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My Translations of 戦史叢書 (SENSHI SŌSHO "WAR HISTORY PUBLICATIONS")

南東方面海軍作戦 (1) (NANTO HŌMEN KAIGUN SAKU SEN (1))
"NAVAL OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH EAST AREA VOL. 1"
—ガ島奪回作戦開始まで— (GA SHIMA DAUKAI SAKUSEN KANSHI MADE — "Up to the
beginning of operations to recapture Guadalcanal")

GUADALCANAL 1942 VOL I

14-11-16-3

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THEME BOOK

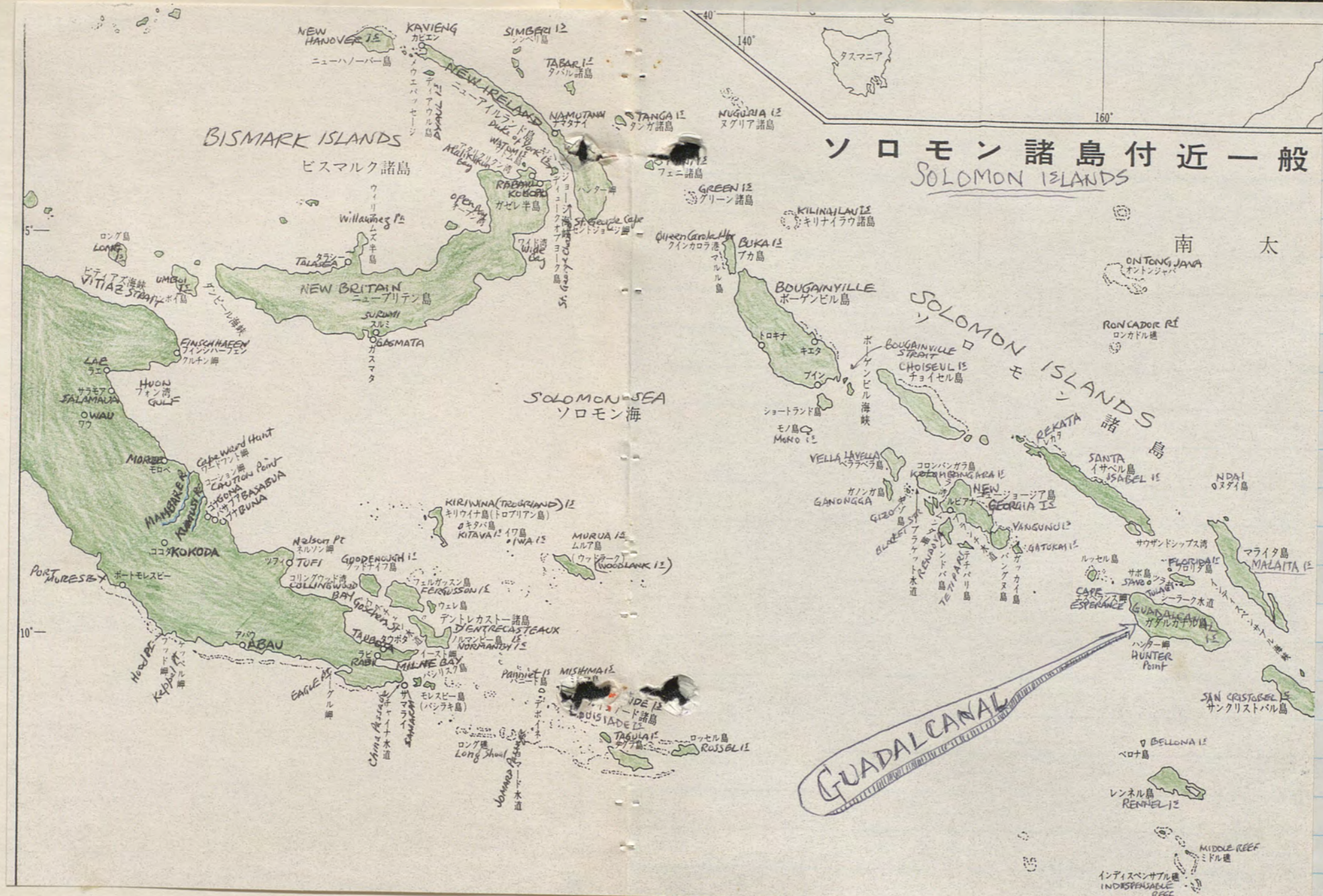
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SHEETS BOUND SECURELY
YET ZIP OUT EASILY.
COVER FOLDS BACK
AND SHEETS LIE FLAT.

11 IN. x 8½ IN.

84 SHEETS

No. 11-6518
COLLEGE RULED



ソロモン諸島付近一般
SOLOMON ISLANDS

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Note that all times and dates are Tokyo Standard Time - i.e. Zone - 9

A peculiarity of Japanese naval usage is that each Fleet, Air Fleet and Air Flotilla has two titles - one administrative (eg - 2nd Fleet) and one tactical (2nd in an operational role becomes 'The Advance Force') to avoid more confusion, their Administrative and

Tactical 'titles' follow

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|---|--|
| Administrative Organization | Tactical Organization |
| 1 st Fleet (Battleships and screen) | "MAIN BODY" "GUARD FORCE" |
| 2 nd Fleet (CA's + screen) | "ADVANCE FORCE" |
| 3 rd Fleet (after MIDWAY the Carrier Fleet and screen) | (After MIDWAY) "CARRIER STRIKING FORCE" |
| 4 th Fleet ("Mandates Force") | South Seas Force |
| after 8 th Fleet was formed → | Inner South Seas Force |
| 5 th FLEET | Northern Force |
| 6 th Fleet (Submarine Fleet) | VANGUARD FORCE frequently translated Advance Expeditionary Force |
| 8 th Fleet ("New Guinea/ Solomon Fleet") | OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE |

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|--|--|
| 21 st Air Flotilla | 1 st Air Attack Force |
| 22 nd Air Flotilla | 2 nd " " " |
| 23 rd Air Flotilla | 3 rd " " " |
| 24 th Air Flotilla | 4 th Air Attack Force |
| 25 th Air Flotilla | 5 th Air Attack Force |
| 26 th Air Flotilla | 6 th Air Attack Force |
| 1 st Air Fleet (until after Midway) | "Carrier Striking Force" |
| 11 th Air Fleet | "Base Air Force" (all naval/regularly shore based combat aircraft - i.e. land based multi engine bombers, multi engine flying boats, fighters, reconnaissance aircraft, and also (CV type) dive bombers and torpedo-bombers) |

Parentheses (---) are those of the Authors - to indicate the Author's comments, explanations or summaries

Double Parenthesis ((...)) are those of the Translator; for clarity, identification, comments or explanations

PRELUDE TO GUADALCANAL

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Part I. On January 23 1943, our forces, in Joint Army-Navy Cooperation, assaulted and occupied RABAU and KAVIENG, moving forward to air bases there. Allied resistance was weak. Strategically, RABAU was viewed as an important position in the South East area for the defence of TRUK, our navy's pivotal position for interception operations against the U.S., and also to secure control of the seas in the Western Pacific.

However, at the outbreak of war, the HAWAII operation (surprise attack on Pearl Harbor) and the operations to the South (invasion of the PHILIPPINES, MALAYA, and the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES), both beginning at the same time, and having wide range objectives, left our military forces insufficient to capture RABAU, so that operation had to await an opportune time.

At that time the Allies were sending reinforcements from the U.S. to the PHILIPPINES area via the South Pacific. Therefore the advance of our forces to Rabaul was seen by the Allies as a great threat; they were apprehensive that our forces, using Rabaul as a base, would advance Southward and cut their line of communications, so they began to rush military reinforcements to the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI, SAMOA, AUSTRALIA and PORT MORESBY areas.

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Immediately after we occupied Rabaul, we received air attacks practically day after day. On 20 February, an American Carrier Task Force came to attack Rabaul but hard fighting by our shore based naval air force prevented an air attack. From late February our shore based air force commenced attacks on Port Moresby.

With the smooth progress of our Hawaii operations and Southern Operations, our forces planned to capture LAE, SALAMUA, TULAGI and PORT MORESBY. The strengthening of our defensive situation in the RABAU area, along with our control of the CORAL SEA posed a threat to the U.S. - AUSTRALIA lines of communications. Our forces invaded LAE and SALAMUA on 8 March but on the 10th, our Occupation Force was attacked there by a U.S. carrier task force causing great damage to our ships. Immediately after the occupation of LAE and SALAMUA our naval shore based air force moved up to LAE and began air annihilation attacks on the PORT MORESBY area but allied counter-attacks were also powerful, and the scale of air operations in the South East area rapidly expanded. The operations to invade PORT MORESBY began in early May but the allies, able secretly to learn in advance of our advance to that objective, speedily sent forces to the CORAL SEA to prevent this. Our forces occupied TULAGI on 3 May, the Occupation

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FORCE continuing to head for PORT MORESBY but the BATTLE OF THE CORAL SEA erupted on 7 and 8 May, where for the first time in history, aircraft carriers fought aircraft carriers in a violent battle. In this action we sank the enemy's largest carrier, the USS LEXINGTON and damaged the YORKTOWN. We lost the light carrier SUDHO, our carrier SHOKAKU was damaged and we lost much of our carriers' air strength and had to suspend the invasion of PORT MORESBY.

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PART II. THE ALLIED COUNTER ATTACK ON GUADALCANAL AND THE OPERATIONS TO INVADE PORT MORESBY BY LAND ROUTE

Our navy had planned to invade MIDWAY and the WESTERN ALEUTIANS in early June after the MO ((for PORT MORESBY)) operations and in early July shift operations to invade NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA ("the F.S. operation", also "the F. Operation") ("F" for FIJI? - "S" for SAMOA?). These operations had already been decided upon when the SECOND PHASE operations began ((with the MO operation)) and since the PORT MORESBY operations were postponed (see above), IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS issued directives on 18 May to carry out the "FS operations and a 2nd MO (Port Moresby) operation while the FS operation was being modified.

The Combined Fleet began its MIDWAY - WESTERN ALEUTIANS operations as scheduled but in the BATTLE OF MIDWAY on 5 June 1942, in one blow, we lost four aircraft carriers, and our MIDWAY invasion ended in failure. Due to the MIDWAY fiasco, Imperial General Headquarters on 11 June directed that the FS operations be postponed and an investigation made into operations by roads to capture PORT MORESBY by land (called the "RI" operation) ((for RIKU-land?)). The concept of the postponed FS operations was gradually to advance our naval shore based air force southward from the Solomon Islands, but this was believed to be unrealistic in view of the actual state of readiness of our air forces, and its cancellation was ordered on 11 July 1942. However, it was absolutely necessary to carry out an invasion of PORT MORESBY in order to conduct the FS operation in the future and also to ameliorate the current intensity of the air-war in the South East area. In the meantime preparations for the FS operation were being advanced. The airfield construction units that had been intended for MIDWAY and NEW CALEDONIA were now

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available for use, in late June they were used to begin improving and equip air bases in order improve the strategic air situation in the South East area in preparation for the FS operations. It was thus that the construction of an airfield on Guadalcanal Island was begun.

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An OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE was established on 14 July and late that month the Headquarters of Commander Eighth Fleet moved to Rabaul. The VIII ARMY which had been formed in preparation for the FS operations, being diverted to investigate the "RI" ((land route to Port Moresby)) operation, landed their advance echelon (in cooperation with the Navy) at Buna and began operations toward Port Moresby.

On the other hand, Allied Forces continued to send reinforcements to Australia to strengthen their arrangements for counter-attacks and also sent forces to, and equipped and readied air bases in New Caledonia and the NEW HEBRIDES Islands areas to prevent our cutting the line of communications between the U.S. and Australia. Immediately after we occupied TULAGI, they landed on ESPERITO SANTO Island, some 500 miles to the south and began the establishment of air bases there. Thus the chessmen were placed on the chessboard for the coming counter-attacks in the SOLOMONS.

Having been victorious in the Battle of Midway, Allied forces landed on GUADALCANAL and TULAGI on 7 August; their attack was a complete surprise, being just before our air force was to move up there, the airfield being still incomplete.

Our shore based air force in the Rabaul area immediately counter-attacked with full strength; the Outer South Seas Force made a night attack during the night of 8 August, striking the enemy a stunning blow and the Allied ships withdrew but the American marines which had landed occupied TULAGI and GUADALCANAL.

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At that time time, Imperial General Headquarters estimated (as had the 7 March Government Liaison Conference's "Estimate of the World Situation") that a full-scale Allied counter-attack would probably occur subsequent to 1943. Here in the South East area the invasion of Port Moresby by land route had just begun, with the focus of our effort in the area directed toward NEW GUINEA. The ships of the Allied Invasion Force having hurriedly withdrawn, led our forces to underestimate

the strength of the enemy forces that had landed on GUADALCANAL.

Receiving the report that the enemy had landed, the Combined Fleet planned to concentrate its "decisive-battle" forces and seek out and destroy the enemy fleet. The Army also, threw in its forces in succession to recapture the GUADALCANAL airfield. Allied forces began using that airfield on 12 August and were supported by their Carrier Striking Force. Thus, the battle for the GUADALCANAL airfield came about, violent fighting breaking out and spreading over the whole area.

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CHAPTER 1. CONSTRUCTION OF THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD AND THE

INVASION OF PORT MORESBY BY LAND ROUTE

I SUSPENSION OF THE FS OPERATIONS.

PARTICULARS OF THE DECISION TO PLAN FOR THE FS OPERATIONS.

CHANGES IN THE SITUATION AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF WAR. Prior to the beginning of the war, the navy section of IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS had completed the plans and preparations for the very complicated, wide ranging FIRST PHASE operations and while there were prospects for assumed situations at the end of that PHASE, there were also many uncertain elements involved that they were unable to decide on definite concepts of operations for the SECOND PHASE. *At the time* At the beginning of the war, our country's scheme to lend impetus to an end of the war envisioned that while invading strategic areas to the South, adopting a posture of long-term invincibility; to count mainly on the collapse of England from the European war situation and a resultant loss of will in America to continue the war. Thus while relying principally on German operations to bring about a collapse of England, our country would proceed with operations to the South to speed the withdrawal from the Commonwealth, and the war, of AUSTRALIA and INDIA. However against America there was no feasible winning move or decisive factor that could bring about America's surrender, militarily, and there was a good probability that the war would become a prolonged war of attrition. For these reasons, it became necessary to solidify a posture of long term invincibility and to this end our policies became: to strengthen our preparations against the Soviet on the Continent; to bring about the submission of the

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CHIANG (KAI SHEK) government; to secure and hold the occupied strategic areas in the South; to procure and develop the raw materials vital to the prosecution of the war; to occupy strategic enemy territory that fronts the outer perimeter of our occupied territory in order to prevent it being a base for an Allied counter-attack; to intercept and destroy the American fleet when it comes to attack.

The paragraph concerning the SECOND PHASE in Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters Directive #1 did no more than indicate this concept and that at the end of the FIRST PHASE, formal directives would be forthcoming, depending on the situation at the time. Based on that Directive, the scheme of operations for the SECOND PHASE in Combined Fleet Secret Order #1 listed these policies: "Supply Lines of the U.S. and Great Britain will be effectively broken"; "Interception of U.S. - British Fleets"; "Commerce Destruction operations against lines of communications of the U.S. and Great Britain"; in addition it listed: "Areas to be quickly occupied or destroyed when feasible by the operations situation: EASTERN NEW GUINEA, NEW BRITAIN, FIJI, SAMOA, strategic places in the AUSTRALIAN area, ALEUTIANS, MIDWAY and the ANDAMAN ISLANDS"

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At the outbreak of war we succeeded in a surprise attack on "HAWAII" and although failing to destroy aircraft carriers and heavy cruisers, struck a crippling blow against the battleships, with the result that the American fleet was, for the time being, unable to advance to the Western Pacific. In addition our invasion operations of strategic areas to the South advanced so smoothly that the date for the invasion of JAVA was advanced by one month. According to all reports, at that time America was busy transporting military material and personnel from the Mainland and Hawaiian areas via Australia to the JAVA area. We estimated that in the future Australia would inevitably become the base for counter-attacks against Japan. However, it was relayed to us that following the Spring of 1942, German forces planned operations to sweep over and completely subdue the CAUCASUS area and advance to the NEAR EAST; that since the end of 1941 German and Italian submarines had sunk and damaged British aircraft carriers and battleships in the Mediterranean Sea while in NORTH AFRICA, German-Italian forces had begun their advance on Egypt.

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With this new information as additional background, from mid-December onward the Navy Section Imperial General Headquarters and the Combined Fleet also, began

break through to WESTERN ASIA. On the other hand Admiral YAMAMOTO wanted to take advantage of the favorable turn in the war situation to strike a blow that would crush America's fighting spirit. On 9 December he ordered his staff to study an invasion of "HAWAII" (as a chance to destroy the American fleet) and an invasion of CEYLON. An invasion of "HAWAII", with its current air strength, was deemed precarious, so while our air power was being readied, he wanted to invade CEYLON, lure out and destroy the British fleet in the Indian Ocean and make the Western area safe. The results of many staff studies showed that an invasion of "HAWAII" prior to the autumn of 1942 would be a difficult matter, while an invasion of CEYLON would be feasible.

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After consultations between the Combined Fleet and the Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters, in mid-December, the latter proposed to the Army Section of Imperial General Headquarters the concepts for an invasion of AUSTRALIA, FIJI and SAMOA and an invasion of "HAWAII". At that time studies were being conducted of invasions of LAE, SAZAMAVA, TULAQI and PORT MORESBY by the Army and Navy Sections and there appeared to be no problems arising, so on 29 January (1942) invasion plans for those places were promulgated.

PLANS FOR INVASION OF AUSTRALIA SUSPENDED

The Navy Section's plan for the invasion of AUSTRALIA was based, primarily, on strategic reasons. The Northwest part of AUSTRALIA, in particular, adjoins the Southern Strategic Zone through the narrow ARAFURA and BANDA Seas, posing a threat to the defence of the Southern Strategic Zone and its lines of communication; the Navy Section estimated Northwest AUSTRALIA would become a base for counter attacks by American aircraft and submarines. Secondly, their plan was a necessary step ~~to~~ the direction of the war: to contrive the withdrawal of AUSTRALIA from the BRITISH COMMONWEALTH, ^{which} would, in turn, contribute to the collapse of Great Britain.

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The Army Section of Imperial General Headquarters was opposed to the Navy Section's proposals and concepts for the invasion of strategic point(s) in AUSTRALIA because of the high probability that such an operation would spread to all of AUSTRALIA, and would exceed the limits of our national resources. The Army Section's estimate was that an invasion of AUSTRALIA would require twelve Army Divisions, with the necessary shipping amounting

to 1,500,000 tons, which would be very disadvantageous to a "posture of long-term invincibility"; and that the long period needed for that shipping would create shortages in shipping used for civilian and munitions needs, and create an obstacle in a long-term war. The Navy Section had no alternative but to abide by the Army's point of view, and in early January cancelled its proposals.

PROPOSAL FOR THE F.S. OPERATIONS

Unable to obtain the Army Section's agreement to an invasion of AUSTRALIA, the Navy Section proposed, as the second best plan, an invasion of NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA to cut the U.S. - AUSTRALIA line of communications -- this scheme included acquisition of New Caledonia's natural resources in minerals. The Army Section, although opposed to an invasion of AUSTRALIA, recognized the extreme importance of AUSTRALIA as a tremendous base for counterattacks against Japan and were in agreement to a plan to isolate AUSTRALIA which did not require the allocation of a great amount of war potential.

A study of the F.S. operation was undertaken in late December 1941 by appropriate Operations officers from the Army and Navy Sections, Imperial General Headquarters.

On the other hand the LIAISON CONFERENCE between the Government and Imperial General Headquarters, influenced by the favorable war situation, decided all sorts of policies dealing with the direction of the war; on 10 January it determined the "POLICY THAT FACES US OVERSEAS", including a Policy toward AUSTRALIA (including New Zealand): "With the progress of our Southern operations applying strong pressure on AUSTRALIA by cutting its lines of communications with the United States and Great Britain, AUSTRALIA will be forced to break its ties with those countries. A similar policy with regard to INDIA was adopted and on 15 January the Army was charged with moves toward INDIA and the Navy with studies for the invasion of AUSTRALIA and for the F.S. Operations.

In the meantime the Combined Fleet had been kept informed of the status of the studies by the Army and Navy Sections of Imperial General Headquarters (hereafter "Imp. Gen. Hq.") of invasion of AUSTRALIA and the F.S. Operations, and was naturally much more positive toward an invasion of Northwest AUSTRALIA. The diary of Combined Fleet Staff Officer (Operations), MIWA, records for 6 January:

"America seems to be busy carrying out reinforcements in the AUSTRALIAN area and to the FIJI and SAMOA; now is not the time for any half-measures -- we must quickly study the invasion of AUSTRALIA" Also, as will be related subsequently, during the critique on 24 February following War Games (map maneuvers), the Staff of the Combined Fleet strongly advocated an invasion of Northwest and Northeast AUSTRALIA, noting that America had been sending reinforcements to Australia since the beginning of the war and the Headquarters Combined Fleet desired to accelerate the "invasion of strategic positions in Australia". The Combined Fleet wanted to invade Australia for strategic reasons: to prevent America's advancing ^{its} air forces and submarines to Australia ^{and} making Australia a base for counter attacks against our Southern Strategic Zone; also, regarding the F.S. Operations, since intelligence reported shipping between the U.S. and Australia had become very heavy, the Combined Fleet saw a necessity to disrupt this traffic, but the Navy Section was against supporting this planned invasion. Its reasons were that the places to be invaded were too far from our main islands (NOUMEA, SUVA and PAGO PAGO all being about 4000 miles from YOKOSUKA) and that to obtain success in those invasions would be a difficult matter, ^(especially so) as long as America's aircraft carriers were in good shape; moreover the occupation of those positions would not insure success for the objectives since there were alternate sea routes between the United States and Australia, and any disruption in U.S. - Australian traffic would be incomplete.

Toward the end of January the Combined Fleet transmitted the following operational concepts to the Navy Section, Imp. Gen. Hq.:

- (a) At the end of May, early June - invade CEYLON, make contact with German forces and when this has been accomplished, the Combined Fleet will turn to the East ((to face the U.S.))
- (b) There is an absolute necessity to seize PORT DARWIN
- (c) It is not necessary to seize FIJI and SAMOA; their destruction would be satisfactory.
- (d) If at all possible, desire to seize "HAWAII."

The Navy Section, informally, was opposed to the parts of the Combined Fleet's plan that included operations to invade HAWAII and the invasion of FIJI and SAMOA that included occupation, in contrast to destruction ((and

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evacuation)). It informed the Combined Fleet of its views and again submitted the Australian invasion concept to the Army Section, Imp. Gen. H.Q., along with the new proposal for an invasion of CEYLON. The Army Section once again, and for the same reasons as before, opposed any invasion of AUSTRALIA but agreed to undertake a study that would be limited to the destruction of PORT DARWIN. They showed considerable interest in an invasion of CEYLON, but were opposed to the plan as too early, time-wise, to act in concert with the advance to the East of German forces. In the meantime, in late February, the Combined Fleet had invited the appropriate action-officers from the Army and Navy Sections of Imp. Gen. H.Q. to attend a war-game of the invasion of CEYLON. However due to a lapse in liaison between the Navy Section and the Staff Combined Fleet, it was 8 March before the Combined Fleet first learned that its strongly hoped for invasion of CEYLON had not been adopted.

Now the Combined Fleet changed its approach to the problem; it was decided that by invading MIDWAY, it could decoy and destroy the American aircraft carriers, whose strike operations had been a torment up until that time; next a destructive attack would be made against FIJI and SAMOA, and to prepare for and then invade "HAWAII" when ready. The Combined Fleet's adoption of the F.S. Operations was it was estimated that the destruction of the American aircraft carriers at MIDWAY would make the operations in the FIJI and SAMOA areas feasible and that offensive operations in those areas would act as ^{an} indirect defense of MIDWAY.

The Combined Fleet held discussions with the Navy Section Imp. Gen. H.Q. based on the above concept with the result that on 5 April an informal agreement was reached for an invasion of MIDWAY (at the request of the Navy Section, invasion of strategic positions in the Western Aleutians was included) and for the F.S. Operations (the Navy Section strongly insisting that FIJI and New Caledonia be invaded and secured but that SAMOA's invasion be for the destruction of facilities). After further studies by the Combined Fleet staff, the operational concepts

were determined to be:

early May: Invasion operations against Port Moresby

early June: the MIDWAY and ALEUTIAN operations

July: the F.S. operations

FS OPERATIONS PLANS

OPERATIONS PLANS FOR SECOND PHASE OPERATIONS: The Navy Section Imp. Gen. H.Q., formulated plans in early April for Second Phase operations; of these, the F.S. OPERATIONS PLAN (gist) was as follows:

GREAT EAST ASIA WAR - SECOND PHASE OPERATIONS - IMPERIAL NAVY'S OPERATIONS PLAN

chapter II Operations Objectives:

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4. The object of the Imperial Navy's operations is by the destruction of enemy fleets and air power in the Pacific and Indian Ocean and the acquisition of the necessary strategic positions to strengthen the building of a posture of invincibility for Japan, and through this to bring about the collapse of Great Britain and crush America's war spirit.

Chapter III Operations Policy:

5. Indian Ocean operations (omitted by the author)

6. Operations against Australia - step up operations to isolate Australia from America and contrive its submission.

8. carry out timely surprise attack/invasion operations/destruction of America's operations bases in the Pacific Ocean area, striving to destroy enemy surface and air forces; After the operations in the Indian Ocean and those against Australia are, for the most part, concluded - seek out the main force of the American ^{fleet} (including British and Allied forces) for a decisive battle and destroy it.

chapter IV Outline of Operations:

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(a) Indian Ocean operations (omitted by the author)

(b) Australian operations - In addition to reinforcement of our operations to isolate Australia from the U.S. and Great Britain, destroy enemy fleet(s) in the Australian area. In order to speed up Australia's submission, carry out the following:

B-1. use our Shore Based Air Force and Carrier Striking Force to destroy enemy forces and military facilities in strategic areas of the East and North ^{Coasts of} Australia

B-2. destroy enemy fleet(s) in Australian waters using our Carrier

Striking Force and Submarines. And destroy enemy sea lines of communications.

B-3. In cooperation with the Army, invade/occupy FIJI, SAMOA and New Caledonia, establish air and naval bases there and cut the sea and air lines of communication between the U.S. and Australia. However after the invasion of SAMOA and when its base facilities have been completely destroyed, our forces will be withdrawn.

(C.) Operations on the Eastern Front (remainder omitted by the author).

SITUATION OF ALLIED FORCES IN THE FS AREA

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ISSUANCE OF ORDERS FOR THE F.S. OPERATION. On 18 May Imperial General Headquarters issued orders to carry out the FS operations; In the meantime the Battle of the Coral Sea had occurred with the resultant failure of the operations to invade PORT MORESBY. A 2nd Invasion of PORT MORESBY was now ordered to be carried out at the same time as the FS operation.

