

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

INTERROGATION NO. (USSBS 251)
NAV NO. 59

Place: OSAKA
Date: 30 Oct. 1945

Division of Origin: Naval Analysis Division

Subject: Mine Countermeasures and Shipping Losses in OSAKA and SOERABAJA
Areas.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira, IJN, served as Chief of Staff Second
Southern Expeditionary Fleet, April 1943 to February 1945 and Chief of
Staff, OSAKA Naval Station, February 1945 to August 1945.

Where interviewed: Japanese Naval Headquarters.

Interrogator: Commander T. H. Moorer, U.S.N.R.

Interpreter: Lieut. Comdr. S. (n) Millstein, U.S.N.R.

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY

Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI discusses the effect of mining on the SOERABAJA
CELEBES and BORNEO Areas as well as the organization and operation of mine
defense at OSAKA.



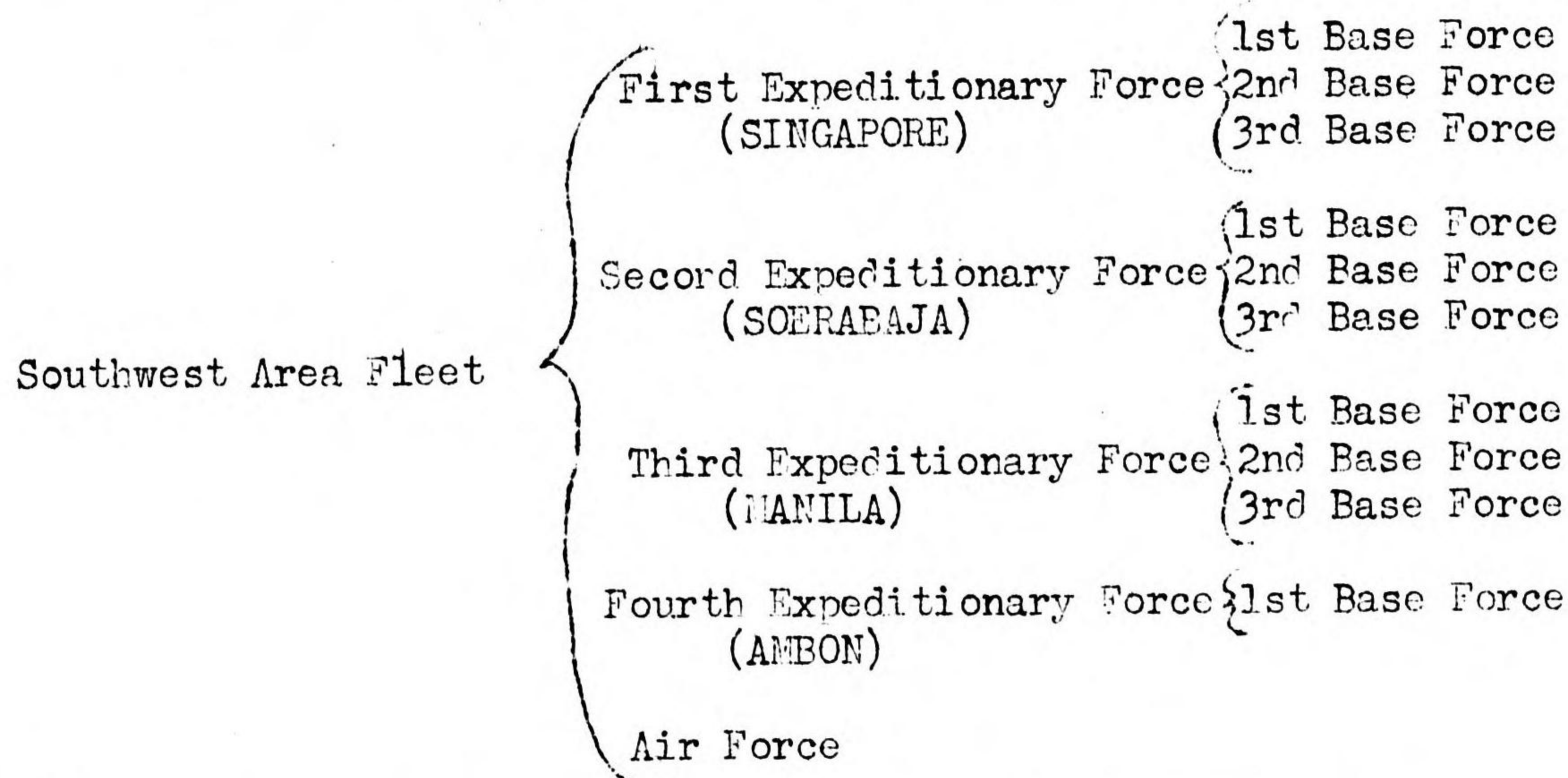
RESTRICTED

NARRATIVE

In response to questions submitted directly and by letter, Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI furnished the following information.

