

# 302<sup>nd</sup> FIGHTER CONTROL SQUADRON

## MISSION

## LINEAGE

302<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Control Squadron

Activated 2 Oct 1943

Redesignated 302<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Control Squadron, 1944

## STATIONS

Bradley Field, CT, 2 Oct 1944

Fort Lawton, WA 13 Jun 1944

Kipapa Field, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, 24 Jun 1944

Stanley Field, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, 28 Jun 1944

Wheeler Field, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, 2 Aug 1944

Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands; 7 Mar 1945

## ASSIGNMENTS

VII Fighter Command

7<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing

## COMMANDERS

Cpt Selvie Livinson, 2 Oct 1943

2Lt Louis Kumin, 5 Nov 1943

Cpt Robert C House, 16 Jan 1944

Maj Summers T Carter, 1 Feb 1944

Cpt Louis Hertzberg, 6 Feb 1944

Cpt Arthur E Roberts, 10 Feb 1944

Maj Lee R Jones, 26 Mar 1944

Cpt Joseph P Bates, 5 Aug 1944

Maj Lee R Jones, 22 Aug 1944

Maj Joseph P Bates, 31 Aug 1944

1Lt Frank L Brizendine Jr, 21 May 1945  
Maj Joseph P Bates, 4 Jun 1945  
Cpt Charles C Dorsett, 31 Aug 1945

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

On 2 October 1943 a General Order of the First Fighter Command authorized the formation of a new squadron, to be known as Detachment "D", Fighter Control Squadron (Provisional). On that date, the organization consisted of 2 officers and 21 enlisted men. By 1 November 1943 the organization had grown to 5 officers and 147 enlisted men. The station was Bradley Field, Connecticut and the purpose of the squadron, as outlined by First Fighter Command, was to train, "For efficient performance of all duties entailed in the operation of a complete Very High Frequency Fighter Control System, either under field conditions or in a fixed defense area." The 93d Fighter Control Squadron was to act as the Parent Overseas Training Unit. The squadron received Warning Orders for overseas shipment 6 October 1943. However, these Warning Orders were deleted 4 November 1943.

The organization became more active in January 1944. On 20 January the First Fighter Command ordered the organization to be known as the "302d Fighter Control Squadron." At that time, the strength of the squadron was 11 officers and 142 enlisted men. Radio sites were established away from Bradley Field, at Pomfret, Connecticut; Phillipston, Massachusetts; and at Westfield, Massachusetts. Homer stations were also placed at Hillagrove Army Air Base, Providence, Rhode Island, and other radio equipment was set up at Norwich, Connecticut.

In March 1944 the organization was warned of overseas shipment. Major Lee R. Jones was assigned from First Fighter Command as Squadron Commander on 23 March 1944. The Warning Orders, from Headquarters Army Air Forces, were dated 28 March 1944 and designated the procedure of preparing for overseas shipment.

During the period from 1 April 1944 to 10 May 1944, the squadron operated a considerable

amount of radio equipment. A Mobile Information Center, SCR 572, was established at Bradley Field. The aircraft controlled by this center included A-25's from Bradley Field and P-47's from Hillagrove Army Air Base, Providence, Rhode Island. Aircraft from one field were employed as targets and those from the other were used as interceptors.

In May, all personnel helped to pack and crate the squadron equipment for overseas movement. Twenty-four hour shifts were maintained and the equipment was finally prepared for shipment by 22 May. The total equipment shipped from Bradley Field, other than that which accompanied troops, consisted of 1181 units and was loaded on 16 flat cars and 4 boxcars. The equipment was sent to Seattle, Washington, with a detachment of guards, 22 May 1944.

On 8 June 1944 20 officers and 288 enlisted men departed by train from Bradley Field, Connecticut. A special train had been arranged for and the route was direct to Seattle, Washington. On 13 June the squadron arrived at Fort Lawton, Washington for overseas staging. Routine procedures of staging were completed by 16 June. On that date the squadron, consisting of 24 officers and 294 enlisted men, embarked from Seattle, Washington on the USS US Grant. Lt. Frank L. Brizendine Jr. was appointed Squadron Adjutant 18 June. The squadron disembarked from the USS US Grant 24 June 1944 at Honolulu, Oahu, T H. All personnel were then taken by train to Kipapa Field. On 28 June the organization moved from Kipapa Field to Stanley Field.

In July a few radio men started courses at the Seventh Air Force Communications School, Hickam Field. The organization was assigned to the VII Fighter Command 5 July. The Squadron took part in a dress rehearsal for a "distinguished visitor and his party" 25 July 1944. Two days later, they stood in review for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, General Douglas MacArthur, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and other distinguished persons.

The squadron moved from Stanley Field to Wheeler Field 2 August 1944. During the month of August, the squadron took part in an overnight bivouac near Kahuku Field. Radio personnel were still attending school at Hickam Field and other radio men were installing antennae at Barber's Point. On 15 August the organization was assigned to Army Air Forces, Pacific Ocean Area. Major Jones was relieved of command 31 August 1944 and was sent back to the United States 13 October 1945. Major Jones had been sick at North Sector General Hospital, Schofield Barracks, from 2 August 1945 until his departure from Oahu. The new Commanding Officer was Captain Joseph P. Bates.

In September and October 1944, the personnel of the squadron began preparation for movement to a forward area. A few radio men began training with the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion. On 1 October, the squadron became attached as a unit to that Battalion. Some men were working at the radar site at Pou Makitilo. Provisions were made for soldier voting and many ballots were cast. The Squadron Basketball Team lead the Wheeler Field League and later received a trophy for being champions of that league. A training program, consisting of Armed Forces Institute Courses, was set up and nearly a hundred men took part. During this time, many men were able to take a five day trip to Hilo, Hawaii, for rest at the Kiluea Military Camp.

On 2 November the organization was assigned to Army Garrison Force 86, with ultimate destination Iwo Jima. The preparation for movement was speeded up and the training program was accelerated.

By December, many men had been placed on detached service with other organizations. Twenty-two men were sent to Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, VII Fighter Command, and 20 went by air to the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion at Saipan. Radio equipment was installed in several jeeps and general preparation was made for shipment to Iwo Jima. All personnel enjoyed a Christmas Party 23 December 1944.

In January 1945 many changes came for the squadron. On 11 January 53 more men went by air to Saipan. Seventy-three men were sent to the 21st Fighter Group at Mokuleia, 19 January 1945. Twelve men were sent to the 15th Fighter Group 20 January. By the end of January only 2 officers and 16 enlisted men remained with the 302d. The address of the squadron was changed to APO 86 on 24 January 1945. Three hundred eighty-six measured tons of equipment were taken to Pier 28, Honolulu, 28 January 1945.

On 5 February the squadron, consisting of 2 officers and 16 enlistedmen, departed from Wheeler Field, Oahu, and embarked on the USAT Sea Sturgeon at Honolulu, Oahu. The Sea Sturgeon left Honolulu at 1600, 5 February 1944. During the voyage the Sea Sturgeon was the flagship of the 1st Echelon Convoy. Several Destroyer Escorts accompanied the convoy. On one occasion, another ship of the convoy, the China Victory, nearly rammed the Sea Sturgeon. Several air raid and submarine alerts were sounded during the course of the voyage. Church services were conducted topside each day and the squadron took things easy during the many spare hours. The Sea Sturgeon crossed the International Date Line 9 February. This meant a change from West to East Longitude time, eliminating the date of 10 February. Anchor was dropped at Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, at 1000 13 February. The Sea Sturgeon departed from Eniwetok at 0700, 21 February 1945, and proceeded on a course direct to Iwo Jima. However, on 22 February orders were changed and the ship headed for Saipan, Mariannas Islands, and arrived there at 1400 25 February.

During February, 19 officers and nearly a hundred enlisted men were on the assault convoy, ahead of the squadron. They were on detached service with several organizations, as indicated above, and were key men in radio operations off Iwo. These personnel sighted Iwo on D Day, 19 February. LST 792 carrying a detachment of our men, beached 23 February but had to withdraw due to heavy mortar fire. Some radio equipment was damaged, but all of our personnel escaped injury. LST 792 beached again on 24 February and personnel came ashore. The Area Control Officers came ashore the same day, and proceeded to set up a temporary Air Defense Control Center for Iwo. Other 302d Personnel landed on the island during the period from 24 February to 4 March 1945.

