

WAR DEPARTMENT

File # 84

Exhibit # 56

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Original notes taken by Capt  
J. J. Robinson U.S.N.R. in the  
interrogation of Vice Admiral  
Sentaro OMORI, I.J.N.

~~Type~~

Vice Admiral  
Interview with ~~Capt.~~ Omori

Time: 26 November 1945, 1015 - 1200 hrs.

Place: Room 304, N.Y.K. Bldg., Tokyo, Japan

Present: Captain J.J. Robinson, USNR, Interrogator

Douglas T. Wada, Interpreter

name: Vice Admiral Sentaro Omori

address: Tokyo Shi, Setagaya-ku, Tamagawa, Oyama-cho  
131 Bancho.

~~age:~~

~~Education:~~

~~Military or naval service: I.J.N~~

Q - What was your command at the time of the outbreak of the war?

A - I was in command of the 1st Torpedo Boat Squadron of the 1st Fleet that took part in the attack.

Q - How long did you hold this command?

A - ~~I assumed command of this squadron in November, 1940, and was replaced in November, 1942.~~

Q - What command did you next hold?

A - I became commander of the 5th Cruiser Squadron in November, 1942, and relinquished its command in November, 1943.

Q - What was your next duty?

A - I was appointed head of the Navy Torpedo Boat School <sup>at Yokosuka</sup> in November, 1943, and was replaced in August, 1945.

Q - What were your duties after that?

A - I was in command of the 7th Fleet from <sup>20</sup> August, 20, 1945, to Sept. 15, 1945.

Q - When did you first learn of the plan to attack Pearl Harbor?

A - It was in early September when I was informed that I was to command the guard force.

Q - By whom were you informed? & where?

A - From the chief of staff of the Combined Fleet when we held a "skull practice" on <sup>the</sup> map at the Staff College in Meguro, Tokyo, in September, 1941.

Q - Can you recall the name of the chief of staff?

A - No.

Q - What was the next development of this plan?

A - We put in at Kure in mid-November for preparations, which took about a week.

Q - When did you leave Kure?

A - We left Kure at midnight on or about 20 November and put in at ~~Hito~~ Hitokappu Bay on Etarofu Island at about 0600 on 23 November, 1941.

Q- What was your next move then?

A- On the 26<sup>th</sup> November, we weighed anchor after sunrise and sailed on a bearing 90° east and as we reached a point north of the Hawaiian Islands, <sup>on 6 December,</sup> we sailed southward <sup>after refueling,</sup> stopping at a point about 150 miles off Oahu, from where we launched our attack.

Q- What was your flagship and how many ships were there under your command?

A- My flagship was the cruiser Abukuma and my squadron consisted of one cruiser and nine destroyers.

Q- Can you name the destroyers that were under your command?

A- My guard force was made up of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> squadrons with the addition of ~~the~~ Kagero. They were Kagero, Kasumi, Shiranuhi, Arare, ~~Isokaze~~, Tanikaze, Hamakaze, Isokaze and ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~. <sup>I can't</sup> ~~the could not~~ recall the last, ~~so we asked him if it wasn't~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~the~~ Urakaze, ~~he stated it was~~ A. Yes. &

