

HEADQUARTERS
U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
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RESTRICTED

INTERROGATION NO 374
Jap Intell No 29

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 17 Nov 1945

Division of Origin: Japanese Intelligence Section, C-2, USSBS.

Subject: Procedure and functions of Aviation Unit of Section
Five, Naval General Staff, 3d Department.

Person Interviewed and Background:

TAKITA, N., Commander, IJN.

1932: Graduated from Naval Engineering School at MAIZURU.
1932-1940(May): Duty aboard CHOKAI, IZUMO, YAGUMO and SORYU.
1940(May): Sent to Boston as a language officer and studied
engineering at Harvard.
1941(Nov): Sent to BRAZIL as Assistant Military Attache.
1942(August): Returned to JAPAN.
1942(Sept): Became Staff Engineering Officer of DesRon One.
1943(July): Became Staff Engineering Officer for CruDiv Eight.
1944(Jan): Joined OPFAMA Air Group as training officer. This
label was a guise to permit the Commander to study
aviation engineering.
1944(July): Became Staff Engineer and Maintenance Officer of
CarDiv 4(ISE and HYUGA)
1945(March): Attached to Naval General Staff.
1945(June): Placed in charge of "D" unit(aviation) of Section
Five(Rear Admiral TAKEUCHI), 3d Department Naval
General Staff.

Where Interviewed: Meiji Building.

Interrogators: Lt. Comdr. WILLIAM H. BOTZER, USNR
Lt. Comdr. F. SHACKELFORD, USNR

Interpreter: Lt. OTIS CARY, USNR

Allied Officers Present: None

Summary:

Commander TAKITA spent 18 months just prior to the outbreak of War in Boston during which time he studied engineering at Harvard. In November 1941 he left for BRAZIL where, as Assistant Military Attache, he combed American newspapers and magazines for useful information until the Japanese Embassy in Brazil was closed late in January 1942.

When, two months before the War ended, he became the officer in charge of unit "D"(aviation) of Section Five, 3d Department, he continued the program of this subdivision--regular estimates of U.S. Navy air strength on both carriers and land bases. None of his 15 reserve officers was specially trained for the job.

The main sources of information relied upon by this aviation unit were news broadcasts from San Francisco and call signs found in crashed planes. Crews of crashed planes, both Army and Navy, were interrogated, but almost no useful information resulted.

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Interrogation of Comdr. TAKITA, N., IJN.

Q.1. Are you a flier?

A. No.

Q.2. You spent some time in U.S. How long were you there?

A. Eighteen months in Boston from May 1940 to November 1941. I studied engineering at Harvard, having been sent by the Navy. Our Embassy made the necessary arrangements.

Q.3. And you were in BRAZIL, too?

A. Yes, from 3 December 1941 to 3 July 1942. I was Assistant Naval Attache until the Embassy was closed at the end of January 1942.

Q.4. When you joined the Naval General Staff in March 1945, you were in Part "D" of Section 5 of the 3d Department?

A. Yes. Fifteen officers were in "D" with responsibilities divided thus: 3 worked on planes, 3 on dispatches, 3 on radio news, 2 on European questions, 1 on CHINA, and 2 on Order of Battle. They were Reserve Ensigns and Lieutenants (jg). I was the only regular. These officers had no previous specialized training before joining the Section. Some were established in economics and law, but most of them were just out of school. They had no training in mechanical engineering.

Q.5. Why were you chosen as head of the Section?

A. For no other reason than that I had spent 18 months in the U.S. and was an engineer.

Q.6. What was the relation between your Section and the comparable Army one?

A. The Sixth Section, 2d Division did the same work in the Army but we did not work or confer with it.

Q.7. How did you work with KOKU HOMBU?

A. We sent them raw materiel without processing or evaluating it. It was mailed to the general affairs Section of KOKU HOMBU.

Q.8. What were the sources of information for each subdivision of your Section?

- A. (1) Radio news came from 3d Department and DOMEI.
(2) Magazines and news articles from neutral sources.
(3) Captured documents from downed planes.
(4) Interrogation of Prisoners-of-War.
(5) Dispatches from the field.

I was only in the Section the last 2 months of the war, but I think the sources of information were the same earlier.

Q.9. Of these sources, which was the most useful?

A. Radio news.

Q.10. What radio news helped you most?

A. San Francisco short wave broadcasts. These were general news broadcasts on which we based our statistical studies.

Q.11. Did you accept as true these San Francisco broadcasts?

Interrogation of Comdr. TAKITA, N., IJN (contd) -----

A. We felt they were padded and based our conclusions on an analysis of records kept over a long time.

Q.12. How much did you believe the figures were padded?

A. In general we thought they were doubled.

Q.13. Was the greatest effort of the 15 Officers in your Section placed on the study of these broadcasts?

A. Yes.

Q.14. How would you use the transcripts of news supplied you by the 3d Department and COMEIT?

A. We would compare the broadcast figures with figures we knew, such as the number of planes we counted on the raids described in your broadcasts.

Q.15. After you completed your studies and made your analysis what did you do with your reports?

