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

INTERROGATION NO. USSBS 67  
NAV. NO. 14

Place: Tokyo.  
Date: 20 October 1945; 0930-1200

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis Division.

Subject: OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE NETHERLANDS  
EAST INDIES.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Captain FUJITA, Isamichi, IJN. Staff Officer of 2nd Fleet  
Southern Sea from 1941 to 1942; and Staff Member of Bureau  
of Military Affairs, N.D., Tokyo from 1942 to 1945.

Where Interviewed: I.J.N., Staff College.

Interrogator: Commander T. H. Moorer, U.S. Navy.

Interpreter: Lt.(jg) R. P. Brown, U.S.N.R., and  
Shigio KAMEDA.

SUMMARY

The Japanese advance into the PHILIPPINES, DUTCH EAST INDIES and BRITISH MALAYA involved the defeat of the principal enemy forces encountered plus the seizure and occupation of strategic points. It was planned to accomplish this by surprise air attacks combined with simultaneous thrusts extending over a wide area. Speed was the keynote of the operation since it was anticipated that the Japanese Fleet would be required to meet a counterattack by the bulk of the United States Fleet. The critical factor in the timing of the operation was the destruction of American Air strength in the PHILIPPINES. This was successfully accomplished.

Captain FUJITA explains the organization of the Southern Force, the general plans and certain details concerning the operation.



TRANSCRIPT

- Q. What was the specific objective of the operation in the South Pacific?
- A. The objective of the Southern Operations was to overcome the principal forces of the American, British and Dutch Forces in the Southern Area and to seize and occupy the following places in order named: PHILIPPINES, BRITISH MALAYA, BURMA, CELEBES, SUMBATRA, TIMOR and other Dutch Islands. It was planned to occupy these areas after surprise attacks and to make every effort to complete this operation as soon as possible in order to release the Southern Force for other planned operations
- Q. Did the operation go according to plan?
- A. Yes, the operation was to be carried out in the following manner:
- (1) Attack and occupation of BRITISH MALAYA.
  - (2) Surprise air attack on the PHILIPPINES (weather might delay the operation, but in spite of the delay the raids would still be carried out) We planned to utilize air attack to the extreme in order to destroy all American aircraft in the PHILIPPINES After which the areas would be occupied in the following order:
- |             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| PHILIPPINES | BALI    |
| BORNEO      | SUMATRA |
| CELEBES     | JAVA    |
| AMBON       | BURMA   |
| TIMOR       |         |
- Q. Was the destruction of the American Air Force in the PHILIPPINES the critical factor in the timing of the operation?
- A. Yes, if we could take care of the enemy Air Force then the invasion could be conducted on schedule.
- Q. What was the specific mission of Admiral KONDO'S Force (Southern Force)?
- A. (1) To destroy the enemy Air Force and (2) to support the landing force.
- Q. Draw a diagram indicating the organization of the Southern Force during occupation of the PHILIPPINES and DUTCH EAST INDIES.
- A.

MAIN BODY

(2 Battleships, 2 Heavy Cruisers, 4 Destroyers)

PHILIPPINE ISLAND GROUP

SOUTHERN FORCE  
(2nd Fleet)  
V.Adm. KONDO

- 1 (3 Heavy Cruisers, 10 Destroyers, Auxiliary craft)
- 2 (3 Heavy Cruisers, 1 Light Cruiser, 12 Destroyers)
- 3 (1 Light Cruiser, 12 Destroyers)
- 4 (1 Light Cruiser, 12 Destroyers)



Transcript of Interrogation (Captain Masamichi FUJITA)

A. (Continued)

ELEVENTH AIR FLEET

(21 Flot - 150 planes) (22 Flot - 100 planes)  
(23 Flot - 150 planes)

SUBMARINE GROUP

SOUTHERN FORCE (4th Squad - 5t Subs) (5th Squad - 6 Subs)  
(2nd Fleet) (6th Squad - 4t Subs)  
V. Adm. KONDO

MINELAYER GROUP

(2 minelayers)

MALAYA GROUP

(4 Heavy Cruisers, 1 Light Cruiser, 10  
Destroyers)

Q. What was the general plan for the PHILIPPINE Attack?

A. The first objective was to destroy the American Air Force by an air attack launched from FORMOSA (Mostly Navy Planes). To assist in this we planned to occupy APARRI and BATAN ISLANDS 120 miles North of LUZON and establish an emergency airfield there. This was necessary because of the comparative short range of the Army planes. A few days later (about 12 December) we were scheduled to attack DAVAO and LEGASPI. These attacks were staged from PALAU; ten days later (about 22 December) we were to land at LILON BAY and LINGAYAN GULF. After the landings were effected, it was the duty of the Army to complete the occupation. If the situation in BRITISH MALAYA and THAILAND permitted, we would make a sudden landing. Plans were also to attack MIRI ISLAND by air and simultaneously to make a landing with a small force. MIRI and KUCHANG, valuable because of oil, were actually occupied on 16 and 29 December respectively. During the occupation of the PHILIPPINES, it was planned to launch simultaneously an invasion against BOFNEO, TARAUN, BALIKIPAPAN and BANDJERBASIN. This landing was staged from PALAU. At the same time MENADO, KENDARI, MAKASSAR in the CELEBES and AMBON and DUTCH TIMOR were to be occupied. Parachute troops were used at MENADO, KOEPANG and PALEMBANG. After the neutralization of SINGAPORE, it was planned to occupy JAVA.

