

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

333FS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

P-38 TAIL DAMAGE

Exhibit III 0

27 December 1944

318th Fighter Squadron Mission #12-13
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-66 (Consolidated)
318 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-5

- A. Eighteen (18) P-38L's. (Three (3) failed to reach target)
- B. One (1) NICK

- A. None
- B. One (1) NICK destroyed in the air (confirmed); one (1) ZEKE destroyed on the ground; two (2) ZEKES damaged on the ground.

Fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.

- Major ROESER, Lts. RESER, KENDLE, STOLZ (Violet 33)
- Capt. McCOWN, Lts. SHENEMAN, SPENCER, BABCOCK (Violet 34)
- Lts. RUFF, SPAULDING, PETTY, MORRIS (Violet 35)
- Capt. MULLIGAN, (Lts. DEYONKER), (FOSTER), (SULLIVAN) (Violet 36)
- Lt. FANCHER, F/O JAMES (Violet 37)

Takeoff: 0621 - Over Target: 1015 - Land: 1345

The five flights rendezvoused with the three navigating B-29's over East Field and proceeded to Iwo Jima at 10,000 feet.

Lt. KENDLE's (Violet 33-3) landing gear doors would not close. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0815.

Lt. SPENCER (Violet 34-3) returned from 200 miles out due to faulty generator and oscillating R.P.M. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0810.

Lt. BABCOCK (Violet 34-4) returned from 300 miles out due to right collant flaps being inoperative. He pancaked at East Field at 0945.

The remaining 15 planes continued to Iwo Jima, dropping to the deck 100 miles from the target. As they reached the target area, the following action took place:

Violet 33-1 made his run across the north end of Airfield No. 1. The first target he saw appeared to be a building or large van between the two turnarounds. A four to five second burst was fired, scoring hits on personnel and starting fires. As he pulled out of his strafing dive he saw a ship (tentatively identified as a naval transport, A P D) about one mile off the east coast, south of the boat landing. He and the remainder of his flight made three strafing runs on the vessel, hitting the bridge, superstructure and along the waterline. Violet 33-1 then circled the north part of the island and heard a bogie called in by Violet 33-4, low at 3 o'clock. Violet 33-4 made the first attack on the enemy plane which was now identified as a NICK. After Violet 33-4 broke off, Violet 33-1 got on the NICK's tail, opened fire at medium range and observed hits on the right engine and wing root. Further firing resulted in an explosion of the NICK's right auxilliary external tank. Flames from this explosion charred the left wing of Violet 33-1's plane. The NICK took violent evasive action. Violet 33-1 broke off the attack due to being out of ammunition.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
CONT'D

Violet 33-2 picked up his first target which was a truck on the turnaround on the north end of Airfield No. 1. He strafed it, observing hits. He then strafed a gun position just off the next turnaround to the east. No fire or explosions were observed. He then joined the rest of his flight for the attack on the freighter. After this, he joined in the attack on the NICK, firing a deflection shot at the same time that Violet 33-1 made his first pass. After Violet 33-1 broke off his attack, Violet 33-2 got on the NICK's tail and opened fire from medium range. He observed hits on the left engine, which burst into flame, and also hits in the cockpit. He broke off temporarily but again got on the NICK's tail as the NICK rolled up to the left. Opening fire at close range, he observed hits on the tail and left wing. He saw a strip which was possibly an aileron, wheel, dangling from the left wing. The NICK began a diving turn to the right as Violet 33-2 fired a final burst, which resulted in an explosion in the left wing root. The NICK flipped over, his left wing tip struck the water, and he crashed in a large explosion. The position of the crash was approximately 25 miles northwest of Iwo Jima.

Violet 33-4 made a strafing run from the west. He observed flashes coming from a gun position on the east coast just below the boat landing. He fired into this position, observing hits. He joined the balance of the flight in the attack on the ship, the bow of which was pointed approximately 45 degrees true. Violet 33-4's first pass was made 45 degrees to the bow. The second pass was made 90 degrees to the bow. He observed hits going into the side and superstructure and saw a small explosion on the superstructure. Pulling off this target, he joined his flight as they proceeded to climb and head for the north part of Iwo Jima. When the flight reached 2,000 feet on a course of 270 degrees, Violet 33-4 saw a bogie 500 feet below at 3 o'clock, approximately one mile away, heading on a course of 45 degrees. He called the bogie in and started after him. He fired three long bursts but observed no hits. He then made three more passes and observed his tracers going into the fuselage, wing roots and canopy. Then, being out of ammunition, he broke off his attack and joined Violet 33-1.

