

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Battle Damage Report.

(d) COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT DAMAGE REPORT

<u>No. Units Damaged</u>	<u>Type of Unit</u>	<u>Type and Extent of Damage</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	RBU-1 Panoramic Adaptor	Extent of Damage Unknown	Radio 1
1	RBW-2 Panoramic Adaptor	Extent of Damage Unknown	C.I.C.
8	RBS or RBS-1 Receivers	Light Water Damage	Radio 3
1	RBS Receiver	Water Damage	C.I.C.
1	RBK Receiver	Water Damage	C.I.C.
1	RAK-5 Receiver	Excessive Shock	Radio 2.
1	RAL-5 Receiver	Excessive Shock	Radio 2
2	RBO Receivers	Heat and Shock	Radio 2
4	RCK Receivers	Heavy Damage (Probably Beyond Repair)	Radar Transmitter Room
4	TDQ Transmitters	Heavy Damage (Probably Beyond Repair)	Radar Transmitter Room
1	TBK-12 Transmitter	High Shock and Heat	Radio 2
1	TBL-6 Transmitter	High Shock and Heat	Radio 2
1	TCZ Transmitter	Transmitter and Antenna Loading Unit blown off	Radio 2
1	TDE-2 Transmitter	High Shock and Heat	Radio 2
1	ARC-1 Receiver/XMTRS	Water Damage	C.I.C.
1	SCR-808-A Receiver XMTR	Water Damage	C.I.C.
1	TBS-2 Receiver/XMTRS	Heavy Damage	Y.E. Room
1	TBY Receiver/XMTR	Completely Destroyed	Rdo. Store Room
1	SCR-808-A Motor Generator Set.	Extent of Damage Unknown	Y.E. Room
1	ARC-1 Motor Generator Set.	Extent of Damage Unknown	Y.E. Room
1	TBS-3 Motor Generator Set, and Starter Filter Unit.	Heavy Damage	Radar XMTR Room
2	RV Remote Radio Phone Units.	Light Water Damage.	Radio 3.
6	RV Remote Radio Phone Units.	Heat, Shock and Water Damage.	C.I.C.
2	Speaker Amplifier Units.	Light Water Damage.	Radio 3
6	Speaker Amplifier Units.	Heat, Shock and Water Damage.	C.I.C.

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1	Speaker Amplifier Unit.	Blown off Bulkhead	Radio 2
1	TCZ Remote Control Unit.	Light Water Damage	Radio 3
2	TBS Remote Control Units.	Extent of Damage Unknown.	C.I.C.
1	Antenna Plug Board	Light Water Damage	Radio 3
1	RR Panel Board	Front Blown Open	Radio 2
1	RT Panel Board	Front Bulged Out	Radio 2
1	RV Panel Board	Shock	Radio 2
1	YE-1 Aircraft Homing Equipment.	Heavy Damage	Y.E. Room
1	NMB-Fathometer XMTR	Heavy Damage	YE Room
1	NMB-1 Echo Sounding Control Unit.	Damage Beyond Repair	Chart House
1	DAS-3 Navigation Equip.	Damaged Beyond Repair	Chart House
4	Transmitting Antennas	Destroyed	Starboard Aft of Is.
3	Receiving Antennas	Destroyed	Port Side
3	Receiving Antennas	Destroyed	Starboard Side Aft
6	RBS Lead - Ins For Antennas	Damaged	
	Lead-Ins For/SCR-808A, ARC-1, TBS, and TDQ/RCK for Antennas on Bridge	Destroyed	
3	Flag Bags with Double Fingers.	Destroyed	Catwalk
3	Complete sets of Signal Flags, and 1 speed cone.	Destroyed	Catwalk
4	12 Inch search-lights	Smoke and Heat	Sig. Bridge
2	24 Inch search-lights	Smoke and Heat	Sig. Bridge
2	Long Glasses	Smoke and Heat	Sig. Bridge
	All Halyards and some Blocks DE	Destroyed	Sig. Bridge

A9/CVE26
Serial 041

U.S.S. SANGAMON

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Battle Damage Report.

All cables routed through C.I.C. and Radar Transmitter Room are damaged beyond repair.

All cables in Radio Two were destroyed.

All cables in Y.E. Room suffered heavy damage.

Cables in Radio Three suffered light water damage.

Extent of damage to cables in Chart Room unknown.

All Test Equipment not destroyed will need repairing.

All spare PA-RTS in Radio Store Room completely destroyed.



A. I. MALSTROM

Copies to:

CinCPac.
ComEscCarForPac.
CTF51 - (ComPhibsPac)
ComServPac.
ComSerRon 10.
ComAirPac.
ComWesSeaFrontier.
Com5thFlt.

CVE26/P6-1/00/MM

RESTRICTED
VIA AIR MAIL

my

Serial: 97

9 May 1945.

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Secretary of the Navy.

Subject: Personnel Suffering Death, Wounds or Injuries
Requiring Hospitalization - Report of.

Reference: (a) A1Nav #48.

1. The following report of personnel suffering death, wounds or injuries requiring hospitalization as a result of enemy action on 4 May 1945 when a Japanese suicide plane crashed through the flight deck and exploded on the hangar deck is submitted:

1. Lt(jg) Ike Henry Moore, (C)L, USNR, 374596
Diagnosis: Wound, fragment (Bomb, head and chest)
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.
2. Lieut. Ivan Victor Wiley, A-T, USNR, 115604 (VF-33)
Diagnosis: Wound, fragment (Bomb, decapitated) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.
3. AVERY, David William, 646 78 34, AOM1c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Burns (entire body) #2508
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.
4. BERRY, Calvin Ross, 931 65 32, Flc (MoMM), V6S, USNR
Diagnosis: Wound, fragment (Bomb, head) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.
5. HENRICSON, Robert August, 311 53 35, AOM1c, USN
Diagnosis: Burns (entire body) #2508
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.
6. McGINNIS, Noah Edward, Jr., 560 52 46, PhM3c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Burns (entire body) #2508
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945.

U.S.S. SANGAMON (CVE-26)

CVE26/P6-1/00/MM
RESTRICTED

Subject: Personnel Suffering Death, Wounds or Injuries Re-
quiring Hospitalization - Report of.

