

File

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

INTERROGATION NO. 230

PLACE: Tokyo
DATE: 1 Nov., 1945
1400

Division of Origin: Military Analysis Division.

Subject: Requirements and Supply of Japanese Ground Armies.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Colonel SATO, Hiro, General Affairs Bureau, War Ministry.
Lt. Col. KUNITAKE, Taruto, General Affairs Bureau, War Ministry.

Where interviewed: MEIJI Building, Room 465.

Interrogator: Colonel J. F. RODENHAUSER.

Interpreter: Captain SUYEMASI, Tako, Japanese Army.

Allied Officers Present:

Lt. Comdr. Gentry C. WALDO, USNR.
Mr. RUGGLES, Military Supplies Division.
Capt. NEAL, Military Supplies Division.

SUMMARY:

In the formulation of requirements estimates of requirements are received from the various armies by the Army Department, where they are broken down into the individual supply agencies concerned, such as, Ordnance, Medical, Intendance, etc. Each supply agency then submits its overall requirements for the next fiscal year to GHQ, where the requirements are studied in the light of the Strategic Plan of Operations and the national resources. Requirements are cut to what the country can produce or obtain. Any shortages must be made up by the armies in the field from local exploitation or they must do without.

Such items as "Maintenance and Replenishment", "Pipelines", "Wasteage", and "Stock Levels" are considered, but due to the limited resources and capacity of Japan to produce, there is never any hope of satisfying these elements of requirements. Hence, requirements are always tailored to just what the empire can produce.

While distribution of supplies to the various armies varied with the climate and region in which they were located, certain of the armies (Kwantung) received no distribution from Japan, as it was considered to be largely self-sustaining. Likewise, the China armies only received one-tenth of normal distribution, because they were considered ninety percent self-sustaining.

From the beginning of the war to the end supplies were always short with the combat troops because of inadequate preparation for the sudden war and because our airplanes and submarines prevented the delivery of supplies to forward areas. Toward the end of the war, when there was practically no outgoing shipping, supplies piled up in Japan.

Additional specific data on wasteage and stocks is being prepared in Army Ordnance Headquarters and is to be submitted on November 5th.

Transcript of Interrogation of Col. SATO and Lt. Col. KUNITAKE.

SUBJECT: Requirements and Supply of Japanese Ground Armies.

Q. How were requirements for the Japanese Army determined?

A. Based on the plan of Strategic Operations the GHQ determined the Supply Plan, taking into full consideration the limitations of the resources and facilities of Japan which have been determined by study and conference of high Japanese officials.
Diagram:

J* A S O N D J F M A M J J* A S O
(1) -----

(2) -----

(3) -----

- (1) Period of study and determination of nation's resources and capabilities.
- (2) Period of formulation of Strategic Plan of Operations.
- (3) Period of computation, formulation and forming of supply plan.

Q. For how far in the future were requirements determined?

A. For one fiscal year only - never longer than that.

Q. Are the commanders of the Groups of Armies, Armies and Area Armies consulted or shown the Strategic Plan of Operations in order to allow them to present their views on requirements for their part of the operations?

A. No, they are not consulted. Their needs are determined by GHQ.

Q. In computing requirements do you take into consideration such items as "Initial Issue", "Maintenance or Replenishment", "Pipe-Line" and "Stock Levels"?

A. Yes, but we were never able to fulfill all of those elements as the resources of Japan would not permit the building of desired stock levels or the filling of the "Pipe-Lines". That method of figuring requirements is the best method, but we could not use it because we could never attain that goal of production. We are not like your country.

Q. Then you cut requirements, or tailored them, to what your raw materials and production facilities were capable of producing?

A. Yes.

Q. You didn't attempt to induce industry to do better by setting goals higher than their calculated capabilities?

A. No, we were at our maximum when we suddenly went into the war and could do no better.

Q. Did you have your desired stock levels and "Pipe-Line" quantities on hand when you went into the war with the U.S.?

A. No, we went into the war very suddenly, and the shortages in reserves hurt us all through the war.

Transcript of Interrogation of Col. SATO and Lt. Col. KUNITAKE.