Violet 34-1 strafed a truck, buildings and enemy personnel on the apron at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. A large fire was started as a result of this attack. As he came off the island, he made three strafing runs on the ship, observing hits on the bridge and at the periscope.

Violet 34-2 strafed two trucks south of the northernmost turnaround at Airfield No. 1. He then strafed six trucks and enemy personnel on the beach just south of the boat landing on the east coast. He then joined the flight leader in attacking the ship.

Violet 35 flight had been assigned the oil drums imbedded along the beach on the west coast. The flight proceeded north of Iwo Jima, passing over Kangoku Iwa and pulling up to 2,000 feet over Hiraiwa Saki. Violet 35-1 observed a lot of small piles of sand and rocks on the beach. He fired into what appeared to be oil drums set into the sand for rifle targets. He observed direct hits at harmonized range by both 20mm and tracers, but the drums did not explode or catch fire. Heads of drums appeared to have been cut off. He swept his fire along the beach, turning off the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

target over the west boat landing. Retiring out to sea and climbing, he saw a small boat the size of a seagoing tug approximately 1,000 yards off Mibiishi Bana, headed approximately 10 degrees toward shore. Violet 35 flight made seven strafing attacks from 45 degrees to dead astern on the boat, getting many hits at the waterline and on the superstructure. When the flight left his target, the boat was drifting and settling in the white foam water and among the rocks directly off the south tip of the island. They observed two men or bodies in the water.

Violet 35-2 saw the oil drums assigned as a target but was not in a position to fire on them. He observed six to eight landing type craft in the west boat landing. He observed three 40mm tracers coming from his position and therefore fired into the ships while turning off the target. Damage as a result of this strafing was unobserved.

Violet 35-3 was also out of position to hit the oil drums but observed the fire from Violet 35-1 go directly into them. Violet 35-3 fired into a wooden building north of the intersection of the roads on the west beach. He saw hits on the building. Automatic weapons fire prevented him continuing his pass south along the beach. He pulled off the target 2,000 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 35-4 fired down a whole row of drums but saw no results from his fire. He observed tracer fire coming from a revetment and buildings in the vicinity of the west boat landing. He attacked this position and the firing ceased. Automatic weapons fire from north of the volcano forced him to retire out to sea 2,500 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 36-1 thoroughly strafed an automatic weapons position that was firing at him from the beach approximately due west from the turnaround Airfield No. 2. He then strafed 2 or 3 single-engine aircraft, which may or may not have been operational, just west of the turnaround. Continuing his pass east of the turnaround, he started a fire midway between the turnaround and the east coast. As he pulled off the island, the burning area exploded and dark smoke rose to 2,000 feet. He next observed the ship off the east coast and strafed it from stern to bow, observing hits along the deck and bridge. When he left, the freighter was smoking from 2 or 3 different places.

Violet 36-2 saw 3 clipped-wing ZEKES parked wing tip to wing tip at the west edge of the No. 2 Airfield runway intersection. He fired into the ZEKES and the center one immediately exploded and burst into flame. As much as the 3 ZEKES were parked so close together, Violet 36-2 believes the two outside ones must have been severely damaged when the middle one exploded. Coming off the island, he observed a ship and joined three other P-38's who were strafing the ship in string formation. He observed hits along the side and bridge.

Violet 36-3 made his pass on the deck across Airfield No. 2. He saw three ZEKES (the middle one was burning) and just as he started to leave the other two, he received hits from automatic weapons fire which blew off a large section of his left outboard horizontal stabilizer and damaged his left vertical stabilizer and rudder. He immediately headed for Minami Rock and orbited there until joined by the B-29's.

Violet 36-4 strafed two of the landing craft near the west boat landing, observing hits on one of them. He continued across the island without picking up a specific target and was just about to join in the attack

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
CONT'D

the ship when he heard Violet 36-3 call in and say that he had been hit. He therefore joined Violet 36-3 and accompanied him to Minami Rock.

Violet 37-1 remained with the bombers until they came within one mile of Iwo Jima. He then saw the seagoing tug off the south tip of the island and proceeded to attack it. He made a total of seven strafing passes on the boat, observing tracers pour into it on each pass. After his last pass, he saw the boat crash into the rocks on the southeast tip of the island. The boat was smoking when he left the area.

Violet 37-2 remained with the bombers and did not attack any target.