NAVY SECTION, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, ORDER NO. 19

1. The Cinc Combined Fleet in cooperation with the 17th Army will invade/occupy strategic positions in the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA Island groups and destroy the enemy's main bases.

2. Details will be issued by the Chief of the Naval General Staff.

NAVY SECTION, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, DIRECTIVE NO. 98.

Cinc Combined Fleet, conforming to the Central Joint Army-Navy Agreement (Separate annex), will carry out invasion/occupation of NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA Island areas; At the same time the main enemy bases in those areas are destroyed, our operations bases will be moved forward to SUVA and NOUMEA, and elsewhere; operations to cut the lines of communication between the coasts of America and Australia will be intensified and pressure brought to bear on the Eastern Coastal area of Australia.

SEPARATE ANNEX

JOINT ARMY-NAVY CENTRAL AGREEMENT WITH REGARD TO OPERATIONS IN NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI AND SAMOA ISLAND AREAS.

1. OPERATIONS OBJECTIVES

Invasion/occupation of strategic positions in the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI AND SAMOA Islands areas; intensify breaking of communications between the U.S. and Australia, and block enemy plans for counterattacks from the above areas.

2. OPERATIONS POLICY

(a) Invasion/occupation of strategic positions of the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA Islands will be carried out with Joint Army-Navy Cooperation.

(b) While applying pressure on enemy fleets and air forces, NEW CALEDONIA will be the first objective and forces landed there; next, FIJI and SAMOA will be swiftly attacked and forces landed at NOUMEA, SUVA, and PAGO PAGO respectively, and at other places of strategic importance.

(c) On occupying strategic points of NOUMEA, SUVA and PAGO PAGO, the interior of all islands will be mopped up and afterward, disorder will be suppressed on nearby islands at opportune times.

(d) On occupying strategic positions in the NEW CALEDONIA and FIJI Islands area with Joint Army-Navy cooperation, strategic points will be secured and the Navy will move forward its operations bases; After the occupation of strategic positions in SAMOA, these places will be either secured or our forces will be withdrawn after destroying all installations.

3. COMMANDERS AND FORCES

ARMY - Commander: COMMANDER XVII ARMY; Forces; Main strength of the XVIII Army

(XVII Army Group; a nucleus of 3 infantry Battalions each from the 18th and the 55th Divisions)

NAVY - Commander: CinC 2nd Fleet; Force: 2nd Fleet; a force whose core is the 1st AIR FLEET

(The Carrier Fleet) - abolished after

4. PREPARATIONS FOR OPERATIONS

a. The main power of the Naval force will assemble at TRUK about mid-June.

b. The majority of Army Forces will first concentrate in the DAVAO area about mid-June and then arrive in the ASSEMBLY Area via PALAU.

c. a part of the Army Force will assemble in the RABAU area and prepare for operations.

d. The Navy will have a suitable force (other than that used in the main operations) escort the transport of Army Forces to its arrival at the ASSEMBLY POINTS.

5. ASSEMBLY POINTS AND STANDBY TIME

NEW CALEDONIA INVASION FORCE - RABAU - late June

FIJI and SAMOA INVASION FORCES - TRUK - early July

6. COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Depending on the operational situation of the Combined Fleet, operations will begin in late July, as convenient.

7. OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS

(a) At the time of the invasion operations the Navy will have a strong carrier striking force in the sea area to the east of Australia and in the vicinity of the assault landing points with the tasks of destroying and mopping up all sea and air forces and of cooperating with the land battle with part of its air power.

(b) In concert with operations of the carrier striking force, the NEW CALEDONIA INVASION FORCE (nucleus - 3 infantry battalions) will sortie, as opportune, and head for the assembly point under navy escort and land on the southern part of New Caledonia, occupying first NOUMEA, and other strategic positions.

(c) The FIJI Invasion Force (nucleus 5 infantry battalions) and the SAMOA INVASION FORCE (nucleus - 1 infantry Battalion and one reduced battalion of Naval Landing Force) will at an opportune time depart the assembly point, escorted by the navy, and land on VITI LEVU and TUTUILA, respectively, at approximately the same time, occupying SUVA and PAGO PAGO, and other strategic points.

(d) When NOUMEA, SUVA and PAGO PAGO and other strategic positions have been occupied and secured, the interior of each island will be mopped-up, and when opportune, disorder will be suppressed on neighboring islands.

(e) After strategic positions have been secured, important positions will be adequately defended by Joint Army - navy cooperation, and the Navy will advance forward its operations bases and strive to fulfill the operations objectives.

(f) After the occupation of SAMOA, the Central Authorities will decide anew by the end of the invasion whether to hold this position for the

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long term or whether our forces will be withdrawn after destroying all facilities. In case of withdrawal - about one month after the assault - all facilities will be completely destroyed. Matters not covered by the Central Authorities outline of withdrawal operations will be carried out by joint agreement by the Senior Army and Navy Commanders.

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8. COMMAND RELATIONS

will be through joint Army-Navy coordination. However in land warfare when Army forces and those of the Naval Landing Force are both operating in the same area at the same time, unity of command will be exercised by the senior officer.

9. DEFENCES AND PATROLS

a. The Army has the principal responsibility for the land defence of NEW CALEDONIA and FIJI, the Navy being charged with patrolling and guarding the sea and air space with its sea and air forces

b. In case SAMOA is to be secured and held, the Army is charged with the task of land defence, the Navy having the responsibility for the security of its lines of communications to the rear; however, if the situation permits, guarding and patrols of the sea and air space is the Navy's responsibility.

- - - (parts omitted by the author)

15. NAMES FOR THE OPERATIONS

NEW CALEDONIA OPERATIONS - "NI" operations ((NI of NIU KAREDONIA)) (or "NK" operations) ((NIU KAREDONIA))
 FIJI OPERATIONS - "FU" operations ((FU of FUJI)) (or "FI" ((FU FIJI) operations))
 SAMOA OPERATIONS - "SA" operations ((FU SA of SAMOA)) (or "SA" operations) ((SA))

NAVY SECTION, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, DIRECTIVE NO 99.

The Cinc Combined Fleet will carry out operations against PORT MORESBY in accordance with the Central Joint Army-Navy agreement (per Separate Annex)

SEPARATE ANNEX

CENTRAL JOINT ARMY-NAVY AGREEMENT REGARDING PORT MORESBY OPERATIONS

1. OPERATIONS OBJECTIVES

By an occupation of PORT MORESBY, destroy the enemy's offensive position against Eastern New Guinea and also control the CORAL SEA.

2. OPERATIONS POLICY

At an opportune time during the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI, SAMOA operations,

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make landings in the Port Moresby vicinity, occupy that place and also strategic positions in that vicinity.

3. COMMANDERS and FORCES

ARMY: ~~Commander~~ 17th Army; Part of the 17th Army (The Aoba Detachment - whose nucleus is 3 battalions of infantry of the 2nd Division)

NAVY: CINC 4th Fleet; Naval force whose core is the 4th Fleet (including one battalion of Naval Landing Force.)

(NOTE: a part of the 11th AIR FLEET (shore based naval air force) will take part).

4. PREPARATIONS FOR OPERATIONS

(a) After the Army force concentrates at DAVAO by mid-June, it will immediately proceed to the Assembly Point.

(b) The Navy will escort the transport of Army forces to the Assembly Point, using forces other than those to be used in the main operations.

5. ASSEMBLY POINT and ASSEMBLY TIME

PALAU - mid JUNE

6. COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

These operations will be begun at an appropriate time between the commencement of the NEW CALEDONIA operations and the beginning of the FIJI and SAMOA operations.

7. OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS

As decided at a conference of the Army and Navy Commanders.

8. COMMAND RELATIONS

By joint Army-Navy coordination. However in land warfare, where the Army forces and those of the Naval Landing Force are operating in the same area at the same time, unity of command will be exercised by the senior commander.

9. DEFENCE and PATROLS

a. The land defences of the strategic area of PORT MORESBY and vicinity will be, ^{governed} by joint Army-Navy coordination for the time being; after the conclusion of the NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA operations, should Naval forces be in excess, the Army will transfer the defences to the Navy, and withdraw.

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b. the Navy will have the responsibility for sea and air patrol and protection in the Port Moresby area with sea and air forces.

(Remainder omitted by the author)

BATTLE OF MIDWAY

An invasion of MIDWAY and strategic points in the Western ALIUTIANS was ordered on 5 May (1942). The Combined Fleet committed the majority of its decisive-battle forces to this operation. On the morning of 5 June, the Carrier Striking Force began its bombing attack on MIDWAY but received a first-strike attack by the American Carrier Task Force, losing the AKAGI, KAGA and SORYU. Having escaped damage, the HIRYU attacked the enemy, severely damaging the YORKTOWN (subsequently sunk by the I-168) but the HIRYU received a concentrated attack by American aircraft and sank. At midnight the 5th, the Cinc Combined Fleet ordered the invasion of MIDWAY suspended.

Cruiser Division 7, headed to bombard MIDWAY received orders at midnight to call off its operation and immediately reversed course, during which the MIKUMA and the MOGAMI collided, the MOGAMI receiving severe damage to its forward section. Afterward, while the MIKUMA was escorting the MOGAMI to the Eastward, it received an air attack by the American Carrier Task Force and was sunk. In the meantime the Northern Force occupied both ATTU and KISKA on 8 June, without opposition.

Thus the objectives of the Invasion of MIDWAY were not attained and in one blow we lost four of our main strength aircraft carriers. For details see the War Histories Compilation - "The Battle of MIDWAY".

CANCELLATION OF THE FS OPERATION

POSTPONEMENT OF THE FS OPERATION. The defeat in the Battle of MIDWAY had a very serious effect on subsequent direction of the war. On 6 June at 1640, the Chief of Staff, Combined Fleet sent a radio to the Head of the 1st Section ((PLANS and OPERATIONS)) of the Navy Section, Imp. Gen. HQ:

"REGRETFULLY WE HAD TO SUSPEND MIDWAY OPERATION. ^{BELIEVE THAT} TWO DASH THREE MONTHS WILL BE REQUIRED TO REACTIVATE PREPARATIONS (MAINLY TO READY OUR AIR POWER) AND THEREFORE POSTPONEMENT OF NEXT OPERATIONS NECESSARY.

WOULD APPRECIATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISPOSITION OF ARMY FORCES THAT WERE TO TAKE PART IN THESE VARIOUS OPERATIONS... (Remainder omitted by the author)

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This radio implied that the Headquarters Combined Fleet intended to reactivate the Midway invasion operation within the two or three months preparatory period and when those operations were completed to shift to the FS Operations

The Head of the 1st Section, Navy Section, Imp. Gen. H.Q. replied:

"IN VIEW OF THE CHANGES IN THE SITUATION, THE REDUCTION IN OUR CARRIER STRENGTH, ETC., THE MIDWAY OPERATION IS POSTPONED FOR THE TIME BEING. WHILE IT IS INTENDED THAT THE NEXT OPERATION BE SHIFTED TO THE NEW CALEDONIA-FIJI AREA, THIS WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME FOR PREPARATIONS, DESIRE THAT A DECISION AWAIT A STUDY OF THE DETAILS. FURTHERMORE, THE MIDWAY OPERATION IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING CANCELLED"

The next day, Imperial General Headquarters issued orders cancelling the Midway Operation and an Army-Navy Conference was held that afternoon regarding the direction of subsequent operations, and agreed that:

1. The Midway operations be temporarily suspended
2. To postpone the beginning of the FS Operations about 2 months,
3. To study whether the positions in the Aleutians would be permanently held.
4. To expedite a study of the possibility that the MO Operations (Invasion of Port Moresby) be an invasion by land routes

The next day, the 8th, the Chief of the Army General Staff and the Chief of Naval General Staff reported to the Throne the changes in operations; and the Chief of Naval General Staff reported that: at present it is not appropriate to proceed with the Midway operations, which are suspended for the time being; and due to the loss of naval air power, the FS operation is therefore postponed; that operation will depend primarily on the replenishment and getting ready of our naval air power, but as the present status of the Fleet is not clear, this postponement should be about 2 months.

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Our navy suffered losses of carrier air power in the Battle of the Coral Sea and now, one month later, lost four of our mainstay aircraft-carriers and all of their aircraft (285 planes). In addition to the

first line carriers, SHOKAKU and ZUIKAKU, were readying the ZUITO, JUNYO, HIYO and RYUJO but some of these had not received their complement of aircraft. Time would be necessary to rebuild the aircraft carrier force, some seven months would be required ^{just} to fill ^{the} material deficiencies in this force. At that time our aircraft production was low, and in order to fill material deficiencies in the carrier force, it would be necessary for the Shore Based Air Force to lose its replacement aircraft. Moreover, except for the SHOKAKU, ZUIKAKU and the RYUJO (although a regular carrier, was of small size), all the others were converted merchant ships and ^{since} a reconstructed carrier force would be, unavoidably, less powerful. ^(our Shore Based Air power would have to be relied on for the FS operations.) In addition, not only was there a shortage of aircraft for the entire navy, the readiness of the Shore Based Naval Air Force was incomplete in the South East area. In order that the Shore Based Air Force could be the 'main-spring' for the advance of the FS operations (as will be covered later), first, it was necessary to develop an airfield on Guadalcanal Island, opposite TULAGI, where a suitable location had been previously reported by Carrier Division 5.

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Meanwhile the 5th Air Attack Force (the tactical title of the 25th Air Flotilla of the Shore Based Air Force) had been carrying on a grueling air battle in the Rabaul and Port Moresby areas. To improve this situation and in order to carry out the FS operation as a link to next stage operations, the 2nd MO operation, then being planned, could not be postponed. Still, an invasion by sea with the naval forces presently available would be prohibitive. As a result of an Army-Navy conference regarding the navy's request for an invasion by land route, an agreement was made to make an on-the-spot investigation of its feasibility.

On 11 June Imperial General Headquarters issued the below directive to the CinC Combined Fleet to postpone the FS operation and to make an investigation into an invasion of PORT MORESBY by land.

NAVY SECTION, IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS DIRECTIVE NO 103.

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1. Commencement of the F operations and MO operations directed by Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters Orders number 98 and 99 will be postponed for the time being. A gist of the above operations will be furnished later.

2. The Combined Fleet will direct the 4th Fleet to collaborate with the Army in Eastern New Guinea in conducting a prompt investigation into operations to invade

PORT MORESBY by land and to accelerate this study, to cooperate with a part of the 17th Army's operations to occupy a position on the shores of the MAMBARE River."

In preparation for the FS Operations the Army ^{had} established the 17th Army on 18 May and proceeded with preparations to move forward to the designated assembly points. With the decision to postpone the FS Operations, the Army assembled those forces on 12 June, part in the BISMARCKS, the main force in the MINDANAO and PALAO areas to prepare for forthcoming operations, collaborating with the Navy to conduct an inquiry on the spot for an invasion of Port Moresby by land; the occupation of a zone along the MAMBARE River was directed as a part of that inquiry.

STUDIES OF THE NEXT STAGE, THE FS OPERATION

With the decision to postpone the F.S. Operation for about two months, the Navy Section of Imperial General Headquarters began anew a study of these operations; this resulted in the determination to use the SOLOMON ISLANDS (principally GUADALCANAL and TULAGI) as a base from which to occupy EFATE; using the latter as an intermediate base, to occupy NEW CALEDONIA, and deploy there one Air Flotilla ((of the Shore Based Air Force — hereafter "Base Air Force")) (the 2nd Air Flotilla, hereafter called 2nd Airplot) and within a week, occupy FIJI, and in addition, build a large air base at EFATE. When required, naval land based bombers would be moved up to forward bases and within a month SAMOA would be occupied.

On 12 June the Navy Section ("Imp. Gen. Hq" will hereafter be omitted) held a conference with the Staff of the 1st Air Fleet, which had returned to Japan from the MIDWAY operations, regarding re-building the carrier force. All of their aircraft had been lost ^(in the Battle of Midway) but a considerable number of their air crews had survived. In view of the current situation of aircraft production, the Navy Section predicted that in order to fill the aircraft allowances of the six ships (mentioned previously) by the end of July, a part of the replacement aircraft for the Base Air Force would have to

be used. As a result of these studies, the Navy Section on 13 June decided on the following policy for the direction of operations in all areas:

1. Operations in the South Pacific Area.

a. carry out operations about mid-September

b. expedite readying a land air base for the above operations in the TULAGI area (it appears feasible to ready it by mid-August); next, occupy a land air base in the New Hebrides area and move up our air force.

2. Operations in the North Pacific Area. (omitted by the author)

3. Operations in the Australian Area.

a. As soon as preparations are complete for the MD operation, expedite the invasion by land route, if possible; Depending on the situation when the invasion (of Port Moresby) has progressed half-way, a shift to invasion by sea will be made.

b. The primary objectives of our submarines will be enemy ships in the Australian area and stepped-up operations to destroy lines of communication between Australia and the United States.

4. Operations in the Indian Ocean (omitted by the author)

5. Operations in the Central Pacific Area.

a. Decisions with regard to ALEUTIAN and MIDWAY operations will await training results and preparations for special invasions and the future situation.

b. Devise plans to lure/decoy the enemy fleet to battle and when such opportunity arises, attack and destroy it.

6. Operations to destroy sea-lines-of-communications (omitted by the author but its gist emphasizes the Indian Ocean.)

The Combined Fleet returned to its anchorage at HASHIRAJIMA (from the MIDWAY operation) on 14 June. The Navy Section made arrangements with the Combined Fleet regarding policies for forthcoming operations and plans for changes in the organization of the Combined Fleet. These changes consisted of the establishment of an 8th Fleet with resultant changes in the 4th Fleet and the rebuilding of the carrier force in a newly established 3rd Fleet. By these consultations the HQ Combined Fleet completely agreed with a policy of Central Direction and studies were made of shifts in the fleet organization.

However the Headquarters Combined Fleet on 22 June reported its views on the next operations as follows:

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" Prudence is necessary in the methods of use of the carrier striking force. Primarily, it should be used against enemy surface forces, and until our Zero fighters are able to shoot down B-17s, that policy should be expressly adopted. Moreover, by the use of our Base Air Force I feel confident that we will be able to invade and occupy New Caledonia but I am not confident of the invasions of FIJI and SAMOA. These are the views of the Commander in Chief, Combined Fleet."

However the Navy Section did not agree with the views of the Headquarters Combined Fleet and both sides decided to re-study the matter.

Combined Fleet had the Base Air Force and others conduct studies of the FS Operation in which the Base Air Force was the main force, and on 30 June Headquarters Base Air Force forwarded to the Navy Section the results of its studies: " the crux of the difficulties in the next operation is that ~~the~~ Zero fighters cannot be used because of the ((extreme)) attack ranges (in air battles at the outbreak of war in the South West Area, fighters made 87% and land bombers made 13% of our successes) plus the fact that material and personnel are not sufficient. Even ~~wif~~ the material and personnel goals were fulfilled, the next operation would be formidable but with prospects for success; for this, the MO operation should precede the FS operation and the enemy must be deprived of the use of PORT MORESBY, at least during the FS operation. The order of these operations, under an air umbrella of the full might of the Base Air Force, should be EFATE, NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI and SAMOA."

There was no prospects for the stipulated material and personnel. The plan, essentially the one made by the Navy Section, was considered as generally agreed to.

FS OPERATIONS CALLED OFF

However the Headquarters Combined Fleet on 5 July, once again sent its views on the next operation; these were, bluntly speaking, a desire to cancel the FS operation: " The sequence of operations in the Headquarters Combined Fleet's proposed was, first of all, to advance the 3rd Fleet ((the Carrier Fleet now, not Carrier Force)) to the CANTON Island area under an umbrella of the Base Air Force from bases in the MARSHALLS, to decoy out the American Carrier Task Force and destroy it in a decisive battle, and thus facilitate the FS Operation. In the

meantime the invasion of Port Moresby by land, together with the readying of air bases at TULAGI and KIETA would put the FS operation within destructive range of our land based aircraft. In view of our present air strength and its replacement, I have no confidence of success in this operation and desire that it be cancelled. The above are the views of the Commander in Chief Combined Fleet. After studying these views of the Combined Fleet the Navy Section reached the conclusion that there was no nothing to do but cancel the FS Operation and on 7 July proposed to the Army Section cancellation of that operation, giving the following reasons:

"Reasons for the necessity, at this time, to cancel the FS Operation, for the time being.

1. In view of the battle lessons and decrease of our carrier strength in the Midway operation, the air battle during assaults on enemy bases will, in general, conform to those during the Southern Operations in the First Phase operations (Philippines, Malaya, Netherlands Indies), where our shore based air power attained air supremacy and destroyed enemy air power.

2. In the NEW CALEDONIA operation of the FS Operations, it will be necessary to crush enemy air power in the EFATE (700 miles from GUADALCANAL) and NEW CALEDONIA areas by our aircraft operating from a seaplane base on TULAGI and a land air base on GUADALCANAL (work started recently - expect completion at the end of August); the air base on EFATE must be occupied, our air forces moved up to that place and enemy air power on NEW CALEDONIA destroyed.

In the FIJI operation, it will be necessary to operate our air force from bases on EFATE and NEW CALEDONIA to attack FIJI. The NANDI base (on VITI LEVU Island of the FIJIs) is 550 miles from EFATE, while SUVA is about 600 miles. Similarly for the SAMOA operation - TUTUILA is about 650-700 miles from FIJI bases.

3. In the Southern Operations, our naval air force fighters inflicted 87% of the enemy's air losses but except for the surprise attacks on the outset of the war, enemy bases have been taken, one after another, generally within 300 miles of our bases. While we had planned to use our fighter aircraft to the maximum in the FS operations, they can be used only against New Caledonia using EFATE as their base and in all the other operations, land based bombers and flying boats will have to be used, even then at extreme attack ^{range}.

4. In view of the above and past war lessons, there is little assurance of a thoroughly destructive air campaign with land based bombers; moreover it would require a force vastly superior to that of the enemy. Such air operations, even powerful daylight attacks will involve considerable losses from enemy fighters and great results are not

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probable in night attacks. In summary, those operations would require a considerable superiority in air power and, by their nature, involve losses that would be quite substantial.

5. Consideration has been given to using carrier based air power to offset the above disadvantages of land based air but up until now there has been little actual intelligence on the enemy situation in the areas of operations except that it is being strengthened with each passing day; while a thorough reconnaissance is necessary beforehand, there is no actual, effective means of such reconnaissance; if (an) aircraft carrier(s) be used for that purpose, there are no suitable bases for the aircraft to provide cover for the carrier(s); On the other hand, since the sea lanes are extremely complicated, and as Hydrographic surveys of the areas are incomplete, operations there are restricted and involve some degree of danger, and as an extremely serious situation would arise in case of failure, the use of (an) aircraft carrier(s) must be avoided, if possible.

6. At present the air battle in the New Guinea area is entirely a battle of attrition. Since the beginning of July, in particular, the enemy has assembled a rather strong air force at Port Moresby (estimated at 40 or more bombers) with which vigorous counter-attacks have been made on us resulting in our losses having a gradual increase. It is, of course, necessary to overcome all obstacles and speedily capture Port Moresby, but even after it is occupied, we would not be able to shift our air forces there to some other place and whatever losses there are, we must continue to keep them to the lowest degree possible.

Moreover, as will be related later, replacement of attrition is practically at a stand-still and is lessening each day; Enemy bombers, B-17s and B-26s, have been engaged and attacked by a good number of our present Zero fighters until the former have expended their bombs, without our fighters being able to shoot them down. Because of this, there has recently been such tragic actions as suicidally ramming enemy bombers to bring them down. Operations units on-the-spot have reached the opinion that under such conditions, F operations and the like are inconceivable.

7. In the MIDWAY operation and in the Battle of the Coral Sea, the loss of shipboard type aircraft in both the Carrier force and the Base air force

totalled some 400 aircraft. As a result of several studies regarding their replacement and reorganization it appears that in our forecasts until now, we had estimated that although our aircraft production was small and increasing, it would replace losses with even some excess, but due to the above large losses we are faced with the fact that, contrary to expectations, our aircraft production appears to be completely stalemated with little prospect of improvement.

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Moreover, the material status of the Base Air Force during the present operations ^{is shown} by its aircraft allowances as of the end of June: fighters - 54%, land based bombers - 75%, flying boats - 80%; and at a time when we fear losses will increase and when there are almost no prospects for their replacements, a trend toward a worsening of the situation.

8. The situation regarding production of naval aircraft is such that monthly production barely compensated for losses, with ^{and} a ^(disappointing) fighter production of less than 90 per month, this fighter production must be viewed most seriously. At present when our war potential is low and there is almost no expectation for recovery of our operational strength, there is the apprehension that moving our lines of operation further forward will hinder a continuation of the war henceforth. In addition, there are no positive goals for increases in aircraft production, therefore the situation requires us to devise some sort of unusual measures

9. On the other hand, in the New Guinea and Port Darwin areas we continually strike telling blows on the enemy but his replacements are furnished rapidly, his reinforcements coming up, one after another, battling us without let up. In contrast to our gradual loss in military power and lessened fighting capability, the enemy is always able to exert a sizeable military force; our fighter aircraft do not attain full results in attacking enemy bombers - we should take advantage of our power to make repeated, vigorous counter-attacks. The situation being as it is, the enemy's military power ^{will} gradually increasing, creates a good possibility of our being overwhelmed in aerial warfare by sheer ^{numbers}.

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10. All the above circumstances and, to say the least, our present condition of aircraft production suggest that we should cancel the F operation at this time and devise measures to counteract, as much as possible, the war of attrition, adopt an effective means of shooting down enemy bombers, and meanwhile look into all means of rapidly increasing our aircraft production. As soon as these aims are met, it will be appropriate to commence operations." The Army Section also agreed with these views and on 11 July, Imperial

General Headquarters issued orders cancelling the FS Operation.

II DIRECTION OF OPERATIONS AFTER THE CANCELLATION OF THE FS OPERATION

Navy General Staff's Policy for Direction of Operations.

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 ORGANIZATION OF THE 8th FLEET (omitted as redundant)

The Wartime Fleet Organization was revised on 14 July (1942). The main changes were the newly-established 3rd Fleet and 8th Fleets. Previously the 1st Air Fleet had been the nucleus of the Carrier Striking Force, to which ships from other fleets had been assigned by modification of the Combined Fleet's organization but it was now dissolved and carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers organized into a new 3rd Fleet which would be made into a Carrier Striking Force, the first evolution in the art of war against sea-air power. The 8th Fleet was organized to protect the South East Area, its organization being: 8th FLEET

Flagship - (CA) CHOKAI

Crudiv 18 - (OCL) TENRYU, (OCL) TATSUTA

Subron 7 - (AS) JINGEI

Subdiv 13 I-121, 122, 123

Subdiv 21 Ro 33, 34.

7th Base Force: SC 23, 32; 85th Communication Unit; 85th Submarine Base

8th Base Force: M.S. 20, 21; SC Div. 21, SC Div. 31, SC Div. 56; Gunboat Div. 5;

81st, 82nd and 84th Guard Divisions; 8th Submarine Base; 8th Communication Group.

