDE AS MUCH OF THIS AREA AS POSSIBLE--AT LEAST BRUNEI--HAVE BEEN IN ORDER? PERHAPS CAAF SOWESPAC RELIED ON C.G. FIFTH AIR FORCE TO HANDLE THE SITUATION, FOR HE HAD INSTRUCTED THAT COMMANDER TO "INITIATE STRIKES AGAINST THE BRUNEI AREA OF BORNEO AT THE EARLIEST PRACTICABLE DATE."**** THIS WAS IN ADDITION TO CONDUCTING LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT PLANS.***** PERHAPS THE OPTIMISTIC STATEMENT IN THE ABOVE INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE THAT "KING II COULD NOT BE STOPPED IN THE AIR, ON THE GROUND, OR SEA", WHICH SUPPORTED THE BASIC CONCEPT THAT NO MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD BE INVOLVED IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIED OPERATIONS AT LEYTE HAD A GOVERNING EFFECT ON HIS DECISIONS.

It is of interest that neither COMSOWESPAC, COMTHIRDFLT, nor COMSEVENTHFLT, who were more concerned with the location and possible movement of enemy surface forces than was CAAF SOWESPAC, made any requests to that commander to modify the search plan.

At about 1526 he received a message from COMSOWESPAC****** directing him to maintain a special reconnaissance watch over Balabac Strait during the night of October 18th and 19th, in addition to night PBY searches from Morotai to maximum range over the Sulu Sea, as previously directed in GHQ

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* COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170939 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC CANF SOWESPAC, info COMFIFTHAIRFOR, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 77, etc.

** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT.

*** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171536 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC (in NASHVILLE).

**** HQ AAF SOWESPAC Revised Operations Instructions No. 71/1, October 4th, 1944.

***** HQ SOWESPAC Operations Instructions No. 71, September 24th, 1944.

****** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180626 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA, COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, etc.

COMSOWESPAC dispatch 170102. These amplifying instructions from COMSOWESPAC in regard to night searches as far as Balabac Strait were apparently prompted by COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch 170909, wherein that commander had advised COMSOWESPAC that effective support by the THIRD Fleet against the "Tokyo Express" would depend upon timely information of its approach, and that he deemed the observation of Balabac Strait most important in this regard.*

CAAF SOWESPAC undoubtedly awaited anxiously the completion of runway construction sufficient to support PB4Y search operations from Morotai, which according to plan, were to commence at daylight the next day.

During the evening he received COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 10 which directed that the Submarine Patrol Zone which had been temporarily established by COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 8 within a circle of fifty miles radius centered at Tongehatan Point, Tawi Tawi (Latitude 05°-21'N, Longitude 120°-10'E) and was to expire at 2359 was to remain effective until further notice.**

He immediately advised his command of this Zone Notice.***

(a) Operations of C.G. FIFTH Air Force, October 18th.

C.G. FIFTH Air Force, for October 18th, directed his command, among other things, to: (a) strike Davao headquarters with seven squadrons of B-24's; (b) conduct fighter sweep over Mindanao; (c) carry out search plan EASY, using ten PB4Y's; (d) photo-reconnoiter Davao and Illana, Mindanao, and Balikpapan, Borneo; (e) map Mindoro,**** and (f) cover Balabac Strait during the night as requested by COMTHIRDFLT.*

Since there is no indication that Davao was attacked, it seems correct to say that the B-24 strike against that area was cancelled because of predicted bad weather over northern Mindanao.***** On the other hand, there was a non-scheduled flight of thirty-four B-24's from Biak against the Menado area of the Celebes, which strike may have been a substitute for the Davao strike. In addition, there was a fighter sweep by sixteen P38's and fifteen P47's from Morotai against southern Mindanao, which reported having strafed barges, luggers and dock facilities in the area of Illana and Sarangai Bays, and the Del Monte supply area. Search Plan EASY had been carried out with negative results,****** the photo reconnaissance and the

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.
** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180523 October 1944 to CANF SOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC.
*** CAAF SOWESPAC Dispatch 182311 October 1944 to AAF SOWESPAC.
**** C.G. FIFTH Air Force Fragmentary Field Order No. 292, October 18th, 1944.
***** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.
****** COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 190225 October 1944 to All Commands receiving COMSEVENTHFLT Daily Intelligence Summaries.

mapping flights appear to have been made as this was a continuing operation, and the special reconnaissance over Balabac Strait had also been negative.

On this date C.G. FIFTH Air Force moved VPB 146 from Biak to Morotai, in accordance with pre-arranged plans. He now had on Morotai VPB 146 (sixteen PV-1's) and two squadrons of Medium Bomber Group THIRTY-EIGHT (twenty-seven B-25's). His operating area had been extended the previous day to include the western Visayas,* although his prior instructions had ordered him, when heavy bombers were established on Morotai, (a) to neutralize hostile air forces and destroy shipping in the Visayas area, excluding Leyte and Samar, and (b) to initiate attacks against the Brunei area at the earliest practicable date.**

Although his new area in the western Visayas, except for Panay, was within the 600 mile operating radius of the PV-1 and B-25 type medium bombers from Morotai, he still could not reach Brunei.

Since Morotai fields were being prepared for the operation of Navy PB4Y's commencing the following morning, and since he had been ordered to make long-range air strikes on the Visayas area and Brunei, it may seem strange that he did not either (a) move a limited number of heavy bombers (B-24's) to Morotai or (b) stage heavy bombers from Biak through Morotai in a manner similar to that employed by the B-29's operating from the Calcutta area through advance bases in east China to attack Formosa in support of KING II. Apparently the reason for not moving the B-24's to Morotai was one of shipping; i.e., shipping had not been scheduled for this early date,*** but whether or not this was a responsibility of C.G. FIFTH Air Force or of CAAF SOWESPAC is not stated. It would appear as if (a) an incorrect estimate of the readiness date for heavy bomber operations from Morotai had been made, (b) adequate shipping was not available, or (c) the weakness of Japanese air power in the Philippines, as found by COMTHIRDFLT's initial probing attacks in this area during September, 1944, and the THIRD Fleet carrier attacks against Formosa and the Philippines during mid-October, had caused CAAF SOWESPAC to feel that the deep penetration attacks by heavy bombers ordered for Brunei were not necessary at this time.

During the day he learned that the THIRTEENTH Air Force had attacked Balikpapan. The weather had been bad and only eight out of thirty-one sorties had managed to reach the objective.****

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* COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170939 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, CANF SOWESPAC, info COMFIFTHAIRFOR, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 17, etc.

** HQ AAF SOWESPAC Revised Operations Instructions No. 71/1, October 4th, 1944.

*** HQ AAF SOWESPAC Operations Report No. 24, October 21st-27th, 1944.

**** Weekly Intelligence Report No. 47, HQ FIFTH Air Force, October 15th-21st, 1944.

(b) Operations of CTF 73, (Naval Air Force) October 18th.

CTF 73 continued administrative control over his land and tender-based aircraft from his flagship, CURRITUCK, anchored in Seeadler Harbor, Manus, while the operational control of those units in the Biak and Morotai areas continued as a function of C.G. FIFTH Air Force. Accordingly, on verbal orders of C.G. FIFTH Air Force VPB 146, consisting of sixteen PV-1's, was moved from Biak to Morotai on October 18th, to commence search and attack operations from the latter base the following day.* Meanwhile, CTG 73.4 (Commander Fleet Air Wing SEVENTEEN), to whom C.G. FIFTH Air Force had delegated responsibility for long-range daylight searches (Search Plan EASY), made ready to transfer VPB's 101 and 115 to Morotai in time to start Search Plan FOX, daylight, October 19th.

Search Plan EASY was conducted on October 18th, with negative results, except for four luggers which were attacked and set afire in Ameorang Bay, Celebes.**

It was a relief to the pilots to complete the last extended searches from Biak, for they had been flying 1100 mile sectors which was the extreme radius of a PB4Y, since October 16th, when the search coverage was extended from 1000 miles to include the exits from Surigao and San Bernardino Straits, and the Inland Philippine Seas.*** The next day they would begin search operations from Morotai; where the search sectors, for the most part, would be less critical in regard to fuel.

The seaplane squadrons based at Morotai on October 18th operated as follows: One PBY from VPB ELEVEN**** covered the Menado strike, one the Balikpapan strike and one the Mindanao fighter sweep in an air-sea rescue capacity; two PBY's flew local antisubmarine searches and one PBY made a special search. As regards this latter search, the area and the results are not mentioned, but it is believed that it was flown in response to GHQ SOWESPAC dispatch 170102 and COMSOWESPAC dispatch 180626 directing night PBY searches over the Sulu-China Seas to maximum range, with particular emphasis on reconnoitering Balabac Strait. A "blackcat" (PBY expecially modified for night operations), presumably from VPB TWENTY-NINE, bombed enemy barracks on Simunul Island, and barges off Tawi Tawi, in the Sulu archipelago.*****

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* War Diary VPB 146, October 18th, 1944.

** COMSEVENTHFLT Dispatch 190225 October 1944 to All Commands Receiving COMSEVENTHFLT Daily Intelligence Summaries.

*** War Diary VPB 115, October 1944.

**** War Diary VPB 11, October 1944.

***** War Diary VPB 29, October 18th, 1944; also GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 190215 to Army Melbourne, Airboard, A.C.N.B., Admiral Koenrad.

(B) CINCPAC - CINCPOA, October 18th.

(1) Western Pacific Task Forces.

(a) Operations of COMTHIRDFLT.

The operations planned for October 18th by COMTHIRDFLT called for (a) sustained strikes against Luzon by TG's 38.1 and 38.4, (b) a fighter sweep and two deckload strikes against the Laoag - Aparri area by TG 38.2 and (c) fueling and aircraft replenishment of TG 38.3 by TG 30.8 in Area OCTANE.

By early morning, since he monitored the SOWESPAC task commanders' circuit,* he received GHQ SOWESPAC intelligence estimate which advised him, in part, that (1) Formosa air attacks and subsequent carrier strikes had reduced enemy air in all adjacent main air centers, (2) the air defense capacity of the Philippines had sharply declined, (3) the FIRST Striking Force was in the Singapore - Brunei area on October 15th, (4) the assignment of oilers to the Pescadores suggested sortie to the northward rather than to the eastward into the Philippines, (5) the SECOND Striking Force would refuse to fight when aware of the strength of the THIRD Fleet, and, finally (6) Operation KING II could not be stopped in the air, on the ground or on the sea.**

This estimate showed that his carrier strikes had been so effective against Japanese land-based air power as to destroy its ability to react with any strength in defense of the Philippines. It also showed that, in the opinion of GHQ SOWESPAC, there was little expectation of any surface ship movement in strength through the Philippines.

THEREFORE, BY INFERENCE, SHOULD HE NOT HAVE CONCLUDED THAT HIS MOST LIKELY OPPOSITION LAY IN THE JAPANESE CARRIER STRENGTH BELIEVED TO BE CONCENTRATED IN THE EMPIRE AND HAVE MADE SEARCHES IN THE NORTHERN SEMI-CIRCLE TO COVER THOSE SECTORS NOT ADEQUATELY SEARCHED, IN SO FAR AS TF 38 WAS CONCERNED, BY THE LAND-BASED AIR FROM TINIAN? PERHAPS HE FELT THAT, SINCE ALL INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INDICATED THAT THE JAPANESE UNITS WERE RETIRING, NO ACTION WAS PROBABLE AT THIS TIME; PERHAPS HIS INTELLIGENCE INDICATED THAT THE JAPANESE CARRIERS WERE STILL IN THE EMPIRE; PERHAPS HE FELT THAT BUNGO SUIDO WAS ADEQUATELY GUARDED, AND THAT HE COULD RELY ON THE SUBMARINES STATIONED THERE TO GIVE HIM WARNING OF THE DEPARTURE OF ANY MAJOR JAPANESE FORCES. BUT DID HE GIVE ANY CONSIDERATION TO THE FACT THAT KII SUIDO WAS NOT GUARDED, AND SHIMONOSEKI SUIDO IN ONLY LIMITED FASHION? DID HE GIVE ANY THOUGHT TO THE MOVEMENT INTO THE OBJECTIVE AREA OFF THE PHILIPPINES OF JAPANESE SUBMARINES IN STRENGTH? IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE, IT SEEMS RELEVANT AT THIS TIME TO REPEAT THE COMMENT MADE IN VOLUME I ON COMTHIRDFLT'S OMISSION OF SIMILAR SEARCHES ON OCTOBER 10TH, DURING HIS ATTACK ON OKINAWA. THIS COMMENT WAS, "IT SEEMS IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT COMPLETE RELIANCE SHOULD NOT NORMALLY

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* Action Report COMTHIRDFLT, Operations of Western Pacific Task Forces and THIRD Fleet, Serial 0085, January 25th, 1945, Annex K.

** GHQ SOWESPAC Dispatch 171935 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC (in NASHVILLE).

BE PLACED ON INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED BECAUSE SUCH INFORMATION IS NOT ALWAYS COMPLETE, IS OFTEN INACCURATE, AND IS FREQUENTLY MISLEADING. ALTHOUGH ALLIED INTELLIGENCE WAS KNOWN TO BE GENERALLY EXCELLENT, IT WAS NOT ALWAYS SO AND SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN RELIED ON FULLY, SINCE BY SO DOING, THE COMMANDER MIGHT FIND HIMSELF PLACING TOO MUCH RELIANCE ON ITS USUAL ACCURACY AND UNCONSCIOUSLY BASING HIS PLANS ON ENEMY INTENTIONS, RATHER THAN ENEMY CAPABILITIES."

During the morning, COMTHIRDFLT became concerned about the weather, and rightly so, for his information indicated that a typhoon was forming at Latitude 14°-00'N, Longitude 136°-00'E and would move northwest at about ten knots. Also, he was aware that a storm of typhoon intensity had prevented air operations by CTG 77.4 in support of the landings on Dinagat and Suluan Islands the previous day. Therefore, at 0807 he advised CTG 30.3 of the above and directed him to come to course due south upon completion of fueling operations,* and at 1226 he notified his carrier task groups and fueling group of the impending adverse weather and directed that fueling operations for TG's 38.2 and 38.3 scheduled for October 19th, 22nd and 23rd be conducted in Area MICK instead of Area OCTANE as follows, in order to avoid the predicted bad weather;** TG 38.2 to fuel in Area MICK October 19th and October 23rd; TG 38.3 to fuel in Area MICK October 22nd.

He was paying close attention to his daily weather forecasts, for he knew that the typhoon belt for October passed through the central and northern Philippines and that typhoons with their inherent rainy and squally weather were rather prevalent at this time of the year.

At 1134, having completed his new evaluation of the performance of his planes in their air strikes between October 10th and October 17th, which indicated that he had destroyed a total of 915 planes in the air and on the ground, and having studied the above intelligence estimate with particular relation to the effects of his carrier air strikes, he decided that his claims were correct and therefore notified CINCPAC and COMSOWESPAC accordingly.

As a consequence of the intelligence estimate from COMSEVENTHFLT received on the previous day, of that by GHQ SOWESPAC received that morning, and of his plane evaluation reported above, COMTHIRDFLT now decided that the situation was stable enough to permit his making advance plans for the rotation of his carrier groups for logistics, such as fueling, ammunition replenishment, provisioning and repairs.

According to the original employment schedule*** TG's 38.2 and 38.3 were to depart for Ulithi at 1800 on D/3 day, arrive on D/5 day, remain until D/8, and return to the THIRD Fleet operating area about D/10;

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 172307 October 1944 to CTG 30.3.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180326 October 1944 to CTG 30.8, CTG's 38.2, 30.7.

*** Annex "C", Employment Schedule, COMFIRSTCARFORPAC (CTF 38) OpOrder 11-44, Serial 00020, October 1st, 1944.

meanwhile, TG's 38.1 and 38.4 were to operate in general support of KING II. Nevertheless, at 1349 he decided to retire TG 38.1 plus the HANCOCK on October 22nd in time to arrive at Ulithi by 0600 October 24th for rearming, fueling, provisioning, tender and at--anchor availability--SOA sixteen knots; TG 38.1 less the HANCOCK to be ready for sea by dawn October 28th. He further directed CTG 38.1 to operate in the vicinity of Latitude 12°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E on October 22nd, proceeding there upon completion of fueling in Area MICK October 21st.*

At 1352 he directed CTG 38.2, in company with CTG 38.3 to proceed on October 20th to reference point "Q", Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 128°-00'E, to operate in this vicinity October 21st and 22nd, and then to proceed with TG 38.2 on October 23rd to receive fuel from TG 30.8 in Area MICK, rendezvousing with the oiler group at Point MICK 0700 October 23rd. Meanwhile, CTG 38.3 was to fuel in Area MICK on October 22nd and presumably return to Point "Q" after fueling. This would give two carrier task groups operating in the vicinity of Point "Q" on October 21st and one on October 22nd and 23rd. COMTHIRDFLT further notified CTG 38.2 that the BUNKER HILL and HANCOCK would be detached from TG 38.2 on October 21st by separate dispatch.**

At 1515 he directed CTG 38.2 to (1) detach the HANCOCK on October 20th in time to rendezvous with TG 38.1 at Point MICK 0700 October 21st for temporary duty, and (2) to detach the BUNKER HILL on October 21st to report to CTG 38.3 for temporary duty.***

At 1518 he directed CTG 38.4, upon completion of fueling in Area MICK October 21st, to proceed to the vicinity of Latitude 12°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E, and to operate in that area until further orders, and advised him that his task group would be reinforced on October 21st by the WASHINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS, SOUTH DAKOTA, ALABAMA and DESDIV NINTY-NINE (C.K. BRONSON, COTTON, DORTCH, GATLING and HEALY) in accordance with later orders by separate dispatch.****

At 1525 he issued instructions for CTG 38.3 to detach the above four battleships (including COMBATPAC in WASHINGTON) and five destroyers from his group on October 20th to rendezvous and report for temporary duty to CTG 38.4 at 0700 October 21st in the vicinity of Point MICK.*****

The above modifications to the basic employment schedule, and the composition of the remaining task groups of TF 38 brought about by the planned

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180449 October 1944 to CTG 38.1, info CTG 38.2, etc.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180452 October 1944 to CTG 38.2, info CTG 38.3, etc.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180615 October 1944 to CTG 38.2, info CTG's 38.1 and 38.3, etc.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180618 October 1944 to CTG 38.4, info CTG's 38.1, 38.2 and 38.3, etc.

***** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180625 October 1944 to CTG 38.3, info CTG 38.4, etc.

retirement of TG 38.1 plus the HANCOCK to Ulithi, in effect provide for two balanced forces strategically situated to cover the Leyte operation commencing on October 21st. TG's 38.2 and 38.3 would, on that day, operate together as a force about 300 miles northeast of San Bernardino Strait in the vicinity of Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 128°-00'E, and would be composed of four CV, one CVL, two BB, two CL, one CLAA and twenty-two DD, whereas on October 22nd and 23rd they would be separated by about 100 miles while fueling. Meanwhile, CTG 38.4, reinforced as above, would operate about 300 miles east-northeast of Leyte Gulf in the vicinity of Latitude 12°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E, and would be composed of two CV, two CVL, four BB, one CA, one CL and sixteen DD.

WHILE THE REASONS FOR PLANNING TO SHIFT THE VARIOUS UNITS OF TF 38 AND DISPOSE THEM AS ABOVE ARE NOWHERE STATED, IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT THE FORCE TO THE NORTH WAS TO BE STRONGER IN AIR POWER THAN THAT TO THE SOUTH IN THE RATIO OF ABOUT 1.6 TO 1, BASED ON TOTAL NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT (417/258), WHEREAS, THE FORCE TO THE SOUTH WAS TO BE STRONGER IN BATTLESHIPS THAN THE FORCE TO THE NORTH (FOUR BB TO TWO BB). THUS IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT COMTHIRDFLT PLANNED TO DISPOSE HIS UNITS TO PREVENT (A) IN THE NORTH, AS NECESSARY, REINFORCEMENTS OF LAND-BASED AIR POWER MOVING FROM THE EMPIRE TO THE OBJECTIVE AREA VIA FORMOSA, LUZON AND, AT THE SAME TIME, TO BE IN A POSITION TO COVER THE ALLIED OPERATIONS IN THE OBJECTIVE AREA, AND (B) IN THE SOUTH, ANY JAPANESE ATTEMPT BY TOKYO EXPRESS TO REINFORCE THE ARMY GARRISON FORCES ON THE EAST COAST OF LEYTE VIA SURIGAO STRAIT OR SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT WITH THE RESULTING POSSIBLE SURFACE ACTION.

At about 1759 he received CINCPOA's Zone Notice No. 44 which reclassified Submarine Operating Areas KITCHEN, CLOSET, MARU MORGUE and 11-C as submarine patrol zones; PARLOR, DEFER, that portion of VESTIBULE lying north of Latitude 21°-00'N and that portion of DETECT and DEPART lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E as joint zones; and DETAIN, that portion of DELETE lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E and that portion of VESTIBULE lying south of Latitude 20°-30'N as air surface zones.*

From this he could see that the areas in which his task groups were to operate were air surface zones and he could therefore expect any submarines sighted to be enemy.

At about 1945 he received a report from CTG 38.4 wherein that commander reported the successful results of his air strikes in central Luzon notably in the Clark Field area, and reported that his morning and afternoon reconnaissance of San Bernardino Strait had been negative.**

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* CINCPOA Dispatch 180829 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 17, info COMINCH, COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, CTF 71, CTF 72.

** CTG 38.4 Dispatch 181015 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT.

(1) TF 38 (Fast Carrier Attack Force), October 18th.

(a) Operations of CTG 38.1 and CTG 38.4.

Since the schedule for October 18th called for CTG 38.1 to join CTG 38.4 on this day in the vicinity of Latitude 15°-39'N, Longitude 123°-30'E, from which position both groups were to launch sustained strikes against central Luzon, the operations of these two groups will be discussed together. CTG 38.1, the senior task group commander, in the WASP, rendezvoused his group with TG 38.4 in the above reference position at about 0600, assumed tactical command and coordinated the air strikes of both groups. CTG 38.1 was to attack enemy airfields in the Clark Field area and CTG 38.4 was to attack those in the Manila area. In addition, CTG 38.1 was to launch a search and attack mission against Legaspi and Daet airfields and possible enemy shipping in San Bernardino Strait, and CTG 38.4 was to send a reconnaissance flight over San Bernardino Strait in the morning and afternoon.

(1) Operations of CTG 38.1.

CTG 38.1* commenced launching aircraft as follows:

Time	Strike Designation	Composition	Sortie
0607	Fighter Sweep	30 VF	30
0904	Fighter Sweep	21 VF	21
1305	Strike ABLE	12 VF, 12 VB, 8 VT	32
1350	Strike ONE ABLE (Search & Attack)	16 VF, 12 VB, 8 VT	36
		Total Sorties	119

The bombers and torpedo planes carried bombs. The fighters carried their standard loading of .50 caliber ammunition and, in addition, those fighters equipped with rocket launchers carried rockets.

The two fighter sweeps were launched to gain control of the air over Clark Field area prior to the arrival of Strike ABLE. About thirty-five enemy fighters opposed the first sweep on its arrival over the target area about 0730, and some thirty-five more met the second sweep about

* Action Report HORNET, Ryukyu Islands, Formosa and Philippine Operations, October 2nd-27th, 1944, Serial 0031, October 28th, 1944; Action Report WASP, Operations Against Okinawa, Leyte, etc., October 2nd-27th, 1944, Serial 0040, October 28th, 1944; Action Report MONTEREY, Operations Against Nansei Shoto, etc., October 2nd-28th (EL), 1944, Serial 0029, October 27th, 1944; War Diaries CTG 38.1, HORNET, MONTEREY, October 18th, 1944; also Aircraft Action Report Air Group 14 forwarded by WASP, Serial 0238, November 9th, 1944.

1030. The first sweep was recovered at 1032 and the second at 1358. Allied pilots claimed to have destroyed a total of thirty enemy aircraft in the air and twenty-nine on the ground, versus two Allied VF lost in aerial combat. Also, the pilots on the first sweep reported that about thirty enemy ships were at anchor near the breakwater at the northern part of Manila Harbor.*

The success of the two fighter sweeps is attested by the fact that Strike ABLE met little air opposition when it arrived over the Clark Field area at 1515 and attacked the airfields, mostly with unobserved results due to smoke and haze. However, the strike group encountered intense enemy AA, although no Allied aircraft were shot down. The flight returned aboard at 1655.*

Strike ONE ABLE was launched on a search and attack mission over San Bernardino Strait, Legaspi and Daet airfields. It returned at 1750, with negative results except for one enemy plane destroyed on the ground at Legaspi. No aircraft were lost.**

WHY CTG 38.1 LAUNCHED A SEARCH AND ATTACK GROUP AGAINST LEGASPI AND POSSIBLE SHIPPING IN SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT IS NOT UNDERSTOOD, FOR NEITHER THE STRIKE AGAINST LEGASPI NOR THE RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS OVER SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT BY CTG 38.4 THE PREVIOUS DAY HAD LOCATED ANY SUITABLE TARGETS. ON THE OTHER HAND, TG 38.1 PILOTS ON THE FIRST FIGHTER SWEEP OF THE DAY HAD REPORTED ABOUT THIRTY SHIPS ANCHORED IN MANILA HARBOR. SINCE THEY LANDED ABOARD AT 1032, OR MORE THAN THREE HOURS PRIOR TO THE TIME THAT STRIKE ONE ABLE WAS LAUNCHED AGAINST UNKNOWN TARGETS AT LEGASPI AND IN SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT, THERE WAS AMPLE TIME TO BRIEF THE PILOTS AND ORGANIZE A SHIPPING STRIKE AGAINST KNOWN TARGETS RATHER THAN SEND THEM IN SEARCH OF THE UNKNOWN, WITH PROBABLE NEGATIVE RESULTS AND ATTENDANT WASTE OF AMMUNITION.

From 0430 until the daylight CAP reported on station CTG 38.1 maintained a night CAP of two VF and from sunrise to sunset he maintained a CAP of sixteen VF and a SNASP of four VF and four VT. Although a few bogeys were picked up on the radar, no interceptions were made and there were no attacks on the task group.***

Total plane losses from all causes were 6 VF, 1 VB, a total of seven planes of which five planes were lost operationally. Personnel losses were three pilots.****

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* Action Report Air Group 11, October 18th, Encl (G) to HORNET, Serial 0031, October 28th, 1944; also Action Report Air Group 14, October 10th-26th, 1944; Serial 0114, November 5th, 1944.

** Action Report MONTEREY, Operations Against NANSEI SHOTO, etc., October 2nd-28th (EL), 1944, Serial 0029, October 27th, 1944; also Action Report CTG 38.1, Operations against Okinawa, Formosa, etc., October 2nd-29th, 1944, Serial 00101, December 15th, 1944.

*** War Diaries CTG 38.1, HORNET, WASP and MONTEREY, October 18th, 1944.

**** Action Report HORNET and WASP, October 2nd-27th, 1944; also War Diary MONTEREY, October 18th, 1944.

(2) Operations of CTG 38.4,* October 18th.

Time	Strike Designation	Composition	Sorties
0623	Reconnaissance	2 VF, 2 VT	4
0625	Fighter Sweep	24 VF	24
0810	Strike ABLE	16 VF, 21 VB, 15 VT	52
0901	Strike BAKER	17 VF, 23 VB, 12 VT	52
1330	Fighter Sweep	21 VF	21
1348	Strike CHARLIE	24 VF, 27 VB, 17 VT	68
1426	Reconnaissance	2 VT	2
		Total Sorties	223

The bombers and torpedo planes carried bombs, except that the torpedo planes launched in Strike CHARLIE carried torpedoes. The fighters carried their standard loading of .50 caliber ammunition, and, in addition, those fighters equipped with rocket launchers carried rockets.

CTG 38.4 planned to establish air superiority over the Manila area by sending a fighter sweep ahead of his first two strikes to attack Nichols and Nielson airfields, but bad weather to the east of Manila prevented the fighter sweep and Strike ABLE from attacking either of these fields, so they attacked Clark Field instead, and returned aboard at 1030 and

* Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Visayas, in support of the Occupation of Leyte, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944; also Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations Against the Enemy, Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944; Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944; also Action Report FRANKLIN, Operations Against the Enemy at Nansei Shoto, Formosa, and the Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944; Serial 0039, October 31st; also Action Report BELLEAU WOOD, Action Against Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Luzon and the Visayas, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944; Serial 0170, November 3rd, 1944; also Action Report SAN JACINTO, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Philippine Islands, and Visayas, Philippine Islands, in support of the Occupation of Leyte, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944; Serial 0043, October 31st, 1944; also War Diaries CTG 38.4, FRANKLIN, BELLEAU WOOD October 18th, 1944; also Aircraft Action Report Air Group 13 forwarded by FRANKLIN, Serial 0193, November 7th, 1944.

1156 respectively. The fighter sweep was met by about thirty enemy fighters, of which eighteen were reportedly destroyed.*

Strike BAKER attacked Nichols and Nielson airfields at about 1015 from an altitude of 800 to 1000 feet, just below the overcast, in spite of bad weather and very heavy AA fire which shot down to VF from the ENTERPRISE. The flight landed aboard at 1214.*

Strike CHARLIE was launched against the shipping that had been reported earlier in Manila Bay. The strike was preceded immediately by a fighter sweep of twenty-one VF to attack airfields in the vicinity of Manila to prevent opposition by enemy aircraft.*

On returning the FRANKLIN aircraft arrived safely. The ENTERPRISE pilots encountered adverse weather which forced them to make a wide detour to the north of Manila and caused the flight to be long delayed in its return. At the time of expected return, TG 38.4 was some thirty-seven miles east of Point OPTION. CTG 38.4, realizing this fact, detached the ENTERPRISE with two destroyer escorts to meet her returning aircraft. However, the ENTERPRISE planes arrived after dark (sunset occurred at 1822), low on fuel. After landing fifteen planes, the ENTERPRISE's deck became fouled for twenty minutes by a deck crash, whereupon CTG's 38.1 and 38.4 expeditiously respotted the flight decks of WASP and FRANKLIN and landed seven planes. In these operations, four VB and five VT were lost operationally. After all planes were aboard or down, and destroyer searches had been made for survivors, CTG 38.4 reformed his task group and steamed through the area the remainder of the night searching for survivors.**

WHILE CTG 38.4 OPERATED AS ABOVE HIS TASK GROUP WAS IN A POSITION VULNERABLE TO BOTH SUBMARINE AND NIGHT AIR ATTACK. WHY THEN DID HE JEOPARDIZE HIS COMMAND? PERHAPS HE FELT THAT THE RECOVERY OF HIS DOWNED PILOTS AND AIRCREWMEN (TWENTY IN ALL) WAS SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO WARRANT THIS ACTION; PERHAPS HE FELT THAT THE CHANCE OF A NIGHT AIR OR SUBMARINE ATTACK WAS REMOTE, SINCE THE ENEMY THUS FAR HAD MADE NO NIGHT AIR ATTACKS OFF THE PHILIPPINES AND NO ENEMY SUBMARINES HAD BEEN REPORTED IN THIS AREA; PERHAPS HE WAS GUIDED BY THE PRECEDENT ESTABLISHED BY CTF 58 WHO, SEVERAL MONTHS EARLIER (JUNE 20TH), IN THE BATTLE OF THE PHILIPPINE SEA, IN ORDER TO RECOVER DOWNED PILOTS, HAD COMPLETELY NEGLECTED ANTISUBMARINE SCREENING MEASURES IN FAVOR OF RESCUING PERSONNEL.*** WHATEVER HIS REASON THE SEARCH THIS NIGHT WAS EFFECTIVE IN THAT BY 2400 HE HAD RECOVERED FOUR PILOTS AND EIGHT AIRCREWMEN AND HAD LEARNED THAT ONE VT PILOT HAD BEEN DEFINITELY

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* Aircraft Action Report, Air Group 13, October 10th-20th, 1944, Serial 077, November 6th, 1944; also Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations Against the Enemy: Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944.

** Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, etc., October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 10th, 1944.

*** Action Report CTF 58, Operations in Support of the Capture of the Marianas, Serial 00388, September 11th, 1944, pages 29 and 30.

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LOST.* THIS LEFT THREE PILOTS (ONE VT, TWO VB) AND FOUR AIRCREWMEN YET TO BE RESCUED.

THE POSITION OF TG 38.4 RELATIVE TO POINT OPTION IS NOT EXPLAINABLE, FOR DOCTRINE REQUIRED THE COMMANDER TO REMAIN WITHIN A RADIUS OF ONE-HALF THE LIMIT OF VISIBILITY FROM POINT OPTION AT ALL TIMES, OR ADVISE THE PILOTS OF A CORRECTED POSITION, COURSE AND SPEED FOR POINT OPTION. THE LATTER DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DONE.

IN THIS CONNECTION IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT HERE THAT WHILE THE SELECTION OF A COURSE AND SPEED FOR POINT OPTION IS ALWAYS A DELICATE PROBLEM, WHICH IS OFTEN COMPLICATED BY UNFORESEEN OPERATIONS AND VARIABLE WIND CONDITIONS, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY THIS DIFFICULTY OCCURRED IN THIS OPERATION. THE PLANNED OPERATIONS WERE KNOWN AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN ALLOWED FOR IN THE COMPUTATIONS. THIS WAS THE SECOND DAY CTG 38.4 HAD OPERATED IN THIS AREA, THERE WAS NO NOTICEABLE CHANGE IN THE FORCE AND DIRECTION OF THE WIND, AND EXPERIENCE MUST HAVE INDICATED THAT SOME PLANES WOULD HAVE FORCED LANDINGS. BESIDES, IT SEEMS QUITE LIKELY THAT THE FACT THAT BAD WEATHER WAS APPROACHING WAS KNOWN TO HIS COMMAND.

Total plane losses from all causes were 5 VF, 1 VF(P), 5 VB, 5 VT--a total of sixteen planes--of which thirteen planes were lost operationally. Personnel losses as of 2400 were nine pilots and seven aircrewmen.**

During the day, in accordance with COMTHIRDFLT's directive,*** CTG 38.4 conducted morning and afternoon searches over San Bernardino Strait, with negative results. The first search, composed of two VF and two VT from BELLEAU WOOD, departed 0623 and returned 0942; the second search of two VT from SAN JACINTO departed at 1426 and returned at 1745.****

Enemy air activity in the vicinity of TG 38.4 was very light. Very few bogeys were detected. At 0725 BELLEAU WOOD CAP intercepted and shot down a two-engine land bomber thirty miles from the formation. At 1025 a bogey was reported bearing 210°(T), distant twenty miles, and a short

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* War Diaries MAURY, HELM, WILKES, SWANSON, October 18th, 1944.

** Action Reports, ENTERPRISE, FRANKLIN and SAN JACINTO, October 7th-21st, 1944.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 160246 October 1944 to CTG 38.4, info to COMSOWESPAC, etc.

**** CTG 38.4 Dispatch 181530 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPAC, COMTHIRDFLT, COMINCH; also Action Reports BELLEAU WOOD, Action Against Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Luzon and the Visayas, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0170, November 3rd, 1944, and SAN JACINTO, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Philippine Islands, and Visayas, Philippine Islands, in Support of the Occupation of Leyte, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0043, October 31st, 1944.

time later ENTERPRISE lookouts actually sighted an enemy two-engine land bomber on about the same bearing.* Nevertheless, interception by SAN JACINTO CAP was unsuccessful, and this plane escaped.* The 1025 plane reported an Allied carrier task group at 1030 consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other ships.**

The combined results of the above strikes by CTG's 38.1 and 38.4 were quite successful. The aggregate claims amounted to sixty-one enemy aircraft destroyed in the air and seventy-six destroyed on the ground. In regard to shipping, four medium AK's, one AO, and one floating drydock were claimed to have been sunk in Manila Harbor. In addition, considerable destruction and damage to hangars, buildings, and fuel storages at Clark and Nichols airfields were reported.***

Photographs confirm the destruction to airfields and shipping. In addition, post-war records show that five passenger-cargo and large vessels ranging from about 4000 to 7000 tons were actually sunk in Manila Bay by carrier-based aircraft on October 18th.**** In connection with shipping losses, it is interesting to note that all were sunk by aerial torpedoes,***** which fact tends to substantiate the superiority of torpedoes over bombs as an antishipping weapon.

No Japanese reports are available in regard to their air losses in the Manila area on October 18th.

(b) Operations of CTG 38.2, October 19th.

At the beginning of the day CTG 38.2 was proceeding on his new assignment on base course 260°(T) at twenty-two knots to the vicinity of Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 123°-45'E, from which position he was to launch one fighter sweep and two deck-load strikes against the Laoag - Aparri area, instead of operating in strategic support in the vicinity of Latitude 18°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E, prior to fueling on the following day.****** This change in schedule gave him an opportunity to engage in the first

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* War Diary CTG 38.4, October 1944.

** Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** Action Report CTG 38.1, Operations against Okinawa, Formosa, etc., October 2nd-29th, 1944, Serial00101, December 15th, 1944; Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations against Okinawa Jima, etc., October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944; War Diary CINCPAC, October 1944.

**** Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses during World War II, prepared by Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

***** Action Report Air Group 13, October 10th-29th, 1944, Serial 077, November 6th, 1944.

****** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170822 October 1944 to CTG 38.2, info COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, etc.

offensive operations since he had attacked targets in northern Formosa on October 14th.

At 0212 he launched a night CAP consisting of two VF from INDEPENDENCE, which was recovered at 0616. No contacts were made.*

Commencing at about 0615, from approximate position Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 124°-00'E, about 100 miles east of northern Luzon, he launched planes on combat missions as follows:**

	Time	Strike Designation	Composition	Totals
(a)	0615	Fighter Sweep	35 VF	35
(b)	0800	Strike ABLE	32 VF, 36 VB, 21 VT	89
(c)	1100	Strike BAKER	36 VF, 31 VB, 18 VT	85
		Total sorties		209

The armament for the above strikes consisted generally of bombs and incendiary clusters. In addition, those torpedo planes and fighters so equipped carried rockets as well as their usual loading of machine gun ammunition.

Weather conditions in the operating area of the task group, and en route to the target area, were undesirable for flight operations, with low ceilings, reduced visibility and showers, variable easterly winds from five to twenty knots. However, the weather at the target was excellent, with unlimited ceiling, and visibility about twenty miles.

The fighter sweep, which landed aboard at 1000, and strikes ABLE and BAKER, which returned at 1220 and 1610 respectively, met no air opposition and encountered very meager AA fire as they attacked what few targets they could find on the airfields in the Aparri - Laoag area. After exhausting available ground targets, they searched for enemy shipping along the north and northwest coasts of Luzon.***

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* War Diary INDEPENDENCE, October 1944.

** Action Report BUNKER HILL, October 7th-26th, 1944, Serial 0293, October 27th, 1944; Action Report HANCOCK, October 6th-31st, 1944, Serial 0100, November 3rd, 1944; Action Report INTREPID, Operations against Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Luzon and the Japanese Fleet, Operations on Leyte, Philippine Islands, etc., October 10th-31st, 1944, Serial 0166, no date; and Aircraft Action Reports, Air Groups 7, 8 and 18, October 18th, 1944.

*** Aircraft Action Report, Air Group 7, October 18th, 1944, forwarded by Commanding Officer HANCOCK Serial 0100, November 3rd, 1944; Aircraft Action Report Air Group 8, forwarded by Commanding Officer BUNKER HILL Serial 0304, October 30th, 1944; Aircraft Action Report Air Group 18, October 18th, 1944, no forwarding endorsement.

The results of the above strikes were quite profitable, particularly in regard to Japanese shipping losses. CTG 38.2 claimed a total of five ships amounting to about 20,000 tons sunk, seven ships totaling about 11,200 tons probably sunk, and thirty-eight smaller vessels and luggers amounting to 13,600 tons damaged. He claimed a total of twenty-one enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground and one single-engine seaplane destroyed in the air as it was taking off.*

The claimed destruction and damage to enemy shipping is substantiated in part by photographs and postwar analysis of Japanese shipping losses, the latter indicating that on October 18th two cargo ships, three transports and one submarine chaser, totaling 21,778 tons were sunk by carrier aircraft off Camiguin Island; off Lapog a passenger-cargo vessel (2407 tons) and a tank landing ship (1,000 tons) were sunk, and another tank landing vessel was probably sunk.**

Total losses were two VF, two VB, of which three planes were lost operationally. Personnel losses were two pilots, one aircrewman, of which one pilot, one aircrewman were rescued on the following day by the BONEFISH.***

CTG 38.2 maintained local patrols consisting of a CAP of twelve VF and a SNASP of four VF-four VB/VT from dawn until sunset. No enemy aircraft were observed.****

At 1831 CTG 38.2 set course 129°(T), speed sixteen knots, and steamed toward his fueling rendezvous with oiler units of TG 30.8 at 0700 the following day.*****

(c) Operations of CTG 38.3, October 18th.

CTG 38.3 continued on base course 200°(T), at seventeen knots, toward his 0700 fueling rendezvous, zig-zagging in accordance with Plan No. 6. At 0220 he changed course to 160°(T), and at 0520 he changed course to 040°(T). At 0601 he sighted on bearing 050°(T) distant twelve miles the oiler units (TU's 30.8.3, 30.8.5 and 30.8.13) of TG 30.8 consisting of the tankers MISSISSINEWA, CALIENTE, SCHUYLKILL, CHIKASKIA, ESCAMBIA, TAPPAHANNOCK, PAMANSET, KASKASKIA and LACKAWANNA, plus the escort carriers RUDYERD BAY and NEHENTA BAY (providing air cover for oiler units) and the aircraft replenishment carrier, BARNES. At 0642 fueling was commenced, on base course 090°(T), speed ten knots, and continued until 1205.******

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* War Diary CTG 38.2, October 1944.

** Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses during World War II, prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February, 1947.

*** War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.

**** War Diaries BUNKER HILL, HANCOCK and INTREPID, October 18th, 1944.

***** War Diary BUNKER HILL, October 1944.

****** Smooth Deck Log ESSEX, October 18th, 1944; War Diary CTG 38.3, October 18th, 1944.

At 0645 CRUDIV THIRTEEN (SANTE FE, BIRMINGHAM, MOBILE) and DESDIV 100 (COGSWELL, CAPERTON, INGERSOLL, KNAPP) rejoined TG 38.3, in compliance with COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch 170402 October releasing these units from cover duty with TG 30.3. During the fueling operations personnel from the disabled HOUSTON were transferred to the oiler units for transportation to Ulithi, where that vessel would ultimately arrive in tow.*

During the forenoon the BARNES transferred the following aircraft and pilots to TG 38.3: to ESSEX one VF, one VB and two VT; to PRINCETON four VF; to LANGLEY one VT; to LEXINGTON four fighter pilots. One VT flyable dud was transferred from the ESSEX to the BARNES.**

From sunrise to sunset, CTG 38.3 maintained a CAP of eight VF and a SNASP of four VF-four VB/VT. In addition, an inner anti-submarine patrol of two seaplanes was provided by the MASSACHUSETTS and WASHINGTON during the fueling operations. Also, pre-dawn CAP of two VF(N) was flown by the LEXINGTON from 0326 until 0556.***

Two enemy aircraft, apparently on reconnaissance missions, were claimed to have been shot down during the day. At 1130 the CAP from LEXINGTON shot down a plane identified as an enemy two-engine heavy fighter, bearing 018°(T), distant seventy-five miles.**** This was likely a two-engine search plane, which had taken off from Okinawa at 0700 to search sector 155°-165°(T) and did not return.*****

Again, at 1300 the CAP from PRINCETON claimed shooting down a similar type plane about sixty-five miles north of the formation. This plane cannot be accounted for in Japanese records. At no time during the day did enemy aircraft actually attack the task group.

Neither TG 38.3 nor the fueling group were reported this day by Japanese search planes, because only one of the four search planes went far enough to have observed these groups, and this plane was shot down, without transmitting a contact report.

Plane and personnel losses consisted of one VT with pilot and one aircrewman from LANGLEY as a result of crashing into the sea on catapulting (replacement VT was provided by BARNES); one VF was jettisoned from ESSEX.******

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* War Diary COMCRUDIV 13, October 18th, 1944.
** War Diaries CTG 38.3, LANGLEY, ESSEX and BARNES, October 18th, 1944.
*** War Diary CTG 38.3, October 18th, 1944.
**** War Diary LEXINGTON, October 18th, 1944.
***** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, General Battle Report Addresses (Western Attack Force TWO Urgent Battle Report (October 18th, Part I), War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.
****** War Diary LANGLEY, October 18th, 1944; Smooth Deck Log ESSEX, October 18th, 1944.

After completion of fuel and aircraft replenishment CTG 38.3 continued in an easterly direction until sunset (1816), at which time he set course 255°(T) at seventeen knots, so as to arrive in his designated operating area (vicinity of Latitude 17°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E) by 2400.

(2) Operations of CTG 30.3 (Salvage Group), October 18th.*

TG 30.3, now under the command of COMCRUDIV TEN in BOSTON, continued on course 120°(T) at four knots toward Ulithi. It still operated as two task units, TU's 30.3.1 and 30.3.2.

At 0530 radar and TBS contact was made with the fueling unit, closing from the eastward. This unit (TU 30.8.8) consisted of the oilers TOMAHAWK, PECOS and KENNEBAGO, and DE's WEAVER and HILBERT. Fueling commenced at 0630.

Fueling operations were made difficult by long, heavy swells and by the slow speeds required to prevent separation from the towing group.

At 0848 the GRAYSON spotted a low-flying enemy carrier-type reconnaissance plane, which was shot down at 0900 by the CAP from CABOT on a bearing of 290°(T) distant twenty-five miles from the formation.**

Although Japanese sources do not so indicate, it is quite probable that this plane was one of the four enemy planes from Formosa that searched sector 085°-145°(T) from Garan Bi to a distance of 400 miles on this date; three carrier-type planes and one carrier-type reconnaissance plane were assigned to search this sector.***

At about 0900 CTG 30.3 received COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch 172307 directing that he change course to the south upon completion of fueling in order to clear the path of a typhoon that was apparently forming in the South Philippine Sea and moving northwestward along the projected track of the salvage group.

At 1328 CTG 30.3 in BOSTON shifted from TU 30.3.2 to TU 30.3.1.****

At 1736, upon completion of all fueling, he changed course to 180°(T). He realized that while this course would bring his group closer to

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* COMCRUDIV 10 Action Report, Report of Salvage of the CANBERRA and HOUSTON, Serial 0032, November 30th, 1944.

** Aircraft Action Reports, Air Group 29, October 6th-November 7th, 1944, Serial 0024, November 7th, 1944; Smooth Deck Log BOSTON, October 18th, 1944.

*** SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 172021 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No. 75), Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Unit, (256th Air Group), October 13th-November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

**** War Diary BOSTON, October 18th, 1944.

Luzon (about 300 miles), it held promise of avoiding the typhoon, which at this time seemed the greater of the two evils. However, any apprehension that he may have had in regard to his proximity to Luzon was quickly lessened when at about 1832 he received COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch to CINCPAC which reported success of early TF 38 strikes against Luzon.*

From dawn until sunset planes from CABOT and COWPENS provided local air patrols consisting of a CAP of eight VF and a SNASP of four VF and four VT. Japanese air activity, except for the one reconnaissance plane destroyed, and a bogey that approached at 0218 from the northwest to within fifteen miles of the formation, was nil.**

(3) Operations of CTG 30.5 (Fleet Air Wing ONE), October 18th.

CTG 30.5 continued to control the operations of his tender and land-based aircraft from aboard his flagship, HAMLIN, anchored at Ulithi. His seaplanes flew long range day searches to 600 miles between bearings 300°(T) and 360°(T) from Kossol Passage, while his land planes (PB4Y's) flew long range daylight searches from Tinian to 800 miles between bearings 245°(T) and 272°(T), and to 1000 miles between bearings 272°(T) and 353°(T); in addition, the area north through southwest was covered by shorter range searches by land planes (PV-1) from Tinian, and seaplanes from Saipan, as indicated in Diagram "C". The results of these searches were uniformly negative.***

CTG 30.5 neither sent nor received any dispatches of significance to his operations on this date.

He lost one PBM-3D type seaplane and one crew member from VPB 216 in a landing crash at Kossol Passage.****

(2) Operations of CTF 17 (Submarine Force Pacific), October 18th.

CTF 17 at his headquarters at Pearl Harbor watched the developing situation. He probably wondered what had become of the Japanese cruiser force which had been contacted by the SKATE on October 16th. He had moved the PERCH and CROAKER into the Nagasaki-Sasebo area and had a wolf pack off Bungo Suido but there had been no reports for over twenty-four hours.

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180902 October 1944 to CINCPAC, COMSOWESPAC, Info All THIRD Fleet TFC's.

** Action Report COWPENS, October 17th-20th, Serial 0028, October 21st, 1944; Action Report CABOT, October 17th-20th, 1944, Serial 067, November 1st, 1944.

*** War Diaries, VPB's 202, 216, 4, 17, 18, 102, 116, 150, October 1944.

**** War Diary VPB 216, October 18th, 1944.

During the forenoon he decided that it was no longer necessary to maintain the WHALE and the SEAHORSE northeast of Formosa and therefore, since they had completed their original patrols and presumably were low on fuel and provisions, he directed them to return to Midway for refit.*

Sometime between about 1230 and 1500 he received a contact report from the STERLET stating that at 1115 she had contacted two heavy cruisers, one light cruiser, and six destroyers in Latitude 28°-00'N, Longitude 127°-45'E on course 320°(T) speed seventeen.** From its composition and location and from the fact that he had received no contact reports from either his Nagasaki - Sasebo submarines or his Bungo Suido submarines, he probably concluded that this was the same force which had been reported by the SKATE on October 16th southeastward of Amami O Shima. If this was so, he could see that the enemy, instead of retiring into the Inland Sea, had remained in the Amami O Shima area.

He now alerted his submarines in the MARU MORGUE and Nagasaki - Sasebo areas to this contact and directed them to attack.*** From the fact that he did not alert any of his submarines south of the MARU MORGUE it seems clear that he had decided that this cruiser force was still headed for the Inland Sea. He did not alert the submarines off Bungo Suido because (a) they were on station where they had closed Bungo Suido to ingress as well as to egress, (b) he did not wish the Bungo Suido submarines to depart this area in order to attack. Instead, by omission, he plainly desired them to remain on station.

During the previous day and throughout this forenoon he received numerous dispatches from COMTHIRDFLT indicating that since the prospects of fleet action were poor, and the greatest danger lay in a Tokyo Express action rather than in a fleet action it was unnecessary to maintain a THIRD Fleet concentration of carrier forces preparatory to such fleet action, and therefore he had issued orders designed to establish a gradual return of TF 38 to its basic bombing schedules.

To say that CINCPOA and CTF 17 concurred in this opinion of COMTHIRDFLT seems correct for at 1729 CINCPOA Zone Notice No. 44 reclassified certain of the submarine areas, as follows:****

(a) Air Surface Zones--DETAIN, that portion of DELETE lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E, and that portion of VESTIBULE lying south of Latitude 20°-30'N.

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* War Patrol Report WHALE, Report of NINTH War Patrol, Serial 017 October 30th, 1944; also War Patrol Report SEAHORSE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial C-5-44, November 1st, 1944.

** STERLET Dispatch 180300 October 1944 to CTF 17.

*** CTF 17 Dispatch 180619 October 1944 to All Submarines MARU MORGUE and Nagasaki - Sasebo.

**** CINCPOA Dispatch 180829 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT and CTF 17.

(b) Joint Zones--PARLOR, DEFER, that portion of VESTIBULE lying north of Latitude 21°-00'N, and that portion of DETECT and DEPART lying east of Longitude 123°-00'E.

(c) Submarine Patrol Zones--KITCHEN, CLOSET, MARU MORGUE and 11-C.

CTF 17 at 1903 directed "all submarines in CONVOY COLLEGE and MARU MORGUE to discontinue special dispositions, to patrol stations previously ordered and to resume normal rotating patrols." He further, in the same dispatch, directed the submarines in CONVOY COLLEGE to patrol to the westward of Longitude 123°-00'E.*

These directives were designed, of course, to keep TF 17 out of likely operating areas of the THIRD Fleet. They made it possible for TF 17 submarines to operate with reasonable security westward of Longitude 123°-00'E and made it possible for COMTHIRDFLT to operate his carrier forces in areas where their aircraft could attack any submarine as enemy. In this connection it will be recalled that on October 6th COMTHIRDFLT had requested that TF 17 submarines be kept north of Latitude 25°-00'N and west of Longitude 121°-00'E until 2400 October 15th after which they could be shifted as far south as Latitude 20°-00'N if desired.** It will be observed that this dispatch, also by omission, implied that the idea of keeping the submarines west of Longitude 121°-00'E still obtained when south of Latitude 20°-00'N. It is clear that CINCPOA mindful of the fact that the THIRD Fleet was now operating south of Luzon Strait and feeling that Allied operations in the Leyte area would cause increased movements of Japanese shipping along the island chain of Philippines, Formosa, and Okinawa, desired to move his submarines into intercepting positions, and therefore felt that the change from Longitude 121°-00'E to Longitude 123°-00'E was justified.

WHILE THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT CINCPOA WAS CORRECT IN MAKING THE SUBMARINE ZONE CLASSIFICATIONS ABOVE REFERRED TO THERE SEEMS TO BE CONSIDERABLE DOUBT AS TO THE WISDOM OF CTF 17'S ORDER TO THE SUBMARINES OF THE MARU MORGUE AND CONVOY COLLEGE, AND PARTICULARLY THE LATTER, TO RETURN TO THEIR NORMAL OPERATING SCHEDULES. ALLIED ADVANCE FORCES WERE OPERATING IN LEYTE GULF AT THIS TIME AND COMMENCING ABOUT MIDNIGHT ON THE FOLLOWING DAY THE PRINCIPAL FORCES OF TF 77 WOULD BE ENTERING LEYTE GULF PREPARATORY TO LANDING ON THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 20TH. IF THERE WAS TO BE ANY JAPANESE REACTION IN STRENGTH TO THESE LEYTE GULF OPERATIONS EVEN IF ONLY TO THE EXTENT OF STRONG TOKYO EXPRESS OPERATIONS, MIGHT NOT SUCH FORCES HAVE COME THROUGH LUZON STRAIT?

At about 1930 he likely received a contact report from the BLACKFIN that she had sighted an unknown submarine in Latitude 20°-45'N, Longitude

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 181003 October 1944 to All Submarines CONVOY COLLEGE and MARU MORGUE.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 060712 October 1944 to CINCPOA.

132°-52'E.* From his plot of the positions of his submarines CTF 17 could see that this submarine was enemy and that, from its course, it was headed across the SEVENTH Fleet lines of communication between New Guinea, Peleliu and Leyte, which were some 800 miles to the southward.

Sometime between 2000 and midnight he received dispatches as follows: (a) From the SAWFISH that having completed her lifeguard duties she was headed for her patrol station;** (b) from the SAURY that she had recovered a downed aviator and was returning to her assigned station*** and (c) and most important, a dispatch from CTG 17.17 (the wolf pack commander in the BESUGO) reporting that he now considered the primary mission of his group was attack.**** In addition, the wolf pack commander reported that (a) he had reassigned his submarines with the BESUGO north of Latitude 32°-00'N and the RONQUIL south of that Latitude in Area SEVEN west of Longitude 132°-10'E, and the GABILAN in vicinity Okino Shima, (b) retiring Japanese fleet units were following the 100 fathom curve along each coast of Kyushu and that one heavy cruiser and one larger ship had returned that morning.

(a) CONVOY COLLEGE.

Submarines operating in CONVOY COLLEGE continued to be the SAILFISH, ICEFISH, SAWFISH, PARCHE, DRUM, SEADRAGON, SHARK, BLACKFISH, SNOOK and COBIA. All submarines, with the exception of the SAWFISH, on lifeguard duty, continued to patrol their designated rectangles along a north and south line from the southern tip of Formosa to Cape Bojeador in order to blank Luzon Strait. They generally operated submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness and low visibility.

At 1454 the SAWFISH, which had sighted numerous enemy patrol craft during the day, sighted a torpedo boat known as a CHIDORI and fired four stern tube torpedoes which missed. In return she was ineffectively depth charged by the torpedo boat.*****

At about 2000 these submarines received orders from CTF 17 to discontinue their special dispositions and patrol stations previously ordered (October 15th),****** to resume normal rotating patrols, and to remain westward of 123°-00'E.******* They immediately commenced deployment to their

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* War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report SAWFISH, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, Serial 88-44, November 8th, 1944.

*** SAURY Dispatch 181030 October 1944 to CTF 17.

**** BESUGO Dispatch 181424 October 1944 to CTF 17.

***** War Patrol Report SAWFISH, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, Serial 088, November 8th, 1944.

****** CTF 17 Dispatch 150931 October 1944 to All Submarines concerned.

******* CTF 17 Dispatch 181003 October 1944 to All Submarines in CONVOY COLLEGE and MARU MORGUE.

original patrol stations.*

Also at 2000 the Commanding Officer SHARK as commander of the coordinated attack group (wolf pack) consisting of the SHARK, BLACKFISH and SEADRAGON issued instructions to his command concerning new patrol areas.** Diagram "C" shows that this group operated in Area DELETE on this day. Since this attack group was assigned Area DESTROY in CONVOY COLLEGE rotation for this period of the month it is assumed that the wolf pack commander planned to rendezvous his group there en route to their new station.

At 2100 the Commanding Officer SAWFISH, as wolf pack commander--his wolf pack now consisted of the SAWFISH, ICEFISH, and DRUM--in accordance with the above, issued instructions to the ICEFISH and the DRUM concerning their patrol stations for the next two days.***

At 2120 PARCHE,having received orders from CTF 17 to rendezvous with the SAILFISH at a designated rendezvous in the vicinity of Balingtang Channel and to escort her to Saipan where she was to unload the aviators she had rescued and was to repair her radio transmitter,**** headed for the rendezvous where she arrived at midnight. The SAILFISH received this order at 2200, and headed for the rendezvous.

At 2200 the SAWFISH had completed her lifeguard duties and was entering Area DETECT where she planned to rendezvous with the ICEFISH and DRUM.***

Likewise at this time the reduced wolf pack SNOOK and COBIA, in Area DELETE, headed for their new patrol stations in that area. The SNOOK was to operate in the Balingtang Channel area and the COBIA off Calayan Island.*****

During this day the submarines of CONVOY COLLEGE made no important contacts.

The submarine BLACKFIN, which was supposed to be operating in Area PARLOR awaiting orders to proceed on her mission, actually was in the safety lane of Area VESTIBULE for, at 1600 in Latitude 20°-45'N, Longitude 132°-52'E, she sighted an unidentified submarine. She submerged and commenced

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* War Patrol Report PARCHE, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 078, December 2nd, 1944.

** War Patrol Report SEADRAGON, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 194, November 8th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report SAWFISH, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, Serial 088, November 8th, 1944.

**** CTF 17 Dispatch 172037 October 1944 to PARCHE.

***** War Patrol Report SNOOK, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 053, November 18th, 1944; also War Patrol Report COBIA, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 035, November 5th, 1944.

an approach. Finally, at 1726 having lost contact and deciding that the submarine likely was the NAUTILUS, the commanding officer discontinued his approach operations. Actually this was not the NAUTILUS but was instead one of the Japanese submarines which was en route to the Philippine area at this time. At 1900 perhaps feeling that this contact might not have been the NAUTILUS he sent a contact report to CTF 17. At 2015 he received orders from CTF 17 to proceed to patrol area as previously ordered.*

(b) Northwest Coast Formosa.

The TANG continued to patrol in the center of Formosa Strait. She encountered numerous patrol planes and patrol craft which appeared to be searching for her. The commanding officer therefore decided to leave the center of the strait and to patrol instead off Pakusa Point during the 18th, and to move to a position off Kiirun Harbor on the 19th. During this day he made no contacts of consequence.**

(c) Northeast Coast Formosa.

The coordinated attack group (wolf pack) consisting of the SILVERSIDES (F), SALMON and TRIGGER continued to operate off the northeast coast of Formosa in Area 11-C. It had been reinforced by the WHALE and the SEAHORSE. However, these latter two submarines did not long remain since they were directed by CTF 17 to depart the area and proceed to Midway.*** The WHALE received these orders at 0530 and immediately headed for Midway. The SEAHORSE did not receive them since she had submerged at 0455, and it was not until 1950, after she had surfaced, that she finally received them. She also headed for Midway. The departure of these two submarines lessened the density of the submarine screen in this area and made possible fifty mile gaps through which enemy shipping might pass undetected. During the day these submarines operated submerged; during the night they operated on the surface.

(d) MARU MORGUE.

The submarines BARBEL, SKATE, SAURY, BURRFISH, STERLET, and SEA DOG continued to operate in the MARU MORGUE. They had been assigned definite stations by CTF 17 and had been directed to remain in those stations until further orders. All of these submarines, with the single exception of the SAURY, were on station during daylight hours. The SAURY, instead of being

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* War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report TANG, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, no serial, September 10th, 1945.

*** War Patrol Report WHALE, Report of NINTH War Patrol, Serial 017, October 30th, 1944; also War Patrol Report SEAHORSE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial C-5-44, November 1st, 1944.

on station, had departed to the eastward to look for a BUNKER HILL fighter pilot who had been downed since 1300 October 16th, and therefore she remained well to the eastward of Okinawa and of her assigned station throughout the entire day.* She recovered the pilot at 1447. This was a most fortuitous rescue since almost fifty hours had elapsed between the downing of the pilot and the recovery.

The BARBEL, BURRFISH, and STERLET operated submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness; the SEA DOG operated on the surface at all times except as forced down by Japanese aircraft; the SAURY remained on the surface until 1447 when, having fortuitously recovered the downed pilot, she set course for Okinawa and submerged until sunset to give the crew a rest. The SKATE operated on the surface until 1151 when she was attacked by enemy aircraft and submerged until darkness.

Save for the sighting of Japanese aircraft and small patrol craft, the patrols of all submarines with the single exception of the STERLET were uneventful.** The STERLET's patrol on the other hand was very eventful for at 1038, while submerged, she sighted by periscope, at a range of 29,000 yards, two ATAGO class heavy cruisers, one TENRYU class light cruiser and six escorting destroyers. The types and numbers of ships reported were in general correct although there were five destroyers instead of six. The classes were somewhat incorrect in that the heavy cruisers were of the NACHI class and the light cruiser was of the NATORI class. However, there was considerable similarity between the ATAGO and NACHI classes of heavy cruisers and between the TENRYU and NATORI class of light cruisers. Actually this contact was on the SECOND Striking Force consisting of the heavy cruisers NACHI and ASHIGARA, the light cruiser ABUKUMA and five escorting destroyers (the KASUMI and HATSUHARU had not as yet rejoined). The force was escorted by one airplane which was conducting antisubmarine patrol. This plane appears to have come from Amami O Shima, since the ABUKUMA had not recognized it as being attached to the SECOND Striking Force.

At 1105 the STERLET heard the Japanese destroyers "pinging."

At 1115 she heard one very distant depth charge. This was the depth charge attack made by the USHIO***--two depth charges were actually dropped--but the USHIO conducted a very poor attack and the STERLET escaped damage.

The STERLET could not close this force nearer than 8,000 yards because of the necessity for running submerged.

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* War Patrol Report SAURY, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 023, November 29th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report STERLET, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 0120, November 30th, 1944.

*** War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161617, NA 11801.

At 1300 after the Japanese force had passed, and with it the escorting planes, the STERLET surfaced and transmitted her contact report, in part that t[illegible] heavy cruisers, one light cruiser, six destroyers had been sighted at 1115 on course 320, speed seventeen, in Latitude 28°-00'N, Longitude 127°-45'E.* It was 1430 before she had completed her transmission.**

At 1522 she contacted a single destroyer on course west at high speed. This was presumably the KASUMI which was returning from a mission of rescuing a downed aviator. She was unable to close.**

By about 2030 all submarines in the MARU MORGUE excepting the BURRFISH had received CTF 17's order directing them to discontinue special dispositions and patrol stations previously ordered and to resume normal operating patrols.***

As a consequence of this dispatch all submarines excepting the BURRFISH proceeded to those stations within their designated areas which they considered would be most fruitful against Japanese shipping. The BARBEL had moved by midnight into the center of Area ABANDON; the SKATE into the center of Area ABLAZE; the SAURY into the southeast corner of Area ABDUCT; the BURRFISH had temporarily retired as on the previous evening but this time to a position about fifty miles to the northwest of Okinawa; the STERLET into the center of Area ABRIDGE, and the SEA DOG into the center of Area ABUSE.

Meanwhile the BILLFISH was proceeding uneventfully at about seventeen knots to the Nansei Shoto area.****

(e) Nagasaki - Sasebo.

The PERCH and the CROAKER continued on to their new stations in the area between Fukae Shima and Kyushu arriving on station about 2000. It seems clear from Diagram "C" that the PERCH's reference to a position south of Nagasaki was very loosely worded since her station in fact appears to have been southwest of Nagasaki and therefore to the westward of the CROAKER. This disposition was reasonably effective but the diagram shows that a third submarine was necessary to close the approaches. During daylight these submarines operated submerged: during darkness they operated on the surface. They did not know that the ESCOLAR had been lost. Except for aircraft observed in the vicinity of the Japanese naval air station on Fukae Shima the patrols were uneventful.*****

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* STERLET Dispatch 180300 October 19[illegible] CTF 17 Info COMTHIRDFLT.

** War Patrol Report STERLET, Report of [illegible]OND War Patrol, Serial 0120, November 30th, 1944.

*** CTF 17 Dispatch 181003 October 1944 to all Submarines in CONVOY [illegible]OLLEGE and MARU MORGUE.

**** War Patrol Report BILLFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 088, November 29th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report PERCH, Report of THIRD War Patrol, No Serial, November 8th, 1944.

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(f) HIT PARADE.

(1) The approaches to Bungo Suido.

The three submarines assigned to Bungo Suido continued to patrol their assigned sectors in Area SEVEN, with BESUGO in the western sector, the GABILAN in the central sector and the RONQUIL in the eastern sector. They patrolled submerged during daylight, and on the surface at night. Weather conditions were poor, with a visibility of from about one to four miles in the vicinity of the RONQUIL and GABILAN. The weather in the vicinity of the BESUGO, while somewhat better, was still only fair.

These patrols--during the day and until about 1640--were uneventful in the central and eastern sectors, but in the western sector the BESUGO made several early morning contacts. At 0513 she contacted by radar a fast-moving target entering Bungo Suido along the 100-fathom curve. The commanding officer reported that from his bridge it resembled a large passenger ship, possibly a BB-XCV. He further stated that it did not have the lines of either a battleship or a cruiser.* This was not a BB-XCV since the Japanese BB-XCV's, ISE and HYUGA were in the Inland Sea. However, the tentative identification shows the confusion existing at this time as to the characteristics of these ships. The BB-XCV's were essentially battleships with most of their battleship characteristics, except that they had a flight deck over the quarterdeck** and were often referred to as flight deck battleships.*** Since the target ship was travelling at approximately twenty-four knots, the BESUGO was unable to close to nearer than 9500 yards, which she did at 0534. As a result, target escaped into Bungo Suido. The BESUGO now submerged.*

At 0638 she sighted a second ship (course not given, but also apparently heading for Bungo Suido), bearing 298°(T), distant 10,000 yards. This ship she identified as a heavy cruiser, but as no heavy cruisers were reportedly in Empire waters at this time it is more likely that it was a destroyer. Since the BESUGO was submerged, she was unable to close and the target passed well out of range.* She made no more contacts, and the remainder of the day was uneventful.

However, as evening drew on, the GABILAN at 1640 sighted what she thought were two destroyers heading for Bungo Suido at twenty-two knots. She was forced to submerge, as the destroyers were headed right at her. On

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* War Patrol Report BESUGO, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 0267, November 29th, 1944.

** CINCPAC-CINCPOA Weekly Intelligence Bulletins, Vol. 1, Nos. 2, 3 and 5, July-August 1944.

*** Intelligence Memorandum by Captain Raymond D. Tarbuck, USN, to Asst. Chief of Staff (G-3), Advanced Echelon, GHQ SOWESPAC, October 4th, 1944.

surfacing, the destroyers were out of range.* No contact report appears to have been made.

At 1735 the RONQUIL made sound contact on two PC's which were patrolling the area. At this time the BESUGO, GABILAN and RONQUIL were expected to evade rather than attack small antisubmarine vessels.**

During the early evening the wolf pack commander in the BESUGO directed the RONQUIL to patrol west of Longitude 132°-00'E and south of Latitude 32°-00'N, the GABILAN to replace the RONQUIL in the eastern sector in the vicinity of Okino Shima, and the BESUGO to remain in the western sector and north of Latitude 32°-00'N. The RONQUIL which surfaced at 1842, received the above instructions at that time; the GABILAN, owing to difficulties in communications, did not receive them until 2250 when she received them from the RONQUIL.***

Based on the correct rotation at this time, which rotation was due to commence at 2400,**** the BESUGO should have moved into the central sector. Why was this not done? The wolf pack commander explained it at 2324 by dispatch to CTF 17, in part, as follows:

"Consider primary mission this group now attack. BESUGO and RONQUIL ordered patrol Area SEVEN west of Longitude 132°-10'E; BESUGO north of Latitude 32°-00'N, RONQUIL south of same latitude; GABILAN ordered patrol vicinity Okino Shima; returning Jap fleet units following hundred fathom curve along east coast Kyushu; one heavy cruiser and one large ship returned this morning. Could not close."*****

THUS, THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER, PRIOR TO 1842, ACTING ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE AND BASING HIS ACTION ON HIS ESTIMATE OF ENEMY INTENTIONS RATHER THAN ON CAPABILITIES, AND FURTHER FORGETTING THAT HE WAS A SMALL BUT NEVERTHELESS VITAL COMPONENT OF THE RECONNAISSANCE ELEMENTS OF HIS COMMANDER'S PLAN HAD DECIDED TO CANCEL THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE ASSIGNED TO HIM BY HIS SUPERIOR AT PEARL HARBOR, "THE PREVENTION OF UNDETECTED SORTIE OF ENEMY TASK FORCES THROUGH BUNGO SUIDE,"****** AND TO REPLACE IT WITH THE "DESTRUCTION" OBJECTIVE, ALSO GIVEN IN HIS BASIC ORDERS; i.e., HE NOW CONSIDERED THAT HIS BASIC TASK WAS "TO ATTACK."******* IT IS ASSUMED THAT HE BASED HIS ACTION HERE ON SEVERAL FACTORS, NOTABLY:

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* War Patrol Report GABILAN, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 031, November 13th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report RONQUIL, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 038, November 28th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Reports BESUGO, RONQUIL and GABILAN, October 1944.

**** Submarine Operational History, World War II, Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Vol. 1, page 57.

***** BESUGO Dispatch 181424 October 1944 to CTF 17.

****** CTF 17 Operation Order 328-44, Serial 00847, September 25th, 1944 to TF 17.17.

******* War Patrol Report BESUGO, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 0267, November 29th, 1944.

(a) CTF 17'S STANDARD PATROL INSTRUCTIONS, WHEREIN THAT COMMANDER DIRECTED:

"NO SET OF PATROL INSTRUCTIONS AND NO OPERATION ORDER CAN EVER FULLY COVER ALL POSSIBLE SITUATIONS WITH WHICH A SUBMARINE COMMANDING OFFICER MAY BE CONFRONTED. WHEN CONFRONTED BY A NEW AND UNEXPECTED SITUATION, THE COMMANDING OFFICER MUST THEN RELY UPON HIS OWN JUDGMENT AND INITIATIVE, KEEPING EVER BEFORE HIM THE MAJOR MISSION, WHICH IS TO INFLICT THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DAMAGE UPON THE ENEMY."*

(b) CTF 17'S BASIC ORDERS, WHEREIN CTF 17 DIRECTED THAT, IN ADDITION TO PREVENTING AN UNDETECTED SORTIE OF ENEMY TASK FORCES THROUGH BUNGO SUIDO, THE BESUGO, GABILAN AND RONQUIL WERE TO ATTACK ENEMY FORCES ENCOUNTERED, INCLUDING MERCHANT SHIPPING.**

(c) HIS BELIEF THAT, SINCE ENEMY FORCES WERE RETIRING AND THE PROSPECTS OF BATTLE WERE REMOTE, IT WAS FUTILE TO CONSIDER THAT THE "PREVENTION OF UNDETECTED SORTIE" OBJECTIVE STILL OBTAINED, AND THEREFORE HE SHOULD RETURN TO SINKING SHIPS AS A PRIMARY TASK.

BUT WERE THESE FACTORS ENOUGH? IT WOULD APPEAR NOT, FOR WHILE IT IS THE DUTY OF A COMMANDER, IN THE ABSENCE OF A SUPERIOR AND IN THE FACE OF A CHANGING SITUATION, TO TAKE ANY ACTION HE DEEMS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT HIS COMMANDER'S PLAN, EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF DEPARTING FROM HIS INSTRUCTIONS, THERE IS SERIOUS DOUBT THAT SUCH A SITUATION OBTAINED AT THIS TIME.*** THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER WAS NOT FACED WITH A SITUATION WHICH REQUIRED IMMEDIATE ACTION, AND SHOULD HAVE COMMUNICATED WITH THE PROPER AUTHORITY, WHO HAD FAR MORE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION THAN HE, AND HAVE MADE CONSTRUCTIVE REPRESENTATIONS. IN ADDITION, HIS COMMANDER, WHOM HE COULD EXPECT WAS FOLLOWING THE UNFOLDING SITUATION IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC VERY CLOSELY, HAD NOT SEEN FIT TO MODIFY HIS ORDERS IN ANY WAY. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER ADVISED CTF 17 AT A LATE HOUR OF HIS CHANGE IN OBJECTIVES, IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT, BY TAKING THE ACTION HE DID, HE DENIED THAT COMMANDER AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPRAISE THE SITUATION BEFORE THE SUBMARINES HAD COMMENCED MOVING TO THEIR NEW STATIONS. BY THE TIME CTF 17 HAD RECEIVED THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER'S 2324, THE RONQUIL HAD BEEN UNDERWAY TOWARD HER NEW STATION FOR AT LEAST FIVE HOURS, WITH THE RESULT THAT, BY 2400, THE APPROACHES TO BUNGO SUIDO WERE LEFT, IN GENERAL, UNGUARDED. THEREFORE, BASED ON THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMANDING OFFICER BESUGO WAS UNSOUND.

IN SUPPORT OF THIS VIEW IS THE FACT THAT AT 1903 CTF 17 ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS SUBMARINES IN CONVOY COLLEGE AND MARU MORGUE TO

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* CTF 17 Operation Plan No. 1-43, Annex B, Serial 0807, June 24th, 1943.

** CTF 17 Operation Order 328-44, Serial 00847, September 25th, 1944, to TG 17.17.

*** Sound Military Decision, U.S. Naval War College 1942, pages 15 and 16.

DISCONTINUE THEIR SPECIAL DISPOSITIONS AND RESUME NORMAL ROTATING PATROLS.* THIS DISPATCH SHOULD HAVE BEEN RECEIVED BY THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER IN THE BESUGO BY 2000, SINCE SOME OF THE ADDRESSES RECEIVED IT AT THAT TIME.** IT WILL BE OBSERVED THAT THIS DISPATCH MAKES NO MENTION OF ANY NEW ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY OTHER TF 17 SUBMARINES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC. THEREFORE, DOES IT NOT SEEM REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE OMISSION OF ANY ORDERS TO HIS WOLF PACK SHOULD HAVE ALERTED THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER TO THE THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS HE HAD ERRED IN CANCELLING HIS "PREVENTION OF UNDETECTED SORTIE OF ENEMY TASK FORCES" OBJECTIVE? PERHAPS THIS OMISSION CAUSED HIM TO ADVISE CTF 17 AT 2324 OF HIS INDEPENDENT ACTION.

(2) The Approaches to Tokyo Bay.

The above approaches continued to be guarded by the TAMBOR and the GREENLING which operated submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness. As shown in Diagram "C", the TAMBOR was operating at this time about fifteen miles to the northeast of Miyake Shima and patrolling on a north-south line, while the GREENLING was operating between Omai Zaki and Kozu Shima generally on a northeast-southwest line. Weather conditions in the vicinity of both submarines was fair in the early morning with heavy weather, accompanied by periods of reduced visibility setting in later in the day.

Both patrols were uneventful,*** although the TAMBOR contacted one small patrol boat at 1235, one at 1729 and one at 2012, all of which were avoided.****

The SEA DEVIL, which was retiring, continued on towards Majuro, remaining on the surface during the day. Since she took no further part in this operation, she will be dropped from further discussion.*****

(C) China - Burma - India Theater.

(1) Operations of C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force, October 18th.

C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force, in addition to his primary mission of supporting the Allied ground forces on the mainland of China, dispatched, in support of the Leyte operation, four search B-24 sorties over the South China Sea to search the area north of the line from Kamranh Bay to Lingayen, in

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 181003 October 1944 to all submarines.

** War Patrol Report STERLET, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 0120, November 30th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report GREENLING, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, no serial, November 23rd, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report TAMBOR, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, Serial 08019, November 30th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report SEA DEVIL, Report of FIRST War Patrol, no serial, undated but about October 25th, 1944.

accordance with the search track indicated on Diagram "C". The extent of coverage is not known, although the mission report* states that the radar of the night search plane flying the western sector became inoperative after six hours.

The search planes reported the following contacts at:

(a) 0400, six ships, unknown types, Latitude 19°-42'N, Longitude 112°-45'E.

(b) 0452, eight medium sized ships, unknown types Latitude 21°-15'N, Longitude 111°-37'E.

(c) 1015, five freighters, Latitude 20°-28'N, Longitude 113°-17'E, course 020°(T), speed ten knots.

(d) 1655, three freighters, Latitude 20°-23'N, Longitude 112°-55'E, course 080°(T), speed ten knots.

(e) 1915, three cargo ships, Latitude 19°-50'N, Longitude 112°-17'E, northerly course.

(f) 2120, eighteen ships, unknown types, Latitude 21°-06'N, Longitude 111°-22'E, course 035°(T), speed fifteen knots.

(g) 2230, eight ships, unknown types, Latitude 20°-32'N, Longitude 111°-40'E.

What action, if any, COMNAVGRPCHINA or CINCPOA took in regard to the above reported contacts is not known. However, the courses and positions of the enemy ships sighted, all between Hainan and Hong Kong, except for contact (d) which may have been en route to Formosa or the Philippines, do not indicate that these contacts were of immediate importance. CINCPOA probably evaluated these contacts as coastal convoys, inasmuch as he had received no contact reports from the BERGALL or the ROCK, which were patrolling between Cape Varella (sixty miles north of Kamranh Bay) and North Danger Shoal.** As a matter of fact, Japanese records*** indicate that (a) there were convoys in the Hainan - Huiling Island and Hong Kong areas and (b) that the Commander FIRST Escort Force, who was charged with the movement of convoys, was at this time endeavoring to expedite unloading and withdrawal of convoy shipping from Formosa and the Philippines, in view of the danger from Allied air attack.

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* AAF Operations from China bases in support of Leyte Campaign, ltr from Historical Division, Air University Library, USAF Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, to President, Naval War College, November 8th, 1950.

** War Diaries BERGALL and ROCK, October 18th, 1944.

*** War Diary FIRST Escort Force, October 1944, WDC Document 161719, NA 11609.

CHAPTER IV - JAPANESE OPERATIONS, October 18th.

(A) Operations of CinC Combined Fleet.

CinC Combined Fleet remained during the night at his temporary headquarters at Shinchiku. He had delayed here enroute to Hiyoshi for reasons mentioned under "Operations of CinC Combined Fleet 0719 - 2400, October 17th", and it was well that he had done so, since the situation had clarified in so far as the Combined Fleet was concerned. He now knew that the Main Force would be unable to sortie from the Inland Sea before October 20th, and that the FIRST Striking Force would be unable to sortie from Brunei Bay before October 22nd.

The situation had not as yet clarified as regards the nature of the Allied operation in the Leyte area.

He was clearly anxious to discover whether this operation (a) was the commencement of landing operations in that area, as seemed highly probable; (b) was the central Philippines operation by Admiral Halsey, discussed on the previous day by his Chief of Staff (the other operation being a landing in the southern Philippines by General MacArthur);* or (c) was purely a feint by enemy surface forces, with the actual enemy landing to occur in the southern Philippines, most probably Mindanao.**

He knew that he should continue on to Hiyoshi,*** since the time for X-day would have to be determined, and he felt that he wished to be present at Hiyoshi when that was being decided. However, he also undoubtedly wished to know (a) what his search planes had discovered concerning the movements of Allied forces, both task and invasion, but especially the latter since this might have a determing effect on X-day; (b) what operations the Allied naval forces in the Sulu Sea area were undertaking on this day; and (c) what invasion operations, if any, were underway elsewhere in the Philippines.

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 170946 October 1944, to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Situation Estimate at the Start of the Allied Invasion of Palau-Halmahera, Combined Fleet Headquarters, September 17th, 1944, Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item B.

*** Admiral Soemu Toyoda, ex-IJN, "The End of Imperial Navy", Tokyo, April 1950, pages 149-154.

He therefore remained at Shinchiku during the early forenoon to await reports.

He knew, of course, that (a) the FIRST Striking Force was enroute to Brunei, having departed Lingga at 0100;* (b) the SECOND Striking Force was enroute to Mako, having departed Amami O Shima at 0530; (c) the SIXTH Base Air Force was (1) concentrating on Formosa preparatory to moving to the Philippines, and (2) prepared to attack on fifteen minutes notice; and (d) the FIFTH Base Air Force and the FOURTH Air Army in the Philippines were probably, so far as their meager strength and weather conditions permitted, already reconnoitering and attacking the Allied forces off Leyte Gulf.

How long CinC Combined Fleet remained at Shinchiki is not known, but it is not believed that he remained there any longer than was necessary to receive the reports concerning the early forenoon operations of both enemy and friendly forces. As a consequence, it seems likely that prior to his departure for Hiyoshi, he had learned that:

(a) Commencing at about 0800 the Philippine Islands were under heavy air attack from carrier planes and that Laoag had been hit by 150 planes, Aparri by thirty, Manila by fifty planes, Clark Field by 100 planes, and the Tacloban area and Cebu had been heavily hit.** (The attack on Laoag and Aparri had been made by CTG 38.2, the attacks on central Luzon by CTGs 38.1 and 38.4, and the attacks on Tacloban and Cebu by CTG 77.4).

(b) (1) At 0815 the first of four carrier-type reconnaissance planes of the T-Force had taken off from Kanoya to endeavor to locate the Allied carrier task force last reported at 0915 October 17th in Latitude 22°-00'N, Longitude 126°-40'E, and to maintain such contact once made.*** The remaining three planes departed at 0832, 0910 and 1120; (2) at 0842 one two-engine land bomber and between that time and 1124 two two-engine land bombers had departed Kanoya to make contact at dusk and guide the attack unit in to the attack.****

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* Detailed Action Report CRUDIV-16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Philippine Area Naval Operations Part II, October-December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104; also Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953),Volume II.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 7, 11th Recco Unit, Search East of Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 161445, NA 28445.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

(c) Allied operations were continuing in the Suluan area and that at 0930 about thirty Allied warships and about ten transports had been observed in the area.*

(d) One Allied carrier task group consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other ships was operating at 1030 about 200 miles east of Manila.*

(e) Car Nicobar Island had once again been attacked by a British carrier task group consisting of one carrier, one battleship, three destroyers and two ships believed to be transports. The island had been shelled between 0400 and 0500.* This attack does not appear to have concerned him, since he recognized that it was purely diversionary. He presumably based this diversionary concept on the very limited Allied forces employed there relative to those now operating off the Philippines, and to the relative strategic unimportance of Car Nicobar as compared to the vital importance of the Philippines. As on the previous day, he decided to leave the defense of the area to the Army and Navy commanders there who were responsible for it.**

At about this time, 1100, CinC Combined Fleet departed for Hiyoshi. Sometime in the afternoon he arrived at Omura Kyushu, where, because of bad weather, he was grounded throughout the remainder of this day.*** It seems likely that from here he was able to discuss matters by telephone with his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi. Therefore, it can be assumed that if he did not receive any information enroute Omura, he received it at that place after arrival.

At about 1101 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet transferred CRUDIV SIXTEEN, composed of one heavy cruiser, one light cruiser and one destroyer, from the FIRST Striking Force to the SECOND Striking Force, and, in the same dispatch transferred the now augmented SECOND Striking Force, consisting of three heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and eight destroyers, to Commander SW Area Force. He further directed that the original SECOND Striking Force fuel at Takao instead of Mako and proceed immediately to Manila.****

At 1103 he advised Commander SW Area that the newly-constituded SECOND Striking Force was being transferred to his command to serve as the backbone

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* Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** Imperial General Headquarters, Army High Command Record, Mid 1941-August 1945, Headquarters FEC Military History Section, Japanese Research Division, Japanese Monograph No. 45, page 156.

*** Admiral Soemu Toyoda, ex-IJN, "The End of the Imperial Navy", Tokyo April 1950, page 149 - 154.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 131101 October 1944, to Commanders FIRST and SECOND Striking Forces, Main Force, (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

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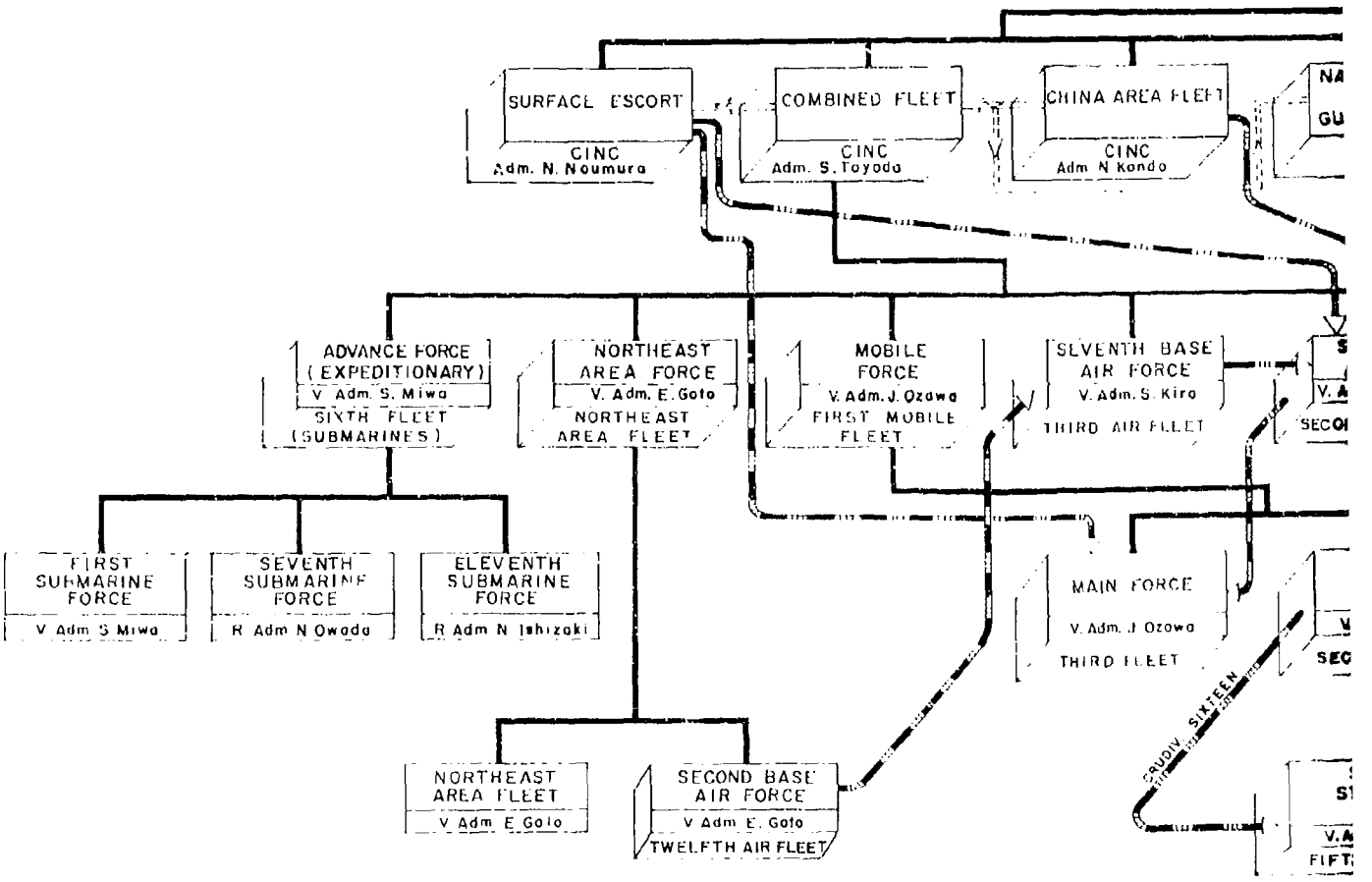
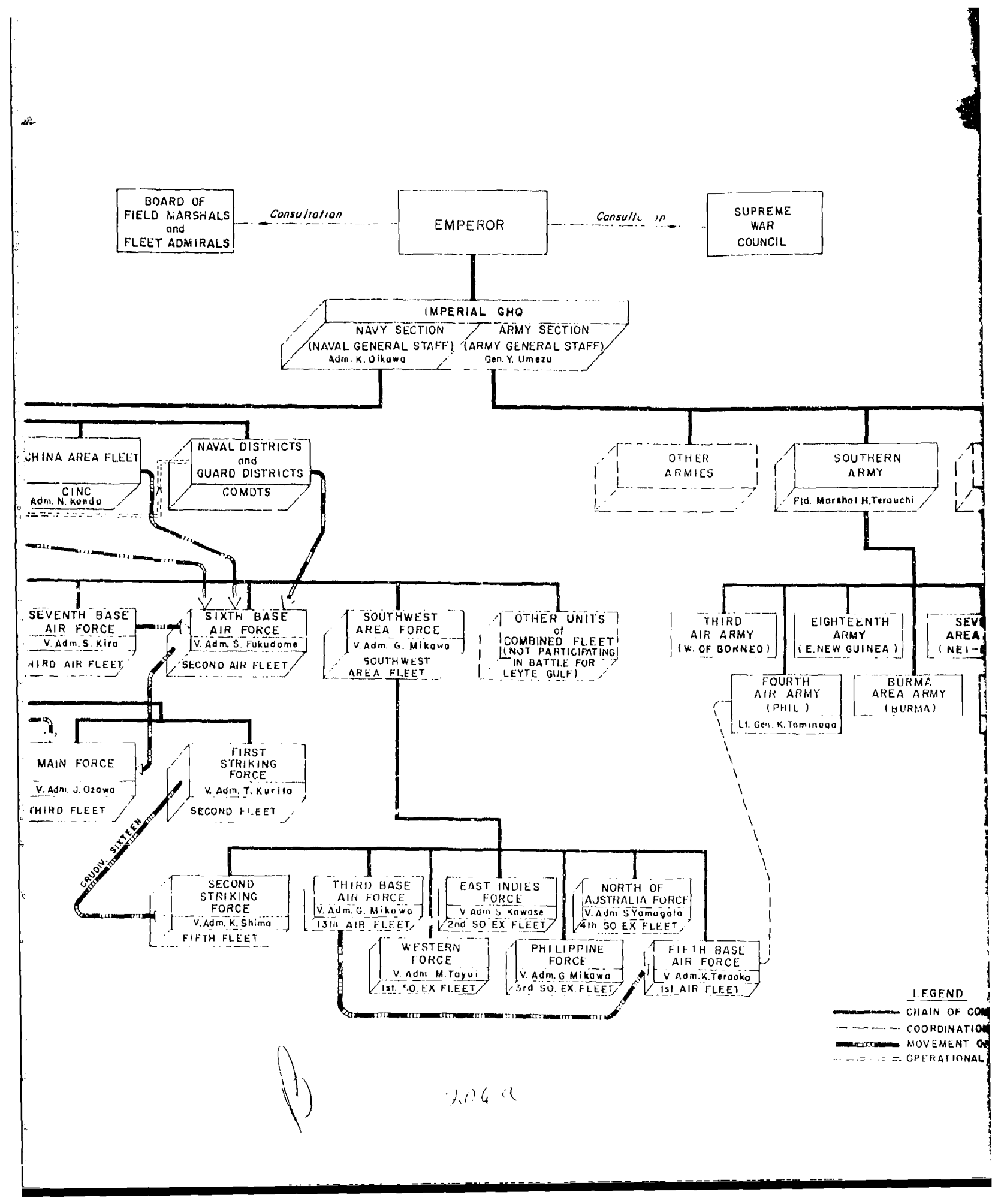
181101 - 201802 OCTOBER 1944

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THIRD AIR FLEET
SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. S. Fukudome
SECOND AIR FLEET
SOUTHWEST AREA FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
SOUTHWEST AREA FLEET
OTHER UNITS of COMBINED FLEET (NOT PARTICIPATING IN BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF)
THIRD AIR ARMY (W. OF BORNEO)
EIGHTEENTH ARMY (E. NEW GUINEA)
FOURTH AIR ARMY (PHIL.)
Lt. Gen. K. Tominaga
BURMA AREA ARMY (BURMA)
MAIN FORCE
V. Adm. J. Ozawa
THIRD FLEET
FIRST STRIKING FORCE
V. Adm. T. Kurita
SECOND FLEET
CRUDIV. SIXTEEN
SECOND STRIKING FORCE
V. Adm. K. Shima
FIFTH FLEET
THIRD BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
13th AIR FLEET
EAST INDIES FORCE
V. Adm. S. Kawase
2nd SO. EX. FLEET
NORTH OF AUSTRALIA FORCE
V. Adm. S. Yamaguchi
4th SO. EX. FLEET
WESTERN FORCE
V. Adm. M. Tayui
1st SO. EX. FLEET
PHILIPPINE FORCE
V. Adm. G. Mikawa
3rd SO. EX. FLEET
FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE
V. Adm. K. Teraoka
1st AIR FLEET
LEGEND
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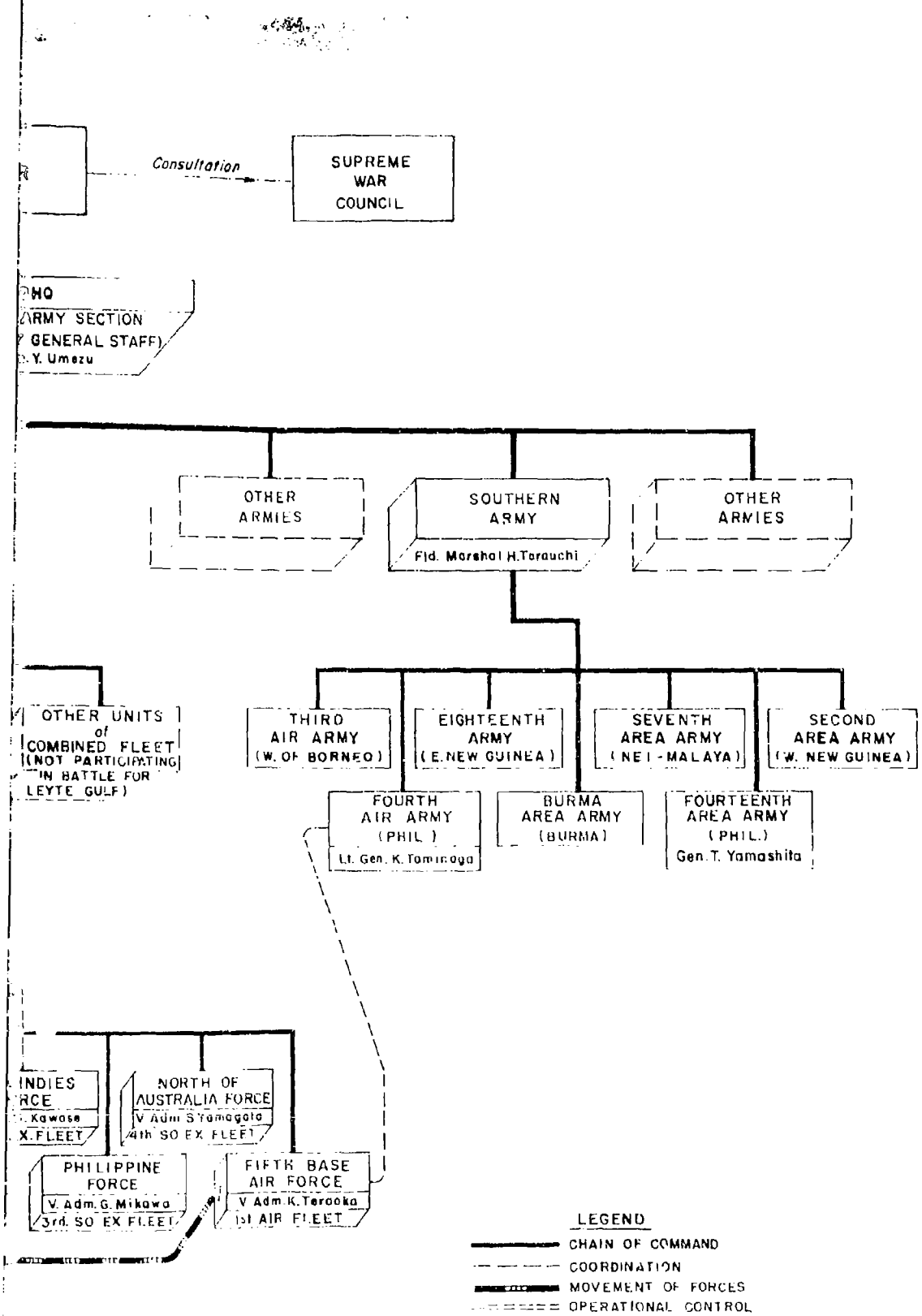

PLATE XVI

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of mobile over-water counterattack operations. In other words, it was to be employed in moving troop reinforcements to Leyte.*

It will be noted that this allocation of the SECOND Striking Force to troop transportation coincided with COMTHIRDFLT's previously expressed view that the enemy would attempt Tokyo Express operations.

