

**Unit History 506th Fighter Group
(Including 457th, 458th and 462nd Fighter Squadrons)
1-30 June 1945**

Combat Operations:

Combat operations for the month of June opened with the disastrous weather hop, the Osaka Escort Mission (#06-01) of 1 June 1945. The VII ⁽¹⁾ FC Field order called for the 506th, in conjunction with the 15th and 21st Fighter Groups to support a maximum effort bombing raid by the XXI Bomber Command against Osaka on 31 May, the date being later extended to 1 June. The 506th was to be lead escort for the bomber stream. It was estimated (by annex "A", Intelligence) that not more than 200 fighters were available for the defense of the Osaka area and that pilot shortages, gasoline shortages, and maintenance difficulties would ground about half of the Nip effectives. Included in the Air Sea Rescue facilities were 5 subs, 4 superdumbos, 5 dumbos, and 2 surface vessels. Delayed 45 minutes because of ground fog at the other airfields, ⁽²⁾ takeoff of the 59 aircraft of the 506th was accomplished at 0757. Two and a half hours later the long range preliminary report phoned to A-2 at the Fighter Command indicated that 51 of our aircraft were still airborne. Around noon, reports began filtering through from Agate Base, via North Field Operations, that the mission was turning around and coming home. The predicted weather front had been encountered enroute. The first planes landed shortly before 1300 and the reports they brought back were not at all encouraging. Fragments of conversation overheard on the radio indicated that some of the pilots would return from the mission, if they returned at all, on the deck of a destroyer or inside a sub. On the line and in the tents at Squadrons and Group Headquarters, men sat around in glum silence watching the planes straggle in two or three at a time, listening to the radio reports and jumping up every now and then to question one of the pilots. already landed for news of their absent comrades. An air raid early that morning — by no means, as spectacular as our first baptism of fire, and with no visible damage ⁽³⁾ inflicted on the enemy — had left, everyone a bit more frayed and tattered than usual and our feeling of discouragement deepened as the preliminary casualty reports began to come in and the S-2's started looking in the files for the aerial numbers of the missing pilots. One of the pilots, 2nd Lawrence E. Grennan of the 457th, flying ⁽⁴⁾ aircraft 520, product of the Tinian cannibalism operation , experienced engine trouble 250 miles from base on the return

trip and nursed his plane to within 6 miles of Iwo before the engine quit cold and he was forced to bail out; he was picked up by a naval patrol vessel within a few minutes. ⁽⁵⁾

By 1500 the last returns had landed, including three pilots of the 462nd; Capt Lee, his wing man Lt Mayer, and Lt Graham, who had found that the most convenient exit from the front lay in the direction of the target and who had, therefore, attached themselves to elements of the bomber stream for the trip to Osaka and back. Twelve men did not return.

The missing included:

- Group Headquarters -
 - Lt Col Harvey J. Scandrett
 - Capt Edmund M. Crenshaw
- 457th Fighter Squadron -
 - 2nd Lt James E. Best
 - 2nd Lt Robert H. Griffith
 - 2nd Lt Robert. C. Klippel
 - 2nd Lt Leonard J. Kloiber
 - 2nd Lt William E. Saks
- 458th Fighter Squadron -
 - 2nd Lt Thomas F. Kerrigan
 - 2nd Lt Robert B. Harvey
- 462nd Fighter Squadron -
 - Capt Lawrence S. Smith
 - 1st Lt Gale L. Loomis
 - 1st Lt Archie C. Ridley

Bit by bit, the details of the story were pieced together by the S-2's. All accounts agreed on the fact that a front had been encountered at approximately 31°N. 420 miles on course from Iwo; also established was the fact that a 360° turn to the left was made by the navigator B-29's and the fighters before the front was penetrated. A number of weather (Quiet) reports were heard at this point, most of them unfavorable ("Oranges are sour") except for a remark overheard on "Nan" Channel by Capt Lumpkins of the 462nd and Capt Anthony of the 457th that, "It is clear at our angels plus 1"; information was also broadcast that "It is clear underneath". Apparently carried on between the navigator-29's and the Group Leaders. These conversations were conducted anonymously without benefit of identifying call signs. After entering the front at an altitude of 10000'-11000', "the utmost confusion prevailed", as the mission report describes it. The formation disintegrated, contact was lost between squadrons and flight leaders, between element leaders and their wingmen and the entire

Group was transformed in a matter of seconds, into a disorganized melee of individual aircraft attempting to pick their way out of the soup on instruments. Contributing to the hazards of the occasion was the close proximity of the aircraft of all three Groups. At least one mid air collision is known to have occurred in which Lt McClure's propeller chewed off part of Capt Crenshaw's tail surface. Shortly thereafter Capt Crenshaw was heard to announce that he was bailing out. Some of the accounts mentioned a sort of illusory opening or pocket into which a number of the fighters, led by about 5 of the B-29's, entered attempting to find a passage through the front. The sides of the opening gradually narrowed, with the aircraft coming into increasingly dangerous proximity with one another. Inside the front, aircraft were observed in every position of flight, inverted, spinning, diving, climbing in steep banks, and headed in all directions. A number of the pilots went into spins and recovered, others, undoubtedly, spun in. Radio chatter, on all channels, increased the confusion, and DU's were emanating from all directions. Despairing of receiving aid from DU, the majority of the pilots made a 180° and headed for home on instruments, altitudes from 100' to 25000' being selected in an effort to get over or under the weather.

Intermittent aid and comfort were given to the P-51's by the B-29's although the navigators had an annoying habit of plunging into a thick soupy cloud, radioing the fighters clustered under their wing to meet them on the other side of the obstruction. Having escaped from the front, the fighters tagged onto the navigators and straggled home. Of the 12 men missing, definite information was available on only Lt Harrigan, forced down about 200 miles from Iwo by mechanical difficulty. Lt Harrigan had switched on his emergency IFF and received a fix from a birddog (surface vessel) 20 miles away; his wing man, Lt Phillips, before being forced to leave by a dwindling gas supply, had circled his position and observed him climb into his life ⁽⁶⁾ raft, Worn out and beat up. the pilots returned from the mission declaring that it was by all odds the roughest experience they ever hoped to encounter. ⁽⁷⁾ As one man put it, "I haven't been so tired since the day I got married".

Total losses for all three groups on the mission included 25 pilots ⁽⁸⁾ missing and 27 aircraft lost .

Opinions advanced in the post mortem critique of the mission regarding the persons or circumstances accountable for the disaster were many and varied. The Fighter Command deftly placed the burden on the shoulders of the lower echelons With the comment,

"Penetration of frontal systems has been systematically avoided, with the cardinal rule of 'don't go on instruments,, except in an emergency".

Actually the Group had been under considerable pressure to accomplish missions in weather conditions that were marginal to say the least. Colonel Harper had been reminded that we were now flying under "Combat Conditions" and the weather precautions exercised by stateside training ⁽⁹⁾ units could not always be followed in the Theater of Operations .