Attached Units: TSUGARU, Desdiv 30 (MUTSUKI, YAYOI, MOCHIZUKI, UZUKI).

Kure 3rd Special Landing Force, Sasebo 5th Spec. Landing Force

(XAYS) Kiyokawa Maru; 2nd Air Squadron; 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th Airfield & Base Construction Units

The South East Areas and the Inner South Seas area (Maudates area) had been, until now, the responsibility of the 4th Fleet; would hereafter, due to the expansion of the war into the South East Area, that theater of war will be divided, the Inner South Seas to remain the responsibility of the 4th Fleet, the Outer South Seas (the South East Area) to become the responsibility of the 8th Fleet. This was set forth in:

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NAVY SECTION IHP, GEN. HQ. ORDER #112

① THE FOURTH FLEET HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS ((THE MANDATED ISLANDS)) AND THEIR EASTERN SEA ZONE, THE DEFENCE OF THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS (INCLUDING THE GILBERTS), AS WELL AS THE PROTECTION OF SEA LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS ^{INCLUDING} OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND THE HOME ISLANDS.

② THE EIGHTH FLEET HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY, MAINLY FOR OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH ^{EAST} AREA, FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF DISORDERS IN EASTERN NEW GUINEA AND FOR THE DEFENCE OF THAT AREA, INCLUDING OCCUPIED ZONES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AREA EAST OF THERE.

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The Cinc Combined Fleet on 12 July ordered, effective 14 July, the following changes in the Wartime Organization as follows: (covering only the South East Area)

COMBINED FLEET RADIO ORDER #181 (gist)

THE FOLLOWING CHANGES IN THE SECOND PERIOD ORGANIZATION OF COMBINED FLEET SECRET ORDER #12 ARE EFFECTIVE 14 JULY, PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIRD PERIOD OPERATIONS (WILL BE GIVEN BY LATER ORDER), IN ORDER: ^{NAME}

NAME OF FORCE	FORCE COMMANDER	STRENGTH	TASKS
7. "BASE AIR FORCE"	Cinc 11 th Air Fleet	2 nd Air Flotilla of the 11 th Air Fleet	Air Warfare on East and SE Fronts
8. "INNER SOUTH SEAS FORCE"	Cinc 4 th Fleet	4 th Fleet	Occupy ocean and Nauru Islands, make ready an air base on Ocean Island, protect and patrol area of responsibility Conduct studies of the NK (New Caledonia) and F (Fiji) ^{operations}
9. "OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE"	Cinc 8 th Fleet	8 th Fleet (KSS a part)	

12. NOTE: DELINEATION OF THE RESPECTIVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN THE FOURTH FLEET AND THE EIGHTH FLEET WILL BE BY A LINE PASSING THROUGH THE EQUATOR AT 160° EAST LONGITUDE AND BEARING 285° (NOTE: 8th FLEET War reports list this line as bearing 280°).

(a) WHEN THE ENEMY COMES TO ATTACK THE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 4TH FLEET OR THE 8TH FLEET, THE CINC 11TH AIR FLEET WILL EXERCISE UNITY OF COMMAND OVER THE 4TH FLEET, 8TH FLEET AND 6TH FLEET ^(SUBMARINES)

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(b) THE CINC 4TH FLEET WILL CONTINUE IN COMMAND OF 8TH FLEET UNITS ON THE SPOT UNTIL THE CINC 8TH FLEET ARRIVES IN THAT AREA.

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III OPERATIONS TO SOLIDIFY AIR BASES IN THE SE AREA (SN OPERATIONS)

READYING AN AIRBASE ON GUADALCANAL

After the battle of MIDWAY, work was started (as a part of the FS Operation) on building an airfield on Guadalcanal as an advance base for the Base Air Force. The idea for an air base there originated with Commander YOKOHAMA Air when his unit moved up to TULAGI for the MO Operations and level land was noted on the eastern part of Guadalcanal, suitable for an airfield and so reported to Commander 25th Air Flotilla, his senior. From Tulagi, searches were flown by flying-boats ("patrol-planes") after its occupation on 3 May, covering the entire SORAL SEA, thus becoming the Southernmost base of search operations in the South East Area. Despite its good search and patrol capability, its potential for attack missions was much less than a land base for bombers since it required so much time to load bombs or torpedoes on a flying boat. The Tulagi base was attacked by ^(about 12) enemy aircraft the night of 29 May, emphasizing the need for a land base for air-defence from which fighters could be sent up.

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HOPES OF SOLIDIFYING SOUTH EAST AREA AIR BASES

At the time the FS Operations were cancelled, it was estimated that following the Battle of Midway, America would continue sending military reinforcements to AUSTRALIA, set up new air bases in the NEW HEBRIDES, NEW CALEDONIA Islands to strengthen his air power in that area, and would enlarge American facilities at the Port Moresby bases; As American military strength in Australia increased, reinforcements would move up from Australia to New Guinea, and attacks by Allied and American air forces would continue as the main emphasis in that area.

At that time our land air bases in the South East Area consisted of RABAU WEST, RABAU EAST, LAF, SURUMI and KAVIENG but the latter two were practically never used; moreover these three principal airbases were not fully equipped nor adequate to support air warfare operations, which ~~was~~ increasing in intensity, involving more and more bomb damage to the

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Bases and to our aircraft there. Also, in spite of committing the entire 5th Air Attack Force ((tactical title of the 25th Air Flotilla of the Base Air Force)) in the MO operations with the hopes of putting an end to aerial attrition warfare, these results could not be obtained due to inadequate air strength and inadequate base facilities. During the battle of the Coral Sea on 8 May, the enemy force had been sighted and contact was being maintained ((for an attack to follow)), the airfield could not be used due to a cloudburst and the

opportunity to attack was lost.

SN OPERATIONS PLAN

In the middle of June after the Midway operation had been called off and the FS operation postponed, CinC Combined Fleet ordered that the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th Construction Units, then attached to the South Seas Force, to expedite making ready the airfields in the South East area, beginning with one on GUADALCANAL Island. At the same time the Base Air Force was directed to cooperate with the South Seas Force in a search for suitable sites for air bases in the South East area; the Submarine Force was also to cooperate with the South Seas Force and to destroy sea lines of communications in the South Pacific Ocean area. South Seas Force assigned the "cover-name" - "SN Operations" to operations to acquire and construct air bases in the Solomons and East New Guinea areas

On 17 June the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet sent a message stating that in view of the next operations, it was desired that the airfield on GUADALCANAL Island be completed by early August and that an intermediate land base for aircraft was necessary between RABAU and GUADALCANAL and that the base at KIETA be studied.

KIETA was a small airfield on the west coast of BOUGAINVILLE, 240 miles from RABAU and 330 miles from GUADALCANAL, that we had occupied in March. A 5th Air Attack Force reconnaissance plane photographed both KIETA and BUKA airfields reporting the results but that Headquarters failed to realize the absolute necessity for such an intermediate base, having their attention caught by the planned subsequent advances from GUADALCANAL.

South Seas force's employment schedule for Construction Units was:

Airfield	Construction Unit
RABAU EAST (plus connecting road)	7 th Construction Unit, Detachment from 4 th Construction Bureau, (TRUCK) and natives.
RABAU WEST	10 th Construction Unit
LAE	14 th " "
KAVIENG	12 th " "

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AIRFIELD	CONSTRUCTION UNIT(S)
TULAGI	parts of 13 th and 14 th Construction Units.
GUADALCANAL	11 th Construction Unit, majority of 13 th Construction Unit, part of 4 th Construction Bureau

Schedules:

First-stage GUADALCANAL CONSTRUCTION - mid-August: capability for 27 fighters and 27 land bombers

Second-stage " " - early September: capability for 45 fighters and 60 land bombers

KAVIENG: mid-August - facilities to handle one squadron of Fighters and one Squadron of Land Bombers

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The first echelon of Naval Landing Force and from the Construction Unit moved up to GUADALCANAL in mid-June to secure and ready the area for the rest of the Construction Units which left Truk the latter part of June escorted by destroyers of Desron 6 with Crudiv 6 and Crudiv 18 as distant support.

The LAF Construction Unit left Truk the latter part of June under escort of Desdiv 30.

The Headquarters of the 4th Fleet, as a result of their experiences during the occupation of LAE and SALAMUA and in the Battle of the Coral Sea, were apprehensive over an attack by an American Carrier Task Force during the movement of the Construction Units to Guadalcanal, as reflected by this dispatch of 25 June to Combined Fleet requesting reinforcements:

THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION UNITS TO GUADALCANAL ISLAND IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF AIR BASES IN THE R AREA INVOLVES QUITE LARGE AMOUNTS OF CARGO, THE EXPEDITIOUS DISCHARGE OF WHICH WILL REQUIRE REMAINING SEVERAL DAYS AT THE ANCHORAGE. EVEN UNLOADING TWO SHIPS AT A TIME REQUIRES TWO DAYS FOR EACH TWO SHIPS, AND IN VIEW OF THAT PLACE'S LOCATION, ENEMY ATTACKS IN THE PAST AND RECENT HIGH LEVEL OF ENEMY ACTIVITY SUGGESTS SOME SORT OF OFFENSIVE ACTION IN THE R-AREA. ESTIMATE ENEMY WILL INEVITABLY ATTACK THE AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION SITE, NOT ONLY BY SHORE BASED AIRFORCES BUT ALSO BY CARRIER TASK FORCE RAIDS. ALTHOUGH THIS COMMAND HAS CRUDIV 6 CRUDIV 18 AND DESRON 6, MOST OF THE LATTERS DESTROYERS ARE ON ESCORT AND GUARD ASSIGNMENTS, IT IS REQUESTED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE GIVEN PROMPT CONSIDERATION IN ORDER TO PROMPTLY COMPLETE THIS BASE WITH WHICH TO DESTROY THE ENEMY AT THE TIME OF HIS ATTACK, IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE BASE AIR FORCE. WITH THE DISPATCH OF REINFORCEMENTS WOULD LIKE TO PROCEED WITH THE OCEAN AND NAUVA OPERATIONS:

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(A) A POWERFUL FORCE INCLUDING AIRCRAFT CARRIERS SECRETLY OPERATE IN THE R-AREA FROM EARLY JULY UNTIL EARLY AUGUST TO CONTACT AND DESTROY THE ENEMY

(B) SUBSEQUENT TO EARLY JULY A SUBMARINE FORCE BE DEPLOYED AND PATROL THE AREA CENTERED ON GUADALCANAL ALONG THE APPROACH AREAS OF ENEMY ATTACKS. (IT IS DESIRED THAT 6TH FLEET ((SUBMARINES)) EXPEDITE FURNISHING A UNIT TO REPLACE SUBRON 7 WHICH IS UNABLE TO MEET THE ABOVE REQUIREMENT)

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On 22 June the 5th Air Attack Force ordered YOKOHAMA AIR ((flying boats and float planes)) to move apart of his forces to TULAGI ^{and} in conjunction with the airfield construction on Guadalcanal, and to fly local air patrols, searches of the F sector and reconnaissance of ^{the} SANTA CRUZ, New Hebrides and other islands seeking suitable sites for land and sea air bases. Half of the flying boats and most of the Type 2 float-fighters (Zero fighter fitted with floats) moved up to Tulagi around July 1st, the latter flying air patrols over the construction unit's convoy enroute, and after arrival during the construction work on the airfield.

Similar protection was also provided for the Construction Unit that left for RABAUZ for LAE at about the same time.

On 29 June Cmc 6th Fleet ((Comdr. Submarine Fleet)) ordered Subron 3 to depart Kwajalein on 10 July to cooperate in SN operations by attacks on enemy lines of communications and destruction of enemy ships in the New-Caledonia, Fiji, Samoa, Australian east and south coastal areas, and if conditions so indicated - the New Zealand area to prevent reinforcement of enemy bases during ^{air} base construction by our South Seas Force.

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SN OPERATIONS FORCES MOVE UP TO GUADALCANAL AND LAE

The advance echelon of Construction and Landing Force personnel for Guadalcanal, in the KINRYU Maru ((9309 tons)) arrived there 1 July escorted by the DD MUTSUKI.

(381) The LAE force, KINAI Maru ((8360 tons)) and the KENYO Maru ((6486 tons)) escorted by Comdesdir 30 arrived at LAE, also by 1 July.

(389) The main Guadalcanal convoy, transports AZUMASAN Maru ((7622 tons)), AZUMA Maru ((6645 tons)), HOKURIKU Maru ((8359 tons)) and KOTOKU Maru ((6701 tons)),

CONDENSED - GIST

escorted by Comdiv 6 in YUBARI (CL), DD UZUKI and Sub Chaser Division 21 (S.C. 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, and 18), left TRUK 29 June, scheduled to arrive Lunga Roads, Guadalcanal, at 1500 July 4th. Crudiv 6 and Crudiv 18 left Truk 1005 the 31st in support of this operation.

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However, at 0935 the 4th a radio from a 4th Air Attack Force ((24th Air Flotilla in the Marshalls)) search plane reported: "SIGHTED WHAT APPEARS TO BE A SHIP'S SILHOUETTE BEARING 200° 300 MILES FROM JALUIT," followed by "ENEMY TASK FORCE COMPOSITION OF ONE AIRCRAFT CARRIER TWO CRUISERS. COURSE 90° SPEED 16 KNOTS". On the receipt of this report, Commander 5th Air Attack Force recalled to RABAU the Zero fighters then moving up to LAE and ordered his entire land based bomber force to load torpedoes and stand by to attack the American Task Force ^{early} the next morning.

Since early June, changes had been noted in ^{allied} communications activity in the South Pacific area; both the Navy Section and Headquarters Combined Fleet, ^{both} estimating that the allies had some plan of operations for the South East area, had issued alert warnings, one after the other, beginning 26 June. Comdr. South Seas Force believed that the reported enemy carrier task force to indicate an attack on his Guadalcanal force and radioed: "CEASE UNLOADING - ALL SHIPS RETIRE ABOUT 300 MILES FROM GUADALCANAL". That force had just arrived off SAVO Island but immediately reversed course and headed for Shortland Island (S.E. tip of BOUAINVILLE I.). At 2100 that evening a report was received from the 4th Air Attack Force stating that the previous reports of sighting the enemy carrier task force were in error; after refuelling the screen vessels at KIETA, course was reversed at 1345 the 5th to head for GUADALCANAL. When west of SAVO Island at 0947 the 6th, the YUBARI sighted a submarine periscope and the destroyer and subchasers made a coordinated attack without results. Previously, 21 June, an allied submarine had torpedoed ^(and sank) the KEI-10 Maru ((2626 tons, a converted Gunboat)) which was rushing aviation gasoline to TULAGI. The Guadalcanal force finally anchored off LUNGA ROADS at 1330 the 6th Shortly after, at 1440 a B-24 bombed the anchorage area but no damage was caused; 6 Zero float-fighters, which had moved up to TULAGI from SHORTLAND, pursued the B-24 but could not make contact, the B-24 being about 20 knots faster than the Type 2 fighters. - - - - -

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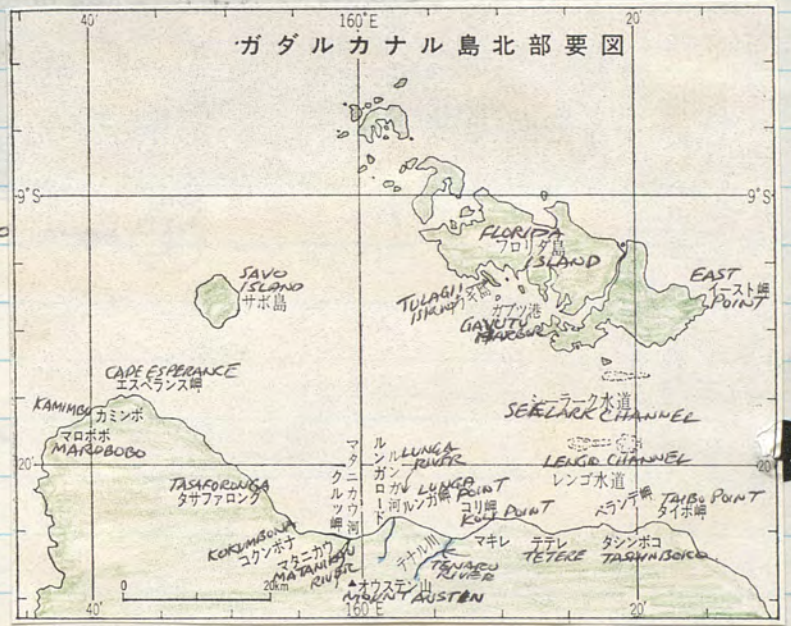
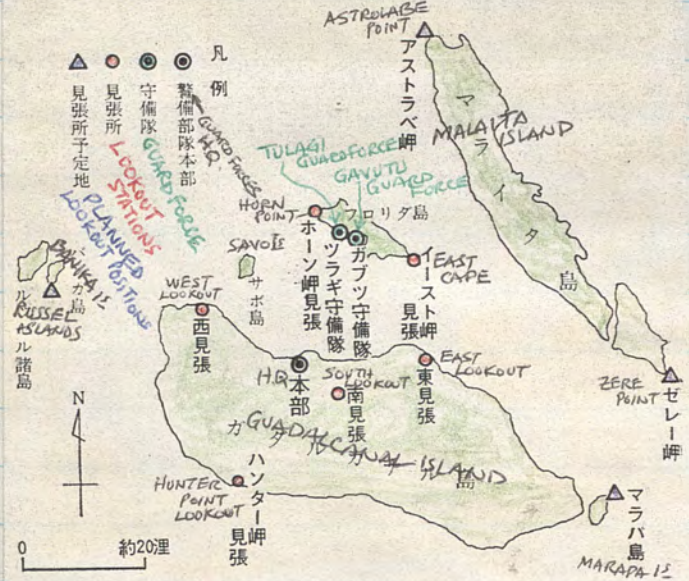
AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION

As mentioned previously, an "Outer South Seas Force" was established on 14 July and therefore the SN Operations were thereupon transferred from the "South Seas Force", now the

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of their defense network, several lookout stations had been set up on Guadalcanal and Florida Islands and others were to be installed on MALAITA Island (2), on BANAIKA Island⁽¹⁾ in the RUSSEL Islands, and on MARARA Island (1) off the South East tip of Guadalcanal.

「ガダルカナル」島警備部隊見張所略図 (昭和十七年七月十六日現在)



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--- During this time, large type enemy planes made appearances in steadily increasing numbers and the results of interceptions by our float-fighters were a disappointment; in his report giving a scheduled date of completion, Captain MANZEN had requested that zero fighters be dispatched. In the meantime, the Base Air Force, on 13 June had ordered a squadron of fighters of the 6th Air Squadron to move into Guadalcanal on 16 August. ---

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--- KAVIENG AIR BASE CONSTRUCTION. The 12th C.U. (about 1050 men) under the command of Lt. Cdr. Iwao IMAMURA, which had been organized in Kure in May and took part in the MIDWAY OPERATION, was designated to work on the KAVIENG Air base and received a reinforcement of about 800 men from the 4th Construction Bureau (at TRUK; this Bureau was later on renamed the "4th FACILITIES BUREAU"). As a result of their efforts, land bombers could land and take off from KAVIENG on 6 August and by 15 August the base was ready to accommodate, if needed, the 6th Air Attack Force ((25th Air Flotilla)). From mid-to-late August that Headquarters

And the MISAWA Air Group moved into KAVIENG, the remainder of that force arriving in early September

SITUATION AT LAE

Most of the 14th CU and part of the Saseb's 5th Special Landing Force had arrived at LAE on 1 July but the previous day, Commander Base Air Force had sent the following radio message to Comdr South Seas Force requesting that the KIETA air base be made ready instead:

RELATIVE TO COMBINED FLEET SECRET RADIO # 141 (NOTE: this message ^{#141} was from the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet requesting a study of KIETA air base problems) From Comdr Base Air Force; To: Comdr South Seas Force; "REFERENCE COMBINED FLEET SECRET RADIO #141. SINCE THERE IS AN URGENT REQUIREMENT TO HAVE THE KIETA AIRFIELD QUICKLY ^{MADE} CAPABLE FOR TYPE-1 ("BETTY") LAND BOMBERS AND AS THERE IS NO OBJECTION TO POSTPONING WORK AT LAE, REQUEST 14TH CONSTRUCTION UNIT BE SIFTED TO KIETA"

The unloading of the 14th C.U. was stopped and it left that night for RABAU. For this reason the making ready and improvements to the LAE air base were delayed.

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EXAMINATION OF THE KIETA BASE

At the same time that Comdr Base Air Force asked that the 14th C.U. be used at KIETA, he also directed the 5th Air Attack Force promptly to conduct a study of the KIETA base. A study group from 5th Air Attack Force, 14th C.U. and the 8th Base Force (Rabaul) left Rabaul by flying boat on 8 July for an on-the-spot examination. That airfield had not been used since the Australians had constructed it in 1940; its runway's axis was 135°, having a small river and marshland on its north and south sides; moreover, mountain ranges of 1-2000 meters high lay to the north and to the west of the runway; also, unless the road to the airfield from the village of KIETA were widened and improved, movement of construction materials would be a big problem. All of these facts were radioed to Comdr 5th Air Attack Force that night at 2300, with the opinion that KIETA was entirely unsuitable for an air base since even if reconstructed, it would still be almost surrounded by obstacles, would require drainage and would be practically useless as an emergency landing field for land bombers as it lacked space for runway expansion; In addition, there does not appear to be any suitable place on Bougainville Island to construct an air base.

With these facts before him, the Chief of Staff Base Air Force informed the

Chief of Staff Combined Fleet of the facts:

CONDITION OF KIETA BASE IS AS SET FORTH IN 25 AIR FLOTILLA'S SECRET RADIO NO. 792, EVEN IF WORK BE STARTED NOW ON KIETA, ITS COMPLETION WOULD BE LATER THAN GUADALCANAL BASE, AND THE ADVANTAGES OF ITS USE WOULD BE SMALL WHEN GUADALCANAL BASE HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

THEREFORE REQUEST CONSTRUCTION OF KIETA BASE BE GIVEN UP.

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Thus the HQ COMBINED FLEET'S plan of mid-June to make ready the Kieta airfield as an intermediate base between Rabaul and Guadalcanal was dropped, for this reason, as will be covered later, when Allied forces counter-attacked by landing on GUADALCANAL, our Base Air Force was forced to operate at a great disadvantage since there was no intermediate base between its main base and the enemy's position.

RABAU AREA

The 10th CV, which was already in the RABAU area, was put to work on RABAU West (VUNAKINAU); it was gradually up-graded and improved but never fully completed due to ^{the} increasing intensity of enemy air attacks and the nature of the soil. A new road from RABAU to the airfield was completed by the 8th Base Force using native labor, on 26 July

TULAGI SEAPLANE BASE

Material is not available on this work but facilities for defence, communications and operations were enlarged and strengthened to meet TULAGI'S role as an advanced air base (seaplanes)

SEARCH FOR SUITABLE AIRBASE SITES

Pursuant to (previously mentioned) orders from Comdr. Base Air Force, to look for suitable land and seaplane, air base sites in the SANTA CRUZ - NEW HEBRIDES Island areas, a flying boat left TULAGI on 30 June, with an Army Staff officer aboard as an extra observer. As a result they saw that a large airfield had already been established on EFATE Island, with large type aircraft parked on the field, and several ships at anchor at ESPIRITO SANTO. After calling off work on KIETA airfield, Comdr. Base Air Force ordered the 4th and 5th Air Attack Forces to reconnoiter NAURU and OCEAN Islands, and BUKA and the LOUISIADÉ Archipelago, respectively, for suitable airfield sites.

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While the existence of a small airfield on BUKA Island was well known, being

only some 150 miles from Rabaul it was considered to have little tactical value by the Headquarters of 25th Air Flotilla; a study of BUKA airfield was commenced on 26 July.

The air battles that developed between RABAU and GUADALCANAL after the allied counter attack began with their landings there, were entirely unanticipated and the matter of an intermediate air base (made ready afterwards) did not become a problem. Thus work did not, at that time, begin on BUKA. The reasons behind the 11th Air Fleet's orders to study BUKA are not known but it appears that there were no directives to expedite that work,

On July 15th and 17th, 3 land bombers were used to make an aerial study of the LOUISIADÉ Archipelago and the D'ENTRE CASTEAUX Islands, with the resulting in a report that suitable sites for airfields capable of handling 50 land bombers had been seen on KIRIWINA I^s, MURUA ((WOODLARK)) I^s, GOODENOUGH I^s and TAGULA Island.

IV. BEGINNING OF OPERATIONS TO INVADE PORT MORESBY BY LAND ROUTE

THE "RI" STUDY OPERATION ((RI) for "RIKU"^(陸) "Land" 陸, for "Land Route" - "RIKURO" 陸路))

It was previously stated that on 11 June Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters, directed CinC Combined Fleet to have the 4th Fleet cooperate with the Army in carrying out an examination and study of an operations route via land for an invasion of Port Moresby. To do this, it is necessary to cross over the 2-4000 meter OWEN STANLEY Mountain range of Eastern New Guinea, then descend to the rear of the objective. It was not known whether such a road existed or not, nor was the topography of area known. After the postponement of the First MORESBY invasion, the Army's South Seas Detachment and the 8th Base Force ((navy)) began to study documents and natives' stories of the existence of a road to Port Moresby. At first they were seeking a land supply route to use after the completion of the Second "MO" operation. They concluded that such a route existed, its capacity unknown and reported this to Navy Section via the 8th Base Force.

AIR RECONNAISSANCE OF A LAND INVASION ROUTE (See sketch, next page)

The same day, June 11th, that the Navy Section directed CinC Combined Fleet to carry out the "RI" Study operations, the Head of the 1st Bureau (operations) of the Navy Section requested South Seas Force and Base Air Force secretly to photograph the shores and any roads along the MAMBARE and KUMUSHI Rivers in connection with studies of roads for an invasion of Port Moresby by land; also the topographic map section from the Navy

Hydrographic office was ordered to RABAU.

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The 5th Air Attack Force took aerial photography of the roads and river front areas in the vicinity of the MARKHAM river on June 20 and active topographic map making began on the 28th. There being four zones (as follows) where roads from the eastern coast of New Guinea, to Port Moresby were possible, these studies were begun:

1. From Morobe to Kokoda to Port Moresby
2. From the MAMBARE River to Kokoda to Port Moresby
3. From BUNA to KOKODA to Port Moresby
4. From Morobe to "ARIPA-TO Peak" to Port Moresby

Two Type 2 land reconnaissance aircraft took off from LAE, the 28th to cover mainly the northern coastal area; a road, believed useable by motor vehicles, was revealed between BUNA and KOKODA and roads were observed to lead inland for about 15 miles in other places but no roads led to the west or to the south. On 30 June one land reconnaissance plane, covered by 4 Zeros reconnoitered the above area and the results were reported as follows:

1. A ROAD, 2-3 METERS WIDE, RUNS ALONG THE MAMBARE AND KUMUSHI RIVERS INLAND FOR ABOUT 5 MILES; IT THEN LEADS INLAND FOR ABOUT 5 MILES AFTER WHICH IT BECOMES 1 METER IN WIDTH FOR 10 MILES, RUNNING INTO A DENSE JUNGLE WHERE NO ROAD IS VISIBLE.

