

RESTRICTED

MARINE FIGHTING SQUADRON 314
c/o FLIGHT POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

1 October 1945.

From:
To:
Via:

Intelligence Officer, Marine Fighting Squadron-314.
Commandant of the Marine Corps.
(1) Commanding Officer, Marine Fighting Squadron-314.
(2) Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group-22.
(3) Commanding General, Second Marine Aircraft Wing.
(4) Commanding General, Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force,
Pacific.

Subject: Interrogation of Japanese Kamikaze Pilot,
submision of.

Enclosure: (A) An Interrogation of Japanese Kamikaze Pilot.

1. There is enclosed an Interrogation and photograph of a Kamikaze pilot conducted by the writer at the Onura, Kyushu, Marine Air Base, shortly after the arrival there of Marine Fighting Squadron-314.

EDWARD G. WILKINS,
Lieut., USMC.

KV28(314) / 101 Jto First Enclosure 1 October 1945.
MARINE FIGHTING SQUADRON 314, c/o FPO, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Serial No. 1411-45.

From:
To:
Via:

Commanding Officer.
Commandant of the Marine Corps.
(1) Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group-22.
(2) Commanding General, Second Marine Aircraft Wing.
(3) Commanding General, Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force,
Pacific.

2. Forwarded.

EDWARD G. WILKINS

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 77510

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 775120

INVESTIGATION OF
KODOMO PLANT, CHIHO NARAI, MIYAZAKI CITY, JAPAN
MAILED 1 MAY 1945

APPROVED: DIRECTOR, MARINE INVESTIGATION SECTION, ARMY AIR FORCE

EDWARD G. CONNOR, DIRECTOR, INVESTIGATION SECTION, MARINE

RESTRICTED

3. In the latter stages of the Pacific War, particularly in the Okinawa campaign, the Japanese Air Force resorted to a new and unusual form of aerial warfare. It was called the Kamikaze Corps and much has been said and written about this last stand defensive measure which required the Japanese pilots to plunge their planes in suicide dives on targets and installations. This report does not attempt to prove nor disprove any statements or theories on the subject prior to its submission. It is submitted with the hope that such new information as it contains may be of value and interest. The interviewing officer is grateful for the expert services of Captain J. H. James, USAF, who acted as the interpreter.

2. Upon arriving at Onna, Kyushu, Japan with Marine Fighting Squadron Three Fourteen, of Marine Aircraft Group Twenty Two, a search for a Kamikaze pilot was immediately initiated. Through the cooperation of Vice Admiral Nakamura, Japanese Imperial Navy, the former Commanding Officer of the Yorktown Aircraft Works, a four day man hunt was successfully terminated at a railroad station in Nagoya. The pilot was willing to be interviewed and permission was granted by Japanese Occupational Authorities to bring him to Okinawa. This was done and the following is an account of the interview.

Q. What is your name, rank and branch of service?

A. "Ogata Saiti, I am a first class petty officer of the Japanese Naval Air Force."

Q. Are you a member of the Kamikaze, or Special Attack Corps? A. Yes, since the 22 of June 1945."

Q. Is there a distinction between the Kamikaze and Special Attack Corps? A. There is no difference. The word Kamikaze means "divine wind" or "winds of the God". Kamikaze is simply the name which Japanese have given this corps. We named it as you Americans would name your planes "Flying Devil" or "Red Devil" or something similar".

Q. How did a pilot become a member of the Kamikaze Corps? A. The Commanding Officer of the different Air bases would draw the pilots at all times. The names of the Kamikaze candidates were drawn by the Commanding Officer of the air base. I noticed that those whose names were drawn were always of fearless character and brave nerve. From these Kamikaze candidates a final selection was made and these would be members of the Kamikaze Corps."

Q. Were there any volunteers for this Corps by those who were not selected? A. Yes, there were none but they were few in number. It was felt that unless we were chosen it was not the Emperor's will that we became members".

Q. Were there any inducements or rewards in order to make Kamikaze dare such desirous?

A. "There were absolutely no inducements nor rewards of all for joining the Corps. He would still be fighting if the Emperor wished. Although my mother bore me I am the property of the Emperor for life, carry out his wishes. To die for him in the highest honor to the Japanese soldier. My duties in this life are to my parents and Emperor during those times of grave stress my parents abdicated to God any ch-

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 775120

RESTRICTED

so I am free to serve only the Emperor."

