





# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

VF-45

REPORT No. **ACA-1 #17**

## XI. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPS OR GROUND OBJECTIVES (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

**Secung-Vacua, Shell and Texas Co. Tank farms west bank of Ma Le River (4 1/2 miles SSE of Saigon - Designated as Targets)** (b) Time Over Target(s) **1600 (1)** (Zone) **93, 121, 122, Air objective Folder No. 85.2) Also Sugar Baker, 1 mi. downstream from Texas**  
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)  
 (c) Clouds Over Target **4000' cumulus, 3/10th** / **Oil co. tank farm**  
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 (d) Visibility of Target **Clear until obscured by smoke from burning** (e) Visibility **6-8**  
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)  
 (f) Bombing Tactics: Type **Glide** Bomb Sight Used **Mark 8**  
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)  
 Bombs Dropped per Run **1** Spacing **X** Altitude of Bomb Release **Variable**  
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)  
 (g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed **X** Probably Destroyed **X** Damaged **X**

(h) AIMING POINT	(i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(j) NO. A/C ATTACKING (k) SQUADRON	(l) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH AIMING POINT	(m) NO. HITS On Aiming Point	(n) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

(o) RESULTS: (For all hits claimed on ship targets and for land targets of special interest, draw diagram, top or side view or both, as appropriate, showing type and location of hits. For all targets give location and effect of hits, and identify by numbers above. Use additional sheets if necessary).

(p) Were Photographs Taken? **yes** Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.



P1-16

SANJAC 43 12 JAN 45 1530 (-9) K 20.6 3/4" OBL. VAR. SAIGON CONF.

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## XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA. (Narrative and comment. Describe action fully and comment freely, following applicable items in check list at left. Use additional sheets if necessary.)

### ENGAGEMENT WITH ENEMY

#### OWN AIRCRAFT

- Disposition
- Altitudes
- Speeds
- Approach Tactics
- Use of Cover, Deception
- Angles of Attack and Their Effectiveness
- Distance of Opening Fire
- Defense Tactics and Their Effectiveness

#### ENEMY AIRCRAFT

- Method of Locating, Distance
- Disposition
- Altitudes
- Speeds
- Approach Tactics
- Use of Cover, Deception
- Angles of Attack
- Distance of Opening Fire
- Defensive Tactics

#### COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Own Weaknesses
- Enemy Weaknesses
- Offensive Tactics, Own
- " " , Enemy
- Defensive Tactics, Own
- " " , Enemy
- Flexible Gunnery, Own
- Escort Tactics
- Fighter Direction
- Use of Radar
- Night Fighting
- Recognition, Aircraft

### ATTACK

#### OWN TACTICS

- Method of Locating Target
- Approach to Target
- Altitudes, Speeds
- Approach
- Dive
- Pull-Out
- Dive Angle
- Strafing
- Retirement
- Defensive Tactics
- Use of Jamming

#### DEFENSE, ENEMY

- Evasive Tactics, Ships
- Concealment
- Searchlights
- Night Fighter Tactics
- Use of Jamming

#### COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Bombing Tactics
- Torpedo Tactics
- Effectiveness of Bombs, Torpedoes
- Selection of Targets
- Fuzing
- Strafing Tactics
- Defensive Tactics
- Use of Radar
- Reconnaissance
- Photography
- Briefing

### OPERATIONAL

- Navigation
- Homing
- Rendezvous
- Recognition, Ships
- Communications
- Flight Operations
- Search and Tracking
- Base Operations
- Maintenance

Twelve (12) P6F-5's of VF-45, together with six (6) TBM's of VT-45, were launched from the USS SAN JACINTO at 1345 (L), 12 January, 1945, to hit shipping or specified land targets in the Saigon, French Indo-China area. Among the land targets designated was the oil tank farm area (formerly properties of Socoxy-Vacuum Oil Co., Shell Oil Co. and The Texas Co.) on the west bank of the Nha Be River approximately 4.5 miles SSE of Saigon.

