HEADQUARTERS
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INTERROGATION NO. (USSBS No. 222)
Jap. Intel. No. 4

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 6 Nov. 1945

Division of Origin: Japanese Intelligence Section.

Subject: JAPANESE NAVAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Rear Admiral TAKEUCHI, Kaoru, IJN, graduated Naval Academy 1918; commissioned a 2nd Lt. (Sub-Lt. or Ensign) in 1919 and assigned duty on BB SETSU which was scraped as a result of the Disarmament Conference and converted to a target ship; post graduate courses in gunnery and torpedo schools, both six months each; was then placed on an "old DD", the KAGARO (only 300 tons, he states), the ship credited, according to Adm. TAKEUCHI, with sinking the Russian flagship in the Russo-Jap War in the battle of RYOJUN (PORT ARTHUR); went to BB OZAHE; was transferred to DD HARAKAZE; 1931, at time of "Manchurian Affair", was a student at the Naval War College; 1932, held command of "2nd class DD" HASU; followed with service as staff officer with 2ND OVERSEAS FLEET, then came to TOKYO as a staff officer on the Naval General Staff; 1936-37, was Naval Attache at OTTAWA (Canada); upon return to Japan in 1939 became an instructor in the Naval War College teaching American Naval History; 1941, commanded a Naval Air (Seaplane) Group based at YOKOSUKA; (a scouting-training group with eight planes, some single and some 2 seaters, "very old style"), made some flights, however, as far as TAIWAN (FORMOSA); 1941 (end of year) left command of this air unit two months before beginning of war with U.S. and was given a post in the "Board of Research for Total War", a civilian organization directly under the Cabinet. Interpreter MIZOTA (with Adm. TAKEUCHI) who had himself spend eleven years in the U.S. as a business man, explained that this Research Board was the Japanese equivalent of the U.S. industrial mobilization board. Adm. TAKEUCHI held this post as a civilian, out of uniform. While there he was not in good health (dengue fever) and did not do a great deal of work; July 1942, became Chief of Fifth Section of Naval General Board and occupied this post until end of war; promoted to Rear Admiral in Spring of 1945; since Navy General Board was dissolved has been working for the American authorities.

Where interviewed: Navy Ministry.

Interrogator: Lt. Comdr. William H. BOTZER, USNR
Lt. Comdr. T. M. CURTIS, USNR

Interpreter: Maj. John C. PELZEL, USNR

Note: Adm. TAKEUCHI had his own interpreter, SHUICHI MIZOTA, who carried the burden of the interpreting, with Maj. Pelzel assisting and checking.

Transcript of Interrogation (Rear Admiral TAKEUCHI, Kaoru, IJN)

SUMMARY

Rear Admiral TAKEUCHI, IJN, became Chief of the Fifth Section, 3rd Department, of the Navy General Staff in July, 1942, and held that post until the end of the war.

"Third Department (Rear Adm. N. NAKASE) is "Naval Intelligence".

"Fifth Section" is "America and possessions except Philippines". Assigned duties were:

1. Intelligence and propaganda campaign toward USA and Latin America.

2. Estimation of national affairs of subject nations.

3. Plans for collecting information on subject nations.

Fifth Section consisted of one Lt. Aide to Adm. TAKEUCHI and four sub-sections, A, B, C, and D, each under a Comdr. or Lt. Comdr., graduates of the Naval Academy, except for 37 new graduates from the Naval Academy who, because of a surplus of naval officers, were assigned to the Fifth Section in the Summer of 1944 this was the entire officer personnel of the section. Two clerks and two temporary civilian employees, graduates of foreign language schools, completed the personnel set-up.

A. U.S. Home country, covering all aspects of American life.

B. Overseas territories, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam.

C. Latin America.

D. Concerned exclusively with Aircraft; under a Naval Engineer. This one man had cognizance of the aircraft of the entire world.

NOTE: Cognizance of the U.S. Fleet when in home ports came under (A) Section; when cruising, under (B) Section.

There were no special intelligence training schools to prepare officers for the work of this section, such training as there was, being done within the Section itself, and there were no special intelligence courses at the Naval Academy.

There was no "official" coordination of intelligence activities with the army or other governmental agencies, but unofficially, information was exchanged "where appropriate", and Adm. TAKEUCHI had requested such information be furnished him.

