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Adobe Portable Document Format Version of:

The History of the 4th AA Command, Western Defense Command,
Jan 9 1942 to July 1 1945 (extract)

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This file contains 32 pages of the 4th Anti-Aircraft Command history, Chapter V, “Defense Operations on the West Coast.”

Featured is the “Battle of Los Angeles” cited by many as a UFO event. Also mentioned are Japanese attacks on the west coast, sightings and tracking of unidentified aircraft and ships, along the west coast of the United States and “the balloon menace.” Makes for interesting reading.

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Chapter V

DEFENSE OPERATIONS ON THE WEST COAST1. The "Battle of Los Angeles".

During the early months of 1942 the AA defenses of the West Coast were on an almost continuous alert. This was the period of the Japanese landings on the Aleutians and attacks were expected at Seattle and other Pacific Coast cities.⁽¹⁾ Many rumors were afloat that the Japs would bomb these cities on various dates and, in cooperation with the Japanese-Americans perhaps force a landing. It was rumored these attacks would be synchronized with others on Oahu, Australia, the Canal Zone and Alaska.⁽²⁾ A Jap informant in Los Angeles, for instance, reported to Headquarters 11th Naval District that there was a strong rumor among Japanese families, presumably based on a short-wave radio report from Japan, that on 18 February the West Coast would be bombed.⁽³⁾ A report to Headquarters 39th Brigade, Seattle, from G-2, Northwestern Sector, WDC, on 13 February stated that according to reliable Nisei sources it was rumored that "Japs will bomb West

(1) History of the 243d Slt Bn, p 5.

(2) WD Wire (signed Marshall) #2797 to CG, WDC, 6 Feb 42.

(3) TT, AG, WDC to CG Fourth AF et al, 15 Jan 42. It was this type of report and consequent events which determined General DeWitt to evacuate the Japanese from the Theatre of Operations. It should be noted however, that much of the information secured came from the Japanese residents of the Coast themselves; that no convictions for espionage or sabotage have been secured against any Japanese and that there is no evidence to prove more than a fraction of a per cent of them were in any sense disloyal. The popular hysteria cultivated over a decade by newspapers and inciters of racial hate were as instrumental in forcing General DeWitt's hand as was the very real danger that in case of a landing, sabotage of installations and aid to the enemy might be the determining factor in success or defeat.

Coast on February 18th".⁽¹⁾ These were but two of many such reports during the ten weeks after Pearl Harbor. It would seem the Japanese either had a plan or thus tried to hold as many U.S. military units in the continental United States as possible. The sinking of eight (8) out of twelve (12) Jap ships in the Straits of Macassar on 23-25 January may have scared them into trying to scare us, during the month of February, into holding our units at home.

The period from 7-15 February was the first one in which actual attacks, accompanied by sabotage, were expected.⁽²⁾ When nothing happened, this date was extended to the 18th by General DeWitt on the basis of a Nisei report.⁽³⁾ Based on a GHQ dispatch from General Marshall on 19 February, in which alarm was expressed at reports of "coordinated sabotage" between 15 February and 15 March, General DeWitt extended the alert warning to cover that period.⁽⁴⁾ Continued reports from friendly Japanese led him from time to time to repeat his injunction to be on the alert.⁽⁵⁾

Around 1800 on 23 February a friendly Japanese reported that a rumor was current among Japanese residents of Los Angeles that an attack would occur that night. An hour later (1905) a Jap submarine surfaced off the coast at Ellwood, California and at a range of 2500

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- (1) 39th Brig, Unit Report #2, 15 Feb 42.
 (2) Dispatch, Commander Pacific Naval Coastal Frontier (San Francisco) to CG, WDC, 6 Feb 42 (WDCF).
 (3) To CG each Sector and Command, 16 Feb 42 (WDCF).
 (4) TT WD 3328, 19 Feb 42 confirming warning by Sec of War on 17 Feb (Ltr HQ 000.51 (2-14-42)MSC-F-W, 17 Feb 42, to CG's Armies, Corps, Areas, et al).
 (5) Dispatch G-2, WDC to G-2, Alaska Defense Command, 24 Feb 42 (WDCF 384 Vol I #7).

yards and over a period of twenty (20) minutes, fired thirteen rounds of 5½ inch shell at the oil installations of the Barnsdall Company. (1)

Western Defense Command G-2 Summary for 7 March made the following analysis:

(1) General:

Thirteen shells were fired by a hostile submarine lying off ELLWOOD, California, at oil installations of the BARNSDALL Oil Company, the first shell being fired beginning about 7:05 PM, 23 February 1942. The firing lasted about 30 minutes. Of the 13 shells fired, 4 or 30% were duds. Only superficial damage was done and no storage tanks or other vital installations hit.

(2) Examination of shells

From the duds the following data was obtained:

- Diameter of projectile - 5.5"
- Length (with fuze unattached) - 21"
- Rotating band (width) - 1.75"
- Fuze attached to nose and provision made for booster
- Bursting charge - resembles our explosive "D"
- Preliminary examination of the projectile indicated no defects in the manufacture of the shell case.
- Detailed examination of duds not yet completed.

(3) Identification of sub

The hostile submarine was tentatively identified as one of the I type (four vessels numbered 5 to 8) from descriptions given by A. C. of S., G-2 Southern California Sector, on the night of the shelling. The testimony given by eye-witnesses later casts some doubt on this identification.

(1) Ltr G-2, WDC to Chief of Section, WDC, 6 March 42, (WDCF, 384 Vol I #9, WDC G-2 Summary #24 for 6-7 March 42. See also History 4th Fighter Command, 1942, Vol II, Sec I and Vol IV, "A-2 Messages" 918, 921 and 923. Los Angeles was put on yellow alert at 1956, on red at 2013, radio silence at 1957, "all clear" at 0003. Maj Gen Walter K. Wilson, CG, the SCS WDC telephoned General DeWitt at 2045 that bombers had come out from Bakersfield but "probably too late". Gen DeWitt ordered the platoon of 75s' back to Ellwood which General Wilson had removed to Los Angeles on 16 Feb (WDCF 384, 1942, Vol I). See also Ltr Gen Wilson to Gen DeWitt, 26 Feb 42, explaining why he removed the guns (WDCF 384/8, 1942, Vol I).

(4) Fire Adjustment methods

Analysis and plotting of each shell indicates very poor fire adjustment methods. The range was about 2500 yards.

(5) Probable Enemy Targets

Lack of knowledge or more probably, confusion or loss of direction, was responsible for the failure to strike at the Gasoline Plant which would have crippled productions at this company for some months. This target was prominently situated on the waters edge and directly opposite the point where the submarine first opened fire. It was less than 1000 yards from the center of impact of the grouped shots.

The next night after the firing on the Bainsdall Oil Refinery the famous "Battle of Los Angeles" occurred. This was the most noteworthy of all the "token raids" on the West Coast during the war and gave the Air defenses of Los Angeles a realistic experience in place of the simulated defense they had established for the abortive maneuver in December.