At this time weather forecasts for fighter missions from Iwo to the Empire were furnished entirely by the Guam Weather Forecasting Central.. The Weather Central forecasts were based upon the search plane reports of the previous day. Daily variation, as well as diurnal variation, was being observed in the intensity of the frontal systems in the area concerned. These variations had not hampered bomber type aircraft operations but were to be of significance in connection with fighter operations. The changes in the cold frontal intensity occurring on 1 June indicated the necessity for checks upon frontal activity along route immediately prior to time of the mission. An analysis was made of the circumstances leading up to the 1 June disaster. The conclusions and recommendations were set forth in an extension ⁽¹⁰⁾ of paragraph 8 (Remarks) to Mission Report #06-01. This report was never sent to higher headquarters for two reasons. The recommendations either had been adopted by the time the study was typed or they were opposed to policies of the Command in the discussion of which had been revealed a non-compromising attitude. Nevertheless the analysis has some historical value in that it reflects the thinking of the Group during the most impressionable period of its development.

It was pointed out that the weather forecast from Iwo to the Empire had predicted 3/6/10 cumulus bottoms at 1500' with tops not exceeding 7000' except at 27 degrees north where 3/10 extended into a layer of stratus at 10000'. The weather actually encountered was 10/10 cover extending from Kita to 31 degrees North, with tops generally at 5000' and occasionally at 9-10000'. At 31 degrees North a solid front extended from the deck to an estimated 30000'. Weather reported from the B-29's, once the front was reached was misleading. Reports were overheard that the weather was alright on the deck, that it was alright at 10000' and that a hole was observed in the overcast. Such reports may have influenced the Group Commander not to make the decision to return to Base at the time the front was first sighted.

The 506th Commander, Lt. Col. Scandrett, being among the missing, it was impossible to do

more than speculate on the reasons for his decision. The point is exceedingly delicate and the extended remarks comment as follows: "There is the understandable disinclination for a new Group to turn back while there is a chance to continue lest they be charged with exercising undue caution while under combat conditions."

Finally, since no overall command appears to have been established for the mission, the individual Group Leader would be reluctant to order the return of his Unit if there was even a remote chance that the other outfits would proceed to the target.

Contributing to the results was, of course, the factor of congestion of air traffic at the "funnel" into the overcast.

Based on the experiences of this mission, it was concluded that certain policies were desirable in order to produce more effective missions and at the same time increase the safety factor of the Fighters. Desirable action was summed up in the "Recommendation" section of the analysis. Inasmuch as the tactical situation over the Empire had failed to demonstrate the need for mutual support of Fighter Groups it was thought that Groups of a combined force should be dispatched, at not less than 15 minute intervals. Two weather ships were requested, one to report cloud tops and the other bottoms, on VLR missions. After studying available cruise control data and evaluating our own cruise control experience the belief was stated that 20000' was the maximum cloud top which may be negotiated on an Empire strike and leave a normal safety margin of gas and oxygen. Cloud levels below 500' were considered insufficient for the maneuvering of a Group. A "weather minimum" of 20000' tops and 500' bottoms should, it was believed, be established for VLR missions.

Issue was taken with the haphazard assignment and rapid rotation of B-29 crews as navigational escort for fighter, missions, recommending that the B-29 crews be attached to the Fighter Command and live with the Group for which escort is furnished.

Where necessity dictated the simultaneous dispatch of two or more Groups, it was considered advisable that the senior officer participating be given command of the operation.

Finally the return of the Weather Officer to the Group was urged. The gist of the argument was that the reliability of his forecast was compromised in our eyes by his association (on DS) with the Command.

Several of these recommended procedures, taken up verbally with the Command, were adopted before the close of the month. In subsequent missions, the Groups were, dispatched at

intervals rather than simultaneously. A change in the weather ship procedure was effected by which more detailed information was made available to fighters enroute to the target. The hit and miss methods of selecting navigational B-29 crews was abandoned in favor of attaching and domiciling the bomber crews with the fighter Groups whom they were to escort.

A note of ironic amusement was afforded by the picturesque accounts of the mission dreamed up by the adjective specialists and rewrite men of the news services. One account read, "The 7th Army Fighter Command Mustangs flanked the B-29's to beat off any opposition as the huge bombers ⁽¹¹⁾ blasted the heart of the great war center".

On 2 June a slightly more detailed account of the day's activities appeared which read as follows: "More than 450 Super Fortresses escorted by 150 Mustang fighter planes flying from Iwo, battered Osaka, second largest city of Japan, with 3200 tons of fire bombs in a daylight attack, raising to 24000 tons the weight of bombs heaped on Nippon in seven scorching ⁽¹²⁾ attacks in 19 days".

The exact means by which the 27 battered aircraft ⁽¹³⁾ which staggered over the target were magnified into a striking force of 150 planes is unknown. Reticence of military censorship to disclose the loss of fighter aircraft (some of whose pilots were presumably sitting in their life rafts hoping that Air Sea Rescue would get to them before the Japs) plus the overzealous imagination of the correspondents here and at Guam were no doubt responsible.

On 3 June Lt Harrigan was picked up. Finally sighted by a Navy B-24 whose attention he had attracted by his signal mirror, between 0800-0900 on the 3rd, Harrigan had been overlooked by a Navy plane at 1500 on the 1st, by a B-29 and 2 P-51's on its wing later that day, and by a B-29 at ⁽¹⁴⁾ 1700 on the second. Flares of various types were fired at these aircraft without result, on the morning of the second, a Frigate Bird landed on his raft, Lt Harrigan and the bird looked at one another quizzically for a while before the bird flew away. The B-24 which sighted him was relieved by a PBY which dropped a can containing cigarettes and a note. The note read, "Do you need anything? Ship will arrive at 2200. It is now 0900. If you need water hold oar up horizontal, if not, wave hands". Having conserved his water, Lt Harrigan waved his hands. A destroyer steamed up on schedule, hauled him aboard, put him to bed in the Captain's cabin, fattened him up on chicken and steak — the Navy, it would appear, has a way of getting things ⁽¹⁵⁾ like that — and delivered him to Iwo on the 5th.

Between the 1st and the 7th of June the Group reposed on its collective derrieres awaiting a weather clearance for missions to the Empire. Several attempts were set afoot by the Fighter Command to inaugurate missions. On the morning of the 4th, an Osaka escort mission was scheduled for the next day; Later that morning notification was received that the target was changed from Osaka to Kobe. At 1430 that afternoon, VII Fighter informed us that the escort mission had been shelved and replaced by a possible strafing attack on an airfield in the vicinity of Kobe or Osaka. A few minutes later the mission was cancelled ⁽¹⁶⁾.