-
7. MILLER, Ralph Hubert, 565 21 14, S2c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Burns (entire body) #2508
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945
 8. MOBLEY, Hugh Sam, 656 61 62, MM1c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Wounds, fragment (Bomb, multiple) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945
 9. NELMS, Charles Edward, 669 20 81, AMM1c(T), V2, USNR
Diagnosis: Wounds, fragment (Bomb, multiple) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945
 10. SHERMAN, Earl Brewer, 721 74 50, MM2c(T), V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Wounds, fragment (Bomb, multiple) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945
 11. STRICKER, John "F", 628 81 56, MM1c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Wounds, fragment (Bomb, multiple) #2584
Date: 4 May 1945
Died
Disposition: Burial at sea, 5 May 1945
 12. Ensign Gerald William Van Dyke, (C)L, USNR, 401938
Diagnosis: Shrapnel wounds, multiple
Condition: Serious
Prognosis: Good
Disposition: Transferred to U.S.S. MUSTIN(DD413) on 5 May
1945 FFT U.S.S. SOLACE
 13. JOHNSON, Jack Alfred, 632 77 30, AMM3c, V6, USNR
Diagnosis: Burns of face, arms and legs
Condition: Serious
Prognosis: Fair
Disposition: Transferred to U.S.S. MUSTIN (DD413) on 5
May 1945 FFT U.S.S. SOLACE

CVE26/P6-1/00/MM
RESTRICTED

Subject: Personnel Suffering Death, Wounds or Injuries
 Requiring Hospitalization - Report of.

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14. JONES, Dennis Conwell, 844 25 76, RM3c, V6S, USNR
 Shrapnel wounds, left thigh and abdomen
 Prognosis: Poor
 Condition: Serious
 Disposition: Transferred to U.S.S. MUSTIN (DD413)
 on 5 May 1945 FFT U.S.S. SOLACE.
 15. MOON, Donald Eugene, 885 55 26, S2c(QM), V6S, USNR
 Shrapnel wounds and burns
 Prognosis: Poor
 Condition: Critical
 Disposition: Transferred to U.S.S. MUSTIN (DD413)
 on 5 May 1945 FFT U.S.S. SOLACE
 16. ADAMS, John Robinson, Jr., 706 07 28, AM3c, V6, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
 17. ALESKAS, Anthony, 646 76 88, AOM1c, V6, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
 18. BROOCK, Roy Card, 730 09 97, AOM2c, V6, USNR.
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
 19. BROBERG, Kenneth Ellsworth, 880 09 74, Slc(AOM),
 V6S, USNR
 Shrapnel wounds
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
 20. CHATWOOD, Raymond, 272 94 88, AMM3c(T), USN
 Burns
 Serious
 Prognosis: Fair
 Hospitalized aboard
 21. CHLASTAWA, Mitchell Frank, 212 81 91, AMM1c(T)(CA),
 USN (VT-33)
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard

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Subject: Personnel Suffering Death, Wounds or Injuries
 Requiring Hospitalization - Report of.

22. DAVITT, William Gregory, 870 25 45, V6S, S2c, USNR
 Burns
 Serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
23. FARLEY, William Bernard, 635 50 71, S2c, V6, USNR
 Burns
 Serious
 Prognosis: Fair
 Hospitalized aboard
24. GOLDING, William Cameron, 629 39 35, BM2c(T), V6, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
25. GONZALEZ, Joseph Roque, 562 78 45, ART1c(T), V6, USNR
 Shrapnel wound
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
26. HENDRICKSEN, Roy Wilbur, 945 98 05, S2c(RdM), V6S, USNR
 Shrapnel wounds
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
27. JOHNSON, Harvey Grant, 564 07 01, AOM3c, V6, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
28. JOHNSON, John Gordon, 730 89 40, S1c, V6, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard
29. McCHESNEY, Aubrey, 844 40 31, S2c, V6S, USNR
 Burns
 Not serious
 Prognosis: Good
 Hospitalized aboard.

U.S.S. SANGAMON (CVE-26)

CVE26/16-1/00/MM
RESTRICTED

Subject: Personnel Suffering Death, Wounds or Injuries
Requiring Hospitalization - Report of.

-
30. WASMUTH, David, 863 78 44, ARM3c(CA), V6S, USNR (VT-33)
Shrapnel wounds
Serious
Prognosis: Good
Hospitalized aboard
 31. WELLER, Tom Gordon, 856 76 84, AOM3c(CA), V6S, USNR(VT-33)
Blast concussion
Serious
Prognosis: Fair
Hospitalized aboard
 32. WELSCH, Richard William, 337 24 99, ACMM, USN (VF-33)
Burns
Serious
Prognosis: Fair
Hospitalized aboard
 33. WILLOUGHBY, Lucian Robert, 848 29 82, S2c, V6S, USNR
Multiple shrapnel wounds
Serious
Prognosis: Fair
Hospitalized aboard

A. I. MALSTROM.

cc: BuMed
CinCPac
BuPers
ComServPac
ComAirPac



JAPANESE TONY ATTEMPTING TO CRASH USS SANGAMON AMID HEAVY FIRE OF AA GUNS.

ENCLOSURE (C).



ENCLOSURE (C).

JAPANESE TONY JUST BEFORE CRASHING ALONG SIDE USS SANGAMON AMID HEAVY FIRE OF AA GUNS.

5/14/45

Secret

CV# -26 -11512

Jap Tony attacking USS Sangamon
Keranda Retto Islands of Obinawa Gunt
in background - Lines of tracer fire from
Sangamon's guns - firing about vertically.
Plane splashed and exploded on starboard
quarter barely missing ship. A plane
believed to be a Mik attacked a few
minutes later.