A/A varied. Fire from the west shore was meager and inaccurate except for the automatic weapons positions just north of the south volcano, which was intense and inaccurate. Fire from the positions in the vicinity of Airfield No. 2 was moderate and accurate. Violet 36-3 was hit from these positions. Intense barrage type fire was observed coming from positions south of the east boat landing. Fire from these positions (100mm or larger) put up an intense barrage over the ship just after the attacks completed their strafing attacks.

At 1030 all planes had completed their attacks and rendezvoused with B-29's at Minami Rock. They headed for base at 1040.

Good enroute and return with the exception of a few small fronts. Good over target; clouds, .3 cumulus, 4000 to 5000 feet. Loud and clear.

Narrative.

841 rounds .50 cal. 1,428 rounds 20mm. 10,577 gallons gas.

Other observations:

Violet 35-1 observed white phosphorous exploding in the air directly over the fire started by Violet 34-1 at the southern end of Airfield No. 2. Smoke from this fire and from the burning ZEKE was visible from Minami Rock.

No operational planes other than those mentioned in this report were seen, either on the runways or in the wooded dispersal area.

When planes finished strafing the naval transport A P D smoke was seen rising from three places along the deck. The B-29 navigational support planes observed intense A/A fire emitting from this ship when it was under strafing attack by the P-38's.

A thorough reconnaissance of Minami Rock by Violet 34-1 did not disclose the presence of a radar installation.

SANDERS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

27 December 1944

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-66 (Consolidated)
 P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-5

1. A. Eighteen (18) P-38L's. (Three (3) failed to reach target)
 B. One (1) NICK
2. A. None
 B. One (1) NICK destroyed in the air (confirmed); one (1) ZEKE destroyed on the ground; two (2) ZEKES damaged on the ground.
3. Fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.
4. Major ROESER, Lts. RESER, KENDLE, STOLZ (Violet 33)
Capt. McCOWN, Lts. SHENEMAN, SPENCER, BABCOCK (Violet 34)
Lts. RUFF, SPAULDING, PETTY, MORRIS (Violet 35)
Capt. MULLIGAN, Lts. DEYONKER, FOSTER, SULLIVAN (Violet 36)
Lt. FANCHER, F/O JAMES (Violet 37)

UNDERScoreD-73RD PILOTS

Takeoff: 0621 - Over Target: 1015 - Land: 1345

The five flights rendezvoused with the three navigating B-29's over East Field and proceeded to Iwo Jima at 10,000 feet.

Lt. KENDLE's (Violet 33-3) landing gear doors would not close. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0815.

Lt. SPENCER (Violet 34-3) returned from 200 miles out due to faulty generator and oscillating R.P.M. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0810.

Lt. BABCOCK (Violet 34-4) returned from 300 miles out due to right collant flaps being inoperative. He pancaked at East Field at 0945.

The remaining 15 planes continued to Iwo Jima, dropping to the deck 100 miles from the target. As they reached the target area, the following action took place:

Violet 33-1 made his run across the north end of Airfield No. 1. The first target he saw appeared to be a building or large van between the two turnarounds. A four to five second burst was fired, scoring hits on personnel and starting fires. As he pulled out of his strafing dive he saw a ship (tentatively identified as a naval transport, A P D) about one mile off the east coast, south of the boat landing. He and the remainder of his flight made three strafing runs on the vessel, hitting the bridge, superstructure and along the waterline. Violet 33-1 then circled the north part of the island and heard a bogie called in by Violet 33-4, low at 3 o'clock. Violet 33-4 made the first attack on the enemy plane which was now identified as a NICK. After Violet 33-4 broke off, Violet 33-1 got on the NICK's tail, opened fire at medium range and observed hits on the right engine and wing root. Further firing resulted in an explosion of the NICK's right auxilliary external tank. Flames from this explosion charred the left wing of Violet 33-1's plane. The NICK took violent evasive action. Violet 33-1 broke off the attack due to being out of ammunition.

