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S-E-C-R-E-T

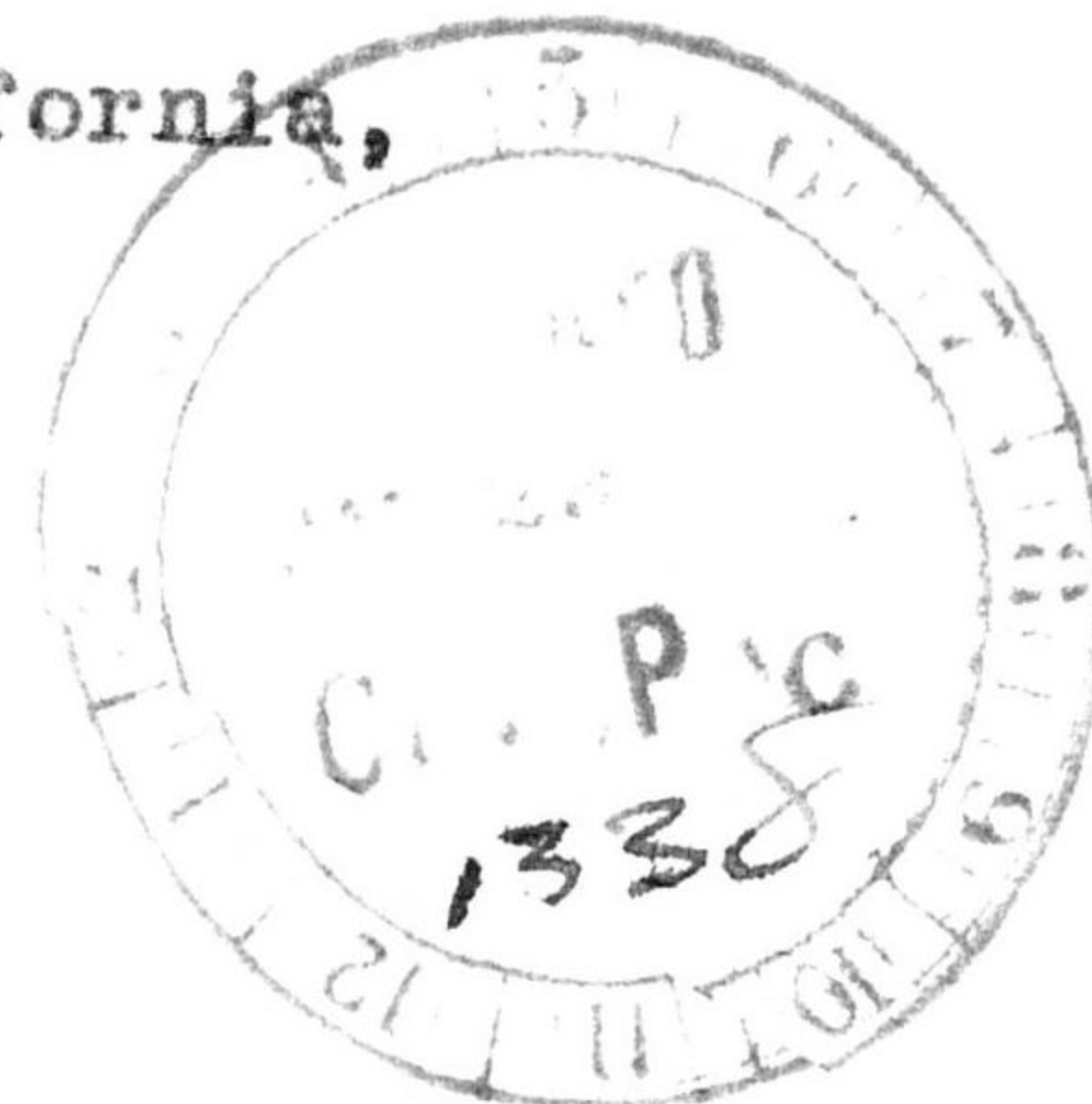
U.S.S. SAN JACINTO

10/mjb

CVL30/A16-3  
Serial: 006

c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
20 January 1945.