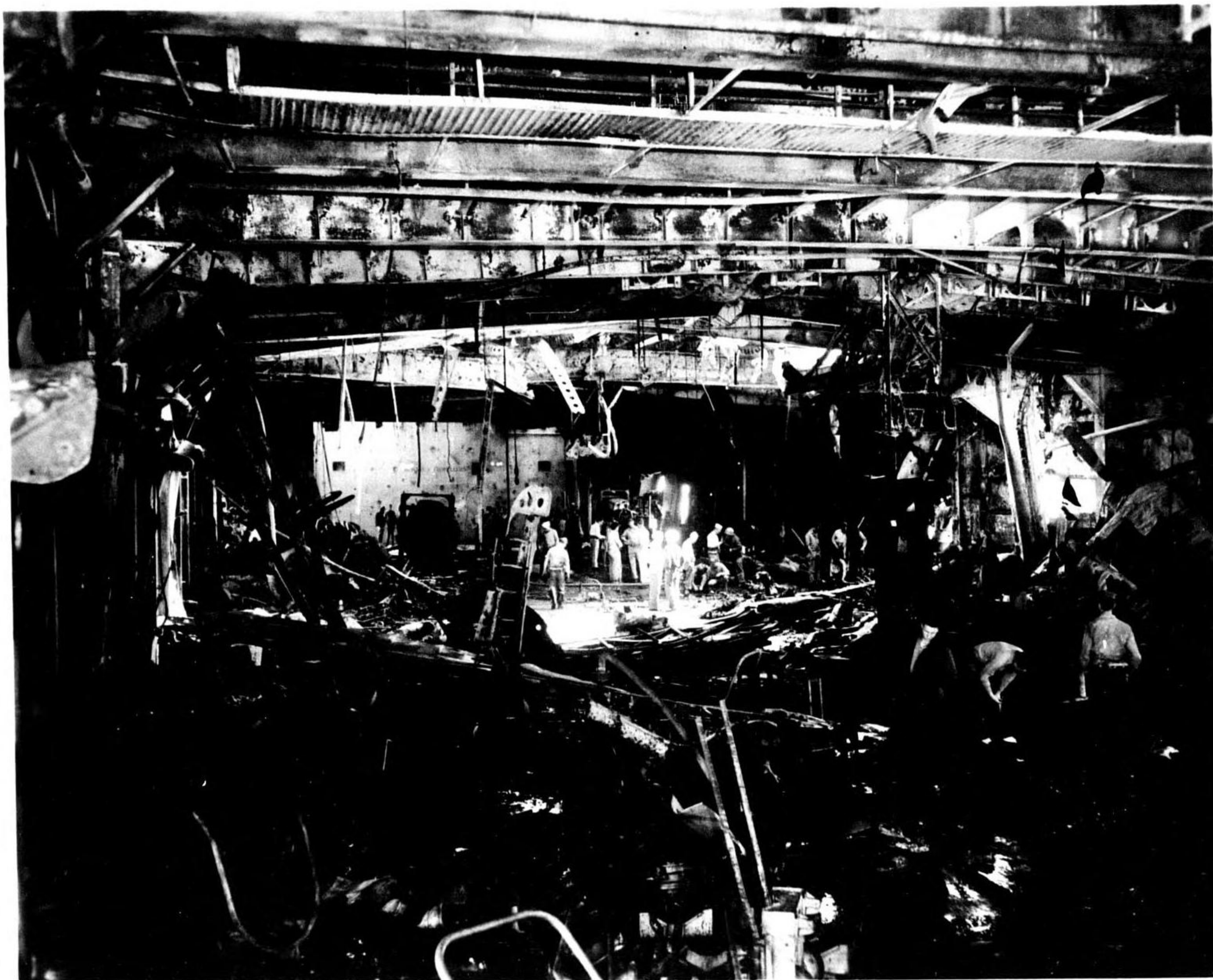
photo by Lt J.B. Chick USNR - Photographer
Officer - from Flag Bridge.



FLIGHT DECK LOOKING FORWARD FROM AFTER ELEVATOR.



FLIGHT DECK LOOKING AFT FROM BRIDGE.



HANGAR DECK SPACE, LOOKING FORWARD.



HANGAR DECK SPACE, AFTER CLEARING OF DEBRIS,
SHOWING TILTED ELEVATOR AND GIRDER PENETRATED
BY BOMB.



HANGAR SPACE OVERHEAD SHOWING THE HOLES
WHERE BOMB PIERCED THE FLIGHT DECK AND
SUPPORTING GIRDER.



FLIGHT DECK SUPPORT GIRDER SEVERED AT
ENTRANCE POINT OF JAP PLANE.



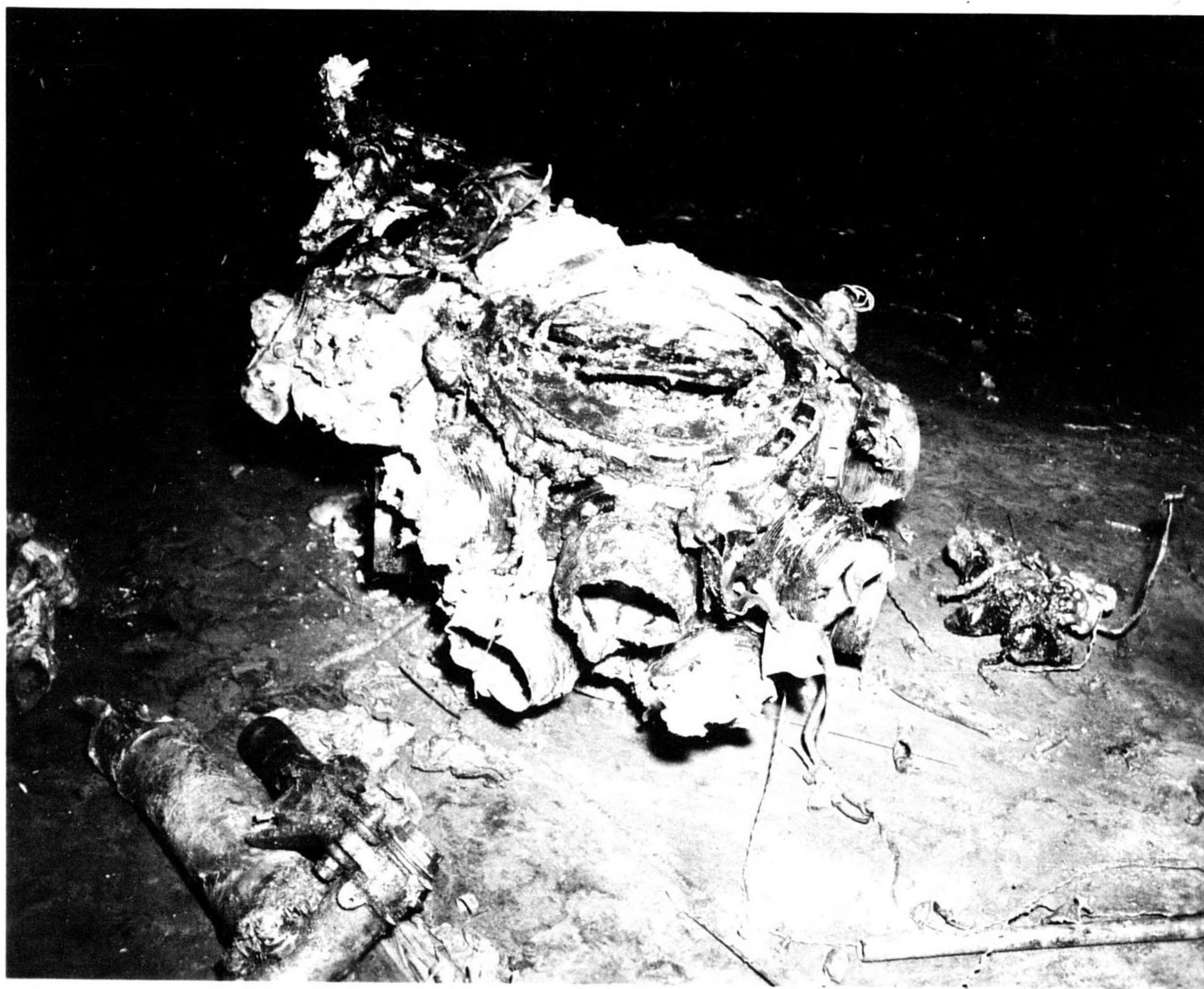
TOP VIEW OF FORWARD ELEVATOR BLOWN ABOVE FLIGHT DECK.