It is not entirely clear what motivated the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet to make these changes in the fleet structure at this vital time, since they seriously decreased the strength of the Combined Fleet forces to be committed in battle whould SHO One be activated. It will be remembered that the original Combined Fleet SHO Plan called for CRUDIV SIXTEEN to operate with the FIRST Striking Force, and the SECOND Striking Force to operate with the Main Force. In 1949, the Deputy Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, who, in October 1944 was with the CinC Combined Fleet on Formosa, stated that the transfers had been made because it was thought that the SECOND Striking Force as originally constituted could not join the surface forces in time to participate in the penetration operation.** This was evidently a statement confused by the passage of time, since it was easily possible, as shown by Diagram "C" and from simple calculation, for the SECOND Striking Force to have joined the FIRST Striking Force after its sortie from Brunei which was planned for October 22nd, and prior to its entrance into the Sulu Sea. In so doing it would not have required any previous rendezvous with CRUDIV SIXTEEN, since that CRUDIV was already with the FIRST Striking Force.

This matter of possible changes in the fleet structure had already been considered by Commander Mobile Force, who as early as September 10th, as a result of chart maneuvers conducted at Kure, had recommended, among other items, that in the event SHO One or Two were activated, CRUDIV SIXTEEN, which at that time was operating with the SW Area Force, be incorporated in the FIRST Striking Force, and CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE be incorporated in the Main Force.***

It seems likely that he made these recommendations because he knew (a) the Mobile Force SHO Plan gave as one of the objectives for the command "the transportation and protection of the amphibious group",**** which, as has been

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th – 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Statement of Japanese Officials on World War II, Vol. IV, Military History Section, FEC, page 20, Statement of Rear Admiral Toshitane Takata, ex-IJN, October 10th, 1949.

*** Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of the Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

**** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order 76, August 10th, 1944, Section III, Allocation of Forces, paragraph 3, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945 (MACHI Document).

pointed out earlier, meant the moving of troop reinforcements to the objective area in order to counterattack the enemy; (b) both Army and Navy Sections of Imperial General Headquarters had issued, as of August 15th (last correction on October 8th), an "Outline of Preparations for Mobile Counterattacks accompanying the SHO Operation," wherein they stated the policy as follows: By making thorough preparations and close cooperation among the attack, shipping and escort forces, a prompt counterattack operation will be carried out in timely fashion;* and (c) that these transport and protection forces would likely be CRUDIV's SIXTEEN and TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE.

He made the recommendation concerning the FIRST Striking Force because he felt that "in order to assure the success of the FIRST Striking Force's penetration, it was necessary to augment the surface combat strength of that force as much as possible,"** and the recommendation concerning CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE because he appears to have felt that without these forces the Main Force screening forces would not only be inadequate but might be so weakened as to be an ineffective lure.*** As it was, the removal on October 14th of CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE, which at the time comprised the SECOND Striking Force, made it necessary to reinforce the Main Force with four destroyers**** of the MATSU-type, which were not only slow but had a very short cruising radius,***** thus affecting adversely the mobility of the Main Force.

THESE RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE WERE SOUND. IN NAVAL WARFARE, WHEN A DECISIVE BATTLE AGAINST WHAT IS EXPECTED TO BE A SUPERIOR FORCE IS IMMINENT, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE NATION'S MAXIMUM NAVAL POWER AND, IF POSSIBLE, HER LAND AIR POWER IN SUPPORT, BE CONCENTRATED AT THE DECISIVE TIME AND PLACE IN ORDER THAT THE MAXIMUM BLOW MAY BE DELIVERED AGAINST THE ENEMY. TO THIS END ALL NAVAL FORCES OF WHATEVER CHARACTER SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COMMANDER, WHO SHOULD SO APPORTION THEM AS TO INSURE THAT EACH SHIP IS EMPLOYED TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE.

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* Appendix to Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Directive No.450, FEC, GHQ Military Intelligence Section, Military History Division Microfilm No. 62239.

** Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of the Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

*** Detailed Action Report Main Force SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** These were the MAKI, KIRI, SUGI, KUWA, which were MATSU-type destroyers with a speed of 27.8 knots, a cruising radius of but 2500 miles (at 20 knots), and a displacement of 1530 tons.

THE NAVAL DECISIVE BATTLE DIFFERS FROM THE GROUND DECISIVE BATTLE IN THAT:

(A) IN THE GROUND DECISIVE BATTLE, SMALLER FORCES OFTEN HAVE SUCCESSES AGAINST LARGE FORCES OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THEIR RELATIVE NUMERICAL FIGHTING STRENGTHS, WHEREAS IN THE NAVAL DECISIVE BATTLE SUCH SUCCESSES ARE RARELY OBTAINED; AND

(B) IN THE GROUND DECISIVE BATTLE, MANY ELEMENTS OF A DECISIVELY DEFEATED ARMY MAY SURVIVE TO FIGHT AGAIN, WHEREAS IN THE NAVAL DECISIVE BATTLE VERY FEW SHIPS OF A DECISIVELY DEFEATED FORCE WILL ESCAPE.

WHY, THEN, WITH THE PROSPECT OF AN ALLIED INVASION IN STRENGTH--SINCE ALL ALLIED INVASIONS HAD BEEN IN STRENGTH--DID THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET AT THIS VITAL TIME INITIATE THESE TRANSFERS WHICH CONSIDERABLY WEAKENED THE MAIN FORCE AND TO A LESSER, BUT IMPORTANT, DEGREE THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, AND WHICH WERE NOT ONLY CONTRARY TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONDUCT OF NAVAL WARFARE BUT WERE ALSO CONTRARY TO THE GENERAL TENOR OF THE MEMORANDUM OF HIS COMMANDER SURFACE FORCES?

A PARTIAL ANSWER, INSOFAR AS THE MAIN FORCE WAS CONCERNED, MAY HAVE BEEN THAT, IN VIEW OF ITS PURELY DIVERSIONARY ROLE, CINC COMBINED FLEET, BELIEVED THAT SUFFICIENT STRENGTH TO SUPPORT THE MAIN FORCE COULD BE OBTAINED THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT OF OTHER SHIPS CURRENTLY IN THE INLAND SEA BUT NOT OTHERWISE DESIGNATED.* HOWEVER, THE ANSWER WHICH BEST EXPLAINS THESE TRANSFERS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THAT THEY REFLECTED STRONG POLICY DISAGREEMENTS IN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE NAVY. THE ARMY BELIEVED, THAT, SINCE IT HAD DECIDED THAT DECISIVE GROUND BATTLE WOULD BE WAGED ONLY ON LUZON, THE CORRECT STRATEGY FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEYTE WAS TO EMPLOY THE FULL CONCERTED STRENGTH OF BOTH THE SEA AND AIR ARMS, TOGETHER WITH THE GROUND TROOPS LOCALLY AVAILABLE.* THIS CONCEPT EVIDENTLY DID NOT PRECLUDE LIMITED GROUND REINFORCEMENTS BEING MOVED INTO LEYTE FROM NEIGHBORING ISLANDS. THE NAVY, ON THE OTHER HAND, BELIEVED AT THIS TIME THAT THE CORRECT STRATEGY WAS TO WAGE DECISIVE BATTLE IN DEFENSE OF LEYTE, EMPLOYING THE FULL CONCERTED STRENGTH OF ALL ARMS-LAND, SEA AND AIR. THE NAVY, THEREFORE, ENVISAGED MOVING POWERFUL ARMY FORCES TO LEYTE TO CARRY OUT COUNTERLANDINGS AND TO DESTROY THE ENEMY LANDING FORCES ASHORE. THESE LATTER OPERATIONS WERE TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE PLANNED FLEET PENETRATION INTO LEYTE GULF.*

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* Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College; also Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-1945, First Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I(Colonel Misao Matsumae, ex-IJA), Section II, paragraph A. 2.b.(2) (b), "The Luzon District."

THE ARMY'S CONCEPT, WHICH WAS THE ORIGINAL APPROVED CONCEPT, WAS NOT REALISTIC BECAUSE IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN CLEAR THAT ONCE THE ALLIES HAD ESTABLISHED AIRFIELDS IN LEYTE, PERMANENT COMMAND OF THE AIR OVER LUZON WOULD AUTOMATICALLY FOLLOW, SINCE JAPANESE LAND-BASED AIR POWER HAD ALREADY PROVEN INEFFECTIVE. WITH THE LOSS OF COMMAND OF THE AIR AND WITH ALLIED SEA POWER CONTROLLING THE SEA AREAS, EITHER THE FALL OF LUZON WOULD OCCUR IN DUE TIME OR LUZON MIGHT BE COMPLETELY BY-PASSED BY THE ALLIES.

THE NAVY'S CONCEPT WAS THE MORE LOGICAL BECAUSE THE NAVY REALIZED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN A DECISIVE VICTORY IN THE LEYTE AREA LEST THE PHILIPPINES FALL FOR THE REASONS ABOVE STATED. BUT THE NAVAL HIGH COMMAND WAS UNREALISTIC IN THAT IT FAILED TO REALIZE FULLY ITS LIMITED FORCES AND PERSISTED IN DETACHING FORCES FOR DUTIES WHICH, WHEN COMPARED WITH THE NECESSITY FOR GAINING AN IMMEDIATE VICTORY AT SEA, WERE DECIDEDLY SECONDARY.

SINCE IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) DID NOT, AT THIS TIME, FAVOR COUNTERLANDING OPERATIONS IN THE LEYTE AREA, AND SINCE IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (NAVY SECTION) DID FAVOR SUCH OPERATIONS, THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET WAS MOTIVATED TO INITIATE THESE TRANSFERS IN PART BY THE HOPE THAT THE ARMY WOULD BE PRESSED THEREBY INTO AGREEING ON COUNTERLANDING OPERATIONS.*

THIS METHOD OF ENDEAVORING TO PRESS THE ARMY AT THIS LATE DATE INTO INITIATING MEASURES WHICH IT DID NOT FULLY SUPPORT, AND WHICH IT FELT WOULD CREATE A POOR OR UNDESIRABLE SITUATION INSOFAR AS THE ARMY WAS CONCERNED, IS NOT A SOUND PROCEDURE, SINCE IT TENDS TO BREAK DOWN COMPLETE UNITY OF ACTION. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE NAVY HAD ENDEAVORED AT AN EARLIER DATE TO OBTAIN THE AGREEMENT OF THE ARMY FOR A DECISIVE GROUND, SEA AND AIR BATTLE AT THE POINT OR POINTS OF INVASION RATHER THAN TO HAVE DELAYED SUCH DECISION UNTIL INVASION WAS IMMINENT, BUT HAD NOT SUCCEEDED INSOFAR AS THE PHILIPPINES WERE CONCERNED.

THESE DISAGREEMENTS, AT THIS TIME, IN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, SHOW THAT EACH SERVICE, ARMY AND NAVY, WAS OBSESSED WITH THE NEEDS OF ITS OWN SERVICE IN CONTRADISTINCTION TO THOSE OF ITS SISTER SERVICE, AND THAT NEITHER OF THEM CONSIDERED THE OBJECTIVES TO BE ATTAINED BY THE JOINT SERVICES ON THE BROAD LEVEL OF THE SHO ONE PLAN. IN THIS CONNECTION, DOES IT NOT SEEM STRANGE THAT THE SHO ONE PLAN, WHICH, IN ITS ESSENCE, CALLED FOR A DECISIVE BATTLE AT THE POINT OF LANDING, WAS, BY DISAGREEMENTS SUCH AS THESE, BEING MADE MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT OF ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND WAS, IN FACT, IN THE PROCESS OF BEING UNNECESSARILY MODIFIED ON THE BASIS OF THE SUGGESTIONS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY HIGH COMMAND?

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* Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force received April 13th, 1953 by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, translator for World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

THIS LATTER COMMENT IS NOT DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH A HARD AND FAST RULE THAT A PLAN SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED. ON THE CONTRARY, IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT (A) NO PLAN CAN BE EXPECTED TO ANTICIPATE ALL EVENTUALITIES, AND (B) UNEXPECTED CHANGES ARE THEREFORE TO BE REGARDED AS NORMAL. HOWEVER, THE COMMENT IS DESIGNED TO POINT OUT THAT THE SHO ONE PLAN HAD BEEN PREPARED SOME TIME BEFORE, AND THAT WHILE IT PROBABLY EMBRACED COMPROMISES BETWEEN THE SERVICES IT WAS NEVERTHELESS THE BEST PLAN--BASED ON CERTAIN ASSUMPTIONS AS TO THE CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD OBTAIN AT THE TIME OF THE ALLIED INVASION--THAT COULD BE PREPARED IN ADVANCE. DESPITE THIS FACT, AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT (EXCEPT FOR A REDUCTION IN JAPANESE LAND-BASED AIR POWER, AND OF CARRIER AIRCRAFT AS WELL, BECAUSE OF THE ABORTIVE ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE ALLIED CARRIER FORCES) THE SITUATION WAS UNFOLDING EXACTLY AS FORECAST, EVEN TO THE DIVERSIONARY ROLE OF THE MAIN FORCE,* THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND--AND PARTICULARLY THE NAVAL HIGH COMMAND--NOW ENDEAVORED TO CHANGE THE APPROVED PLAN WITHOUT ANY LOGICAL REASON WHATSOEVER.

THE CONDUCT OF THE ARMY AND THE NAVY IN THIS PHASE OF THE SHO ONE OPERATION DID NOT REFLECT CREDIT ON EITHER SERVICE, NOR ON THEIR RESPECTIVE SECTIONS IN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS. IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH SECTION OF IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS TO EVALUATE ALL FACTORS WITHOUT BEING UNDULY INFLUENCED BY THE REPRESENTATIONS OF EITHER SERVICE, AND TO CARRY OUT THE APPROVED SHO ONE PLAN, OR TO PROVIDE A MODIFIED PLAN- OR EVEN A NEW PLAN IF NECESSARY- FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF ALL FORCES, LAND, SEA AND AIR, WHICH COULD BEST ACCOMPLISH THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE.

IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE, THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE WAS THE PREVENTION OFA SUCCESSFUL ALLIED LANDING IN THE PHILIPPINES. IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) WAS UNABLE TO PERCEIVE THAT THE BEST MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS OBJECTIVE THROUGH THE SHO ONE PLAN WAS TO GAIN COMMAND OF THE LOCAL SEA AREA BY DECISIVELY DEFEATING THE ALLIED NAVAL FORCES AT THE TIME OF LANDING; FOR IF SUCH A DECISIVE VICTORY WERE WON, JAPANESE REINFORCEMENTS COULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE LANDED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY AND THE GROUND BATTLE AGAINST THOSE ALLIED FORCES WHICH HAD SUCCEEDED IN LANDING WOULD BE SPEEDILY AND SUCCESSFULLY TERMINATED.

At 1110 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet advised the Chiefs of Staff of the major fleet commands, for planning purposes, as follows:**

"(1) Although an overall assessment of the enemy's landing intentions is not yet possible, it is estimated that in view of the Suluan landing, sweeping

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* Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

operations in Surigao Strait, the air attacks on Manila and Cebu, and other indications, there is strong possibility of a landing in the Tacloban area.

"(2) Tentative outline of future operations:

(a) The FIRST Striking Force will advance through San Bernardino Strait and annihilate the enemy invasion force.

(b) In support of the FIRST Striking Force penetration, the Main Force will lure the enemy to the north and destroy remnants of his forces if the opportunity arises.

(c) The SECOND Striking Force (CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE) and CRUDIV SIXTEEN will be placed under command of SW Area Force, and will carry out counterlandings as the backbone of mobile over-water counterattack operations.

(d) The full strength of the base air forces will be concentrated in the Philippines and will completely wipe out the enemy carriers.

(e) The Advance Expeditionary (Submarine) Force will destroy damaged enemy vessels and troop convoys with all the forces at its command.

(f) The FIRST Striking Force will penetrate to the enemy landing point on X-day. The Main Force will advance to the area east of Luzon on X-1 or X-2.

(g) X-day will be fixed by special order, but it is tentatively set at October 24th. Commander Mobile Force will fix the time of sortie of the Main Force so as to conform to the above."

Here, then, was the genesis of the final Naval plan for SHO One. Here also was the first plan available to this analysis which stated that the FIRST Striking Force was to advance through San Bernardino Strait. This plan was very similar to the Mobile Force plan for the employment of the surface forces in SHO One and SHO Two, as originally promulgated by Commander Mobile Force on August 10th, 1944. It had the same basic weakness; i.e., the necessity for precise coordination between all forces in the objective area at the time of the Allied landing.

That this weakness of the plan was recognized by at least some of the principal commanders is indicated by the diary of COMBATDIV ONE who, upon receipt of the tentative plan from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, enumerated the coordinated operations required, and then noted, "The point is, just how much coordination can be expected from the other forces concerned? The problem, in particular, is the heavy reliance on base air forces."*

* Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953,)Volume II.

The tentative plan for the Advance Expeditionary Force differed considerably from the directive originally given that force in CinC Combined Fleet's basic orders to that command. The original orders* stated that the Commander Advance Expeditionary Force would intercept the enemy and gain control of the invasion area. They further stated that the targets for the submarines would normally be aircraft carriers, battleships and troop convoys, in that order, but that it was not necessary to adhere too rigidly to this priority. In any case, damaging attacks were to be made on the enemy and, if cooperation was possible between the surface forces engaged, the submarines were to attack in full strength.

The change of X-day from October 22nd to 24th was, of course, made because of the inability of Commander Main Force and Commander FIRST Striking Force to meet the earlier date. While this change, in view of later events, might be considered today to have been a departure from the Combined Fleet SHO One plan, this is not considered to have been the case on October 18th, since at that time the date of the Allied landing could not as yet have been exactly determined. This was so because Japanese intelligence concerning Allied invasion forces was poor at this time. In fact, no contacts whatsoever had been made on any Allied invasion forces of consequence, except perhaps on the limited forces engaged in the Suluan, Dinagat and Homonhon operations. Of course, there was always the fear at Japanese headquarters that the Allied landing might occur one or more days before October 24th, in which case the date of October 24th might prove to be a definite and perhaps fatal departure from SHO plan, since strong enemy forces could have been landed, and the transports retired, before the Japanese penetration operations could have been made effective. Certainly the limited forces available to Commander SW Area Force could not have prevented such landings.

The issuance of this order was known to the Army, for the Daily Record of the FOURTH Air Army in an entry for this day states "Decisive battle ordered for the Navy surface forces."**

At 1133 CofS Combined Fleet ordered the oiler NICHIEI MARU, escorted by the KURAHASHI and one other escort ship (Escort No. 25) to proceed to Coron Bay and to report its arrival there.*** This oiler had been ordered to Coron

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* Outline for Advance Expeditionary Force Operations in SHO Operations (Combined Fleet OpOrd 87, August 20th, 1944). ATIS Document No. 39 (Part VIII), June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

** Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181133 October 1944 to NICHIEI MARU, (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 473), War Diary NICHIEI MARU, October 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838.

Bay for the purpose of fueling the FIRST Striking Force after it had completed its penetration operation.*

At about 1240 the CofS Combined Fleet received a dispatch from the CofS SW Area Force** advising that it appeared virtually certain that the Allies were planning to land in the Leyte-Samar area, and that (1) four minesweepers appeared to be engaged in minesweeping off Tacloban, (2) a large enemy warship had gone aground off Point Bunga, Samar, and (3) he had learned, through radio telephone intercept, that Allied carrier aircraft had been ordered to attack Surigao Strait and the southern tip of Panaon Island.

Sometime in the afternoon it seems quite possible that (a) the CofS Combined Fleet at Hiyoshi received word of a landing in the Tacloban area,*** and (b) that CinC Combined Fleet, who was probably now enroute to Hiyoshi, did not receive it. However, since the CofS Combined Fleet took no action at this time, it also seems possible that he (a) did not receive it, (b) did not believe it, and waited for further confirmation, or (c) could do nothing until October 24th, and therefore left it to his local commanders to take whatever defensive measures were available to them.

During the early afternoon he learned that between 1230 and 1400 about twenty-four land attack planes of the T-Force attack unit had departed Kanoya.**** These planes were to be joined by carrier-type attack planes from the 262nd Attack Unit staging through Okinawa, but whether or not these planes joined, and the extent of their participation, is not known.*****

Also during the afternoon he learned that there had been two air raid alerts on Formosa; one at 1245 and one at 1500, but that no enemy aircraft appeared.******

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 190914 October 1944, to NICHIEI MARU, RYOEI MARU, War Diary NICHIEI MARU, October 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838.

** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181210 October 1944, to Flags, Major Commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

**** T-Force Dispatch 181650 October 1944, to CinC Combined Fleet (General Battle Report No.7), Detailed Action Report 702nd Attack Unit (752nd Air Group), October 16th - 19th, 1944, WDC Document 160364, NA 12357.

***** Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

****** War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 103rd Attack Unit, October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

At about 1600 he received word, presumably from Commander SW Area Force, that, through an enemy message intercepted at 1530, that commander had learned that the enemy had ordered landing operations to be commenced between Dulag and San Jose.*

Also at about 1600 he learned that Cebu Air Base had been bombed by eighty carrier planes.**

At about 1610 he received a dispatch from Commander SW Area Force directing CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE to standby at Mako, and CRUDIV SIXTEEN at Brunei pending receipt of special orders.***

At about 1630 he learned that the T-Force attack had been cancelled because all searches had been negative, and that the T-Force search planes had landed on Okinawa.****

Likewise during the late afternoon, the CofS Combined Fleet and probably CinC Combined Fleet as well, since that commander had arrived at Omura by this time, received word that (a) two search planes had departed Taichu at 1315, had presumably searched for the Allied carrier task forces (no search sector was given) and had returned at 1703, having made no contacts;***** (b) a single search plane from the T-Force had departed Oroku at 1430, had searched, with a visibility of fifteen miles, on course 175°(T) to a distance of 350 miles, with a lateral movement to the left of thirty miles, and had failed to contact allied forces;****** (c) the SIXTH Base Air Force had launched no attacks during the day, since all of its searches had been negative; (d) Catmon Hill, Leyte, had been shelled in the afternoon by one ship, apparently a cruiser;* and (d) four minesweepers had been observed sweeping the area east of Dulag, Leyte.*

It seems likely that CinC Combined Fleet, upon his arrival at Omura, where he was forced to remain because of bad weather, received a report from the Chief of the Special Affairs Bureau of Imperial General Headquarters

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181540 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, COMCRUDIV 16, CinC Combined Fleet (SW Area Force DesOpOrd No. 662), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document, 161638, NA 11739.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 13, 708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attacks on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

***** War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 103rd Attack Unit, October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

****** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch 181846, October 1944, to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

(Navy Section), issued at 1605, wherein enemy intentions, based on an analysis of communication intercepts, were estimated as follows: "Enemy landing operations in the Surigao area appear to be of a limited character designed to infiltrate a weak segment of our defenses or to acquire air bases. They cannot be recognized as a real large-scale move to invade the Philippines."*

WHEN COMPARED WITH THE VIEW OF A TACLOBAN LANDING EXPRESSED BY THE COFS COMBINED FLEET IN HIS 1110 DISPATCH OF THAT MORNING, THIS EVALUATION, WHICH WAS COMPLETELY IN ERROR STRONGLY INDICATES THAT AT THIS TIME THERE WAS A DIVISION OF OPINION WITHIN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (NAVY SECTION) AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE SULUAN LANDING DID IN FACT FORECAST A LARGE-SCALE INVASION OF THE PHILIPPINES. HOW DID IT HAPPEN, THEN, THAT AT 1701, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (NAVY SECTION) THROUGH THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF,** DIRECTED CINC COMBINED FLEET THAT THE SHO OPERATIONS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN THE PHILIPPINES,*** THUS ACTIVATING SHO ONE FOR THE ENTIRE NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT? THE ANSWER SEEMS TO BE THAT THE IMPULSE FOR ACTIVATING SHO ONE ORIGINATED NOT IN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS BUT RATHER WITH CINC SOUTHERN ARMY, WHO, AS EARLY AS THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER, FEELING THAT THE ALLIES WOULD LAND IN THE PHILIPPINES VERY SOON, HAD RECOMMENDED THAT THE CONCENTRATION OF JAPANESE GROUND, SEA AND AIR FORCES AS PROVIDED IN THE SHO ONE PLAN BE STARTED IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO AVOID DELAYS IN MEETING THE DEMANDS OF A LAST-MINUTE DECISION TO REPEL AN ENEMY LANDING FORCE IN THE PHILIPPINES.**** IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) HAD REFUSED TO RECOMMEND THE ACTIVATION OF SHO ONE AT THAT TIME ON THE GROUND THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO MAKE SUCH A DECISION. HOWEVER, WHEN ON OCTOBER 18TH IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) RECEIVED AN ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION FROM CINC SOUTHERN ARMY WHEREIN THAT COMMANDER ESTIMATED THAT THE ALLIED OPERATIONS IN THE LEYTE AREA WERE EITHER (A) A DIVERSIONARY RECONNAISSNACE IN FORCE OR (B) A BLOCKADE OF THE EASTERN ENTRANCE TO LEYTE GULF***** AND RECOMMENDED THAT SHO ONE BE

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* Philippine Area Naval Operations Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

** Admiral Koshiro Oikawa, IJN.

*** Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Dispatch 181701 October 1944 (Directive No. 476), FEC GHQ Military Intelligence Section, Military Historical Division Microfilm No. 62239.

**** Monograph, First Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government History of Imperial General Headquarters Army Section 1941-1945, Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-72. Also known as Imperial General Headquarters Army High Command Record Mid-1941-August 1945, Headquarters FEC Military History Section, Japanese Research Division Japanese Monograph No. 45.

***** Daily Record of the War Situation October 18th, 1944, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10 SWPA Series Vol. II). (NOTE: This document was certified to the Demobilization Board as the Original Record maintained by Captain Kinji Takahashi, IJA, Operations Department, Imperial GHQ (Army Section), for the purpose of making daily battle situation entries on Charts. It is based on radio messages from various operational forces and commands).

ACTIVATED, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) DECIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS RECOMMENDATION TO RECOMMEND THE ACTIVATION OF THE SHO ONE OPERATION* IT IS APPARENT THAT IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (NAVY SECTION) CONCURRED WITH THIS DECISION OTHERWISE SHO ONE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED SINCE ACTIVATION HAD TO FOLLOW AN IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS JOINT ARMY-NAVY DESIGNATION OF THE AREA OF EXECUTION. IN IMPLEMENTING THIS DECISION IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION) PRESUMABLY THROUGH THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF ISSUED THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIVE* TO COMMENCE THE FIRST PHASE BEGINNING THE FOLLOWING DAY, OCTOBER 19TH:

"1. THE DECISIVE OPERATION OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN THE PHILIPPINE AREA.

"2. IN COOPERATION WITH THE NAVY, THE SOUTHERN ARMY COMMANDER WOULD START THE DECISIVE OPERATION TO DEFEAT THE MAIN FORCE OF THE ENEMY ATTACKING THE PHILIPPINE AREA.

"3. THE CHINA EXPEDITIONARY ARMY COMMANDER AND THE TENTH AREA ARMY COMMANDER (PRIOR TO 22 SEPTEMBER CALLED THE FORMOSA ARMY COMMANDER) WOULD COOPERATE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO MAKE THE OPERATION EASIER TO ACCOMPLISH."

It seems likely that CinC Combined Fleet, upon his arrival at Omura, received the various dispatches which he had missed enroute Shinchiku to Omura. These were important dispatches, since they made additional changes to the Combined Fleet SHO One Plan. Several of them, which were originated by his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi were concerned with counterlanding operations, another gave a tentative outline for future operations and set X-day tentatively for October 24th, several others--which originated with Commander SW Area Force--forecast Allied landings in the Leyte-Samar area. Whether or not CinC Combined Fleet agreed with these dispatches is not known, but, since there is no record that he took any counteraction, it is assumed that he was satisfied with the actions of his Chief of Staff.

At about 1710, CinC Combined Fleet received a dispatch from the CofS SW Area Force explaining that CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE were to be held on standby at Malo and CRUDIV SIXTEEN on standby at Brunei, because the Southern Army had not yet completed its plans for moving troops.**

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* Monograph, First Demob lization Bureau, Japanese Government History of Imperial General Headquarters Army Section 1941-1945, Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-72. Also known as Imperial General Headquarters Army High Command Record Mid-1941-August 1945, Headquarters FEC Military History Section, Japanese Research Division Japanese Monograph No.45.

** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181640 October 1944, to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

Sometime before 1732, the CofS Combined Fleet received the activation order from the Chief of the Naval General Staff, for at that time he activated SHO One for the Combined Fleet.* This activation, outside of requiring the Combined Fleet surface forces to be prepared for twenty knots on two hours notice, meant little to the surface forces, since, with the exception of the Main Force, they were already enroute to Brunei and to Mako, and the Main Force itself was rapidly preparing for sea. It did have the effect of expediting the regrouping, reorganizing and moving of the SIXTH Base Air Force to Formosa and thence to the Philippines, and the reinforcement of both the FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces.

Normal Japanese practice would have been to follow up this activation order with another order setting forth the overall operating plan. However, since it was known in Tokyo that CinC Combined Fleet was on his way back to Tokyo from Shinchiku, the CofS Combined Fleet wisely decided to defer the issuance of this order for the time being and to issue instead only those orders immediately required to expedite operational preparations.**

At about this same time, the CofS Combined Fleet learned that CinC Southern Army and C. C. FOURTH Air Army had received orders activating SHO One and had commenced concentrating their forces in accordance with previously prepared plans.***

Sometime during the day, likely feeling that he had not handled the oiler situation in the Lingga - Singapore area adequately, and feeling that Commander FIRST Striking Force would be better able to handle the oiler situation during the forthcoming crucial days, he transferred seven oilers, including the YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU, to that commander for duty.**** This was a wise but belated action, since Commander FIRST Striking Force was already at sea enroute Brunei and was operating under radio silence.

Sometime during the late afternoon he received an intelligence report to the effect that at 1505 an enemy force was 110 miles east-south-east of

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944, to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force received April 13th, 1953 by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

*** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944 - 1945, First Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1946, Volume 46, Part I Colonel Misao Matsumae, ex-IJA), Section III, paragraph A.2.d.

**** Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

Ishigaki Island.* This report was in error in that no Allied forces were in this area. However, the submarine WHALE was returning from the area on the surface and was in this vicinity at the specified time.** It is not impossible that Japanese report referred to the WHALE.

During the early evening he learned that the plans of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force for the morrow were the same as for the preceding day.***

At about 2042, he received Commander SIXTH Base Air Force's dispatch 182012,**** wherein that commander (a) advised his command that the enemy had commenced landing in the Tacloban area and that SHO One had been activated, (b) ordered his command to speed up their movement to Formosa and to expedite preparations to move to the Philippines, (c) ordered the 901st and 953rd air groups to provide antisubmarine patrols for the FIRST and SECOND Striking forces, and (d) tentatively assigned deployment bases in the Philippines to units under his command.

At 2058 the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, in furtherance of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force's dispatch 181109***** concerning the ferrying of aircraft to the combat forces, issued instructions wherein he designated Commander Western Attack Force ONE as the controller of all ferrying of planes and directed other commanders to cooperate.******

At about 2100 he learned that the T-Force attack group (twenty-four planes) had returned to Kanoya.*******

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* Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSO-Roku, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

** War Patrol Report WHALE, Report of NINTH War Patrol, Serial 017 October 30th, 1944.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181503 October 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 79), War Diary Commander Western Attack Force ONE, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182012 October 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 80), War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

***** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181109 October 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group) October 13th - 31st 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

****** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 182058 October 1944 to Commander FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH Base Air Forces (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 475), War Diary 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

******* Detailed Action Report, 702nd Attack Unit (752nd Air Group, October 16th - 19th, 1944, WDC Document 160364, NA 12357.

During the night he learned that Commander FIFTH Base Air Force planned on the following day (October 19th) to make full strength attacks against the Allied carrier force and invasion force, especially transports, commencing at dusk.*

During the night he also learned that many Japanese ships had been sunk by Allied aircraft and submarines. While it is probable that he did not know at this time exactly how many had been lost, it is likely that he had received enough information to know that the losses had been serious. Actually seventeen merchant ships of a total tonnage of 87,597 tons had been sunk of which five had been sunk by submarines, ten by Allied carrier-based aircraft, one by Army aircraft, and one by a combination of Allied carrier-based aircraft and submarines. Two tank landing ships and one submarine chaser had been sunk in addition.**

(1) Operations of Commander Mobile Force, October 18th.

Commandor Mobile Force remained ashore at Oita Air Base and awaited developments. He was primarily interested in the Main Force, since he commanded that force in person. He was, of course, interested in his other two forces, the FIRST Striking Force, which was enroute Lingga - Singapore to Brunei, and the SECOND Striking Force, which was at Mako. However, since, as has been pointed out earlier, these two forces, although still technically attached to the Mobile Force, were being operated, in general, directly by CinC Combined Fleet, he had little to do with them insofar as the present operations were concerned.

At 0303 he gave the Commander Yashima Anchorage instructions regarding primarily the handling of fuel and the replenishment of the sortie units of the Main Force at that anchorage. These orders are of interest in that he directed that the destroyers present be employed as barges for fueling the sortie ships.***

At 0930 he shifted his flag from Oita Air Base to the ZUIKAKU.

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182142 October 1944 to FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces, CinC Combined Fleet (FIFTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No. 49), Detailed Action Report No.3, 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), Search Operations Against Enemy Task Force and Attacks on Enemy Shipping, October 20th-November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160534, NA 12378.

** Japanese Navy and Merchant Losses During World War II, prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

*** Commander Mobile Force Dispatch 180303 October 1944 to Main Force, CinC Combined Fleet, Commander Yashima Anchorage, Detailed Action Report Zuihe, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161008.

During the forenoon he received word of the heavy air attacks in the Philippines by carrier based planes, of the Allied operations in the Leyte area with some concept of the number and character of Allied ships there, of the contact on a carrier force east of Manila and, finally, of the attack on Car Nicobar Island.

During the late forenoon he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatches 181101, concerning the transfer of certain designated units to Commander SW Area Force;* 181103, concerning the reasons for this transfer;** and 1110, wherein the Chief of Staff gave a tentative outline of future operations.***

At 1450 he designated the OYODO as flagship of CORTRON THIRTY-ONE and as relief flagship of the Mobile Force for the SHO One operation.**** At 1535 he announced that at 0800 October 19th his flag would be temporarily transferred to the OYODO; that the OYODO would then proceed to Yashima Anchorage, where he would hold operational conferences, after which, in the OYODO, he would proceed to Oita and would return his flag to the ZUIKAKU.*****

THIS DETAIL IS INCLUDED HERE TO SHOW THE CLOSE CONTACT COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE WAS MAINTAINING WITH HIS SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS. SINCE THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR PERSONAL CONFERENCES AND FREE DISCUSSION, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT SUCH OPERATIONAL CONFERENCES ARE OFTEN HIGHLY NECESSARY IN ORDER THAT SUBORDINATES MAY BE FAMILIARIZED WITH THE PLANS AND HOPES OF THE COMMANDER AND IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY DISCUSS THESE PROBLEMS AMONG THEMSELVES AND WITH THE COMMANDER. IF THIS IS ADEQUATELY DONE, AND IF THE SUBORDINATES ARE COMPETENT, THEN THE COMMANDER CAN FEEL CONFIDENT THAT, SHOULD HE NOT BE PRESENT, THEY WILL ACT INSTINCTIVELY AS HE WOULD HAVE THEM ACT. AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT ELSEWHERE, THIS IS THE FINAL AIM OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Commanders FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Forces, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Commander Mobile Force Visual Dispatch 181450 October 1944 to OYODO, Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

***** Commander Mobile Force Visual Dispatch 181535 October 1944 to Mobile Force (Mobile Force SigOrd 6), Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

During the day Commander Mobile Force received, as information addressee, dispatches from the lesser units of his command concerning their activities in preparing for sortie. These dispatches are included under the sub-head Commander Main Force.

At 2046 he activated SHO One for the Main Force.* This appears to have been his method of informing his command of the activation of SHO One. It will be remembered that the Main Force as now constituted included some individual ships from other commands such as ISUZU, TAMA, MAKI, KIRI, AKIKAZE, SUGI, among others, which ships had been transferred to the Main Force the preceding day and he wished to be sure that they received the activation order promptly. Why he did not indicate to his command, as did other commanders on his own echelon, the time (1732) at which CinC Combined Fleet had activated SHO One is not explained.

(a) Operations of Commander FIRST Striking Force, October 18th.

At 0100, in accordance with plan, the FIRST Striking Force commenced sortiing from Lingga - Garan** for Brunei, and headed for Dempo Strait.*** Radio silence was in effect. The entire force sortied with the exception of the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO, which were enroute to Manila, and the MICHISHIO and NOWAKI, which were at Singapore. The order of departure was:

(1) SECOND Section.**

(a) DESRON TEN, consisting of the light cruiser YAHAGI, six destroyers: ASAGUMO, YAMAGUMO, URAKAZE, HAMAKAZE, YUKIKAZE, ISOKAZE.

(b) CRUDIV SEVEN, consisting of four heavy cruisers: KUMANO, SUZUYA, TONE, CHIKUMA. (Sortied from Garan).

(c) BATDIV THREE, consisting of the two battleships KONGO and HARUNA.

(2) FIRST Section.****

(a) DESRON TWO, consisting of the light cruiser NOSHIRO(sortied

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* Commander Mobile Force Dispatch 182046 October 1944 to Main Force (Mobile Force DesOpOrd 61), Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

** Detailed Action Report No. 13 DESRON 10, SHO Operation, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Operation, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, WDC Document 161639.

**** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171400 October 1944, Detailed Action Report MOGAMI October 18th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 160463, NA 12652.

from Garan), and nine destroyers: SHIMAKAZE, SHIGURE, KIYOSHIMO (sortied from Garan), KISHINAMI, NAGANAMI, OKINAMI, ASASHIMO, HAMANAMI, FUJUNAMI.

(b) CRUDIV FIVE consisting of three heavy cruisers MYOKO (F), HAGURO, MOGAMI.

(c) CRUDIV SIXTEEN, consisting of one heavy cruiser AOBA (F), one light cruiser KINU and one destroyer URANAMI.

(d) CRUDIV FOUR, consisting of four heavy cruisers: ATAGO (FFF), TAKAO, CHOKAI, MAYA.

(e) BATDIV TWO, consisting of two battleships: YAMASHIRO (F), FUSO.

(f) BATDIV ONE, consisting of three battleships: YAMATO (F), MUSHASHI, NAGATO.

The length of the formation was such that BATDIV ONE, which sortied last, did not sortie until 0200.*

Commander FIRST Striking Force was in the ATAGO in CRUDIV FOUR.

The YAMATO in BATDIV ONE, which was one of the last three ships in the formation, passed almost exactly through the reference point (Latitude 00°-33'N, Longitude 104°-42'E)** at 0430.*

SINCE THE PLANNED ROUTE TO BRUNEI CALLED FOR THE GUIDE OF THE SECOND SECTION, WHICH GUIDE WAS IN THE DESTROYERS IN THE VAN,*** TO PASS THROUGH THIS POINT AT 0300,** IT WOULD APPEAR THAT EITHER (A) THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE HAD BECOME STAGGERED IN LENGTH (ONE AND ONE HALF HOURS AT THE PLANNED SPEED OF SIXTEEN KNOTS WOULD BE THE EQUIVALENT OF TWENTY-FOUR MILES) OR (B) AND THIS WAS MUCH MORE LIKELY, THE GUIDE OF THE SECOND SECTION HAD BEEN DELAYED CONSIDERABLY IN ITS ARRIVAL AT THE 0300 REFERENCE POINT. IN EITHER CASE IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE ABILITY OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE TO FORM UP AT NIGHT ON A PLANNED SCHEDULE HAD BEEN OVERESTIMATED BY ITS COMMANDER, WHICH DID NOT AUGUR WELL FOR FUTURE NIGHT OPERATIONS.

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* Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Operation, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215, October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander SECOND Section FIRST Striking Force visual dispatch 171730 October 1944 to SECOND SECTION, Detailed Action Report No. 13 DESRON 10, SHO Operations, October 17th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

During the sortie, radar and sonar stations were manned and individual units conducted evasive maneuvers. No preliminary sweeps of the area by light forces prior to the sortie, other than the air search by the planes of CRUDIV FIVE the preceding afternoon*, were made.

This appears to have been because the South China Sea in the vicinity of the reference point was shallow (less than twenty fathoms) and therefore enemy submarine operations, while possible, were unlikely. Commander FIRST Striking Force evidently felt that the manning of the radar and sonar stations and the evasive maneuvers above mentioned would provide sufficient protection against submarines.

Weather conditions at 0600 were: Clear, wind southwest seven miles per hour, visibility fifteen miles.**

At 0630 Commander FIRST Striking Force ordered the command, which by this time appears to have closed up, to assume cruising disposition Y-8.*** While the nature of this disposition is only roughly known it appears to have consisted, at least in the FIRST Section, of two parallel columns of heavy ships, the columns being 4000 meters apart. The SECOND and FIRST Sections were separated by some 4000 meters, and were maneuvered separately. The destroyer locations are not known, but since most Japanese dispositions placed the destroyers generally on the flank with but limited numbers ahead, it is accepted that this condition obtained here.

Likewise at 0630 the FIRST Striking Force commenced zigzagging on base course 065°(T), with a speed of advance of about sixteen knots.*** It is not clear whether or not ship-based planes were launched for antisubmarine operations, but it seems likely that they were not. Instead, the planes on certain ships were held in readiness.*** It is more probable that antisubmarine patrols were provided by shore-based aircraft, but there is no information thereon for this date.

At 0718 Commander FIRST Striking Force directed his command to be prepared at 0730 to make eighteen knots immediately and twenty knots on twenty minutes notice.****

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 171205 October 1944 to COMCRUDIV 5, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Operations, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

**** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 180718 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

At about 1000 the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO, which had arrived off Manila Bay at 0800 but had not entered the harbor because the Manila area was under Allied air attack, received Commander FIRST Striking Force's dispatch orders--issued at 2005 the previous evening--to proceed to Brunei and await orders there.* At 1030, therefore, these two destroyers departed for Brunei.** The long delay (fourteen hours) incident to the receipt of this message by these destroyers indicates that it had been given a low priority or had been seriously delayed by communication difficulties.

During the forenoon Commander FIRST Striking Force received word of the heavy air attacks in the Philippines by carrier-based planes, of the Allied operations in the Leyte area (with some concept of the number and character of Allied ships there), of the contact on a carrier task force east of Manila, and, finally, of the attack on Car Nicobar Island.

At 1200, in approximate position Latitude 01°-29'N, Longitude 106°-38'E, he changed course to the left to 010°(T) to pass between Anambas and Great Natoena Islands.*** He maintained this course during the remainder of the day. Since, according to his movement plan, this change of course was to be made at 1100 rather than at 1200, it is clear that the formation was behind schedule about one hour. This supports the view previously expressed that the guide of the SECOND Section on sortie had been considerably delayed in arriving at the 0300 reference point.

During the late forenoon his command was increased by the addition of Escort No. 32**** and seven oilers.

He now had (a) eight escort type ships (MANJU, MIYAKI, CHIBURI, KURAHASHI, YURISHIMA, ESCORT No. 19, ESCORT No. 27, and ESCORT No. 32) for use as oiler escorts. Of these escort types, three (KURAHASHI, MANJU, and MIYAKI) were at or near Sana (Hainan), four (CHIBURI, YURISHIMA, ESCORT No. 19 and ESCORT no. 27) were at Singapore, and one (ESCORT No. 32) was at Yulin (Hainan); and (b) eight oilers (YUHO MARU, HAKKO MARU, MANEI MARU, ITSUKUSHIMA MARU, OMUROSAN MARU, NIPPO MARU, NICHIEI MARU, and RYOEI MARU). With the exception of the MANEI MARU, enroute from Palembang to Singapore, the NICHIEI MARU, which was at Sana, and the RYOEI MARU, enroute to Mako, all oilers were at Singapore. Of course, the YUHO MARU and HAKKO MARU escorted by the MICHISHIO, NOWAKI and the ETOROFU had departed at 1000 that morning

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 172005 October 1944 to COMDESDIV 2 and Imperial GHQ, War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** War Diary AKISHIMO October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Operations, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

**** War Diary FIRST Escort Force, October 1944, WDC Document 161719, NA 11609.

for Brunei, but were, for all practical purposes, still in the Singapore area.*

At about 1203 he received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet to the NICHIEI MARU directing the latter ship with two escorts to proceed immediately to Coron Bay and to report her arrival at that base.**

Evidently the ships of the FIRST Striking Force were receiving dispatches direct from Tokyo for at 1438 the MYOKO advised the HAGURO that reception from Tokyo was bad between 1250 and 1400, which by inference meant that reception during the remainder of the day was satisfactory.***

The afternoon passed without incident except for a periscope sighting by the NOSHIRO at 1545.**** Evasive maneuvers were conducted by the ships in the vicinity of the NOSHIRO for several minutes, but since no attack developed, these ships resumed stations in formation.***** Actually, the contact was false, since there were no submarines, Allied or Japanese, in the area at the time.

At 1635 Commander FIRST Striking Force received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet which transferred CRUDIV SIXTEEN from his command to the SECOND Striking Force and assigned the augmented SECOND Striking Force to the SW Area Force.****** A few minutes later he received an explanatory dispatch from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet which stated that the new SECOND Striking Force was to serve as the backbone of mobile over-water counterattack operations.*******

About this time he received a dispatch from Commander SW Area

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* Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181133 October 1944 to NICHIEI MARU War Diary NICHIEI MARU October 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838.

*** MYOKO Visual Dispatch 181438 October 1944 to HAGURO, Detailed Action Report No. 3 HAGURO, SHO One Operations, October 23rd - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161747.

**** Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Operations, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

***** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Commanders FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

****** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

Force directing, among other items, that CRUDIV SIXTEEN stand by at Brunei;* and at about 1710 a dispatch (received by COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN at 1747) from the Chief of Staff SW Area Force wherein the Chief of Staff explained that the reason for this was the fact that the Southern Army was not ready to move troops.**

At 1717 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch*** giving a tentative outline of future operations.

He was considerably concerned with two items in these dispatches, (a) the setting of X-day for October 24th, and (b) the detachment of CRUDIV SIXTEEN.

(a) His concern over X-day was based on the fact that he had advised the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet on the previous evening that at twenty knots (which would require destroyer refueling after leaving Brunei) he could arrive at the eastern entrance to San Bernardino Strait by the morning of X-day, and at sixteen knots he could arrive there by the night of X-day. But since the distance from San Bernardino Strait to the eastern entrance to Leyte Gulf was some 220 miles, it was clear to him that should the twenty knot alternative be accepted he could not possibly penetrate into Leyte Gulf before the midafternoon of October 24th, and should the sixteen knot alternative be accepted, he could not penetrate there before early morning of the following day (October 25th). In the former case, during the passage from San Bernardino to Leyte Gulf he would be under the concentrated air power of whatever carrier aircraft had not been drawn to the north by the Main Force; in the latter case this passage would be made during darkness.

Therefore, it is probable that he preferred the sixteen knot plan not only for the reasons stated here but also because the SHO concept called for a dawn penetration **** which could not be obtained under the twenty knot plan.

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* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181540 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, COMCRUDIV 16 (SW Area Force DesOpOrd 662), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181640 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 171201 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, Commander FIRST Striking Force, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

(b) His concern over the detachment of CRUDIV SIXTEEN was based on the fact that his forces, while strong, had a penetration objective which could not be achieved without serious loss. Therefore, since the success of the operation was based on the success of this penetration objective, it was essential that his command be at the maximum possible strength.

Although the above two items, as has been pointed out, were of considerable concern to him, there is no record that he made any representations thereon whatsoever.

At 1743 he received the Chief of the Naval General Staff dispatch 181701 directing that the SHO Operation be carried out in the Philippines,* and at 1808 he received CinC Combined Fleet's directive activating the SHO One Operation.** This activation of SHO One could not have surprised him, since, as early as October 14th, he had decided that an invasion of the Philippines was inevitable, had discontinued training, and had prepared for battle.*** The Allied landings in the Suluan area, the SHO One Alert issued on the previous day, the Allied carrier strikes throughout the north - central Philippines, and the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's tentative outline of future operations issued that day had done nothing to modify this view, but instead had supported it. Therefore, the proximate activation of SHO One could not have been unexpected.

However, the receipt of this activation order must have had an electrifying effect on the crews of his ships, since it foreshadowed a decisive fleet action of a nature not heretofore experienced in the Pacific War.

During the day Commander FIRST Striking Force received most of the intelligence information concerning the Allied operations in the Leyte area that was received by CinC Combined Fleet. Among these were the attack on Car Nicobar Island; the Allied air strikes against Manila, Clark Field, Aparri, Laoag, and Tacloban; the Allied forces sighted off Suluan Island and off Tacloban; the order directing the commencement of landing operations off Tacloban; and the contact on an Allied carrier force consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other ships about 200 miles east of Manila at 1030.****

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* Imperial General Headquarters,(Navy Section),Dispatch 181701 October 1944 (Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Section Directive 476), FEC, GHQ, Military History Section, Military Historical Division Microfilm No. 62239.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641. NA 11839.

*** Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSO-ROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953) Volume II.

At 1900 Commander FIRST Striking Force directed that at 0100 the following morning the SECOND Section, and at 0120 the FIRST Section, would change course to 070°(T).* Assuming that at this time the disposition was correctly formed, this shows that (a) the guides of each section in disposition Y-8 were roughly five and one-third miles apart, and (b) that the whole disposition was still one hour behind schedule, since the basic plan had called for this course to be made at midnight.**

At 1908 COMBATDIV ONE issued instructions concerning the state of readiness of certain planes on the YAMATO (two planes), MUSASHI (one plane) and NAGATO (one plane).***

At 2400 the FIRST Striking Force was bearing 267°(T), distant 480 miles from Brunei, while the fueling group was bearing 251°(T), distant 555 miles from Brunei.

(b) Operations of Commander Main Force, October 18th.

Commander Main Force throughout the day was preparing his command for sortie on October 20th. He had directed them to assemble at Yashima Anchorage when ready for sea.**** However, the carriers of CARDIV THREE had to recover their aircraft at Oita, and therefore the ZUIHO, CHITOSE and CHIYODA,***** already at Oita, remained there throughout the day. At 0555 the fourth carrier of this division (ZUIKAKU), which was at Tokuyama, departed for Oita.****** Meanwhile, the HYUGA (and presumably the ISE) of CARDIV FOUR departed Oita at 0524 and headed for Yashima Anchorage.*******

At about 0705 he received a dispatch from COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE to the ISUZU,******** and at 1015 to the AKIKAZE and KIRI,********* to proceed

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* Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 181900 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Dispatch 171215 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO Operations, Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

**** Commander Main Force Dispatch 171350 October 1944 to Main Force, Detailed Action Report OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

***** War Diaries ZUIHO, CHITOSE, CHIYODA, ZUIKAKU, October 1944.

****** War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1st - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

******* War Diary HYUGA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

******** COMCORTRON 31 Dispatch 180635 October 1944 to ISUZU, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

********* COMCORTRON 31 Dispatch 180945 October 1944 to Commander Main Force, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

to Yashima Anchorage when sortie preparations were completed.

At 0859 the ZUIKAKU arrived at Oita.

At 0956 his Chief of Staff advised the Main Force that at 1300 October 19th, Commander Main Force was planning to hold an operations conference (on the SHO One operation) on the OYODO at Yashima Anchorage, and directed "all commanders concerned, destroyer commanders and escort commanders in the Kure area to attend". The Chief of Staff further directed that those commands concerned with accomodating aircraft (which, of course, meant the ships of CARDIV THREE and possibly the two plane guard destroyers HATSUZUKI and WAKATSUKI, which were assisting the carriers) were to send a representative if at all possible.* He did not include their commanding officers since they were very busy at Oita and because he felt that he did not require them in person at this conference, inasmuch as he planned to return to Oita that evening.

At about 1115 Commander Main Force received a dispatch from COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE advising the ISUZU that the MAKI and KUWA would arrive at Oita from Saeki at 1700 and directing the ISUZU to arrive there at that time.**

At 1131 he learned that CRUDIV SIXTEEN had been transferred from the FIRST Striking Force to the SECOND Striking Force and that the newly-constited SECOND Striking Force had then been transferred from the Mobile Force to Commander SW Area Force*** for duty involving counterlanding operations in the Philippines area.****

These dispatches were highly significant in that he now knew the planned composition of the Main Force on sortie. This composition was four first-line carriers, ZUIKAKU, ZUIHO, CHITOSE, CHIYODA; two hermaphrodite battleships, HYUGA and ISE; three light cruisers, OYODO, TAMA and ISUZU; and nine destroyers and destroyer escorts, SHIMOTSUKI, HATSUZUKI, AKITSUKI, WAKATSUKI, SUGI, MAKI, AKIKAZE, KIRI, KUWA.

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* CofS Main Force Dispatch 180956 October 1944 to Main Force, Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

** COMCORTRON 31 Dispatch 181045 October 1944 to ISUZU, War Diary ISUZU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Commanders FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

At about 1140 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's estimate that there was likely to be a landing in the Tacloban area of Leyte Gulf, and a tentative outline of future operations based thereon. He learned that his command was to advance to the area east of Luzon on X-1 or X-2 day and was to support the X-day penetration of the FIRST Striking force by luring the enemy to the north and by destroying remnants of the enemy forces should the opportunity arise.* He also learned that X-day would be fixed by special order, but was tentatively set for October 24th, and that he was authorized to fix the sortie time for the Main Force to conform to the above tentative plan.*

At about 1240 he learned that Commander SW Area Force, on the basis of Allied activities in the Leyte-Samar area, was virtually certain that the Allies would land in that vicinity.**

During the afternoon he learned of the two air raid alerts on Formosa, and likely learned that no enemy aircraft had appeared.***

At about 1404 he learned that the ISUZU had arrived at Yashima at 1200 and was proceeding on to Oita.****

At 1450 (since he was also Commander Mobile Force) he knew that the OYODO had been designated flagship of CORTRON THIRTY-ONE and as reserve flagship of the Mobile Force during the SHO One Operation,***** and at 1535 that the OYODO, with himself aboard, would, at 0800 October 19th, proceed to Yashima Anchorage, after which it would proceed to Oita, where he would return to the ZUIKAKU.******

SOMETIME DURING THE DAY HE ISSUED IN WRITING HIS MAIN FORCE OPORD NO. ONE, WHICH DEALT WITH THE FORTHCOMING OPERATIONS OF HIS COMMAND IN THE

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** CofS SW Area Dispatch 181210 October 1944 to Flags, Major Commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 103rd Attack Unit, October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** ISUZU Dispatch 181334 October 1944, to COMCORTRON 31, War Diary ISUZU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

***** Commander Mobile Force Visual Dispatch 181450 October 1944 to OYODO, Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th-29th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

****** Commander Mobile Force Visual Dispatch 181535 October 1944 to Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operations October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

EVENT SHO ONE OR SHO TWO WERE ACTIVATED.* WHILE THIS ORDER ITSELF IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THIS ANALYSIS IN ITS ENTIRETY, SUFFICIENT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM SEVERAL SOURCES** TO INDICATE THAT, IN GENERAL, FOR SHO ONE, IT DIRECTED THAT THE MAIN FORCE, IN COOPERATION WITH FRIENDLY FORCES, WAS (A) TO DO ITS UTMOST TO ASCERTAIN THE ENEMY SITUATION, AND (B) TO LURE THE ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCES TO THE NORTHEAST FROM THE AREA EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES, THUS INSURING THE SUCCESS OF THE COMBINED FLEET PENETRATION OPERATIONS. IN ACCOMPLISHING THIS, THE MAIN FORCE WAS TO PROCEED SOUTH THROUGH THE WATERS EAST OF THE NANSEI SHOTO, MAINTAINING A STRICT ALERT AGAINST AIR ATTACK. IN THE WATERS EAST OF LUZON OR FORMOSA, IT WAS (A) TO CLOSE THE ALLIED TASK FORCES THERE, (B) TO STRIKE AN EFFECTIVE FIRST BLOW AT THE ALLIED CARRIERS BY DELIVERING A STRONG DAYTIME AIR ATTACK, AND (C) AT THE SAME TIME, AND WITHOUT REGARD FOR ITS OWN POSSIBLE LOSSES, TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO LURE THE ENEMY TO THE NORTHEAST. THEREAFTER, IT WAS TO OPERATE IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO KEEP THE ALLIED CARRIER FORCE AT THE OUTER LIMIT OF ITS AIR ATTACK RANGE, APPROACHING THE ENEMY DURING THE DAY AND RETIRING AT NIGHT. BY THIS MEANS, COMMANDER MAIN FORCE HOPED TO DRAW THE ENEMY INTO THE DESIRED AREA AND THERE ENGAGE A PORTION OF HIS FORCES IF A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO SHOULD ARISE.

At about 1802 he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch 181732 activating SHO One.***

At about 1950 he received COMCARDIV ONE's dispatch to CARDIV THREE advising that command that Commander 601st Air Group would transfer to detached duty in CARDIV THREE all personnel and material in accordance with Main Force DesOpOrds Seven and Eleven.****

At 2046 by Commander Mobile Force's DesOpOrd 61, SHO One was activated for the Main Force.*****

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* Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744; also Detailed Action Report ZUIKAKU, SHO Operation, October 20th - 25th, 1944, WDC Document 161008.

** Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO Operation, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007; also Detailed Action Report KUWA, Battle off the Philippines, October 20th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732, October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** COMCARDIV 1 Dispatch 181920 October 1944 to CARDIV 3 (CARDIV 1 DesOpOrd 1), War Diary ZUIHO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

***** Commander Mobile Force Dispatch 182046 October 1944 to Main Force (Mobile Force DesOpOrd 61), Detailed Action Report HYUGA SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

At 2055 he designated plane guards for the landing of aircraft on October 19th (beginning at 1300) and 20th (beginning at 0700) as follows: ZUIKAKU-WAKATSUKI; ZUIHO-HATSUZUKI; CHITOSE-AKITSUKI, and CHIYODA-SHIMOTSUKI.*

At 2321 he established a supply force composed of the oilers TAKANE MARU and JINEI MARU, ESCORTS 22, 33 and 43, and the AKIKAZE, and directed that this force proceed immediately to Tokuyama, and then within two or three days to Amami O Shima, where it was to stand by.** Since ESCORTS 22 and 43 were still with the FIRST Escort Force and were not transferred to the Main Force until the following day,*** this dispatch is considered to have been anticipatory of this transfer. It will be observed that the AKIKAZE was now removed from the screen of the Main Force.

(c) Operations of Commander SECOND Striking Force, October 18th.

Commander SECOND Striking Force, with the SECOND Striking Force (less the HATSUHARU, which had been directed to proceed independently to Mako),**** continued refueling his light forces at Satsukawa Bay, Amami O Shima. This refueling was completed at 0430, at which time DESDIV EIGHTEEN and DESDIV TWENTY-ONE, which had refueled from the cruisers of CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE, sortied and commenced conducting an antisubmarine sweep outside the harbor in coordination with the local defense forces***** which, in accordance with orders received the previous evening, had begun their antisubmarine operations as early as 0300.****** While it is true that the nearest Allied submarine, the STERLET, was some sixty miles from Satsukawa Bay, and therefore the cruisers on sortie were in no danger of Allied submarine attack, this was not known to the Japanese commanders, who by this time had acquired a healthy respect for the capabilities of Allied submarines.

At 0530 Commander SECOND Striking Force (COMCRUDIV TWENTY-ONE) with CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and the ABUKUMA, sortied from Satsukawa Bay. On completing the sortie, he was rejoined by DESDIV'S EIGHTEEN and TWENTY-ONE, less HATSUHARU.***** The weather conditions at this time were: cloudy, light wind,

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 182055 October 1944, to COMDESDIV 61, 653rd and 931st Air Groups, COMDESRON 11 (Main Force DesOpOrd 11), War Diary ZUIHO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** Commander Main Force Dispatch 182321 October 1944 to DESRON 11, etc., Detailed Action Report HYUGA, SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

*** War Diary FIRST Escort Force, October 1944, WDC Document 161719, NA 11609.

**** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 172343 October 1944 to HATSUHARU, War Diary DESRON 1, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

****** Commander (Command unknown) Dispatch 171138 October 1944 to Kanoya Air Base, Subchasers, etc., War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11973.

visibility five miles.* He headed in a southwesterly direction to close a downed airplane.

Meanwhile, DESDIV SEVEN, which had been refueling from drums ashore, continued refueling. The process was necessarily slow, and therefore the refueling was not completed until 0630. At 1650 DESDIV SEVEN sortied from Amami O Shima and proceeded to rejoing Commander SECOND Striking Force.*

Sometime after sortiing, Commander SECOND Striking Force received word that Car Nicobar Island had been shelled by Allied forces at 0400.**

At about 0845 the KASUMI left the formation to rescue the crew of the downed plane which had made a forced landing at Latitude 27°-42'N, Longitude 128°-34'E. She effected the rescue at 0910.** This was in accordance with CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch 141216*** to Commander SECOND Striking Force, directing his sortie from the Inland Sea, and is of interest here in that it was the only known instance of such rescue by this force.

The KASUMI did not attempt to rejoin at this time but instead made arrangements to transfer the rescued airmen to a torpedo boat.**

At about 0930 Commander SECOND Striking Force changed course to the northwest and headed for the HATSUHARU's estimated noon position presumably to give her instruction which he did not choose to send by radio. This change of course also tended to move the SECOND Striking Force out of the more dangerous waters of the Nansei Shoto where he knew Allied submarines were operating.

At 1006 the ABUKUMA sighted an unidentified aircraft bearing 120°(T).**** Since no contact reports on Allied carriers were made by Japanese air forces until 1030,***** and since there are no records of any such contacts in the war diaries of the SECOND Striking Force, it is not known how Commander SECOND Striking Force reacted to this contact. However, since he continued on his northwesterly course, it is assumed that he correctly evaluated it as friendly.

At 1100, DESDIV SEVEN rejoined the SECOND Striking Force in Latitude 28°-05'N, Longitude 127°-41'E.*

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* War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 141216 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, info all Fleet and Squadron Commanders Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 348), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

**** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161634, NA 11973.

***** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

At about 1115, in Latitude 28°-02'N, Longitude 127°-40'E, the NACHI detected the submarine STERLET. The USHIO immediately depth-charged her, employing two depth charges with unknown results.* The STERLET had contacted the SECOND Striking Force at 1038 at a range of 29,000 yards, and had closed to attack, but could not close nearer than 8,000 yards. The USHIO attack was poorly made, since the STERLET reported hearing only one depth charge, and that at a great distance.**

At about 1133 Commander SECOND Striking Force presumably intercepted the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch to Commander SW Area Force, wherein the Chief of Staff advised that commander that the SECOND Striking Force was being placed under his command to serve as the backbone of mobile over-water counterattack operations in the Philippines area.***

At about 1140 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 181110 to the chiefs of staff of the principal fleet commands, giving a tentative outline for future operations and the tasks of all principal forces and setting X-day at October 24th.****

At about 1200 the HATSUHARU rejoined the formation in Latitude 28°-16'N, Longitude 127°-30'E.***** Weather conditions at this time were: cloudy, wind north-northwest at nine miles per hour, visibility ten miles.******

At 1220 the KASUMI transferred the rescued airmen to the torpedo boat (location of transfer not known) and then started to rejoin the SECOND Striking Force.****** The result of this maneuver was that she fell behind the formation some three hours since at about 1522 she appears to have been sighted by the STERLET.**.

At about 1345 Commander SECOND Striking Force received word from Commander SW Area Force that the "P" Operation had been activated.*******

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* War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO) October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

** War Patrol Report STERLET, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 0120, November 30th, 1944.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16 - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

***** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1st - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

****** War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717,NA 11801.

******* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181315 October 1944 to all Commanders SW Area Force (SW Area Force DesOpOrd No. 660), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

At 1348 he advised the SECOND Striking Force by voice radio that the HATSUHARU would proceed independently to Mako, fuel and await orders there.* He planned to refuel the HATSUHARU at Mako because she had not fueled at Amami O Shima and now needed much more fuel than would be required by the other destroyers. By sending her ahead, she would be able to advise the authorities at Mako of the time of expected arrival of the SECOND Striking Force, of the amount of fuel required by that command, and of any other logistics requirements.

Sometime between 1348 and 1455 he received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet wherein he was informed that CRUDIV SIXTEEN was transferred to his command, that the augmented SECOND Striking Force was transferred from the Mobile Force to the SW Area Force, and that he was to refuel at Takao (rather than Mako) and proceed immediately to Manila.** This dispatch appears to have required some three hours for transmission.

At 1455 he advised his command by voice radio of the transfer of the SECOND Striking Force to the SW Area Force, of the change in fueling from Mako to Takao, and of the planned movement to Manila.***

At 1555 he directed the HATSUHARU by voice radio to proceed to Takao, fuel and await orders.**** As there is no record of the HATSUHARU departing, it is assumed that she left the command at this time and proceeded directly toward Takao.

At about 1610 he received Commander SW Area Force's dispatch directing CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE to stand by at Mako and CRUDIV SIXTEEN at Brunei pending receipt of special orders.***** At this same time he appears to have directed the HATSUHARU also by voice radio to proceed to Mako.

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* Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 181348 October 1944 to SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Commander FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 181455 October 1944 to SECOND Striking Force (SECOND Striking Force DesOpOrd 132), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739

**** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 181555 October 1944 to HATSUHARU, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181540 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force, COMCRUDIV 16, CinC Combined Fleet, (SW Area Force DesOpOrd No. 662), War Diary DESRON 1, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

These repeated changes in the destinations of the units of the SECOND Striking Force clearly indicated confusion in the high command echelons of the Combined Fleet, and were probably not reassuring to the addressees.

At 1747 he received an explanatory dispatch from the Chief of Staff SW Area Force to CinC Combined Fleet wherein he explained why it was that Commander SW Area Force had considered it necessary to modify CinC Combined Fleet's instructions to refuel the SECOND Striking Force at Takao and then to advance immediately to Manila.* The Chief of Staff stated in this dispatch that this was done because the Southern Army had not yet completed plans for moving troops, and implied thereby that because of advance information from the CinC Southern Army, Mako and Brunei would be preferable to Takao and Manila for the expedition of troop movements.

At 1800 he changed the course of the SECOND Striking Force from 245°(T) to 225°(T).** At this time weather conditions were: clear, wind east-northeast at nine miles per hour, visibility ten miles.***

Sometime prior to 1845, when it was received by COMDESRON ONE,**** he received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch 181732 activating the SHO One Operation.*****

IT WILL BE OBSERVED THAT AT NO TIME DURING THIS DAY, OR SUBSEQUENT TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM AMAMI O SHIMA, DID COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE ISSUE ANY ORDERS TO HIS COMMAND, OR TO COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN, BY RADIO; NEITHER DID HE REPORT TO COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE FOR DUTY. THIS SHOWS CLEARLY THAT HE WAS OPERATING UNDER RADIO SILENCE, WHICH WAS THE LOGICAL METHOD OF OPERATION UNDER THE EXISTING SITUATION. CERTAINLY IT WAS UNWISE TO TRANSMIT MESSAGES TO UNITS OF HIS COMMAND WHICH, BY DOCTRINE, WERE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHING THE TASK GIVEN TO THEM BY HIGHER AUTHORITY. IN THE U.S. NAVY THIS WAS WELL RECOGNIZED AND FOLLOWED AT THE TIME, AND THE U.S. NAVY INSTRUCTIONS TODAY (1) STATE THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIONS...DEPENDS ON CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES SUCH AS THE ASSIGNMENT OF MISSIONS AND TASKS TO SUBORDINATES...IN LANGUAGE WHICH WILL MINIMIZE THE NEED FOR AMPLIFICATION...,****** AND (2) PRESCRIBE AS

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* CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181640 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** War Diary DESDIV 7 (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717,NA 11801.

**** War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

****** Basic Fleet Operational Communication Doctrine, NWP 16, Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations,September 1953, paragraph 202.a.

A FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATION IN THE OPERATION OF NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS THAT ONLY THE MINIMUM USE OF RADIO CONSISTENT WITH THE SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE TASK SHOULD BE PERMITTED BY SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT.*

The SECOND Striking Force continued on toward Mako. From Diagram "C" it is clear that this required no change from the planned route to Takao since Mako would be passed enroute to Takao.

At 2400 the SECOND Striking Force was bearing 270°(T) distant 160 miles from Naha, Okinawa. Sometime before midnight the Kasumi had rejoined. The location of the HATSUHARU is not known with any exactness, but was presumably ahead of the above position since she had taken a direct course to Mako.

(2) Operations of Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, October 18th.

During this day Commander Advance Expeditionary Force issued no further orders to his submarines relating to the SHO Operation, except to order the twelve submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force which were ready for combat service into what he termed A and B Groups. The A Group was composed of the submarines already at sea, these being the I-26, 45, 54 and 56; the B Group of the eight submarines preparing to depart, viz., the I-38, 41, 44, 46, and 53 and the RO-41, 43 and 46.** He had learned that the latter group could be made ready to depart on the following day. It will be remembered that the I-53 had been ordered to sea on October 11th, but, not being ready for sea, had remained in port. It would now be ready to sortie on the next day.

The A Group which had received Commander Advance Expeditionary Force's orders to proceed into the area east of the Philippines was at this time enroute to that area. In proceeding, the I-56 was contacted by the Allied submarine BLACKFIN which reported having contacted an unidentified submarine headed due south at 1600 this date in Latitude 20°-45'N, Longitude 134°-00'E.***

It seems correct to say that Commander Advance Expeditionary Force received most of the dispatches throughout the day relating to the Allied operations in the Philippines in general and in the Leyte - Samar area

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* U.S. Naval Communication Instructions, DNC 5 (A), Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, January 1954, Paragraph 1021.1(h).

** Submarine Operation in Philippine Waters 1944-1945, Department of Army, Historical Division No. 8-5, ATIS October 30th, 1945; also Merit Rating Reports for Naval Ship Units (Submarine Operations, October 1944), WDC Document 161011.

*** War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

in particular. Among these was the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 181110 which directed in part that "the Advance Expeditionary Force will destroy damaged enemy vessels and troop convoys with all the forces at its command."* It was important that he receive this data, as it was necessary to brief his submarine commanders who were to depart the next day on the general situation in the Leyte - Samar area and to explain his planned objectives to them.

THESE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET WERE A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE FROM CINC COMBINED FLEET'S BASIC ORDERS FOR THE SHO OPERATIONS WHICH DIRECTED "TARGETS FOR THE ADVANCE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE NORMALLY WILL BE THE AIRCRAFT CARRIERS (INCLUDING CONVERTED CARRIERS), BATTLESHIPS AND TROOP CONVOYS IN THAT ORDER. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE MOBILITY OF THE ADVANCE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, IT WILL ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS BY NOT ADHERING TOO RIGIDLY TO THE PRIORITY."** IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE CHANGE WAS MADE BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED NUMBER OF SUBMARINES WHICH WERE AVAILABLE FOR THIS OPERATION.

THE BRIEFING OF SUBMARINE COMMANDERS, WHICH IS GENERALLY GIVEN IN THE U.S. NAVY PRIOR TO THE DAY OF DEPARTURE, SHOULD BE AS COMPLETE AS POSSIBLE BECAUSE THE SITUATION AT THE SCENE OF ACTION MAY DIFFER RADICALLY FROM THAT FORESEEN IN THE COMMANDER'S PLANS, IN WHICH CASE THE SUBMARINE COMMANDER, BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF SUBMARINE WARFARE AND THE LIMITATIONS IT IMPOSES ON COMMUNICATIONS, MAY BE FORCED TO MAKE HIS OWN ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION AND TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTION WITHOUT RECOURSE TO HIGHER AUTHORITY.*** IF HE IS ADEQUATELY BRIEFED, IT IS LIKELY THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ACTION WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS COMMANDER'S OBJECTIVES.

At about 1802 Commander Advance Expeditionary Force received CinC Combined Fleet's order 181732 activating SHO One.****

During the day, since there are no Japanese records of any attacks on Allied forces at this time, and since the Allied ships likewise report no submarine attacks, it is considered that the four Japanese submarines enroute to the area east of Luzon made no attacks on Allied forces.

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 87, August 20th, 1944, Outline for Advance Expeditionary Force Operations in SHO Operations, ATIS Document No. 39, Part VIII, June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

*** Submarine Operations, NWP-23, Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington 25, D.C., 1953, Chapter IV, Paragraph 401.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

At 2400 these submarines were located as shown in Diagram C.

(3) Operations of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, October 18th.

Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, from his headquarters at Takao, awaited reports on the developments of the night. Owing to the heavy weather which had occurred in the Visayan area, he had heard little of the Allied activities in that area. However, weather conditions there were improving, and he knew that he would soon learn whether or not the Allied operations were in fact an invasion.

At 0248 he received (a) a radar contact report from a flying boat on what appeared to be an enemy task group in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E, (b) a report at 0305 from the contacting flying boat that she was maintaining radar contact and a further report at 0330 that conditions in the area would make bombing difficult but rendered a torpedo attack possible and (c) a radar contact report on two additional enemy groups, one at 0400 in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 128°-15'E and one at 0405 in Latitude 19°-25'N, Longitude 127°-55'E.*

He was now probably pleased at his foresight in having ordered his forces on Formosa concentrated at their designated concentration bases, because he had realized that the Allied carriers could be in a position to make a strong surprise attack at dawn. This had in fact occurred. However, the additional fact that the Allied carriers were so far from Formosa - about 350 miles - probably relieved him to a degree since this distance lessened the probability of air attack.

He knew later that his morning searches had not departed entirely as planned: (a) the six Kyushu search planes which were to search the sector 155°-190°(T) from Kanoya to a distance of 650 miles had departed on schedule at 0500, (b) the four Okinawa search planes had not departed on schedule at 0530 but instead had departed in a staggered manner, viz., two planes to search the sector 145° - 165°(T) had departed at 0700, the other two planes had departed at 0550 and at 0600, and (c) the Formosa planes scheduled to depart as early as possible after dawn (0630) to search the sector 085° - 145° (T) from Garan Bi had departed on schedule but instead of the six planes originally scheduled only five had sortied and of these five, one had been forced to turn back due to engine trouble. The remaining two planes due to depart at this time, one from Karenko to search to the southeast to 250 miles

* Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

and one from Sancho Kaku via Ishigaki to search to the southeast had departed successfully. Also he knew that (a) all of his air strength had been prepared to attack after 0600 on fifteen minutes notice since he had ordered them to be ready after that time and (b) that his interceptors had been ordered to standby on a No. One Alert. So far as was possible he was ready.

At about 0750 he received a dispatch from the 901st Air Group giving the results of the night search.*

This report, while in general similar to the contact reports made by the plane, was amplified considerably. It indicated that the 0248 contact was on a large group of ships which were moving in a southerly direction and that the 0400 and 0405 contacts each consisted of a single ship or a small group of ships. The report also stated that since the weather in the vicinity of the enemy was half overcast with a ceiling of from 800 - 3000 meters, with a front extending east west from a point near Latitude 18°-40'N, and since the weather to the south was unfavorable with flashes of lightening, bombing from the clouds would be difficult.

Of these three contacts but one, the 0248 contact, appears to have been a real contact, whereas the other two contacts (0400 and 0405) were probably phantoms since no Allied shipping was in the area of the pilots track chart 0400 and 0405 positions. The 0248 contact was most likely on TG 38.3 since the track chart of the Japanese plane shows the contact to have been in the actual location of that task group at this time, i.e., Latitude 18°-25'N, Longitude 127°-50'E. The location given by the pilot, i.e., Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E, was therefore in error with relation to his own track chart, being some forty-five miles bearing 346°(T) from the position given on the track chart. It was also in error as regards the 0400 and 0405 contact reports.

It seems clear from the confusion between the pilots track and his reported positions (through contact reports) that the pilot somehow became confused in the handling of his grid charts.

He now awaited also with interest the operations of the T-Force, which he had heretofore commanded but which now had been transferred to CinC Combined Fleet. He was interested because (a) the T-Force had in fact been largely destroyed and (b) the remainder was being launched at this time against a contact which, as has been pointed out previously, was some thirty hours old, and (c) the operations of the T-Force were in his area of responsibility.

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* 901st Air Group Dispatch 180750 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet and Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

At 0830 he learned of the raids by Allied carrier aircraft on the Philippines. He probably wondered whether this forecast attacks on Formosa as well, since (a) strikes on Luzon on several previous days had been paralleled by strikes on Formosa, and (b) the Allies might attempt to interfere with the flow of aircraft to the Philippines by striking Formosa. To counter such an attempt, he had not only placed his interceptors on a No. One Alert,* but he had (a) endeavored to improve their operations by naming a single tactical commander to command all fighters of the same type in each area,** (b) directed, in the event of a report that enemy aircraft had been sighted, that (1) his bombers and attack planes disperse and (2) all fighter strength at each base assume interception dispositions after 1000,*** presumably to facilitate the exercising of command as prescribed in DesOpOrd No. 76. It is assumed that he delayed this order until this time because Allied carrier strikes normally appeared just after dawn and continued through the early forenoon, and he did not desire to have his pilots confused as to the origin of their orders.

THIS WAS A RETURN TO THE BASIC SHO PLAN FOR THE COMBINED FLEET, WHEREIN IT WAS DIRECTED THAT, IN ORDER TO CONSERVE AIRCRAFT, AIR FORCES MIGHT BE OBLIGED TO WITHDRAW IN ORDER TO AVOID THE INITIAL ATTACK OF THE ENEMY.**** WHILE THE ABOVE ORDER FOR THE BOMBER AND ATTACK PLANES TO DISPERSE MAY SEEM AT VARIANCE WITH COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE'S DESOPORD 75, WHEREIN HE DIRECTED HIS AIR STRENGTH ON FORMOSA TO BE READY TO ATTACK AFTER 0600, THIS IS NOT IN FACT THE CASE. THE FORMER WAS ORDERED IN THE EVENT OF A REPORT THAT ENEMY AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN SIGHTED, WHICH, IN EFFECT, WOULD MEAN THAT AN ALLIED CARRIER TASK FORCE HAD CLOSED TO LAUNCHING RANGE WITHOUT DISCOVERY AND THAT SURPRISE HAD BEEN ACHIEVED; THE LATTER WAS ORDERED IN THE EVENT AN ALLIED CARRIER TASK FORCE HAD BEEN SIGHTED. THE FORMER WAS ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE, THE LATTER OFFENSIVE.

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* Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 172021 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 75), Detailed Action Report 256th Air Group Expeditionary Unit, October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 76, October 17th, 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Unit, (256th Air Group' October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

*** War Diary KOKUBU Detachment (103rd Attack Unit), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 86, August 4th, 1944, Air Combat Regulations for SHO Operations, ATIS Document No. 39 (Part VIII), June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document); also CofS Mobile Force Statement on Task Force Operations in the SHO Operation, Task Force Serial 1003, August 10th, 1944, ATIS Document No. 39 (Part I), April 22nd, 1944 (NACHI Document).

At 1109 Commander SIXTH Base Air Force issued an operation order for the reinforcement of units on Formosa. In essence, he (1) designated Commander Western Attack Force ONE as the controlling agent for the receipt and movement of aircraft, (2) gave top priority to the receipt and movement of twin-engine land bombers for reconnaissance, (3) directed the replacement of obsolescent carrier-type bombers by a newer carrier-type reconnaissance plane, (4) provided for the airlift of ferry crews.*

About 1131 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch which placed the SECOND Striking Force augmented with CRUDIV SIXTEEN under the Commander Southwest Area Force** and at 1133 the Chief of Staff's dispatch wherein he stated that the SECOND Striking Force would be employed in moving troop reinforcements to Leyte.***

At about 1140 he received a dispatch from Chief of Staff Combined Fleet outlining tentative future operations.**** In this dispatch the Chief of Staff set X-day tentatively for October 24th, and stated among other things, that it was planned to concentrate the full strength of the Base Air Forces in the Philippines for the purpose of completely destroying the Allied carriers.

COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE COULD CLEARLY SEE FROM THIS DISPATCH THAT THE ACTIVATION OF SHO ONE WAS IMMINENT. HE HAD KNOWN SINCE THE PRECEDING DAY THAT CINC COMBINED FLEET ANTICIPATED ACTIVATING SHO ONE PRESENTLY BECAUSE AT 1406 ON THAT DAY HE HAD DIRECTED HIM TO MOVE HIS STRENGTH TO THE PHILIPPINES AS THE SITUATION PERMITTED.***** HE NOW KNEW THAT IT WAS PLANNED

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* Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181109 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 78), War Diary KANOYA Detachment 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group) October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944 to Comdrs FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 350), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944 to Commander SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 171406 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 355), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group) October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12593.

TO MOVE HIS FULL STRENGTH THERE WITH A DEFINITE OBJECTIVE, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CARRIERS. THIS WAS A CHANGE FROM THE CENTRAL AIR AGREEMENT WHICH PROVIDED THAT GRADUAL LOSSES WOULD BE INFLICTED ON ENEMY CARRIERS, AND LATER THAT "BOTH THE ENEMY CARRIER GROUPS AND TRANSPORT CONVOY" WERE TO BE DESTROYED AT THE SAME TIME.* HE ALSO KNEW THAT WHILE IN THE PHILIPPINES HE WOULD EITHER OPERATE "IN COOPERATION" WITH COMMANDER FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE, OR HE WOULD COMMAND BOTH AIR FORCES.** OWING TO THE FACT THAT THE SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE WAS MUCH LARGER THAN THE FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE IT IS LIKELY THAT HE ANTICIPATED THAT THE LATTER CONDITION WOULD OBTAIN.

It is assumed that during the forenoon he received word of the departure at 0100 of the FIRST Striking Force from Lingga - Singapore, and at 0530 of the departure of the SECOND Striking Force from Amami O Shima, of the Allied operations in the Leyte area with some concept of the number and character of the Allied ships there, of the contact on a carrier task force consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other naval ships 200 miles east of Manila, and, finally, of the attack on Car Nicobar Island.

At about 1240 he received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff SW Area Force stating that it was virtually certain that the Allies were planning to land in the Leyte-Samar area.*** Since this estimate tended to confirm the estimate previously made by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet at 181110 and since his own searches had been negative it seems correct to say that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force now gave his undivided attention to the prospective movement of his command to the Philippines.

At about 1248, on the basis of a radar warning, he or l fighters to carry out interception. Since this was after 1000 the res- ponsibilities as presented in DesOpOrd 76 applied. It is not w many fighters were launched but it is known that in the Tainan are a total of fifty-four fighters took-off. No enemy aircraft were sighte e fighters returned to base at 1425.**** This was a false contact si e were

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* Army-Navy Central Agreement Concerning SHO Air Operations, concluded July 24th, 1944, Supplement to Imperial General Headquarters Navy Section Directive 435, July 26th, 1944 WDC Document 216769 (Microfilm).

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force OpOrd No. 6 September 5th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D.

*** CofS SW Area Dispatch 181210 October 1944 to Flags Major Commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla October 1944 WDC Document 161643, NA 12260

**** Commander 14th Combined Air Group Dispatch 182325 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Fighter Unit (256th Air Group) October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422 NA 12426; also War Diary KOKUBU Detachment (103rd Attack Unit) October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

no Allied aircraft in the area.

At about 1430 he likely received word that his fighters had strafed one surfaced enemy submarine bearing 300°(T) distant twenty-one miles from Takao, and one bearing west distant sixty miles from takao.* These contacts were false since, except for the SAWFISH, which was submerged, no Allied submarines were in the area at the time. The SAWFISH was bearing 257°(T) distant forty-seven miles from Takao. She reported no attacks by enemy aircraft during this day.**

At 1503 he told his command that the operations on October 19th would be the same as those on October 18th*** that is (a) a continuance of the regrouping and concentrating on Formosa of aircraft assigned to his command preparatory to moving it to the Philippines, (b) a continuance of his routine air searches, (c) the concentration of his air strength presently on Formosa and capable of attack, and their readiness to take-off after 0600 on fifteen minutes notice and (d) his interceptors on No. One Alert**** from about 0500 until 0900.*****

At about this same time he received a report of a formation of large enemy aircraft heading east over the Pescadores Islands, and at 1505 he ordered all fighters to intercept the formation. Forty-three fighters took-off in the Tainan area but the number of fighters which took-off from other bases on Formosa is not known. No enemy aircraft were sighted so the fighters returned to base at 1640.* This was a false contact since there were no Allied aircraft in the area.

At about 1630 he probably learned that the T Force attack had been cancelled.******

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* Commander 14th Combined Air Group Dispatch 182325 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Fighter Unit (256th Air Group) October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422 NA 12426; also War Diary KOKUBU Detachment (103rd Attack Unit) October 13th - 31st 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** Deck Log SAWFISH October 18th, 1944.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181503 October 1944, War Diary 31st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 75, October 17th, 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Expeditionary Unit,(256th Air Group), October 13th - November 17th, 1944, WDC Document 161422, NA 12426.

***** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 171751 October 1944, to Western Attack Force ONE (Western Attack Force ONE SigDesOpOrd 13), War Diary 103rd Attack Unit October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

****** Detailed Action Report No. 13,708th Attack Unit (T-Force), Night Torpedo Attack on Enemy Task Force off Formosa, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160579, NA 12409.

About 1731 he received a dispatch* from Commander Western Attack Force ONE implementing his own order concerning the ferry of replacement aircraft to Formosa. It directed all SIXTH Base Air Force units to move to Formosa, except for those requiring training. Those excepted were presumably those with too little training to be effectively employed in the Philippines even with the additional training being given on Formosa. Some units in Formosa were directed to leave their aircraft and to return the crews and maintenance personnel to Kyushu to collect and ready replacement aircraft.**

At about 1802 he received a dispatch from Commander Western Attack Force TWO reporting the Okinawa searches.*** The dispatch stated that (a) no contacts had been made by the search planes, (b) sector 145° - 155°(T) had been searched to only 350 miles, (c) communications had been lost with the search plane in sector 155° - 165°(T) at 1123, which was still missing, and which was obviously the one shot down by the TG 38.3 CAP at 1130,**** (d) the plane searching in sector 165° - 177°(T) had been missing since departure at 0600.

It was unfortunate for the Japanese that this plane was lost shortly after take-off, since as shown in Diagram C it was to search the sector in which TG 38.3 was fueling at the time. While it seems probable that this plane would have been shot down by the Allied CAP it also seems probable that the Japanese would, by the loss of two adjacent search planes at almost the same time, have been alerted to the fact that carrier aircraft were most likely in the vicinity and therefore the carrier task group they were seeking was nearby.

During the evening he received several dispatches from his various subordinate commanders wherein they outlined the searches planned for the following day. These were as follows:

(a) Kanoya: Five two-engine land bombers to depart at 0700 to search the sector 160° - 210°(T) to 650 miles.*****

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* Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch, no time group, October 18th, 1944, to Western Attack Force ONE, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181109 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 78), War Diary Kanoya Detachment, 252nd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

*** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary Commander Western Attack Force TWO, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

**** War Diary LEXINGTON, October 18th, 1944.

***** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 181850 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary Commander Western Attack Force ONE, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

(b) Okinawa:

(1) One carrier-type reconnaissance plane to depart at 0530 to search the sector 155° - 165°(T) to 400 miles.

(2) Two two-engine land bombers to depart at 0530 to search the sector 165° - 185°(T) to 600 miles.*

(c) Formosa: Five carrier-type planes were to search the sector 090°-155°(T) from Garan Bi to 400 miles. While the take-off time was not specified it appears to have been about 0600.**

These searches, while of limited density, were adequate to indicate, weather permitting, whether or not Allied carrier task groups were within the search sectors.

About this time Commander SIXTH Base Air Force learned that the daily air alert dispositions on Okinawa, on and after October 19th, would be No. One Alert from 0530 to 0700 and No. Three Alert thereafter.***

At about 1916 he learned that a carrier reconnaissance plane had departed ORUKU at 1430 to search the sector 170° - 175°(T) to a distance of 350 miles in advance of the scheduled dusk attack of the T Force.****

Also some time prior to 2010 when it was received by Commander TWENTY-FIFTH Air Flotilla, he received CinC Combined Fleet's order activating SHO One. *****

At 2012 he advised his command that the enemy had commenced landing in the Tacloban area and that SHO One had been activated. In this same dispatch he directed that (a) all forces were to expedite (1) their movement to Formosa (2) their reorganization and (3) their preparations for deployment to the Philippines, and (b) that portion of the 901st and 953rd Air Groups,

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* Commander Western Attack Force TWO SigOrd No. 42 October 18th, 1944 (transmitted by telephone), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

** Detailed Action Report No. 1, 263rd Attack Unit (653rd Air Group), SHO Operations October 14th - 21st, 1944.

*** Commander Western Attack Force TWO SigOrd No. 43 October 18th, 1944 (transmitted by telephone), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

**** Commander Western Attack Force TWO Dispatch 181846 October 1944 to Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

which was originally disposed in the Formosa and Nansei Shoto areas, was to return to those areas from its dispersal bases and was to provide antisubmarine patrols for the FIRST* and SECOND Striking Forces commencing October 20th. He also tentatively designated deployment bases in the Philippines.** (Table 2)

Later, at about 2128, he received a dispatch order*** from the CinC Combined Fleet, which was intended to expedite the reinforcement of the base air forces. This order directed that (a) all aircraft remaining in the homeland were to be ferried to Kanoya, utilizing the entire strength of the 101st Air Flotilla, (b) each combat unit was to employ its own personnel and organic transport aircraft in ferrying aircraft to the forward bases, and (c) primary control of the movement of aircraft by combat units was placed in Commander Western Attack Force ONE in Kanoya, to be assisted by Commanders Western Attack Force TWO and THREE, in Okinawa and Formosa.

It will be observed that this dispatch was quite similar to that issued at 1109 by Commander SIXTH Base Air Force and differed primarily in that it was addressed principally to the Commanders of the FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH Base Air Forces, and appears to have been designed to facilitate the operations of Commander Western Attack Force ONE in the control of the ferrying of aircraft.

Sometime in the evening, his instructions for the night radar searches from Garan Bi were telephoned to the 901st Air Group. Two flying boats were to fly search lines 110°(T) and 130°(T) to a distance of 450 miles and fly a cross leg ninety miles to the left. Time of departure was to be 2300.****

At midnight he perhaps knew that these planes had taken off from Toko but they had not yet departed from Garan Bi on search.****

At the end of this day the SIXTH Base Air Force still consisted of

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* Evidently an error--should properly have been Main Force since only the Main Force and the SECOND Striking Force would be in the area covered by Formosa and Nansei Shoto based planes at this time.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182012 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd No. 80), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 182058 October 1944 to Commanders FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH Base Air Forces (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 475, War Diary Western Attack Force ONE, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

**** Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

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TABLE 2

Plan For Deployment of SIXTH Base Air Force to The Philippines

(a) Basic Deployment Bases.

