

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

INTERROGATION No. 104  
NAV NO. (27)

PLACE: Tokyo  
DATE : 23 Oct. 1945.

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis.

Subject: IWO JIMA Operation.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Commander OKUMIYA, Masatake, I.J.N., Class 1927, I.J.N.A. On Air Staff and Commander RABAU Air Group 1942-1943. Served at RABAU, TRUK and OKINAWA. At present on I.J. Naval Staff as Operations under Captain OHMAE. (Appeared smart and well informed).

Where interviewed: Naval War College.

Interrogator: Captain HEDDING, USN.

Interpreter : Lt. (jg) R.P. BROWN, USNR.

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY:-

The purpose of this interrogation was to amplify and clarify the answers submitted in answer to Nav. Memorandum 6.

Transcript of Interrogation (Commander OKUMIYA, Masatake)

Q. What Naval Air Force were available in the NANPO SHOTO on 15 February 1945?

A. At IWO JIMA six Type O fighters and four attack bombers. At CHICHI JIMA a detachment of 903rd Air Group consisting of three Seaplanes, being utilized in escort duties.

Q. What was Japanese estimate of U.S. Forces committed to the IWO JIMA Operation?

A. Carrier Task Force (5th Fleet under Adm. Spruance) consisting of 12 CV's, 8-10 BB's, 20 CA's or CL's, 50 DD's. Amphibious Force with 2 1/2 Divisions.

Q. What was the strength and disposition of Japanese Naval Forces as of 15 February?

A. 2nd Fleet (Inland Sea)

BB's - YAMATO, HARUNA, NAGATO  
XFEB-CV's-ISE, HIYUGA (Singapore)  
CA's - TONE, OYODO  
CL's - SAKO, YAHAGI  
25 DD's  
15 SS  
(Other units of 2nd Fleet under repair)

3rd Fleet (Inland Sea)

CV's - AMAGI, KATSURAGI, RYUHO, KAIYO, HONSHO.

NOTE: Units of 3rd Fleet not operational as no Air Groups available. No Air Groups in training due to lack of aviation gas.

Q. In defense of the NANPO SHOTO; why did defense plan not contemplate use of available Naval Forces?

A. Because of fuel shortage the 2nd Fleet was not to be committed, also fuel available was to be conserved for use in final attack. Because no Air Groups were available, the 3rd Fleet could not be used.

Q. Was the carrier attack on the Tokyo Area on 16-17 February 1945 a surprise?

A. Since a search plane which took off from KISARAZU on the 5th on 150 degrees sector failed to return, and D. F. fix that afternoon on something North of IWO, the Navy expected an attack on the 16th; but was in doubt as to location and composition of the U.S. Force.

Q. Why was no attack in force made against the U.S. Carrier Force on the 15th and 17th?

A. Primarily due to lack of experienced pilots. Those pilots with experience were in training with new type of aircraft and not considered sufficiently trained. The 1st Air Army (JAAF) was requested to conduct attacks and 10 Type 100 observation planes took off with unsuccessful results.

Q. On 16th and 17th were any Naval vessels attacked by carrier aircraft in the TOKYO Area?

Transcript of Interrogation (Commander OKUMIYA, Masatake)

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A. No Naval vessels. A 10,000 ton tanker, the YAMASHIO, was left sunk and burned. An Army transport carrier was attacked and received minor damage. This type of carrier was built for transport of Army aircraft, had a flight deck about 125 - 150 meters. Three were in commission.

Q. How was data on Naval Air Force losses obtained?

A. From records. Records are available in Naval General Staff from October 1944 on. These are only records now available, however questionnaires have been sent to Naval Officers in the various organizations of the Fleet to obtain information on aircraft losses. This information should be available in two weeks to a month.