The Sea Sturgeon departed from Saipan at 0700, 5 March 1945. On 7 March, Iwo was sighted and the squadron, except for a few men designated to drive our vehicles onto the island, left the ship at 1500 that day. They boarded an LST and landed on Blue Beach, Iwo Jima, at 1900 7 March

1945.

Beginning 8 March, personnel of the squadron began to come back from detached service. Very High Frequency Radio sites were set up at various places on the island. Transmitters, receivers and homers were all mobile units and were ready for operation soon after being driven onto the island. These sites furnished ground to air channels for the Air Defence Control Center and also communication by remote FM to the Ground Control Intercept Stations. The radio installations on top of Mt. Suribachi proved to be most efficient, probably because of the height of that location. Our radio men carried equipment to the top of the mountain and began operations even before Suribachi Highway was ready for use.

On 6 March the first land-based fighters arrived at Iwo. Brigadier General Ernest Moore, Commanding General of the VII Fighter Command, pancaked a P-51 on South Field of Iwo Jima and was followed by twenty-five pilots of the 47th Fighter Squadron, 15th Fighter Group. Twelve P-61's of the 548th Night Fighter Squadron arrived the same day. The Mustangs and Black Widows began to fly combat air patrol on their second day on the island, and on 6 March the first tactical air operation against Jap forces still fighting on Iwo was flown by the 47th Fighter Squadron. Close tactical support missions continued over Iwo until Marines split the Jap forces in the northern section of the island and drove through to the sea. The battle lines then became so close that air operations were discontinued. Immediately thereafter the fighters initiated neutralizing operations against the Bonin Islands.

On 10 March, Lt. Koumjian, our Area Controller, picked up an SOS. He directed a P-61 to a lost B-29 and the heavy bomber was safely escorted to Iwo.

The first fighter mission against enemy occupied islands to the north of Iwo was run on 11 March when pilots of the 47th Fighter Squadron, carrying 33 500 lb. bombs, chalked up a score of 22 hits against Susaki Airfield on Chichi Jima. Two Black Widows of the 548th Night Fighter Squadron provided escort for a Navy Dumbo during the mission. The 45th Fighter Squadron ran its first mission to Haha Jima on 12 March and the 78th Fighter Squadron hit Chichi targets for the first time on 13 March. From then on, weather permitting, daily air operations were conducted against these islands.

The Air Defense Control Center took over full operation from the Navy 11 March. Our Controllers had their first opportunity for service 25 March when 6 enemy aircraft were detected by radar. Flash Red was ordered and Lt. Pabst, our Ground Control Intercept Controller, contacted 2 Bettys for a P-61. Two Bettys were shot down (1 confirmed, 1 probable), and the remaining planes were driven off before reaching the island.

On 25 March a Jap banzi attack was made at the Northern end of the island. Several pilots of the 21st Fighter Group were killed and many marines, navy personnel (including Seabees), and army personnel were killed or wounded. The Japs were repulsed and killed after a long night of battle. Our personnel with the 21st Fighter Group arrived 26 March and helped to clean up the scene of the battle. Needless to say, they were on the alert for several days, awaiting any further banzi

attempts.

By 28 March, a total of 21,832 Japs had been killed at Iwo. Also, 259 prisoners (60 Koreans and 199 Japs) had been taken since D Day. By this time attempts were being carried out to make Japs in caves surrender. By means of sound trucks and with the aid of Prisoners of War, many Japs gave up. If the Japs didn't surrender, the caves were blasted and sealed.

During March P-51's and P-61's continued bombing and strafing of Susaki Airfield and other objectives at Chichi Jima. By 28 March the airfield there was determined to be inoperative. Other operations were carried out against Haha Jima and against Japanese shipping.

B-29's landed on Iwo from the first days of March on. These B-29's were from the XXI Bomber Command and they stopped at Iwo after taking part in bombing or mining missions.

During April 1945, the squadron continued at full operation. Lost planes were "homed" by mobile radio equipment (SCR 575). Our controllers continued their work at the Air Defense Control Center and at the various Ground Control Intercept Stations. On 7 April, the squadron moved from foxholes, in the original bivouac area, to the permanent area near Mt. Suribachi. Tents were set up and a mess hall was constructed from wood obtained by "moonlight requisition."

Infantry units had started the process of "mopping up" by the first of April. They continually tried to obtain Prisoners of War, and an incident of 1 April serves to describe the type of resistance they encountered. On that date, intelligence personnel, with the aid of interpreters and Prisoners of War, tried to persuade surviving Japs held in caves to lay down their arms. From a particular cave, a Jap emerged stating that two officers and one sergeant were inside. Renewed efforts were made to induce the 3 Japs to come out. When the sergeant attempted to crawl out, one of the Jap officers threw a grenade at him, wounding him in both legs. The Jap officers then committed suicide.

On 3 April all personnel were given a great scare. At 0600 small arms fire was reported at the Northern end of the island. Japs were using tracer ammunition, presumably to set off dynamite left by the 8th Marines for the use of the Island Engineer. An explosion shook the entire island when 6,000 cases of dynamite exploded and burned. Eighteen US casualties were incurred, one fatal. Material damage was caused, but the 302d was untouched.

The date of 7 April was a historic one for Iwo Jima. On that date, 166 B-29's were escorted by P-51's of the VII Fighter Command. The Nakajima Aircraft Engine Plant at Tokyo was bombed visually from 15,000 feet, by loads of five 2,000 lb. GP demolition bombs. Results were good to excellent. Flak was intense and accurate. From 30 to 60 enemy fighters intercepted the B-29's and were fairly aggressive. Two Jap fighters rammed 2 B-29's, destroying one and damaging the other. Several enemy fighters were reportedly shot down by B-29's. Five B-29's were lost over the target and 27 were forced to land at Iwo Jima after the mission, due to mechanical failure, battle damage and lack of fuel. On the same date, 108 P-51's of the 15th and 21st Fighter Groups took off for the mission, but 17 were aborted due to mechanical difficulties. Four others flew cover for

a lifeguard submarine. Fighter interception consisted of Nicks, Tojos, Tonys and Zekes. Our fighter pilots shot down 21 confirmed, 5 probable and damaged 10 others. Phosphorous bombs were dropped on our planes without success. We lost 2 fighters and 1 pilot. This was the first time that land-based American fighters had been over the Japanese mainland, and the first time B-29's had been escorted over the Empire. Needless to say, our radio personnel were very busy keeping in contact with the bombers and fighters. VII Fighter Command reported communications as excellent and the radio boys felt proud of their part in the first fighter strike.

An interesting incident took place 17 April. An infantry patrol, with the aid of interpreters and Prisoners of War, worked around a particular cave. This cave had been talked into by a Prisoner of War for four hours the day before, with no results. After two hours of talking on 17 April, the Japs handed out a Red Cross flag, a Japanese flag and a note written in English. Following is a verbatim copy of the note: "There is a field hospital of the Japanese Army in these holes. Several battle men who had come back from the front have also lived here. But a few days ago they went to somewhere and now here are living only medical members and patients. So we lift up the Red Cross flag today and we are doing only our medical duty. We have never resisted and we will never fight against you. Please know our mind and never attack us as the treaty of the International Red Cross Society.--The Head of the Hospital." After two hours of discussion between the Japs in the cave and the volunteer Prisoners of War, 73 Prisoners of War surrendered. The Japs were wearing clean uniforms, were in excellent health, and were wearing Red Cross insignia.

The squadron spent an unpleasant night 25 April 1945. At about 2330, a flare landed in some supplies on Green Beach, approximately 100 yards from the squadron area. The flare was apparently defective since its small parachute did not open. The flare came down while still ignited. At first some wood was apparently burning, for sparks flew into the air, increasing in amount until they finally went as far as the squadron area. Many of the squadron members were watching the fire when suddenly an explosion was heard. Shrapnel flew through the air and everyone scrambled to take cover at the opposite beach. The entire sky was lighted up and the explosions continued with greater intensity. By that time the flames had spread to a stack of demolition tubes, setting them on fire. The fire then spread to other revetments setting off rockets and other types of ammunition. Since the rockets would explode in midair, there was no safe spot for anyone on the Southern end of the island. Fire and explosions continued through the night and suddenly the entire area became as light as day. The concussion of this explosion was so terrific that persons who were standing within 300 yards were actually thrown through the air. This detonation, which came at 0330, 26 April, was the result of 148 500-lb. GP demolition bombs exploding simultaneously. The explosions continued all night and early the next morning the 302d personnel came back from foxholes, the opposite beach, or the Northern end of the island. The area had been completely wiped out, as far as tents and other equipment was concerned. The Orderly Room was torn to shreds and much of the office equipment was damaged or destroyed. Shrapnel, rockets, shells and craters were found throughout the area. No injuries were incurred by 302d personnel, but 1 officer of the VII Fighter Command was killed and 2 enlisted men of that organization were injured.