(1) Organic Units SIXTH Base Air Force.*

Force	Scheduled Deployment Bases			Preparations Outline
	Regular Bases	Forward Operational Bases	Dispersal Bases	
SIXTH Base Air Force HQS	Clark			HQS to be established at 5th Base Air Force HQS in MANILA while HQS installations at Clark are incomplete
"T" Force**	Clark Field Base (about 4 airfields)	Small Aircraft: Cebu, Mactan	Labuan, Kudat Puerto Princesa	The outline of redeployment preparations and base preparations will be separately issued.
1st Group	Nichols No. 1	Legaspi, Tacloban	Clark, Del Carmen, Manila	
2nd Group	Nichols No. 2 (or Clark)	Ormoc, Mactan	Bomber Units: Puerto Princesa; Fighter Units: Lubang, San Marcelino	
3rd Group 4th Group	Lipa No. 1 Batangas (Depending on the Situation, Two engine land Bombers Units of Clark)	Silay, Binalbagan	Large and Medium aircraft: Labuan, Kudat	
Recco Unit, Night Fighter Units	Clark (elements at each of the various group bases)	Legaspi Cebu	San Marcelino, Lubang	

(2) Attached Aircraft***

7th Base Air Force & 61st Air Flotilla Units	Angeles (Tagalog) East and West			
CARDIV 3 & CARDIV 4	Angeles (South) Del Carmen			

(3) Number Two Deployment Bases (applicable when forces are moved up and attacks are carried out under enemy air superiority).

SAN MARCELINO, LUBANG, PUERTO PRINCESA, BATANGAS.***

* SIXTH Base Air Force OpOrd No. 13 September 27th, 1944, Issued from Headquarters, Southern Kyushu, File of Orders Kept by Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Senior Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D.

** Presently operating under CinC Combined Fleet.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182012 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 80), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

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about 842 planes of which 505 were operational.*

(4) Operations of Commander SW Area Force, October 18th.

Commander SW Area Force, at his Manila headquarters, awaited the morning reports. He was interested in the reports of his search and reconnaissance planes. While the data from Japanese sources is indefinite, data from Allied sources shows that search planes were operating from Luzon but apparently not from the Visayas nor from Mindanao.

In support of the view that Japanese search planes were operating from Luzon are the three contacts reported by Allied task groups; viz: (a) TG 38.4, operating off Luzon, at 0725 shot down a two-engine land bomber within twenty miles of the formation,** (b) TG 30.3 shot down a carrier-type plane at 0900 bearing 290°(T), distant twenty-five miles from the formation,*** and (c) TG 38.4 at 1025 observed a two-engine land bomber bearing 210°(T), distant twenty miles from the formation,***which bomber escaped interception by the CAP.

In support of the view that no Japanese search planes operated from the Visayas or Mindanao are these facts:

(1) No contacts were made on Allied task groups approaching Leyte, notably TG 77.4 and TF's 78 and 79 (landing craft).****(Commander SW Area Force, in a situation summary as of 1210 did not mention any contacts on Allied forces).***** Likewise, none of the Allied group approaching Leyte reported sighting visually or by radar any Japanese planes whatsoever.

(2) The weather in northern Mindanao and the western Visayas, notably

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* SIXTH Base Air Force figures not corrected for (a) operational losses subsequent to 0719 October 17th believed to have been negligible (b) replacement aircraft which may have been received but also believed to have been negligible and (c) planes returned to the Main Force, number not known; it is known however that 89 planes of the 653rd and 634th Air Groups, all or some of which had been transferred back from the SIXTH Base Air Force, were embarked in CARDIV 3 upon its sortie.

** War Diary CTG 38.4, October 1944.

*** Aircraft Action Report, Air Group 29, October 18th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operation, October 12th - 29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944; Action Report CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944; also Action Report CTF 79, Seizure of Leyte, Serial 00323, November 13th, 1944.

***** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181210, October 1944, to Flags Major Commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

Panay and Negros, was poor for flying.*

(3) Leyte and Cebu had been under constant Allied air attack by TG 77.4 commencing at about 0800.** Actually, the Japanese search planes in this area--if any were operational--should have departed before this time, but they do not appear to have done so.

(4) Mindanao had been under neutralizing attack by FIFTH Air Force planes for some time, which evidently had made flying operations hazardous.***

Sometime after midnight, Commander SW Area Force knew that C. G. FOURTH Air Army had issued a directive to his command ordering (a) that Army to employ its full strength to destroy the enemy and in particular the enemy transports presently engaged in landing operations in the Suluan area, and (b) regrouping of his own air command to better facilitate air operations.****

At 0800 Commander SW Area Force observed that the Manila area was being attacked by Allied carrier planes. He learned, some minutes later, that Laoag and Aparri in northern Luzon, Clark Field in central Luzon, the Tacloban area in Leyte, and Cebu in the Visayas were being heavily hit likewise.**

Since as early as October 10th, as has been discussed under "Operations of Commander SW Area Force 0719-2400 October 17th", he had estimated the situation and had forecast that the Allied operations at that time presaged Allied landing operations in the southern Philippines in which case attacks on Formosa and the Philippines were to be expected,***** he could not have been surprised by the strength of these air strikes, anymore than he could have been surprised by the landing operations at Suluan Island, and the sweeping operations inside Leyte Gulf.

A little later he received a report that at 0900 four minesweepers

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* Aircraft Action Report No. 11, VF-26, October 18th, 1944, no forwarding endorsement.

** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, SECOND Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

*** FIFTH Air Force Weekly Intelligence Review No. 47, October 15th - 21st, 1944.

**** C.G. FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-507, October 18th, 1944, contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

***** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 101554 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet WDC Document 161638, NA 11739

appeared to be engaged in minesweeping operations off Tacloban.* This report was correct as to operations, but there were ten minesweepers (YMS type) rather than four.**

He also received a report that at about this time a large enemy warship had gone aground off Point Bunga, Samar.* This was an incorrect report since no Allied warships were operating in the Point Bunga area except perhaps TU 77.4.3 which was an escort carrier unit. No units of this group grounded at any time.

At about 1000 he received a report, presumably from the Army, since he did not include it in his 1210 dispatch to be discussed later, that Allied operations were continuing in the Suluan area and that at 0930 about thirty Allied warships and about ten transports had been observed in the Suluan area. *** This report was incorrect since there were about thirty-eight warships of all types including one AVP in TG 77.2 which was the only force in the Suluan area at this time. There were no transports (AP's and APA's) whatsoever, although there were eleven APD's. Since these APD's appeared as destroyers to the Japanese, they have been included among the warships.

IT IS OF INTEREST THAT THE FOURTH AIR ARMY HAD ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE FOUR CARRIERS, FIVE BATTLESHIPS, THIRTY CRUISERS AND DESTROYERS AND TWENTY TRANSPORTS IN LEYTE GULF.**** WHILE THIS ESTIMATE WAS MADE LATE IN THE DAY THE FACT THAT IT DIFFERS CONSIDERABLY FROM THE NAVY ESTIMATE INDICATES THAT FULL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION WAS NOT BEING PRACTICED BY THE TWO SERVICES EITHER IN THE COMBAT AREA OR IN THE EMPIRE.

At about 1100 he received a 1030 contact report--also presumably from the Army--on an Allied carrier task group consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other ships operating about 200 miles east of Manila.*** (This was most likely TG 38.4, which at 1030 was bearing 071°(T), distant 171 miles from Manila). The contact report was therefore in error some sixty-eight miles, bearing 144°(T) from the actual position of TG 38.4. The composition of the task group was also very much in error, since TG 38.4 consisted of four carriers, two cruisers and eleven destroyers.

During the forenoon, he received word of the Allied attacks on Car Nicobar Island.*** Although Car Nicobar was within SW Area, and although he

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* CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181210 October 1944 to Flags Major Commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

** Action Report CTG 77.5, Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 28th, 1944.

*** Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

was responsible for the sea operations in the theater, he took no action, leaving any necessary naval operations to his naval commander in the area. He appears to have done this because (a) he realized that the operations were diversionary, (b) he had far greater responsibilities in the Philippine Area, and (c) he felt that his naval commander there would take any action he could within his capabilities.

Between 1131 and 1133 he received two dispatches from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet. One dispatch transferred CRUDIV SIXTEEN from the FIRST Striking Force to the SECOND Striking Force, then transferred the augmented SECOND Striking Force to the SW Area Force, and finally directed the SECOND Striking Force to refuel at Takao and proceed immediately to Manila.* The other dispatch advised him that these transfers were being made for the purpose of moving troop reinforcements to Leyte.**

At about 1140 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch to the Chiefs of Staff of the principal fleet commands giving for planning purposes, a tentative outline of future operations and setting X-day as October 24th. In this dispatch the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet stated in part that it was planned to place the SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV SIXTEEN under Commander SW Area Force for the purpose of carrying out counterlandings as the backbone of mobile over-water counterattack operations, and that it was planned to concentrate the full strength of the base air forces in the Philippines for the purpose of completely destroying the Allied carriers.***

Upon receipt of these dispatches, Commander SW Area Force consulted with C. G. FOURTEENTH Area Army**** to ascertain the number of troops immediately available for counterlanding operations.***** While the basic SHO One Plan, as pointed out earlier, did not necessarily envisage counterlanding operations coordinated with the penetration operations, it seems clear here that Commander SW Area Force, (a) because of his effort to ascertain the Army forces immediately available (b) because as a naval commander he felt that

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181101 October 1944, to Commanders FIRST Striking Force, Main Force, SECOND Striking Force (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 359), Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181103 October 1944, to Commander SW Area Force, etc., Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839

**** General Tomoyuki Yamashita, IJA.

***** Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force received April 13th, 1953 by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, Translator for World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

otherwise the SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV SIXTEEN would not have been transferred to the SW Area Force at this time but would properly have been retained within the Main Force and the FIRST Striking Force, and (c) because the counterattack operations had been included in the tentative outline for future operations,* correctly interpreted the tentative outline as anticipating such coordinated operations.

At 1210 he advised all major commands that (a) despite the bad weather conditions in the Tacloban area which denied proper reconnaissance he was virtually certain that the Allies were planning to land in the Leyte - Samar area, and (b) certain information of importance had been received (from units of his own command) which information was that (1) at 0900 four minesweepers had been observed apparently minesweeping off Tacloban, (2) a large enemy warship has gone aground off Point Bunga, Samar, and (3) Allied carrier aircraft had been ordered to attack Surigao Straits and the southern tip of Panoan Island.** It seems likely that item (3) referred to attacks on that area by Allied carrier aircraft which during the forenoon had been on anti-PT boat sweeps in this area.***

Commander SW Area Force's statement in this dispatch that the bad weather conditions in the Tacloban area had denied proper reconnaissance is somewhat startling in that the weather reports from the Allied planes on support missions in that area during the forenoon indicate that the weather over the target was quite good**** with a visibility, as early as 1015 of some thirty miles.***** It had been gradually clearing since daylight although as late as 0910 heavy rains had been encountered over the target. Thereafter it had rapidly cleared and remained so throughout the day. From this it would appear that intelligence sources available to Commander SW Area Force were employing the early morning claim of poor weather to cover their failure throughout the forenoon to obtain more definite information of the operations in the Tacloban-Dulag area.

WHILE THIS ACTION BY HIS INTELLIGENCE SOURCES DID NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE'S ESTIMATE AS TO THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS BECAUSE HIS

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181210 October 1944 to Commanders Major Commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** CTG 77.4 Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 00075, October 5th, 1944, Annex D, Appendix 3.

**** Aircraft Action Report No. 2 Composite Squadron 81 forwarded by Commanding Officer NATOMA BAY, Serial 00041, November 1st, 1944.

***** Aircraft Action Report No. 1 Composite Squadron 27 to Commanding Officer Savo Island, No Serial, November 1st, 1944.

ESTIMATE THAT THERE WOULD BE A LANDING IN THE TACLOBAN AREA WAS CORRECT, IT IS CONSIDERED IMPORTANT HERE TO STRESS AGAIN THE NECESSITY FOR MAKING ACCURATE REPORTS. SINCE THE COMMANDERS' DECISIONS ARE GENERALLY BASED ON SUCH INTELLIGENCE IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT INACCURATE INTELLIGENCE MIGHT DECISIVELY AFFECT SUCH DECISIONS.

At 1315 Commander SW Area Force executed the "P" operation.*

At about 1515 he learned that Cebu Air Bases had been attacked by about eighty Allied carrier planes which inflicted slight damage,** and at about 1530, through voice radio intercept, that the Allies had issued an order at that time directing the commencement of landing operations between Dulag and San Jose.*** This latter information was incorrect; no landing operations were commenced until two days later. However, operations were commenced at this time to investigate the underwater approaches to the planned landing beaches to insure that they were satisfactory and it is presumed that this intercepted message referred to the orders to commence these operations.****

THE FACT THAT THE JAPANESE WERE ABLE, EVEN THOUGH INCORRECTLY, TO INTERCEPT A VOICE RADIO MESSAGE FROM THE ALLIES WHICH GAVE AWAY IMPORTANT FUTURE TACTICAL INFORMATION IS A INDICTMENT OF THE ALLIED EMPLOYMENT OF THE VOICE RADIO AT THIS TIME. ACTUALLY THE CONTROL OF VOICE RADIO WITHIN A COMMAND IS A FUNCTION OF THE SENIOR FLAG OR COMMANDING OFFICER ON THE VOICE RADIO CIRCUIT. IF THERE IS POOR DISCIPLINE ON THE CIRCUIT IT (A) REFLECTS UPON THE OFFICER CONTROLLING IT (B) SLOWS COMMUNICATIONS, (C) OFTEN CAUSES CONFUSION (D) PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR DECEPTION AND (E) MAY GIVE INFORMATION TO THE ENEMY.*****

During the early afternoon, as a result of his conference with C.G. FOURTEENTH Area Army and also with CinC Southern Army, Commander SW Area Force learned that there was to be some delay in the projected counterlanding operations. He, therefore, mindful of the fact that the SECOND Striking Force had been directed to refuel at Takao and then to proceed directly to Manila, issued

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* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181315 October 1944 to Commanders SW Area Force and Combined Fleet, Action Report FIRST Striking Force SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** Material for Situation Estimates FIRST Section Naval General Staff October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** Action Report CTG 77.2 Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th - 24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

***** Employment of Communications, NWIP 16-1, Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, December 1953, paragraph 411.a.1.

dispatch instructions to that force at 1540 to standby at Mako.* In the same dispatch he directed CRUDIV SIXTEEN to standby at Brunei. Later, at 1640, his Chief of Staff advised CinC Combined Fleet as to the reason for these changes, stating that it was done because the Southern Army had not yet completed plans for moving troops.** While the Chief of Staff did not say so, it is clear that Commander SW Area, in making these changes, was motivated by the danger—the ever-present danger—of losing these ships through air attack should they be based at Manila, since air strikes had been made on the Manila area commencing at about 0800 that day, and by the fact that the oiler RYOEI MARU was scheduled to arrive at Mako on the following morning.

During the day, Commander SW Area Force learned that (a) although the FIFTH Base Air Force had sortied some seventeen aircraft, the results, insofar as damage inflicted was concerned, were disappointing (only one ship had been damaged, and that a destroyer inside Leyte Gulf),*** (b) that the FOURTH Air Army, in addition to reconnaissance missions, had made at least one attack on the ships in Leyte Gulf (this attack had been ineffective),**** (c) that a total of some 400 Allied carrier planes had attacked in the Philippines,***** (actually, exclusive of the direct support operations in the Dulag-Tacloban area of Leyte, the number of Allied sorties which made the above strikes was 685),****** and (d) that Catmon Hill had been shelled for three hours in the afternoon, probably by a cruiser.******* This was an understatement, since Catmon Hill had been shelled by a number of ships and bombed by numerous planes.

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* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181540 October 1944, to Commander SECOND Striking Force, COMCRUDIV 16 (SW Area Force DesOpOrd 662), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** CofS SW Area Dispatch 181640 October 1944, to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Appendix to Philippine Area Naval Operations Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

**** War Diary BREESE, October 18th 1944.

***** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

****** SUPRA Chapter III, Operations of CTF 38 and CTG 77.4, October 18th 1944.

******* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

At about 1802 he received CinC Combined Fleet's order activating SHO One.*

This activation of SHO One and the tentative date for X-day of October 24th were of particular importance to Commander SW Area Force, since he was required to take certain definite action with his base air forces.

This action was:

(a) to reconnoiter the movements of the Allied carrier force.** (This operation had been underway for some time).

(b) to commence the transferring and concentrating of air forces from neighboring bases. (This operation had been underway since the previous day).

(c) to concentrate the base air forces (FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces) in the Philippines.***

(d) to completely destroy the enemy carriers commencing on X-1 day (October 23rd.)****

Commander SW Area Force knew during the evening that, owing to bad weather, the SECOND Air Division, which had been ordered to attack the Allied transports engaged in landing operations off Leyte Gulf,***** had been unable to concentrate effectively at Bacolod Air Base, Negros, with the result that no strong attacks had been made.******

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944, to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet ResOpOrd 360), Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order 76, August 10th, 1944, Section VI, Outline of Operation, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, (NACHI Document).

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order 76, August 10th, 1944, Section II, Concrete Operational Policy, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, page 5 (NACHI Document).

***** C.G. FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-507, October 18th, 1944, Contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of Army Historical Division on Microfilm HS-7.

****** Philippine Air Operations Phase II, 1944-1945, First Demobilization Board, October 1946, Chapter III(A) (2) (d).

(a) Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, October 18th.

Commander FIFTH Base Air Force awaited reports of the various air searches which had been launched from Luzon. As has been discussed under "Operations of Commander SW Area Force October 18th", it seems correct to say that both the Commander FIFTH Base Air Force and the C.G. FOURTH Air Army had launched the scheduled dawn searches from Luzon but had not launched any searches from the Visayas or Mindanao, because (a) the weather conditions in the central and western Visayas were poor for flying, and (b) of the neutralizing air attacks by the FIFTH Air Force against Mindanao. Naturally, Commander FIFTH Base Air Force was primarily concerned with the location of the Allied invasion forces and of the Allied carrier task forces operating in the vicinity of the Philippines, but he was also interested in discovering the activities of the Allied forces in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf. Sometime after midnight he knew that C. G. FOURTH Air Army had issued a directive to his command ordering (a) the Air Army to employ its full strength to destroy the enemy, and in particular the enemy transports presently engaged in landing operations in the Suluan Area, and (b) regrouping of his own air command to better facilitate air operations.*

At 0800 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force knew, since he was at Manila, that that area was being attacked by Allied carrier planes. He also learned, some minutes later, that Laoag and Aparri in northern Luzon, Clark Field in central Luzon, the Tacloban Area in Leyte, and Cebu in the Visayas, were being heavily hit.**

During the forenoon he received a number of reports concerning the activities of the Allies in the Leyte - Samar area. Among these were the report that (a) at 0900 four minesweepers appeared to be minesweeping off Tacloban,*** (b) a large enemy warship had grounded off Point Bunga, Samar,*** (c) at about 0930 about thirty enemy warships and about ten transports had been observed in the Suluan area,**** and (d) at 1030 an Allied carrier task group consisting of two aircraft carriers and five other ships were operating about 200 miles east of Manila.**** (This contact was made by a two-engine land bomber which was sighted by TG 38.4 at 1025 but which escaped interception by the CAP).***** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force took action against the

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* C.G. FOURTH Air Army Operation Order A-507, October 18th, 1944, Contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

*** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181210 October 1944 to Flags Major Commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11973.

**** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

***** War Diary CTG 38.4, October 1944.

above contacts but the action was weak, consisting of but seventeen sorties, of which thirteen were against the carriers and four against the force operating inside Leyte Gulf.* Since the carriers operating off the Philippines (TG's 38.1, 38.2 and 38.4) did not report any attacks, and since the Japanese made no claims of success against the carrier task groups, it is evident that no attacks by the thirteen planes materialized.

On the other hand, the Japanese did claim success against the shipping inside Leyte Gulf. They reported that one of the four planes which attacked this shipping there had damaged a destroyer,* (This was the PREBLE, which, at 0945, was unsuccessfully attacked by two carrier-type bombers, dropping four bombs, all of which missed.)**

At about 1140 he received the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch giving, for planning purposes, a tentative outline of future operations, setting X-day as October 24th, and indicating - among other items having to do with the penetration operations - that the full strength of the base air forces was to be concentrated in the Philippines for the purpose of completely destroying the Allied carriers.*** He now knew that it was planned to move the SIXTH Base Air Force into the Philippines in full strength, where it would either operate "In cooperation" with his FIFTH Base Air Force or would be unified under Commander SIXTH Base Air Force. In preparation for this deployment of the SIXTH Base Air Force to the Philippines, Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, since he was charged with the responsibility for providing base facilities for air strength concentrated within the area over which he had control,**** commenced preparing such base facilities.

He knew in general the bases in the Philippines which Commander SIXTH Base Air Force planned to use, since that commander had included the information in his OpOrd No. 13 issued on September 27th.***** Although this order gave him something to work with, he must also have anticipated changes

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* Appendix to Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October - December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947. Department of the Army Historical Division File No. 8-5, JS-104.

** War Diary PREBLE, October 18th, 1944.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands of Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Appendix 2 to Air Combat Regulations for SHO Operations, Combined Fleet OpOrd 86, August 4th, 1944, ATIS Document No. 39 (Part VIII), June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

***** SIXTH Base Air Force OpOrd No. 13, September 27th, 1944, issued from headquarters, Southern Kyushu, File of Orders kept by Captain Bunzo Shibata, IJN, Senior Staff Officer SIXTH Base Air Force, Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-18, Item D.

depending on the effectiveness of Allied attacks, the base facilities which could be made available, and the number and types of aircraft ultimately available for deplcyment to the Philippines. The details would have to be worked out finally between himself and Commander SIXTH Base Air Force.

At about 1210, since he was at Manila, he received Commander SW Area Force dispatch 181210, wherein that commander advised all major commands that he was virtually certain that the Allies planned to land in the Leyte-Samar area.*

At about 1315 he knew that the "P" Operation had been executed by Commander SW Area Force.**

At about 1515 he learned that Cebu air bases (Cebu, Mactan and Lahug) had been under attack by about eighty carrier planes which had conducted strafing and bombing attacks commencing at 1420 and, except for the fact that the runways had been hit by two bombs, had accomplished little damage.***

The Allies claimed that in the above attacks which had been made by TG 77.4, they had destroyed sixteen planes of which two had been shot down in the air and fourteen on the ground, and destroyed three torpedo boats, one 5000-ton oiler, one submarine chaser, one oil sampan, and eight barges.**** While it seems logical to believe that there is some merit to the Allied claims concerning the destruction of at least a portion of the above aircraft, since such view is supported by the results obtained by analysis of previous Allied claims of air strike success on the Nansei Shoto, Formosa and Luzon,***** post-war reports and analyses of Japanese shipping losses do not support the Allied claims as regards the shipping losses.****** It is perhaps true that

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* CofS SW Area Dispatch 181210 October 1944, to Commanders Major Commands, War Diary ZUIKAKU, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 181315 October 1944, to Commanders FIRST Striking Force and Combined Fleet, Action Report Commander FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

*** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

**** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operations, October 12th - 29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

***** Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf (NavPers 91973) prepared by Naval War College, 1953, Discussion of Losses of Japanese Aircraft October 10th-0719 - October 17th, 1944, pages [illegible]-451.

****** "The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II," prepared by Military History Section, Special Staff, GHQ, FEC, February 1952; also "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II", prepared by Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

some small craft were sunk in these attacks, but these units were evidently too unimportant to be mentioned in the above analyses.

The Allies also claimed that TF 38 had destroyed in its attacks on Luzon (a) in the Manila area sixty-one planes in the air and eighty planes on the ground, and (b) in the Aparri - Laoag area one plane in the air and twenty-one on the ground. Therefore, the total number of planes claimed destroyed by the Allies on this day, was: (a) by TG 77.4, sixteen planes, (b) by TF 38, 163 planes, or a grand total of 179 planes. Since Japanese information concerning planes lost on this day is lacking, these claims, as on the previous day, have been evaluated on the basis of empirical factors developed in Volume I.* This evaluation gives a total of eighty-four operational aircraft lost, of which sixteen were lost by the FOURTH Air Army, and the remainder (sixty-eight) by the FIFTH Base Air Force.

These losses reduced the operational strength of the FIFTH Base Air Force to the thirty-three aircraft listed below, as recorded in Japanese documents, and the available strength to fifty-five aircraft.

At about 1533, or perhaps later, he likely knew that Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had directed that the operations for October 19th would be the same as those for October 18th; i.e., routine search and air defense, with attack units on fifteen minutes notice after 1600.**

At 1802 he received CinC Combined Fleet's order activating SHO One.***

Sometime later he learned that, as of 1800 that date, the thirty-three operational aircraft available to him to carry out the tasks assigned his command consisted of fifteen carrier-type fighters, one or two carrier-type reconnaissance bombers, two or three land attack planes, two land bombers, eleven carrier-type attack planes,**** eight of which had arrived that day.

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* War College Analysis based on claims of TG 77.4 and TF 38 as corrected by empirical factors derived from analysis. (Volume I, Battle for Leyte Gulf, (NavPers 91973) prepared by Naval War College, 1953, Discussion of Losses of Japanese Aircraft, October 10th-17th, 1944, pages 449-451.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 181503 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 79), War Diary 51st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944 to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), War Diary 101st Air Flotilla, October 1st - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160304, NA 12542.

**** Operational Aircraft Strength of FIFTH Base Air Force and FOURTH Air Army, 1800 October 18th 1944, and their Anticipated Strength for October 20th, 1944, FEC Microfilm (no number) contained in Military History Section FEC letter to Naval War College, January 10th, 1952; also Memorandum of Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa, IJN, CinC Southwest Area Fleet, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 31, Foo locker 7 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

He knew of course, that plans had been underway for some time to reinforce both the FIFTH and the SIXTH Base Air Forces, but it is likely that he did not know with certainty how effective these plans were, although the limited number of operational planes available to his command would indicate that the plans, insofar as the FIFTH Base Air Force was concerned, had not been very effective up to this time.

Naturally, he hoped that, since SHO One had been activated, there would be a marked improvement in this regard. He therefore had reason to feel somewhat encouraged when, at about 2128, he received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet wherein that commander issued instructions designed to expedite the delivery of replacement aircraft to the combat forces.*

At 2142, despite the small number of available aircraft, he issued an order for all-out attack operations.** In this order he (a) advised his command that the enemy was preparing to make a landing near Tacloban, (b) directed full strength attacks against the Allied landing force in the vicinity of Tacloban and against Allied carrier forces which were making air strikes against the northern and central Philippines, (c) directed carrier attack plane units of the 201st and 761st Air Groups and the 253rd Attack Unit (also a carrier attack plane unit) to advance to Puerto Princesa in the early morning and from there to take off at 1715 October 19th in order to attack enemy transports in the Tacloban area at dusk, and (d) directed these elements of the 201st Air Group presently at Cebu Air Bases to continue surprise attacks against enemy transports.

IT WILL BE OBSERVED THAT DESPITE HIS GENERAL REFERENCE TO BOTH TRANSPORTS AND CARRIERS AS CORRECT PHYSICAL OBJECTIVES, HE FAILED TO GIVE THE CARRIERS AS A SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE TO ANY UNIT. WHETHER THIS WAS BECAUSE HE WAS NOT CERTAIN AS TO THE ACTUAL LOCATION OF THE ENEMY CARRIER FORCE, OR WHETHER IT WAS BECAUSE, WITH THE LIMITED PLANES AVAILABLE, HE FELT THAT THE TRANSPORTS OFFERED A MORE INVITING TARGET SINCE HIS PERFORMANCES AGAINST THE CARRIERS HAD NOT BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL, IS NOT KNOWN. PERHAPS--AND THIS SEEMS LIKELY--IT WAS A COMBINATION OF THESE TWO IDEAS.

In this connection Commander FIFTH Base Air Force stated in his diary*** that, in view of the weakness of the Japanese land-based air forces

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 182058, October 1944 to Commander FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH Base Air Forces (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd No. 475), War Diary Western Attack Force ONE, October 1944, WDC Document 161644, NA 12258.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182142, October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force (FIFTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 49), Detailed Action Report No.3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378.

*** The KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps, Extracts from Private Papers of Former Japanese Officials and Officers (Diary of Vice Admiral Kimpei Teraoka, August 1st - November 1st 1944, GHQ, FEC Special Historical Collection Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 30, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Series, Volume II.)

relative to the Allied carrier air pow , it was necessary to discover some means by which this weakness might be overcome. Commander FIFTH Base Air Force stated in this regard "just so long as the power of the enemy task force remains immense, or in other words, the enemy holds control of the air, it would be most dangerous for our surface ships to go rushing in. Hence, it becomes imperative to damage if not destroy, the enemy carriers in order to cripple the use of their aircraft at the latest by the scheduled date of decisive battle, i.e., 25 October, nd thus ensure the safe conduct of our ships. However, to do this, time is running short and planes are scarce." Therefore both he and Vice Admiral Onishi discussed the problem fully throughout this day. It was during these discussions that Vice Admiral Onishi, aware that victory could not be obtained with conventional methods brought up the radically different tactic of crash-dive--an idea that he had cherished for some time. Both Commander FIFTH Base Air Force and Vice Admiral Onishi agreed that (a) in order to save the Nation there was no method other than the crash-dive which could be effective (presumably meaning in the short time available) and (b) Vice Admiral Onishi, because he was to succeed to command of the FIFTH Base Air Force immediately, should assume complete responsibility for the formation of the crash-dive attack units, later to be known as the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps.*

The necessity for forming the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps shows clearly that the Japanese air commanders were fully aware of the fact that their air attacks against TF 38 off Formosa had been ineffective.

ITS FORMATION AT THIS TIME IS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO MILITARY STRATEGISTS AND TACTICIANS. IT PRESENTS FORCIBLY THE INCONTESTABLE FACT THAT WHEN NATIONS ARE IN A WAR OF SURVIVAL IT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT, IN ORDER TO "TURN THE SCALES" IN THEIR FAVOR, THEY WILL RESORT TO METHODS OF WARFARE, NOT ONLY UNORTHODOX BUT OFTEN FANTASTIC. THEY WILL DO THIS EVEN THOUGH CONTRARY TO THE LAWS OF NATIONS AND TO ACCEPTED USAGE. IN THIS CASE, WHILE IT CANNOT BE SHOWN THAT THE EMPLOYMENT OF CRASH-DIVE TACTICS WAS CONTRARY TO SUCH LAWS IT WAS NECESSARILY MOST UNORTHODOX AND UNUSUAL. FORTUNATELY FOR THE ALLIES IT WAS NOT TO PROVE DECISIVE.

Although no further operations for Commander FIFTH Base Air Force are recorded, it can be accepted that he was feverishly expediting the preparation of airfields and their facilities for the SIXTH Base Air Force, was doing all possible to repair the damage to his important airfields done that

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* The KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps, Extracts from Private Papers of Former Japanese Officials and Officers (Diary of Vice Admiral Kimpei Teraoka, August 1st - November 1st 1944, GHQ, FEC, Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 30, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Series, Volume II).

day by Allied air strikes was making every effort to repair his damaged aircraft, was in communication with the various commanders in the Manila area--and particularly with Commander SW Area Force and C.G. FOURTH Air Army--in order to coordinate air operations, and was making plans for unexpected developments on the morrow.

(B) Operations of C.G. FOURTH Air Army, October 18th.

C.G. FOURTH Air Army spent a good part of the night preparing plans for the operations to be conducted on this day. He had to (a) evaluate the information he was receiving concerning the Allied operations in the Suluan area and elsewhere, (b) determine the number of operational planes, pilots and aircrews available, (c) learn the condition of his airfields and air facilities, (d) analyse objectives received from higher authority (e) and finally, issue instructions to his command based on the above as well as on the tasks assigned his command for the SHO One Plan.

After estimating the entire situation C.G. FOURTH Air Army sometime after midnight issued his instructions to his command. These instructions in addition to (a) advising his command that the Allies had been landing in the Suluan region since October 17th (b) assigning the SIXTEENTH Air Brigade (type 4 fighters) and the 12th Air Regiment (heavy bombers assigned temporarily for the transport of ground personnel) which were at the Clark Field area from the SECOND Air Division to the THIRTIETH Fighter Group, and (c) stating that the air army would exert its full strength to destroy the enemy, directed other action as follows:

(1) C.G. SECOND Air Division to employ its full available strength and immediately attack Allied transports engaged in landing operations in the Suluan area.

(2) C.G. SEVENTH Air Division to (a) neutralize Allied land-based air strength on Morotai; (b) conduct maximum practicable search operations in order to discover approaching enemy forces.*

(3) Commander THIRTIETH Fighter Group to advance immediately with the SIXTEENTH Air Brigade from Luzon to the Central Philippines (Visayas) and prepare for attack operations.

Meanwhile, he awaited the results of his morning searches from Luzon, which he had launched in accordance with his agreement with Commander FIFTH Base Air Force.** As has been pointed out before under "Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, October 18th", his planned searches from the

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* C.G. FOURTH Air Army Operation Order A-507, October 18th, 1944, contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

** Agreement Concerning Operations Against Enemy Task Forces, Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

Visayas and Mindanao had not been flown because of (a) the bad weather in the central and western Visayas and (b) the neutralizing air attacks by the FIFTH Air Force against Mandanao.

Since C.G. FOURTH Air Army and Commander FIFTH Base Air Force were in Manila, it is assumed that during the forenoon C.G. FOURTH Air Army received the same information as did Commander FIFTH Base Air Force concerning Allied activities.

At about 1140 he likely knew from naval sources that the Combined Fleet had received a tentative outline of future operations setting X-day as October 24th and indicating among other items that the full strength of the base air forces was to concentrate in the Philippines for the purpose of destroying the Allied carriers. This was of particular interest to him because his own forces were relatively weak and those of the FIFTH Base Air Force weaker still, and therefore, without considerable reinforcement, neither of them, either separately or in coordination, could be expected to be effective against the Allied carrier task forces which were being employed against him.

It is probable that at about 1600 he learned (a) that the enemy had ordered landing operations to be commenced between Dulag and San Jose,* and (b) that Cebu Air Base had been bombed by eighty Allied carrier-planes.

During the late afternoon he learned that Catmon Hill had been shelled by a cruiser and four minesweepers had been observed sweeping the area east of Dulag, Leyte.**

At about 1802 he learned from naval sources that CinC Combined Fleet had activated SHO One.***

Sometime later he received instructions from the Chief of the Army General Staff that SHO One was activated for the FOURTH Air Army as of 0000 October 19th.**** He immediately made preparation to concentrate his forces in accordance with prearranged plans,***** and at 2230 issued a directive to his command wherein he:

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* Material for Situation Estimate, First Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** War Diary 61st Air Flotilla October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

*** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 181732 October 1944, to Combined Fleet (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 360), Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operations, October 16th-28th, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839.

**** Imperial General Headquarters (Army Section) Order No. 1153, October 18th, 1944, Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1st Endorsement July 12th, 1953 to President of Naval War College letter Serial 1696-53, June 12th, 1953.

***** Philippine Air Operation Phase II, 1944-1945, First Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Misao Matsumae, ex-IJA) Chapter II, Section B.4.

(a) advised that SHO One had been ordered activated from 0000 October 19th

(b) issued instructions concerning the incorporation of air reinforcements into his command. He directed that upon their arrival in the Philippines (1) the FIRST and TWENTY-SECOND Air Regiments would revert to the command of the Commander THIRTIETH Fighter Group and (2) the TWENTY-FIFTH Air Brigade Headquarters, and the THIRD, FOURTEENTH and TWENTIETH Air Regiments would come under command of C.G. SECOND Air Division.

(c) directed aircraft transferring from Formosa to the Philippines to take an over-water route to the westward and, insofar as practicable, to time their flights so as to arrive at their concentration points at night.*

IT WILL BE NOTED THAT THE TIME OF ACTIVATION OF SHO ONE BY THE ARMY WAS 0000 OCTOBER 19TH, WHEREAS THAT FOR THE NAVY WAS 1701 ON THE 18TH, NEARLY SEVEN HOURS EARLIER. THE DELAY WAS NOT THE RESULT OF FAULTY COMMUNICATIONS. SUCH PROCEDURE DIFFERED MARKEDLY FROM AMERICAN PRACTICE. IN AMERICAN PRACTICE A PLAN ONCE APPROVED BY THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF WAS PLACED IN EFFECT BY THE THEATER COMMANDER (CINCPOA OR COMSOWESPAC IN THE PACIFIC) SIMULTANEOUSLY FOR ALL FORCES UNDER HIS COMMAND. ON THE OTHER HAND, IN JAPANESE PRACTICE, THERE BEING NO THEATER COMMANDERS, THE ARMY AND NAVY GENERAL STAFFS COULD AND DID ACTIVATE SHO ONE OPERATION AT DIFFERENT TIMES FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE SERVICES.

IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE AMERICAN PRACTICE WAS THE MORE CORRECT, SINCE UNDER JAPANESE PRACTICE, TWO COMMANDS IN THE SAME OPERATING AREA, SUCH AS FOURTH AIR ARMY (SOUTHERN ARMY) AND FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE (COMBINED FLEET), COULD BE OPERATING, AND IN THIS CASE DID OPERATE FOR SOME HOURS, UNDER DIFFERENT BASIC OBJECTIVES, WITH THE CONFUSION INHERENT IN SUCH A SITUATION. THE FORMER WAS OPERATING UNDER A SHO ONE ALERT; THE LATTER WAS MAKING EFFECTIVE A SHO ONE ACTIVATION. THE ALERT WAS ESSENTIALLY A STANDBY OPERATION; THE ACTIVATION WAS THE EXECUTION OF THE PLAN ITSELF.

During the day Commander FOURTH Air Army lost sixteen operational aircraft to Allied attacks which reduced his operational aircraft at 1800 to twenty-five fighters, ten light bombers, and four reconnaissance planes and thirty heavy bombers or a total of sixty-nine planes,** and his available aircraft to 115 planes.

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* C.G. FOURTH Air Army Operations Order A-509, October 18th, 1944, Contained in file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer FOURTH Air Army, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7.

** Operational Aircraft Strength of the FIFTH Base Air Force and FOURTH Air Army, 1800 October 18th, and their Anticipated Strength for October 20th, 1944, FEC Microfilm (no number) contained in Military History Section FEC Letter to Naval War College, January 10th, 1952; also Memorandum of Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa, IJN, CinC Southwest Area Fleet, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 31, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Serial Vol. II).

CHAPTER V - Allied Operations, October 19th.

(A) Operations of COMSOWESPAC, October 19th.

COMSOWESPAC in the NASHVILLE continued to advance toward Leyte Gulf in company with the transport echelon of TF 79. He appears to have taken no unusual action on this date, judging from the almost complete absence of any operational dispatches relevant to the Leyte campaign originated by him or his headquarters.* Apparently, he was satisfied that the preliminary operations by the advance force in the objective area, and the supporting operations by COMTHIRDFLT on the northern flank and CAAF SOWESPAC on the southern flank, were proceeding according to plan. As yet the enemy had not offered any appreciable opposition either by air, land or sea.

Thus far, he had received no contact reports by Allied aircraft or submarines, of any sizeable Japanese surface forces moving toward the Philippines. Insofar as he knew, the only enemy forces at sea were (a) the two heavy cruisers, one light cruiser and six destroyers, which had escaped the trap set by COMTHIRDFLT on October 16th and which had been reported by the STERLET,** and (b) the three large enemy ships in Makassar Strait contacted by the BREAM at 0300 the previous day on course 035°(T) speed twenty-three knots.*** Nevertheless, the definite whereabouts of the major portion of the Japanese fleet was not fully known although the latest intelligence information still indicated that the bulk of the enemy fleet was divided between the Empire and the Lingga-Singapore area.

At about 0100 he received an amplifying report**** from CTG 38.4 relative to the results of operations by that commander on October 18th. This report, among other things, (a) gave a resume of the successful air attacks in the central Luzon area against meager enemy resistance and (b) stated that air reconnaissance of San Bernardino Strait during the morning and afternoon had been negative.

At about 0248 he intercepted a detailed report***** from CTG 77.2 concerning the preliminary operations (October 18th) by the advance force indicating, that (a) the operations of the objective area had progressed

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* G-3 Journal, General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area, October 19th, 1944 (Microfilm).

** STERLET Dispatch 180300 October 1944 to CTF 17 and COMSUBPAC.

*** War Diary BREAM, October 18th, 1944.

**** CTG 38.4 Dispatch 181530 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPAC, COMTHIRDFLT and COMINCH.

***** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 181718 October 1944 to CTF 77, info C.G. 6th Army, COMINCH, CTF's 78 and 79, COMTHIRDFLT.

satisfactorily on that date despite the initial delay due to inclement weather on October 17th and (b) CTG 77.2 expected to commence the D-1 day schedule at daylight October 19th and complete reconnaissance of the northern beaches during the forenoon.

At about 1030 he received a second dispatch* from COMTHIRDFLT relative to possible employment of "Tokyo Express" tactics by the enemy in an attempt to reinforce his garrison forces on Leyte. This dispatch was prompted by a COMSEVENTHFLT broadcast relative to the BREAM 0300 October 18th contact report on three large enemy ships. It showed, possibly as a result of his long experience with these tactics in the Solomons campaign, and expressed two days earlier to COMSOWESPAC,** that COMTHIRDFLT believed that enemy troop reinforcements would be made by "Tokyo Express" method. It will be recalled that as a consequence of COMTHIRDFLT's first mention of "Tokyo Express" COMSOWESPAC had directed CAAF SOWESPAC to maintain a special reconnaissance watch over Balabac Strait during the nights of October 18th and 19th and to continue night PBY searches over the Sulu Sea.*** COMSOWESPAC took no action on COMTHIRDFLT's second dispatch, because he considered that the searches previously directed by him were sufficient to protect the southern flank.

At about 1656 he received via CINCPAC a contact report made by a FOURTEENTH Air Force China-based search plane over the South China Sea which reported sighting at 1405 an enemy naval task force consisting of one carrier, two cruisers and three destroyers in Latitude 18°-40'N, Longitude 112°-11'E, course 330°(T), speed twenty-five knots.**** Sometime after this and probably about 2023 he likely received a contact report by the TRIGGER, which reported sighting at 1400 in Latitude 25°-30'N, Longitude 122°-45'E, (fifty-two miles on bearing 057°(T) from the northeastern tip of Formosa) four enemy heavy cruisers and five destroyers on course 270°(T), speed sixteen knots.*****

During the evening he received COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 11 issued by his headquarters at Hollandia cancelling SOWESPAC Zone Notices No. 8 and No. 10 which had established a temporary Submarine Patrol Zone around Tawi Tawi.******

At about 2138 he received a summary report of the air operations on October 19th by CTG 38.4 which stated that (a) much damage and destruction

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190100 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC and COMSEVENTHFLT, info CINCPAC, COMINCH, All TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170909 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC.

*** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 180626 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT and COMTHIRDFLT, etc.

**** CINCPAC Dispatch 190726 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, COMTHIRDFLT, TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

***** TRIGGER Dispatch 190715 October 1944 to COMSUBPAC, info COMTHIRDFLT.

****** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 190630 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC and CANF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA.

had been accomplished against enemy shipping in Manila Bay (b) no enemy air opposition had been encountered except for sixteen fighters on the earlier morning fighter-sweep over Manila, and (c) the morning and later afternoon reconnaissance flights over San Bernardino Strait had produced negative results.*

At about 2237 he received COMTHIRDFLT's answer** to C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force query, relayed by COMNAVGRPCHINA and CINCPAC, as to how much longer the searches over the South China Sea by China-based search planes would be required. Since he took no action at this time, he thereby gave tacit approval to COMTHIRDFLT's reply that these searches would be vital as long as the activity and movement of the enemy continued. Enemy activity and movement then known to both COMSOWESPAC and COMTHIRDFLT consisted mainly of three widely scattered contacts, viz, (1) three large ships reported by the BREAM at 0300 the day before in Makassar Strait, (2) three cruisers and six destroyers sighted by the STERLET off Amami O Shima at 1115 also on the previous day, and later by the TRIGGER at 1400 this day off the northeastern tip of Formosa, reported as four heavy cruisers and five destroyers, (3) one carrier, two cruisers and three destroyers 120 miles southeast of Hainan Island also on this day by the FOURTEENTH Air Force search plane. Since these forces were hardly large enough to suggest an enemy surface encounter of major proportions, it is likely that COMSOWESPAC concurred with COMTHIRDFLT's concept that the enemy might attempt to reinforce the Leyte garrison by "Tokyo Express" tactics.

At about 2259 he received COMTHIRDFLT's orders to keep TF 38 intact while awaiting developments, with the cancellation of all existing orders for the various task groups to retire to Ulithi and Manus for logistic replenishment, emergency upkeep and repair.*** He was no doubt pleased that COMTHIRDFLT had taken appropriate action to cope with the enemy situation then developing on the seas north, west and south of the objective area, and felt confident that that commander would carry out his task of providing covering support to the Leyte operation.

Finally at about 2332, he received CTG 77.2's dispatch reporting that the beach reconnaissance of the northern beaches had been completed and that no mines or other underwater obstacles had been found.**** The stage was now set for the main assault and landing on D-day.

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* CTG 38.4 Dispatch 191208 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info CINCPAC, COMTHIRDFLT, COMSEVENTHFLT, etc.

** COMTHIRDFLT's Dispatch 191307 October 1944 to CINCPAC, info COMSOWESPAC, CTF 38.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191329 October 1944 to CTF 38 and all TGC's of TF 38, info COMINCH, COMSOWESPAC, CINCPAC, CTG 30.3, etc.

**** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 191402 October 1944 to C.G. 6th Army, COMTHIRDFLT, and CTF's 77, 78, and 79.

(1) Operations of Commander SEVENTH Fleet, October 19th.

Commander SEVENTH Fleet took no unusual action this day as COMSEVENTH Fleet, nor in his capacity as CANF SOWESPAC, insofar as the Leyte operation was concerned.

During the day he had received a number of dispatches from COMTHIRDFLT relative to the operations of the THIRD Fleet. Whereas most of these dispatches, which are discussed under "Operations of COMTHIRDFLT, October 19th," were concerned with the movements of THIRD Fleet units one of them was of unusual interest in that it pointed out the possibility of short, fast unheralded Tokyo Express runs. This was COMTHIRDFLT's second caution relative to Tokyo Express runs.

COMSEVENTHFLT took no action in this matter, because he considered that the extended air searches then underway over the southern flank as directed by COMSOWESPAC, together with the Allied air searches from Palau and Tinian and the covering operations of COMTHIRDFLT to the north, plus the China-based searches over the South China Sea, and the disposition of Allied submarines, were suitable to provide early and positive detection of any Japanese surface forces that might attempt to penetrate the objective area.

During the evening he received COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 11 which cancelled COMSOWESPAC Zone Notices No. 8 and No. 10.* Unfortunately, this Zone Notice, like Zone Notice No. 10, was not relayed to CTF 71 with the result that that commander did not know that the Submarine Patrol Zone around Tawi Tawi had been cancelled.

(a) Operations of CTF 77, (Central Philippines Attack Force) October 19th.

CTF 77 appears to have been satisfied with the preliminary developments thus far in the Leyte operation, for he did not send any important messages or otherwise take any pertinent action on October 19th. He realized that his forces were now fully committed and that the operation had to proceed as planned. He still had no knowledge as to the extent or results of air operations in the Mindanao area by CAAF SOWESPAC in protection of the southern flank, although he had requested information in this regard two days earlier.** On the other hand, he was pleased with the supporting operations by COMTHIRDFLT on the northern flank of the objective area, since he had been receiving summaries and periodic reports of the successful strikes by TF 38 aircraft against Luzon, the latest of which he received from CTG 38.4 at about 0100 this day informing him of (a) the fruitful results of the attacks on October 18th against enemy aircraft and shipping in the Manila area, and (b)

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* COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 190630 October 1944 to CANF SOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC, info CINCPOA.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 170401 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, info C.G. FIFTH Air Force, All TFC's and TGC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets, etc.

the negative results of the morning and afternoon air searches over San Bernardino Strait.*

At about 0248 he received a report from CTG 77.2 which indicated among other things that (a) D-2 day operations off the southern beaches had progressed according to plan, (b) the D-1 day schedule would be commenced at daylight and a complete reconnaissance of the northern beaches made during the forenoon, (c) the gulf was free of mines except in Area SWEEP, (d) except for two desultory air attacks Japanese air reaction had been negligible, and (e) guerrillas reported that nearly all Japanese aircraft in Leyte had been destroyed, and there were no motor torpedo boats in the gulf.**

This dispatch was highly gratifying to CTF 77. He had known that as a result of bad weather almost the whole of October 17th had been lost and therefore the load on the advance forces would necessarily be much greater in order to accomplish adequately the advance force tasks prior to D-day. He had known, of course, through COMSOWESPAC's intelligence estimate of the previous day, that the Japanese opposition, particularly air opposition, was expected to be negligible. Here now was confirmation of that estimate.

At about 1030 he received COMTHIRDFLT's dispatch warning him in regard to possible "Tokyo Express" tactics by the Japanese in an attempt to make a counterlanding on Leyte, but he, like COMSOWESPAC, either considered that adequate protective measures were being taken or did not attach the same significance to the reference contact report as did COMTHIRDFLT, for he took no action.***

Also at about 1030 he received word from CTG 77.2 that the destroyer ROSS had struck two mines, believed to have been floaters, in the main swept channel near Point "F" at 0135, and was out of action, although prospects for salvaging seemed good.****

At about 1645 he received the report of an enemy force off northern Formosa heading toward the South China Sea,***** and at about 1656 he received the same contact report as COMSOWESPAC and COMTHIRDFLT regarding the enemy task force sighted off Hainan Island,****** but since he took no action,

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* CTG 38.4 Dispatch 181530 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, info COMTHIRDFLT COMSEVENTHFLT, CINCPAC, COMINCH.

** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 181718 October 1944 to CTF 77, info COMTHIRDFLT, COMINCH, C.G. SIXTH Army, CTF's 78 and 79.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190100 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, all TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

**** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 190104 October 1944 to CTF 77, info CTF 79, COMTHIRDFLT, CINCPAC and COMINCH.

***** TRIGGER Dispatch 190715 October 1944 to COMSUBPAC, info to COMTHIRDFLT.

****** CINCPAC Dispatch 190726 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, COMTHIRDFLT, all TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

even so much as to advise his advance force commander at the objective area, he no doubt shared the same views as both COMSOWESPAC and COMTHIRDFLT, viz., the Japanese might attempt to reinforce the Leyte garrison by "Tokyo Express" tactics. He appears to have felt that the composition of these two widely scattered contacts and the composition of the BREAM contact reported in Makassar Strait on the previous day, was not such as to impose a threat to the landing; in fact, should the enemy attempt to penetrate the objective area with the meager forces thus far reported, the six battleships, six cruisers and sixteen destroyers in TG 77.2 and the air attack potential in the twelve escort carriers of TG 77.4 should be ample to repulse such a thrust, without even considering the support and covering operations by the THIRD Fleet.

At about 2237 he received a copy of COMTHIRDFLT's reply to C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force's query as to how much longer the searches between Huiling Island and Lingayen would be required.* In view of the above contacts, he like COMSOWESPAC, no doubt concurred with COMTHIRDFLT's opinion that these searches were vital as long as the activity and movement of the enemy continued at its present tempo.

At about 2259 he received information that COMTHIRDFLT, in view of the enemy contacts in Makassar Strait, off northern Formosa and Hainan Island, had decided to keep TF 38 intact and had cancelled all existing orders for the various task groups to retire to Ulithi and Manus.**

At about 2332 he received word from CTG 77.2 that reconnaissance of the northern beaches had been completed with negative results in regard to enemy mines or other underwater obstructions.*** This report signified the successful conclusion of the pre-D-day operations by the advance force. The objective area was now ready for the D-day assault and landing.

* * *

During the course of the day he received four dispatches from CTG 78.5 (Commander Harbor Entrance Control Group) relative to tide and current data in Leyte Gulf, navigational aids established, swept area data, and other entrance information. The gist of these dispatches was that: (a) actual current conditions approximated those predicted, (b) navigational lights had been established for approach echelons on Dinagat Island and Homonhon Island, and (c) since that portion of Area SWEEP of Main Channel and to northward was not safe he recommended that D-day groups entering Leyte Gulf stay close to the north point of Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP and

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191307 October 1944 to CINCPAC, info COMSOWESPAC and CTF 38.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191329 October 1944 to CTF 38 and all TGC's of TF 38, info COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, etc.

*** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 191402 October 1944 to C.G. SIXTH Army, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF's 77, 78, 79, etc.

(d) be escorted by minesweepers.* Item (c) was a relay from TG 77 5.

He also received an information dispatch from CAAF SOWESPAC passing for action to C.G. FIFTH Air Force CTF 77's dispatch 170401 to CAAF SOWESPAC requesting a report on the scheduled air strikes against the Mindanao area.**

In view of the fact that the recommendation of CTG 78.5 (c) above was at a considerable variance from the plan and since strong ebb tides of from four to five knots were expected which tides would oppose and delay the progress of the slower vessels through the entrance into Leyte Gulf, CTF 77 awaited a recommendation from his advance force commander (CTG 77.2). This recommendation, which arrived at about 1821 and concurred with that of CTG 78.5, was to the effect that since only that portion of Area SWEEP south of the main channel to Desolation Point had been cleared of mines the entering ships should stay close to the north point of Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP then via the main channel to the transport areas. CTF 77 now decided that his forces could enter the gulf safely providing they followed CTG 77.2's recommendation. He therefore issued no modifications to the basic plan feeling confident that his subordinate commanders would, in the absence of specific entry instructions from himself, automatically comply with the recommendations of the advance force commander.

(1) Operations of Advance Force, October 19th.

(a) Operations of CTG 77.2*** (Bombardment and Fire Support Group).

At the beginning of October 19th, TG 77.2 was steaming in night cruising disposition on various courses at eight knots in the retirement area between the southern landing beaches and Hibuson Island.

CTG 77.2 was making preparations to resume bombardment of the southern beach area and start bombardment of the northern beach area. His destroyers were to support the UDT's off the northern beaches, cover the in-shore minesweeping operations off both the northern and the southern beaches, and screen to the seaward of the heavy bombardment ships, while the latter provided off-shore support and scheduled bombardment against enemy beach defenses. His heavy ships had been assigned gunfire positions about three miles off-shore in accordance with Plate "XV".

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* CTG 78.5 Dispatches 190359, 190618, 190958 and 191212 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78, 79.

** CAAF SOWESPAC Dispatch 190444 October 1944 to C.G. FIFTH Air Force info CTF 77.

*** All information here, except as otherwise indicated, obtained from Action Report CTG 77.2 (COMCRUDIV 4), Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

At 0135 he learned that the ROSS which, with the ROBINSON, was escorting the minesweepers had several minutes earlier struck a floating mine one mile south of Point "F" in the entrance to the Tacloban-Dulag approach channel. He immediately ordered the CHICKASAW to stand-by her.

At 0205 he designated 0550 as ZERO hour for bombardment of the southern beaches and directed Groups ABLE and BAKER of Fire Support Unit SOUTH to fire alternately every two and one-half hours commencing with Group BAKER. This was done to provide rest for the gun crews and opportunity to service cruiser and battleship spotting aircraft. He also directed Commander Fire Support Unit NORTH to designate ZERO hour for his unit, and suggested 0700 as an approximate time.*

At 0210 he learned that the ROSS had at 0155 struck a second floating mine and had lost all power.

The mining of the ROSS was of considerable concern since it showed that it was unwise to retire the minesweepers at night as far as Area SWEEP, and further pointed out the serious danger from floating mines especially in the vicinity of Area SWEEP. This casualty, and the lack of casualties to TG 77.2 inside the gulf now showed him that his decision not to retire the heavy ships outside the gulf at night as originally planned had been sound.

At 0218 he advised CTF 77 of the operations which had been undertaken on October 18th. He reported, in part, that (1) the weather was excellent, (2) landing on Homonhon Island had been unopposed, (3) he had commenced exploratory sweeps of Areas DRUM and DOG and clearance sweeps of the transport areas with all sweeps negative, (4) his original report of Area SWEEP had been in error, that the sweep was only 50% complete with sixty mines swept, (5) Group ABLE Fire Support Unit SOUTH had passed through the mine field and had made reconnaissance of all southern beaches with negative results, (6) the remainder of the bombardment Group had entered the gulf before sunset, (7) the gulf was believed free of mines except Area SWEEP, (8) air attacks on command had been desultory and light, (9) the guerillas reported (a) nearly all Japanese aircraft destroyed Leyte (b) no motor torpedo boats in gulf, (c) Japanese troops concentrated Tacloban, (d) no Japanese in Panaon, and finally (10) that he expected to commence D-1 day schedule at daylight and complete reconnaissance of the northern beaches during the forenoon.**

Dawn came at 0517 and the weather continued favorable, with one to two-tenths low scattered clouds at 1500 feet, five to six tenths high scattered clouds above 10,000 feet, good visibility, light variable winds three to six knots, sea calm.

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* Action Report CALIFORNIA, Participation in Operations off Island of Leyte, October 19th-24th, 1944, Serial 0025, November 18th, 1944.

** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 181718 October 1944 to CTF 77, info CTF's 78 and 79, C.G. SIXTH Army and COMTHIRDFLT.

At 0527 he detached Group BAKER of Fire Support Unit SOUTH to continue the bombardment of the southern beach areas between Tolosa and Abuyog commenced the previous afternoon. Commander Group BAKER in the HONOLULU then departed the disposition with Group BAKER and proceeded to the firing area.

At 0546 he detached Fire Support Unit NORTH which was to conduct bombardment and underwater reconnaissan e off the northern beaches. Commander Fire Support Unit NORTH (CTU 77.2.1) in the MISSISSIPPI, with Fire Support Unit NORTH then departed the disposition and, followed by UDT Unit NORTH, proceeded towards the firing area.

He was now left with Group ABLE of Fire Support Unit SOUTH which unit he commanded as CTU 77.2.2. This group was to alternate with Group BAKER in the bombardment of the southern beaches. Since Group BAKER was to open fire first, CTG 77.2, as Commander Group ABLE, maneuvered to the seaward of that group awaiting his firing time.

His two support units operated as follows:

(1) TU 77.2.2, (Fire Support Unit SOUTH).

At 0550 Group BAKER less WELLES commenced its scheduled bombardment. At 0835 Group ABLE, which had relieved Group BAKER, continued the bombardment from the firing stations vacated by Group BAKER. This rotation of fire by these two groups continued throughout the day with the bombardment groups alternating every two and one-half hours. At about 0900 CTU 77.2.2 realizing the necessity for increased fire power in order to reduce enemy opposition to UDT Operations, directed the CLAXTON and the ALBERT W. GRANT to report to Commander Fire Support Unit NORTH for duty.

At this point it seems important to digress a moment from the discussion of the bombardment to discuss a situation which arose concerning Filipino citizens and the actions of CTG 77.2 relating thereto. It seems that during the forenoon CTU 77.2.2, as CTG 77.2, received word from a number of his small craft, such as minesweepers, that they had taken aboard Filipino "patriots" who wished to give information on the enemy, and desired to confer with the commander of the advance forces.

Since the LOUISVILLE had been the only ship in its area attacked by enemy planes CTG 77.2 grew suspicious.

At 1252 he received four of these "patriots" on board the flagship and had them interrogated by his Chief of Staff. In view of the fact that at least one of them appeared of doubtful character, and in further view of the fact the "patriots" had probably already learned that the main landing was to occur on the following day, CTG 77.2 decided to retain them on board all ships until after the landing, lest the disloyal "patriots" inform the Japanese of the landing plans. He immediately ordered that (a) all

"patriots" were to be retained on board until he had had an opportunity to interrogate them. Actually he did not plan to interrogate them, but merely desired to retain them for "safe keeping" until after the landings had been effected, and (b) no more "patriots" were to be taken aboard any ship in the area.*

THE ABOVE ACTION OF CTG 77.2 WAS CORRECT FOR TWO REASONS: (A) THE "PATRIOTS" WERE CITIZENS OF AN AMERICAN POSSESSION AND THEREFORE INTERNATIONAL LAW DID NOT APPLY AND (B) CTG 77.2 FELT THAT HE HAD SUFFICIENT REASON TO SUSPECT THAT THERE WERE, AMONG THE "PATRIOTS," SOME ENEMY AGENTS WHO MIGHT GIVE INFORMATION TO THE ENEMY CONCERNING THE ALLIED LANDINGS PLANS. IT IS A WELL-KNOWN TENET OF GENERAL INTERNATIONAL LAW THAT A BELLIGERENT HAS THE RIGHT BY THE EMPLOYMENT OF ADEQUATE MEANS TO PREVENT ANY PERSONS FROM GIVING INFORMATION TO THE ENEMY.**

THE VALIDITY OF CTG 77.2'S ACTION IN THIS CASE WAS NOT AFFECTED BY THE FACT THAT THE JAPANESE "PUPPET" GOVERNMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES HAD DECLARED WAR AGAINST THE UNITED STATES SINCE THE "PUPPET" GOVERNMENT WAS NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE UNITED STATES.***

Now to return to the bombardment!

All firing by groups ABLE and BAKER was completed at 1715. Fire Support Unit SOUTH then withdrew to its night retirement area.

Due to meager intelligence concerning suitable military targets, area firing was employed. However, when the spotting planes sighted important military targets not visible to the ships because of foliage and trees, those targets were taken under fire. This resulted in almost complete reliance being placed on the reports from the spotting planes.

(2) TU 77.2.1,**** (Fire Support Unit NORTH).

At 0546 CTU 77.2.1 in the MISSISSIPPI with TU 77.2.1, plus WELLES followed by UDT Unit NORTH departed TG 77.2 and proceeded to his

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* Statement by Commodore R. W. BATES, USN (Ret), Chief of Staff TU 77.2, March 9th, 1954.

** War Department Field Manual 27-10 (FM 27-10) October 1st, 1940, Chapter 6, paragraph 202 (a) pages 57-58; Instructions for the Navy of the United States governing Maritime Warfare, June 1917, paragraphs 78, and 79.

*** Wilson and Tucker International Law, Ninth Edition (New York 1935), pages 48-49.

**** Action Report CTU 77.2.1 (COMBATDIV 3) Bombardment and Fire Support Mission on Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, Serial 0166, October 29th, 1944; Action Report CTG 77.6, Leyte Island Operations, Philippine Islands, Serial 0084, November 19th, 1944; Action Report UDT 6, Report of Underwater Demolition Team 6, Leyte Island Operation, Serial 02-44 October 23rd, 1944; Action Report UDT 9, Leyte Operation, No serial, November 3rd, 1944; also Action Report UDT 10, Assault Landing, Leyte Island, Serial 02, October 24th, 1944.

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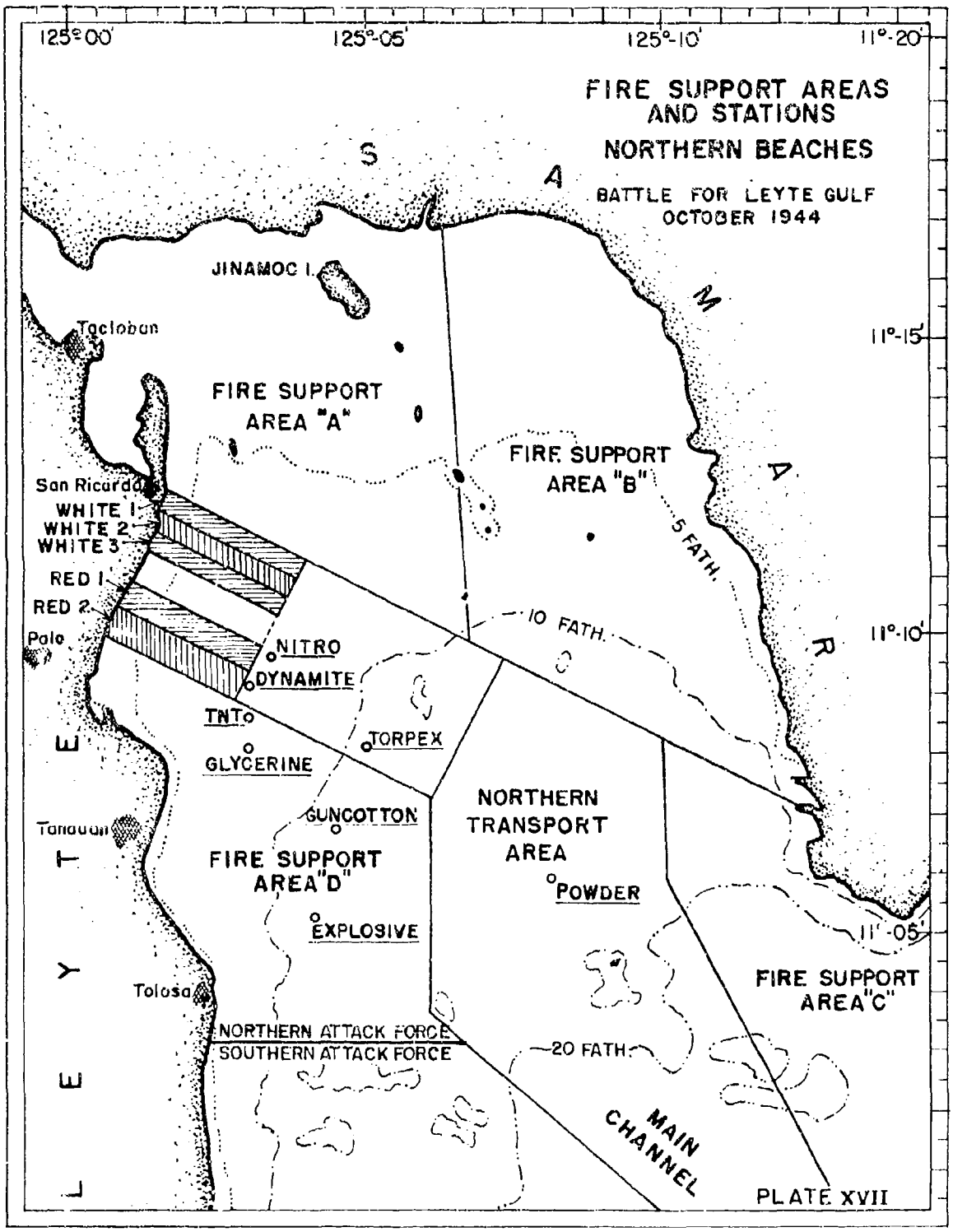

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fire support area (Plate XVII) where he planned to conduct bombardment and underwater reconnaissance of the northern beaches. Arriving in his fire support area about 0840 he commenced his scheduled bombardment at 0900. At 1000 he was reinforced by the CLAXTON and the ALBERT W. GRANT which were to be employed in close fire support for UDT operations.

After about two hours of preliminary bombardment by the MISSISSIPPI, WEST VIRGINIA and MARYLAND, the in-shore bombardment group consisting of the AULICK, CONY, SIGOURNEY, WELLES, CLAXTON, and ALBERT W. GRANT, proceeded with the BROOKS, CLEMSEN and RATHBURNE toward gunfire support positions 3,000 to 4,000 yards off the landing beaches, and at 1115 commenced close-range bombardment.

At 1130 the UDT personnel commenced reconnoitering their respective beach areas, which task they completed successfully at 1540. Thereupon the APD's and supporting destroyers were withdrawn to join the heavier ships of TU 77.2.1.

TU 77.2.1 completed bombardment at 1615, and retired from the fire support area.*

The bombardment of the northern beaches, like that of the southern beaches seemed only reasonably effective, due to the lack of visible targets. Slow, deliberate, indirect, area fire was employed. No enemy fire was directed at the heavy ships, although the UDT's, APD's and supporting destroyers drew intense and sporadic small arms, mortar and light artillery fire. In fact, so intense was the nature of this fire that the destroyer AULICK received several hits and one UDT had to be temporarily withdrawn from WHITE Beach at 1141 when one LCPR was sunk, killing one and wounding eleven embarked personnel. Reconnaissance was resumed at 1500 after the light batteries had been silenced by the battleships, destroyers and APD's. The destroyers supporting the UDT'S in the morning remained too far off shore for maximum effective employment of their forty-millimeter guns (their best weapon for eliminating enemy small arms and mortar fire), in order to avoid unswept mineable waters and to stay clear of the minesweepers operating off the beaches.

As a result of the above bombardments CTG 77.2 claimed having destroyed numerous mortar batteries. No enemy counterfire was observed and no heavy enemy batteries were found.

At about 1612 CTG 77.2 received a dispatch relayed from CTG 78.5 (Harbor Entrance Control Group) wherein that commander, in view of conditions found in Area SWEEP, recommended that the high-speed

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* Action Report MISSISSIPPI, Bombardemnt of Leyte, Philippine Island, October 19th-20th, 1944, Serial 0139, November 23rd, 1944.

minesweepers precede TF 78 and other groups which were to enter the gulf commencing at 2300.*

While considering what action to recommend on this dispatch he received at 1719 a report, and a recommendation, from CTG 77.5, The report was that (a) no mines had been found in transport or fire support areas, or near landing beaches (b) 113 mines had been swept in Area SWEEP on this day bringing the total to 186 for the three days (c) that portion of Area SWEEP south of the main channel was considered safe, but the main channel and that portion of Area SWEEP to the northward was not safe. The recommendation was that entering ships stay close to Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP thence via main channel to the transport areas.

CTG 77.2 now re-estimated the situation. The problems facing him were (a) should he accept CTG 77.5's implied recommendation that the Allied assault shipping be permitted to enter via the southern swept channel or (b) should he recommend D-day be delayed until Area SWEEP had been completely swept?

He decided that since there still remained a swept area sufficiently wide (about seven miles) south of the main channel which could be considered safe of moored mines and which was navigable by the incoming task forces and groups, it would be wise to maintain the scheduled landing date and to bring in the assault shipping as per schedule. He also decided that it would (a) be unwise for the incoming shipping to pass through Area SWEEP to the northward of the main channel because that area had not been swept, and (b) it would be wise for it to pass through Area SWEEP south of the main channel since this area had been cleared sufficiently to be considered safe. He therefore, at 1751 advised CTF 77 to this effect, as follows:

"Area SWEEP not clear of mines. That portion of Area SWEEP south of main channel to Desolation Point, Dinagat Island, considered safe of moored mines. Ships entering stay close to north point Dinagat until clear of Area SWEEP, thence via channel to transport area."**

CTG 77.2'S ACTION IN MAKING THIS RECOMMENDATION IS CONSIDERED SOUND. IT WAS HIS DUTY, AS THE COMMANDER ADVANCE FORCE, TO KEEP HIS IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR--IN THIS CASE CTF 77--CONSTANTLY INFORMED AS TO THE DEVELOPING SITUATION AND OF HIS OPINIONS RELATING THERETO SO THAT CTF 77, ON WHOM THE ULTIMATE DECISION LAY, MIGHT HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE ANY DECISIONS NECESSARY ON THE PREMISES. THIS IS WHAT IS KNOWN AS MAKING CONSTRUCTIVE REPRESENTATIONS. WHILE IN THIS CASE HE DID NOT ACTUALLY WORD HIS DISPATCH IN THE FORM OF A RECOMMENDATION BUT INSTEAD WORDED IT AS AN ACCEPTED FACT, IT WAS, NEVERTHELESS, A RECOMMENDATION SINCE IT WAS A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE FROM THE BASIC PLAN AND MIGHT NOT BE ACCEPTED BY CTF 77.

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* CTG 78.4 Dispatch 190642 October 1944 to CTG 77.2.
** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 190851 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78, 79.

At 1800, the NORTH and SOUTH Fire Support and UDT Units having rendezvoused, he formed a night cruising disposition in the retirement area south of the Tacloban-Dulag approach channel. He assigned the RICHARD P. LEARY and HALFORD to duty as night harassing units for the southern beaches, and the CONY and SIGOURNEY as the night harrassing units for the northern beaches. Meanwhile, the YMS units and the SAN CARLOS (AVP) anchored in shallow water in the northern sector of the southern transport area.

At 1845 he decided that the recommendation of CTG 78.5 that minesweepers precede TF 78 and other groups was sound and therefore directed CTG 77.5 to have MINDIV ONE meet TG 79.1 between Points REB and FIN at 2300 and conduct them through the minefield.* It is presumed that he meant by TG 79.1 the leading elements of TF 79, i.e. the Tractor Group of TG 79.1 and 79.2 which were due by plan to reach Point FIN at 2300.

At 2302 he sent a detailed dispatch report to CTF 77 on the results of the reconnaissance of the northern beaches, which in essence stated that no mines or other underwater obstacles had been found and that the beaches were ready for landing.**

It is of interest that during this day enemy resistance in the air to the advance operations in the objective area had been as meager as that on the ground, and had consisted solely of six sporadic and uncoordinated attacks--undetected by radar--against advance force units at the entrance and west central areas of Leyte Gulf as follows:

(1) At 1204 one carrier-type bomber dropped a bomb close aboard the disabled ROSS, causing negligible damage.***

(2) At 1447 one enemy plane dropped two bombs in the vicinity of the ARIADNE, CROSBY and HUGHES--no damage.****

(3) At 1555 four enemy planes attacked Sweep Unit SEVEN in Area DRUM--no damage.*****

(4) At 1700 one carrier-type fighter bombed BLACK Beach ONE and the ARIADNE--both bombs missed targets.******

(5) At 1712 one enemy carrier-type bomber endeavored to attack the LOUISVILLE, but owing to the force of its dive, disintegrated in

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* CTG 77.2 Dispatch 190945 October 1944 to CTG 77.5.
** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 191402 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78, 79.
*** Action Report ROSS, Operations Against Leyte, Serial 002, November 1st, 1944.
**** Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated, probably early November 1944.
***** Action Report CTG 77.2 (COMCRUDIV 4), Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.
****** War Diary ARIADNE, October 19th, 1944.

mid air. This plane had been entirely unobserved and might have made a full hit had it not disintegrated. CTG 77.2, noting this fact, said, "Someone is holding a parasol over me."* The bomb fell short and landed close aboard the RICHARD P. LEARY.

(6) At 1714 three enemy carrier-type bombers attacked Sweep Unit ONE in the middle of Area SWEEP, dropping six small bombs (about 100 kg.) close aboard the HOVEY, with negative results.**

In addition, at 1248 an enemy two-engine land-bomber, probably on a reconnaissance mission, was sighted and fired upon by the KILTY with negative results, in the vicinity BLACK Beach ONE.***

The five planes which attacked between 1700 and 1714 above were variously reported by individual commands as enemy carrier-type fighters carrying bombs. It therefore seems likely, although for reasons not explained they required about three and one-half hours instead of the normal two and one-half hours to reach the objective area, that these planes were the "one carrier-type bomber and four fighters armed with bombs" launched by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force from Mabalacat Field at 1300 against surface ships in Leyte Gulf.****

THE ABILITY OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT TO PENETRATE THE OBJECTIVE AREA UNDETECTED, MAKE THEIR ATTACKS, AND THEN ESCAPE PRACTICALLY UNSCATHED DEMONSTRATES THAT IN THE PROXIMITY OF SURROUNDING LAND MASSES ALLIED AIR COVER, FIGHTER DIRECTION AND FIRE CONTROL SYSTEMS THEN CURRENT WERE INADEQUATE. THE ATTACKS DEVELOPED SO QUICKLY THAT THE CAP COULD NOT BE VECTORED TO MAKE AN INTERCEPTION, NOR COULD THE ANTIAIRCRAFT FIRE CONTROL SYSTEMS PROVIDE THE NECESSARY ACCURACY AND VOLUME OF FIRE. FORTUNATELY, BY THIS TIME, THE ALLIED AIR STRIKES AGAINST THE PHILIPPINES HAD SO WEAKENED THE JAPANESE AIR POWER THERE THAT IT WAS NOT ABLE TO LAUNCH ANY ATTACKS IN MASS. IN FACT THE JAPANESE FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE HAD BEEN REDUCED TO ABOUT FORTY AND THE FOURTH AIR ARMY TO ABOUT FIFTY-FIVE OPERATIONAL PLANES BY THE END OF THE DAY.

(b) Operations of CTG 77.4 (Escort Carrier Group), October 19th.

In compliance with his basic directive from CTF 77 to strike the western Visayas D-3 through D-1 days,***** CTG 77.4 decided to

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* Statement by CTG 77.2 to Captain R. W. Bates, USN, Chief of Staff, TG 77.2 October 19th. 1944.

** War Diaries HAMILTON, HOVEY, LONG, PALMER and SOUTHARD, October 19th, 1944.

*** Action Report KILTY, Dinagat Operation, Serial 0271044, October 27th, 1944.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division File 8-6, JS-104.

***** CTF 77 Dispatch 170358 October 1944 to CTG's 77.4 and 77.2, info COMTHIRDFLT, all TFC's SEVENTHFLT, all TGC's THIRDFLT, etc.

attack the islands of this group which he had not been able to reach the previous day because of adverse weather conditions. In view of the fact that he had struck Cebu on October 18th, and the C.G. FIFTH Air Force was scheduled to attack Cebu on the 19th,* he launched strikes against Negros and Panay only as follows:

Time	Composition	Sorties
0630	48 VF, 24 VT	72
1230	28 VF, 15 VT	43
	Total Sorties	125

The above strikes, being among the first over the western Visayas, were mainly exploratory, their purpose being to determine and destroy the enemy's air strength in operational fields and aircraft in this area. As will be shown later in the summary of strike results, they revealed no enemy air activity of any importance in the western Visayas, and likewise no enemy shipping of consequence in the area.

In addition to the above exploratory strikes, he launched strikes against the Tacloban-Dulag area in support of the bombardment groups and UDT units. For this purpose, he maintained on call over the objective area from 0615 until 1730 an air support group of twenty-eight VF and fourteen VT. He also provided over the target area a TASP of four VT and a TCAP of thirty-six VF from 0615 until 1730, and a dusk TCAP of twelve VF from 1700 until 1820. In addition, during the afternoon he launched a photographic flight (one VT) to photograph the results of the beach bombardment by TG 77.2.**

Over each of his three task units, he stationed a four-VF CAP and a four-VT ASP from dawn until sunset.**

Favorable flying conditions prevailed in the sea operating areas throughout the day, with southerly winds of eight to eleven knots, partly cloudy skies, visibility six miles, increasing to twelve miles after 1600. The sun rose at 0621 and set at 1814.*** Over the target area the weather was clear, with visibility about thirty miles.****

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* Weekly Intelligence Review No. 47, October 18th-21st, 1944, Headquarters FIFTH Air Force, Assistant Chief of Staff, A-2.

** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operations, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

*** Action Report MANILA BAY, Operations in Support of Occupation of Leyte, October 12th-30th, 1944, Serial 0103, November 2nd, 1944.

**** Action Report NATOMA BAY, Leyte Operation, October 18th-29th, 1944, Serial 00041, November 1st, 1944.

The morning strike was directed against Bacolod, Talisay and Saravia airfields on Negros and enemy shipping in that vicinity. It arrived over Negros at about 0745 and attacked the above targets until about 0930, at which time it departed for base, landing aboard at 1100. No enemy activity was encountered in the air, and evidence of enemy air activity on the ground was practically nil.

The afternoon strike was launched against Santa Barbara and Madurriao airfields on Panay and against shipping facilities in the vicinity of Iloilo. The flight arrived over Panay at about 1430 and attacked targets on this island until 1615, returning aboard at 1720.

One enemy fighter, shot down over the vicinity of Cebu as the afternoon strike was returning to base, comprised the only enemy activity in the air in opposition to the strikes by TG 77.4.

As a result of his two strikes against the western Visayas, CTG 77.4 claimed the destruction of one enemy fighter in the air and twenty-two enemy fighters and sixteen two-engine land bombers on the ground. In regard to shipping destruction and damage, he claimed the destruction of one small freighter-transport, one patrol boat and an oil barge, and the damaging of one minesweeper, one schooner and six barges. His own losses were one VF and pilot,* shot down by antiaircraft fire over Negros during the morning strike, and one VF, lost operationally.**

In addition to the above two strikes against the western Visayas, eight of the twelve VF on combat air patrol over the objective area were directed by CSA to make a fighter sweep against Surigao and Badas Placer airfields on northern Mindanao. On arrival over these fields at 1500, the attack planes found no enemy aircraft either in the air or on the ground. Buildings and storage facilities were strafed, inflicting only slight damage. This flight landed aboard at 1608.***

There is no information in Japanese documents to substantiate the above reported losses and damage to enemy aircraft and facilities. In respect to shipping, postwar reports of Japanese naval and merchant losses during World War II, which are rather complete, do not reveal any losses or damage to enemy shipping in the Visayas on this day.****

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* War Diary CHENANGO, October 19th, 1944.

** Action Report CTG 77.4, Leyte Operation, October 12th-29th, 1944, Serial 00120, November 15th, 1944.

*** Aircraft Action Report No. 68, VF-35, forwarded by CHENANGO Serial 0309, November 3rd, 1944.

**** "The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II," prepared by Military History Section, Special Staff, GHQ, Far East Command, February 1952; also "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II," prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

No enemy attacks were made against the task group during the day.

(c) Operations of CTG 77.5 (Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group), October 19th.

(1) Operations of Sweep Units.

The various sweep units of TG 77.5 operated as follows:*

Area (See Plate III)	Unit	Type Sweep	Character
Surigao Strait Channel	ONE	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of forty feet.
SWEEP	TWO & THREE	Exploratory	Moored and acoustic to a depth of sixty feet.
Northern Transport Area	FOUR & FIVE	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.
Southern Transport Area	SIX	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.
DRUM	SEVEN	Clearance	Moored and acoustic to a depth of thirty feet.
Beaches ORANGE, VIOLET, BLUE, YELLOW, WHITE and RED	EIGHT	Exploratory	Moored to a depth of ten feet.

Again on this day, as on the previous days, all mines uncovered were found in Area SWEEP. It began to appear, as was actually the case, that the enemy had laid a double row of chemical horn contact type mines across the entrance to Leyte Gulf, between Homonhon and Dinagat Islands.**

Enemy air action against TG 77.5 during the day was limited to two attacks. At 1555 Sweep Unit SEVEN in Area DRUM was attacked

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* Action Report CTG 77.5, Report of Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Strait and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

** Action Report COMCRUDIV 13, Report of Sweeping Operations of Japanese Minefield in Leyte Gulf, Serial 03, October 29th, 1944.

by four planes, causing no damage,* and at 1714 three enemy carrier-type bombers dive-bombed Sweep Unit ONE in the middle of Area SWEEP, dropping six small bombs (about 100 kg.) close aboard the HOVEY, with negative results.**

At 1719 CTG 77.5 reported to CTG 77.2 that (a) no mines had been found in the transport or fire support areas, or near the shore in Area SWEEP; (b) 113 mines had been swept this date bringing the total swept thus far to 186 (Records available show these figures were more likely 110*** and 190); (c) that portion of Area SWEEP south of the main channel was considered safe, but the main channel and the portion to the north was not safe; (d) ships entering the gulf should stay close to Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP, thence via the channel to the transport areas.*

At about sunset the DMS's and AM's (Sweep Unit ONE, TWO and THREE) retired to the seaward of the entrance to Leyte Gulf, except for the BREESE and SANDS, which patrolled with the Hydrographic Unit (TU 77.5.2) inside the gulf, off Samar Island; the YMS sweepers also remained inside the gulf for the night.****

At 2305 Sweep Unit ONE, minus the CHANDLER, HOWARD and PREBLE, rendezvoused with TF 78 east of Area SWEEP in the vicinity of Point FIN and commenced making a tactical sweep ahead and on the right flank of the force so as to ensure safe entry into Leyte Gulf.*****

At 2224 Sweep Unit SIX which was en route GREEN Beach, Panaon Island was joined by the STACK as escort,****** and at 2325 by LANG.*******

(2) Operations of Hydrographic Unit, October 19th.

During this day TU 77.5.2 planted nine case buoys in the southern transport area marking the approaches to the YELLOW, ORANGE, VIOLET and BLUE Beaches.******** Upon completion of this assignment at 1740 this unit in company with the SANDS patrolled off Samar Island.

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* Action Report CTG 77.2 (COMCRUDIV 4), Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th-24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944.

** War Diaries HOVEY, HAMILTON, LONG, PALMER, and SOUTHARD, October 19th, 1944.

*** War Diaries HOVEY, HAMILTON, PALMER, TOKEN, TUMULT, REQUISITE and Deck Log SCOUT, October 19th, 1944.

**** War Diaries BREESE and SANDS, October 19th, 1944.

***** War Diaries HOVEY, SOUTHARD, HAMILTON, LONG and PALMER, October 19th, 1944; also Action Report CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944.

****** War Diary STACK, October 19th, 1944.

******* War Diary LANG, October 19th, 1944.

******** War Diary BREESE, October 19th, 1944.

(d) Operations of CTG 77.6 (Beach Demolition Group), October 19th.

In view of the importance and relation that bombardment and fire support have to successful beach reconnaissance by the UDT, the operations of CTG 77.6 have been included in the operations of CTG 77.2 and discussed under TU 77.2.1, since UDT operations this day were conducted only off the northern beaches.

(e) Operations of CTG 78.4 (Dinagat Attack Group), October 19th.

By the beginning of October 19th TG 78.4 consisted of only TU 78.4.1. The other three task units had been dissolved as they had completed their missions, and either had been absorbed by the sole remaining unit or assigned to other task units of the advance force. Consequently, TG 78.4 now consisted of the DD's HUGHES (FF), STACK and LANG, the CM ARIADNE, and the APD's CROSBY, KILTY, HERBERT, SCHLEY and WARD.* The latter three vessels departed during the forenoon for Kossol Passage, in accordance with CTG 78.4 Dinagat Attack Order 1-44, October 3rd, 1944.**

At 1004 CTG 78.4 landed at Loreto, on the northwestern shore of Dinagat Island, Companies "A" and "D" of the SIXTH Ranger Infantry Battalion to reconnoiter the area for possible enemy activity, as requested by the battalion commander. He had withdrawn Company "A" from BLACK Beach ONE for this purpose. He completed the reconnaissance, which was unopposed, at 1430 with negative results and then returned the troops to BLACK Beach ONE.*

At 1540 he detached the STACK to escort Sweep Unit SIX from the Southern Transport Area to GREEN Beach Area (Panaon Island).*

At 1659, in the HUGHES, and accompanied by the ARIADNE, he departed BLACK Beach ONE to patrol Surigao Strait while awaiting the arrival of those units of the Panaon Attack Group (TG 78.3), not present in the area. En route he was joined at 1725 by the LANG. He ordered the CROSBY and KILTY to remain off the Dinagat landing area for the night.* He was now CTG 78.3 rather than CTG 78.4 since the objectives assigned TG 78.4 had been accomplished.

At 2325 LANG joined STACK and Sweep Unit SIX.

During the day enemy air activity in the vicinity of his command was very sparse, and was limited to the following: (a) at 1248 the KILTY sighted and opened fire on an enemy two-engine land bomber, probably on

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* Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated, probably early November 1944.

** War Diary HERBERT, SCHLEY and WARD, October 19th, 1944.

a reconnaissance mission,* (b) at 1447 a single enemy plane attempted to dive bomb the CROSBY and either the HUGHES or ARIADNE; both bombs missed;** (c) at 1700 a carrier-type fighter attempted to bomb BLACK Beach ONE and TU 78.4.1. One bomb fell close behind the beach and one landed in the water about 200 yards from the ARIADNE.*** No planes were shot down.

(f) Operations of CTG 78.5,**** (Harbor Entrance Control Group), October 19th.

On October 19th, CTG 78.5 continued to take current and tidal data between Dinagat and Homonhon Islands. He was assisted in this task by the ARIADNE from 0852 until 1511.

At 0235 in the BISBEE he headed toward the vicinity of Point "F" to stand by the disabled ROSS. Upon his arrival there he learned that the CHICKASAW had also arrived and was rendering all assistance necessary. Thereupon, he proceeded to the nearest (western) edge of Area SWEEP to standby, in the meantime collecting further current data. At 0548 he escorted the ROSS, in tow of the CHICKASAW, to safe anchorage off the western shore of Homonhon Island, bearing 015°(T) distant six miles from Point "E".

Having completed this task at 0842, he anchored near the ROSS at the northwestern corner of Area SWEEP and resumed taking current data.

He directed the GALLUP to collect current and tidal data on the southern edge of Area SWEEP off Desolation Point, and the ARIADNE to make similar observations in the vicinity of Point "G" just east of Area SWEEP.

Later in the morning he collected, assembled, and analyzed all the tidal and current data thus far obtained, and at 1259 reported the results of CTF's 77, 78 and 79 by dispatch stating that the actual current conditions found corresponded very closely to those predicted***** in CTG 77 Operation Plan 13-44, Appendix 6 to Annex L.

In the afternoon and evening he sent two dispatches to the three attack force commanders in regard to swept area data, navigation

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* Action Report KILTY, Dinagat Operation, Serial 0271044, October 27th, 1944.

** Action Report CTG 78.4, Report of Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated, probably early November 1944.

*** War Diary ARIADNE, October 19th, 1944.

**** All information here, except as otherwise indicated, obtained from Action Report CTG 78.5, Report of Operations of the Harbor Entrance Control Group, October 18th-24th, 1944, no serial, November 22nd.

***** CTG 78.5 Dispatch 190359 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79.

lights, and other entry information.* He also forwarded a dispatch from CTG 77.5 advising that the portion of Area SWEEP in the main channel and to the northward was not safe due to unswept mines, and recommending that ships entering Leyte Gulf stay close to the north of Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP, and thence proceed via the Tacloban - Dulag approach channel. In forwarding this latter dispatch he added the recommendation that minesweepers precede the D-day groups.**

(2) Operations of CTF 78 (Northern Attack Force), October 19th.

CTF 78 continued his advance toward Leyte Gulf generally along route SHEARWATER about fifteen to twenty miles behind the Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79, on course 300°(T) at eight knots in company with his force and the Close Covering Group (TF 77.3), minus Reinforcement Groups ONE (TG 78.6), TWO (TG 78.7) and THREE (TG 78.8), and TG's 78.4 and 78.5. The latter two groups were already at the objective area and their operations for October 19th have been discussed under the operations of the advance force. Reinforcement Groups ONE and TWO were about 400 and 830 miles respectively behind TF 78, while Reinforcement Group THREE was still at Hollandia, scheduled to depart for Leyte on D+3 (October 23rd).

The weather remained favorable, with partly cloudy skies and a few widely scattered afternoon showers, surface winds southeast six to nine knots, sea calm, flying conditions average.***

CTF 78 received the dispatches sent to CTF's 77 and 79 by CTG's 77.2 and 78.5 relative to entry instructions and the preparation of the landing beaches and approaches, as cited under the Operations of the Advance Force and CTF 77. He likely was pleased that the beach preparations were proceeding as planned.

However, he no doubt was perturbed by the fact that the minesweeping operations at the entrance to Leyte Gulf had not been completed in the northern portion, including the main channel, and that his force would now have to enter the gulf close to the northern point of Dinagat Island where maximum ebb currents up to four point eight knots had been reported by CTG 78.5.**** He expected that since the tide would be ebbing during the period that his units were scheduled to enter, the opposing currents would (a) delay the entry of his slower vessels and (b) retard the movement of the succeeding assault echelons at a most vital time, causing them to jam up at the entrance and perhaps even delay the landing at H-hour, set for 1000 the following day.

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* CTG 78.5 Dispatch 190618, and 191212, October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79.

** CTG 78.5 Dispatch 190958 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79, info all TGC's of TF's 77, 78, 79.

*** Action Report, CTU 77.4.34, Support of Leyte Operations, October 12th-November 1st, 1944, Serial 0154, November 5th, 1944.

**** CTG 78.5 Dispatch 190359 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79.

Accordingly, he wisely decided to anticipate his scheduled arrival at the entrance by forty-five minutes, and requested the Commander Landing Craft Movement Group (CTU 79.11.3) who was scheduled to enter one hour ahead of TF 78, to do likewise.*

At 1140 he sighted the above Landing Craft Movement Group bearing 310°(T), distant about fifteen miles.**

During the afternoon he continued on toward the entrance to Leyte Gulf.

At 1737, well before dark, and before crossing the 100 fathom curve, he ordered his heavy ships to stream paravanes.**

At 1810 he sighted Siargao Island bearing 245°(T) distant about thirty-five miles.***

At 2000 he detached the escort carrier unit (TU 77.4.34) to proceed to the northward to rendezvous with TU 77.4.3 the following morning. This escort carrier unit, as on previous days, had provided air cover for TF 78 and the Tractor Group of TF 79 from dawn until sunset, flying a total of sixteen ASP sorties and twenty-four CAP sorties, all with negative results.****

At 2200, when about thirty miles bearing 120°(T) from the entrance to Leyte Gulf, he formed a special approach disposition for entering the gulf, drawing his cruisers and destroyers in close to the axis in order to make a tight formation for transiting Area SWEEP and the Tacloban - Dulag approach channel, in accordance with his Entry and Deployment Plan, Annex "K" to CTF 78 Operation Plan Number 101-44.**

At 2247 he sighted (a) the light installed by CTG 78.5 on the southern tip of Homonhon Island (Latitude 10°-41.5'N, Longitude 125°-45.5'E) bearing 320°(T) distant about twenty-two miles,***** and (b) at 2347 the light similarly established on the northern tip of Dinagat Island (Latitude 10°-28.3'N, Longitude 125°-38.3'E) bearing 277°(T) distant about sixteen miles.*** These lights provided valuable assistance to his command and later echelons in approaching and entering Leyte Gulf.

At 2305 in the vicinity of Point FIN he was joined by Sweep Unit ONE minus the BREESE, CHANDLER, HOWARD, PREBLE and SANDS. He then

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* Action Report CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944.

** War Diary PHOENIX, October 19th, 1944.

*** War Diary BOISE, October 19th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTU 77.4.34, Supporting of Leyte Operations, October 12th-November 1st, 1944, Serial 0154, November 5th, 1944.

***** War Diary FREMONT, October 19th, 1944.

directed this unit to make a tactical sweep ahead of, and on the right flank of his force. He did this because CTG 78.5 (Commander Harbor Entrance Control Group) had advised him that only the southern portion of Area SWEEP had thus far been swept, and had recommended that he stay south of the line bearing 283°(T) from Point FIN.*

At about 2332 he received a gratifying dispatch from CTG 77.2 which stated in essence that no mines or other underwater obstacles had been found on the northern beaches and that reconnaissance of the area from San Ricardo south to the Palo River showed entire RED and WHITE areas were suitable for beaching ships up to the size of LST's.** If he had had any concern over the possibility that his LST's might not be able to beach with a dry ramp--his information on this subject during the planning stage as shown in his basic plans indicated that this was likely to occur***--this must now have been dispelled.

At 2400 his command (TF 78) was bearing 133°(T) distant ten miles from the entrance (Point REB) to Leyte Gulf. The movement of the assault units from Hollandia and Manus had thus far been without incident. At this time he believed that his force had not been observed by the enemy, inasmuch as he had not encountered any enemy aircraft or submarines.**** However, in this he was in error for his force had been sighted at 0800 by a Japanese Army search plane from the Philippines.*****

(3) Operations of CTF 79 (Southern Attack Force), October 19th.

(a) Operations of the Landing Craft Movement Group.

The Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79, escorted by COMDESRON FIFTY-FOUR (CTU 79.11.3) as OTC in the HOVEY continued its advance toward Leyte Gulf on course 296°(T) at nine knots with Tractor Group ABLE in in the van and Tractor Group BAKER 1500 yards to the rear.