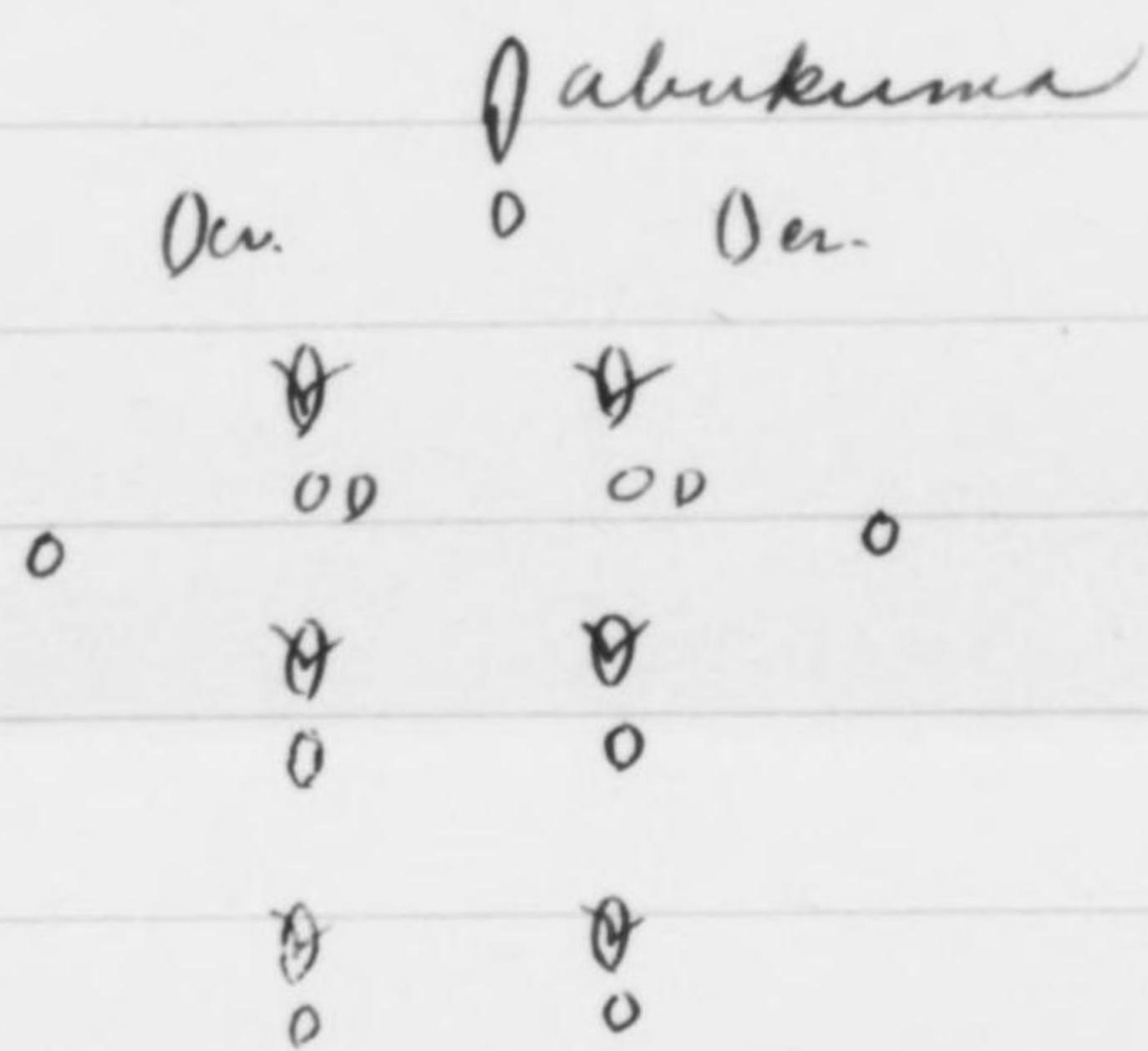
What was

Q- ~~Can you recall~~ the strength of the attack force?

A- ~~It consisted of~~ 6 carriers, 2 battle ~~ships~~ <sup>ships</sup>, 2 heavy cruisers, about 4 submarines, about six supply ships and my squadron.

Q- What did you do after arriving at a point 150 miles north of Oahu?

A- My squadron closed in along side the carriers to protect them. As I recall it, they were in this formation. (see diagram attached)



Q- At what time did you launch the attack?

A- The first wave left at about 0330 of 8 December, followed by the 2nd wave at about 0430. It took about 3 hours for one wave to attack and return.

Q- <sup>When</sup> ~~at about what time~~ did you start on your homeward journey?

A- ~~We started back~~ In the afternoon. I can't recall the exact time.

Q- Did you take the same route?

A- No, we headed northwestward, then west, <sup>then south-</sup> ~~from where~~ ward, then westward and then northwestward to Kure. I ~~traced~~ <sup>plotted</sup> this course on the map. At this point, two carriers broke off to attack Midway.

Q- Why did you turn south and then west at these points?