SOERABAJA

The Southwest Area Fleet was organized as shown below:



The Second Expeditionary Force at SOERABAJA was responsible for mine countermeasures in the BORNEO, CELEBES, and JAVA Areas. In these areas mine sweeping was a continuous process. During the first part of 1943, the magnetic mine was difficult to sweep but the problem was solved when magnetic bars were procured from SINGAPORE in September and October. By the end of 1943, mines became of serious consequence. A radar warning net was established, as well as a system of watchers. By tracking planes with radar, an effort was made to establish dropping points. Night fighters were used but proved ineffective.

Beginning in 1944 mining had a considerable effect on the exploitation of the vast resources of the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES. Not only were ships and cargoes destroyed but convoys were delayed, and unloading areas were jammed at SOERABAJA and BALIKPAPAN pending sweeping operations. The destruction of tankers and delay in oil shipments was particularly serious.

Due to use of small wooden ships, mining had little effect on the supply to garrisons. Mining countermeasures involved the use of 1500 men and 30 ships in the CELEBES, BORNEO, and JAVA Areas. Nevertheless about 40% of all vessels over 1000 tons which sailed into the BALIKPAPAN - SOERABAJA Area, were sunk or damaged by mines. In many cases ships were salvaged only to be sunk the second time. Even before the capture of the PHILIPPINES, the traffic to the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES was reduced to a trickle. After February 1945, no attempt was made to use large ships and only small schooners and wooden barges were operated.

Note: Quoted below is the exact report as submitted by Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI. It is considered important since it effectively illustrates how totally unprepared the Japanese were for large scale mine attacks.

" COUNTER-MEASURES AGAINST MINES LAID BY AMERICAN AIRCRAFT IN OSAKA AREA

1. Counter-measures employed in view of the conditions of mine laying by the UNITED STATES aircraft in the KANTON area.

- a. Establishment of magnetic mine sweeping unit at KII Defense Garrison (YURA). Order was issued to establish magnetic mine sweeping unit on April 5, 1945. Launched immediately on preparations.
- b. Establishment of OSAKA Port Defense Garrison and KOBE Port Defense Garrison Order was issued on May 1, 1945 to establish newly the OSAKA

NARRATIVE of Interrogation (Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira, IJN)

and KOBE Port Defense Garrisons. However, the mine sweeping strength could not be mobilized until the early part of June.

- c. Preparation of mine sweeping by use of sound bombs from airplane at KOMATSUSHIMA and KUSHIMOTO Seaplane Bases.
- d. Established look-out posts for mines along seashores of OSAKA-WAN, HAPIMANADA, and AWAJISHIMA in early part of April.
- e. Prepared a map as of 4 April 1945, showing the channels to be swept and so got ready for counter-measures against mine laying.
- f. The strength of each mine sweeping unit as of 4 May 1945 (UNITED STATES planes laid mines in OSAKA-WAN for the first time)
 - (1) KII Defense Garrison
 - Type 5 mine sweeper
 - Mother boats (converted sub-chaser) 3
 - Side boats (fishing boat) 9
 - Type 3 Model 2 mine sweeper (fishing boat) 10
 - (2) OSAKA Port Defense Garrison; KOBE Port Defense Garrison
 - Strength: None
 - (3) KOMATSUSHIMA and KUSHIMOTO Seaplane Bases
 - Scout seaplanes 6

2. Mine sweeping during the early period of mine laying in OSAKA-WAN by UNITED STATES planes.

- a. Magnetic mine sweeping unit of the KII Defense Garrison was advanced to OSAKA-WAN and engaged in mine sweeping.
 - Strength: Type 5 mine sweepers 2 units
 - Type 3 model 2 mine sweepers 3 units
- b. Mine sweeping with sound bombs by planes of KOMATSUSHIMA and KUSHIMOTO Seaplane Bases. The mine sweeping was done by a total of 6 planes on 4, 5 and 6 May.
 - Total number of mines disposal: 15

