

R E S T R I C T E D

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

INTERROGATION NO. 450  
(Japanese Intell No. 40)

PLACE: TOKYO  
TIME: 27 Nov 45

Division of origin: Japanese Intelligence Section  
USSBS.

Subject: Japanese Intelligence at Army Level

Person Interrogated and Background.

OHMURA, Sakai, Lt. Colonel.

A staff officer of the 25th Army on SUMATRA from July 1942 to December 1944.

Oct. 1932	Commissioned, Sub-Lt., attached to 1st Imperial Guard Regiment.
Dec. 1937	Promoted to Capt., admitted to War College.
Nov. 1939	Graduated from the College.
Dec. 1939	Instructor at the Army Academy.
Feb. 1941	Staff Officer, 27th Division, TIENTSIN, Anti-communist campaigns.
Oct. 1941	Major
July 1942	Staff Officer, 25th Army. SUMATRA.
Dec. 1944	GSC, GHQ.
June 1945	Lt. Colonel.

Where Interviewed: Meiji Building.

Interrogator: Major R.S. Spilman, JR. AC

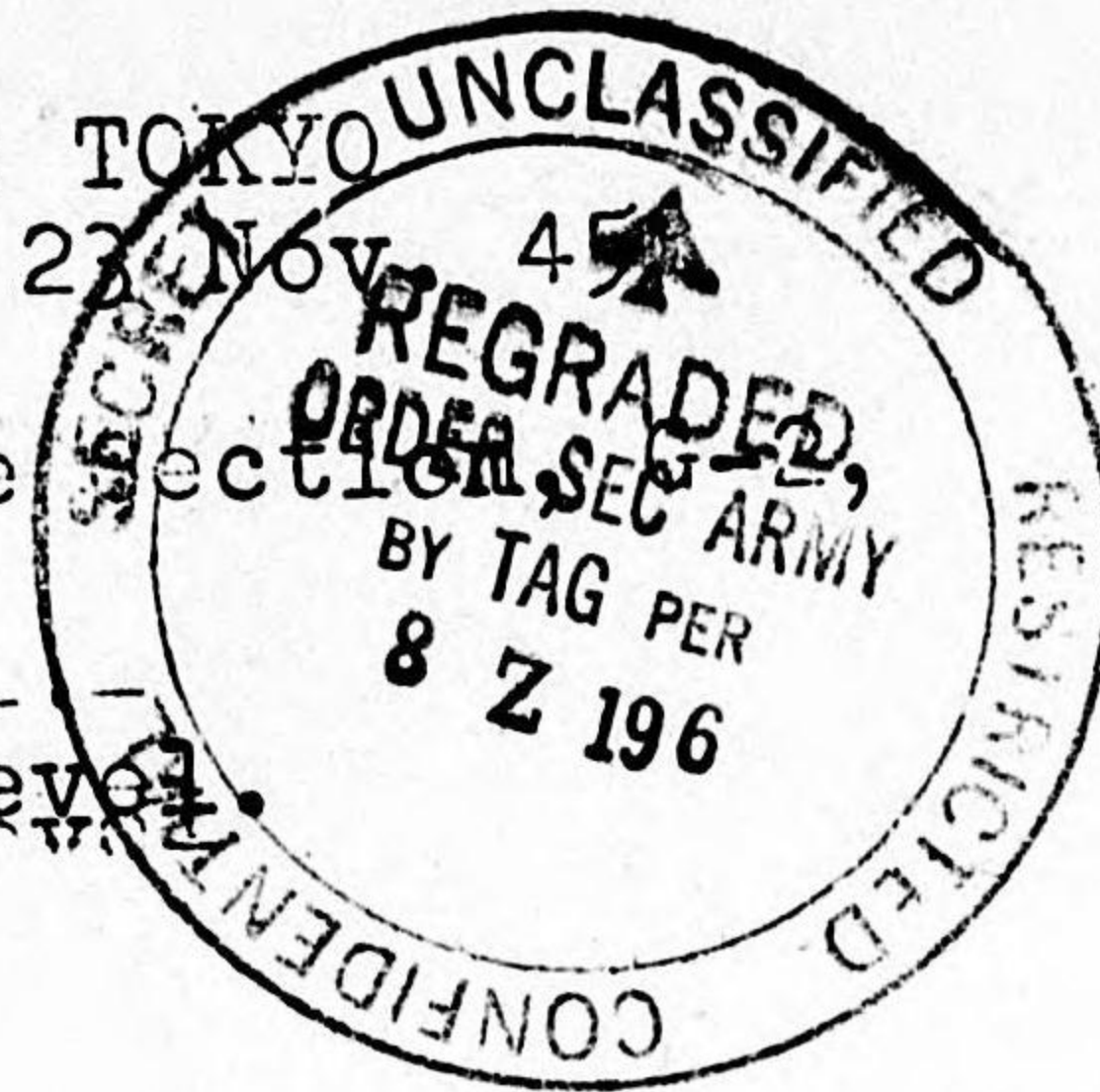
Interpreter: Major John C. Pelzel USMCR

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY

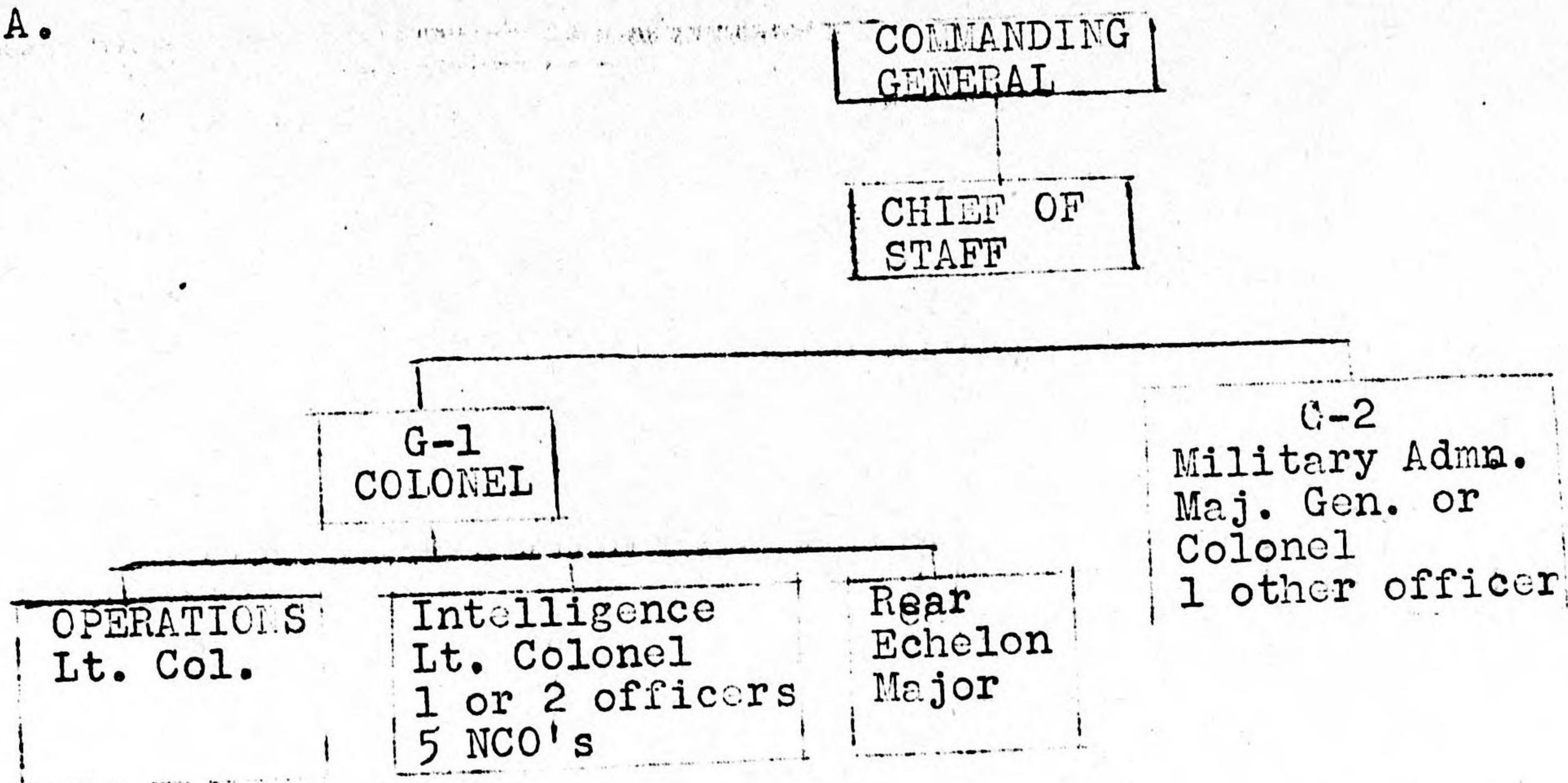
1. The intelligence of the 25th Army in MALAYA consisted of 2 officers and 4 or 5 NCO's with one or two additional officers attached temporarily from time to time.
2. Principal intelligence sources for the Army were:
  - (1) Study of U.S. Submarine movements.
  - (2) Study of U.S. Aircraft movements.
  - (3) Information furnished by natives.
  - (4) Aircraft search.
  - (5) Patrols.
3. The Army sent radio intelligence reports to Division daily and a weekly summary as far down as the regiment. General monthly summaries were also published.
4. Patrol areas were prescribed for the various echelons of command. There was no special patrol units.