A- We thought that American submarines were <sup>waiting</sup> ~~lying~~ <sup>for us</sup> ~~in wait~~ at these points. At this point I pointed to a position north of Midway I we attacked something we believe were American submarines, although we ~~are~~ <sup>are not</sup> sure.

Q- What were your precautions <sup>for a surprise attack,</sup> as you sailed toward Hawaii? Did you maintain radio silence?

A- At the rendezvous point off Saeki, we were instructed to avoid all ships, even friendly, <sup>to</sup> maintain a course that would avoid American patrol planes I showed us

how they avoided the patrol planes sent out from Dutch Harbor area and Midway, to maintain radio silence and to send out no scout planes.

Q- ~~How~~, How were orders received from your commander-in-chief and who was he?

A- My commander-in-chief was Nagumo aboard the Akagi and orders were issued by blinkers.

Q- When did you first see the definite plan to attack Pearl Harbor?

A- <sup>About middle of November</sup> at the rendezvous point off Saeki.

Q- ~~How~~ Did you receive a copy of it? If so, where is the plan?

A- Yes, but it was taken up by the chief of staff and ~~was~~ destroyed after the attack, since it was a military secret.

Q- What was your impression or understanding in regard to the declaration of war?

A- We were told that war would be declared before we



attacks and if not, we would be called back, but when we began launching planes at a point 150 miles off Oahu, we believed that war had been declared.

Q- ~~Did~~ <sup>Didn't</sup> you know ~~exactly~~ <sup>whether</sup> war had been declared or not? ~~Did~~ <sup>Did</sup> you hear any discussion in regard to ~~the declaration of war?~~ <sup>that matter?</sup>

A- No, since my task was to guard the attacking fleet, I was worried about it and particularly about the fuel problem. So on the way to Etorofu from Saeki, we held daily ~~training~~ <sup>in regard to</sup> fueling. It was also decided that if we couldn't solve the fueling problem, we were to leave the destroyers back. Hence, that was my greatest worry. Besides, I was afraid that we might meet the American fleet coming to ~~the~~ attack Tokyo.

Q- What is your idea in regard to declaration of war?

A- War should first be declared before an attack is executed.

Q- Then, to gain the element of surprise, would you execute the attack a minute after war has been declared?

A- No, about an hour or two afterwards.

Q- When did you first hear about questions being raised ~~about~~ whether war had been declared before or after the Pearl Harbor attack?

A- Only recently through the newspapers. As I understand it, there seemed to have been some kind of difficulties in the transmission of the declaration.

Q- What was your reaction when ~~you~~ <sup>you</sup> first learned of the plan to attack Pearl Harbor.

A- It was ~~is~~ during the maneuvers in September that we were told that we might have to go to war against America and I was really surprised to hear that.

Adm. Omori.

Little  
dark  
irregular  
features  
Teeth  
noting

Comdr 1st Torpedo ~~Boat~~ Squadron  
1st Fleet. —

Nov 1940 Replaced Nov. 1942.

Comdr. Fifth Cruise Squadron  
Nov 1942 — to Nov 1943 —

Head of Navy Torpedo Boat School. Yokosuka.  
Nov. 1943 — Aug 1945

Head 7th Fleet — Aug 20 — 1945  
to Sept 15 — 1945.

Early Sept.  
To Comd.

Guard Force —

Staff College — Mogyuro, Tokyo —  
from 5th Comb Fleet Sept 41,

Skull practice — on map —

Mid Nov dt Kure — put in — about 1 week —  
on about Nov 20 — midn — Hittokape Bay on Etorofu Id.

Entered — on 23 November 1941 — about 6 a.m.

On 26th — after sunrise — Cruise Aburatsubo —

One cruiser 9 destroyers. 90° —

② X ~~11~~

radio silence

Dec 6<sup>th</sup> - started southward after refueling.

Rendezvoused about 150 miles N of Oahu.

Then squadron brot alongside <sup>carrier</sup> heavy plane, took off.