In view of the fact that a strong attack might have occurred with consequent damage of almost irreparable extent to the war effort in this crucial year, it is important to note that the AA units in Los Angeles at the time had their full complement of searchlights and 3" guns, but were 36.4% short of TBA in 37mm cannon, 42% short of caliber .50 machine guns, that camouflage was 42% complete, field fortifications 78% complete, that the total AA strength at the time was 294 officers and 8653 enlisted men, and that the "Estimate of Combat Efficiency" was "FAIR".⁽¹⁾ It is interesting to note that at this time the use of the SCR 268 was restricted to searchlight use, only

(1) 37th Brig Unit Report, 1 March 1942.

one (Btry B of the 65th CA) being used for gun-laying.

Naval intelligence at Los Angeles reported at 1900 on the evening of 24 February that an attack could be expected during the next ten hours and from that time on 37th Brigade Hq received a very large number of reports of flares and blinking lights near the defense plants and oilfields⁽¹⁾ and the 4th Interceptor Command put the coast from Monterey to the Mexican border on Yellow Alert⁽²⁾ until 2223 when it reverted to White. At 0144 an SCR 268 (3-T-4) picked up an unidentifiable aerial target (confirmed by two 270s');⁽³⁾ at 0200 there appeared on the Information Center's Operation Board an unidentified "target 120 miles west of Los Angeles . . . well tracked by radar, by 1st Lt Kenneth R Martin";⁽⁴⁾ all AA gunswere alerted at 0215 and between 0221 and 0232 were put on Green Alert, Status #1.⁽⁵⁾ This target between 0206 and 0227 was tracked to within three miles of the Los Angeles area and at 0221 the Regional Controller ordered a Blackout.⁽⁶⁾

(1) 37th Brigade "Report of Operations during the early morning, 25 Feb 1942" to the CG 4AAC, 27 Feb 42 (has nine inclosures), App B, Doc 28.
(2) A-2 Report AA Liaison Monitor, messages #946 and 949, History, 4th Ftr Comd, 1942, Vol IV.
(3) Par 5, App B, Doc 29 (Conference Report, 25 Feb 42).
(4) Major Milton E Durham, of LA Wing; his account is quoted in History of Los Angeles Fighter Wing, p 12-13. He says the Blue Alert was ordered at 0215, a Red Alert at 0223 "as the target approached from the Santa Maria area, still well tracked"; that the AA was put on Green Alert, Condition 1 by the Controller and "the tactical defense turned over to the antiaircraft" as no fighters were sent up. Immediately "the air over Los Angeles erupted like a volcano. . . ."
(5) "S-2 Report AA Liaison Monitor", "Journal of the Gun Commander" in Doc 28, App B. A-2 message #954 in 4th Ftr Comd History, 1942, Vol IV, says they were put on Green 1 at 0240. This may have been true of part.
(6) 37th Brig S-3 "Summary of Events", App B, Doc 28, Incl #4; 4AAC S-3 Rpt says Blackout was ordered at 0237 (4AACF 319 #2).

The Los Angeles papers reported the affair briefly over the next few days in a none-too-complimentary manner⁽¹⁾ and it received considerable attention in the national metropolitan dailies.⁽²⁾ Los Angeles citizens brought pressure to bear on the War Department through their Senators and Congressmen--especially Congressman Leland Ford of Los Angeles, and the War and Navy Department engaged in mutual recriminations as to whose planes were up over the city that night.

Secretary of War Stimson, according to the Los Angeles Times, expressed the belief there were fifteen planes from commercial bases over the city and implied the army was justified in shooting at them. Secretary of the Navy Knox held there were no planes over the city and that the AA had just had a case of explicable nerve jitters which had unfortunately resulted in a bombardment which was indirectly responsible for six deaths and considerable property damage. The Times held this was "not time for squabbling" and deprecated Congressman Ford's call for a congressional investigation; it felt it would be more to the point for the local army authorities to find out why so many of their shells failed to explode; why only one-fourth of the city's air-raid system functioned and what should be done about the fact that only one-sixth of the city's population could possibly get in the air-raid shelters.⁽³⁾

(1) Yet the LA Times had a temperate editorial on 27 Feb and the Examiner for 28 Feb called it "an instructive and beneficial experience An Air Raid alarm, the blackout, the prompt and energetic action of the Army's antiaircraft batteries revealed certain weaknesses but also demonstrated compensating strength".

(2) Rodney L Brink called it good practice for the real thing in an editorial in the Christian Science Monitor for 26 Mar 42.

(3) 27 Feb 42, "This is not Time for Squabbling".

From this time on the wires were hot with reports of flights of enemy planes. At 0243 the Gun Officer reported unidentified planes between Seal Beach and Long Beach; (1) at 0306 a balloon carrying a red flare was reported over Santa Monica and firing on it by batteries B, G and D of the 65th CA and B of the 205th CA began at 0307 on orders of the Controller to destroy it.

A total of 482 rounds of 3" were expended at the planes and "dirigible" without visible result (2) except Gun 3E3 reported setting one plane on fire. (3) At 0328 Btry G of the 78th CA reported 25 to 30 heavy bombers over the Douglas Plant. (4) At 0333 fifteen (15) planes were seen flying over Artesia and 581 rounds of 3" and 38 rounds of 37mm were expended on them by batteries B, C, D, G and H of the 78th and B, C and D of the 122d Gun Bns before they passed out to sea over Long Beach. (5) At 0355 batteries C and D of the 65th fired 100 rounds of 3" at another balloon over Santa Monica. Ten minutes later batteries B, C and D of the 78th opened up again on another target over Long Beach and fired 246 rounds of 3" before the target passed out to sea. (6) At 0403 Battery G of the 78th reported fifteen (15) planes over the Douglas Plant and six minutes later fifteen (15) more, or perhaps the same flight, approaching the plant again. At 0413 this

(1) S-2 Report AA Liaison Monitor (App B, Doc 28, incl #1).
(2) App B, Doc 28, incl #1, page 6.
(3) "Journal of the Slt Commander", incl #3 to ibid.
(4) "Journal of the Gun Commander", Incl #2 to ibid. S-2 Liaison Monitor records this at 0325.
(5) Appendix B, Doc 28.
(6) Ibid.

battery reported fifteen planes right over the plant but too high for the 37mm guns. At 0455 the GARE reported the Douglas Plant at Long Beach had been bombed but suffered no hits. (1)

At 0612 the Navy reported that a PRO had reported several planes shot down at 180th and Vermont Streets and the Antiaircraft Officer passed the news on to the Gun Commander. (2)

At 0645 the Gun Commander put the AA on Red Alert #1 as friendly flights were scheduled to leave the area. By 0715 it was too light for the searchlights and at 0720 the Blackout was lifted; Hollywood, it is interesting to note, had lighted up like a Christmas tree at 0635. (3)

Around 0830, Colonel Phillips, Army liaison officer with the Navy at San Diego reported three Coast Guard planes were up all night flying in an oval forty miles apart offshore over the ocean between Santa Barbara and Long Beach. One of these planes had flown from San Pedro to San Juan Capistrano, landing at 0200.

At 0940, Colonel Phillips reported again to Fourth Air Force that he was misinformed; that the Coast Guard planes had not made the scheduled oval flight which he had previously reported. He added further that no 11th Naval District planes had been up after 1800 on the evening of the 24th. (4)

(1) "Journal of the Gun Commander", incl #2 to App B, Doc 28.
(2) "S-2 Report AA Liaison Monitor", incl #1 to ibid.
(3) Ibid, page 19.
(4) Tel Conversation, Colonel Moon and Colonel Kiel, Fourth Air Force, 0955, 25 Feb 42, page 118 in History 4th Fighter Command, 1942, Vol I. See also A-2 Messages 983 and 988 in ibid, Vol IV.

