



HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(Pacific)

RESTRICTED



INTERROGATION NO. 357.

Division of Origin: Military Analysis Division.

Subject: Japanese Army Air Force's Training Program.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Colonel HAYASHI, Junji - Chief of Staff of 51 Training Flying Divisions located at Gifu Hanahu. A graduate of the Military Academy (West Point of Japan) Col. HAYASHI has been in the army for 26 years. His training included 11 months flight training at Tokorozawa Air School, and upon completion was commissioned and assigned to the 5th Air Reconnaissance Regt in Formosa (which later became 5 Hikosentai). He held numerous posts including an assignment at Tachikawa Hiko Gakko (Air School) for 3 years, an instructorship at Akene Hiko Gakko for 3 years, as a Squadron Leader in 6 Hikosentai for 2 years, and an instructorship in air tactics at the Officer's School for 7 years. In 1937 he was graduated from the Army War College. He was assigned to the Utsunomiya Hiko Gakko for 1 year, was CO of 31 Hikosentai until March 1943 when he became head of the student body at the air officers school. In May 1944 he became C of S of 51 Kyciku Hikoshidan and held that post until the end of the war.

EVALUATION: This officer was extremely intelligent and exceptionally well informed even on subjects outside his immediate field, because of his wide range of experience and general knowledge of the Air Forces. He is well regarded by his contemporaries as two other officers in different interrogations when asked to supply the name of a man able to answer questions on a variety of subjects recommended Col HAYASHI. The information contained herein is regarded as reliable.

Where Interviewed: USSBS Regional HQ #1 at Nagoya.

Interrogator: Captain John C. West.

Interpreters: 1st Lt. Richard Sneider.

Summary:

A discussion was held on the defects in the JAAF wartime Training Program and its effect on the quality of army pilots. Colonel HAYASHI was also able to answer questions on pilot strength at various times.

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- Q. How many pilots did the Japanese Army Air Forces have in 1937?
- A. Approximately 500 pilots.
- Q. How many flying hours did the average pilot of this period have?
- A. At least 300 hours.
- Q. What was the pilot strength of the JAAF in 1941?
- A. About 2000 pilots.
- Q. How many hours did they have?
- A. About the same as 1937 the ordinary pilot had at least 300 hours.
- Q. What was the plan of expansion with respect to pilot personnel strength at the time of the outbreak of war?
- A. They planned 5000 pilots by 1942.
- Q. How many did they actually have by 1942?
- A. They actually had only 2000 pilots by this time.
- Q. Why did they fail to achieve the goal?
- A. Because of a shortage of teachers, planes, and facilities.
- Q. Were any steps taken to correct this shortage?
- A. Yes, we expanded our number of schools and training units with a commensurate increase of instructors.
- Q. Just how was this done?
- A. Well, in the winter of 1941, we organized 10 additional training units (Kyoiku Hikorentai). These started functioning early in 1942, but we also formed 10 more training units from combat units. In addition, the capacity of existing training units was expanded.
- Q. Just what effect did this reorganized training program have on pilot strength?
- A. By the end of 1943, we had 5000 pilots.
- Q. What was the situation by mid-1944?
- A. We had slightly more than 5000 pilots.
- Q. Did you consider this output satisfactory?
- A. No. By this time we had started losing pilots in combat, so we had to expand the training program still more.
- Q. Just how did you do this?
- A. We added the Operational training units, (Rensei Hikotai) and formed more training (Kyoiku) units. We also redesignated the Kyoiku Hikorantai Kyoiku Hikotai.
- Q. How many pilots then did you have by the end of 1944?
- A. We had 5000 in Japan and Korea. I think there were about 2000 outside the Country.
- Q. Does this include pilots lost in the Philippines?

A. Yes, I don't know how many pilots we lost there, but the 2000 figure covers all outside the homeland in late 1944 exclusive of losses.

Q. How about the quality of pilots during these reorganizations and expansions?

A. The quality of pilots steadily decreased as the war progressed.

Q. Specifically, what were the reasons for this decline in quality?

A. Basically, the chief reason was a lack of training. We were not able to give them enough flight instruction.

Q. Can you give us the flying time which a student received prior to 1941 as compared to the war-time instruction?

A. Prior to 1941, a student received at least 100 hours in fundamental (elementary) instruction. In 1944-45 we were able to give him only 40 hours in this (Renshu) phase of training. The other phases (Advanced and Operational) likewise decreased in length...each of these two phases consisted of but 30 hours each by the end of the war, giving the finished pilot only 100 hours....just what he would have received in his elementary training prior to the war.

Q. What were the limiting factors which caused this decrease in pilot quality?

A. There were several: Decrease in flying hours because:

We needed large quantities of pilots in a hurry, so we cut down the hours;

By early 1944 our fuel supply had become limited and this shortage became progressively worse;

We had to take in large quantities of trainees and their quality was not up to our pre-war standards;

We still did not have enough instructors. We had to assign more and more cadets per instructor. In addition the quality of the instructors declined.

We were also limited in our number of aircraft available for training purposes.