In May 1945 many changes took place in the squadron. Captain Bates, our Commanding Officer, was promoted to the rank of Major and the Oak Leaf was pinned on him by Brigadier General Moore. The personnel who had been on detached service at Saipan came to Iwo by air. Air raid shelters were constructed during the month and the squadron area was built up.

Several air raid alerts had been sounded during March and April, but enemy activity had seldom been detected. Inoperative IFF in friendly aircraft or peculiar atmospheric conditions were generally the cause of these alerts. In all cases, our controllers were prepared to place Iwo fighters in a position for interception and to alert the island personnel. At 1840 6 May a similar red alert was sounded, but it was later determined that B-29's with inoperative IFF were approaching the island. Another alert, was sounded at 1735 8 May, when radar again detected what later appeared to be atmospheric conditions. On 23 May, a red alert was sounded at 2220. Two unidentified aircraft had been shown by radar to be 140 miles North of Iwo, 40 minutes before that. Several other unidentified aircraft were reported at 2150. The enemy aircraft approached Iwo at an altitude of 14,000 to 16,000 feet, speed 180 to 200 MPH. The aircraft dispersed and circled when 30 miles from Iwo and 3 aircraft descended and approached the island individually from the North at low altitude, taking radar counter-measures as they approached. At 2220 1 unidentified aircraft was shot down near the North shore of the island and crashed into the sea. At 2235 a Jap Peggy was shot down and crashed on the North Airstrip. A third aircraft was engaged by anti-aircraft fire with undetermined results. Night fighters made contacts, but none of these were visual. Island casualties were 3 killed and 11 wounded. Minor damage was done to the North Airstrip.

On 11 May, an undetermined number of Japs escaped from a cave at Mt. Suribachi and escaped along the East Beach, near the Squadron Area. Personnel of the squadron were alerted and kept on the watch for Japs. At daylight, 2 Japs were captured on the East Beach. By 1000, a patrol of Infantry troops found 13 Japs in a wrecked Jap ship on the East Beach, about 200 yards from the squadron area. Eleven Japs were killed and 2 prisoners, including a Jap Major, were taken. The prisoners reported that their cave had been occupied by 23 Japs, who had been there since the invasion and had been sealed in by blasted entrances for some weeks. They had an ample supply of food and obtained water from a well that they had dug inside the cave. On the morning of 10 May, the Infantry had ruined their water supply by pumping salt water into the cave. At 2000, 10 May, the Japs had decided to attempt escape. After digging for 4 hours, they began crawling out of the cave at midnight and started northward along the East Beach, where they were killed or captured.

The squadron experienced a typical Pacific typhoon on 16 May 1945. Warning of the storm came several hours in advance and all tents were secured. A surface wind came from the East at 12 MPH at the beginning of the period, becoming gusty by 0700. A tropical storm, with winds from 50 MPH to 75 MPH, continued from the East. The wind then shifted to South and then West. All personnel were trying, with little success, to hold down tents and to keep their equipment dry. During the storm, 2.08 inches of rain fell. Several tents were blown down, the mess hall was in ruins, and the Orderly Room was once again damaged.

June was another busy month for the squadron. Gradually permanent radio installations were set up to replace the mobile transmitters, receivers and homers. A permanent building was installed on top of Mt. Suribachi and 10 Very High Frequency Channels were installed in it. Permanent antennae were set up and the equipment was ready for operation on 10 June, when the permanent Air Defence Control Center was also ready to operate.

Another air raid occurred 2 June 1945. At 0215, 2 flights of bogeys appeared on the radar scope on a course of 200° and 130 miles North of Iwo, approaching the island at 230 to 250 MPH. At 0245, our Controller at the Air Defense Control Center sounded the siren alerting island personnel and directed 4 P-61 aircraft for interception. At 0253, 2 enemy aircraft approached the island. One airplane was fired upon by 120 mm anti-aircraft at an altitude of 15,000 feet and veered away from the island, going West to North. The other airplane made a run and dropped incendiary bombs and fragmentation bombs at the Northern end of the island. At 0301 a third enemy airplane was taken under fire at an altitude of 20,000 feet and did not reach the island. All clear was sounded at 0412. Slight damage was done to installations, 5 men were killed and 17 were wounded. Once again 302d personnel were fortunate, since none were injured.

During this period, P-51's continued fighter strikes on Japanese Islands. Also, B-59's continued to land at Iwo, due to fuel shortages, battle damages or other reasons. On 8 June, for example, 117 B-39's landed at Iwo. These planes were part of 450 Marianas based B-29's which daylight-bombed Osaka with 6 ton loads of GP demolition bombs. On that occasion, P-51's again provided fighter escort.

It should be explained that on the occasions when Very Long Range (VLR) Strikes were made on Japan, our radio men used what is known as "Uncle Dog" Homing in order to assist planes in returning to Iwo. This homing was most effective at Brother Agate # 3, a homer station on top of Mt. Suribachi. These signals were transmitted for several hours during the return of VLR Strike planes. Each transmission was for two minutes, followed by a one minute break directional, and the direction finding was done by means of a simple installation in the fighter plane, any number of planes were thus enable to home simultaneously. This equipment corresponded roughly to Radio Range equipment, used in commercial aviation. Fighter pilots on returning from a mission, would proceed with the aid of navigational B-29's, to within several hundred miles of Iwo. There they would pick up the "Uncle Dog" signals and fly directly on these signals until the sight of Mt. Suribachi welcomed them to their base. It is safe to say that the use of "Uncle Dog" homing was instrumental in keeping tactical losses low at Iwo Jima.

High winds were again experienced on Iwo 6 June. Winds of gale intensity caused the crew of the USS Shepoet to abandon ship several hundred yards off the East Shore. Because of pounding surf and undertow, the survivors were having extreme difficulty in reaching shore. S. Sgt. Bergman and Cpl. Sakevich, 302d men, both entered the surf several times, each time aiding a survivor to safety. In spite of having swallowed quantities of sea water and gasoline, these men continued rescue work until the last survivor had been brought to safety.

The Japs were still living in caves during June. By 16 June, 25,486 Japs had been killed on Iwo and

1,192 Prisoners of war had been taken. On that date the two prisoners taken indicated that they had been shut up in a cave since the invasion with five other Japs. Water was secured by catching rain. Five days prior to their capture, their supply of food and water ran out. Five of the Japs committed suicide. One of the Japs captured was hospitalized since he had shot himself in the chest and had slashed his wrists in an attempt "to join his ancestors."

Another storm hit Iwo on 22 June. A strong SE surface wind, shifting through South to West by the end of the period, varied from 45 to 50 MPH, with gusts up to 70 MPH. Rain totaled 2.18 during the storm. For this storm the office tents were lowered and sand bags were used to secure them. No injuries were received by 302d personnel.

At 0103 24 June, the island was alerted for another air attack. At 0107 "Control Yellow" was announced, and shortly afterward one, and possibly two, enemy aircraft were taken under fire with negative results. One enemy aircraft dropped several bombs, in the vicinity of the third airfield. Planes retired to the north, and at a point approximately 80 miles from Iwo, P-61 shot down one enemy aircraft, identified as a Betty. The remaining enemy plane went to minimum altitude and evaded successfully. All clear was sounded at 0155. Once again the personnel of the squadron escaped injury.

Another air raid took place on 24 June. At 0025 on that date, two enemy aircraft appeared on a course of 358°, altitude 24,000 feet, speed 270 mph and approximately 180 miles from Iwo. At 0103 the air raid alarm was sounded. At 0107, two enemy aircraft approached Iwo from 17,000 feet to 24,000 feet altitude and heavy AA guns opened fire on the targets. One outgoing aircraft was intercepted by P-61. At 79 miles from Iwo, the bogey was identified as a Betty and was shot down. Contact with the other enemy airplane was lost when 44 miles from Iwo. All clear was sounded 0157. Two fragmentation bombs fell at the North end of the island and four incendiary bombs fell off the West Beach. Slight damage was done to installations and one enlisted man was wounded, but 302d personnel again were uninjured.

