

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

INTERROGATION NO. (USSBS NO. 112)
NAV NO. 28

Place: Tokyo
Date: 23 October 1945

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis Division.

Subject: TOKYO AIR DEFENSE.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Major TOGA, Hiroshi, IJA, a regular officer of the Japanese Army, was attached to the 57th Regiment in MANCHURIA in December 1941. From January 1942 till November 1943 he attended the Army Academy at KOYAMA. He was instructor at Army officer's school at TOKYO from December 1943 to July 1944. He was staff officer of the 10th Air Division from July 1944 to present date.

Where interviewed: MEIJI Building, Room 748.

Interrogator: Captain T. J. Hedding, USN.

Interpreter: Lt.(jg) R. P. BROWN, USNR.

Allied Officers present: None.

SUMMARY

Major TOGA was interrogated to obtain information on the Japanese Army Air Defense of the TOKYO Area, particularly against carrier-based air attacks. The 10th Flying Division of the Japanese Army Air Force was responsible for the air defense of the TOKYO Area. Its organizational strength was 210 fighters and 12 observation fighters, with a claimed operational strength of about 90%. Defense tactics called for a fixed defense in depth with two outer lines of defense with a final defense over TOKYO proper. During alerts reinforcements were ordered to TOKYO by the Air Defense Commander of the EMPIRE Area, General Prince HIGASHI - KUNI. The number of reinforcing planes being determined by this command.

From February 1945 on, the number of aircraft available for defense decreased rapidly due to losses, conversion of aircraft types and shortage of aviation gas. Towards the last of the war emphasis was placed on dispersal and conservation with consequent reduction in effectiveness.

Report of losses are very unreliable due to reported destruction of records. Major TOGA is attempting to obtain accurate reports.

TRANSCRIPT

Transcript of Interrogation (Major TOGA, Hiroshi, IJA)

Q. Were you advised of the subject of this interrogation?

A. I heard about it.

Q. What Japanese Army Air Force organization was responsible for the air defense of the TOKYO AREA?

A. The responsibility for the air defense of TOKYO was left up to the East District (TOBU). Direct Army Command was under General TANAKA, S.

Q. Was the 10th Flying Division, which you joined in July 1944, part of this organization?

A. They received their orders from TANAKA. In February of this year they became independent.

Q. Was the 10th Flying Division actually engaged in the defense of TOKYO AREA?

A. The Division actually participated in the defense of the TOKYO AREA.

Q. Who commanded the Division?

A. Up until April of this year, the commanding officer of the 10th Flying Division was Lt. General YOSHIDA, K. In April of this year the command changed to Lt. General KONDO, K.

Q. Are these two Generals still in the TOKYO AREA?

A. KONDO is in the TOKYO AREA, and YOSHIDA is believed to be in CHINA and his whereabouts is not known.

Q. Are you familiar with the Operation Plans of the Japanese Army Air Force air defense organization from the period of 15 February until end of hostilities?

A. I know only that with which my own command is concerned, that is the 10th Flying Division.

Q. What other flying divisions were included in the defense organization of the TOKYO AREA?

A. There was no other air division in the TOKYO AREA. There was a Naval Organization, however.

Q. Do you remember the carrier air attack against the TOKYO AREA in February, July and August of this year?

A. I remember them.

Q. What were the defense plans set-up by the air force organization for the defense of the TOKYO AREA against carrier-based plane attacks?

A. Up until February of this year, when the command was under Lt. General YOSHIDA, the plan for the defense of the TOKYO AREA against carrier-based aircraft was to meet the enemy in the air and shoot them down. However, in April when KONDO became the Commanding Officer, the plan was that they should not expend aircraft unnecessarily in defense against carrier-based raids, but should setup a defense by using the AA guns to the fullest extent as possible, and at the same time disperse their aircraft on the ground to minimize their losses.

Q. Where did they intend to seek air combat, over the TOKYO AREA or attempt to intercept raids prior to the arrival of the attacking planes?