Q. How were instructors chosen?

A. First of all, naturally, we tried to get the best men. However, long combat service was a considerable factor and we tried to use men who had been wounded in battle and were not physically fit for combat. Also men who graduated from flying school but were not fit to stand the rigors of combat.

Q. Did you have any fixed rotation policy for pilots?

A. No.

Q. Which of these groups do you consider made the best instructors.

A. The men who had seen combat.

Q. What was the effect of Allied bombing on training?

A. The training program was cut 30%.

Q. What were the chief reasons for this cut?

A. The bombing did two things: (1) It made training flights dangerous particularly after fighters were in range of our airfields; and (2) our planes had to be dispersed which consumed time and fuel.

Q. Were training units ever used for interception?

A. No. They were no good for that.

Q. Were instructors from training units ever used for this purpose?

A. A little, chiefly in February, March of 1945 in Kyushu and the Osaka and Sagami areas.

Q. What units did they come from?

A. From 11, 10 and 1 Rensei Hikotai, respectively.

Q. What percentage of instructors were used?

A. About 60% were assigned for this duty.

Q. Were there any breaks in your training program in the latter stages of the war?

A. Yes, in April of this year we had virtually to cease all training. We resumed our training after June, but I think the 53rd Koku Shidan in Korea stopped altogether.

Q. What was the reason for this break in training?

A. Chiefly it was lack of fuel.

Q. Did your division ever have any tactical assignment?

A. Yes, we were included in a tactical plan issued by Kokusogun on 15 April 1945 which said that when the invasion came we were to begin an all-out fight.

Q. Just what was your division's part in this plan?

A. We were assigned the defense of a part of Honshu. All our planes were to become converted to special attack planes through the addition of bombing racks and equipment. (A special bomb sight)

Q. Just how many planes would you have been able to mobilize from your division?

A. We would have been able to equip 750 planes and furnish an equal number of pilots.

Q. How would these have been used?

A. Of the 750 planes, all but 180 were to be shipped to other units. The remaining 180 would be used by us when the situation became desperate.

Q. What type units were you to ship your planes to?

A. I think they were going to numbered special attack units.

Q. Did you ever actually ship any planes?

A. Yes, we had shipped 72 planes (and pilots) by the time the war ended.

Q. Do you think these pilots would be successful as special attack pilots whereas they were no good as interceptor pilots?

A. Yes, they would have been all right as special attack pilots because that takes little training.

Q. How much training did the special attack pilot get?

A. He received 30 hours of basic training and 40 hours special training.

Q. What did this 40 hours include?

A. Navigation, bombing, and night flying.

Q. How many units (training flying divisions) like yours existed?

A. There were three others.

- Q. Where were they?
- A. The 52nd was at Kumagaya, Honshu, the 53d in Korea, and the 55th in Malaya.
- Q. Were all these units alike?
- A. ~~Units~~ 51, 52, and 53 were alike. The 55th was different, but I don't know in what respects.
- Q. What was the training strength of these divisions.
- A. Each division with its subordinate units, had a strength approximately 750 planes.
- Q. What was the output of finished pilots?
- A. About 300 pilots were graduated from each division each 4 months.
- Q. What percentage of the entering group failed to finish?
- A. About 10% of the original intake failed to graduate. However, about 20% of those pilots finishing weren't any good.
- Q. Why did you let this poor 20% graduate?
- A. We needed pilots.
- Q. Did the number of failures decrease as your need for pilots increased, or did you have to relax your standards?
- A. We relaxed our standards, but the percentage of failures still increased.
- Q. What were your original physical standards?
- A. Originally, the prospective air cadet had to have good eyes and ears, be of normal height and weight....I don't know what the exact specifications were, but they had to be good healthy boys. However, each qualification became a little easier as the war progressed.
- Q. How about mental standards?
- A. There was no lowering of mental standards during the war.
- Q. Did the lower physical standards cause the increasing rate of failures and bad pilots?
- A. No. There was no relationship.
- Q. Why the bad pilots then?
- A. Because of the general taking in of personnel who were not adapted for pilot training.
- Q. Did they have adaptability tests?
- A. Yes, numerous ones.
- Q. What were they?
- A. I don't know exactly. They were varied, all being rather technical.
- Q. Where can we find out about them?
- A. Some bureau at Koku Hombu was in charge of this....they should be able to tell you.
- Q. Then in your opinion, the real reason for the percentage of bad pilots was the taking in of personnel without properly screening them?

A. Yes, that's it.

Q. Where were these adaptability tests given?

A. Preliminary tests were given in various areas, but the final test was always given in Tokyo in recent times.

Q. What categories of persons did your organization train?

A. Regular Army Officers went through the Kyoiku stage, but not Rensei stage; Reserve Officers and Regular non-commissioned officers received Renshu, Kyoiku and Rensei training in our units; Reserve non-commissioned officers were trained by the Communications Ministry in their elementary (Renshu) stage.

Q. What pilots did this Communications Ministry use?

A. They used civilian pilots.

Q. One final question Colonel, You must have been one of the first group of pilots in Japan, why did you choose the aviation branch after graduation from the Military Academy?

A. Because even then I recognized that branch as being the most important.