An exhaustive investigation at Brigade headquarters lasting from noon until 1715 hours brought out some interesting but very conflicting testimony. A few samples of the observations were as follows: (1)

1. The night was clear and black with just a trace of high haze.
2. Colonel Henry C. Davis, Executive Officer and Acting Commander of the 37th Brigade, thought for a few minutes that he saw from 10-15 planes over Inglewood but soon decided it was drifting smoke from AA bursts. He did not believe any planes at all were present. (2)
3. Lt Buchanan saw from 20-30 planes over the city from the roof of his hotel at 8th and Flower; he estimated they were at 20,000 feet and flying 150 mph. Three guards with him saw them in the searchlights and they could hear their motors, but could not pick them up in their field glasses.
4. Several civilians testified the 7-8 planes they saw were very high and looked like birds in the searchlight beams (perhaps they were).
5. Colonel Watson of the 203d CA at 0300 saw a balloon but discovered the meteorological laboratory had sent up a balloon and hence ordered the units of his command to hold their fire. He saw no planes.
6. Capt Molder of the 203d CA saw lights pick up a meteorological balloon at 0300 and firing commenced upon it at a height of 8-9000 feet.
7. Captain Cohen of the 214th CA identified the balloon as a meteorological one when it was illuminated by the searchlights; two SCR 268's did not pick it up although they searched.
8. Captain Bailey of the 214th CA searched with his SCR 268's at the intersection of the searchlight but got nothing.
9. Lt Gaines from the CP on top of a five story building at Anaheim and Daisy Streets could find no target with his binoculars in the intersection of his two lights nor did his SCR 268 give anything.

(1) 37th Brig "Testimony of Officers, Enlisted Men and Civilians", (Incl #7 to Doc 28 in App B).
(2) Ibid and Ltr General Fickle to General DeWitt, 27 Feb 42 (WDGF 384/8 Vol I).

10. Sgt Bowman of the 214th at 0310 saw five planes with his naked eye from 310 San Diego Street; they appeared to be bombers at 30,000 feet, flying in a wedge which changed to a "T". He was positive he saw them illuminated by 15-20 searchlights and they appeared as planes always did.
11. Lt Miles in SE Los Angeles with glasses saw a "V" of three planes at 9000 feet which flew two courses (most observers saw two courses flown.)
12. Lt Head of the 122d Gun Bn saw a "V" of three planes at 9000 feet but his SCR 268's picked up nothing.
13. Lt Anderson of the 78th CA at the Douglas Plant at Long Beach saw a plane through his elevation scope and also his binoculars (0325); his height finder read 6,725 yards. A few minutes later he saw a flight of three planes through his binoculars at the same height.
14. Lt Bendixon of the 122d and two of his men counted 14 planes flying high and slow.
15. Pvt Gaylor of B Battery 122d saw a flight of five planes in a "V" and the battery fired on them.
16. Captain Hyde of the 3d CA (Harbor Defenses) at 0415 saw two flights of 6 planes each. Colonel Barshong of the 265th CA (Harbor Defenses) saw a wedge of three.

General Fickel who happened to be in Los Angeles at the time and was present at the investigation telephoned General DeWitt immediately after its close (1715). He reported that the testimony had been very conflicting with some witnesses claiming they had seen as high as 50 planes. Others had claimed that red signal flares had been sent up in strings or clusters of three or four. One officer had testified he had talked to a civilian who saw some of them lighted in a vacant lot and since his name was learned the FBI was investigating. (1) General Fickel believed one target was two meteorological balloons re-

(1) WDC File 384/8 Vol I, #178 SM; Confirmed by Ltr id to id, 27 Feb 42, loc cit.

leased by AA units rear Hollywood and that probably from 1-5 planes did fly over Los Angeles from the northwest part of the city toward the flares on the south side near Downey. He had three possible theories:

1. A civilian flyer was up and refuses to admit it.
2. Some flyer flew into the area from Mexico or the interior of the United States.
3. Japanese submarine-launched planes were over the city. Height reported of 20,000 feet however, did not fit such a theory.

An interesting sidelight on this third point is that when General Delos C. Emmons, CG The Hawaiian Department, heard of the affair at Los Angeles, he reported to General DeWitt that just such a sub-based plane on 23 February had operated off the west coast of Oahu between Miihau [an island south of Oahu] and Honolulu. It had flown at about 95 knots an hour and stayed out of gun range and the interceptors had missed. (1)

General Goodman in his report of the "Conference" summarized the lessons learned by the affair: (2)

1. Rate of target travel should have been given more weight after opening fire in order to avoid excessive expenditure of ammunition.
2. Over-illumination of target violated searchlight SOP by putting altogether too many on-target; platoon commanders are responsible for seeing lights are put out in such cases so that the target will be properly illuminated.
3. A definite schedule for sending up meteorological balloons should be established and under no circumstances should they be put up when guns are on a Green Status.

(1) Transcript of Tel Conv General DeWitt to Lt Smith, Aide to Admiral Greenslade of 12th Naval District, San Francisco (WDCP 384.8 Vol I) 5 Mar 42.

(2) App B, Doc 29, page 4. See also Summary by Brigade S-3, Maj Henry M. Spengler, App B, Doc 28, incl #4.

4. Responsibility for opening fire should rest with the Anti-aircraft Commander--not the Controller.
5. Flares or supposed signals should be reported by group commanders to local ground force commanders only; Brigade Headquarters should be informed only in unusual cases.

Another conclusion is that which General DeWitt made on 22 March to the Commanding Generals of the Sectors, the Communications Zone and the Ninth Corps Area:

"It has been definitely ascertained that the blackout and anti-aircraft firing in the Los Angeles Area on the morning of 25 February, 1942, were caused by the presence of from one to five unidentified airplanes. While it is possible that these airplanes were launched from Japanese submarines, it is more likely that they were civilian or commercial planes, operated by unauthorized pilots. It is directed that every means available be taken to locate unauthorized airplanes, their pilots, their landing fields and their places of storage. State and Federal agencies concerned may be called on for cooperation, but the primary responsibility of elimination of this menace rests with the army". (1)

The Unit Report of the 37th Brigade a week later (1 March 42) summarized the whole matter by recording that 1-15 hostile or unidentified planes were observed between 0215 and 0415 over Los Angeles; that gun batteries of Groups 2 and 3 fired 1401 rounds of 3" and 39 rounds of 37mm; no planes were shot down and no bombs were dropped. (2)

Ernie Pyles' column of 5 March added his bit; he had seen no target but had enjoyed the display of searchlight and shellbursts and the way the searchlights held the target unseveringly right across the sky. The city was very quiet; the blackout not complete. (3)

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- (1) 4ACF 383.4 #3.
 - (2) 4AACF
 - (3) Los Angeles Times, 5 March 1942.