The first air raid alert in July came at 1221 2 July. All clear was sounded at 1239, when it was found that abnormal atmospheric conditions had caused radar installations to indicate bogeys. Throughout July the radio and control men continued to be very busy. The increase of B-29 and fighter flights to Japan made Iwo a busy place. The first B-29's to be staged through Iwo in large numbers 66 B-29's which landed here 28 July. Each B-29 refueled with 4,500 to 5,000 gallons of gasoline and the crews were fed, rested and briefed. Beginning at 1800, these B-29's took off for their target at Aomori, Honshu. These 66 B-29's were each loaded with 10 tons of incendiary bombs.

At 0940 4 August one enemy twin-engine airplane (Dinah III) was shot down 30 miles West of Iwo Jima by P-47 Combat Air Patrols. Lt. Philip Bailey, GCI Comptroller on duty at the time, was awarded the Bronze Star Medal by General Spaatz for outstanding work in this interception. Air raid alarms were sounded at 1009, a few minutes later, when radar screens showed bogeys 25 miles North of Iwo. All clear was sounded at 1027, after bogeys had been identified as friendly aircraft.

August brought good news as far as the world situation was concerned. The first use of the atomic bomb, Russian entry into the war, and the Japanese surrender were all great events. All of the 302d boys were hoping that their work was finished and that they could return to the good old USA.

The Squadron Headquarters' located at Wheeler Field, was busy with final preparations for the move. We were allotted passenger space for one (1) Officer and thirty four (34) Enlisted Men. The remainder of the Squadron was placed on Detached Service for transportation to our new destination. The remainder of our Control Section was flown to Saipan for duty with the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion. Seventy six (76)men were placed on Detached Service with the 21st Fighter Group, eight (8) men with the 15th Fighter Group, and the remainder with the VII Fighter Command and 568th Signal AW Bn.

The Squadron was allotted 386 measured tons for shipping space. The final Manifest and Unit Personnel and Tonnage Tables were completed. The Allotted Tonnage was not sufficient to take all of our T/E with us. However, a request was submitted to AAFPOA, and they authorized us to dispose of the equipment to various supply agencies with the understanding that should the need ever arise, we could redraw this equipment.

At this time our units on the L.S.T.'s 792 and 723 were undergoing operational training at sea. The equipment was calibrated with the ship, both loaded and empty, and it proved satisfactory in both instances. With Marines aboard, both ships and men went through maneuvers at Maui T.H. Both ships departed the Hawaiian Islands 26 January 1945.

The Squadron received a call on 27 January to have it's equipment at Pier #26, Honolulu, by 28 January. This order found us short of manpower and transportation facilities. However, an urgent request was made of A.G.F. and they supplied the necessary vehicles, and Army Air Base, APO #959 the necessary men; and the equipment reached the docks at the appointed hour. On 22 January 1945, the Squadron received orders changing their address to APO #86. With the equipment at the docks and our men on Detached Service for transportation purposes, we were now awaiting orders to board ship, which we found were not long in coming.

During the month of January, at least fifteen men from our organization were sent on Detached Service to Hilo, Hawaii. It had been the Squadron policy to send as many men as possible to the military camp at Hilo. The men had nothing but glowing praise for this camp. It was during this month also, that this organization had a Physical Training Program, and all men in the Squadron were required to attend at least six days a week. The program lasted until most of the men had departed for duty with other organizations. The daily program was of an hours duration.

Our equipment was being loaded during the first few days of February. The Squadron Headquarters were waiting call from port to embark. We were notified to board ship the fifth of February. Captain Bates, the Squadron Commander, and eight (8) Enlisted Men boarded the USS Sea Sturgeon about noon the same day. The USS Sea Sturgeon was the flagship of the 1st Echelon Convoy. The ship left the Honolulu docks on the evening of the same date, and after much speculation, arrived at Enewetok in the Marshall Islands on 13 February 1945. The ship dropped anchor and we remained there eight (8) days. We departed 21 February 1945, and arrived at Saipan, in the Mariannas, 25 February 1945. The ship was still anchored off Saipan the 28th day of February 1945. The trip was uneventful, no enemy action was encountered. The food aboard ship was very good, and movies were shown at regular intervals.

The nineteen (19) Officers and sixty two (62) Enlisted Men who were attached to the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion, were the key men in the part our Squadron was to play in the operation at Iwo Jima. Of the above number, twelve(12) Control Officers, four (4) Communications Officers and thirty six (36) Enlisted Men were aboard LST's of the assault phase to Iwo Jima.

Their job was to furnish the necessary link for a GCI Station by giving VHF Ground to Air Communications. The convoy arrived at Enewetok in the Marshalls, 3 February 1945, and departed on the fifth. They arrived at Saipan in the Mariannas, 10 February 1945. Picture if you can, a complete GCI Station on top deck of an LST complete with 1-527 radar unit; SCR's 573 transmitter, 574 receiver and 575 homer facilities. One each of these units were aboard LST's 792 and 723. Upon arrival at Saipan, this equipment was put into operation, and they participated in Marine maneuvers off the Island of Tinian in the Mariannas Group.

The convey left eh Marianas on 12 February 1945, keeping both stations in operation to aid the Navy as stand-bys in the operation at Iwo Jima. This was to be the it's first trial in actual combat operations. The Communications Officers report the VHF radio equipment operated very satisfactory. The convoy sighted Iwo Jima on the morning of 19 February 1945 (D-Day). After unloading combat Marines, the LST's patrolled the waters around the Island acting as reserve GCI and radar reporting station for the Navy. According to plan, Lt. Rubenstein a Communications Officer and his team aboard LST 792 were to go ashore first and set up their equipment and get it operating as soon as possible. LST 792 beached in the late afternoon of D plus four, but due to heavy enemy mortar fire, was forced to withdraw from the beach. During this shelling, only slight damage was done to the radio equipment. On the morning of D plus 5, they beached again and unloaded their equipment. Two days later, Lt. Rubenstein's team set up their equipment for

operation on Iwo Jima in the Volcanic Group, furnishing communications for the Air Defense Control Center, and one 527 radar platoon. The main problem encountered was that of space for a 75 foot antenna which was not available on crowded Iwo. This solved by using one mast for both receiver and transmitter. Lt. Stewart, Communications Officer, and his team were patrolling the Island aboard LST 723, they were told to dismantle their equipment and prepare to debark. Meanwhile our Area Controller went on duty in the A.D.C.C., 25 February 1945 and worked in conjunction with the Navy.

In the above three groups of the Squadron are discussed, all attached to the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion, and all in the same assault convoy. The convoy arrived on D-Day and unloaded Marines and equipment. Our personnel landed from D plus 5 through D plus 11. Conditions were naturally rough at that stage. The men dug in and fortunately we had no casualties.

One (1) Officer and seventy six (76) Enlisted Men with the 21st Fighter Group were still at Mokuleia, Oahu, T.H. During the month of February, Lt. Dalton was placed in Group S-2 office to assist in their work, the remainder of the men were placed among the Fighter Squadrons of the 21st Group and were being utilized where needed. They were assigned to section. T/Sgt Dodrill is being used as first Sergeant in the 46th Fighter Squadron. From all reports, the men are doing a good job, as the Group is short of personnel. These men are to rejoin the 302d Fighter Squadron at Iwo Jima.

The six (6) Officers and seventy three (73) Enlisted Men with the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion at Saipan, of the Marianas, are playing an important part in the Air Defense Control Center chore. All these men are from the Control Section of this Squadron. The six (6) Officers are being used as Ground Control Intercept Officers. The Enlisted Men aid in operating the A.D.C.C. as monitors, plotters, tellers, etc.

The twenty three (23) Enlisted Men with the 15th Fighter Group were at sea during February. Fifteen (15) of these men were being used on the line, the other eight (8) were merely attached for transportation purposes. All twenty three men are to rejoin the Squadron upon arrival at Iwo Jima.

Eleven (11) Enlisted Men with the VII Fighter Command are being utilized as clerks in the various offices. These men were also at sea during the month of February, some on the USS Sea Sturgeon with Hq Squadron of VII Fighter Command, and some on the USS Sea Runner. These men are to rejoin the Squadron when they are needed.

The remaining eleven (11) Enlisted Men of the Squadron are attached to AAF Fighter Control Detachments A,C,D and E. These men are doing radio work and other duties with their respective units.