Violet 33-2 picked up his first target which was a truck on the turnaround on the north end of Airfield No. 1. He strafed it, observing hits. He then strafed a gun position just off the next turnaround to the east. No fire or explosions were observed. He then joined the rest of his flight for the attack on the freighter. After this, he joined in the attack on the NICK, firing a deflection shot at the same time that Violet 33-1 made his first pass. After Violet 33-1 broke off his attack, Violet 33-2 got on the NICK's tail and opened fire from medium range. He observed hits on the left engine, which burst into flame, and also hits in the cockpit. He broke off temporarily but again got on the NICK's tail as the NICK pulled up to the left. Opening fire at close range, he observed hits on the tail and left wing. He saw a strip which was possibly an aileron, or wheel, dangling from the left wing. The NICK began a diving turn to the right as Violet 33-2 fired a final burst, which resulted in an explosion in the left wing root. The NICK flipped over, his left wing tip struck the water, and he crashed in a large explosion. The position of the crash was approximately 25 miles northwest of Iwo Jima.

Violet 33-4 made a strafing run from the west. He observed flashes coming from a gun position on the east coast just below the boat landing. He fired into this position, observing hits. He joined the balance of his flight in the attack on the ship, the bow of which was pointed approximately 45 degrees true. Violet 33-4's first pass was made 45 degrees to the bow. The second pass was made 90 degrees to the bow. He observed hits going into the side and superstructure and saw a small explosion on the superstructure. Pulling off this target, he joined his flight as they proceeded to climb and head for the north part of Iwo Jima. When the flight reached 2,000 feet on a course of 270 degrees, Violet 33-4 saw a NICK 500 feet below at 3 o'clock, approximately one mile away, heading on a course of 45 degrees. He called the bogie in and started after him. He fired three long bursts but observed no hits. He then made three more passes and observed his tracers going into the fuselage, wing roots and canopy. Then, being out of ammunition, he broke off his attack and joined Violet 33-1.

Violet 34-1 strafed a truck, buildings and enemy personnel on the service apron at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. A large fire was started as a result of this attack. As he came off the island, he made three strafing runs on the ship, observing hits on the bridge and at the waterline.

Violet 34-2 strafed two trucks south of the northernmost turnaround on Airfield No. 1. He then strafed six trucks and enemy personnel on the beach just south of the boat landing on the east coast. He then joined his flight leader in attacking the ship.

Violet 35 flight had been assigned the oil drums imbedded along the beach on the west coast. The flight proceeded north of Iwo Jima, passing over Kangoku Iwa and pulling up to 2,000 feet over Hiraiwa Saki. Violet 35-1 observed a lot of small piles of sand and rocks on the beach. He fired into what appeared to be oil drums set into the sand for rifle pits. He observed direct hits at harmonized range by both 20mm and tracers, but the drums did not explode or catch fire. Heads of drums appeared to have been cut off. He swept his fire along the beach, turning off the

target over the west boat landing. Retiring out to sea and climbing, he saw a small boat the size of a seagoing tug approximately 1,000 yards off Tobiishi Bana, headed approximately 10 degrees toward shore. Violet 35 flight made seven strafing attacks from 45 degrees to dead astern of the boat, getting many hits at the waterline and on the superstructure. When the flight left his target, the boat was drifting and settling in the white foam water and among the rocks directly off the south tip of the island. They observed two men or bodies in the water.

Violet 35-2 saw the oil drums assigned as a target but was not in a position to fire on them. He observed six to eight landing type craft in the west boat landing. He observed three 40mm tracers coming from this position and therefore fired into the ships while turning off the target. Damage as a result of this strafing was unobserved.

Violet 35-3 was also out of position to hit the oil drums but observed the fire from Violet 35-1 go directly into them. Violet 35-3 fired into a wooden building north of the intersection of the roads on the west beach. He saw hits on the building, Automatic weapons fire prevented him continuing his pass south along the beach. He pulled off the target 2,000 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 35-4 fired down a whole row of drums but saw no results from his fire. He observed tracer fire coming from a revetment and building in the vicinity of the west boat landing. He attacked this position and the firing ceased. Automatic weapons fire from north of the volcano forced him to retire out to sea 2,500 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 36-1 thoroughly strafed an automatic weapons position that was firing at him from the beach approximately due west from the turnaround on Airfield No. 2. He then strafed 2 or 3 single-engine aircraft, which may or may not have been operational, just west of the turnaround. Continuing his pass east of the turnaround, he started a fire midway between the turnaround and the east coast. As he pulled off the island, the burning area exploded and dark smoke rose to 2,000 feet. He next observed the ship off the east coast and strafed it from stern to bow, observing hits all along the deck and bridge. When he left, the freighter was smoking from 2 or 3 different places.