After take-off the flight, under the general direction of the Essex Group flight leader, set course for Saigon. Before reaching the target the Group Commander of Air Group 45, leading the SAN JACINTO flight, was informed by the Essex VF leader that the latter was going to proceed to make a sweep of the Saigon airfields and advised the Group Commander to select and strike suitable targets, and to escort the VT back to base after their run.

The first indication of the target was a single column of black smoke rising from the Shell tank farm. The combined group flew up the east side of the target, and peeled off in a glide bombing and strafing run against the oil installations from North to South. (Just as the Group Commander was pushing over in his dive he received permission for the second 3 plane section of TBM's to proceed north to search for and strike shipping nearer Saigon.)

Ten of the Hellcats (all 3 VF divisions except the 2 photo planes) proceeded to drop their quarter-ton bombs on the oil storage area, and to make repeated strafing runs on the installations at all three tank farms. The smoke and dust of explosions of the tanks, and the black smoke of burning oil made it difficult to assess accurately the damage, or attribute individual credit, but the 10 bombs and repeated strafing of all the tanks of the three contiguous storage areas, blazed at least 5 tanks in the Shell oil plant, 3 in the Socoxy-Vacuum farm and at least 1 in the Texas Co. farm. The only previous damage to these oil tanks and installations was one tank on fire in the Shell Oil Company farm from an earlier attack. Photographic interpretation, together with pilot interrogation, estimated 70% of the joint oil installations to have been destroyed (See photograph stapled to page 3.)

Two of the Hellcats pilots broke off their strafing attacks on the storage areas long enough to strafe and smoke a 2500 ton engine after freighter (Sugar Baker - JMS) in the Nha Be River approximately one (1) mile downstream from the Texas Oil Co. tank farm. The ship was run aground on the west side of the Nha Be River and was observed to be smoking when last seen.

The flight then rendezvoused, proceeded to the Song Phan Airfield SE of Saigon where one division made section strafing runs on revetted buildings with uncertain results, since no fires were observed. The flight then proceeded to Cape St. Jacques Airfield, which was observed to be negative, then rendezvoused and returned to base.

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**XIII. MATERIAL DATA.** (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left.  
Use additional sheets if necessary).

**ARMAMENT**

- Guns, Gunsights
- Turrets
- Ammunition
- Bombs, Torpedoes
- Bomb Sights
- Bomb Releases

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- Radio, Radar
- Homing Devices
- Visual Signals
- Codes, Ciphers

**RECOGNITION**

- IFF
- Signals
- Battle Lights
- Procedures

**PROTECTION**

- Armor; Points and Angles  
of Fire Needing Further  
Protection
- Leak Proofing

**EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT**

- Parachutes
- Life Belts, Life Rafts
- Safety Belts
- Emergency Kits
- Rations, First Aid

**NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT**

- Compasses
- Driftsights
- Octants
- Automatic Pilots
- Charts
- Field Lighting

**INSTRUMENTS**

- Flight
- Power Plant

**OXYGEN SYSTEM**

**CAMOUFLAGE AND  
DECEPTION DEVICES**

**STRUCTURE**

- Airframe
- Control Surfaces
- Control System
- Dive Flaps
- Landing Gear
- Heating System
- Flight Characteristics  
At Various Loadings

**POWER PLANT**

- Engines
- Engine Accessories
- Propellers
- Lubricating System
- Starters
- Exhaust Dampers

**HYDRAULIC SYSTEM**

**ELECTRICAL SYSTEM**

- Auxiliary Plant
- Lights

**FUEL SYSTEM**

**FLIGHT CLOTHING**

**MAINTENANCE**

**BASE FACILITIES**

- Plane Servicing Equipment
- Personnel Facilities

**Armament functioned normally, but it is considered that 6 5" H.E. rockets with non-delay fuse would have been much more suitable for the variety of targets assigned than the one 500 lb. SAP bomb with 4-5 second delay fuse, which was ordered.**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

SIGNATURE **G. W. FLAUCHE, Jr., Ensign, USNR**  
ACI Officer

SIGNATURE **G. E. SCHRYER, Cdr., USN**  
Commanding Officer

1-15-45 DATE