SIDE VIEW OF FORWARD ELEVATOR SHOWING BUCKLING DUE TO BLAST.



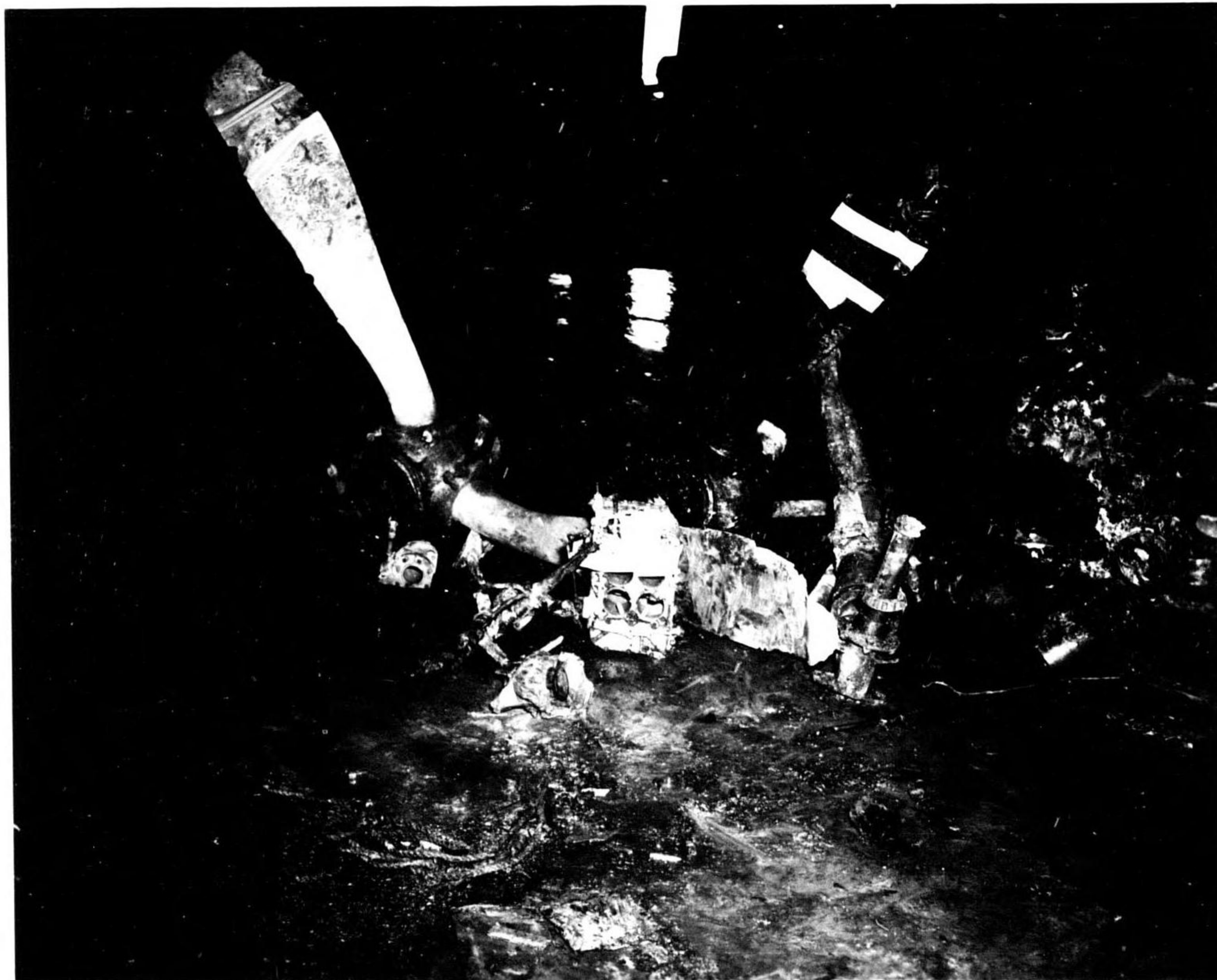
JAPENGINE FOUND IN FORWARD ELEVATOR PIT.



