



A broad equatorial trough existed on 18 June stretching from the Philippine Islands to the eastern Caroline Islands along 5N. Although synoptic data suggested several circulations along the trough axis, satellite imagery during the following 48 hours indicated increased convective activity around the eastern periphery of the trough as a result of convergent easterly flow.

At 201200Z, increased convection was noted near the primary surface circulation east of the Palau Islands. By 211200Z, satellite imagery indicated improved organization with synoptic data revealing increased southwest gradient level inflow and 20-25 kt (11-13 m/sec) wind reports from ships northeast of the depression. As a result, a tropical cyclone formation alert (TCFA) was issued at 211800Z.

The depression moved west-northwestward toward Leyte in the Philippine Islands on 22 June. The mountainous island chain was expected to prevent further development and the TCFA was cancelled at 221800Z. However, the potential for significant tropical cyclone development was expected to improve once again as the depression entered the South China Sea.

Thus, with the depression located south of Mindoro and moving west-northwestward, a formation alert was reissued at 240000Z. Aircraft reconnaissance at 240717Z located a circulation center just west of Busuanga Island with surface winds estimated at 40 kt (21 m/sec) and a minimum sea level pressure of 996 mb. Based on the aircraft data and evidence of increased convective activity on satellite imagery, the first warning on Tropical Storm Herbert was issued at 241200Z.

In the South China Sea, Herbert tracked northwestward toward Hai-nan Island while intensifying slowly. Maximum intensity of 50 kt (26 m/sec) was attained at 250600Z and was sustained for the next 24 hours as Herbert passed 15 nm (28 km) southwest of the Paracel Islands. Peak winds of 46 kt (24 m/sec) were reported by the islands at 260000Z. Landfall on Hai-nan occurred near 261800Z with maximum sustained winds of 45 kt (23 m/sec). Over Hai-nan, Herbert tracked around the western face of Wu Chih Sham Mountain and exited due north into the Gulf of Tonkin. A north-northwest track over the Gulf of Tonkin ended with landfall south of Chin-hsien, China at 280300Z with 45 kt (23 m/sec) intensity, as verified by land station reports. Once over southern China, Herbert weakened quickly and dissipated as a significant tropical cyclone by 290000Z (Fig. 3-07-1).

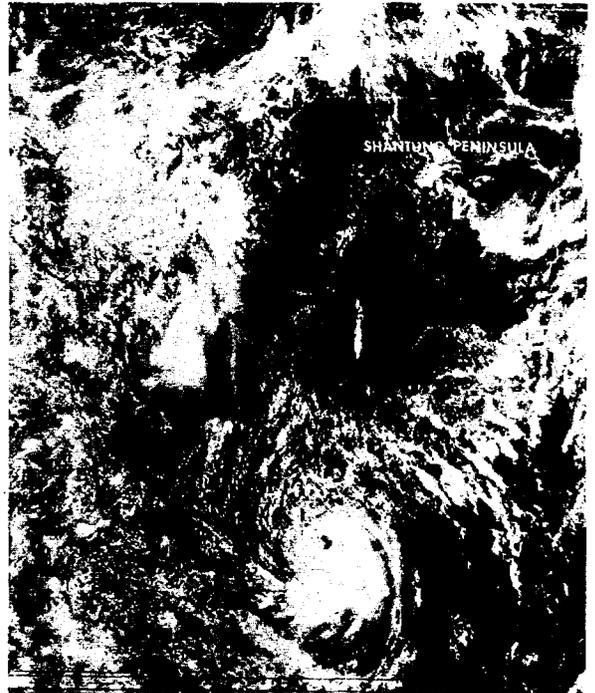


FIGURE 3-07-1. Tropical Storm Herbert at 45 kt (23 m/sec) intensity making landfall over southern China, 28 June 1980, 0316Z. (DMSP imagery)

A strong mid-level ridge extending from southern China eastward across the Pacific along 24N provided the steering flow as Herbert tracked steadily along the southern periphery of the ridge. The 500 mb analyses on 25 and 26 June showed that the ridge extended westward to near 108E just west of Hai-nan Island. Thus, a turn toward the northeast was expected following landfall over southern China. However, the 270000Z 500 mb analysis revealed that the ridge actually built westward across southern China, resulting in Herbert's westward track during his dissipation stage following landfall.

The definitive mid-level synoptic pattern and steering flow provided JTWC with good warning continuity and resulted in excellent forecast vector errors of 77 nm (143 km), 128 nm (237 km), and 57 nm (106 km) for 24, 48, and 72 hours, respectively.