

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



INTERROGATION NO: 355
(Japanese Intell. No. 21)

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 15 Nov. 1945

Division of Origin: Japanese Intelligence Section,
G-2, USSBS.

Subject; Japanese Naval Intelligence, Its Flow to and Use
by the Planning Department (1) of the Naval
General Staff.

Person interrogated and background:

TOMIOKA, S., Rear Admiral, IJN.

1917, - Graduated from Naval Academy.

1928-30, - Attended Naval War College.

1930-33, - Navy Representative at League of Nations.

1939(Nov.)-1940(Oct.) - Taught strategy at the Naval
War College.

1940(Oct.)-1942(Dec.) - Operations Section of Naval
General Staff.

1942(Dec.)-1943(Jan.) - Commanded fitting out of the
CL Oyodo and became her Captain
upon commissioning.

1943(Jan.) -1943(Sept.) - Commanded CL Oyodo.

1943(Sept.) - Became Deputy Chief of Staff of the
Southeast Area Fleet responsible for
Supply and Construction at Rabaul

1943(Nov.) - Promoted to Rear Admiral

1944(June) - Became Chief of the Southeast Area
Fleet.

1944(Nov.) - Returned to Homeland and assumed duty
of operations and war history officer
of Naval General Staff.

Where Interviewed: Navy War College.

Interrogators: Lt. Comdr. William H. Botzer, USNR
Lt. Comdr. F. Shackelford, USNR

Interpreter: Lt. Otis Cary, USNR

Allied Officers Present: None.

Transcript of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

SUMMARY:

The First Department of the Naval General Staff in preparing operations plans depended on intelligence from the Fleets and from the Third (Intelligence) and Fourth (Communications) Departments of the General Staff. While the most useful information supplied by the Third Department was in the form of (1) weekly written estimates of Allied losses, strength, and location and (2) character analyses of Allied Commanders, intelligence on the whole was "very poor, very haphazard".

It was estimated that the U.S. would employ 15 to 18 big carriers against Iwo Jima and land 2 to 3 divisions and that against Okinawa big carrier strength would be between 18 and 20 and that 5 to 7 divisions would comprise the invading force. These estimates of landing forces were reached on the basis of statistical analyses showing that in past operations the U.S. had employed forces at least twice the strength of Japanese defending units. Respecting Allied intelligence, it was believed that the number of divisions defending Okinawa was known to the enemy. (U.S.)

After the fall of Okinawa, there was no thinking in the General Staff that the Allies could be stopped. The only hope was to discourage them by inflicting very heavy losses on the invading forces, losses up to 30 or 40% of the first waves. It was estimated that the U.S. would land 15 divisions in southern Kyushu at the end of July or early in August after first taking the neighboring islands, and that at the same time a unit would be landed in Shikoku. By the end of 1945 it was thought an assault would be made against the Tokyo area.

Concerning the attack on Pearl Harbor, the striking force sailed from ETOROFU ISLAND, TANKAN BAY under a cloak of radio silence on 26 November 1941 and received daily dispatches of the latest information while enroute.

Transcript of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

SUMMARY: (Contd.)

On 2 December it was told that on or about 8 December it could attack. Before the assault it was thought that 2 to 4 U.S. capital ships would be destroyed, and immediately after the attack and before the fleet broke radio silence the General Staff estimated that two capital ships had been sunk and possibly a third.

Later in the War, especially following Midway, the Planning Section was frequently misled by exaggerated claims of damage to Allied units, exaggeration due to faulty pilot reporting after many good fliers were killed and to a lack of photographic confirmation.

Transcript of Interrogation:(TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

Q. 1. Describe for us the operation of the 1st Department, Naval General Staff?

A. I was responsible for operations planned by the General Staff relating to the:

- (a) Fleet.
- (b) Defense of homeland.

Q. 2. Did this include preparation of operations plans?

A. Yes, the overall planning. Word would come from the Emperor as to the general strategy and course to follow. We would then prepare plans for the Fleet, overall plans.

Q. 3. What were your sources of information on which your operational plans were based?

A. Three main sources:

- (a) 3rd Department.
- (b) Information from the Fleets.
- (c) 4th Department, Communications department

After December 1944, we relied almost exclusively on communications information.

Q. 4. What sort of information did the 3rd Department supply?

A. Background information based on diplomatic sources, U.S. broadcasts, newspapers and magazines, etc. Almost none of the information from the 3rd Department was used for other than background purposes.