- Q. weren't members given honorable distinction, raise in rank, and many privileges before taking off for a mission?
- A. "The mere fact that we were in the Corps did not set us apart from the rest of the Emperor's servants. This was only our duty as it was the bombers' duty to keep sanitation in the barracks. If the special attack pilot crashed his plane into an aircraft carrier and had done an exceptionally successful job the Emperor might have raised his rank for what he had achieved. The similar honor can be said for the plumbers in the barracks. Everyone is serving the Emperor, the dution in which he is serving the Emperor does not matter. Nothing was done for personal gain."
- Q. Did the government give the deceased pilots' family any form of additional allotment?
- A. "If a family was left in financial distress by the loss of their son in this fashion the Emperor may allow a gift to the parents. There were never any promises of this to any member that I know".
- Q. Did you wear a special type of uniform? What did the Japanese civilian think of you?
- A. "There was no distinction in uniform at all. I shall say that in the eyes of the Japanese people we seemed to have a little more prestige. We could feel it as we went about."
- Q. How did the civilian know you were in the Kamikaze Corps?
- A. "The people in my home town of Sasebo, and the people at my base found out this fact through various ways."
- Q. Can you give an account of your training since you entered the service?
- A. "I attended middle school (high school) in Sasebo with the expectancy of studying law at the Tokyo Imperial University, but the war ended this plan. I joined the Japanese Navy Air Corps in January 1943. I trained an entire year before I actually started to learn flying. During this time I spent all of my energies in learning from books and getting my body into perfect physical fitness. We ran and crawled and did calisthenics every day until we were almost exhausted. It was great enjoyment. I am twenty years old and this was great fun. Every one enjoyed the training. This was at MIYAZAKI, MIYAZAKI KEN in the neighborhood of Tokio. From January to June 1944 I was at MIYAZAKI in MIYAZAKI KEN near Okinawa and this period was spent as a director of newly induced trainees. From July 1944 to the end of the war I was stationed at MIYAZAKI in YAMAGUCHI KEN near Hiroshima. Most of this time I was flying a twin engine bomber (Belle) and a single engine (Zero). On 22 June 1945 my name was drawn by lot and I became a kamikaze candidate and shortly thereafter I was an actual member."
- Q. Did you continue to fly a bomber even as a Kamikaze pilot?
- A. "No, during the entire month of July I flew a single engine fighter (Zero). The (Zero) and (Val) were used almost entirely for kamikaze work in the last phase of the war. All machine guns were taken off the kamikaze planes. All armament was removed making it as light as possible."

Authority 575120
DECLASSIFIED

- Q.** When did you expect to make your mission?
A. The date for my mission was set on the 20th of August 1945. I was told that there would be others, but never found out who they were. The target was to have been a battleship at Okinawa."
- Q.** Did you know that there was a battleship at Okinawa?
A. No, but every one said it would be there. Everyone said there would be many of them there. Our pilots returning from Okinawa always said that there were all types of ships there.
- Q.** Did you have any photo coverage of Okinawa?
A. Not since April 1945."
- Q.** What was your greatest fear?
A. "The same fear that all Kamikaze had - finding the target."
- Q.** It was noted in the Okinawa campaign of some of your formations only a portion of planes would make suicide dives and the others would turn back, were those other planes for navigation purposes?
A. Only in the case of bad weather whereby the target was obscured did a kamikaze plane turn back. Those planes which you can turn back were protecting and decoy planes. On the way to the target they would protect the unturned kamikaze planes. Let us assume that we are to attack an aircraft carrier. Ten planes would take off from Kyushu, of these only three would be kamikaze, the remaining seven would serve as escort cover to the target. Once over the target the seven orthodox planes would act as decoys and draw the AA fire while the kamikaze would attack from a vulnerable position. It is extremely difficult to hit a moving ship. To help the kamikaze pilot hit the ship each takes a picture of his mother along. With this picture the strength of the pilot is aided and he can use his mother's guidance to achieve the target. It will make him dive straight and swift. No pilot of kamikaze planes ever returned if the target could be seen."
- Q.** Were the Kamikaze planes ever loaded with fuel enough gas to get to the target?
A. Yes, but this was done to preserve precious gasoline and not to insure that the pilot would not return. On cloudy days when the weather might completely obscure the target enough gasoline was always given so that the Special Attack planes could return to home field."
- (At this point Hanzl looked out the window at a driving rain and remarked "We have had much rain after the war's end, during the war, very little. It is surely the weeping of the Godot.")
- Q.** Were any of your special attack pilots ever locked in their cockpits or given hypodermics before taking off for their mission? Were any of them intoxicated?
A. I have never known a Kamikaze to be given a hypodermic or to be locked in his cockpit before a mission. I never saw or heard of one being drunk while taking off."
- Q.** Did any of the wives of the deceased Kamikaze commit hari kiri?
A. Not that I recall. I have heard of American radio broadcasts and news accounts saying that this happened often, but I know of no one

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 1775120

"The wives are not soldiers so this would be unnecessary."

Q. Are there any special allowances by the Japanese Government to the family of the deceased Kamikaze pilot?

A. "I have known cases where this has happened. Usually the families were very poor and their loss was great. The Emperor had made a gift, but I did not know how much it was. No gifts were ever expected."