Q. Were the forces used in the JAVA Occupation part of the forces used in the PHILIPPINES?

A. Not entirely. This force was staged from CHINA and JAPAN and the PHILIPPINES. It was planned to land at three places, BATAVIA, SOERABAJA and the center north coast of JAVA. The fleet supporting the landing in the PHILIPPINES combined with the forces at MIRI and proceeded to JAVA. The entire operation was a joint operation between the Army and Navy. The total number of Navy land based aircraft employed in the entire operation was 300 in the PHILIPPINES - 100 at SAIGON. The 300 planes in the PHILIPPINES were moved into the EAST INDIES as the operation progressed. The entire operation went actually according to plan and only minor changes were necessary. The Commander in Chief of the Second Fleet was in direct



Transcript of Interrogation (Captain Masamichi FUJITA)

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A. (Continued)

command of the MALAYA Operation. In the middle of January, we rendezvoused at PALAU with a carrier force from JAPAN and proceeded to KENDARI and then to the area South of JAVA where we remained until the operation for the occupation of JAVA was completed.

Q. Were you familiar with the general over all plans?

A. Yes, all plans in general.

Q. Did the success of PEARL HARBOR alter these plans in anyway?

A. The operation plans were made up with the fact in mind the PEARL HARBOR operation was going to be a success.

Q. What action did you expect the American Fleet to take after the war started?

A. I thought the American Submarine Forces would cause trouble, but didn't expect strong forces of surface craft.

Q. Did you expect reinforcements to come from the UNITED STATES after the war started?

A. We didn't think that reinforcements would come direct, but we had in mind that the American Fleet would be assembled in the PACIFIC for a counterattack and that is the reason why we hurried with the operation.

Q. During the approach of the Philippine Group to LUZON, were attacks expected?

A. Yes, they were, and we took the necessary precautions.

Q. What kind of precautions?

A. All A.S. guns were manned and all units were kept out of range as much as possible. (600 miles)

Q. Do you know why CLARK and NICHOLS Fields were not attacked at daylight or shortly thereafter on 8 December?

A. The plan was to attack at dawn, but because of the bad weather, the attack was delayed until 1230.

Q. Can you tell me the total number of ships the Japanese Force lost, both combat and merchant ships in this Operation?

A. Two or three mine sweepers were lost. No other major damage was encountered by our ships.

Q. Didn't you lose two destroyers from submarine attack?

A. Yes, I think so.



Transcript of Interrogation (Captain Masamichi FUJITA)

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- Q. Are you familiar with the attack on Japanese Convoy by American Destroyers in MACASSAR STRAITS on 24 February?
- A. I am not familiar with the operation, but will ask officers of the Third Fleet to investigate it for you. The officers are Captain IHARA and Captain ISHIHARA.
- Q. Are you familiar with the action South of BALI on 19 February?
- A. No.
- Q. Are you familiar with the details of the Battle of JAVA SEA?
- A. This was a Third Fleet operation. Captain ISHIHARA will give you this information.
- Q. Were there any Japanese ships sunk in the JAVA SEA BATTLE?
- A. No, only damaged.
- Q. Were any Japanese battleships present?
- A. No.
- Q. After the battle, some of our ships attempted to escape through the straits. Do you know anything about them?
- A. I knew they were sunk, but no detail. I believe that the destroyer FUBUKI sank the HOUSTON.
- Q. Were all the ships sunk North of JAVA before they got through the Straits?
- A. I think so, but am not sure.
- Q. Did the large Japanese Force operating South of JAVA have any action at all?
- A. A Dutch destroyer was sunk, but it was thought to be the American Cruiser MARBLEHEAD at the time.
- Q. Did you know that the HOUSTON had been bombed and only the fwd. turrets were in operating condition?
- A. No, I didn't know that.
- Q. In the LINGAYAN Operations, were the ships supporting the landing in the Gulf attacked by aircraft?
- A. Yes, I think by land base planes.
- Q. Do you know what damage the ships received?
- A. I think that one light cruiser was slightly damaged. Contact Captain E. IHARA for details.