Parts of the Communications and Control Sections had already arrived at Iwo Jima in the sub-assault phase, and were in operation in their respective phases of the Island Aircraft Warning System. CAPTAIN BATES, Squadron Commander, and his small group of men who were present

for duty aboard the USAT Sea Sturgeon, departed from Saipan, Island of the Marianas Group, on the 4th of March. They arrived at Iwo Jima on the morning of the 7th of March. The Squadron Equipment was aboard the USAT Cape Fear, in the same convoy. As previously mentioned, all equipment authorized by T/O & E 1-47, dated 17 June 1943, was accompanying the squadron, with the exception of some heavy equipment for which shipping space was not provided on this move. The USAT Sea Sturgeon dropped anchor on the west side of the island and shortly after noon the men were unloaded into an LST and departed for shore. The LST finally beached at about 2000 and the squadron went ashore at 2100 on the 7th of March. The men were carried by trucks to the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion Area for the night. They dug in and most of the men agreed that the first night was a miserably cold one.

On the morning of March 8th, the squadron gathered and set up a temporary area, with its strength increasing almost every day. Men were returned from Detached Service with the 15th Fighter Group and the VII Fighter Command immediately. Officers and enlisted men returned for duty from Temporary Duty with the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion by the night of March 8th. The squadron had increased from a small one, consisting of one officer and eight enlisted men present for duty to one consisting of four officers and thirty-four men--with many increases to come during the month.

In compliance with General Order 18, AAFPOA, the squadron was reorganized on March 14th under WD T/O & E 1-47, dated 18 October 1944. This reorganization gave us quite a few authorized changes in equipment, too numerous to list, and, in personnel, gave us a reduction of 5 enlisted men. Some changes in MOS, occurring mostly in the Control Section, were put into effect. In that section, 19 405's (Clerk-Typists) had been authorized in the old T/O & E, as compared to 16 055's (Clerk, Non-Typists) in the new one. The Supply and Medical Sections had new MOS's, but the same number of enlisted men. Two additional drivers were authorized and they were definitely needed by the organization. The Statistical Control Officer was lost on the new T/O & E, reducing the authorized officers from 24 to 23. Officer grades were on the same level and number as on the old T/O & E, however.

On March 17th, all personnel on Detached Service with the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion were returned to duty with the squadron. This change consisted of 15 officers and 54 enlisted men, including three radio VHF teams and all of the Control Officers. While on Detached Service, these teams furnished VHF and control interception aboard LST's enroute to Iwo Jima, and in the surrounding waters. They were in operation on Iwo Jima to furnish the vitally needed VHF and Ground-To-Air Communications and Homing for stray aircraft.

The Air Defense Control Center went into operation on a larger scale on the 1st of March. Our Area Controllers, CAPTAIN SAMFORD, CAPTAIN WILLISTON, LIEUTENANT DORSETT AND LIEUTENANT KOUMJIAN, rotated on the duty under the tactical direction of A-3 Section of the VII Fighter Command. In this early stage of operations, the Navy was still in charge of tactical operations, with our Controllers aiding by reporting to the Navy.

The 302d Fighter Control Squadron had one VHF Station in full operation at this time. Equipment in this station included SCR 573 Transmitters, 574 Receivers, 575 Homers and a PE 95 was used for necessary power requirements. The station furnished two Ground-To-Air Channels for the ADCC by land line and the same channels by remote FM to the 527 GCI Station, location on the First Air Strip. An additional two channels were put into operation just south of the First Air Strip, using other SCR's 573 and 574. This station went into operation on March 5th, connected to the ADCC by land lines and to the GCI Station by land line and FM. The land lines to the 527 proved unsuccessful, as they were continually broken by bull-dozers repairing the air strip. The FM link worked very well after the proper frequencies were put into use. Another complete VHF Station was placed on top of Mt. Surabachi on March 25th. The main difficulty at this station was the limited space on top of the outer edge of the volcano. This station was complete with SCR's 573, 574 and 575. The station was connected by land lines to the ADCC and to a 270 Radar, furnishing Ground-To-Air Communication for both. This site had more advantages than others on the Island, due to its height, which greatly increased the effective range of the VHF Equipment. Some trouble was encountered due to the closeness of the SCR 270 Radar Antennas, which caused a considerable amount of background noise on the VHF Radio Receivers. Three stations were in operation at the latter part of March. One of these, however, was being used as a stand-by. Four channels were available to the ADCC and the GCI Station on the First Air Strip.

The Control Officers are in tactical control of an air defence center and we had 12 of them doing the job, 4 Area Controllers at the ADCC and 8 GCI Intercept Controllers located at the 527 Radar and 270 Radar. An air raid occurred on March 1st and our reporting greatly aided the Navy in destroying one Betty. On March 6th, the first land-based fighters arrived at Iwo Jima--the 15th Fighter Group with P-51's and the 548th Night Fighter Squadron with P-61's. The first CAP flew March 7th. On March 10th, LIEUTENANT KOUMJIAN, Area Controller, picked up an SOS. A P-61 was sent out and found a B-29 lost with two engines out. The B-29 was escorted safely to base. On March 11th, the ADCC took over control of land-based planes, relieving the Navy. On March 6th, tactical control of anti-submarine patrol was acquired. On March 25th, six bogies were reported closing in from the North. Flash Red was given by the controller and the interception was on. LIEUTENANT PABST, GCI Controller on duty of the SCR 527, successfully completed a contact for P-61's and three Bettys were knocked down (confirmed). The remaining enemy planes were driven off. LIEUTENANT PABST has been recommended for the Bronze Star Medal for this achievement. March was a crowded month, full of operation for our squadron. Our controllers were in charge of controlling fighter aircraft in flight. Three VHF Stations were in operation, furnishing Ground-To-Air Communications for the controllers and our homers giving the proper steers to bring lost aircraft in safely. The men were well-trained for their respective jobs and doing a very good job of it.

After many months of training in the United States and at Oahu, T. H. the Squadron was finally doing its job in a combat area. Needless to say it was with a feeling of real satisfaction. Our communications section had three complete stations in operation at the beginning of the month, using four channels each. These stations were location on Mt. Suribaci, and near the Southern Air Strip, operating 24 hours daily.

The Controllers were busy operating the ADCC and two Ground Control Intercept Stations. Our 73 enlisted men of the control section were still in the Marianas Islands. However, we were called on to furnish monitors for the ADCC and this was done by using radio men.

We had 16 officers and 102 enlisted men present for duty on 1 April, an increase of 15 officers and 94 enlisted men since our arrival at Iwo Jima. The temporary area was hardly sufficient to take care of the quartering and feeding of these men. On 7 April, we moved into our permanent assigned area. The move was one from fox holes to tents and with a larger mess hall and better all-around facilities. Much thought and planning was required in the proper arrangement of the new area and good results were obtained. The main problem encountered was to find enough lumber to build a mess hall that would meet the necessary sanitary requirements to serve B rations. This naturally required weeks of extra working hours. As luck would have it, early in the morning of 26 April, a fire set off a large ammunition dump located within a hundred yards of our area. The explosions lasted from 0030 until 0600 on 26 April, with the results that our area was completely demolished. All tents were down and most of them damaged beyond repair. The area was evacuated during the explosions and no injuries to personnel were incurred. This meant starting all over again and rebuilding our area. By the night of 27 April all tents were replaced and the mess hall was serving hot B rations again.

Recreation is also a difficult problem in a forward area. However, it is recognized as one of absolute necessity by our Squadron Commander. The men are busier now than ever before and proper relaxation is a great benefit. Our Special Service Officer has a large squad tent for a Day Room. This has a radio, phonograph, writing tables and a large library. Athletic equipment is available to the men at their request. The Squadron Fund was used for the purchase of beer twice during the month of April. Movie schedules for our own and nearby areas are posted on the squadron Bulletin Board.

