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ANNEX B

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INTERROGATION NO. 166
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PLACE TOKIO
DATE 30 October 45

Division of Origin, Shipping and Rail Transportation

Subject: Operation and Allotment of A Class Ships

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Major URESHINO - Vice Chief of Section - Bureau of Military Affairs,
3rd Section, Army Department.

Where interviewed Bureau of Military Affairs, USSBS

Interrogator Mr. Albert C. Ingersoll Jr.

Interpreter Mr. Taira, Jr.

Allied Officers Present _____

This paper was prepared in reply to the questions of Mr. Ingersoll, and
is reproduced as received by him.

NOTE :--

It is hoped to acknowledge that this report is not so reliable as it is prepared through fragmental materials and remembrance.

Oct. 10, 1945.

ON OPERATION AND ALLOTMENT OF A CLASS SHIPS

1. At the beginning of the war, the gross tonnage of A class ships amounted to 2,150,000, of which about 1,460,000 G/T (69%) was allotted for the transportation of landing operation army, and the rest for the transportation of echelons in rear and the preparation for the Java operation. Items of the use of 1,460,000 G/T are as follows : --

Malay landing army	about 71 G/T
Philippine landing army	about 65 G/T
South sea detachment	about 5 G/T
Sakaguchi detachment	about 5 G/T

2. The operation in the South areas had been planned to be finished about in four months, and along with that the ships in use had also been supposed to be dismissed at the end of March, 1942. But the operation in Burma caused the time to be postponed, and moreover the advance operations in Aleutians, Midway, Fiji, and Samoa necessitated the use of about 200,000 G/T of ships. Thus the time of the dismissal of these ships was forced to be postponed instead of the schedule. The details of the condition of allotment of those ships at the time are not known.

3. As a result of the failure in the Midway operation the Fiji and Samoa operations were suspended, but the ships used in these areas were transferred for the operations in Solomons and New Guinea (Moresty); especially the rise of the Guadalcanal operation proved the shortage of the bottoms hitherto allotted in these areas, making it inevitable to transfer at once some of the ships allotted in the South sea and mainland. Thus more than half of the ships in possession were allotted in the Solomon districts.

The conditions of allotment of the ships in use in the middle of Oct. 1942 are as follows:

Total Possession:	about	1, 150,000 G/T
Items :	the Solomon operation	500,000 G/T
	troops	34 G/T
	recruits	5 G/T
	supplies	11 G/T
	the Malay and Philippines operation	25 G/T
	the South sea --- homeland	7 G/T
	Korea (Manchuria) area	7 G/T
	China area	1 G/T
	Japanese water area	2 G/T
	refrigerator ships, engineering ships, etc.	14 G/T
	in docks	9 G/T

4. The forced operation at Guadalcanal and the repletion for the loss in this operation necessitated increasing of desired ships. Hereupon the government and the General Headquarters made up a measure for the future war conduct, which was based upon the increasing levy of ships, and by which the army performed a levy as shown in the separate paragraph, and most of those ships thus levied were installed in the Solomon district. An outline condition of the use at the end of 1942 is as follows:

Total	1,420,000 G/T
Use in the Solomon operation	710,000 G/T

5. With the termination of the Guadalcanal operation, a rebuilding of the system of ship-operation was felt necessary. Thus, in order to make it a standard for the economical employment of ships in proportion of 1,100,000 G/T after April 1941 on the one hand, and to furnish materials for the reduction of escort force on the seas and the insuring of the safety of ships as well to form a plan for escort system on the other, a fundamental operation was in order to dispose of a bulky transportation demand with a limited number of ships, we established and hoped to put in practice a measure for increasing and strengthening of various transportation means as shown in the separate paragraph.

6. Along with the fall and loss of Guadalcanal, we were pressed to adjust and strengthen the strategic defence area, and we put the main point of transportation by ships in the northern New-Guinea, northern Australia, and the Kurile islands district since April 1943. and picking up as many ships as possible from the mainland and the South district, we practised the transportation for Hollandia, Wewak, Salmi, Halmahera, etc. In the meantime, the action of submarines became gradually substantial, the action of aircraft at the terminal of operative transportation became frequent, enhancing the loss of ships.