Q. 5. Did you get any valuable information from the 5th Section of the 3rd Department? (Admiral TAKEUCHI)

A. Yes, but it was mostly background.

Q. 6. What information from 5th Section was most useful?

A. Two things:

- (a) Estimate of Allied losses, strength, and location.
- (b) Character analysis of Allied Commanders.

Information concerning damage to Allied units was generally exaggerated.

Q. 7. Did the 5th Section supply estimates of Allied strength and location periodically?

A. There was a weekly written estimate as well as oral information at daily conferences.

Q. 8. Was the weekly estimate considered accurate and was it the basis on which plans were based?

A. It depended on the source. If only an estimate, it was not relied on too much. If based on factual data such as captured documents, then it was relied upon. I have the general opinion that our intelligence was very poor, very haphazard.

Q. 9. Tell us about the daily conferences.

A. Only Navy personnel attended. The Staff duty officer, who changed daily, would review the general war situation based on the latest dispatches. Operations and Intelligence officers, and other war leaders, attended these conferences which were usually presided over by the Chief of the Navy General Staff.

Transcript of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

Twice a week there would be conferences between the Army and Navy. These would be attended by operations officer.

Q. 10. Did you help plan the operations for the 2nd battle of the Philippine Sea?

A. No. I was in RABAUl at the time.

Q. 11. What operations did you plan or help plan? How about the last YAMATO sortie, for example?

A. None. The YAMATO sortie was planned by the Combined Fleet Staff.

Q. 12. Did you help plan the air defense of Iwo Jima?

A. Yes. The general plan there was to leave it be, to let you win a Pyrrhic victory. We had to conserve our planes and use them against you on your next assault. We thought you would attack Okinawa in late March. We hoarded our strength to use it against you then.

Q. 13. Did you have much data on the strength of the Allied Fleet at the time of Iwo Jima?

A. Based on statistical analysis of your past operations, we thought you would land 2 to 3 divisions, and employ 15 to 18 big carriers. We were not bothered about the strength of your other fleet units. Our estimates were reached on the premise that you would use either the 3rd or 5th Fleet, the strength of which we had earlier known in previous landings. We also took into account your strength during the Taiwan strikes and the time we estimated it would take you to repair past war damage.

Q. 14. Was air or submarine reconnaissance more effective?

A. Air quite easily. Submarines were unable to provide details.

Q. 15. Before the fall of the Marianas, how extensive was your aerial reconnaissance?

A. We wanted to have extensive reconnaissance, but actually we employed relatively few patrols. Your TRUK raid, for example, was a complete surprise. Our reconnaissance was very spotty. Many of our patrols failed to return. This was one reason we limited the number of our search flights.

Q. 16. After the loss of Okinawa, did you fly regular patrols out of the empire?

A. Practically none, because we were unable to send them out. Operational losses due to plane or pilot failure were high.

Q. 17. How great was the range of patrols out of the MARIANAS?

A. 600 miles was the standard leg. Toward the end of the war, the leg was shortened to 500 miles. Weather fronts turned almost all flights back when they were encountered. You apparently flew right through weather but we did not.

Transcription of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

Q. 18. Were many SAIUN (Myrt) patrols flown out of the empire at the end of the War?

A. Very few. Not many of the (SAIUN) Myrt were operational. We had a great deal of trouble with maintenance. The quality of the engines was poor and the mechanics were mediocre.

Q. 19. What was the general scheme of defense planned for OKINAWA?

A. There was a difference of opinion as to the strategic importance of OKINAWA. The Navy wanted to make a stand there. The Army wished to save the last strong stand for the home islands. Only $2\frac{1}{2}$ divisions were at OKINAWA. Discussion was underway at time you landed as to whether reinforcements would be landed or not. Our OKINAWA air strategy was to base planes on FORMOSA and KYUSHU and hit you from both sides. The Navy was to concentrate on carriers, the Army on transports. Both Army and Navy were committed to KAMIKAZE attacks.

Q. 20. Did you have all the information (intelligence) you needed?

A. We didn't have enough, but the shortage did not effect our basic plans. They were as good as they could be, I think, from the tactical standpoint.

Q. 21. Did you know the Allied strength at the time of the OKINAWA assault?

A. We estimated 18 - 20 carriers would be used. We thought you would land 5 - 7 Divisions. We thought you knew the number we had and would plan to land at least twice the number we had on the island. In past operations you had used forces double or more our strength.

Q. 22. What made you think we knew you had $2\frac{1}{2}$ Divisions on OKINAWA?

A. We respected your intelligence--your reconnaissance, and any number of other sources. We also thought you had some Fifth Columnists or spies on OKINAWA. We caught some suspects, but we were not able to determine conclusively that they were your agents.

