

Box #24

HEADQUARTERS
 U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
 (PACIFIC)
 APO #234
 C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

Interrogation No: 356

PLACE: Fukuoka, Kyushu
 DATE: 29 October 1945

Division of Origin: Military Analysis

SUBJECT: Japanese Army^{-Air} Suicide Tactics and Preparations for Defense against
 Invasion.

Personnel Interrogated and Background:

Lt. Col. JIN Naomichi entered Army School (Military Academy) Tokyo in 1928; graduated as a pilot from Tokorozawa Flying School in 1941; from December 1941 to May 1944 was Staff Officer at Imperial GHQ (Daihoni); from June 1944 to December 1944 was Staff Officer at General Defense Hq (Boei So Shireibu); from January 1945 to February 1945 was Chief of Intelligence for 8th Flying Division in Formosa; March 1945 to May 1945 was Chief of Liaison Staff in Thirty-second Army Intelligence on Okinawa (escaped from Okinawa in small boat with seven others); from June 1945 to August 1945 was Operations Officer on Staff of Sixth Air Army at Fukuoka. Interrogators felt, after a week's constant dealing with JIN, that he was the brains of the Sixth Air Army despite his short association with it. It was evident that the CG, Lt Gen SUGAWARA Michio, leaned heavily on JIN.

Where Interviewed: Fukuoka Base Command, Fukuoka, Kyushu.

Interrogator: Capt. Chalmers M. Roberts, AC.

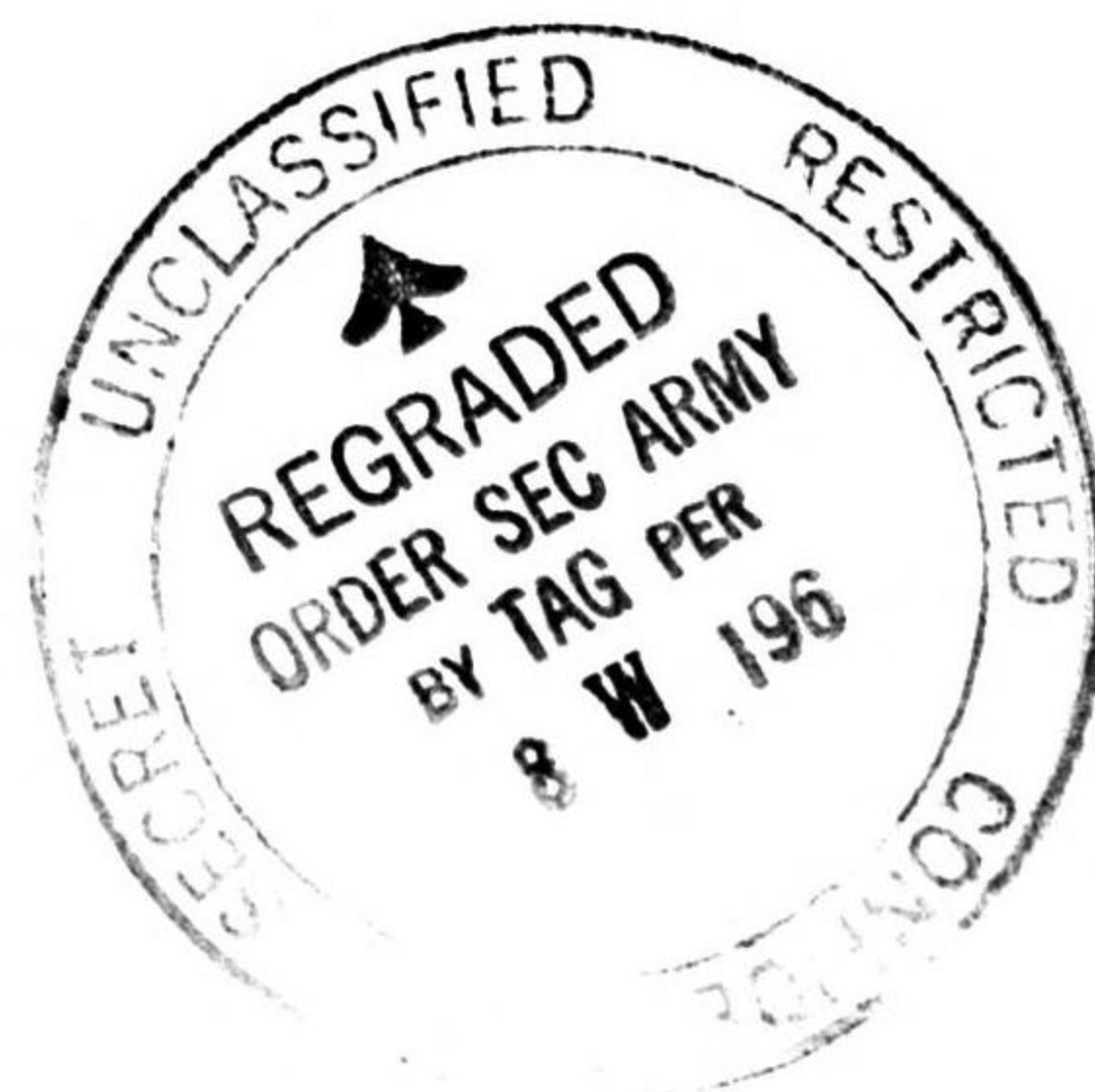
Interpreter: Capt. Dow Parkes, MI.