0330 planes took off - 8<sup>PM</sup>

about hr after sunrise -

0430 second wave -

about 5 hrs - radio silence

if must ask, commander in chief - Akagi ~~Na~~ ✓

About mid Nov first saw planes for attack P.H.

Rendezvoused off Saeki - saw plane there -

Avoid all ships even friendly.

- course to avoid patrol planes,

- radio silence

- no scout planes.

C-in-C - he put out necessary orders.

(3) (4) (7)

Abr. 150 mi away -

(Place <sup>0330</sup> ~~0330~~) - 8 Dec.) Believed war had  
(8 Dec.) been ~~told~~ declared -

Rec -

Rec told war wd be declared before attack -

Never heard any such <sup>Attack without declaring war</sup> statement being made

That war wd be declared if attack -

First declare war then attack -

That wd have been  $\begin{array}{r} 0329 \\ 0330 \end{array}$

About 1 or 2 hours wd seem sufficient -

Did he hear any discussion regarding (the war)

No. How guard attacking fleet - Fuel problem  
Whiffard would have to fight Amer - really surprised.  
When maneuvers in Sept told them <sup>might have to</sup> ~~to~~ go to way U.S.

When start back from P.H. -

8 Dec afternoon

Afraid U.S. coming to attack Tokyo

N A E - BLUE TEAM. ~~MIWA~~  
↑  
Chief Staff Officer

W. Pacific - Enemy penetrates -  
General problem.

Enemy Adv. Base.

Combined Fleet.  
Spearhead. ~~MIWA~~ TOMIYAMA. ~~MIWA~~ <sup>Beil on</sup> ~~MIWA~~ <sup>TINIAN.</sup>  
1 part of Staff Sect. - Operation Chief.  
1 " " Navy Staff. Air Officer.

1st Air Fleet - Kido Kantai Air Staff Officer

Pearl Harbor Attack. - - - - -

Supply of

Yamanote      Kurashina  
Ugaki          MIWA -

KONO

→ Ito Seichi - - - - -  
Before Nov. in Oct.      ↘ Seichi

1911 - Meiji 44

1925 - Taisho 15 - Showa 1

7

8

1933

Showa

5th

Gunma Kyokai - Military Affairs

1933 - 1936

1926 - 1937

12 - 3

Chief of Staff - 5th Fleet

1937 - <sup>month</sup> July 37

" "

4th ~~Fleet~~  
Squadron

July 37 - Nov. 37

Staff Officer, 9th Squadron

Nov 37 - Nov 38

Ch of Staff, 2nd Fleet

Nov 38 - Oct 39

Int. Staff College:  
Tactics.

Oct 39 - June 43

Senior Staff Officer  
Combined Fleet

July 43 - May 45

SECT 2.

General Naval Staff

Notes of Lt. Fred H. Uychan

Interrogation of Rear Adm. Kuroshima

犯 犯 犯  
罪 罪 罪

NOTES.

Navy General Staff.

Ito - Success unlikely - dangerous enterprise  
for complete annihilation of attacking unit  
Division of force would make southern operation  
difficult. ||

Combined Fleet  
To capture

Kuroshima - Fortress in South will take 1/2 year or more.  
Combined fleet will have to control S.W.P. Waters. ||

NAGUMO - Success not likely. - Hesitated.

Later after detailed study came to conclusion that it  
might succeed. [Overall plans were made in  
conjunction with Yamamoto and Staff - minute]  
details were put in regards to actual carrying  
out of plan were his own.  
NAGUMO.

DATE. Early part of NOV. THE E ACTUAL

Final Order - 1700.

Nov 7. Secret Order and

22 Nov go to TAKA and take in fuel.

~~IT~~ HITOKAPU WAN  
Special Order to 1st

Air Fleet - Go to such and such spot on secret orders.  
and standby. 24 Nov. In case of war - move to



KUROSHIMA.

Hawaii and attack American Fleet - In  
case of harmonious agreement return.

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| Gensaike - Buend in -  
Navy Ministry - Individual too -

---

--- Hawaiian Attack ---

6 Sept - 7 Dec.

Conferences - Between Army Staff, Foreign Office  
NAIKAKU Cabinets - etc

[ Combined fleet ] - [ ]

f. General Study & Study. etc,

Kuroshima -

Hikoku.