Before war with U.S. the Fifth Section issued monthly intelligence summaries, but later, due to printing and paper shortages, this became impossible, and serially numbered leaflets were published periodically "when information justified". In the name of the Chief of the General Staff, information prepared by this section was disseminated to Fleet Units by dispatch "when available."

SUMMARY (Cont'd)

Chief sources of information were:

(a) Naval Attaches stationed abroad.
(b) Interception and recording of broadcasts, which included short wave broadcasts and U.S. intermediate frequency broadcasts for domestic consumption.
(c) Certain amount of documents seized in various war zones, leaflets, newspapers, documents, etc. in destroyed or submerged vessels, including some from Europe.
(d) Prisoner of War information.
(e) Aircraft shot down.
(f) Papers picked up "at sea" by fleet units (i.e. from the water).

No special provisions were made for analyzing captured equipment, but such materials and information were passed about in the Navy Dept. to the section most directly concerned.

Adm. TAKEUCHI stated that his section "had nothing to do with photo intelligence", although "some photos were passed on and some information gained."

Japanese Naval Intelligence had complete information on U.S. fleet units and defenses in the Hawaiian Area on 7 December 1941 and prior. "No trick at all - from your own newspapers and publications which we could buy and from personal observation."

(END SUMMARY)

Transcript of Interrogation (Rear Admiral TAKEUCHI, Kaoru (IJN)

Q.1. What was the organization of the Naval Intelligence activity which you headed?

A. 3rd Dept., Naval Intelligence Section. Under this, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th Sections. I was head of 5th Section.

5th Section - America and possessions, except Philippines.

FOUR AIDES (Comdr. or Lt. Comdr. plus one Lt. aide).

A - Comdr. - United States - Home Country covering all aspects of American life.

B - - Overseas territories - Alaska, Hawaii, Guam. Whenever fleet was in home port, it was under (A) Section - when cruising, under (B) Section. (B) requires good men who understand fleet problems. (A) must understand political questions. Only one man in (A) and one in (B).

C - - Latin America.

D - - Concerned exclusively with aircraft. Naval engineer. One man only. Must be cognizant of aircraft of entire world.

Young Lt. - - Aide to Section Head. Was picked for ability in English - also aide to Supreme War Council.

2 clerks and 2 temporary employees - rank of warrant officer - civilian employees. Graduates of foreign language schools.

NOTE: During the summer of 1944 the Imperial Navy assigned 37 graduates of the Naval Academy to the 5th Section.

A, B, and C - section heads - were graduates of the Naval Academy.
D was a graduate of Naval Engineering School.
B was such a good man he was taken by the fleet when the war started and then Admiral TAKEUCHI served as B.

Q.2. What special intelligence training was provided for? What schools? What special courses at the Naval Academy?

A. No special schools. Conducted own training as possible. No special intelligence courses at academy. Navy did not attach much importance to intelligence activity in old days. Most of officers were men of not too rugged health and slated to be placed on the retired list as Captain. Only five men went through the Intelligence Section and reached rank of Admiral. Had it not been for war, Adm. TAKEUCHI was prepared to be placed on retired list as Captain (Adm. TAKEUCHI is a little deaf).

Q.3. How were your intelligence activities integrated and coordinated with the army?

A. No official correlation, but information of Naval interest was relayed by Army General Staff and vice versa. The reports were taken for what they were worth. Copies of news reports were exchanged.

Q.4. Were regular intelligence summaries prepared or published?

A. Not regularly but periodic summaries were published when information justified. Prior to the war, these were issued monthly. Due to printing and paper shortage, we were not able to continue the practice. We published serially numbered leaflets after the war started.

Q.5. Did you disseminate intelligence information to Fleet Units through dispatch? Was this on a regular schedule?

A. Yes, they did that in the name of the Chief of General Staff. There was no routine schedule of routing.

Q.6. Was there coordination with other government agencies?

A. Yes, in the sense that all other ministries were asked to pass on information of value. The Ministry of Treasury, the Foreign Office would pass on information in their own fields. This was of little value to us, however.

Q.7. What were your other sources of information?

A. (a) Naval attaches stationed abroad.
(b) Interception and recording of broadcasts, which included short wave broadcasts and U.S. intermediate frequency broadcasts.
(c) A certain amount of documents seized in various war zones. These consisted of leaflets, newspapers, documents in destroyed or submerged vessels, including some from Europe.
(d) Prisoner of war information, i.e., statements from prisoners.
(e) Aircraft shot down.
(f) Papers picked up at sea by fleet units (from water).