Allied Officers Present: Sqn Ldr E. W. Bloxham (RAF) MI
 1st Lt. Donald Meiklejohn, MI

ANNEX: #1 - "Sixth Air Army and Plans for the Defense of Japan Proper"

Summary:

JAAF suicide units in Okinawa campaign and preparations against Allied invasion; reasons for use of suicide tactic.



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In response to a previous request, Lt. Col. JIN submitted copies of three papers dealing with (1) his own views on Japanese Army Air suicide units (2) the part played by the JAAF in the Okinawa campaign, and (3) the preparations carried out and planned by the Sixth Air Army for the "Ketsu" Operation in defense of Kyushu (Annex #1). As he expounded much of his own view on suicide units at the interview, that exposition is included in the following interrogation report, rather than in a separate annex. The paper on the Okinawa Campaign has been appended to the interrogation of Lt Gen SUGAWARA, CG of Sixth Air Army.

Q. What were the main reasons for the adoption of suicide tactics?

A. I think there were four main reasons:

1. There was no prospect of victory in the air by the employment of orthodox methods.
2. Suicide attacks were more effective because the power of impact of the plane was added to that of the bomb, besides which the exploding gasoline caused fires -- further, achievement of the proper angle effected greater speed and accuracy than that of normal bombing.
3. Suicide attacks provided spiritual inspiration to the ground units and to the Japanese public at large.
4. Suicide attack was the only sure and reliable type of attack at the time such attacks were made (as they had to be) with personnel whose training had been limited because of shortage of fuel.

I offer two examples to explain this last point: (1) At Manila in September 1944, a joint Army-Navy bombing test carried out against ships in the Bay showed that normal bombing could be expected to score only one hit for every four bombs dropped, even with comparatively well-trained personnel (Gen Tominaga, CG of the Fourth Air Army, and the CO of the Navy's First Air Fleet, the ranking air Commanders in the Philippines, conducted these tests on their own initiative), whereas it was believed that each suicide plane would hit its target; however, no suicide crash experiments were actually carried out.

Q. Was this the theory on which you carried out attacks at Okinawa?

A. Yes, we thought that of the regular bombers which got through to attack their targets only one in four would have scored hits, whereas we thought that of the suicide planes that got through (believed to be 30% of those that sortied) all would hit their targets. We do not know, however, whether all of them did so, and it is possible that some splashed without inflicting damage.