Transcript of Interrogation (Major TOGA, Hiroshi, IJA)

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- A. Expect to have air battle within the TOKYO AREA. The first line of defense was built around CHOSHI, KATSUURA and SHIRAHANA, the second line of defense was at KISARAZU and CHIBA and the third line of defense was the air coverage of TOKYO proper.
- Q. Did the plan contemplate attacks on the American Carrier Force from which these air strikes were being launched?
- A. My organization had no plans for attacking American Carriers and I think that it was the responsibility of the First Air Army; also, the Navy had plans to attack the American Carriers, but I don't know anything about that. Until July of this year, the First Air Army had no real plans for attacking the American Carriers.
- Q. What means were provided for coordination with the Navy Air Defense Force?
- A. The cooperation and coordination with the Navy Air Defense was in actuality that the Navy defend beyond the first line of defense set-up by the Army and that the Army would carry out the air defense over the land. The Navy, based at YOKOSUKA, KISARAZU and ASTUGI, was responsible for direct coverage of its own immediate area only. Liaison with the Army between the Army Headquarters East District (TOBUGUN) and YOKOSUKA existed in the eventuality of an attack. Until February of this year, both Army and Navy took to the air when attacks were made. However, in July these plans, as I have already stated, differed. It is believed, however, that the Navy carried out attacks in the air against the American Fleet.
- Q. Was there a common Fighter Director Center for the employment of both Air Forces?
- A. They operated independently, but there was liaison.
- Q. What were the actual aerial tactics employed in intercepting attacking aircraft?
- A. The aerial tactics employed in intercepting attacking planes were that when planes approached one or between two Army bases in the first defense line, the planes at those two bases would attack in full force against the incoming planes. The planes in the secondary defense line were in the air, but would not attack unless planes got through the outer defense line. The same can be said of the direct air coverage of the TOKYO AREA, that American planes which penetrated the secondary defense line were to be attacked by the planes performing air coverage over TOKYO.
- Q. Was their primary target bomber planes or escort fighters?
- A. Bomber planes were the primary target.
- Q. What was the actual operational strength of the 10th Flying Division on 15 February 1945?
- A. In the 10th Flying Division there were about 200 fighters and 12 observation planes.
- Q. Was that authorized strength or operational strength?
- A. The organization strength called for about 210 planes, I don't know about the other.
- Q. What was the normal availability, in percentage, of operational planes?
- A. Generally 200 planes.
- Q. You stated previously that the 10th Flying Division was the only defense Air Division in the TOKYO AREA with an authorized strength of approximately 210 fighters. By this, do you mean that there were only 210 fighter planes (Army) available for the air defense of the TOKYO AREA?

Transcript of Interrogation (Major TOGA, Hiroshi, IJA)

A. Yes.

Q. Were other Air Divisions ordered to reinforce the 10th Flying Division during air attacks?

A. Yes.

Q. From where and what strength?

A. Assistance in repelling incoming attacks was to be received from the Fighter Pilot School at MITO, TOKOROZAWA and TAMA. These did not include, necessarily, whole Air Divisions, but only certain flying units there. They came to help us in February.

Q. Who determined the strength of reinforcement ordered in this particular area?

A. The Air Defense Commander of JAPAN who was His Majesty Prince HIGASHI-KUNI.

Q. Was the 10th Flying Division able to maintain their operational strength throughout the remainder of the war?

A. No, they were not able to maintain 200 operating planes. In about July, the number of available planes was 100. The reasons for the decrease of availability was due to installation of armament in planes as well as some losses.

Q. Were you able to maintain the required number of pilots?

A. We were able to maintain sufficient number of pilots for the number of planes available, but we could not use all of the pilots because of the shortage of aviation gasoline.

Q. The lack of operational planes then was due to two reasons; actual lack of modern combat type planes and lack of gasoline. Is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. Was the combat efficiency or calibre of the pilots maintained during this period?

A. The combat efficiency of the pilots decreased because of the lack of fuel for training purposes.

Q. Were available spares and maintenance adequate?

A. No, the spares were inadequate, particularly as far as engines were concerned.

Q. How about maintenance facilities?

A. In comparison with the lack of engine parts for the planes, repair and maintenance facilities were considered sufficient. However, the repair and maintenance crews which were sufficient in number had been hurriedly trained and were not too skillful in their work.