The writer is unable to resolve the controversy from the data available but the following telephone conversation between General DeWitt and Major General A. D. Surles at Washington on 7 March summarizes some interesting points: (1)

"One to five but most probably three planes appeared over Beverly Hills at an elevation of about 18,000 feet, flying very slowly. They were picked up by the searchlights and followed through to Long Beach and then to sea. We know they did not come from Mexico, at least I am assured by General Cardenas, whom I immediately communicated with, that they did not come from either Baja California, Sinaloa or Sonora. He is definite in his statements to me. We know that there were no Army planes....no Navy planes, Coast Guard, and civilian planes--CAA planes....We are still checking through Nevada and Arizona. The FBI and the Governors of the States, as well as are our own troops. But I am certain nothing will be found. At the time of the bombardment of the oil derricks and dock at Elwood, one submarine carrying two guns, one forward and one aft, came within 500 yards of the coast and was seen--it was in daylight, just at dusk--it was, and all its characteristics were observed. That submarine, which has a tonnage displacement of 1955 tons, is listed in the Navy document on Japanese boats as carrying one aircraft and a catapult. Right after the shelling and after the Los Angeles incident I sent a radio to GHQ and asked them to check with ONI to find out whether or not the Navy Department had any information that...the aircraft had been removed. He said, no, that the latest information from the Navy was that they were still carrying them....My belief is that those three planes...were launched from submarines somewhere close into shore under our detectors....I am told that that could be done if they came in very close to shore. The sea that night was like glass, and the Navy informs me that the planes could have been launched from the submarines and have been taken on again due to the calmness of the water....I received shortly after that a radio-gram from General Emmons in Hawaii stating that he had heard about this incident at Los Angeles and that they had had a similar one on February 23....The question has been asked several times why the pursuits were not sent up. The reason was that we didn't have much pursuit--we had 15 planes in three different places--a total of 45; if that was a reconnaissance preceding a carrier... we did not want to have our pursuit in the air, half out of gas when the attack came in. We didn't want to take the chance.

(1) WDCF 384.8. See also Tel Conv General DeWitt and General Clark, GHQ, Washington, 7 March in 4AACF.

The pursuit was alerted, the pilots were in their planes, their engines were warm and their propellers turning, already to take off to intercept any attack that would possibly have followed the reconnaissance....The bombers were alerted, warmed up, crews in planes, ready to go in search for the carrier if the attack should materialize. That's why no planes were sent up. It was a fine tactical decision. General Fickel was there at the time and so was my antiaircraft Officer, Colonel Murphy, and the decision was made by Colonel Israel, which I think was correct...."

In any event, General DeWitt commended the AA units of the 37th Brigade for their alertness, preparedness and initiative during the affair and this was indorsed down to the units by General Gardner and General Goodman.⁽¹⁾ In the same manner a commendation was directed to 4th Interceptor Command units through General Fickel and General Kepner. Brigadier General Kepner, commanding the 4th Interceptor Command, on 14 March, in turn congratulated the personnel of the 4th AA Comd for the "efficient and exemplary manner" in which they had performed and for "this splendid example of efficient operation and high state of readiness...to meet any situation".⁽²⁾ So it would appear all commanders were pleased, if not completely satisfied with the conduct of this celebrated affair.⁽³⁾

2. Other Defense Operations in 1942.

Throughout 1942 after 25 February rumors and reports of attacks, sabotage and enemy plans were numerous in the various AA Brigade Unit Reports--especially that of the 39th Brigade, and in the WDC G-2 Sum-

(1) WDCF 201.22, Ltr dated 26 Feb 42. A copy is Doc 41b in App B, History of the 37th Brigade.

(2) 4AACF 330.13 #3.

(3) UP report in Los Angeles TIMES for 27 March said the Hsin Kiang, Manchukuo radio declared on 27 March: "Roosevelt is a liar. He said in a fireside chat that the United States Coast would be safe from enemy attack and submarines....two days later U-boats sank eight ships off the American Coast and two waves of Jap planes flew over Los Angeles and its aircraft factories.

maries. These chiefly concern unidentified ships, submarines and planes but also enumerate wire-cutting, fires and minor enemy operations on or near the Coast. These were naturally more numerous and more important during 1942 when the Jap cause was in the ascendancy and the Allies had not yet stopped their expansion, than they were in 1943 and 1944 when they had been put on the defensive. It should be remembered particularly that this is the period when occupation of Alaska by the Japs was under way. An enumeration of a few selected items is here included to illustrate the actual and potential operational activities of the units of the 4th AA Comd. Unit reports are practically void of alerts or records of sabotage, sinkings or alarming events after December 1942.

1. Seattle, 22-28 February 1942: 26 February at 0300 radar tracked unidentified ship for 30 minutes, 30 miles west of Strait of Juan de Fuca. Tampering with AA wire continuous during the week; one "civilian" caught cutting wire by Btry F, 63d CA(AA) and turned over to the FBI. Many reports current of plans of Japs to sabotage Barrage Balloons in area. (1)
2. Seattle, 1-7 March 1942: Two (2) submarines sighted off coast on 3 March and another on 6 March. Three unidentified planes tracked for forty-six (46) minutes on 5 March (1409 to 1455). (2)
3. Seattle, 8-14 March: Submarine twice reported on 13 March. Minor sabotage reported in Seattle area. "Members of the Silver Shirts are known to be exchanging intelligence". (3)
4. Los Angeles, 28 March 1942: WD reported to General DeWitt that information from six (6) separate counter espionage sources indicate possibility of a sabotage effort in Los Angeles area on or about 28 March by "Japanese residents therein". Alert should be established 27-29 March but Navy does not apprehend naval or air attack from Japan. (4)

(1) 39th Brigade Unit Report #5, 29 Feb 42.
(2) Ibid #6, 8 March
(3) Ibid #7, 15 March.
(4) WD Dispatch #4661 (signed Marshall) 1235, 25 Mar 42 (WDCF 384/8).

5. West Coast, April 1942: Kilsco K. Haan, Korean patriot who correctly predicted the attack on Pear Harbor, states second phase of Jap war will start in late April and will include attacks on Siberia, Alaska, Hawaii and the Pacific Coast. Navy reports Mexican sources indicate attacks during this period and that Jap aggression is indicated in early April against northwest coast of Mexico and the airplane installations of San Diego and Los Angeles. It is also reported that the Japs plan to occupy Christmas Island on 31 March. (1)
12 April 1942: Submarine sighted 150 miles west of Prince Rupert. 16 April: submarine sighted two (2) miles west of Reef Point, Vancouver Island. 18 April, six unidentified boats sighted by U.S. Destroyer Williamson between Kodiak and Seward. During week of 12-18 April, 304th CA Barrage Balloon Bn at Seattle had some field wire cut and WDC reported wires cut in Billingham and Seattle Sub-Sectors; the 39th Brigade reported the "usual number of unidentified boats, flares and cerax flashes" (this was a customary final paragraph in 39th Brigade Unit Reports). (2) 21 April: Navy reported six (6) unidentified planes headed MNW at high speed [Seattle Region].
23 April: Jap student remarked in school there was no cause to worry about raids until 26 April. (3)
6. 28 May 1942: Secretary of War Stimson issued warning today that Jap raids on the Pacific Coast "seem inevitable". Doolittle's "raid meant a most serious loss of face which can be wiped out only by a return blow....We are on the alert...." (4)
7. West Coast, May 1942: At end of May and near the time of the Battle of Midway (3-7 June) it was expected attacks might be made on the West Coast as the Jap navy was roaming freely from the East Indies to Japan. General DeWitt was greatly concerned with the lackadaisical attitude taken by the personnel of many of the harbor defenses of San Francisco. (5) All AA units on the Coast were on special alert during the period 25 May to 8 June as an attack was definitely expected. (6)
8. Seattle Region, June: Many submarines were sighted during the month of June; on 19 June the SS Fort Comsum was torpedoed off Cape Blanco, Oregon (47°N- 125W); Vancouver Island radio station on Estavan Point was shelled by a submarine for forty minutes at 2220 on 20 June. Many unidentified vessels were

