

HEADQUARTERS  
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY  
(PACIFIC)

RESTRICTED

INTERROGATION NO: 314

PLACE: Fukuoka, Kyushu  
DATE: 31 October 1945

Division of Origin: Military Analysis Division

SUBJECT: JAAF 12th Flying Division

Personnel interrogated and Background:

Maj. Gen. HABU Hideharu -- NOT a pilot; in Manchuria as CO of 45th Flying Regt at beginning of war; took unit south to Hongkong briefly in early 1942, returning to Manchuria; joined General Defense HQ, Tokyo, Apr 42, as staff officer; June 44 attached to Hokoda Training Flying Div; CO of 15th Indep Flying Brigade, Anshan, Man., Aug 44 - May 45; CG, 12th Flying Div, Ozuki, Yamaguchi Ken, May 45 until end of war. Age: 50.

Maj HAMANO Munefusa -- CO of 83rd Indep Flying Sqdn, China, 1941-42; pilot, graduate of Military Academy, Tokyo 1943 and of Navigation Training School (Hakujyoshi Hiko Gakko), 300 kms of Tsitsihar, Man.; Staff officer, 19th Flying Brig, May 44, transferring to 12th Flying Div when 19th Brig became 12th Div on July 44 and became operations officer. Age: 35.

Where Interrogated: Fukuoka Base Command, Fukuoka, Kyushu.

Interrogator: Capt. Chalmers M. Roberts, AC

Interpreter: Capt. Dow Parkes, MI

Allied Officers Present: Sqdn Ldr Edward W. Bloxham, (RAF) MI  
1st Lt Donald Meiklejohn, MI

SUMMARY

Defense of Anshan against B-29's including ramblings; fighter defense in N Kyushu, division of air defense responsibility in W Japan; fuel shortages, intelligence nets, plans for defense against Allied landing; use of suicide aircraft and planned use in defense against Allied invasion.

Annexes Attached:

1. "List of the air crews of the 12th Flying Div," prepared on 28 Sept 1945.
2. "List of Unit preparations of the 12th Flying Div." prepared on 28 September 1945.
3. "Analytic list of preparation of personnel for the anti-aircraft unit of the 12th Flying Div," prepared on 28 September 1945.

INTERROGATION

- Q. What was the nature of the work being done by the 15th Flying Brig at the time you were in Manchuria?
- A. The mission of the 15th FB was to defend ANSHAN against B-29 attacks.
- Q. And what flying regiments or other units did you have with which to do this?
- A. Originally the 15th FB had under its command the 70th Flying Regt. and the 25th Indpt Flying Sqdn. However, in November of last year, the 70th went to Tokyo, and after that a new FB was organized to take its place - the 104th. That left the 104th FR and the 25th FCS (Indpt Flying Sqdn) under my command. The 70th had Ki-44 (Tojo). The 25th FCS had Ki-45 (Nick) and the 104th FR had Ki-84 (Frank). In May of this year, an additional FCS was put into the organization - the 84th, which had Ki-46 (Dinah).