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2. A ROAD BETWEEN BUNA AND KOKODA IS USEABLE BY MOTOR VEHICLES; IT CROSSES THE KUMUSHI RIVER BY A BRIDGE EAST OF "PABAKI"; THE MAIN PART OF THE ROAD IS IN A VALLEY ON GENERALLY FLAT TERRAIN

3. AN OBVIOUS ROAD WAS OBSERVED THREADING ITS WAY HALF-WAY UP THE SIDE OF A PRECIPITOUS RAVINE FROM KOKODA TO THE EAST SIDE OF "BOGU" IN THE VICINITY OF "FUADA" (NOTE: the mountainous area to the north of "ISURABA"). SOME BELIEVE TO BE PASSABLE BY MOTOR VEHICLES BUT OTHERS BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE A PROBLEM. THIS ROAD COMES OUT AT THE SUMMIT IN THE VICINITY OF "FUADA", RUNS ALONG THE "WAUMEKUBI-KU" AND "NOVA" RIVERS (BELIEVED TO BE UPPER REACHES OF THE BROWN RIVER WHICH FLOWS INTO THE GULF OF PAPUA) BUT CLOUDS PREVENTED COVERAGE OF ITS WESTERN PART

BUT, GENERALLY SPEAKING, IT IS BELIEVED TO PROCEED FROM THERE TO PORT MORESBY AND TO BE USEABLE BY MOTOR VEHICLES.

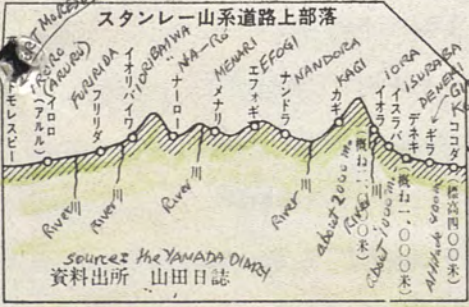
4. OTHER THAN THE ABOVE, THERE ARE NO OBVIOUS ROADS

5. INTEND TO BEGIN MAKING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS OF THE ABOVE ROADS FROM PHOTOS WITHIN 2-3 DAYS.

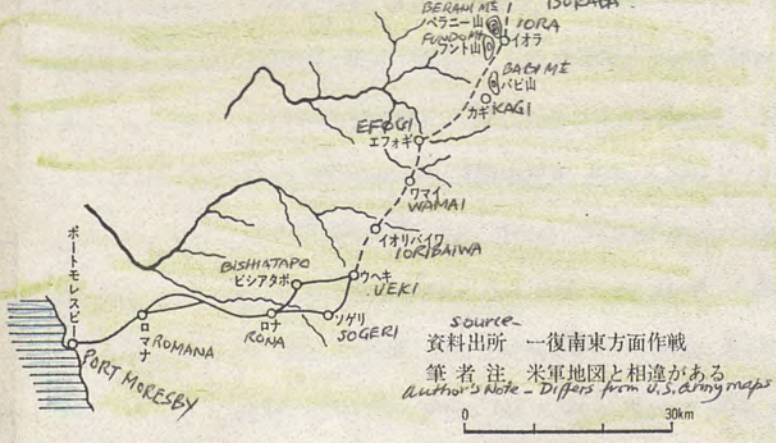
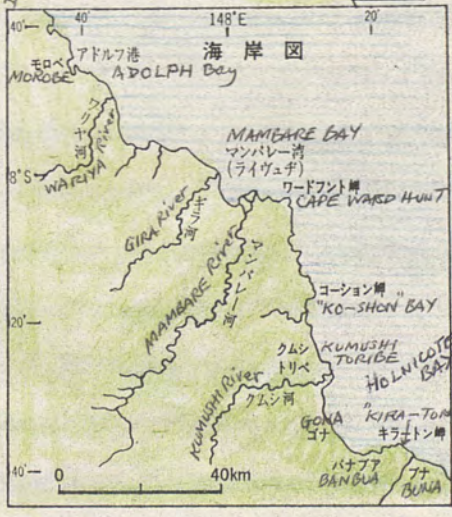
On 3 July air reconnaissance was concentrated on the BUNA-KOKODA area with the result that the bridge in the ravine south west of Kokoda was determined to be a wooden structure, 1.5 meters wide, but impassable by a truck but the study, until now, indicated that an invasion by land route was feasible. During this reconnaissance of the 3rd, the enemy issued air-raid warnings and intercepted with 13 fighters. This caused Comdr. 5th Air Attack Force to send the following message

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Sketch map
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CROSS-SECTION OF THE HIGHER ELEVATION - ROAD ACROSS THE OWEN STANLEY MOUNTAIN RANGE



SKETCH MAP OF THE BUNA-PORT MORESBY ROAD
ブナ-ポートモレスビー道路略図



KOKODA SOME
F THE BRIDGE
WARNINGS DURING
1 FIGHTERS BETWEEN
UD FROM CANOES
CED MORESBY.
TO CARRY OUT
BUNA AND
CESSARY TO
ROADS ARE ALL
graphic reconnaissance
H1 RIVER on the 9th
A and the KUMUSHI
e as observers.

Army Sector, Imperial General Headquarters had directed that a part of the 17th Army occupy a zone along the MAMBARE River in order to study the RI operation. Since small ships could ascend that river from its mouth for some 40 miles, it was believed that they could depend on the MAMBARE River for transportation. However, in view of the use of a road, as related above, it was decided to move a head with a bridgehead at BUNA.

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FPREPARATIONS BY THE SOUTH SEAS FORCE

DIRECTION OF OPERATIONS The Headquarters 4th Fleet met with the 17th Army and Base Air Force on 8 July to work out arrangements for the "R1 Study Operations" and drew up a "17th Army, 4th Fleet, 11th Air Fleet agreement concerning the R1 Study Operations". Its gist was that in late July an advance echelon, principally engineer troops, escorted by the 4th Fleet, would land at BUNA to begin a study of roads to be used for operations; the navy would land a Special Landing Force to secure the bridgehead and would also use a Construction Unit for supplementary construction of the operations road.

On 11 July Comdr. South Seas Force revised the South Seas organization, forming a "East New Guinea Force" centered in Crudiv 18 ((OCLC TENRYU & TATSUTA)) and directed it to carry out the "R1" study operation with the cooperation and support of the Base Air Force, the Support Force ((Crudiv 6)) and the R area force. In the meantime ^(on 8 July) he had also ordered Crudiv 18, then operating in the REKATA Bay area in the SN. operation, to return to RABAUZ and prepare for the "R1" study operation.

Thus the direction of the on-the-spot study for the R1 operations was initially Commander South Seas Force's but after the 8th Fleet was established by Combined Fleet's order on 14 July, the latter then took over direction of these operations in the South East Area.

ON THE SPOT AGREEMENT BY ARMY & NAVY FOR THE "R1" STUDY OPERATIONS

((omitted)) (393 F) (394 F) (394 F)

OCCUPATION FORCE OPERATIONS ORDER ISSUED ((omitted (395 F)))

It was estimated at that time that a considerable number of B-17 and other bomber reinforcements had moved to Australia and the PORT MORESBY areas and that they were becoming quite active. On 11 July a message was received from the 3rd Bureau ((Intelligence)) of the Navy Section stating that the Legation at Dublin had reported that according to a dispatch of 27 June from the Melbourne Special Correspondent of the Sunday Times, Australia expects Japanese forces to invade Port Moresby by land route at the close of the New Guinean rainy-season and that their reconnaissance aircraft are carrying out

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routine reconnaissance and patrols over the 20,000 foot mountain range.

These matters were of concern to the ^{Staff of the} Eastern New Guinea Occupation Force in drawing up their plans; also of immediate concern was the unreliability of charts and other hydrographic data for BUNA and vicinity plus that place's nearness to Port Moresby (80 miles by direct flight); selection of anchorages, routes of approach, unloading sites etc plus the need to preserve secrecy of the operation all presented problems, especially the first two. By the cooperation of the 5th Air Attack Force, the navigators of the two cruisers and the Captains of the destroyers were flown over the anchorage and approach areas to familiarize them and pass the word to their forces.

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PREPARATIONS FOR OPERATIONS BY ARMY FORCES

RI STUDY OPERATIONS PREPARATIONS In addition to inspecting the condition of his forces, the Commander of the XVIIth Army, Lieut. General Haruyoshi Hyakutake, decided to attach a part of infantry from the Army's South Seas Detachment* to the 15th Independent Engineer Regiment for the RI Study operations and that those operations would be carried out under the operational direction of the Commander South Seas Detachment.*

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When the letter met with General Hyakutake on 30 June, he complained of deficiencies in supplies and concluded by emphasizing that as long as a motor vehicle road was not pushed from BUNA to PORT MORESBY, an invasion of that place would not be possible. The Commanding General of the XVIIth Army would not accept that view and the next day, 1 July, issued orders to the Commander South Seas Detachment* to land the main body of the 15th Independent Engineer Regiment, plus one ~~battalion~~ ^{battalion} of infantry at BUNA and expedite its advance to the vicinity of the OWEN STANLEY mountains south of KOFODA and reconnoiter a land invasion route to PORT MORESBY

Comdr South Seas Detachment* immediately had preparations put in motion to send one company of infantry, one company of mountain ("back") artillery and the main body of the 15th Independent Engineer Regiment under the ^{direct} command of the latter's Commander, Colonel Yokoyama; this force was called the YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon and it also included some 500 men of the ^(navy's) "Takasego Volunteer Corps" from Taiwan

and Korea as supply carriers/bearers. --- The Commander South Seas Detachment, after issuing a South Seas Detachment Order concerning the dispatch of the Yokoyama Advance Echelon on 14 July, considered the possibility that in addition to making a reconnaissance of a

* The South Seas Detachment was the Army's initial contribution to the 4th Fleet's operations from the beginning of the war - invasions of GUAM, RABAU, KAVONG, PORT MORESBY, LAE, SOLOMONA, etc

land invasion route, the main body of his Command might be called on to invade via the land route, and worked out an outline of a stockpile of supplies needed, beginning with 200 tons of primary rations to be placed as near as possible to the Owen Stanley Mountains by the end of August.

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----- In the meantime the FS Operation had been ^{ordered} cancelled on 11 July, and on the 15th a Staff officer from the Army Section of Imperial General Headquarters, a Lieut. Colonel Masanobu TSUGI, arrived at the XVII Army Headquarters to work out arrangements for the next operations; this Staff officer reported the background of the cancellation of the FS Operations and also told XVII Army Headquarters that Imperial General Headquarters had directed the 17th Army to invade Port Moresby by land, without waiting for the results of the "Ri" Study Operation, in order to capitalize on the air battles in Eastern New Guinea; that a Central Army Navy Agreement that was supposed to accompany the directive wanted the Command Post of the 17th Army moved up to Rabaul by about the 24th, an on-the-spot Army-Navy agreement expedited, and an invasion by land together with one by sea be initiated.

CHANGES TO INVASION

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As a result of this liaison through Staff officer TSUGI, the Commander of the 17th Army believed that due to change in the situation, Imperial General Headquarters did not want to wait for the results of the "Ri" Study Operation and had directed him to invade Port Moresby by land. Therefore, on 18 July, 17th Army Orders were issued: ~~to~~ With the close collaboration of the Navy in order to speedily occupy Port Moresby and strategic positions in Eastern New Guinea, the South Seas Detachment will push forward; the BUNA-KOKODA road and occupy PORT MORESBY and air fields in that vicinity; part of the 35th Infantry Brigade will land from sea in an area directly North East of PORT MORESBY to facilitate the invasion by the South Seas Detachment by land route. In accordance with these orders a part (about one infantry company) of the 35th Infantry Brigade was to seize strategic positions in the SAMARAI and LOUISIADE Islands areas.

The Headquarters XVII Army informed Headquarters 4th Fleet on these

important developments but, needless to say, the navy believed that they were still operating in the study phase and the Chief of Staff replied "BELIEVE WE ARE STILL IN THE "RI" STUDY OPERATION PHASE..." On receipt of this response, XVIII Army now realized that the navy also had not received any such Imperial General Headquarters directive; a radio from Army Section, Imperial General Headquarters on the 25th - "WE ARE AWAITING RESULTS OF SEVENTEENTH ARMY'S STUDY OF THE OPERATION" - was a shock, and for the first time, it now became obvious that staff-officer TSUJI was acting arbitrarily, and on his own initiative.

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The YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon had been scheduled to depart Rabaul at 0000 the 22nd but just prior to sailing it received XVIII Army orders for an invasion. Commander South Seas Detachment, however, directed the YOKOYAMA force to operate in accordance with their previous orders.

TRANSPORTATION OF THE YOKOYAMA ADVANCE ECHELON TO BUNA

In accordance with the on-the-spot agreements for the "RI" Study operation, Commander 5th Air Attack Force on the 18th commenced the air-annihilation battle in the Port Moresby area when 27 land bombers and 15 Zero fighters took off from Rabaul but were forced to turn back by bad weather enroute. The 19th was a repeat of their experience on the 18th, but at 0920 on the 20th, 25 land bombers and 13 Zero fighters struck Port Moresby, attacking three airfields but found only about a dozen large and small planes dispersed on the ground at those three fields, and no enemy aircraft were seen airborne. Thus, the battle to destroy the enemy's air power prior to the departure of the Eastern New Guinea Occupation Force's departure consisted of but one day of unrewarded operation.

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The YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon, were embarked in the AYATOSAN Maru (9788 tons) and the RYŌYŌ Maru (5973 tons), and the Sasebo 5th Navy Special Landing Force loaded aboard the KINRYU Maru (9309 tons) departed Rabaul harbor the morning of the 20th for BUNA under the escort of the Eastern New Guinea Occupation Force*. The Sasebo 5th Special Landing Force of 433 men was commanded by Commander Torashige TSUKIOKA (known hereafter as the "TSUKIOKA force"). To conceal their true destination, the convoy first headed toward the Solomon Islands for about an hour after leaving Saint George's Channel, then set course to pass along the south coast of New Britain.

That day was one of low clouds and rain squalls with poor visibility, which it was believed would favor the secrecy of their movements but at 0835 they were

* CRUIDIV 18 (TENRYU, TATSUYA) - TSUKIOKA - SUBDIVISION 37 (SC 28, SC 29, SC 30).

picked up by an allied search plane and sighted again at 1000. Anticipating an air attack, the Occupation Force took an evasive course and no attack developed that day. Poor visibility continued on the 21st but at 0725 they were again sighted by an allied search plane, but whether it was because they were headed toward LAE, or not, no subsequent attack developed and that afternoon friendly fighters from LAE came to provide air cover and float-planes from SALAMUA reconnoitered their anchorage area and reported no enemy troops observed in the vicinity of the ^{scheduled} landing points. Also, as planned, the Naval Landing Force of the 82nd Guard Force had opened a feint attack in the Lae-Salamua area that morning at 0600.

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The Occupation Force, on receiving a report that LAE had been attacked by enemy aircraft at 1415, believed that they had succeeded in hiding from the enemy; changed course in mid afternoon and headed for BUNA. At 1545 the TENRYU was bombed by a B-17, and enemy air attacks continued thereafter, but by violent maneuvers they were able to escape damage and arrived at their anchorage about as scheduled. Unloading began immediately and by 1815 the Naval Landing Force had reached a point (Point "A") about 5 kilometers west of BUNA and at 1900 the YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon was at GONA, both groups having landed without any ^{resistance}.

That night many enemy planes reconnoitered the area but there were no attacks; the sea remained calm and unloading progressed smoothly, the KINRYU Morn completed unloading at 0245 the 22nd and departed. At 0500 Comdr. Occupation Force ((in TENRYU)) learned from intercepted enemy plain-language messages that the enemy planes had begun operations; he tried to advance the hour of departure from the anchorage but could not contact the army and its situation was unknown, as there had been no contact with the army forces since their arrival. Also, the weather in the BUNA area had been gradually changing since early that morning and in trying to send a weather report to LAE, no contact could be established either directly or via the 8th Communicator's Unit ((at Rabaul)) until 0600.

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At 0536 the TATSUTA intercepted an enemy ^{aircraft's} plain language message: HAVE

SIGHTED 1 CRUISER 2 DESTROYERS AND 2 TRANSPORTS LANDING UNDERWAY AT GONA". Also, at 0530 ~~B~~^E Communication Unit reported "ENEMY CONCENTRATING AIRCRAFT SINCE EVENING OF 21ST IN PORT MORESBY AREA BY 0500 22ND ESTIMATE 5 TO 7 SQUADRONS LARGE PLANES AVAILABLE".

Beginning at 0610 that morning, the 22nd, when several large type planes appeared over the anchorage, repeated enemy attacks were received, in all about a hundred attacks. At 0710, just before the AYATOSAN Maru had finished unloading, it was bombed, caught fire and had to be beached. The UZUKI, proceeding to the rescue was also bombed by 5-B-26s and received fragments from near misses which caused 21 casualties but not enough damage to interfere with full power operation. Having no medical officer aboard, the UZUKI returned direct to RABOUL. The RYOYO Maru, still partly unloaded, left its anchorage at 0840, retiring under the protection of the Subchaser Division, and although attacked several times, suffered no damage. Due to heavy rain since early morning at the airbase at LAE, there were no prospects for fighters to depart but at 1045, during a break in the weather, 6 fighters took off and there after performed direct air cover for the surface forces and preventing further enemy air attacks. Thus the Occupation Force now returned to RABOUL, the last ship reaching there the 24th. On the other hand, the float-planes that had advanced ~~to~~^{to} SOROMOVA, moved up to BUNA arriving at 1410 the 22nd but the sea was rough and two of the three float planes had their engines torn off their mounts on landing; ~~so~~ the move of their base to BUNA^{was} cancelled also because of the severity of attacks by enemy fighter planes. On its return to Rabaul the Occupation Force immediately began preparations for their next transportation run but their recent experiences caused them to consider the trouble that lay ahead.

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The Navy Landing Force that had landed at Point "A" sent one platoon to BUNA at 0700, occupied and secured that area. It was found that about 30 enemy white-soldiers had been there until the previous evening but now only natives were there. Enemy aircraft came and attacked mainly the army's area with intense bombing and strafing, consequently during daylight nothing could be accomplished except study the roads.

After landing, the YOKOHAMA Advance Echelon hurried forward a van force (one company of infantry with bicycles) toward KOKODA; the main body moved up to

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BUNA during the 22nd. The road adjacent to the landing point near the coast was relatively good through SOBUTA from BUNA and GIRUWA and was useable by motor vehicles and did not require repair work for some 40 kilometers into the interior. The main body, which had been ^{closely} following the van force, joined it, and on the night of the 28th made a night attack on a company of Australian troops that were defending KOKODA, and by the morning of the 29th had occupied KOKODA and its airfield. In the meantime, on successive days during daylight they had been attacked by air, and were forced to move by night. According to prisoners captured at KOKODA, the total force at Port Moresby was about 20,000, consisting of American, Australian and Indian forces, and that strong defences were being built in the area surrounding that place.

2nd TRANSPORTATION TO BUNA

As stated above, the Commanding General XVII Army had believed, by the liaison of Staff Officer TSUJI, that a directive from Imperial General Headquarters and a Central Army-Navy Agreement for the invasion of Port Moresby by land route would arrive momentarily. Also as previously set forth, the illuminating radio from the Army Section about waiting for results of the "RI Study Operation, was most unexpected, indeed!

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While a second transportation run to BUNA had been scheduled to carry the remainder of the YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon and TSUKIOKA force, but that was changed by the 1th Army directive to invade Port Moresby to transport of the main body of the South Seas Detachment. However with the non-arrival of the Central Army-Navy agreement (and outline of the operations), the remaining personnel and material of the YOKOYAMA and TSUKIOKA forces were loaded aboard the KOTOKU Maru ((XAE/AP 6701 tons)) and the KYOYO Maru ((5973 tons)) and sailed for BUNA on schedule, escorted by the ((CL)) TATSUTA, ((CL)) YUBARI and Subchaser Division 32 less S.C. #28 (ie, SC#29 and SC#30).

Prior to this, at the request of Headquarters XVII Army to transport Staff Officer TSUJI, some 30 Army officers and some material from 8th Base Force to BUNA, the DD ASAKURI loaded the above on the 25th and departed. Staff Officer Tsuji was to spur on the YOKOYAMA Advance Echelon, the others were to reconnoiter the topography

of the BUNA-KOKODA road. On entering the anchorage on the 26th the ASAGIRI was attacked by one B-17 and two B-26s; Asagiri, in taking evasive action to avoid attacks, at 1647 hit a hidden shoal bearing 064°, distant 6,000 meters from "KIRA-TON" (KILLERTON?) Point, losing her starboard propeller but was able to proceed on one engine. Staff officer TSUJI and one other received slight wounds. Staff officer Tsuji did not land but returned to RABAU in that ship on the 28th, where, by establishing liaison with Headquarters 25 Air Flotilla, the following radio was sent to the Army Section Imperial General Headquarters:

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" AT THE END OF JULY THE ENEMY HAS CONTROL OF THE AIR IN VICINITY BUNA MOREOVER ACTUAL USEABLE NAVAL AIR STRENGTH IS ONLY 20 FIGHTERS AND 30 BOMBERS. NAVAL GENERAL STAFF UNAWARE THIS ACTUAL SITUATION "

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The second transportation run left RABAU the 27th, took a course along the north coast of New Britain without sighting any enemy aircraft, then headed west, with Zero fighters from LAE patrolling overhead. On the 29th, headed for their anchorage but at 1643 some 10 enemy dive bombers (SBD-3) and 4 fighters (P-39) suddenly attacked from clouds overhead. Our fighters shot down 5 dive bombers but one bomb hit #5 hold of the KOFUKU Maru, penetrating through the ship's bottom and flooding that hold, giving the ship a 4 meter "up-trim". That ship thereafter anchored in the KUMUSHI River, 45 miles upstream of its mouth, where the Army troops were unloaded into 3 landing craft; led by the subchasers they proceeded to BASABUNA where they landed, thence proceeding toward SALAMUA. At 1730, the RYOYO Maru grounded on a hidden shoal 6700 meters, 075° from CAPE KILLERTON, but got off under its own power at 1830, when it proceeded to its anchorage and began to unload. Now, however, the wind and sea gradually built up, and an enemy bombing attacks at 2346 combined to allow little progress in the unloading; work was stopped when about 60% unloaded, that ship left its anchorage at 0330 and headed north but it was attacked by a B-17 at 0740, without receiving any damage, an escorting fighter shooting down the B-17.

In the meantime, in response to an urgent request from the army for food supplies, the Commander Eastern New Guinea Occupation Force ordered the convoy to return to its anchorage. The KOFUKU Maru, escorted by the YUZUKI, reversed course and headed south but at 1575 the 30th were picked up by a B-17, and at 1640 received a concentrated attack by 8-B-17s. Bad weather at LAE

at that time prevented the take off of escort planes so the KOFUKU Maru and YUZUKI had only their own meager defenses against the enemy's low-level bombing and strafing. At 1651 when 045°, distant 36 miles from Cape Ward Hunt, the KOFUKU Maru was hit by 3 or more bombs and brought to a stop. The TATSUTA was ordered to take her in tow but it was to no avail, the YUZUKI and TATSUTA then picked up the survivors and returned them to Rabaul the afternoon of the 31st.

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The RYOYO Maru, which had headed for Rabaul under the escort of Sub-Chaser Division 32 also reversed course to re-enter the anchorage, as ordered, but had an engineering break down, so again turned back toward Rabaul arriving there the afternoon of August 1st.

Previous to the above events the NANKAI Maru ((8416 tons)) had arrived at Rabaul ^{the 28th,} carrying the 15th Construction Unit; it left the 31st at 0600, escorted by SC # 28 and the TSUGARU to transport that Construction Unit to BUNA. The next day they were picked up by a B-17 and bombed and strafed at 1300. Again heavy rain at LAE prevented fighter plane operations for the protection of the NANKAI Maru and escorts, so the latter were recalled to Rabaul, arriving the night of 2 August.

The activity by large type enemy aircraft at that time had become extremely persistent, making high-level bombing attacks on the 1st BUNA TRANSPORTS and then, as if to mock our weak anti-aircraft defenses, changed to low-level bombing and strafing attacks on the 2nd Transportation Group by even large bombing planes, and also made concentrated attacks by dive bombers; what indeed could we expect from the AA batteries of the TATSUTA and the YUZUKI against these attacks?

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HEADQUARTERS 8th FLEET MOVES TO RABAU

The 8th Fleet was organized in home waters as of 14 July 1942. The CinC and his staff/headquarters embarked in the CA CHOKAI left HASHIRAJIMA for TRUK, arriving the 25th where they received a briefing on operations in the South East area from Headquarters 4th Fleet. CinC 8th Fleet took over command of the Outer South Sea forces on 27 July, moved to Rabaul on the 30th where he established his headquarters ashore; in an emergency his headquarters would be embarked in the

CHOKAI where he would direct the operations of his force. By establishing his command headquarters ashore, he broke with an old naval tradition which was criticized by some.

According to the 8th Fleet War Diary, C-in-C. 8th Fleet estimated that according to various current communications intelligence reports, the operations of enemy forces in the South East Area was becoming more and more active and that he submitted his views of the situation to The Central Authorities ((Imperial General Headquarters)) and to the Headquarters of the Combined Fleet regarding reinforcement of the military strengths to his area.

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JULY 21

In view of the vigorous movements of the enemy in the area of the Coral Sea it is estimated that fighting will break out with strong enemy forces in the near future; in that event, even if reinforcements of a strong force - including aircraft carriers is not furnished, this force, by decaying the enemy force within the attack range of our Base Air Force, should be able to attack and destroy the enemy. Nevertheless, due to consideration of liaison with the 17th Army and the many Construction Units in the rear areas, the lack of destroyer strength is keenly felt and request this Command receive a speedy reinforcement of at least one destroyer division.

JULY 23

It is likely that the enemy plans to recapture Guadalcanal Island; this is indicated by the enemy's repeated ^{air} reconnaissance of that island and his recent concentration of sizeable air power in the New Hebrides Islands area suggests plans to recapture it prior to the move there of our air forces. In order to oppose enemy surface force strike operations like those during the MO operations ((Battle of the Coral Sea etc)), it is believed that CruDiv 6 and the CHOKAI should not retire to TRUK but should be deployed instead to QUEEN CAROLA Harbor ((Buka Island, north of Bougainville)) or to KAVIENG. As it is necessary to strengthen the underwater defenses at both the above bases, it is requested that the SHIRATAMA ((Mine/Net layer 1,347 tons)), scheduled to join on 5 August be dispatched to this force to expedite the laying of anti-submarine nets and other underwater defensive material.