At 0651, for reasons not available to this study, but most likely because he was ahead of schedule CTU 79.11.3 slowed to five knots. At 1220 he increased speed to 7.5 knots probably because he required this speed to arrive at Point FIN at 2300.

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* War Diary HOVEY, SOUTHARD, HAMILTON, LONG and PALMER, October 19th, 1944; also Action Report CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944.

** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 191402 to CTF 78, etc.

*** CTF 78 OpPlan 101-44, Serial 0008, October 3rd, 1944, Annex "J" Intelligence Plan.

**** Action Report, CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 0091, November 10th, 1944.

***** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

At 1426 he formed a special approach disposition in accordance with his Movement Order Number 1-44. This disposition reduced the front of the landing craft formation from 3,500 to 1,800 yards and drew the screen in closer to the axis to allow passage within the 6,000 yard wide swept channel into Leyte Gulf.*

At about this time he received a request from CTF 78 to anticipate his scheduled arrival at the entrance to Leyte Gulf to allow for currents of uncertain strength.*

At 1725 he sighted Siargao Island bearing 220°(T), distant twenty-five miles.**

At 1930 he changed course and axis to 305°(T) and at 1941 increased speed to nine knots. He now expected to arrive at Point FIN at 2200, one hour ahead of the original scheduled time.

At 2150 he changed base course to 282°(T) and at 2200 the formation center of the Landing Craft Movement Group passed Point FIN. He adjusted course to the southward in order to pass close aboard (4,000 yards) the northern tip of Dinagat Island in response to the recommendation of CTG 78.5.***

With the Landing Craft Movement Group he succeeded in transiting the mined area safely, arriving at the southwest corner of Area SWEEP at midnight, still about an hour ahead of schedule. The anticipated strong currents in the entrance had not retarded his entry into the gulf, and the channel entrance was now clear for the succeeding attack force echelons (TF 78 and the Transport Groups of TF 79). The movement of the Landing Craft Movement Group from Manus to Leyte Gulf had, so far, been uneventful and CTU 79.11.3 considered that it had not been detected by the enemy.**** This seems to have been the case, although as pointed out under Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, October 19th, there is a possibility that he may have been discovered.

(b) Operations of the Transport Groups, October 19th.

CTF 79 in the MOUNT OLYMPUS, in company with Transport Groups ABLE (TG 79.1) and BAKER (TG 79.2), followed about 125 miles behind the Landing Craft Movement Group, and about 110 miles behind TF 78, along route SHEARWATER, on course 296°(T), speed eleven knots. His air cover was

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* Action Report (CTG 79.11) COMDESRON FIFTY-FOUR, Serial 059, November 12th, 1944.

** Deck Log REMEY, October 1944.

*** CTG 78.5 Dispatch 190958 October 1944.

**** Action Report COMDESRON 54 (CTG 79.11), Attack on Leyte Island, Central Philippines, October 20th-26th, 1944, Serial 059, November 12th, 1944.

provided by CTU 77.4.14 who from dawn until sunset maintained a CAP of four VF, a SNASP of four VF and an ASP of four VT over the two transport groups, with negative results.

During the day he was concerned (a) over the possibility that his force might be intercepted by the enemy--although he did not know it his force had been sighted by Japanese Army planes at 1200 about 120 miles east of Mindanao*--and (b) that the three large enemy ships sighted by the BREAM in Makassar Strait at 0300 the previous day and which he had properly interpreted as an enemy surface force since merchant units would not endanger his command, might attempt to intercept him during daylight or after dark on this day. He had therefore directed (a) CTU 77.4.14 to make early morning and afternoon searches in the direction of Mindanao to the west and south of the convoy course, 300°(T), to a distance of 200 miles or to land, and (b) had prepared a battle plan whereby one of the two escorting destroyer squadrons would form an offensive screen to deny the approach of the enemy while the transports and remaining screen took evasive action.

CTU 77.4.14 therefore made the searches to comply with the above as follows:

(a) Early morning search. This search, which departed at 0540, covered the sector 200°-260°(T). The sector was sub-divided into four subsectors each flown by one VF-one VT, with the point of origin Latitude 08°-43'N, Longitude 129°-32'E. The search was landed about 0930.**

(b) Afternoon search. This search which departed at 1400 covered the sector 190°-250°(T). The sector was also sub-divided into four subsectors each flown by one VF-one VT, with the point of origin Latitude 09°-18'N, Longitude 128°-22'E. The search was landed about 1750.**

The results of both of these searches, each with 100 per cent coverage, were negative.

CTF 79 was also gravely concerned lest (a) expected strong ebb tides from four to five knots might oppose and delay the transit of his slower vessels through the entrance to Leyte Gulf and (b) the enemy minefield at the entrance to the gulf might not be sufficiently cleared to permit the safe passage of his force on its arrival.*** He had been receiving during the day disquieting reports from CTG 78.5 that strong currents had been observed

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** Action Report CTG 79.1, Participation in Amphibious Operations for the Capture of Leyte, Serial 00454, October 26th, 1944.

*** Action Report CTF 79, Seizure of Leyte-Participation of TF 79, Serial 00323, November 13th, 1944.

in the entrance, which checked very closely with those shown on the charts, and that the north portion of Area SWEEP, including the main channel, still had not been cleared of mines.* He had also received a report from CTG 77.2 which concurred with CTG 78.5 in regard to both the progress of mine clearance and the recommendation that entering ships stay close to the northern point of Dinagat Island until clear of Area SWEEP and then proceed to the transport areas via the main channel.** This meant that he would have to enter Leyte Gulf through that portion of the entrance where the strongest currents (four point eight knots) had been reported. Furthermore, these currents followed the contour of Desolation Point and would be setting east (0030-0700) during the period that his ships were scheduled to enter the gulf. Consequently, his concern as to whether his slow landing craft could negotiate the strong ebb tide was well founded.

At about 1200 his command appears to have been discovered by Japanese aircraft from the Philippines although he did not know it.

Since he was maintaining radio silence, he no doubt waited anxiously to arrive within TBS voice radio range of the Harbor Entrance Control Group (CTG 78.5) so that he could obtain further information on the progress of the Landing Craft Movement Group as well as information of the mine and current conditions at the entrance to the gulf. He did not know that CTF 78, who was within TBS voice radio range of the Commander Landing Craft Movement Group (CTU 79.11.3), (a) had already handled this situation by requesting that commander to anticipate the arrival of his group in Surigao Strait so as to allow for currents of uncertain strength, and (b) had increased the speed of his own force so as to arrive forty-five minutes ahead of schedule.***

By the end of the day the two transport groups had closed to within about thirty-five miles of the Landing Craft Movement Group and were bearing 118°(T), distance thirty miles from the entrance to Leyte Gulf.

(b) Operations of CTG 70.1**** (Motor Torpedo Boat Group), October 19th.

CTG 70.1 in the OYSTER BAY (AGP), in company with the WATCHAPREAGUE (AGP), WILLOUGHBY (AGP) and HALF MOON (AVP), continued to escort his forty-five motor torpedo boats (MTB Squadrons 7, 12, 21, 33, and 36) to Leyte Gulf via routes HAWK and SHEARWATER at nine knots.

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* CTG 78.5 Dispatches 190350 and 190958, October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79.

** CTG 77.2 Dispatch 190851 October 1944 to CTF's 77, 78 and 79.

*** Action Report CTF 78, Leyte Operation, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944; also Action Report COMDESRON 54 (CTG 79.11), Attack on Leyte Island, Central Philippines, October 20th-26th, 1944, Serial 059, November 12th, 1944.

**** War Diaries OYSTER BAY, WACHAPREAGUE and WILLOUGHBY, October 19th, 1944.

During the afternoon he conducted underway fueling of the MTB's from their escorting tenders.

The passage to Leyte had thus far been uneventful and was proceeding according to plan. By 2400, TG 70.1 was bearing 116°(T), distant 300 miles from the entrance to Leyte Gulf.

(c) Operations of CTF 71 (Submarines, West Australia), October 19th.

Since this was D-1 day, the movements and contacts made by TF 71 submarines would be of great importance to CTF 71 inasmuch as Allied amphibious forces were fast approaching Leyte Gulf from the southeastward and it was necessary to have prompt information concerning any movements of Japanese naval forces.

As of midnight he knew of course, that Allied air strikes were continuing on this day and would continue for some days. Whether or not he had the exact orders to TF 38 and TG 77.4 is not important--what is important is the fact that as a commander of competence he knew that no landings would be attempted without powerful air operations not only for reconnaissance, and for cover, but in direct support of these landings. He also must have suspected, if he didn't actually know, that COMTHIRDFLT operations in connection with a prospective fleet action on October 15th, 16th and 17th had unset the air strike schedule of TF 38 and therefore it was likely that air strikes would have to be made against Luzon after October 18th since these strikes had probably been postponed, which was in fact the case. It is of interest in this connection that the new schedule which directed strikes on Luzon had already been promulgated, and was now in the hands of COMSEVENTHFLT,* but whether or not CTF 71 had as yet received it is not known.

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE DOES IT NOT SEEM REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE LOCATION OF HIS LIFEGUARD SUBMARINES AND THE DURATION OF THEIR STAY ON STATION SHOULD HAVE BEEN OF VITAL CONCERN TO HIM? A STUDY OF HIS LIFEGUARD SUBMARINE DISPOSITIONS WOULD HAVE SHOWN HIM THAT THE LIFEGUARD ASSIGNMENTS OF THE BONEFISH AND THE COD, WHICH WERE OFF WESTERN LUZON, HAD EXPIRED THE PREVIOUS MIDNIGHT (2400 OCTOBER 18TH) AND THAT THESE SUBMARINES WERE NOW WITHOUT ORDERS. DOES IT NOT SEEM SURPRISING THAT HE HAD NOT AS YET ASSIGNED THEM NEW ORDERS EITHER DIRECTING THEM TO REMAIN ON LIFEGUARD STATIONS OR ASSIGNING THEM NEW STATIONS? THAT THE COMMANDING OFFICERS COD AND BONEFISH WERE CONCERNED OVER THEIR FAILURE TO RECEIVE SUCH ORDERS AND WONDERED WHAT TO DO IS PLAINLY SHOWN IN THEIR WAR PATROL REPORTS.**

Sometime during the morning he received several dispatches; one from LAPON reporting, among other items, very heavy seas;*** one from the

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 160246 October 1944 info to CINCSOWESPAC.

** War Patrol Report COD, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 06, November 20th, 1944; War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, November 6th, 1944.

*** LAPON Dispatch 181515 October 1944 to CTF 71.

BLUEGILL reporting, among other items, having sunk three cargo ships from a ten ship convoy and requesting permission to return to Mios Woendi for torpedoes--the submarine tender ORION was based there--and fuel;* one from the BONEFISH reporting having rescued the BUNKER HILL's downed aviators;** one from the RATON reporting that she had sunk four cargo ships and one destroyer from the BLUEGILL's convoy, that a typhoon was brewing, and requesting that owing to a shortage of torpedoes she be allowed to retire to Mios Woendi*** for reload; one from CTF 17 advising that the COBIA in CONVOY COLLEGE and the BARBEL in MARU MORGUE would complete their patrols on October 21st and 23rd respectively and that he was sending them to TF 71 as replacements;**** and CINCPOA's Zone Notice No. 45 designating Area VESTIBULE north of Latitude 20°-30'N as a joint zone.*****

At 1048, as CTG 71.1, he advised the DACE and DARTER that the RATON had reported remnants of the (BLUEGILL) convoy at the northern end of Palawan Passage, course 190°(T) speed six at 0400 that morning.****** Why he sent this dispatch remains unclear, unless it was purely informative. However, from the actions of other submarines both in TF 71 and TF 17 on other occasions, the effect of such a dispatch was often serious in that the submarine commanders departed their stations in order to comply with what they inferred was an order even though not so expressed.

As a matter of fact, it will be shown later under "DACE and DARTER," that immediately upon intercepting the RATON's report of her attacks on the BLUEGILL convoy the wolf pack commander (Commanding Officer DARTER) departed with the DARTER from Balabac Strait and headed north up the passage for a rendezvous with the DACE preparatory to attacking the convoy.

At about noon he received a dispatch from CTF 17 advising in part that the BLACKFIN would pass to his command at 0600 October 22nd.*******

At 1257 he replied in the negative to the BLUEGILL's request of that morning for permission to retire to Mios Woendi stating that reconnaissance commitments made it necessary to retain him in Area A-4 for a few days.********

AT 1314 HE DIRECTED THE RATON TO RETURN TO MIOS WOENDI THERE TO RELOAD AND AWAIT ORDERS.********* WHY HE CHOSE TO RETURN THE RATON WHICH WAS

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* CTF 71 War Diary October 19th, 1944.
** BONEFISH Dispatch 181915 October 1944 to CTF 71.
*** RATON Dispatch 182023 October 1944 to CTF 71.
**** CTF 17 Dispatch 182029 October 1944 to CTF 71.
***** CINCPOA Dispatch 182138 October 1944.
****** CTG 71.1 Dispatch 190148 October 1944 to DACE and DARTER.
******* CTF 17 Dispatch 190215 October 1944 to CTF 71.
******** CTF 71 Dispatch 190357 October 1944 to BLUEGILL.
********* CTF 71 Dispatch 190414 October 1944 to RATON.

BEGINNING HER PATROL RATHER THAN THE BLUEGILL WHICH WAS COMPLETING HER PATROL HAS NOT BEEN EXPLAINED. THE RATON HAD ONLY BEEN ON PATROL SOME THIRTEEN DAYS AND HAD FOUR TORPEDOES REMAINING WHEREAS THE BLUEGILL HAD BEEN ON PATROL SOME THIRTY-ONE DAYS AND HAD BUT THREE TORPEDOES REMAINING. COULD THE BLUEGILL'S OVERHAUL PERIOD HAVE BEEN THE DETERMINANT?

During the late afternoon CTF 71 appears to have either received information concerning additional air strikes on Luzon or estimated that such strikes might be necessary in strategic support of the landings on D-day for he directed (a) at 1824 the LAPON to continue on lifeguard duties until sunset October 20th when she was to depart for Fremantle,* (b) at 1916 the COD to continue on lifeguard duties until sunset October 20th, then to proceed to patrol Area A-2 until 2100 October 26th then to shift Op-control to CTF 17 and depart for Pearl Harbor** and (c) at 2021 the BONEFISH to continue lifeguard duties until sunset October 20th, then to proceed to Pearl Harbor and to shift Op-control to CTF 17 at 0900 October 21st.***

In addition at 2047 he issued instructions to the COBIA and BARBEL concerning their movements to Fremantle upon completion of their patrols with TF 17.****

At 2058***** and 2102****** as CTG 71.1 he advised his command concerning the movements of friendly submarines en route to and from patrols.

(1) BREAM and RATON.

(a) The BREAM continued on toward her patrol station remaining submerged during daylight hours and on the surface during darkness. At 1939 she transited Sibutu Passage and passed into the Sulu Sea. During the early evening the Commanding Officer BREAM, who, on arrival on station, was to command the coordinated attack group (wolf pack) consisting of the BREAM and RATON learned that the RATON had been ordered to Mios Woendi, and would be replaced by the GUITARRO which was following the BREAM into the SuluSea******* This would maintain the integrity of the two submarine wolf pack.

The day's operations were uneventful. The BREAM advanced this day about 160 miles toward her assigned station A3-A7.

(b) The RATON immediately after midnight continued her attacks on the convoy which she had attacked just before midnight. The rain was heavy and blinding. At 0110 she fired four torpedoes by radar at a large ship separated from the convoy but all missed.

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 190924 October 1944 to LAPON.
** CTF 71 Dispatch 191016 October 1944 to COD.
*** CTF 71 Dispatch 191121 October 1944 to BONEFISH.
**** CTF 71 Dispatch 191147 October 1944 to CTF 17, COBIA, BARBEL.
***** CTG 71.1 Dispatch 191158 October 1944 to TG 71.1.
****** CTG 71.1 Dispatch 191202 October 1944 to TG 71.1.
******* War Patrol Report BREAM, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 021-44, November 22nd, 1944.

The Commanding Officer then decided to attack the main convoy and at 0315 fired six torpedoes and claimed hits on two merchant ships.* Actually he made no hits.** He then, in view of bad weather, decided to head up the convoy track toward Manila to discover any cripples. Also at this time he reported the above action against the convoy and requested permission to return to Mios Woendi for reload. At 0605 he submerged, and surfaced at 1615. At 1736 he received orders from CTF 71 directing his return to Mios Woendi as requested, there to await orders.*** He promptly commenced his retirement from the area.

(2) ROCK and BERGALL.

The ROCK patrolled her regular station remaining submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness.****

The BERGALL did not patrol her station after 0445 but instead made a southwest surface sweep across the Hong Kong - Singapore shipping lanes as shown on Diagram D. At 1749 having made no contacts of importance she commenced her return to her regular patrol station.*****

Neither the ROCK nor the BERGALL received any lifeguard calls from the search planes of the FOURTEENTH Air Force.

(3) BLUEGILL and ANGLER.

The BLUEGILL having exchanged stations with the ANGLER now patrolled between Lubang Island and Cape Calavite. At 0055 she advised CTF 71 that she had sunk three cargo ships from a ten ship convoy, had but three torpedoes left and requested authority to proceed Mios Woendi for fuel and torpedoes.****** She presumably expected this request to be granted not only because she was low on fuel oil but because, on this date she had completed her patrol in accordance with her operation order.*******

She submerged at 0743 due to enemy aircraft and remained submerged until 1940 when she surfaced. After surfacing she received CTG 71's dispatch 190357 denying her the authority to depart and directing her, in view

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* War Patrol Report RATON, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, December 1st, 1944.

** "Japanese Naval and Merchant Ship Losses During World War II by U.S. Submarines", prepared by Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee February 1947.

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 190414 October 1944 to RATON.

**** War Patrol Report ROCK, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 016, November 1st, 1945; Deck Log ROCK, October 19th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report BERGALL, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 0102, November 8th, 1944; Deck Log BERGALL, October 19th, 1944.

****** War Diary CTF 71, October 18th, 1944.

******* CTG 71.1 Operations Order 135-44, September 17th, 1944 to BLUEGILL.

of reconnaissance commitments, to remain in Area A-4 for a few more days.* During the day the weather and sea conditions improved with good visibility. She made no contacts of importance although she exchanged calls at 2040 with the RATON which was retiring from the area.**

Meanwhile the ANGLER had commenced patrolling northwest of Lubang Island. During early morning she learned of the BLUEGILL's exploits, but except for an abortive approach on an enemy ship she had an uneventful patrol herself. She patrolled submerged during daylight and on the surface during darkness.***

(4) DACE and DARTER.

During the early morning the DARTER which was patrolling the western approaches to Balabac Strait intercepted the BLUEGILL's report to CTF 71 describing the attack on the convoy on the preceding day.**** The Commanding Officer DARTER, who was the commander of the coordinated attack group (wolf pack), then at about 0333 directed the DACE to rendezvous that evening at a designated position in Palawan Passage preparatory to forming a combined search for the BLUEGILL convoy in the event it attempted to transit Palawan Passage.***** At about 0553 he intercepted the RATON's dispatch to CTF 71 describing her recent attack on the BLUEGILL's convoy which she located at 0400 at the northern entrance to Palawan Passage on course 190° (T) speed six knots.****** He then appears to have advised the DACE that the rendezvous scheduled for that evening was now advanced to the late forenoon for he departed immediately from Balabac Strait and headed north to rendezvous with the DACE which rendezvous was effected at about 1100. However, before the submarines had closed to voice distance they observed approaching two Japanese destroyers which they identified as FUBUKI class. These destroyers were actually the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO of the YUGUMO class which were en route from Manila to Brunei Bay to rejoin the FIRST Striking Force.*******

The DARTER submerged and at 1142 attacked the destroyers by firing four torpedoes which missed. The DACE likewise submerged and attacked at 1145 firing four torpedoes which also missed. The DARTER was then unsuccessfully attacked by the destroyers which did not delay to continue the attack, but continued on toward Brunei. The DARTER thereafter remained submerged until 1930 when she surfaced, and headed for the originally designated

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* CTF 71 Dispatch 190357 October 1944 to BLUEGILL.

** Deck Log BLUEGILL, October 19th, 1944.

*** War Patrol Report ANGLER, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09 (10), November 9th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report BLUEGILL, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 039, November 25th, 1944; also CTF 71 War Diary October 18th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report DACE, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09, November 6th, 1944.

****** RATON Dispatch 182023 October 1944 to CTF 71.

******* War Diary AKISHIMO October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

rendezvous with the DACE.* Meanwhile the DACE remained submerged until 1921 at which time she also surfaced and proceeded toward the original rendezvous. At 2115 the rendezvous was effected. The submarines exchanged information and then the DARTER patrolled in the vicinity of Royal Captain Shoal, the DACE about sixty miles to the northward, in search not only of the BLUEGILL convoy but also for any heavy units which the Japanese destroyer sweep indicated might be following the destroyers.*

THE DECISION OF THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER TO MOVE THE DARTER FROM HER PATROL STATION TO THE WESTWARD OF BALABAC STRAIT AND INTO A NEW PATROL STATION WHICH WAS ABOUT NINETY MILES TO THE NORTHWARD OF HER ORIGINAL PATROL STATION IS NOT CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN CORRECT. THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO COVER EFFECTIVELY THE SOUTHERN APPROACHES TO PALAWAN PASSAGE AND THE WESTERN APPROACHES TO BALABAC STRAIT.*** HOW COULD HE CONSIDER THAT BALABAC STRAIT WAS EFFECTIVELY GUARDED WHEN THE NEAREST SUBMARINE OF HIS WOLF PACK WAS NOT NEARER THAN NINETY MILES TO THAT VITAL PASSAGE? WHILE IT IS REALIZED THAT THE URGE TO SINK MERCHANT SHIPPING WAS STRONG WITHIN THE SUBMARINE COMMAND, CAN IT BE SAID THAT THIS URGE WAS AT ALL TIMES TO HAVE PRIORITY OVER REASONED JUDGMENT? A GLANCE AT DIAGRAM D WILL SHOW THAT AT MIDNIGHT THE JAPANESE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WAS BUT 245 MILES FROM THE UNGUARDED BALABAC STRAIT.

(5) HAMMERHEAD.

The HAMMERHEAD conducted routine patrol in the southwest approaches to Brunei Bay with her noon position in Latitude 05°-13'N, Longitude 113°-46'E which was bearing about 268°(T) distant eighty-three miles from Palau Kuraman Light. She patrolled on the surface during darkness, but submerged during daylight. No contacts were made on this day.****

(6) GUITARRO.

The GUITARRO continued on toward her patrol station in the Sulu Sea. She operated on the surface until 0905, when she submerged until 1957. It is likely that shortly after surfacing she received CTF 71's dispatch (a) cancelling the dispatch orders to patrol the Sulu Sea (b) directing her to carry out the original OpOrder which assigned her to patrol Areas A-3 and A-7 off the west central coast of Luzon***** with BREAM and RATON and (c) advising that the RATON, having expended most of her torpedoes in attacks on BLUEGILL's convoy, had been ordered to Mios Woendi for reload******

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* War Patrol Report DARTER, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 020, November 5th, 1944.

** Deck Log DACE, October 19th, 1944.

*** CTF 71 Dispatch 110504 October 1944 to DACE and DARTER.

**** War Patrol Report HAMMERHEAD, Report of SECOND War Patrol, no serial, November 2nd, 1944.

***** CTG 71.1 OpOrder No. 143-44 to GUITARRO, October 7th, 1944.

****** CTF 71 Dispatch 190417 October 1944 to GUITARRO and BREAM.

At 2100 she commenced transit of Sibutu Passage and by 2330 she had completed transit and had entered the Sulu Sea northbound to her new station.* There were no contacts on this day.

(7) TANTIVY.

The TANTIVY continued on through the Flores Sea to her station in Makassar Strait. She arrived off Ambo Island about noon and commenced her patrol. About 1800, in position Latitude 02°-32'S, Longitude 117°-58'E, she sighted a small coaster. No other contacts are recorded for this day.**

(8) STOIC and ZWAARDVISCH.

The Commanding Officer ZWAARDVISCH reported to CTF 71 that he was returning from patrol in Area E-8, having fired all bow torpedoes and having sunk (a) a German submarine, (b) a small coastal vessel, (c) a small cargo ship, and having probably sunk a Japanese destroyer and minelayer. He reported in addition that he had five German prisoners on board, four of them officers.*** This German submarine was the 740 ton U-168.**** Since the ZWAARDVISCH was now en route to Fremantle she will be dropped from further independent discussion but will be included in the submarines retiring from the area.

The STOIC continued her patrol north of Java in Area E-5. CTF 71's daily submarine plot shows her to have been in about the center of her area. She recorded no contacts for this day.

(9) GURNARD.

This submarine completed transiting Karimata Strait at 0424, without incident and headed for patrol Areas D-4, D-7 where among other duties she was to mine the vicinity of Point Datoe.***** At 0712 she submerged for the day as she was close to enemy held territory. She surfaced at 2003 and continued on to her patrol areas. She made no contacts during this day.******

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* War Patrol Report GUITARRO, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 0044, November 16th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report TANTIVY, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, Report of COMSUBS7THFLT, Serial 00565, December 14th, 1944.

*** CTF 71 War Diary of Submarines Based Western Australia, October 19th, 1944.

**** CTF 71 Daily Submarine Plot of Subs Based Western Australia, notation on October 20th, 1944 and Janes Fighting Ships 1944-45, page 229.

***** CTG 71.1 OpOrder No. 145-44 to GURNARD, October 8th, 1944.

****** War Patrol Report GURNARD, Report of SEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 030, November 17th, 1944.

(10) BATFISH.

This submarine continued on through the Banda Sea to her newly assigned patrol area in Area A-8, north of Scarborough Shoal.* She proceeded on the surface except when forced to dive by aircraft or for training.** At 2207, she made radar contact on a "Q" ship accompanied by two small escorts. At 2310, she attacked by firing six torpedoes, but missed. This attack was apparently undetected by the enemy as the BATFISH continued tracking these ships up to midnight encountering no evasive action or counter attack by them.*

(11) STORM.

The STORM proceeded westward through the Flores Sea toward her patrol station in the vicinity of the Gulf of Boni. No contacts were recorded for this day.***

(12) TANTALUS.

This submarine arrived at Exmouth Gulf on this date, fueled and departed for patrol in the vicinity of south Anambas Islands,**** which patrol area could have been either Area E-1 or D-3, but most probably was E-1. She planned to employ the route normally used by submarines which was Lombok Strait, Java Sea and Karimata Strait.*****

(13) MUSKALLUNGE.

At 1400 the MUSKALLUNGE, which had been under overhaul with her completion date November 5th completed her overhaul some seventeen days ahead of time, got underway from Fremantle with an escort and proceeded to the exercise area.****** At 2330 she released the escort and departed for patrol Area A-6 via Darwin, Flores Sea, Makassar Strait, Sibutu Passage and Mindoro Strait.*******

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* War Patrol Report BATFISH, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 057, December 1st, 1944.

** Deck Log BATFISH, October 19th, 1944.

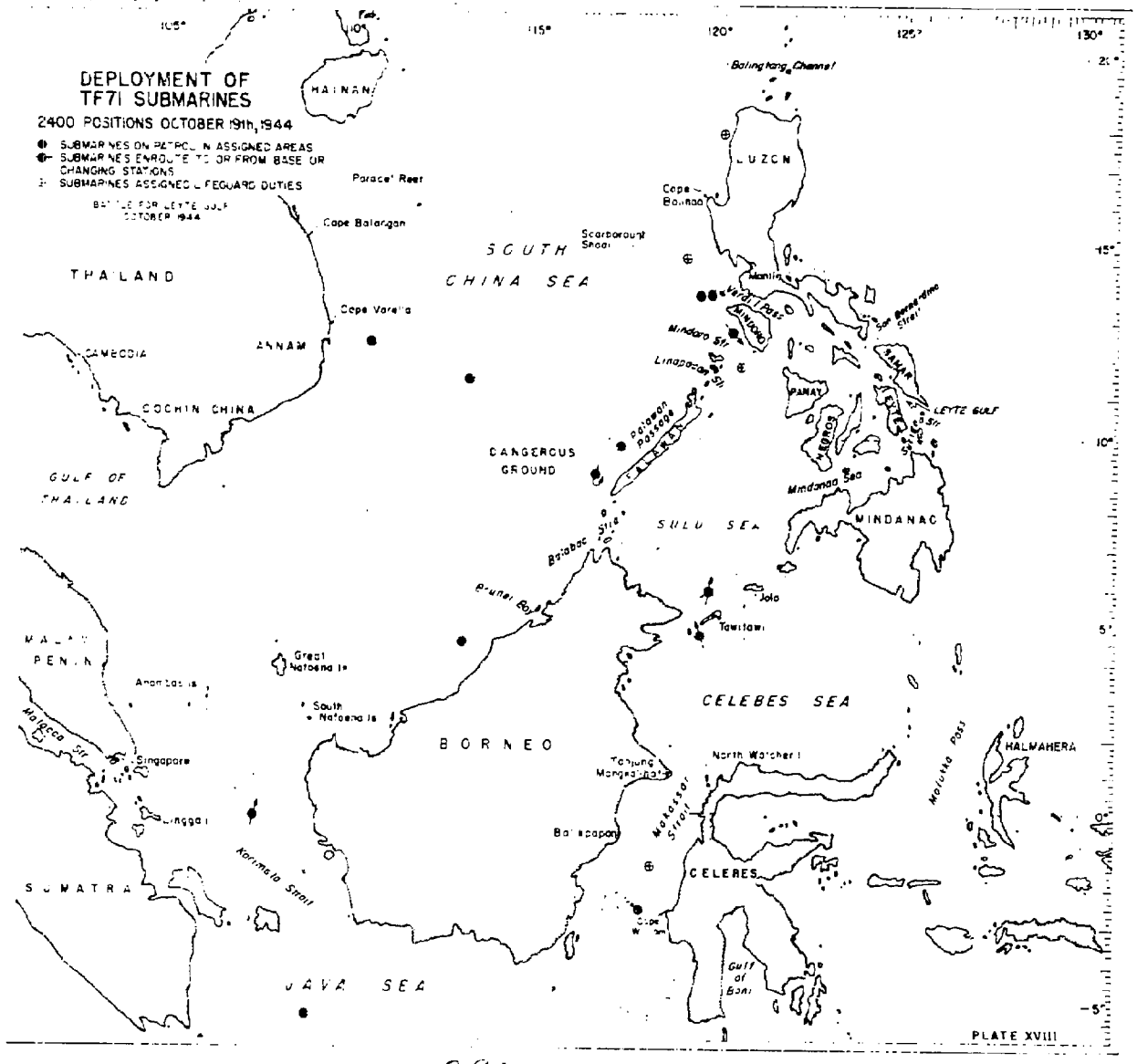
*** War Patrol Report STORM, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol contained in War Diary COMSUBSEVENTHFLT, Serial 00355.

**** War Diary CTF 71 and Daily Dispositions of Submarines Based Western Australia, October 19th, 1944.

***** CTG 71.1 OpOrder 127-44 to BREAM, September 29th, 1944, Annex "C" paragraphs "E" and "F".

****** War Patrol Report MUSKALLUNGE, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 038, December 14th, 1944.

******* CTG 71.1 Dispatch 191202 October 1944 to all Submarines.


DEPLOYMENT OF
TF71 SUBMARINES
2400 POSITIONS OCTOBER 19th, 1944
SUBMARINES ON PATROL IN ASSIGNED AREAS
SUBMARINES ENROUTE TO OR FROM BASE OR CHANGING STATIONS
SUBMARINES ASSIGNED LIFEGUARD DUTIES
BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF OCTOBER 1944
HAINAN
Paracel Reef
Cape Batangan
THAILAND
Cape Varella
CAMBODIA
ANNAM
COCHIN CHINA
GULF OF THAILAND
SOUTH CHINA SEA
Scarborough Shoal
LUZON
Cape Bolinao
Manila
Verde I. Pass
Mindoro
Mindoro Str.
Lingayen G.
San Bernardino Strait
SAMAR
PANAY
LEYTE
LEYTE GULF
Surigao Str.
LEYTE
Panaon Passage
CAMOTES
DANGEROUS GROUND
Mindanao Sea
MINDANAO
SULU SEA
Balabac Str.
Brunei Bay
Jolo
Tawitawi
MALAY PENIN.
Anambas Is.
Great Natuna Is.
South Natuna Is.
Malacca Str.
Singapore
Lingga I.
SUMATRA
Karimata Strait
BORNEO
CELEBES SEA
Tanjung Mangkalihat
North Watcher I.
Makassar Strait
Balikpapan
CELEBES
Molucca Pass
HALMAHERA
Cape Mandar
Gulf of Boni
JAVA SEA
105°
110°
115°
120°
125°
130°
25°
15°
10°
5°
-5°
PLATE XVIII

298a

(14) Lifeguard Submarines.

At 0310 the BONEFISH recovered the downed BUNKER HILL airmen and at 0415 notified CTF 71 of the recovery.* Although her lifeguard duties had expired and she had received no new instructions she decided, pending further orders, to return to her lifeguard station off Cape Bolinao where she arrived about midafternoon.** At 2047** she received a dispatch from CTF 71 directing that she remain on lifeguard duties until sunset October 20th, then to proceed to Pearl Harbor; en route at 0900 October 21st she was to shift Op-Control to CTF 17.*** During this day BONEFISH operated on the surface except when forced to submerge by enemy aircraft. She made no contacts.

The COD, her lifeguard duties having expired, awaited further orders. However, while awaiting she shifted voice receivers from lifeguard frequency to area frequency and commenced patrolling in Area A-3 amid heavy seas, rain and wind. At 0424 and 0553, she made radar contacts on single ships. The first contact could not be closed; the second contact was identified as a patrol craft, but no action was taken primarily due to the foul weather.**** She remained on the surface most of the day being submerged only for the period 0623 to 1114.***** Sometime in the early evening--possibly about 1946--she received orders to continue lifeguard duties until sunset on the 20th; after which she was to patrol Area A-2 until 2100, October 26th, at which time she was to shift Op-Control to CTF 17 and depart the area for Pearl Harbor.****** The remainder of the day was uneventful. She received no lifeguard calls.*****

The LAPON patrolled her station to the north of Quiniluban Island, on the surface. Just after midnight, the commanding officer sent CTF 71 a special weather report for information of aircraft and also reported very high seas.******* At 0631, she submerged for the day about five miles south of Falmouth Bank. She made no contacts, and received no lifeguard calls. During early evening she received amplifying orders from CTF 71 wherein she was directed to depart for Fremantle at sunset October 20th.********

The PADDLE, which during the night had patrolled to the eastward on the surface across Makassar Strait, was now returning to her lifeguard station. At 0519 having arrived on station she commenced circling and remained on the surface during the day without receiving any communication from CTF 71 on strikes for that day. At 1500, having decided there were to be no air strikes she again commenced surface patrol eastward across Makassar Strait

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* BONEFISH Dispatch 181915 October 1944 to CTF 71.
** War Patrol Report BONEFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.
*** CTF 71 Dispatch 191121 October 1944 to BONEFISH.
**** War Patrol Report COD, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 06, November 20th, 1944.
***** Deck Log COD, October 19th, 1944.
****** CTF 71 Dispatch 191016 October 1944 to COD.
******* LAPON Dispatch 181515 October 1944 to CTF 71.
******** CTF 71 Dispatch 190924 October 1944 to LAPON.

to return to lifeguard station at dawn. No contacts were made during the day and no lifeguard calls were received.*

(15) Submarines Retiring from the Area.

Submarines retiring from area, notably, BAYA, CAVALLA, BECUNA, FLASHER, HOE, SEA ROVER, SPITEFUL, TELEMACHUS, ZWAARDVISCH and STURDY made no contacts of consequence.

* * * *

THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE TF 71 SUBMARINES AT 2400 OCTOBER 19TH IS SHOWN IN PLATE XVIII. IT WILL BE OBSERVED THAT MANY OF THESE SUBMARINES ARE NOT IN THE STATIONS INDICATED IN PLATE VI. ATTENTION IS PARTICULARLY DIRECTED TO THE FACT THAT BALABAC STRAIT IS VACANT (DIAGRAM D).

(2) Operations of Commander Allied Air Force SOWESPAC, October 19th.

Two important events occurred on this day, insofar as the operations by CAAF SOWESPAC in support of the Leyte campaign are concerned. First, Search Plan FOX (see Plate XIX) was inaugurated and secondly, the first strike by land-based aircraft against targets in the Philippines beyond Mindanao was made when thirteen FIFTH Air Force P-47's took off from Morotai and attacked Cebu.

THE INITIATION OF SEARCH PLAN FOX CANCELLED SEARCH PLAN EASY AND MOVED THE PRINCIPAL SEARCH ORIGIN FROM BIAK TO MOROTAI, 520 MILES CLOSER TO THE PHILIPPINES, AND EXTENDED THE SEARCH COVERAGE WELL INTO THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND OVER ALL OF THE PHILIPPINES EXCEPT LUZON. THIS SEARCH PLAN COVERED THE APPROACHES TO THE CENTRAL PHILIPPINES VIA MINDORO, SAN BERNARDINO, MAKASSAR, SURIGAO AND BALABAC STRAITS, BUT IT SIGNIFICANTLY DID NOT COVER THE SEA AREA OFF THE NORTHWESTERN COAST OF BORNEO SO AS TO PROVIDE EARLY DETECTION OF ANY ENEMY SURFACE FORCES THAT MIGHT MOVE UP FROM THE LINGGA - SINGAPORE AREA. THE OMISSION OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AREA OFF BORNEO WAS A SERIOUS FLAW IN SEARCH PLAN FOX, FOR ALLIED INTELLIGENCE AT THIS TIME HAD REVEALED THAT THE BULK OF THE JAPANESE FLEET EXCEPT FOR CARRIERS WAS BASED IN THE LINGGA - SINGAPORE AREA DUE TO A SHORTAGE OF FUEL IN THE EMPIRE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE APPROACHES THROUGH THE SOUTH CHINA SEA FROM THE NORTH WERE COVERED BY CHINA-BASED LAB-24'S AS DISCUSSED UNDER OPERATIONS OF C.G. FOURTEENTH AIR FORCE IN CHAPTER I. THE APPROACHES NORTH AND EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES WERE COVERED BY COMTHIRDFLT.

The attack by FIFTH Air Force planes against Cebu was in conformity with COMSOWESPAC's directive of October 17th that extended the area of attack operations by CAAF SOWESPAC to include that portion of the western Visayas west of the line running through the eastern boundaries of Camiguin, Bohol and Cebu to the southeastern tip of MASBATE (see Air and Surface Operations Areas

* War Patrol Report PADDLE, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 018, November 1st, 1944.

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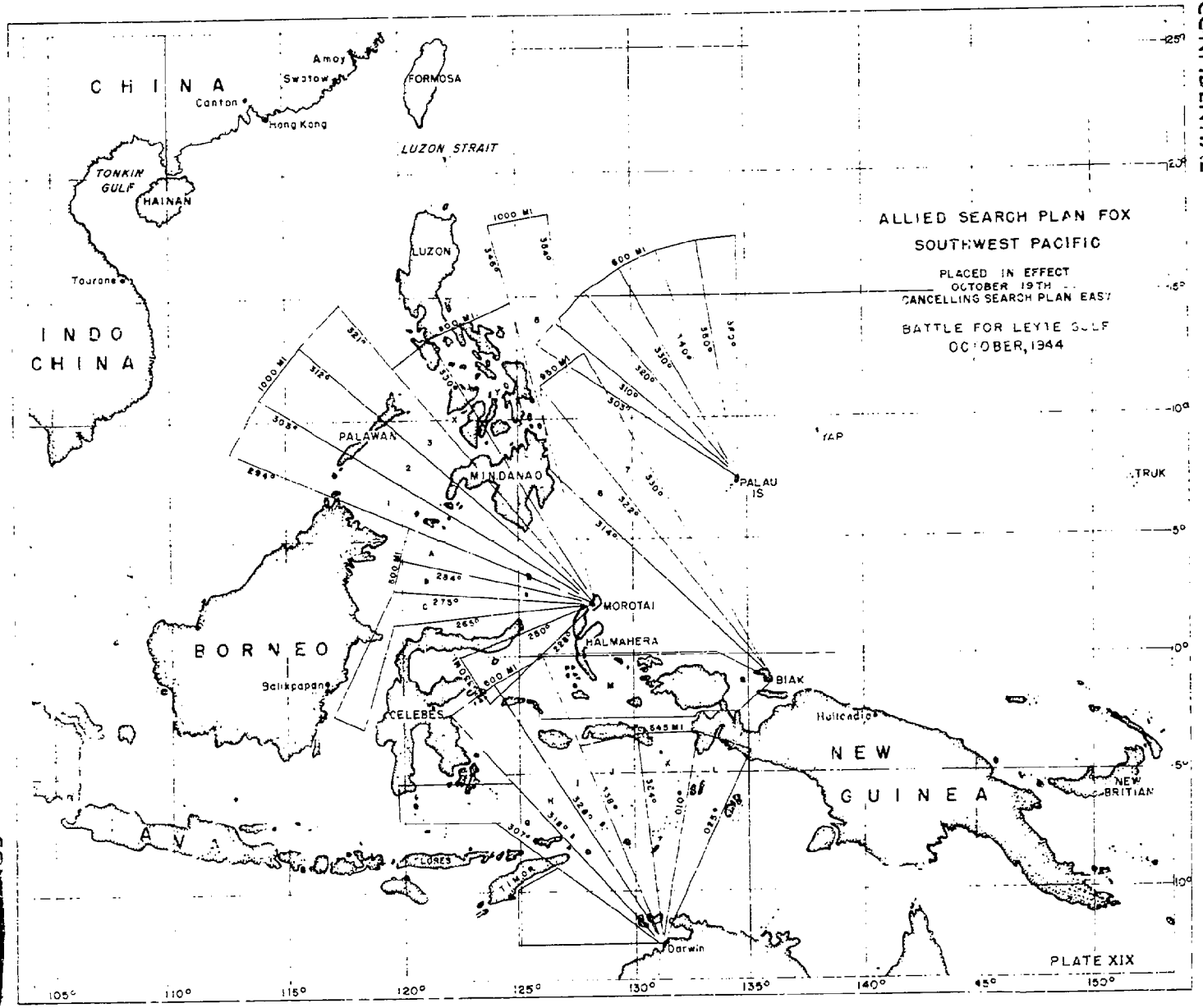

PLATE XIX

300a

CONFIDENTIAL

of Responsibility chart in Appendix III).*

In addition to the above operations, CAAF SOWESPAC continued neutralization strikes against enemy targets in the rear areas, and the central and southern areas of Mindanao.

During the evening he received COMSOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 11 cancelling SOWESPAC Zone Notice No. 8 and No. 10.**

His operations were controlled from his headquarters at Hollandia while he himself continued toward Leyte aboard the NASHVILLE in company with COMSOWESPAC.

(a) Operations of C.G. FIFTH Air Force, October 19th.

C.G. FIFTH Air Force assigned the following tasks to be accomplished on October 19th by his subordinate commanders in support of the Leyte operations.***

(1) Commanding Officer, 310th Bombardment Wing.

(a) Provide for local fighter defense of Morotai area and strike targets of opportunity in the Halmaheras.

(b) Conduct fighter sweep of Mindanao.

(c) Assume operational control of one squadron of B-25's from C.G. FIFTH Bomber Command.

(2) C.G. FIFTH Bomber Command.

(a) Conduct night sea searches over the Philippines, using two B-24's.

(3) CTG 73.4 (Commander Fleet Air Wing SEVENTEEN).

(a) Carry out Search Plan FOX using ten PB4Y's.

(4) Commanding Officer NINETY-FIRST Reconnaissance Wing.

(a) Photo-reconnoiter enemy airdromes in the Davao area and the seaplane base at Bassa Point (Davao Gulf) using two F-5's.****

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* COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170939 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC, CANF SOWESPAC, info to C.G. FIFTH Air Force, COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 77, etc.

** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 190630 October 1944 to CANF SOWESPAC and CAAF SOWESPAC, Info CINCPOA.

*** HQ FIFTH Air Force Fragmentary Field Order Number 293, October 19th, 1944.

**** The F-5 photoplane was a P-38-type fighter configured for photo-reconnaissance.

(b) Photo-reconnoiter Jolo and Tawi Tawi Islands (Sulu Archipelago) using two F-5's.

In addition, there was a fighter sweep against Cebu which was not included in the above field order, probably because the directive for this attack was issued after the order had been promulgated.

In compliance with the above directives, sixteen P-38's strafed targets in the Zamboanga area of southwestern Mindanao and the northeasterly islands of the Sulu Archipelago, sinking two barges off Jolo Island and three luggers at Zamboanga, and damaging a 500/1000 ton freighter off Tictauan Island.*

Thirteen P-47's attacked air installations and shipping in the vicinity of Cebu Town, damaging one freighter, five barges and two luggers, and eight fighters on the ground.* Three P-47's were shot down by enemy antiaircraft fire.**

There is no information in Japanese documents to substantiate the above reported losses and damage to enemy aircraft and facilities. In respect to shipping, postwar reports of Japanese naval and merchant losses during World War II, which are rather complete, do not reveal any losses or damage to enemy shipping in the Visayas on this day.***

The results of the B-24 night sea searches over the Philippines were negative.****

(b) Operations of CTF 73 (Naval Air Force), October 19th.

CTF 73 continued administrative control over his land and tender-based aircraft from aboard his flagship CURRITUCK, which at 1600, October 19th, with CTF 73 embarked, escorted by HMAS HAWKESBURY (PF), got underway from Manus for Morotai, speed fifteen knots, to deliver aviation spares, supplies and personnel to the TANGIER, in accordance with Commander Aircraft SEVENTH Fleet Movement Order Number 7-44, October 19th, 1944.*****

Meanwhile, CTG 73.4 (Commander Search and Support Group), commenced flying long-range daylight searches for the first time from Morotai,

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* FIFTH Air Force Weekly Intelligence Review Number 47, October 15th-21st, 1944.

** CINCPAC War Diary, October 1944, Serial 00963, November 6th, 1944.

*** "The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II" prepared by Military History Section, Special Staff GHQ, Far East Command, February 1952, also "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II," prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

**** Reconnaissance, GHQ, SOWESPAC, October 19th, 1944, prepared by Military Intelligence Section, General Staff.

***** War Diary CURRITUCK and Commander Naval Base Manus, October 19th, 1944.

in accordance with Search Plan FOX, using the PB4Y's of VPB 101 and 115, under the operational control of C.G. FIFTH Air Force.* Also he commenced making attacks against targets in the Mindanao area and the Sulu Archipelago with the newly arrived PV-1's of VPB-146, under the direction and coordination control of C.G. FIFTH Air Force.**

Other operations of CTF 73 on October 19th in support of the Leyte operation included local antisubmarine patrols in the Morotai area, and cover and rescue missions by the PBY's of VPB-11 for the FIFTH Air Force strikes against Zamboanga and the northern islands of the Sulu Archipelago.*** In addition, three armed night patrols over the Sulu Sea were made by PBY's from VPB-29,**** in compliance with basic orders from GHQ COMSOWESPAC.*****

The night PBY searches were all negative, but the long-range PB4Y daylight searches from Morotai proved to be more lucrative for VPB's 101 and 115 than those flown from the remote base at Owi. The first contact occurred at 1000 when the PB4Y in sector "X" sighted and attacked three 500/1000 ton cargo vessels and eight single-engine reconnaissance type seaplanes in Mangarin Bay, southwest Mindoro, claiming the destruction of one of the cargo ships and two of the seaplanes.****** At 1120 the PB4Y in sector "Y" destroyed an enemy observation-type seaplane on the water in San Bernardino Strait, off the northwest tip of Samar.******* At 1300 the PB4Y in sector THREE attacked and later claimed the destruction of a 6000 ton freighter transport in latitude 11°-27'N, Longitude 119°-10'E,******** (fifteen miles west of the northern tip of Palawan). Postwar records of naval and merchant shipping losses for October 19th do not list such a ship; similarly, no mention is made of the 500/1000 ton cargo vessel claimed to have been destroyed in Mangarin Bay.*********

THE ACTIVITY OF THE PB4Y'S ON THIS DAY HAS BEEN DISCUSSED IN DETAIL TO EMPHASIZE THE FACT THAT THE PILOTS OF THESE AIRCRAFT, WHILE CONDUCTING LONG RANGE SEARCHES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEARCH PLAN FOX, DEVIATED FROM THEIR PRIMARY SEARCH MISSION TO ATTACK TARGETS, FOR THE MOST PART OF MINOR IMPORTANCE, THEREBY EXPOSING THEMSELVES TO THE DANGER OF BEING DESTROYED OR DAMAGED

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* War Diary COMAIRSEVENTHFLT, October 19th, 1944.

** War Diary VPB-146, October 19th, 1944.

*** War Diary VPB-11, October 19th, 1944

**** War Diary VPB-29, October 19th, 1944.

***** COMSOWESPAC Dispatch 170102 October 1944 to CAAF SOWESPAC.

****** Aircraft Action Report No. 31, October 19th, 1944, VPB-101, Serial 0107, December 23rd, 1944.

******* Aircraft Action Report No. 72, October 19th, 1944, VPB-115, Serial 0193, November 5th, 1944.

******** Aircraft Action Report No. 29 VPB-101, October 19th, 1944, Serial 0107, December 23rd, 1944.

********* "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses During World War II", prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947; also "The Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II", prepared by Military History Section, Special Staff, GHQ Far East Command, February 1952.

BEFORE COMPLETING THEIR SEARCHES. THEIR ACTION IN SO DOING WAS AT VARIANCE WITH THEIR BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM CAAF SOWESPAC AND C.G. FIFTH AIR FORCE,* AND WAS AT VARIANCE NOT ONLY WITH THE SEARCH DOCTRINE IN FORCE AT THE TIME WHICH WAS THAT "IT IS INADVISABLE TO DIVERT PATROL PLANES FROM THEIR PRIMARY MISSION AS SCOUTS IN ORDER TO ATTACK LIGHT SURFACE FORCES,"** BUT ALSO WITH CURRENT DOCTRINE WHICH PROHIBITS COMBAT OPERATIONS BY SCOUT AIRCRAFT UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY ORDERS FOR THE OPERATIONS.***

THE ABOVE ACTION OF THE PATROL PLANES WAS PARTICULARLY UNACCEPTABLE AT THIS TIME BECAUSE THE LEYTE LANDING WAS TO OCCUR ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, AND IT WAS THEREFORE ESSENTIAL THAT THE MOVEMENTS AND STRENGTH OF JAPANESE FORCES BE QUICKLY AND SURELY DISCOVERED.

(B) CINCPAC-CINCPOA, October 19th.

(1) Western Pacific Task Forces.

(a) Operations of COMTHIRDFLT.

From the nature of the dispatches released by COMTHIRDFLT on October 19th, it is clear that he was particularly interested in the possibility that the Japanese would attempt to reinforce their garrison forces on Leyte via "Tokyo Express" tactics. Accordingly, at 1000, as a consequence of the contact report by the BREAM on three large enemy ships observed in Makassar Strait at 0300 October 18th, he advised COMSOWESPAC again of the possibility that the enemy might attempt to deploy his fleet in small dispersed groups near the objective area in such a manner that they could concentrate quickly for short and fast movement, using careful hiding, and timing the attack to take full advantage of weather cover.**** He clearly wanted to emphasize the necessity for extreme vigilance on the southern flank of the objective area for fear that such attack might develop before he could interdict them from his covering position to the north.

At about 0708 he received CINCPOA's Zone Notice No. 45 wherein VESTIBULE north of Latitude 20°-30'N was designated as a joint zone.*****

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* HQ AAF SOWESPAC Revised Operations Instruction No. 71/1 October 4th; also HQ FIFTH Air Force Fragmentary Field Order No. 293, October 19th, 1944.

** Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Fleet Aircraft USF-76 (Revised), Volume III, Patrol Aircraft, paragraph 8-102, prepared by Commander Aircraft Scouting Force, February 1942.

*** Naval Air Operating Procedures NWP 41, U.S. Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1954, Section 372.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190100 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC and COMSEVENFLT, info CINCPAC, COMINCH, all TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

***** CINCPOA Dispatch 182138 October 1944.

At 1004 he directed CTG 30.7 (Hunter-Killer Group,* consisting of HOGGATT BAY, BEBAS, SEID, STEELE and SAMUEL S. MILES) to report for duty to CTG 30.3 on October 20th to provide antisubmarine protection for the Salvage Group.**

At 1050, feeling that TG 30.3 would soon be beyond danger from enemy surface or air attack, he directed COMCRUDIV SIX in the WICHITA to depart TG 30.3 at 0600 October 20th and proceed to rendezvous for duty with CTG 38.4 in Area NICK at 0700 October 21st; destroyer escort to be provided by CTG 38.4. He further directed CTG 38.4, upon arrival of the WICHITA, to detach the BILOXI in time to join CTG 38.2 during daylight October 21st in the vicinity of Point QUEEN (Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 128°-00'E).*** At 1111 he issued orders for the CABOT, STEPHEN POTTER, THE SULLIVANS and MILLER to be detached from TG 30.3 in time to rejoin TG 38.2 during forenoon on October 20th.****

Later in the day he received the following contact reports:

(a) At about 1645 from the TRIGGER, which reported sighting at 1400 in Latitude 25°-30'N, Longitude 122°-45'E (fifty-two miles on bearing 057°(T) from the northeastern tip of Formosa) four enemy heavy cruisers and five destroyers on course 270°(T), speed sixteen knots.*****

(b) At about 1656 via CINCPAC from a FOURTEENTH Air Force China-based search plane over the South China Sea which reported sighting at 1403 an enemy naval task force consisting of one carrier, two cruisers and three destroyers 120 miles southeast of Hainan Island, in Latitude18°-00'N, Longitude 112°-11'E, course 330°(T), speed twenty-five knots.******

(c) At about 1931, or perhaps earlier if he was monitoring the Central Pacific shore-based air reconnaissance frequency, from Allied aircraft on two enemy submarines; one, on the surface about 1125, bearing 098°(T) distant 592 miles from the northern tip of Luzon, course 150°(T), speed twelve knots; the other, also on the surface, at 1200 on bearing 097°(T), distant

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* At the time the Hunter-Killer Group was known as the JASASA (Joint Air Surface Antisubmarine Action) Group and is so designated in the pertinent COMTHIRDFLT OpOrders. Throughout this study, the more familiar term "Hunter-Killer" group is used.

** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190104 October 1944 to CTG 30.7; also War Diary HOGGATT BAY, October 19th, 1944.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190150 October 1944 to CTG 38.4 and COMCRUDIV 6, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, etc.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190211 October 1944 to CTG 30.3, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, etc.

***** TRIGGER Dispatch 190715 October 1944 to COMSUBPAC, info COMTHIRDFLT.

****** CINCPAC Dispatch 190726 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, COMTHIRDFLT, TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

500 miles from the same reference point, course 180°(T), speed twelve knots.* He now estimated that the two submarines here mentioned plus one sighted heading south by the BLACKFIN at 1600 the previous day about 220 miles north of the 1125 plane contact** had been deployed to attack TG 30.3. However, he was not alarmed by these submarine contacts, since he felt that he had provided CTG 30.3 with adequate air and surface antisubmarine units to cope with the situation and therefore issued no additional instruction.

At about 1826 or later he received a dispatch from COMNAVGRPCHINA which had been forwarded by CINCPAC, that "General Chennault wants to know if you can advise duration of time FOURTEENTH Air Force planes will be required."***

At 2207, presumably as a consequence of the contacts on enemy forces off Hainan Island and northern Formosa, (a) and (b) above, he answered C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force's query by stating that he deemed the continuation of these searches vital as long as the activity and movement of the enemy continued.****

Since the composition of the three widely scattered contacts on enemy surface forces off Formosa, Hainan Island, and in Makassar Strait was hardly large enough to suggest an engagement of major proportion, COMTHIRDFLT's original concept that enemy naval reaction to KING II would be limited to "Tokyo Express" tactics was strengthened. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that the Allied landing would occur on the following day he decided to keep TF 38 intact so that he would have maximum forces available for any eventuality. Accordingly, at 2229 he cancelled all existing orders for his task groups to retire to Ulithi for logistic replenishment, emergency upkeep and repair,***** and his orders of the previous day to shift his battleships and carriers.****** He ordered the CABOT group and WICHITA to shift from TG 30.3 to TF 38, and the MARSHALL to shift from TG 38.1 to TG 38.2 as previously directed, inviting attention to the new rendezvous position. He then directed his task group commanders as follows:

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* War Diaries CINCPAC and COMFWDAREA (CTF 57) October 1944; CINCPAC Daily Location and Plot, Allied and Enemy Forces, Underlay No. 1, 1630Z October 19th-1630Z October 20th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

*** CINCPAC Dispatch 190856 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191307 October 1944 to CINCPAC, info COMSOWESPAC, CTF 38.

***** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191829 October 1944 to CTF 38 and all TGC's of TF 38, info COMINCH, COMSOWESPAC, CINCPAC, CTG 30.3, etc.

****** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180615 October 1944 to CTG 38.2, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, etc., also COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180625 October 1944 to CTG 38.3, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, etc.

(a) CTG's 38.1 and 38.4 to carry out the existing schedule to support the Leyte operation on October 20th and fuel in Area MICK (northeast corner, Latitude 15°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E) on October 21st.

(b) CTG's 38.2 and 38.2 to rendezvous at Point READY (Latitude 15°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E) at 1200 October 20th and operate in that vicinity; CTG 38.3 to make a 300 mile sector search from 270° to 340°(T) in the morning and afternoon on October 20th, keeping away from land but sighting the coast line in order to detect any enemy vessels that might be passing close along the shore.

COMTHIRDFLT'S DECISIONS AND ACTIONS SHOW THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN MAINTAINING A RUNNING ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION. HIS DECISION TO KEEP TF 38 INTACT WAS OF COURSE CORRECT, AND HIS ACTIONS SHOW CLEARLY THAT HE REALIZED AND UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS MISSION--NAMELY TO PROVIDE COVER AND SUPPORT FOR THE ALLIED LANDINGS ON LEYTE.

Little did he know that he had received only one reliable contact report. This was from the TRIGGER on the Japanese SECOND Striking Force. While incorrect as to composition, the report was sufficiently correct to give a reasonable idea of the character of the force operating off northeast Formosa. The report concerning the naval task force in the South China Sea was in error, for this was merely an enemy convoy en route from Sanwa (Hainan Island) to the Empire, escorted by the escort carrier SHINYO.* The three large vessels reported by the BREAM in Makassar Strait were not sighted visually, but only appeared as "pips" on the radar, a fact that the BREAM failed to include in her contact report.** Therefore, unless he had other information not available to this study COMTHIRDFLT had based all his plans on erroneous intelligence information, although the fault was not his, but rather in the poor quality of the reports he had received.

(1) Operations of TF 38 (Fast Carrier Force)

(a) Operations of CTG 38.1 and CTG 38.4.

October 19th marked the second consecutive day that these two groups operated in the vicinity of Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 123°-30'E and launched their aircraft against central Luzon. Their operations continued to be coordinated by CTG 38.1, the senior task group commander and OTC. The plan for October 19th called for CTG 38.1 to attack enemy aircraft and airfields in the Manila and Clark Field areas, and CTG 38.4 to destroy the enemy shipping observed in Manila Bay the previous day. In furtherance of these

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* War Diary, 931st Air Group, October 1st-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160151, NA 12319.

** War Patrol Report BREAM, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 021, November 22nd, 1944.

tasks CTG 38.1 and 38.4 commenced launching aircraft as follows:*

TIME	STRIKE DESIGNATION	COMPOSITION	SORTIES
0615	VF SWEEP	44 VF	44
0643	ABLE	39 VF, 36 VB, 28 VT	103
0828	BAKER	37 VF, 33 VB, 24 VT	94
1201	CHARLIE	44 VF, 37 VB, 25 VT	106
		Total Sorties	347

The armament for the above strikes consisted generally of bombs, except that those fighters so equipped carried rockets in addition to their usual loading of machine gun ammunition, and eight torpedo planes from TG 38.4 (five in Strike ABLE and three in Strike CHARLIE) carried torpedoes.

The weather on October 19th was favorable over both the target area and the operating area. Sunrise was at 0640. The adverse weather encountered east of Manila at 1630 on October 18th by the FRANKLIN and ENTERPRISE pilots on their last strike had moved northwest, and on October 19th good flying conditions prevailed over central Luzon, with high cirrus clouds, scattered low stratus 2,500 to 5,000 feet, clear visibility fifteen to twenty miles. In the operating area the sea was smooth, with light easterly winds, high broken alto-stratus clouds, occasionally overcast, visibility eight miles.**

The above strikes were quite successful. CTG 38.1 claimed having destroyed on the ground sixteen two-engine and seven single-engine

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* Action Report HORNET, Ryukyu Islands, Formosa and Philippine Operations, October 2nd-27th, 1944, Serial 0031, October 28th, 1944; Action Report MONTEREY, Operations Against Nansei Shoto, Sakishima Shoto, Formosa, Luzon, Visayas, etc., October 2nd-28th, (EI), 1944, Serial 0029, October 27th, 1944; also Aircraft Action Report Air Group 14, WASP Serial 0238, November 9th, 1944; Action Report BELLEAU WOOD, Action against Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Luzon and the Visayas, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0170, November 3rd, 1944; Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations against the Enemy, Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944; also Aircraft Action Reports, Air Group 13, FRANKLIN Serial 0193, November 6th, 1944.

** Aircraft Action Reports Air Groups 11, 13, 14 and 28, October 19th, 1944; also Deck Logs WASP and FRANKLIN, October 19th, 1944 and Action Report WASP, October 2nd-27th, 1944, Serial 0040, October 28th, 1944.

planes, and having damaged five two-engine and twenty-one single-engine planes. He claimed further the destruction of two barracks at Clark Field, three hangars, two fuel dumps and the administration building at Nielson Field, and installations and dispersal areas at Clark, Nielson, Pasig and Nichols Fields.* CTG 38.4 claimed having shot down three of sixteen enemy fighters that intercepted the morning fighter sweep over the Manila area in the only attempt that the Japanese made in the air to oppose the Allied strikes this day.**

In regard to enemy shipping, CTG 38.4 claimed having sunk one oiler, one large and two small cargo vessels, and one small cargo-transport. He claimed having damaged twenty-eight ships of various types and sizes.***

The above claims were based entirely on pilot reports, since no photographs were taken. COMTHIRDFLT in his operational summary of the above strikes evaluated the results as follows:****

In regard to enemy aircraft he gave credit to the reported destruction of three fighters in the air and no credit to aircraft reportedly destroyed on the ground. He estimated that sixteen two-engine and six single-engine planes had probably been destroyed on the ground and that five two-engine and twenty-two single-engine planes had been damaged. As regards enemy shipping he gave credit for sinking but one ship (AO); he listed as damaged two large AP, one medium AP, two medium AO, two large AK, seven medium AK, and four small AK.***** Post war records indicate that no merchant shipping above 500 tons was sunk on this day.****** Unfortunately, there are no Japanese records concerning their air losses available to this study.

Included in the composition of Strike BAKER was an anti-shipping search made by four VF to investigate a number of enemy transports reported to be in Lingayen Gulf. However, no transports were found in the gulf, but two large oilers were sighted at 1050 alongside a pier at San Fernando, and fifteen large luggers and forty to fifty landing craft were seen

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* War Diary CTG 38.1, October 19th, 1944.

** COMTHIRDFLT Operational Summary of Carrier Strikes, TG's 38.1 and 38.4, October 19th, 1944, Serial 00109, November 22nd, 1944; also Aircraft Action Reports Air Group 11, 13, 14 and 28, October 19th, 1944.

*** Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Philippine Islands, in Support of the Occupation of Leyte, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Operational Summary of Carrier Strikes, TG's 38.1 and 38.4, October 19th, 1944, Serial 00109, November 22nd, 1944.

***** "Japanese Naval and Merchant Ship Losses during World War II", prepared by Joint Army and Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

at anchor in the bay. The ships alongside the pier were strafed, and attacked with 500-point bombs with undetermined results.*

CTG 38.4 made a morning and afternoon search over San Bernardino Strait, each flown by two VT. The first search was launched at 0606 and recovered at 0917; the second at 1358 and recovered at 1745. The results of both searches were negative.**

Throughout the day he continued to search for unrecovered survivors from his eight planes that had landed in the water after dark the previous evening, flying a total of forty-seven sorties from the ENTERPRISE for this purpose, and employing cruiser planes to pick up any survivors sighted by the search planes. In this manner, one VT pilot and two VT aircrewmen were recovered at 1219 by the NEW ORLEANS.*** This left one VT pilot, two VB pilots and two VB aircrewmen to be accounted for, but since he stated that by the end of the day all personnel except one VT pilot had been recovered**** and the ENTERPRISE showed only one VT pilot as not recovered,***** it is concluded that the two remaining VB pilots and aircrewmen were rescued by other units in the command, who failed to record this information. CTG 38.1 stationed two night fighters over the task groups from 0435 until after the daylight CAP was launched.******

From dawn until 1800 he maintained a CAP of sixteen VF, a SNASP of four VF/four VT, and an ASP of four VT. During this same period, CTG 38.4 provided a CAP of eight VF and an ASP of four VT/VF.

There were no enemy air attacks against either task group. The only enemy air action in the vicinity of these groups occurred during the morning search for downed flight personnel (0730-1125) when two ENTERPRISE fighters shot down an enemy land attack plane bearing 285°(T), distant thirty-five miles from TG 38.4.******* There is no mention regarding this plane in Japanese documents available to this study.

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* Aircraft Action Reports Air Group 13, October 10th-29th, 1944, Forwarded by WASP Serial 0238, November 9th, 1944.

** Action Report SAN JACINTO, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, and the Visayas in Support of the Occupation of Leyte, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0043, October 31st, 1944.

*** War Diary NEW ORLEANS, October 19th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTG 38.4, Operations Against Okinawa Jima, Formosa, Luzon, Philippine Islands, in Support of the Occupation of Leyte, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 00263, November 16th, 1944.

***** Action Report ENTERPRISE, Operations Against the Enemy, Nansei Shoto, Formosa, Philippine Islands, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944.

****** War Diary CTG 38.1, October 19th, 1944.

******* War Diary CTG 38.4, October 19th, 1944; also Action Report ENTERPRISE, October 7th-21st, 1944, Serial 0053, October 31st, 1944.

Total aircraft losses for the day for both task groups, from all causes, were two VF, two VB and five VT, including one VF and one VB lost operationally; personnel losses totalled five pilots and seven aircrewmen.

Upon completion of the day's flight operations at 1730 CTG's 38.1 and 38.4 headed southeast toward their assigned operating area in the vicinity of Latitude 11°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E, where they were to arrive by 0600 the following day and provide direct air support to Allied landings on Leyte.* Sunset was at 1820.

At 1930, CTG 38.4, in compliance with COMTHIRDFLT orders, detailed and detached the NICHOLSON to rendezvous with the WICHITA (COMCRUDIV SIX) and escort her from TG 30.3 to join TG 38.4.**

(b) Operations of CTG 38.2, October 19th.

CTG 38.2 continued on course 129°(T) at sixteen knots toward the fueling rendezvous with TG 30.8 in Area MICK (northwest corner, Latitude 15°-00'N, Longitude 128°-20'E). It will be recalled that TG 38.2 had been scheduled originally to fuel in Area OCTANE (northeast corner, Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 130°-00'E),*** but that the fueling area had been changed at 1226 on October 18th by COMTHIRDFLT to Area MICK, 180 miles to the south, in order to avoid a typhoon forming in Latitude 14°-00'N, Longitude 136°-00'E, and predicted to move northwest at ten knots.****

At 0816 he made contact with the fueling group,***** consisting of six oilers (MONONGAHELA, CALIENTE, KASKASKIA, PATUXENT, NEOSHO, and LACKAWANNA), two escort carriers (NEHENTA BAY and RUDYERD BAY) and two aircraft replacement carriers (SITKOH BAY and BARNES), plus a number of screening destroyers and destroyer escorts.******

At 0900 the OWEN, whose sortie from Ulithi with TG 38.2 on October 6th had been prevented by emergency boiler repairs and her departure delayed until October 16th, reported to him for duty.*******

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* War Diaries CTG 38.4, WASP, ENTERPRISE, October 19th, 1944.

** War Diaries CTG 38.4 and NICHOLSON, October 19th, 1944; also COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190150 October 1944 to CTG 38.4 and COMCRUDIV 6, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, etc.

*** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 170022 October 1944 to CTF 38, CTG's 38.1, 38.2, 38.3 and 38.4, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, COMSOWESPAC, CTG's 30.3, 30.5, 30.8, etc.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 180326 October 1944 to CTG's 38.2, 30.7 and 30.8, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, COMSOWESPAC, etc.

***** War Diary COMDESDIV 104, October 19th, 1944.

****** Deck Log INTREPID, October 19th, 1944; also War Diary CTG 30.8, October 19th, 1944.

******* War Diary OWEN, October 19th, 1944.

He commenced fueling his command at 0929 on base course 110°(T), speed ten knots, and completed it at 1500, TG 30.8 having delivered 93,000 barrels of fuel oil and 190,000 gallons of aviation gasoline.* Fueling conditions were ideal and flying conditions were favorable, with a smooth sea, gentle breezes, clear weather, visibility about eight miles.**

He received replacement aircraft as follows: INTREPID, four VF from the BARNES and two VT from the BARNES and two VT from the SITKOH BAY; HANCOCK, one VF from the BARNES. In addition, three fighters were transferred from the INDEPENDENCE to the HANCOCK. No replacement aircraft were delivered to the BUNKER HILL or INDEPENDENCE.***

At 1523 he commenced steaming generally in a northwesterly direction on various courses at sixteen knots so as to join CTG 38.3 in the vicinity of Point READY (Latitude 15°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E) at 1200 on October 20th, and operate in that area with TG 38.3 in a covering capacity for the Leyte landings, while TG's 38.1 and 38.4 provided direct air support.****

From dawn until sunset he maintained a CAP of eight VF and an ASP of four VT/VB. No enemy aircraft were observed.

(c) Operations of CTG 38.3, October 19th.

On October 19th, CTG 38.3 operated independently in a covering position about 250 miles east of Luzon, in the vicinity of Latitude 17°-00'N, Longitude 127°-00'E, standing by to intercept any enemy forces that might either threaten the Allied invasion forces or the ships of TG 30.3.*****

He maintained from sunrise until sunset a CAP of eight VF and a SNASP of four VF and four VT/VB. No enemy activity was observed in the vicinity of the task group.*****

One VT was jettisoned from the ESSEX.******

(2) Operations of CTG 30.3 (Salvage Group), October 19th.

At the start of the day CTG 30.3 was still on course 180°(T) making good about five knots. He had taken this course at 1730 the previous

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* War Diary CTG 30.8, October 19th, 1944.
** Deck Logs NEW JERSEY, INTREPID and INDEPENDENCE, October 19th, 1944; also Action Report HANCOCK, October 6th-31st, 1944, Serial 0100, November 3rd, 1944.
*** War Diaries BARNES, SITKOH BAY, INTREPID, INDEPENDENCE, October 19th, 1944.
**** Deck Logs NEW JERSEY, INTREPID and INDEPENDENCE, October 19th, 1944; also COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191329 October 1944 to CTF 38 and all TG's of TF 38, info COMINCH, CINCPAC, COMSOWESPAC, CTG 30.3, etc.
***** War Diary CTG 38.3, October 19th, 1944.
****** Deck Log ESSEX, October 19th, 1944.

day on orders of COMTHIRDFLT* so as to avoid a typhoon that was reported to be moving northwest across his projected track to Ulithi. Nevertheless, there had been no local indication thus far that a typhoon was forming to the southeast of his group for the barometer was holding steady and the weather favorable, with slight sea, gentle northeasterly breezes, partly cloudy sky, but very good visibility.**

At 0815 the CURRENT (ARS-22), which had been dispatched from Ulithi by COMSERVRON TEN at 0633 on October 16th to aid in salvaging the damaged HOUSTON and CANBERRA, reported to him for duty.***

He maintained during daylight a CAP of eight VF and an ASP of four VT over his task group. No enemy aircraft were intercepted although an unidentified plane, possibly from Okinawa since it retired in that direction, was picked up at 0359 on the air search radar.**** At 1015 an enemy twin-engine plane approached undetected by radar to within about twelve miles of TG 30.3, when it was sighted low on the water by the lookouts of the COWPENS. It escaped.*****

At 2130 he made radar and voice contact with COMTHIRDFLT in TG 38.2, approximately twenty miles to the northeast. During the ensuing TBS voice radio conversation, COMTHIRDFLT, who apparently considered that TG 30.3 had steamed far enough to the south to avoid the typhoon, directed him to resume direct course to Ulithi at midnight. Accordingly, at 2400 he changed course to 115°(T). He also sent the CHARRETTE to rendezvous with TG 30.7 (ATR-50 and TREVOR) forty-five miles to the north and to escort these vessels to TG 30.3.****** At this time TG 30.3 was bearing 114°(T), distant 370 miles from the northern tip of Luzon, and was about 750 miles from Ulithi. A favorable current during the day had increased the average SOA to about five point eight knots.*******

(3) Operations of CTG 30.5 (Air Search, Reconnaissance and Photographic Command), October 19th.

CTG 30.5 on October 19th continued to fly land-plane searches from Tinian and seaplane searches from Kossol Passage and Saipan, as indicated in Diagram D.

At about 1125 and 1200 two unarmed PB4Y search planes searching from Tinian in Sector 52V223 (272°-281°(T), sighted two unidentified

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* COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 172307 October 1944 to CTG 30.3.
** War Diary BOSTON and Deck Log BOSTON, October 19th, 1944.
*** War Diary CURRENT (ARS-22), October 19th, 1944.
**** Action Report COWPENS, October 20th, 1944, Serial 0028, October 21st, 1944.
***** War Diary COWPENS, October 19th, 1944.
****** War Diary COMCRUDIV 10, October 19th, 1944.
******* War Diary COMTHIRDFLT, October 19th, 1944, Serial 00142, December 10th, 1944.

submarines. The first submarine was on course 150°(T), speed twelve knots, 590 miles bearing 098°(T) from Cape Engano (northern tip of Luzon); the second distant 500 miles on bearing 097°(T) from Cape Engano, course 180°(T), speed twelve knots. The first submarine, a large fle type, remained on the surface and would not answer the challenging planes by blinker or IFF. The other, a medium-sized submarine, immediately submerged when challenged.*

These were apparently two of the four Japanese submarines which had departed the Empire on October 13th and 15th and were at this time en route to the area east of the Philippines to conduct full scale attacks against the Allied carrier task forces, ("Operations of Commander Advance Expeditionary Force" 0719-2400 October 17th), inasmuch as there were no Allied submarines in this area on October 19th. The contact report was in error as regards the size of these submarines, since all four (I-26, I-45, I-54 and I-56) were quite large,** being of about the same length and displacement as the NARWHAL and NAUTILUS. One of these submarines could well have been the same one that was sighted on the surface on a course 180°(T) at 1600 the previous day by the BLACKFIN 220 miles to the north, in Latitude 20°-45'N, Longitude 132°-52'E.*** Nevertheless, COMTHIRDFLT estimated that these contacts had been made on three separate enemy submarines, and that these submarines had been deployed to attack TG 30.3.****

A third contact was made at 1330 when a Tinian-based PB4Y, covering sector 36V223 (344°-353°(T)), sighted an enemy destroyer heading 000°(T) at twenty knots, bearing 013°(T), distant eighty-two miles from Chichi Jima.*

The results of the other sector searches conducted by CTG 30.5 from Saipan and Kossol Passage on October 19th were negative.

(2) Operations of CTF 17 (Submarine Force Pacific), October 19th.

It will be recalled that at about midnight CTF 17 had received a dispatch from the commanding officer of the BESUGO wherein the commander stated that he considered the primary mission of his group was now attack, gave the new locations of his wolf packs as (a) BESUGO and RONQUIL Area SEVEN west of Longitude 132°-10'E, with BESUGO north and the RONQUIL south of Latitude 32°-00'N and (b) GABILAN vicinity Okinoshima and reported that the returning

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* War Diaries CINCPAC and COMFWDAREA CENTPAC (CTF 57), October 1944; CINCPAC Daily Location and Plot, Allied and Enemy Forces, Underlay No. 1, 1630Z October 19th-1630Z October 20th, 1944.

** "Japanese Naval Vessels at the End of War", April 25th, 1947, Administrative Division, Second Demobilization Bureau, Compiled by Shizuo Fukui, Constructor Lieutenant Commander (ex-IJN).

*** War Patrol Report BLACKFIN, Report of FIRST War Patrol, Serial 021, December 4th, 1944.

**** War Diary CINCPAC, October 1944, Serial 000963, November 6th, 1944.

Japanese fleet units were following the 100 fathom curve along the east coast of Kyushu and that one heavy cruiser and one large ship had returned that morning.*

While what he thought of this dispatch is nowhere stated it seems clear that he at least tentatively concurred with the decision of the wolf pack commander for he not only decided not to issue any corrective orders at this time but in addition he relayed the dispatch to the GABILAN without change.**

At 0638 he received CINCPOA Zone Notice Number 45 which corrected CINCPOA Zone Notice Number 44 by stating that VESTIBULE north of Latitude 20°-30'N was a joint zone.***

DURING THIS DAY HE CLOSELY OBSERVED THE DEVELOPING SITUATION IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC, AND AWAITED ADDITIONAL REPORTS FROM HIS SUBMARINES AS WELL AS FROM UNITS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC TASK FORCES AND OF SOWESPAC. EXCEPT FOR A DISPATCH SENT BY COMTHIRDFLT AT 1000 WHICH HE RECEIVED DURING THE LATE FORENOON THERE WERE NO CONTACTS OF ANY IMPORTANCE THROUGHOUT THE DAY.**** THE ABOVE COMTHIRDFLT DISPATCH WAS IMPORTANT IN THAT IT SHOWED THAT THAT COMMANDER WAS NOT EXPECTING JAPANESE REACTION BY MAJOR SURFACE FORCES, BUT RATHER FELT THAT THAT REACTION WOULD TAKE THE FORM OF SHORT UNHERALDED "TOKYO EXPRESS" RUNS EMPLOYING THE FLEET IN SMALL DISPERSED GROUPS SO DEPLOYED AS TO PERMIT QUICK CONCENTRATION IN SUPPORT OF THE ABOVE RUNS.

Sometime later and probably about 1645 he likely received the TRIGGER's contact report that at 1400 in Latitude 25°-30'N, Longitude 122°-45'E, she had sighted four enemy heavy cruisers and five destroyers on course 270°(T) speed sixteen knots.***** This he recognized as the same group contacted by the STERLET west of Amami O Shima on the previous day.

At 1833 CTF 17 thought it wise to advise all submarines that both the STERLET and the BESUGO had sighted enemy fleet units heading for the comparative safety of the Empire.******

At 1907 he advised the GABILAN by dispatch that she was detached from the wolf pack, and directed her to proceed to Area SIX where she was (a) to guard the approaches to Kii Suido (b) to remain outside mineable waters and (c) if necessary to enter mineable waters in pursuit of shipping she was to

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* BESUCO Dispatch 181424 October 1944 to CTF 17.

** War Patrol Report GABILAN, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 031, November 13th, 1944.

*** CINCPOA Dispatch 182138 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, CTF 17, info COMINCH, COMSOWESPAC, COMSEVENTHFLT, CTF 71, CTF 72.

**** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 190100 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC and COMSEVENTHFLT.

***** TRIGGER Dispatch 190715 October 1944 to CTF 17.

****** CTF 17 Dispatch 190933 October 1944 to All Submarines.

destroy her ECM.* From Diagram D, it is evident that after 2150, the time the GABILAN departed for Kii Suido, these new dispositions of the BESUGO wolf pack left the Bungo Suido, except for the extreme western portion, completely unobserved and did not cover the Kii Suido even in a limited fashion, since that strait was some 130 miles to the northeastward.

A short time after this he decided that since the STERLET contact had now moved to the Formosa area where she had been contacted by the TRIGGER the necessity for patrolling the sea off Nagasaki against enemy surface forces no longer obtained and therefore at about 2108 he advised both the CROAKER and the PERCH to this effect.** Whether or not he included the ESCOLAR in the above dispatch is not known since the ESCOLAR was lost and the basic dispatch is not available to this study. By this dispatch he authorized the submarines in the Nagasaki - Sasebo area to leave that area and thus made it possible for Japanese shipping to pass through these waters unmolested.

The above orders of CTF 17 when considered with his orders of the previous day, notably those to the submarines of the MARU MORGUE and CONVOY COLLEGE to return to their normal operating procedures, gave a clear pattern of CTF 17's estimate of the situation at this time and inferentially of CINCPOA's, since both CTF 17 and CINCPOA, who were at Pearl Harbor, normally consulted one another with relation to matters of this nature.

THESE ORDERS SHOW THAT CTF 17 HAD DISCONTINUED HIS SPECIAL SUBMARINE BARRIERS FOR GUARDING AGAINST PASSAGE BY ENEMY SURFACE COMBATANT FORCES (A) THE APPROACHES TO BUNGO SUIDO (B) THE APPROACHES TO SHIMONOSEKI SUIDO (C) THE MARU MORGUE AND (D) LUZON STRAIT, HAD PERMITTED THE BARBEL TO RETIRE WHEN SHE HAD SUFFICIENT FUEL ON BOARD TO HAVE REMAINED ON STATION FOR SEVERAL MORE DAYS, AND HAD DIRECTED HIS SUBMARINES TO RETURN TO THEIR NORMAL ANTISHIPPING OPERATIONS. HE DID ALL OF THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE KNEW THAT THE ALLIED MAJOR LANDINGS ON LEYTE WOULD OCCUR ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, AND THAT SUCH LANDINGS NORMALLY MIGHT CAUSE STRONG JAPANESE REACTION. WHY THEN DID HE DO THIS? THE ANSWER SEEMS CLEAR, BECAUSE HE FELT THAT THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT THAT NO MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE FLEET WOULD BE INVOLVED IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIED OPERATIONS AT LEYTE STILL OBTAINED AND THAT THE ONLY REACTION TO BE EXPECTED WOULD BE "TOKYO EXPRESS" RUNS WHICH WOULD OCCUR WITHIN THE SOWESPAC AREA WHERE THEY WOULD BE COUNTERED BY SOWESPAC FORCES SUPPORTED BY TF 38.

During this day six Japanese submarines, the I-38, I-41, I-44, I-46, I-53 and the RO-43, departed the Inland Sea via Bungo Suido for the waters east of the Philippines, undetected by the BESUGO wolf pack.***

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 191007 October 1944 to All Submarines.

** War Patrol Report PERCH, Report of THIRD War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.

*** Submarine Operations in Philippine Waters, 1944-1945, Department of Army, Historical Division, File No. 8-5, JS-15.

The deployment of TF 17 submarines at 2400 October 19th is shown in Plate XX. Attention is particularly directed to the disposition of the submarine coordinated attack group off Bungo Suido.

(a) CONVOY COLLEGE.

With the passage of midnight the submarines of CONVOY COLLEGE which were not already on station continued toward their new patrol stations. There were two principal coordinated attack groups (wolf packs) (a) the SAWFISH (F), ICEFISH, DRUM and (b) the SHARK (F), BLACKFISH, SEA DRAGON. There was also a reduced wolf pack consisting of the SNOOK and COBIA. The remaining two CONVOY COLLEGE submarines PARCHE and SAILFISH were departing the area. The above submarines operated as follows:

(1) SAWFISH, ICEFISH, DRUM.

These submarines (Diagram D) patrolled Area DETECT west of Luzon Strait remaining on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight. No contacts of consequence were made during the day. At about 1931 the wolf pack commander in the SAWFISH who was endeavoring to reform his group--it will be recalled they had all been on independent duties--closed the ICEFISH in order to issue his new patrol schedule for Area DETECT. At this time the ICEFISH requested authority to remain on patrol beyond her scheduled departure date (October 26th). The wolf pack commander then opened out to contact the DRUM.*

(2) SHARK, BLACKFISH and SEA DRAGON.

These submarines remained in Area DELETE west of Luzon Strait throughout the day until early evening when the wolf pack commander issued new instructions directing his submarines to patrol in accordance with regular schedules (as prescribed for CONVOY COLLEGE).** These schedules were supplemented by his own orders which assigned each of his submarines a specific operating area within the area designated by the CONVOY COLLEGE schedule. Since at this time this wolf pack was assigned Area DESTROY all submarines promptly headed for their new stations which were in the vicinity of Pratas Reef within that area. All submarines operated on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight.*** They made no important contacts.

(3) SNOOK and COBIA.

The SNOOK patrolled Balingtang Channel throughout the day.

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* War Patrol Report SAWFISH, Report of EIGHTH War Patrol, Serial 88-44, November 8th, 1944.

** War Patrol Report SEA DRAGON, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 194, November 8th, 1944.

*** Deck Logs BLACKFISH and SEA DRAGON, October 19th, 1944.

The COBIA which arrived on station to the south of Calayan Island during early morning likewise patrolled her area.* Both submarines operated on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight.** Neither submarine made any contacts of importance throughout the day.

(4) PARCHE and SAILFISH.

These two submarines rendezvoused at 0515 in Luzon Strait. Then they separated to proceed independently through Luzon Strait*** and to rendezvous again after passing through the strait.**** Having completed this passage at 2255 they rendezvoused about midnight and continued on toward Saipan.***** They operated on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight, and made no contacts of importance.******

(5) In addition to the above ten submarines, the BLACKFIN was moving to the westward toward the patrol area previously ordered and at midnight was about eighty miles from the eastern border of CONVOY COLLEGE. She operated, in general, on the surface both day and night and made no contacts.*******

(b) Northwest Coast of Formosa.

During this day the TANG which had been operating off Pakusa Point gradually moved to a position off Kiirun. Strong currents and heavy swells made station keeping difficult. Finally, at 2200 having had no success in locating targets off Kiirun and having heard of an enemy task force heading north along the China coast the Commanding Officer TANG departed Kiirun at full speed to intercept this force.******** What this enemy task force was is not known since the only enemy force in the area was the SECOND StrikingForce which was in Formosa Strait and not off the China coast and was heading south instead of north. Most likely it was a local coastal convoy.

(c) Northeast Coast of Formosa.

The SILVERSIDES (F), TRIGGER and SALMON were patrolling off the northeast coast of Formosa in Area 11-C as a coordinated attack group (wolf

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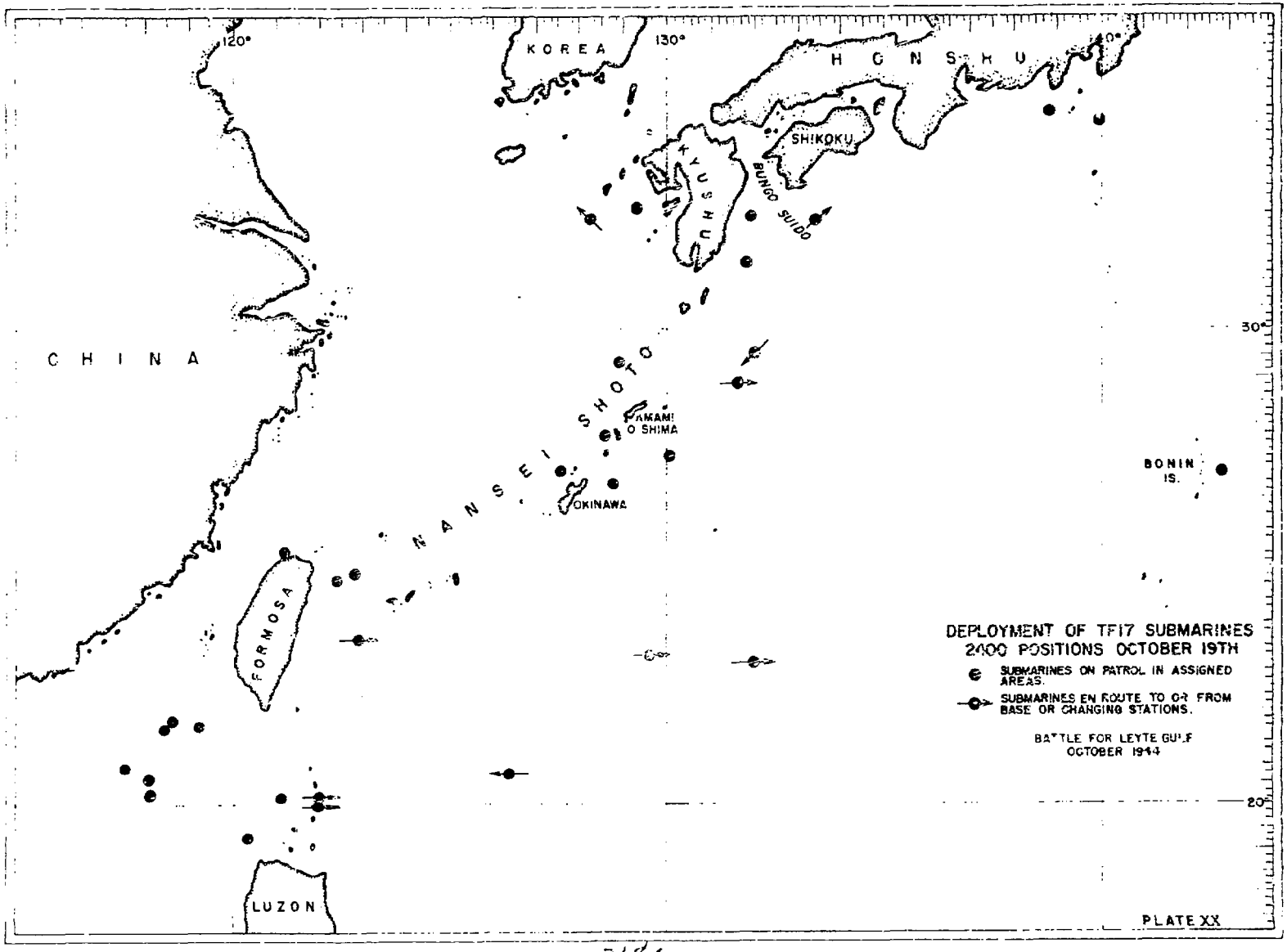
* War Patrol Report COBIA, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 035, November 5th, 1944.
** Deck Logs SNOOK and COBIA, October 19th, 1944.
*** War Patrol Report PARCHE, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 78, December 2nd, 1944.
**** War Patrol Report SAILFISH, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, Serial 037, December 11th, 1944.
***** Deck Logs PARCHE and SAILFISH, October 19th, 1944.
****** Deck Log BLACKFIN, October 19th, 1944.
******* War Patrol Report TANG, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, no serial, September 25th, 1945.



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pack). The disposition of these submarines was reasonably effective although at midnight there was a gap of some fifty-five miles between the TRIGGER and the SALMON.

During the day the SILVERSIDES and SALMON made no important contacts. However, the TRIGGER at 1105 while submerged contacted a destroyer which she estimated was headed for Kiirun. She could not close.* This destroyer was most likely the HATSUHARU heading for Mako. Also the TRIGGER at 1328 contacted the Japanese SECOND Striking Force which she identified as two ATAGO Class cruisers, one NATORI Class light cruiser and possibly two other cruisers or destroyer leaders with several FUBUKI Class destroyers.* Actually as has been pointed out previously, the SECOND Striking Force consisted of two NACHI Class heavy cruisers, one NATORI Class light cruiser and six destroyers since the HATSUHARU was not in the formation. The TRIGGER endeavored to reach an attack position but was forced to submerge to seventy feet because she was being attacked by a Japanese plane escorting the SECOND Striking Force.* At 1522 she surfaced and commenced transmitting a contact report to CTF 17 as well as to the SILVERSIDES and SALMON although the latter submarines failed to receive the report. In this report she listed four heavy cruisers and five destroyers.** It is likely that these radio transmissions were those detected at 1510 by the ABUKUMA, of the Japanese SECOND Striking Force as originating from an Allied submarine.*** Although there is a small time difference, TRIGGER was the only Allied submarine in this area sending dispatches at this time. Estimating that this cruiser force was heading for Kiirun for fueling the Commanding Officer TRIGGER closed the northeast coast of Formosa and headed on the surface for that harbor until forced to submerge because of Japanese aircraft. Later at 1952 while surfaced he contacted the SILVERSIDES and received patrol orders for the next day from the wolf pack commander which orders directed the SILVERSIDES and TRIGGER to patrol off Kiirun.**** Actually the estimate was in error as the Japanese SECOND Striking Force was headed for Mako rather than Kiirun.

During the day the Commanding Officer SALMON, who had an officer on board who was suffering his third attack of internal pains in about one week, decided to advise CTF 17 and therefore at 1905 surfaced and headed to the southward presumably to clear the area where the SILVERSIDES and TRIGGER were operating before opening up with his radio. At 2328 he sent a dispatch to CTF 17 reporting, among other items, the illness of the above officer. He then headed out of the area on course 095°(T), speed seventeen knots, and advised the SILVERSIDES and TRIGGER of his action.*****

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* War Patrol Report TRIGGER, Report of TENTH War Patrol, Serial 033, November 3rd, 1944.

** TRIGGER Dispatch 190715 October 1944 to CTG 17 info THIRDFLT.

*** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** Report of Commander Coordinated Attack Group (CTG 17.19), Serial 046, November 23rd, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report SALMON, Report of ELEVENTH War Patrol, Serial 016, November 10th, 1944.

WHILE THE DECISION OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER SALMON TO CLEAR HIS OPERATING AREA LONG ENOUGH TO SEND A MESSAGE WAS CORRECT IN THAT IT PROTECTED THE LOCATION OF THE OTHER TWO SUBMARINES OF THE WOLF PACK HIS DECISION TO MOVE OUT OF THE AREA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN INCORRECT. HE WAS A MEMBER OF A WOLF PACK WHICH HAD BEEN STATIONED IN THIS AREA NOT ONLY TO ATTACK AND DESTROY ENEMY FORCES ENCOUNTERED BUT ALSO TO REPORT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE MOVEMENTS OF IMPORTANT ENEMY MEN-OF-WAR AND CONVOYS.* WOULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER HAD HE RETURNED TO HIS PATROL AREA IMMEDIATELY AFTER SENDING THE DISPATCH TO CTF 17 AND HAVE AWAITED THERE THAT COMMANDER'S ORDERS? BY SO DOING HE WOULD HAVE MAINTAINED THE INTEGRITY OF THE WOLF PACK DISPOSITION.

(d) MARU MORGUE.

The submarines in this area, although released from special dispositions by CTF 17, did not alter their stations a great deal.