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- Q. Did you at any time in the defense against B-29s, order any pilots to attempt to ram the B-29s in the air?
- A. The ramming of B-29s by pilots was not a direct order from Headquarters but was voluntarily performed by pilots because their machine guns had no effect and they attempted this method instead.
- Q. How many rammings took place?
- A. Only four that I know of. There were many attempts to ram, but because the speed of our planes was not sufficient they did not succeed. When our planes were in front of the B-29s, the attempts generally met with success.
- Q. In each case where a Japanese plane actually hit a B-29, was the B-29 brought down?
- A. I know of one case in which a Japanese plane rammed a B-29 but failed to destroy it, and no doubt there were others, but I do not know for certain how many or any details.
- Q. Did the ramming of B-29s ever become official Japanese policy as did the suicide attacks in the Okinawa and Philippines Campaigns?
- A. In the case of suicide planes which flew into ships, there were definite orders stating that such missions should be carried out; however, in the case of ramming planes, there were no orders at any time that I know of, either in Manchuria or Japan. All cases were individual actions on the part of the pilots.
- Q. Many times the Japanese Radio broadcast references to interception of B-29s in Manchuria by what was referred to as the Manchurian Air Force, and indicated there were Manchurians as well as Japanese who were flying aircraft. Were there any such?
- A. The Manchurian Air Force was composed almost entirely of Japanese who had gone to Japanese schools. There were some Manchurians included; however, it was not possible to use them efficiently and their part in operations was negligible.
- Q. Why wasn't it possible to use them efficiently?
- A. Because they weren't adequately trained - they had not been to schools in Japan. In addition to the inadequate training, there were racial problems in that it was necessary to make most of the officers of the Manchurian Air Force Japanese and the NCO's and soldiers were usually Manchurians. (Gen. HABU implied that to have a Manchurian officer in charge of Japanese crews would be undesirable.)
- Q. The Manchurian Air Force you speak of - was it an actual organization, or was that a way of referring to the Manchurians in the 2nd Air Army?
- A. I am not clear on that subject. There was some relationship between them, but I am not sure what it was.
- Q. Did you have adequate aircraft to defend against B-29 attacks?
- A. For the most part, the Manchurian Air Force was using antiquated planes. The Japanese handed over to them a few Ki-45s, but I believe there weren't more than 10 Ki-45s used by the Manchurian Air Force. About twelve pilots from the Manchurian Air Force were trained in flying the Ki-45s in the Japanese 25th Indpt Flying Sqdrn.
- Q. What warning was received in Manchuria of approaching B-29 attacks?
- A. The warning system that was used when B-29s left bases south of the Yellow River was as follows: In Japanese occupied areas in China forward of the B-29 airfields, there were lookouts stationed. These lookouts, when the planes left the field, would telephone that fact. However, they could not tell the direction of flight from their points. The telephone messages were received at Tsinan. There were also such lookouts in Japanese occupied areas in the Taiyuan area. Such lookouts upon seeing planes would telephone to two points - Tsinan and Peiping. However, from Tsinan and Peiping, the intelligence was sent by wireless to Manchuria.
- Q. Did the Japanese have any lookout personnel with wireless sets in the immediate area of B-29 fields in the Chungking and Chengtu areas?

- A. The planes could not be seen by any lookout personnel until they reached 112°E. At that point we would have lookout personnel stationed.
- Q. What other source of intelligence did you have of B-29 activity?
- A. We received intelligence from Japanese units stationed in Burma, about B-29 operations in going back and forth between India and China. When they saw large numbers of planes from India going into China, they estimated that in two or three days there would be attacks in certain areas of Japan or Manchuria. There units in Bruma would see the planes.
- Q. How did the units in Burma obtain that information?
- A. The information sent from Burma was derived from viewing the planes - the northernmost units would see the planes in flight.
- Q. Did you receive any intelligence from the Japanese Navy on this B-29 activity?
- A. No.
- Q. Was there no information from the Navy via Tokyo?
- A. I received nothing directly from the Navy. All my information in Manchuria came from General Defense Hq in Tokyo and I do not know on what that was based except for that previously described. I received the intelligence through the Japanese Army in Manchuria (the Kwantung Army) rather than directly from lookouts by radio.
- Q. What damage was done in Manchuria by the B-29 attacks?
- A. In July of 1944, B-29 attacks damaged the Anshan Steel Works and destroyed 30% of the works. At Mukden, there was an aircraft factory which was the target of the B-29's, but the damage was very slight - it was under 10%.
- Q. What aircraft were they making at Mukden?
- A. The raid came when they had made the fuselages for the first four Ki-84s (Frank). Two of those were destroyed. After that the factory was dispersed. Because of the difficulty of transportation between the parts of the factory, no more Ki-84s were produced. The Ki-27, an old type of plane, was at one time manufactured both in Japan and in Manchuria. However, with the beginning of the war, the output was stopped and Ki-43s were made instead, but only in Japan.
- Q. Were Ki-79s also made in Manchuria?
- A. I do not know about that. (Note: It is known from other sources that the trainer Ki-79 is a version of the obsolete fighter Ki-27.)
- Q. As a result of these raids in Manchuria, were any additional fighters brought for defense from Japan?
- A. In August 1944, the 104th FR was newly established in Manchuria and it had thirty-five planes. However, this was not a direct result of the B-29 raids since at that time there were almost no B-29 operations in Manchuria.
- Q. Was there any shortage of gasoline in Manchuria while you were there?
- A. The shortage of fuel in Manchuria was very severe. Originally there was a sufficient amount, but much of it was sent to Japan to be used there, and there was therefore a shortage. All we had in Manchuria, was our original stock. Since gasoline was not manufactured in Manchuria, the problem continued to exist from the beginning and through my period of service there. There was never an acute enough shortage to affect combat operations, but training was severely restricted.
- Q. What training of air crews was going on in Manchuria during your period there?
- A. The pilots joined the FRs with very little combat training and received combat training in the FR. So far as I am aware, there was no preliminary flight training in Manchuria.
- Q. When you took over as Commanding General of the 12th Flying Div, what was your general assignment for that organization?