My second example is the lesson of the Philippines Campaign: regular attacks by well-trained large units resulted in few hits and in heavy casualties to the Japanese.

Q. Do you know of any other suicide attacks by the JAAF?

A. Apart from some attacks which were carried out in the Leyte Campaign (I am not certain of the date), there was a report that in the Burma Campaign a Japanese, Lt. Abe, crashed his plane into the elevator of a British carrier.

Q. Did the Manila Bay experiment establish the policy of suicide attacks?

A. Yes.

Q. Did the Army and Navy make this decision together?

A. No, independently.

Q. Who carried out the first attack - the Army or the Navy?

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- A. The first Army and Navy attacks were carried out at about the same time. The Navy attacking units were called "Kamikaze" and the Army "Tokkotai"; the latter had such additional names as "Shinshu/Kamiwashi," "Makoto" and "Shimbu."
- Q. Were any Army units called "Haja?"
- A. I am not familiar with that name.
- Q. Did the "Kamiwashi" units come only from the First Air Army?
- A. No, from the Second, Fifth and Sixth Air Armies also.
- Q. Where did the "Sakigake" units come from?
- A. From the Fifth Air Army's 13th Flying Division.
- Q. In the Western District Army HQ in Fukuoka there is an alert board to report Allied planes. Where else were there similar boards?
- A. At Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Taihoku (Formosa); the Tokyo board was the best.
- Q. Were they all the same type?
- A. Yes, each was, of course, constructed for its area.
- Q. What area did the Seibugun (Western District Army) board at Fukuoka cover?
- A. Shikoku, Chugoku and Kyushu.
- Q. In what building was the Hq of the Sixth Air Army?
- A. At the Fukuoka Girls' High School; just before the end of the war it was moved to buildings on a hillside at the southeast side of the city and tunnels were being prepared so we could move underground. The war ended before we used them, however, since the war the Hq has been moved back to the Girls' School. (NOTE: All these Hq were visited by the interrogators.)

ANNEX #1: "THE SIXTH AIR ARMY AND PLANS FOR THE DEFENSE OF JAPAN PROPER."

(Paper prepared by Lt. Col. JIN Naomichi, senior staff officer of Sixth Air Army, on 30 October 1945:)

I. OUTLINE OF THE ATTACK PLAN.

1. Attached operational organizations (11 FD, 12 FD, 100 FB, 30 FC) will be deployed in Kinki, North Kyushu, Shinkoku and South Kyushu, respectively, and be on duty to attack vessels invading their fronts. Those divisions not in the invading fronts will attack either the invading vessels from the flank or redeploy their units to support the divisions at the front.

2. The targets of attack will be transport vessels, with special emphasis on small landing craft. The most important front is estimated to be South Kyushu (the main attack is expected on the east sea coast with a part on the west sea coast); at the same time a small attacking force on the Shikoku front and a large-scale invasion in the Korean Strait are anticipated.

3. The chain of command at the time of the termination of the war will be found in TAB A at the end of this paper.

4. Preparations were being made to have 1000 suicide planes in the Sixth Air Army alone by the time operation preparations were to be completed (end of September); as of 15 August there were 800 planes.

When the operation began it was planned to increase plane strength approximately 500 (in both suicide and general units), initially from 1 FA and 5 FA. These planes were to be centered in Shikoku, North Kyushu, and the Senyo districts respectively, and later would be reinforced several times.

5. The deployment of these units on 15 August 1945, is listed in TAB B at the end of this paper.

6. When we thought the South Kyushu operation about to begin the main strength of the combat units of 11 FD and 12 FD were to be switched to 30 FC.

7. Important points of operational preparations were as follows:

A. Training - a study was made of the intervals between attacks by the U. S. fighter planes and the shortage of fuel also was considered; instruction was carried out in line with these matters. Special attention was paid to bombing and machine gunning small landing craft by both fighter and attack units.