(1) WDC, G-2 Summary #37, 28-31 March 1942.
(2) 39th Brigade, Unit Report, 19 Apr 42.
(3) Ibid, 26 Apr 42.
(4) INS in LA Times, 28 May 42
(5) Tel Conv, Gen DeWitt to Lt Col Honaker (Liaison Officer for Gen Gilbreath, SF POE), 31 May 42 (WDCF 384/8 Vol I).
(6) History of the 37th Brig, 29; 37th Brig Unit Report #19, 7 June 42.

seen and reported; one shelled the Oregon Coast south of Ft Stevens on 21 June without damage. (1) On 23 June the Air Base Hospital at Walla Walla was destroyed by fire with a loss of \$200,000 and sabotage was suspected. The same day the SS Camden was fired on with torpedoes off Cape Blanco, Oregon (43°N- 125°W). (2)

- 9. Seattle, 8 September: At 0620 a forest ranger saw an unidentified plane drop a bomb on Mt Emily which started a forest fire. He put out the fire and turned bomb fragments over to authorities--fragments weighted about fifty (50) pounds. Water-proofed impregnated pellets were scattered over a wide area; they were triangular in form with a hole in center. It was estimated the bomb weighed one hundred fifty (150) pounds; it had Jap characters on nose fragment. Plane appeared to be a single float type 95. Since enemy submarines were daily reported off the Washington-Oregon coast it doubtless was a submarine launched plane. Report of an enemy submarine bombed off Cape Blanco later the same day "may have some connection". (3)

- 10. Portland Region, September 1942: At 0610 PWT, 9 September, a small, slow square-winged, single engine, single-float bi-plane flew inland thirteen (13) miles south of Brookings, Oregon and dropped a 132 pound incendiary bomb of Jap manufacture which started a small fire. The plane then flew back to sea. At 1053 the pilot of an A-29 under Navy operational control sighted a strange looking submarine of about 300 feet length and bombed same as it submerged at 1055. It was not again seen but it was not discovered whether or not it was hit. It was known several enemy submarines had been operating off the Pacific Coast for some time. (4)

- 11. Portland Region, October 1942: Two tankers were torpedoed off the southeastern coast of Oregon on 4-5 Oct. From such a submarine a plane was launched which flew over Cape Blanco shortly

(1) Republican Senator Rupert C. Holman, of the Senate Military Affairs Special Committee, severely criticized the 4th AF because Oregon and Washington were as inadequately protected and complained that nothing was being done about it. He was informed by Hq 4th FC that fighters and bombers were not available to protect all the coast of these states in every case of attack. Tel Conv, Col McCaulay to Gen Kepner, 24 July 42 in History 4th Ftr Command, 1942, Vol III, Doc 145.

(2) 39th Brig, Unit Report, 27 June.

(3) 39th Brig, Unit Report #33, 14 Sept 42.

(4) Memo to the C of S, 333.5/101 (IG) dtd 5 Oct 42, to CG WDC, signed Col John W. Tyndall, IGD, Subj: "Investigation of Dropping of Incendiary Bomb near Brookings Oregon, 9 September 1942" (WDCF 384/22).

This document is 16 pages long and with exhibits A and B of the Investigation, runs to 100 pages. See also WDC G-2 Summary #97, 11-14 Sep 42.

before daylight on 29 September and probably dropped several incendiaries, which, due to dampness of the undergrowth did not start a fire. Flashes were seen, explosions heard but investigators were unable to find the location where the incendiaries were dropped despite some smoke that hung in the vicinity for several hours. Thirteen persons in different areas heard the motor of the plane although none saw it. (1)

3. Occasions for Defense Action 1942-1945.

During 1943-1944 there were many unidentified targets but few alerts. Numerous unidentified planes were picked up and tracked but usually they were identified before lost. One instance illustrates them all: on 27 July 1943 at 0244 the San Francisco Controller reported to the Los Angeles Wing Hq that Japs had landed at Coos Bay, Oregon. Fighter squadrons were alerted at Van Nuys, Glendale and Santa Ana Army Air Fields. At 0339, the situation was reported "Negative", the alert had been caused by incompetence in reading marine signals at Coos Bay. Army, Navy and Air Corps units went back to bed. It may be said in passing that although this particular affair did not appear on the Wing Operations or radar boards at Los Angeles, actually between 8 December 1941 and 8 October 1943, a total of 611,877 "unidentified targets" were actually plotted on them. (2) These occasions gave the personnel of the Air Defense Regions practice in keeping prepared for a sneak attack, as for instance when the Seattle JOC alerted the Seattle Air Defense Region on 11 December 1944, as a result of the report of a Myrt II Jap plane over Indian Island in Puget Sound; (3) or as on 23 January 1945 when the San Francisco

(1) WDC G-2 Summary #106, 9-13 October 1942.

(2) History of the Los Angeles Fighter Wing, p 20, 22.

(3) December Chapter (1944), p5, History of the 243d AAA Slt Bn; December Chapter (1944), p3, History of the 631 AAA Group.

automatic weapons units were put on Orange 1 from 2144 to 2330 when alerted by the AA00 as the result of unidentified planes over the Farallons. (1)

During the months of December 1944 and January and February 1945 a number of rubber, wax or paraffin treated paper balloons of Jap manufacture were seen and found in various parts of the Northwest from Oregon to Montana. Attached to some of these were small bombs varying from three to thirty-three pounds in weight and of various shapes and purposes. Set afloat in the prevailing Westerlies they are presumably an experiment by the Japs in setting fires, creating alarm and perhaps are a precursor of attempts at biological warfare. Since the balloons are from 30 to 40 feet in diameter, of about 17,500 cu ft capacity, and can lift not more than 360 pounds at 26,000 feet or about 1000 pounds at sea-level, their chief value is as a nuisance unless they could be dispatched in enormous number.

Thus far (2 July 45) a total of 220 have actually been found in various parts of the western two-thirds of the United States with the greatest concentration in the states of the Northwest, Canada and Alaska to the Aleutians. Bombs or the verified remains of bombs have been found in 28 cases. Some balloons have been shot down and not recovered; many have come to earth unseen and will continue to be found for a long time. (2) It is reasonable to believe that some of the

(1) 543d AW Bn Unit Rpt #156, 28 Jan 45.