The BARBEL operated in the center of Area ABANDON; the SKATE in the western portion of Area ABLAZE; the SAURY in Area ABDUCT, about thirty miles to the eastward of Nakagusuku Wan; the BURRFISH in Area ABOLISH but instead of operating close in to Okinawa as ordered (it will be recalled that she had not as yet received CTF 17's dispatch ordering her to resume normal patrol but did receive it at 1903) she was now operating about twelve miles to the northward of Iheya Jima, STERLET in Area ABRIDGE operating westward of Amami O Shima and the SEA DOG operating in the southeastern part of Area ABUSE. None of the above submarines made any contacts of importance, although the SKATE encountered some trawlers which she was unable to attack and the BARBEL employing four torpedoes attacked a large trawler unsuccessfully. Patrols were conducted on the surface during darkness, and submerged during daylight.**

The BARBEL now had no torpedoes remaining although she did have some 47,000 gallons of fuel oil on board. However, despite this her commanding officer decided to depart his station, where he was scheduled to remain until October 21st, and therefore headed to the eastward. At 1828 he surfaced and at 2000 he sent a dispatch to CTF 17 requesting permission to return permission to return to Midway.*** At about midnight he crossed the eastern border of his area.

The decision of the Commanding Officer BARBEL to depart the area was in accordance with the patrol instructions which stated that submarines will normally terminate their patrols when they have insufficient torpedoes remaining to conduct a successful attack.****

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* CTF 17 Operation Order 326-44, September 24th, 1944, paragraph 2, to TANG.

** Deck Logs BARBEL, SKATE, SAURY, BURRFISH, STERLET and SEADOG, October 19th, 1944.

*** BARBEL Dispatch 191006 October 1944 to CTF 17.

**** CTF 17 Operation Plan 1-43, Annex "B", paragraph 2.

The BILLFISH having been ordered to relieve the SKATE was en route to Latitude 29°-30'N, Longitude 132°-00'E, from which she was to enter Area ABLAZE at sunset October 21st. She arrived in the above designated position about 1130.* Being in advance of his orders the commanding officer patrolled this vicinity remaining on the surface during daylight as well as during darkness except when forced to submerge temporarily by Japanese aircraft.** No contacts of importance were made.

Meanwhile the WHALE and SEAHORSE which were en route to Midway, proceeded independently, operated in general on the surface and made no contacts of importance although the SEAHORSE thought that she might have contacted an enemy submarine in Latitude 23°-22'N, Longitude 126°-50'E.*** This seems to have been a false contact.

(e) Nagasaki - Sasebo.

The CROAKER and the PERCH continued to operate in the area between Fukae Shima and Kyushu. They were unaware of the fact that the ESCOLAR had been lost. Sometime before 2138 the CROAKER received a dispatch from CTF 17 advising that the necessity of patrolling the waters off Nagasaki no longer obtained. The commanding officer therefore headed for the west coast of Korea in search of more fruitful targets and advised the PERCH as to his plans. He endeavored to advise the group commander in the ESCOLAR, also by radio, but failed to contact the ESCOLAR.**** Meanwhile at 2300 the PERCH received the same dispatch and her commanding officer promptly departed the Nagasaki area and headed for Danjo Gunto where he expected to encounter enemy shipping.*****

During the day, neither the CROAKER nor the PERCH made any contacts of importance. They operated on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight.

(f) HIT PARADE.

(1) Approaches to Bungo Suido.

During this day in view of the wolf pack commander's orders issued on the evening of the previous day the BESUGO, RONQUIL and GABILAN were no longer in position to prevent the undetected sortie of enemy task forces through Bungo Suido but instead were widely separated as shown in Diagram D. At about 0500 the RONQUIL arrived on her new station which was west of

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* War Patrol Report BILLFISH, Report of SIXTH War Patrol, Serial 088, November 27th, 1944.

** Deck Log BILLFISH, October 19th, 1944.

*** Deck Log SEAHORSE, October 19th, 1944.

**** War Patrol Report CROAKER, Report of SECOND War Patrol, Serial 027, November 10th, 1944.

***** War Patrol Report PERCH, Report of THIRD War Patrol, no serial, November 8th, 1944.

Longitude 132°-00'E and south of Latitude 32°-00'N and the GABILAN replaced the RONQUIL in the eastern sector of Area SEVEN in the vicinity of Okino Shima. Here she had been directed to patrol the vicinity of Okino Shima but actually she approached no nearer than twenty miles. Meanwhile the BESUGO remained in the western sector north of Latitude 32°-00'N. All three submarines patrolled on the surface during darkness and submerged during daylight, and had uneventful patrols although they sighted numerous aircraft and sampans.

At 2150 the GABILAN received a dispatch from CTF 17 which detached her from the BESUGO wolf pack and directed her in part to proceed to Area SIX and guard the approaches to Kii Suido and to remain outside of mineable waters unless in pursuit of enemy shipping.* She immediately headed for her new station.

THIS DISPATCH WAS LIKEWISE RECEIVED BY THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER AT THE SAME TIME. IF THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER HAD HAD ANY DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER OR NOT HIS ACTION IN CHANGING HIS OBJECTIVE FROM THE PREVENTION OF AN UNDETECTED SORTIE OF ENEMY FORCES THROUGH THE BUNGO SUIDO TO ATTACK WAS CORRECT, THIS DISPATCH SHOULD HAVE REMOVED IT FOR THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER COULD SEE THAT CTF 17 WAS NOW DESTROYING EVEN THE LIMITED SUBMARINE BARRIER WHICH HE (THE WOLF PACK COMMANDER) HAD DESIGNATED IN HIS 182324.

At 2217 the GABILAN acknowledged the receipt of the above dispatch and reported that she had 68,000 gallons of fuel on board and twenty-four torpedoes.** Meanwhile the commanding officer made an estimate of the situation. Mindful of the fact that CTF 17's operation order to the BESUGO's coordinated attack group (wolf pack) stated that an important amount of enemy shipping passed along the east and southeast coasts of Honshu and Shikoku, he decided that there were but two focal points in the approaches to Kii Suido which would give him the best opportunities for destroying shipping. These were in the vicinity of Mureto Saki and Ichei Saki where the 100 fathom curve was close to the shoreline.*** There seems to be considerable doubt as to the correctness of this analysis since a position on the 100 fathom curve equidistant from Kamata Saki and Hino Misaki would be better suited to guard Kii Suido. Apparently the Commanding Officer GABILAN decided that his orders to guard Kii Suido and the instructions about sinking shipping in the same dispatch were incompatible and decided that what was intended was sinking of shipping rather than guarding.

(2) Approaches to Tokyo Bay.

The above approaches continued to be guarded by the TAMBOR and the GREENLING which operated on the surface during darkness and submerged

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* CTF 17 Dispatch 191007 October 1944 to GABILAN.
** GABILAN Dispatch 191317 October 1944 to CTF 17.
*** War Patrol Report GABILAN, Report of THIRD War Patrol, Serial 031, November 13th, 1944.

during daylight.* Except for an unsuccessful attack** by the TAMBOR employing four torpedoes against what appeared to be a destroyer escort,*** neither the TAMBOR nor the GREENLING made any contacts of importance during the day.

(C) China-Burma-India Theater, October 19th.

(1) Operations of C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force.

C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force on this date appears to have been concerned as to how much longer he would be required to conduct searches over the northern half of the South China Sea with his LAB-24's from their bases in eastern China, for at 1341, he originated an inquiry to CINCPOA on this subject via COMNAVGRPCHINA.**** CINCPOA in turn asked COMTHIRDFLT if he could estimate the required duration of these searches, since their primary mission in the first place was to prevent a surprise penetration by the Japanese Fleet into the THIRD Fleet operating area east of the Philippines.***** COMTHIRDFLT answered that as long as the activity and movement of the enemy continued at the same or increased tempo he deemed the continuation of the FOURTEENTH Air Force searches vital, and that he could not at this time estimate the duration of such requirement.******

The above inquiry by C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force was probably prompted by either one or both of the following considerations. First, he might have reasoned that Search Plan FOX, placed in effect on this very day, extended the searches by CAAF SOWESPAC well into the central portion of the South China Sea, and therefore reduced the necessity for the FOURTEENTH Air Force searches north of the Kamranh Bay - Lingayen line. Secondly, and this reason is the more probable, these searches severly taxed his already limited fuel supply for his primary mission of supporting the Allied troops against the current Japanese ground offensive toward southeast China. Moreover, all his fuel had to be flown over the "Hump" under trying conditions by B-29 and C-47 tankers from the Calcutta area of India.******* At any rate, he continued to run the prescribed searches on this day, while waiting for CINCPOA to answer his dispatch.

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* Deck Logs TAMBOR and GREENLING, October 19th, 1944.

** "Japanese Naval and Merchant Losses during World War II by U.S. Submarines", prepared by the Joint Army-Navy Assessment Committee, February 1947.

*** War Patrol Report TAMBOR, Report of TWELFTH War Patrol, Serial 08019, November 30th, 1944.

**** COMNAVGRPCHINA Dispatch 190441 October 1944 to CINCPOA.

***** CINCPAC Dispatch 190856 October 1944 to COMTHIRDFLT, info COMSOWESPAC and CTF 38.

****** COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 191307 October 1944 to CINCPOA, info COMSOWESPAC and CTF 38.

******* "Air Operations in China, Burma, India, World War II, U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey Report No. 67, Pacific War.

The search planes reported the following contacts:*

(a) At 0305, three ships, unknown types, Latitude 20°-40'N, Longitude 111°-40'E.

(b) At 0335, seven ships, unknown types, Latitude 21°-10'N, Longitude 113°-45'E.

(c) At 0540, two ships, unknown types, Latitude 21°-25'N, Longitude 111°-46'E.

(d) At 1403, one SHOKAKU Class CV, one ISE type BB, two CA/CL unknown class, two DD unknown class--course 330°(T) at cruising speed, Latitude 18°-41'N, Longitude 112°-10'E.

Report (d) above was considerably in error, for at this time there were no first line carriers, battleships, or any type cruisers, in this area of the China Sea. The ZUIKAKU, the only one of the two SHOKAKU Class carriers remaining (the SHOKAKU had been sunk June 19th, 1944 in the Battle of the Philippine Sea), as well as both ISE Class battleships (the ISE and HYUGA) were in the Inland Sea preparing to sortie with the Main Force. The cruisers, for the most part, were divided between the FIRST Striking Force (en route from the Lingga - Singapore area to Brunei), the SECOND Striking Force (north of Formosa), and the Empire. Actually the pilot of the search plane saw the escort carrier SHINYO with a convoy of merchant ships and probably one or two DE/DD type escorts. The SHINYO had sortied with a convoy from Yulin, Hainan Island, for Japan at 1700 October 18th,** with a detachment of aircraft from the 931st Air Group aboard.***

From the comparison of forces given here it is clear that neither C.G. FOURTEENTH Air Force nor COMNAVGRPCHINA, who at 1458 received the report, had very good intelligence information concerning the disposition or movement of Japanese surface forces, although COMNAVGRPCHINA did re-evaluate the ISE type battleship as a destroyer when he reported the naval task force to CINCPOA as one carrier, two cruisers and three destroyers.**** CINCPOA re-broadcasted COMNAVGRPCHINA's message verbatim at 1626 to COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, COMTHIRDFLT, and all THIRD and SEVENTH Fleet task force commanders.***** What action, if any, these latter commanders took, except for COMTHIRDFLT, is not known.

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* AAF Operations from China Bases in support of the Leyte Campaign, letter from Historical Division, Air University Library, USAF Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama to President, Naval War College, November 8th, 1950.

** War Diary FIRST Escort Force, October 1944, WDC Document 161719, NA 11609.

*** War Diary 931st Air Group, October 1st-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160151 NA 12319.

**** COMNAVGRPCHINA Dispatch 190558 October 1944 to CINCPAC, info COMSUBPAC.

***** CINCPAC Dispatch 190726 October 1944 to COMSOWESPAC, CTF 77, COMTHIRDFLT, and All TFC's THIRD and SEVENTH Fleets.

CHAPTER VI - JAPANESE OPERATIONS, October 19th.

(A) Operations of CinC Combined Fleet.

Owing to the continuance of the bad weather which had forced him to stop at Omura, CinC Combined Fleet remained there during the night. He undoubtedly hoped for better weather with the arrival of daylight so that he might return to Hiyoshi, which was but 500 miles from Omura. However, he was disappointed in this regard since the bad weather still obtained and he was forced to remain at Omura until the following day. While Omura was a major air base, with modern communication facilities, he could not obtain there - anymore than he could on Formosa - that detailed knowledge of the overall trend of the operations which is necessary for the proper exercise of command. Such information was available to him only at Hiyoshi.

Having learned from his weather reports that weather conditions in the Philippines had improved, CinC Combined Fleet correctly assumed - since he heard nothing to the contrary - that his search planes were making their scheduled searches in that area as well as in the Nansei Shoto and Formosa areas. The improved weather conditions were, of course, not an unmixed blessing, since the Allied carrier forces would likewise benefit, and the Philippine airfields would soon be under heavy attack.

He awaited the results of his morning searches with concern. He was especially interested in discovering Allied invasion forces, for, should such forces be observed within 600 miles of the Philippines (the limit of his air searches)* and on courses converging on Leyte Gulf, it would be clear that the invasion of that area was near, probably within a matter of two or three days. Such an early invasion would preclude the accomplishment of one of the principal objectives of the SHO Plan; namely, the prevention of an Allied landing by the destruction of the invasion forces at the beachhead during the attempted landing.

Shortly after 0800 he commenced receiving contact reports, principally from his search planes.

(a) At 0800 three regular carriers, four escort carriers, twelve cruisers

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* The limiting ranges of the air searches was 650 miles from their bases but since the principal bases were about fifty miles from the eastern coast the effective range became about 600 miles.

and destroyers and about forty small craft in Leyte Gulf.*

(b) At 0812 four carriers bearing 090°(T), distant 155 miles from Bataan Peninsula.** This was corrected sometime later, albeit erroneously, to five carriers in Latitude 15°-20'N, Longitude 123°-40'E.*

It is highly probable that from these contacts he was convinced that the Allied landing attempt was near, but since a landing would require more forces than had as yet been located, he took no immediate action, but awaited further contact reports.

He also knew about this time that the Philippine airfields had been heavily hit by Allied carrier-based aircraft (navy sources stated "more than 160 sorties;"*** army sources stated "about 720 sorties").**** Actually, exclusive of the support strikes, there were 527 air strikes in the Philippine area.

At about 0820 he received Commander Western Attack Force ONE dispatch directing all operational units of that command to move as rapidly as possible, via Formosa, to the Philippines, and in this movement, to base at bases designated in SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrds 61 (referring to Formosa bases) and 80 (referring to Philippine Bases).*****

About this time his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi thought it wise to advise the Commanding Officer NICHIEI MARU as to his plans concerning the oilers since the question of fuel was of vital importance. He therefore at 0914 stated by dispatch that "(1) Although NICHIEI MARU, KURAHASHI and Escort No. 25 have been ordered to proceed to Coron for the time being in order to fuel the FIRST Striking Force request that you issue instructions with regard to their subsequent movements. (2) RYOEI MARU, MANJU and MIYAKE are en route to Mako in order to fuel the SECOND Striking Force. (3) We are negotiating

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force, Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160358, NA 12592.

** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953, Volume II.

*** Material for Situation Istimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** Daily Record of the War Situation, October 19th, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

***** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 190758 October 1944 to Western Attack Force ONE (Western Attack Force ONE SigDesOpOrd No. 8), War Diary 252nd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

to have the KUROSHIO MARU and TOHO MARU transferred to Combined Fleet (ships allocated to army, and are, at present, en route, fully loaded, to the homeland from near Sana; both ships are unable to fuel ships at sea)." (This dispatch was not received by the NICHIEI MARU until 1410.)*

Commencing sometime after 0830, but probably not before 0900 CinC Combined Fleet began receiving numerous contact reports on Allied forces, which clearly showed that an invasion was not only possible but was actually imminent.** These contacts were:

(a) At 0830 thirty merchant-type ships, escorted by four cruisers or destroyers, on a northwesterly course bearing 110°(T), distant 180 miles from Tacloban.

(b) At 0845, three carriers and eight other ships in Latitude 10°-05'N, Longitude 126°-25'E, (bearing 130°(T), distant 120 miles from Tacloban).

(c) At 0850, one escort carrier, three battleships, seven cruisers, and several destroyers in Latitude 11°-05'N, Longitude 127°-05'E, (bearing 094°(T), distant 130 miles from Tacloban).

(d) At 0912, thirty merchant vessels in Latitude 11°-15'N, Longitude 126°-15'E (off the southeastern coast of Samar) on a northerly course

(e) At 0930 three carriers and five battleships on a northeasterly course in Latitude 17°-15'N, Longitude 126°-35'E (280 miles northeast of Lamon Bay).

(f) At 1010 two carriers and two cruisers in Latitude 17°-45'N, Longitude 127°-35'E, (about seventy miles bearing 070°(T) from the group sighted at 0930).

From these sightings CinC Combined Fleet at Omura, as well as his Chief of Staff at Hiyoshi, could see that nine carriers were operating in the vicinity of Lamon Bay, and eleven carriers and escort carriers in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf. Thus, as of 1010 the number of carriers so far committed by the Allies to the operations in the Philippines had increased from thirteen observed on October 16th to the twenty observed on October 19th, of which twenty, only five had been reported as escort carriers. This would leave some fifteen large and small carriers, which was one less than the total number of carriers originally reported as being with TF 38, although two to three escort carriers in addition had been reported as disposed behind TF 38

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* CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 190914 October 1944, to NICHIEI MARU, War Diary NICHIEI MARU October 1944, WDC Document 160148, NA 11838.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

for the purpose of supplying replacements of planes and crews.* CinC Combined Fleet must now have arrived once again at the unhappy conclusion that the Japanese air successes, claimed both by the pilots and by Imperial Headquarters itself, were subject to serious revision, for here were the carriers of TF 38 practically intact. Perhaps he still believed that some Allied ships had been damaged - in fact, some damaged ships had been sighted on October 15th and 16th - but whether he now believed that any carriers had been sunk is not known. Perhaps he felt, with COMCRUDIV SEVEN, that CTF 38 had succeeded in reinforcing what remained of his carrier striking force,** but since this idea appears to have been expressed by COMCRUDIV SEVEN only, it is not likely that CinC Combined Fleet entertained this view. Actually up to this time CTF 38 had received no replacement carriers.

At about 1120 he received Commander SIXTH Base Air Force dispatch instructions to his command wherein that commander after stating the plans for the surface forces which plans obviously came, in general, from CinC Combined Fleet's 181110, directed his command to (a) deploy to the Philippines on October 21st or 22nd and (b) launch attacks beginning October 22nd and 23rd with the objective of first destroying the Allied carrier task forces and thereafter destroying the remaining naval units.***

This dispatch must have been reviewed with some concern by CinC Combined Fleet since his instructions to the Combined Fleet had been a purely tentative outline for planning purposes whereas Commander SIXTH Base Air Force had apparently accepted them as final.

During the forenoon CinC Combined Fleet received a dispatch from his Chief of Staff to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, wherein the Chief of Staff, fully cognizant of the fact that certain submarines of the FIRST Submarine Force were scheduled to sortie on this date, issued instructions to that commander, in substance as follows:

As soon as sortie preparations are completed, the Advance Expeditionary Force will depart the Inland Sea; will proceed at high speed to the waters east of the central and southern Philippines for the purpose of attacking the Allied fleet and transport convoys.****

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* THIRD Section Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Section Dispatch 111255 October 1944, to All Fleet Commanders, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 7, October 23rd - 26, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191050 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 361, October 19th, Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, WWII Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

At about 1250 he received a contact report reporting that at 1220 a large group of merchant ships had been sighted in Latitude 08°-25'N, Longitude 128°-25'E* (bearing 130°(T) distant 580 miles from Manila).

Although Japanese dispatches available to this study do not give any overall estimate of the number of Allied merchant-type ships approaching the Philippines area, Japanese naval intelligence data states that as of 1220 there were eleven carriers and 100 transports.** From this it can be inferred that the large group of merchant ships reported at 1220 reportedly consisted of some forty ships. This inference is substantially correct, for although the above 1220 contact report was in error to the south about sixty miles, possibly due to a mistake in the grid reporting system, it was quite accurate in longitude and distance, and indicated that it referred to the transport groups of TF 79. The composition of TF 79 transport groups ABLE and BAKER included thirty-eight vessels (26 AP/APA, 8 AK/AKA, 1 APH and 3 AGC) that might have been reported as transports. Included also in the disposition of TF 79 were five LSD's and two LSV's.

The Japanese intelligence data referred to** (a) evaluated the "eleven carriers and 100 transports", as the "enemy invasion force", (b) listed seven battleships and twenty transports inside Leyte Gulf (the FOURTH Air Army listed seven battleships, twenty-one cruisers and destroyers and eighteen transports)*** and (c) stated (presumably from radio interception) that at 1140 the Allies had ordered landing operations started in the vicinity of Dulag. It is assumed that this information was available to the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet and probably to CinC Combined Fleet as well.

Japanese intelligence sources were correct in evaluating the transports cited in (a) above as belonging to the enemy invasion force, for at 1220 TF's 78 and 79 were converging on Leyte, TF 78 bearing 119°(T) distant 103 miles from the entrance to Leyte Gulf, and TF 79 bearing 117°(T) distant 150 miles. Both CTF 78 and CTF 79 believed, even up until this time, that their approach to Leyte had been undetected.

The information in (b) relative to seven battleships and twenty transports

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** Daily Record of the War Situation, October 19th, 1944, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol.II).

inside Leyte Gulf was not correct. Instead exclusive of the units off Dinagat Island there were six battleships, six cruisers, sixteen destroyers, twelve high speed transports, forty-six minesweepers and several other craft. There were no merchant type transports.

The reference in (c) to the Allied order at 1140 for landing operations in the vicinity of Dulag was incorrect since no such operations were ordered on that day. The misinterpretation of the radio interception by the Japanese can be attributed to the nature of the Allied operations in the Dulag area at this time. October 19th marked the second consecutive day that CTG 77.2 had conducted shore bombardment against targets in the Dulag area.

MOREOVER, ALLIED RECONNAISSANCE OF THE BEACHES OFF DULAG BY THE UDTs CONCLUDED THE PREVIOUS DAY--AND THE MINESWEEPING OPERATIONS—HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN EVERY INDICATION TO JAPANESE OBSERVERS THAT AN AMPHIBIOUS INVASION IN THIS LOCALITY WAS IMMINENT. THIS ILLUSTRATES THE FACT THAT IN AMPHIBIOUS LANDINGS ACROSS DEFENDED BEACH AREAS WHERE SUSTAINED PRELIMINARY BOMBARDMENT, MINESWEEPING, AND BEACH RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS ARE REQUIRED, THE ELEMENT OF TACTICAL SURPRISE IS NECESSARILY LOST.

At about this time information was received in Tokyo that the Allies had landed at Tacloban under cover of smoke but had been repulsed.* This was, of course, not a landing at all but was instead the UDT Operation covering the northern beaches wherein Commander Fire Support Unit North ascertained the nature of the beach defenses in that area. This was in no sense a repulse but was instead a planned retirement once the desired information had been obtained. Evidently the Japanese at Leyte were not familiar with the nature of UDT operations.

At about 1250 he received word that the Allies had, for the third successive day, attacked Car Nicobar Island and that (1) the attacking force consisted of two carriers, two battleships, four cruisers and three destroyers: (2) it had delivered a gunfire bombardment between 1120 and 1220; and (3) defending forces had succeeded in sinking one carrier and one destroyer of this attacking force.** Since he continued to believe that this Car Nicobar action was purely diversionary, he took no action but left any possible action to his Commander SW Area Force who was charged with the naval phases of the defense.

Also at about 1250 he received a dispatch from his Chief of Staff to Commander Main Force, and presumably to Commanders SW Area Force and FIRST

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* Daily Record of the War Situation, October 19th, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 [illegible] SWPA Series Vol.II).

** Material for Situation Estimates, First Section, Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (microfilm).

Striking Force as well, stating that under certain circumstances, the SECOND Striking Force might be returned to the Main Force.* While it is not explained what caused the Chief of Staff to send this dispatch, it seems clear that it resulted from an estimate of the situation wherein the Chief of Staff, after thoroughly considering the situation in the Philippines, had arrived at the opinion that, since the army had not completed plans for moving troops,** it was quite possible that the forces he had detached were in excess of those required for counterlanding operations.

IN ARRIVING AT THE ABOVE DECISION, THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET HAD HAD TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE SHOULD ITS SERVICES NOT BE REQUIRED FOR COUNTERLANDING OPERATIONS. APPARENTLY HE HAD CONSIDERED AT THIS TIME BUT TWO COURSES OF ACTION. THESE WERE WHETHER (A) TO RETURN IT TO THE MAIN FORCE, OR (B) TO INCORPORATE IT IN THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE. HE DECIDED IN FAVOR OF RETURNING IT TO THE MAIN FORCE FROM WHENCE IT HAD COME. HIS REASONS FOR REJECTING COURSE (B) WERE: (1) THE RELATIVELY LOW TRAINING LEVEL OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE WHEN COMPARED WITH THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, (2) THE LIMITED STRENGTH OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, BECAUSE OF WHICH IT COULD NOT CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE PENETRATION OPERATION, (3) HIS FEAR THAT THE TRANSFER OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WOULD THROW THE OPERATIONS INTO CONFUSION AND WOULD, AT THE SAME TIME, NECESSITATE INCREASED RADIO TRAFFIC WHICH MIGHT DIVULGE JAPANESE INTENTIONS TO THE ENEMY.*** HE BASED THIS FEAR ON THE FACT THAT THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WAS HEAVILY OCCUPIED WITH SORTIE PREPARATIONS, AND ITS OPERATIONS PLAN HAD ALREADY BEEN DECIDED UPON.

The SHO One plan for the Mobile Force stated that, in the absence of other orders, "The Main Force will assemble and proceed" to carry out the Main Force phase of the penetration operation. This was known as Method "KO". There were four other methods: "OTSU", "HEI", TEI", "BO". Method "OTSU", which will be discussed later, called for the Main Force to be divided into two units for the operations. A detachment was to carry out a diversionary movement in order to facilitate the overall operations.**** The other three

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October, 1944, to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** CofS SW Area Force, Dispatch 181640 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Statements of Japanese Officials in World War II, Vol. IV, Military History Section, FEC, page 20, Statement of Rear Admiral Toshitane Takata, ex-IJN, October 10th, 1944; also Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

**** Commander Mobile Force Operation Order 76, August 10th, 1944, Section IV, Combat Methods, page 12, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd, 1945, (NACHI Document).

methods had no applicability at this time. Since the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet did not indicate any method of employment, it seems likely that he expected that Method "KO" - which was the normal method - would be employed by Commander Mobile Force. However, Commander Mobile Force appears to have had the authority to initiate either Method "KO" or Method "OTSU", depending upon the demands of the situation.

THE REASONS FOR NOT TRANSFERRING THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE RELATIVELY LOW TRAINING LEVEL (REASON (b) (1), ARE NOT CONSIDERED SOUND.

THE REASON GIVEN IN (b) (2) ABOVE THAT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE PENETRATION OPERATION CANNOT BE SUPPORTED BY THE FACTS. THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE AT THIS TIME (LESS CRUDIV SIXTEEN WHICH HAD BEEN DETACHED ALTHOUGH IT WAS STILL PART OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE CRUISING DISPOSITION) CONSISTED OF SEVEN BATTLESHIPS, ELEVEN HEAVY CRUISERS, TWO LIGHT CRUISERS AND NINETEEN DESTROYERS. THIS WAS NOT A VERY POWERFUL FORCE WITH WHICH TO ATTEMPT TO PENETRATE LEYTE GULF AGAINST THE POWERFUL ALLIED FORCES WHICH WOULD BE ARRAYED AGAINST IT. THIS FACT HAD ALREADY BEEN POINTED OUT BY COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE WHO HAD RECOMMENDED STRENGTHENING THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE RATHER THAN WEAKENING IT.*

THE REASONS GIVEN IN (b) (3) ABOVE ARE ALSO OF DOUBTFUL VALIDITY. WHILE THEY MAY HAVE SEEMED SUFFICIENT TO THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF SOUND OPERATIONS THEY LEAVE MUCH TO BE EXPLAINED. FOR EXAMPLE (A) HOW COULD THE ADDITION OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, (AND THIS ADDITION WOULD HAVE BEEN SOLELY BY DISPATCH SINCE THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE WAS EN ROUTE MAKO), HAVE INTERFERED WITH THE SORTIE PREPARATIONS IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WAS ALREADY AT SEA? (B) WHAT OBJECTION COULD THERE BE TO CHANGING THE OPERATION PLAN OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE SHOULD THE SITUATION WARRANT IT? WOULD THIS NOT BE CORRECT LEADERSHIP? (C) HOW COULD THE TRANSFER OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE NECESSITATE INCREASED RADIO COMMUNICATIONS OF SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE? ANY DISPATCHES CONCERNING THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, IF NECESSARY, COULD HAVE BEEN SENT BY COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE TO BRUNEI BY SHIP-BASED AIR AND FROM BRUNEI BY RADIO TO THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE AND FINALLY, (D) HOW COULD THE OPERATION BE THROWN INTO CONFUSION? THE COMMANDERS WERE LONG EXPERIENCED IN WARFARE (A VICE ADMIRAL COMMANDED THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE) AND ALL WERE THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH CURRENT JAPANESE ORDERS AND DOCTRINES, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY SO WITH ANY SPECIAL ORDERS OR DIRECTIVES OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, IF SUCH EXISTED. PERHAPS IT WAS HERE THAT THE THOUGHT OF CONFUSION AROSE.

PERHAPS THE FACT THAT COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE WAS NEXT SENIOR

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* Mobile Force Memorandum Concerning Tactical Organization of Mobile Force, September 10th, 1944, Department of Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-26, Item A.

TO COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE AND WOULD AUTOMATICALLY SUCCEED TO COMMAND WAS THE MOTIVATING FACTOR FOR NOT INCLUDING THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE IN THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE. THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND CONSIDERED THAT COMBATDIV ONE* WAS THE BEST SUITABLE RELIEF AS COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE. COMBATDIV ONE HAD BEEN CHIEF OF STAFF TO CINC COMBINED FLEET, ADMIRAL ISOROKU YAMAMOTO, IJN, UNTIL THE LATTER'S DEATH, APRIL 18TH, 1943.**

At about 1406 CinC Combined Fleet received a dispatch from Commander FIFTH Base Air Force which gave a summary of the contacts received that day which summary increased the number of carriers off Lamon Bay by one (i.e. from nine to ten), and a report that, as of 1330, the Philippines had been attacked by a total of twenty-five aircraft of which thirteen had struck Clark Field slightly damaging some of the Japanese planes there.*** This latter report was probably received with considerable skepticism by CinC Combined Fleet because the Allied air strikes throughout the forenoon had struck the Philippines in far greater strength than twenty-five planes and reports thereon must have reached Hiyoshi and Omura.

At about 1408 he likely knew that as of 0800 the SIXTH Base Air Force strength on Formosa consisted of 395 planes of which 223 were operational.****

Also around this time he knew that the Allied attack on Car Nicobar Island was continuing; that the attacking force which was reported as the British EIGHTH Fleet consisted of two carriers, two battleships, four cruisers and three destroyers; that a gunfire bombardment had been made on Car Nicobar between 1120 and 1220 and that the Car Nicobar defense had sunk one carrier and one destroyer.

At about 1721 he received the Chief of Staff SW Area Force Dispatch 191651 wherein that commander advised Commander SECOND Striking Force and COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN that the Southern Army planned to move about three battalions of reinforcements from the Visayas area to Leyte Island and that orders thereon would be issued after the SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV SIXTEEN had completed plans for moving to the Philippines.***** COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN received this dispatch at 1800.*****

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* Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN.

** Information compiled by Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Japanese Research Division, Military History Section, GHQ-FEC, relating to Penetration Operations of FIRST Striking Force, Battle for Leyte Gulf, contained in GHQ-FEC, Military History Section letter to President, U.S. Naval War College, March 30th, 1954.

*** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit 701st Air Group), Octobe · 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191338 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 193rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

***** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 191651 October 1944 to Commanders SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV 16, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

Sometime during the afternoon he likely received additional intelligence reports from Army aircraft which reported sightings as follows:

(a) Three cruisers and eight transports of numerous sizes in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia.*

(b) At 1300 about seventy combat ships, including six carriers, fourteen battleships, twenty cruisers, and thirty destroyers, plus thirty transports of various sizes and two hospital ships, in Seeadler Harbor, Manus, Admiralty Islands.**

While data available to this analysis does not show fully how many Allied ships were in Humboldt Bay, it is known that TG 78.8 (Reinforcement Group THREE), consisting of some thirty-two ships, including four escort frigates, was present at Hollandia. This indicates that the Hollandia report was at least fifty percent accurate. However, data available on the shipping in the Admiralties is complete. This data shows that the contact report in (b) above was very incorrect, since there were no carriers, battleships nor cruisers at Manus or elsewhere in the Admiralties at this time.***

CinC Combined Fleet could now estimate the strength of the Allied effort. He knew, if his sightings were reasonably accurate, that the Allies had combat ships as follows: (a) in the Leyte area: six carriers, five e car- riers, ten battleships and a minimum of thirty cruisers and destr (b) off Luzon (Lamon Bay): ten carriers, five battleships, and minimu destroyers, which latter figure was obviously erroneous since the task groups would be screened by many more destroyers; (c) in the ties: six carriers, fourteen battleships, twenty cruisers, and th troyers; (d) at Humboldt Bay: three cruisers. Naturally, since th reportedly eighty transports at Humboldt Bay and no destroyers, he at the destroyer figure was probably erroneous since it was unlikely t transports would sortie without antisubmarine screens which might be oy- ers. Thus, in summary, his command had sighted a total of twenty-two large carriers, five escort carriers, twenty-nine battleships and a minimum of eighty-five cruisers and destroyers, which summation, at least in carriers and battleships, based on Japanese intelligence, was excessive.

He could also estimate that if half of these carriers were large carriers (CV) with a complement of ninety-six planes, half small carriers (CVL) with thirty-three planes, and if the five escort carriers carried thirty planes each, then should all forces concentrate in the Leyte area, he would

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** Appended Chart One to Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** War Diary Commander Naval Base Manus, Admiralty Islands, October 1944.

be opposed by roughly 1569 planes which was far more planes than he had operational that morning (538),* or even available (897), in both the FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces. On the other hand, he could estimate that (a) should the force in the Admiralties fail to join up—this was likely since the Admiralties are about 1500 miles from Leyte--he would be opposed by sixteen carriers, five escort carriers, fifteen battleships, thirty-five cruisers and destroyers and 1182 planes and (b) should the Main Force succeed in enticing the Allied carrier force presently off Luzon away to the northeast from the objective area and thereby deny it an opportunity to employ its strength in opposition to the penetration operation, he would reduce considerably the Allied surface ship superiority shown in (a) and would then be opposed by six carriers, five escort carriers, ten battleships and thirty cruisers and destroyers (excluding the three cruisers in Humboldt Bay) and 537 planes.

To oppose this latter Allied force he had (a) in the FIRST Striking Force (including CRUDIV SIXTEEN still in company and including oiler group escorts MICHISHIO and NOWAKI), seven battleships, thirty-five cruisers and destroyers, (b) SECOND Striking Force, (less CRUDIV SIXTEEN) three cruisers, seven destroyers, (c) in the Main Force, nine carriers, two hermaphrodite battleships, eleven cruisers and destroyers. Thus, in summary, his command consisted of a total of nine carriers, seven battleships, two hermaphrodite battleships, fifty-six cruisers and destroyers. However, he knew that (a) of these nine carriers but four were ready for sea and these four would be equipped with understrength air groups, and (b) while he had available a total of 538* operational land-based aircraft to support his operations in the Leyte area the Allies had none nearer than Morotai. He also knew that, insofar as the penetration operation was concerned, which, of course, was the basic operation by which the objective of preventing an Allied landing in the Leyte area was to be accomplished, he would oppose the Allied forces in Leyte Gulf with the FIRST Striking Force only. Thus, if all went well, he would oppose the Allied six fleet carriers and five escort carriers with their 537 planes, their ten battleships and thirty cruisers and destroyers, with seven battleships, thirty-five cruisers and destroyers and 538* operational aircraft of the FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces, plus the limited aircraft of the FOURTH Air Army. It seems probable that he felt that, with good luck, he might have a chance of success.

HOWEVER, IN ESTIMATING HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT HE REALIZED THAT THE ABOVE ESTIMATES WERE PURELY NUMERICAL AND THAT THE CHARACTER OF THE THEATER MIGHT WELL HAVE AN IMPORTANT INFLUENCE ON THE PENETRATION OPERATION, SINCE THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE WOULD HAVE TO PASS THROUGH RESTRICTED WATERS WHERE IT MIGHT LOSE TEMPORARILY ITS FREEDOM OF ACTION, AND WHERE ALSO IT MIGHT SUFFER SERIOUS DAMAGE FROM ALLIED AIR POWER AND SUBMARINES, THEREBY JEOPARDIZING ITS ABILITY TO CARRY OUT THE PENETRATION OPERATION.

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* SIXTH Base Air Force figures are not corrected for (a) operational losses subsequent to 0719 October 17th believed to have been negligible, (b) replacement aircraft which may have been received but also believed to have been negligible and (c) planes returned to the Main Force, number not known; it is known however, that 89 planes of the 653rd and 634th Air Groups, all or some of which had been transferred back from the SIXTH Base Air Force, were embarked in CARDIV 3 upon its sortie.

SOMETIME DURING THE DAY THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF INFORMED THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF* THAT THE NAVY WAS MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THE COMBINED FLEET PENETRATION INTO LEYTE GULF.** WHY HE FELT THAT IT WAS NECESSARY SO TO ADVISE THE ARMY IS NOT UNDERSTOOD, SINCE THE PENETRATION OPERATION WAS THE HEART OF THE COMBINED FLEET SHO ONE PLAN. ACTUALLY THE ARMY WELL KNEW THAT THE NAVY WAS PLANNING DECISIVE BATTLE, FOR ON THE PRECEDING DAY (OCTOBER 18TH) THIS FACT HAD BEEN ENTERED IN THE DAILY RECORD OF THE FOURTH AIR ARMY.***

THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF TO THE SURPRISE OF THE NAVY DISAPPROVED OF THIS ACTION AT THIS TIME AND BY SO DOING TOOK A STAND AGAINST THE STRATEGY WHICH HE HAD HERETOFORE SUPPORTED, I.E., "THAT THE CORRECT STRATEGY FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEYTE WAS TO EMPLOY THE FULL CONCERTED STRENGTH OF THE SEA AND AIR ARMS TOGETHER WITH THE GROUND TROOPS LOCALLY AVAILABLE." INSTEAD HE NOW PROPOSED THAT THE NAVY ADOPT A POLICY OF CONSERVING FLEET STRENGTH.** SINCE THIS WAS A NEGATION OF THE SHO ONE PLAN, AND SINCE SUCH NEGATION COULD HAVE SERIOUS AND FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES, THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF DID NOT IMMEDIATELY ACCEPT OR REJECT THE ARMY RECOMMENDATION, BUT AGREED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

AS A CONSEQUENCE, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF AND THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF MET THAT EVENING IN TOKYO. NEITHER THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF NOR THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF ATTENDED THE MEETING.** IN VIEW OF THE SERIOUS NATURE OF THE MATTER UNDER DISCUSSION, DOES THIS NOT SEEM SURPRISING? CERTAINLY IN THE UNITED STATES AT THIS TIME, WHEN MATTERS OF SUCH IMPORTANCE WERE UNDER DISCUSSION, THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, IN PERSON, WOULD HAVE ATTENDED SUCH A MEETING AND WOULD NOT HAVE LEFT THEM TO BE DISCUSSED BY SUBORDINATES.

AT THE MEETING, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF STATED, IN SUBSTANCE, THAT (A) THE NAVY WISHED TO CARRY OUT THE LEYTE PENETRATION OPERATION IN ORDER TO DESTROY THE ALLIED INVASION FORCES; (B) AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THIS ACTION, A DECISIVE FLEET ENGAGEMENT MIGHT OCCUR; (C) IF THE NAVY DID NOT FIGHT IT OUT NOW, IT WOULD BE FORCED BACK TO JAPANESE WATERS AND WOULD MEET THE FATE OF THE ITALIAN NAVY; AND (D) IF THE NAVY DID NOT TAKE THE OFFENSIVE NOW, THE WAR WOULD BE LOST. THEY FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT THE NAVY MINISTER**** APPROVED OF THIS PLAN.

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* General Yoshijiro Umezu, IJA.

** Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

*** Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report of Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

**** Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai, IJN.

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF IN REPLY STATED, IN SUBSTANCE, THAT THE ARMY DESIRED THE NAVY TO REFRAIN FROM AN OPERATION WHICH WOULD RISK DESTRUCTION OF THE FLEET, SINCE (A) THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS WERE SLIGHT; (B) SHOULD THE FLEET BE DESTROYED, THE ALLIES WOULD GAIN CONTROL OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND THE EAST CHINA SEA; AND (C) SINCE THE COMBINED FLEET HAD NO CARRIER AIRCRAFT, A PART OF THE LAND-BASED AIR STRENGTH WOULD HAVE TO BE DIVERTED TO PROVIDE AIR COVER FOR THE FLEET, WHICH WOULD BE DISADVANTAGEOUS. THEY FURTHER STATED THAT, EVEN IF THE NAVY SUFFERED THE FATE OF THE ITALIAN NAVY, IT COULDN'T BE HELPED.*

THIS MEETING ADJOURNED WITHOUT HAVING REACHED ANY CONCLUSIONS WHATSOEVER.*

THE NAVY'S CONCEPT WAS THE MORE CORRECT, SINCE, AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT IN VOLUME I OF THIS ANALYSIS, THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND CONSIDERED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO JAPAN'S SURVIVAL IN THE WAR TO DEFEND THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE HOMELAND AND THE SOUTHERN RESOURCES AREA, WHICH INCLUDED THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES, MALAYA, BURMA, AND, TO A DEGREE, THE PHILIPPINES. THIS WAS SO FOR MANY REASONS, BUT INSOFAR AS THE NAVY WAS CONCERNED IT WAS VITAL, BECAUSE THE OIL STOCKS IN THE EMPIRE WERE VERY LOW INDEED. IN FACT, IT WAS THIS SHORTAGE OF FUEL IN THE EMPIRE WHICH HAD FORCED CINC COMBINED FLEET TO BASE HIS FIRST STRIKING FORCE AT LINGGA - SINGAPORE IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE JAPANESE NAVY, AT LEAST, REALIZED THAT SHOULD JAPAN LOSE IN THE PHILIPPINES, THE SHIPPING LANES TO THE SOUTH WOULD BE COMPLETELY CUT OFF. IN THIS CASE, EVEN IF IT SHOULD SUCCEED IN RETURNING TO JAPANESE WATERS, THE FLEET WOULD BE UNABLE TO OBTAIN ITS FUEL SUPPLY, AND IF IT REMAINED IN SOUTHERN WATERS IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN SUPPLIES OF AMMUNITION AND ARMS.** IT IS PRESUMABLY THIS VERY FACT WHICH CAUSED THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NAVAL GENERAL STAFF TO STATE THAT IF THEY DID NOT NOW ENGAGE IN DECISIVE BATTLE FOR THE PHILIPPINES, THEY WOULD MEET THE FATE OF THE ITALIAN NAVY, WHICH HAD BEEN SURRENDERED TO THE ALLIES.

THE ARMY'S CONCEPT, ON THE OTHER HAND, SHOWED LITTLE APPRECIATION OF THE NAVY'S ROLE IN WAR AND OF WHAT IS MEANT BY CONTROL OF THE SEA. THE ARMY SEEMED TO THINK OF THE JAPANESE FLEET AS A "FLEET IN BEING", AND APPEARED TO HOLD THE VIEW THAT ITS PRESENCE NEAR THE OBJECTIVE AREA, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS INFERIOR TO THE ALLIED FLEET, WOULD PRODUCE A PROFOUND EFFECT UPON ALLIED ACTION. THEY APPEARED TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH AN INFERIOR "FLEET IN BEING" WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE ALLIES AS A SUFFICIENT DETERRENT TO AT LEAST DELAY THEIR OPERATIONS, IF NOT STOP THEM. THEY SEEMED TO FEEL THAT THE JAPANESE NAVAL FORCES, SO LONG AS THEY EXISTED, WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE SUPPLIES OF

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* Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

** Campaigns of the Pacific War, United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) 1946, pages 3, 280, 281.

MEN AND MATERIALS TO THE VARIOUS ISLAND BASES ALONG THE PHILIPPINES-FORMOSA-NANSEI SHOTO-KYUSHU LINE. SUCH, OF COURSE, WAS NOT THE CASE, AND HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE THROUGHOUT THE ALLIED ADVANCE IN THE CENTRAL PACIFIC. THE FACT THAT THE JAPANESE FLEET WAS IN BEING HAD NOT PREVENTED THE ALLIED MOVEMENT ACROSS THE CENTRAL PACIFIC, NOR HAD IT PREVENTED THE PRESENT ATTACK ON LEYTE. THE ARMY, WHILE IT REALIZED THAT THE NAVY OPERATED ON OIL, AND THAT WITHOUT OIL ITS OPERATIONS WOULD BE STOPPED, COULD NOT REALIZE THAT FAILURE TO DEFEAT THE ALLIED FORCES IN THE LEYTE OPERATION WOULD AUTOMATICALLY CAUSE THE ALLIES TO GAIN COMMAND OF THE SEA. THEY DID NOT APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT WITH THE LOSS OF THE PHILIPPINES, ALLIED AIR POWER OPERATING FROM LAND BASES THERE, AND ALLIED SEA POWER WOULD BE ABLE TO GAIN SUCH CONTROL OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA THAT JAPANES LINES OF COMMUNICATION TO THE SOUTH WOULD BE SEVERED AND THE FLOW OF OIL STOPPED COMPLETELY. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY RENDER THE JAPANESE NAVY VIRTUALLY HELPLESS, BUT WOULD HAVE A SIMILAR EFFECT ON AIRCRAFT IN AIR OPERATIONS. THUS IT WOULD COMPLETELY CUT OFF THOSE ISLAND BASES THEY HOPED TO DEFEND.

THE ARMY'S RELUCTANCE TO EMPLOY LAND-BASED AIRCRAFT IN SUPPORT OF NAVAL OPERATIONS IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE FAILURE OF THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND TO APPRECIATE THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF SEAPOWER TO THE DEFENSE OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THEREFORE TO THEIR OWN SECURITY AND TO THE SUCCESS OF THEIR OWN OPERATIONS. THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND THAT THE BEST METHOD OF DEFENDING THE PHILIPPINES WAS TO DEFEAT DECISIVELY THE ALLIED NAVAL FORCES AT THE TIME OF LANDING IN WHICH CASE THOSE ALLIED GROUND FORCES WHICH HAD SUCCEEDED IN LANDING WOULD BE EASILY DESTROYED. THEREFORE THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPLYING AIR COVER FOR THE FLEET SHOULD HAVE BEEN OBVIOUS. IN THIS CONNECTION IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT NONE OF THE JAPANESE SURFACE FORCES EXCEPTING THE MAIN FORCE WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN AIR COVER.

Sometime during the day, CinC Combined Fleet learned that Hitler had ordered all German males between the ages of sixteen and sixty into the newly-organized defense army.* This was a serious development, since it indicated that the situation of the Axis powers in Europe was becoming desperate and that Japan could expect even less assistance from that quarter.

Also sometime during the day CinC Combined Fleet learned that six submarines, the I-38, I-41, I-44, I-46, I-53 and the RO-43, had departed for waters east of Luzon in accordance with orders issued on October 17th. All of these submarines made effective departures with the exception of the I-44, which developed mechanical trouble and returned to base.

It is likely that about 1800 CinC Combined Fleet received word that a five-plane air attack group from Mabalacat Field (one of the Clark group of airfields) had scored direct hits on one or two enemy battleships.

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

At 1743 he ordered the Commanding Officer KAIYO to command the transport group consisting of the KAIYO, RYUHO, MOMO and UME from DESDIV FORTY-THREE and the MO-_ (and possibly the KAYA) since that appears later in this command. He further ordered him to proceed from Kure via Sasebo to Kiirun, Formosa for the purpose of transporting armaments and material for the reconstruction of the 61st Air Depot.*

By nightfall Imperial General Headquarters (Army Section) had received intelligence, source not available to this analysis, that the Allies had in the Leyte area twenty-eight large carriers (CV), fourteen small carriers (CVL), forty converted carriers (CVE), eleven battleships, twenty-two cruisers, thirty-five destroyers and 120 escort ships,**

If this intelligence was made available to CinC Combined Fleet, it is not believed that he accepted it in its entirety since it numbered carriers far in excess of any Japanese naval intelligence figures heretofore received or shown in Japanese naval intelligence reports for this day. It seems more probable that he accepted the estimate of enemy strength derived from the contact reports and forwarded by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force at 1336,*** even though this estimate likewise was still far in excess of any previous Japanese Naval Intelligence estimate. It also seems more probable that the Army High Command for similar reasons likewise did not accept it in its entirety.

At about 2300 he received a dispatch (received by COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN at 0030 the following morning) from the Chief of Staff SW Area Force wherein the Chief of Staff,**** presumably in reply to CinC Combined Fleet dispatch 191220, stated in part that, since (a) the Southern Army had not yet decided as to the final reinforcement plan for Leyte, but had estimated that the first echelon would number two battalions, and (b) this would require only CRUDIV SIXTEEN and about two transports, he could see no objection to employing the remainder of the SECOND Striking Force, less two destroyers, in support of either the FIRST Striking Force or the Main Force.

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191743 October 1944 to all ships concerned (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 477), War Diary DESRON 11, October 1944, WDC Document 161715, NA 12712.

** Daily Record of War Situation, October 19th, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4 Footlocker 10 of 10 SWPA Series Vol.II).

*** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, (70lst Air Group) October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 192230 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

He further stated that the Army had not decided as yet whether to make a counterlanding (in eastern Leyte), or to land reinforcements on the Leyte west coast, but that, in his opinion, the troops should be landed on the west coast in conjunction with and only slightly behind the penetration of the FIRST Striking Force.*

THE REDUCTION AT THIS TIME OF THE SOUTHERN ARMY'S PLANNED INITIAL REINFORCEMENTS TO LEYTE OF FROM THREE BATTALIONS AT 1651 TO TWO BATTALIONS AT 2230 (OBVIOUSLY COUNTERLANDINGS WERE TO BE ON A VERY LIMITED SCALE), AND THE FACT THAT CINC SOUTHERN ARMY HAD NOT AS YET DECIDED WHERE TO LAND THESE REINFORCEMENTS, CLEARLY INDICATES THAT JAPANESE ARMY SHO ONE PREPARATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES TO COUNTER AN ALLIED LANDING IN THE LEYTE-SAMAR AREA WERE IN A MOST UNSETTLED STATE. UNDER JAPANESE POLICY, IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR SUCH OPERATIONS, EVEN WITHOUT A DIRECTIVE BY IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS (ARMY SECTION), TO BE PLANNED AND EXECUTED BY CINC SOUTHERN ARMY AND BY HIS C.G. FOURTEENTH AREA ARMY, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE PHILIPPINES.**

(1) Operations of Commander Mobile Force, October 19th.

Commander Mobile Force remained in the ZUIKAKU at Oita Anchorage and continued expediting the preparation of the ships of the Main Force and their air groups for the sortie on the following day.

At 0800 he shifted his flag to the OYODO. At 0810, in the OYODO, he departed for Yashima Anchorage,*** where he planned to conduct an operations conference with his commanders there.

At 0831 in accordance with Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's tentative outline of future operations**** he advised the Mobile Force as to the plan of movement of the Main Force in substance about as follows: "The Main Force will advance to the area northeast of the Philippines by X-1 or X-2 and will launch an air attack." (The date of the penetration by the FIRST Striking Force is designated as X-day).

Since the OYODO had been refitted in 1944 as the flagship of CinC Combined Fleet it is probable that while en route to Yashima Anchorage Commander Mobile Force received many of the contact reports on Allied invasion

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* Cof S SW Area Force Dispatch 192230 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1953, by Mr, Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

*** War Diary OYODO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report Main Force SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

shipping in the vicinity of Leyte, and the contact reports on carriers off Lamon Bay, which showed definitely that an invasion was to be expected shortly. Although he had as yet received no orders other than the tentative outline issued by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet on the preceding day, which, among other items, set X-day as October 24th, directed the Main Force to advance to the area east of Luzon on X-1 or X-2 day, and directed him to fix the time of sortie of the Main Force to conform to this schedule, he now knew that, failing other orders, he would have to continue to act on the basis of this tentative outline, since this was based on the earliest penetration time for the FIRST Striking Force. He also knew that he would not be required to sortie before October 20th, since he planned to receive the last of his air groups on the morning of that day.* This was within the time limitations of the tentative outline.

He arrived at Yashima Anchorage at 1200.** Here he received those contact reports and important dispatches which he may not have received on the OYODO. He promptly held his operational conference with his commanders there. While the agenda for this conference is not available, it is assumed that he discussed primarily Main Force OpOrd No. 1*** and the plans for sortie. This would have included, among other things, the manner in which the sortie of the Main Force was to be conducted, the hour of sortie, the anti-submarine operations preliminary to and during the sortie, the plan of movement to the objective area, tne proposed operations in support of the diversionary objective, and the numerous matters relating to carrier operations, which, because of the lack of recent training of his screening forces in carrier operations, were bound to arise. In support of this assumption are the various dispatches which he or his subordinates issued later on this day or on the following day concerning these very matters.

Also, since during this conference he likely, at about 1250, received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet**** stating that, under certain circumstances, the SECOND Striking Force might be returned to the Main Force, it seems probable that he discussed this matter with his commanders as well.

In studying the contact reports which he had received during his stay at Yashima, he undoubtedly noted with particular interest the reported location of the Allied carriers; nine in the vicinity of Lamon Bay and eleven,

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* Commander Main Force Dispatch 182055 October 1944 to COMDESDIV 61, 653rd and 931st Air Groups, COMDESRON 11 (Main Force DesOpOrd 11), War Diary ZUIHO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** War Diary OYODO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operations, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

**** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October 1944 to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

including escort carriers, in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf. His objective, of course, was to divert these carriers - at least those off Lamon Bay - away to the northeast* so that they would be unable to support the Allied forces in the Leyte area. He was concerned lest the carriers off Lamon Bay should decide to move farther south,** in which case he would have a longer distance to travel in order to get into a diversionary position. He was also concerned about the location of these carriers because, owing to the difficulty of night sortie through Bungo Suido, he was forced to make a daylight sortie. He therefore was anxious to sortie as early as practicable in order to facilitate his contact with the enemy.

Upon completion of this conference, he returned to Oita, apparently by air, and hoisted his flag in the ZUIKAKU. The OYODO remained at Yashima.***

It seems likely that it was at this time that he held his conferences with his carrier commanders and possibly with the commanders of his air groups concerning the air phases of the forthcoming operations.**

During the remainder of the day, he pondered over the employment of the SECOND Striking Force, should it be returned to his command.

HE UNDOUBTEDLY REALIZED THAT (A) CONSIDERATIONS OF FUEL (REFUELING WOULD BE REQUIRED) AND DISTANCE (IT WAS ABOUT 800 MILES FROM THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO THE INLAND SEA) WOULD NOT PERMIT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO REJOIN THE MAIN FORCE PRIOR TO THE LATTER'S SORTIE FROM THE INLAND SEA, AND (B) IT WAS SCARCELY POSSIBLE FOR THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO REJOIN THE MAIN FORCE AFTER THE MAIN FORCE'S SORTIE FROM THE INLAND SEA BECAUSE (1) THE FUTURE MANEUVERS INCIDENT TO ENTICING THE ALLIED CARRIER FORCE TO THE NORTHEAST COULD NOT BE FORECAST WITH DEFINITE ASSURANCE NOW OR LATER AND (2) ONCE HE HAD SORTIED IT WAS LIKELY THAT HE COULD NOT BREAK RADIO SILENCE TO DESIGNATE A RENDEZVOUS LEST HE GIVE AWAY HIS POSITION PREMATURELY TO THE ENEMY. UNDER THESE CONDITIONS HE WOULD BE FORCED, WHETHER HE WISHED TO DO SO OR NOT, TO OPERATE THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE SEPARATELY AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE MAIN FORCE RATHER THAN IN THE MAIN FORCE DISPOSITION, AND HE PREPARED DESOPORD NO. 62 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS DECISION. THE JAPANESE TERMED AN OPERATION OF THIS NATURE A STRATEGICAL ENVELOPMENT—THAT IS, THE USE OF FORCES WHICH HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN DISPOSED ON EXTERIOR LINES AND WHICH ARE CONVERGED

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* Commander Mobile Force OpOrd No. 76, August 10th, 1944, Section II, Concrete Operational Policy, ATIS Document No. 39, Part I, April 22nd 1945, page 5 (NACHI Document); also Main Force OpOrd No. 1, Detailed Action Report No. 2 OYODO, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161007.

** Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** War Diary OYODO, October 19th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.* ACTUALLY, AS WILL BE SHOWN LATER, COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE VISUALIZED A SINGLE ENVELOPMENT WHERE THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE WOULD BE A LURE DESIGNED TO DIVERT THE ALLIED CARRIERS IN ITS DIRECTION SO THAT THE MAIN FORCE MIGHT EFFECT A SURPRISE AIR ATTACK FROM THE FLANK.

At about 1915 Commander Mobile Force received a dispatch from Commander 653rd Air Group to CARDIV THREE concerning the embarkation of aircraft on the carriers of CARDIV THREE. In this dispatch the Commander 653rd Air Group advised that aircraft would be flown aboard the carriers as follows:

(a) ZUIKAKU: One fighter (leader's plane), nineteen fighters, eleven fighter-bombers, thirteen carrier type attack and seven carrier type reconnaissance--a total of fifty-one planes.

(b) ZUIHO: One fighter (leader's plane), seven fighters, four fighter-bombers and six carrier type attack--a total of eighteen planes.

(c) CHITOSE: One fighter (leader's plane), seven fighters, four fighter-bombers and six carrier type attack--a total of eighteen planes.

(d) CHIYODA: One fighter (leader's plane), seven fighters, four fighter-bombers and five carrier type attack planes--a total of seventeen planes.**

Therefore it was contemplated at this time to embark on the four ships of CARDIV THREE a total of 104 planes, plus a few planes which were to be hoisted aboard. This was a considerable reduction from the normal operating complement (168 planes)*** and shows the ill effect the transfer to the SIXTH Base Air Force of a large number of the planes belonging to the carrier group had had on the air combat ability of CARDIV THREE.

At about 2300 he received Commander SW Area Force dispatch 192230 wherein that commander stated, in part, that he could see no reason why the SECOND Striking Force could not be employed in support of either the FIRST Striking Force or the Main Force.**** In view of the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 191220,***** he was undoubtedly interested in this SW Area

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* Japanese Striking Force Tactics contained in "Know Your Enemy" Addendum to CINCPAC-CINCPOA "Weekly Intelligence" Vol. I, No. 10, September 15th, 1944.

** Commander 653rd Air Group Dispatch 191845 October 1944 to CARDIV 3, War Diary ZUIHO, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Letter from Military History Section FEC October 14th, 1953, to President Naval War College.

**** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 192230 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

***** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October 1944, to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

Force dispatch since it indicated a strong probability that the SECOND Striking Force would be returned presently to the Main Force.

At 2328 he advised the Main Force by dispatch that October 20th was tentatively designated as X-day (the day of sortie for the Main Force) and 1300 as Y-hour (the hour of the Main Force's departure from its anchorage).*

The date of October 20th was chosen so that Commander Main Force might conform with the tentative instruction issued by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet at 1110 on the previous day wherein that officer tentatively designated X-day for the penetration operation as October 24th and directed Commander Mobile Force to fix the time of sortie of the Main Force so that it could advance to the area east of Luzon on X-1 or X-2 day. The time of 1300 was selected because (in view of the difficulty of a night sortie from Bungo Suido and other considerations) it was desired to arrive off Okinoshima at 1700 October 20th.**

The decision of Commander Mobile Force to depart at 1300 October 20th appears sound in that it gave the Main Force time to reach the objective area in case X-day remained October 24th or was advanced to October 25th, or in case the enemy carriers presently off Lamon Bay moved south.**

(a) Operations of Commander FIRST Striking Force, October 19th.

At an approximate speed of advance of sixteen knots, and zigzagging, the FIRST Striking Force continued toward Brunei through the South China Sea, via the previously designated circuitous route. At midnight it was still on course 010°(T), which was one leg of this route, and was heading toward Latitude 04°-45'N, Longitude 107°-14'E, where the SECOND Section, which was in the van, was to change course at 0100 to 070°(T)***

At this time, the FIRST Striking Force was complete except for the HAYASHIMO and AKISHIMO, which were en route from Manila to Brunei, where they were to rejoin the FIRST Striking Force, and the oiler group (MICHISHIO, NOWAKI, ETOROFU, YUHO MARU, and HAKKO MARU) which was en route from Singapore to Brunei, where the oilers were to refuel the FIRST Striking Force.

At 0100 the SECOND Section, in approximately the correct position

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* Commander Mobile Force Dispatch 192328 October 1944 to Main Force, Detailed Action Report ISUZU, Battle off Philippines, October 20th - 29th, 1944, page 4, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

** Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, page 4, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander FIRST Striking Force visual Dispatch 181900 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

in longitude along the predetermined track but about four miles to the north (the YAMATO reported passing through Latitude 04°-54'N, Longitude 107°-15'E at 0130),* ceased zigzagging, commenced changing course to 071°(T), and headed for the next change-of-course position (Latitude 06°-52'N, Longitude 113°-03'E), At about 0120, the FIRST Section followed the SECOND Section. The speed of advance of about sixteen knots and the new course of 071°(T) was maintained throughout the day.

During the forenoon, it seems likely that antisubmarine protection was provided in part by the ship-based planes of the FIRST Striking Force.

Also during the forenoon, Commander FIRST Striking Force received most, if not all, of the various contact reports on Allied forces operating off the Philippines. In summary, these showed that numerous Allied carri rs were both in the Leyte area and off Lamon Bay, and that Allied invasion forces were fast approaching the Leyte area.** This, of course, was bad news, since he could plainly see that unless the Japanese minefields and air power could delay the Allied advance operations, the penetration operation could not possibly be conducted as planned in the Mobile Force basic plan; that is, it could not be made effective at the time of the Allied landing, but instead would occur some days later. In fact, since the penetration operation was tentatively set for October 24th at the earliest, Commander FIRST Striking Force could see that, should the Allied landings occur in a day or so, as seemed likely, it was quite possible that the transports would have disembarked their troops before the FIRST Striking Force could penetrate Leyte Gulf.

In the meanwhile the AKISHIMO and HAYASHIMO (which, it will be remembered, were not at this time in the disposition with Commander FIRST Striking Force, but instead were en route from Manila to Brunei) sighted at 1100 a surfaced enemy submarine on the (port) bow, distant 15,000 meters. They immediately headed toward the submarine in order to attack. At 1140, the AKISHIMO observed four torpedoes, which had been fired by the submarine, pass clear of the formation. They began sonar search, but, failing to make contact, discontinued the search and headed for Brunei.*** This was the submarine DARTER, which had attacked from the east.**** It is of interest that

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* Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592; also Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953),Volume II.

*** War Diary AKISHIMO October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** War Patrol Report DARTER, Report of FOURTH War Patrol, Serial 020, November 5th, 1944.

the submarine DACE had attacked from the west at the same time and had also fired four torpedoes, but since her presence was unobserved by the Japanese destroyers, her torpedoes must have passed well clear.* There is nothing in the records available to indicate that these destroyers reported these contacts by dispatch.

At 1311 one plane from Miri contacted the FIRST Striking Force in position bearing 295°(T) distant 195 miles from Miri and carried out direct escort.**

At 1630 a second plane from Miri contacted the FIRST Striking Force in position bearing 302°(T) distant 195 miles from Miri and relieved the first plane which discontinued escorting and returned to base.**

During the rest of the day nothing of importance occurred within the FIRST Striking Force. Radar target ranging practice was held between 1533 and 1656.*** This was especially important for cruisers and above, since they had evidently recently received, at Singapore, new radars (No.22, MODIFICATION 2) and it was desired to compare them with the older radars.****

At 1725 the second Miri plane also returned to base.**

On several occasions on this day Commander FIRST Striking Force sent visual signals to his command, providing air and surface patrols for the force while anchored at Brunei.***** His responsible commanders in turn, also by visual signal, issued instructions to their commands designating

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* War Patrol DACE, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, Serial 09, November 6th, 1944,

** Detailed Action Report MIRI Detachment, 901st Air Group, October, 1944, WDC Document 160369, NA 12366.

*** Detailed Action Report No. 3, YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

**** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 191405 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force (FIRST Striking Force SigOrd No. 181), Detailed Action Report No. 3, YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639.

***** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 191302 October 1944 to FIRST Striking Force (FIRST Striking Force SigOrd No. 180), Detailed Action Report No. 3 YAMATO, SHO One Antiair and Surface Actions, October 17th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161639; also Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 191340 October 1944, to FIRST Striking Force (FIRST Striking Force SigOrd No. 182), Detailed Action Report BATDIV 1, SHO 1 Operation, October 18th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

the manner in which these patrols were to be executed.*

At 1900 COMBATDIV THREE notified his command that "from 0630 tomorrow, one antisubmarine direct escort plane will stand by for immediate take-off."** It is presumed that this signal meant that one plane each on both the KONGO and HARUNA were to be ready for antisubmarine operations.

It seems highly probable that sometime during the early evening Commander FIRST Striking Force was advised through an intelligence dispatch, although such a dispatch cannot be located, that:

(a) Three cruisers and eighty transports of various sizes had been observed in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia,*** and

(b) At 1300, about seventy combat ships, including six carriers, fourteen battleships, twenty cruisers, and thirty destroyers, plus thirty transports of various sizes and two hospital ships, had been observed in the Admiralties.****

Since the various contact reports received throughout the day had shown clearly that Allied forces of considerable strength were off the central and northern Philippines or in Leyte Gulf, Commander FIRST Striking Force could now estimate with some exactness the character of the Allied effort. If he received all of the above contacts he would have known that in Leyte Gulf there were three carriers, four escort carriers, seven battleships, twelve cruisers and destroyers, and that relatively nearby there were three carriers, one escort carrier, three battleships and eighteen cruisers and destroyers. Summarized, this was six carriers, five escort carriers, ten battleships, and thirty cruisers and destroyers. This was a formidable force, but since he had with him in the FIRST Striking Force, including CRUDIV SIXTEEN, seven battleships and thirty-five cruisers and destroyers supported by land-based air, it would seem that the odds were not altogether hopeless. Actually it appears likely that he thought the Allied force in Leyte Gulf was much weaker and consisted in fact of four battleships, six

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* COMBATDIV 1 Dispatches 191300 and 191820, October 1944, to FIRST Striking Force (BATDIV 1 SigOrds 188, 189), War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739; also COMDESRON 10 Dispatch 191700, October 1944, to DESRON 10 (DESRON 10 SigOrd 163), War Diary DESRON 10, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739; also COMCRUDIV 7 Dispatch 191710, October 1944, to CRUDIV 7, War Diary CRUDIV 7, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** COMBATDIV 3 Dispatch 191900 October 1944, to BATDIV 3, War Diary TONE, October 1944, WDC Document 160144, NA 11841

*** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

**** Appended Chart One to Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

cruisers and ten destroyers.*

At 1903 he notified his command that at 2000 the zigzag plan would be changed; that at 0000 the following morning the SECOND Section (in the van), followed at 0030 by the FIRST Section was to change course to 130°(T), and that at 0050 the command was to resume zigzag maneuvers.** From this order as well as from orders issued the previous day, it seems that the Japanese, prior to making a fleet change of course, automatically ceased zigzagging and resumed base course. This was similar to the then current American naval practice which prescribed that ten minutes prior to a change of course which had been ordered in advance to be executed at a specified future time all ships would automatically cease zigzagging and resume base course.***

At 1920 COMCRUDIV SEVEN issued instructions concerning the assignment of aircraft for antisubmarine attack missions on the following day as SUZUYA, one plane, TONE, two planes.****

During the day the oiler group proceeded uneventfully toward Brune.

At about 2300, since he was an information addressee, Commander FIRST Striking Force received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff SW Area Force stating that since the Army reinforcements for Leyte would be small and would not require more than CRUDIV SIXTEEN and about two transports he could see no reason why the remainder of the SECOND Striking Force could not be employed in support of either the FIRST Striking Force or the Main Force.***** What Commander FIRST Striking Force thought regarding the possible increase in his command of three cruisers and seven destroyers is not known.

At 2400 the FIRST Striking Force was bearing 309°(T) distant 165 miles from Brunei.

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* Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15, 1953), Volume II.

** Commander FIRST Striking Force Visual Dispatch 191903 October 1944, to FIRST Striking Force, War Diary BATDIV 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

*** Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Fleet, USF 10A, Headquarters of Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, 1944, para 3453(1).

**** COMCRUDIV 7 Visual Dispatch 191920 October 1944 to CRUDIV 7, War Diary TONE, October 1944, WDC Document 160144, NA 11841.

***** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 192230 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operation, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

(b) Operations of Commander Main Force, October 19th.

Commander Main Force remained throughout the day in his flagship, the ZUIKAKU, at Oita Air Base excepting during those hours when, as Commander Mobile Force, he was at Yashima Anchorage in the OYODO.

During the day he continued his efforts to prepare the Main Force for sortie, and the various subcommanders of the Main Force did likewise.

At about 0800 he learned that at 0730 COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE had hoisted his flag in the OYODO at Oita Air Base. At 0800 as Commander Mobile Force he also had hoisted his flag in the OYODO, This provided the unusual situation when compared with U.S. naval practice, of the OYODO flying simultaneously the flags of Commander Mobile Force and COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE. U.S. naval practice provides that not more than one distinctive mark (personal flag, command pennant of an officer of the Navy, or commission pennant) shall be displayed by a ship or craft at one time.*

Sometime apparently during the early afternoon and possibly as a result of the conference at Yashima Anchorage, Commander Main Force made provision for an antisubmarine sweep of the waters in the vicinity of the Pacific Ocean entrance to Bungo Suido, and ordered the Commander Main Force Screening Force to carry out this sweep.

As a consequence Commander Main Force Screening Force appears to have directed COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE to form an antisubmarine sweep unit to sweep the entrance area in the vicinity of Okinoshima at the time of sortie of the Main Force. COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE appears to have formed this group with the KUWA, MAKI, KIRI and SUGI. Later he received a written directive from Commander Main Force Screening Force wherein that commander directed that, at the time the Main Force sortied from Bungo Suido, the Commanding Officer ISUZU would command the ISUZU, KUWA, MAKI, KIRI and SUGI and would conduct an antisubmarine sweep of the scheduled route.** Therefore in compliance with this dispatch COMCORTRON THIRTY-ONE added the ISUZU to his antisubmarine sweep unit.*** It is presumed that Commander Main Force received this information shortly after the above dispatches had been transmitted. It is known that the ISUZU received the latter dispatch at 1553.

By about 2250 he knew that preparations were well underway for

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* U.S. Navy Regulations 1948, Chapter 21, Honors and Ceremonies, Article 2163.

** Commander Main Force Screening Force OpOrd No. 1, Detailed Action Report KUWA, Battle of the Philippines, October 20th - 26th, 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

*** COMCORTRON 31 Visual Dispatch 191553 October 1944 to Main Force, War Diary ISUZU, October 19th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

the antisubmarine operations which were to precede the sortie of the Main Force from Bungo Suido, for at that time he received a dispatch from the commander of the antisubmarine sweep unit advising the area commander that about three hours prior to the Main Force's sortie from the eastern entrance of Bungo Suido the ISUZU, KUWA, MAKI, KIRI, and SUGI were to conduct antisubmarine operations, that the area of operation would be on a line bearing 140°(T), distance twenty miles from the reference point (bearing 122°(T) distant three miles from Okinoshima Light), and that the distance between ships would be three and one half kilometers.*

(2) Operations of Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, October 19th.

Commander Advance Expeditionary Force likely spent the night expediting the preparations for sea of the submarines scheduled to depart this day for the objective area off the eastern Philippines. While he was not successful in getting all of them ready for sea at this time he did succeed in dispatching six submarines. These were the I-38, 41, 44, 46, 53 and the RO-43. The RO-41 and 46 were not quite ready for sea and therefore did not depart. This was not surprising since these two submarines had, with the RO-43, just returned from an extensive war patrol in the Palau area and although their morale was high the necessity for certain limited repairs was to be expected.

The submarines of the A Group, one of which had been contacted on the previous day by the BLACKFIN, appear on this day to have continued their movement to the Philippines. This view is supported by the fact that Allied search planes from Tinian contacted two unidentified submarines, evidently Japanese, since no Allied submarines were in the area, one about 1125 bearing 098°(T) distant 590 miles from the northern tip of Luzon (Cape Engano) on course 150°(T) speed twelve; the other at 1200 bearing 097°(T) distant 500 miles from Cape Engano, on course 180°(T) speed twelve. The first submarine remained on the surface, the second submarine quick dived on being contacted.**

The southerly route taken by the submarines of the A Group may seem to some students of warfare to have been poorly chosen in that the shortest approach to the operating areas off the Philippines would, based on distance alone, have been along a southwesterly rather than along a southerly course. However, it seems likely that the southerly course was taken for these reasons:

(a) Because CinC Combined Fleet in his basic orders to the submarines

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* COMCORTRON 31 Dispatch 192220 October 194 to Commander Kure Defense Squadron, info Commander Mobile Force, Detailed Action Report HYUGA, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161006, NA 12604.

** War Diaries CINCPAC and CTF 57 October 1944; also CINCPAC Daily Location and Plot, Allied and Enemy Forces, Underlay No. 1, 1630Z October 19th to 1630Z October 20th, 1944.

had directed among other items that,"...depending on the enemy situation, elements of the Advance Expeditionary Force will be assigned to the cutting of supply routes in the enemy rear... ...so long as rapid adherence to the interception dispositions (prescribed in this order) is possible."*

(b) Because having received reports that some Allied task forces had retired to the east, notably TG 30.3 (which group contained the damaged CANBERRA and HOUSTON) the Japanese tried to intercept these forces with their A Group submarines.**

(c) Because this southerly route would permit running surfaced during daylight hours (by avoiding the operating areas of the Allied carriers) and therefore would insure an earlier arrival on station. In this connection it will be remembered that the carriers were no longer primary targets--the targets now were damaged enemy ships and troop convoys.***

If these were the Japanese reasons for choosing the southerly course --and it seems correct to assume that they were--they are considered sound since, if the submarines were successful in getting somewhere on the lines of communication between the Allied bases in the western Pacific and Leyte Gulf, such as Ulithi or even Palau, then they would be in the intercepting position prescribed in the basic orders indicated in paragraph (a) above, and would be in position to attack Allied convoys as ordered by CinC Combined Fleet on the previous day.*** From these positions they could move rapidly to their prescribed SHO One positions* while still remaining on the routes likely to be travelled by these Allied convoys.

It seems reasonable to expect that sometime during the late afternoon or early evening the submarines now at sea either received Commander FIFTH Base Air Force's dispatch 191336, summarizing contacts made as of 1300 that day, or received a summation of this dispatch which emphasized the more important features thereof.

(3) Operations of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, October 19th.

Commander SIXTH Base Air Force remained at his headquarters at Takao and shortly after midnight learned that the night search by radar equipped

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* CinC Combined Fleet Operation Order No. 87, August 20th, 1944, ATIS Document No. 39, Part VIII, June 4th, 1945 (NACHI Document).

** USSBS Interrogation NAV No. 72, Interrogation of Japanese Officials, Interrogation of Vice Admiral Shigeyoshi Miwa, ex-IJN, Vol II, page 295.

*** CofS Combined Fleet Dispatch 181110 October 1944 to CsofS Major Commands, Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report FIRST Striking Force, SHO Operation, October 16th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 161641, NA 11839

flying boats had commenced from Garan Bi at midnight.* Soon thereafter at 0030, his Chief of Staff sent a dispatch to the Commanders of Western Attack Forces ONE and TWO implementing his DesOpOrd No. 80 of the evening before.** In this dispatch*** the two subordinate commanders were requested to move up that day the entire operational strength remaining in the Kyushu and Nansei Shoto areas (excluding "T" Force and FOURTH Surface Escort Unit) with aircraft being serviced to follow when ready. The two commanders were also requested to carry out routine searches insofar as possible by utilizing training units, "T" Force (presumably by local arrangement), and escort forces.

During the morning he awaited reports from his search planes which had apparently departed on schedule since the weather had improved markedly. He also awaited reports from other sources concerning the activities of the Allied forces in the Leyte area. By dawn he knew that the night searches from Garan Bi had been negative.****

At 0758 he advised his command that SHO One had been activated and gave them a summary of the existing situation.*****

Commencing about 0800 he knew that the airfields and shipping in the Manila area and the western Visayas (Cebu, Negros and Panay) were under attack by more than 160 Allied Planes.******

During the early forenoon he received a dispatch from Commander Western Attack Force ONE, wherein that commander directed all units in the Kyushu area to move their operational strength as rapidly as possible to the Philippines by way of Formosa.******* It is likely that he also received a dispatch

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* Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night searches, October 10th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402; also War Diary Kure Defense Squadron, October 20th, 1944, WDC Document 161511, NA 12076.

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182012 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 80), War Diary Western Attack Force TWO, October 18th, 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

*** CofS SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 190030 October 1944 to Commanders Western Attack Forces 1 and 2, Detailed Action Report No.2 Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 19th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

**** Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

***** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 190758 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 701st Air Group, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

****** Material for Situation Estimate FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

******* Commander 51st Air Flotilla Dispatch 190758 October 1944, to 51st Air Flotilla, War Diary 252nd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

from Commander Western Attack Force TWO to his command directing that on the following day aircraft at all bases would move up to the deployment bases designated in previous orders.*

During the forenoon he received, from time to time, contact reports from the Philippines which showed that Allied carriers were operating in strength off the Philippines, with nine carriers in the vicinity of Lamon Bay and eleven carriers -- including escort carriers -- in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf.** He also knew that about one hundred merchant-type ships had been reported approaching the Leyte area.***

At 1050 he issued his orders for the SHO One decisive battle. After advising his command that (a) the FIRST Striking Force was to move up to Brunei on October 20th and was to sortie from San Bernardino Strait on October 24th (X-day) and annihilate the enemy invasion forces; (b) the Main Force was to advance to the waters northeast of the Philippines on X-1 or X-2 day in support of the penetration operation of the FIRST Striking Force; (c) the SECOND Striking Force (CRUDIV 21, DESRON 1) and CRUDIV SIXTEEN would be assigned to counterattack operations along the Philippine coast, he issued instructions as follows: "This force will move up to the northern Philippines as outlined below and will first destroy the enemy carrier forces, thereafter annihilating the remaining enemy." He then directed that all units were to prepare immediately for decisive battle and were (a) to move up to the Philippines on October 21st or 22nd, and (b) to launch attack operations commencing on October 22nd or 23rd. In this connection, he advised that his headquarters would move up on October 21st or 22nd with an advance echelon on October 20th. Finally, mindful of the fact that the T-Force, after reorganization, might be returned to his command, he included advance instructions as follows: "If the T-Force is restored to the SIXTH Base Air Force, it is tentatively scheduled to be redeployed in the Formosa area."****

IT WILL BE OBSERVED THAT COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE BASED HIS DIRECTIVE ON THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET'S TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF FUTURE

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* Commander 25th Air Flotilla Dispatch (no date/time group available) October 19th, 1944, to 25th Air Flotilla, War Diary 25th Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160137, NA 12278.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336, October 1944, to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258; also Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

*** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm), NA 12592.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191050 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

OPERATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN ISSUED AT 1110 THE PREVIOUS DAY. SINCE, AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT PREVIOUSLY, IT HAD BEEN JAPANESE PRECTICE TO FOLLOW UP AN ACTIVATION ORDER WITH ANOTHER ORDER SETTING FORTH THE OVER-ALL PLAN, AND SINCE THE ACTIVATION ORDER OF 1732 - ALSO OF THE PREVIOUS DAY - WAS NOT FOLLOWED BY SUCH AN OVER-ALL PLAN, COMMANDER SIXTH BASE AIR FORCE ASSUMED THAT THE TENTATIVE PLAN WAS THE APPROVED PLAN. WHILE IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT HIS ACTION IN SO DOING CAUSED ANY CONFUSION WITHIN HIS COMMAND WHICH COULD NOT BE SPEEDILY RECTIFIED SINCE THE DATE OF THE PENETRATION OPERATION WAS OBVIOUSLY TO BE OCTOBER 24TH OR 25TH, DOES IT NOT SEEM CLEAR THAT SUDDEN CHANGES IN PRACTICE, EVEN IF WARRANTED, SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHENEVER POSSIBLE?

By about noon he knew that his search planes which were returning to base had reported all searches negative. From this and from the numerous contacts being received from Commander FIFTH Base Air Force he could estimate that Allied operations had definitely shifted from the Formosa area to the Philippines area.

About 1300 he ordered an air raid alert and directed fighters to intercept. A total of at least twenty-six fighters took off from Tainan and Shinchiku but made no contact,* although there was a reported sighting of a P-38.** This was a false report, there being no P-38's in the area. This alert probably stemmed from a report that B-29's had taken off from Chengtu at 1020.***

At 1338, having learned how many aircraft of the SIXTH Base Air Force were on Formosa as of 0800, he sent out a dispatch, presumably**** to Commander FIFTH Base Air Force but likely to CinC Combined Fleet and Commander SW Area Force as well (unfortunately, no addressees were listed in the dispatch available to this study), wherein he listed for each unit the aircraft

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* Combat Action Records of Air Units, Navy Merit Awards Section (221st Air Group, Shinchiku Detachment), October 1944.

** Combat Action Records of Air Units, Navy Merit Awards Section (252nd Air Group), Formosa and Philippines, October 14th - 25th, 1944.

*** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 191300 October 1944 to Southern Kyushu Air Base (Western Attack Force ONE SigDesOpOrd 7), (telephone); also Detailed Action Report No. 2 Northern Attack Force (SECOND Base Air Force), October 10 - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191338 October 1944 to addressees unknown, War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 103rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 13th - 31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

available, the aircraft operational, and the type and location of these aircraft, viz:

CARDIV THREE	
15/13 Carrier Type Fighters	Daikozan
9/9 Carrier Type Attack Planes	Daikozan
3/3 Carrier Type Reconnaissance Planes	Daikozan
CARDIV FOUR	
36/27 Zero Fighters	Taichu
7/4 Carrier Type Reconnaissance Planes	Taichu
3/3 Carrier Type Attack Planes	Taichu
THIRD Air Fleet	
47/30 Zero Fighters	Taichu
10/8 Carrier Type Attack Planes	Taichu
10/? Carrier Type Reconnaissance Planes	Taichu
FIFTY-FIRST Air Flotilla	
31/10 Zero Fighters	Taichu
41/10 Carrier Type Bombers	Taichu
SECOND Air Fleet	
86/44 Zero Fighters	Shinchiku
3/1 Reconnaissance Planes	Daikozan
2/1 Two-engine land Bombers	unknown
9/3 Land Reconnaissance Planes	Shinchiku
41/30 Intercepter Fighters	Daikozan
FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group	
15/9 Carrier type fighters; rest unknown	Taichu
China Area Fleet	
21/13 Carrier type fighters	Taichu
901st Air Group	
7/3 Type-97 flying boats	Taichu
Tainan Unit	
Reconnaissance seaplanes (number unknown)	Toko

TOTAL KNOWN AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT, 395; TOTAL KNOWN OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT, 223. ACTUALLY, THE SUMMARY WAS IN ERROR SINCE THE ABOVE FIGURES GAVE 398 AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT OF WHICH 221 WERE OPERATIONAL. THIS DISPATCH, WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST DISPATCH OF THIS NATURE WHICH HE HAD SENT, AT LEAST SINCE OCTOBER 10TH, WAS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE IN THAT IT GAVE AN APPROXIMATION OF THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT AND THE TYPES WHICH COULD BE TRANFERRED TO THE PHILIPPINES FROM FORMOSA. IT THEREFORE WAS IMPORTANT TO ALL COMMANDS FOR BOTH COMBAT AND LOGISTIC PLANNING, AS A FACTOR IN THE DETERMINATION OF RELATIVE FIGHTING STRENGTH AND, CONSEQUENTLY, IN THE SOLUTION OF THE MILITARY FROBLEM. IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT IN DETAILED TACTICAL ESTIMATES THE COMMANDER REQUIRES AN EXHAUSTIVE COMPREHENSION OF THE FIGHTING CAPABILITIES OF HIS OWN AND THE ENEMY'S ARMED FORCES BECAUSE HIS SELECTION OF PHYSICAL OBJECTIVES (TARGETS) AND HIS USE OF RELATIVE POSITION ARE AFFECTED BY SUCH CONSIDERATIONS.

At about 1355 he received a dispatch from Commander Western Attack Force ONE outlining the plan for the advance of air reinforcements from Kyushu to Philippines as follows:*

(a) Flying units.

Thirty-nine carrier-type fighters (thirteen carrier-type fighters of the 252nd Air Group and twenty-six carrier-type fighters of the 221st Air Group); five carrier-type attack planes (252nd Attack Unit); and twenty-nine carrier-type reconnaissance planes (3rd, 5th, 102nd, and 103rd Attack Units) - a total of seventy-three planes - were to take off on October 20th for Formosa, where they were to base as designated by Commander SIXTH Base Air Force.

(b) Ground personnel and material.

(1) SECOND Air Fleet units in accordance with previous plans.

(2) THIRD Air Fleet units and FIFTY-FIRST Air Flotilla units:

(a) Ten transport planes and fourteen land attack planes on October 20th.

(b) Thirty two-engine land bombers on October 21st.

(c) Two transport planes, one land attack plane and one two-engine land bomber (assigned to Headquarters) on October 22nd.

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* Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 191325 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

(c) Headquarters.

When arrangements for the above transfers had been generally completed, Headquarters, after transferring its duties to Commander 101st Air Flotilla, was to move up to Formosa - tentative date October 22nd.

It will be observed that there were forty-six combatant planes employed as transports for the movement of base personnel and material. There is no specific information as to the employment of these planes once the air lift had been completed, but it is likely that they were to be returned to their combat commands.

Sometime after this - probably about 1406 - Commander SIXTH Base Air Force received Commander FIFTH Base Air Force's dispatch 191336,* which gave, in part, a summary of the contact reports received as of 1300 by his command. He noted that this summary increased the carriers off Lamon Bay from nine to ten.

At about 1530 he ordered a second air raid alert and directed fighters to intercept. A total of at least eight fighters took off from Tainan but made no contacts. This was a false alert there being no Allied planes in the area.

During this day his forces continued to regroup and concentrate on Formosa. His interceptors had been on Number One Alert from about 0500 until about 0900, and his air strength capable of attack had been ready on fifteen minutes notice since 0600.

At about 1827 he received a dispatch from Commander Western Attack Force ONE indicating that the Kyushu search for the following day would cover the sector 150°(T) to 195°(T) to a distance of 650 miles departing Kanoya at 0700.**

At 1915 he informed his command that operations for the force on October 20th would be the same as on October 19th, except that the search in lane 31 (150°-155°(T) from Garan Bi was reduced from 400 miles to 300 miles and the patrols in another sector were cancelled.***

At 2000, since he was based in the Takao area, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force knew that the Commander Takao Guard District had directed the Luzon

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 216724 (Microfilm).

** Commander Western Attack Force ONE Dispatch 191757 October 1944 to Western Attack Force ONE, (Western Attack Force 1 SigDesOpOrd No. 9), Detailed Action Report No. 2 Northern Attack Force, SECOND Base Air Force, October 10th - November 15th, 1944, WDC Document 161645, NA 12262.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191915 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report OBUKU Detachment, (901st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160369, NA 12366.

Strait Force to provide antisubmarine patrol for the SECOND Striking Force.*

In the evening he telephoned his instructions to the 901st Air Group for night searches from Garan Bi. Two radar equipped flying boats were to take off at 2300 and search on lanes 110°(T) and 130°(T) to 450 miles, search a ninety mile cross leg to the left, and return to Garan Bi.**

At about 2127 he received word from Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group at Tainan that he would have twenty-one fighters operational on the following day,*** including the attached units of the CHINA Area Fleet.

At 2331 he directed Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group to dispatch about eight fighter planes to Mako to provide air protection to the SECOND Striking Force during the time that force remained at Mako.****

In accordance with this dispatch, Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group advised Commander 254th Air Group that Lieutenant Sugigura, in command of nine fighter planes, would, commencing at 0700, provide air protection for the SECOND Striking Force while it remained at Mako.*****

About this time, Commander SIXTH Base Air Force firmed up his SHO One Attack organization order and prepared to issue the essentials of it immediately by dispatch.

Since the information concerning the number of planes lost operationally, the number gained through reinforcement, and the number transferred from the SIXTH Base Air Force to the Main Force, is inadequate, it is considered that, for all practical purposes, the over-all operational aircraft of the SIXTH Base Air Force still numbered about 505 planes, and the available aircraft about 842 planes.

At midnight he learned that only one of the two flying boats--the

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* Commander Takao Guard District Dispatch 192000 October 1944 to Luzon Strait Force, info SECOND Striking Force, Main Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

** Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th-28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

*** Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group Dispatch 160369 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Formosa Detachment, (254th Air Group), October 13th-27th, 1944, WDC Document 161429, NA 12432.

**** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 192331 October 1944 to 14th Combined Air Group (SIXTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 82), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** Commander FOURTEENTH Combined Air Group SigOrd No. 182, October 19th, 1944, to Commander 254th Air Group, Detailed Action Report Formosa Detachment (254th Air Group) October 13th-27th, 1944, WDC Document 161429, NA 12432.

one covering search lane 110°(T) from Garan Bi - had departed on schedule,* the other, which was to have covered search lane 130°(T) from Garan Bi, had not departed because of engine trouble.*

(4) Operations of Commander SW Area Force, October 19th.

As on previous days, Commander SW Area Force remained at his Manila Headquarters and awaited developments. He knew, in view of the clear weather, that his search planes were flying and he hoped to locate soon any Allied forces within the search sectors of his search planes.

He did not have to wait very long, for shortly after 0800 -- and continuing through the early afternoon -- he commenced receiving contact reports from the planes which were operating from the Philippines. The contact reports showed, as has been pointed out previously, that there were at least ten carriers operating in the vicinity of Lamon Bay, and eleven carriers and escort carriers in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf.** Since this was a total of sixteen carriers and five escort carriers, he could readily see that Allied carrier strength had survived the attacks of the FIFTH and SIXTH Base Air Forces and the FOURTH Air Army far better than had been reported.

They also showed that there were three large convoys converging on Leyte Gulf. These convoys were composed of about 100 merchant-type ships which he evidently estimated as transports, since the Japanese intelligence reports so listed them. It was therefore clear to him that his estimate of the previous day*** that a landing in the Leyte-Samar area was to be expected was correct. He had every reason to be concerned, since his own forces, even when assisted by the FOURTH Air Army and by the FOURTEENTH Area Army, were obviously inadequate to repel a landing. It will be remembered that the naval forces he had available for this purpose consisted only of light surface craft supported by possibly a few midget submarines based at Cebu and some suicide boats based at Corregidor,**** and that the air force consisted of about 102 operational planes in the FIFTH Base Air Force and in the FOURTH Air Army. As has been discussed under "Operations of CinC Combined Fleet, October 19th", he could estimate that, should the Allied carriers concentrate in the Leyte Area, he would be opposed by some 1182 planes. He could clearly see that, until the arrival in the Philippines of the SIXTH Base Air Force planes on October 21st or 22nd, his land-based air forces would be very weak

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* Detailed Action Report 901st Air Group, Night Searches, October 10th - 28th, 1944, WDC Document 160551, NA 12402.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258; NA 12592; also Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

*** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181210 October 1944, to Commanders Major Commands, War Diary 61st Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 161643, NA 12260.

**** Supra, Chapter II Operations of Commander SW Area Force.

indeed, and that, until the penetration operation became effective on October 24th or 25th, he would have to rely for surface operations on his limited light forces alone.

Also commencing at about 0800, he knew that the airfields and shipping in the Manila area and the western Visayas were under air attack by numerous planes. This was a serious situation, since there was considerable Japanese shipping in Manila Harbor at this time.

At about 0945 he directed that, upon arrival in Manila of the "S" Unit (consisting of twenty-four fighters) it was to be released to Commander FIFTH Base Air Force who was to station it in the Manila area, where it would be employed mainly in escorting shipping and in interception of enemy aircraft.* This was obviously in implementation of his DesOpOrd 655 of October 16th, 1944,** and shows that this element of the 331st Air Group was about to arrive on station. Since Manila had been heavily attacked for the past several days, and since its air defenses were notably weak (the Allies reported that on October 19th, except for an initial early morning interception by sixteen fighters no enemy air opposition was encountered over the Manila area during the remainder of the day), the arrival of this air unit was an important addition to his forces in the northern Philippines.

During the forenoon he received a dispatch from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet to Commander Advance Expeditionary Force, directing that commander to depart the Inland Sea when ready, to proceed to the waters east of the central and southern Philippines, and to attack the Allied fleet and convoys there.***

Sometime during the early afternoon, the high command in the Philippines learned through radio interception that at 1140 the Allies had ordered landing operations commenced near Dulag.**** It seems probable that it was Commander SW Area Force who notified the Naval General Staff of this supposed fact.

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* 31st Communication Unit Dispatch 190945 October 1944, to Commander FIFTH Base Air Force (SW Area Force DesOpOrd 666), Detailed Action Report No. 3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378.

** 31st Communication Unit Dispatch 161314 October 1944, to Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, CinC Combined Fleet (SW Area Force DesOpOrd 655), Detailed Action Report No. 3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group) October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378.

*** Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 361, October 19th, 1944, Written Statement of Captain Toshikazu Ohmae, ex-IJN, Senior Staff Officer Mobile Force, received April 13th, 1944, by Mr. Clarke H. Kawakami, World War II Battle Evaluation Group, Naval War College.

**** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

At about 1250 - probably earlier - he received word of another attack on Car Nicobar Island by planes and ships. In this case the gunfire bombardment occurred between 1120 and 1220. This was the third successive day of attacks on this area by Allied surface and air forces. The strength of the Allied forces (two carriers, two battleships, four cruisers and three destroyers) in this attack was somewhat stronger than that which had attacked on the previous day and more nearly approximated that which had attacked on October 17th. However, the results were more favorable this time, since the Car Nicobar command claimed having destroyed one carrier and one destroyer.* Commander SW Area Force wisely continued to leave the naval responsibility for the defense of the area to his naval commander there.

