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

INTERROGATION NO. (USSBS 484)
NAV NO. 113

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 29 November 1945

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis Division.

Subject: BISMARCK SEA Convoy, 3 March 1943.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Colonel SUGITA, Ichiji, IJA; on staff of 8th Area Army at RABAUL, embarked in an escort destroyer of subject convoy as liaison officer to 18th Army.

Where interviewed: Meiji Building.

Interrogator: Rear Admiral R. A. Ofstie, USN.

Interpreter: Mr. F. C. Woodrough, jr.

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY

The convoy consisted of 6 transports, ranging from 2000 to 5000 tons each, and two small freighters of about 1000 tons each. The escort comprised 8 destroyers.

The convoy and escorts were attacked by U. S. Army aircraft northeast of DAMPIER STRAITS. The destroyer on which Colonel SUGITA was a passenger was stopped by an underwater hit, and he transferred to another destroyer which was picking up survivors. Later in the day the load of survivors was adjusted with another destroyer, and they returned to RABAUL.

In the vicinity of the attack the ships became widely scattered, but Colonel SUGITA said he saw about 3 or 4 ships sinking. On return to RABAUL he received a report that all ships of the convoy (6 transports, 2 freighters) had been sunk, plus four of the escorting destroyers.

Total personnel, all services, in the sunken ships was on the order of 7000. Of these, roughly half were lost, although survivors who had reached land near the action came straggling in for some time thereafter and hence exact figures cannot be arrived at.

(No Transcript of Interrogation)

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