(2) 4AAC Ltr 45-1, "Intelligence Summ", 21 Jan 45, par 9, 11, and 15; Section II, a summ of WDC G-2 Periodic Rpt #160, 20 Jan 45 App B, Dec 60. See also 4AAC Ltr 45-2, "Intell Summ", 28 Jan 45, par 1, 5 and 20 and Sec II, App B, Doc 61; also 45-3, 5 Feb 45 par 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 22, and Sec II, "Biological Warfare", App B, Doc 62; 45-4, 11 Feb 45 Doc 63; 45-5, 18 Feb 45, Doc 64; 45-6, 26 Feb 45, Doc 65. This last ltr has an excellent digest of AAA Sit and Com operations on the Western Front. See also App B, Docs 66 to 71 which are 4AAC Intell Summ for Apr and May 1945.

forest fires in Oregon and Washington in the summer of 1945 were caused by Jap incendiaries; Biological Warfare is a distinct possibility and every agency of the Western Defense Command has taken special precautions to be prepared for any eventuality. At a conference at Hq WDC on 17 January attended by representatives of WDC, FAF, 9th Service Command, 4th AA Command and the Navy, the balloon menace was carefully considered and defense agencies coordinated to combat it. It was agreed that FAF planes would shoot them down and that those found on land would continue to be reported and the materiel turned in to WDC for investigation and evaluation; constant vigilance would be maintained and information coordinated by all defense agencies. (1) Hq WDC gave its Sector Commanders chief responsibility for securing the balloons and Hq FAF issued considerable meteorological and other data regarding them to all its units. (2)

The 4th AA Command was asked to submit plans of defense premised upon the possible seriousness of balloon attacks in conjunction with light air raids. This was complied with under three plans. (3) (A) Based on the premise that the balloon attack would be of its present limited nature no change in disposition of AAA units would be made but they might be put on a higher alert status. (B) Under conditions

(1) FAF ltr 452.4/3, 22 Jan 45 "Procedures and Policies Relative to Japanese Balloon Incidents".

(2) FAF Ltrs 452.4/W/3, 19 Mar 45, "Coordination of Intelligence Activities Relating to Japanese Balloons", and 452.4, 26 March "Japanese Balloons". Also FAF (S) "Meteorological Study in Connection with Japanese Balloons", prepared by 2d Lt Charles A Carlson Jr, dtd 20 May 45.

(3) 4AAC Ltr 660.2 (PT), 25 Jan 45, "Survey of Proposed AAA Defenses Against Enemy Attacks, Including Balloon Borne Raids"

of a persistent balloon attack, especially if incendiaries were used, some of the AAA gun and searchlight units would be re-sited nearer the coast for radar and visual surveillance and the destruction of the balloons by gun fire. (c) Under threat of a comprehensive, coordinated and sustained attack with incendiaries and biological bombs, the re-sitement would occur but augmentation by more AAA units would be immediately necessary to render the balloon and/or air defense effective.

Integration of Harbor Defense AA, ANTB batteries, and Naval and commercial vessels in harbors would be continued in accordance with FAF Defense Memo 56-34, dated 11 August 1944.

Local planning for these three varieties of defense were drawn up in detail by the respective Group, Battalion and Brigade Hq charged with the Air Defense of the Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles Air Defense Regions.

From a defense viewpoint the Jap balloon situation has created interest on the part of AAA personnel and given FAF fighter pilots practice in search and firing missions. The balloons were usually so high and so many reports were made on imaginary balloons, "net" balloons, etc, that the report for search missions is usually "Negative".

The only fatal accident from the bombs attached to balloons occurred at Ely, Oregon, 5 May, when the wife of Archie E Mitchell of Lakeview and five children picnicing in Quartz Pass were killed by one which they picked up. (1)

(1) 4AAC Intelligence Summary #8, 4 June 45, B-71, and 4AAC "Incident Log" for 7 May 1945.

Newspaper accounts of the tragedy with vague hints as to the origin of this bomb created little furor in Oregon and Washington and the secrecy in which the details and speculation were veiled aroused public curiosity. Hence on 22 May the War Department made a press release of a general nature which was calculated to allay any alarm as the result of newspaper accounts of the death of these six people. Papers all over the country carried it and there was no serious increase in manifestations of alarm on the part of the public, although reports of balloons "seen" quintupled on the West Coast. This release followed by a few days (17 May) a special release on the West Coast by WDC to all schools which briefly covered the same data but which it was hoped and enjoined would be kept entirely oral and would not be commented on in the newspapers. Data regarding the details of and authority for this prior release are not available to the writer but it appears its purpose was to keep the information oral; the affair, however, stimulated so much curiosity that the WD followed it with the press release mentioned above. A more detailed account of the balloons seen and found in the western half of the US will be found in the Histories of the Fourth Air Force⁽²⁾ and the Western Defense Command.⁽³⁾

(1) Confidential Summaries were issued by the Office of the Chief, Combat Intelligence Division, FAF, from 17 January. Hq WDC and AAF Hq at Washington also issued intelligence summaries and letters on the subject.

(2) This History had not yet been started in January 1945 but it should by all means be undertaken as the "overall picture" of the West Coast Defense, including liaison with all branches of the services of the US Canada and Mexico will otherwise never be secured. Hq WDC is directly under the War Dept and has never been directed to prepare a history.

Despite the several hundred per cent increase in reports of balloons seen since this publicity occurred the actual number verified or found has markedly decreased. It is not known whether this is due to less favorable wind currents in the summer, to cessation of activity at the point of their release due to the incessant bombings to which Japan is now (10 July) being subjected, both, or for other reasons.

Data regarding separate balloon incidents after 23 May was no longer classified secret or confidential by the War Department, but intelligence summaries, technical reports on equipment, photographs, or conclusions relative to hazards, threats--including bacteriological warfare, continued to be so classified. It would appear the balloon threat was largely over by 1 July 1945 but its potentialities will offer food for thought for years to come.

With the inauguration of Combined AAF-AAA Training under the Fourth Air Force on 6 August 1943, 39th and 37th Brigade Hq became responsible for the storage and care of a reserve of ammunition for use by "Army Ground Force units in the case of an emergency". This was to be issued whenever necessary to AA units located at various Army Air Fields within the Western Defense Command in case of an emergency. These units were not a part of the 4th AA Command until 1 May 1944 but were stationed for Combined AAF-AAA Training under the Fourth Air Force, and by this scheme were insured an adequate supply of ammunition if an emergency developed where they would be called on to defend the West Coast. (1)

In December due to the cessation of Combined Training at Corvallis and Salem this reserve was maintained at 101st Brigade and 37th Brigade Hq. The reserve at San Francisco was made up of 2000 rounds of 90mm and 6400 rounds 40mm; at Los Angeles 2000 rounds of 90mm and 3200 rounds 40mm. (2)

During 1942, 1943 and 1944 much trouble was experienced with faulty tracer elements in 37 and 40mm ammunition; Maj Steele, RA Gunnery Officer, noted that half the 37mm fired at San Diego in September 1942 blew out its tracer; (3) at Seattle he noticed the tracer fell out at 1000 yards and the self-destructive element failed to work; (4) visibility was poor and variable in range; reports from the 4th AA Command were at least partly responsible for the development of a much improved tracer element. (5)

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- (1) WPC Ltr 471 (Ord) 6 Aug 43 to CG 4AAO (4AAOF 471 #38).
 (2) Id to Id 10 Dec 43 (4AAOF 471 #54).
 (3) App C, Doc 3, p 6.
 (4) Ibid, p 7.
 (5) Par 4, Dec 26, App C and Par 2c in Doc 27, loc cit.

all contributed invaluable data from which a sound advanced radar program was developed. Here it is only fair to say that the 37th AAA Brigade was by far the most competent and productive of new ideas.