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Later, on the 26th, the cooperation of the submarines of Subron 3, and on the 30th, the dispatch of 2 destroyer divisions were requested by radio. During the briefing at TRUK on progress of the SN and RI Study operations, Vice Admiral Mikawa, the new C-in-C 8th Fleet specifically asked the C-in-C 4th Fleet "whether offensive operations by the

enemy was expected in the Guadalcaanal area". According to a memorandum written by Vice Admiral Mikawa after the 1st Battle of the Solomons (Savo Islands) the Cinc 4th Fleet replied "Absolutely not!" Vice Admiral Mikawa's post-war recollections on this point were identical.

ARMY-NAVY JOINT AGREEMENT CONCERNING INVASION OF PORT MORESBY BY LAND
CENTRAL AGREEMENT. The 17th Army's shift from the "R1" Study Operations to a land invasion of Port Moresby and the change in the 2nd Buna Transportation to carry the main body of the South Seas Detachment has been covered above. These changes had been agreed to by the new Headquarters 8th Fleet when it moved up to TRUK. Then the XVIII Army radioed to the Army Section, Imperial General Headquarters on the 27th a report on the developments, until then, in the "R1" Study Operations, with the opinion that an invasion of Port Moresby, primarily by land route, was feasible and requested directives accordingly. Thereupon the Army and Navy Sections of Imperial General Headquarters agreed on an invasion by land route and, on the 28th, Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters Directive #115 was issued with a Central Army-Navy agreement covering those operations in Eastern New Guinea as a separate annex, as follows:

SEPARATE ANNEX

1. OPERATIONS OBJECTIVE

To occupy and secure important strategic positions of PORT MORESBY, and others, and to mop-up the enemy in Eastern New Guinea, and to utilize the SOLOMON ISLANDS to control the CORAL SEA.

2. OPERATIONS POLICY

Invalidate and occupy PORT MORESBY, principally by land route and also to occupy other strategic positions, to suppress disorder and secure each strategic position.

3. Commanders and Forces

Cinc 8th Fleet - a force, the core of which is the 8th Fleet

Cinc 11th Air Fleet - a force, the core of which is the 25th Air Flotilla

Commanding General XVIII Army - XVIII Army (core of about 6 Infantry Battalions)

4. Outline of Operations

a. Utilizing results of the "R1" Study Operations, the main body of

The Army force will occupy the road area BUNA-KOKODA to PORT MORESBY and nearby air field complexes, as soon as possible.

b. As operations via the land route progresses, land a part of the Army force from the sea at a suitable time to facilitate the operations, above.

c. The Navy will, in addition to destroying enemy air power in the PORT MORESBY area, maintain mastery over enemy ships in the northern part of the CORAL SEA, protect the force that will invade by sea, and collaborate closely in the above land operations

d. During and after the PORT MORESBY invasion operations, at an appropriate time occupy and subdue important strategic positions in Eastern New Guinea. In the above operations, the invasion of islands and northern coasts will be primarily by naval landing forces, while others will be carried out primarily by army forces.

5. Command Relationships.

Joint Army-Navy cooperation; however, in case both Army and Navy forces are operating in the same place at the same time, the Senior Commanders present will exercise unity of command for land operations.

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11. Operations Designators

Eastern New Guinea Operations → "TO" (for "East") Operations

Of the above, the PORT MORESBY Invasion Operations → "RE" (the 2nd syllable of) Operations MORESBY

THE ON-THE-SPOT AGREEMENT

An Army-Navy on-the-spot agreement by the Commanders concerned was made at Rabaul on the 28th in which the Chief of Staff 8th Fleet and the CFS 11th Air Fleet participated.

... the Army suddenly demanded that they be in charge of the amphibious landing of the 35th Infantry Brigade at SAMARAI, the Navy proposing that they carry them out. There was also a difference of opinion between the Army and the Navy over the methods of transport and landing, to which the Navy proposed two plans.

(1) The Army forces to move to their objectives in small craft (some 50 of these), the Navy to transport ^{their} forces in destroyers and land at their objectives

(2) Should the Army not wish to move up in small craft, they would be transported in, and land from Navy destroyers, only.

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To this the 17th Army argued that in situations where control of the air is lacking, the prospects for a successful movement by small craft are small, but

from the point of view of a unit's fighting power after landing, the fire-power of an army unit carried in small craft is superior to that of a naval landing force landed from destroyers; the Army also felt that the transport of army troops in destroyers would complicate the chain of command. The final agreement was reached the night of the 31st calling for army troops to be transported in destroyers and that naval landing forces would also participate in the invasion from sea phase.....

It would seem that the mutual differences of opinion were due to the fact that Headquarters XVII Army, spurred on by Staff officer Tswi, had decided as early as 18 July to invade Port Moresby by land but had failed to consult the senior Naval Commander (then C-in-C 4th Fleet) and was using a newly organized 8th Fleet Headquarters and a newly formed, high spirited Army unit (the 35th Infantry Brigade) bound for the front for the first time, as pawns to enforce its unilateral decision. The gist of this on-the-spot Army-Navy agreement was:

A. POLICY: The Army and Navy, cooperating together, will promptly invade and secure Port Moresby and other strategic enemy positions in Eastern New Guinea.

B. OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS DIRECTIVES: (a) The Army will move up the BUNA - KOKODA road with the South Seas Detachment (b) A part of the Army forces and a Naval Landing Force will be transported in naval destroyers and carry out sea-borne assault operations, landing in the vicinity of Port Moresby in collaboration with the operations of the South Seas Detachment, and facilitate the latter's operations. The time of the landings in the vicinity of Port Moresby will be determined as soon as possible after the South Seas Detachment has passed through the Owen Stanley Mountain Range. (c) The Navy will, as soon as possible, occupy SAMARAI and establish there a seaplane base and, in addition, will use a part of its forces to conduct a feint operation from the LAE - SALAMUA area toward the WAU area to facilitate the Army's Port Moresby invasion operations. (d) the Navy will use an appropriate force to block reinforcements to, or withdrawals from, Port Moresby by the enemy.

C. OPERATIONAL ITEMS (a) the Navy will make a special point of providing direct control of the air for transport convoys at anchor and of the

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anchorage areas (b) The navy will move forward an air base to the Buna area as soon as possible and exert control of the air in the anchorage areas. The Army will cooperate by taking over the ground defences of the above area. (c) After landing the main body of the South Seas Detachment, the navy will cooperate with that force through close liaison so that when the Army force captures and makes ready the airfield near Kokoda, it will move up facilities and personnel to operate an advance airfield there.

This agreement, in addition, covered matters of command, allocation of forces, and the date (X-day) for the landing of the 3rd Buna Transportation (the main force of the South Seas Detachment and the Naval Construction Unit (X-Day - August 7th), as well as the date (X+8 days) for landing the 4th Buna Transportation (the remainder of the South Seas Detachment and Construction Unit), all forces to be ashore by the latter part of August.

TRANSPORTATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION UNIT AND BUILDING THE BUNA AIRFIELD

The Tsukioka Force that had moved up to Buna and to Hako Zaki (formerly called Point "A"), while avoiding enemy aircraft's persistent, daily reconnaissance flights, made ready air-defence facilities, assisted in unloading the 2nd Buna Transport run transports and made studies of the anchorage and harbor area and for a seaplane base. Although unable to find a suitable site for the seaplane base, they did discover a suitable site for a land air base and reported this fact on the 29th. Comdr Eastern New Guinea ordered the Tsukioka force to quickly make it ready for use, adding the 14th Construction Unit (about 1000 men) for that purpose and called for a study as to whether fighter planes could move up to Buna in 20 days.

From their experience with the 1st and 2nd Buna transportation runs it was apparent that air defence of the anchorage was absolutely necessary to be able to unload at Buna and that air protection from the LAE airbase, 140 miles away, was virtually impossible. Float fighters, operating from an advance seaplane base (as had been so successful in the NEI campaign) could provide the air defence but, as stated above, no suitable site could be found but now the discovery of a site for a land air base offered a solution to their problem.

The Tsukioka force worked day and night from the 31st onward preparing the base and on 2 August reported completing an airfield 800 meters east by west and 200 meters north by south, suitable for landings and take offs by fighter aircraft. On that day well over a hundred natives were working readying the airfield;

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according to them, this was the place where the Australians had started to build a field but it had become a swampy area due to an unexpected rainy period, and had been abandoned. Also according to the natives, the Australians had also planned to prepare a large airfield at a place 12 miles east of BUNA where^a dense forest had been cleared, the area then becoming grass covered.

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After receiving the report that the airstrip was ready to receive fighter aircraft, Commander 5th Air Attack Force on 3 August sent 8 Zero fighters and the (~~XAV~~) KIVUKAWA Maru sent a float reconnaissance plane to examine the field; they found it generally satisfactory as an emergency landing strip, estimating that one more week's work could make it capable of supporting a section (9 aircraft) of fighters, if additional personnel were furnished.

In the meantime the ~~Hakoyama~~ Advance Echelon, which had continued its smooth ^{advance}, optimistically reported on the 27th: "ROAD BETWEEN SAMBO AND KOKODA HAS BEEN IMPROVED FOR USE BY MOTOR VEHICLES. FOUR DAYS TO KOKODA, 8 DAYS TO PART MORESBY, TOTAL TWELVE DAYS". However the 1st Buna Transportation Run had not completed its unloading, the 2nd Run had discharged all the personnel but only about 60% of its material, and on the 28th it became clear that the road now was much worse than expected. When the 15th Construction Unit landed on the 28th, the Commander of the TSUKIOKA force recommended that he retain a minimum amount of road repair material and make ready a food-bearer (^{so} carrying) force. Thus the forwarding and stockpiling of army provisions ^{so} necessary for any progress of invasion operations became seriously stagnated.

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On 3 August the Headquarters 8th Fleet, with agreement by the 17th Army, called off, temporarily, the 3rd Buna Transportation, deciding to send instead the 14th and 15th Construction Units to Buna in the NANKAI Maru (8416 tons), KINAI Maru (8306 tons) and KENTO Maru (6486 tons) to make ready the Buna air base and also transport Army rations and fodder for further movement forward. In addition, the above ships were to load as much as possible of the KENTO Maru's cargo of army provisions and supplies plus aviation fuel, base material and personnel of the TRINAN fighter squadron that was to move up to BUNA. The instructions issued 5 August to the Construction units were that: The 15th Construction Unit, after arrival at the BUNA anchorage would

receive its orders from the Commander South Seas Detachment regarding the construction of exterior roads and work on the airfield; cooperate (about 800 men) with the 14th Construction Unit with regard to the Buna airfield; cooperate (about 600 men) in the transfer of army rations; cooperate (about 30 men) in forwarding rations and establishing liaison with the detached naval communications unit personnel.

The above three transports left Rabaul at 1500 6 August escorted by the (CA) TATSUTA, ((DDs)) UZUKI and YUZUKI and Subchasers # 23 and # 30 under command of the CO. TATSUTA. The KINAI Maru was delayed by engineering difficulty until 1547, and escorted by the YUZUKI rejoined the others at 0505 the 8th. At 0430 the 7th, Allied forces attacked Guadalcanal. As the Base Air Force now decided to concentrate its entire force for attack on the enemy, air cover for the convoy could not now be expected, so Commander Outer South Seas Force ordered the Buna convoy "to postpone its movement for one day". However, in decoding this message on the flagship of Crudiv 18, the expression "one day" was erroneously rendered as "temporarily", and as a consequence Comdr Cruiser Division 18 (Comdr. Eastern New Guinea Invasion Force) ordered the escort force to return to Rabaul. In the meantime (as will be related, later on) Outer South Seas Force was concentrating its principle forces to attack the enemy in the Guadalcanal area in conjunction with Base Air Force attacks, and had issued orders to all ships to prepare to sortie. Commander Eastern New Guinea Invasion force in the TENRYU and the (DD) YUGIRI were making preparations to sortie and at 0900 the former ordered TATSUTA and destroyers in company to turn over escort of the convoy to the subchasers and join the TENRYU and Asagiri which would sortie at 1300 for the Solomon Islands. The TATSUTA, UZUKI and YUZUKI were about to sortie when they learned of the signal "to postpone its movement for one day", from their tactical commander, Commander Eastern New Guinea Invasion Force, so they rejoined the convoy and arrived off BASABUNA on the 9th, Commander Outer South Seas Force at 0800 the 7th ordered Commander 8th Base Force ((Rabaul)) to take over the responsibility for protection of the New Guinea area and that official, being unable - for the time being - to receive cooperation from the Base Air Force, ordered the convoy back to Rabaul, where it arrived at 0900 the 9th.

V OPERATIONS OF THE BASE AIR FORCE

The postponement of the F.S. operation and the 2nd MO operation, by which it was hoped the control of the air in the South East area would be settled, once and

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for all time, was a grievous disappointment to the Base Air Force. Moreover, the loss of four first-line aircraft-carriers in the Midway operation had increased greatly the responsibilities of the Base Air Force in all forthcoming operations.

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Since the latter part of June, America had been increasing the tempo of their reinforcements to the Australian area and were building new facilities and the air bases necessary for expansion of air power in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia Islands areas as well as expanding current operational facilities there; in collaboration with the Australian Air Force their air operations had become quite active and, in addition, enemy guerrilla activity had been noted at the end of June in the Lae-Salamaua area.

Against these the 5th Air Attack Force had been making continuing attacks on ^{the} Port Moresby ^{and} Horn Island areas, obtaining some battle results but had been unable to ^{hit} their support bases on the Australian main-land and thus were kept from bringing real pressure to bear on the seat of enemy air power.

On the other hand, the enemy, using Port Moresby as a relay or staging base, could attack the Rabaul and Lae areas frequently and the enemy bombers, both B-17s and B-26s became increasingly effective, while our current zero fighters were, in most cases, unable to shoot them down. Additionally, due to the inadequacy of our air field construction capabilities, many of our aircraft on the ground received damage from bombings and strafing; insufficiency of production by our aircraft factories at home caused replacements to fail to keep pace with losses. For these reasons the future in air warfare loomed dark despite frantic efforts by everyone concerned. It was in this impending crisis that planning for the SN operations and the RI Study operations were undertaken as preparation for the next operation. In addition to its air warfare in the Port Moresby area, the 5th Air Attack Force conducted searches of the high seas in preparation for an attack by an enemy carrier task force, and also cooperated in the RI Study operation, the SN operation and the Eastern New Guinea Invasion operation.

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At the time of the SN operation (order issued 27 June) the Order of Battle of the 5th Air Attack Force was:

UNIT	COMMANDER	FORCE	DEPLOYMENT / NOTES
1 st UNIT	C.O. TAINAN AIR	45 VF LAF 3 V Rec. RABAU	included VF detachment from the 4 th Air Attack Force (Marshall-Castine Manned)
2 nd UNIT	C.O. 4 th AIR	36 land bombers RABAU (W)	
3 rd UNIT	C.O. GENZAN AIR	27 land bombers "	Returned to 2 nd Air Attack Force on 1 July
4 th UNIT	C.O. YOKOITAMA AIR	12 VP "MAVIS" TULAGI 9 float fighters Rabaul	
1 st Special Duty Unit	C.O. AKITSUSHIMA (Seaplane carrier)		
2 nd Special Duty Unit	C.O. MOGAMI GAWA Maru (aircraft transport)		
Construction Work at Rabaul (East)	C.O. #10 Construction Unit	#10 C.U.	
Gradecanap/Sea Construction work	C.O. #11 " "	#11. C.U.; #13 C.U.	
KAVIENG Base Construction work	C.O. #12 " "	#12. C.U.	
BUNA Base Construction work	C.O. #14 " "	#14 C.U.	

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However replacements did not keep up with losses and the actual number of useable aircraft on the day the above order was issued was:

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Rabaul West: 11 land bombers; Rabaul East 6 fighters, 1 Reconnaissance plane.

Rabaul Seaplane base - 11 Patrol Planes; 8 float fighters.

LAF - 19 fighters, 2 reconnaissance planes

AIR FIGHTING

In June the 5th Air Attack Force, although deficient in air strength reduced its day and night attacks and other offensive operations in order to concentrate on maintenance, training and raising its combat potential in preparation for the 2nd Mo operation then scheduled for July. With the postponement of that operation, attacks on Port Moresby were again begun on 16 June when 21 Zeros attacked, engaging some 30 P-39s for about 30 minutes from 0800 onward, and ending in complete victory, reporting 19 P-39s shot down (of which 3 were unconfirmed) with no losses to our side. It was planned to make an all-out attack the next day, the 17th, with two groups against shipping in Port Moresby harbor. The first group - 18 land bombers and 12 fighters hit an 8,000 ton merchant ship with four 250 kilo. and 60 kilo. bombs and 3 near misses, ^{reported,} sinking it and shooting down 2 enemy fighters, all our planes returning safely. An attack by the 2nd Group was prevented by bad weather but a 6,000 ton merchant ship was sighted in the harbor and the outline of a new airfield 1250 meters x 800 meters was discovered to the north of the "new airfield". Thus, there are a total of five airfields

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in the vicinity of Port Moresby: the "old airfield" (Port Moresby field), the "new airfield", KILA KILA airfield, Kidd field and this newly discovered airfield.

A similar attack was carried out on the 18th but five of the fifteen bombers engaged received serious damage from anti-aircraft gun fire. On 6 July a reconnaissance of Horn Island showed many large and medium aircraft on the airfield and these were attacked the next day by 16 land bombers which reported setting afire a large type plane, a refueling cart and two buildings; no anti-aircraft fire was noted and a 6,000 ton merchant ship was observed at anchor off Thursday Island pier.

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On 20 July, new Type-2 (Early) flying boats having the hoped for long range capability arrived from TRUK from the 4th Air Attack Force; using moonlight, they attacked distant TOWNSVILLE on July 25th, 27th and 28th.

On 30 July, 20 Type 2 Zero fighters (increased performance but lesser endurance) (the "clipped-wing Zero or "HAMM") arrived at Rabaul. That afternoon Comdr 5th Air Attack Force ordered the majority of a fighter unit moving to LAE to return and undergo ^(until 3 August) a short training course in the new Zeros.

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In the meantime there had been a sharp increase in the intensity of the enemy air attacks against RABAU, LAE, TULA GI and our shipping, especially in the TULA GI-GUADALCANAL area. For example, since early July when work was started on the Guadalcanal airfield, one or two large enemy planes attacked Tula GI/Guadalcanal each day and each time were driven off by our float fighters. On the 31st, seven B-17s attacked and were driven off by 6 float fighters, the first large air attack on that area, but the next day, again 7 B-17s attacked, while on the 2nd, 10 B-17s attacked GUADALCANAL and one B-17 attacked TULA GI.

During this period we attacked Port Moresby 14 times, Horn Island 3 times, Townsville 3 times, Cairns once, LAE vicinity, in support of ground operations, 4 times; during the same period the enemy attacked Rabaul (11 times), LAE (20 times in 7 days) TULA GI and GUADALCANAL (20 times in 18 days)

SEARCH AND RECONNAISSANCE — DISCOVERY OF AIRFIELD AT RABA

Ocean searches during the period were conducted to obtain intelligence of the enemy and in conjunction with operations of friendly forces, in spite of the shortage of forces, which was in turn aggravated by the operations

related above. As there was a greater probability that an enemy carrier task force would come to attack the RABAU-SHORTLAND area via the sea area to the east of those locations, the "C" Sector was covered on a daily basis as the most important search sector. With the beginning of the construction of an airfield on Guadalcanal Island, the F Sector was searched commencing 30 June onward by large flying boats that had moved up to TULAGI. Also, with the movement of convoys of personnel and material for Guadalcanal, searches and reconnaissance were flown at appropriate times of the ^(waters of the) Solomons, Efate and New Caledonia. When not conducting attacks, searches of Sector B - the western Coral Sea - were also carried out for the first time and on 24 July, with the 1st BUNA Transportation Run and the beginning of the RI Study operation, searches of Sector A, the sea area to the south of New Guinea were made. These were precautionary against the sudden appearance of an enemy carrier task force there - that being the area from which the enemy launched its air attacks against our shipping at LAE and Salamaua on 10 March.

On 30 July at 1200 a search plane flying Sector A-3 sighted an enemy destroyer, a passenger ship and an oil tanker entering port at SAMARAI with enemy fighter planes covering overhead. The 5th Air Attack Force ordered a search and attack for the following morning; 9 planes took off early, 3 for Sectors A, C, and F while land bombers were on stand-by for attack but due to bad weather over A Sector, the enemy could not be seen; this bad weather continued again the next day also. On the 2nd a Type-2 ((Judy)) land reconnaissance plane flying Sector A-2 over the mountainous area of New Guinea reported "ENEMY SIGHTED 0820" but failed to return to base. In addition to the above searches, a photographic reconnaissance of SAMARAI was carried out and what appeared to be an airfield was discovered about 10 miles west of RABAI, with 2 small type aircraft flying overhead and also 2 small aircraft were seen near SAMARAI. Then on 4 August a "Judy" escorted by 4 Zeros made a reconnaissance of the airfield discovered near RABAI, sighting a runway 1200 meters x 60 meters, more than 30 planes on the ground and 11 P-40s in the air; also several dispersal areas were noted where the runway adjoined the coconut groves; a 6000 ton merchant ship was alongside the pier and a destroyer was at anchor. [The allies had begun work on this airfield (as will be related later) in early July.] In the air engagement that followed, 4 P-40s were reported shot down and 5 set afire but the "Judy" failed to return.

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On the 4th a Type-2 Flying Boat ("EMILY") which had moved up to TULAGI flew a reconnaissance of the FIJI and New CALEDONIA Island groups. There were thick clouds over the FIJIs but fortunately the northern shore of VITI LEVU Island was clear; the west coast of New Caledonia from "KONE" (Central-Western New Caledonia) southward could not be observed due to cloud cover. AT "PAGU-MENE" (west coast of northern part of New Caledonia) a runway (metalled) 2000 meters x 1500 meters was noted to be under construction with several dispersal areas adjoining the coconut groves; there were 4 large type and 3 small type aircraft on the runway.

Various intelligence reports on the 5th indicate vigorous activity by enemy ships in the Coral Sea area; searches were conducted in the "C" Sector and in the S.W. part of the "F" Sector (F Sector search had been reduced to 400 miles) without results and on the 6th these searches were repeated. Commander 5th Air Attack Force was planning an all-out attack against RABU on the 7th and all useable fighter aircraft were concentrated on Rabaul East airfield and 27 land bombers made ready to attack RABU from Rabaul west on the 7th " " " "

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OPERATIONS OF THE SUBMARINE FORCE

It has been told that CINC Combined Fleet ordered the Submarine Fleet at the beginning of the SN operations to cooperate in those operations and to attack enemy sea lines of communications in the South Pacific. Accordingly, most of Subron 3 (I-11, I-169, I-171, I-174 and I-175) and the I-32 of Subron 1 were ordered on commerce destruction operations in the AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - SAMOA area, ~~and~~ to conduct patrols in connection with the SN operations and to collect data for the F.S. Operations. These submarines which had been at Kwajalein following the Midway operations, departed there July 8th and 9th under command of Comsubron 3, Rear Admiral Chitaki KONO

.. (416) (417) (418) (419)

These submarines were returning to TRUK in early August when they were ordered to the Solomon Islands area as a result of the enemy's surprise attacks and landings on the TROKI - WADALANOL area

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VII ALLIED SITUATION IN NEW GUINEA - CONCEPT OF DEFENCE OF AUSTRALIA

omitted - translation and quoted from MORTON - "US ARMY IN WORLD WAR II - PACIFIC STRATEGY" etc

and "THE ARMY AIR FORCE IN WORLD WAR II" by office of Air Force History, USAF -

(420) (421) (422) (423) (424) (425) (426)

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CHAPTER II - ALLIED COUNTER-ATTACK AGAINST GUADALCANAL AND 1ST SOLOMON'S SEA BATTLE

At 0425 on 7 August, the 5th Fleet and 5th Air Attack Force units in the RABAUL area received URGENT radio messages from TULAGI Communications Unit: "UNDER INTENSE BOMBING ATTACK" --- "SIGHTED ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCE". These were followed by "ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCE OF 20 SHIPS ATTACKING TULAGI - UNDER ENEMY AIR BOMBING ATTACK - ENEMY PREPARING TO LAND - REQUEST REINFORCEMENTS..." Both the Navy Section Imperial General Headquarters and the Headquarters Combined Fleet received these messages at the same time. The Allies timed their counter attack against GUADALCANAL and TULAGI at the time that the Construction Unit (which had been building an airfield on Guadalcanal island as part of the SN operations) had just reported (2 days earlier) the completion of a runway 800 meters x 600 meters that could be used by fighter aircraft.

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The 5th Air Attack Force immediately began an attack on the enemy vessels with its entire force; the Outer South Seas Force also, urgently assembled its ships in the Rabaul area and made a night attack on enemy ships around SAVO Island at midnight the 8th, and reported a great victory. As a result of this 1st Solomon's Sea-Battle, the allied ships, although only partially unloaded, withdrew on the 9th. However the American Marine force that had landed on Tulagi and Guadalcanal pursued the Japanese forces there and secured the Guadalcanal airfield and its vicinity, as well as TULAGI

1. OUR SITUATION JUST BEFORE THE ENEMY ATTACK

ESTIMATE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION IN THE SOUTH EAST AREA The Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters had received intelligence that on 2 July a convoy of 37 ships had departed San Diego, and that on 14 July another convoy had left the West Coast and would reach the east coast of Australia in early August. The Chief of the Naval General Staff mentioned this matter to the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet when the latter came up to Tokyo on business in mid July with the observation that these convoys seem to be reinforcements for Australia but it is possible that when they perceive that our forces are not advancing on Australia, they may

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Send those troops direct to Port Moresby.