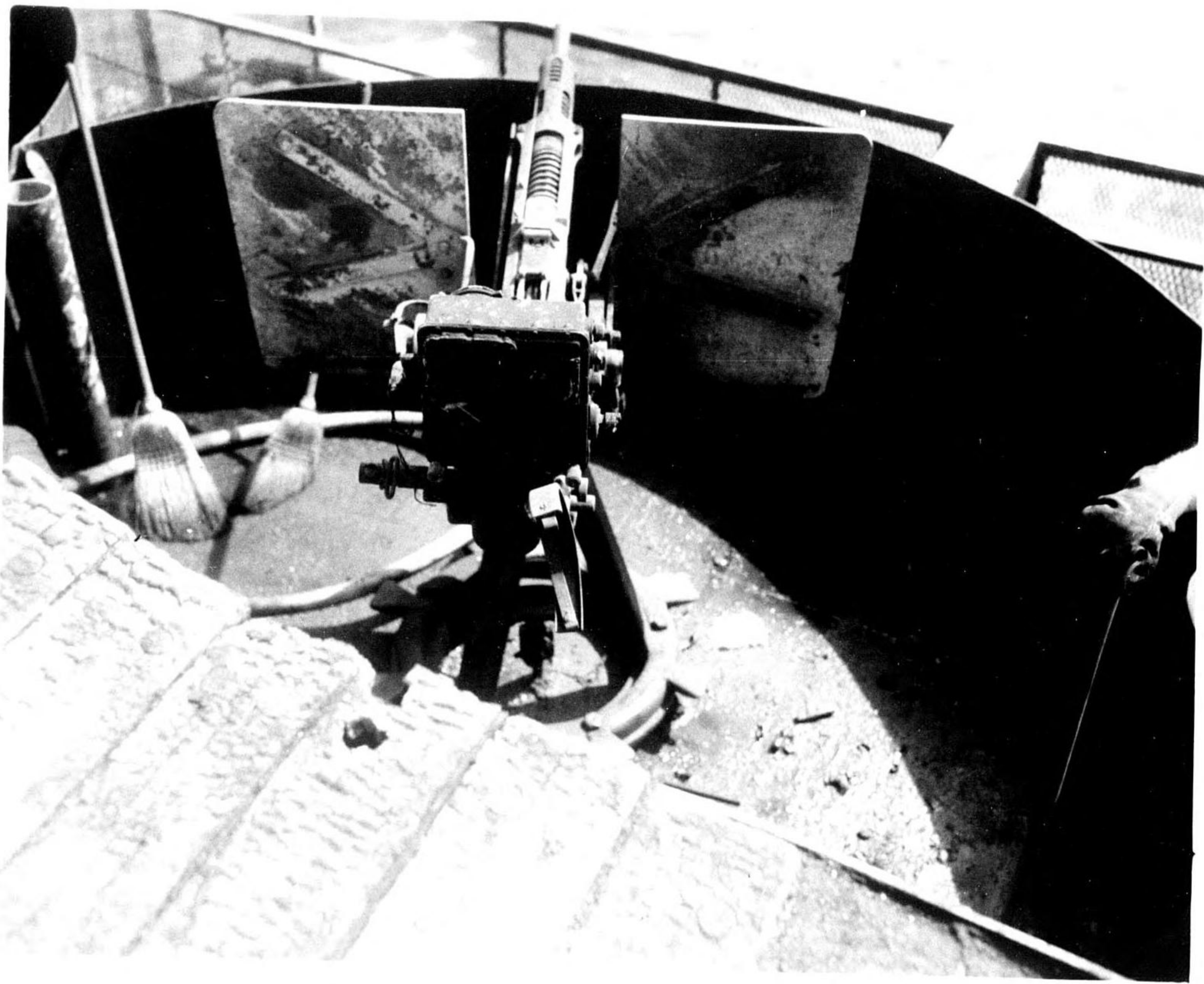
SECOND JAP ENGINE FOUND ON HANGAR DECK BELOW SEVERED
FLIGHT DECK GIRDER.



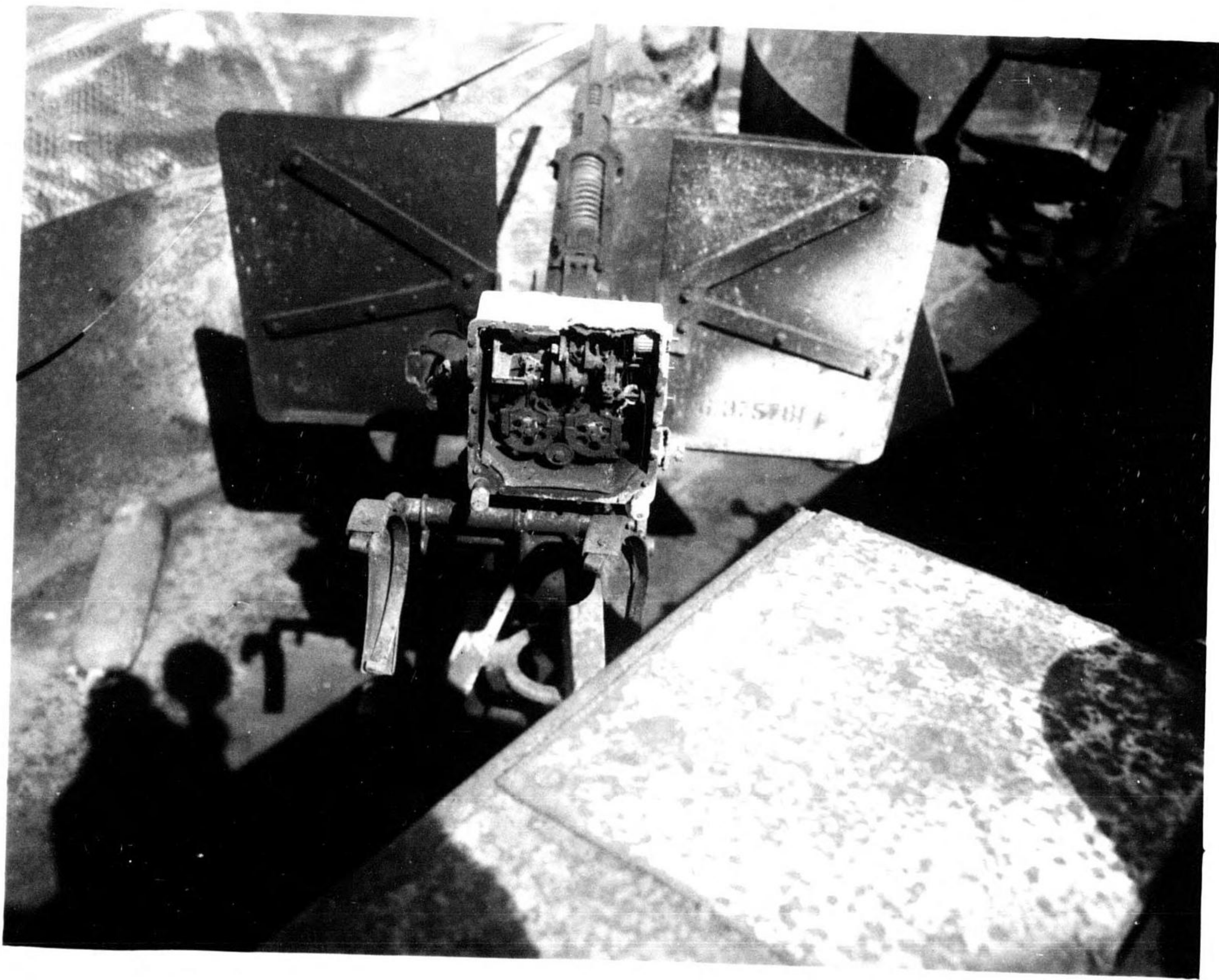
40 MM MOUNT DAMAGED BY BOMB, SHRAPNEL AND FIRE.