FIRST ENDORSEMENT to:  
C.O. VF-45's Secret Ltr.  
VF-45/A16-3/A9, Ser: (004) of  
19 January 1945.



From: Commanding Officer.  
To: Commander in Chief. U.S. Fleet.

Via: (1) Commander Task Group THIRTY-EIGHT POINT THREE.  
(2) Commander Task Force THIRTY-EIGHT.  
(3) Commander Third Fleet.  
(4) Commander in Chief. U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Aircraft Action Reports: 12 January through 16 January 1945.  
1. Forwarded.

MICHAEL H. KERNODLE.

DISTRIBUTION OF ENCLOSURES:

CominCh (1) Advance Copy.  
CinCPac (3) Advance Copies.  
JICPOA (1) Copy direct.  
ComAirPac (1) Copy direct.

*Det Enc*  
17-45

~~Tese~~

Not checked for comments.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
AIR FORCE  
FIGHTING SQUADRON FORTY-FIVE  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

In Reply  
Refer To:

VF-45/A16-3/A9  
Serial:

(004)

S-E-C-R-E-T

19 January 1945

**From:** Commanding Officer, Fighting Squadron FORTY FIVE,  
(Commander, CVL Air Group FORTY FIVE)

**To :** Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet.

**Via :** (1) Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SAN JACINTO.  
(2) Commander Task Group THIRTY-EIGHT POINT THREE.  
(3) Commander Task Force THIRTY-EIGHT.  
(4) Commander Third Fleet.  
(5) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

**Subject:** Aircraft Action Reports; 12 January through 16  
January, 1945.

**Reference:** (a) ComInCh Serial 7152 of 29 October, 1943.  
(b) Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter ICL-45 of 1  
January, 1945.

**Enclosure:** (A) Comments by Commander CVL Air Group FORTY FIVE.  
(B) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 16, dated  
12 January 1945.  
(C) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 17, dated  
12 January 1945.  
(D) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 18, dated  
15 January 1945.  
(E) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 19, dated  
15 January 1945.  
(F) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 20, dated  
16 January 1945.  
(G) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 21, dated  
16 January 1945.

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosures  
(A) through (G) are forwarded herewith.

G. E. SCHNEIDER.

DISTRIBUTION OF ENCLOSURES:

ComInCh	(1) Advance copy
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USS SAN JACINTO	(1) Copy

SUMMARY OF ACTION REPORTS FOR PERIOD 12 - 16 JANUARY, 1945 - INCLUSIVE

1. RESUME OF SORTIES FLOWN AND TIME:

VF Sorties - 50 (221 hours)  
VT Sorties - 20 ( 84 hours)

2. OWN LAKE LOSSES:

VF - None  
VT - 1 TBM-3

3. OWN PERSONNEL LOSSES:

VF - None  
VT - Shot down in vicinity of Saigon, presumably after having been hit by A.A. fire. Pilot, Ensign Peter Lambros (#325538), crewmen: FITZGER, Richard D., ARM3c (Service No. 653 51 58) and SANTO-WHITE, Edward X., ARM3c (Service No. 709 22 04).

4. DAMAGE TO ENEMY:

Enemy aircraft destroyed: 3 Sallys  
by VF 2 Nicks  
1 Single Engine fighters

Enemy aircraft damaged: 14 Twin engine  
By VF 5 Single engine (VF type)  
4 Single engine (B1 lane)

Enemy shipping damaged:  
By VF 1 AO (Sugar Able - JAST) badly damaged and ablaze  
by 6 rockets and strafing, Tachien Harbor.  
1 DE - Damaged by 2 rocket hits, Cape St. Jacques  
1 DD - Damaged and beached by 5 rocket hits and  
strafing, Cape St. Jacques.  
1 CL - Overturned, Dennai River, French Indo-China  
by 2 X 1000 lb. bombs, 15-20 feet from starboard  
beam.  
1 AK - (1500 ton Sugar Charlie - JAST) rocketed  
and strafed, dead in water - Hai Nam Harbor,  
Hainan Island.  
1 AK - Already burning, strafed starting new fire,  
off Cape Paderan, French Indo-China.  
2 80' fuel luggers, Tsingtan Harbor, Hainan, by  
strafing.