On 4 August, the Head of the 1st Department of the Navy Section Imperial General Headquarters estimated that the increasing volume of enemy communications indicated that the enemy was engaging in some planned operation, and dispatched the following message to the Chiefs of Staff of all fleets:

AN ALERT SEEMS NECESSARY JUDGING FROM CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS INTELLIGENCE REPORTS COMBINED WITH THE RECENT ACTIVITIES OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT NOT ONLY IN BRITISH NEW GUINEA AND THE SOLOMONS BUT ALSO IN THE MARSHALLS AND WAKE AREAS. (1) SHARP INCREASE 2 AUGUST IN AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY HAWAIIAN AREA BELIEVED CONNECTED WITH A SORTIE BY A POWERFUL FORCE FROM THERE. (2) SINCE LATE JULY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC BROADCAST BY HAWAIIAN AREA ADDRESSES INCLUDE THE PACIFIC FLEET AND SOUTH WEST PACIFIC FLEET (3) ON ONE AND TWO AUGUST INCREASED APPEARANCES OF US AND BRITISH FLEET UNITS NOTED IN SEA AREA EAST OF AUSTRALIA" x x x x x x x x x x x

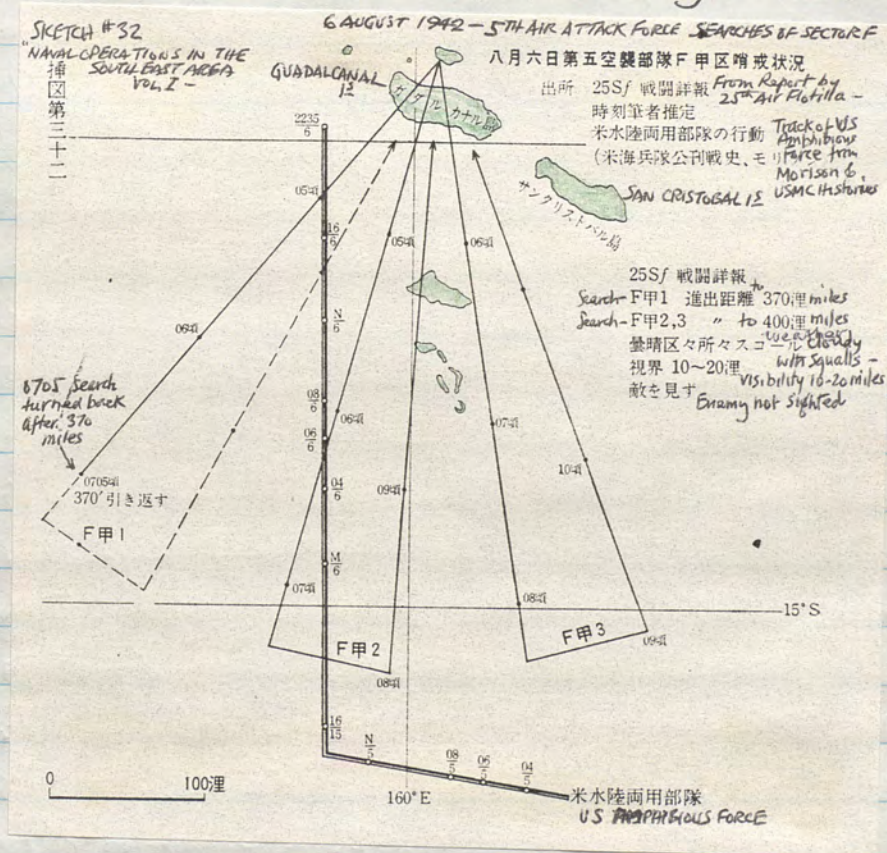
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Since moving to the South East area, the Headquarters 8th Fleet had been anticipating an enemy counter-attack, estimating it would probably be directed against the Solomon Islands area and a request for an increase in the ground defences of Guadalcanal had been made to the Central Authorities. However, their estimate of the timing of an enemy counter-attack was the same as that of the Central Authorities - mid 1943, or thereafter. The principal staff officers of the 8th Fleet having only recently assigned to their new posts from the Navy Section / Naval General Staff position were aware of the Chief of Naval General Staff's caution to the Chief of Staff Combined Fleet that the reinforcements from the above convoys could be landed direct at Port Moresby; that it was right after they had put in motion the "Ri" study operation in late July, when increased activity by Guerilla bands in the Loe-Salamoua area had occurred and just before the discovery of the enemy airbase at RABU. This was the situation when the above "ALERT" message of 4 August was received and as reports from the 8th Communications Unit (at Rabaul) were being delivered reporting significant increases in enemy communications in the South East area since late July, Headquarters 8th Fleet estimated that the enemy was using all its power to prevent our invasion of Port Moresby by land. The continuing increase in attacks by large-type

bombers on Guadalcanal and Tulagi were judged as measures to prevent our construction of the airfield there.

Ever since the beginning of the SN and RI study operations the 5th Air Attack force had been carrying out ocean searches for an appearance by an enemy carrier task force and since the above ALERT warning, had made careful searches of the sea areas to the South of the Tulagi area (the F Sectors), the sea areas to the east of New Guinea (the A Sectors) and the seas to the east of Rabaul (the C Sector) but had not been able to obtain any intelligence of the enemy. The day before the enemy landed on Tulagi and Guadalcanal, 3 large flying boats ((MAVIS)) had searched the F Sector and although the visibility was limited, nothing suggesting an enemy was sighted. Sketch #32 shows these searches, and the track ((post war)) of the enemy invasion force ((Amphibious Force))

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OUR FORCE'S SITUATION

SOUTH EAST AREA Since the beginning of the SN operation in mid June, the South East Area naval forces had been striving to make ready additional airbases. As stated before, a runway on ^{the} Guadalcanal air base was completed on 5 August and reported ready to receive fighter planes but the Headquarters of the 11th Air Fleet and the 25th Air Flotilla concluded that it was necessary to confirm this by actual test landings ((as was standard practice))

The work on the KAVIENG base was not yet finished while work on the BUKA airfield had not been started; the base at BUNA would require another week's work, for which an ((airfield)) construction unit had left Rabaul August 6th for BUNA. Thus, the useable airfields at that time were RABAUL (WEST), RABAUL (EAST), LAE, SURUMI, Tulagi Seaplane base and RABAUL seaplane base. In the month and a half little progress had thus been made in the SN operations. The 5th Air Attack Force's ready-for-use aircraft at the various bases on 7 August were:

RABAUL (WEST) Land Bombers - 32 (4th Air) "Betty's"

RABAUL (EAST) Zero fighters - 24 (Tainan Air) "Zero" ~~Group~~

Land Reconnaissance - 2 (" ") "Judy"

Ty-2 Zero fighters 15 (2nd Air) "Hump"

camer type dive bombers 16 (2nd Air) "Val"

RABAUL Seaplane Base Ty 97 - flying boats 2 (Yokohama Air) "Mavis"

Ty 2 " " 2 (1st Air Detachment) "Emily"

TULAGI Seaplane Base Ty 97 " " 7 (Yokohama Air) "Mavis"

Zero float-fighters 9 (" ") "Pete" (?)

Enemy air attacks in Eastern New Guinea were interfering with our RE("V") (MORESBY) operations; the Advance Echelon of Yokohama Air had already moved forward to KOKODA and the transport of the main body of the South Seas Detachment to BUNA was about to begin; the FS Operation had been tentatively cancelled and efforts were being made to assemble supplies and equipment.

The main strength of the Outer South Seas Force, CHOKAI (CA) and Crudiv 6 were in the KAVIENG area in support of the SN and RE("V") operations; the CHOKAI and 1st Section Crudiv 6 (AOBA and KAKO) sortied for the ADMIRALTY ISLANDS area early the morning of August 7th to support the BUNA convoy and 2nd Section, Crudiv 6 (MINUGASA and FURUTAKA) had left for RABAUL. ((OCL)) TATSUTA accompanied by DDs YUZUKI and UZUKI and Subchasers had left RABAUL on the 6th for BUNA and the ((OCL)) TENRYU, ((DDs)) YUBARI, ((DDs)) YUGIRI, ((CM)) TSUGARU and other ships remained at anchor in RABAUL. The Headquarters 8th Fleet was ashore there directing the operations of the Outer South Seas forces. The 5th Air Attack Force had completed a concentration of its aircraft preparatory to an attack on RABI on the 7th.

COMBINED FLEET'S MAIN FORCE

After the Combined Fleet's decision to cancel the F.S. Operation, studies were made for the next operation -- the destruction of enemy commerce and destruction of enemy surface forces in the INDIAN OCEAN area, using the main strengths of the Combined

Fleet - the 2nd Fleet and the Submarine Force. As this concept had not yet developed into a concrete plan, it had not reached the stage for negotiations/consultations between the Staff of the Combined Fleet and the Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters; it intimated a departure from home waters in late September. The 2nd Fleet and 3rd Fleet were in home waters expediting their training and readiness for forthcoming operations, while in the meantime Crudiv 7 and Subron 3 had been assigned to the South West Area Fleet to carry out Commerce Destruction Operations in the Bay of Bengal ("B" Operations) and had left home waters in mid-July and arrived at MERGUI (West Coast, MALAY Peninsula) on July 31st, where they were preparing for operations. Subron 3 was then operating in ^{the} South East area while Subron 1, 2, and 8 were in home waters preparing to depart for Commerce destruction operations in the INDIAN OCEAN area.

Headquarters of the SHORE BASED AIR FORCE was at TINIAN with his forces deployed as follows: 22nd Air Flotilla - Home Islands; 24th Air Flotilla - Inner South Seas (WAKE, PUL, TARAN, IMIENJI (JAVIT)); 25th Air Flotilla - South East Area (as set forth above); 26th Air Flotilla - Home Islands, STAPAN, TINIAN. The 21st and 23rd Air Flotillas were assigned to the South West Area Fleet and stationed at RANGOON, KENDARI (Celebes) and KOEPANG (Timor).

The 3rd Fleet, which formed the Carrier Striking Force, had been established by the change in War Time Fleet Organization of 14 July, consisted of: Cardiv 1 - (SHOKAKU, ZUIKAKU and ZUIHO); Cardiv 2 - (RYUJO, JUNYO, HIYO); Batdiv 11 - (HEI, KIRISHIMA), Crudiv 7 - (KUMANO, SUZUYA, MOGAMI), Crudiv 8 - (TONE, CHIKUMA), DESRON 10 - (Desrons 4, 10, 16 and 17); Attached: HOSHIO, AKAGI, HIRYU, YUBARE. NOTE: (1) MOGAMI was under repair at TRUK; (2) AKAGI & HIRYU had been lost in the Battle of Midway but were added to this organization to hide that secret. The 3rd Fleet was formed as a striking force; the SHOKAKU had completed its ((Coral Sea)) repairs on 18 July, the ZUIKAKU had been undergoing minor repairs at KURE since 1 August, and the RYUJO was training in the KAGOSHIMA BAY area after the ALEUTIAN operations. Conversion work on the HIYO had been completed on the HIYO on 31 July and work on the ZUIHO and JUNYO was scheduled for completion on August 10th and 25th, respectively. Due to the very heavy losses of aircraft squadrons ^{back of the} in the Coral Sea and continuing to the Battle of Midway, we were striving to replace ^{our} material losses while carrying out carrier squadrons' training at air bases at IWAKUNI, KANOYA, KASAGAHARA, and KAGOSHIMA. In short, movements by the SHOKAKU, ZUIKAKU and RYUJO were not hindered but the other three carriers were not yet completed, nor could they be used for operations until they had a minimum of

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Six and a half months operational-training after completion of their conversion-work. Also, due to the replacements and shifts in flight personnel of an air squadron, their degree of training was inferior and their battle-readiness could not be expected until mid-September.

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II THE COUNTER ATTACK BY ALLIED FORCES ~ Background of their Decisions for same

All U.S. Source material omitted

Morton - "U.S. Army"
King - Fleet Adm. King & Naval Chronological Record of WW II
Morison - "The Struggle for Guadalcanal"

433 F Reasons for their Decision for an Offensive in the Solomons Area

435 F Preparations by Allied Forces

438 F Landings at TULAGI & GUADALCANAL

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III ENEMY'S ATTACK ~ OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES - URGENT RADIOS OF ENEMY'S ATTACK

The units in the TULAGI area immediately sent urgent reports of the enemy's attack early on the morning of 7 August. Then there were the final message from Captain Shigetoshi MIYAZAKI, Commander of Yokohama AIR at the TULAGI Base on GAVUTU Island reporting "MANY ENEMY TROOPS WE WILL DEFEND TO THE LAST MAN - PRAY FOR OUR SUCCESS" - after which all communications broke off.

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Principal Messages

ORIGINATOR	TIME OF DISPATCH	ADDRESSEES	TIME OF RECEIPT	MESSAGE
TULAGI COMMUNICATIONS STATION	0412	CINL 8 th FLEET C/S 4 th FLEET C/S 6 th FLEET C/S Combined Fleet Chief 1 st Dept. Navy Section, Imperial HQ. Comdr 25 th Air Flotilla	0430	UNDER INTENSE ENEMY BOMBING.
SAME	0425	SAME	0450	SIGHTED ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCE
SAME	-	-	-	UNDER ATTACK BY ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCE OF 20 SHIPS - PREPARATIONS FOR LANDING UNDERWAY - REQUEST ASSISTANCE
COMDR YOKOHAMA AIR	0430	-	0435	ALL FLYING BOATS DESTROYED BY AIR ATTACK AT 0430
SAME	0435	COMDR 5 th AIR ATTACK FORCE INFO: COMDR OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE	0508	SIGHTED ONE ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIER AND 4 CRUISERS
TULAGI COMMUNICATIONS STATION	0435	8 th FLEET	0519	ENEMY HAS BEGUN LANDING AT TULAGI
SAME	-	C/S 11 AIR FLEET C/S 8 th FLEET C/S 4 th FLEET COMDR 25 th AIR FLOTILLA CHIEF 5 th DEPT. NAVY SECTION IMPERIAL HQ	0529	DUE TO THE SITUATION, AM BURNING EQUIPMENT (Author's Note: "equipment" believed to mean code books and other communications related material.)

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SAME	0529	8 th FLEET	0550	BEING BOMBARDED BY SHIPS' GUNFIRE
SAME	0535	SAME	0538	1 BATTLESHIP, 3 CRUISERS, 15 DESTROYERS; ALSO TRANSPORTS
SAME	0603	8 th FLEET	0603	STUBBORN DEFENCE - BOMBS NEAR MISS THE COMMUNICATIONS ROOM
COMDR YOKOHAMA AIR	0610	—	—	MANY ENEMY TROOPS - WE WILL DEFEND TO THE LAST MAN - PRAY FOR OUR SUCCESS

NOTE: (1) These messages taken from the 8th FLEET WAVE DIARY, BATTLE REPORT OF THE 25th AIR FLOTILLA and the "YAMADA DIARY"

(2) The report of sighting 4 cruisers and 1 aircraft carrier must be mistaken identification of other vessels. Post-war U.S. data shows that their aircraft carriers were some 60 miles west of Guadalcanal and could not be seen from Tulagi; in addition, no flying boats nor float-fighters took off from Tulagi that morning.

(3) At that time Yokohama Air was based on GAVUTU Island and the 84th Guard Force, under the command of the 8th Base Force, was on TULAGI Island; the TULAGI Communications Station was under the command of the 84th Guard Force.

(4) Sunrise in the TULAGI area that day was 0440.

OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE ((The Operational Title of 8th FLEET))

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The urgent radio from TULAGI was quite unexpected by the Outer South Seas Force. At first, the 8th Fleet estimated that it was probably only a reconnaissance in force and apparently felt that the report of the enemy strength was probably exaggerated. An air of optimism had become so persuasive that they believed their Shore Based Air Force and the Outer South Seas force could/would drive off the enemy carriers and enemy fleet, respectively, and that a battalion (approximately) of ground forces could recapture it. However, Staff officer ONISHI, in his post-war recollections, stated that from the first he had estimated the attack to be a real counter-attack.

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Based on a similar estimate, the Commander of the Outer South Seas Force, Vice Admiral Gunichi MIKAWA, decided to have his major ships - the flagship CHOKAI and others sortie for the SOLOMON ISLANDS to destroy the enemy invasion force in collaboration with attacks by the Base Air Force ((the Naval Shore Based Air Force)). At 0535 he ordered his forces at Rabaul to expedite completion of preparations for sortie, for the flagship, CHOKAI, to speed to RABAUl to embark the 8th Fleet Staff/Headquarters, and for the YUNAGI to act as its escort. As mentioned previously, CruDiv 6 and the CHOKAI had left KAVIENG at 0415 for the ADMIRALTY Islands and RABAUl but on receipt of the above mentioned urgent radio ((from TULAGI)), Comdr CruDiv 6 cancelled the movement to the ADMIRALTIES and headed South at high speed, reporting arrival at RABAUl anticipated at 1300. This action by Com CruDiv 6 was through his own initiative.

Commander Outer South Seas Force issued urgent orders for: (a) the (DD) OIKAZE to the waters around SHORTLANDS I^s (it departed RABAUl at 0630) to pick up downed in that

area (as requested by Comdr 5th Air Attack Force - details later on); (b) Subron 7 to proceed to the TULAGI area and attack enemy ships there; the formation of a Reinforcement Force from the ground forces at Rabaul (SASABO 5th SNLF - 415 men, KURE 3rd SNLF - 41 men, KURE 5th SNLF - 53 men, 81st Guard Force - 10 men, total 519 men) to be promptly transported to GUADALCANAAL Ist in the MEIYO Maru ((5627 t)_{AG}) and AE SOYA ((3800 t)) and escorted by the (CM) TSUGARU, Mine Sweep #2 and Sub Chasn #16. (this force departed RABAUl at 2100 the 7th).

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In Eastern New Guinea, the convoy transporting the Airfield Construction Unit to BUNA had left RABAUl on the 6th but with the 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE about to make an all-out attack on TULAGI, it became impossible to send any air cover for the BUNA convoy, so Comdr. Outer South Seas Force postponed that convoys arrival at BUNA for one day. Also, as will be related, since the Commander of the EASTERN NEW GUINEA INVASION FORCE was embarked in the (OCL) TENRYU, now in company with the (CA) CHOKAI and other ships moving south toward the SOLOMONS, he ordered the Commander 8th BASE FORCE as replacement in command of the Eastern New Guinea operation.

The Headquarters 8th Fleet had been studying ways and means of attacking and destroying the enemy attacking force since receipt of the urgent messages from TULAGI and had quickly ~~decided~~ decided to send south to the SOLOMONS those forces immediately available (CA) CHOKAI, the 4 CAs of CruDiv 6, the old CLs TENRYU and YUBARI and the DD, YUGIRI for a quick-strike against the enemy.

5th AIR ATTACK FORCE — and — SHORE BASED^d AIR FORCE

As previously stated, the 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE had scheduled an attack on RABAUl for 7 August and had concentrated his forces at RABAUl in preparation for that attack. The Combined Fleet's Reorganization of 14 July had assigned 15 Zero-mod 2 ((HAMP)) fighters and 16 carrier dive bombers of 2nd AIR to the Shore Based Air Force, which had been shipped to RABAUl in the YAWATA Maru and arrived August 6th. After receiving TULAGI's urgent messages and after liaison with the Headquarters of the 8th Fleet, Rear Admiral Sadayoshi YAMADA, the Commander of the 5th Air Attack Force, decided to attack, using his entire air power in the RABAUl area, and at 0635 issued this operation order (5 Air Attack Force Operation Order #196):

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(1) THIS MORNING AN ENEMY INVASION FORCE (1 BATTLESHIP, 1 AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 3 CRUISERS, 15 DESTROYERS AND MANY TRANSPORTS) APPEARED OFF TULAGI AND ARE LANDING.

(2) ALL FORCES WILL ATTACK WITH ALL THEIR MIGHT AS FOLLOWS:

(a) #2 FORCE - 27 LAND BASED BOMBERS - BOMBING ATTACK - TAKE OFF 0730

#1 FORCE - 18 ZERO FIGHTERS

(b) #3 FORCE - (AUTHOR'S NOTE: 2ND DIVISION'S AIRCRAFT) - 9 DIVE BOMBERS - PREPARE TO TAKE OFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

(c) ATTACK TARGETS: #2 FORCE - ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, TRANSPORTS

#3 FORCE - TRANSPORTS, ((ENEMY)) FORCES ASHORE

(3) AKIGUMO EXPEDITE MOVEMENT TO BUKA -- DUTY TO READY THE AIRFIELD THERE AND RESCUE DOWNED AIR CREWS.

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In the above order, the directive for land based bombers to attack by bombing was because there was no time to make a change in bomb loads (from the land-bombs for the RABU attack) already in the bomb-racks. In addition, there was concern that the Zero fighters in escorting the Land based bombers from RABAU to TULAGI - 500 miles - and return might have to make emergency landings on BUKA, hence the need to ready the emergency field at BUKA for such use. This airfield, as mentioned previously, had not been worked on prior to, nor after, the SN operation. Because of lack of radius of operations by the dive-bombers, one-way attacks would be required and, if conditions were suitable, these aircraft could make emergency landings on BUKA, but if not, they would have to "ditch" at sea in the SHORTLAND 12 area, hence the urgency of the (DD) OIKAZE's mission, particularly the rescue of downed air-crews. Subsequently a Type 2-flying-boat (EMILY) was dispatched also on this mission. At 0710 a search for the enemy carrier task force by 3 Land Based Bombers covering a sector 100°-130° from RABAU commenced on orders from Commander Duter South Seas Force, and a Type 2 flying boat was also on stand-by for a shadowing/maintaining contact mission and Zero-Med 2s were flying combat air patrol over RABAU.

Earlier, at 0600, Commander 5th Air Attack Force sent to the TULAGI Communication Station and the TULAGI SEAPLANE BASE the following:

INTEND TO DISPATCH 27 LAND BOMBERS AND 18 ZEROS AT 0700 TO ATTACK ENEMY CARRIER TASK FORCE 16 DIVE BOMBERS, ^{NOW} MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR ATTACK. In another area, on receipt of TULAGI's ^{urgent}

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reports, the Commander of the Naval Shore Based Air Force, Vice Admiral Nishizo TSUKAHARA (on TINIAN) at 0600 ordered Commander 6th Air Attack Force to send 9 land bombers from those immediately available from MISAWA AIR on TINIAN to speed to RABAU and come under the Command of Commander 5th Air Attack force; this was followed by an order at 1000 to send all of MISAWA AIR.

Also, at 0640 he had ordered the 5th Air Attack Force to attack the enemy invasion force with all his forces and the Outer South Seas ^{Force} to cooperate with the 5th Air Attack Force; as follows - OPERATION ORDER # 59.

(1) 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL MAKE AN ALL OUT ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY INVASION FORCE.
ATTACK TARGETS - CONVOY OR AIRCRAFT CARRIER (TOMORROW); AIRCRAFT CARRIER OR CONVOY

(2) OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE WILL COOPERATE WITH 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE USING APPROPRIATE FORCES WITH THE TASK OF DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY INVASION FORCE.

The above directive to the Outer South Seas Force was in accordance with the provisions established in Combined Fleet's Reorganization of Forces of 14 July - i.e. "Should the enemy attack in the areas of responsibility of the 4th Fleet, or the 8th Fleet, the C-in-C 11th Air Fleet (the Comdr. Shore Based Air Force) will exercise unity of command over the 4th Fleet and the 8th Fleet". Thus, the Headquarters 8th Fleet came directly under the command of Commander 11th Air Fleet. Both Headquarters, 11th Air Fleet as well as 8th Fleet, estimated that there was strong likelihood of an enemy's counter attack in the SOLOMON ISLANDS area but neither had changed their belief that it would come sometime after mid-1943. For this reason, this attack on TULAGI, against an area where it had been previously anticipated, did not correspond with the expected timing for a real counter-attack and was probably seen as being aimed at the destruction of the airfield but this landing of an amphibious invasion convoy indicated a second objective, a real counter attack! In either case, this was the opportune time to send a relief force for the TULAGI Area Force, and attack and destroy the enemy carrier task force. It was decided to put in the 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE and make an all-out attack, to move the 11th Air Fleet Headquarters forward to RABAU and collectively direct the Outer South Seas Force; to this end the following was sent to all forces:

- ① AFTER TODAY THIS COMMAND WILL COLLECTIVELY DIRECT THE EIGHTH FLEET WITH REGARD TO OPERATIONS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AREA ② THIS COMMAND WILL DEPART TINIAN AT 0600 TOMORROW AND WILL SHIFT ITS FLAG TO RABAU.

THE 17th ARMY

The 17th Army had scheduled war-games/map problem of the PORT Moresby ^(invasion operations) by the South Seas Detachment for 7 August beginning at 0900 but at 0620, KAMI, the Senior Staff Officer of the 8th Fleet called on the Chief of Staff ^{of the 17th Army}. This morning the enemy attacked TULAGI and radio contact has been lost; the navy is dispatching all its air power, some 40 aircraft, and the fleet is also under way. In the 17th Army, only the Chief operations Staff officer had been informed that the airfield on

Guadalcanal had been completed and that our fighter aircraft would move up there soon; moreover they had not been informed of the alert-message of August 4th from the Chief 1st Division of Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters. At 0730 a staff officer from the ArQ. 8th Fleet came and requested the cooperation of army forces in recapture-operations and was told by a staff officer of the 17th Army that as they had no troops at hand and, after consideration, replied that, if available, they could send forward the 35th Brigade which was at PALAO. There was no thought given to shifting the SOUTH SEAS DETACHMENT, then at RABAU (and scheduled to move to BUNA), to the GUADALCANAL area.

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Up to now the mission of the 17th Army ^{had been} "In cooperation with the Navy, invade and secure PORT MORESBY, and ^{the} suppression of disorder in ^{other} strategic places in Eastern New Guinea, as the opportunity offers." However, there was a proviso in the Joint Army-Navy Central Agreement regarding operations in Eastern New Guinea which said "The Army will assist the Navy ^{as required} with regard to the defence of strategic islands of the Solomons Islands." Now the Headquarters 17th Army studied the matter ~ should they proceed with the PORT MORESBY invasion operations as planned or should they send the main force of the South Seas Detachment to GUADALCANAL. As a result, it was decided to ^(without delay) have ^{YOKOHAMA} the ^{advance} (Van) Force ^{push forward without delay} from its present position, ^{to} quickly to move the main body of the South Seas Detachment to BUNA, and to assign the 35th ^{Infantry} Brigade (The KAWAGUCHI Detachment) to GUADALCANAL Island. ^{it was decided that the} At that time ^{infantry} regiment of the 17th Army that had departed DAVAO on 5 August and was due to arrive RABAU on the 15th would be landed in BUNA as a follow-up to the main body of the SOUTH SEAS DETACHMENT. Headquarters 17th Army informed Headquarters 8th Fleet of the above and also sent the following report to the Army Section, Imperial General Headquarters:

" (1) ACCORDING TO INFORMATION FROM THE NAVY AT 0600 THE SEVENTH LANDINGS ^(AT TULAGI) WERE MADE FROM ~~THE~~ 20 TRANSPORTS ESCORTED BY 1 AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 1 BATTLESHIP, 4 CRUISERS AND 15 DESTROYERS

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(2) THIS ARMY WILL IMMEDIATELY USE A PART OF THE 35TH INFANTRY BRIGADE TO REINFORCE TULAGI AS REQUESTED BY THE NAVY. REQUEST APPROVAL.

(3) AT PRESENT THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THE PORT MORESBY OPERATIONS."

COMBINED FLEET

ON 7 AUGUST the Headquarters and Staff of the Combined Fleet were embarked in the YAMATO at the fleet anchorage at HASHIRAJIMA; Although scheduled to cruise to KURE early that day, this move was cancelled on receipt of the report of the enemy heavy strike/attacks against TULAGI. The Staff of the Combined Fleet estimated that the enemy force with the aircraft carrier

that was landed was about one division and that this was indeed a real counter-attack.