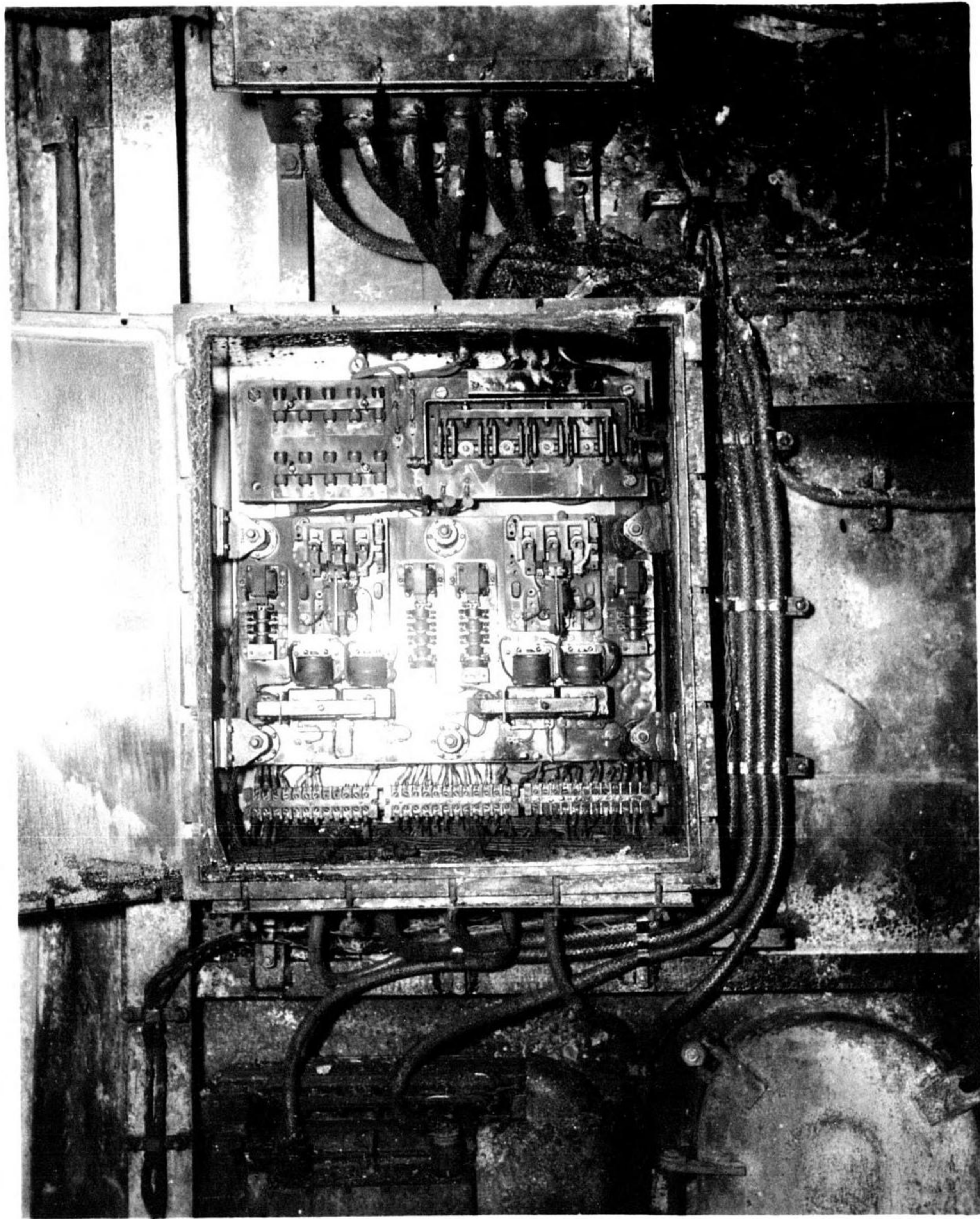
PROPS OF JAPANESE NICK.



20 MM GUN DAMAGED BY FIRE RESULTING FROM JAP
PLANE'S SUICIDE PLUNGE.



20 MM GUN AND MOUNT DAMAGED BY FIRE .



GENERAL ELECTRIC AMPLIDYNE AND AMPLIFIER
PANEL FOR 40 MM MOUNT--BURNED AND CHARRED
BUT STILL OPERATING.

U.S.S. SANGAMON (CVE-26)

CVE-26
A16
Serial 047

20 May 1945



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

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander in Chief, UNITED STATES FLEET.
Via : (1) The Commander, TASK UNIT 52.1 .3.
(2) The Commander, TASK GROUP 52.1.
(3) The Commander, TASK FORCE 52.
(4) The Commander in Chief, PACIFIC FLEET.
Subj: Aircraft Action Reports and Summaries.
Ref : (a) Pacific Fleet Conf. Ltr. 1 CL-45 of
1 January 1945.
Encl: (A) Original and three copies of CVEB-33 Aircraft
Action Report Nos. 1 to 27, both inclusive.
(B) Original and three copies of VT-33 Aircraft
Action Nos. 1 to 45, both inclusive.
(C) Original and three copies of VF-33 Aircraft
Action Reports Nos. 1 to 83, both inclusive.
(D) Original and three copies of Summaries of
Action Reports and Operations through 9 May
1945.

1. Enclosures (A), (B), (C) and (D) are forwarded here-
with.

A.I. MALSTROM

Copies to:
Cominch 1
Cincpac 3
Comairpac 1
Jlcpac 1

016977

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

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS, REPORT OF COMMANDER AIR GROUP THIRTY-THREE.

This group, with a composition of 16 VF, 8 VF(N), 1 VF(P), and 6 VT, has completed two and one half month's operations embarked in the U.S.S. SANGAMON, the last forty-two days being under active combat conditions during which 1200 sorties were flown. These sorties included, at times, operations over a period of forty hours straight and called for a total of 151 night landings and 422 pre-dawn or night launches.

The first two weeks of our tour we were engaged in flying routine support missions for our forces on Okinawa. The carrier division was then ordered to the vicinity of Sakishima Gunto for the purpose of neutralizing airfields in this area.

Our usual schedule in these operations called for a 0330 launch of four VT and four VF(N) for hecklers over the islands followed by an eight or twelve plane VF sweep at 0530. All these planes landed by 0900 and operations were secured until 1530. At this time all available VT and eight or twelve VF were launched for a late strike. The VT returned to the carrier while the VF remained over the target until relieved by two or four VF(N). VF(N) were kept over the target throughout the night. During the day strikes, ASP and CAP were furnished by the other three carriers in the division.