- A. At the time I became Commander of the 12th FD, I received no special orders. However, my mission was to defend Northern Kyushu, including such places as Kokura and the Kammon Tunnel, against air attacks. My assignment was general air defense of Northern Kyushu.
- Q. At this time, was the 12th FD directly responsible to General Defense Headquarters?
- A. At the time I came to Ozuki, in May 1945, the chain of command was as follows: Imperial General Headquarters, 2nd General Army, Western District Army (or actually, the 16th Area Army; both being the same organization). My unit was directly under the Western District Army.
- Q. What was your relation at this time to the Sixth Air Army?
- A. At the time I arrived in Ozuki, the 12th FD was a part of the Sixth Air Army. However, for defense operations it was directly under the Western District Army, but on 10 June 1945, the command set-up was changed and the 12th FD, instead of being directly under the Western District Army, was put under the direct jurisdiction of the 6th Air Army.
- Q. And not directly under Air General Army (Koku Sogun)?
- A. I was under the Air General Army, but not directly - the Sixth Air Army intervened until the end of the war.
- Q. What area was the 12th FD specifically responsible for defending when you first came to Ozuki?
- A. At the time I first came to Ozuki, the boundaries of my area of responsibility were not clearly fixed. However, I was responsible for defending Kokura and the steel plants concentrated in the Kokura-Yawata area, plus the Shimonoseki Strait and ships in the adjoining waters and harbors.
- Q. When was your area of command more specifically defined?
- A. On July 10th.
- Q. And this division was the one that obtained at the end of the war, and the one on which you would have operated in defense against an Allied landing?
- A. Yes, this area that was defined at that time continued until the end of the war, and in case of a landing, would have remained in force.
- Q. What was the exact boundary of the area?
- A. The boundary runs as follows: From Cape Ashizuri in Southern Shikoku, North to Imaharu; thence to Fukuyama, Honshu; then North to Daisen, which is a few miles east of Yonago, on the north coast of Honshu. Thence north to include Oki Island. South-westward to include Tsushima and thence westward along the 34th parallel to include Saishu. West of Saishu, the line was not clearly drawn between the 12th FD and the forces in China. The 12th FD was responsible for all of KYUSHU. However, just shortly before the war ended the 30th Flying Group (Sento Hikoshudan) was to move into KUMAMOTO and its Headquarters was established there, but the main force had not arrived at the time the war ended. Had it arrived, a boundary would have been established between the 12th FD and the 30th FG, but since it didn't, no boundary was ever drawn. In case of a landing, the 30th FG\* would have been responsible for the defense of Southern KYUSHU and the 12th FD would have been responsible for Northern KYUSHU and the other areas already described. When B-29 attacks were made, we had about 30 minutes' warning in Southern SHIKOKU. Our units at BOFU, OZUKI, and ASHIYA could not efficiently intercept the B-29 attacks on Southern KYUSHU, because with such short warning, the B-29s could hit their targets before our planes could reach the area. It was extremely difficult, therefore, for us to defend Southern KYUSHU against air attack. Further, when B-29s appeared south of SHIKOKU, it was not possible to determine their target; sometimes it was South KYUSHU; sometimes it was Central KYUSHU; sometimes OSAKA, and sometimes the SHIMONOSEKI STRAIT area. Because we could not tell their target, we could not go there to wait their arrival, but had to stay at our bases to defend them against possible attack, and this further restricted our defensive operations. The radius of effective operations did not extend as far as KUMAMOTO. At first the Navy was responsible for the air defense of Southern KYUSHU but withdrew because of heavy attacks, and at the end of the war there

were no intercepter units in Southern Kyushu. Navy Air Headquarters moved from Kanoya to Oita. Units moved from Southern Kyushu bases to Usa, Tsuiki and Omura. Note: The GOC of 30FC stated in interview that his role was "offensive." Presumably, both officers mean the same thing i.e. an offensive form of defense.