Violet 36-2 saw 3 clipped-wing ZEKES parked wing tip to wing tip at the west edge of the No. 2 Airfield runway intersection. He fired into the ZEKES and the center one immediately exploded and burst into flame. Inasmuch as the 3 ZEKES were parked so close together, Violet 36-2 believes the two outside ones must have been severely damaged when the middle one exploded. Coming off the island, he observed a ship and joined three other P-38's who were strafing the ship in string formation. He observed hits along the side and bridge.

Violet 36-3 made his pass on the deck across Airfield No. 2. He saw the three ZEKES (the middle one was burning) and just as he started to strafe the other two, he received hits from automatic weapons fire which tore off a large section of his left outboard horizontal stabilizer and damaged his left vertical stabilizer and rudder. He immediately headed for Minami Rock and orbited there until joined by the B-29's.

Violet 36-4 strafed two of the landing craft near the west boat landing, observing hits on one of them. He continued across the island without picking up a specific target and was just about to join in the attack

4. CONT'D

on the ship when he heard Violet 36-3 call in and say that he had been hit. He therefore joined Violet 36-3 and accompanied him to Minami Rock.

Violet 37-1 remained with the bombers until they came within one mile of Iwo Jima. He then saw the seagoing tug off the south tip of the island and proceeded to attack it. He made a total of seven strafing passes on the boat, observing tracers pour into it on each pass. After his last pass, he saw the boat crash into the rocks on the southeast tip of the island. The boat was smoking when he left the area.

Violet 37-2 remained with the bombers and did not attack any target.

A/A varied. Fire from the west shore was meager and inaccurate except for the automatic weapons positions just north of the south volcano, which was intense and inaccurate. Fire from the positions in the vicinity of Airfield No. 2 was moderate and accurate. Violet 36-3 was hit from these positions. Intense barrage type fire was observed coming from positions south of the east boat landing. Fire from these positions (40mm or larger) put up an intense barrage over the ship just after the pilots completed their strafing attacks.

At 1030 all planes had completed their attacks and rendezvoused with the B-29's at Minami Rock. They headed for base at 1040.

5. A. Good enroute and return with the exception of a few small fronts.
Good over target; clouds, .3 cumulus, 4000 to 5000 feet.
- B. Loud and clear.

6. See Narrative.

7. 10,841 rounds .50 cal. 1,428 rounds 20mm. 10,577 gallons gas.

8. Other observations:

Violet 35-1 observed white phosphorous exploding in the air directly over the fire started by Violet 34-1 at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. Smoke from this fire and from the burning ZEKE was visible from Minami Rock.

No operational planes other than those mentioned in this report were seen, either on the runways or in the wooded dispersal area.

When planes finished strafing the naval transport A P D smoke was seen rising from three places along the deck. The B-29 navigational escort planes observed intense A/A fire emitting from this ship when it was under strafing attack by the P-38's.

A thorough reconnaissance of Minami Rock by Violet 34-1 did not disclose the presence of a radar installation.

SANDERS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PILOT'S NARRATIVES

(Group Mission Report #12-66)

MAJOR WARREN K. ROESER (Violet 33-1)

After strafing the APD, I led my flight west around the north end of Iwo to look for another target. Violet 33-4 spotted a bogie heading northeast and we turned to attack. 33-4 made the first attack on what appeared to be a NICK, and scored hits and left him smoking before he broke away. I then got on the NICK's tail and fired two four-second bursts before running out of ammo. On my first burst, pieces flew from the left engine and fuselage and his left landing gear started down. On my second burst, his right auxiliary gas tank exploded and a fire broke out in his right wing root. When I broke away, he was burning fiercely in the right wing and had slowed down considerably. When I broke away, 33-2 came in and scored more hits, after which the NICK crashed in the water and exploded.

All during the attack by my flight, the NICK stayed right on the deck and used extremely violent evasive action, almost hitting the water on some of his skidding turns. The NICK was a dull green with red roundels on wings and fuselage. He carried a drop-tank of fuel on each wing, and released one of them during the attack. The NICK had two persons aboard, neither of which was observed to escape.

/s/ Warren K. Roeser
/t/ WARREN K. ROESER,
Major, Air Corps.

2ND LT. ROBERT H. RESER (Violet 33-2)

Lt. Stoltz called in the bogie when we were rejoining at the north tip of the island. When I first saw him he was at five o'clock to Major Roeser and I, going away, at approximately 1,500 feet. Stoltz made the first pass. By this time we'd identified the bogie as a NICK. The NICK dove as Stoltz made a pass on him and when Stoltz broke off, Major Roeser initiated his first pass. I flew the Major's wing on this pass and tried a short burst but missed so I broke up and away. By this time the NICK was on the deck. He pulled some very good evasive action but Major Roeser managed to stay on his tail. I observed the Major's hits in the right wing and engine and that engine flamed.