Q.8. What sources did you find most reliable and effective?

A. The most valuable were seized documents. Unfortunately, not many of these were seized, however.

Q.9. Where was the main effort of your section centered?

A. We concentrated the efforts of the section in statistical study of all data received by the section, probably a result of peculiarity of my own experience, which included long study of American history, going back to days of John Calvin. This was done in the belief that if enough data was sifted, as in diamond mining, enough data would result of value to make it worth while. In Japan there is a tendency to look on intelligence as synonymous with espionage. This does not agree with my view. The long term aspect of my work was concentrated on collection of all available data over a period of time. I have done this for twenty years. To do this kind of work properly, you must have a large staff which I did not have in spite of repeated demands. Until the summer of last year, when in addition to five sectional heads the navy placed 37 men just out of the Naval Academy at my disposal (under Chief, 5th Section - Adm. TAKEUCHI). As ships were sunk, a surplus of officers made this possible. Principal work given to these 37 officers was translation of U.S. radio broadcasts and making summaries of U.S. data.

Q. 10 Were these broadcasts helpful?

A. No. Nothing of value was gained from a single piece of news. Broadcasts seemed to be controlled. Over a long period, studying records, they proved of considerable value. There was a great difference between short wave and intermediate (domestic) frequencies. Intermediate did prove of considerable value.

Q. 11 What information did you receive from short wave radio in the United States operated by Japanese? New Zealand agents?

A. Nothing of the kind. Should one be received, the operator would be suspected of being an American spy instead of Japanese. Agents in New Zealand, as elsewhere, did not come under my department.

Q. 12 Radio broadcasts by Japanese, from Hawaii, prior to war?

A. I was not in this position at that time, but was told the Japanese had none.

Q. 13 Diplomatic channels?

A. The navy had no direct communication. Such information came first to the Ministry.

Q. 14 Was any useful information gained from interception of U.S. mail, letters, and diaries found on bodies of U.S. military personnel, prisoners of war, etc?

A. No, nothing of significant value. Your authorities must have been cautious. I heard that U.S. authorities had given orders that no diaries be kept. We tried to have a smiliar order imposed without success.

Q. 15 What provision was made for analyzing equipment captured?

A. Nothing of outstanding importance. We were looking for Radar and bombing equipment. Equipment we obtained was broken up and not of much use. Analysis was made within the Navy department by designers making similar equipment.

Q. 16 Did you get much useful information from natives in the areas of operation?

A. Far from being useful. We suspected them of working for the U.S.

Q. 17 Did you attempt in 5th Section of the Navy Department periodic estimates of U.S. strength?

A. I believe that up to the time I came to occupy the position of head of the 5th Section a monthly summary was made. After the war started, it was difficult to keep up. We collected data of U.S. fleet losses after actions and waited for confirmation, then made an estimate of what had actually occurred. I kept a graph of my own but did not pass it on until a check had been made. It was so secret, I did not permit others into the room where it was kept.

Q. 18 Such information was not made available even within the Navy Department?

A. No, none available to entire navy.

Q. 19 What use was made of it?

A. After it had been checked, I issued my opinion. I felt any other information might be misleading. (NOTE: Adm TAKEUCHI, in reply to a query as to whether any other person or department was doing this, replied that he was the only one having cognizance of this function).

Q. 20 What was your method of estimating U. S. losses?

A. We used various methods. One was getting information from the Japanese fleet - by interviews - by U.S. radio transmission regarding losses - from Japanese fleet forces engaged in particular engagements. Often several months elapsed before we could say what U.S. units were engaged. We always checked up. In several instances where one engagement followed another, it was several months before losses in the first engagement could be estimated.

Q. 21 Were these reports disseminated?

A. Those that we had confidence in. These were not necessarily accepted as official and final because fleet officers often had opinions of their own.

Q. 22 How successful were you estimates?

A. I took the view from the first that 100% accuracy was impossible and would not attempt to make an estimate unless given a 20% leeway, more or less.

Q. 23 Did the 5th Section attempt to keep a careful and timely record of the location and composition of U.S. fleet units?