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Q. Give the organization of the staff at army level.

A.



Some additional staff officers were assigned from time to time. The number varied with the availability of staff officers, and was never more than 12 to 15.

Q. At the Army level what were your principal sources of intelligence.

A. There were four:

(A) Movements of Submarines They were observed by coast watchers, ships at sea and airplanes. We made statistical analysis of submarine movements and tried to deduce from them the direction from which an attack would come and where it would take place. In an area where there were heavy submarine movements we thought this might be an attempt to cut off supplies prior to an attack we also thought you might be planting agents prior to an attack

(b) Movement of Aircraft These were located by observation posts and the amount of air activity was charted.

(C) Prisoners: Most of these were natives and Chinese who were not considered strictly speaking prisoners-of-war. Occasionally we would get an Englishman. No. U.S. pilots were captured in my area while I was in SUMATRA. We got little information from them. Our instructions were not to mistreat prisoners, but to send them to Area Army Headquarters at SINGAPORE. We interrogated them first at Division and then sent them to the Area Army. They were usually no trained interrogators below Division although in a few instances Regiments had some. We captured some documents, chiefly maps which were sent to Division where they were assessed and if though important was sent to higher echelons.

(D) Communications Intelligence: We computed the volume of traffic from enemy ships and planes and thus found out where concentrations were. We did not break your codes but from volume could estimate the number of planes or ships in the area. We also listened to broadcasts from local stations and from U.S. An effective source was the Indian and Burma Armies on the Japanese side. They gave location of units, fortifications and other combat intelligence which came to us from the Area Army at SINGAPORE.

Q. What reports were sent down from Army Headquarters?

A. Daily reports on enemy situation were sent by radio to division. A weekly summary was printed and enough copies made to go to Regiments. A more general summary was prepared monthly. Radio reports were sent when urgent information was received. Patrol information occasionally went direct to Regiment through usual channels.

Q. What pre-war information of the SINGAPORE-SUMATRA area did you have?

A. At the beginning of the war, only small scale maps of SUMATRA were available but we captured some good ones from the British which were reprinted. I heard that our Singapore information was good. This came from Chinese and native agents. Since the natives were not too friendly with the Dutch and British we got some good information from them.

Q. Was there a TOKUMU KIHAN unit in your area?

A. No. There was no need for one.

Q. What use was made of photographs?

A. In the Singapore campaign some use of photos for reconnaissance was made. Later on the main use of air photographs was for photo mapping of SUMATRA.

Q. What were the channels for distribution of photographs to ground units?

A. Requests for photographs went up through ground channels to Area Army. Area Army sent the request to Air Army, which then attached a reconnaissance unit to the Ground Army. Thereafter, both requests for photographs and distribution was direct. If planes were not attached requests went up through ground channels to Area Army and then down through air channels to the photographic unit. Distribution took the reverse channels.

Q. How effective were airplanes in gathering information?

A. In the early days of the war we had sufficient planes to conduct good searches from SUMATRA. The search areas were determined by Army, Area Army, Air Army, and Navy in cooperation. Army searches were carried out by the Air Division. After your landing in the Philippines, all planes were drawn out of our area so searches could not then be conducted.

Q. Were air officers attached to ground forces for control in ground support?

A. Ordinarily only at Army level although occasionally there might be an air officer at Division level.

Q. What were the duties of the liaison officer?

A. He would advise on the use of air and of the army controlled small liaison planes used as passenger planes by the Commanding Generals and General Officers of the Army.

Q. Describe mechanics of air support of ground forces.

A. Close support was directed by Division through air liaison officers at Division Headquarters. Front line troops put out panels showing their lines and Division ordered bombing from gridded maps. Main grids were 1 Km square and subdivided into 100 m sub-squares. Maps at 1:10,000 scale were preferred, but 1:25,000 were usually the only ones available.