Q. Referring to American Carrier Attacks on the TOKYO AREA on the 16 and 17 February, what combat losses were sustained by the 10th Flying Division?

A. I am not sure just what the combat losses during these two days were, but I think that it was about 30 planes.

Q. Who would know?

A. Other than myself there are two persons from the Staff of the 10th Flying Division, one is at TOKOROZAWA and the other at FUKUI. Major YAMAMOTA, Shigo is at TOKOROZAWA and Lt. Colonel MATSUMURA, Shizuma is at FUKUI.

Transcript of Interrogation (Major TOGA, Hiroshi, IJA)

- Q. Were records kept of losses by the division?
- A. Yes, but they have been destroyed.
- Q. Who ordered their destruction?
- A. The order for their destruction came from Lt. General KAWABE, Shozo who was the Commanding Officer of the Air Army.
- Q. Where are the copies of these records?
- A. Duplicates of these records might be obtained at the Bureau of INVESTIGATION for COMMENDATIONS and AWARDS (KOSEKI CHOSABU).
- Q. During the carrier attacks, 16-17 February, how many planes were destroyed on the ground?
- A. Approximately 10.
- Q. What damage was done to the installations at the fields?
- A. Minor damage.
- Q. What did the 10th Flying Division consider was the relative effectiveness of carrier-based fighter planes and American Army P-51 planes from IWO JIMA?
- A. The P-51 were jeopardized by the distance they had to travel and return, therefore couldn't stay over the target very long; whereas the carrier planes could stay longer over the target.
- Q. Which type of planes did the most damage to the Japanese Air Force and to their field installations?
- A. Damage done by P-51 minor, both in the air and on the ground; whereas damage by carrier-based planes was greater.
- Q. Which planes or type of planes did the Japanese fighter pilots consider the most effective combat fighters in air combat?
- A. They considered the F6F carrier-based planes as most effective.
- Q. That is in comparison with P-51 and F4U?
- A. I think that is true.
- Q. What type of planes did the 10th Flying Division have?
- A. Type Three fighters, Type Two fighters (one with a one engine and one with a two-engine). The two-engine fighters are night fighters, TORYU; single engine fighters were SHOKI. The Type Three above was called HIEN. The Type One was called HAYABUSA.
- Q. Was any revision of defense tactics made as a result of the initiation of carrier attacks on the home islands?
- A. The Air Defense Plan for the TOKYO AREA was not changed from February on.
- Q. Did they attempt any dispersal of planes to prevent damage on ground by air attacks?
- A. Yes, in one particular case they moved them four or five kilometers away from the field.
- Q. What effect did this dispersal have on the operating efficiency as a fighting force?

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- A. It prevented their planes from getting into the air. The principal object was to hide them and keep them from receiving any damage.
- Q. Then late in the war you tried to avoid combat?
- A. Because of previous damage we were forced to hide our planes. It was not that we didn't want to go in to fight, but we had been ordered to hide our planes.
- Q. Then losses were not acceptable?
- A. That is correct.
- Q. During the latter period of the war were your pilots trained for the Special Attack Corps?
- A. Yes.
- Q. All of them?
- A. No, not all of them.
- Q. Who decided which group of pilots would be trained for that type of operation?
- A. They volunteered for it in the 10th Flying Division and training was carried out for this Special Attack Corps.
- Q. What did this training consist of?
- A. They practiced landings and take-offs with their bomb load and a bit of navigation in case they had to go out to sea.
- Q. Were their planes specially equipped?
- A. The only special equipment they had was to attach bombs to fighters.
- Q. What was the normal number of night fighters attached to your organization?
- A. The organization plan called for one SENTAI or 42 night fighters. However, they actually had only 25 or 26 night fighters.
- Q. Did you consider them to be effective?
- A. They operated satisfactorily against the B-29s.
- Q. What do you mean satisfactorily?
- A. They shot them down.
- Q. In the total loss of aeroplanes, what percentage were operational losses?
- A. About 2/3 were lost in combat.