The Major broke away and Stoltz made another pass. When he broke away, I was in position for a stern attack. As I came down on his tail the NICK started a turn to the left. I followed and opened fire at about 800 feet. I made hits on the left engine and started it flaming and also observed two explosions on the left side of the canopy. I broke away and as I started on my next pass the NICK faked a bank to the right, then broke left sharply. I got on his tail and opened fire at very close range. I again got hits in the left wing and engine and observed something come loose on the trailing edge of his right wing. A big puff of smoke came from his left

engine and it appeared to conk out. His left wing dipped sharply but he slowly brought the ship level and started a very gentle right turn. I fired my final burst and broke away to watch him. His left engine exploded and the NICK flipped over and went into the water on his left wing. There was a huge explosion when he hit the water.

/s/ Robert H. Reser
/t/ ROBERT H. RESER,
2nd Lt., Air Corps.

2ND LT. ANTHONY J. STOLTZ (Violet 33-4)

While flying mutual support position with Major Roeser and Lt. Reser at 3,000 feet on course 270 degrees, after leaving the north end of Iwo Jima, I saw an enemy plane at 0300 o'clock about 500 feet low from me and about one mile away. I called in the bogey and turned to attack him. When I first saw him he was flying a course of 45 degrees but when he saw me he started down to the water and turned to the left. This put me directly behind him. I drove right up his tail and gave him three long bursts. I must have been on him for ten seconds. Saw thin wisps of smoke and flashes from the back of his cockpit which looked like return fire on this pass. I saw my tracer hit but I must have been already out of 20mm as I could not see any flashes. During this run the NICK flew straight and level. I pulled off right 90 degrees and then pulling up I did a 180 degree right putting the NICK ahead of me at 0300 o'clock. While in this position I saw Major Roeser fire and blow up something on the NICK's wing which made a big flash of flame and which went out again. As Lt. Reser started to fire on the NICK I did another 90 degree right and got back in line. After Lt. Reser pulled off I started firing and fired from directly astern of him until within 100 feet of him. I saw my tracer enter his fuselage and wing roots. When I pulled off and came back around, I saw Lt. Reser on the NICK's tail in a turn to the left. After he broke off I hit the NICK again at 45 degrees and noticed tracer hit the canopy. The NICK straightened out and dropped something off his wings. I could not tell what it was. I pulled off to the right of the NICK and saw Lt. Reser get on him and explode the NICK's left engine. The flame soon went out. I then made another 45 degree pass from the right and ran out of ammunition. I went upstairs and joined Major Roeser as Lt. Reser went in after the NICK again. He exploded this time, the NICK hitting the water and exploding again.

/s/ Anthony J. Stoltz
/t/ ANTHONY J. STOLTZ,
2nd Lt., Air Corps.

A TRUE COPY: -

William P. Freligh
WILLIAM P. FRELIGH,
1st Lt., Air Corps.

58 DECEMBER 1944

A.P.O. # 244

27 December 1944

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-66 (Consolidated)
P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-5

1. A. Eighteen (18) P-38L's. (Three (3) failed to reach target)
B. One (1) NICK
2. A. None
B. One (1) NICK destroyed in the air (confirmed); one (1) ZEKE destroyed on the ground; two (2) ZEKES damaged on the ground.
3. Fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.
4. Major ROESER, Lts. RESER, KENDLE, STOLZ (Violet 33)
Capt. McCOWN, Lts. SHENEMAN, SPENCER, BABCOCK (Violet 34)
Lts. RUFF, SPAULDING, PETTY, MORRIS (Violet 35)
Capt. MULLIGAN, Lts. DEYONKER, FOSTER, SULLIVAN (Violet 36)
Lt. FANCHER, F/O JAMES (Violet 37)

Takeoff: 0621 - Over Target: 1015 - Land: 1345

The five flights rendezvoused with the three navigating B-29's over East Field and proceeded to Iwo Jima at 10,000 feet.

Lt. KENDLE's (Violet 33-3) landing gear doors would not close. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0815.

Lt. SPENCER (Violet 34-3) returned from 200 miles out due to faulty generator and oscillating R.P.M. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0810.

Lt. BABCOCK (Violet 34-4) returned from 300 miles out due to right collant flaps being inoperative. He pancaked at East Field at 0945.