A Fighter Control Squadron is just what the name implies--to have a constant control of fighter aircraft in defensive measures and to guard against and warn of any enemy aircraft. In order to perform this mission three VHF radio sites were in 24 hour operation. The busiest station was located on top of Mt. Suribachi. This station furnished two channels. Ground-To-Air communication to the control officer at the ADCC enabled him to keep in constant communication with airborne aircraft. The same channels were also available to the GCI control officer on Suribachi. The SCR 575 Homer was also located on the mountain and had an outstanding record. This station logged 289 homings for the month of April. Many lost planes were steered to Iwo Jima, including B-29's returning from raids on the Japanese homeland. Another station was located near the Southern Air Strip, furnishing an additional two channels to the ADCC and making them available to the other GCI control officer at the SCR 527 on the Southern Air Strip. This station also had a SCR 575 Homer that logged about 25 homings for the month of April. The third station was dismantled on 10 April and was prepared to move to another location on the north end of the Island to give the Northern Air Strip a homer station and the SCR 527 located in that area the necessary Ground-To-Air communication. This move was in process during the latter part of the month. A permanent installation is being placed on top of Mt. Suribachi. This installation, upon completion, will replace the SCR's 573 and 574. It will house

10 RC 256 and 10 RC 257 to furnish the Ground-To-Air communications to the ADCC. The explosion of the bomb dump on 26 April caused considerable damage to signal equipment. Three radio van trucks were damaged to the extent of having to be replaced. These were replaced through the 506th Fighter Group. Considerable damage to radio sets RC 256 and RC 257 located in Squadron stock pile slowed up progress on installations on Mt. Suribachi.

The Controllers were busier than ever during April due to the increasing air strikes on Japan. Although controlling is mainly a defensive job, it is also one of aiding all aircraft in returning to the base. On 7 April, 53 B-29's were pancaked at Iwo Jima. The first fighter strike against Japan was on 12 April and that date was also the one of the first air raid alert of the month. The two almost coincided, as the fighters were due to return at the time of the alert. Five raids were plotted, the most near being 50 miles from the Island. Snow was covering a large area. The raiders left the vicinity unseen and unchecked. Combat air patrols and strikes on the Bonin Islands were a daily procedure. We furnished men to monitor the VHF Channels as an aid to the controller on duty at the ADCC. The monitor was located in the ADCC, logging all messages over his particular channel. The monitor also had communication with airborne aircraft and was able to accept messages for the controller when he was too busy to acknowledge the calls.

The number of men present for duty increased steadily during the month of May. The Control Section returned from Detached Service at the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion in the Marianas. This increase of personnel created new problems within the organization, such as providing quarters, mess facilities, additional air raid shelters, and latrines.

Three air raid shelters were constructed in the area and they later proved to be "just the thing." Also, additional shelters were constructed to better accommodate all the personnel. The squadron was given authorization for a 250-man mess hall, consisting of three quonset huts. This mess hall is nearing completion at the time of this writing. Our main difficulty at the end of May was the insufficient housing space in the squadron area.

On 16 May a typhoon hit Iwo Jima and it affected the squadron greatly. Again our tents were blown over and the mess hall was demolished. The Orderly Room tent also went down, but personnel of the Orderly Room pitched a new one and were in full operation within a few hours. Even though two mess halls had been destroyed in three weeks, the men started immediate construction of another temporary mess hall. This temporary construction would be used until the quonsets were set up and ready for use. We didn't miss a meal, although several were eaten in the rain and in the open.

In May it was interesting to note the decided change in living conditions. Our mess schedule often included fresh meats and vegetables. Ice cream was served once a week and ice was obtained from the Navy on several occasions. The quarters were improving with time and movies were shown every other night in the squadron area. The morale was very high, as is usually the case when men are kept properly busy.

May again gave Fighter Control a chance to show its value. Four air raid alerts were given during

the month, and, finally, on the night of 21 May enemy planes raided the island for the first time since March. First let us consider what makes Fighter Control operate. Many persons have never heard of Fighter Control and many more only have a vague idea of the job it does. As mentioned in previous histories, our chief operation in the air defense of Iwo Jima, although we have important roles in aiding all aircraft. A map of Iwo Jima is inclosed, with the ADCC and our VHF Stations located on it. With the map as an aid, the reader may obtain a picture of Fighter Control in action. The ADCC is the keynote of activity. All outer stations are connected to the center and there the gathered information is put into use. A large map, marked in miles and degrees, is in plain view of the Control Officer and he is man of decision in the operation. In reality the whole thing is one big team working together, all equally important and dependent on each other. The 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion, with its radar units placed advantageously on the island, report all aircraft in the vicinity and by means of radar determine if the aircraft are friendly or enemy. When one of their radar units pick up aircraft on the scope, it gives distance and height of aircraft--and the same is reported to the ADCC. The 138th AAA Battalion supplies the island defense gun batteries and goes into action upon receiving the Controller's "go ahead" signal--Enemy Aircraft over island, Flash Red, Control Yellow.

In order to accomplish this air defense, the 302d Fighter Control Squadron now has three Homer Stations, SCR's 575, and three relay stations, SCR's 573 and 574. All mobile equipment operates from radio vans, rolled to the place of operation (Note Stations on Map). The three home trucks gave almost three hundred steers to base during May, many of which were B 29's. They aided that many aircraft in locating tiny Iwo Jima and successfully landing here. The relay stations furnished the controllers their communications with aircraft, whether it was to direct our fighters in intercepting the enemy, directing them in their patrol duties or aiding them in other ways. Our Communications Section was busy installing a permanent installation on top of Mt. Suribachi. Upon completion, this would house 10 RC 256's and RC 257's and will replace the mobile relay stations now located on Iwo. During May, one homer station and one relay station were placed into operation on the northern end of the island, near the North Air Strip. The relay station used 90 foot steel mast antennas and furnished Ground-To-Air Communications for the Intercept Controllers in the SCR 527 Radar Unit, located nearby. "Uncle Dog" was used extensively on each fighter strike. This is a means of homing fighter aircraft on their return from the Japanese Empire and is accomplished by the homer station transmitting two-minute signals, at intervals, during the time when the fighter planes return. The P-51 Aircraft have a modified SCR 522 with two antennas and an adapter, that enable them to fly on the beam emitted by the homer transmitter. This greatly aids the planes, as all of them come home at the same time rather than singularly.

The many months of training, and all that went with it, paid dividends to Fighter Control and to all personnel on Iwo Jima in May. The siren, giving the air raid warning, sounded four times during May. Each time that our Control Officer on duty gave the alarm it was necessary for all personnel to take cover, for a threat of enemy planes was indicated. On each of the first three occasions, no enemy aircraft were sighted. The alerts were probably the result of our own heavy bombers approaching the island without the proper identification, or it could have been caused by certain weather conditions showing as aircraft on radar equipment. However, the Controllers gave the warning on any occasion when enemy aircraft might have been near. On the evening of 21 May,

radar units reported unfriendly aircraft closing in from the north. The Air Controller sent up night fighters to investigate, and directed the fighters to the location of the bogey plots. When enemy aircraft came closer, the control officer sounded the air raid alert, warning all personnel. The island was blacked-out and anti-aircraft batteries were ready. One plane came over the island at several hundred feet and was knocked down by small arms and automatic weapons. One was knocked down about two miles off the north shore at 15,000 feet. One enemy aircraft dropped anti-personnel bombs on the north end of the island, causing slight casualties and was believed to have been badly damaged. Thus the reader has been given a picture of fighter control in action--warning personnel of a raid and sending up fighter interceptors.

In thinking of a squadron in a forward area, one first thinks of the work that the squadron is doing and then measures the squadron efficiency. The 302d Fighter Control Squadron is a highly technical squadron and is justly proud of its records on Iwo Jima. Strangely enough, our headquarters section had the real battle in improving our living conditions. The Orderly Room continued their administrative duties in an efficient manner. Supply was constantly on the jump to get the things that were needed so badly. Personnel made the most of canned rations. Also the month of June saw such improvements as tent floors and frames for living quarters and a new 250-man mess hall. Most of our construction work was done within the squadron and the personnel appreciated the results.

The Communications Section under Capt. John Bailey, Jr. had its busiest month in June. A new permanent installation housing 10 VHF channels was completed on top of Mt. Suribachi. The main problem encountered was the placement of the 90 foot pole antenna on the small space available. The installation was ready for operation on June 5 and finally went into operation on June 10 with the permanent ADCC. Technically speaking it furnished 10 channels of communication to the ADCC for its ground-to-air communication. These channels were tied into the ADCC by land lines which ran only a short distance for the ADCC was located at the foot of Mt. Suribachi.