- 1 Order in writing - no written Relis Blackout,
- 2 Limit Knowledge to few men
- 3 Course to be kept away from American Air patrol
- 4 not to meet ships of neutral country -

Yamamoto believed in fighting squarely.  
Told them Ito Chujo - Dojans Gensui of Gunreibu

(Must) Believed that notification had been given to  
Foreign office -

"Notification was given first"  
Yamamoto asked, after receiving Pearl Harbor  
Report.

NAGATO - - HIROSHIMA BAY - ATTENDED,

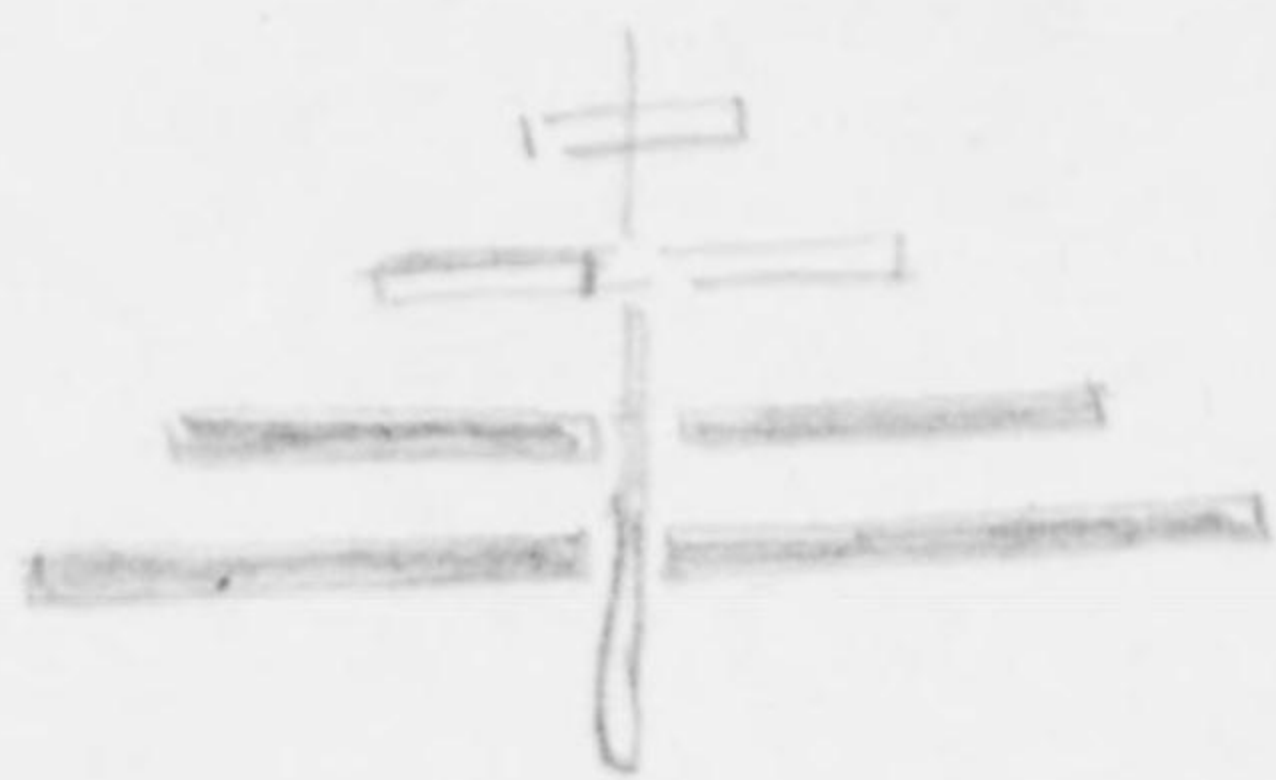
IWAKUNI - AIR BASE. - -

1 South Expeditionary Fleet

Yamamoto. [ ]

] Plan of Operation given by <sup>Navy General</sup> Staff  
In order to carry this out Explanation  
was given in regards to the operations.