- Q. What was your working arrangement with the Navy for general defense, particularly with regard to the preparations for defense of Japan against Allied landings?
- A. We worked in cooperation with Navy Headquarters at Oita for defense against air attack. The Navy was responsible for the Bungo Channel. We were responsible for the Shimonoseki Strait area, and the Navy was responsible for the defense of South Kyushu from Sasebo south, and also for the Eastern coast of South Kyushu. In the event of Allied landings on Kyushu, Army-Navy cooperation would have been carried out at the level of the Sixth Air Army, rather than directly by my unit.
- Q. Would the units under the 12th FD have been used as suicide planes in the event of a landing?
- A. Yes; all would have been used in this manner.
- Q. Did you have any actual suicide units (TOKKOTAI) subordinated to you in addition to your regular units?
- A. Yes, I had special attack units under my jurisdiction which were organized by the Air General Army and sent to the 12th FD.
- Q. In the case of units with aircraft assigned to 12th FD, how near was actual strength to allotted strength?
- A. The number of planes did not come up to expectations. In one regiment, there were 50 fighter planes. Under my jurisdiction, there were the following flying regiments with the numbers of planes which each had at the end of the war: 4th with 50, 71st with 30, 47th with 30, 59th with 40; the 71st came from the Philippines and at the time of its arrival in Kyushu, 30 planes were allotted to it. The unit brought no planes from the Philippines.
- Q. Of the numbers which you have given for each of these units, how many were actually serviceable or ready to take off?
- A. 4th FR had 22 or 23 serviceable planes in the "Ko" category; 71st had between 2 and 8; 47th had between 15 and 20, and 59th had between 22 and 26 at the beginning of August 1945. At the end of the war, the 4th FR had 12, 71st FR had 2, 47th FR had 10, and 59th FR had 22 planes in Ko category.
- Q. In addition, you had assigned to you two reconnaissance light bomber units, the 65th and the 66th FRs, and one reconnaissance unit, the 83rd FCS. What were the figures for these units?
- A. The 83rd FCS was not under my jurisdiction. It was directly under the Sixth Air Army. The 65th and 66th FRs were under the 6th FB, which in turn was under my command. The 65th FR had 29 aircraft and the 66th had 15 - I think that was the figure - both at the beginning of August and the end of the war. All of these planes were in the "Ko" category.
- Q. In addition to these regular units, you had numerous special attack units (Tokko Tai) under your command at this time. Can you list them by number, and give the number of aircraft each had?
- A. There were 15 Tokko Tai with 6 planes each directly under the 12 FD, and an additional 13 such units, also with 6 planes, were under the 6th FB which in turn was under the 12th FD. The total, thus, was 28 units directly under my command at the end of the war.
- Q. How many other suicide units under your command were expanded prior to the end of the war? were
- A. None of my special units/used in attacks, and therefore none was lost. The ones that were used were under the 6th Air Army.
- Q. What type of aircraft did these 28 Tokko Tai have?
- A. Ki-45, Ki-43, Ki-61, Ki-51, and Ki-54. In addition, there were training types.

- Q. When reference was made to some special attack units as Shin Butai, did the term have any special significance?
- A. At the beginning, special attack units were called by various names; however, that was stopped and all of them were called Shin Butai in a numbered series.
- Q. In getting your fighters into the air, were alerts received from the alert room here at Fukuoka in Western Army Hq, or did you have an alert room of your own which received the warnings directly from the radar stations?
- A. At Ozuki, there was a control board for alerts similar to the one in the Western District Army Hq; however, it was much smaller. This control board was installed in a shelter in a tunnel into a mountain and is still in good condition. All information on the 12th FD alert board was received from the alert room in Western Army Hq, with the exception of intelligence received from an Army radar station on Cape Ashizuri (South Shikoku), which sent alerts by wireless both to Western Army and to Ozuki (12th FD). However, at Ozuki, a wireless of 12th FD could hear wireless messages from all radar stations and could work directly from that information and did so.
- Q. Did 12th FD scramble fighters on its own initiative, or on orders from the Western Army?
- A. I received only a general order from the Sixth Air Army to defend my area. In actual operations, I myself determined what planes were to go and ordered them up. I had telephone communications with all my airfields where the scramble orders were given over a loudspeaker.
- Q. What was your reaction to the cessation of hostilities in mid-August of 1945?
- A. At the time the war ended I felt a great deal of resentment, and it was extremely difficult for me to adjust myself to the situation. Like others in my units, I considered flying a last suicide mission against an Allied target. However, following the Imperial order, I directed my officers to gather their men and to calm them down. Since that time I have thought a great deal about the situation and have resolved to adjust myself to it. I have not yet been able to do this successfully, but in the future I expect to enter a quiet life of farming and of contemplation, and in this kind of life I expect to be able to achieve the realization that the ending of the war was a good thing for my country in that it saved many lives.