Also at about 1250 he received a dispatch from CinC Combined Fleet to Commander Main Force, stating that under certain circumstances the SECOND Striking Force might be returned to the Main Force.** He realized that this dispatch likely resulted from his dispatch of the previous day wherein he had stated, in part, that the Southern Army had not yet completed plans for moving troops.***

HE NOW REALIZED THAT CINC COMBINED FLEET'S DECISION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT TO RETURN THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE TO THE MAIN FORCE DEPENDED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE DESIRE AND ABILITY OF CINC SOUTHERN ARMY TO MOVE TROOPS TO THE LEYTE AREA. HE THEREFORE MAINTAINED CLOSE RELATIONS WITH CINC SOUTHERN ARMY IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN THAT COMMANDER'S WISHES. CINC SOUTHERN ARMY MADE AN ESTIMATE OF THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE AFTERNOON AND DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO REINFORCE THE GROUND TROOPS ON LEYTE BY TRANSFERRING TO LEYTE CERTAIN GROUND TROOPS NOW IN THE WESTERN VISAYAS. AT THIS TIME HE FELT THAT HE COULD MOVE ABOUT THREE BATTALIONS. THIS WAS A SOUND DECISION, FOR, AS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT UNDER "OPERATIONS OF CINC COMBINED FLEET, OCTOBER 18TH", IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN CLEAR THAT ONCE THE ALLIES HAD ESTABLISHED AIRFIELDS IN LEYTE, PERMAMENT COMMAND OF THE AIR OVER LUZON WOULD FOLLOW. SINCE LAND-BASED JAPANESE AIR POWER HAD ALREADY PROVEN INEFFECTIVE, ADDITIONAL GROUND TROOPS WERE NOW NECESSARY TO HELP THE NAVAL FORCES PREVENT A SUCCESSFUL LANDING. CINC SOUTHERN ARMY ADVISED COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE OF THIS DECISION, AS A CONSEQUENCE OF WHICH THE CHIEF OF STAFF SW AREA FORCE ADVISED COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE AND COMCRUDIV SIXTEEN AS FOLLOWS:

"1. Southern Army plans to move about three battalions of reinforcements from the Visayas area(central Philippines), to Leyte Island.

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* Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October 1944 to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 181640 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744

"2. Orders with respect to the above will be issued after the SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV SIXTEEN have generally completed plans for advancing to the Philippines."*

Paragraph 2 of this message referred to the preparations of these ships for the counterlanding operations soon to be undertaken. This included the loading of landing craft and other equipment necessary for amphibious operations.

Sometime during the afternoon Commander SW Area Force received an intelligence report which reported (1) that three cruisers and eighty transports of various sizes had been sighted in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia, and (2) that at 1300 about seventy combat ships, including six carriers, fourteen battleships, twenty cruisers, thirty destroyers, plus thirty transports of various sizes and two hospital ships, had been sighted in Seeadler Harbor, Manus, Admiralty Islands.**

These reports were of little immediate concern to him, since it would be some time before they could arrive in his area even if they got underway immediately. His major concern at present was with the enemy forces now in his area, which forces were far stronger than his own.

At 1905, realizing the difficulties facing his command, he advised that command by dispatch that SHO One had been activated and exhorted the entire SW Area Force to do its utmost to gain victory and thereby to turn the tide of the Greater East Asia War.***

Meanwhile he continued to carry out conversations with the Southern Army concerning the movement of troops to Leyte. Evidently CinC Southern Army was having difficulty in determining how many troops were available in the western Visayas for this purpose. Finally, however, he was advised by CinC Southern Army that the number to be transferred, while not definite as yet, would probably be two battalions rather than three. As a consequence, at 2230, mindful of the necessity for keeping CinC Combined Fleet informed of the Army plans in order that that commander might make any changes required by the changing situation, and prompted by the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet's dispatch 191220 concerning the returning of the SECOND Striking Force to the Main Force, he, through his Chief of Staff, advised CinC Combined Fleet as follows:****

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* CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 191651 October 1944 to Commander SECOND Striking Force and CRUDIV SIXTEEN, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744

** Appended Chart One to Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO Operations, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 191905 October 1944, to all Fleet and Squadron Commanders SW Area Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

**** CofS SW Area Force Dispatch 192230 October 1944 to CinC Combined Fleet, Detailed Action Report CRUDIV 16, SHO Operations, October 17th - 27th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

"Southern Army's plan for moving reinforcements is not yet firmly fixed, but at present it is contemplated that the first echelon will number two battalions, or two thousand several hundred men. To transport the above, it is considered that CRUDIV SIXTEEN and about two transports will be sufficient. Accordingly, this headquarters sees no objection to employing CRUDIV TWENTY-ONE and DESRON ONE in support of the FIRST Striking Force or the Main Force. However, we consider it is desirable that two destroyers from DESRON ONE be attached to CRUDIV SIXTEEN as direct screen. (It will be necessary for these destroyers to reach the central Philippines by afternoon, October 23rd.)

"Further, the Army is still studying whether to carry out a counterlanding or to land reinforcements on the Leyte west coast. However, it is the opinion of this headquarters that troops should be landed on the west coast in conjunction with and only slightly behind the penetration of the FIRST Striking Force."

THE STATEMENT OF COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE THAT HE SAW NO OBJECTION TO EMPLOYING THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE IN SUPPORT OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE OR THE MAIN FORCE IS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE IN THAT IT PRESENTS THREE IDEAS WHICH MAY HAVE MOTIVATED THAT COMMANDER. THE FIRST OF THESE IDEAS IS CONTAINED IN THE WORDS "HE SEES NO OBJECTION"; THE SECOND IN THE WORDS "IN SUPPORT OF"; THE THIRD IN THE WORDS "THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE."

(A) THE WORDS "HE SEES NO OBJECTION" ARE CLEARLY NOT A RECOMMENDATION IN THE FULL SENSE. INSTEAD, THEY ARE A MEANS OF ADVISING CINC COMBINED FLEET THAT WHILE HE (COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE) FAVORED THE PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, HE COULD NOT MAKE A SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION SINCE HE DID NOT KNOW CINC COMBINED FLEET'S PLAN FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE; THAT IS, HE DID NOT KNOW (A) WHAT CINC COMBINED FLEET MEANT WHEN HE STATED IN HIS DISPATCH TO COMMANDER MAIN FORCE THAT "UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES..." THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE MIGHT BE RETURNED TO THE MAIN FORCE,* NOR (B) THE EXTENT OF COUNTERLANDING OPERATIONS CONTEMPLATED BY IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS. HE DID KNOW, OF COURSE, THE PRESENT CONTEMPLATED PLANS OF CINC SOUTHERN ARMY.

(B) THE WORDS "IN SUPPORT OF" INDICATE THAT, IN COMMANDER SW AREA'S MIND, (1) THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE NEED NOT BE RETURNED TO THE MAIN FORCE, BUT INSTEAD MIGHT WELL BE EMPLOYED, POSSIBLY WHILE STILL UNDER SW AREA COMMAND, AS A SEPARATE FORCE WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF ASSISTING THE PRINCIPAL FORCES. THIS WAS LIKEWISE THE CONCEPT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET, WHO STATED LATER THAT "SUBSEQUENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE FOURTEENTH AREA ARMY MIGHT MAKE IT MORE ADVANTAGEOUS TO LEAVE THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE UNDER THE SW AREA FORCE IN VIEW OF THE COUNTERLANDING OPERATIONS WHICH WERE EXPECTED TO

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* CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October 1944, to Commander Main Force, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

HE CARRIED OUT.";* (2) SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST MENTION OF THIS SUPPORT CONCEPT BY ANY COMMAND, IT IS OF IMPORTANCE AS IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE GENESIS OF LATER DECISIONS BY CINC COMBINED FLEET WITH REGARD TO THE EMPLOYMENT NOT ONLY OF THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE BUT ALSO OF OTHER DETACHED FORCES AS WELL.

THIS SOLUTION SEEMED LOGICAL TO THE JAPANESE BECAUSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH DOCTRINE BASED ON THE CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS OF THE JAPANESE NAVY THE SENIOR COMMANDER IN A TACTICAL SITUATION WOULD WHENEVER NECESSARY ASSUME OVERALL COMMAND OF ALL UNITS OPERATING LOCALLY, AND THEY FELT THAT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE, FOR EXAMPLE, IF WITHIN TACTICAL RANGE OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, AND REQUIRED, WOULD BE AUTOMATICALLY ABSORBED IN THAT COMMAND, SINCE COMMANDER FIRST STRIKING FORCE** WAS SENIOR TO COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE.*** THE SAME COMMENT APPLIED TO THE MAIN FORCE WHERE ITS COMMANDER**** WAS ALSO SENIOR TO COMMANDER SECOND STRIKING FORCE.

(C) THE WORDS "THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE" APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INCLUDED BY COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALERTING CINC COMBINED FLEET TO THE FACT THAT HE (COMMANDER SW AREA FORCE) WAS NOT ENTIRELY CONVINCED THAT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE SHOULD BE RETURNED TO COMMANDER MAIN FORCE, AS CONTEMPLATED BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET, BUT INSTEAD MIGHT BETTER BE EMPLOYED IN SUPPORT OF EITHER THE MAIN FORCE OR THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE, AND PREFERABLY THE LATTER.

IF THE ABOVE ANALYSIS IS CORRECT--AND OTHER INFORMATION INDICATES THAT IT IS--COMMANDER SW AREA'S VIEWS APPEAR TO BE SOUND WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE SUGGESTION THAT THE SECOND STRIKING FORCE BE EMPLOYED "IN SUPPORT OF", SINCE THIS PRESENTS THE CONCEPT OF THIS SMALL FORCE OPERATING APART FROM EITHER OF THE PRINCIPAL FORCES RATHER THAN AS PART OF THE ONE OR THE OTHER OF THESE PRINCIPAL FORCES. IT HAD LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE JAPANESE--AND WAS SO RECOMMENDED AS LATE AS SEPTEMBER 10TH BY COMMANDER MOBILE FORCE--THAT IN ORDER TO ASSURE SUCCESS OF THE PENETRATION OPERATION, IT WAS NECESSARY TO AUGMENT THE SURFACE COMBAT STRENGTH OF THE FIRST STRIKING FORCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. COMMANDER SW AREA'S SUGGESTION, THEREFORE, WAS NOT ONLY IN OPPOSITION TO THIS RECOMMENDATION, BUT WAS ALSO IN OPPOSITION TO THE PRINCIPLE OF CONCENTRATION, WHICH THE JAPANESE SO FAR IN THE LEYTE OPERATION HAD CONTINUED TO IGNORE, ESPECIALLY IN THE AIR OPERATIONS BY THE FIFTH AND SIXTH BASE AIR FORCES, AS WAS DISCUSSED IN VOLUME I OF THIS ANALYSIS.

There is no explanation available as to why the Chief of Staff SW Area Force believed that the troops should land on the west coast in conjunction with and only slightly behind the penetration of the FIRST Striking

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* Statements of Japanese Officials in World War II, Volume IV, Military History Section, FEC, page 20, Statement of Rear Admiral Toshitane Takata, ex-IJN, October 10th, 1944.

** Vice Admiral Takao Kurita, IJN.

*** Vice Admiral Kiyohide Shima, IJN.

**** Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, IJN.

Force. Perhaps knowing as he did that Allied air power would offer the only serious opposition to his landings, he hoped that the air forces would be occupied at this time with the operations of the FIRST Striking Force on the east coast of Leyte, and therefore he might be able to make daylight landings on the west coast with acceptable losses.

Also, there is no explanation as to how CinC Southern Army proposed to effect counterlandings on the east coast of Leyte. Perhaps, because of the limited ground troops available, he was contemplating a form of Tokyo Express, which, if successful, would, because of the relatively rapid movement by sea when compared with the movement by land in the rugged terrain of Leyte--particularly during the rainy season--expedite the delivery of these reinforcements to the battle area. However, the possibility of success of such an operation, in view of the strength of the Allied naval force already in the Leyte Gulf area, which strength was increasing daily, must have seemed poor.

At 2246 Commander SW Area Force, presumably feeling that, since the defense forces in the Car Nicobar operation had recently enjoyed some success (it reported sinking one carrier and one destroyer on this day), it might be wise to attempt some stronger counteraction than was within the province of the local naval commander. He therefore issued a "U" operation alert for the Car Nicobar Islands.* This "U" operation appears to have prescribed the tasks to be undertaken by the subarea forces, both surface forces and land-based air forces. However, the order distinctly exempted the THIRD Base Air Force, which operated in the Borneo area, and directed that force to continue its present missions.*

(a) Operations of Commander SECOND Striking Force, October 19th.

Commander SECOND Striking Force, with the SECOND Striking Force less the HATSUHARU which was proceeding independently to Mako and less CRUDIV SIXTEEN which was proceeding in company with the FIRST Striking Force to Brunei, continued on course 200°(T) at a speed of advance of sixteen knots toward Mako.

At 0600 he changed course to the westward to head toward northern Formosa.**

At 0730 he advised his command that SHO One had been activated as of 1730 the previous day. This appears to have been a precautionary signal to insure that all ships in the force knew of the activation.***

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* Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 192246 October 1944, to SW Area Force (SW Area Force DesOpOrd No. 669), War Diary 23rd Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160264, NA 12546.

** Track Chart Appended to War Diary ABUKUMA October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 190730 October 1944, to SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESDIV 7 (USTIO) October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

Since he had been ordered to the SW Area Command in order to assist in counterlanding operations, he was naturally very interested in the character of the Allied operations, the location of the various Allied forces, and the nature of the Japanese counterlanding operations and therefore made every effort to obtain contact and other reports by careful attention to radio interception. It is therefore likely that he received at least some of the contact reports being broadcast by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force. In this case, he would have learned that Allied carrier task forces were present in the Philippine area in great strength and that from the contacts on transport shipping an invasion in strength would soon eventuate.

At noon, in position Latitude 25°-19'N, Longitude 123°-13'E, he again altered course, this time to somewhat north of west, in order to pass well clear of the northernmost tip of Formosa.*

At about 1250 he likely received CinC Combined Fleet's dispatch 191220 to Commander Mobile Force, wherein the CinC advised that commander that "under certain circumstances" he might return the SECOND Striking Force to the Main Force.** Since this dispatch did not state whether or not the SECOND Striking Force to be so ordered was, in this case, the original SECOND Striking Force or was that force augmented by CRUDIV SIXTEEN, it can be supposed that this lack of information gave him cause for concern. He could see, by simple plotting on his charts, that if he had to wait until he had rendezvoused with CRUDIV SIXTEEN before he could return to the Main Force, he would be long delayed, and that if he did not wait for CRUDIV SIXTEEN, but reported immediately, he would still be unable to rejoin the Main Force before it had sortied from Bungo Suido. Therefore, it was clear that he would either rejoin at sea or would operate separately, with the latter course the more likely because of radio silence. He awaited the clarifying dispatches which would normally be forthcoming.

He was also concerned about the meaning of the words "under certain circumstances", since there was no explanation of their meaning.

At 1328 the ABUKUMA sighted an airplane,*** apparently a Japanese seaplane, which had evidently been sent from one of the seaplane bases nearby to escort the SECOND Striking Force. This view is supported by the fact that in the action reports available to this study there are no references to communications between the plane and the ships. This was because, at this time, the Japanese communications had not been developed to the stage where,

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* Track Chart Appended to War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

** CinC Combined Fleet Dispatch 191220 October 1944 to Commander Mobile Force, other addressees unknown, Detailed Action Report Main Force, SHO One Operation, October 20th - 29th, 1944, WDC Document 161005, NA 11744.

*** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 19th, 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

for instance, surface units could intercept or receive messages from land-based aircraft.*

At about 1406 Commander SECOND Striking Force likely received Commander FIFTH Base Air Force's dispatch 191336 which gave, in part, a summary of the contact reports received as of 1300 by that command.**

At 1510 the ABUKUMA detected radio transmissions from an Allied submarine.*** This may have been the submarine TRIGGER, which, at 1328, while operating at periscope depth had sighted the SECOND Striking Force at a range of 18,000 yards, bearing 080°(T), and, taking advantage of her excellent relative position had commenced making an approach for attack. Fortunately for the Japanese, the TRIGGER was unable to deliver the attack because she was forced to dive below periscope depth upon being sighted and attacked at 1344 by the plane reported above. However, the TRIGGER surfaced at 1522 and commenced transmitting the contact report.****

Commander SECOND Striking Force does not appear to have been too concerned over this contact. Apparently, he was anxious to get to his destination, Mako, and did not wish to reduce his screen by detailing any of his escorting destroyers to stay with the contact. It is also possible that the additional fuel which would have been required for these destroyers to rejoin the screen, once the search had been completed, was a deciding factor.

At 1532 and again at 1616 the ABUKUMA reported sighting what appeared to be enemy submarines.*** Although one of these contacts may have been on the TANG this seems scarcely likely since the submarine TANG appears to have been no nearer than thirty miles. There were no other Allied or Japanese submarines nearby.

At 1710 Commander SECOND Striking Force issued his fueling plan for fueling from the oiler RYOEI MARU at Mako on the following morning.*****

This oiler was due to arrive at Mako after the SECOND Striking Force had arrived there. Except for the fueling of the ABUKUMA which was

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* USSBS Interrogation Navy No. 75, Interrogations of Japanese Officials Interrogation of Admiral Soemu Toyoda, ex-IJN, Volume II, Page 316.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to 103rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), Material for Situation Estimates FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm)

*** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

**** War Patrol Report TRIGGER, Report of TENTH War Patrol, Serial 033, November 3rd, 1944.

***** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 191710 October 1944 to SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESDIV 7, (USHIC), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801).

scheduled to occur immediately after the arrival of the oiler, all fueling was to be accomplished commencing "from about sundown." This was evidently to reduce possible damage from Allied air attack since the fueling plan called for the heavy cruisers and destroyers to be alongside the oiler at the same time, with one heavy cruiser and four destroyers on each side of the oiler.* The arrangement appears to have been designed primarily to expedite communications since the above plan indicated that only one ship at a time could fuel from the oiler.

At 1800 having rounded the northwest tip of Formosa, Commander SECOND Striking Force changed course to about 225°(T) and entered the Straits of Formosa.**

At 1945 he designated the daytime conditions of readiness to be followed while at Mako.*** These were relatively low (i.e. twelve knots in fifteen minutes) which indicates that he anticipated no serious Allied operations against his command.

At 2155 the ABUKUMA reported having sighted what appeared to be a submarine.**** This contact may have been the submarine TANG which could have been in the area at about this time.***** Since the TANG was later lost with all of her records, the reality of this contact cannot be confirmed.

At 2316 Commander SECOND Striking Force received the "U" alert issued by Commander SW Area Force.******

At 2400 the SECOND Striking Force was bearing 022°(T) distant ninety miles from Mako. The HATSUHARU's position is not known. However, the submarine TRIGGER contacted at 1005 a single destroyer of the same class as the HATSUHARU headed in the direction of northern Formosa which, assuming a speed of advance of fourteen knots and a direct route, could well have been that ship. In this case she was at 1005 some sixty-five miles ahead of the

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* Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 191710 October 1944 to SECOND Striking Force, War Diary DESDIV 7, (USHIO), October 1944, WDC Document 161717, NA 11801.

** Track Chart Appended to War Diary ABUKUMA October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11973.

*** Commander SECOND Striking Force Dispatch 191945 October 1944 to SECOND Striking Force (SECOND Striking Force SigOrd No. 133), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

**** War Diary ABUKUMA, October 1944, WDC Document 161636, NA 11937.

***** War Patrol Report TANG, Report of FIFTH War Patrol, No Serial, September 19th, 1945 (Written from memory by Commanding Officer).

****** Commander SW Area Dispatch 192246 October 1944 to SW Area Force (SW Area Force DesOpOrd No. 669), War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

SECOND Striking Force. Her estimated 2400 position was bearing 042°(T) distant sixty miles from Mako.

(b) Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, October 19th.

Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, at his headquarters in Manila, awaited the reports of his morning searches. The weather had improved markedly and he knew that all of his search planes had departed on their scheduled searches. What these searches were is not known exactly, since there is no data available to this study which gives the character of the searches for this day. It will be remembered that the search operations prior to the activation of SHO One had been governed by the joint agreement between Commander FIFTH Base Air Force and C.G. FOURTH Air Army.* But now that SHO One had been activated, this agreement had automatically terminated. However, it is not believed that the search plans for October 19th could have differed greatly from the previous plans and therefore it is assumed, that the search coverage was as great on this day as during the preceding days.

Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, mindful of the fact that, excepting for the Allied surface shipping at the entrance to and inside Leyte Gulf, no additional Allied forces had been discovered on the previous day in the Leyte area, was undoubtedly anxious that today's searches be effective. He knew, of course, that at 1030 on the previous day an Allied carrier task force had been discovered some 200 miles east of Manila, presumably by Army search planes, and he knew that the Manila area, as well as Laoag, Aparri, Clark Field, Tacloban, and Cebu had been heavily hit by carrier planes.** He realized that, if an Allied landing was in prospect (at 2142 on the previous day he had advised his command that such an enemy landing near Tacloban was in prospect),*** the enemy would necessarily have much greater forces in the Leyte area than had as yet been discovered. Certainly as a result of previous experience with Allied landing operations, he could expect many more carriers and much more powerful invasion forces. He was determined to discover these because the success of the penetration operation was dependent in a large way upon early discovery of enemy invasion forces, and because, owing to the typhoon, he had thus far failed badly in his efforts to locate the enemy forces approaching the Leyte area. Indeed, the Allied forces now operating in that area had not been discovered until they had arrived off Suluan Island early morning October 17th.

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* Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division Microfilm HS-7 (Agreement probably made late summer 1944).

** Material for Situation Estimates, FIRST Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

*** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182142 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force (FIFTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 49), Detailed Action Report No. 3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378

Shortly after 0800 he knew that Allied carrier forces were still in the area for at that time carrier planes commenced striking airfields in the Manila area and in the western Visayas.* Also at this time he began to receive contact reports on Allied forces approaching the Leyte area, as well as on Allied carrier task forces operating off Luzon.

These reports were made as follows:

(a) At 0800, three regular carriers, four escort carriers, twelve cruisers and destroyers and about forty small craft in Leyte Gulf.**

The contact concerning the ships inside Leyte Gulf, was considerably inaccurate in that (a) there were no carriers whatsoever inside Leyte Gulf and no regular carriers even in the vicinity, and (b) there were inside the gulf six battleships, six cruisers, sixteen destroyers, and forty-one minesweepers.

(b) At 0812, four carriers bearing 090°(T), distan. 155 miles from Bataan Peninsula.*** As has been noted earlier under the discussion of contact reports received by CinC Combined Fleet, this was later corrected to a report at 0812 of five carriers in Latitude 15°-20'N, Longitude 123°-40'E.**

These contacts, which are clearly on the same task group (TG 38.4) differ by some twenty-five miles. The original contact which was received first was correct in position and composition. Therefore, the corrected report which appears to have been received some hours later was in error not only in position by some twenty-five miles bearing 040°(T) from the correct position of TG 38.4 but also in composition in that there were four rather than five carriers in the task group.

It is possible that the Japanese plane which made this contact report was shot down, since the ENTERPRISE reported having destroyed by air action sometime between 0730 and 1125 one land attack plane bearing 285° (T), distant thirty-five miles from TG 38.4.

(c) At 0830 thirty merchant-type ships, escorted by four cruisers or destroyers, on a northwesterly course in Latitude 10° - 15'N, Longitude 127° - 55'E, (bearing 110°(T), (stant 180 miles from Tacloban).**

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff October 1944, WDC Document 210764, (Microfilm).

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944, to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

*** Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953), Volume II.

The contact concerning the ships on a northwesterly course appears to have been made on a portion of TF 78 which was being escorted by four cruisers of TG 77.3. There is a possibility that the contact may have been made on the Landing Craft Movement Group of TF 79 which was five miles nearer the reported position but since there were no large merchant ships in this group and no cruisers it seems correct to say that the contact was on TF 78 because that force in addition to many small ships such as destroyers, LSD's, LST's, LCI s and LSM's consisted of twenty-two large ships escorted by two heavy cruisers and two light cruisers. Thus the contact report appears to have been the result of a quick estimate. Actually, in either case the reported position of the contact was considerably in error as TF 78 was about forty miles due south of the reported position, and the Landing Craft Movement Group was about thirty-five miles bearing 255°(T) from the reported position.

(d) At 0845, three carriers and eight other ships in Latitude 10° - 05'N, Longitude 126° - 25'E, (bearing 130°(T), distant 120 miles from Tacloban).*

This contact was made on TU 77.4.1 (Panaon Carrier Group), which was operating in the area indicated. It was in error, as regards position, as TU 77.4.1 was at this time about forty miles to the north of the reported position. There were four instead of three escort carriers, the other eight ships being the seven destroyers and destroyers escorts which now comprised the screen since EVERSOLE had retired to Kossol Passage.

(e) At 0850, one escort carrier, three battleships, seven cruisers, and three or four destroyers in Latitude 11° - 05'N, Longitude 127° - 05'E (bearing 094°(T) distant 130 miles from Tacloban).*

This contact, while reasonably correct for position, was very inaccurate as to composition. Actually, this was TU 77.4.2, composed solely of four escort carriers and eight destroyers and destroyer escorts.

(f) At 0912, thirty merchant vessels in Latitude 11° - 15'N, Longitude 126° - 15'E (off the southeastern coast of Samar) on a northerly course.*

This contact—an Army lookout post report—while reasonably correct as regards position, was likewise completely inaccurate as to composition. This formation included no merchant vessels whatsoever; it was TU 77.4.3, composed of four escort carriers and seven destroyers and destroyer escorts.

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

(g) At 0930, three carriers and five battleships on a northeasterly course in Latitude 17° - 15'N, Longitude 126° - 35'E (280 miles northeast of Lamon Bay).*

This contact, which was on TG 38.3, was correct for position and was correct in composition as regards the large ships, except that there were four carriers and four battleships rather than three carriers and five battleships. Apparently this pilot reported only the larger ships in the formation, ignoring the cruisers and destroyers.

(h) At 1010, two carriers and two cruisers in Latitude 17° - 45'N, Longitude 127° - 35'E (about seventy miles bearing 070°(T) from the group sighted at 0930).*

This was the retiring TG 30.3. The contact report was in error as regards position as the task group was about forty miles to the southeast of the reported position. It was correct as regards the number of carriers but incorrect as regards the number of cruisers, since, in addition to the damaged CANBERRA and HOUSTON, there were two others. There were also nine destroyers and two tugs. The plane, which apparently made this contact, was sighted at 1015 by the COWPENS within twelve miles of the task group. It retired at high speed and escaped.**

(i) At 1220, a large group of merchant ships in Latitude 08° - 25'N, Longitude 128° - 25'E (bearing 130°(T) distant 580 miles from Manila).

This contact appears to have been made on the transport group of TF 79. This opinion is based on the fact that, although the contact was some sixty miles south of TF 79's actual position, the longitude and the size of the convoy were correct. Also, there were no Allied ships in the latitude referred to.

IT WILL BE NOTED THAT THE JAPANESE PLANES HAD, IN GENERAL SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING A REASONABLY ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE APPROACH OF THE ALLIED FORCES TO LEYTE. WHILE NOT ALL ALLIED FORCES WERE LOCATED AND WHILE SOME OF THE CONTACTS WERE OFF IN POSITION BY AS MUCH AS FORTY MILES (PERHAPS DUE TO MISHANDLING OF THE GRID SYSTEM; PERHAPS TO POOR AERIAL NAVIGATION) ENOUGH GENERAL INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED TO PROVIDE THE JAPANESE COMMANDERS WITH SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT A LANDING IN STRENGTH WAS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE IN THE LEYTE AREA. IT IS OF INTEREST THAT THE TWO ALLIED AMPHIBIOUS COMMANDERS (CTF 78 AND CTF 79) DID NOT KNOW THAT THEY HAD BEEN REPORTED. THEY THOUGHT THEMSELVES THUS FAR UNDETECTED,*** ALTHOUGH CTF 79, BECAUSE OF

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit, October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** War Diary COWPENS, October 19th, 1944.

*** Action Report, CTF 78, Leyte Operation, October 17th - 25th, 1944, Serial 00911, November 10th, 1944.

A CONTACT REPORT ON THREE LARGE ENEMY SHIPS PASSING THROUGH MAKASSAR STRAIT, MADE PREPARATIONS FOR POSSIBLE SURFACE ACTION.*

About this time Commander FIFTH Base Air Force knew that his search plane searching the sector 095° - 105°(T) from Manila was missing.**

Sometime about 1120, but probably later, Commander FIFTH Base Air Force received Commander SIXTH Base Air Force's dispatch orders for the SHO One operation.*** From this dispatch he could see that the SIXTH Base Air Force would move to the Philippines on October 21st or 22nd and would commence attack operations on October 22nd or 23rd. This data gave him as a minimum, two days in which to complete the preparation of the bases to be occupied by the planes of the SIXTH Base Air Force.

At 1330 one carrier-type bomber with four fighters with bombs departed Mabalacat to attack surface ships in Leyte Gulf and claimed having scored direct hits on two battleships.****

Since the Allied battleships did not report any attacks, and since the LOUISVILLE, certain minesweepers and the ARIADNE did report attacks by five carrier-type planes occurring between 1700 and 1714, it seems likely that these latter attacks were made by the Mabalacat group.***** These attacks were unsuccessful.

This was the only air strike launched by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force on this day. This appears to have been due to the intermittent heavy air strikes by Allied aircraft on his airfields in the Philippines notably against the Clark Field area, the Manila area, and the Visayas. At this time the main air strength of the FIFTH Base Air Force and the FOURTH Air Army was in central Luzon.

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* Action Report CTF 79 Seizure of Leyte, Serial 00323, November 13th, 1944.

** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336, October 1944, to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

*** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191050, October 1944, to SIXTH Base Air Force, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (701st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau Japanese Government, October 1944, Department of Army Historical Division File 8-5, JS-104.

***** Action Report CTG 77.2, Bombardment and Capture of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands, October 16th - 24th, 1944, Serial 00147, November 5th, 1944; also War Diaries HOVEY, HAMILTON, LONG, PALMER, ARIADNE and SOUTHARD, October 19th, 1944.

Commander FIFTH Base Air Force now prepared a summary report of the above contacts and included therein a statement that up to 1330 there had been three attacks by a total of twenty-five enemy aircraft, of which thirteen had struck Clark Field accomplishing little damage. At 1336 he disseminated this report to the FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees.*

THIS ACTION WAS SOUND AND REPRESENTS A PRACTICE WHICH WAS IN EFFECT AT THE TIME IN THE U.S. NAVY** AND IS IN EFFECT AT PRESENT.*** WHILE IT IS NOT WISE TO BURDEN COMMUNICATIONS WITH REPORTS OF THE ENEMY THAT CONTAIN NO NEW INFORMATION, IT IS NECESSARY TO DISSEMINATE PERTINENT NEW INFORMATION--AND IN PARTICULAR, CONTACT REPORTS --PROMPTLY TO ALL COMMANDERS CONCERNED. IN THIS CASE, COMMANDER FIFTH BASE AIR FORCE REALIZED THAT IT WAS MOST LIKELY THAT MANY OF THESE CONTACTS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, AND SINCE HE KNEW THAT THE SITUATION WAS VERY FLUID, HE FELT THAT THIS INFORMATION WAS ESSENTIAL IN ASSISTING THE RESPONSIBLE COMMANDERS TO FORMULATE THEIR ESTIMATES OF THE SITUATION.

At about 1406 he received a dispatch from Commander 61st Air Flotilla at Davao to his base commanders wherein that commander (a) gave a summary of the results obtained by Japanese land-based aircraft between October 11th and October 16th and claimed in this summary that Japanese land-based aircraft had sunk or damaged thirteen carriers, three battleships, seven cruisers and twelve other ships of unidentified type in the area east of Formosa, (b) stated that an enemy invasion force was concentrated in the vicinity of Tacloban in the central Philippines and was attempting a landing, (c) stated that SHO One had been activated on the preceding day, and (d) directed that, since it was highly probable that the Allies would carry out air attacks on the southern Philippines in support of this invasion attempt, all bases were to strengthen defensive dispositions and carry out their missions to the best of their ability.****

This dispatch is of importance in that it indicates that the Japanese High Command had not informed the commanders on the lower echelons of the failure of the air operations against TF 38 and permitted those commanders to operate on the basis of incorrect information. As a matter of

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

** War Instructions, U.S. Navy 1934, FTP 143, Section VI, paragraphs 520-523.

*** Operational Intelligence, U.S. Navy 1947 ONI-Y-1 Chapter I, Paragraph 1304.

**** Commander 61st Air Flotilla Dispatch 191336 October 1944 to Davao No. 1 and No. 2, Degos, Lasang, Sarangani, Valencia, and Cagayan Bases, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592.

note, it is not clear where Commander SIXTY-FIRST Air Flotilla obtained his information of ships sunk or damaged since his list differs from that published by Imperial General Headquarters on October 16th.

WHY THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND AT THIS LATE DATE FAILED TO ADVISE THE LOWER ECHELONS OF THE TRUE SITUATION IS NOT KNOWN. CERTAINLY THE HIGH COMMAND WELL UNDERSTOOD THAT, EXCEPTING FOR THE SPECIAL PURPOSES OF DECEIVING THE ENEMY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS BE CONSTANTLY ADVISED AS TO THE ENEMY SITUATION SO THAT THEY MAY ESTIMATE FUTURE COURSES OF ACTION, CORRECT DEFICIENCIES AND DIRECT EFFORTS TOWARD ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE OBJECTIVE. OTHERWISE SHOULD SITUATIONS ARISE WHERE THE SUBORDINATE COMMANDER IS FORCED, WITHOUT ACCESS TO LATEST INTELLIGENCE DATA, TO MAKE HIS OWN ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION AND TO ARRIVE AT HIS OWN DECISION WITHOUT RECOURSE TO HIGHER AUTHORITY HE MIGHT WELL TAKE ACTION WHICH MIGHT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS COMMANDER'S OBJECTIVE.

THAT THIS CRITICISM IS JUSTIFIED IS CLEAR FROM COMBATDIV ONE'S PERSONAL DIARY* WHEREIN THAT COMMANDER, IN COMMENTING ON THE FACT THAT THE CHIEF OF STAFF COMBINED FLEET HAD PUBLISHED WITHOUT CHANGE THE T-FORCE BATTLE CLAIMS FOR OCTOBER 12TH AND 13TH, STATED IN PART:

"THERE ARE TIMES WHEN EXAGGERATION IS DESIRABLE IN ORDER TO RAISE MORALE, BUT GREAT CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED IN ORDER THAT MEN WHO ARE DIRECTING OPERATIONS DO NOT PLACE UNDUE RELIANCE ON BATTLE REPORTS AND GET CARRIED AWAY."

At about 1408 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force received a dispatch from Commander SIXTH Base Air Force which reported the operational strength of that command on Formosa, as of 0800, to be 223 aircraft out of 395 available, and gave their type and present location.** Actually, as pointed out under Commander SIXTH Base Air Force, the summary was in error as the figures in the dispatch gave 221 aircraft operational out of 398 available.

During the day he knew that about five army planes had attacked shipping off Tacloban claiming damage to three battleships and three transports with a loss of three planes.***

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* Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, IJN, (COMBATDIV 1), Personal Diary, SENSOROKU, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushiki Kaisha (Tokyo, March 15th, 1953, Volume II

** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191338 October 1944 to addressees unknown, War Diary Kokubu Detachment, 103rd Attack Unit, (70lst Air Group), October 13th-31st, 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592

*** Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

Later on in the day after having received reports from his unit commanders he estimated that the Allies had made more than 160 sorties against the Philippines.* Actually there had been 485 sorties.**

It will be remembered that on the previous evening Commander FIFTH Base Air Force had directed that at 1715 the next day an air attack group was to depart Puerto Princesa, Palawan, for Leyte Gulf where it was to execute an attack on the Allied transports off Tacloban.*** It is presumed that this was to be a dusk attack. This attack, for reasons probably known to Commander FIFTH Base Air Force but not available to this study, was not made since the Allies reported no air strikes after 1714. Perhaps the cancellation of this attack was due to a number of causes notably lack of operational aircraft within the attack units and to insufficient time for preparation.

At about 1935 he received Commander SW Area Force's dispatch 191905 wherein that commander exhorted the entire SW Area Force to do its utmost to gain victory.****

At about 1945 Commander FIFTH Base Air Force received Commander SIXTH Base Air Force's dispatch directing the SIXTH Base Air Force to continue the same operation on the 20th that it had conducted on the 19th.*****

At 2134, possibly in view of this lack of operational aircraft within the attack units, he ordered the "S" Attack Unit to report to Commander 201st Air Unit for duty and changed its deployment base from Manila to Mabalcat. This unit which was originally ordered to provide escorts for shipping, and interceptors for the Manila patrol section, now appears to have been assigned to the 201st Air Unit as a reinforcement of that unit.******

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* Material for Situation Estimates, First Section Naval General Staff, October 1944, WDC Document 216764 (Microfilm).

** Supra Chapter V, Operations of CTF 38, CTG 77.4 and C.G. FIFTH Air Force, October 19th, 1944.

*** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 182142 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force (FIFTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 49), Detailed Action Report No. 3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378.

**** Commander SW Area Force Dispatch 191905 October 1944 to all Fleet and Squadron Commanders SW Area Force, War Diary DESRON 1, October 1944, WDC Document 161638, NA 11739.

***** Commander SIXTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191915 October 1944 to SIXTH Base Air Force, Detailed Action Report Oruku Detachment (901st Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160369, NA 12366.

****** Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 192134 October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force (FIFTH Base Air Force DesOpOrd 50), War Diary 23rd Air Flotilla, October 1944, WDC Document 160264, NA 12546.

During this day Vice Admiral Onishi who, it will be recalled, had accepted the responsibility for forming the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps commenced forming that corps. Having decided that it would be wiser to work through the immediate superiors in command of the pilots rather than to appeal directly to the pilots themselves, he summoned to the FIFTH Base Air Force Headquarters the Commander 761st Air Group* based at Clark Field and the Commander 201st Air Group** based at Mabalacat and their respective operations officers. Sometime in the afternoon the Commander 761st Air Group and his operations officer arrived and Vice Admiral Onishi, after having explained that he was speaking as the incoming Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, made known his views concerning the necessity for the formation of the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps.

Since the Commander 201st Air Group had not arrived by 1600 (he had delayed to observe the departure of an attack unit) and since it was thought that either his car had broken down or he had been ambushed by guerillas Vice Admiral Onishi then departed for Clark Air Base where he assembled the personnel, explained the critical situation facing Japan, expounded his views concerning the necessity for forming the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps and called for volunteers.

The pilots of the 201st Air Group accepted the challenge and requested that the formation of this unit be left to the air group itself, which request was agreed to by Vice Admiral Onishi.*** Recruiting of pilots for the corps started immediately. Thus the KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps was born!

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* Captain Kosei Maeda, IJN.

** Captain Sakae Yamamoto, IJN.

*** The KAMIKAZE Special Attack Corps, Extracts from Private Papers of Former Japanese Officials and Officers (Diary of Vice Admiral Kimpei Teraoka, August 1st - November 1st 1944, GHQ, FEC, Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 30, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Series, Volume II).

There are no specific figures available concerning the Japanese losses on October 19th, but what evidence there is shows that the FIFTH Base Air Force lost a total of about nineteen planes.

This is deduced from the fact that during the day the FIFTH Base Air Force received twenty-six planes (twenty-four carrier-type fighters and two carrier-type attack planes). Therefore, had no planes been lost the operational strength of the FIFTH Base Air Force would have been fifty-nine planes i.e., thirty-three plus twenty-six. However, data available to this analysis shows that there were forty operational planes within the FIFTH Base Air Force at the end of the day,* out of about sixty-seven available, (twenty-four carrier-type fighters, one carrier-type reconnaissance plane, eleven carrier-type attack planes, two land attack planes and two two-engine land bombers). The difference between the fifty-nine planes and the forty -- nineteen planes -- therefore must represent losses suffered that day.

(B) Operations of C. G. FOURTH Air Army, October 19th.

At 0000 SHO One was activated for the FOURTH Air Army. The basic task of the FOURTH Air Army under this plan as outlined in the Central Air Agreement was the destruction of the enemy transport convoy.** C. G. FOURTH Air Army had tentatively assigned the following tasks to his subordinates in his draft plan of operations:***

(1) The SECOND Air Division and the THIRTIETH Fighter Group, to destroy the enemy landing convoy.

(2) The FOURTH Air Division, to conduct the antiaircraft defense of the Manila district.

(3) The SEVENTH Air Division, to continue the neutralization of air bases in Morotai and the reconnaissance of western New Guinea.

He had listed two additional tentative missions for the FOURTH Air Army which he had not assigned specifically to his subordinate commanders: (a) to employ either all or a part of his strength in support of counterlandings if such were to be conducted and (b) to destroy enemy airborne troops.

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* Nichols Field Dispatch 221851 October 1944 to Seletar Base, Detailed Action Report No. 3 253rd Attack Unit (331st Air Group), October 20th - November 13th, 1944, WDC Document 160354, NA 12378; also Memorandum of Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa, IJN, CinC Southwest Area Fleet, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of The Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 31, Footlocker 7 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

** Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Section Directive No. 435, July 26th, 1944, WDC Document 216769 (Microfilm).

*** Draft Plan of FOURTH Air Army Operations after mid-October, Documents from the file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer, FOURTH Air Army, Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

As discussed under Operations of Commander FIFTH Base Air Force, the activation of the SHO One Operation terminated the joint agreement between C. G. FOURTH Air Army and Commander FIFTH Base Air Force which governed search operations from the Philippines prior to this date. It has been assumed, however, that cooperatively, the two commanders ordered essentially the same search coverage as on previous days.

Also, because of the proximity of their headquarters, both commanders are assumed to have received the same contact reports. C. G. FOURTH Air Army, then received the numerous contacts reported by Commander FIFTH Base Air Force in his 191336.*

From these contacts, he was probably encouraged as to the effectiveness of the search operations. However, any remaining doubt he may have had as to whether the Suluan operations prefaced a large scale Allied invasion was clearly dispelled.

He was aware that Commander SECOND Air Division had planned to move his headquarters from Clark Field to Bacolod at some time during the day. This move was in accordance with the assigned area of responsibility for that division in the event of an enemy landing in the central or southern Philippines. However he learned during the forenoon that Commander SECOND Air Division had been wounded in an Allied air raid and had to be relieved. He therefore ordered the C. G. FOURTH Air Division**to take command of the SECOND Air Division.*** This assignment was apparently in addition to that commander's assignment as C. G. FOURTH Air Division inasmuch as no mention is made of a new commander for that division.

About noon, C. G. FOURTH Air Army learned through naval sources of the plans of Commander SIXTH Base Air Force. Because of the necessity for coordinating his operations with those of the base air forces and the necessity for sharing bases and facilities, he - as well as Commander FIFTH Base Air Force - was concerned with making arrangements for the basing and servicing of the SIXTH Base Air Force in the short time available.

At about 1730 he knew that the air attack of five naval planes which had been launched against the Allied surface forces, in Leyte Gulf reported having scored direct hits on two battleships.****

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* Commander FIFTH Base Air Force Dispatch 191336, October 1944 to FIFTH Base Air Force Battle Report Addressees, War Diary 103rd Attack Unit (70lst Air Group), October 1944, WDC Document 160258, NA 12592; also Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4 Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

** Lieutenant General Isamu Kinoshita, IJA.

*** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Misao Matsumae, Ex-IJA), paragraph III, A.2.d.

**** Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, October-December 1944, Second Demobilization Bureau, Japanese Government, October 1947, Department of Army Historical Division, File No. 8-5, JS 104.

During the day he learned from time to time that five planes of the SECOND Air Division had been launched against Allied shipping off Tacloban and fifteen additional had been employed as interceptors.* By nightfall he knew that Commander SECOND Air Division had claimed damaging three battleships and three transports.* These claims were entirely in error. No battleships were attacked throughout the day, and although some combatant craft, which the Japanese may have called transports (notably the CROSBY), were attacked, none were hit.

The Allied ships in Leyte Gulf confirmed the above attacks with reports of sighting twelve enemy planes of which eleven had been employed in six air strikes, and one was a reconnaissance plane.

Despite the few attacks reportedly made by his aircraft and despite the limited results obtained, it seems logical to believe that Commander SECOND Air Division was satisfied for the moment with the performance of his air units. This is so because (a) he had been hampered by bad weather in assembling his forces at Bacolod** and (b) his plans called for only hit and run attacks while concentrating all his air strength for his major air effort*** and therefore he could not expect other than limited results.

Although Japanese records do not indicate any further operations on this day, C. G. FOURTH Air Army undoubtedly spent his time preparing plans for the SHO battle and watching the progress of reinforcement units which were

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* Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1944, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Misao Matsumae, ex-IJA), Attached sheet No. 17; also Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations in the Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA series Vol. II).

** Philippine Air Operations, Phase II, 1944-45, First Demobilization Bureau Monograph, Japanese Government, October 1946, Vol. 46, Part I (Colonel Misao Matsumae, ex-IJA, paragraph III.A.2.d.

*** Documents from file of Lieutenant Colonel Katsuo Sato, IJA, Staff Officer, FOURTH Air Army, Draft Plan of Operations, Department of the Army Historical Division, Microfilm HS-7.

en route to the Philippines. His actual losses for this day were fourteen planes.* This left him with about fifty-five planes operational out of ninety-two available since no reinforcements appear to have arrived in the Philippines on this day.

* The report kept at Imperial General Headquarters listed thirty-four planes, as follows: Twelve set on fire, twelve damaged, eight hit by hostile fire, two missing. However, since (a) this number is much larger than the claims of the Allies as evaluated by the process developed in Volume I and (b) it seems logical to believe that the twelve set on fire and the twelve damaged were one and the same, and (c) it seems most likely that the eight planes hit by hostile fire may have been and most likely were still operational, this number has been reduced to fourteen. It is of interest that, through pure coincidence, the total number of planes lost by both the FIFTH Base Air Force (nineteen) and the FOURTH Air Army (fourteen)---a total of thirty-three planes is almost identical with the number (thirty-two) which would have resulted had the Japanese losses been computed by the empirical factors employed in Volume I and used elsewhere in this analysis. (Daily Record of the War Situation, GHQ-FEC Special Historical Collection, Supporting Documents to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's Historical Report on Allied Operations Southwest Pacific Area (Item 4, Footlocker 10 of 10, SWPA Series Vol. II).

CHAPTER VII, Epilogue.

With the approach of midnight the situation was as follows:

(a) the Allied forces, which still continued to believe that major elements of the Japanese fleet would not be involved in opposition to their present operations, had completed their advance operations in Leyte Gulf preparatory to the landings which were to occur on the following morning; their leading units (amphibious forces) were already entering Leyte Gulf, although this fact would not be known to the Japanese until daylight, and were heading for their anchorages off the designated beaches; their carriers, whose location was in general known to the Japanese, were on station prepared to provide cover and support on short notice and their submarines, whose locations were known also in a general way to the Japanese, were on station where they were operating primarily against Japanese shipping;

(b) the Japanese forces were hastily preparing to counter the Allied main landing which they expected would occur in the Leyte-Samar area on the following day and for which they were far from prepared. Their surface forces and submarines were either underway or were making every effort to get underway; i.e., their FIRST Striking Force, completely unknown to the Allies, was en route Brunei Bay where it would arrive on the following morning for fueling; their SECOND Striking Force, which had been contacted as late as the preceding afternoon by the Allies, was en route Mako where it would arrive on the following morning also for fueling; their Main Force was still in the Inland Sea, which fact was known to the Allies, where it was completing preparations for departure; their base air forces and their Army air force, which were low in combat strength, and their Army ground troops on Leyte, which were weak relative to the Allied invasion forces, were preparing for decisive battle in defense of Leyte; and their submarines, one or more of which had been contacted by the Allies, were en route to the waters east of the Philippines. However, because of logistics problems, none of their naval surface forces would reach the objective area for at least four days.

* * *

THUS AT THIS HOUR, THE ALLIES, HAVING COMPLETED ALL PREPARATIONS, WERE ABOUT TO LAUNCH POWERFUL LANDING OPERATIONS WHEREIN THEIR SEA, AIR AND GROUND FORCES WERE IN GENERAL COORDINATED AND CONCENTRATED, WHILE THE JAPANESE, HAVING REACTED BELATEDLY AND INDECISIVELY TO ALLIED ADVANCE OPERATIONS, COULD NOW BRING ONLY LIMITED ELEMENTS OF THEIR WIDELY DISPERSED

SURFACE AND AIR FORCES INTO POSITION INITIALLY TO OPPOSE THE LANDINGS. HOWEVER, UNKNOWN TO THE ALLIES THE JAPANESE WERE ALSO AT THIS HOUR MOVING ALL OF THEIR AVAILABLE NAVAL AND AIR STRENGTH TO THE PHILIPPINES PREPARATORY TO AN ALL OUT ASSAULT BY SUCH FORCES, ASSISTED BY THE LOCAL GROUND TROOPS, AGAINST THE ALLIED INVASION AND CARRIER FORCES. THE CLIMACTIC PERIOD OF THE LEYTE GULF ACTION WAS NOW UNDERWAY!

APPENDIX I

ORGANIZATION OF ALLIED FORCES AT

2400 OCTOBER 19TH

BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF

ALLIED NAVAL FORCES	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C.
(a) TF 77 CENTRAL PHILIPPINES ATTACK FORCE.	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C.
(a) (1) TG 77.1 Flagship Group.*	Captain Granum, Alfred M.
(a) TU 77.1.1 Fleet Flagship Unit.	Captain Granum, Alfred M.
AGC WASATCH (FFFFF).	Captain Granum, Alfred M.
DD's AMMEN, MULLANY.	
(b) TU 77.1.2 Cruiser Unit.**	Captain Coney, Charles E.
NASHVILLE.	Captain Coney, Charles E.
DESDIV 48 less AMMEN, MULLANY.	Captain McLean, John B.
DD's ABNER READ (F), BUSH.	
(2) TG 77.2 Bombardment and Fire Support Group.	Rear Admiral Oldendorf, Jesse B.
(a) TU 77.2.1 Fire Support Unit NORTH.***	Rear Admiral Weyler, George L.
BATDIV 3 less NEW MEXICO, IDAHO.	Rear Admiral Weyler, George L.
MISSISSIPPI (FF)	Captain Redfield, Herman J.
BATDIV 4 less COLORADO.	Rear Admiral Ruddock, Theodore D., Jr.
WEST VIRGINIA (F),	Captain Wiley, Herbert V.
MARYLAND.	Captain Ray, Herbert J.
DD's AULICK (F), CONY, SIGOURNEY.	Commander Andrew, John D.

* War Diary MULLANY, October 15th, 1944.
** War Diary NASHVILLE, October 16th, 1944.
*** Action Report CTU 77.2.1, Bombardment and Fire Support Mission on Leyte Island, Serial 0166, October 29th, 1944.

(b) TU 77.2.2 Fire Support Unit	
SOUTH.*	Rear Admiral Oldendorf, Jesse B.
BATDIV 2	Rear Admiral Chandler, Theodore E.
TENNESSEE (F),	Captain Hefferman, John B.
CALIFORNIA,	Captain Burnett, Henry P.
PENNSYLVANIA.	Captain Martin, Charles F.
CRUDIV 4 plus MINNEAPOLIS less INDIANAPOLIS.	Rear Admiral Oldendorf, Jesse B.
LOUISVILLE (FFF),	Captain Hurt, Samuel H.
PORTLAND,	Captain Settle, Thomas G.W.
MINNEAPOLIS.	Captain Slocum, Harry B.
CRUDIV 9 less ST. LOUIS.	Rear Admiral Ainsworth, Walden L.
HONOLULU (F).	Captain Thurber, Harry R.
CRUDIV 12 less MONTPELIER, CLEVELAND.	Rear Admiral Hayler, Robert W.
DENVER (F),	Captain Bledsoe, Albert M.
COLUMBIA.	Captain Curts, Maurice E.
DESRON 56.	Captain Smoot, Roland N.
DESDIV 111.	Captain Smoot, Roland N.
DD's LEUTZE, NEWCOMB (FF), BENNION, HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS, RICHARD P. LEARY.	
DESDIV 112 plus HALFORD.	Captain Conley, Thomas F., Jr.
DD's ROBINSON (F), ROSS,** ALBERT W. GRANT, BRYANT, HALFORD.	
DESDIV X-RAY less AULICK, CONY, SIGOURNEY.	Commander Hubbard, Miles H.
DD's CLAXTON (F), THORN, WELLES.	
AVP SAN CARLOS.	Lt. Commander Mills. Delong
(3) TG 77.3 Close Covering Group.***	Rear Admiral Berkey, Russell S.
(a) (1) TU 77.3.1 Light Cruiser Group.	Rear Admiral Berkey, Russell S.
CRUDIV 15 less NASHVILLE	Rear Admiral Berkey, Russell S.
PHOENIX (FF),	Captain Duncan, Jack H.
BOISE.	Captain Roberts, John S.
DESDIV 47 less BEALE.	Captain McManes, Fenmore M.
DD's HUTCHINS (F), BACHE, DALY, KILLEN.	

* War Diary COMCRUDIV 4, October 12th, 1944 and COMCRUDIV 4 Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 0008, October 5th, 1944.

** Damaged by striking two mines October 19th; thereafter out of action; replaced by BLACK October 20th.

*** Action Report CTG 77.3 Leyte Operation, Serial 0359, November 3rd, 1944.

(2) TU 77.3.2 Heavy Cruiser Group.	Commodore Collins, John A., RAN
HMAS SHROPSHIRE	Captain Nichols, Charles A.G., RN
HMAS AUSTRALIA (F),	Captain Dechaineux, Emile F.V., RAN
DD's HMAS ARUNTA, HMAS WARRAMUNGA, BEALE.	
(4) TG 77.4 Escort Carrier Group.	Rear Admiral Sprague, Thomas L.
(a) (1) TU 77.4.1 Panaon Carrier Group.*	Rear Admiral Sprague, Thomas L.
(a) TU 77.4.11 CARDIV 22	Rear Admiral Sprague, Thomas L.
CVE SANGAMON (FFF)	Captain Browder, Maurice E.
(CVEG 37-22 VF, 9 VT),	Lt. Commander Hindman, Stanley E.
CVE SUWANNEE	Captain Johnson, William D.
(CVEG 60-22 VF, 9 VT),	Lt. Commander Feilbach, Harvey O., USNR
CVE CHENANGO	Captain Van Deurs, George
(CVEG 35-20 VF, 9 VT),	Lt. Commander Moore, Frederick T., Jr.
CVE SANTEE	Captain Blick, Robert E.
(CVEG 26-23 VF, 8 VT).	Lt. Commander Funk, Harold N.
(b) TU 77.4.12 CARDIV 28 less CVE's SARGENT BAY and RUDYERD BAY.	Rear Admiral Henderson, George R.
CVE SAGINAW BAY (FF)	Captain Sutton, Frank C.
(VC 78-18 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Hyde, John L., USNR
CVE PETROF BAY	Captain Kane, Joseph L.
(VC 76-18 VF, 12 VT).	Commander McCauley, James W.
(c) TU 77.4.13 Screen.	Captain Nunn, Ira H.
DESDIV 93 less HEERMANN, HOEL.	Captain Nunn, Ira H.
DD's McCORD (F), TRATHEN, HAZELWOOD.	
CORTDIV 63 less SHELTON, DENNIS.	Commander Bewick, James V.
DE's EDMONDS, RICHARD S. BULL, RICHARD M. ROWELL, COOLBAUGH.	
(2) TU 77.4.14** Special Escort Group.	Rear Admiral Henderson, George R.
CVE's SAGINAW BAY (FF) (VC 78-18 VF, 12 VT), PETROF BAY (VC 76-18 VF, 12 VT). DE's EDMONDS, RICHARD S. BULL.	

* Action Report CTU 77.4.1, Leyte Operation, from October 12th-October 29th, Serial 00104, November 8th, 1944.

** Escorting TG 79.1 to Leyte Gulf.

(b) (1) TU 77.4.2 Southern Carrier Group.*	Rear Admiral Stump, Felix B.
(a) TU 77.4.21 CARDIV 24 less CVE's ANZIO and CORREGIDOR.	Rear Admiral Stump, Felix B.
CVE NATOMA BAY (FF)	Captain Morehouse, Albert K.
(VC 81-18 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Barnes, Robert C.
CVE MANILA BAY	Captain Lee, Fitzhugh
(VC 80-18 VF, 10 VT).	Lt. Commander Stubbs, Harry K., USNR
(b) TU 77.4.22 CARDIV 27.	Rear Admiral Sample, William D.
CVE MARCUS ISLAND (FF)	Captain Greber, Charles F.
(VC 21-17 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Murray, Thomas O., USNR
CVE KADASHAN BAY	Captain Hunter, Robert N.
(VC 20-17 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Dale, John R., USNR
CVE SAVO ISLAND	Captain Ekstrom, Clarence E.
(VC 27-18 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Jackson, Percival W.
CVE OMMANEY BAY	Captain Young, Howard L.
(VC 75-18 VF, 12 VT).	Lt. Smith, Allen W., Jr. USNR
(c) TU 77.4.23 Screen.	Captain Reynolds, Luther K.
DESDIV 94 less JOHNSTON.	Captain Reynolds, Luther K.
DD's HAGGARD (F), FRANKS, HAILEY.	
CORTDIV 69 less STAFFORD plus LeRAY WILSON.	Commander Phifer, Thomas C.
DE's RICHARD W. SUESENS (F), ABERCROMBIE, LeRAY WILSON, OBERRENDER, WALTER C. WANN.	
(2) TU 77.4.24 Special Escort Group.**	Captain Hunter, Robert N.
CVE's KADASHAN BAY (F) (VC 20-17 VF, 12 VT). OMMANEY BAY (VC 75-18 VF, 12 VT).	
DE's RICHARD W. SUESENS (F), ABERCROMBIE.	Commander Phifer, Thomas C.
(c) (1) TU 77.4.3 Northern Carrier Group.***	Rear Admiral Sprague, Clifton A.F.

* Action Report CTU 77.4.2, Reoccupation of Leyte Island, October 18th-29th, 1944, Serial 00114, November 2nd, 1944.

** Ibid. Escorting TG 78.6.

*** Action Report CTU 77.4.32, Action off Samar Island, October 25th, 1944, Serial 00014, October 28th, 1944.

(a) TU 77.4.31 CARDIV 25.	Rear Admiral Sprague, Clifton A.F.
CVE FANSHAW BAY (FF)	Captain Johnson, Douglass P.
(VC 68-18 VF, 11 TBM),	Lt. Commander Rogers, Richard S.
CVE ST. LO	Captain McKenna, Francis J.
(VC 65-18 VF, 12 VT),	Lt. Commander Jones, Ralph M., USNR
CVE WHITE PLAINS	Captain Sullivan, Dennis J.
(VC 4-17 VF, 12 VT),	Lieutenant Fickenscher, Edward R., Jr.
CVE KALININ BAY	Captain Williamson, Thomas B.
(VC 3-18 VF, 12 VT).	Lt. Commander Keighley, William H. USNR
(b) TU 77.4.32 CARDIV 26 less CVE's HOGGATT BAY and NEHENTA BAY.	Rear Admiral Ofstie, Ralph A.
CVE KITKUN BAY (F)	Captain Whitney, John P.
(VC 5-18 VF, 12 VT),	Commander Fowler, Richard L.
CVE GAMBIER BAY	Captain Vieweg, Walter V.R.
(VC 10-18 VF, 12 VT).	Commander Huxtable, Edward J., Jr.
(c) TU 77.4.33 Screen.	Commander Thomas, William D.
DESDIV 93 less McCORD, TRATHEN, HAZELWOOD	
plus JOHNSTON.	Commander Thomas, William D.
DD's HOEL (F), HEERMANN, JOHNSTON.	
DE's RAYMOND,	Lt. Commander Hansen, Sigurd, USNR
DENNIS (F), JOHN C. BUTLER, SAMUEL B. ROBERTS.	
(2) TU 77.4.34.*	
Special Escort Group.	Rear Admiral Ofstie, Ralph A.
CVE's KITKUN BAY (F), (VC 5-18 VF, 12 VT), GAMBIER BAY (VC 10-18 VF, 12 VT).	
DE's DENNIS (F), JOHN C. BUTLER.	Lt. Commander Hansen Sigurd, USNR
(5) TG 77.5 Minesweeping and Hydrographic Group.**	Commander Loud, Wayne R.
(a) TU 77.5.1 Minesweepers.	Commander Loud, Wayne R.

* Escorting TG 78.1 and TG 78.2 to Leyte Gulf.

** Action Report CTG 77.5, Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

(1)	Sweep Unit ONE.	Commander Loud, Wayne R.
	Mine Division 5.	Lieutenant Brennan, John E., USNR
	DMS's SOUTHARD (F), CHANDLER, HOVEY (FF), LONG.	
	Mine Division 19 (Modified).	Lt. Commander Clague, John, USNR
	DM's PREBLE, BREESE.	
	DMS's HAMILTON (F), HOWARD, PALMER.	
	APD SANDS (with 4 LCPR sweepers).	Lieutenant Samuels, Jerome M., Jr. USNR
	CHICKASAW (ATF).	Lieutenant Olson, Louis C., USNR
(2)	Sweep Unit TWO.	Lt. Commander Woodhouse, Ernest W. USNR
	Mine Division 14 plus AM SCOUT.	
	AM's ZEAL (F), VELOCITY, TUMULT, TOKEN, SCOUT.	
(3)	Sweep Unit THREE.	Lt. Commander Peirce, Herbert R., Jr., USNR
	Mine Division 13 plus AM SENTRY.	
	AM's REQUISITE (F), PURSUIT, REVENGE, SAGE, SENTRY.	
(4)	Sweep Unit FOUR.	Lieutenant Staehli, Ralph J., Jr. USNR
	YMS's 1, 81, 140 (F), 311,* 319.	
(5)	Sweep Unit FIVE.	Lieutenant Latta, William A., USNR
	YMS's 238, 243, 286, 293, 335, 389,* 398 (F).	
(6)	Sweep Unit SIX.	Lieutenant Schminke, Paul, USNR
	YMS's 39, 49, 52, 340 (F), 342.	
(7)	Sweep Unit SEVEN.**	Lieutenant Burns, Thomas W., USNR
	YMS's 71, 73, 176,* 314, 341 (F).	
(8)	Sweep Unit EIGHT.	Lieutenant (jg) Daly, Roy E., USNR
	4 LCPR's (carried in APD SANDS).	

* YMS's 176, 311 and 389 with PRESERVER, as TU 79.12.1, arrived Leyte Gulf October 18th, 1944.

** Action Report CTG 77.5 Minesweeping Operations in Surigao Straits and Leyte Gulf, Serial 0111, October 29th, 1944.

(b) TU 77.5.2 Hydrographic Unit.	Commander Hunt, Robert B.A. RAN
HMAS GASCOYNE, YMS's 316, 393, HMAL 1074.	
(6) TG 77.6 Beach Demolition Group.*	Lt. Commander Morgan, Charles C., USNR
(a) Transport Groups.	
TRANSDIV 12 (Temporary).	Lt. Commander Morgan, Charles C., USNR
APD's TALBOT (F), MANLEY,** GOLDSBOROUGH, KANE.**	
TRANSDIV 14 (Temporary).	Lt. Commander Murphy, Owen B., USNR
APD's BROOKS, BELNAP,** OVERTON,** HUMPHREYS (F).	
TRANSDIV 16 (Temporary), less SANDS.	Lt. Commander Welch, Richard L., USNR
APD's RATHBURNE, GEO E. BADGER, CLEMSON.	
(b) Reconnaissance and Demolition Group.***	Lt. Commander Eaton, James B. Jr., USNR
(1) UDT Unit NORTH.	Lt. Commander Eaton, James B. Jr., USNR
UDT No. 6 (Embarked in APD CLEMSON).	Lieutenant Logsdon, Deearle M., USNR
UDT No. 9 (Embarked in APD BROOKS).	Lt. Commander Eaton, James B., Jr. USNR
UDT No. 10 (Embarked in RATHBURNE.)	Lieutenant Choate, Arthur O., Jr., USNR
(2) UDT Unit SOUTH.	Lt. Commander Young, Donald E., USNR
UDT No. 3 (Embarked in APD TALBOT).	Lieutenant Crist, Thomas C., USNR
UDT No. 4 (Embarked in APD GOLDSBOROUGH).	Lieutenant Carberry, William G., USNR
UDT No. 5 (Embarked in APD HUMPHREYS).	Lieutenant Debold, John K., USNR
UDT No. 8 (Embarked in APD GEO E. BADGER.)	Lt. Commander Young, Donald E., USNR
(7) TG 77.7 Service Group.****	Rear Admiral Glover, Robert O.

* War Diary TALBOT, October 12th, 1944.
** Carried demolitions only. War Diary TALBOT, October 12th, 1944.
*** CTG 77.2 Operation Plan 2-44, Appendix 3 to Annex B.
**** CTG 77.7 Operation Plan 2-44, Serial 00021, October 8th, 1944.

(a) TU 77.7.1 Fueling Group.* AO's ASHTABULA (F), SALAMONIE, SARANAC, CHEPACHET, AE MAZAMA, S.S. DURHAM VICTORY.** CORTDIV 40 less FOREMAN, ENGLAND, plus MANNING. DE's BOWERS, WHITEHURST, WILLMARTH, WITTER, MANNING.	Captain Beard, Jefferson D. Commander Thorwall, Charles A., USNR
(b) TU 77.7.2 Task Unit Leyte.*** IX (AO's) ARETHUSA, CARIBOU. MINK, PANDA; AN's TEAK, SILVERBELL, SATINLEAF; ACN INDUS (F); ARL ACHILLES; ARS CABLE; AO(W) SEVERN; AE MURZIM.	Captain Hylant, Emory P.
(b) TF 78 Northern Attack Force.	Rear Admiral Barbey, Daniel E.
(1) TG 78.1 Palo Attack Group.	Rear Admiral Barbey, Daniel E.
(a) TU 78.1.1 Group Flagship.**** (Also Force Flagship Unit). AGC BLUE RIDGE (FFF). TU 78.1.2 Relief Group Flagship DD RUSSELL	Commander McDowell, Lewis R. Commander McDowell, Lewis R. Lt. Commander Wicks, John E., Jr. Lt. Commander Wicks, John E., Jr.
(b) TU 78.1.3 Transport Unit.***** TRANSDIV 6 (Temporary). APA's FAYETTE (F), ORMSBY, LEEDSTOWN, AKA TITANIA, AK HERCULES, LSD EPPING FOREST, LSD CARTER HALL. TRANSDIV 24 (Temporary). APA's DuPAGE (FF), FULLER, ELMORE, WAYNE, AP JOHN LAND, AKA AQUARIUS, LSD GUNSTON HALL.	Captain Brittain, Thomas B. Captain Baker, Harold D. Captain Brittain, Thomas B.
(c) TU 78.1.4 LST Unit.****** LST's 26, 168, 171, 181, 452 (F), 456, 458, 459, 462, 463, 465, 466.	Commander Baker, Danford M., USNR

* War Diary SARANAC, October 1944.
** Employed as an ammunition ship.
*** War Diary INDUS, October 1944.
**** CTF 78 Operation Plan 101-44, Serial 0008, October 3rd, 1944.
***** Action Report CTU 78.1.3, Leyte Assault, Serial 0200 October 24th, 1944.
****** Action Report CTU 78.1.4, Leyte Operation, File FE25/A16-3, November 1st, 1944.

(d) TU 78.1.5 LSM Unit.* LSM's 19 (F), 21, 257.	Lieutenant McComb, Edward L., USNR
(e) TU 78.1.6 Escort and Fire Support Unit.** DESDIV 49 less STEVENS, DD's JOHN RODGERS (F), MURRAY, HARRISON, McKEE.	Captain Crommelin, Henry Captain Crommelin, Henry
(f) TU 78.1.7 Control Unit.*** PC's 598, 623 (F), 1129, SC 726.	Captain Brantly, Neill D.
(g) TU 78.1.8 LCI Support Unit.**** LCI(G)'s 65, 23, LCI(R)'s 71 (F), 72, 73, 74, 331.	Lieutenant Sargent, Robert E., Jr. USNR
(h) TU 78.1.9 Demolition Unit.***** LCI(F)'s 227, 228.	Lieutenant (jg) Sibigtroth, Joseph C., USNR
(i) TU 78.1.10 LCI Smoke Unit.****** LCI's 28 (F), 361, 363, 364, 429, 447, 448.	Captain McGee, Homer F.
(j) TU 78.1.11 Salvage Unit.******* AT QUAPAW.	Lt. Commander Castle, Northrup H., USNR
(k) TU 78.1.12 Army Headquarters Unit.******** PCE(R)'s 848 (F), 849, 850, S.S. APACHE, FP 47.	Lieutenant Gunby, D. Kirk, USNR
(l) TU 78.1.13 Beach Parties.***** Beach Party No. 1 Beach Party No. 4	Lieutenant Zinser, Eugene J., USNR Lieutenant Walter, Raymond G., USNR Lieutenant Zinser, Eugene J., USNR

* War Diary LSM-21, October 1944.
** Action Report CTU 78.1.6 Serial 0114, November 5th, 1944.
*** Action Report CTU 78.1.7 no serial, November 1st, 1944.
**** Action Report CTU 78.1.8 Serial 160, November 22nd, 1944.
***** CTG 78.1 Operation Plan 1-44, Serial FF-0001, October 7th, 1944.
****** Action Report CTU 78.1.10, Leyte Operation, Serial 0122, November 20th, 1944.
******* War Diary QUAPAW, October 16th, 1944.
******** War Diary PCE(R) 848, October 13th, 1944.

(2) TG 78.2 San Ricardo Attack Group.* — Rear Admiral Fechteler, William M.

(a) Group Flagship. APA FREMONT (FFF). — Captain Conlan, Clarence V.

(b) Relief Group Flagship. DD ANDERSON. — Lt. Commander Benson, Ralph H., Jr.

(c) Headquarters Support Aircraft. — Commander Spangler, Earles, USNR

(d) TU 78.2.1 Transport Unit. — Captain Carlson, Milton O.

(1) TU 78.2.2 TRANSDIV 20. APA's LEONARD WOOD (F), PIERCE, JAMES O'HARA, AP LaSALLE, AKA ELECTRA, LSD OAK HILL. — Captain Loomis, Donald W.

(2) TU 78.2.3 TRANSDIV 32. APA's HARRIS (FF), FREMONT (FFF), BARNSTABLE, AP HERALD OF THE MORNING, AKA ARNEB, LSD WHITE MARSH. — Captain Carlson, Milton O.

(e) TU 78.2.4 Tractor Unit. LST's 18, 66, 67, 68, 202, 204, 245, 466 (F), 467, 468, 469, 470, 474, 476. — Captain Scruggs, Richard M.

(f) TU 78.2.5 LSM Unit. LSM's 18 (F), 20, 22, 23, 34, 138, 139, 258, 311. — Commander Weintraub, Daniel J.

(g) TU 78.2.6 Screening Unit. DESDIV 42 less RADFORD plus ANDERSON. DD's FLETCHER (F), LaVALLETTE, JENKINS, ANDERSON. — Captain Jarrell, Albert E.

(h) TU 78.2.7 Control Unit. PC's 1134 (F), 1119, 1120, SC 991. — Captain Loomis, Donald W.

(i) TU 78.2.8 Support Unit.* LCI(R)'s 34, 230 (F), 337, 338, 340, 341. LCI(G)'s 64, 69 (F). — Commander [illegible]y, Dwight H.

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* Action Report CTG 78.2, Leyte Operation, Serial 0085, November 29th, 1944.

(j) TU 78.2.9 Salvage Unit ATO SONOMA.	Lieutenant Wurzler, Walter R., USNR
(k) TU 78.2.10 Beach Parties. Beach Party No. 3. Beach Party No. 8.	Lt. Commander Halloran, Edward R., USNR Lt. Commander Halloran, Edward R., USNR Lieutenant Nordyke, Ted, USNR
(3) TG 78.3 Panaon Attack Group.**	Rear Admiral Struble, Arthur D.
(a) TU 78.3.1 Group Flagship. DD HUGHES (FF).	Commander Rittenhouse, Ellis B.
(b) TU 78.3.2 Transport Unit. LSI's MANOORA, KANIMBLA, WESTRALIA.	Commander Cousin, Alan P., RANR (S)
(c) TU 78.3.3 Fast Transport Unit. CM ARIADNE.	Capt in the Lord Ashbourne, RN
(d) TU 78.3.4 Escort Unit. DESDIV 4 less STERETT and WILSON. DD's LANG (F), STACK. DESDIV 50. DD's SIGSBEE, RINGGOLD (F), SCHROEDER, DASHIELL.	Captain Melgaard, John L. Captain Melgaard, John L. Captain Parish, Herman O.
(e) TU 78.3.5 Control and Support Craft. PC's 1122, 1133, LCI(G)'s 68, 70 (F) LCI(R)'s 31 (F), 342, LCI(D) 29.	Captain Murphey, Charles D.
(f) TU 78.3.6 Beach Party No. 7.	Lieutenant O'Neill, Thomas F., USNR
(4) TG 78.4 Dinagat Attack Group.**	Rear Admiral Struble, Arthur D.
(a) TU 78.4.1 Black Beach ONE Unit. DD's HUGHES (FF), STACK, ROBINSON, PF GALLUP, CM HMAS ARIADNE. APD KILTY.	Rear Admiral Struble, Arthur D.

* Action Report CTG 78.3, Panaon Group, Serial 0019, undated.
** Action Report CTG 78.4, Dinagat Group, Serial 0018, undated.

(b) TU 78.4.2 Black Beach TWO Unit. Captain Benson, Francis W.
DD's LANG (F), ROSS,
PF BISBEE (F).

(c) TU 78.4.3 also TU 77.2.3,
Close Covering Group.* Rear Admiral Hayler, Robert W.
CL's DENVER (F), Captain Bledsoe, Albert G.
COLUMBIA, Captain Curts, Maurice E.
DESDIV 112. Captain Conley, Thomas F., Jr.
DD's BRYANT, ROBINSON,
ROSS, ALBERT W. GRANT.

(d) TU 78.4.4 Black Beach THREE
Unit. Rear Admiral Hayler, Robert W.
DENVER (F), DD ALBERT W.
GRANT, APD CROSBY.

(5) TG 78.5 Harbor Entrance Control
Group.** Captain Benson, Francis W.
PF's BISBEE (F), GALLUP,
LCI's 343, 344, 430 (F), 432.

(6) TG 78.6 Reinforcement Group ONE.*** Captain Jenkins, Samuel P.

(a) RED Beach Unit ONE. Captain Jenkins, Samuel P.
TRANSDIV 8 (Temporary). Captain Jenkins, Samuel P.
APA's CRESCENT CITY (FF),
WARREN, WINDSOR.
LST Unit. Commander Linthicum, Theodore C.
LST's 623, 666, 667, 668, 695,
697, 740, 741, 744, 751, 986,
1017, 1018 (F), 1027.

(b) BLUE-ORANGE Beach Unit. Lieutenant Talley, William O.
LST's 24, 471, 472 (F), 606.

(c) WHITE Beach Unit. Captain Hanson, Ralph E.
TRANSDIV 26 (Temporary). Captain Hanson, Ralph E.
APA's CALLAWAY (FF), LEON,
SUMTER, AP STORM KING,
AK JUPITER.

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* Action Report CTU 78.4.3 and 78.4.4, Bombardment and Support of Landings, Suluan Island, Serial 0149, November 2nd, 1944.
** Action Report CTG 78.5, October 18th-24th, November 22nd, 1944.
*** Action Report CTG 78.6, Serial 0154, October 31st, 1944.

(d) LST Unit. — Captain Swigart, Oral R.
LST's 170, 397, 460, 549, 613, 614 (F), 696, 699, 700, 910, 911, 912, 993, 1014, ARL ACHILLES, XAK's THOMAS, GIANELLA, KINNEY, JUDSON, FIELDS, SHORT.

(e) LCI Unit 44 (Temporary). — Commander Tucker, James F.
LCI's 683, 684, 685, 693, 977, 978 (F), 979, 980, 981, 982, 1064, 1065.

(f) Escort Unit. — Captain Solomons, Edward A.
DESDIV 3 less HUGHES, ANDERSON, RUSSELL plus HOWORTH, STEVENS. — Captain Solomons, Edward A.
DD's MORRIS (F), HOWORTH, MUSTIN, STEVENS,
PF's CARSON CITY, BURLINGTON.

(7) TG 78.7 Reinforcement Group TWO
Convoy Unit.* — Captain Ginder, John K.B.

(a) Liberty Ships.
GENERAL FLEISCHER, CAPE ROMANO, CAPE CONSTANCE, JOHN PAGE, SABIK, JANSSENS, LEO MERRITT, DAVID GALLIARD, FRANK CUHEL, MARCUS DALY, BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE, JOHN FOSTER, VITUS BERING, SAMUEL BARLOW, BENJAMIN WHEELER, LOUIS WUELE, CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN, OVID BUTLER, ESCANABA VICTORY, CASSIOPIA, CLARENCE DARROW, ESCALANTE, JAMES KING, EDWARD S. HOUGH.

(b) SERVICE FORCE.
TU 77.7.2 less AE MURZIM and AN SATINLEAF. — Captain Hylant, Emory P.
ARL ACHILLES IX (AO's) ARETHUSA, CARIBOU, MINK, PANDA, AN's TEAK, SILVERBELL, AKN INDUS, ARS CABLE, AO(W) SEVERN.

(c) LST Unit. — Captain Seay, Erskine A.
LST's 464, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 569, 573, 610 (FF), 619, 658, 663, 673, 687, 688, 694, 703, 734, 736, 737, 744, 749, 750, 908, 919, 990, 991, 1015, 1025, 1026, AO SUAMICO, PG TULSA.

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* Action Report CTG 78.7, Serial 0176, November 10th, 1944.

(d) SCREEN.	Captain Ginder, John K.B.
DESDIV 41 less HOWORTH.	Captain Ginder, John K.B.
DD's NICHOLAS (F), O'BANNON, TAYLOR, HOPEWELL.	
PF's SAN PEDRO,* MUSKOGEE.	
(8) TG 78.8 Reinforcement Group THREE** Convoy Unit.	Commander Steinmetz, John L., USCG
(a) Service Ship Unit.	Lt. Commander Kapuscinski, John S., USNR
AK's MURZIM,*** HYPERION, ZAURAK (F), APC 17, AN SATINLEAF.***	
(b) Liberty Ship Unit.	
FLOYD B. OLSON, THOMAS NELSON, PRINCE L. CAMPBELL, JOE C.S. BLACKBURN, AMERIGO VESPUCCI, MATTHEW P. DEADY, VAN NUYS, CAPE JUDY, CAPE CUMBERLAND, SEAMAN A. KNAPP, MORRISON R. WAITE, JOHN ALDEN, ATWATER, A. BAILEY, JOAN BARTRAM, JUAN CABRILLO, CARL G. BARTH.	
(c) LST Unit.	
LST's 22, 206 (FF), 220, 454, 618, 922.	
(d) Screen.	Commander Steinmetz, John L., USCG
CORTDIV 29 less CORPUS CHRISTI and HUTCHINSON.****	Commander Steinmetz, John L., USCG
PF's EUGENE (FFF), EL PASO, VAN BUREN, ORANGE.	
(c) TF 79 Southern Attack Force.*****	Vice Admiral Wilkinson, Theodore S.
Force Flagship.	
AGC MOUNT OLYMPUS (FFFF).	Captain Shultz, John H.
Commander Support Aircraft.	Captain Taylor, Herbert W., Jr.
(1) TG 79.1 Attack Group ABLE.	Rear Admiral Conolly, Richard L.
Group Flagship.	
AGC APPALACHIAN (FFF).	Captain Jeffs, Charles R.

* Action Report CTG 78.7, Central Philippines Operation, Serial 0176, November 10th, 1944.

** War Diaries, HYPERION, ZAURAK, October 23rd, 1944.

*** Attached to TU 77.7.2.

**** Action Report CTG 78.8, Reinforcement Group THREE, Serial 071, November 16th, 1944.

***** Action Report CTG 79.1, Leyte Operation, Serial 00454, October 26th, 1944.

(a) TG 79.3 Transport Group ABLE.* Captain Richardson, Clifford G.

(1) TU 79.3.1 TRANSDIV 7. Captain Richardson, Clifford G.
APA's CAVALIER (FF),
J. FRANKLIN BELL,
FELAND, AKA THUBAN,
AP GOLDEN CITY, LSD LINDERWALD.

(2) TU 79.3.2 TRANSDIV 30.** Captain Misson, Clinton A.
APA's KNOX (F), CALVERT,
CUSTER, AKA CHARA,
APH RIXEY.

(3) TU 79.3.3 TRANSDIV 38 (Temporary).*** Captain Allen, Charles
APA's LAMAR (F), ALPINE,
HEYWOOD, AKA ALSHAIN,
AP STARLIGHT, LSD ASHLAND.

(4) TU 79.3.4 TRANSDIV X-RAY.* Captain Snackenberg, John A.
APA's GEORGE CLYMER,
PRESIDENT HAYES,
AGC MOUNT OLYMPUS,
AK MERCURY,****
LSV MONITOR.****

(5) TU 79.3.5 Underwater Demolition Unit.* Lt. Commander Morgan, Charles C., USNR

UDT No. 3 (in APD TALBOT). Lieutenant Crist, Thomas C., USNR

UDT No. 4 (in APD GOLDSBOROUGH). Lieutenant Carberry, William G., USNR

(6) TU 79.3.6 LCT Unit.* Lieutenant Wassell, Meyer, USNR
LCT's 667, 738, 739, 740,
772, 781, 819, 820, 861,
863, 864, 990.

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* Action Report CTG 79.3 Amphibious Invasion, Leyte P.I., October 20th-23rd, 1944, Serial 0169, November 8th, 1944.
** Action Report CTU 79.3.2, Serial 086, October 26th, 1944.
*** Action Report CTU 79.3.3, Serial 0118, October 31st, 1944.
**** For administrative purposes the MERCURY and the MONITOR were under CTU 79.3.3, and the PRESIDENT HAYES and possibly the GEORGE CLYMER under CTU 79.3.1.

(7) TU 79.11.1 Transport Group ABLE Screen.*	Captain Marshall, William J.
DESRON 48.	Captain Marshall, William J.
DESDIV 95 less STEMBEL.	Captain Marshall, William J.
ERBEN (F), WALKER, HALE, ABBOTT.	
DESDIV 96 less BULLARD plus GANSEVOORT and BRAINE.	Commander Kobey, Theodore H.
KIDD, GANSEVOORT, BLACK (F), CHAUNCEY, BRAINE.	
(b) Tractor Group ABLE.	Captain Webb, Richard C., Jr.
(1) TG 79.5 LST Unit.	Captain Webb, Richard C., Jr.
(a) TU 79.5.1 LST's 608, 609, 611, 612 (FF), 693, 738, 739 (F), 909.	Commander Shively, Joshua C.
(b) TU 79.5.2. LST's 126, 169, 205, 223, 242, 565 (F), 605, 670, 686, 733.	Commander Parsons, Edwin C., USNR
(c) TU 79.5.3.** 34, 123, 125, 207, 213, 219, 451 (F), 461, 478, 482, 488, 617, 1006.	Lt. Commander Harlan, James L.
(2) TG 79.7 Control Unit.***	Commander Busck, Vilhelm K.
DD STEMBEL (F), PC's 462, 464, 470, 563; PCS's 1391, 1418, 1429; SC's 631, 632, 1004; 6 LCC's.	

* Action Report CTU 79.11.1, October 20th-24th, 1944, Serial 080, October 31st, 1944.

** Action Report CTU 79.5.3, Report of Operations in the Amphibious Assault on Leyte Island, P.I., October 20th-24th, Serial 284, January 1st, 1945.

*** Action Report CTG 79.3, Amphibious Invasion, Leyte, P.I., October 20th-23rd, 1944, Serial 0169, November 8th, 1944.

(3) TU 79.7.1 Gunboat Support Unit.	Commander Montgomery, Alan R.
(a) TU 79.7.2 Rocket Unit.* LCI(G)'s 365, 366, 407, 422, 439, 440, 442, 475, 558 (F), 559, 560, 561, 565, (FF), 567, 568, 580, 751, 752.	Commander Montgomery, Alan R.
(b) TU 79.7.3 Mortar Unit.** LCI(M)'s 1056 (F), 1057, 1058, 1059; LCI(A)'s 975, 1055.	Lt. Commander Robison, Carl F., USNR
(c) TU 79.7.4 Salvage and Fire Fighting Unit. LCI(L) 564 (F), 676***	Lt. Commander Starkus, Charles J. (Ret)
(2) TG 79.2 Attack Group BAKER****	Rear Admiral Royal, Forrest B.
Group Flagship. AGC ROCKY MOUNT (FFF).	Captain Patten, Stanley F.
(a) TG 79.4 Transport Group BAKER.	Captain Knowles, Herbert B.
(1) TU 79.4.1 TRANSDIV 10 (Temporary).***** APA's CLAY (F), ARTHUR MIDDLETON, BAXTER, WM. P. BIDDLE, AP GEORGE F. ELLIOTT, AKA CAPRICORNUS, LSV CATSKILL.	Captain Morrison, George D.
(2) TU 79.4.2 TRANSDIV 18.**** APA's CAMBRIA (FF), MONROVIA, FREDERICK FUNSTON; AP WAR HAWK, AKA ALCYONE; LSD's CASA GRANDE, RUSHMORE.	Captain Knowles, Herbert B.

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* Action Report LCI(G) 565, Assault on Leyte, October 25th, 1944.
** Action Report CTU 79.7.3, Serial 051, October 23rd, 1944.
*** Action Report CTG 79.3, Amphibious Invasion, Leyte, P.I., October 20th-23rd, 1944, Serial 0169, November 8th, 1944.
**** Action Report CTG 79.2, Leyte Operation, Serial 0032, November 4th, 1944.
***** War Diary CTG 79.4 (COMTRANSDIV 10), October 1944.

(3) TU 79.4.3 TRANSDIV 28.* APA's BOLIVAR (F), SHERIDAN, DOYEN; AP COMET; AKA ALMAACK; AK AURIGA; LSD BELLE GROVE.	Captain Flanagan, Henry C.
(4) MINDIV 34 less SCOUT, SCUFFLE, SENTRY.** SAUNTER (F), SALUTE, SCRIMMAGE.	Lt. Commander Keefer, James R.
(5) TU 79.11.2 Transport Group BAKER Screen.***	Captain McLean, Ephraim R., Jr.
DESRON 49 (Temporary).	Captain McLean, Ephraim R., Jr.
DESDIV 97 less WILLIAM D. PORTER and YOUNG. PICKING (F), SPROSTON, WICKES.	Captain McLean, Ephraim R., Jr.
DESDIV 98 less KIMBERLY, LUCE. ISHERWOOD (F), CHARLES J. BADGER.	Captain Cooper, William G.
DESDIV 101 less HALL, PAUL HAMILTON plus MacDONOUGH. HALLIGAN (F), HARADIN, TWIGGS, MacDONOUGH.	Captain Martin, Hugh J.
(b) TG 79.6 LST-LCI Transport Group BAKER.****	Captain Rimer, Theodore W.
(1) TU 79.6.1 LST-LSM Transport Unit.	Commander Ageton, Arthur A.
Unit Flagship DD LUCE (FF).	Commander Owens, Hinton A.
(a) TU 79.6.11 Assault Unit BLUE.***** LST's 20, 483, 486, 568, 671, 745, 918, 999, 1013, 1024.	Lt. Commander Reith, George, USNR

* War Diary COMET, October 1944.

** Assigned to TG 79.4 for movement to Leyte to report to CTG 77.5 on arrival in accordance with CTG 79.2 Mailgram 120932 October 1944 to CTG 77.4, COMINDIV 34, SALUTE, SAUNTER and SCRIMMAGE.

*** Action Report CTU 79.11.2, Assault on Leyte Island, Serial 0121, October 30th, 1944.

**** Action Report CTG 79.2, Leyte Operation, Serial 0032, November 4th, 1944.

***** Action Report CTU 79.6.11, October 20th-24th, 1944, Serial 038-44, October 31st, 1944.

(b) TU 79.6.12 Assault Unit ORANGE.* LST's 117, 118, 277, 564, 567, 669, 672, 698, 916, 917 (F).	Lt. Commander Drexler, Louis A., Jr.
(c) TU 79.6.13 Reserve Unit ONE.* LST's 269, 270 (F), 615, 794, LSM's 134, 135.	Lieutenant Barber, Oliver W.
(d) TU 79.6.14 Reserve Unit TWO.** LSM's 24 (F), 136, 233, 29.	Lt. Commander Blanche, John G., Jr.
(e) TU 79.6.15 LCT Unit.* LCT's 688, 747, 821, 822, 830, 898, 992, 1016, 1296, 1298.	Lieutenant Franklin, Gordon P., USNR
(2) TU 79.6.2 LCI Unit.	Captain Rimer, Theodore W.
(a) TU 79.6.21 Mortar Unit.*** LCI(M)'s 658, 659, 660 (F), 751; LCI(A)'s 775, 974.	Lt. Commander Hannett, George W., USNR
(b) TU 79.6.22 Rocket Gunboat Unit.* LCI(G)'s 366, 372, 373, 439, 440, 451, 461, 462, 464, 465, 467, 472, 475.	Lieutenant Giliberty, Frank R., USNR
(c) TU 79.6.23 LCI Salvage Unit.* LCI(L)'s (S&FF) 738 (F), 598.	Captain Rimer, Theodore W.
(3) TU 79.11.3 Landing Craft Screen.****	Captain Coward, Jesse G.

* Action Report CTG 79.2, Leyte Operation, Serial 0032, November 4th, 1944.
** Action Report CTU 79.6.14, Seizure of Leyte, Serial 05, October 30th, 1944.
*** Action Report CTU 79.6.21, Seizure of Leyte, Serial 114, November 4th, 1944.
**** CTC 79 Attack Plan A304-44, October 2nd, 1944.

DESRON 54. DESDIV 107 less WADLEIGH and NORMAN SCOTT. REMEY, MERTZ, MONSSEN. DESDIV 108. McDERMUT (F), McGOWAN, McNAIR, MELVIN. PCE(R)'s 851, 852, 853.	Captain Coward, Jesse G. Captain Coward, Jesse G. Commander Phillips, Richard H.
(c) TG 79.19 Salvage Group.* less ARS GRAPPLE** plus ATF MENOMINEE ARS PRESERVER, ARL EGERIA, ATF's POTAWATOMI, CHOWANOC, CHICKASAW, MENOMINEE***	Commander Foss, Henry O., USNR
(b) COMMANDER ALLIED NAVAL FORCES SOWESPAC.	Vice Admiral Kinkaid, Thomas C.
(a) TG 70.1 Motor Torpedo Boats.	Commander Bowling, Selman S.
(1) TU 70.1.3 Leyte Group.	Lt. Commander Leeson, Robert, USNR
(a) MTB RON 7. MTB's 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 137, 138.	Lt. Commander Leeson, Robert, USNR
(b) MTB RON 12. MTB's 146, 150, 151, 152, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196.	Lieutenant Pullen, Weston C., Jr., USNR
(c) MTB RON 21. MTB's 320, 321, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328. 329, 330, 331.	Lieutenant Gleason, Carl T.
(d) MTB RON 33. MTB's 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497.	Lieutenant Preston, Arthur M., USNR
(e) MTB RON 36. MTB's 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, U.S. Army QA 13, One Crash Boat.	Lt. Commander Tappaan, Francis D., USNR

* CTG 79 Attack Plan A304-44, October 2nd, 1944.
** ARS GRAPPLE detached October 14th to other duty.
*** PRESERVER with YMS's 176, 311 and 389, as TU 79.12.1, arrived Leyte Gulf October 18th; CHOWANOC with TU 79.11.1; POTAWATOMI, MENOMINEE with TG 79.6; CHICKASAW with TG 77.5, arrived Leyte Gulf October 17th; EGERIA proceeding with TG 79.11.3.

(2) TU 70.1.6 Advance Tender Unit. — Lt. Commander Holroyd, Walter W., USNR

WACHAPREAGUE (AGP 8),
WILLOUGHBY (AGP 9),
HALF MOON (AVP 26),*
OYSTER BAY (AGP 6).

(b) TF 71 Submarines, West Australia. — Rear Admiral Christie, Ralph W.

(1) TG 71.1 U.S. Patrol Group — Rear Admiral Christie, Ralph W.

(a) On Patrol.
ANGLER, BLUEGILL, COD, DARTER,
LAPON, BERGALL, BONEFISH, DACE,
HAMMERHEAD, PADDLE, ROCK.

(b) En route Patrol.
BATFISH, BREAM, GUITARRO,
GURNARD, MUSKALLUNGE.

(c) En route Base.
BAYA, CAVALLA, RATON, RAY,
BECUNA, FLASHER, HOE.

(2) TG 71.7 British and Netherlands Patrol Group. — Rear Admiral Christie, Ralph W.

(a) On Patrol.
TANTIVY, STOIC, SIRDAR.

(b) En route Patrol.
STORM, TANTALUS.

(c) En route Base.
SEA ROVER, SPITEFUL, TELEMACHUS,
ZWAARDVISH, STUDY.

(c) TF 72 Submarines, East Australia. — Captain Haines, John M.

(1) TG 72.1 Special Mission Group. — Captain Haines, John M.
NAUTILUS, NARWHAL, CERC.

(d) TF 73 Naval Air Forces. — Rear Admiral Wagner, Frank D.

(1) TG 73.1 Flag Group. — Captain Evans, William A.
CURRITUCK (FF),
1 AVR.

* For movement to objective area only.

(2) TG 73.2 Strike and Rescue Group.*	Captain Oliver, Richard M.
(a) TU 73.2.1 Rescue Unit. ORCA, VPB-11 (8 PBY), 1 AVR.	Commander Fleming, Morton K., Jr.
(b) TU 73.2.2 Strike Unit. TANGIER, VPB-29 (8 PBY), 2 AVR's.	Captain Oliver, Richard M.
(3) TG 73.3. Manus Group.** HEDRON 10, Patrol Planes Present Manus, Carrier Replacement Pool, Patrol Plane Replacement Squadrons.	Captain Lambrecht, John O.
(4) TG 73.4 Search and Support Group. Patrol Planes Present Woendi.	Captain Jones, Carroll B.
(a) TU 73.4.1.*** HERON, VPB-52 Detachment (4 PBY)	Lieutenant Norcott, John M., USNR
(b) TU 73.4.2.**** VPB-146 (15 PV).	Lt. Commander Robinson, Jesse P., Jr.
(c) TU 73.4.3.**** VPB-101 (12 PB4Y).	Commander Miller, Justin A.
(d) TU 73.4.4.**** VPB-115 (12 PB4Y).	Commander Compton, James R.
(5) TG 73.7 Advanced Group.	Commander Renard, Jack C.
(a) TU 73.7.1.***** HALF MOON, SAN CARLOS,****** VPB-33 (15 PBY), VPB-34 (12 PBY), 1 AVR.	Commander Bandy, Jack I. Lt. Commander Anderson, Fernald P. Lt. Commander Utgoff, Vadym V.