The remaining 15 planes continued to Iwo Jima, dropping to the deck 100 miles from the target. As they reached the target area, the following action took place:

Violet 33-1 made his run across the north end of Airfield No. 1. The first target he saw appeared to be a building or large van between the two turnarounds. A four to five second burst was fired, scoring hits on personnel and starting fires. As he pulled out of his strafing dive he saw a ship (tentatively identified as a naval transport, A P D) about one mile off the east coast, south of the boat landing. He and the remainder of his flight made three strafing runs on the vessel, hitting the bridge, superstructure and along the waterline. Violet 33-1 then circled the north part of the island and heard a bogie called in by Violet 33-4, low at 3 o'clock. Violet 33-4 made the first attack on the enemy plane which was now identified as a NICK. After Violet 33-4 broke off, Violet 33-1 got on the NICK's tail, opened fire at medium range and observed hits on the right engine and wing root. Further firing resulted in an explosion of the NICK's right auxilliary external tank. Flames from this explosion charred the left wing of Violet 33-1's plane. The NICK took violent evasive action. Violet 33-1 broke off the attack due to being out of ammunition.

4. CONT'D

Violet 33-2 picked up his first target which was a truck on the turnaround on the north end of Airfield No. 1. He strafed it, observing hits. He then strafed a gun position just off the next turnaround to the east. No fire or explosions were observed. He then joined the rest of his flight for the attack on the freighter. After this, he joined in the attack on the NICK, firing a deflection shot at the same time that Violet 33-1 made his first pass. After Violet 33-1 broke off his attack, Violet 33-2 got on the NICK's tail and opened fire from medium range. He observed hits on the left engine, which burst into flame, and also hits in the cockpit. He broke off temporarily but again got on the NICK's tail as the NICK pulled up to the left. Opening fire at close range, he observed hits on the tail and left wing. He saw a strip which was possibly an aileron, or wheel, dangling from the left wing. The NICK began a diving turn to the right as Violet 33-2 fired a final burst, which resulted in an explosion in the left wing root. The NICK flipped over, his left wing tip struck the water, and he crashed in a large explosion. The position of the crash was approximately 25 miles northwest of Iwo Jima.

Violet 33-4 made a strafing run from the west. He observed flashes coming from a gun position on the east coast just below the boat landing. He fired into this position, observing hits. He joined the balance of his flight in the attack on the ship, the bow of which was pointed approximately 45 degrees true. Violet 33-4's first pass was made 45 degrees to the bow. The second pass was made 90 degrees to the bow. He observed hits going into the side and superstructure and saw a small explosion on the superstructure. Pulling off this target, he joined his flight as they proceeded to climb and head for the north part of Iwo Jima. When the flight reached 2,000 feet on a course of 270 degrees, Violet 33-4 saw a NICK 500 feet below at 3 o'clock, approximately one mile away, heading on a course of 45 degrees. He called the bogie in and started after him. He fired three long bursts but observed no hits. He then made three more passes and observed his tracers going into the fuselage, wing roots and canopy. Then, being out of ammunition, he broke off his attack and joined Violet 33-1.

Violet 34-1 strafed a truck, buildings and enemy personnel on the service apron at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. A large fire was started as a result of this attack. As he came off the island, he made three strafing runs on the ship, observing hits on the bridge and at the waterline.

Violet 34-2 strafed two trucks south of the northernmost turnaround on Airfield No. 1. He then strafed six trucks and enemy personnel on the beach just south of the boat landing on the east coast. He then joined his flight leader in attacking the ship.

Violet 35 flight had been assigned the oil drums imbedded along the beach on the west coast. The flight proceeded north of Iwo Jima, passing over Kangoku Iwa and pulling up to 2,000 feet over Hiraiwa Saki. Violet 35-1 observed a lot of small piles of sand and rocks on the beach. He fired into what appeared to be oil drums set into the sand for rifle pits. He observed direct hits at harmonized range by both 20mm and tracers, but the drums did not explode or catch fire. Heads of drums appeared to have been cut off. He swept his fire along the beach, turning off the

4. CONT'D

target over the west boat landing. Retiring out to sea and climbing, he saw a small boat the size of a seagoing tug approximately 1,000 yards off Tobiishi Bana, headed approximately 10 degrees toward shore. Violet 35 flight made seven strafing attacks from 45 degrees to dead astern on the boat, getting many hits at the waterline and on the superstructure. When the flight left his target, the boat was drifting and settling in the white foam water and among the rocks directly off the south tip of the island. They observed two men or bodies in the water.