Deep support was ordered from Army level using the same kind of maps.

Q. Did the Navy planes ever support ground troops?

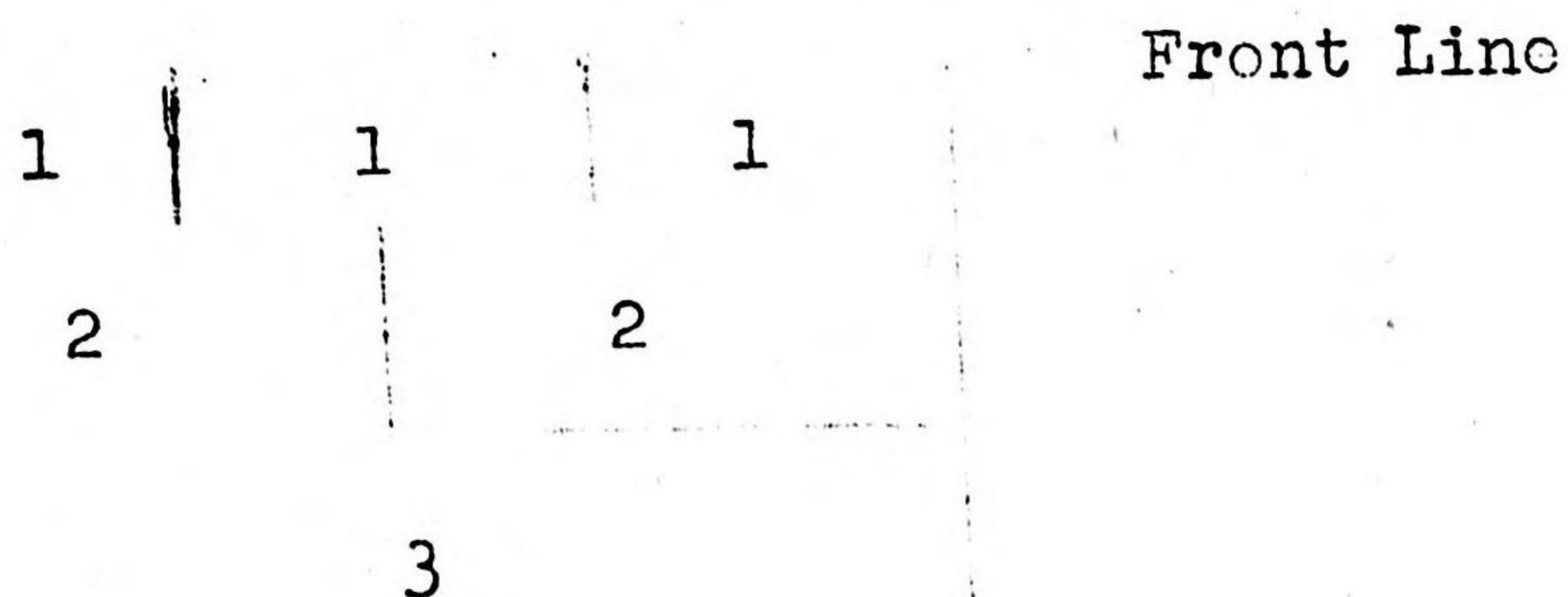
A. No.

Q. Were planes used for artillery spotting?

A. Yes. The plane flies along the course from the battery to the target and corrects by observation of the bursts. Planes were also used for locating batteries for counter battery fire.

Q. What use is made of patrols in the ground forces?

A. General coordination of patrolling is a Division responsibility. However patrol areas are broken down as shown below.



Areas numbered 1 are company responsibility. Areas numbered 2 Battalion, Area 3, Regiment. In addition Division patrols were sent out to specified points. The personnel for patrols ordered by commands higher than company came from front line troops since the higher headquarters have no special patrol units. There were no special patrol units in the Japanese Army.

Q. Did Engineer Units have a special intelligence organization?

A. No.

Q. Were special wire tapping patrols sent out?

A. Yes, but since few men in front lines could understand English these were not very effective. For the same reason interception of radio messages was not effective in lower units.

Q. Did you have special intelligence communications channels?

A. No.

Q. Were situation maps kept at Army level?

A. Yes, and they were reproduced and sent to both higher and lower echelons if possible. In practice the transmission of these maps was irregular.

Q. What type of reports were published at Army level and what distribution was made?

A. A daily report was sent as far down as regiment and up to the Area Army. This included much general intelligence and ended in an estimate of the enemy situation and intentions.