During our period in the combat area the number of night fighter pilots aboard was increased to fourteen. These pilots flew regularly after we started the Sakishima operation but prior to that they were put to very little use. Due to the tactical situation or for other reasons, they either were not launched or were not vectored out to any distance if already airborne. Only one ship controlled interception was made successfully on an enemy plane. It is true that numerous TBM's and PBM's were chased and identified as friendly. We also maintained a CAP for twenty-four hours to test the practicability of it. However, eight or more months are spent in training a pilot to do something for which he is seldom used. Our VF(N) pilots shot down four and shot up many more on the ground in the islands and did a great job, but not in their specialty. For this reason it is felt that we should train Night Attack pilots for use in a group of this kind, rather than specialized night intercept pilots.

The primary requisite in either training is sufficient night flying under all conditions of weather to make the pilots feel completely at home. During this flying the training should be much more varied and should include a large amount of heckling or intruding combined with strafing and bombing. Our present night fighter pilots are well qualified to do only one thing when they report to a group for duty, that is to make interceptions. They are not fighter pilots in the accepted sense of the word in that they are not up to standard on tactics, teamwork, day interceptions, bombing, strafing and escort.

C-O-N-T-R-I-B-U-T-I-O-N-S

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS, REPORT OF COMMANDER AIR GROUP THIRTY-THREE.

Training should include more support work, and work of a different type than that now done. This group did quite a lot of day support training at San Luis Obispo, Camp Cooke, and in the Hawaiian area. All of it was similar and all attacks were made on well marked targets such as crosses, buildings, etc. In no case was any training given in the location of well camouflaged gun positions, airplanes covered with brush and leaves, underground hangars with camouflaged entrances, etc. No night use of flares over land was tried except on one occasion. This was in Makau pocket on Oahu and the low ceiling that night made it unsafe for extra observing planes to be in the air. On heckling missions we found the flares to be very valuable, when used properly, either for illumination or for diversion of ground defenses. Day and night work at locating targets, identifying and hitting them should have a much larger weight in the training program than at present.

Regardless of the original training, all pilots should be thoroughly familiar with both types of planes. The cockpits of the two should be standardized as much as possible and all replacements should come to the fleet with the ComAirPac approved changes incorporated. The 5B is considered to be definitely superior to the 5N as a search or heckler plane and as a day fighter. The 5N is necessary for night interceptions. Incorporation of these changes in TBM's for night use is equally important.

For the night training no better place than Barber's Point could be picked. NACTU PAC is there to supervise the training and the weather is much more suitable than on the west coast of the United States. Preliminary training could be accomplished in the Imperial Valley though the weather there is too good for the final combat stage. An area at both places should be obtained where realistic camouflaged emplacements could be erected and where live bombs and flares could be utilized. This is a must.

Whether to carry any TBM planes is another question. The commanding officer of VF-33 feels that the F6F can do just as well on heckling missions and that VF with their large bomb load should be utilized for day group work where this load can be accurately placed where it will do the most good. In this I do not completely concur, feeling that the large load and versatility are the best features of this type on night attack missions should the need arise for more work than two or four VF(N) can handle. The planes will still be used for straight support whenever the group can be used in the day time. I feel that six TBM-3B's should be carried and utilized to the fullest.

One item in connection with training cannot be stressed too strongly. That is the training of the group as a unit rather than as two squadrons or even three separate units. The value of this is well borne out when the losses from anti-aircraft are considered. A group that has trained properly together makes coordinated attacks in which the planes all hit the target from different directions

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS, REPORT OF COMMANDER AIR GROUP THIRTY-THREE.

- (1) Train Night Attack Pilots, both VF and VF for overland work.
- (2) Reduce number of planes in complement to 25 maximum.
- (3) If this is done, change pilot complement to 12 VF (200%) and leave VF as is (30-200%). This number can be kept well occupied and there is sufficient berthing space aboard.

F. B. GILKISON

ENCLOSURE (D)

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS - REPORT OF COMMANDING OFFICER FIGHTING SQUADRON THIRTY-THREE.

VF-33 is constituted of two tactical elements, the day fighters and the night fighters. This narrative is concerned mainly with the day fighters, flying F6F-5E's. Our tour of combat duty started slowly with many LCAP's and a few support missions on OKINAWA. This was an ideal transition from training to the real thing.

Soon after D-day we were part of the force sent to neutralize airfields in the SAKISHIMA GUNTO. There were six fields to cover. The main fields were well protected by medium and light AA. Heavy AA was meager and caused little trouble.

From an intended stay of one or two days, these fields became our "baby". Thereafter until we departed, every flight made from this carrier was a strike or a TCAP. Both strike and TCAP carried as much load as they could stagger off with. The TCAP was to drop the load on the fields in case no air opposition was encountered.

The air opposition was existent on two or three occasions only, but on every strike the VF would take escort position on the TBM's and cover on every run. The AA was bad and any run that did not take advantage of every bit of cloud, sun, altitude and speed was inviting hits and losses.

Escorting our own torpedo planes was a pleasure. They would put us in position, give one minute to go, and the low cover would start in, the torpedoes following immediately, the high cover next. All runs were made at 60° if possible using full throttle. The ASH gear held us back considerably. We seldom could get over 370 kts in the dive. All planes were diving at the same time from different directions and no individual runs were permitted. Accuracy may have suffered a little from the organized chaos dive, but safety increased many per-cent.

The weather was variable. Some days it was very bad and it was impossible to get to the islands. On two days clouds began at 200 feet and were still above us at 20,000 feet. Our ASH gear picked up the thunder heads nicely, but would not, or we could not recognize the targets. On other days when the other carriers had trouble locating the targets, due to clouds, the day fighter with their ASH gear had no difficulty. Several times when it was necessary to drop bombs and rockets through the overcast the ASH gear allowed the area to be well covered and was invaluable for navigation.

Airborne aircraft were encountered on two occasions. On the first four planes sighted two Tonys at 11 o'clock down. The first section made a run on them with the second section remaining high for cover. The Tonys dove through the clouds as soon as the run began, the first section followed, then pulled up to prevent hitting the ground. The same instant the high section was attacked by two more Tonys from above and behind. Our planes were heavily loaded, over 15,000 lbs gross, and before they could jettison all the planes disappeared in the overcast.

The second encounter was on 22 April when seven Oscars were sighted high and in position for a run. At the same time 20 to 30 bombers and fighters were sighted on NOBARA field warming up and taxiing into take-off spot. All planes dove on the field getting rid of their bombs and strafing. The torpedo planes were then escorted clear of the island and sent home. The eight VF climbed and engaged the Oscars shooting down five and two probables. A short time later four more Oscars were sighted up sun 5,000 feet above. They obligingly let down as we climbed to intercept. All four were splashed after a thirty mile chase. These four planes had a new tactic not seen before by any of our pilots. The four planes ran from us and took a 1-2-1 formation, that is, one 1500 feet low to the left, two close together high and one 1500 feet low to the right. As we closed the two center men did a right chandelle, the low men turned inboard and zoomed up underneath to attack our planes making head on runs on the two high Japs.

