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

INTERROGATION NO 412
(Jap Intell No 28)

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 16 Nov 1945

Division of Origin: Japanese Intelligence Division.

Subject: Squadron (Army) Intelligence Procedure.

Personnel interrogated and background:

Major SAEKI, Akito graduated from Officer's School in 1938 and, following a course at HAMAMATSU Flight School, was assigned to the 7th Air Regiment. In July 1939 he was a bomber (KI 21) pilot in CHINA. SAEKI returned to JAPAN for further air training and remained until May 1943 when he was sent to the WEWAK Area, NEW GUINEA, as Commanding Officer of a squadron of KI 49 bombers. He returned to Army Staff College in December 1943 and was in the General Affairs Department of General Air Headquarters since February 1945.

Where Interviewed: Room 528, Meiji Building

Interrogator: Major R. S. SPILMAN, JR., AC
Lt. Comdr. PAINE PAUL, USNR

Interpreter: Major JOHN PELZEL, USMCR

Allied Officers Present: None

SUMMARY:

Major SAEKI was a pilot in CHINA in 1938 and 39 and was Commanding Officer of a squadron of HELEN aircraft (KI 49) based in the WEWAK area from May 1943 to December 1943.

No intelligence officer was attached to the squadron and intelligence information was passed to and collected from pilots by Major SAEKI. Orders from Air Headquarters went to the Division, thence to the Regiment, where the various squadron commanders were assembled and given the mission with such photos and intelligence as were available. The Division is the lowest unit to have an officer whose primary duty is intelligence, (usually a Major or Lt. Col.) but he had received no special Intelligence training.

Briefing was confined almost entirely to essential flight data such as approach and withdrawal, radio frequencies, route to and from the target, and weather, if available. A navigation chart with a route indicated thereon and a photograph of the target, usually without annotation, were carried on the flight.

Brief reports were made orally to higher headquarters immediately after each mission and detailed reports were made later in writing.

Very little information was received from higher headquarters and, in NEW GUINEA, due either to a shortage or ineffective use of reconnaissance and photo aircraft almost nothing was known about Allied airfields or installations.

Major SAEKI appeared intelligent and to have a thorough knowledge of his duties in the squadron.



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412-1

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Interrogation of Major SAEKI, Akito, Japanese Army.

Q.1. What was the primary mission of your squadron in NEW GUINEA?

A. Mostly against ground troops. A little night bombing of airfields.

Q.2. What was the briefing procedure?

A. An operations order from Air Headquarters was sent to the Division, thence to the Regiment (SENTAI) where Squadron Commanders were called together and given the order and available intelligence. The Squadron Commanders then passed this information to their squadrons.

Q.3. What material such as maps, etc. did you carry in your planes?

A. We carried no documents but did carry aerial photos. In CHINA, these were annotated but in NEW GUINEA they were not.

Q.4. Did you have several scales of photographs?

A. Most were 1/40,000 to 1/20,000.

Q.5. What were the facilities for taking photos?

A. A reconnaissance squadron attached to the Air Division took most of the pictures. On the few daylight missions flown in NEW GUINEA, the bombers also took photographs.

Q.6. Did you have photo interpreters?

A. Some interpretation was done at the reconnaissance squadron, but I believe by the squadron officers and not by special interpreters.

Q.7. Did your squadron make an attack on PORT MORESBY?

A. One night attack but clouds prevented bombing.

Q.8. What other intelligence was included in the briefing?

A. Very little besides aerial photos. Sometimes, in a day attack, reconnaissance aircraft were sent out 30 minutes ahead and reported back by radio. This was never done for my squadron, however.

Q.9. Did you have special target area maps (target charts) for briefing?

A. The use of such maps was part of pilot training but we had none either in CHINA or NEW GUINEA.

Q.10. Were FLAK positions annotated on photos?

A. Yes, if they were known, but we had almost no information in NEW GUINEA.

Q.11. Were no navigation maps carried?

A. My squadron carried navigation maps, scale of 1/2,000,000 to 1/3,000,000. These were made in TOKYO from all land surveys and navigation charts available.

Q.12. Did Headquarters have larger scale maps?

A. Yes, for the LAE - SALAMAUA and PORT MORESBY areas. We had 1/500,000 maps which were captured, U.S. I believe. Distances were shown in feet.

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412-2

Interrogation of Major SAEKI, Akito, Japanese Army, (contd)

Q.13. At SENTAI Headquarters was a war room situation map kept?

A. Nothing elaborate. Intelligence and operations were not separate. In the regiment the Commanding Officer performed intelligence functions. At the Air Division level there was an Intelligence Staff Officer, a Lt. Col. or Major, and about 3 Officers or NCOs as assistants. He had no special Intelligence training.

Q.14. At SENTAI level was an Officer assigned Intelligence duties whether or not he was called an Intelligence Officer?

A. No. All that type of duty was done by the Commanding Officer. At the Brigade level some had an officer assigned Intelligence duties, some did not, but they were never called Intelligence Officers.

Q.15. What type of reports were made by CHUTAI following a mission?

- A. 1. Results of bombing
2. Situation on the ground (aircraft, etc.)
3. Weather enroute.
4. Action of enemy aircraft

Q.16. Over the target did you attempt to check actual AA positions against photo annotations?

A. We tried to locate them after returning.

Q.17. Did AA reports go up thru command channels?

A. Yes.

Q.18. Did you receive printed Intelligence material from higher commands?

A. Yes, a report from the Division about every 10 days (The general war situation, results of bombings, future predictions).

Q.19. Did you give information to pilots prior to a mission, on the following subjects?

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| 1. Rendezvous. | a. Yes. |
| 2. Weather. | a. We received the best available, if any. In the air we sometimes received weather from various stations but communications were very poor. |
| 3. Approach attack and withdraw-
al, specific information? | a. Yes. |
| 4. Was consideration given to
wind direction and velocity? | a. We usually had no wind information. Determining factors were:
<u>1</u> the lay of the land
<u>2</u> the best way to avoid fighters
<u>3</u> the best way to avoid AA
<u>4</u> the most effective bombing approach. This was the main factor since we often had no information on the others. |
| 5. Navigation - was a specific
route drawn on a map? | a. Yes. We carried it with us. |
| 6. Communications, frequencies
etc. | a. Yes. The communications member of the crew was so briefed. |
| 7. Air-Sea rescue facilities
and survival information? | a. No instructions were given but some survival equipment was carried. |
| 8. Were pilots given specific
ditching instructions? | a. No special instruction was given to pilots. No procedure was outlined. |

Interrogation of Major SAEKI, Akito, Japanese Army, (contd)

Q.21. What was the specific nature of reports made by the squadron?

A. First a verbal report was made then a written one which contained details of fuel consumption, ammunition expended, results of bombing, etc. (This was a very full report on forms prescribed at Brigade level and seems to have included nearly everything contained in our detailed reports from squadron and group level).

Q.22. Could we get one of those forms?

A. These were made up by each Regiment or Brigade and were not standardized.

Q.23. In your pilot training was any study made of Intelligence procedure?

A. None. We learned something of enemy tactics and plane capabilities, however.

Q.24. Did you think that the information you received (considering what was available) was adequate?

A. In the Japanese Army, not enough thought was given to Intelligence.