

23 February 1942

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Commanding Officer.
To : Commander Task Force 11.
Subject: Air attack on February 20, 1942; Report on.

1. Radar contact report of "Bandits" bearing 286° T was received at 1630. Went to general quarters immediately; all stations manned at 1635. Course 234° true, speed 20 - 25 knots, maneuvering to maintain station 2000 yards from carrier. 1640 observed crash of first enemy plane on or near horizon. 1643 "Bandits" reported 035° T, distance 10 miles. About this time (1643) first attack came in. A single glide bomber (twin engine) was observed coming in broad on starboard bow. When within range, opened fire with 5"/38, 1".10 and .50 caliber weapons. This bomber crashed off stern. During this initial attack one bomb struck the water about 900 yards on starboard bow; shortly after a stick of bombs struck water broad on bow, distance 1500 - 2000 yards apparently from high level deflected off, well clear of all vessels. During this phase, fired 15 rounds 5"/38 (single purpose); 40 rounds 1.1 at the single glide bomber and 50 rounds at bombers overhead, both from the forward mount.

2. At 1700 "Bandits" reported 080° T, 9 miles. At 1708 single bomber coming in from astern obviously headed for carrier. Opened fire with after 1.1 on this plane, expending 85 rounds plus 150 rounds .50 caliber. This plane crashed ahead of carrier after dropping 4 or 5 bombs close under her stern.

3. Total ammunition expended: 15 rounds 5"/38; 175 rounds 1.10 and 150 rounds .50 caliber. Fire discipline and reaction of crew was considered very good. The 1.1 fire on the two single planes which succeeded in getting through, was considered effective. No personnel injury or material damage was suffered.

4. There is a very definite need for 20 mm weapons in this vessel.

E. L. BECK

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