As it turned out, the stretch of inclement weather which dictated the abandonment of the escort mission came at a most inopportune time. At Kobe on 5 June the B-29's ran into 150 to 160 Jap planes who made a total of 647 attacks on their formations. At a cost of 3 bombers destroyed and 18 damaged by fighters plus 3 more destroyed and 9 more damaged by flak and fighters and flak combined, the B-29's racked up a score of 44 destroyed, 22 probables ⁽¹⁷⁾ and 44 damaged. This score, incidentally, topped anything achieved to date ⁽¹⁸⁾ by escort missions of the Iwo based Mustangs.

On the afternoon of the 5th word was received of an Osaka escort scheduled for the 7th; supporting a maximum effort strike by the XXI BomCom, the 506th, 15th, and 21st Fighter Groups were to maintain patrol of the bomber route between the IP and the target. The escorting fighters, contrary to the practice followed on the weather hop of the 1st, were to be dispatched in shifts, with the 506th as the second serial, at intervals of 15 minutes. If business in and around the bomber stream proved to be a trifle slack the fighters were ordered to pick up an extra dividend by an attack on Jap airfields in the vicinity, Itami was selected as the 506th's target. At the Group briefing at 2000 on the 6th the S-2, Captain Gilges, gave a general resume of the flak situation in and around the bomber target, concluding with the reassuring thought that the heavy AA guns would be primarily directed at the B-29's and that fire from these batteries encountered by the fighter escort, approximately 5000' from the bomber stream, would be extremely poor gun laying by the Jap AAA.

Detailed information on the defenses and dispersal areas at Itami was also presented. The plan of attack called for a repetition of the flak buster and deck strafing tactics followed at Kasumigaura in late May.

Takeoff with 59 A/C — of whom 7 returned early — was accomplished at 0842 ⁽¹⁹⁾. Arriving at the departure point at 1200 the Group provided area protection for the bomber stream for

about 1 hour and 15 minutes. A lone Jap SE A/C. blissfully unaware of the presence of our P-51's some 4000' above him was observed at 16000' Just S of the Target apparently directing AA fire on the bombers. A mad scramble for the Nip's scalp ensued between Lt Col Brown's flight and Lt Zagorsky's flight of the 462nd Squadron. Assorted passes were made by all 8 A/C with the result that the Jap, after several pathetic attempts at evasive action, disappeared in flames into the clouds.

Results for all three groups were uniformly meager. In addition to the SE destroyed by the 506th, a Nick was destroyed and a Dinah damaged by the other outfits. ⁽²⁰⁾

Flak over the Empire gave the pilots very little trouble. Miscellaneous bursts of heavy AA encountered at the DP, about 5 miles SE of the IP, in the target area, and at the RP were described as meager and inaccurate.

Results of the 2800 tons of incendiary and HE bombs dropped by the escorted B-29's included 3.4 square miles of the city of Osaka newly devastated. ⁽²¹⁾ While the Osaka escort was underway on the 7th, notification was received of a strafing mission on Meiji, Toyohashi, and HJamamatsu A/Fs. Two abortive weather missions and an untold number of postponements were incurred in connection with these targets during the remainder of the month. The first of the Meiji weather hops became airborne with 60 A/C at 0945 on the morning of the 8th ⁽²²⁾. The 506th together with the 15th Group scheduled to attack Kagamgahara, Suzuka, and Akenogahara, encountered & front some 60 miles on course reaching up to 28000' - 30000'. The Group returned to Base and stoged around the Island for awhile to get rid of some of their gas, before landing at 1134.

The following day a routine Bonins strike was scheduled ⁽²³⁾. From A-2 of the Fighter Command a report was received of a boat 40' long having been sighted in the vicinity of Chichi. The 12 A/C plus Josephine and escort of the 457th were unable to locate the boat however, and unloaded their bombs on Sasaki A/F, on a radio station, and on what was described as a "large warehouse". A low level strafing job was conducted on several wooden ships ⁽²⁴⁾.

It was: not until June 10th, almost a month after our aircraft landed on the Island, that our first successful escort mission was run. The Tokyo escort mission on that date in which the 506th and 15th Fighter Groups supported a medium effort XXI BomCom strike against selected targets, was the first occasion on which the itching trigger fingers of the 506th pilots had an

opportunity to fire at and shoot down a sizeable number of Jap airborne opposition. The 506th, providing the leading escort from the DP to the target, took off in the morning at the uncomfortable hour of 0545 ⁽²⁵⁾. Reaching the DP at 0900, the 462nd as high cover, the 457th on the left, and the 458th on the right, lower and slightly astern, the Group proceeded inland. They sighted a squadron of Tony's apparently lying, in ambush for the bombers. The Nips took to their heels. Three or four of them who failed to get away fast enough were jumped by Major Dejarnette's flight, 462nd Squadron, and one each was racked up by the Major, Lt Bash, and Lt Rosebrough. Another stray from this squadron of Tonys was jumped by Capt Lee, 462nd; Capt Lee made two passes at the Jap who spiraled down and crashed into the mountains.

Lion's share of the kills was bagged by the 458th; picturesque, mustachioed Capt Pete Nowick, the Mad Russian, bagged two Franks or Tojos. His wingman Lt Neil Smith remarked later, "I called out the bogies to him and he went after them. And boy, did he get them". Lts Feld and Sowers each: blew one up in the air and one shot down in flames is split between Lt Mikes and Lt Seegers.

The 457th had, comparatively speaking, a much more tranquil afternoon than either of its neighbors. Action was recorded on only one flight, Dooley Green. Lt Lawrence and Lt Hetland got a short burst into one Tojo, Lt Skiver and Lt Gardner got hits in the cockpit of a Tojo; Lt Skiver ripped off a short burst at another and Lt Gardner flamed still another. Our total score was 10 destroyed, 4 probably destroyed, and 2 damaged. Over and beyond the fact that the mission was our first real pay dirt job over the Empire it was of great value to the Group as an indication of combat problems and techniques to be worked out in the future. The 506th pilots, it was agreed, were eager to close and come to grips with the enemy, so much so in fact that they, very nearly ran one another down in the mad scramble to tap the few Nips sighted. As Lt Newcomb of the 457th put it,

"It's, getting so we've almost got to fight the other boys off to get to take a solo shot at a Jap plane". Net result of this policy was, of course, poor air discipline ⁽²⁶⁾. Nobody was lost on this mission, the quality and number of Jap fighters being what it was, so that the lesson learned was entirely gratuitous.

The 1800 tons of bombs dropped by the 300 B-29's escorted were divided between the Hitachi Aircraft factory and engineering works at Chiba, the Nakajima Aircraft factory at

Omiya, the Japan Aircraft factory at Tomioka, the Tachikawa Army Air Depot, and the Kasumigaura Seaplane Base and Air Depot. Most of the buildings at the Kasumigaura Depot and all the major buildings at the Hitachi engineering works were destroyed ⁽²⁷⁾.