3. Mine sweeping and counter-measures after the above period.

- a. The mine sweeping units of the KII Defense Garrison were stationed permanently at OSAKA and KOBE Harbors and became the main strength of mine sweeping. They were engaged in mine sweeping in channels where the mines were reported to have been laid.
- b. The status of the strength of mine sweeping units as of 11 June.
 - (1) Mine sweeping equipment

Name	Drag net	Type 5 mine sweeper	Type 3 model 2 mine sweeper	Reformed type 3 sweeping equipment	Sound bombs
OSAKA Naval Munition Department		7 sets (no accessories)	11 sets Magnetic Bars 940		1,300
KII Defense Garrison	10 (length 10 cm breadth 70 cm mesh: 6 sq.ft. Manila homp)	1 set (no accessories)	5 sets		800
OSAKA Port Defense Garrison			10 sets		130
KOBE Port Defense Garrison		All equipment lost by fire	22 sets (only 17 sets usable)	18	300

(2) Mine sweeping vessels.

NARRATIVE of Interrogation (Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira, IJN)

Name	Type 5	Type 5 Model 2	Type F
KII Defense Garrison	Mother boats (converted sub chaser) 3 Side boats (fishing boats) 9	Fishing boats 10	
OSAKA Port Defense Garrison		Fishing boats 10 Schooner 1	
KOBE Port Defense Garrison		Fishing boats 12 Schooners 1	

- c. Set up anti-mine lookout posts in early part of June at important points along the channels to be swept and endeavoured to collect accurate information quickly.
- d. Planned to set up search lights in the vicinity of AKASHI SETO in order to ascertain the positions of mines dropped. However, the plan did not materialize.

4. Navigation Control.

- a. Put into effect the navigation control in accordance with the conditions of mine laying and mine sweeping.
Chief control station: OSAKA Minor Naval Station
Other control stations: OSAKA Naval Office of Resident Officers.
KOBE Naval Officer of Resident Officers.
KII Defense Garrison.

When the bombing by UNITED STATES planes became frequent, the time of incoming and outgoing vessels to and from ports was controlled.

- b. As the damage due to bombing and mines grew larger and the navigation of vessels in general (steel) became actually impossible, impetus was given to the use of schooners instead and were actually used. In order to assure the safe-sailing of these vessels, connecting bases were established at six localities; SAKAGOSHI, IESHIMA, SHIMOTSU, TANABE, SUSAMI and URAQAMI.
- c. In order to protect the sailing of vessels, fairway-buoys were planted 2,000 meters apart on one side (partly both sides) of important channels during middle of July.

NUMBER OF DROPPED AND DISPOSED MINES

1. Number of times of mine dropping:

May	5	Times
June	7	"
July	4	"
August	3	" (Reported)
Total	19	Times

2. Estimated number of the dropped mines:

Approximately 500 to 600

3. Disposed Mines:

By type 5 mine sweeping apparatus	24
By type 3 improved style mine sweeping apparatus	13
By Acoustic (Sound Bomb) mine sweeping apparatus (Includes 15 by use of planes)	70
By self or induced explosion	56
Total	163

STATUS OF SHIP MOVEMENTS AND ITS EFFECT ON THE WAR

1. Monthly data of the movements of the sea going vessels.

NARRATIVE of Interrogation (Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira, IJN)

MONTH	NUMBER OF VESSELS			
	OSAKA Port		KOBE Port	
	Outgoing	Incoming	Outgoing	Incoming
May	109	77	60	54
June	29	20	21	11
July	53	41	15	16
August	12	10	9	10
September	20	19	1	2
October	6	6	0	0

For details, refer to list attached hereto.

2. Effects on the war.

The ships' movements, as noticeable in the above data, were greatly hindered as the result of the magnetic mine laying by the American planes. As its counter-measure, the use of wooden schooners was adopted, but this, too, was threatened even before it could be put to practical use, by the American bombings carried out against our shipping since August.

Simultaneously with the above measure, the strengthening of our railway transportation was also carried out, but the total capacity of land and sea transportations was so affected that it became a great obstacle in carrying on the war. Such was the general status of our transportation up to the conclusion of war."

In addition to the above report the following information was submitted under separate cover.

- (1) Detailed list showing location and methods used for each mine swept in OSAKA Area.
- (2) Chart showing location of all vessels sunk in the OSAKA Area.
- (3) List of all vessels sunk or damaged in OSAKA Area.
- (4) Reports by individual ships of damage received from mines.