Gunreibu to Sanbo Hanbu - Early part of  
Nov. Yamamoto went to Tokyo and must have  
told them.



Ogasawara  
Bonin.

At a board NAGATO.

SAKUSEN -

Does not remember giving

Plan of Combat of various fleets.  
1st Fleet to Malay - Southern Expeditionary Fleet  
2nd Fleet to Philippines - Southern fleet. Reserve. and also  
3rd Fleet 2 Fleet Commander as C of C. 3 squadrons of subs also with 7 fleet.

Explanation.

Reinforcement units -

Action of Air based planes.

Submarines.

Submarine  
Advance  
guard.

Main force to stand by  
guarding the Eastern water.

NOV. MIDDLE. -

新高山 | 新高山  
 我  
 DEC. \*  
 X  
 X

1208. - NIITAKAYAMA  
 1730 - 12. 2.

[ X DAY - ]

Depends on Circumstances - 我 我

我  
 加

- if U.S. were in alert  
 Standby condition then even that would not  
 be enough -

加  
 藤

Control of SW.P. Sea Area by neutralizing the  
 U.S. Navy. So that the operation would proceed  
 without hindrance - To be able to have enough  
 time to solidify their gains

(meetings - ( - ( - 十月 五 六 七 日 )

新  
 高  
 山

加  
 藤

- 1. <sup>1st air fleet</sup> Adm. Nagumo (R KUSAKA) GENDA.
- 1. Yamamoto. Adm. Ugaki KUROSHIMA.
- 1. GUNREIBU - TOMIOKA (福田) MIWA.

Supply - Bad weather - Destroyer  
 has to refuel quite often - also

富田

→ Showa.

\*

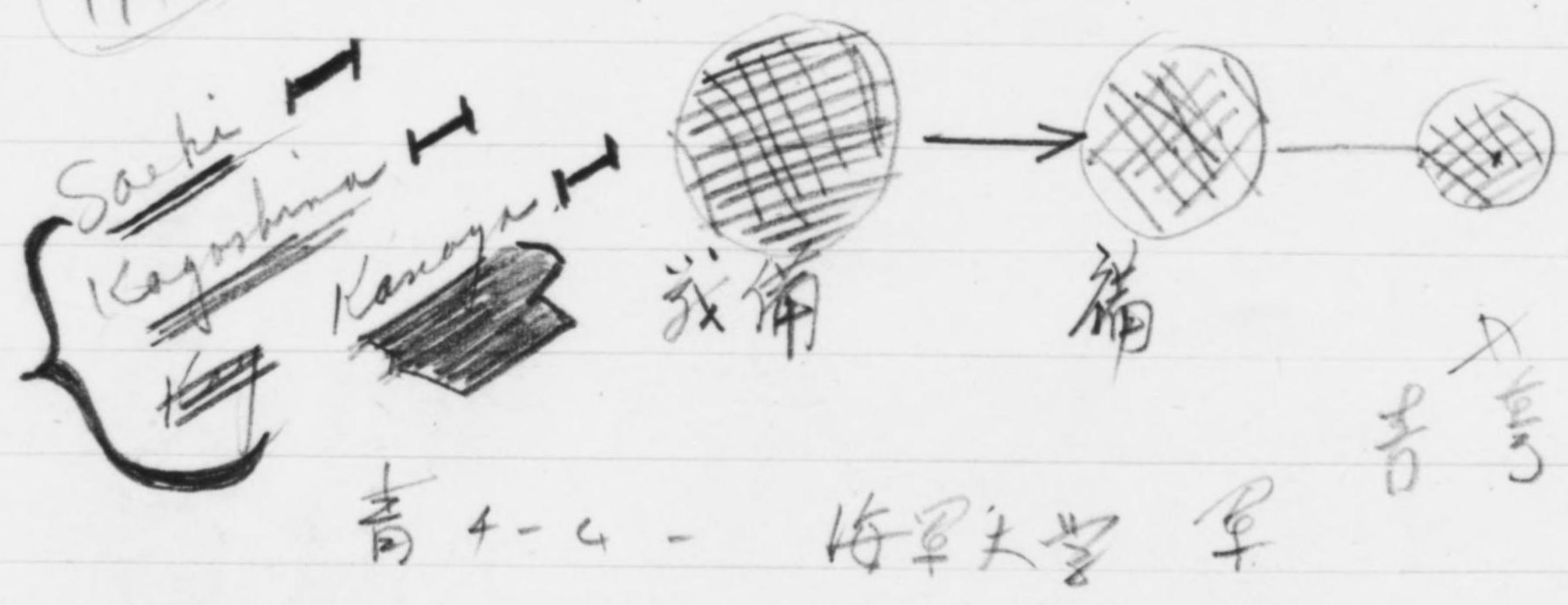
Naval Academy - <sup>少尉</sup> 大正五年 - 1917 - 1918  
 " College - 1929 - Dec. <sup>Provisionary Ensign for 1 year</sup>  
 then received Commission.

