

DECLASSIFIED

Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

S-E-C-R-E-T

PART IV. CENTRAL PACIFIC - C. MINOR OPERATIONS. (cont'd)

44. After 1600 on 3 September, the task group cleared the WAKE Area and continued to ENIWETOK.

Bombardments of AGUIJAN Island.

45. On 6 September, the destroyers ELLET and DOWNES conducted a bombardment of AGUIJAN Island in the MARIANAS, for the purpose of destroying a single enemy gun emplacement which had been located by photographic reconnaissance.

46. A Marine Corps Piper Cub was used for spotting, and the SAIPAN Shore Fire Control party was embarked in the ELLET. Ammunition expended was 204 rounds of 5" by the ELLET, an unreported number of rounds by the DOWNES. Target areas were reported as well covered with effective fire, but exact results were not indicated.

47. On 11 September, the ELLET bombarded supply dumps in the same area, expending 92 rounds of five-inch, 376 rounds of 40mm, and 725 rounds of 20mm. Areas were well covered, and several small fires were started. Airplane spot was again used. On neither occasion was there any return fire.

Shelling of the FLUSSER.

48. On 7 September, while on routine patrol to the southward of WOTJE Island, the destroyer FLUSSER was fired upon by a shore battery at a range of about 4000 yards. About six two-gun salvos, estimated to be four or five inch in caliber, landed close aboard while the FLUSSER retired under a smoke screen. Fire ceased when the range had been opened to about 8000 yards. The FLUSSER's after guns fired 29 rounds in counter-battery, with about ten rounds landing near the target.

49. Near misses wounded nine of the FLUSSER's crew, and caused slight damage to the ship from fragments.

LCI(G) Patrol Missions, GUAM.

50. After completing their close support missions covering the 3rd Marine Division during the assault and occupation phase on GUAM, ships of LCI Flotilla 13, Group 37 began a series of patrols along the northeast coast of the island. These were designed to prevent the escape or reinforcement of the Japanese forces still present on the island, and to aid the Marines in exterminating or capturing Japanese hidden in the caves and brush along the shore line. The latter proved to be the most important function of the LCIs.

51. These patrols began in August, and continued throughout September. LCI(G)s 466, 469, 471, and 473 took part, basing at APRA Harbor. One of them was constantly on patrol along the northeast coast. They not only cooperated with the Marines ashore by firing on specified targets and recalcitrant Japanese, but they were active in efforts to induce enemy personnel to surrender. With intelligence officers and cooperative prisoners of war aboard, they made use of public address systems and banners to attract Japanese on shore and persuade them to come out to the beach and give themselves up. During the month, the four LCI(G)s took on board 157 prisoners of war.

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52. The northwest coast of GUAM is entirely surrounded by a coral reef, and the evacuation of Japanese through the surf and over the reef was difficult and hazardous. This and other phases of the operation were skillfully performed, however. From a military standpoint the capture of these Japanese not only saved lives among our troops who would otherwise have been required to exterminate them, but also had the effect of introducing dissension in the enemy camp, and thus probably denying the more fanatical Japanese the means to pursue strong guerilla tactics against our troops.

Operations Ashore in the MARIANAS.

53. Although the assault and occupation phases in all the captured MARIANAS had ended in August, there remained considerable numbers of the enemy in isolated groups. Army and Marine troops on SAIPAN, TINIAN, and GUAM operated persistently against these Japanese. Between 1 and 29 September, 1782 Japanese were killed on the three islands, and 276 prisoners of war were taken. We lost 18 men killed and 75 wounded in the MARIANAS during the month.

MARSHALL Islands Patrols.

54. After 7 September, all but one of the destroyers patrolling the enemy held islands in the Eastern MARSHALL Islands were withdrawn.

D. LOGISTIC DEVELOPMENT.

General.

55. Construction of major air and naval bases in the MARIANAS commenced while heavy fighting was still in progress. Completion of present projects is expected to require several months. Progress at the end of September was reported as slightly ahead of schedule.

56. Health conditions were improved by airplane spraying of insecticide, and agricultural projects were being studied with a view of making the islands more nearly self-supporting.

Airfields.

57. By the end of September, airstrips were operational as follows:

GUAM

OROTE Field, 5000 foot runway.
AGANA Field, 6100 foot runway.

SAIPAN

ISELY Field, 1st strip, 7000 foot runway (to be extended to 8500 feet by 15 October.)
East Field, 5100 foot runway.
Seaplane Base, 12000 foot NE-SW runway.

TINIAN

North Field No. 1, 6000 foot runway (to be extended to 8500 feet.)