Q. When did the pinch of lack of sufficient reserves first become critical with your army?

A. At the conclusion of the Guadalcanal campaign.

Q. Did you feel the pinch in New Guinea?

A. Yes, we lost out in the Owen Stanley Mountains due mainly to lack of supplies necessary for the operation.

Q. In computing your requirements did you take into consideration wastage?

A. We do not know what you mean by wastage.

Q. Take 100 men - they all have a uniform - every month say 3 men lose, destroy or otherwise render unserviceable their uniform - that is wastage.

A. Yes, we considered it, but our production capacity and raw materials were so limited we could not replace. The men must go without - that is why Japanese soldiers have ragged, poor uniforms.

Q. In other words, as far as clothing is concerned, the soldier had to get along with what he had? If he lost his trousers, he had to go without?

A. Yes. Of course, the Japanese soldier is supposed to exploit the local resources as much as possible to take care of himself.

Q. What about weapons, ammunition, tanks, trucks, etc?

A. Yes, we figured wastage, or use, on them - so much percent for each item.

Q. On what did you base this percent?

A. On experience.

Q. What did you use for experience?

A. The Russo-Japanese War and the China War.

Q. Can you give me a list of these wastage factors by item?

A. Yes, the Army Ordnance Headquarters is already preparing such a list for you, I believe.

Q. How did you distribute this replacement equipment to your armies?

A. On the basis of each infantry division getting so much.

Q. Was this called the "Kaisen-bun"?

A. Yes, Kaisen-bun.

Q. How often did a division get this issued to it?

A. They didn't all get it. The Kwantung Army didn't get any supply as it was entirely self-sufficient. The armies in China were set up for only 1/10 of the amounts in the Kaisen-bun. Divisions in New Guinea would be allocated the

Transcript of Interrogation of Col. SATO and Lt. Col. KUNITAKE.

full amount for their climate, but that didn't mean that they received it, as shipping was very tight. The commander in the New Guinea Area would be told so many Kaisen-bun were at his disposal as he needed it - provided we had the shipping. If there was no shipping, he had to get along without it or with as much as got through to him. Your airplanes prevented much of it from getting through.

Q. You mean if he was short of guns and ammunition, he would just have to carry out his plan of operation as best he could?

A. Yes, due to lack of shipping and your airplanes, Rabaul did not receive much for a long time; so the army in New Guinea got very little.

Q. Were any "High Level" decisions ever made which shifted resources to the production of more of one item at the expense of other items?

A. Yes, after Guadalcanal we decided to put all available steel into small boats - we decided we needed many more small boats like your landing craft.

Q. In what other items like weapons, ammunition, trucks, tanks did this switch in steel allocations cause serious cut-backs?

A. It didn't affect those items - they don't use the same materials - we took steel from other sources.

Q. It must have affected something - your annual production of steel is just so much.

A. Japanese industry cannot make rapid switches like you can in your country; so while we desired to increase landing craft production we couldn't do it for sometime. The production of the other items went right along as before gradually tapering off as landing craft production began to come up. This took place over a period of many months.

Q. Something must have been given priority over something else to accomplish such a program. Can you furnish us the priorities set by your top level people from 1941 through 1945?

A. Yes, we are preparing that at present for another study.

Q. What stock level did you have in your depot system? How much in Japan? At Rabaul? Philippines? Etc?

A. Enough in Japan for 10 to 15 Infantry Divisions.
" Manchuria " 38 to 42 " "
" China " 20 to 24 " "
" Burma " 5 " "
" Java " 3 " "
" in Philippines 5 " "
" " Amboina " 2 to 3 " "
" " New Guinea 2 to 3 " "
" " Rabaul " 5 to 7 " "
" " Chishima Is. 5 " "

Q. If you could have satisfied your desired level of stocks, how much would you have had in reserve in Japan?

A. 90 to 100 Infantry Division of supply.

Transcript of Interrogation of Col. SATO and Lt. Col. KUNITAKE.

Q. How much was in the depots in Japan before you surrendered?

A. 32 to 45 Divisions, because we could not ship it out - only because it piled up from production. We are giving you an inventory by item - I believe GHQ has it on Ordnance now.

Q. What about provision for spare parts to maintain your major items of equipment?

A. Yes, we figured on spare parts from previous experience in the Russo-Japanese War and the China War. However, we could not produce enough spare parts to maintain our equipment.

Q. Did you resort to cannibalization?

A. Yes, in our arsenals and in the field.

Q. If you found you could not supply the spare part to put the major item in serviceable condition, did you try to supply the end item?

A. Yes, but we did not have enough to do much of this.