The following day a Chichi strike was run against Radio Stations 6 and 7 ⁽²⁸⁾. Results of the 16 bombs (8 instantaneous and 8 delay) dropped on the target by the 462nd were unobserved. ("Unobserved" is a term sometimes employed by the intelligence officer to indicate that, inasmuch as no one saw the bombs miss the target, his conscience is relieved of the necessity of reporting the mission as a failure.) Four additional A/C were detailed on this mission as cover for several F6F photo snips. Arriving over Chichi the strike leader tried to reach the photo planes on the radio, but the reply which he received was inadequate to permit rendezvous, although visual contact with one of the photo Joes was made and 2 of our designated escorts were dispatched as cover.

Received on 12 June was a teletype from VII Fighter Command enunciating a change of policy for strikes against the Bonins. The three Fighter Groups were given permission to dispatch training missions to the Bonins on their own initiative ⁽²⁹⁾. It was becoming embarrassingly obvious that the tactical significance of the bombs that were plowing up the ground on Chichi, Ani, and Haha, or killing the fish in Futami Harbor was exceedingly dubious. Having discharged their primary duty, watering Susaki A/F, the extra dividends picked up by damage to shipping which for some reason was a particularly elusive target for our dive bombing P-51's — radio towers, buildings, and docks were very small potatoes indeed. The degree of accuracy attained by the 506th on targets other than Sasaki cannot be accurately estimated due to inadequate observation and meager reports of bomb hits supplied by the pilots to the S-2's. Of the 85 tons of 500 lb GP bombs dropped by the 506th during May and June, 19 1/2 tons were devoted to Susaki A/F, 52 tons to such targets as shipping, barracks areas, radio installations, gun emplacements and piers, while the remaining 134 tons were jettisoned in the water, on Susaki, our bombing results seem to have been fairly good: 11 1/2 tons appear to have hit either in the center or along the edges of the field, with the remaining 8 tons either observed or presumed to have fallen on the grounds adjacent to the airfield. Tabulation of the mission reports for bombing results on other targets is complicated both by the number of "unobserved" hits and the number of hits for which nothing but the general target grid area was reported. Of the 52 tons dropped on barracks, shipping, etc, about

8 1/4 tons or 16% was observed to register either a direct hit or a near miss on enemy installations in the Bonins.

Of the remaining 43 3/4 tons, 32 3/4 were observed or presumed to be misses (about 6 1/4 tons of these misses did anti fishing duty in Futami Harbor and adjacent waters) while 11 tons were either "unobserved" or were reported to fall in areas where the specific target was not enumerated. The amount of damage wrought by the 16% of hits and near misses cannot be determined; unless the misses lay within 60' of the target, it is unlikely that anything more than superficial damage would be caused by the blast effect of a 500 lb bomb ⁽³⁰⁾

On the 14th of June the next Bonins mission after this "training" directive was received, 8 planes of the 458th Squadron had a better than average day against shipping targets at Chichi. Hits were scored on a couple of small vessels in Futami Harbor ⁽³¹⁾, with a very satisfactory amount of smoke and flame observed from both targets. The occasion was all the more noteworthy in that it was the first instance in which a 506th aircraft actually hit a shipping target with a bomb.

The following day, the 15th, the 506th together with the 15th Group ran an abortive escort mission to Osaka. ⁽³²⁾ A weather front encountered at about 31° or 32° on course was responsible for the decision to return to base. Sixty-four A/C were involved in the mission, all of which returned safely. One accident occurred in connection with this mission when Lt. McClure of the 462nd buckled his wings during a 7 or 8 point landing with heavily loaded wing tanks.

On the 16th during a Bonins strike two of the 462nd aircraft made the Group's first rocket sortie. Twelve rockets, plus 8 bombs from 4 other ships, were discharged in the direction of radio station #6, with hits observed in the station area east of the power plant. Four bombs were dropped, toward radio station #5 and 4 more along gun emplacements near station #6 ⁽³³⁾.

Next day the 462nd loaned 2 of its 5 rocket ships to the 458th who scored a direct hit on a large building in the center of the radio station #7 area. Strafing passes were made by the 11 A/C strike force on stations 6 and 7. The rockets fired by the second ship, presumably on station #7, ended up in the reservoir about 300 yards to the south ⁽³⁴⁾.

On the morning of the 19th the Meiji-Hamamatsu strafing mission, briefed on the 15th,

postponed on the 16th, postponed (after being twice set forward at 1 hour intervals with the pilots chewing their nails in the cockpits) on the 17th, and ditto on the 18th, finally became airborne at 0952. Meiji, however, continued to be a jinx for the 506th. A front was encountered about 250 miles out and 59 A/C strike force pancaked on North Field at 1230. The 457th, determined on earning its salary one way or another, made a run on Chichi on the return trip hitting radar station #1 and radio station #2 together with assorted barges and a Sugar Dog. One of the pilots had the edge of his wings clipped by flak ⁽³⁵⁾.

It was beginning to be feared that the fighter Command was losing faith in the prognostications of its weathermen, dispatching the fighters as a sort of weather reconnaissance unit in case the forecast turned out to be wrong. Our comment on this practice in the remarks section of the mission report was a model of restraint. It stated simply, "Weather forecast was received, prior to takeoff, correctly forecasting the actual conditions prevailing."

The bad taste left in our mouth by the weather reconnaissance missions luring the middle of the month was quite obliterated by the notable Hyakurigahara strafing mission of the 23rd. Scheduled to strike Hyakurigahara and Katori while the 15th Group attacked Shimodate and Kjasumigaura ⁽³⁶⁾. 55 A/C of the 506th were airborne rather late in the morning at 1019. In addition to the regular load of 1800 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, several aircraft of the flak-buster detachment from the 458th Fighter squadron were equipped with 6AR rockets each ⁽³⁷⁾.

The mission rendezvous over Kita was snafued somewhat by the B-29's being on the west instead of their briefed position east of the rock ⁽³⁸⁾. It was, in fact, a rather bad day for the B-29'a for not only did they foul up the rendezvous, but they also delivered the Group at a DP some 10 miles further up the coast than originally planned. Moreover, at landfall they received several uncomfortably close bursts of heavy flak. "Uncle George" Olson, S-2 of the 462nd who had bummed a ride on one of the navigators came back from the mission white as a sheet and strangely silent. "This is my first and last ride in a B-29", quoth he.

The 458th was the first to hit the primary target, Hyakurigahara A/F making a steep dive on the target through a hole in the soup. With the exception of a trainer that sustained a direct hit from one of Maj Shipman's rockets, no damage was; observed! at this target. The 457th stumbled out of the overcast on Mito South A/F which was mistaken for the primary target

and strafed in a steep dive before the error was discovered. The 462nd, however, had somewhat better luck; they had ascertained the northerly drift of the departure point and arrived at Hyakurigahara as planned. A strafing pass was made on the northern section of the field from west to east in a 30° dive. A total of 5 destroyed and 6 probables was racked up on this pass. Meanwhile the 457th was having a field day at Naruto where 4 A/C were destroyed and 22 were damaged.