**Ground targets - destroyed:  
By VF**

- 1 Approximately 70% of Oil storage tanks and installations, tank farms of Shell Oil Co., Secory Vacuum Oil Co., and the Texas Co., Nha Be River, French Indo-China (Targets No's. 93, 121, 123, Air Objective Folder 85.2) by bombs and strafing.
- 1 Dry dock control building, Teshien Naval Base, Formosa by 1 X 1000 lb. bomb.
- 1 Dry dock shops, Teshien Naval Base, Formosa, by 1 X 1000 lb. bomb.
- 4 Hangars burned, Kiungshan Airfield, Hainan Is.
- 1 Ammunition dump fired, Kiungshan Airfield, Hainan Island.

**Enemy shipping damaged:  
By VT**

- 1 500 lb. G.P. bomb hit on Fox Baker anchored in Saigon River off wharf area at southern end of city.
- 1 500 lb. G.P. bomb hit on Fox Able anchored in Saigon River off wharf area at southern end of city.
- 1 500 lb. G.P. and another near miss on a two stack DD anchored in Teshien harbor.

**Enemy ground targets:  
Damaged by VT**

- 4 500 lb. G.P. bomb hits on oil storage tanks at Shell and Standard - Vacuum oil de ets on Nha Be River, 4 miles south of Saigon. Four large fires started. Confirmed by photo.
- 1 Hit with 500 lb. G.P. on main quay at Takao.
- 1 Hit with 500 lb. G.P. on small wharf at Bakli Town.

**5. TACTICS EMPLOYED:**

Once again with no enemy air opposition encountered the force of all strikes by VF and VT planes of the air group was expended in coordinated attacks against enemy shipping, war ships, aircraft on the ground, and shore and shipboard anti-aircraft positions.

**6. GENERAL COMMENTS:**

As we progress deeper into enemy territory, military installations of all kinds become increasingly more heavily defended by anti-aircraft fire. This in turn calls for the highest degree of coordination between fighters, bombers and torpedo planes in making simultaneous attacks on enemy AA positions, merchant and warships and aircraft field installations.

In view of the basically sound need for getting strike groups over the target area as intact as possible, it would not appear that the practice of rendezvousing deck leads from various carriers on top of cloud cover 10,000 feet thick is at all conducive to achieving the purpose of expeditiously despatching well integrated strikes against the enemy.

In one instance a strike leader ordered a rendezvous of two carrier deck leads on top of an overcast which was a solid cloud mass for 10,000 feet. Planes from this group started up through the cloud cover by divisions from 1000 feet altitude on a set course and speed, but by the time they had broken into the clear at 11,000 feet, the divisions were so widely separated that they were not again able to get together, and some divisions were broken up into two plane sections or smaller units which did not again get joined up until they rejoined in previously designated rendezvous area near the target. A join up with the other carrier group was never effected. Much needless time was wasted in attempting to collect the scattered flock on top of the clouds, especially when it is considered that the entire strike could have successfully proceeded most expeditiously to the target area under the cover of the cloud layer and gained altitude later when weather conditions permitted.

A similar incident occurred the very next day on another strike, this time causing a considerable delay in the departure of the strike for the target and undoubtedly contributed to the loss of several torpedo planes in the group because of lack of fuel. Further recounting of this incident would be merely repetition of what has already been said.

