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

INTERROGATION NO. (USSBS 485)
NAV NO. 114

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 28 November 1945

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis Division.

Subject: Japanese Army Air Forces in SOLOMONS Campaign.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Lieutenant Colonel TANAKA, Roji; Military Affairs Section of War Ministry, April 1941 - September 1942; Staff Officer, 8th Area Army RABAU, September 1942 - September 1943; attached to SAMBO HOMBURU (GHQ) from September 1943 to end of war.

Where interviewed: Meiji Building.

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

Interpreter: Mr. F. C. Woodrough.

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY

1. The following were the movements of all Army aircraft into RABAU Area:

(a) December 1942 - 12th Air Regiment.

1st Division - 50 fighters.
11th Division - 50 fighters.

This group had been operating in BURMA and were ferried to SOERABAJA by air; from SOERABAJA to TRUK by aircraft carrier; flown to RABAU from TRUK. These were the best fighter units the Army had in the RABAU Area.

(b) November 1942 - 10th Division, 7-8 reconnaissance planes.

Brought by carrier from MANCHURIA to RABAU.

(c) January - February 1943. 14th Division, 27 heavy bombers, ferried by air from BURMA to RABAU.

(d) March - April 1943.

208th Division - 30 light bombers.
45th Division - 30 light bombers.

In February, transferred from MANCHURIA to the Homeland, taken to TRUK by carriers. After about ten days maintenance work at TRUK, the 45th Division flew to RABAU. The 208th Division had more maintenance trouble and did not leave TRUK until end of April, then leaving about 10 of its unsatisfactory planes at TRUK. Neither of these divisions was of much effectiveness in operations.

(e) April - May 1943. 14th Air Regiment.

68th Division - 30 fighters.
78th Division - 30 fighters.

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SUMMARY of Interrogation (Lieutenant Colonel TANAKA, Roji, IJA).

The 78th Division, from MANCHURIA, came from YOKOSUKA to TRUK by carriers in late April. On departing for RABAU via air this unit proceeded on wrong course and lost 18 of 30 planes in forced landings on a reef, but with little loss of personnel. The 68th Division went to RABAU via PHILIPPINES and NEW GUINEA in May.

(f) April - May 1943. 13th Division, about 30 two-seat fighters, came from the Homeland via PHILIPPINES and NEW GUINEA, arriving late April and early May.

2. Strength figures given are organizational strength. Actually only about two-thirds of this number became operational at the destination due to losses enroute. The 1st and 11th Divisions were exceptions however, having practically no losses enroute.

(No Transcript of Interrogation)

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