The Chief of Staff Combined Fleet, Rear Admiral UGAKI wrote in his diary for that day "The enemy is surely using his main force to boldly exploit the situation in that area ... (parts omitted by the Author) - If we do not quickly defeat him there he will probably try to recapture RABOUL or interfere with the PORT MORESBY operation and since operations in the above area will become exceedingly difficult, even if we postpone the INDIAN OCEAN area operations, we must first put things in order by using all our might to clear them out. Discussed various requirements to dispose of them"

The Staff of the Combined Fleet had estimated that the Solomon Islands area was one of the enemy's main counter attack objectives but estimated the timings to be the same as that of the Navy Section Imperial General Headquarters, - i.e. - the autumn of 1943, or subsequent thereto, therefore the enemy's attack was now a stunning shock. However, from one viewpoint, it appeared that here was a good opportunity to come to grips with, attack and destroy him in the TULAGI area ^{where} he had come to attack and had landed ground forces; ever since the enemy had attacked the Marshalls area on 1 February, including our defeat in the Battle of Midway etc., we had been persistently striving to come to grips with the enemy's carrier task force!

As a result of liaison with the Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters, agreement was reached on an estimate of the enemy situation and on counter plans. It was decided to cancel the Commerce Destruction operations in the INDIAN OCEAN ("B operations"), concentrate all available strengths of the 2nd Fleet and 3rd Fleet and sortie to recover the TULAGI area and come to grips with, and destroy the enemy carrier task force; the Headquarters Combined Fleet would also move forward to TRUK.

In the meantime the Cinc Combined Fleet at 0650 the 7th had ordered SUBRON 3, then operating in the South East Area to attack the enemy which was attacking in the TULAGI area. Orders were also sent to CruDiv 5, Desron 2 (less DesDiv 15)^{and} Desron 4 (less DesDiv 2) of the 2nd Fleet, after calling at the nearest Naval Base to make preparations for movement to the South Seas area. The YOKOSUKA 5th S.L.F. (616 men) which was on stand-by at GUAM* for the invasion of OCEAN and NAUKU were ordered incorporated into the Outer South Seas force.

The HQ Combined Fleet also requested the Navy Section Imperial General Headquarters for Army forces to be thrown into the action. Immediately they were informed of a plan to use the IKKI Force* (2,400 men) ^{as a first step,} but they felt that (the IKKI Force) strength was too small and expressed dissatisfaction with the plan. However the Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters explained that the Army Section (Imp. Gen. HQ) were confident of that force's power, and as the power of Army forces.

* (Had been part of the Midway invasion force - returned debarked at GUAM)

was out of their line, they agreed even though still not satisfied and uneasy about this. The Staff Combined Fleet felt that since there were 700 men in the Defense Force at TULAGI, 1200 in the Guadalcanal Defense Force and 2000 in the Airfield Construction Force there shouldn't be great difficulty in recapturing TULAGI-GUADALCANAL. Furthermore they were conscious of the fact that the Shore Based Air Force, the Outer South Seas Force and the 5th Air Attack Force, respectively, would conceive appropriate measures to dispose of the matter. At 0200 the 8th the CinC Combined Fleet ordered future operations as follows:

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"COMBINED FLEET RADIO ORDER #198. (1) ON THE SEVENTH AN ENEMY INVASION FORCE SUPPORTED BY A CARRIER TASK FORCE ATTACKED THE TULAGI AND GUADALCANAL AREAS; THE SHORE BASED AIR FORCE, SUBMARINE FORCE AND OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE ARE NOW ATTACKING THE ENEMY. (2) THE COMBINED FLEET WILL PROMPTLY ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY AND ALSO SECURE THE ABOVE AREA. (3) ALL FORCES WILL OPERATE AS FOLLOWS: (A) OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE, INNER SOUTH SEAS FORCE AND SHORE-BASED AIR FORCE (WILL BE CALLED THE "SOUTH EAST AREA FORCE"), UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE COMMANDER SHORE BASED AIR FORCE, WILL REPEATEDLY ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY. ALSO, AN AIR BASE WILL BE REAINED AND SECURED IN THE BOUGAINVILLE AREA AND THE 26th AIR FLOTILLA WILL PROMPTLY MOVE FORWARD TO RABUL. (B) THE ADVANCE FORCE AND STRIKING FORCE (EXCEPT THOSE UNITS UNABLE QUICKLY TO OPERATE DUE TO REPAIRS ETC.) WILL, AS SOON AS PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETED, ADVANCE IN SUPPORT TO THE SOUTH SEAS. (C) THE OPERATIONS SET FORTH IN COMBINED FLEET RADIO ORDER #174 (AUTHOR'S NOTE-THE "B" OPERATIONS) ARE CANCELLED, AND CRUDIV 7, DESRON 3, DESDIV 4, DESDIV 15, KYOKUTOMARU AND NIPPON MARU (REMOVED FROM THE SOUTH WEST FORCE), UNDER COMMAND OF COMCRUDIV 7 WILL MOVE TO DAVAO ABOUT AUGUST 17TH. (D) ORDERS WILL BE ISSUED LATER REGARDING COORDINATION WITH ARMY FORCES (E) THIS COMMAND IN THE YAMATO PLUS DESDIV 7 AND KASUGA MARU WILL DEPART THE INLAND SEA ABOUT 18 AUGUST AND MOVE FORWARD TO THE SOUTH SEAS AREA."

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This order established for the first time a SOUTHEAST AREA FORCE and as previously stated the Commander of the SHORE BASED AIR FORCE exercised command over the Outer South Seas Force but this order officially placed that commander in command of the Outer South Seas Force and the Inner South Seas Force as "Commander SOUTH EAST AREA FORCE" with the responsibility for operations in the "South East Area". Also, by this order the CinC Combined Fleet ordered the Shore Based Air Force to secure and make ready an air base in the BOUGAINVILLE Island area.

THE ARMY AND NAVY SECTIONS OF IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

The Navy Section intercepted the urgent radios from the units in the TULAGI area on the

morning of the 7th and the operations related messages of the Shore Based Air Force, the Outer South Sea Force and 5th Air Attack Force; in addition it maintained liaison with the Headquarters Combined Fleet. From various radio messages the Navy Section 16HQ know that a force of one battleship, one aircraft carrier, 3 cruisers, 15 destroyers and many transports were in the TULAGI area and that a separate enemy force of 3 cruisers, 7 destroyers and 27 transports had entered the anchorage to the east of the airfield on GUADALCANAL Island. Moreover they estimated that aircraft carriers were to the area to the north of TULAGI. The Navy Section, 16HQ, like the Staff Combined Fleet estimated that the enemy's landings at TULAGI were the enemy's planned actual counter-attack. The ^{evening} afternoon of the 7th, the Chief of the 1st Division of the Navy Section (who was also the Head of the 1st Division of the Naval General Staff) informed the Chiefs of Staff of the Combined Fleet, the 11th Air Fleet and 8th Fleet of the following estimate of the enemy situation: FROM THE SITUATION OF ENEMY RADIO OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS AND THE STRENGTHS OF THE ATTACK TODAY IN THE TULAGI AREA, IT SEEMS THAT THE ENEMY PLANS POSITIVELY TO RECOVER THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THE NEW GUINEA AREA. ALSO THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE ENEMY FORCE WHICH WAS THOUGHT TO HAVE DEPARTED THE HAWAIIAN AREA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MONTH HAS ALREADY ADVANCED TO THE SOLOMONS AREA, THEREFORE THE ENEMY STRENGTH ^(IN THE LATTER AREA) PARTICULARLY IN AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, IS ESTIMATED TO BE CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN REPORTS INDICATE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IN THE ABOVE ESTIMATE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION THE NAVY SECTION 16HQ ESTIMATED THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE LANDINGS JUST MADE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS, THE ENEMY PLANNED TO ACTUALLY RECOVER THE NEW GUINEA AREA. THIS ESTIMATE WAS PROBABLY BECAUSE THE NAVY SECTION BELIEVED THE FIRST OF THE TWO PREVIOUSLY REPORTED CONVOYS, THE ONE OF 37 SHIPS WHICH DEPARTED SAN DIEGO ON 2 JULY WOULD, AS ESTIMATED AT THE TIME, BE AT PORT MORESBY AND THAT THE SECOND, THAT LEFT THE WEST COAST (U.S.) ON 14 JULY WAS THE ONE THAT HAD ATTACKED IN THE TULAGI AREA. THE NEXT DAY THE NAVY SECTION MADE ITS ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION, AS FOLLOWS:

(1) STRENGTH OF THE ENEMY FORCE WHICH DEPARTED THE HAWAIIAN AREA: 1 AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 1-2 AUXILIARY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, 2-3 CRUISERS, 8 DESTROYERS, 45 TRANSPORTS (PROBABLY THOSE THAT DEPARTED US WEST COAST ON 14 JULY)

(2) FORCES WHICH DEPARTED FOR THE SOLOMONS AREA: 1 BATTLESHIP, 3 CRUISERS, 7 DESTROYERS, 30 TRANSPORTS (AUTHOR'S NOTE: DEDUCTION BY NAVY SECTION FROM 5th AIR ATTACK FORCE RECONNAISSANCE ON THE 7th AND THE ATTACK FORCE'S REPORT?). OF THE 45 TRANSPORTS WHICH DEPARTED THE HAWAIIAN AREA, SOME THIRTY MIGHT OPERATE ELSEWHERE OR COULD BE TANKERS.

(3) ENEMY OPERATIONS AGAINST OTHER AREAS (1) THERE SHOULD NOT BE EXCESS FORCES FROM WHICH TO ORGANIZE

ADDITIONAL
 AN INVASION FORCE OF THE SAME LEVEL AS THAT FOR THE SOLOMONS AREA (2) THEY COULD CARRY OUT DIVERSIONARY ATTACKS IN OTHER PLACES FOR THE TIME BEING. (3) THEY MAY PLAN TO RECOVER THE SOLOMONS AND MORESBY AREAS AND THEN THE RABOUL AREA (4) ALTHOUGH THEY MAY HAVE SOME SORT OF SCHEMES FOR ACTIVITY AGAINST THE GILBERTS AREA, THESE SHOULD NOT AMOUNT TO MUCH. (5) FOR THE TIME BEING THEIR FORCES THAT HAVE COME THERE SHOULD BE TIED UP IN THE SOLOMONS AREA, THE MORESBY AREA AND FROM BOTH AREAS AGAINST THE RABOUL AREA. (6) THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF MANY MEN-OF-WAR IN THE CORAL SEA AREA.

The above estimate of the enemy situation was immediately passed to the Army Section, 194HQ, and the Army and Navy Sections both began studies of counter-plans.

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Until now, the Army Section had been notified by the Navy Section that an airfield on GUADALCANAL Island was under construction but only one Section of that Staff knew of this, the great majority did not know of it.

As a result of their studies of a counter-plan it was agreed to carry on as planned the Eastern New Guinea operations and also to recapture GUADALCANAL Island and TULAGI. To this end, tentatively agreed measures to be taken were to quickly concentrate at RABOUL the 17th ARMY units that were scattered at various places and based on purpose of the Army-Navy Central Agreement of 28th July, to assist the Navy in the Solomon Islands, in the background of their decision was the estimate of the situation that the enemy planned to recapture the SOLOMON and NEW GUINEA areas, plus their estimate that now that the Combined Fleet was moving forward, if army forces were thrown in, the operation would not be very difficult. They underestimated the fighting power of the American landing force and overestimated that of the I KK I Force which they were confident would recapture GUADALCANAL, if used.

After arrangements were worked out between the Navy Section, 194HQ, and the Staff of the Combined Fleet the major features of the counter-plan of the 8th, other than the sortie of the Combined Fleet, were:

- (1) SHORE BASED AIR FORCE (a) expedite sending drop-tanks for carrier torpedo-bombers. (b) reinforcements of carrier dive-bombers, carrier fighters, Type 2 "Emily" flying boats and floatfighters; immediately furnish 2nd Air 9 carrier dive bombers; float fighters - personnel and equipment to be sent on the ENNAN Maru departing the 13th; carrier fighters - move forward all from 6th Air (shift base forward) load 20 a/c on the ENNAN Maru during latter part of August (send 20 a/c); intend to send 5 Type 2 (Emily) large flying boats and will supply 4 Type 97 Mavis flying boats.

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(2) LANDING FORCES: (a) Assign the YOKOHAMA 5TH SLF (about 600 men) to the OUTER SOUTH SEAS ^{FORCE} (b) Prepare the following Naval Landing Forces: YOKOSUKA 6TH and SASAGO 6TH S.L. Forces (Each of about 1500 men), organization scheduled for completion 15 August; The YOKOSUKA 3RD Special Landing Force (Parachute Force of about 800) which will complete its shift to TANINBAR 12 East of TIMOR and due to return to Japan; Additional SLF of 1450 men

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(3) COMBINED FLEET (except Shore based Air Force) (a) 3RD Fleet - only Cardiv 1 will depart. Replenish personnel and material as needed - ready to sortie 14-15TH (b) 2ND Fleet (all) will sortie. (c) Subron 1 - ready for sea August 15TH; now preparing for departure.

The Army Section on the 7TH sent to the IKKI Detachment - "RETURN TO GUAM AND STAND BY IN YOUR PRESENT TRANSPORT - EXPECTED DEPLOYMENT TO EASTERN NEW GUINEA" - this order was sent to all ^{Army} Commanders in Chief and also the order to the 17TH Army to assist the Navy's operations in the Solomon Islands and the PORT MORESBY INVASION OPERATIONS should be carried out as scheduled. This order was ^{also} in agreement with the 17TH Army's views, as previously noted. The IKKI Detachment, after the Battle of MIDWAY, were carrying out training on GUAM Island and on 6 August went aboard ship which departed GUAM the 7TH to return to home islands. In response to the Headquarters Combined Fleet request for the dispatch of Army forces, the Army Section were considering the dispatch of either the 41ST Infantry Regiment or the 35TH Infantry Brigade in addition to the IKKI Detachment. The 41ST Infantry Regiment had previously left DAVAO and was being transported to RABOUL and due to arrive the 15TH or 16TH of August. Therefore in addition to the IKKI Detachment, it was likely that the 41ST Infantry Regiment would be sent since they could arrive at GUADALCANAL quicker than the 35TH Infantry Brigade. However, ^{even} in the event that the 35TH Infantry Brigade were dispatched, it had the prospect of moving up to GUADALCANAL at the same time that the Combined Fleet was concentrated at TRUK. The decision as to which of these forces would be sent was put off until the following day. Again on the 8TH the Army Section and Navy Section made joint studies regarding the estimate of the situation in the South East area, the previous estimate of the situation being explained by the Navy Section. The conclusions of their joint research and study were:

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"Today's estimate of the situation boils down to the enemy's actions are to occupy and secure the Solomon's ^{by} to recapture them, he has allocated considerable forces; therefore, we agree that ~~the~~ the Army and Navy should, ^{after} concentrating appropriate forces, take the offensive. Late the night of the 8TH, the Army Section notified the 17TH Army that it would have the responsibility for operations for the recapture of the Solomon Islands and also,

From the Desk of

Japan free & date

EDWIN T. LAYTON

- ()
() "Free Burmai"
"Base Air Free" —

Admin Title — Operative Title — (at no)

1st Air Fleet — ~~Samuel Shiley~~ Jones

2nd Fleet — Adams Jones

6th Fleet — Vanguard Free (A)

4th Fleet — South Sea Zone
late Index S.S.F

8th Fleet — South Sea Zone

~~South Sea Zone~~ —

24 Air Fleet

4th Air Fleet Jones

25 Air Fleet

5 " "

26 " — 2th

6 " "

at all costs to carry out the previous plans for the invasion operations against PORT MORESBY.

(1) As the Army and Navy are in conference studying the matter of operational directives for that area based on the new situation there, it is expected that the necessary orders and directives will be issued, one after another.

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(2) The prompt conclusion of the "RE" ((no RESEBY)) operation (including an invasion in the vicinity of SAMARAI) and the coming operations of your Army (you will be responsible for the recapture of the SOLOMONS area) are considered to be extremely important from the leadership viewpoint, therefore we would like you to carry out, ^{and at all costs,} promptly, previous plans, if the local naval situation permits. The Central Naval authority agrees with the above.

(4) THE 1ST BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS - OPERATIONS OF THE BASE AIR FORCE*
OPERATIONS ON AUGUST 7TH 1942

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It has already been related how the Commander of the 5th Air Attack Force, on receiving the urgent messages from TULAGI of the attack by the enemy early on 7 August, ^{immediately} decided to ~~make~~ an all-out attack, ^{and} took the necessary steps to prepare for forced landings of dive bombers, 27 land based bombers ((BETTY?)) (each carrying 2-250 kilo ((550#)) and 4-60 kilo ((132#)) bombs) and 17 Zero fighters; took off from RABAU at 0755 to attack enemy carriers. However, as they were unable to sight any enemy carriers, they attacked the enemy ships off ^{at 1115} TULAGI; both prior to and after their bombing attack, they received attacks by some 60 enemy aircraft and intense anti-aircraft gunfire. Heading for the enemy transports, our bombing attack force was prevented from using their bomb sights by thick clouds and interference by enemy aircraft and had to bomb heavy cruisers from 3,700 meters altitude. No hits were obtained and results were small.

In the meantime our Zero fighters, ^{reported} shooting down 48 enemy fighters (of these 8 were unconfirmed), 5 dive bombers, 1 medium size plane, for a total of 54 aircraft, 2 Zero fighters were lost, and on returning 4 fighters landed on BUKA airfield, 11 arriving at RABAU. According to U.S. records, the U.S. forces knew in advance of the movement of our bomb attack force; at 0845 from a report from a Coastwatcher on Bougainville and in addition, the radar of the USS CHICAGO detected our force 5 minutes before it arrived over TULAGI and the CHICAGO's fighter direction group directed the 62 fighters from the WASP, ENTERPRISE and SARATOGA to intercept the Japanese aircraft. In this action the Americans lost 11 fighters, and 1 dive bomber.

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Nine of our dive bombers took off from RABAU at 0845 and at 1300, braving intense anti-aircraft fire and some 12-15 enemy aircraft, attacked 2 enemy destroyers, reporting heavy damage.

* Hereafter - The Naval Shore Based Air Force will be abbreviated to BASE AIR FORCE.

to one and ^(the other) setting ^{afire} with heavy damage and probability of sinking - After their dive bombing attack they were again engaged by about 15 enemy fighters, losing two dive bombers. Seven planes started their return flight, 3 made forced landings at sea near the SHORTLANDS, two crews being rescued by large flying boats, the third was picked up by naval vessels, but four ^{others} failed to return. According to US records, one destroyer received a bomb hit during our dive bombers' attack which killed 22 men but caused only light damage; they also claimed to have shot down 10 of the 11 attacking dive bombers.

Prior to our Bomber force's take off, 3 land based bombers took off from RASSAU to search for the enemy carrier task force over an arc of 110° - 130° to a distance of 700 miles. The two aircraft that covered the 110° and 120° sectors sighted an enemy patrol plane. The third search plane encountered bad weather to the South-east of TULAGI and headed for the GUADALCANAL anchorage area, reporting as follows.

ENEMY SHIPS AT TULAGI:

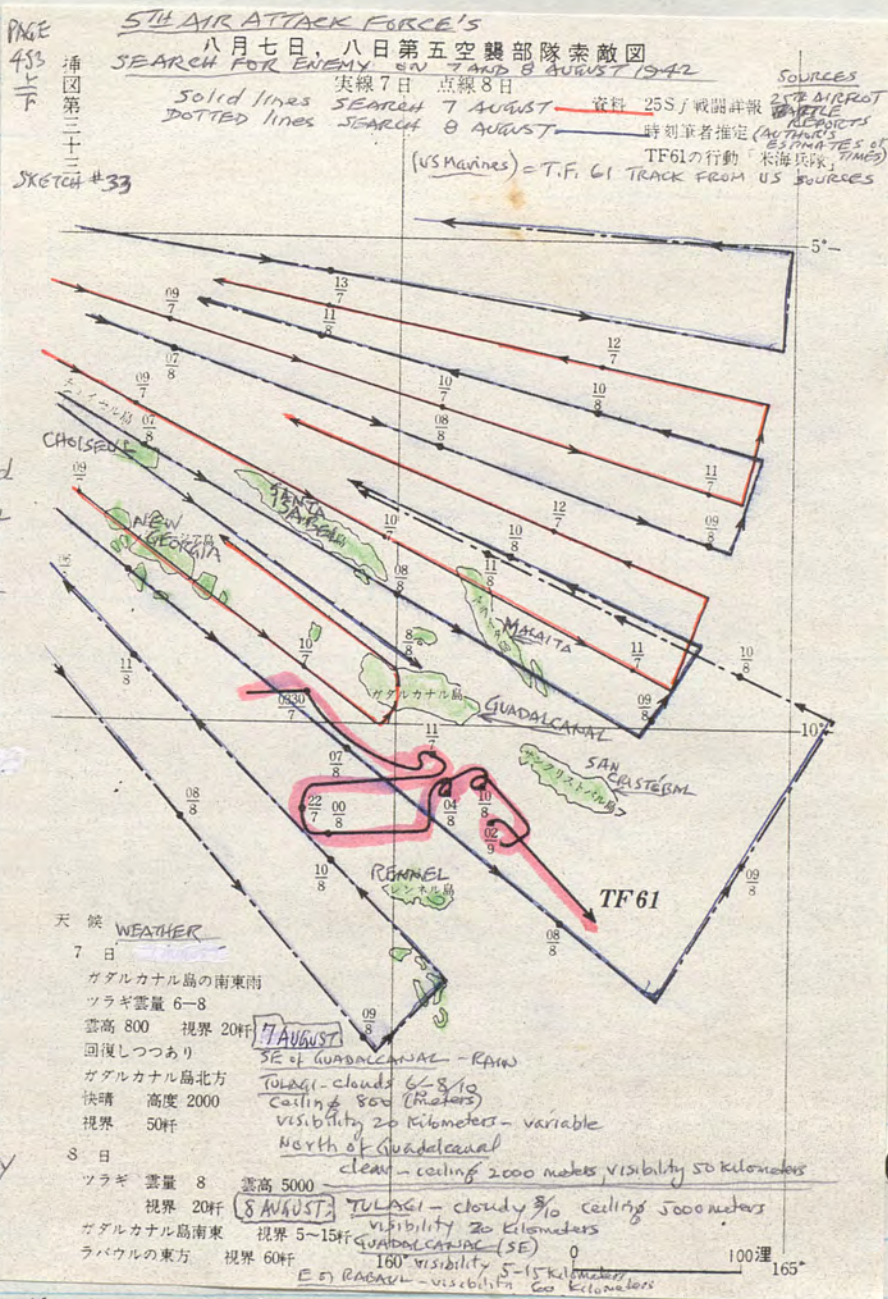
3 HEAVY CRUISERS, 7 DESTROYERS,
27 TRANSPORTS. MOST OF THE
TRANSPORTS ARE CONCENTRATED

AT "MARJEUKILE" (AUTHOR'S NOTE - about
6 miles east of LUNGA POINT)

NO ENEMY AIRCRAFT SIGHTED.

WEATHER REPORT - $\frac{3}{10}$ CLOUDS AT
2000 (meters), SCATTERED CLOUDS IN
VICINITY BUT NO HINDERANCE, VISIBILITY
50 KILOMETERS"

The search did not sight the
enemy carrier(s) and American
records show that they were operating to the west of GUADALCANAL fairly close by. They were not-



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sighted due to the bad weather and because only one search plane was in that area. See sketch page 88, lower right. It is not clear whether ¹²²⁰ 5th Air Attack Force's report ^{to all forces} on the enemy was based on the above report, or on the (previously stated) report of their bombing attack: "AT 1130 2 LARGE CRUISERS, 3 DESTROYERS AND ABOUT 25 TRANSPORTS ARE ANCHORED OFF TULAGI. AIRCRAFT CARRIERS NOT YET SIGHTED."

Previous ^(at 0920 the 7th) to this, the Commander 5th Air Attack Force ordered "SEND ONE LAND BOMBER ^{AT 0945} TO ASCERTAIN THE ENEMY SITUATION AND BATTLE RESULTS IN THE TULAGI AND GUADALCANAL AREAS"; that aircraft took off at 1002 from RABAU for the required reconnaissance,

Commander 5th Air Attack Force ^{after} combining the reconnaissance reports and the report made by the Bombing Force after their return, sent the following report to all forces.

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- (1) ALTHOUGH OUR AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SIGHT THE ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, FROM THE NUMBER OF ENEMY FIGHTERS (GRUMMAN) AND DIVE BOMBERS (SBD-3) SIGHTED (TOTAL ABOUT 60 AIRCRAFT), IT IS BELIEVED THERE ARE 2-3 AIRCRAFT CARRIERS.
- (2) THERE ARE 3 HEAVY CRUISERS, 13-16 DESTROYERS, SOME 40 TRANSPORTS AND ONE SHIP RESEMBLING A BATTLESHIP ANCHORED OFF TULAGI AND GUADALCANAL

In addition, the above Commander again at 1800 made the following over-all report to all forces:

COMMUNICATIONS WITH GUADALCANAL CEASED AT 0200 AND WITH TULAGI AT 0620 AND THE SITUATION THEREAFTER NOT KNOWN. ^{SOME} COMBINING REPORT BY OUR BOMBER FORCE WITH 1330 REPORT BY ^{ONE} TYPE 1 ((BETTY)) RECONNAISSANCE, ENEMY SITUATION ^{SOME} FOLLOWS: (1) ENEMY LANDING ON GUADALCANAL. FIRES AT 3 PLACES ON GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD (2) ONE FIRE VICINITY TULAGI SEAPLANE BASE. (3) IN VICINITY OF TULAGI ARE 3 HEAVY CRUISERS, SEVERAL DESTROYERS AND ^{SOME} 13 TRANSPORTS. (4) OFF GUADALCANAL ARE SEVERAL DESTROYERS AND 17 TRANSPORTS. (5) BETWEEN ^{ABOUT} 1120 AND 1220 SOME 60-70 ENEMY AIRCRAFT ALOFT OVER THE ANCHORAGE (6) AT 1330 NO ENEMY AIRCRAFT SIGHTED OVER ANCHORAGE FROM ABOUT 1330. (7) BECAUSE OF BAD WEATHER TO SOUTH EAST OF TULAGI, UNABLE TO CONDUCT ENEMY SEARCH. AIRCRAFT CARRIERS NOT YET SIGHTED.

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The 5th Air Attack Force, in response to the enemy's operations in the TULAGI area carried out air attacks from RABAU instead of the expected attack on PORT MORESBY and intensified the defensive patrols over RABAU by Zero-mod 2 fighters, but there was an attack there by 13 B-17s at 1020. Some 20 Zero fighters intercepted and shot down one enemy aircraft over WIDE BAY and inflicted other damage but the runway on the west airfield was damaged

which was not restored for use until 1500. Thus ended the operations of 7 August 1942. Notwithstanding the 5th Air Attack Force's mustering of all his forces for his attack, it was not able to smash the enemy invasion force as it began its amphibious assault, when it was most vulnerable and in greatest danger. However we must not overlook the fact that the battle results of the 7th Fighter action which had a considerable effect on the subsequent operations of the Allied Force. As will be related later, the American Carrier Task Force abandoned its air support ~~bases~~ of their sea and land forces during their unloading of material and supplies and withdrew to the south on the evening of the 8th. Their reason for this was that their losses in fighter planes was high (21%) and these losses were those in the battle with our Zero fighters on the 7th. (NOTE - This premature withdrawal, which caused the retirement of the shipping before it had completed its unloading of supplies and material along with the success of the night attack by our Outer South Seas Force, were the reasons for the difficulty of operations by their landing force ^(the invaders ashore).)