As we swung into the routine of having a steady target available our schedule became more or less standardized. The day fighters would have a pre-dawn strike, an afternoon strike, and a late afternoon fighter sweep. The fighter sweep and the VF from the strike were to remain at the target until the VFN arrived, and if all were clear, to return to land by sunset or as soon thereafter as possible. Night landings were made on several occasions with no difficulty.

The night fighters would fly TCAP and heckler missions over the target during the night with the TEM's either assisting in the heckling or taking the strikes with the day VF.

Field, apparently reporting enemy fighters. On the 22nd occasion contact was made and several planes were seen in the field vicinity. The enemy fighters were seen to be attacking planes by gunfire. One plane was seen to be hit. Another plane at about 2500 feet appeared to be hit. The log shows. This plane, a Tony, was splashed. The first one crashed in an attempt to land. The second was observed at this time otherwise unaccounted for. The way. Heckler intruder missions were made.

VF(N) Unit of VF-33, Lt. RODMAN, Senior Officer.

This narrative report is concerned with the night fighter element of VF-33. This element was composed of 12 night fighter trained pilots and 8 F6F-5N's.

The first portion of this cruise included dawn and dusk local combat air patrols with three heckler intruder missions flown over OKINAWA air fields up to and including L-day.

The latter portion of this cruise, commencing soon after L-day, involved all night heckler intruder missions over SAKISHIMA GUNTO and condition eleven watches for local combat air patrol.

The six fields covered were on MIYAKO SHIMA and ISHIGAKI SHIMA in the SAKISHIMA GUNTO. Several of these fields were well protected by medium and light AA during hours of day light. However, at night AA opposition was meager to non-existent. The night fighters suffered no combat losses in these operations. Three planes were hit by AA but this was due to making runs before darkness or after day light. The only AA opposition encountered at night came mainly from the bomber strip on ISHIGAKI. It appeared that it was coming from one particular light or medium battery. In most cases the aim was so wild in this night AA opposition that it seemed to be a gesture of Jap annoyance. There was no indication of radar fire control. Only one searchlight was encountered on one occasion.

Failure of the Japs to cease runway repair activities until we had approached to sound range indicated strong possibility of no search radar.

Heckler intruder flights consisted of four planes each for the dawn and dusk flights and two planes each for the other night hours. Flights averaged three and one-half hours duration.

Airborne aircraft were encountered on two occasions. In both cases initial contact was made by observation of the Jap's lights. This was closed to radar contact. On the first occasion a Nick was shot down after being observed signalling to the field, apparently requesting runway lights. On the second occasion contact was made and closed on a Jap Tony flying in field vicinity with running lights on. After damaging this plane by gunfire contact was lost. Contact was later made on another plane at about 200 feet apparently about to enter landing circle. This plane, a Tony, was splashed. It is felt that the first one crashed in an attempted landing; a plane was observed at this time otherwise unaccountably afire on the runway. Heckler intruder missions were conducted under average

ceiling of 1500 to 3000 feet with conditions of darkness ranging from a full high moon thru scattered clouds to totally black night with complete overcast. One attack was conducted with thunderheads over both islands and ceiling of less than 200 feet. Strafing, R. P. and bombing attacks were made by means of APS-6A radar with unobserved results.

Airborne radar proved invaluable in these attacks, primarily in picking up targets and in returning to the task unit. The single dot modification of the five and one mile scales installed by Lt(jg) M. I. SHADUR of VF-33 had the full approval of all pilots. It permits greater accuracy in close navigation as in bombing thru overcast. One of its greatest single uses in this squadron was in reaching the break-up position in the landing circle about our own carrier without assistance of F.D.O. or Snapper. The single dot modification also gave greater range and clearer scope indication for radar rendezvous and for initial airborne intercept contacts.

The night reticule in the MK 8 gunsight was satisfactory for all night work including strafing. Straight incendiary belting of .50 caliber was preferred for all night work. Tracers, while not blinding the pilot too badly, tend to blank out the target. The dawn and dusk flights used a belting of straight incendiaries in inboard and mid-guns and regular day belting in outboard guns. Flights during hours of complete darkness used straight incendiaries in all guns.

Heckler tactics used were similar to those used by other night organizations. Any apparent activity in field area was strafed. In any event periodic strafing runs were made over runway and revetment areas to remind the Japs that they still had company. On several occasions MK 6 flares were dropped from MKI Mod 0 flare containers and attacks made under their illumination. No AA fire was drawn and attacking planes were able to pick targets. Periodic dropping of flares also enabled us to study fields for signs of activity. Combination of heckling and attacks under flare illumination offers a great deal of promise. Unfortunately we did not remain in the SAKISHIMA area long enough to reach any definite conclusion on these tactics. Of particular interest were these facts which we discovered: The best altitude of flare release was 3000 feet. We drew no AA fire, even though circling close over the field looking for signs of activity. The plane which releases the flare and his section mate can make three strafing runs apiece during one flares illumination period.

Paul G. HUBBY, Lt-Cdr, USN,
Commanding, VP-31.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS:
VF-33 RECOMMENDATION: MATERIAL.

1. That the lighting switches on all fighters be simplified and standardized. Three switches could replace the six now installed on the the F6F-5 and still provide all combinations desired.

2. A single switch should be installed which would jettison all bomb and rockets, to be used in emergencies when caught at a disadvantage by enemy air opposition.

3. All planes delivered in the combat zone should have all changes incorporated. A board should be formed at ComAirPac to help incorporate or make changes. Under the present system changes are discouraged as much as possible by those responsible for giving authorization for a change. The opposite should be true with action being taken immediately to get the change incorporated at the factory as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS: TRAINING.

1. More training in locating and bombing camouflaged targets and more training in strafing ground targets should be included in the syllabus.

2. All pilots should get two night landings. These may be made under good conditions of sea and moon. The main thing is to build up confidence so that a prospective night landing does not cause them to be apprehensive.

3. If possible, Squadrons should be given an idea of the type of work they will be doing so they may stress certain phases of the syllabus.

4. Include more heckler and attack tactics in night fighter training syllabus.

5. Conduct experimental work to determine value of and tactics for night attack under flare illuminations in conjunction with night heckling missions.

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