Q. 23. After the fall of OKINAWA was there any thinking in the General Staff that the Allies could be stopped?

A. No. Our only hope was that we could discourage you by inflicting great damage on your forces. We estimated we would destroy 30-40% of the initial assaulting forces when you hit the homeland.

Q. 24. Where did you estimate the blow would fall on the home islands?

A. At the end of July or early in August we believed you would land 15 divisions in southern KUYSHU after taking the neighboring islands. In addition it was estimated that one unit would perhaps assault SHIKOKU at the time of the KUYSHU landings and that by the end of the year you would invade the TOKYO area. We felt that your home front pressure would require you to move fast and require you to try to end the war as quickly as possible.

Transcript of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

Q. 25. What was the basis for such estimates?

A. You couldn't bomb us into submission, I thought, and therefore you would have to land on the home island. Once you took OKINAWA after IWO JIMA, we concluded that your first homeland assault must be against KYUSHU or SHIKOKU. Your land based fighters did not have any range to cover the TOKYO area landings. So that we estimated it would be necessary for you first to take KYUSHU or SHIKOKU and then move to TOKYO. This was based on estimates and not on particular factual intelligence.

Q. 26. Did you think we had enough ships to land and support 15 divisions?

A. Based on statistics of your previous landings, we figured that you would use 15 divisions and that you easily had enough ships to land and supply that many.

Q. 27. What in your opinion was the turning point of the War?

A. The fall of SAIPAN. That gave you complete supremacy in our eyes on land and sea. In the south theatre there was no suitable place where we had sufficient tactical reason to make a stand for a showdown. SAIPAN, however, was such a place. From there you could bomb the homeland and take the initial steps for invading the homeland.

Q. 28. Why did you not, then, commit your entire fleet to a defense of SAIPAN?

A. I'm not qualified to speak on that as I was in RABAUL at the time. I thought, however, that we did commit the backbone of our fleet, especially all of our carrier planes which were the most important element. We placed very heavy emphasis on air power and when those planes were lost we felt we had nothing left to throw in with any hope of success.

Q. 29. How long did you think the Navy could fight at the outbreak of the War?

A. Two years. We never felt we could land in the U.S. Our place was to take and hold onto as many islands as we could.

Q. 30. In planning the PEARL HARBOR attack did you expect to eliminate the U.S. Pacific Fleet with that blow?

A. We expected to sink from 2 to 4 U.S. capital ships and expected in return some damage to our own units. Our success was beyond all expectations.

Q. 31. Did you have specific information regarding what U.S. units were in Pearl Harbor?

A. On the 3rd or 5th, I think, you publicly broadcast what units you had in Pearl Harbor, including the names of ships. We were familiar with your pattern--operations Monday through Friday and then back to Pearl Harbor for the weekend. However, we didn't necessarily expect to find the Fleet in Pearl Harbor. We were ready to hit it outside of Pearl Harbor if we caught it there.

Transcript of Interrogation: (TOMIOKA, S. Rear Admiral)

Q. 32. When did your fleet sortie for the Pearl Harbor attack?

A. From ETOROFU ISLAND, TANKAN BAY on 26 November. It was decided by the Cabinet on 1 December and the Fleet was notified on 2 December that on 8 December or later it would be all right to attack.

Q. 33. How did you communicate with that Fleet enroute?

A. By dispatch, the Fleet itself maintained radio silence and hence, of course, did not receipt for message sent them.

Q. 34. Specifically what sort of intelligence was sent out to them while they were enroute?

A. Data from the 3rd Department regarding conditions in Pearl Harbor. There were daily summaries. For instance we dispatched to the Fleet the data contained in your broadcast of the 3rd or 5th listing the U.S. capital units in Pearl Harbor.

Q. 35. Are you familiar with the intelligence sent by the Japanese Honolulu Consulate during the 10 days prior to the attack?

A. The 3rd Department would know. I don't recall any unusual data sent from the consulate, data other than that they always sent the foreign office.

Q. 36. What was your evaluation of success of the attack immediately after it was made?

A. Two capital ships sunk and possibly a third. Many planes destroyed. But we kept asking ourselves, "When will you hit back?" Our Fleet continued to maintain radio silence after one or two communications shortly after the attack.

Q. 37. You have said that later in the War the Planning Section was frequently misled by your own exaggerated claims? What were the reasons for such errors?

A. Faulty reporting by pilots and lack of photographic confirmation. With the loss of good pilots, the accuracy of our reports dropped off sharply, that is after MIDWAY. For example, by the time of OKINAWA, we at the Navy General Staff Headquarters disregarded completely any pilot claims of damage inflicted at night.