Somewhere in the passage between Mito South and Naruto, Capt Benbow, a flight leader of the 457th, lost sight of the remainder of the Squadron. Cool, calm, and collected, the Capt thereupon proceeded to Naruto on his own and made 6 separate sweeps over the field. Such unparalleled effrontery if performed over a Nazi airdrome, for example, would have been an open invitation to destruction.

While the 457th and the 462nd were ringing up their totals in destroyed and damaged on the ground, the 458th had become engaged in a hell for leather aerial fight in the vicinity of Yachimata. The bogies were sighted in flights of 4 about 6000' down. Licking their chops hungrily, the 458th dove down for the kill. In a few brief moments, 10 Japs were destroyed, 2 probably destroyed, and 1 damaged. The repertoire of evasive tactics employed by the 20 or so Nips engaged was extremely limited, consisting mostly of half rolls and split S's. Incidents of this type contributed to the somewhat unflattering opinion many of the fliers were beginning to form of the combat effectiveness of the Nips. The box score of the mission is as follows:

Air Total: Destroyed - 10, Probables - 2, Damaged - 1.

506th Group Headquarters

1st Lt. Evan S. Stuart - 2 Zekes destroyed, 1 Zeke probably destroyed

458th Fighter Squadron

Capt, J. B. Baker - 1 Tojo destroyed

1st Lt. Jack A. Kelsey - 1 Oscar destroyed

1st Lt. Vance A. Middaugh - 1 Tojo destroyed

1st Lt. Max. E. Ruble - 1 Jack destroyed

2nd Lt. Harold G. Davidson - 2 Zekes destroyed

2nd Lt. Roy H. Kempert - 1 Zeke destroyed

2nd Lt. Frank H. Wheeler - 1 Jack destroyed

2nd Lt. G.B. Lambert - 1 Jack probably destroyed

All air victories were in the Yachimata, Miyakawa, Naruto area from 12000' down to 3000'.

All approaches were from above and behind.

Ground Total: Destroyed - 10, Probables - 7, Damaged - 30

457th Fighter Squadron

Capt. Abner M. Aust Jr - 1 George destroyed at Naruto

1st Lt. Francis B. Clark - 3 Georges destroyed at Naruto
1st Lt. Evelyn K. Neff - 1 George destroyed at Naruto
458th Fighter Squadron
Major Harrison E. Shipman - 1 trainer probably destroyed at
Hyakurigahara.
462nd Fighter Squadron
1st Lt. Jose Diaz - 1 Zeke destroyed at PT
1st Lt. Frederick A. Sullivan - 1 Zeke destroyed at FT
2nd Lt. Frank C. Buzze - 2 ToJos destroyed at PT
2nd Lt. Robert W. Graham - 1 George destroyed at PT
1st Lt. Gordon C. Dinglee - 1 Tony probably destroyed at PT
2nd Lt. Leonard A. Dietz - 1 SE probably destroyed at PT
2nd Lt. William G. Ebersole - 1 Nick probably destroyed at PT
2nd Lt. Newton N. Millner - 1 George probably destroyed at PT
2nd Lt. Harold D. Stewart - 2 SE probably destroyed at PT

From these encounters all of the 506th aircraft returned safely although LT. Buzze of the 462nd had a 7.7 mm slug in his wing tip and Lt. Sullivan of the 462nd had his canopy shot off over Hyakurigahara; Lt. Sullivan's trip back to Iwo in his well ventilated cockpit was exceedingly cold.

All but one of our aircraft landed shortly before 1800 and we sat down, then, to sweat out the missing pilot, Lt. Moore of the 457th. During the wait, a bogie appeared on the instruments and several flights were scrambled to repel the invader. Eventually, the bogie turned out to be our absent birdman, Lt. Moore, who had gone astray somewhere over the Empire and made the long trip back from the rally point all by himself. While fifty miles from Iwo he was called on VHF and given a steer to base. The alert was precipitated by the failure of the IFF ⁽³⁹⁾. Lt. Moore landed at 1025. The newspaper's account of the strike with their customary inattention to detail, gave the following interpretation to the report of Lt. Moore's 8 hrs and 20 minutes in the air: "The 1645 mile round trip was the longest combat flight yet made from here by Mustangs. They were out as much as 8 hours and 20 minutes including time over the targets".
(40)

At the critique presided over by diffident, soft spoken, Major Shipman, CO of the 458th Squadron, and leader of the mission, a number of interesting suggestions were brought forward for the conduct of future operations. The navigators came in for some criticism: their conduct at the rendezvous, their spacing enroute to the target, and their navigational errors in regard to the DP were commented upon at some length.

Replacement of aborting A/C by the spares was attended with a good deal of confusion; it was suggested that henceforth a leader of the spare flight be designated through which all requests for replacements enroute to the target would be channeled. Having reached landfall the violent evasive action taken in response to the packet of heavy flak encountered there resulted in partial disintegration of the formation. It was determined that evasive action, in the future, should be taken by flights rather than by individual aircraft.

The usual admonitions were directed against excessive radio chatter over the Empire. In this instance, a particularly violent urge to employ radio unnecessarily, overtook the pilots of one squadron during the jettisoning of wing tanks shortly before the attack on the PT. In lieu of a radio conversation to inform an adjacent member of the flight that his wing tanks are now safely on their way to do their bit for the Americanization of the Jap landscape, a hand signal of some kind was suggested.

Regarding tactics over the target, favorable comment was passed on the use of 5 degrees of flaps during the strafing run by Lt Willis, a high class operator with the A-36 during an eight months booking in the Mediterranean Theater. Use of flaps enable the pilot to maintain a nose down attitude permitting better sighting and a longer burst of fire on the target while strafing on the deck.

Having given a satisfactory account of ourselves on a strafing mission, we were rewarded by an escort mission to the Hagoya area scheduled for the 26th⁽⁴¹⁾. Supporting a maximum effort of XXI BomCom, the 506th was to patrol from IP to Target at Nagoya with the 15th patrolling the same beat at Kobe⁽⁴²⁾.

Airborne at 0647 with 60 aircraft, we rendezvoused over Kita without incident. About 100 miles short of the Empire, a medium size front was encountered and we went to 21000' to pass over it, raising to 22000' at the DP.