End of Interrogation

LIST OF THE AIR CREWS OF THE 12 FLYING DIVISION., HQ. OF 12TH FLYING DIVISION  
28 September 1945

AIRFIELD	CHAIN OF COMMAND	UNIT	PILOT	GUNNER ON PLANE OR RADIO OPERATOR ON PLANE	TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
Ozuki	Directly assigned to division	4 FR 47 FR Shinbu Unit (FI-45)	50 30 6	30	80 30 6	116
Bofu		71 FR Shinbu Unit (FI-43)	31 24		31 24	55
Sone		Shinbu Unit (trainers)	24		24	24
Ashiya		59 FR Shinbu Unit (FI-61)	45 12		45 12	57
Gannosu		Shinbu Unit (trainers)	24		24	24
Metabaru		Under the Command of 6 FB	65 FR Shinbu Unit (FI-51)	32 36		32 36
Tachiarai (South)	66 FR Shinbu Unit (FI-54)		25 6	20	45 6	51
Tachiarai (North)	Shinbu Unit (FI-54)		12		12	12
Chikugo	Shinbu Unit (trainers)		24		24	24

NOTE: Totals (not given in Japanese table): pilots, 381; gunners and radio operators, 50; total personnel - 431.

LIST OF UNIT PREPARATIONS OF THE 12TH FLYING DIVISION				Hq of 12th Flying Division, 28 September 1945		
AIRFIELD	CHAIN OF COMMAND	UNIT	PERSONNEL	GRAND TOTAL		
Ozuki	Directly assigned to division	4 FB	650			
		47 FR	300			
		Shinbu Unit	12			
		Under Command of 4 FR	129 DFS	170	1132	
		Under Command of 71 FR	71 FR	400		
			175 DFS	170		
		Shinbu Unit	59 FB	48	618	
			500	24		
		Under Command of 59 FB	133 DFS	170	694	
			48	50	98	
Shinbu Unit	Under the Command of 6 FB	48	120	168		
		Main part of 170 DFS	320			
Metabaru		65 FB	72	392		
		Shinbu Unit	300			
Tachiarai (south)		66 FR	12	312		
Tachiarai (north)		Shinbu Unit				
Chilugo		Shinbu Unit	24	24		
		Shinbu Unit	48	48		
Grand total				3486		

NOTE: DFS is here used by the Japanese for DOUJIKU SU SEIBITAI (independent maintenance unit)



ANALYTIC LIST OF PREPARATION OF PERSONNEL FOR THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT UNIT OF THE 12TH FLYING DIVISION				Hq. of 12th Flying Division 28 September 1945								
AIRFIELD	CHAIN OF COMMAND	UNIT	PERSONNEL	ARMAMENT								
				96LG	99LG	92MG	"Te" No. 4	13min	20mm	98HMA	Twin- barrelled LA	
Ozuki	Directly assigned to division	4 ab	300			9	81	50	10			
Bofu		235 ab	80	2				32	6			
Ashiya		248 ab	100			10			30	10		
Sone		82 ac	34						10	5		
		64 ab	100						30	20		
Fuknoka	Under Command of 64 ab	7 MAS	130								6	
		8 MAS	130								6	
Gannosu	Under command of 51 ab	64 ab (a part)	10		5							
Metabaru		65 ab	100					40	10			
		84 ac	74	2				20	15			
Tachiarai (north)		Under Command of 84 ab	9 MAS	130								6
			10 MAS	130								7
Tachiarai (south)			194 ab	106	3 (12 yr model)	4	3		30	10	3	
Chikugo			238 ab	66		3			30			
Bunso (south)			193 ab	24		6			3		3	
Total				1514	7	18	22	81	275	86	6	25