A. Yes, to the best of our ability, and especially before a large naval engagement.

Q. 24 What were your sources?

A. On basis of method already described. In addition, we would publish reports with the warning that they were not 100% accurate.

Q. 25 Were you successful in this?

A. Yes. Had we not served the fleet well they would not have come back to us as they did often for other information.

Q. 26 How were these reports distributed?

A. We never made more than five or six copies, so could not go to departments not concerned with planning.

Q. 27 Were you able to predict U.S. future operations or landings?

A. We never attempted to play the part of a forecaster. We never attempted to reach conclusions. Intelligence is subject to a time limit. It was our policy not to arrive at conclusions, but we passed information on to those whose duty it was to deploy forces. (duty of Operations sections). I impressed my subordinates with this procedure.

Q. 28 What information was gained from interrogation of prisoners and how was this gotten?

A. At various points local units (navy) would do questioning. Information so gained was transmitted to 5th Section. A prisoner of war camp, the only one controlled by the navy, was located at OFUNA. This was a source of information. Prisoners were accomadated temporarily (those taken by navy) and then turned over to the army. Prisoners were questioned at this camp, and a number of my staff often went to this camp to do interrogating.

Q. 29 What is your comment on the value of these interrogations?

A. They were of very little value. Most men captured were of lower rank, and in their first engagement. A career officer graduate of your academy, captured, would not talk. My policy was not to force men to talk. Because of this, men formerly at OFUNA asked to be returned there. As an exception, captured members of carrier crews gave information on the name of their carrier. According to international law, name, rank, and unit is required. This was of help in learning the identity of units. (NOTE: On direct re-questioning, Adm. TAKEUCHI repeated that internation law requires NAME, RANK, and UNIT).

Q. 30 Did you rely on Photo Intelligence?

A. My section had nothing to do with this.

Q. 31 Is there a separate unit doing this work?

A. No such independent unit existed, but each air unit has its own photo reconnaissance reports.

Q. 32 Did you receive and evaluate photo reconnaissance reports?

A. Photos were passed on to my section, and by studying photos, some information was gained.

Q. 33 Was any attempt made to collect data and analyze U.S. anti-aircraft (Flak Intelligence)?

A. It is possible that fleet units did this. It was not a function of Naval General Staff.

Q. 34 What information did you have on 7 December 1941 and immediately prior thereto, including number, type, and size of U.S. fleet units in Hawaiian waters?

A. Unfortunately, at that time I was a civilian and cannot give an answer with confidence that would be correct. To the best of my knowledge, it was easy enough to deduct from your total strength the number of ships laid up in docks in the U.S. We received the Army and Navy Register, printed in Washington, and by reading personnel items could tell where ships were. This publication could be purchased for 20 cents.

Q. 35 Did the navy department concern itself with ground installations and defenses in the Hawaii Area?

A. Yes, we had access through U.S. announcements.

Q. 36 How was such information secured?

A. No trick at all. It was secured from newspapers, and by personal observation before the war.

Q. 37 Was this section responsible for such information?

A. Yes. It was sent out to all departments of the Navy, and to the Army.

Q. 38 How was it disseminated?

A. In printed form - multiple copies.

Q. 39 Are copies available?

A. The Navy Ministry burned down. The records were burned.

Q. 40 Were no copies of any kind preserved?

A. No.

Q. 41 With regard to Japanese Naval Intelligence as a whole, what were the outstanding services of Naval Intelligence to the Japanese fleet units?

A. I have never pondered the question before, but feel sure that the Intelligence organization of the Navy had no injurious effect on the fleet. Men in the fleet are usually not informed on foreign affairs. My organization performed the duty of passing on well serviced information.

Q. 42 Will you comment on the times, in terms of campaigns, when the work of the 5th Section was most effective. When it was weakest. Reasons?

A. The effectiveness of the sections increased with the passage of time, due to increased experience. I believe that this was true of many of my colleagues. We enjoyed greater confidence of superiors as time passed.

Q. 43 In the light of war experiences, how would the Admiral change or improve his 5th Section operations?

A. Without question, the first change would be an increased staff, to bring men of superior qualities into sub-section (B) (Overseas territories, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam) which was vacant during the war. Another change would be improvement of conditions under which we worked:

1. Communications, which were poor.
2. Printing facilities, which were also poor, and became more so toward the end of the war.