G. E. SCHROETER.

ENCLOSURE (A) to  
VF-45 secret ltr., file  
A16-3/A9, serial (004)  
dated 19 January, 1945

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

## I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting **VF-45** (b) Based on or at **U.S.S. SAN JACINTO** (c) Report No. **VF-45  
ACA-1 #16**

(d) Take off: Date **12 January, 1945** Time (LZT) **0800 (I)** (Zone); Lat. **11° 39' N** Long. **110° 27' E**

(e) Mission **Anti-shipping strike, Camrash Bay to Cap  
St. Jacques, French Indo-China** (f) Time of Return **1150(I)** (Zone)

## II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER			BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)
		TAKING OFF (c)	ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	ATTACKING TARGET (e)		
<b>F6F-5</b>	<b>VF-45</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4 planes carried 1 x 1000 lb. G.P. bomb. 4 planes carried a total of 17 rockets, 5" H.E.</b>	<b>.025 second, delay tail fuse Non-Delay</b>

## III. OTHER U. S. OR ALLIED AIRCRAFT EMPLOYED IN THIS OPERATION.

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
<b>TBM-3</b>	<b>VF-45</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>USS SAN JACINTO</b>				
<b>TBM-3C</b>	<b>VF-45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>USS SAN JACINTO</b>				

## IV. ENEMY AIRCRAFT OBSERVED OR ENGAGED (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE	(b) NO. OBSERVED	(c) NO. ENGAGING OWN A/C	(d) TIME ENCOUNTERED	(e) LOCATION OF ENCOUNTER	(f) BOMBS, TORPEDOES CARRIED; GUNS OBSERVED	(g) CAMOUFLAGE AND MARKING
<b>None</b>			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) **XX**

Did Any Part of

(i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? **XX** If so, Describe Clouds **XX**  
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(j) Time of Day and Brilliance  
of Sun or Moon **XX** (NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (k) Visibility **XX** (MILES)

## V. ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED OR DAMAGED IN AIR (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE ENEMY A/C	(b) DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY:				(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER	GUNS USED		
<b>None</b>						

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

REPORT No. **VF-45**  
**ACA-1 #16**

## VI. LOSS OR DAMAGE, COMBAT OR OPERATIONAL, OF OWN AIRCRAFT (of those listed in II only).

(a) TYPE OWN A/C	(b) SQUADRON	(c) CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C, TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE	(d) WHERE HIT, ANGLE (List armor, self-sealing tanks, equipment hit)	(e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE, (Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed)
1	<b>None</b>			
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				

## VII. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES (in aircraft listed in II only; identify with planes listed in VI by Nos. at left).

(a) NO.	(b) SQUADRON	(c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(d) CAUSE	(e) CONDITION OR STATUS
	<b>None</b>			

## VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA FOR PLANES RETURNING

(a) TYPE A/C	(b) MILES OUT	(c) MILES RETURN	(d) AV. HOURS IN AIR	(e) AV. FUEL LOADED	(f) AV. FUEL CONSUMED	(g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED				(h) NO. OF PLANES RETURNING
						.30	.50	20MM	MM	
<b>F4U-7</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>300</b>					
							<b>Av. 1600</b>			
							<b>pls. per</b>			
							<b>line</b>			

## IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm		<b>All was shipboard</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm		<b>All was shipboard</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## X. COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, OWN AND ENEMY AIRCRAFT (use check list at left).

SPEED, CLIMB,  
at various altitudes

URNS  
DIVES  
CEILINGS  
RANGE  
PROTECTION  
ARMAMENT

**No combat with enemy airborne aircraft**



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

REPORT No. VP-45  
ACA-1 #16

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

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) bank of Namoi River, 6 mi. ESE of Saigon, French Indo-China (b) Time Over Target(s) 0945 (X) (Zone)

(c) Clouds Over Target 3000', alto-cumulus, 1-2/10ths (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Clear (e) Visibility 8 - 10 (MILES)  
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.)