B. Counter measures against typhoons and Allied pattern bombing (NOTE: The Japanese here use the word "carpet" to describe the type of bombing):

Facilities were improved in order to avoid loss of planes and material which might be damaged in the usual September typhoon or by U. S. attacks on Japanese bases.

8. Reason for changes in the chain of command in preparation for "Ketsu" operation from the Combined Fleet to the Air General Army was as follows:

A. The organization of the Air General Army made it possible to facilitate and quicken the employment of Army Air Units.

B. For the operation in defense of Japan Proper, there was need for cooperation, especially between the ground army and water-borne suicide units; and "Ketsu" operation truly unified the land, sea, and air battle strength. Especially in the decisive battle for Japan Proper, there was a definite need for close tactical cooperation with the ground armies during battle.

NOTE: In order to see that cooperation with the Navy (the Fifth Air Fleet) would be complete, preparations were made to strengthen the communication network, to establish joint forward command posts, and to exchange influential staff officers.

II. OUTLINE OF THE DEFENSE PLAN.

1. Since most urban areas had been burned by the time the war was terminated, there was practically nothing to be defended aerially and air defense operations accordingly ceased as such and the effort became purely offensive: 11 FD (which was assigned directly to the Air General Army for attack but under command of the Sixth Air Army for "Ketsu" operation) and 12 FD, with their combat units, were to fight in cooperation with the Navy. In addition, 100 Flying Brigade (101 and 103 Flying Regts) and 30 Sento HIKOSHUKAN (51 and 52 Flying Regts) also were preparing to join the attack forces when the war ended.

2. In attack operations, if circumstances would permit, it was hoped that contact with U. S. fighter units would be avoided and the Japanese would concentrate on attacking allied bombers. This was decided in order that as many planes as possible could be held back to have them available to attack vessels.

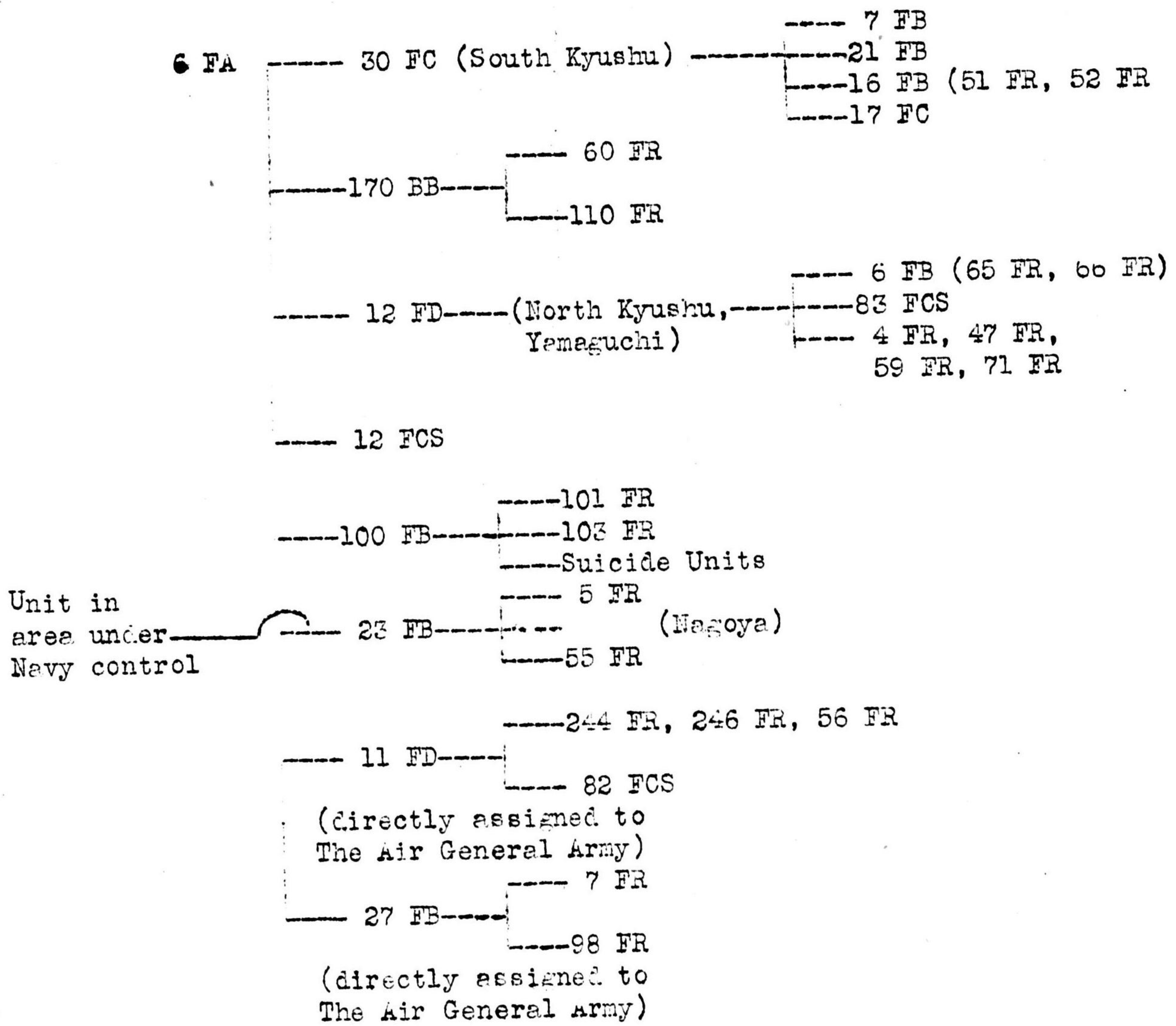
3. Coast Defense. During July and August, 1945, U. S. naval units frequently attacked and shelled the coast of Japan. To check these attacks the following deployment was made:

11 FD	2 Suicide Units	Yokaichi
100 FB	2 Suicide Units	Takamatsu, Yura
12 FD	4 Suicide Units	Yonago, Ozuki, Tachiarai, Nittahara
30 FC	4 Suicide Units	Miyakonojo, Chiran, Bansei

In the Sixth Air Army's operational area, it was decided to execute this attack, but just at this time the war ended.

TAB "A"

"CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR THE DECISIVE BATTLE OF JAPAN PROPER"



TAB "B"

LIST OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF SUICIDE UNITS (15 August 1945)

<u>KYUSHU</u>		<u>SHIKOKU</u>	
<u>AIRFIELD</u>	<u>NO. AND TYPE OF UNIT</u>	<u>AIRFIELD</u>	<u>NO. AND TYPE OF UNIT</u>
Bofu	2 Fighter	Takamatsu	3 Fighter
Ozuki	2 Trainer	Yura	2 Fighter
Ashiya	2 Fighter		
Gannosu	5 Trainer		
Tachiarai (N)	2 T/E Adv Trainer		
	2 Fighter		
Metabaru	8 Recce		
Chikugo	6 Trainer		
Kikuchi	6 Trainer		
Kuroishibara	6 Trainer		
Temana	4 Trainer		
Kumamoto	1 Trainer		
Kumenosho	6 Trainer		
Hitoyoshi	4 Trainer		
Miyakonojo (W)	3 Fighter		
	2 Trainer		
Miyakonojo (E)	2 Fighter		
	3 Trainer		
Chiran	2 Fighter		
	2 Trainer		
Bansei	3 Trainer		
Kiwaki	3 Trainer		
Niutabara	1 Fighter		
	4 Trainer		
Bungo	1 Trainer		
Sone	4 Trainer		
	86 X 6		46 X 6

TOTAL: 132 X 6 = 792

(Aircraft)

NOTE: Number of planes per unit was 6.