

HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO 234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO. 31

Place: Omiya Plant

Date: 17 Oct. 1945
1400

Division of Origin: Shipping & Rail Transp.

Subject: Imperial Government Railroad and
Locomotive Shops - Omiya.

- a. Capacity
- b. Bomb Damage

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

M. Suzuki	Works Manager - Omiya
A. Yamaguchi	Director Railway Division, Liason Officer, Tokyo
T. Yumoto	Mechanical Engineer, Railway Division, Tokyo.

Interrogator: Ralph P. Russel.

Allied Officers Present: Capt. Robt. A. Lightburn

Summary:

This plant is the largest railroad shop in Japan, repairing locomotives, cars, automobiles and trucks. It also maintains all the electrified road equipment.

a. The Plant Capacity is normally 10 to 20 freight and passenger cars daily, and one locomotive.

b. The maximum personnel employed during the war was 5,000. At present there is a total of 4,600 employed in the following categories, 900 supervisors, foreman and clerks, 500 apprentice boys, and 3,200 workmen.

c. A shortage existed during the war in materials, handicapping the plant in its work. Oxygen, coke, and special materials such as staybolts and sheetmetal were especially critical. The plant was able to maintain a limited supply through very careful reclamation, and use of secondhand material.

d. On this date, the plant was very active repairing cars and locomotives, and did have sufficient materials to maintain its repair program.

The plant was bombed once, 14 April, 1945, being hit in the south east end of the Freight Car Repair Shop, causing fire. The plant was shut down for the day, debris was cleared, and operations resumed the next day. Six hundred (600) incendiary bombs were estimated to have fallen, burning some small buildings, another section of the Freight Car Repair Shop and completely destroying ten (10) passenger cars.

Countermeasures taken against raids were the removal of a number of small buildings to provide a firebreak.

First Day, 19 June 1944.

Q. What losses did you have on the first day and when did they occur relative to the time of initiating your attack?

A. Two carriers were sunk that day, the TAIHO and SHIKOKU.

Q. Give me details about the sinking of the SHIKOKU.

A. She was sunk by a submarine at one o'clock in the afternoon (not quite sure of details; was far from the scene). The first wave of planes had left the ship, and the submarine attack occurred before the second wave was launched. The first wave had not yet returned. I received a report that the carrier was afloat 2 or 3 hours after the hit.

Q. As for the TAIHO, what happened there?

A. It was a submarine torpedo at 0900 on the 19th. All the gasoline spread around in the hangar deck, exploded, and because of this explosion the TAIHO sunk at perhaps 1100.

Q. Before launching the first wave?

A. After the first wave left and before the second wave was launched.

Q. The Admiral then transferred to what ship?

A. He transferred to the ZUIKAKU by means of a destroyer.

Q. During this period when ships were lost and the 1st and 2nd waves of planes were sent out for the attacks, was the whole disposition fairly close together, say within 50 miles?

A. Within a range of 100 miles, the entire formation.

Q. What were the first reports you had of the results of the air attack on the American Task Force; when did you get the report and what were they?

A. I did not know until this operation ended and the planes returned. In other words, during the action I received no report of American damage, and never did receive full information.

Q. About how many planes did you send out; how many waves and how many planes?

A. The 1st wave was 300 planes altogether (not quite sure); the 2nd wave a very few planes on account of the two carriers being sunk, perhaps about 100.

Q. The other planes sank with the carriers?

A. Yes.

Q. About what total of planes did you have in all the ships before you came up there?

A. We brought altogether about 400 or 450 planes.

Q. And of those planes how many returned from the 1st and 2nd waves?

A. I do not recollect; but very few returned.

Q. Did you know whether a considerable number had gone in and landed at GUAM? Did you get reports from GUAM?

A. I received a report to that effect. I think they landed at GUAM and TINIAN.

TRANSCRIPT of Interrogation (Vice Admiral T. OZAWA, I) - - - - -

- Q. How were plans changed as a result of first days action?
- A. The plan was changed to such an extent that the next day the ships were to go back west to refuel and then try to attack again. There were no changes in basic plan but a necessitated change in Japanese movements.
- Q. Did you receive any new directive or intelligence from Admiral TOYODA as a result of the first day?
- A. I received no report from Admiral TOYODA directly as a result of the first days action.
- Q. When the 1st and 2nd waves were sent out, what were the flight commanders orders; what were they to attack, first priority, - what was the plan?
- A. The main order was to attack the carriers in conjunction with land-based planes; only to attack the carriers. Also the land-based planes were to attack carriers.
- Q. This is the point, if attacks from all the planes were to be coordinated, was an effort made to strike at the same time?
- A. The planes made formation (rendezvous) in individual squadrons, and every squadron was to take its individual target.

Second Day, 20 June 1944

- Q. The next day you had very few planes; about how many left?
- A. Perhaps a little less than 60, perhaps about 40 planes left on the ZUIKAKU of the entire First Air Squadron. About the same number of planes left in the 1st and 3rd Squadrons.
- Q. What was your plan to employ those planes on the 20th?
- A. The day of the 20th was occupied by refueling, and keeping watch against submarines. Next attack was intended to be made on the 21st.
- Q. During the day of the 20th while refueling, etc, and until late in the day, what information did you have on movements of the U.S. Task Force?
- A. American scout planes interfered with the fueling operations, and the force had to go still further west. Fueling never was accomplished, and about evening the American bombing attack was received and resulted in the loss of one carrier in the 2nd Air Squadron.
- Q. That was the HIYO?
- A. Yes, and the JUNYO received serious damage. By result of that attack we had to change the refueling and attacking plan altogether. We abandoned original plans and retired to OKINAWA, and at the same time I received a dispatch from Admiral TOYODA that we should abandon the attack and return.
- Q. That night you received the dispatch?
- A. In the evening of the 20th I received orders to similar effect from Admiral TOYODA.
- Q. With respect to the HIYO, can you tell me the details of the damage; did you sink her or did she sink from torpedo or bombing attack?
- A. She sank on account of the damage, mostly by bombing.
- Q. How soon did she sink?
- A. Perhaps 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ hours; she had very insufficient defense equipment because it was a converted carrier and had insufficient compartmentation and protection.