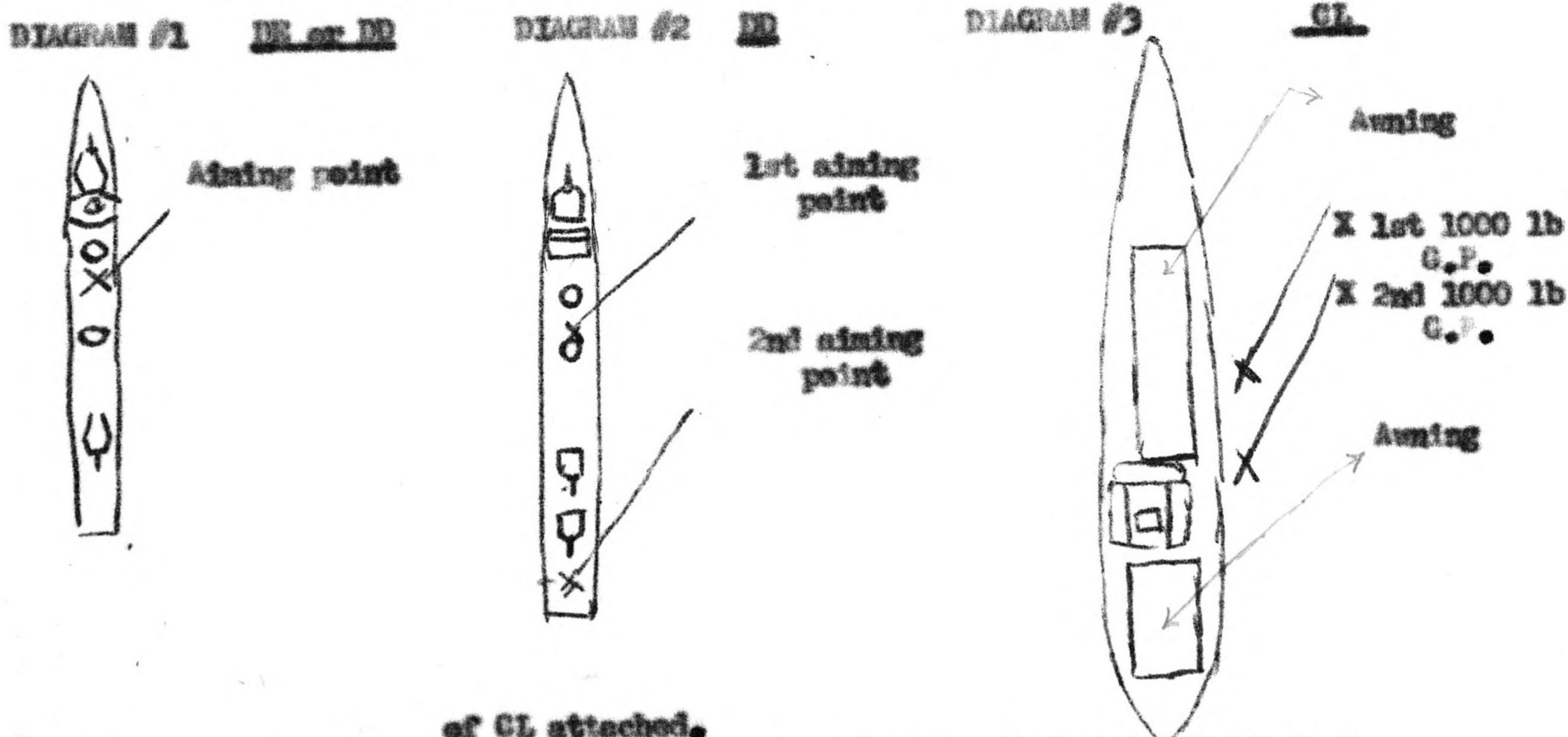
(f) Bombing Tactics: Type For DE and DD, glide bombing; For CL, Dive bombing Bomb Sight Used Mark 8 (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run 1 (NUMBER) Spacing X (FEET) Altitude of Bomb Release 3000 to 3000' (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 Aft stack	DE or DD 1500 tons	1 - VP-45	4 rockets - 2 hits (Ship was subsequently sunk by torpedos of VP-45)	2	Slight Trailed light smoke
2					
3 1st plane, between stacks, 2nd plane aft of after turret	2000 tons	2 - VP-45	5 rockets - 5 hits	3 on 1st aiming point, 2 on 2nd aiming point	Serious, DD beached 150' from shore
4					
5					
6 Amidships	500' X 50'	2 - VP-45	2 X 1000 lb. G.P., each aimed amidships	2 close aboard, 15 - 20'	CL overturned on its starboard side (photo)
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).



of CL attached.