Violet 35-2 saw the oil drums assigned as a target but was not in a position to fire on them. He observed six to eight landing type craft in the west boat landing. He observed three 40mm tracers coming from this position and therefore fired into the ships while turning off the target. Damage as a result of this strafing was unobserved.

Violet 35-3 was also out of position to hit the oil drums but observed the fire from Violet 35-1 go directly into them. Violet 35-3 fired into a wooden building north of the intersection of the roads on the west beach. He saw hits on the building. Automatic weapons fire prevented him continuing his pass south along the beach. He pulled off the target 2,000 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 35-4 fired down a whole row of drums but saw no results from his fire. He observed tracer fire coming from a revetment and building in the vicinity of the west boat landing. He attacked this position and the firing ceased. Automatic weapons fire from north of the volcano forced him to retire out to sea 2,500 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 36-1 thoroughly strafed an automatic weapons position that was firing at him from the beach approximately due west from the turnaround on Airfield No. 2. He then strafed 2 or 3 single-engine aircraft, which may or may not have been operational, just west of the turnaround. Continuing his pass east of the turnaround, he started a fire midway between the turnaround and the east coast. As he pulled off the island, the burning area exploded and dark smoke rose to 2,000 feet. He next observed the ship off the east coast and strafed it from stern to bow, observing hits all along the deck and bridge. When he left, the freighter was smoking from 2 or 3 different places.

Violet 36-2 saw 3 clipped-wing ZEKES parked wing tip to wing tip at the west edge of the No. 2 Airfield runway intersection. He fired into the ZEKES and the center one immediately exploded and burst into flame. Inasmuch as the 3 ZEKES were parked so close together, Violet 36-2 believes the two outside ones must have been severely damaged when the middle one exploded. Coming off the island, he observed a ship and joined three other P-38's who were strafing the ship in string formation. He observed hits along the side and bridge.

Violet 36-3 made his pass on the deck across Airfield No. 2. He saw the three ZEKES (the middle one was burning) and just as he started to strafe the other two, he received hits from automatic weapons fire which tore off a large section of his left outboard horizontal stabilizer and damaged his left vertical stabilizer and rudder. He immediately headed for Minami Rock and orbited there until joined by the B-29's.

Violet 36-4 strafed two of the landing craft near the west boat landing, observing hits on one of them. He continued across the island without picking up a specific target and was just about to join in the attack

4. CONT'D

on the ship when he heard Violet 36-3 call in and say that he had been hit. He therefore joined Violet 36-3 and accompanied him to Minami Rock.

Violet 37-1 remained with the bombers until they came within one mile of Iwo Jima. He then saw the seagoing tug off the south tip of the island and proceeded to attack it. He made a total of seven strafing passes on the boat, observing tracers pour into it on each pass. After his last pass, he saw the boat crash into the rocks on the southeast tip of the island. The boat was smoking when he left the area.

Violet 37-2 remained with the bombers and did not attack any target.

A/A varied. Fire from the west shore was meager and inaccurate except for the automatic weapons positions just north of the south volcano, which was intense and inaccurate. Fire from the positions in the vicinity of Airfield No. 2 was moderate and accurate. Violet 36-3 was hit from these positions. Intense barrage type fire was observed coming from positions south of the east boat landing. Fire from these positions (40mm or larger) put up an intense barrage over the ship just after the pilots completed their strafing attacks.

At 1030 all planes had completed their attacks and rendezvoused with the B-29's at Minami Rock. They headed for base at 1040.

5. A. Good enroute and return with the exception of a few small fronts.
Good over target; clouds, .3 cumulus, 4000 to 5000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.

6. See Narrative.

7. 10,841 rounds .50 cal. 1,428 rounds 20mm. 10,577 gallons gas.

8. Other observations:

Violet 35-1 observed white phosphorous exploding in the air directly over the fire started by Violet 34-1 at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. Smoke from this fire and from the burning ZEKE was visible from Minami Rock.

No operational planes other than those mentioned in this report were seen, either on the runways or in the wooded dispersal area.

When planes finished strafing the naval transport A P D smoke was seen rising from three places along the deck. The B-29 navigational escort planes observed intense A/A fire emitting from this ship when it was under strafing attack by the P-38's.

A thorough reconnaissance of Minami Rock by Violet 34-1 did not disclose the presence of a radar installation.

SANDERS