The new installation replaced the mobile SCR 573 and SCR 574 Radio Vans and used RC 256 and RC 257 VHF Receiver and Transmitter Equipment. Brother Agate #3, SCR 575 Homer on top of Mt. Suribachi was moved from the north side to the west side to make space for the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion's Radar Installation. Brother Agate #3 had two available channels from the permanent transmitter and receiver shack on the mountain. Brother Agate #2, SCR 575 Homer, was moved from the southern end of the first air strip to the new location between the second and third air strips. The SCR's 573 and 574 were also moved to the same location giving Brother Agate #2 two VHF channels for homing purposes. Brother Agate #1 was located at the northern of the third air strip, thus providing three SCR's 575 on Iwo Jima. Each station had two different channels to enable a very wide coverage in homing of lost aircraft. The relay stations consisting of SCR 573 and SCR 574, Transmitter and Receiver Radio Vans furnished ground-to-air communication to the GCI Stations. GCI Station, Agate #7, had four available channels and the same channels were available to Agate #13, SCR 270, located nearby. These installations were north of the third air strip, Agate #9, SCR 527, located between the first and second air strips had

four available VHF channels by means of another relay station. In all our Communications Section operated and maintained 3 Homer Stations, SCR's 575; installation of 10 VHF Transmitters and Receiver RC 256 and RC 257; and 3 relay stations consisting of 2 SCR's 573 and 574 each. These stations gave our controllers their communication to the planes in the air.

The Control Section moved into the new permanent Air Defence Control Center located at the foot of Mt. Suribachi on June 10. At the start four area controllers were required to operate the ADCC. Eight other controllers were working as GCI officers. The squadron furnished 45 enlisted men of the control section. Forty of these acted as monitors, 4 as fighter clerks, and 1 as clerical assistant to Lt. Col. Flood, Senior Controller. The strikes against Japan, CAP Patrols, and four air raids kept the Control Section very busy.

Iwo Jima had four enemy air raids during the month of June and the timing of these raids seemed almost uncanny. Invariably the Japanese would raid during bad weather or when our air patrol was not in operation. On one occasion the Japanese arrived just at the time that the air patrol was to be relieved. The first of these raids was on the morning of June 1. Flash red was sounded at 025 K and the team work of our defense then went nicely into action. The 568th SAW Battalion with its radar units; the 302d F.C. Sqdn. with its VHF Communication and control of aircraft; the 138th AAA Battalion with its anti-aircraft guns; and the 549th Night Fighter Sqdn. with its planes in the air to intercept the enemy, all cooperated in an efficient manner. The following is an account of what happened before the flash red sounded, in other words "behind the scenes." Agate #13 SCR 270 radar unit, picked up the first bogey plot at 0215 K, 37 minutes before the siren blew. They reported enemy aircraft and position with reference to the ADCC. The area controller was then on the spot. His job was to determine if the aircraft was friendly or enemy. Many times during the B-29 raids, the heavy aircraft had failed to show the proper identification due to faulty equipment and he was thus always on the alert. The bogey was picked up at 010°, 157 miles from Iwo Jima, course 160° then Raid #1 came to within 75 miles from Hot Rocks, Raid #2 separated from it and both raids continued toward Iwo Jima in closely parallel courses. At 0244 Raid #3 appeared at 40 miles. At 0302 K Raid #4 appeared at 090° 6 miles from Hot Rocks. As the enemy aircraft were closing in on Iwo Jima, the Senior Controller alerted the Island Personnel and also the 549th Nighter Fighter Sqdn. which placed two more fighters in the air for the interception. Anti-aircraft artillery were also ready and the GCI controller were following the enemy raider on their SCR 527 and 370 radar unit scopes. These controllers were directing the fighter interception and made contact but each contact was lost when the Japanese planes used evasive action and proved too fast for our night fighter. were over Hot Rocks at 0304 K. Anti-aircraft personnel engaged two bogeys that flew over the island but no hits were scored. Five bombs set fire to an asphalt dump. One officer and four enlisted men were killed and 11 enlisted men were injured in that area.

Another raid took place at 2125 K on June 7. All personnel were alerted and interceptions were made but the bogey passed Hot Rocks 35 miles west. No enemy planes appeared over the island.

On June 22 Japanese aircraft raided Iwo Jima again. Flash red alert was sounded at 0320 K. The first bogey was reported by Agate #13 at 0050 K bearing 300° 135 miles from Hot Rocks. One P-61

was airborne at 0145 K and two more were sent out at 0213 K. The Controller at Agate #7 directed the fighter P-61 to an interception at 075°, 60 miles out at 0212 K at 24,000 feet. The bogey continued on course 260°, climbing to 26,000 feet and taking violent evasive action until 25 miles east of Hot Rocks. After two complete orbits in that position he took a 360° vector, going into a dive away from the island. Enemy planes dropped bombs at sea and the nearest bogey came within 18 miles of Iwo Jima.

The big thrill of the month went to, Lt. Stadjuhar, Intercept Controller, and the occasion was the fourth enemy raid on 24 June. Flash red alert was sounded at 0110 K and two enemy planes closed in on Iwo Jima. The planes were intercepted 40 miles from Hot Rocks by our P-61 night fighters, but contacts were lost. The bogeys dropped bombs on Iwo Jima at 0121 K and 0127 respectively. They came over Iwo Jima at a high altitude and dived to get away faster. Anti-aircraft guns engaged the bogeys but reported no hits. Agate #7 under Lt. Stadjuhar directed the P-61 to a contact on the enemy plane leaving Hot Rocks. Contact was made and the bogey was shot down at 0140 K, 79 miles from base. This was indeed a good feeling for Lt. Stadjuhar and was the reward for the army months of GCI training.

The number of personnel in the squadron had steadily increased since its arrival on Iwo Jima. This increase was necessitated by the substantial increase in the duties of the organization. During the month of July we had an average strength of 21 officers and 244 enlisted men. All assigned officers and 194 enlisted men were present for duty with the squadron. One important factor to the functioning of the squadron was the absence of the security ceiling authorized Fighter Control Squadrons to provide Patrolmen for the purpose guarding the various radio installations while the technical men were busy operating the stations. In order to overcome the absence of the security section all enlisted men under the first three grades pulled a tour of guard in addition to their regular duties.

During July the organization had many men on detached service to other organizations. Of these 11 were working in the Control Center in Saipan on detached service with the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion; 21 enlisted men were on detached service with the VII Fighter Command doing all kinds of work; 4 enlisted men were on detached service with the 15th Fighter Group; and the remaining 8 were on detached service with the 21st Fighter Group. On the whole our personnel present for duty were sufficient to carry out the work of the squadron. Some difficulty was experienced in obtaining cooks in view of the fact, that several were sent to the United States on TDY.

3. (This paragraph was undecipherable but pertains to the placement of men on detached service.)

4. The squadron was on Iwo Jima. The vital link, from Ground-To-Air had been operating for 24 hours per day since a few days after the invasion of Iwo Jima. (Much of this paragraph is undecipherable but it pertains to the construction of a communications building and a 90-foot antenna on top of Mt. Suribachi in order to improve Ground-To-Air communications.)

5. Three SCR 575 Radio Vans (Homer Stations) were in operation during July. The most active one, Brother Agate, was located on top of Mt. Suribachi. It was responsible for the "Uncle Dog" Homing for fighter planes returning from strikes on Japan.

A pilot upon completion of his mission over the target could turn on his "Uncle Dog" Homer and get a direct bearing to Iwo Jima even though it was 750 miles away.

It is impossible to estimate just how many pilots were saved. (Text then describes just how the Homer Station operates.)

6. One air raid alert was sounded during the month of July. However, on that occasion the planes finally proved to be friendly. Unidentified planes were coming in from the north at 30,000 feet and were giving every indication of being enemy aircraft. The controller placed his intercept fighters in the correct position and warned the personnel of the island. "All clear" was sounded as soon as the aircraft were identified as friendly.

7-9. Are largely undecipherable. They pertain to the establishment of a Council of enlisted men to identify problem areas and to help improve living conditions, the expansion of recreation facilities, and the development of an athletic program and the request for an athletic field.

The month of August 1945 brought about the cessation of the war against Japan, and, for the 302d Fighter Control Squadron, the knowledge that every man in the organization had contributed materially towards attainment of Victory. Technically, the formal surrender by Japan was not to come until 2 September, but the Air Offensive from Iwo Jima had ceased with the last fighter strike on 14 August. However, this did not mean that the activities of the organization had ended. The job of supplying VHF Communications for the Air Defense Control Center, and its allied Control Stations, SCR's 527, and MEW Radar would continue as long as the island maintained fighter defense.

The strength of the organization remained approximately constant throughout the month. The greatest change came with the addition of 36 photo men, on detached service to this organization from various fighter squadrons. This brought the total number of photo men with the squadron to 45. The addition of these men was not made to assist the squadron in performing its mission, but for the purpose of centralizing all photo men on the island so that they could work in a central laboratory, in a location near this organization. The added personnel also included the 570th AAF Band, Army Postal Unit 86, and members of the Armed Forces Radio Service, who operate Radio Iwo. These additional men caused a strain on the administrative and mess personnel, but did not interfere with the efficiency of these sections.

