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Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

REG. NO 275
R. S. NO 3 02492
REG. SHEET NO 180

U.S.S. SANTEE (CVE-29)
Care Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

CVE29/A16-3

Serial: (094-45)

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

9 September 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander Carrier Division TWENTY-SEVEN,
(CTG 77.1)
(2) Commander Seventh Fleet (CTF 70).
(3) Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific
Fleet.

Subject: Action Report - Evacuation of Prisoners of War
from Formosa, 29 August through 9 September 1945.

Reference: (a) PacFleet Confidential Letter 1 CL-45.

Enclosure: (A) Subject Action Report.

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (A),
is submitted herewith.

J. V. Peterson
J. V. PETERSON.

Advance Copies to:
Cominch (Readiness Div.) (1)
Cincpac (3)
ComAirPac (1)

138708

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U. S. S. Santee (CVE-29)

ACTION REPORT

EVACUATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR FROM FORMOSA

29 August 1945 through 9 September 1945.

ENCLOSURE (A) to U.S.S. Santee Confidential Letter Serial 094-45

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U.S.S. SANTEE (CVE-29)

NARRATIVE

In accordance with ComCarDiv 27 Operation Order 2-45, on 29 August the U.S.S. Santee sortied from Leyte Harbor, P.I., as part of TG 77.1 in company with the U.S.S. Block Island (CVE 105), U.S.S. Finch (DE 328), U.S.S. Kretchmer (DE 329), U.S.S. Brister (DE 327), U.S.S. Gary (DE 326), OTC being Rear Admiral Dixwell Ketcham, U.S. Navy, Commander Carrier Division 27 in the Block Island. The mission of the task group was to cover TG 77.2, a minesweeping unit delegated to sweep approaches to Jinsen Harbor, Korea.

On 1 September, after rendezvousing with the U.S.S. Chepachet (AO 78) at 22-40 N, 127-32 E, encountered impending typhoon conditions which necessitated a change of course to the east and south during 1 and 2 September. During this period TG 77.1 orders were cancelled and the Task Group was ordered to proceed at first opportunity to Northern Formosa and to drop supplies and medicine to Prisoners of War Camps north of 24° 20' N and to evacuate prisoners from these camps.

On 3 September at 1236 Lieutenant Commander Victor (n) Gang, (MC), U.S.N.R. (99161) was washed overboard from the forecastle by a wave coming over the bow. His body was recovered by the U.S.S. Finch (DE 328) at 1302 and at 1505 he was pronounced dead by the ship's doctor. Rough weather continued throughout the night of 3 September, during which period the Santee received the following damage: The deck in two staterooms on the port side of the gallery deck was buckled, and forced upward, #4 gun mount and sponson was tilted upward, the catwalk forward of #2 gun mount was destroyed, and miscellaneous heating lines and ventilation pipes were torn away.

TG 77.1, the first allied units to arrive, approached Northern Formosa at day break on 5 September. Santee planes (CVEG-26) flew 29 demonstration sorties over the airfields, cities and harbor in the area and 7 TBM-3's landed on Matsuyama airfield, discharging 5 pharmacist mates and full loads of food, clothing and medical supplies. During the day the U.S.S. Gary (DE 326) and the U.S.S. Finch (DE 328), members of the screen, entered Kiirun harbor, went alongside the quay, and began taking aboard prisoners of war, British veterans of Singapore. At 1811 the U.S.S. Santee commenced receiving these evacuees, transferred by motor whale boat from the U.S.S. Finch. By 2202, 155 British soldiers had been taken aboard. On 6 September, all members of the screen participated in the evacuation, resulting in the transfer of 322 additional prisoners of war to the U.S.S. Santee for a total of 477. The

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U.S.S. SANTEE (CVE-29)

NARRATIVE (cont.)

evacuees were made up of 8 U.S. Army officers and 18 men, 1 U.S. Naval officer and 2 men, nine British Army officers and 430 men, 1 Dutch officer and 8 men and 1 Dutch civilian. Practically all of these men had been captured in the spring of 1942 at Singapore and in the Philippines. All were suffering from malnutrition, some cases being severe.