The 506th tacked onto a number of the bombers first observed circling near the entrance to Ise Wan in the belief that they were the boys we were supposed to take. They led us astray half way across the peninsula to Osaka before it was realized that we were intruding on 15th Group territory. Breaking contact, the Group swam through the soup to the vicinity of the Dog Leg at Biwo Ko. From Biwo Ko course was set for the IP and from there toward Nagoya, with the soup thickening minute by minute; the mission leader, Lt Col Harley Brown growing more and more dubious of accomplishing the scheduled patrol from IP to target, a 180 was

ordered. In the turn something appears to have happened to the Group formation; the 458th took off toward the eastern shore of Ise Wan; the 462nd stooged up and down the western shore from DP to IP; and the 457th, also on the west, escorted scattered fragments of the B-29 stream from one section of the overcast to the next. During this entire operation, encounters with enemy fighters were extremely meager, on the blind alley run to Osaka, a couple of bandits were sighted out of range by the 462nd. Since our job was to stick with the bombers, pursuit of the distant enemy was not undertaken. A bit later on the same course, 2 Georges offered themselves for sacrifice about 1500' below our formation. Capt Norman Miller's flight pounced for the kill. Hits on one of the Georges — the other having fled into the clouds — were scored by Capt Miller and Lt Colley; the Nip disappeared straight down, smoking. During the patrol from IP to DP, after the squadrons had begun to operate separately, two more encounters with Jap aircraft were registered by Lts McFarlane and Colley of the 462nd. Action in the 457th during their patrol run and escort on the western shore of the Bay consisted of a short razzle dazzle with 2 Georges on whom hits were scored by amiable chubby faced Capt Duan Anthony—the Squadron C.O., and Lt Cawley, Lts Hutchinson and Newcomb had a rather hectic afternoon. Lt Hutchinson, shortly before crossing the front enroute to the coast, found that in order to operate his supercharger he was obliged to engage it by hand. The flight leader told him to head for the rally point and take another pilot, Lt Newcomb, along with him, "Hutch" was eager that day, however, and after fiddling around in the cockpit for about a quarter of an hour, he was able to secure the recalcitrant gadget with a piece of parachute string that he had used to tie his pocket knife onto his suit. He and Lt Newcomb, therefore, carried on a two man war up and down Ise Wan, Stooging around in the soup, they observed elements of the B-29 formation appear and disappear in all directions. At 1140 they saw a sub sneak into the mouth of the bay to pick up the survivors of a crashed and burning B-29. Going in for a closer look, one of the B-29's took a pot shot at them out of range and they called him on the radio and requested him to please stop shooting at them. They went down to the deck to help spot a lone survivor of the crash.

Resuming patrol, they saw an aircraft explode and spiral downward in a ball of fire and smoke near Matsuzaka. Deciding at that point that they'd had enough, they turned to head for home, reaching Base some time after the rest of the Group had landed.

Commenting on the mission, the Fighter Command, shaking its heed ruefully, observed that,

"The reluctance of the enemy to send up his fighters when an overcast is present over the target area was again demonstrated" ⁽⁴³⁾

The 460 escorted B-29's dropped 3000 tons of demolition bombs on 9 targets in the Nagoya, Osaka, Akahi, and Gifu areas; the Atsuta Plant of the Nagoya Arsenal, the Sumitomo duralumin mill, the Eitoku plant of the Aichi Aircraft Company, the Chigusa ammunition factory of the Nagoya Arsenal, the Mitsubishi and Kawasaki Aircraft plants at the Kagamigahara Army Air Depot, the Sumitomo duralumin and propeller factory, the Osaka Army Arsenal, and the Kawasaki Aircraft ⁽⁴⁴⁾. As a result of the raid the reported damage included 77% of the roof area of the Chigusa factory of the Nagoya Arsenal complex (to which previous raids had also contributed), 12% damage at the Sumitomo Aluminum plant, Osaka and 26% new damage at Kawasaki Aircraft of Akashi ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

VLR operations for June ended as they had begun, with a weather mission. Scheduled to hit E Tsukuba and Konoike on 27 June, 61 A/C of the Group were up at 0926 and down by 1502. The front was encountered at about 1205 just short of Hachijo Jima; after milling around for about 15 minutes and attempting to scale the front at a height of 23000', a "sour" quiet report was received from the weather ship and the Group turned for home. ⁽⁴⁶⁾

Combat operations for the month were wound up by 4 Bonins strikes on the 28th, 29th, and 30th, for which results might be described as meager, inaccurate, trailing, on the mission of the 28th run by a 10 A/C strike force of the 458th plus Josephine and escort, the Japs revealed much to our chagrin, an interesting bit of operational deception ⁽⁴⁷⁾ on Susaki A/F. After dumping the bomb load in the general vicinity of radio station #6, on the pier, and on several buildings, a strafing made on 6 SE A/C in a line SW to NE across the field, was met by intense and accurate light and medium flak. No one was seriously damaged although Lt. Jake Pilecki had an M/G slug careen off his windshield and another slug lodge in his wing root. Evaluating the incident the Group S-2 hazarded the opinion that the Nips had stuck a bunch of class 26 aircraft on Susaki in order to lure our pilots into zones of prearranged AA fire or land mines ⁽⁴⁸⁾; A. double barreled attack on the Bonins was made on the afternoon of the 29th.

The 457th led off with a bombing run on what was believed to be the entrance to an underground hangar, sheltering several operational aircraft, NE of the airfield. The reasoning behind the selection of this target serves to illustrate some of the devious ways in which information about the enemy originates and spreads in the Iwo Jima Theater of Operations. A

report had been relayed to the 457th S-2 via one of the 506th Staff Officers who picked it up from the 15th Group, that the presence of such a hangar had been disclosed by one of the small boys captured a few days previously by the destroyer Dunlap. DD 384 ⁽⁴⁹⁾

A run was made against what was thought to be the door of the hangar, with the result that 2 bombs exploded on the bluff above and several others fell in the water or on the land beyond. Other bombs were directed, against radar station #1 ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

A little later that afternoon, the 462nd, with 11 P-51's (Josephine and escort furnished by the 457th) went aloft to drop bombs on what later proved to be a Sugar Class hulk at Haha Jima. Before being positively identified, however, this vessel raised quite a furor among intelligence circles at higher headquarters. The preliminary report which tagged the ship as a Fox Baker, vastly overrated its actual importance ⁽⁵¹⁾. Examination of the gun camera film the following morning by the 462nd S-2, revealed that the ship was a Sugar type vessel, non operational. In addition to the "near misses" scored on the Sugar vessel at Haha, bombs with "unobserved" results and 17 rockets were fired at radio station #1 ⁽⁵²⁾.

The next morning a 12 A/C strike force (plus a Josephine and her escort) of the 458th, took off for Haha to plaster the Sugar; comparatively speaking, they did rather well, some of the bombs coming within a hundred feet of the target. Observed with open hatches in the long narrow harbor off Kitamura town, the vessel was definitely established as a Sugar Charlie hulk ⁽⁵³⁾.