* Based at Morotai. (Volume I, Table 5, Naval Air Forces SEVENTH Fleet).
** 15 VSB (VS 61) employed for offshore patrol not included.
*** Based at Hollandia.
**** Commenced operating from Morotai October 19th.
***** Operating out of Palau. (Volume I, Table 5, Naval Air Forces SEVENTH Fleet).
****** En route Leyte. (Volume I, Table 5, Naval Air Forces SEVENTH Fleet).

(b) TU 73.7.2. VPB-130* (15 PV).	Lt. Commander Dodds, Charles R.
(6) TG 70.2 Anti-Submarine Group.**	Rear Admiral Wagner, Frank D.
(a) TU 70.2.1 Hunter-Killer Unit. SAN PABLO, VPB-11 Detachment (4 PBY),	Commander Pickering, Samuel M.
CORTDIV 33 less MACHIAS. ALLENTOWN (F), CHARLOTTESVILLE, SANDUSKY.	Commander Ryssy, John W., USNR
(c) ALLIED AIR FORCES, SOWESPAC.***	Lt. General Kenney, George C., (AC)USA
(a) Far East Air Forces.	Lt. General Kenney, George C., (AC)USA
(1) FIFTH Air Force (Assault Force).	Lt. General Whitehead, Ennis C., (AC)USA
(a) FIFTH Fighter Command, 8th Fighter Group (52 P-38), 35th Fighter Group (65 P-47), 49th Fighter Group (69 P-38), 58th Fighter Group (73 P-47), 348th Fighter Group (104 P-47), 475th Fighter Group (68 P-38), 418th Night Fighter Squadron (11 P-61), 421st Night Fighter Squadron (12 P-61), 547th Night Fighter Squadron (12 P-61).	Brigadier General Wurtsmith, Paul B., (AC)USA

* En route from Kaneohe, Oahu, to Manus from October 15th to October 30th, 1944.

** Operated out of Morotai throughout October, 1944.

*** Data regarding the organization, disposition and strength of Allied Air Forces, SOWESPAC, as of October 17th was obtained from following source and estimated as of October 19th:

(1) Air Evaluation Board, Leyte Campaign, June 1945.
(2) Allied Air Forces SOWESPAC Operations Report No. 23, October 14th-25th, 1944.
(3) Letter from Director, Historical Division, USAF Air University Library, to President, Naval War College, February 25th, 1951.
(4) Letter from the Research Studies Institute, USAF Air University, to President, Naval War College, November 3rd, 1952.
(5) THIRTEENTH USAAF Letter of Instructions No. 2, October 6th, 1944.
(6) Allied Air Forces, SOWESPAC, Operations Instructions No. 71, September 24th, 1944.
(7) War Diary, Commander Aircraft Northern Solomons (CTG 70.9), October 1944.

(b) FIFTH Bomber Command. — Brigadier General Crabb, Jarred V., (AC) USA

3rd, 312th, 417th Light Bomb Groups (210 A-20),
38th, 345th Medium Bomb Groups (113 B-25),
22nd, 43rd, 90th, 380th Heavy Bomb Groups (164 B-24)

(c) FIFTY-FOURTH Troop Carrier Wing. — Brigadier General Carter, Warren R., (AC) USA

317th, 374th, 375th, 433rd Troop Carrier Groups (271 C-47).

(d) NINETY-FIRST Photographic Reconnaissance Wing. — Colonel Sams, William C., (AC) USA

6th Photographic Group (61 F-5, F-7),
71st Reconnaissance Group (16 B-25, 43 P-40, 12 L-5).

(2) THIRTEENTH Air Force (Supporting Force). — Maj. General Streett, St. Clair, (AC) USA

(a) THIRTEENTH Fighter Command. — Brigadier General Barnes, Earl W., (AC) USA

18th, 347th Fighter Groups (121 P-38),
419th Night Fighter Squadron (11 P-51).

(b) THIRTEENTH Bomber Command. — Brigadier General Matheny, William A., (AC) USA

42nd Medium Bomb Group (83 B-25),
5th, 307th Heavy Bomb Groups (78 B-24),
868th Heavy Bomb Squadron (11 LAB-24).

(c) Troop Carrier Group. — Colonel Sands, Harry J., Jr., (AC) USA

403rd Troop Carrier Group (48 C-47).

(b) TG 70.9 Aircraft Northern Solomons. — Maj. General Mitchell, Ralph J., USMC

(1) FIRST Marine Aircraft Wing. — Maj. General Mitchell, Ralph J., USMC

Air Group 12. — Colonel Willis, William A., USMC

VMF 115, 211, 218, 313 (62 F4U, 19 FG),
VMSB 142, 243 (41 SBD).

Air Group 14. — Colonel Hopkins, Zebulon C., USMC

VMF 212, 222, 223 (63 F4U),
VMXB 244 (21 SBD),
VMO 251 (21 F4U).

Air Group 24. — Colonel Meyer, Lyle H., USMCR

VMSB 133, 236, 241, 341 (87 SBD).

Air Group 61. — Colonel Smith, Perry K., USMC

VMB 413, 423, 433, 443 (46 [illegible]).

Air Group 25. — Colonel Koonce, Allen C., USMC

VMR 152, 153 (32 R4D).

(2) 79th RAAF Fighter Squadron (14 Spitfire).

(3) Royal New Zealand Air Units.

3rd Squadron, RNZAF (17 PV),
17th, 22nd Squadrons, RNZAF (36 F4U).

(4) 17th Photographic Squadron

(5 F5A, 1 RA-24B). — Captain Bartmar, Walter M., (AC) USA

(5) Attached Naval Squadrons.

VPB 148 (9 PV), — Lt. Commander Jakeman, Lloyd F.
VPB 44 (15 PBY), — Lt. Commander Bogart, Gerard S.
VPB 52 (11 PBY), — Lt. Commander Isner, Rennix, Jr., USNR
VS 61 (15 SBD, 1 J2F). — Lieutenant McGowan, William I.

(c) Royal Australian Air Force Command. — Air Vice Marshal Bostock, W.D., RAAF

378 VF, 96 VB(L), 36 VB(M), 12 VB(H), 42 VPB(MS).

(d) CINCPAC-CINCPOA. — Admiral Nimitz, Chester W.

(a) Western Pacific Task Forces. — Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr.

(1) THIRD Fleet. — Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr.

(a) TF 38 Fast Carrier Force — Vice Admiral Mitscher, Marc A.

(1) TG 38.1. — Vice Admiral McCain, John S.

(a) TU 38.1.1 Carrier Unit.	Vice Admiral McCain, John S.
CARDIV 5 less BATAAN	
WASP (FFF)	Captain Weller, Oscar A.
(CVG 14 - 50 VF,	
22 VB, 17 VT),	Commander Blitch, John D.
HORNET	Captain Doyle, Austin K.
(CVG 11 - 51 VF,	
23 VB, 17 VT),	Lt. Commander Smith, Lloyd A.
MONTEREY	Captain Ingersoll, Stuart H.
(CVLG 28 - 23 VF,	
9 VT).	Lt. Commander Mehle, Roger W.
(b) TU 38.1.2 Support Unit.	Rear Admiral Smith, Allan E.
CRUDIV 5.	Rear Admiral Smith, Allan E.
CHESTER (FF),	Captain Hartley, Henry
PENSACOLA,	Captain Mullinnix, Allen P.
SALT LAKE CITY.	Captain Busbey, Leroy W., Jr.
CRUDIV 11 less SAN	
JUAN, FLINT, RENO,	
TUCSON.	Captain Mullan, William E. A.
SAN DIEGO,	Captain Mullan, William E. A.
OAKLAND.	Captain Reed, Kendall S.
(c) TU 38.1.3 Screen Unit.	Captain Espe, Carl F.
MARSHALL.	
DESRON 4.	Captain Smith, Harold P.
CASSIN, DOWNES	
(from DESDIV 8).	
DESDIV 7.	Captain Smith, Harold P.
DUNLAP (FF), FANNING,	
CASE, CUMMINGS.	
DESRON 12 less	
less DESDIV 24.	Captain Burford, William P.
DESDIV 23 less	
FARENHOLT, LANSDOWNE,	
LARDNER.	Captain Burford, William P.
McCALLA (FF), WOODWORTH.	
DESRON 46 less DESDIV	
92 except BROWN.	Captain Espe, Carl F.
DESDIV 91 less	
CHARRETTE, BELL, BURNS,	
plus BROWN.	Captain Espe, Carl F.
IZARD (FF), CONNER, BROWN.	
(2) TG 38.2.	Rear Admiral Bogan, Gerald F.
(a) TU 38.2.1 Carrier Unit.	Rear Admiral Bogan, Gerald F.
CARDIV 4 less CABOT	
plus HANCOCK.	

INTREPID (FFF)	Captain Bolger, Joseph F.
(CVG 18 - 57 VF, 24 VB, 20 VT),	Commander Coleman, Wilson M.
BUNKER HILL	Captain Greer, Marshall R.
(CVG 8 - 53 VF, 24 VB, 18 VT)	Commander Shifley, Ralph L.
HANCOCK	Captain Dickey, Fred C.
(CVG 7 - 56 VF, 23 VB, 18 VT)	Commander Lamade, John D.
INDEPENDENCE	Captain Ewen, Edward C.
(CVLGN 41 - 12 VF(N) 8 VT(N).	Commander Caldwell, Turner F., Jr.
(b) TU 38.2.2 Support Unit.	Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
BATDIV 7	Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
IOWA (FF),	Captain McCann, Allan R.
NEW JERSEY (FFFFF).	Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr.
	Captain Holden, Carl F.
CRUDIV 14 less VICKSBURG, HOUSTON.	Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
VINCENNES (F),	Captain Brown, Allen D.
MIAMI.	Captain Crawford, John G.
(c) TU 38.2.3 Screen Unit.	Captain Womble, John P., Jr.
DESRON 52.	
DESDIV 103 less MILLER, STEPHAN POTTER, THE SULLIVANS.	Captain Womble, John P., Jr.
TINGEY (FF), OWEN.	
DESDIV 104 less MARSHALL.	Captain Kenny, William T.
HICKOX (F), HUNT, LEWIS HANCOCK.	
DESRON 53.	Captain Jarrett, Harry B.
DESDIV 105	Captain Jarrett, Harry B.
HALSEY POWELL (FF) CUSHING, COLAHAN, UHLMANN, BENHAM.	
DESDIV 106.	Captain Tompkins, Benjamin F.
YARNALL (F), TWINING, STOCKHAM, WEDDERBURN.	
(3) TG 38.3.	Rear Admiral Sherman, Frederick C.
(a) TU 38.3.1 Carrier Unit.	Rear Admiral Sherman, Frederick C.
CARDIV 1 less ENTERPRISE, COWPENS plus LEXINGTON, PRINCETON, LANGLEY.	Rear Admiral Sherman, Frederick C.

ESSEX (FFF)	Captain Wieber, Carlos W.
(CVG 15 - 53 VF, 25 VB, 17 VT),	Commander McCampbell, David
LEXINGTON (FFFF)	Vice Admiral Mitscher, Marc A.
	Captain Litch, Ernest W.
(CVG 19 - 40 VF, 30 VB, 18 VT),	Commander Winters, Theodore H., Jr.
PRINCETON	Captain Buracker, William H.
(CVLG 27 - 23 VF, 9 VT)	Lt. Commander Bardshar, Frederic A.
LANGLEY	Captain Wegforth, John F.
(CVLG 44 - 24 VF, 9 VT).	Commander Wordell, Malcolm T.
(b) TU 38.3.2 Heavy Support Unit.	Vice Admiral Lee, Willis A., Jr.
BATDIV 6 less NORTH CAROLINA.	Vice Admiral Lee, Willis A., Jr.
WASHINGTON (FFFF).	Captain Cooley, Thomas R.
BATDIV 8 less INDIANA.	Rear Admiral Davis, Glenn B.
MASSACHUSETTS (F).	Captain Warlick, William W.
BATDIV 9.	Rear Admiral Hanson, Edward W.
SOUTH DAKOTA (F),	Captain Riggs, Ralph S.
ALABAMA.	Captain Murphy, Vincent R.
(c) TU 38.3.3. Light Support Unit.	Rear Admiral DuBose, Laurence T.
CRUDIV 13 less BILOXI.	Rear Admiral DuBose, Laurence T.
SANTE FE (FF),	Captain Wright, Jerauld
BIRMINGHAM,	Captain Inglis, Thomas B.
MOBILE,	Captain Miller, Christopher C.
RENO.	Captain Alexander, Ralph C.
(d) TU 38.3.4 Screen Unit.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
DESRON 50.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
DESDIV 100.	Captain Miller, Wallace J.
COGSWELL (F), CAPERTON, INGERSOLL, KNAPP.	
DESDIV 99.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
CLARENCE K. BRONSON (FF), COTTEN, DORTCH, GATLING, HEALY.	
DESRON 55.	Captain Jarrell, Albert E.
DESDIV 109.	Captain Jarrell, Albert E.
PORTERFIELD (FF), CALLAGHAN, CASSIN YOUNG, IRWIN, PRESTON.	
DESDIV 110 less PRITCHETT.	Commander Edsall, Warren R.
LAWS (F), LONGSHAW, MORRISON.	

(4) TG 38.4.	Rear Admiral Davison, Ralph E.
(a) TU 38.4.1 Carrier Unit.	Rear Admiral Davison, Ralph E.
CARDIV 2 less HANCOCK.	Rear Admiral Davison, Ralph E.
FRANKLIN (FFF)	Captain Shoemaker, James M.
(CVG 13 - 35 VF,	
28 VB, 17 VT),	Commander Kibbe, Richard L.
SAN JACINTO	Captain Martin, Harold M.
(CVLG 51 - 22 VF,	
9 VT)	Commander Moore, Charles L., Jr.
TU 38.4.11	Rear Admiral Sallada, Harold B.*
ENTERPRISE (F)	Captain Glover, Cato D., Jr.
(CVG 20 - 49 VF,	
17 VB, 12 VT),	Commander Smith, Daniel F., Jr.
BELLEAU WOOD	Captain Perry, John
(CVLG 21 - 24 VF,	
9 VT).	Commander Casey, Vincent F.
(b) TU 38.4.2	
Light Support Unit.	Captain McGurl, Daniel M.
BILOXI (FF),	Captain McGurl, Daniel M.
NEW ORLEANS.	Captain Hurff, Jack E.
(c) TU 38.4.3 Screen Unit.	Captain Long, Victor D.
DESRON 6.	Captain Long, Victor D.
DESDIV 11 less	
CRAVEN.	Captain Long, Victor D.
MAURY (FF)	
GRIDLEY, HELM,	
McCALL.**	
DESDIV 12.	Captain Poehlmann, Karl F.
MUGFORD (F),	
RALPH TALBOT,	
PATTERSON, BAGLEY.	
DESDIV 24 less	
GRAYSON.	Captain Greenacre, Alvord J.
WILKES, NICHOLSON,	
SWANSON (F).	
(5) TF 34*** Heavy Surface	
Striking Force.	Vice Admiral Lee, Willis A., Jr.

* Commander Carrier Divison 6. PRINCETON and LANGLEY were assigned to TU 38.3.1.

** Temporarily with TU 30.8.5.

*** Since TF 34 and TG 34.5 were made effective October 25th, the tentative task organization for these groups as issued by Commander Battleships Pacific Fleet in COMBATPAC Operation Order No. 13-44 Addendum No. 1, Serial 00080, October 16th, 1944, is herewith included. The actual organization made effective October 25th differed somewhat from the above organization.

(a) TG 34.1 Battle Line.	Vice Admiral Lee, Willis A., Jr.
(1) TU 34.1.1	Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
BATDIV 7.	Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
IOWA (FF),	Captain McCann, Allan R.
NEW JERSEY (FFFFF)	Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr.
	Captain Holden, Carl F.
(2) TU 34.1.2.	Rear Admiral Davis, Glenn B.
BATDIV 8.	Rear Admiral Davis, Glenn B.
MASSACHUSETTS (F).	Captain Warlick, William W.
WASHINGTON (FFFF)	Captain Cooley, Thomas R.
(3) TU 34.1.3.	Rear Admiral Hanson, Edward W.
BATDIV 9.	Rear Admiral Hanson, Edward W.
SOUTH DAKOTA (F),	Captain Riggs, Ralph S.
ALABAMA.	Captain Murphy, Vincent R.
(b) TG 34.2 Right Flank.	Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
(1) TU 34.2.1.	
(2) TU 34.2.2.	Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
CRUDIV 14 less VICKSBURG, HOUSTON plus BILOXI.	Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
VINCENNES (FF),	Captain Brown, Allen D.
MIAMI,	Captain Crawford, John G.
BILOXI.	Captain McGurl, Daniel M.
(3) TU 34.2.3.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
DESDIV 99	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
CLARENCE K. BRONSON (F), COTTEN, DORTCH, GATLING, HEALY.	
(4) TU 34.2.4.	Captain Kenny, William T.
DESDIV 104 less MARSHALL.	Captain Kenny, William T.
HICKOX (F), HUNT, LEWIS HANCOCK.	
(c) TG 34.3 Center.	
(d) TG 34.4 Left Flank.	Rear Admiral Smith, Allan E.

(1) TU 34.4.1. Rear Admiral Smith, Allan E.
CRUDIV 5.
CHESTER (FF), Captain Hartley, Henry
PENSACOLA, Captain Mullinnix, Allen P.
SALT LAKE CITY. Captain Busbey, Leroy W., Jr.

(2) TU 34.4.2.

(3) TU 34.4.3. Captain Espe, Carl F.
DESDIV 91 less
CHARETTE, BELL,
BURNS plus
PRESTON, UHLMANN. Captain Espe, Carl F.
IZARD (F), CONNER,
PRESTON, UHLMANN.

(e) TG 34.9 Supporting Carrier Group.

(1) TU 34.9.1 Carrier Unit ONE.
1 CVL.
PATTERSON, BAGLEY. Commander Shea, William H., Jr.

(2) TU 34.9.2 Carrier Unit TWO.
1 CVL.
DESDIV 12 less
PATTERSON, BAGLEY. Captain Poehlmann, Karl F.
MUGFORD (F),
RALPH TALBOT.

(6) TG 34.5* Special Group. Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.

(a) TU 34.1.1 Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
BATDIV 7 Rear Admiral Badger, Oscar C.
IOWA (FF), Captain McCann, Allan R.
NEW JERSEY (FFFFF). Admiral Halsey, William F., Jr.
Captain Holden, Carl F.

(b) TU 34.2.2. Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
CRUDIV 14 less
VICKSBURG, HOUSTON
plus BILOXI. Rear Admiral Whiting, Francis E.M.
VINCENNES (F), Captain Brown, Allen D.
MIAMI, Captain Crawford, John G.
BILOXI. Captain McGurl, Daniel M.

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* Since TF 34 and TG 34.5 were made effective October 25th, the tentative task organization for these groups as issued by Commander Battleships Pacific Fleet in COMBATPAC Operation Order No. 13-44 Addendum No. 1, Serial 00080, October 16th, 1944, is herewith included. The actual organization made effective October 25th differed somewhat from the above organization.

(c) TU 34.2.3.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
DESDIV 99.	Captain Wilkinson, Edwin R.
CLARENCE K. BRONSON (F), COTTEN, DORTCH, GATLING, HEALY.	
(d) TU 34.9.2 Carrier Unit TWO.	
1 CVL.	
DESDIV 12 less PATTERSON, BAGLEY.	Captain Poehlmann, Karl F.
MUGFORD (F), RALPH TALBOT.	
(b) TG 30.3.	Rear Admiral Wiltse, Lloyd J.
(1) TU 30.3.1 Towing Unit.	Rear Admiral Wiltse, Lloyd J.
BOSTON (FF).	Captain Herrmann, Ernest E.
HOUSTON (PAWNEE towing).	Captain Behrens, William W.
CANBERRA (MUNSEE towing).	Captain Early, Alexander R.
DESDIV 92 less BRADFORD, BROWN, plus GRAYSON, THE SULLIVANS, STEPHAN POTTER.	Captain Sweetser, Willard M.
BOYD (F), COWELL, GRAYSON, THE SULLIVANS, STEPHAN POTTER.	
(2) TU 30.3.2 Air Support Unit.	Rear Admiral Joy, Charles T.
WICHITA (F).	Rear Admiral Joy, Charles T.
	Captain Spencer, Douglas A.
CABOT	Captain Michael, Stanley J.
(CVLG 29 - 23 VF, 9 VT).	Lt. Commander Eder, Willard E.
COWPENS	Captain Taylor, Herbert W., Jr.
(CVLG 22 - 23 VF, 9 VT).	Lt. Commander Jenkins, Thomas H., USNR
BURNS (F), BELL, CHARRETTE, MILLER.	Commander Bullen, Jacob T., Jr.
(c) TG 30.5 Air Search and Reconnaissance.	Commodore Ketcham, Dixwell
(1) TU 30.5.1 Seaplane Squadrons and Tenders, Kossol Passage.	Captain Goodney, Willard K.
CHANDELEUR (F), POCOMOKE, MAKINAC, YAKUTAT.	
VPB-16 (13 PBM).	Lt. Commander Scarpino, William J.
VPB-202 (13 PBM).	Commander Leeman, Robert W.
VPB-216 (14 PBM).	Commander Cook, Harry E., Jr.
VH-1 Detachment (5 PBM).	

(2) TU 30.5.2 Seaplane Squadrons and Tenders, Saipan.	Commander Lyons, Raymond R.
KENNETH WHITING (F),	
COOS BAY, SHELIKOF.	
VPB-4 (16 PB2Y).	Lt. Commander Curtis, Frederick L.
VPB-18 (12 PBM)	Lt. Commander Brower, Charles M., USNR
VH-1 Detachment (5 PBM)	
(3) TU 30.5.3 Land Plane Search Group, Tinian.	Commander Rigsbee, Everett O., Jr.
VPB-102 (15 PB4Y).	Lt. Commander Pearson, Gerald R., USNR
VPB-116 (15 PB4Y).	Commander Gumz, Donald G.
VPB-117 (15 PB4Y).	Commander Rigsbee, Everett O., Jr.
VPB-150 (16 PV).	Commander Riddell, Robert S.
VPB-151 (15 PV).	Commander Masterton, Paul
(4) TU 30.5.4 Seaplane and Tender Detachment, Ulithi.	Captain McLean, Gordon A.
HAMLIN (FF),	
CASCO,	
ONSLOW,	
VPB-17 (13 PBM).	Lt. Commander Kuehner, Kenneth A., USNR
(d) TG 30.7 Hunter-Killer Group.	Captain Saunders, William V.
CVE HOGGATT BAY (FF).	Captain Saunders, William V.
DE's BEBAS (F), SEID,	Commander Fowler, Thompson F.
STEELE, SAMUEL S. MILES.	
(e) TG 30.8 Fleet Oiler and Transport Carrier Group.	Captain Acuff, Jasper T.
7 CVE, 7 DD, 15 DE, 24 AO.	
(2) TF 59 Shore-Based Aircraft, Forward Area, Central Pacific.	Major General Hale, Willis H., (AC) USA
(a) TG 59.1 Marianas Air Defense Command.	Brigadier General Cushman, Thomas J., USMC

Army.
318th Fighter Group (82 VF).
Detachment 6th Night Fighter Squadron (6 VF(N)).
Detachment 28th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron (4 F5B).

Marine.
VMF 216, 217, 225, 321 (82 VF).
VMF(N) 534 (14 VF(N)).
VMTB 131, 242 (40 VTB)
VMO 1, 2, (20 VO).

(b) TG 59.2 Bomber Command. — Brigadier General Landon, Truman H., (AC) USA

Army.
30th, 494th Bomber Groups (109 VBH).

(c) TG 59.5 Transport Air Group. — Colonel McQuade, Thomas J., USMC

Marine.
VMR 253 (16 VR).

(d) TG 59.6 Garrison Force, Western Carolines. — Major General Moore, James T., USMC

(1) TU 59.6.2 Air Defense Command Palaus. — Colonel Bailey, Caleb T., USMC

Army.
Detachment 28th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron (3 F5B).

Marine.
VMF 114, 122 (42 VF).
VMF(N) 541 (13 VF(N)).
VMTB 134 (24 VTB).

(b) TF 17 Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet — Vice Admiral Lockwood, Charles A., Jr.

(1) TG 17.1 Empire Patrol Group.

(a) On Patrol, Single Submarines.
BURRFISH, BARBEL, STERLET, SAURY, SKATE, SEA DOG, TAMBOR, GREENLING, APOGON, SNOOK, SEA FOX, BILLFISH, COBIA, SEAL.

(b) On Patrol, Coordinated Attack Groups.

(1) TG 17.11. — Commander Blakely, Edward N.
SHARK (F), SEADRAGON, BLACKFISH.

(2) TG 17.14. — Commander Lee, John E.
PERCH, CROAKER (F).

(3) TG 17.15. — Commander Banister, Alan B.
SAWFISH (F), ICEFISH, DRUM.

(4) TG 17.17. Commander Wogan, Thomas L.
BESUGO (F), GABILAN,
RONQUIL.

(5) TG 17.19. Commander Coye, John S., Jr.
SILVERSIDES (F), TRIGGER,
SALMON, TANG.

(c) En route Patrol.
KINGFISH, PILOTFISH, SARGO, POGY,
SCAMP, ALBACORE, HALIBUT, HADDOCK,
TUNA, BLACKFIN, JALLAO, PINTADO, ATULE.

(d) En route Base.
GUARDFISH, ASPRO, CABRILLA, SNAPPER,
PIRANHA, TREPANG, SEGUNDO, TILEFISH,
SEAHORSE, SEA DEVIL, WHALE, PARCHE,
SAILFISH.

(2) TG 17.2 Mandate Patrol Group.

(a) On Patrol.
PERMIT.

(e) CHINA- BURMA-INDIA THEATER.* General Stilwell, Joseph W., USA

(a) FOURTEENTH Air Force. Major General Chennault, Claire L., (AC) USA

308th Heavy Bomb Group (26 B-24, 20 LAB-24).
341st Medium Bomb Group (23 B-25).
51st Fighter Group (55 P-40, 19 P-51).
23rd Fighter Group (47 P-40, 25 P-51).

(b) TWENTIETH Bomber Command. Major General LeMay, Curtis E., (AC) USA

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* Data regarding the organization, disposition and strength of China-based Allied air forces supporting the Leyte campaign was obtained from the following sources:
(1) Letters from the Director, Library Division, USAF Air University to the President, Naval War College, November 8th, 1950, and February 23rd, 1951.
(2) Letter from the Research Studies Institute, USAF Air University to the President, Naval War College, November 3rd, 1952.
(3) TWENTIETH Bomber Command Tactical Mission Reports Nos. 10, 11 and 12, October 14th, 16th, and 17th, 1944.

FIFTY-EIGHTH Bomb Wing.*

40th Bomb Group (35 B-29).	Colonel Blanchard, William H., (AC)USA
444th Bomb Group (35 B-29).	Colonel Harvey, Alva L., (AC) USA
462nd Bomb Group (34 B-29).	Colonel Kalberer, Alfred F., (AC) USA
468th Bomb Group (36 B-29).	Colonel Faulkner, Ted C., (AC) USA

* Headquarters discontinued October 12th, 1944.

APPENDIX II

ORGANIZATION OF COMBINED FLEET

2400 OCTOBER 19TH

BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF

COMMANDER IN CHIEF COMBINED FLEET	Admiral Toyoda, Soemu
(a) MOBILE Force	Vice Admiral Ozawa, Jisaburo
(1) Main Force	Vice Admiral Ozawa, Jisaburo
CARDIV 1*	Rear Admiral Komura, Keizo
CV AMAGI (F)	Rear Admiral Yamamori, Kamenosuke**
CV UNRYU	Captain Konishi, Kaname
CV KATSURAGI	Captain Kawabata, Masaharu
Air Group 601, less elements of	
CARDIV 3	Vice Admiral Ozawa, Jisaburo
CV ZUIKAKU (FFFF)	Rear Admiral Kaizuka, Takeo**
CVL ZUIHO	Captain Sugiura, Kuro
CVL CHITOSE	Captain Kishi, Yoshiyuki
CVL CHIYODA	Captain Jo, Eiichiro
Air Group 601, elements of 653, elements of	
CARDIV 4	Rear Admiral Matsuda, Chiaki
BB/XCV HYUGA (F)	Rear Admiral Nomura, Tomekichi**
BB/XCV ISE	Rear Admiral Nakase, Noboru**
XCV JUNYO*	Captain Shibuya, Harumi
CVL RYUHO*	Captain Matsuura, Yoshi
Air Group 634***	
DESRON 10, elements of	Captain Amano, Shigetaka
DESDIV 41 (less FUYUZUKI)	Captain Wakita, Kiichiro
DD SHIMOTSUKI	
DESDIV 61 (less SUZUTSUKI)	Captain Amano, Shigetaka
DD's HATSUZUKI (F), AKITSUKI, WAKATSUKI	

* Did not sortie with Main Force.

** Promoted to Rear Admiral October 15th, 1944.

*** It seems probable that no elements of Air Group 634 were embarked in CARDIV's 3 or 4 since all of them had been transferred to the SIXTH Base Air Force.

CORTRON 31, elements of	Rear Admiral Edo, Heitaro
CL OYODO (FF)	Captain Mudaguchi, Kakuro
CL ISUZU	Captain Matsuda, Gengo
DESDIV 43, elements of	
MAKI, KIRI, KUWA.	
DESRON 11	Rear Admiral Takama, Tamotsu
CL TAMA (F)	Captain Yamamoto, Iwata
DD's SUGI, MOMI,* KAYA*	
KASHI,* HINOKI (F).*	
931st Air Group, elements of	
Supply Force,** Main Force*	
AO JINEI MARU	
AO TAKANE MARU	
DD AKIKAZE	
Escort Vessels 22, 33, 43.	
(2) FIRST Striking Force	Vice Admiral Kurita, Takeo
First Section	Vice Admiral Kurita, Takeo
BATDIV 1	Vice Admiral Ugaki, Matome
BB YAMATO (FF)	Rear Admiral Morishita, Nobuei***
BB MUSASHI	Rear Admiral Inokuchi, Toshihei***
BB NAGATO	Rear Admiral Kobe, Yuji***
BATDIV 2	Vice Admiral Nishimura, Shoji
BB YAMASHIRO (F)	Rear Admiral Shinoda, Katsukiyo***
BB FUSO	Rear Admiral Ban, Masami***
CRUDIV 4	Vice Admiral Kurita, Takeo
CA ATAGO (FF)	Rear Admiral Araki, Tsuto***
CA TAKAO	Captain Onoda, Sutejiro
CA CHOKAI	Captain Tanaka, Jyo
CA MAYA	Captain Oe, Ranji
CRUDIV 5	Vice Admiral Hashimoto, Shintaro
CA MYOKO (F)	Rear Admiral Ishihara, Itsu***
CA HAGURO	Captain Sugiura, Kajyu
CA MOGAMI	Captain Toma, Ryo

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* Did not sortie with Main Force.

** Although the tankers of the Supply Force did not pass to the command of Commander Main Force until 0100 October 21st in accordance with Combined Fleet 201712 (Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 480), nevertheless Commander Main Force in his dispatch 182321 gave preliminary instructions for the organization and movements of this Supply Force.

*** Promoted to Rear Admiral October 15th, 1944.

DESRON 2 CL NOSHIRO (F) DD's SHIMAKAZE, SHIGURE.	Rear Admiral Hayakawa, Mikio Captain Kajiwara, Sueyoshi
DESDIV 2 DD's HAYASHIMO, AKISHIMO, KIYOSHIMO.	Captain Shiraishi, Nagoyoshi
DESDIV 31 DD's KISHINAMI, NAGANAMI, OKINAMI, ASASHIMO.	Captain Fukuoka, Tokujiro
DESDIV 32 DD's HAMANAMI, FUJINAMI	Captain Oshima, Ichitaro
Second Section	Vice Admiral Suzuki, Yoshio
BATDIV 3 BB KONGO (FF) BB HARUNA	Vice Admiral Suzuki, Yoshio* Rear Admiral Shimazaki, Toshio Rear Admiral Shigenaga, Kazue*
CRUDIV 7 CA KUMANO (F) CA SUZUYA CA TONE CA CHIKUMA	Vice Admiral Shiraishi, Kazutaka Captain Hitomi, Soichiro Captain Teraoka, Masao Captain Mayuzumi, Haruo Captain Norimitsu, Saiji
DESRON 10 less DESDIV's 41, 61 CL YAHAGI (F)	Rear Admiral Kimura, Susumu Captain Yoshimura, Matake
DESDIV 4 DD's MICHISHIO (F),** NOWAKI,** ASAGUMO, YAMAGUMO	Captain Takahashi, Kameshiro
DESDIV 17 DD's URAKAZE (F), HAMAKAZE, YUKIKAZE, ISOKAZE	Captain Tanii, Tamotsu

Service Force

AO's YUHO MARU, HAKKO MARU, OMUROSAN MARU,
ITSUKUSHIMA MARU, MANEI MARU, NIPPO MARU,
NICHIEI MARU, RYOEI MARU

Escorts: MANJU,*** MIYAKE,*** CHIBURI, KURAHASHI,
YURISHIMA, ETOROFU, Escorts Nos. 19, 27, 32

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* Promoted to Rear Admiral October 15th, 1944.
** Temporarily Escorting HAKKO MARU and YUHO MARU to Brunei Bay.
*** Although assigned Commander FIRST Striking Force October 16th were being employed at this time in antisubmarine work off west Formosa.

(b) SIXTH Base Air Force	Vice Admiral Fukudome, Shigeru
(1) Western Attack Force ONE	Vice Admiral Yamada, Sadayoshi
(2) Western Attack Force TWO	Rear Admiral Kikuchi, Tomozo
(3) Western Attack Force THREE	Rear Admiral Joshima, Takatsugu
(4) Western Attack Force FOUR	Major General Yamamoto, Kenji
(c) Advance Expeditionary Force	Vice Admiral Miwa, Shigeyoshi
FIRST Submarine Force	Vice Admiral Miwa, Shigeyoshi
I-26, I-38, I-41, I-45, I-46, I-53, I-54, I-56, I-177, RO-41, RO-43, RO-46, RO-47, RO-109,* RO-112.* XAS TSUKUSHI MARU	
(d) Southwest Area Force	Vice Admiral Mikawa, Gunichi
(1) SECOND Striking Force	Vice Admiral Shima, Kiyohide
CRUDIV 21	Vice Admiral Shima, Kiyohide
CA NACHI (FFF),	Captain Kanooka, Empei
CA ASHIGARA	Captain Miura, Hayao
DESRON 1	Rear Admiral Kimura, Masatomi
CL ABUKUMA (FF)	Captain Hanada, Takuo
DESDIV 7	Commander Iwagami, Jiichi
DD's AKEBONO (F), USHIO	
DESDIV 18	Captain Inoue, Yoshio
DD's KASUMI, SHIRANUHI (F)	
DESDIV 21	Commander Ishii, Hisashi
DD's WAKABA (F), HATSUSHIMO, HATSUHARU	
CRUDIV 16 (less KITAGAMI)**	Vice Admiral Sakonju, Naomasa
CA AOBA	Captain Yamazumi, Chusaburo
CL KINU	Captain Kawasaki, Harumi
DD URANAMI	

* Ordered to report to CinC Combined Fleet for duty with the FIRST Submarine Force.

** Assigned to counterlanding operations.

(2) Philippines Force	Vice Admiral Mikawa, Gunichi
31st Special Base Force (Manila)	Rear Admiral Arima, Kaoru
32nd Special Base Force (Davao)	Rear Admiral Doi, Naoharu
33rd Special Base Force (Cebu)	Rear Admiral Harada, Kaku
954th Air Group	Commander Nakagome, Yoshimasa
955th Air Group	Commander Imagawa, Fukuo
Attached Forces 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet	
(3) THIRD Base Air Force	Vice Admiral Mikawa, Gunichi
28th Air Flotilla	Rear Admiral Kogure, Gunji
331st Air Group (less elements)	Captain Shimoda, Hisao
381st Air Group	Captain Nakajima, Daizo
(4) FIFTH Base Air Force	Vice Admiral Teraoka, Kimpei
23rd Air Flotilla (North of Australia Air Base Unit)	Rear Admiral Furukawa, Tamotsu
26th Air Flotilla (Philippine Air Base Unit)	*
61st Air Flotilla (West Caroline Air Base Unit)	Vice Admiral Ueno, Keizo
153rd Air Group	Captain Takahashi, Nobukichi
201st Air Group	Captain Yamamoto, Sakae
761st Air Group	Captain Maeda, Kosei
1021st Air Group	Captain Kaito, Keiroku
331st Air Group (elements of)	
(e) Anti-Submarine Patrol Force	
CORTRON 31, (elements of)	
DESDIV 30 (less AKIKAZE) UZUKI, YUZUKI	
DESDIV 43, (elements of) MOMO, TAKE, UME	
933rd Air Group	Captain Mita, Kunio
(f) "T" Attack Force	Captain Kuno, Shuzo
762nd Air Group	
752nd, 801st Air Groups (elements of)	
98th, 7th, Heavy Bomber Regiments (Army)	

* Commanded temporarily by Senior Officer after death of Rear Admiral Arima, Masafumi, October 15th.

APPENDIX III

AIR AND SURFACE OPERATIONS

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

(1) Areas of Responsibility for Air Operations. (Plate XXI)

The areas of responsibility for air operations during the early phases of the Leyte operation stem, for the most part, from the assigned tasks of the various forces concerned rather than from any well-defined geographical boundaries.

In general, areas of air responsibility were as follows:*

(a) CAAF, SOWESPAC

Exclusive of searches, and until land-based bombers were established on Morotai: the Sulu Archipelago, and the Mindanao area south of Latitude 08°-45'N.

(b) COMTHIRDFLT

The Philippine Island area, exclusive of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

(c) CANF, SOWESPAC

The Leyte-Samar area, in coordination with the THIRD Fleet.

Areas of responsibility for air operations, and the coordination arrangements between the various air forces, are discussed in more detail below:

CAAF SOWESPAC**

The area responsibility for CAAF, SOWESPAC was two-fold. First, he had a responsibility for long-range search and reconnaissance in accordance with current plans. Secondly, he had an attack and neutralization responsibility.

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* CANF, SOWESPAC Operation Plan No. 13-44, Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Appendix 6 to Annex C.

** CAAF, SOWESPAC Operations Instructions No. 71, September 24th, 1944; CAAF SOWESPAC Operations Instructions (Revised) No. 71/1 October 4th, 1944.

(1) Long-Range Search and Reconnaissance.

CAAF SOWESPAC's area of long-range search and reconnaissance, flown by Navy PB4Y's from Owi, under the operational control of C.G. FIFTH Air Force, was established by Search Plan Easy (Plate VIII). This area was extended upon commencing Search Plan Fox (Plate XIX), from Morotai on October 19th. Thus, the extent of his search and reconnaissance responsibility was defined by the limits of these two search plans. In addition, Biak-based XB-24's conducted night searches over the Sulu Sea and Morotai-based PBY's made night searches and attacks along the northeastern shores of Borneo as far north as Sandakan.

(2) Attack and Neutralization.

In regard to neutralization and attack CAAF SOWESPAC was assigned the following tasks: (a) neutralize hostile air forces and destroy enemy shipping in the Mindanao area south of Latitude 08°-45'N, commencing on D-10; (b) when heavy bombers were established on Morotai extend neutralization to the Visayas, exclusive of Leyte and Samar, and upon departure of the escort carriers (TG 77.4) extend the Visayas area of neutralization to include Leyte and Samar; (c) destroy enemy shipping and neutralize hostile air forces in the Celebes Sea, the Sulu Archipelago and northeastern Borneo areas; (d) initiate strikes against the Brunei area of Borneo at the earliest practicable date; (e) upon the establishment of fighter aircraft on Leyte relieve the carrier-based air forces of responsibility for local protection and close air support of ground forces in the objective area.

COMTHIRDFLT

COMTHIRDFLT's area of responsibility for air and surface operations in support of KING II was as follows:*

(1) Air Operations.

(a) Search and Reconnaissance:

(1) Conduct long-range daylight searches from Kossol Passage as indicated in Annex A of this Appendix, employing aircraft from TG 30.5. In addition, conduct periodic carrier-based air searches as deemed necessary.

(b) Air Attack.

(1) Conduct maximum offensive strikes, employing land-based aircraft of TF 59, against targets in the Volcano and Bonin Islands, D-12, D-11 and D-10 days to prevent enemy air observation of THIRD Fleet units at Ulithi.

(2) Conduct carrier air strikes against (a) Okinawa on D-10 day, (b) Formosa on D-8, D-7 and D-6 days, and (c) Philippines except Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago commencing D-4 day.

---

* COMTHIRDFLT Operation Order No. 21-44; COMTHIRDFLT Dispatch 031600 October 1944 to CTF's 38, 57, 59, and CTG's 30.5 and 30.8.

(2) Surface Operations. (Plate XXI)

THIRDFLT surface units operating in the Visayas area remain at all times north of Latitude 11°-00'N while west of Longitude 130°-00'E.

COMSEVENTHFLT*

The escort carriers (TG 77.4) of the SEVENTH Fleet were to provide direct air support to the preliminary landings on Suluan, Dinagat and Homonhon Islands commencing on D-3, and the main landings at Leyte on D-day. In the latter landings, they were to be assisted by the carrier aircraft of the THIRD Fleet, under the coordination control of COMSEVENTHFLT. Subsequent to D-day, THIRD Fleet carrier strikes were to be made as requested and coordinated by COMSEVENTHFLT or COMSOWESPAC.

The notice of withdrawal of THIRD Fleet support to KING II after October 15th, in order to seek an engagement to the north with the Japanese Fleet, prompted COMSEVENTHFLT to modify the scheduled air strikes by COMTHIRDFLT against the Visayas by giving responsibility for these strikes to CTG 77.4 on D-3, D-2 and D-1, not to interfere with close air support of the landings.** Thus, the air responsibility of CTG 77.4 was extended from the Leyte - Samar area to the other islands of the Visayas during this period, and later as required by the tactical situation.

COMSEVENTHFLT exercised, through his Commander Support Aircraft, direct operational control of all aircraft in the objective area (Leyte - Samar area) from the time of the arrival of his escort carriers off Leyte (October 17th) until he was relieved of this function by CAAF SOWESPAC (October 27th) when the FORTY-NINTH Fighter Group was landed at Tacloban airstrip. All air target assignments were made by COMSOWESPAC or COMSEVENTHFLT. Air operations by land and carrier-based aircraft were coordinated by COMSOWESPAC.

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* CANF SOWESPAC Operation Plan No. 13-44, Serial 00022A, September 26th, 1944, Appendix 6 to Annex G.

** CTF 77 Dispatch 150542, October 1944, to COMSOWESPAC, CINCPOA, etc.

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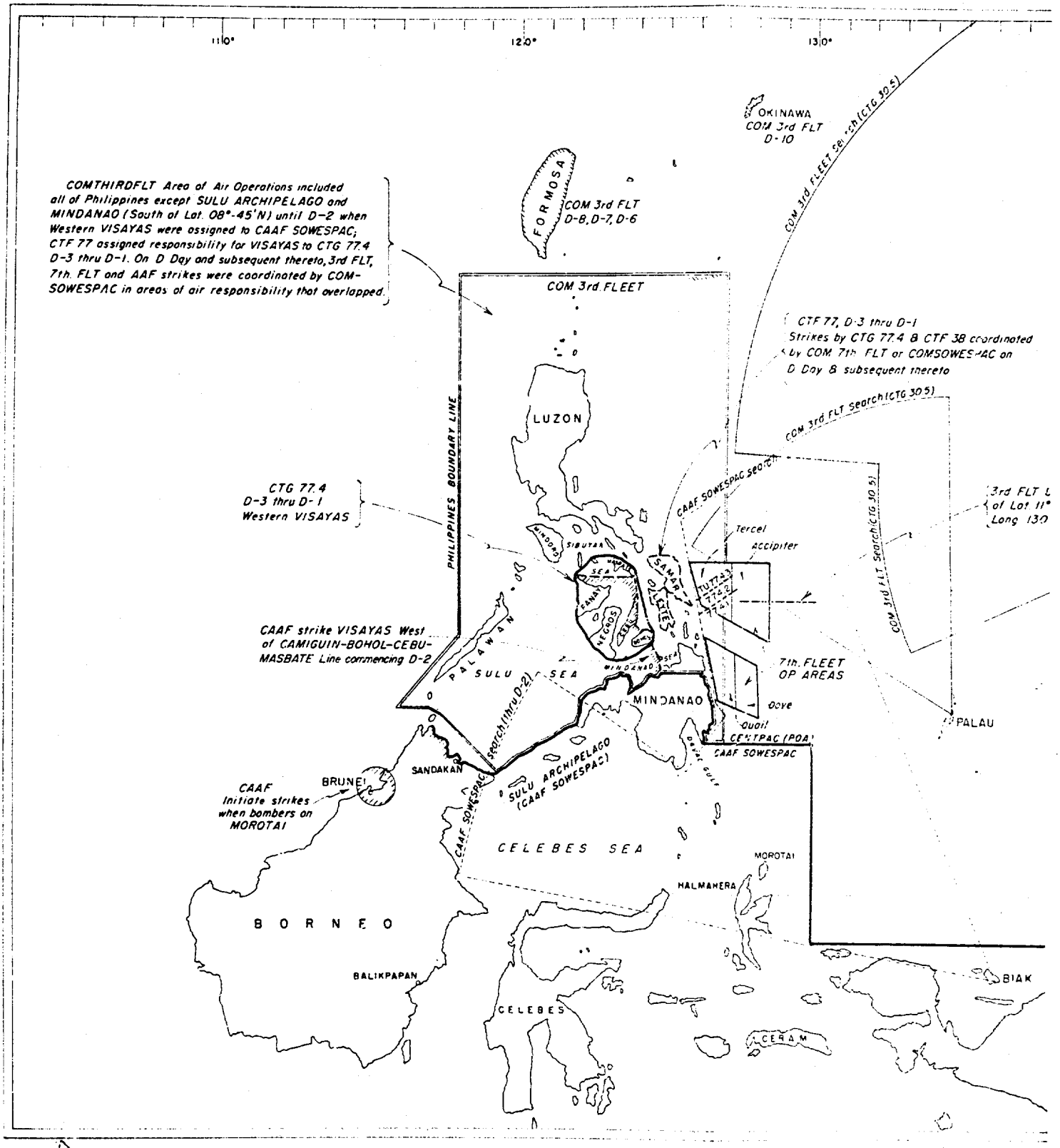

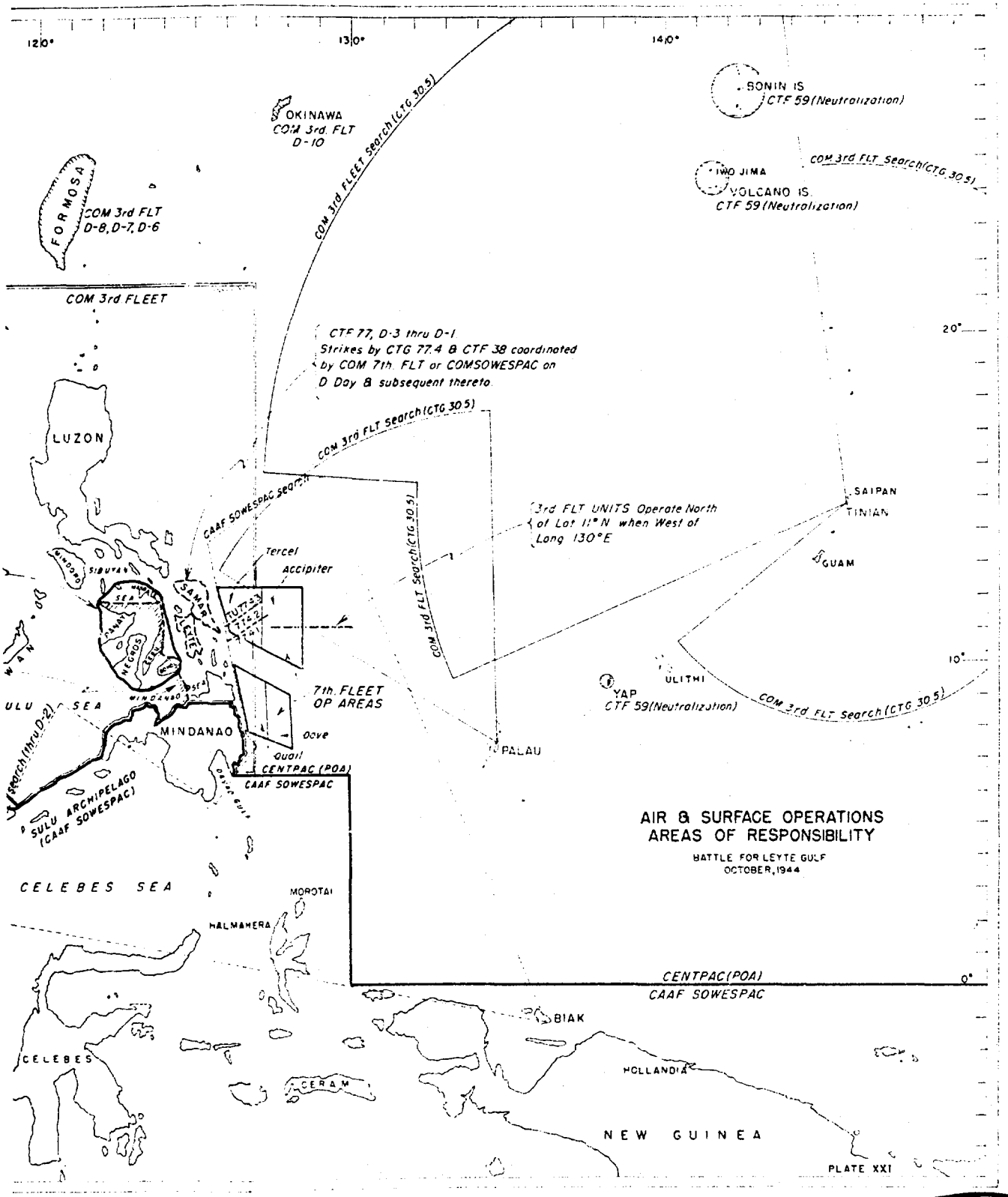

AIR & SURFACE OPERATIONS AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF
OCTOBER, 1944

PLATE XXI

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APPENDIX IV

JAPANESE AIRCRAFT*

Type	Japanese Designation or Name	U.S. Code Name
NAVY:		
Carrier-Type Fighter	Type 0 carrier-based fighter	Zeke
Carrier-Type Fighter	Reppu	Sam
Interceptor Fighter	Raiden	Jack
Interceptor Fighter	Shiden	George
Seaplane Fighter	Kyofu	Rex
Carrier-Type Attack	Type 97 carrier-based attack	Kate
Carrier-Type Attack	Tenzan	Jill
Carrier-Type Attack	Ryusei	Grace
Carrier-Type Bomber	Type 99 carrier-based bomber	Val
Carrier-Type Reconnaissance	Suisei	Judy
Carrier-Type Reconnaissance	Saiun	Myrt
Land Reconnaissance (and night VF)	Gekko	Irving
Land Attack	Type 1 land attack	Betty
Two Engine Land Bomber	Ginga	Frances
Two Engine Land Bomber	Type 96	Nell
Observation Seaplane	Type 0 observation seaplane	Pete
Reconnaissance Seaplane	Shiun	Norm
Reconnaissance Seaplane	Zuiun	Paul
Reconnaissance Seaplane	Type 0 reconnaissance seaplane	Jake
Patrol Seaplane	Type 2 flying boat	Emily
Patrol Seaplane (and transport)	Type 97 flying boat	Mavis
ARMY:		
Fighter	Type 1 fighter	Oscar
Fighter	Type 2 fighter	Tojo
Fighter	Type 3 fighter	Tony
Fighter	Ki 84	Frank
Heavy Fighter	Type 2 heavy fighter	Nick
Reconnaissance	Type 99 Military recco or assault	Sonia
Land Reconnaissance	Type 100 Hq. recco	Dinah
Light Bomber	Type 99 light bomber	Lily
Heavy Bomber	[illegible] bomber	Sally
Heavy Bomber	[illegible]vy bomber	Helen
Heavy Bomber		Peggy**

* Enclosure to CINCPAC/CINCPOA "Wee[illegible] ol. 1, No. 19, November 17th, 1944.

** CINCPAC/CINCPOA "Weekly Intelligence[illegible] Vol. [illegible], [illegible] 14, October 13th, 1944.

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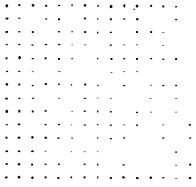
APPENDIX V

CERTAIN ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS WORK

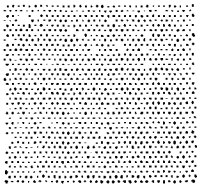
A-20	Fighter-Bomber (Havoc)
AE	Ammunition Ship
AGC	Amphibious Force Flagship
AGP	Motor Torpedo Boat Tender
AK	Cargo Ship
AKA	Attack Cargo Vessel
AM	Minesweeper
AN	Net Layer
AO	Oiler
AO(W)	Distilling Ship
AP	Transport
APA	Attack Transport
APD	High Speed Transport
APH	Transport for Wounded Evacuation
ARL	Repair Ship, Landing Craft
ARS	Salvage Ship
ASP	Antisubmarine Patrol
AT	Ocean Going Tug
ATO	Old Tug
AV	Aircraft Tender
AVP	Small Seaplane Tender
AVR	Aircraft Rescue Vessel
B-24	Heavy Bomber (Liberator)
B-25	Medium Bomber (Mitchell)
B-29	Heavy Bomber (Superfortress)
BATDIV	Battleship Division
BB	Battleship
BB/XCV	Hermaphrodite Battleship
BOGEY	Unidentified Aircraft
C-47	Transport (Skytrain)
CA	Heavy Cruiser
CAP	Combat Air Patrol
CARDIV	Carrier Division
CL	Light Cruiser
CLAA	Antiaircraft Cruiser (Light)
CM	Mine Layer
CORTDIV	Destroyer Escort Division
CORTRON	Destroyer Escort Squadron
CSA	Commander Support Aircraft
CV	Aircraft Carrier
CVE	Escort Aircraft Carrier
CVEG	Air Group Assigned to an Escort Aircraft Carrier
CVG	Air Group Assigned to an Aircraft Carrier
CVL	Light Aircraft Carrier
CVLG	Air Group Assigned to a Light Aircraft Carrier
CVLGN	Air Group Assigned to a Light Aircraft Carrier (Specializing in night operations)
D-day	The term used to designate the unnamed day on which an operation commences, or is to commence (Allied)
DesOpOrd	Dispatch Operations Order
DM	Light Mine Layer
DMS	Fast Minesweeper
ex-IJA	Was Imperial Japanese Army prior to September 1945
ex-IJN	Was Imperial Japanese Navy prior to September 1945
F4U	Carrier Based Fighter (Corsair)
F-5	Army Reconnaissance (Photographic) (P-38 Lightning)
F-7	Army Reconnaissance (Photographic)
FEC	Far Eastern Command
FG	Fighter (Corsair)
FWDAREA	Forward Area
GHQ	General Headquarters
HEDRON	Headquarter Squadron
HMAS	His Majesty's Australian Ship
HS	Historical Section
J2F	Utility Transport
JS	Japanese Studies
L-5	Liaison Aircraft (Sentinel)
LCC	Landing Craft, Control
LCI	Infantry Landing Craft
LCI(A)	Infantry Landing Craft (Ammunition)
LCI(D)	Infantry Landing Craft (Demolition)

LCI(G)	Infantry Landing Craft (Gunboat)
LCI(L)	Infantry Landing Craft (Large)
LCI(M)	Infantry Landing Craft (Mortar)
LCI(R)	Infantry Landing Craft (Rocket)
LCPR	Landing Craft (Personnel) (with ramp)
LCT	Landing Craft (Tank)
LSD	Landing Ship (Dock)
LSM	Landing Ship (Medium)
LST	Landing Ship (Tank)
LSV	Landing Ship (Vehicle)
MTB	Motor Torpedo Boat
MTBRON	Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron
NA	National Archives
NAVGRP	Naval Group
OBB	Old Battleship
OTC	Officer in Tactical Command
P-38	Fighter (Lightning)
P-40	Fighter (Warhawk)
P-47	Fighter (Thunderbolt)
P-61	Fighter (Aircobra)
PAC	Pacific
PBM	Patrol Bomber (Mariner)
PBY	Patrol Bomber (Catalina)
PBJ	Patrol Bomber (Mitchell)
PC	Submarine Chaser
PCE(R)	Patrol Vessel Escort (Rescue)
PCS	Patrol Vessel (Submarine Chaser)
PF	Frigate
PG	Gun Boat
PV	Patrol Bomber (Ventura)
R4D	Transport (C-47) (Skytrain)
RDF	Radio Direction Finder
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
SBD	Carrier Based Dive Bomber (Dauntless)
SC	Submarine Chaser
SigDesOpOrd	Signal Dispatch Operations Order
SigOrd	Signal Order
SOA	Speed of Advance
So. Ex.	Southern Expeditionary
SNASP	Antisnooper Patrol
SS	Submarine
TCAP	Target Air Patrol
UDT	Underwater Demolition Team
VB	Carrier Bomber Squadron
VB(H)	Bomber Squadron (Heavy) Land
VB(L)	Bomber Squadron (Light) Land
VB(M)	Bomber Squadron (Medium) Land
VB(MS)	Bomber Squadron (Medium Seaplane)
VC	Composite Aircraft Squadron (various missions)
VF	Fighter Squadron (Carrier)
VMB	Marine Bomber Squadron
VMF	Marine Fighter Squadron (Land or Carrier Based)
VMO	Marine Observation Squadron
VMR	Marine Transport Squadron
VMSB	Marine Scout Bomber Squadron
VMTB	Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadron
VPB	Patrol Bomber Squadron (Land or Sea)
VR	Transport Squadron
VT	Torpedo Squadron (Carrier)
VTB	Torpedo Bomber Squadron
WDC	Washington Document Center
YMS	Motor Minesweeper

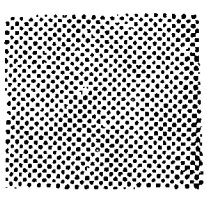
LEGEND



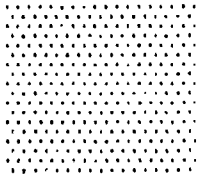
REPORTED SCATTERED SHOWERS AND VARIABLE CONDITIONS.



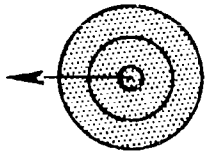
LINE OF SQUALLS OR INDIVIDUALLY REPORTED SQUALLY AND/OR SHOWERY PRECIPITATION AREAS.



FOG, MIST OR HAZE



APPROXIMATE POSITION OF THE INTER-TROPICAL FRONT.



APPROXIMATE CENTER OF TROPICAL STORM AND DIRECTION OF MOVEMENT.

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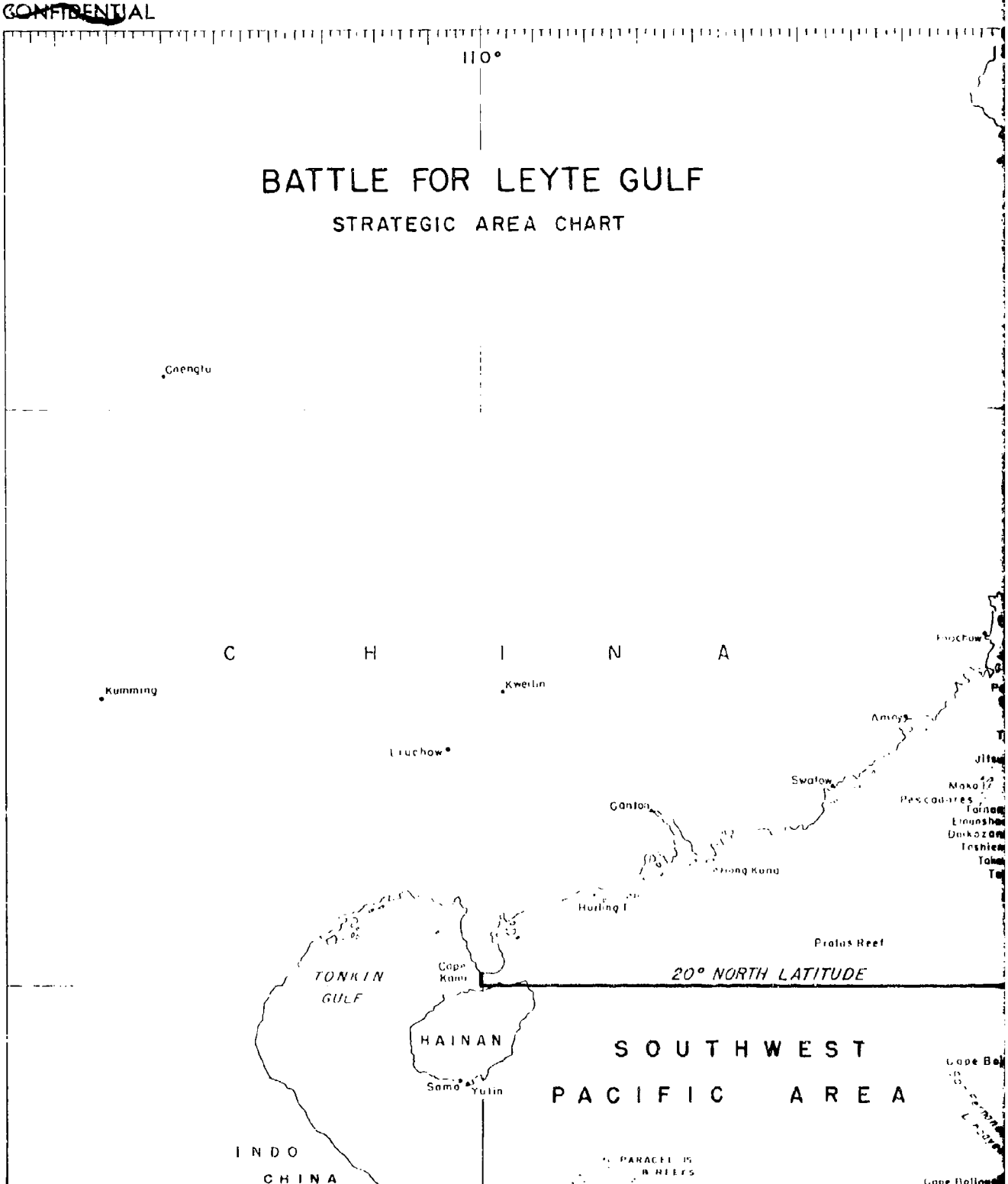
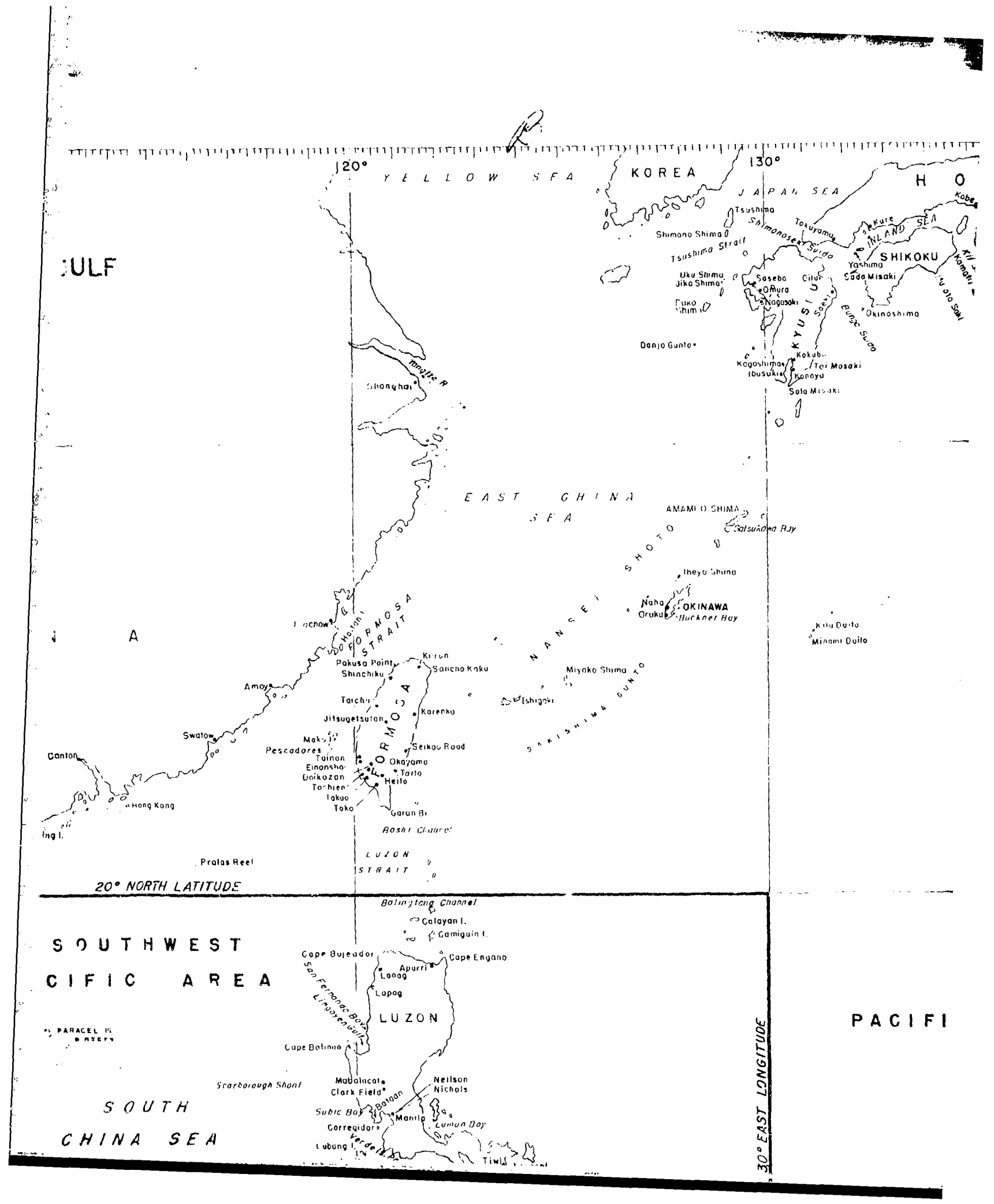
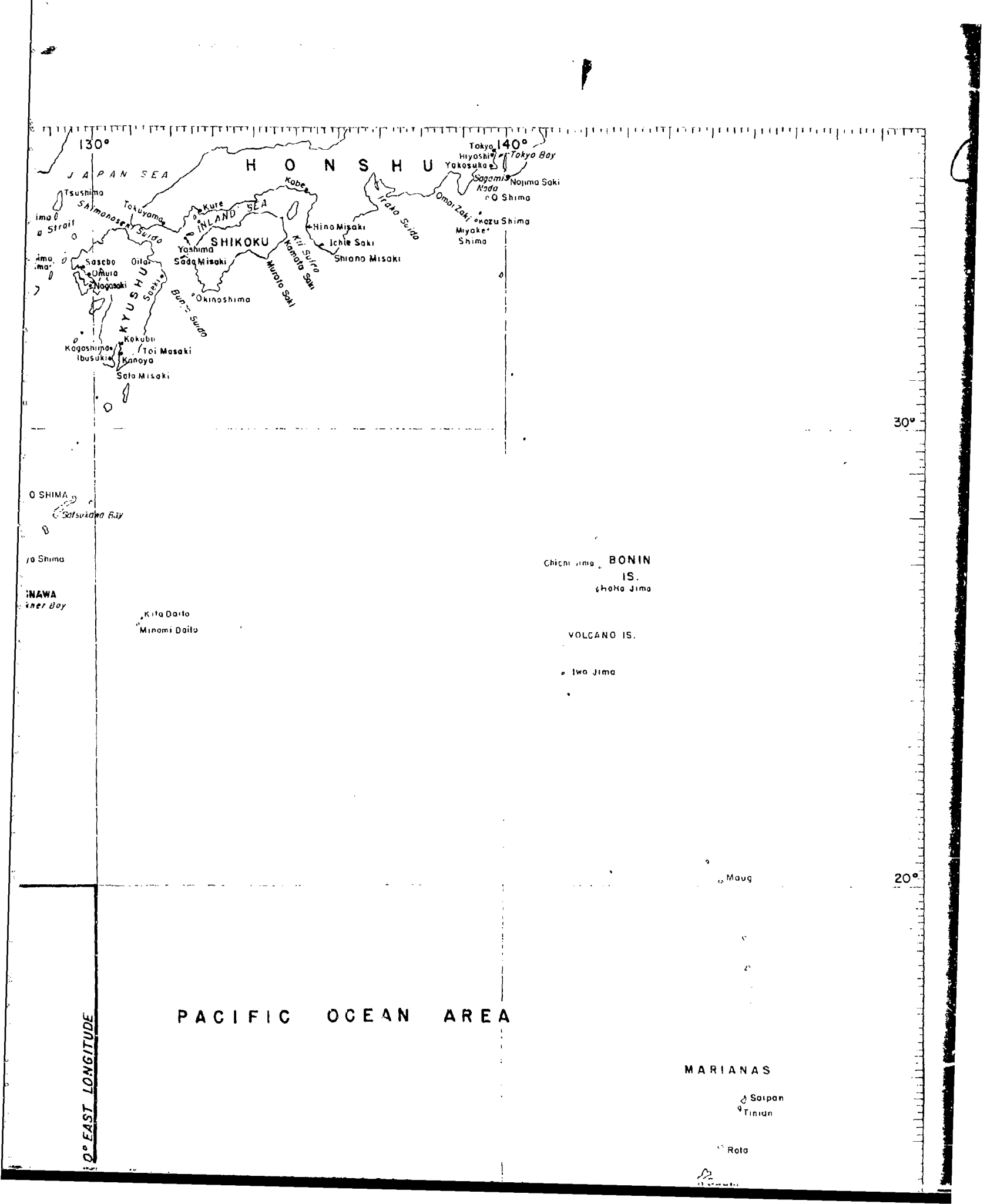
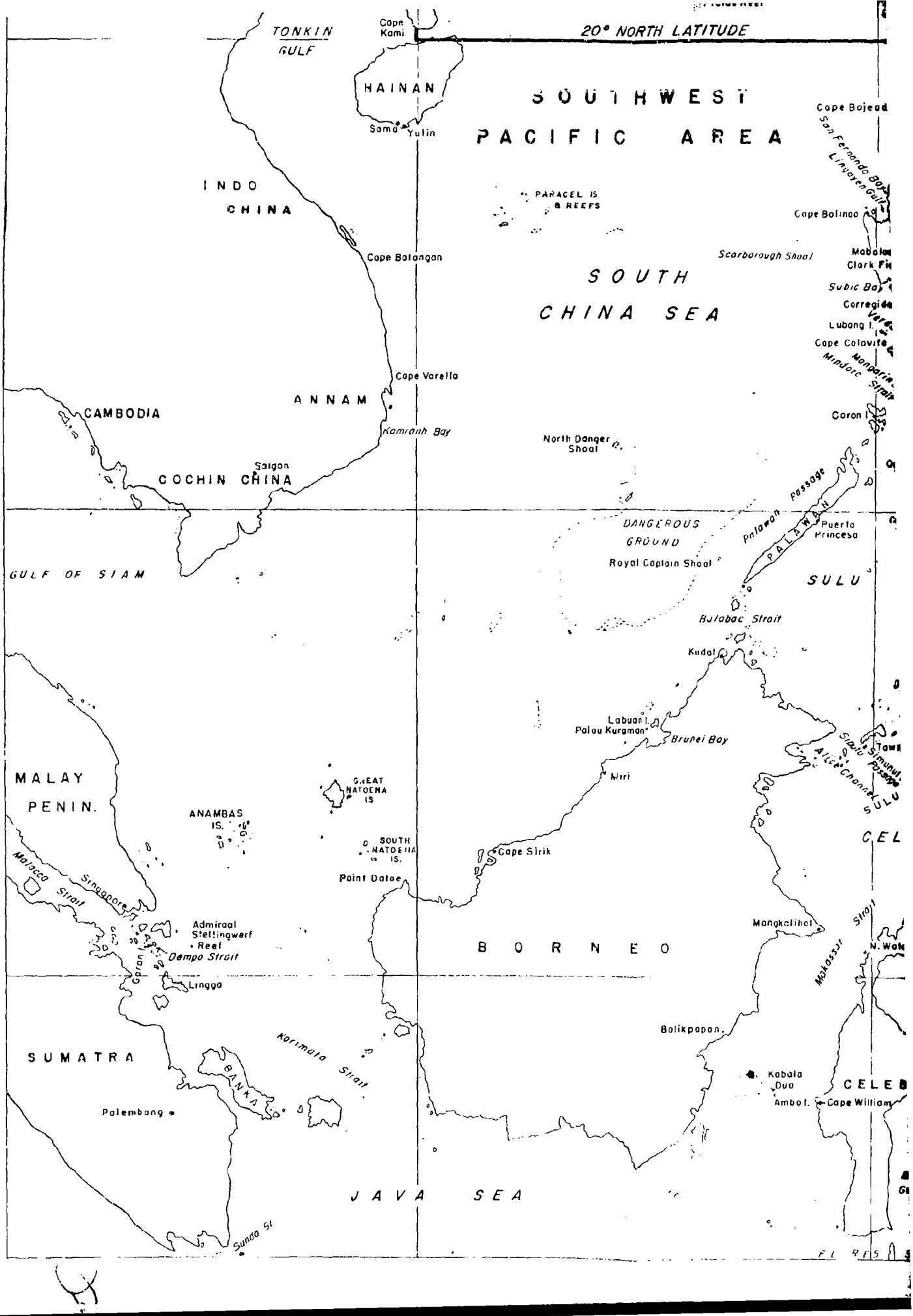
BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF

STRATEGIC AREA CHART

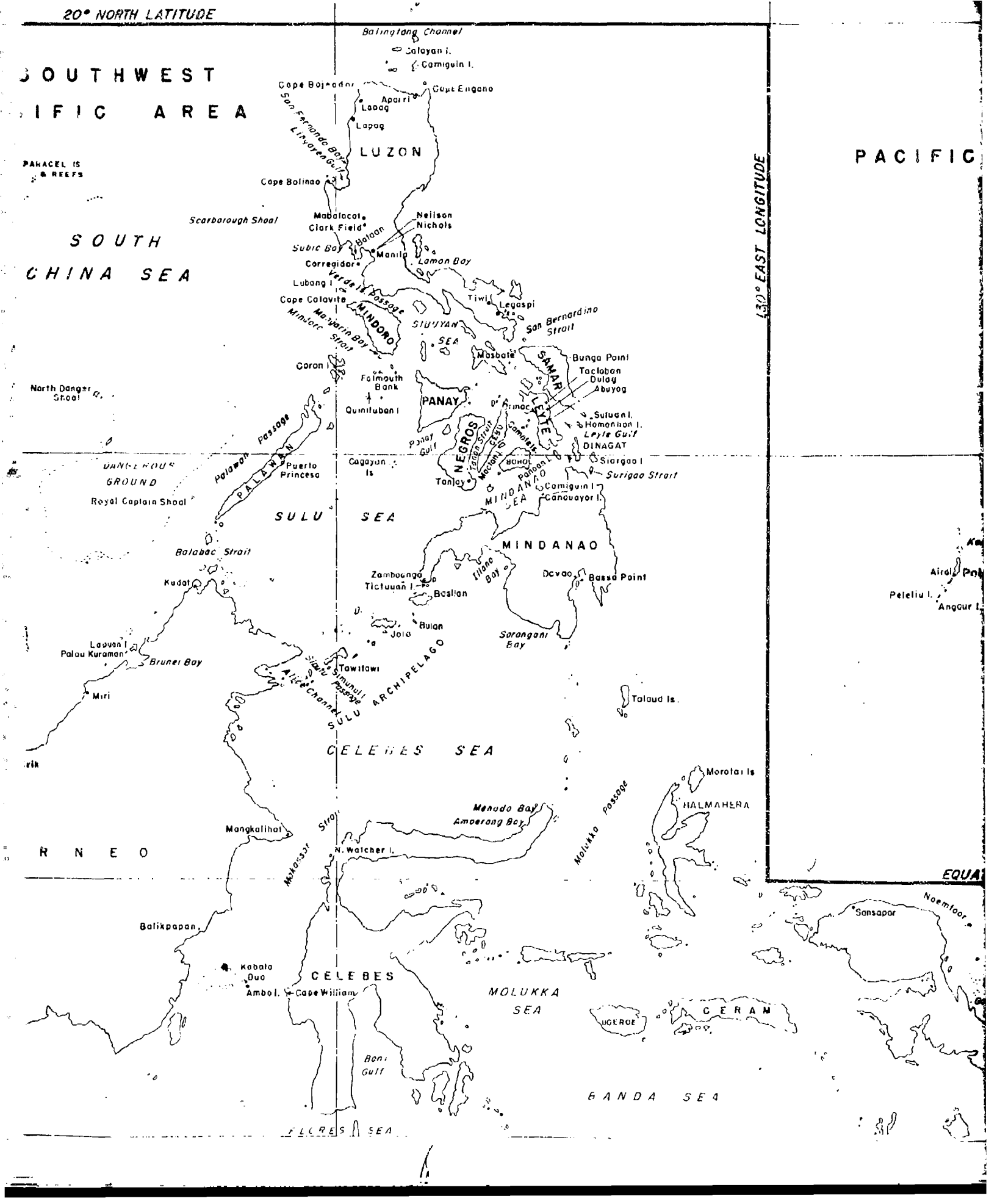


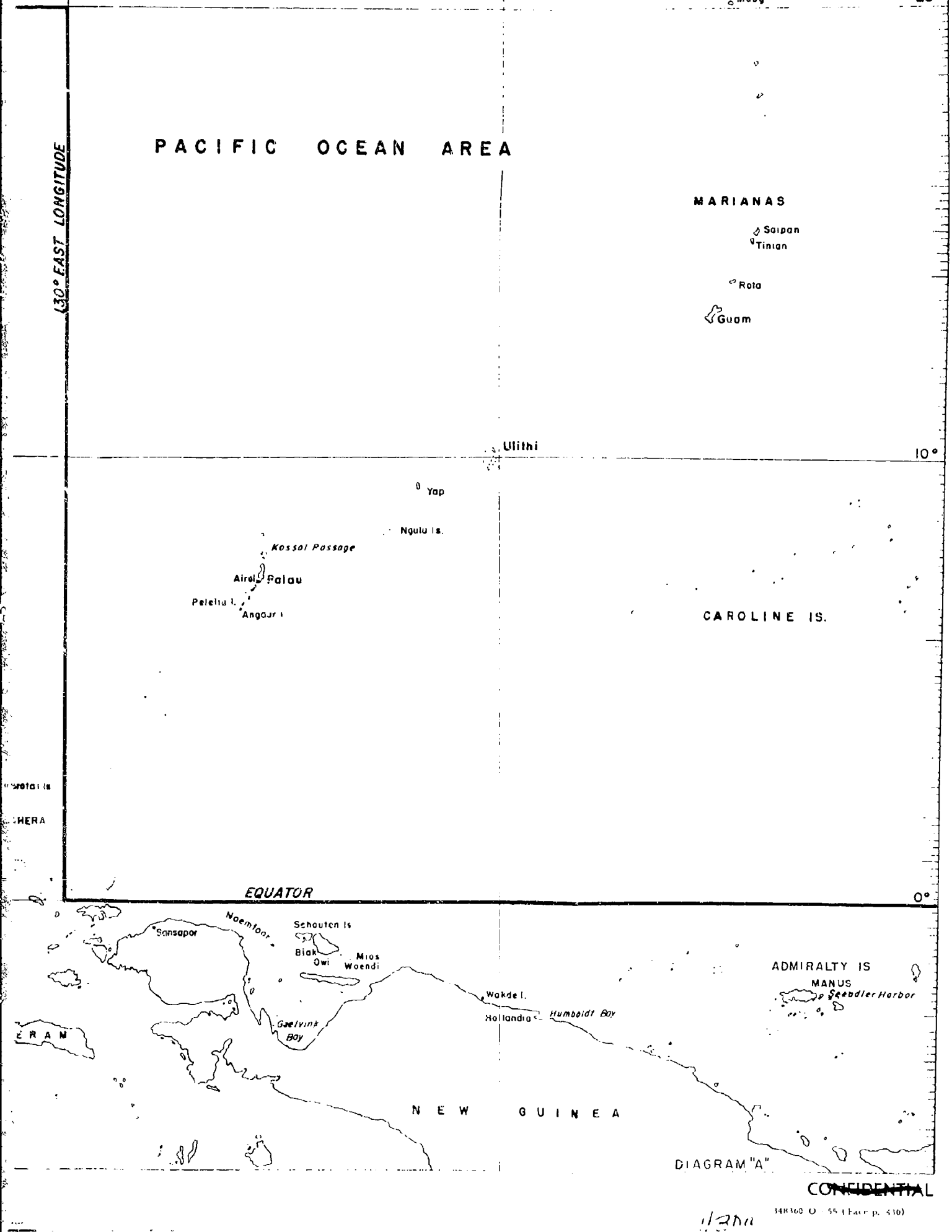

120°
130°
YELLOW SEA
KOREA
JAPAN SEA
INLAND SEA
SHIKOKU
KYUSHU
Kobe
Tsushima
Shimano Shima
Tsushima Strait
Shimonoseki Strait
Tokuyama
Kure
Yashima
Sada Misaki
Uku Shima
Jika Shima
Fuko Shima
Sasebo
Omura
Nagasaki
Oki no shima
Danjo Gunto
Kagoshima
Ibusuki
Kokubu
Toi Misaki
Kanoyu
Sata Misaki
Yangtze R.
Shanghai
EAST CHINA SEA
AMAMI O SHIMA
Setsuda Bay
Iheya Shima
Naha
Oruku
OKINAWA
Buckner Bay
Kita Daito
Minami Daito
NANSEI SHOTO
SAKISHIMA GUNTO
Miyako Shima
Ishigaki
Lochow
Hainan
FORMOSA STRAIT
Pakusa Point
Shinchiku
Kirun
Sancho Kaku
Amoy
Tacchu
Karenko
Jitsugetsutan
Swatow
Makung
Pescadores
Tainan
Einansho
Daikozan
Tochien
Takao
Toko
Okayama
Tarito
Heito
Seikoo Road
Garan Bi
Canton
Hong Kong
Ing I.
Bashi Channel
Pratas Reef
LUZON STRAIT
20° NORTH LATITUDE
Balintang Channel
Calayan I.
Camiguin I.
Cape Bojeador
Cape Engano
Aparri
Laoag
Lapog
San Fernando Bay
Lingayen Gulf
LUZON
Cape Bolinao
Scarborough Shoal
Mabalacat
Clark Field
Subic Bay
Bataan
Manila
Neilson
Nichols
Corregidor
Lubang I.
Verde I.
Lamon Bay
Tiwi
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
PARACEL IS.
REEFS
SOUTH CHINA SEA
PACIFI
30° EAST LONGITUDE


130°
140°
30°
20°
JAPAN SEA
HONSHU
Tokyo
Hiyoshi
Yokosuka
Tokyo Bay
Sagami Nada
Nojima Saki
O Shima
Kobe
Tsushima
Tokuyama
Kure
INLAND SEA
Shimonoseki Suido
Irako Suido
Omai Zaki
Kozu Shima
Miyake Shima
Hino Misaki
Ichie Saki
Shiono Misaki
SHIKOKU
Kii Suido
Komata Saki
Muroto Saki
Yashima
Sada Misaki
Sasebo
Oita
Omura
Nagasaki
KYUSHU
Saki
Bungo Suido
Okinoshima
Kokubu
Kagoshima
Ibusuki
Toi Misaki
Kanoya
Sata Misaki
O SHIMA
Satsuma Bay
Chichi Jima
BONIN IS.
Haha Jima
Kita Daito
Minami Daito
VOLCANO IS.
Iwo Jima
Maug
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
MARIANAS
Saipan
Tinian
Rota
0° EAST LONGITUDE



TONKIN GULF
Cape Kami
20° NORTH LATITUDE
HAINAN
Sama
Yulin
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
Cape Bojead
San Fernando Bay
Lingayen Gulf
INDO CHINA
PARACEL IS & REEFS
Cape Bolinao
Cape Batangan
Scarborough Shoal
Mabalac
Clark Fi
SOUTH CHINA SEA
Subic Bay
Corregido
Lubang I.
Cape Calavite
Mindoro Strait
Cape Varella
ANNAM
CAMBODIA
Kamranh Bay
Coron I.
North Danger Shoal
Saigon
COCHIN CHINA
Palawan Passage
DANGEROUS GROUND
PALAWAN
Puerto Princesa
Royal Captain Shoal
GULF OF SIAM
SULU
Balabac Strait
Kudat
Labuan I.
Palau Kuraman
Brunei Bay
Sibutu Passage
Alice Channel
Miri
MALAY PENIN.
GREAT NATOENA IS
ANAMBAS IS.
SOUTH NATOENA IS.
Cape Sirik
Point Datoe
Malacca Strait
Singapore
Admiraal Stellingwerf Reef
Dempo Strait
Mangkalihat
Makassar Strait
BORNEO
Lingga
Balikpapan
SUMATRA
Karimata Strait
BANKA
Kabala Duo
Ambo I.
Cape William
Palembang
JAVA SEA
Sunda St


20° NORTH LATITUDE
SOUTHWEST
IFIC AREA
PARACEL IS & REEFS
SOUTH
CHINA SEA
Balingtang Channel
Calayan I.
Camiguin I.
Cape Bojeador
Cape Engano
Aparri
Laoag
Lapog
San Fernando Bay
Lingayen Gulf
LUZON
Cape Bolinao
Scarborough Shoal
Mabalacat
Clark Field
Neilson
Nichols
Bataan
Subic Bay
Manila
Corregidor
Lamon Bay
Lubang I.
Verde Is Passage
Cape Calavite
MINDORO
Mindoro Strait
Mangarin Bay
Tiwi
Legaspi
San Bernardino Strait
SIBUYAN SEA
Masbate
SAMAR
Bunga Point
Tacloban
Dulag
Abuyog
LEYTE
Sulauan I.
Homonhon I.
Leyte Gulf
DINAGAT
Siargao I
Surigao Strait
Coron I.
Calamian Gr.
Culion
Busuanga I.
Calauit I.
Linapacan I.
Apo Reef
North Danger Shoal
Quimiluban I.
Falmouth Bank
PANAY
Guimaras I.
Iloilo
Panay Gulf
NEGROS
Tañon Strait
Mactan I.
Cebu
BOHOL
Panglao I.
Cagayan Is.
Puerto Princesa
Palawan Passage
PALAWAN
DANGEROUS GROUND
Royal Captain Shoal
Tanjay
Camiguin I.
Canoauayor I.
MINDANAO SEA
SULU SEA
Balabac Strait
MINDANAO
Zamboanga
Tictuuan I.
Basilan
Illana Bay
Davao
Bassa Point
Kudat
Jolo
Bulan
Sarangani Bay
Labuan I.
Palau Kuraman
Brunei Bay
Miri
Tawitawi
Siasi I.
Simunul
Passage
Alice Channel
SULU ARCHIPELAGO
Talaud Is.
CELEBES SEA
Morotai Is.
HALMAHERA
Menado Bay
Amoerang Bay
Molukka Passage
Mangkalihat
Makassar Strait
N. Watcher I.
BORNEO
Balikpapan
Kabaena
Duo
Ambol I.
Cape William
CELEBES
MOLUKKA SEA
GERUE
CERAM
Bent Gulf
BANDA SEA
FLORES SEA
130° EAST LONGITUDE
PACIFIC
EQUA
Airai
Peleliu I.
Angaur I.
Sansapor
Noemfoor



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Events Depicted on Diagram "B"

October 17th 1944

0719 - 2400

1. 0719 Allied forces reported entering Leyte Gulf.

2. 0719 Shinchiku search plane which had departed at 0445 continued to search sector 149-164°(T). Made no contacts.

3. 0719 Kanoya search planes continued to search sector 135-200°(T). Made contact at 1110.

4. 0719 Shinchiku search plane which departed at 0600 continued to search the area north of a line 067°(T) through Garan Bi and west of a line 130°(T) through Kiirun. Made no contacts. (The search plane that departed at 0700 to search 133-149°(T) returned due to engine trouble.)

5. 0719 Okinawa search planes which had departed at 0600 continued to search sector 115-185°(T) to 400 miles and sector 145-165°(T) to 500 miles. Made no contacts.

6. 0719 Garan Bi search planes which commenced departing at 0710 continued to search sector 065-159°(T) to 400 miles. Two planes contacted enemy carrier planes, one turned back at 230 miles due to weather, one failed to return, the others made no contacts.

7. 0800 Aircraft launched from TG 38.4 east of Manila attacked Manila area (seventy planes) and Legaspi airfield (fifty-one planes).

8. 0809 CinC Combined Fleet ordered SHO One alert.

9. 0817 FRANKLIN recovered four night fighters which had been on a heckler mission over Legaspi during the night.

10. 0820 Company "D", SIXTH Ranger Battalion seized Black Beach Three (Suluan Island).

11. 0830 Japanese search plane contacted enemy carrier task group bearing 085°(T) distant 245 miles from Manila.

12. 0848 CTG 38.4 recovered two VT that were launched at 0557 to reconnoiter San Bernardino Strait. Made no contacts.

13. 0900 Company "B" of the 21st Infantry Regiment and Companies "A", "E" and "F" of the SIXTH Ranger Battalion landed on Black Beach One (Dinagat Island).

14. 0915 SIXTH Base Air Force search plane contacted a carrier task group in Latitude 22°-00'N, Longitude 126°-40'E. (096°(T), 350 miles from Takao)

15. 0915 SIXTH Base Air Force search plane contacted a carrier task group bearing 100°(T) about 360 miles from Takao consisting of twenty ships including three carriers, three battleships, one under tow on easterly course.

16. 0915 Commander 901st Air Group reported contacts of the night flying boats (a) a task group in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 125°-15'E at 0235, (b) a task group in Latitude 20°-15'N, Longitude 124°-25'E at 0250.

17. 0915 BUNKER HILL recovered eight VF and four VB launched at 0558 to search for enemy surface forces in sector 315°-355°(T) to 260 miles. Made no contacts.

18. 0918 Commander Expeditionary Force directed four submarines (I's 26, 45, 54, 56) located east of Nansei Shoto to proceed into the area east of the Philippines.

19. Forenoon CinC Combined Fleet received a report from Commander NINTH Base Force in the Singapore area that his command had sighted what appeared to be an enemy task force near Car Nicobar Island, consisting of two carriers, two battleships, two cruisers and eight destroyers.

20. 1000 Japanese fighters and fighter-bombers (at least twenty-two planes) commenced taking off to intercept air raid on Tainan area of Formosa. (This was a false air raid).

21. 1000 ESSEX recovered eight VF and four VB launched at 0558 to search sector 355°-034°(T) to 260 miles. Made no contacts.

22. 1030 Two "T" Force search planes departed southern Kyushu to search sector 123°-153°(T) from Sata Misaki to 300 miles. (Encountered bad weather and turned back by 1120.)

23. 1110 Kanoya based search plane reported sighting two CV, two BB, and ten other ships in Latitude 22°-05'N, Longitude 127°-35'E. (095°(T), 370 miles from Takao)

24. 1147 WASP recovered special search of eighteen VF launched at 0558 to search for enemy surface units in sector 260°-360°(T) to 300 miles. Made no contacts.

25. 1150 TG 38.4 recovered fighter sweep, strikes Able and Baker aircraft from the strikes over Manila and Legaspi.

26. 1200 TF 78 rendezvoused with fueling group TU 77.7.1. Completed fueling at 1702.

27. 1200 About this time CinC Combined Fleet departed Takao for Shinchiku en route to Hiyoshi. Arrived Shinchiku 1329.

28. 1205 Commander FIRST Striking Force ordered a four plane search to scout a front of 200 miles in the direction of Brunei.

29. 1230 Tainan under attack by over ten B-29's intercepted by at least thirty-three fighters. (Actually consisted of twenty-four B-29's).

30. 1230 One two-engine plane departed Legaspi to reconnoiter Leyte Gulf and sighted one battleship, two cruisers and eight destroyers westward of Suluan Island.

31. 1340 Due to weather conditions, operations of TU 78.4.2 at Black Beach Two (Homonhon) were suspended.

32. 1404 CTG 38.4 launched two VF and two VT to reconnoiter San Bernardino Strait. Recovered at 1647. Made no contacts.

33. 1435 CABOT launched a search of four VF four VT to search sector 235°-310°(T) to 200 miles. Recovered at 1800. Made no contacts.

34. 1515 Thirteen planes departed Clark Field to strike Allied shipping in Leyte Gulf. (Turned back by weather at 1804).

35. 1705 SECOND Striking Force less HATSUHARU entered Satsukawa Bay, Amami O Shima and commenced fueling.

36. 1800 TG 38.2 was detached from the fleet disposition and proceeded independently to the vicinity of Latitude 18°-30'N, Longitude 126°-30'E, where it arrived at midnight.

37. 1806 CTG 38.1 changed course to 205°(T), increased speed to twenty-five knots and headed for the 0600 rendezvous with CTG 38.4 in Latitude 15°-30'N, Longitude 123°-30'E.

38. 1812 CTG 38.3 set course 150°(T) speed seventeen knots and proceeded towards his 0700 fueling rendezvous and later at 2130 changed course to 200°(T).

39. 2200 CinC Combined Fleet received a dispatch from Takao Communications Unit reporting repeated RDF contacts on an enemy task group (TG 30.3) of six ships in Latitude 20°-00'N, Longitude 125°-00'E, (122°(T), 305 miles from Takao), that they had sent seven urgent dispatches and their plot indicated no movement from the previous day.

40. 2230 Two radar equipped flying boats departed Garan Bi to search on search lines 095°(T) and 119°(T) to 450 miles with a cross leg of ninety miles and return.

41. 2230 COMCRUDIV THIRTEEN and DESDIV ONE HUNDRED departed TG 30.3 and headed for the 0700 rendezvous with CTG 38.3 and the fueling group. COMCRUDIV TEN assumed command of TG 30.3.