- Yamato - Musashi -

Oct 1939 - Oct 1943, - Senior Staff Officer of Combined Fleet.

2 Section - Airplane      Serbi  
 Ammunition -      我備 =  
 marine ni taishite -

1941 = arm shant. = - (X)



青 4-4 - 海軍大学 軍

Supply -

Combined Fleet - In order to accomplish mission  
Capture S.W. Strongholds.

① In order to ensure unbreakable defence,  
To control S.W.P. Seas,  
Minimize the strength of American navy.

② Supply, <sup>maintaining</sup> secrecy of movement, utilization of  
success of operation, - doubts expressed in regards  
to this, is War against A.E. fundamentally  
difficult, and successful operation \* \*  
undoubtedly.

Liaison between Combined fleet and Army  
Staff and Foreign office.

→ - Terauchi Genzai <sup>senior</sup> Staff Officer of

Operational Order to 1st Air Fleet  
from Combined fleet. # (7 Nov -  
maintaining utmost secrecy the fleet will assemble  
at Tanban Bay.)

22 Nov - 1st Air Fleet will hiding their movement upon special will depart from Hatakapanan.

Maintaining air and under water security proceed to Hawaii.

Will attack the American Fleet in Hawaii and neutralize their power.

Date of 1st attack x day. (Day will be made clear later) <sup>attacks</sup> Will be about day break.

After having made its attack, the Fleet will sail back to Japan maintaining utmost defence against possible counter attack.

② 1st Air Fleet will immediately assemble to sail back to Japan, upon receipt of notice of favorable turn in diplomatic relation between Japan and America.

25 Nov. 1st Air Fleet will on 26 Nov. Depart from ~~Hatakapanan~~ <sup>Hatakapanan</sup> Tanba Bay - 3 Dec evening will

③ approach xx location and take on supply and fuel.

Iwahuni Air Base.

- naval personnel — 1st Phase
- with Army personnel — 2nd Phase

Yamamoto - quoted -

(Start of war will be upon receipt of Imperial Order, - no matter what, upon receipt of <sup>Religious</sup> ~~news~~ of favorable settlement of Jap American diplomatic settlement...) the fleets will return to Japan.

In Order -

To win - we'll have to invade America  
That is an impossibility.

Why then, will we lose?

Yamamoto - after commencement of war  
we'll be able to fight for 1 year. after that  
I can not guarantee anything.

Overall Hawaii attack was ~~the~~ 1st phase of  
Tactical operation. It was not the ~~first~~  
1st step in opening of hostilities. <sup>They were to attack after</sup>  
Navy understood that, War would ~~begin~~  
Dec. 7



In your opinion ~~was~~  
who in Foreign Office was responsible for the  
delay in tendering the Declaration of War to  
U.S.

— Ito ~~the~~ Seichi. }  
Ichi of <sup>R. adm.</sup> Ishikawa. }  
FUKUTOME — TOMIOKA — MIGHT KNOW,

(To It is my belief that Adm. Kuroshio knew of  
just who was responsible for the transmission of  
Dec of War to U.S. but did not wish to  
commit himself.)

Geo. H. Vignare 20 75. JG.