In summarizing combat operations for June the general expression of opinion among Squadron pilots and the Group staff was that the month had been, if not spectacularly successful, at least reasonably productive. Although a subsequent report was published on 17 July, devoted exclusively to the disclosures of this loquacious young man in which the location of this installation was given.

Flying a total of 207 completed sorties. ⁽⁵⁴⁾ and 4 completed missions we scored 21 A/C destroyed, in the air and 10 on the ground, together with 6 probables, (air) and 7 (ground). Enemy A/C damaged included 7 in the air and 30 on the ground.

It was generally realized, though, that the type and quality of our offensive depended, at least in some degree, upon the skill, aggressiveness and number of the enemy encountered. The enemy we met in June 45 was a far cry from the combat seasoned veterans who flew aloft against the U.S. pilots in the earlier years of the war. The caliber of his resistance may be

described, even on the most charitable interpretation of his conduct as meager, indecisive, and uncoordinated. At no time, for instance, were more than 40 Jap planes sighted in the air on one mission ⁽⁵⁵⁾. Few of these aircraft seemed desirous of locking horns with our Mustangs. The ground defenses around Jap airfields and strafing targets were an agreeable surprise. Both the volume and accuracy of the fire encountered was, from the Jap point of view, disappointing. We were permitted, therefore, to work out our tactics under what might almost be called "laboratory" conditions.

Not a single pilot was lost to enemy ground or air action during the month. Errors in planning and mistakes in fighter tactics made during the heat of battle instead of being visited with the supreme penalty might entail nothing more serious than a chewing out, by the Squadron Co at the close of the mission — and sometimes not even that.

This is not to underrate, for a single minute, the operational hazards of VLR missions against the Empire. Weather and distance are not opponents who can be lightly dismissed, thirteen planes and 11 pilots were lost to weather plus mechanical failure in the course of VLR missions during the month ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

On the other hand, the bashful timidity of the Jap Air Force made it inevitable that the degree of experience our pilots obtained as well as the box score of our results would never reach that final pitch of effectiveness imparted through meeting and vanquishing an opponent worthy of our mettle. Fighters, unlike bombers, cannot effectively operate in a tactical vacuum. From the point of view of resolute irascible Maj. Gen. Le May and his bomber boys, Japan is the ideal test case for the airman's contention that the war potential of a modern industrial community can be effectively obliterated through air power alone. But from the fighter pilots' standpoint it was beginning to appear as though riding into battle against the Jap Air Force was like shadow boxing with an opponent who refuses to emerge from his dressing room. The combat habits which we acquire in, this relatively tranquil phase of our operations, it was felt, might be a source of no little danger in the event of some radical change in the conduct of the JAF. Particularly will this be true in the event that we are called upon to help provide aerial cover for an invasion of the Jap homeland. The resistance we shall meet will be infinitely more savage, more numerous, and more fanatical than anything the 506th has hitherto encountered. No doubt we shall give a good account of ourselves. Faced with a determined Kamikaze type attack, however, a lot of good men may be needlessly lost because

of inadequate air discipline, indifferent gunnery ⁽⁵⁷⁾, and poorly executed tactics.

This melancholy estimate of our future must, of course, be tempered by the realization that this long period of comparative inactivity has doubtless had some effect on the Nip pilots and that their fighting potential will be reduced still further by systematic bombing of airfields in the invasion sector.

Without the inclusion of at least one statistical table or summary, any Army history cannot be considered complete and definitive. In deference to this requirement, therefore, the following chart is presented covering VLR operations for the month of June:

Date	Type	Target	Destroyed		Probables		Damaged		Losses Pilots)
			Air	Gr	Air	Gr	Air	Gr	
June	Escort	Osaka (weather abort)	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
June	Escort	Osaka	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	Strafe	Meiji, Hanamatsu A/F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		(Weather abort)							
June	Escort	Tokyo	10	0	4	0	2	0	0
June	Escort	Osaka (weather abort)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	Strafe	Meiji, Hamamatsu							
		A/F (weather abort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	Strafe	Hyakuragahara A/F	10	10	2	7	1	30	0
June	Escort	Kagoya Area	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
June	Strafe	Tsukuba, Konoike							
		A/F (weather abort	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

A. Preparing the Mission:

Intelligence and Operations — Of prime importance to the successful completion of the mission is accurate and detailed knowledge of the enemy's capabilities. To gather this information, to disseminate it in as easily digestible a fashion as possible is the function of the Group and Squadron S-2's.

The bulk of the S-2 stock of information is derived from the poop sent down by higher headquarters, supplemented by the eyewitness observations brought back by the pilots. General background information, objective folders, charts and diagrams of Jap airfields, teletype reports of shipping in Japan's harbors, of aircraft counts and of damage wrought in XXI Bomcom missions are supplied with commendable promptness. The A-2 sections of each of the numerous Army, Navy and Air Force Commands in the Pacific area evidently feel that

they must issue a periodical of some sort at weekly or monthly intervals if they are to do their share in winning the war. The journals, reports and digests issued in response to this desire are received indexed, and filed in their proper niche on the shelves.

One vitally important source of information, however, we do not have, namely, detailed, up-to-date photographic coverage in stereo of Jap airfields. Information on flak at Jap fields, other than what can be gleaned by the direct observations of the pilots at whom it is directed, is derived partly from the reports published under the imprint of the Central Interpretation Unit at XXI BomCom supplemented by the studies of Interpron Two, the Photo Intelligence Unit of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and by our own study of out-of-date and poorly reproduced photographs. The Bomber Command devotes only the most cursory attention to the location of MG and AW positions at these targets. The pictures; available, poor as they are, reveal countless errors, usually errors of omission in the CIU findings of light and medium flak around the airdromes. Given these conditions, it is imperative that the tactical unit flying the mission be given the best, most detailed photo coverage obtainable on the targets assigned to it. Precisely which of the many echelons lying between us and the source of the photographs bears the responsibility for our failure to receive them, we do not know. Suffice to say that the pictures we do receive are out of date and since they are seldom provided in stereo, of limited usefulness for interpretative purposes.

Use has been made of the gun camera film, particularly the Kodachrome film, in locating gun positions on strafing targets. During June, for in-stance, a study made of the color film of the Kasumigaura mission in late May verified the location of a number of positions previously reported and established the presence of several new gun batteries ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Another type of photo coverage desperately needed for correct target identification on ground strafing missions was clear oblique or approach shots of the objectives from several different headings. Shortage of photo coverage of specific targets was not the only complaint registered by the S-2's against the intelligence material handed out by higher headquarters. It was felt that a composite picture of all land, sea and air operations in the Pacific should be provided for tactical units ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

At the Group briefings at 2000 in the west wing of the officer's mess, the Group S-2 presented the most complete information available of the air and ground situation for the mission.