A. We turned them in to the Chief of the 5th Section who turned them in to the head of the 3d Department.

Q.16. We would like to have copies of these reports.

A. They have been burned.

Q.17. We found some documents, IJN, at KOFU. Do you think any copies of your reports may be included among them?

A. No.

Q.18. Were specific requests made to you for particular studies?

A. Yes, on infrequent occasions. They might ask us, for instance, the Allied plane strength at a particular base.

Q.19. Who made such requests?

A. The Staff of the Combined Fleet. Requests were usually made and often answered by telephone.

Q.20. On what did you base your estimates?

A. The number and size of fields, the U.S. Units based at the field, and our knowledge of the number of planes you had in your units.

Q.21. Did you keep regular up-to-date estimates of Allied plane strength on various bases.

A. Yes, we made monthly estimates and in this way we kept our figures revised.

Q.22. In making these estimates how did you know what units we had on what fields?

A. San Francisco broadcasts and use of call signs picked up in crashed planes.

Q.23. You mean that you got the names or numbers of U.S. Units on particular fields from San Francisco Broadcasts?

A. We got that data from call signs; the crashed planes would sometimes have the call signs of fields as well as the call signs of air groups.

Interrogation of Comdr. TAKITA, N, IJN, (contd)

Q.24. How many fields were there on TINIAN?

A. Commander YOKURU, my predecessor, would know. I don't remember.

Q.25. You have been talking about land based strength. Did you also estimate enemy strength based on carriers?

A. Yes.

Q.26. In October or November 1941, how many planes did you estimate the U.S. Navy had? You were in Boston at that time.

A. I didn't know and made no estimate.

Q.27. At the close of the War how many planes did you estimate the U.S. Navy could operate? How many operational B-29s did you think the U.S. Army had in the Pacific?

A. 3,500 Navy planes
900 B-29s

Q.28. How many B-29s did you estimate were being produced monthly at the end of the War?

A. 150-200

Q.29. From what sources did you base your estimates?

A. U.S. newspapers.

Q.30. Which papers?

A. Not papers. News broadcasts.

Q.31. You are an engineer. Did you study the technical features and performance of enemy planes?

A. KOKU HUMBU and YOKOSUKA technical group were responsible for such information. We got nothing from them.

Q.32. What ship were you on in the Second Battle of the Philippines Sea?

A. HYUGA. We had no planes. I was engineering and Staff maintenance officer of Car Div Four.

Q.33. At OPPAMA did you study aircraft engines?

A. Yes. My job was to acquire enough information to enable me to serve as a staff engineering officer on Car Div Four.

Q.34. What in your opinion was the best U.S. fighter plane?

A. P-51

Q.35. What did you consider the best Japanese fighter plane?

A. SHIDEN (George II).

Q.36. What new Japanese planes were planned at the end of the War?

A. I did no work on such planes myself, but I knew we were developing a jet propelled plane.

Q.37. Did you think the U.S. was interested in jet propelled planes?

Interrogation of Comdr. TAKITA, N , IJN, (contd)

A. We knew of the P-80 from your news releases and were waiting for it.

Q.38. What did you think was the state of development of the Atomic Bomb?

A. I knew nothing about it.

Q.39. We want to know about your work in BRAZIL.

A. I got there on 3 December 1941 and War broke out on 7 December 1941. Until I left for JAPAN on 3 July 1942, I was confined, once the Embassy was closed at the end of January.

Q.40. What were your duties before the Embassy closed, your duties from 3 December 1941 to the end of January?

A. Collecting information from American magazines and newspapers.

Q.41. What sort of data did you get from these sources?

A. Ship sinkings, riots in California, etc. I would underline the important things in red and pass them to the Naval Attache.

Q.42. What were your instructions upon reporting to BRAZIL?

A. I had none.

Q.43. Who was the Naval Attache?

A. A Navy Captain. I forget his name. I was a Lieutenant then.

Q.44. What sort of reports did the Attache make and to whom did he send them?

A. Reports were sent by dispatch to the Navy Ministry. I don't know their nature.

Q.45. Did you aid in interrogating prisoners at the end of the War?

A. Yes.

Q.46. What questions did you ask them?

A. I asked them to what unit they were attached, where they were based, and what their strength was.

Q.47. How many times were you at OFUNA for interrogations?

A. Three to four.

Q.48. How many Prisoners-of-War did you query?

A. 20-30. I questioned the new arrivals, including both Army and Navy.

Q.49. How many of the 20-30 were officers, how many enlisted men?

A. I don't know. I questioned more officers than men. I don't know their ranks. One was a regular Navy Commander. Mostly they were junior Army Officers.

Q.50. Did they tell you their units and where they were located?

A. Yes.

Interrogation of Comdr. TAKITA, N., (contd) -----

Q.51. How did you get information from them.

A. Just interrogated them.

Q.52. And they answered you questions?

A. Yes, the routine ones.

Q.53. And what would you do to make them answer questions that were not routine?

A. Nothing. They almost never had really useful information and we were not too interested in prisoners. There was not enough respect for intelligence by the Japanese. Personnel were supplied haphazardly and they were untrained. There was no system and not much of an audience in high places for intelligence once it was obtained.