Upon completion of the transfer of the prisoners of war to the carriers; the Task Group got underway for Manila, P.I. entering that harbor in the forenoon of 9 September 1945.

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U.S.S. SANTEE (CVE-29)

COMMENT

Handling Prisoners of War:

The prisoners of war, who were not stretcher cases, were brought aboard from whale boats over both sides of the well deck. They were fed, then disrobed, their valuables, shoes and papers segregated for fumigation and their clothes thrown overboard. They were clipped and shaved after which they all took a salt and fresh water shower, using plenty of soap. They were then sprayed with antiseptic and issued new clothing. All personnel on the well deck handling evacuees were dressed in decontamination clothing. Each process was conducted in separate canvas compartments affording privacy. Many expressions of appreciation were received from the evacuees concerning this service. After being clothed, they were numbered, logged, and assigned a cot, on the hanger deck. They were then given a medical examination and treated. All available ship's personnel turned to with a will and performed outstanding services in rendering assistance.

The lessons learned in handling the group the first day were put to such good use that more than twice the number of men were received and processed on the 6th September with marked improvement in the operation despite heavier seas and already severely taxed facilities and medical personnel.

This operation again demonstrated the inadequacy of the 26' motor whale boat in meeting the needs of a CVE. It is recommended that they be replaced with aircraft rearming boats or a similar type boat to afford greater capacity, increased speed, better performance along side and adaptability to more varied uses such as handling stretcher cases, light but bulky stores, liberty parties, etc..

The open well deck was used to good advantage in this operation both in the receiving aboard of the Prisoners of War and their processing.

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U.S.S. SANTEE (CVE-29)

Communication

Use of 140.58 mc as the primary VHF communication channel on 5 September without prior notice caused confusion in view of CincfacAdv confidential dispatch 230455 of July 1945.

Recommendations

None.

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FB2-27/A16-3
SERIAL: (047)

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE, PACIFIC FLEET
CARRIER DIVISION TWENTY-SEVEN

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10 September 1945.

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on
CO, USS SANTEE Conf.
ltr. CVE29/A16-3 serial
(09-45) of 9 September 1945.

From: Commander Carrier Division TWENTY-SEVEN (CTG 77.1).
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander SEVENTH Fleet (CTF 70).
(2) Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Action Report - Evacuation of Prisoners of War from
Formosa, 29 August through 9 September 1945.

1. Forwarded.
2. The performance of duty of the U.S.S. SANTEE was outstanding. The Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SANTEE has been especially commended in separate correspondence.

D. Ketcham
D. KETCHAM.

Copy to:
CO, USS SANTEE

X
11 0288

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By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

UNITED STATES FLEET
COMMANDER SEVENTH FLEET



18 OCT 1945

A16-3(F-3-2/Sw)

Serial: 0392

CONFIDENTIAL

SECOND ENDORSEMENT to:
CO, USS SANTEE Conf.
ltr. serial (094-45)
of 9 September 1945.

From: Commander Seventh Fleet.
To : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Action Report - USS SANTEE (CVE-29) - Evacuation of
Prisoners of War from Formosa, 29 August through 9
September 1945.

1. Forwarded.

2. The prisoners of war were evacuated from Formosa with
outstanding efficiency and promptness. This performance, under the
difficult and hazardous conditions which prevailed, reflects great
credit on the SANTEE.

T. C. Kinkaid

T. C. KINKAID

3 NOV 1945

3RD Endorsement.

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Room 2055

ROUTE TO: 03 (Rm 3604)

6 NOV 1945

FILE NO. A16-3(F-3-2/Sw) / CVE 29

190211

From: CinCPac
To: CNO

1. Forwarded.

2. If comment is considered
appropriate, it will be included in
CinCPac's Monthly Report of Operations
in the Pacific Ocean Areas for the
month concerned.

Copy to: ComCarDiv 27
CO, USS SANTEE

R. C. Parker

R. C. PARKER,
By direction

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