On the other hand, as the scarcity of home materials longed eagerly for the importation of the South materials, we could not but transfer the repatriation ships to Philippines and Taiwan at the cost of part of operative development, and apply them to the transportation of import materials.

The fact that the districts of ship employment were chiefly Pacific Ocean or North Ocean was considerably inconvenient in view of the importation of the South materials, and it was our great regret that we could not utilize those ships to the utmost.

7. As in the early spring of 1944 the operative districts moved to the Middle Pacific areas, most of the ships used in the northern New-Guinea and the northern Australia were transferred to the Pacific Ocean districts, being employed since about March for the transportation of the forces in charge of the defence of Saipan and Palao districts. In this consequence, the starting points and the destinations of those ships were Tokyo, Yokohama, Kure and Hiroshima, and thus the import of the South materials became almost suspended, causing a serious problem for the enrichment of the national power.

8. The attack on ships as the main objects by the task force, beginning with that on Truk and Palao, performs in a rapid reduction of the national and fighting powers, hardly comparable with the loss of a single isolated island, and the line of 1,100,000 G/T that had been maintained with difficulty during 1943 was

broken down, running rapidly along the direction of decrease, and along with the threat by the submarines, to recover the former situation proved impossible.

9. Owing to the development of the middle Pacific operation from February to June 1944, the communication with the South by A class ships was nearly suspended and we could not expect the importation of the material from south sea by A class ships. In the meantime, the preserved total of these materials at home drew near to nought, so that 50,000 to 70,000 G/T a month of C class ships had to be spared, aggravating the situation of the transportation power on the seas. The continual supplies and recruits to the South by the Army, however, were narrowly maintained by using the outbound navigations of these ships.
10. Along with the American troops' landing on Saipan on 15 June 1944, the deployment in the middle Pacific district came to a temporary close, and A class ships became again available in the South districts. But the preserved bottoms at that time, apart from the damaged ships, did not attain half of 1,100,000 G/T. On the other hand, the loss of Saipan resulted in a direct threat to Philippines, Taiwan, and Okinawa, and the communications with the South was confronted with the crisis of breaking off. Here arose the urgent necessities of strengthening the defence of these islands, and of storing up the overseas materials at home as soon as possible. Hereupon, in order to accomplish the deployment of the army on one hand, and to use them for the importation of the overseas materials on the other, we decided to dispatch about 200,000 G/T of C class ships to the South covering from July to September, and for the purpose of the collective use of these ships, we arranged to have a negotiation for transportation among A, B, and C.
11. In Oct. 1944, Leyte operation was launched, and in order to reinforce the army against that operation, the use of the vessels became indispensable. At that time, however, the total number of movable A class ships was only 480,000 G/T, so they were not enough to be applied for a new operation. Therefore, about 80,000 G/T was unavoidably diverted from C class ships which were to be sent to bring back the materials in South sea.
12. At the end of Leyte operation, the navigation in South Sea was almost interrupted. The vessels which could not sail home by January, 1945 were necessarily left to remain in South Sea. In January, 1945, A class ships usable in the vicinity of Japan proper was about 170,000 G/T, so they could not be applicable to the need of the operation.
13. When the scheme of the home land operation was established, the system of the transportation by means of vessels was to deploy the forces to the home land from the continent, and to accumulate the supplies, especially the food. As the ports to be used by A class ships were the same as B. and C class ships used, it was better that they were all unitedly used. Since May, 1945. completely collective operation was practised. Total capable transportation and its division in July, 1945 are as follows.

Total	674 D/T
Items	
Transportation	
for operation	85

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in Kurile Islands District
in Seichu Islands District
Transportation of the commodities 589

(The End)

Table.

Fundamental System of Vessels in 1943.

District	Army	Supply	Vessels allotted to the Army			The Total
			Army	Supply	Others	
North Pacific		30				30
Japanese waters		20				20
Manchuria		50				50
China		30	5	5		40
South Sea		90	50	130		270
Pacific (middle)		50				50
Pacific (south)		100	20	40		160
Recruits	50					50
Passenger	50					50
Operation and maneuver	100					100
The Others					180	180
Dock					100	100
Total	200	370	75	175	280	1100