Target identification through the use of easily recognizable check points was stressed and the

layout, flak, defenses and dispersal areas of the fields to be hit were represented on a belloptican slide thrown on a screen during the briefing. Prisoner of ... *to be continued*

- (1) FO #113, HI VII FC, 30 May 45 (SECRET)
- (2) Mission Report #06-01, HQ. 506th FG, 1 June 45. (Confid.) Exhibit 1.
- (3) G-2 Periodic Report #68, HQ AGF, 2 June 45, covering period from 311800K to 011800K (SECRET)
- (4) Page 23, Unit History, 506th Ftr Gp, May 45 (SECRET)
- (5) AAF Form 14, Report of Major Accident, A/C 44-72552, 2nd Lt Lawrence E. Grennan, 457th Ftr Sq.
- (6) Source of this account: Mission Report #06-01, plus signed statements of Capt Wickman, Capt Anthony, Capt Lumpkins, and others.
- (7) Name withheld.
- (8) Mission Report #16?, Hq VII FC, 1 June 45. (Confidential)
- (9) Col Harper's interview with the CG, VII FC, 27 May 45.
- (10) Exhibit 2.
- (11) Published in Honolulu Advertiser., #20674., 1 June 45.
- (12) ibid #20675, 2 June 45.
- (13) Mission Report 167. Hq VII FC, 1 June 45
- (14) Extension of "Remarks" under par 8, sub par b, mission report #06-01 (1) Air Sea Rescue — Exhibit 3.
- (15) ibid, plus news story by Capt Hynes.
- (16) S-2 Journal, 506th Ftr Gp
- (17) Page 17, Air Intell Report XXI BomCom Vol 1, 14 July 45. (SECRET)
- (18) Best score of VII FC Escorts previous to 5 June was 26-9-23 on the Yokohama Escort of 29 May (Mission Report #163, Hq. VII FC)
- (19) Mission Report #06-02, Hq. 506th FS, 7 June 45. (Confidential); Exhibit 4. Mission conducted per FO #122, HO. VII FC, 6 June 45.
- (20) Mission Report 174. HQ. VII FC. 7 June 45. (Confidential).
- (21) ONI Vol IV, #24, 13 June 45. p 1867
- (22) Mission Report #06-03, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 8 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 5. Mission conducted per FO #123, Hq VII FC, 7 June 45.
- (23) FO #126. Hq VII FC, 8 June 45. (SECRET)
- (24) Mission Report #06-04, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 9 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 6.
- (25) Mission Report #06-05. Hq 506th Ftr Gp. 10 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 7.
- (26) Critique held by Mission Leader Maj Dejarnette, 11 June 45.
- (27) ONI Vol IV, #14, 13 June 45. P 1869
- (28) Mission Report #06-06, Hq. 506th.Ftr Gp, 11 June 45 (Confid) Exhibit 8. Mission conducted per FO#130, Hq VII FC, 10 June 45. (SECRET)
- (29) TWX, Hq VII FC, 120522Z Bonins Neutralization Missions. (SECRET) Exhibit 9.
- (30) The figure of 60' representing the radius within which a solidly built structure would be heavily damaged by the blast effect of a 550 lb bomb (figures not available for 500 lb bombs) was taken from p 11 of a pamphlet on Bomb Recon issued by the OCD, Washington DC, August, 1942.
- (31) Mission Report #06-07, Hq. 506th Ftr Gp, 14 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 10.

- (32) Mission Report #06-08, HQ. 506th Ftr Gp, 15 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 11. Mission conducted per FO #132, Hq VII FC, 14 June 45. (SECRET).
- (33) Mission Report #06-09, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 16 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 02.
- (34) Mission Report #06-10, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 17 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 13. plus squadron report, 458th Ftr Sq, Mission #06-07, 17 June 45.
- (35) Mission Report #06-11, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 19 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 14.
- (36) FO #33. Hq VII FC, 22 June 45. (SECRET)
- (37) Par 11b of Mission Report #06-12 describing these projectiles as HVAR 5" head 3.25" motor is incorrect.
- (38) Mission Report #06-12, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, 23 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 3
- (39) TWX VII FC 240530Z to CO 506th FG. (Secret)
- (40) A/P dispatch to Iwo Jima, 24 June
- (41) Mission Report #06-13, Hq. 506th ; Ftr Gp, 26 June 45. (Confid) Exhibit 16.
- (42) FO #136 Hq VII FC, 25 June 45. (Secret)
- (43) Mission Report #206, Hq VII FC, 9 July 45 (date of Mission 26 June)(Secret)
- (44) ONI Vol 4, #26, 27 June 45, pages 2005, 2007. The ONI figure of "approximately" 100 enemy planes in the air is a very rough approximation indeed. Sightings of all 3 groups, as reported by the Fighter Command, tallied 52 Nips Airborne.
- (45) ONI, Vol 4, #28, 11 July, p 2160, TWX damage report on this mission from XXI BomCom not available.
- (46) Mission Report #06-14, Hq. 506th FG, 27 June 45 (Confidential) Exhibit 17. Mission conducted per FO 135, Hq VII FC, 25 June 45 (Secret)
- (47) This term is employed by courtesy of the Engineer Aviation Camouflage School, March Field, Calif.
- (48) Mission Report #06-15, Hq. 506th FG, 28 June 45 (Confid) Exhibit 18
- (49) G-2 periodic Report #86, Hq. AGF, 20 June 45 covering period 181800K to 191800K. (Secret) The interrogation report of the prisoners issued on 26 June made no mention of the alleged cave hanger.
- (50) Mission Report #06-16, Hq 506th FG. 29 June 45, (Confidential) Exhibit 15
- (51) The flash report, phoned to A-2 an hour after the mission landed, was; re-produced in the VII FC Daily joint Operation-Intell Summary. 29 June 45 (SECRET)
- (52) Mission Report #06-17, Hq 506th FG, 29 June 45, (Confidential) Exhibit 20.
- (53) Mission Report #06-18, Hq 506th FG, 30 June 45, (Confidential) Exhibit 21.
- (54) Item 4 - Item 8 Squadron Statistics, 1-15 June and 15-30 June, 506th FG (Secret), prepared by the Group Stat Officer for inclusion in the GO'S notebook. Exhibit 22a and b.
- (55) Mission #06-05, 10 June 45.
- (56) 506th Mission Reports and AAF Forms 14 June 45
- (57) At the showing of gun camera film for previous missions, held in the officers mess following the briefings, the pictures; would often show a juicy target drifting into view, a few tracers going wide of the mark, and the target escaping punctured only by groans and shouts of derision from the audience. The films of the other two Groups revealed the same faults; inaccurate gunnery, a tendency to fire out of range at both air and ground targets and a disposition to break away too soon.
- (58) Extension of Mission Report #05-07, par 8a, Hq 506th FG, 28 June 45 (Confidential) Exhibit 23
- (59) These recommendations and several others were handed to a representative of the AAF

inspector General during his visit to Iwo in late June.
Exhibit 24, intelligence Deficiencies.