Q. Could you estimate how many special attack corps members were used during the Corps inspection?

A. "No, I could not. I am a pilot of low rank and information of this nature was known only to the high ranking officers in Tokyo. I don't think any pilot knew this information."

Q. Are the headquarters of the special attack corps located in Oita, Kyushu?

A. "No, the general staff was in Tokyo. All aviation functions were directed from Tokyo. I understand there were quite a large number of Kamikaze members stationed at Oita, and many flights were flown from this field."

Q. Did you ever have any action with American pilots?

A. "Yes, on the 31st of May, or 1st of June, 1945, I was one of twenty covering planes for eight Kamikaze planes. Captain Yamada was Leader of the covering planes and First Lieutenant Nakaya was Leader of the Kamikazes. Captain Yamada was to point out the target ships.

Q. Did you know where these ships were?

A. "No, but it seemed that Captain Yamada did know. We took off and flew south for some time and the weather became very bad. Things became very mixed up and the formation of the covering planes was separated. On this day all Kamikaze planes returned to Japan due to bad weather. We could not see too well. I was flying a Zeke and met with an American fighting plane. I think it was a grumman from a carrier. As I turned for home base I shot at him and he seemed to smoke, but I could only see him for a flash. I must understand that I did this in defense of Japan and not for the purpose of harming the American pilot. There were many American planes and they shot down five of our twenty covering planes. I do not know how the Kamikaze planes returned to Japan without seeing the American planes."

"On the following day the same group of Kamikaze planes made another mission toward Okinawa, but with a different formation of covering planes. On this day all eight Kamikaze met their death on their targets. The desire of these pilots was not to kill American forces, but to defend Japan."

Q. Was there a report on the action of these planes?

A. "Yes, according to the coding plane sending back the reports of the missions, the Kamikaze planes sank an aircraft carrier and two LST transport ships. Also they damaged two battleships so that they listed very prominently. Three of the covering planes were shot down and ten returned."

DECLASSIFIED
Authority N75120

RECORDED

For were these special attack planes usually armed?
"In few instances bombs were carried. In this case all guns were removed and the bombs were securely attached to the belly of the plane. Usually a torpedo, without the propelling mechanism was carried. They were armed before taking off. Our hearts were sealed in these torpedoes, so every detail was worked so that it would afford the greatest efficiency. This type of torpedo was called the *Midget* and it weighed a ton."

Q.
A.
Wasn't this a difficult weight for a *Zekes* type plane?
"A trifle heavy, but everything was stripped from the plane, such as guns and armament and it could be flown very well."

Q.
A.
What type of explosive was used? What was the fuse setting?
"I do not know what type of explosive was used. This was a military secret and none of my associates ever knew of what it consisted. It was fused to explode instantaneously upon impact."

Q.
A.
How many hours have you logged as a pilot?
"Two hundred and ninety-eight hours. In the last part of the war, flight training was greatly increased due to the serious gasoline shortage."

Q.
A.
How many instruments hours have you logged as a pilot? How much navigational training?
"I cannot estimate for I do not remember the number of instrument flying hours. We did not log this type of flying. Navigation classes were one hour a day, five days a week, for six months. We used radio aids when ever possible."

Q.
A.
Do you know anything about the *Baka* bomb?
"I know very little for I have seen only two. It is called the *Shirazu* bomb which means "Lighting of the Gods or wrath of the Gods". A steering apparatus was installed to aid the Kamikaze pilot to glide more accurately into the target. I was in the cockpit of one of these bombs which was used for training purposes. The body of this bomb is of plywood and the wings, I think, were of oak. Most of the weight, I understand, consisted of explosive matter. The one I saw had no rocket propulsion devices and appeared to be a kind of gliding bomb."

Q.
A.
Do you think that Japan had more planes than pilots during the time of the Okinawa campaign?
"Japan was definitely weaker on planes than pilots during the final months of the war. Gasoline was also dear and precious. This was caused by the tremendous shipping losses on the sea. I heard high ranking officers on many occasions discuss that we had no sea lanes left on which we could safely transport materials. Our forces in our Pacific bases sent in reports that they were starving."

Q.
A.
What do you think of the American pilots?
"American pilots are usually better than the Japanese pilots. They were better trained and had better equipment."

Q* How do you feel about the war being over?
A* "I am indeed very happy. I do not like to fight. We are not enemies.
Pearl Harbor was a big mistake and we are terribly sorry it ever happened."

Q* Have you any plans for the future?
A* "I have no plans." Good employment is difficult to get and prices are
very high. My wife and I will not be entirely happy for some time to come.
There are many things to do in order to rebuild. My father owns and
operates a Chinese house with many beautiful girls and much money is
taken in by him, but there are no records to buy. Those goods which are
available are ten times as high in price as they were before the war.
There is so much to be done."

100-111111