The peak of radar activity was reached in the 4th AA Command in January 1944 when 270 radar sets of various types were in operation. Following is a breakdown of the types and number of separate sets held by each brigade at the time:

	<u>SCR-268</u>	<u>SCR-545</u>	<u>SCR-547</u>
33d AAA Brigade	28	2	4
37th AAA Brigade	79	3	12
39th AAA Brigade	54	3	8
101st AAA Brigade	67	2	8
	<u>228</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>32</u>

It was during this period from January 1942 to January 1944 that the greatest strides were made in developing tactics, knowledge of the equipment and training of personnel in maintenance. It was the opinion of many, including British military observers, that knowledge and application of radar was on a higher plane in the 4th AA Command during this period than in any other such organization. This was due in large measure to competent direction by Major Clark but even more so to the abundance of well qualified officers and enlisted specialists in the Brigades.

In Seattle, the Brigade Radar Officer was Capt John G Mooring who was strongly reinforced by Capt Duncan Brown, a very well qualified radar officer. Lt Gerald D Van Pelt, later Lt Colonel, also figured prominently in the area.

In San Francisco, the 101st AAA Brigade radar activities were headed by Major Mayhall, with Capt Combs as assistant. Major Cohen B Byrd,

needed protection but the men and materiel were not available. General Gardner on 15 March, for instance, pointed out to the CG's WDC and Fourth Air Force that he definitely needed thirteen (13) OA(AA) regiments, one (1) gun bn, three (3) AWpns Bn's and two (2) BB battalions to adequately protect present assignments alone. (1)

By 5 May the War Department was able to promise that as they became available there would be assigned to the Western Defense Command 15 regiments, 14 gun battalions, 10 AWpns battalions, 4 Slt battalions and 25 BB battalions. (2) It would appear that at the time less apprehension was felt for the safety of the West Coast than for the East Coast for the same tentative allotment gave to the East Coast 45, 26, 20 and 6 units respectively to its defense. (3)

By 30 September the total AA strength on the Coast was 14 OA(AA), 2 Gun battalions (Sep), 2 Searchlight battalions and 6 Barrage Balloon battalions. General Gardner figured that by minimum requirements he still needed 3 regiments, one (1) separate gun battalion, seven (7) AWpns battalions, 4 1/3 Searchlight battalions and seven (7) Barrage Balloon battalions. (The distribution of these units, both on-site and desired, is given in App B, Doc 37.) Fortunately or unfortunately the public was not aware how inadequate the coast defenses were for air defense and the newspapers did not enlighten them; thus Johnny Noble in the Oakland Tribune for 28 August 1942 ecstatically concluded that there was probably no place

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- (1) Ltr, 4AAOF 660.2 (S) #8.
 - (2) WD Ltr AG 381 (5-18-42)MC-E-M, 25 May 42 to CG WDC et al (4AAOF 660.2, #27). Gen DeWitt had the CG's 4th AF and 4th Ftr Command prepare plans for the proper location of these units as they became available. Ltr 10 Aug 42, WDOF 381(AA), #7.
 - (3) 1st Ltr cited in note just above.

on earth as well protected against attack from the sky as was the Pacific Coast. On 5 September he wrote concerning defense preparations, especially AAA; "It is unbelievable that so much could have been done in the eight months that we have been at war"; the antiaircraft boys believe they "can shoot down enemy planes as fast as they come into range".

During the summer of 1942 the three inch AA guns were gradually replaced by the new 90mm⁽¹⁾ being manufactured by Chevrolet, Oliver and Wheland--carriages by Allis Chalmers, Buckeye, Link Belt, Worthington Pump, York Safe and Lock, Hoe and Co, and Otis Elevator.⁽²⁾ This gun's adoption marked a great advance over the 3"; first used in the Pacific on 7 August by the Marines at Guadalcanal, Lt Col K W Benner, USMC, testified he would rather have one battery of 90's than three of 3".⁽³⁾

About the same time the new 40mm Bofors AWpn (manufactured by Chrysler with carriages by Firestone) became available, although the 37mm was still manufactured.⁽⁴⁾ In many cases the continental units were given the new 40 and shipped their 37's overseas to units which were thoroughly familiar with it and the M-5 Director.⁽⁵⁾ Advance information on the 40mm (later incorporated in TM 9-252) was given the 4th AA Command in April. This gun was greatly superior to the 37mm but its adoption necessitated a great many minor modifications to perfect its usefulness. By mid-September practically all AWpns units in the

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- (1) 12 90's arrived with the 369th CA(AA) (Old) at San Diego on 5 May; 16 with the 803d CA(AA) at LA on 28 June. (History of 37th AAA Brigade, page 28, 30.)
- (2) "Extract from Program Demonstration of New Ordnance Materiel, Aberdeen Proving Ground" 18 Mar 42 (4AAGF 472, #10).
- (3) Interviewed by Lt Col Robert Totten. W.D.AAF Ltr to Director of Air Defense, Hq AAF, "Rpt on Marine AA at Guadalcanal" (4AAGF 350.05, #17).
- (4) Ibid.
- (5) 4AAGF #472, Docs 14, 16, 20, 41.

4AAC were equipped with it. (1) Until that time shortages of T/O equip-
ment continued to exist (see next page).

The mixed equipment which existed to a greater or lesser degree
in all units during the summer of 1942 is well illustrated in Btry F
of the 603d CA(AA) at Los Angeles. On 1 July it had two 40mm Bofors
with M-5 Directors, two 37mm with M-5 Directors, two 37's with Central
Tracer Control M-1, two 37's with two air-cooled caliber .50 MG's
mounted coaxially, and sixteen .50 caliber water cooled machine guns.
Not until 19 September did this battalion get its full allotment of
32 Bofors and M-5 Directors and then the cannon had to be passed through
the 7th Ordnance Company for inspection and adjustment before they could
be used. (2)

By the middle of August 1942 the equipment of the AA units on the
Pacific Coast was much more satisfactory but they were still on an average
about 40% short of up to date equipment. The following 4AA Command sum-
marization of "Report of Armament on Hand" as of 13 August tells the
story of TBA deficiencies.

39th Brigade (including 303d, 304th, 308th AB Bns).

- Fully equipped with 90's and 3".
- 53% short on 37mm M-3A-1's, but enough M-3's to cut this percentage "short" to 20%.
- 12% short on cal .50 MG's, but 21 dual mounted .50's almost exactly made up the shortages.
- 25% short on 60" Slt's.
- 77% " " SQR 368's.
- 20% " " M-4 Directors.
- 62% " " M-5 Directors.
- 20% " " M-7 Directors.
- 12% " " Height Finders.

(1) 37th Brig Ltr 323.5 to CG 4AAC, 9 Sep 42, "Plan for Gun and AWpns Defense of LA" (4AAOF 660.2, #44); History of 747th AAA AWpns Bn, p 1.
(2) History of 543d AWpns Bn, p 7-8.

101st Brigade (including 354th and 306th B B Bns).

- 12% short on 90mm and 3% on 3".
- 66% " " 37mm M-3A-1's but supply of M-3's cut this shortage to 37%.
- 35% short on cal.50 MG's but 32 dual mounts largely compensated for T/O shortage of 101 single units.
- 25% short on 60" Slt's.
- 72% " " SCR 268's.
- 20% " " M-4 Directors.
- 76% " " M-5 Directors.
- 30% " " M-7 Directors.
- 31% " " Height Finders.