42. 2300 The ESCOLAR while proceeding from Latitude 33°-44'N, Longitude 127°-33'E, to new station in Latitude 33°-44'N, Longitude 129°-06'E, was lost with all hands, presumably by striking a mine.

43. During the day CinC Combined Fleet received a reconnaissance report that four cruisers, three destroyers, thirteen transports and 110 aircraft had arrived at Morotai.

[redacted]

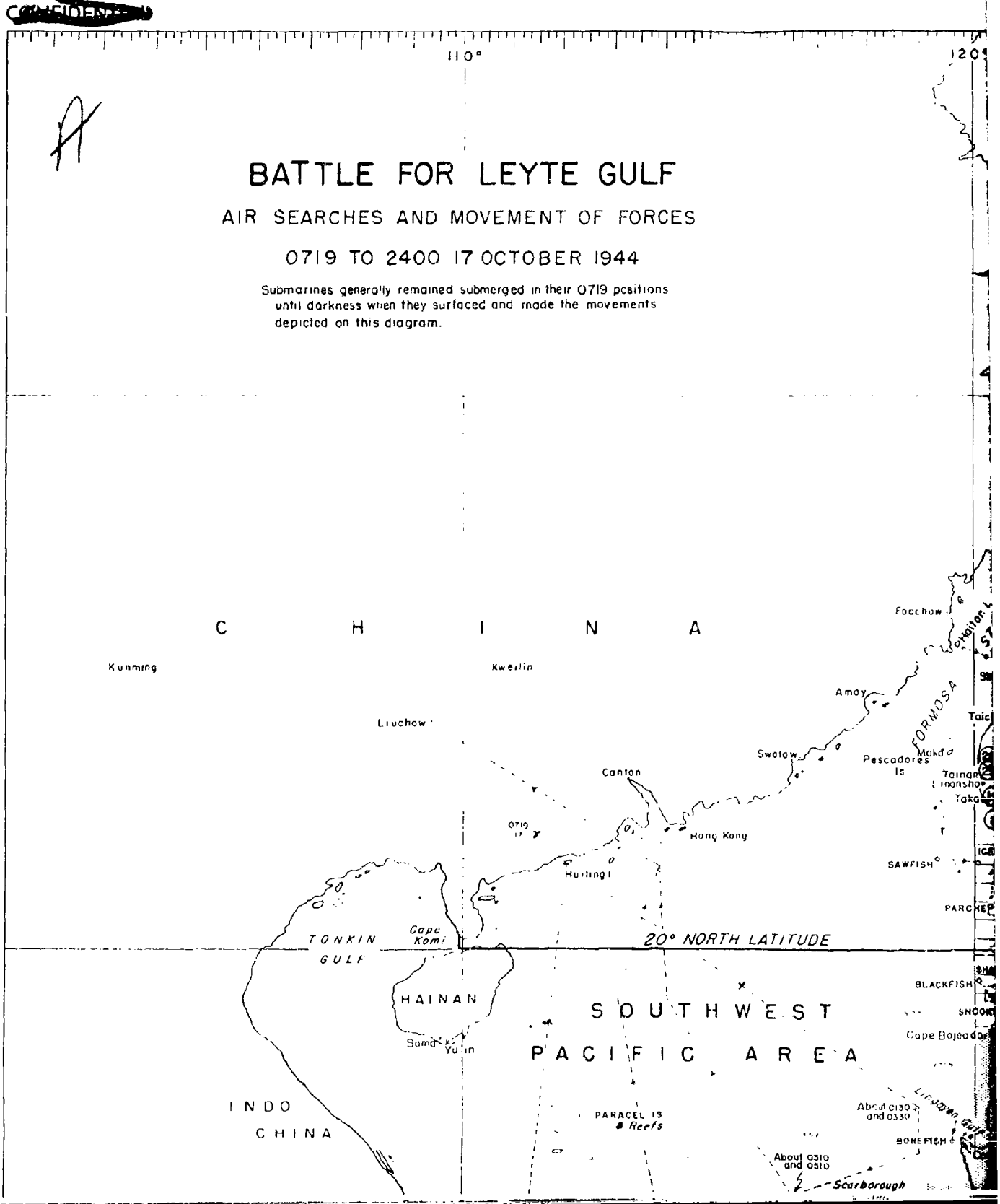
A

BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF

AIR SEARCHES AND MOVEMENT OF FORCES

0719 TO 2400 17 OCTOBER 1944

Submarines generally remained submerged in their 0719 positions until darkness when they surfaced and made the movements depicted on this diagram.



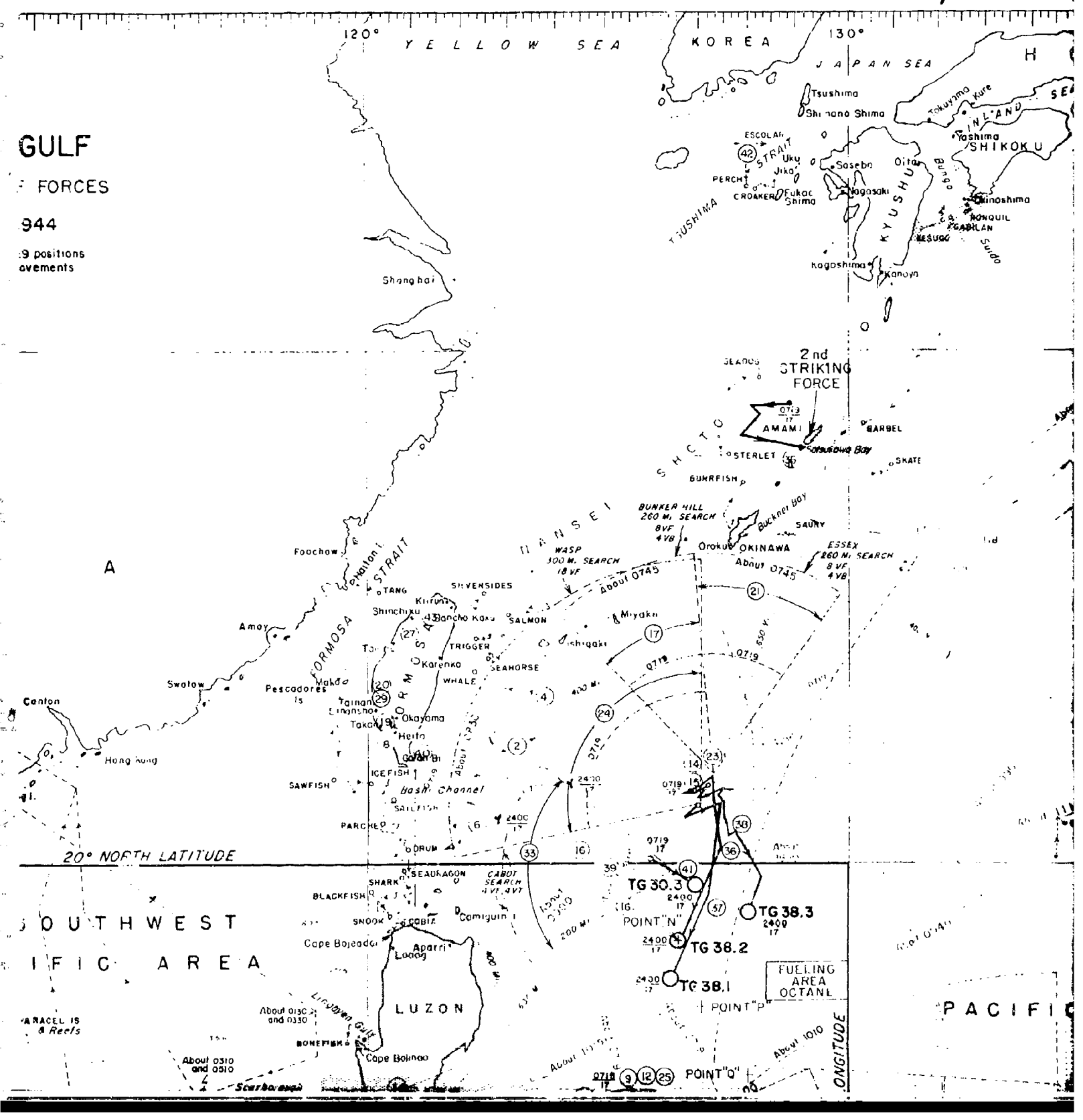
B

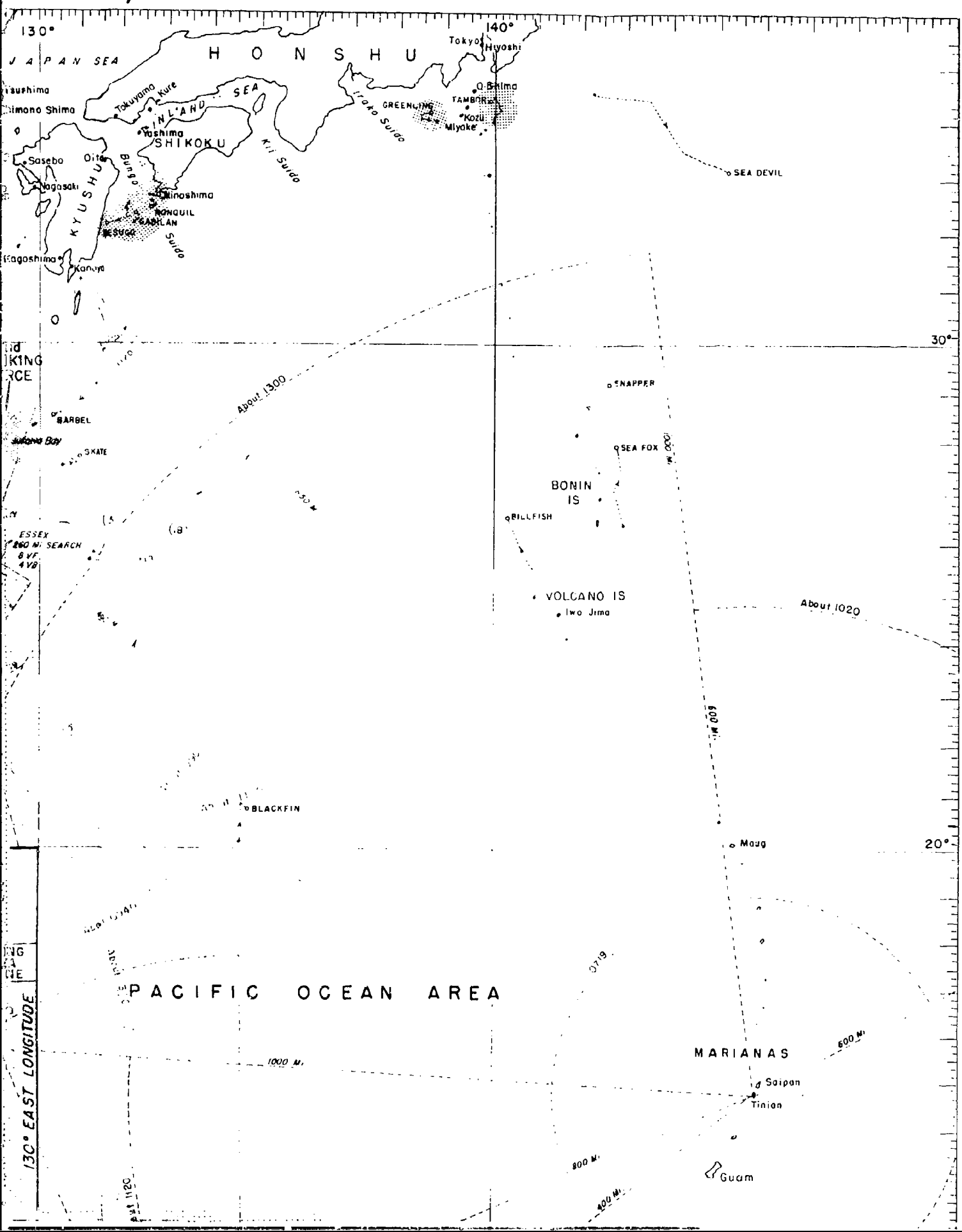
GULF

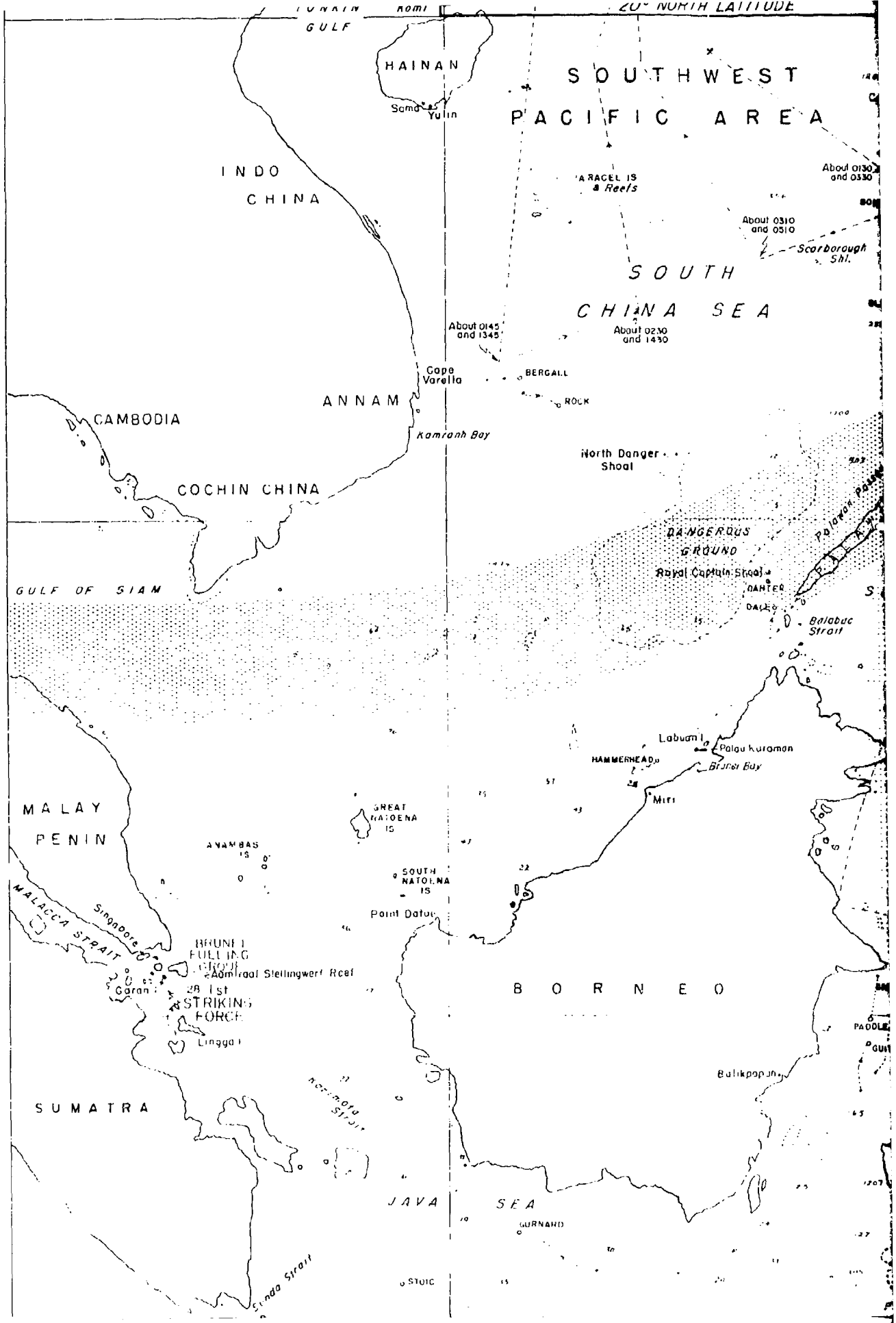
FORCES

944

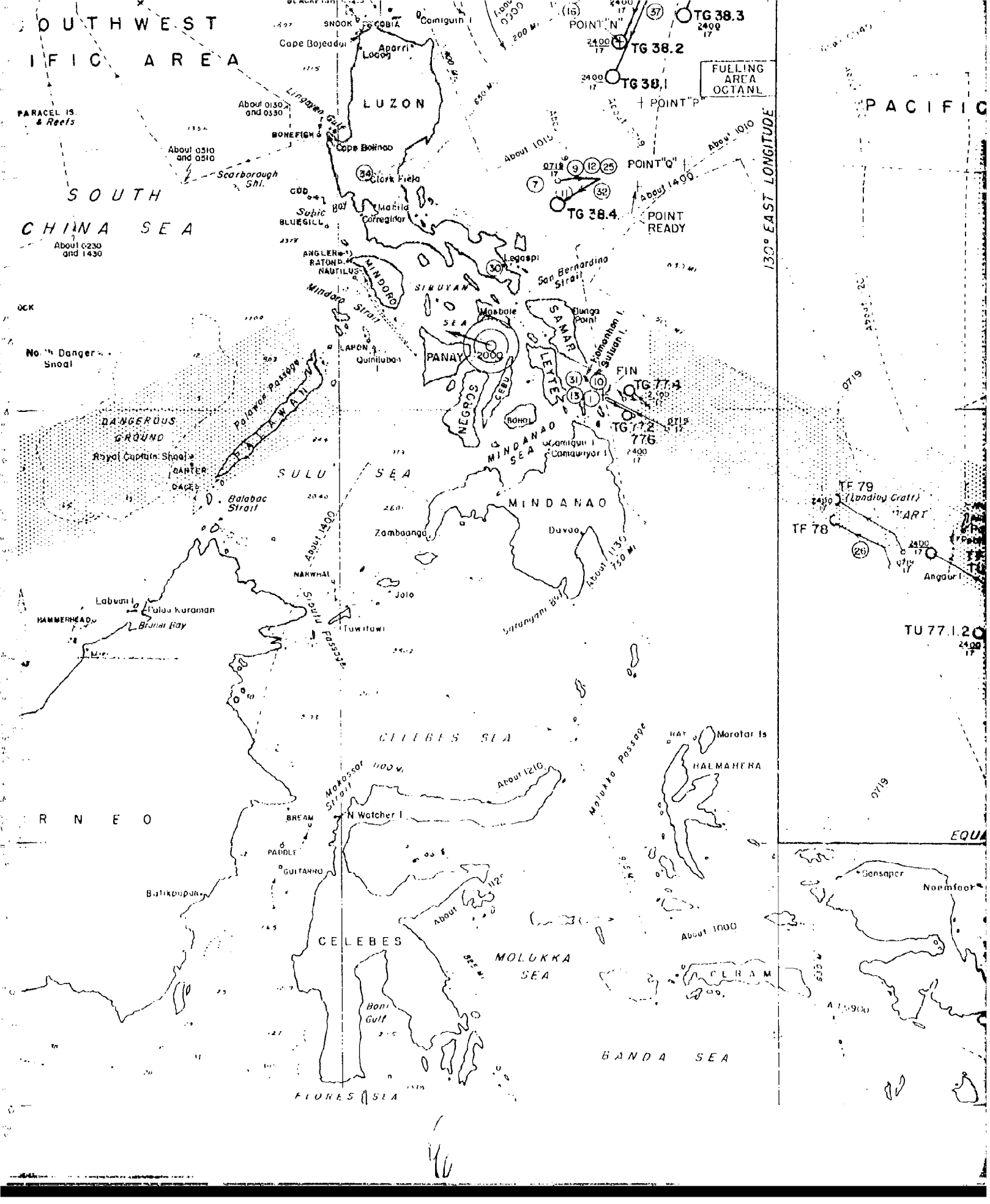
9 positions
ovements




130°
140°
30°
20°
JAPAN SEA
HONSHU
Tokyo
Hiyoshi
O-Shima
TAMBAR
Kozu
Miyake
GREENLING
Izuko Suido
Tsushima
Shimono Shima
Tokuyama
Kure
INLAND SEA
Yashima
SHIKOKU
Kii Suido
Sasebo
Oita
Bungo Suido
Nagasaki
Hinoshima
RONQUIL
GABILAN
SEA DEVIL
KYUSHU
Kagoshima
Kanoya
SNAPPER
About 1300
BARBEL
SKATE
SEA FOX
BONIN IS
BILLFISH
ESSEX
VOLCANO IS
Iwo Jima
About 1020
BLACKFIN
Maug
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
MARIANAS
Saipan
Tinian
Guam
1000 M.
600 M.
800 M.
400 M.
130° EAST LONGITUDE



TONKIN GULF
Komi
20° NORTH LATITUDE
HAINAN
Sama
Yulin
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
INDO CHINA
PARACEL IS & Reefs
About 0130 and 0330
About 0310 and 0510
Scarborough Shl.
SOUTH CHINA SEA
About 0145 and 1345
About 0230 and 1430
Cape Varella
BERGALL
ROCK
ANNAM
CAMBODIA
Kamranh Bay
North Danger Shoal
COCHIN CHINA
DANGEROUS GROUND
Royal Captain Shoal
DANTER
DALE
Balabac Strait
GULF OF SIAM
Labuan I.
Palau Kuraman
HAMMERHEAD
Brunei Bay
Miri
MALAY PENIN
GREAT NATOENA IS
ANAMBAS IS
SOUTH NATOENA IS
Point Datoe
MALACCA STRAIT
Singapore
BRUNEI FUELING GROUP
Admiraal Stellingwerf Reef
Garan I.
28 1st STRIKING FORCE
Lingga I.
BORNEO
PADDLE
Balikpapan
SUMATRA
Karimata Strait
JAVA SEA
GURNARD
Sunda Strait
STOIC



SOUTHWEST
IFIC AREA
PACIFIC
SOUTH
CHINA SEA
LUZON
Cape Bojeador
Aparri
Lingayen Gulf
Cape Bolinao
Clark Field
Manila
Corregidor
Subic Bay
BLUESILL
PARACEL IS. & Reefs
About 0130 and 0330
About 0310 and 0510
Scarborough Shl.
About 0230 and 1430
Camiguin I
POINT "N"
TG 38.3
TG 38.2
TG 38.1
FUELING AREA OCTANL
POINT "P"
POINT "Q"
TG 38.4
POINT READY
130° EAST LONGITUDE
About 1015
About 1010
About 1400
Legaspi
San Bernardino Strait
MINDORO
Mindoro Strait
SIBUYAN SEA
Masbate
PANAY
SAMAR
Bunga Point
Romanhon I.
Sutuan I.
LEYTE
FIN
TG 77.4
TG 77.2
77.6
NEGROS
CEBU
BOHOL
MINDANAO SEA
Camiguin I
Camauayor I
North Danger Shoal
LAPON
Quinilubao
Palawan Passage
PALAWAN
DANGEROUS GROUND
Royal Captain Shoal
CARTER
DACES
Balabac Strait
SULU SEA
MINDANAO
Zamboanga
Davao
About 1400
About 1130
750 MI
NARWHAL
Jolo
Sibutu Passage
Tawitawi
Sarangani Bay
Labuan I
Palau Kuraman
HAMMERHEAD
Brunei Bay
TF 79
(Landing Craft)
TF 78
Angaur I
TU 77.1.2
CELEBES SEA
Makassar Strait
About 1210
Molukka Passage
Morotai Is
HALMAHERA
N Watcher I
BREAM
PADDLE
GUITARRO
Batikpapan
CELEBES
MOLUKKA SEA
About 1000
CERAM
Boni Gulf
BANDA SEA
FLORES SEA
Sansapor
Noemfoor
EQUA

FUELING AREA OCTANE

PACIFIC OCEAN AREA

130° EAST LONGITUDE

MARIANAS

Saipan

Tinian

Guam

Ulithi

Yap

Ngulu Is.

CAROLINE IS.

TF 79 (Landing Craft)

TF 78

TF 79

TU 77.1.1

TU 77.1.2

TG 78.6

PET

ATT

Kossol Passage

Airai

Palau Is

Peleliu I

Angaur I

Morotai Is

HALMAHERA

EQUATOR

Sansapor

Noemfoor

SCHOUTEN IS

Biak

Owi

Mios Woendi

CUB

Hollandia

TG 78.7

8

Seeadler Hbr

MANUS

ADMIRALTY IS.

CERAM

NEW GUINEA

About 0140

About 1010

About 1120

About 0800

About 0910

About 0920

1000 Mi.

800 Mi.

600 Mi.

400 Mi.

500 Mi.

300 Mi.

630 Mi.

515 Mi.

0719

10°

0°

DIAGRAM "B"

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Events Depicted on Diagram "C"

October 18th 1944

0000 - 2400

1. 0100 FIRST Striking Force commenced departing from the Lingga - Garan area for Brunei Bay.

2. 0248 Radar equipped flying boat on night search from Garan Bi contacted what appeared to be an enemy task group in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 127° 35'E. (118°(T), 450 miles from Takao)

3. 0300 BREAM in Latitude 01°-17'N, Longitude 119°-24'E, contacted by radar an enemy force estimated to contain three or four heavy units. (Contact apparently false)

4. 0400 Radar equipped flying boat on night search from Garan Bi contacted an enemy group in Latitude 19°-05'N, Longitude 128°-15'E. (116°(T), 490 miles from Takao)

5. 0405 Radar equipped flying boat on night search from Garan Bi contacted an enemy group in Latitude 19°-25'N, Longitude 127°-55'E. (115°(T), 465 miles from Takao)

6. 0500 Six search planes departed Kyushu to search sector 155° 190°(T), from Kanoya to 650 miles.

7. 0530 SECOND Striking Force less HATSUHARU sortied from Satsukawa Bay, Amami O Shima en route Mako.

8. 0530 TG 30.3 rendezvoused with fueling group TU 30.8.8. Completed fueling at 1736.

9. 0540 Transport groups of TF 79 rendezvoused with fueling group in the vicinity of Point ART to fuel escorts. Completed fueling at 1710.

10. 0550 Four search planes commenced departure from Okinawa to search sector 145°-190°(T). Made no contacts. (Plane in sector 145°-155°(T) turned back at 350 miles, plane in sector 155°-165°(T) broke communication and was missing, plane in sector 165°-177°(T) was missing since departure at 0600.)

11. 0600 CTG 77.4 commenced launching aircraft for covering missions over Leyte area. Recovered at 1050. (Seventy sorties)

12. 0601 TG 38.3 rendezvoused with fueling group and aircraft replenishment carriers of TG 30.8. Completed operations at 1205.

13. 0607 CTG 38.1 and 38.4 rendezvoused and commenced launching aircraft for the days operations over Luzon. (342 sorties) CTG 38.1 completed recovery at 1750. CTG 38.4 did not complete recovery until sunset (1822).

14. 0610 CTG 77.4 launched an armed anti-shipping search of two VF and two VT over northern Mindanao Sea and Tanon Strait. Recovered at 1225. Made no contacts.

15. 0615 TG 38.2 commenced launching aircraft from Latitude 18°-00'N, Longitude 124°-00'E for the days operations over Luzon. Recovered at 1610. (209 sorties).

16. 0623 BELLEAU WOOD launched two VF and two VT to reconnoiter San Bernardino Strait. Recovered at 0942. Made no contacts.

17. 0630 (a) Five search planes departed Formosa to search sector 085°-145°(T) from Garan Bi. Made no contacts. (One plane turned back due to engine trouble.)

(b) One search plane departed Karenko to search southeast to 250 miles. Made no contacts.

(c) One search plane departed Sancho Kaku via Ishigaki to search to the southeast. Made no contacts.

18. 0640 Reinforcement Group TWO (TG 78.7) departed Hollandia and proceeded toward objective area.

19. 0645 CRUDIV THIRTEEN and DESDIV ONE HUNDRED joined TG 38.3 at the fueling rendezvous.

20. 0714 BLUEGILL in Latitude 14°-06'N, Longitude 119°-40'E, sank AP ARABIA MARU and AK's CHINZEI MARU, HAKAROKU MARU.

21. 0800 Philippine Islands heavily hit by Allied aircraft.

22. 0815 Four "T" force carrier type reconnaissance planes departed Kanoya independently to locate the enemy carrier task force reported the previous day in Latitude 22°-00'N, Longitude 126°-40'E. Made no contacts.

23. 0842 Three two engine land bombers departed Kanoya to make contact at dusk and guide in attack units. (Search was negative and the attack was cancelled.)

24. 0900 Group Able of the Bombardment and Fire Support Group (TG 77.2) entered Leyte Gulf.

25. 0905 Company "B" SIXTH Ranger Battalion seized Black Beach TWO on Homonhon Island.

26. 0910 KASUMI in Latitude 27°-42'N, Longitude 128°-34'E rescued the crew of a downed Japanese plane.

27. 1000 Brunei Fueling Group departed Singapore for Brunei Bay.

28. 1030 Contact report of enemy carrier task group of two carriers and five other ships 300 miles east of Manila, received by Commander SW Area Force about 1100.

29. 1038 STERLET in Latitude 28°-00'N, Longitude 127°-45'E sighted two CA, one CL and six escorting DD. (SECOND Striking Force).

30. 1100 CinC Combined Fleet departed Shinchiku for Hiyoshi, but was diverted to Omura because of bad weather.

31. 1144 Motor Torpedo Boat Group (TG 70.1) departed Kossol Passage and proceeded toward the objective area.

32. 1200 HATSUHARU rejoined the SECOND Striking Force formation in Latitude 28°-16'N, Longitude 127°-30'E.

33. 1215 CTG 77.4 commenced launching aircraft for covering missions over Leyte area. Recovered at 1630. (Seventy sorties)

34. 1315 Two search planes departed Taichu presumably to search for the enemy carrier task forces. (No search sector given.) Returned at 1703. Made no contacts.

35. 1426 SAN JACINTO launched two VT to reconnoiter San Bernardino Strait. Recovered at 1745. Made no contacts.

36. 1430 One "T" Force search plane departed Oroku to search sector 170°-175°(T) to 350 miles. Made no contacts.

37. 1430 Commander SIXTH Base Air Force learned that his fighter aircraft had strafed enemy submarines.

(a) bearing 300°(T) twenty-one miles from Takao and

(b) 270°(T) sixty miles from Takao. (These contacts were false.)

38. 1447 SAURY in the area east of Okinawa, rescued one fighter pilot who had been downed since October 16th.

39. 1515 NASHVILLE (CTU 77.1.2) with COMSOWESPAC and CAAF, SOWESPAC on board joined formation with WASATCH (CTU 77.1.1) with CANF SOWESPAC--COMSEVENTHFLT on board and proceeded toward objective area.

40. 1555 Commander SECOND Striking Force directed HATSUHARU to proceed independently to Takao, fuel and await orders. The destination was changed to Mako about 1610.

41. 1600 BLACKFIN in Latitude 20°-45'N, Longitude 132°-52'E sighted an enemy submarine.

42. 1600 Group Baker of the Bombardment and Fire Support Group (TG 77.2) entered Leyte Gulf.

43. Late afternoon CTF 79 launched a search of two VF and two VT from escort carrier along the projected course for 125 miles. Made no contacts.

44. 1701 Imperial General Headquarters (Navy Section) through the Chief of the Naval General Staff at Tokyo directed that the SHO Operation was to be carried out in the Philippines.

45. 2304 RATON in Latitude 12°-37'N, Longitude 118°-46'E, sank AK's TAIKAI MARU and SHIRANESAN MARU.

46. 2324 Wolf pack Commander in BESUGO guarding Bungo Suido changed his objective and altered his disposition.

NOTE: No positions of the Japanese submarines I's 26, 45, 54, 56, other than the 2400 position here shown, are available.

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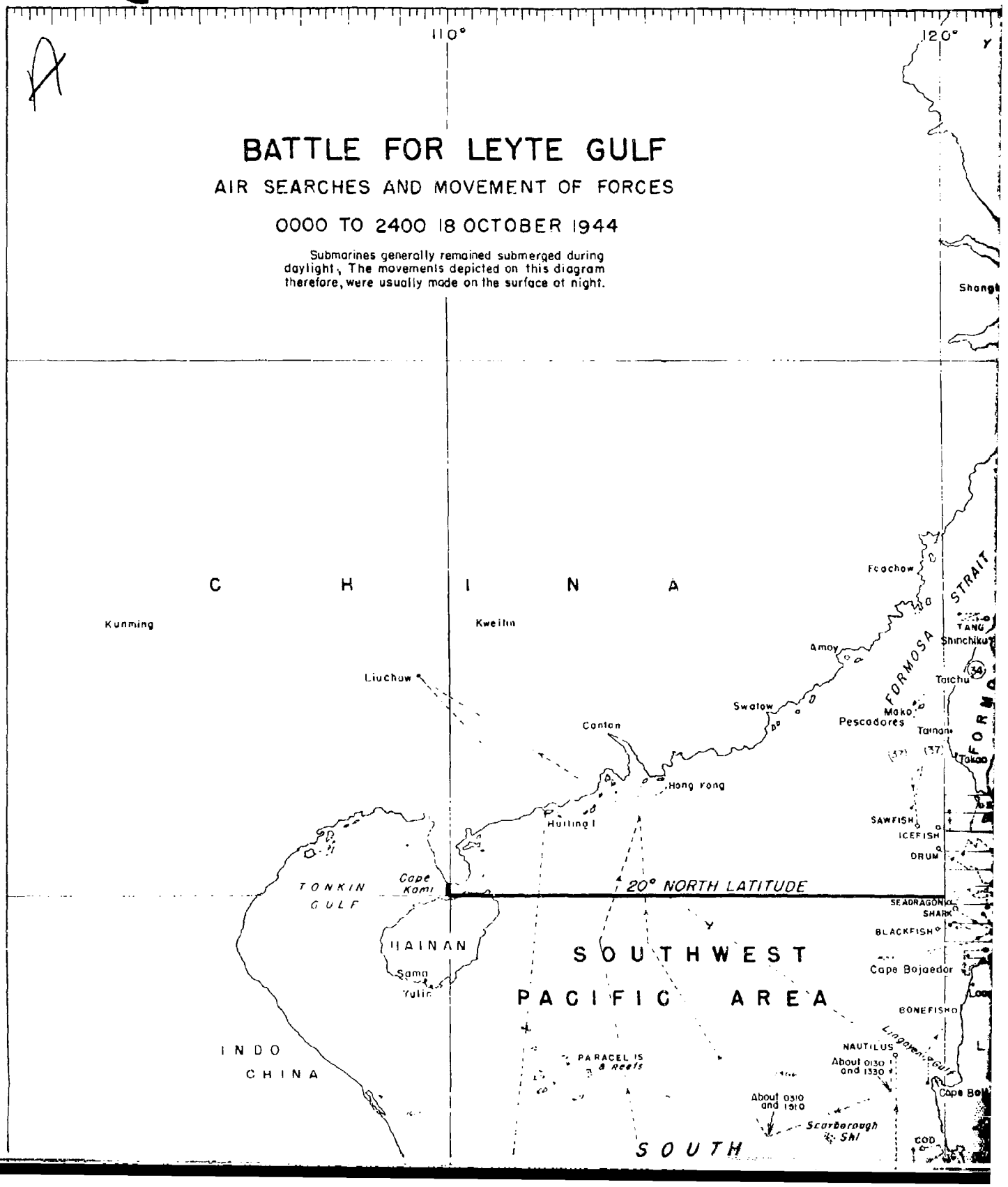
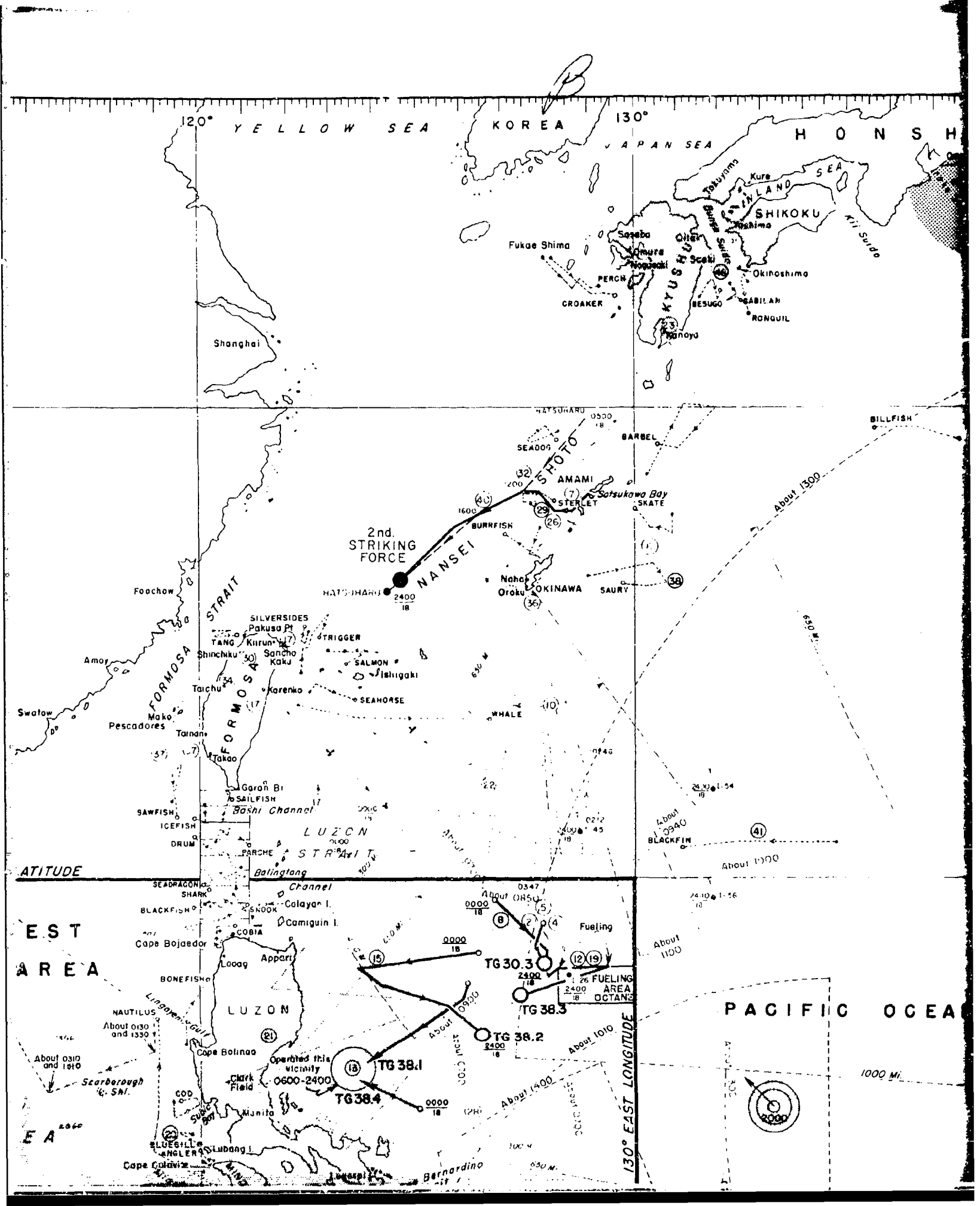
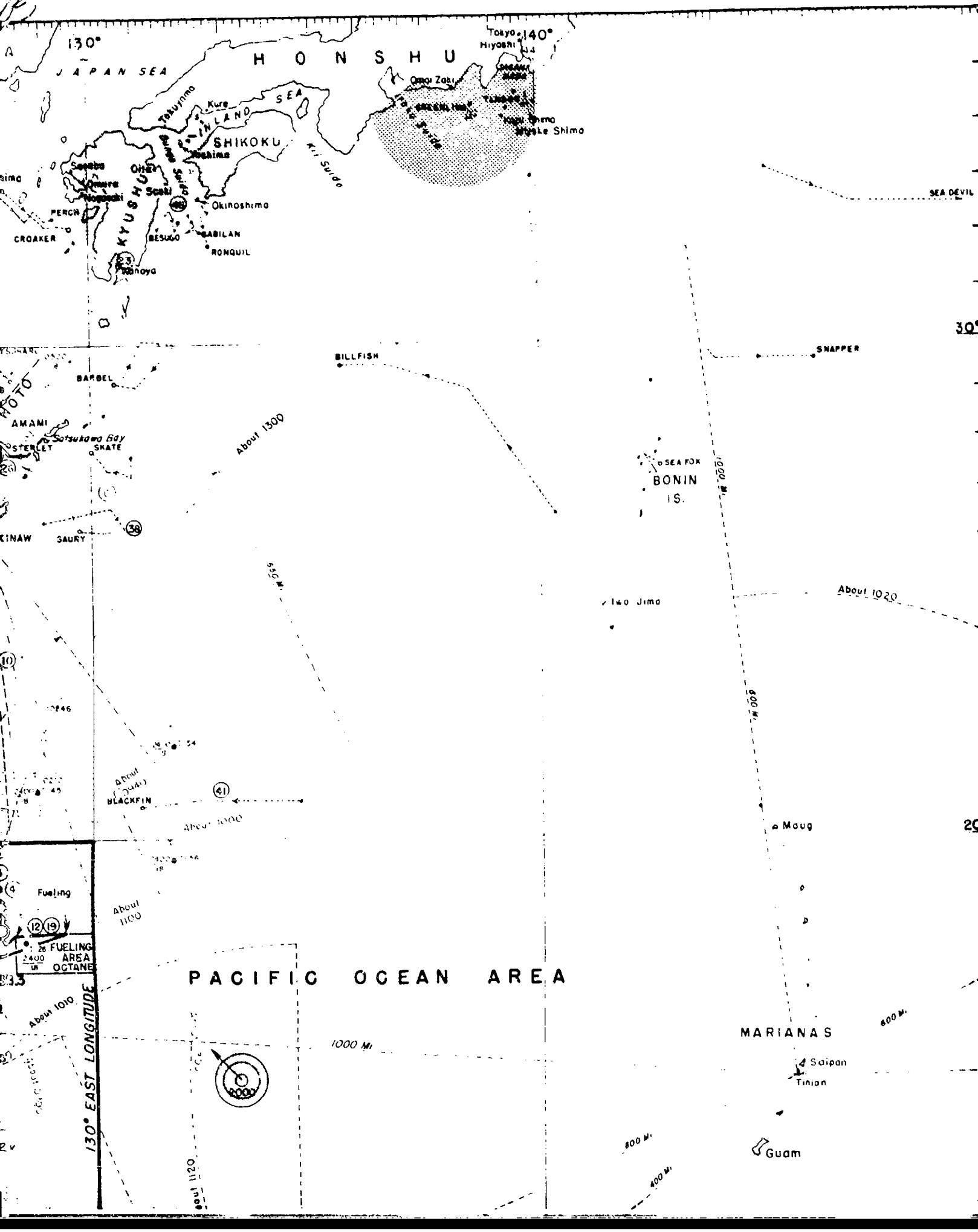
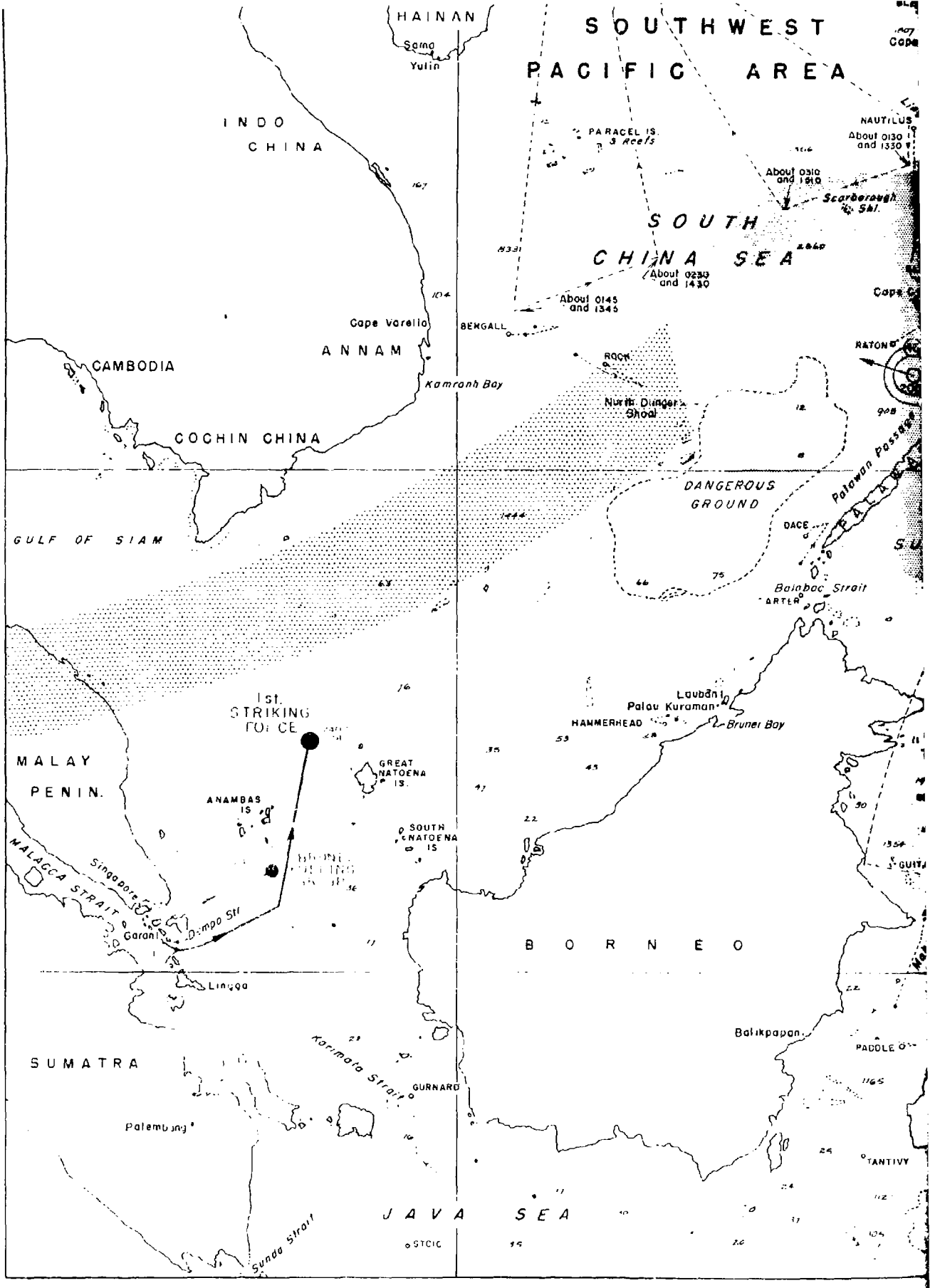


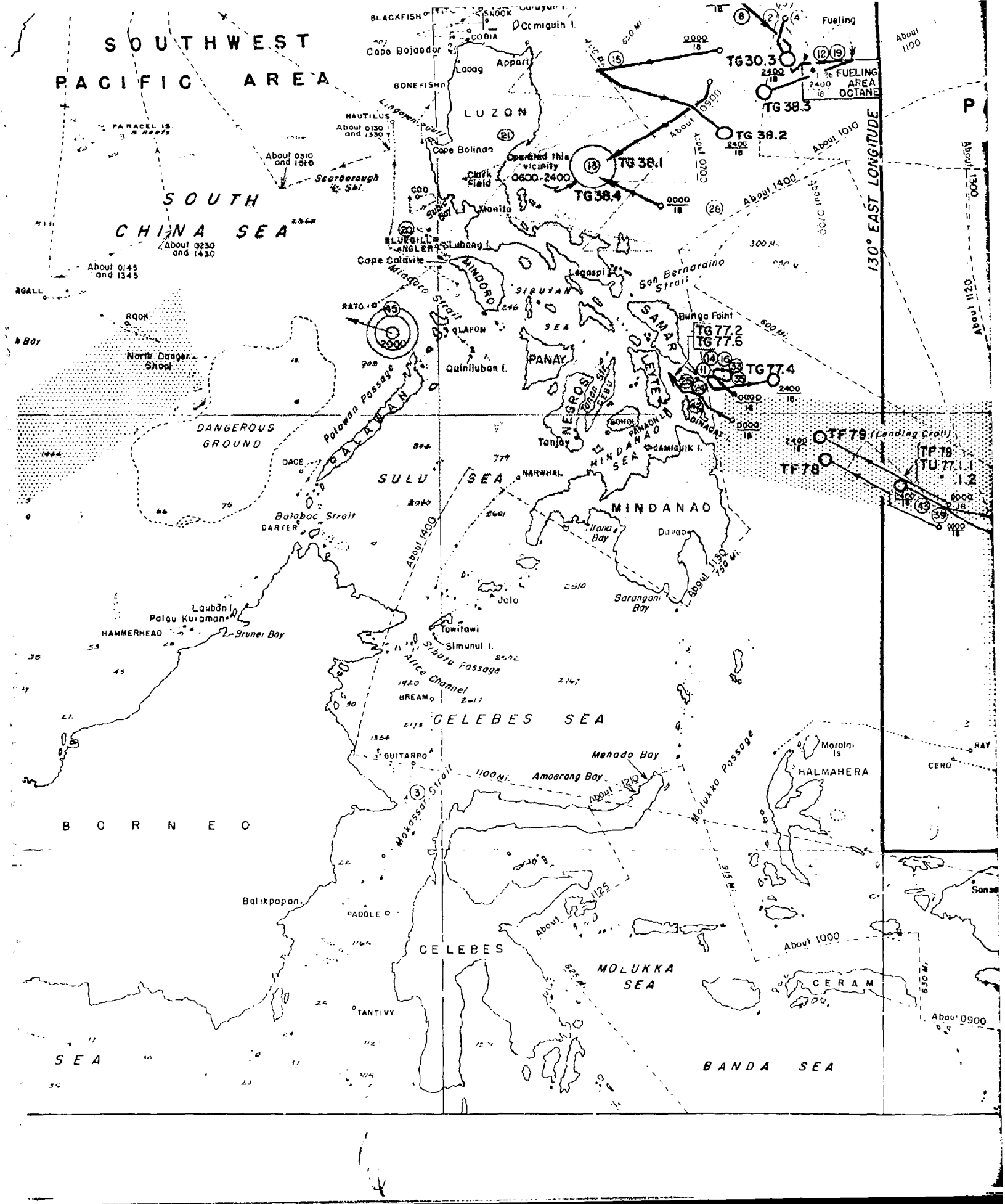


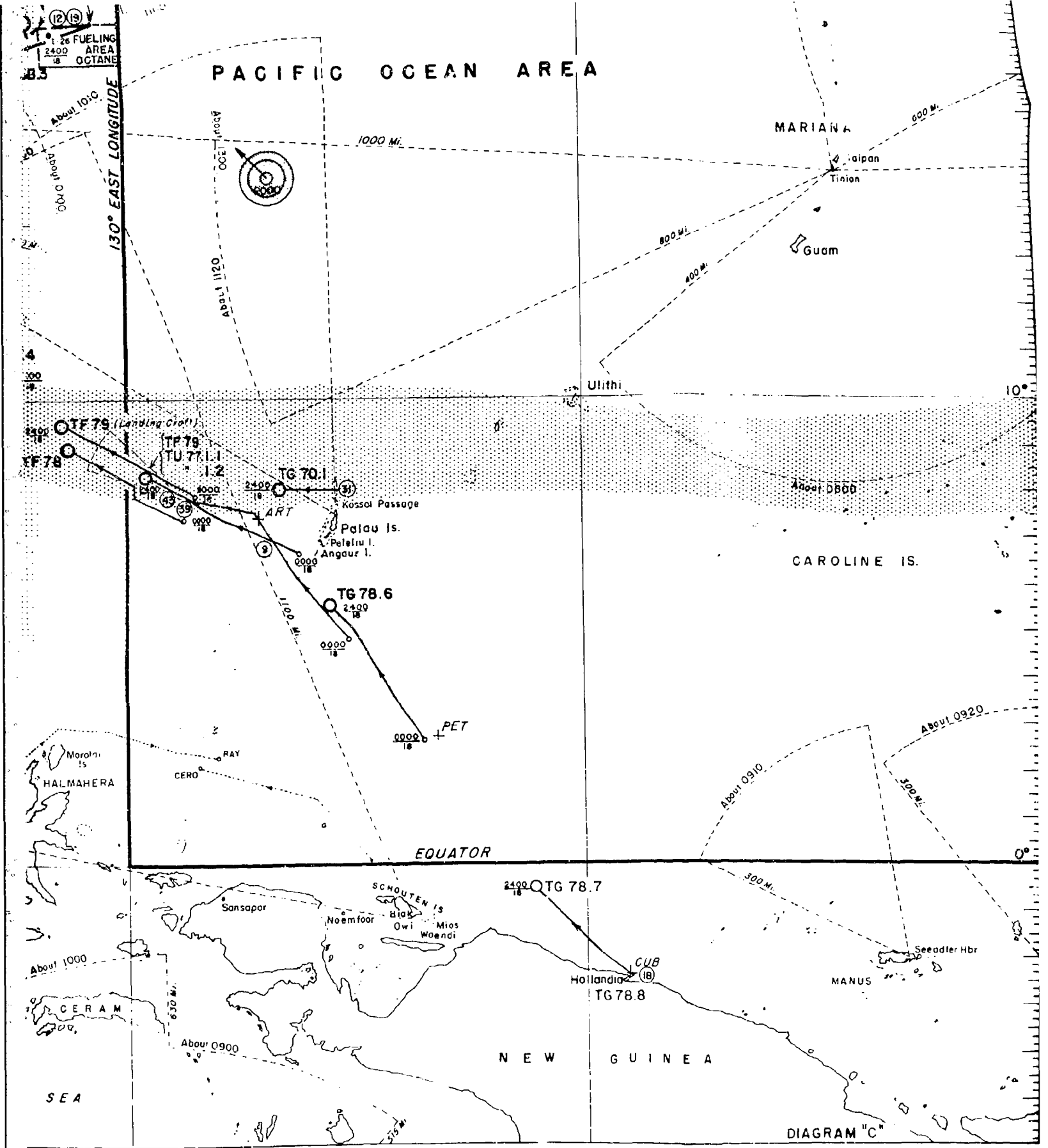
120°
YELLOW SEA
KOREA
130°
JAPAN SEA
HONSH
INLAND SEA
SHIKOKU
Kure
Tokuyama
Kii Suido
Fukae Shima
Sasebo
Omura
Nagasaki
Oita
Saeki
KYUSHU
Okinoshima
PERCH
CROAKER
BESUGO
GABILAN
RONQUIL
Kanoya
Shanghai
HATSUHARU
BARBEL
BILLFISH
SEADOG
SHOTO
AMAMI
Satsukawa Bay
STERLET
SKATE
BURRFISH
About 1300
2nd. STRIKING FORCE
NANSEI
HATSUHARU
2400
18
Naha
Oroku
OKINAWA
SAURY
Foochow
FORMOSA STRAIT
SILVERSIDES
Pakusa Pt
TANG
Kiirun
TRIGGER
Shinchiku
Sancho Kaku
SALMON
Ishigaki
Amoy
Taichu
Karenko
SEAHORSE
Swatow
Mako
Pescadores
Tainan
FORMOSA
WHALE
Takao
Garan Bi
SAILFISH
SAWFISH
Bashi Channel
ICEFISH
DRUM
LUZON STRAIT
PARCHE
BLACKFIN
About 1940
About 1900
ATITUDE
Balingtang Channel
SEADRAGON
SHARK
BLACKFISH
SNOOK
Calayan I.
Camiguin I.
COBIA
Cape Bojaedor
Fueling
About 1100
EST
AREA
Looag
Appari
TG 30.3
FUELING AREA OCTANE
BONEFISH
TG 38.3
LUZON
NAUTILUS
About 0130 and 1330
Lingayen Gulf
TG 38.2
PACIFIC OCEA
About 1010
About 0310 and 1510
Cape Bolinao
Operated this vicinity 0600-2400
TG 38.1
Scarborough Sh.
Clark Field
TG 38.4
About 1400
1000 Mi.
COD
Manila
Subic Bay
130° EAST LONGITUDE
BLUEGILL
ANGLER
Lubang I.
Cape Calavite
Bernardino



130°
140°
JAPAN SEA
HONSHU
Tokyo
Hiyoshi
Omai Zaki
Kure
INLAND SEA
SHIKOKU
Kii Suido
Seoeba
Omura
Nogasaki
Oita
Saoki
KYUSHU
Okinoshima
PERCH
CROAKER
BESUGO
GABILAN
RONQUIL
Kanoya
SEA DEVIL
30°
BILLFISH
SNAPPER
BARBEL
AMAMI
Sotsukawa Bay
STERLET
SKATE
About 1300
SEA FOX
BONIN IS.
1000 Mi
SAURY
Iwo Jima
About 1020
600 Mi
BLACKFIN
About 1000
Maug
Fueling
About 1100
FUELING AREA OCTANE
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
About 1010
1000 Mi
MARIANAS
Saipan
Tinian
Guam
130° EAST LONGITUDE
About 1120


HAINAN
Sama
Yulin
INDO CHINA
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
PARACEL IS.
3 Reefs
NAUTILUS
About 0130 and 1330
About 0310 and 1910
Scarborough Shl.
SOUTH CHINA SEA
About 0230 and 1430
About 0145 and 1345
Cape Varella
BENGALL
ANNAM
CAMBODIA
Kamranh Bay
ROCK
North Danger Shoal
RATON
COCHIN CHINA
DANGEROUS GROUND
Palawan Passage
GULF OF SIAM
DACE
Balabac Strait
ARTEA
1st. STRIKING FORCE
Laubân
Palau Kuraman
HAMMERHEAD
Brunei Bay
MALAY PENIN.
GREAT NATOENA IS.
ANAMBAS IS
SOUTH NATOENA IS
MALACCA STRAIT
Singapore
Dompo Str
Garan
BORNEO
Lingga
Balikpapan
PADDLE
SUMATRA
Karimata Strait
GURNARD
Palembang
TANTIVY
JAVA SEA
Sunda Strait
STCIC


SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
SOUTH CHINA SEA
LUZON
Cape Bojaedor
Cape Bolinao
Cape Calavite
Lubang I.
Mindoro Strait
MINDORO
SIBUYAN SEA
PANAY
NEGROS
SAMAR
LEYTE
San Bernardino Strait
Legaspi
Bunga Point
Quiniluban I.
Palawan Passage
PALAWAN
DANGEROUS GROUND
North Danger Shoal
SULU SEA
Balabac Strait
DARTER
Tanjay
HINDANAO SEA
MINDANAO
Davao
Sarangani Bay
Jolo
Tawitawi
Simunul I.
Sibutu Passage
Alice Channel
CELEBES SEA
Menado Bay
Amoerong Bay
Makassar Strait
Molukka Passage
HALMAHERA
Morotai Is
BORNEO
Balikpapan
PADDLE
CELEBES
MOLUKKA SEA
CERAM
BANDA SEA
TANTIVY
Laubon I.
Palau Kuraman
HAMMERHEAD
Brunei Bay
TG 30.3
TG 38.3
TG 38.2
TG 38.1
TG 38.4
TG 77.2
TG 77.6
TG 77.4
TF 79 (Landing Craft)
TF 78
TP 79
TU 77.1.1
1.2
FUELING AREA OCTANE
Fueling
130° EAST LONGITUDE
About 1100
About 1010
About 1400
About 1300
About 1120
About 1400
About 1150
About 1210
About 1125
About 1000
About 0900
About 0700
About 0900
About 0310 and 1510
About 0230 and 1430
About 0145 and 1345
About 0130 and 1330
Scarborough Shl.
Operated this vicinity 0600-2400
Manila
Lingayen Gulf
Lagaspi
Tanjay
Davao
Sarangani Bay
Jolo
Balabac Strait
Palawan Passage
Sibutu Passage
Alice Channel
Makassar Strait
Molukka Passage
Sonsa
RAY
CERO



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4

Events Depicted on Diagram "D"

October 19th 1944

0000 - 2400

1. 0000 Two radar equipped night flying boats departed Garan Bi to search on bearings 110°(T) and 130°(T) to 450 miles, a cross leg to the left of ninety miles and return.

2. 0030 Chief of Staff, SIXTH Base Air Force at Takao, ordered the commanders of Western Attack Forces ONE and TWO to move up during the day, the entire operational air strength remaining in the Kyushu and Nansei Shoto area (excluding "T" Force and Fourth Surface Escort Unit).

3. 0133 ROSS while escorting minesweepers struck a floating mine one mile south of Point "FOX" and struck a second mine at 0155.

4. 0310 BONEFISH in the area off northwestern Luzon recovered downed airmen attached to the BUNKER HILL.

5. 0540 CTF 79 launched four VF and four VT from PETROF BAY to search sector 200°-260°(T) to 200 miles or land. Recovered about 0930. Made no contacts.

6. 0550 Fire Support Groups of Fire Support Unit South commenced bombardment of southern Leyte beaches. Completed firing at 1715 and withdrew to the night retirement area.

7. 0606 CTG 38.4 launched two VT to search over San Bernardino. Recovered at 0917. Made no contacts.

8. 0615 CTG's 38.1 and 38.4 commenced launching aircraft for the days operations over central Luzon. (351 sorties) Recovered at 1730.

9. Daylight Search Plan "FOX" cancelled search plan "EASY" thereby moving the principal land based search origin from Biak to Morotai.

10. 0630 CTG 77.4 commenced launching air strikes against Negros. (Seventy-two sorties) Recovered at 1100.

11. 0800 Japanese search planes contacted three CV, four CVE, twelve cruisers and DD and fifty small craft in Leyte Gulf.

12. 0812 Japanese search planes contacted four, later increased to five, CV in Latitude 15°-20'N, Longitude 123°-40'E.

13. 0816 CTG 38.2 rendezvoused with fueling and replacement carrier group TG 30.8. Completed operations at 1500.

14. 0830 Japanese search planes contacted thirty transports escorted by four cruisers or DD. (180 miles east of Tacloban.)

15. 0845 Japanese search planes contacted three CV and eight other ships in Latitude 10°-05'N, Longitude 126°-25'E bearing 130°(T) distant 120 miles from Tacloban.

16. 0850 Japanese search planes contacted one CVE, three BB, seven cruisers and several DD in Latitude 11°-05'N, Longitude 127°-05'E bearing 094°(T) distant 130 miles from Tacloban.

17. 0900 Fire Support Group of Fire Support Unit North commenced bombardment of northern Leyte beaches. Completed firing at 1615.

18. 0912 Japanese Army lookout sighted thirty merchant vessels in Latitude 11°-15'N, Longitude 126°-15'E (off southeast Samar).

19. 0930 Japanese search planes contacted three CV and five BB in Latitude 17°-15'N, Longitude 126°-35'E. (280 miles northeast of Lamon Bay)

20. 1010 Japanese search planes contacted two CV and two cruisers in Latitude 17°-45'N, Longitude 127°-35'E. (About 350 miles northeast of Lamon Bay.)

21. 1125 Allied search plane from Tinian sighted an unidentified submarine in Latitude 17°-15'N, Longitude 132°-35'E.

22. 1142 DARTER in Palawan Passage fired four torpedoes at two destroyers. DACE also fired four torpedoes at 1145. All missed.

23. 1200 Allied search plane from Tinian sighted an unidentified submarine in Latitude 17°-30'N, Longitude 130°-45'E.

24. 1220 Japanese search planes contacted a large group of merchant ships in Latitude 08°-25'N, Longitude 128°-25'E. (Possibly the transport group of TF 79) (580 miles southeast of Manila)

25. 1230 CTG 77.4 commenced launching air strikes against Panay. (Forty-three sorties) Recovered at 1720.

26. 1300 Japanese Army fighter contacted about seventy combat ships including six CV, fourteen BB, twenty cruisers and thirty DD, thirty transports and two hospital ships in Seeadler Harbor, Manus, Admiralty Islands. (A very incorrect report)

27. 1328 TRIGGER in Latitude 25°-30'N, Longitude 122°-45'E (east of northern Formosa) contacted SECOND Striking Force.

28. 1330 One carrier type bomber and four fighters with bombs departed Mabalacat to attack surface ships in Leyte Gulf. (Claimed direct hits on one or two BB, actually caused no damage.)

29. 1330 Allied search plane from Tinian sighted an enemy DD in Latitude 28°-25'N, Longitude 142°-35'E.

30. 1353 CTG 38.4 launched two VT to search over San Bernardino. Recovered at 1745. Made no contacts.

31. 1400 CTF 79 launched four VF and four VT from PETROF BAY to search sector 190°-250°(T) to 200 miles or land. Recovered about 1750. Made no contacts.

32. 1403 FOURTEENTH Air Force search planes contacted one CV, one BB, two cruisers and two DD in Latitude 18°-41'N, Longitude 112°-10'E.

33. 1426 CTF 79 (landing craft) formed special approach disposition reducing the front to allow entry into Leyte Gulf. Arrived vicinity Point FIN at 2200.

34. 1907 CTF 17 ordered the GABILAN detached from the BESUGO wolfpack in Bungo Suido and directed her to guard the approaches to Kii Suido.

35. 2200 CTF 78 formed special approach disposition reducing the front to allow entry into Leyte Gulf. Arrived vicinity Point FIN at 2305.

36. 2229 COMTHIRDFLT cancelled all existing orders for his task group to retire to Ulithi and Manus and cancelled the shifting of his battleships and carriers.

37. During the day Japanese Army planes attacked shipping at Tacloban. Claimed damage to three BB and three transports. (Twenty-five planes)

38. During the day Six Japanese submarines (I's 38, 41, 44, 46, 53 and RO 43) departed Bungo Suido for the objective area off eastern Philippines.

39. During the day Japanese search planes sighted three cruisers and eighty transports in Humboldt Bay.

NOTE: No positions of the Japanese submarines I's 26, 45, 54, 56, other than the 0000 position here shown, are available. The arrow indicates the course of these submarines at this time.

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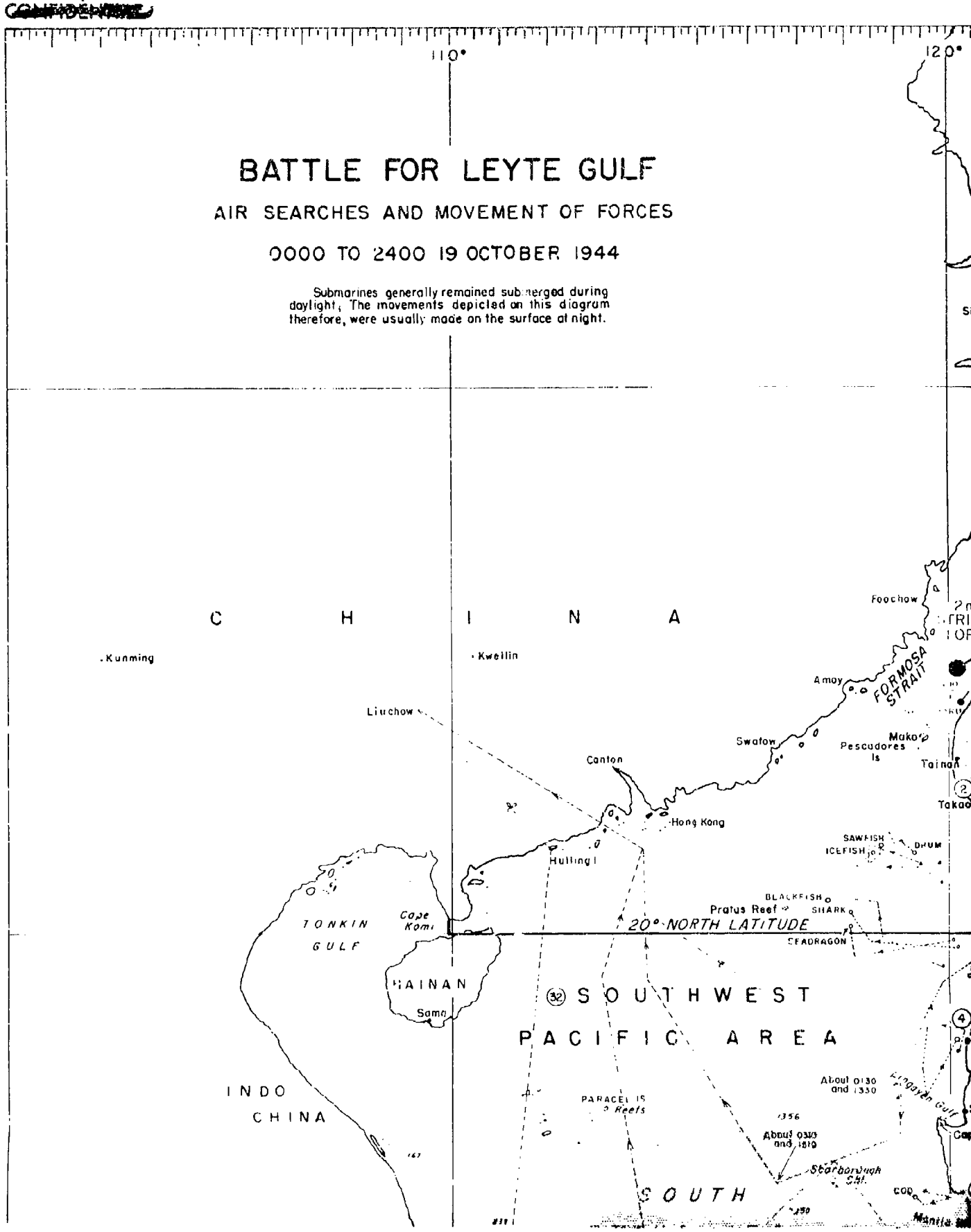
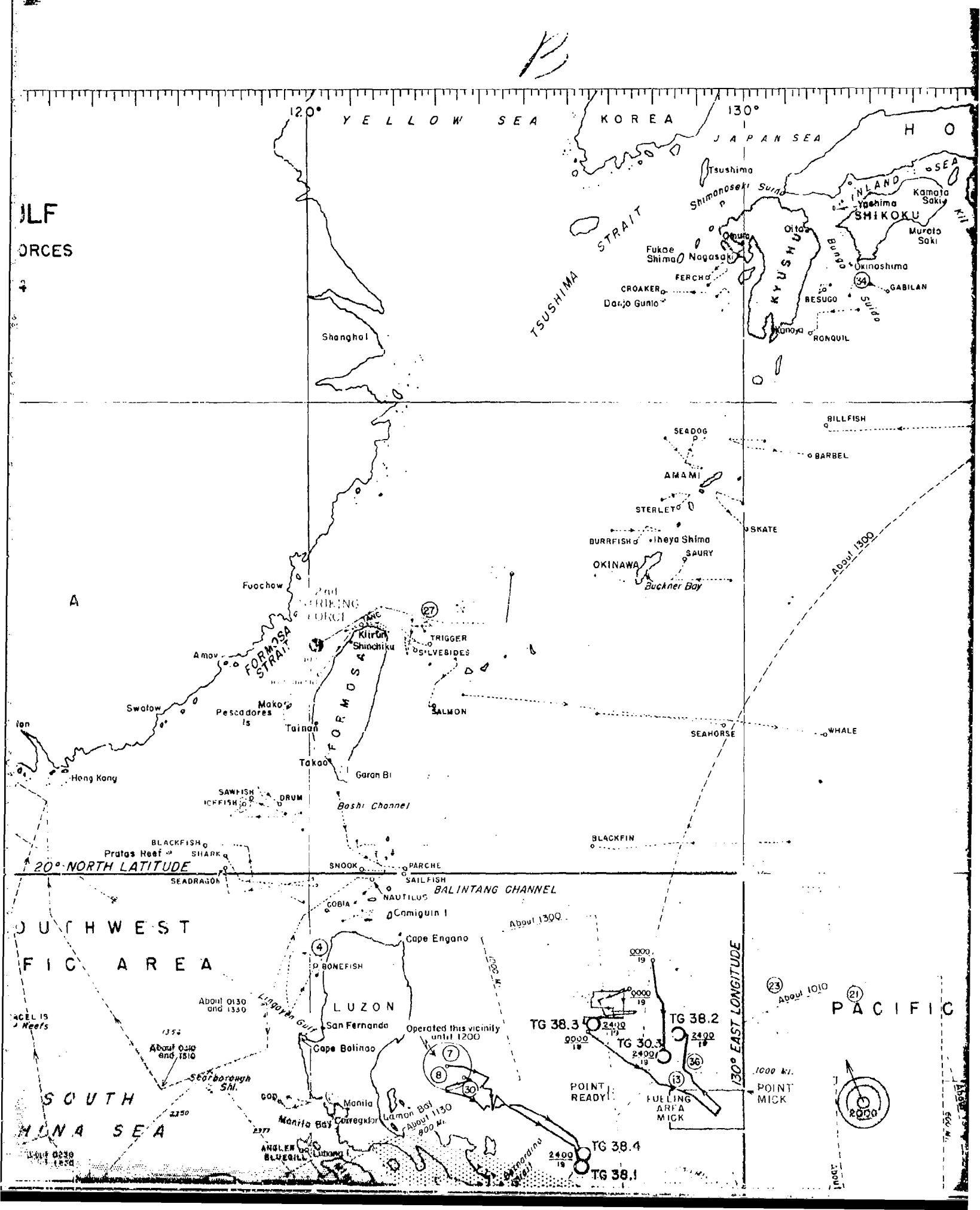
BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF

AIR SEARCHES AND MOVEMENT OF FORCES

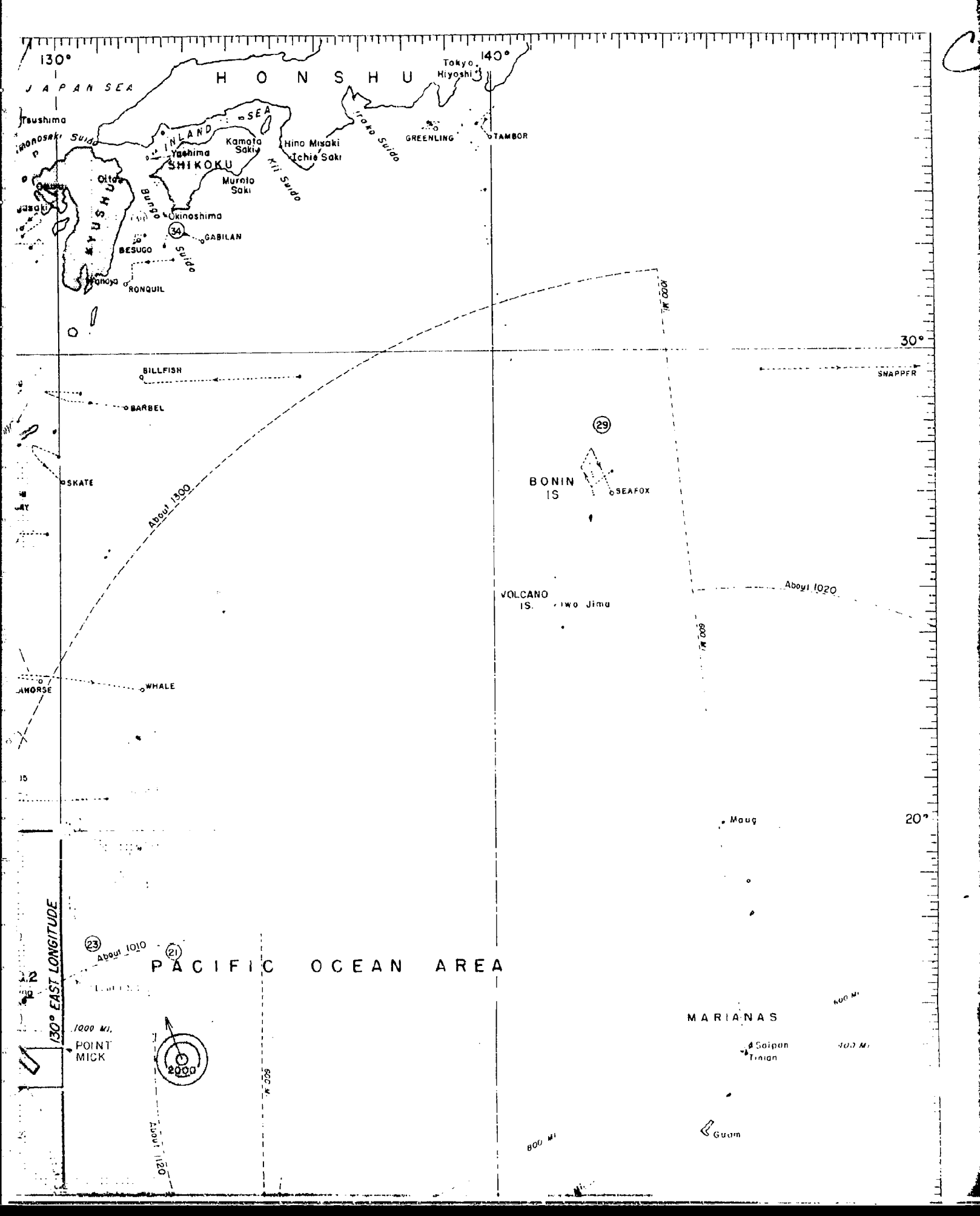
0000 TO 2400 19 OCTOBER 1944

Submarines generally remained submerged during daylight. The movements depicted on this diagram therefore, were usually made on the surface at night.

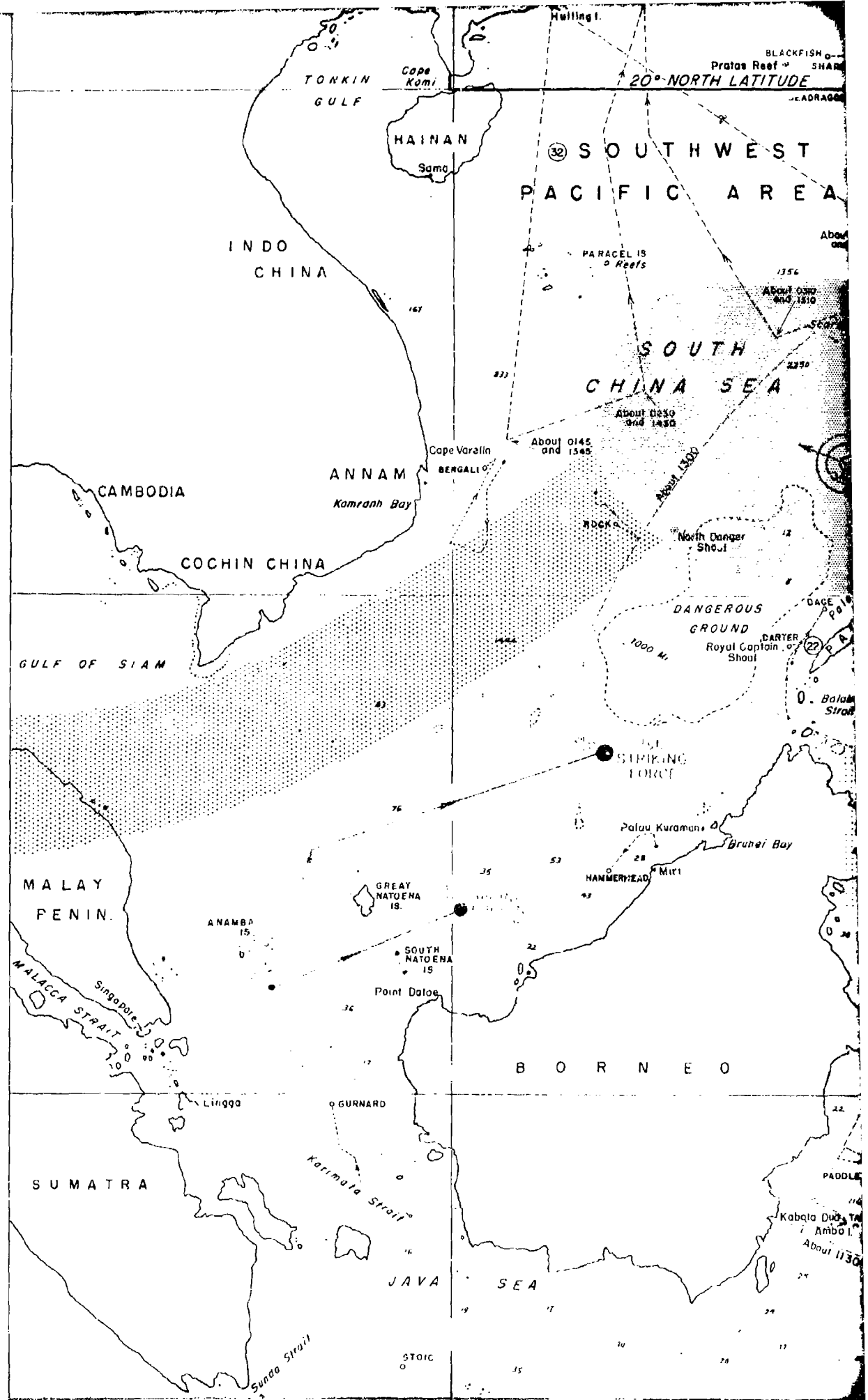


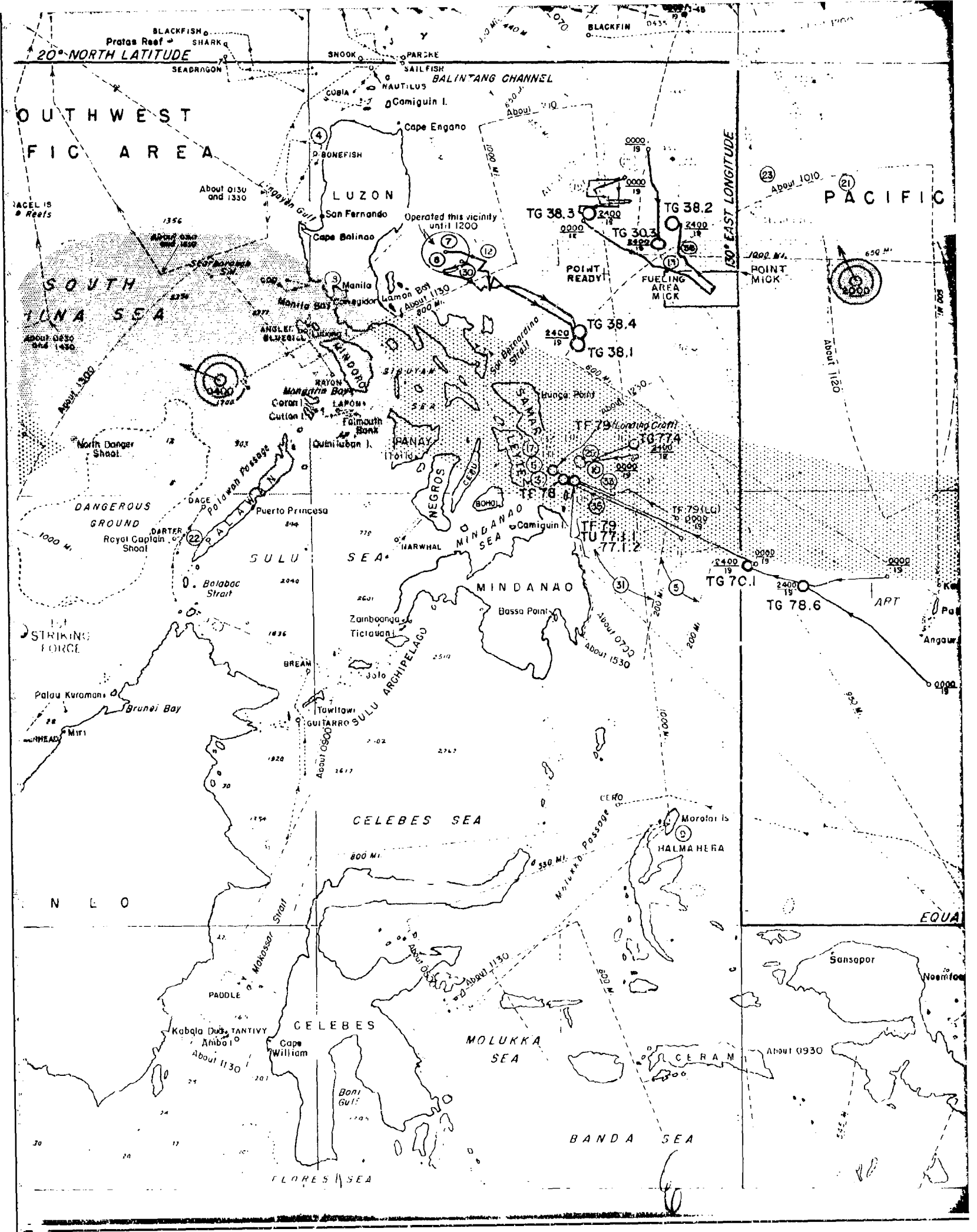


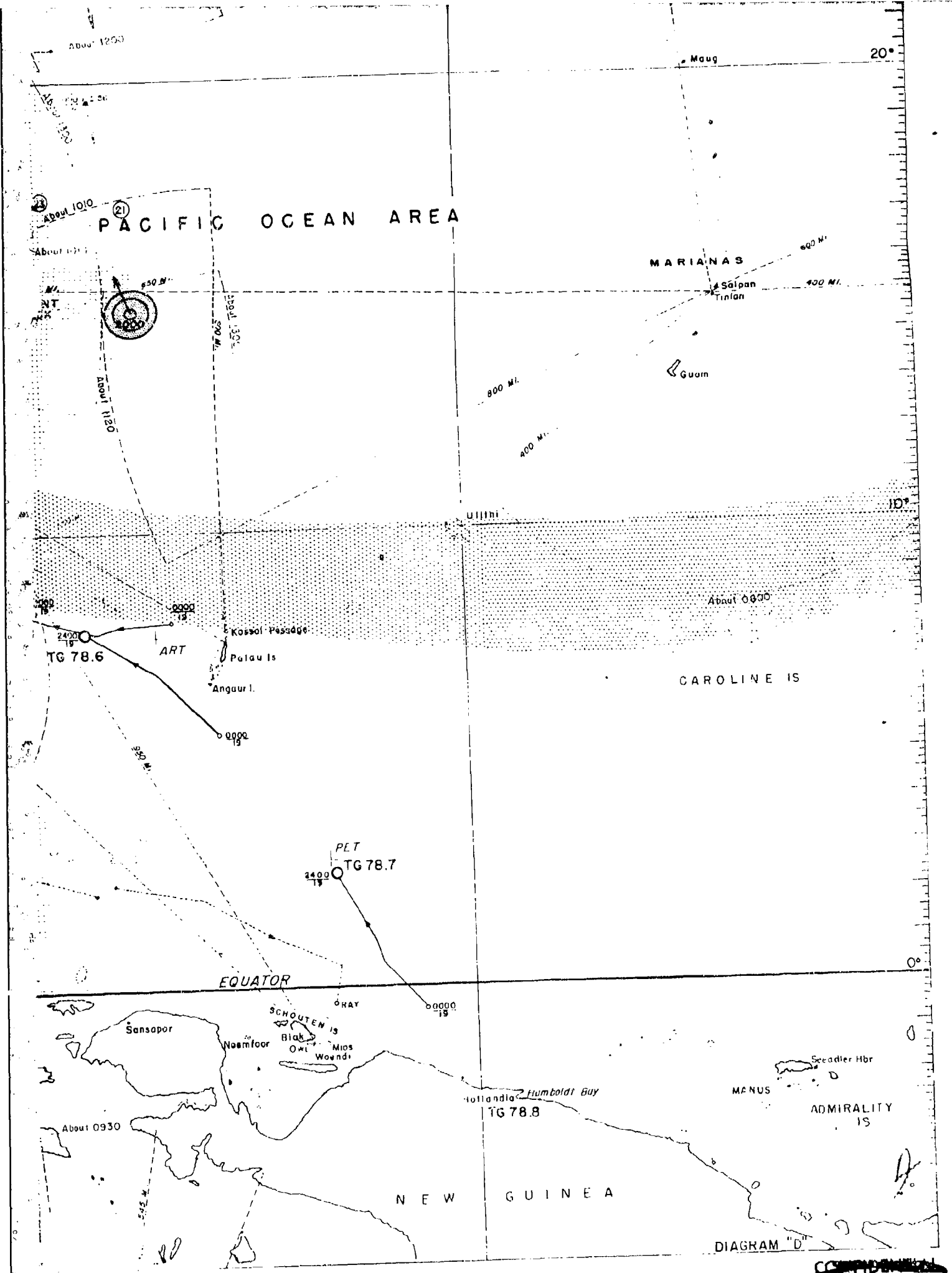
120°
YELLOW SEA
KOREA
130°
JAPAN SEA
HO
Tsushima
Shimonoseki Suido
INLAND SEA
Kamata Saki
Yashima
SHIKOKU
Muroto Saki
Kii
TSUSHIMA STRAIT
Fukae Shima
Nagasaki
Omura
Oita
KYUSHU
Bungo Suido
Okinoshima
GABILAN
FERCH
CROAKER
Danjo Gunto
BESUGO
Kanoya
RONQUIL
Shanghai
BILLFISH
SEADOG
BARBEL
AMAMI
STERLET
SKATE
BURRFISH
Iheya Shima
SAURY
OKINAWA
Buckner Bay
About 1300
Foochow
2nd STRIKING FORCE
TANC
Kiirun
Shinchiku
TRIGGER
SILVERSIDES
FORMOSA STRAIT
Amoy
FORMOSA
Swatow
Makoo
Pescadores Is
Tainan
SALMON
SEAHORSE
WHALE
Takao
Garan Bi
Hong Kong
SAWFISH
ICEFISH
DRUM
Bashi Channel
BLACKFISH
Pratas Reef
SHARK
BLACKFIN
20° NORTH LATITUDE
SNOOK
PARCHE
SEADRAGON
SAILFISH
BALINTANG CHANNEL
NAUTILUS
COBIA
Camiguin I
About 1300
Cape Engano
BONEFISH
LUZON
About 0130 and 1330
Lingayen Gulf
San Fernando
Cape Bolinao
Operated this vicinity until 1200
TG 38.3
TG 38.2
TG 30.3
TG 38.4
TG 38.1
POINT READY
FUELING AREA MICK
POINT MICK
130° EAST LONGITUDE
About 1010
PACIFIC
About 0310 and 1510
Scarborough Shl.
SOUTH
Manila
Manila Bay
Corregidor
Lamon Bay
About 1130
ANGLER
BLUEGILL
Lubang I
Bernardino Strait
2000



130°
140°
JAPAN SEA
HONSHU
Tokyo
Hiyoshi
Tsushima
Shimonoseki Suido
INLAND SEA
Kamoto Saki
Hino Misaki
Ichie Saki
Iroko Suido
GREENLING
TAMBOR
Yashima
SHIKOKU
Kii Suido
Muroto Saki
Oita
KYUSHU
Bungo Suido
Okinoshima
34
GABILAN
BESUGO
Wanoya
RONQUIL
1000 MI.
30°
BILLFISH
SNAPPER
BARBEL
29
SKATE
BONIN IS
SEAFOX
About 1300
VOLCANO IS.
Iwo Jima
About 1020
600 MI.
WHALE
Maug
20°
130° EAST LONGITUDE
23
About 1010
21
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
MARIANAS
600 MI.
1000 MI.
POINT MICK
2000
Saipan
Tinian
400 MI.
600 MI.
About 1120
800 MI.
Guam


Hulling I.
BLACKFISH
Pratas Reef
SHARK
20° NORTH LATITUDE
TONKIN GULF
Cape Komi
HAINAN
Sama
32 SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
INDO CHINA
PARACEL IS
Reefs
About 0330 and 1310
SOUTH CHINA SEA
About 0230 and 1450
Cape Varella
About 0145 and 1545
BERGALI
ANNAM
Kamranh Bay
CAMBODIA
About 1300
ROCKS
North Danger Shoal
COCHIN CHINA
DANGEROUS GROUND
CARTER
Royal Captain Shoal
1000 M.
GULF OF SIAM
1ST STRIKING FORCE
Palau Kuraman
Brunei Bay
MALAY PENIN.
GREAT NATUNA IS.
HAMMERHEAD
Miri
ANAMBA IS.
SOUTH NATUNA IS
Point Datoe
MALACCA STRAIT
Singapore
BORNEO
Linggo
GURNARD
SUMATRA
Karimata Strait
Kabala Dua
Ambol I.
About 1130
JAVA SEA
Sunda Strait
STOIC


20° NORTH LATITUDE
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
SOUTH CHINA SEA
LUZON
PACIFIC
PHILIPPINE SEA
CELEBES SEA
MOLUKKA SEA
BANDA SEA
FLORES SEA
SULU SEA
MINDANAO SEA
BALINTANG CHANNEL
Camiguin I.
Cape Engano
BONEFISH
San Fernando
Cape Bolinao
Manila
Manila Bay
Corregidor
Lamon Bay
About 1130
800 MI.
Lingayen Gulf
Operated this vicinity until 1200
TG 38.3
TG 38.2
TG 30.3
TG 38.4
TG 38.1
POINT READY
FUELING AREA MICK
POINT MICK
130° EAST LONGITUDE
About 1010
About 1120
650 MI.
1000 MI.
800 MI.
Coron I.
Cuttle I.
Culion I.
Malampaya Sound
Mangarin Bay
Calamian Group
Linapacan I.
Falmouth Bank
North Danger Shoal
Royal Captain Shoal
DANGEROUS GROUND
Dangerous Passage
Puerto Princesa
PALAWAN
Balabac Strait
Sibutu Passage
Sibutu I.
Sibuyan Sea
San Bernardino Strait
Burias Pt.
TF 79 (Loading Grp)
TG 77.4
TF 78
TF 79 (LG)
TF 79
TU 77.1.1
77.1.2
TG 70.1
TG 78.6
Panay
Iloilo
Negros
Cebu
Bohol
Leyte
Samar
Surigao Strait
Camiguin I.
Basco Point
Zamboanga
Ticlauan
Jolo
Tawitawi
SULU ARCHIPELAGO
Bream
Palau Kuraman
Brunei Bay
Miri
Labuan
Balabac Strait
Darter
Dage
Narwhal
Paddle
Cero
Morotai Is
HALMAHERA
Molukka Passage
Makassar Strait
CELEBES
Kabala Dua
Tantivy
Ambai
Cape William
Boni Gulf
CERAM
Sansapor
Noemfoor
EQUA
ART
Angaur
STRIKING FORCE
About 0930
About 1130
About 0600
About 0730
About 1530
About 0130 and 1330
About 1300
About 1230
About 1120
About 0630 and 1430
About 0400
About 0900
About 0930
About 1130
About 0600
About 0730
About 1530
About 1130



About 1200
Maug
20°
About 1010
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
MARIANAS
Saipan
Tinian
400 MI.
Guam
800 MI.
400 MI.
About 1120
Ulithi
10°
About 0800
Kossol Passage
Palau Is
Angaur I.
TG 78.6
ART
CAROLINE IS
PET
TG 78.7
0°
EQUATOR
RAY
SCHOUTEN IS
Sansapor
Noemfoor
Biak
Owi
Mios
Woendi
Seeadler Hbr
MANUS
ADMIRALITY IS
Hollandia
Humboldt Bay
TG 78.8
About 0930
NEW GUINEA
DIAGRAM "D"