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

INTERROGATION NO. 358

PLACE: Osaka
DATE: 8 Nov 45

Division of Origin:

Military Analysis Division

Subject:

Japanese Army Air Forces' - 11 Flying
Division (Hikoshidan)

Personnel Interrogated:

Lt. Gen. KITAJIMA Kumao

General KITAJIMA is a graduate of the Military Academy and an old-time fighter pilot. He served in various posts including an instructorship at the Air Officers' School, Akeno Air School, and the Army War College. He retired from the army in 1939 to accept a position with a Japanese governmental agency in China (Kowa). In 1941 he returned to active service with the army, serving as CO of the 12th Flying Regiment in Manchuria. He became commanding officer of the 18th Flying Brigade in August 1942 and in August 1945 become commanding general of the 11th Flying Division.

NOTE: This officer was non-cooperative, evasive, and either withheld considerable information or was extremely ignorant for a person in his position.



Interrogator:

Capt. John C. West

Interpreter:

1st Lt. Richard Sneider

Allied Officers Present:

Capt Charles A. Haskins
1st Lt. John G. Palfrey

SUMMARY

General KITAJIMA finally gave some information concerning plans and activities of his unit, the 11 Flying Division, but no other information of value.

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- Q. What was the mission of the 11th Flying Division?
- A. We were assigned the duty of protecting the Osaka-Kobe area from air attacks.
- Q. What was your superior headquarters?
- A. We were subordinate to the ground organization, Chubugun (Central District Army).
- Q. What was your relation to the 6th Air Army?
- A. We had some relation to them, but were under Chubugun.
- Q. What was your relation to the Air General Army (Kokusogun)?
- A. We were indirectly related to them.
- (NOTE: Further attempts to get a more definite picture of this "relationship" met with no success.)
- Q. What organization was to control your activities for the defense of the homeland (Ketsu) operation?
- A. The 6th Air Army.
- Q. How many planes did you have under your command at the end of the War?
- A. We had 4 flying regiments with about 25 planes each, making a total of 100 a/c.
- Q. How many special attack units did you have under your command at the end of the war?
- A. About 8 with 6 planes each. (NOTE: At first, KITAJIMA was extremely evasive concerning this, but one of his staff officers volunteered the information to him. An unofficial check with the I Corps G-2 section revealed that KITAJIMA in his demobilization report listed no special attack units.)
- Q. Where did you get the pilots and planes for these Special Attack units?
- A. Oh, we got them from everywhere...from China, Korea, the homeland.
- Q. Did you get any from training units?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did your subordinate units furnish any?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you tell us what percentage came from where?
- A. I really don't remember.
- Q. What type a/c were they?
- A. All fighter planes.
- Q. At what HQ was it determined how many planes would be sent up to intercept B-29's?
- A. My division made the decision for its subordinate units.
- Q. Just what flying regiments (hikosentai) were under your command?
- A. The 55th, 56th, 244th and 246th.

Q. What Flying Brigades (Hikodan)?

A. None.

Q. What types of planes did your division have?

A. KI 61's, 84's, 100's and a few 44's.

Q. What was the last B-29 raid which you attempted to intercept?

A. It was a raid on the 14th of August.

Q. How many planes did you order up?

A. We ordered up all we had.

Q. How successful were they?

A. They had no success.

Q. Why?

A. Because P-51's swept the areas ahead of the B-29's and lured our fighters up; when the B-29's came over, our fighters had to return to their bases to refuel.

Q. What was the most effective fighter-interceptor used against B-29's?

A. In my opinion, the KI 61.

Q. Do you consider (Jap) fighters a successful or effective defense against B-29's?

A. In the beginning, the high altitude of the B-29's was a problem.

Q. How about later, when the B-29's came in at lower altitudes?

A. Our problem then was not so much the quality of the fighter planes, but the lack of sufficient quantities with qualified pilots to fly them.

Q. What was the relationship between your organization (11 FD) and the organization controlling fighter interception in the Nagoya region (20 sento-Hikoshudan)?

A. There was no relationship. When 20 sento-Hikoshudan was formed, I gave them control of the 23rd Flying Brigade. (Hikudan).

Q. Was there any coordination of interception?

A. No.

Q. What was the mission of your division in the Ketsu operation?

A. We were to attack all ships in the area between the Muroto Cape and the Kushimoto.

(NOTE) At first General KITAJIMA denied all knowledge of every having received a plan for this operation, but when told that every other command had received such a plan, he finally admitted receiving one.)

Q. What were to be your principal targets?

A. Ships.

Q. What kind of ships?

A. Special Attack planes were to be used against troopships while fighters were to attack the escort vessels and then go on to the larger targets.

Q. When did you expect the invasion?

A. The newspapers say it was coming the first of November.

Q. What was your estimate?

A. We didn't have any.

Q. You mean to tell us that, you, as the Commanding Officer of a Flying Division with a staff which included an intelligence section which was undoubtedly in contact with the higher echelons, did not have any estimate of the time the invasion was to take place?

A. No, we had none. (He finally stated his own personal estimate was October 1945)

Q. When were your preparations supposed to have been completed?

A. We were ready all the time.

Q. Were you ready in August?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have an adequate supply of fuel at the end of the war?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have a reserve for Ketsu?

A. Yes.

Q. Just how much of a reserve?

A. Well, by limiting each pilot to six hours a month we had enough to carry us thru next February or March.

Q. What bomb load did your special attack planes and fighters carry?

A. The special attack planes carried a 250 KG bomb while the fighters carried 2 100 KG bombs, one under each wing.