Four of our GCI Controllers were placed on detached service to the 549th Night Fighter Squadron for a period of 30 days, in order that they might become better acquainted with the pilots and with the tactics of that organization. This brought about better team work and closer cooperation while these Controllers were controlling the aircraft of the 549th Night Fighter Squadron.

On 31 August, the Squadron lost two officers who had been with the organization almost since its activation, and who held key positions in the squadron. Major Joseph B. Bates, the Commanding Officer, departed to attend the School of Military Government at Charlottesville, Virginia. Major Bates was well-liked by every officer and enlisted men under his command and his departure was felt by all. He had been in command from 31 August 1944 to 31 August 1945, during which time the organization trained for, and performed the mission which it had been assigned. Moreover, a large part of this accomplishment was due to Major Bates' faculty for leadership and his understanding nature in handling men. Captain John Rainey, Jr., who had served as Chief Communications Officer under Major Bates' command, was transferred to the VII Fighter Command on 31 August. He too had done his job well, as the record of the Communications Section will attest.

The resulting change in command brought about the appointment to Commanding Officer as Captain Charles C. Dorsett, who had joined the squadron on Iwo Jima in October 1944. Since that time he had been Chief Area Controller for the Air Defense Control Center. His appointment was welcomed by all because of his previous fine record. With the departure of several officers imminent, changes were also made in other important positions in the squadron so that on 1 September the organization would continue with a completely new set of staff officers.

During the month of August, the squadron continued to operate the same equipment that it had been operating in July. This consisted of three VHF Homer Stations (one on Mt. Suribachi); one forward relay station, which provided four VHF Channels of communication for an SCR 527 GCI Station; and the VHF Station on Mt. Suribachi, which provided 10 channels of VHF Communication for the Air Defense Control Center and four of the channels for the new GCI Station. A second homer station was installed on Mt. Suribachi, making four homers in all, but it was never used for tactical missions because the end of the war come shortly after its installation.

The combined record of homings for all four stations included 102 VHF Directional Finding Homings. Uncle Dog Homings were given 13 days during the month. These figures are considerably lower than those of the previous month inasmuch as the number of fighter missions originating from Iwo Jima was also much lower than usual.

Lt. Philip N. Bailey, a GCI Controller, brought notoriety to both himself and to the squadron for his extraordinary performance of duty against the enemy on 4 August. During the only alert of the month, Lt. Bailey directed the interception and subsequent destruction of an enemy observation plane as it approached the island. The action occurred on the morning of 4 August and was accomplished under unfavorable circumstances, because of the heavy cloud cover. For this meritorious achievement, Lt. Bailey was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, and, as further distinction, the medal was presented by General Spaatz, who happened to be present on the island the following day.

After the cessation of hostilities, it became evident that we would not have to use all the stations then in operation. Consequently, one of the homer stations was taken out of operation, and

dismantled, leaving just two homer stations in operation at the end of August. There was no need for ten channels of communication for the Air Defense Control Center, so five of them were put out of operation. It is anticipated that further reduction will take place in the number of VHF Stations on the island in the near future. In the Control Section, the number of monitors working in the ADCC was lowered to five per shift. Fighter clerks continued to assist the Area Controllers and did a commendable job in that important position.

The Squadron Council continued to function, holding several meetings during the month to discuss problems of concern to the men in the squadron, and methods of improving morale. Athletic activities increased now that more time was available, and entertainment was stepped up to a movie every night, in addition to many USO Shows, which toured the island. We also continued to improve the squadron area wherever possible. The construction of a new shower room contributed greatly to the comfort of all members of the organization. With operations cut to a minimum, we anticipated greater problems in morale and in doing so we formulated plans to increase recreational and entertainment facilities as much as possible.

The history of this organization for the month of September 1945 has no spectacular events to relate, but is more a story of waiting and anxiety, and preparation for the long awaited return to the mainland. This does not mean that the squadron ceased to function as a tactical unit. The lessening of air activity around Iwo Jima has reduced considerably the operations of this squadron, and consequently the release from primary duty of many of the personnel within the organization. However, our equipment, which had been in almost continuous operation since our arrival on the island, was in need of a great deal of maintenance work. As a result of this, and in view of the fact that many of our personnel were departing, the personnel of the squadron still had a job to do.

The strength of the organization dropped from 240 assigned and 45 attached, on the first of the month, to 213 assigned and none attached on 30 September. All the attached personnel were returned to their respective organizations, and of our own men, 26 enlisted men and 2 officers were returned to the Zone of Interior. Inasmuch as we still have men on detached service to various organizations of the VII Fighter Command and the 599th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion in the Marianas, our actual present for duty strength on 30 September was 171 enlisted men and 18 officers. In view of the constant departure of personnel, it is evident that very soon we shall reach a stage where the squadron will cease to function as a unit unless replacements are received. We have been fortunate that our key personnel have not been affected much by demobilization, so that our mess, supply, and administration departments are proceeding to function as usual. These sections are doing an exceptionally good job of preparing the records and equipment of personnel who are leaving the squadron.

During the month of September 1945, the number of installations maintained by this organization was reduced to two, both of which are located on Mt. Suribachi. One in a Homer Station (SCR 575) and the other in a permanent installation of VHF Equipment, providing five to ten channels of ground to air communications as required for the MEW Radar Station and the Air Defense Control Center. Our controllers and monitors continued to perform their duties in the

latter stations, while our Communications Section operated the installations on the mountain. Inasmuch as there was no enemy activity, the main job of the Control Section was to direct the Combat Air Patrol and all air activity in the area. The total number of homings given by our personnel during the month of September were: 19 DF Homings, D/U Homings 19. The men who were relieved from operational duty were assigned to work on the equipment which had been removed from our previous sites. Most of the men were repairing, cleaning, painting, and greasing the equipment and vehicles, and equipment for which we would no longer have use was being boxed.

On 1 September M. Sgt. Frank I. Rogers, our Communications Chief, was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service to the squadron during its operations on Iwo Jima. The award was hailed by the entire squadron, inasmuch as M. Sgt. Rogers had displayed extraordinary ability and leadership and was well liked by all who had served with him. However, the greatest contribution to the morale of the squadron came with the awarding of battle honors for participation in the Air Offensive, Japan. (General Orders 29, Par. 1, Hq USASTAF, dated 18 Sep 45.) This tribute was received by the entire squadron as recognition of a job well done and it helped greatly to bring up the morale of the entire organization.

Other factors contributing to the well-being of the organization were: continued entertainment by movies and live shows on the island; organization of athletic leagues; and finally, the establishment of a school in conjunction with the 568th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion, to which this organization is attached. The school was held during duty hours, and every effort was made by the squadron to arrange schedules and duties so that all personnel who desired to attend classes could do so. Also, the VII Fighter Command arrange sightseeing tours over the empire of Japan for personnel within the Command. By the end of the month, several of our men had been on the trips and had enjoyed seeing the targets which planes of the VII Fighter Command struck in missions supported by this squadron.

For the particular mission for which it was trained and used, the Squadron adequately fulfilled all requirements. The VHF and Homing facilities were used to the fullest extent. These sections operated under adverse and changing conditions due to the terrain, the fierceness of the fighting and the changing needs. Even through enemy shelling and bombing, damage done by construction equipment and rough weather conditions, the VHF teams kept their equipment in operation. The Homer sets were called on for an unusually great amount of work due to the VLR fighter missions over water, and the constant overcast weather conditions in the area. Their vigilance and alertness contributed greatly to the success of the fighter VLR strikes. The Control section was used as a monitoring unit instead of as plotters and filterers, but adapted itself to the new job quickly and adequately.

Personnel, equipment and supply as set up in the TO&E were adequate for the mission. Supply through higher echelons was at all times adequate and complete. Equipment was satisfactory, in quantity and quality and was of the needed type in most all instances. Special requirements caused some modifications to be necessary. Personnel of the administrative and communications sections were adequate and were used to best advantage. The Control section officers used their training advantageously, but the enlisted personnel were not used for the jobs for which they

were trained. Highly trained and skilled plotters and filterers were used as radio monitors, which, while very important, did not call for the skilled and rated men of the Control section. In all other respects the command setup of administration, supply and operations was adequate and efficient.

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Sources  
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.