37th Brigade

- No shortage 90mm or 3" guns.
- 85% short on 37mm M-3A-1's but enough M-3's on hand to cut this shortage to 50%.
- 27% short on cal.50 MG's, slightly more than compensated by the 52 dual mounts.
- No shortage on 60" Slt's.
- 54% short on SCR 268's.
- 20% short on M-4 Directors.
- 84% " " M-5 Directors (but 24 M-6's on hand).
- 20% " " M-7 Directors.
- 29% " " Height Finders.

33d Brigade

- No shortages on 90mm guns.
- 48% short on 37mm M-3A-1 guns but the 14 M-3's on hand cut this shortage to 28%.
- 31% short on cal .50 MG's but almost compensated for by the 17 dual mounts on hand.
- 16% short on 60" Slt's.
- 61% " " SCR 268's.
- 59% " " M-5 Directors.
- 30% " " M-7 Directors.
- 25% " " Height Finders.

Totals for units of the Command:

- 164 of 160 TBA 90mm guns on hand (100%)
- 95 of 96 TBA 3" guns on hand (99%)
- 169 of 448 TBA 37mm M-3-A-1 guns on hand leaving a shortage of 279, partially compensated by 124 M-3's and raising % on hand to (65%)
- 851 of 1140 TBA cal .50 MG's almost compensated for by 122 dual mounts on hand (count double) (96%)
- 290 of 340 TBA 60" Slt's on hand (85%)
- 94 of 268 SCR 268's on hand (35%)
- 24 of 30 M-4 Directors on hand (80%)
- 156 of 560 M-5 Directors on hand (28%)
- 38 of 50 M-7 Directors on hand (76%)
- 48 of 64 Height Finders on hand (75%)

* (24 M-5 Directors for 40mm guns not included.)

Ammunition supplies in August were still low. Rounds available per gun (continuous firing time in parenthesis) were as follows: (1)

	<u>San Diego</u>	<u>Los Angeles</u>	<u>San Francisco</u>	<u>Seattle</u>
90mm	563 (22½")	571 (22½")	391 (16½")	625 (25")
3"	No guns	683 (25")	1012 (40½")	712 (28½")
37mm	1658 (14")	1196 (10")	1496 (12½")	1339 (11")
50 cal.	4798 (9½")	4472 (8½")	3091 (6")	5562 (11")

By December the supply was even lower with the total rounds on hand throughout the Command being:

	<u>90mm</u>	<u>3"</u>	<u>40mm</u>	<u>Cal. 50</u>
13 December	395	680	312	3692 (2)
5 February	532	1154	323	3956 (3)
12 July	584	-----	162	3890 (4)

So low had the 40mm ammunition fallen, as indicated under the 12 July item above, that General DeWitt importuned the War Department for a more adequate supply characterizing the shortage in this item as constituting "an extremely hazardous situation". (5) The War Department replied that the situation would be rectified as soon as possible but that critical shortages in theatres of highest operational priority would have to be satisfied first. (6)

(1) 4AAC Memo, 8 Aug 43.
 (2) 4AAC Rpt of Ammo Status, 13 Dec 42 (4AACOF, 471)
 (3) Ibid, 5 Feb 43.
 (4) Ibid, 12 Jul 43.
 (5) WDC Ltr 471 (Ord) 14 Jul 43, to C/S, USA, WD (4AACOF 471 #35).
 (6) 1st Ind to ibid, dtd 30 Jul 43.

On 15 August the basis for figuring the adequacy of ammunition supply was changed. Based on operations in theatres of war a new table was adopted calculated on "Day of Supply of Ammunition". This was figured on the "estimated average expenditure...per day in campaign" (1) and provided that for antiaircraft weapons a sixty day supply would constitute the minimum to be maintained. This sixty day supply was based on an average "day of supply" for 90mm guns of 10 rounds, for 40mm cannon 10 rounds, and for caliber .50 MG's of 100 rounds. Hence the sixty days of supply would be 600, 600 and 6000 respectively. (2)

On 25 October the WDC abolished the term "Day of Supply" and substituted for it the term "Unit of Fire". This was set at 300 rounds for the 90mm and the 40mm and at 1200 rounds for the caliber .50 MG's (AA). The total rounds authorized for the 90 and 40 was left at 600 but the unit of fire prescribed by WDC was 300; the rounds authorized for the caliber .50 was 3000 with the unit of fire fixed at 1200. (3)

It may be mentioned at this point that a spare barrel for each 40mm gun became available for the first time on 23 October 1943. (4) Heretofore one spare per battery had been all that could be secured for continental battalions.

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- (1) WDC Ltr 471 (Ord), 13 Aug 42, to CG 4AAC inclosing WD Ltr A G 471 (2-1-43)OB-S-SPDDO-M, 1 Feb 43 and Incl thereto (4AACF 471 #39).
 - (2) Incl to Ibid. The 6000 rds for cal. .50 MG's was changed to 3000 rds (40% AP, 40% Incend and 20% tracer) by WDC Ltr 471/FW 331, 23 Sep 43, Auth: WD Ltr AG 471 (13 Sep 43)OB-S-D-M, (4AACF 471 #68.)
 - (3) WDC Ltr 471 (Ord) to CG 4AAC et al, 25 Oct 43, "Unit of Fire for WDC" (4AACF 471 #90). Amended 2 Nov 43 to 125 rds as unit of fire for 90mm with authorized allotment left at 600. WDC Ltr 471/472 (Ord) to CG each Brigade, 2 Nov 43 (4AACF 471, #111).
 - (4) WD Ltr 472.93/18205SPOFS, Chief of Ord to CG Benicia Depot, 23 Oct 43, "Spare Barrel Assemblies."

Rounds per gun on hand in the Command at various dates were as follows: (1)

	90mm	40mm	Cal. .50
4 Aug 43	569	266	4081
20 Sep 43	615	337	4005
12 Oct 43	585	337	4005
14 Nov 43	HE 577 AP 34	336 10	AP 159 I 0 T 40.1
27 Jul 44	600	600	3000

On 28 August 1944 (AA Command now under the Fourth Air Force), the threat of any serious attack on the West Coast having largely disappeared, Hq AAF decided, on advice of the Fourth Air Force and 4th AA Command, to cut the allotment of combat ammunition to AAA units. The allotment was therefore cut to a thirty (30) day supply figured at five (5) rounds per day for 90mm's (150 rds); at eight (8) rounds per day for the 40mm (240 rds); at twenty five (25) rounds per day for the caliber .50 machine gun (750 rds). (2)

It is of course obvious that this small amount of ammunition cut the sustained fire of the 90mm, 40mm and caliber .50 MG to 6", 2", and 1 1/2" respectively, but in view of the fact that threat of serious attack to the West Coast no longer existed, that considerable supplies were available on short notice from Fourth Air Force installations and that immensely larger amounts were needed by our troops overseas than had been anticipated, it was regarded as sufficient.

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- (1) 4AAOF 471 under appropriate dates.
 (2) Hq AAF Ltr 471 (6 Jul 44) 11 Jul 44, "Antiaircraft Munitions", to CG 4AF, with 4 Inds (4AAOF 471 ¶8), 4th Ind by 4AAG dtd 16 Sep. App B, Doc 38.