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





## AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)VF-45  
REPORT No. ACA-1 #16

## 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

At 0800 (I), 12 January, 1945, 8 P6F-5's of VF-45 took off from the USS SAN JACINTO, together with 7 TBM's of VT-45, their mission being to seek out and destroy Japanese shipping from Camranh Bay to Cape St. Jacques on the west of southern French Indo-China.

After take-off and rendezvous, the Air Group 45 flight followed the Essex flight, whose leader was coordinator for the combined strike. Course was set for Camranh Bay, but upon learning that there were no more shipping targets in that harbor, the flight swung south along the coast to Cape St. Jacques, which was reached at 0945 (I). At this point, the flight of P6F's and TBM's from Air Group 45 were instructed to orbit while the Essex planes carried out attacks on a convey consisting of at least 3 or 4 oilers, 4 DE or DD's and 1 LSM which was either stationary or very slowly underway immediately west of the southern extremity of Cape St. Jacques.

The Air Group 45 leader, Commander Scheeter, and his wingman flew north up the river toward Saigon to investigate likely targets, while the Essex group attacked the shipping; the remainder of the Air Group 45 planes orbiting south of the Cape awaiting orders to attack. Finding no targets after a short search, Commander Scheeter ordered the Commanding Officer of VT-45 to coordinate the attack upon any remaining ship targets at Cape St. Jacques, consisting of 1 DE or DD a 2 stack DD and an LSM, and then he continued his northward search.

As soon as the Essex flight leader granted permission to the SAN JACINTO planes to attack, a wide circle to westward was made by the VT and 6 VF, and at a point northwest of the 3 ships the VT broke off to the southeast and east for their torpedo runs. The six fighters peeled off ahead of the Avengers, and made a strafing and rocket run from North to South, scoring 2 rocket hits on the midship section of the DE (see diagram #1, page 3) and 3 hits amidships on the DD (see diagram #2, page 3). A second strafing and rocket run was then made, from North to South, scoring 2 more rocket hits on the DD, astern (see diagram #2, page 3). Two VF dropped 1000 lb. G.P. bombs in this run, resulting in near misses. The DE was torpedoed by VT planes, and sank, while the DD was beached 150' from shore, burning and smoking from the combined strafing and rocket hits.

In the meanwhile, the Group Commander and his wingman spotted a large CL (one stacker, similar to the Katori class light cruiser) moored to the south side of the Demnai River, starboard side next to the river bank, approximately 6 miles ESE of the city of Saigon. The cruiser appeared to be about 500 feet long, 50 feet wide and had a single stack set fairly close to the relatively large, built-up bridge. All deck space was unrecognizable because it was covered with awnings. The CL apparently was in good condition, trim and on an even keel, but no activity was noted on board her or on the adjacent river bank. The Group Commander in a 70° dive from East to west initiated from 10,000' released his half-tonner from 3000', barely missing the CL about 15-20 feet from the starboard beam. His wingman made a second run from the same direction dropping his thousand pounder from 2500' and hitting in almost the same location on the starboard side. Although the CL was not observed to sink from the concussion of these bombs, the subsequent strike on Saigon reported the cruiser to be lying on her side at the location of attack and obtained a photograph (See annexed photo).

After making the attack on the CL, the entire flight was rendezvous and returned to base strafing the stern of an AK which was already burning at the bow, located approximately 5 miles off Cape Padaran.

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

REPORT No. **VF-45**  
**ACA-1 #16**

**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

**All equipment and armament functioned normally with these exceptions:**

- One (1) F6F-5** blew off the blast tube of the starboard outboard gun, owing to the looseness of the blast tube, which caused it to creep forward on the barrel jacket.
- One (1) F6F-5**, with only 2 rockets loaded on the starboard wing rails could not fire them, although the racks were checked and found to be in working order upon return. Cause of the failure was either pilot error or defective rockets.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

SIGNATURE

**S. W. FLAUCHER, Jr., Ens., USNR**  
AGI Officer

RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE

**G. E. SCHECTER, Comdr., USN**  
Commanding Officer

RANK AND DUTY

DATE

**1-15-46**