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OPERATIONS ON 8 AUGUST

The 5th Air Attack Force had received considerable damage to its aircraft during the 7th - in their attack on the 7th, and also the losses of patrol planes and float fighters ^(at TULAGI) by the air attack by the enemy at the time of their assault; However, on the afternoon of the 7th, nine land based bombers of MISAWA Air moved forward to RABAUL as reinforcements to the 5th Air Attack Force and were assigned to #5 Unit. These, added to the 5 land bombers of the #5 Unit, gave the total of operational land bombers of 29 aircraft, Zero fighters Mod 1 of 14 aircraft, Zero Mod 2 of 20 aircraft, and 4 large flying boats (of which 2 were Type 2 ("Emily's)). Except for one Type 2 Patrol Plane at STORELAND Island, all planes were at RABAUL. Commander 5th Air Attack Force planned to attack the enemy aircraft carriers with his entire force the next day, and also support the attack by the Outer South Seas force against TULAGI the same day, the 8th.

"FIFTH AIR ATTACK FORCE RADIO ORDER #200. TOMORROW THE 8TH THE ENTIRE FORCE WILL OPERATE, AS SET FORTH BELOW, TO ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY INVASION FORCE IN THE TULAGI AREA: (1) RECONNAISSANCE: (A) FORCE - SEARCH SECTORS, ALL TO 700 MILES THEN LEFT TURN FOR 60 MILES AND RETURN. TAKE OFF AT 0430. #4 UNIT - 100°; #2 UNIT - 110°, 140°; #1 UNIT - 120°. (B) ONE TYPE 2 PATROL PLANE ("EMILY") - 130° TO 800 MILES THEN LEFT TURN FOR 200 MILES AND RETURN. TAKE OFF AT 0330. (2) ATTACK: LAND BASED BOMBER FORCE (COMMANDER - SECTION LEADER, 4th AIR) AND FIGHTER

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FORCE - COORDINATED ATTACK AS FOLLOWS: #1 UNIT - 14 ZERO FIGHTERS, #2 UNIT - 18 LAND BASED BOMBERS (TORPEDO ATTACK), #5 UNIT - 9 AIRCRAFT (TORPEDO ATTACK); TARGETS: PRIMARY - AIRCRAFT CARRIERS; SECONDARY - TRANSPORTS. DUTY OF FIGHTER FORCE - DIRECT COVER OF BOMBERS. TAKE OFF AT 0600. (3) COMBAT AIR PATROL: COMMANDERS OF #1 UNIT AND #2 UNIT WILL INTENSIFY COMBAT AIR PATROLS FROM 0430 ONWARD AS DETERMINED BY COMMANDER #1 UNIT. (4) ADDITIONAL (A) 1 TYPE 2 PATROL PLANE ("EMILY") (AFTER RETURN FROM SHORTLAND ISLAND) AND 1 TYPE 96 PATROL PLANE ("MAVIS") WILL BE ON STANDBY FROM 0700. (B) AKITSUSHIMA - TAKE STATION SO AS TO BEST CARRY OUT RESCUE ((OF DOWNED AIRCREWS))

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Prior to this the Commander Shore Based Air ^{(who was at TINIAN),} after studying the 5th Air Attack Force's reports of operations on the 7th, estimated that the enemy had deployed his carriers within a 150 mile radius of TULAGI and, with their support, planned to move his air power quickly forward to GUADALCANAL Island. He passed these thoughts along at 1710 the 7th and also ordered 5th Air Attack Force to use most of his land based bombers on the 8th to search for and attack the enemy carriers, and for the Outer South Seas Force to attack and destroy the enemy in the vicinity of GUADALCANAL, in concert with the air operations.

The destruction of the enemy aircraft carriers was the objective in these orders from both the 5th Air Attack Force and the Base Air Force. The bombing attack on the morning of the 7th had ended in failure, principally because the enemy's carrier-fighters could not be held in check; the greatest obstacle to attacks by the Outer South Seas force against the TULAGI area was the uncertainty of the location of the enemy carriers. Accordingly, both those Commanders elected to attack and destroy the enemy aircraft carriers as a prerequisite to success in forthcoming operations.

5th Air Attack Force search planes took off as scheduled early in the morning of the 8th and, for the most part, carried out the search plan, but failed to sight the enemy carrier task force. Weather to the south-west of GUADALCANAL continued to be bad with poor visibility but was good in the other areas. The tracks of the search planes on the 8th are shown in blue on the sketch on Page 88 (the search sectors for the 7th being shown in red); an examination of this sketch shows that the air searches for both days were oriented to the sea areas to the east and northeast of GUADALCANAL. The staff of the 25th Air Flotilla, in making their estimate on the 7th apparently gave consideration to the early morning report from TULAGI - "SIGHTED

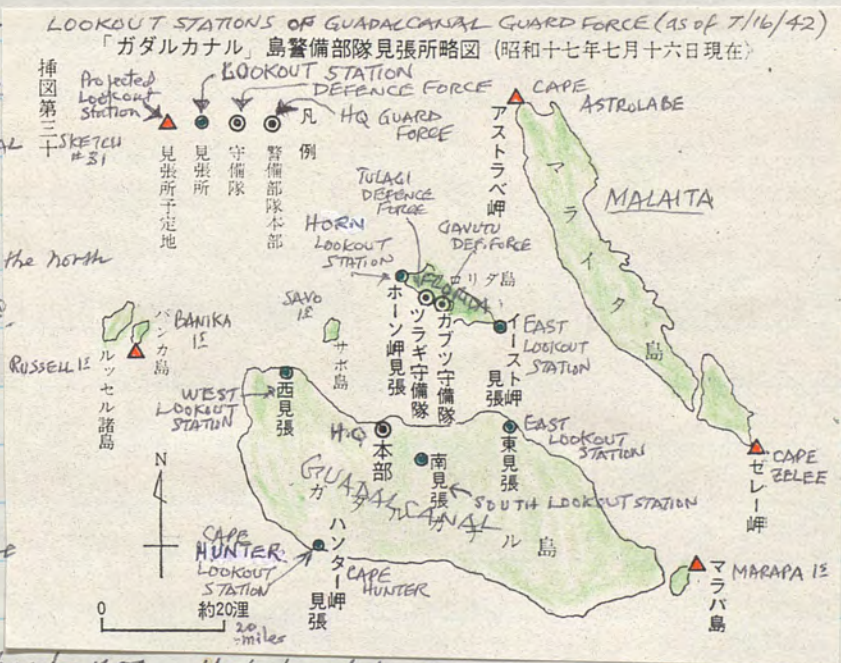
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ONE ENEMY CARRIER AND 4 CRUISERS", the fact that the Air-searches to the southward of TULAGI had failed to find any trace of the enemy on the 6th and therefore judged that the enemy force had attacked TULAGI from the east or the north-east, and that the enemy carriers were also operating in that same general area. The Navy Section IGHQ, as stated previously, also believed the enemy carriers were in the sea area to the north of TULAGI.

However, as shown in the sketch on Page 88, the enemy carrier force was actually operating to the south west of GUADALCANAL in support of their invasion force. We had two ^{search} aircraft in that area (one Type 2 patrol plane was on its way back from a flight to the east of the SOLOMONS) but the previous day's bad weather in that area continued, visibility being less than 10-20 miles, and they were unable to sight the enemy. None the less, a Japanese unit did sight the American aircraft carriers; the Lookout Station on Cape HUNTER,

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(a detachment of the GUADALCANAL Defence Force) on the southwest coast of Guadalcanal heard the sound of aircraft at 0425 and then drifted to the north at 0515, the morning of the 7th. At 0835 they sighted a large force consisting of 1 battleship, 2 aircraft carriers, 5 cruisers and about 10 other vessels to the westward and watched them



disappear in the west at about 1100. Unfortunately its communications with headquarters at LUNGA POINT had been broken off since 0530 and they had no means to make their reports, their transmitter not being capable of communicating directly with RABOUL. This report became known only when the submarine RO-33 established contact with the CAPE HUNTER Lookout Station on 12 August.

As the Air-Search force had not sighted, nor located, the position of the enemy carriers, the Air-Attack force proceeded at 0930 to make an all-out attack against the enemy ships off TULAGI, 23 land-based bombers (BERRY'S), under direct

escort of 15 Zero fighters, brushed aside the interference of some 10 enemy aircraft and very intense anti-aircraft fire. They reported tremendous results of their attacks: one heavy cruiser sunk, 2 light cruisers heavily afire and surely sunk, one ship badly damaged and listing, one destroyer exploded and sunk, 9 transports sunk, 2 ships burning fiercely (one of them set afire as a result of a deliberate collision by one of our planes), also one GRUMMAN fighter and 3 enemy dive bombers shot down. However, our losses were quite heavy: 18 land-based bombers failed to return, 5 others were damaged by enemy gunfire, one Zero fighter was lost, with most of the losses/damage being the result of enemy defensive gunfire. At the time of our attack most of the ships were anchored off GUADALCANAL although several enemy destroyers were at anchor off TULARI. According to U.S. records relating to this attack,



8 August 1942 Land based bombers' torpedo attack
 八月八日、陸攻隊の魚雷攻撃 (モリソン戦史から) (from MORISON'S HISTORIES)

the Allied forces had received from their Coast Watcher on Bougainville intelligence of the impending strike some 80 minutes before our attack arrived. Thereupon, unloading was suspended, the ships promptly got underway and formed into two convoys in the straits (some 20 miles wide) between TULARI and GUADALCANAL and cruised in

formation, ^{protected by} ~~3~~ cruisers and destroyers on their outer flanks, making simultaneous turns at high speed in evasive maneuvers. These evasive maneuvers in formation had been a part of their intensive training when enroute to GUADALCANAL. Their overhead air patrol consisted of only 3 fighter planes.

The Japanese attack was made at extremely low altitude, one part being at only 20 feet and most were shot down by Anti-aircraft guns and machine guns; only 3 of our aircraft succeeded in making attacks - one bomber made a torpedo hit on the destroyer JARVIS, inflicting moderate damage - the other two, probably hit by enemy fire, planned to make suicide crashes against their targets and one of these, even though afire, crashed into the transport JOHN F. ELLIOTT, which caught fire and was lost, continuing to burn throughout the night became a useful beacon for the Outer South Seas Force's night attack that night. The casualties to the Allied

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Force by our air attack was only two ships damaged.

In the meantime, many enemy aircraft had attacked RABAU and LAE but there was no damage at either place. At 1415 that day, the Commander of the Shore Based Air Force and 17 land bombers of MISAWA Air arrived at RABAU.

OPERATIONS ON 9 AUGUST

In view of the remarkable battle results reported by the 5th Air Attack Force on the 8th and the situation of ^{the} remaining enemy force, the Commander Base Air Force decided to annihilate the latter, issuing at 1550 the 8th: BASE AIR FORCE RADIO OPERATION ORDER #60. (1) 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE BATTLE RESULTS AND THE ENEMY SITUATIONS ARE SET FORTH IN ^{TODAY'S} 25 AIRFLOTILLA'S SECRET RADIO #47. (2) TONIGHT THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE WILL MAKE A STRONG NIGHT ATTACK IN THE TULAGI AREA, IF POSSIBLE. (3) 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL TAKE OFF EARLY TOMORROW MORNING AND ANNIHILATE THE REMAINING ENEMY FORCES IN THE TULAGI AREA.

Later that day at 1721, Commander Base Air Force modified the 3rd paragraph of the above order to read: "THE ENTIRE FORCE OF THE 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL TAKE OFF EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND IN COORDINATION WITH THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE OPERATIONS, WILL ATTACK THE ENEMY CARRIERS AND BATTLESHIPS." In effect, the orders were changed from ^{an} attack on the transport convoy off TULAGI to an attack against the enemy aircraft carriers and battle ships for the 9th. Postwar, the then Senior Staff Officer of the Base Air Force recalled in connection with this shift of targets that

"Dive bombers have advantages in attacks against transport-convoys but those aircraft had been lost in their attacks on the 7th; since the percentage of hits in horizontal bombing by land based bombers was poor, those aircraft should be used, in the final analysis, in torpedo attacks but there had been heavy losses to them in their attacks on the 7th and 8th. Therefore, there arose a concern for the loss of that force in a repetition of the above attack. In addition, there arose strong reservations to making another torpedo attack, involving enormous sacrifices, against a convoy that was already

more than half unloaded, and it was concluded that attacks made on the enemy fleet in the vicinity would be more advantageous.

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Based on this order Commander 5th Air Attack Force at 2000 the 8th issued his operation order for the next day, the 9th. In essence it ordered one land-based reconnaissance plane, four land-based bombers and two patrol planes, totalling 7 a/c to search the arc 090°-150° from RABAU to 600-700 miles and for 15 Zero fighters covering 17 land-based bombers ^(carrying torpedoes) to attack enemy aircraft carriers and/or battleships, and if the situation offered, attack transports that were underway. The search for the enemy on the 9th deployed search planes to the seas from the south to the west of GUADALCANAL and from that island's eastern to north eastern seas,

The Outer South Seas Force made a night attack at midnight the 8th and reported splendid battle results - the sinking of 5 heavy cruisers; this action by the Outer South Seas Force will be covered later on.

The land-based reconnaissance plane which had taken off from RABAU the morning of the 9th reconnoitered the TULAGI area and reported at 0800 " 1 HEAVY CRUISER, 4 MERCHANT SHIPS AND 3 DESTROYERS AT TULAGI AND 15 MERCHANT SHIPS, 4 DESTROYERS AND ALSO LIGHT CRUISERS AT GUADALCANAL ". Another report followed at 0850 " NO SIGNS OF DEPARTURE BY THE ENEMY. "

A LAND-BASED BOMBER ON SEARCH ALONG A LINE 130° FROM GREEN Island radioed:

" SIGHTED WHAT LOOKS LIKE A BATTLESHIP BEARING 125°, 90 MILES FROM TULAGI 0745 " and after keeping in contact ((shadowing)) again at 0845 reported: "

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" THE ENEMY IS LEAKING OIL AS IT PROCEEDS, LOOKS LIKE A BATTLESHIP "

At 0820, Commander 5th Air Attack Force, on receiving this report, ordered " LAND BASED BOMBERS ATTACK THE BATTLESHIP ". 16 land-bombers, escorted by 15 Zeros, made their attack on that target from 1040 to 1100, scoring 2 torpedo hits and confirmed sinking it at 1135. They reported their target was an ACHILLES class light cruiser. According to U.S. records ((postwar)) it was the U.S. destroyer JARVIS which had been damaged the previous day at TULAGI and was withdrawing. In this attack we lost 2 land bombers and one more suffered severe damage in making a crash-landing.

At the same time that the JARVIS sank, a search-plane reported sighting 6 destroyers, reporting: " SIGHTED 6 DESTROYERS AT 1135, POSITION 131°-100 MILES FROM TULAGI, ON COURSE 140° SPEED 20 KNOTS ",

At that time the Air Attack Force had already expended their torpedoes so continued their return to base. Moreover there were practically 700 planes at RAUBAL that could be sent for an attack. Thus ended the 9th, the search force and attack forces of the 5th Air Attack Force both failing to find their targets - the enemy carriers and battleships. Today's reconnaissance had sighted a powerful force in the GUADALCANAL area and an additional force of six destroyers, confirming ^{that} somewhat powerful forces ^{were} still in the area. The Staff of the 25th Air Flotilla (operational title - "5th Air Attack Force") doubted that there were powerful forces remaining in the area in view of the confirmed enemy forces of the 7th, the battle results obtained by the 5th Air Attack Force on the 8th and the battle results reported by the Outer South Seas Force. Putting together both forces' battle results would suggest that all enemy ships had been destroyed; from this it would appear that the enemy engaged by the Outer South Seas Force was a separate task force. At 1448 the 9th, Commander 5th Air Attack Force sent the following radio:

WITH REGARD TO THE ENEMY FORCE THAT ATTACKED TULAGI: (1) THE RESULTS OF THE ATTACKS AND RECONNAISSANCE ON THE 7TH AND 8TH BY THIS FORCE; (2) THE RESULTS OF THE NIGHT ATTACK ON THE 8TH BY SURFACE FORCES; (3) THE ^{ENEMY} FORCES REPORTED AT ANCHOR AT TULAGI AND GUADALCANAL BY OUR LAND RECONNAISSANCE PLANE AT 0800 THE 9TH; (4) COMBINING THE ABOVE WITH THE SIGHTING OF AN ENEMY FORCE (6 DESTROYERS AND ONE CRUISER) OPERATING IN THE VICINITY OF 100 MILES BEARING 231 DEGREES FROM TULAGI AT 1135 THE 9TH (AUTHORS NOTE - THE ADDITION OF 1 CRUISER WAS PROBABLY DONE WHEN THE FLIGHT RETURNED TO BASE), MAKES IT QUITE LIKELY THAT THE FORCE ENGAGED BY OUR SURFACE FORCE THE NIGHT OF THE 8TH WAS A SEPARATE FORCE THAT HAD NOT BEEN SIGHTED BY OUR AIR FORCE.

Actually, as is clear from U.S. records ((postwar)), in spite of ^{the} the 5th Air Attack Force's great sacrifices in its vain attacks ^{made} from the 7th onward, their battle results were only one destroyer and one transport sunk.

In the meantime 5 B-17s attacked Rabaul this same day and were intercepted by 31 Zero fighter sorties, 2 of these being shot down. As a result of the bombing one dive-bomber received bomb fragments, the runway was damaged in one place and one Zero fighter was severely damaged on landing. After operations were completed for the 9th, aircraft capable of use were: RAUBAL WEST - 24 land bombers; RAUBAL EAST - 35 Zero fighters and

4 dive bombers; - RABOUL SEAPLANES - 1 Type 2 ((Emily)) Patrol plane and 2 Type 97 ((Mavis)) Patrol planes; SHORTLAND IS - 1 Type 2 Patrol plane.

OPERATIONS ON 10 AUGUST

The Reconnaissance on the morning of the 9th having reported a considerable force ^(still at anchor) in the TULAGI - GUADALCANAL area, the Commander Base Air Force at 1525 the 9th ordered "5th AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL ATTACK TRANSPORTS AT TULAGI WITH SUCH FORCE AS HE DESIGNATES". On the morning of the 10th 21 land bombers and 15 zero fighters took off from RABOUL at 0722 and headed for TULAGI to attack the enemy transports but did not sight the enemy. Also that day, 4 search planes searched the arc 080-120° from RABOUL to a distance of 700 miles without any enemy sighting. That night, Commander 5th Air Attack Force reported as follows:

ALTHOUGH 21 LAND BOMBERS AND 15 ZEROS HEADED FOR THE GUADALCANAL ANCHORAGE TO ATTACK ENEMY SHIPS, NO ENEMY WAS SIGHTED. ABOUT 10 MILES SOUTHEAST OF TULAGI THERE WAS A LARGE SHIP AFIRE AND ON THE VERGE OF SINKING, AND ALSO SOME TWENTY SMALL CRAFT AT GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI. RECEIVED AA FIRE FROM TULAGI AT THAT TIME ONE LAND BOMBER HIT BY FRAGMENTS AT 7,000 METERS, 3 ZEROS MADE LOW PASS ON GUADALCANAL (100 meters) FOR RECONNAISSANCE, SOME 300 MEN - NOT KNOWN WHETHER ENEMY OR FRIENDLY - SEEN WITHIN THE AIRFIELD, ONE FIGHTER HOLED BY 7.7 MM. MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM DENSE JUNGLE.

As will be related later, ^{due to the attack by the Outer South Seas Force at midnight the 8th,} Allied shipping had left their anchorage at 1400 the 9th, although the unloading of their supplies and equipment had not been completed, and headed for NOUMEA. Also the large ship, afire and on the verge of sinking 10 miles south east of TULAGI was the George F. ELLIOTT that had been damaged during our air attack on the 8th.

The Commander of the Base Air Force saw the enemy's withdrawal on the 10th as a result of the air attacks from the 7th to the 10th and the night attack by the Outer South Seas Force the night of the 8th which had smashed the main power of the enemy invasion force and had made it retire. Then he ordered 5 Air Attack Force to carry out attacks on the RABOUL airfield on the next day the 11th; RABOUL was thought to be used as a relay base for concentrating allied air power in the GUADALCANAL area. Commander 5th Air Attack force reported his battle results and casualties for 7-10 August as follows on the night of the 10th:

(1) BATTLE RESULTS - ONE BRITISH HEAVY CRUISER, SUNK INSTANTLY, ONE WICHTA CLASS (FLAGSHIP ~~WITH~~ ADMIRAL'S FLAG) SUNK, ONE BRITISH HEAVY CRUISER HEAVILY DAMAGED, LISTING

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AND BURNING, ONE ACHILLES CLASS SHIP SUNK, TWO LIGHT CRUISERS SUNK, THREE DESTROYERS SUNK, ONE HEAVILY DAMAGED, 10 ENEMY MERCHANT SHIPS SUNK, ONE HEAVILY DAMAGED, TOTAL OF TWENTY ONE SHIPS SUNK. SHOT DOWN FORTY NINE GRUMMAN FIGHTERS (EIGHT OF THESE NOT CONFIRMED), EIGHT SBD, ONE MEDIUM SIZE PLANE FOR A TOTAL OF 58 AIRCRAFT (2) CASUALTIES (NOT INCLUDING FORCES AT TULAGI) LOST FOUR ZERO FIGHTERS (INCLUDING THOSE WHICH FAILED TO RETURN), TWENTY FOUR LAND BOMBERS, SIX DIVE BOMBERS; HEAVILY DAMAGED: ONE ZERO FIGHTER, THREE LAND BOMBERS, THREE DIVE BOMBERS, TOTAL FORTY ONE AIRCRAFT." The actual battle results obtained were extremely small in contrast to the above battle report by 5th Air Attack Force. Most of the report of battle results was from the attack on the 8th but no reconnaissance aircraft was dispatched to confirm that day's battle results. This was probably because an all-out attack was made with a small force and there were no means available. Also as there were no airfields except GUADALCANAL in the SOLOMONS, it was necessary to fly 560 miles to make an attack. Only one attack could be made in one day but there was no alternative to this highly inefficient method of attack, and this was also true of search for the enemy. This situation continued thereafter into the future.

V THE 1ST SEA BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS

OPERATIONS OF THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE - SORTIE OF THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE

As stated previously, upon receipt of TULAGI's urgent signals, the Outer South Seas Force immediately began preparations for sortie, the Commander of that force, at 0830 the 7th issued orders regarding its future movements:

(1) AT 1300 THE 7TH THIS COMMAND IN THE ((CA)) CHOKAI WILL DEPART RABAU, BE JOINED BY CRUDIV 6 TO THE EAST OF BURKA ISLAND AND HEAD ^{SOUTH VIA} GUADALCANAL FOR THE SEAS EAST OF THE SOLOMONS. (2) OPERATIONS THEREAFTER WILL DEPEND ON THE RECONNAISSANCE AND ATTACKS OF THE BASE AIR FORCE TODAY BUT REGARDLESS OF WILL EXERT EVERY EFFORT TO SWOOP DOWN ON THE TRANSPORTS' ANCHORAGE DURING NIGHT TIME AND ATTACK AND DESTROY ((THEM)). Thus, originally that Commander intended to sortie, leading CRUDIV 6 in the CHOKAI, The TENRYU, YUBARI and YUNAGI were then in RABAU, but all were old ships, were not fully trained, and might be a an encumbrance in a night battle. But due to the rigorous demand by

Commander of Crudiv 18 (in TENRYŪ), it was decided that those three ships would also sortie. Post war, that Commander stated with regard to this sortie:

"I had not intended to include Crudiv 18 due to incompleteness of their training and I was concerned lest they be a hindrance in night battle. but the Senior Staff Officer of Crudiv 18, Commander ^(OCL) came to my Headquarters and straightly urged that (the TENRYŪ) be taken along. My Staff officers JIN and OMAE both used all kinds of reasons to pacify the Commander but he would not agree to them. Then, I decided to take all of them with me because to deny any the opportunity to fight the enemy was not in keeping with our Warriors creed (("Bushido")). If they were regular light cruisers they would be placed in the van but I attached them to the rear of the formation so that they would not be an impediment in a night battle"

Now, the Commander of Crudiv 18 issued orders to the ^(OCL) TENRYŪ, ^(DD) YŪBARI and ^(DD) YŪNAGI which were enroute with the BUNA Convoy and took steps to join with the main force in the 1500 sortie. Thus, the line of battle - CHOKAI, CRUDIV 6 (AOBA, KAKO, KINUGASA, FURUTAKA), CRUDIV 18 (flagship) TENRYŪ, YŪBARI and YŪNAGI a total of 8 ships was decided. Their principal characteristics are ((the author fails to make known the fact that all four ships of Crudiv 6 were thoroughly modernized in 1936-1939 and their armament up-dated)) ((Additional data - in red - not in original text but added by translator))

SHIP	(CA) CHOKAI	(CA) AOBA	(CA) KAKO	(CA) KINUGASA	(CA) FURUTAKA	(OCL) TENRYŪ	(OCL) YŪBARI	(DD) YŪNAGI
COMPLETED	1932	1927	1926	1927	1926	1917	1923	1924
STANDARD DISPLACEMENT	11,300t 13,400	9000	8700	9000	8700	3230t	2890 3510	1270
MAIN BATTERY	10-8"	6-8"	6-8"/50 cal			4-5.5"	6-5.5"	1-4.7"/50
AA BATTERY	4-4.7/40 8-5"/40		4-4.7/45 cal Dual Purpose			1-3.1/40	1-3.1/40	0
TORPEDO TUBES	8-24" 16-24"		8-24"			6-21"	4-24"	6-21"
TORPEDOES CARRIED	24		16			16	8(?)	12
NOTES	FULLY TRAINED	Crudiv 6 FULLY TRAINED was COMPLETELY MODERNIZED 1936-1939 - main armament redispersed in twin turrets (5" armor), fixed main deck torpedo tubes replaced by 2-gyrodable rotating mounts on upper deck. Anti-torpedo bulges added.				NOT FULLY TRAINED		
SPEED (knots)	34.2	33.4	32.9	33.4	32.7	33	32	37.3

A meeting of all commanders present was called for 0830 at the Headquarters of the 8th Fleet by Commander Outer South Seas Force ((Cuc 8th Fleet - administrative title)) to go over the forthcoming operation. At this meeting it was stressed that the priority target would be the enemy transports; that their armament would be utilized according to their ^{joint} training doctrine; that the attack would be in column, exercising due care to each ship's speed to avoid bunching up or lagging behind; that the sortie would ^{be} through the central channel ^{passing} between the two rows of the Sozomon Islands, and the withdrawal would be to a point outside the radius

of attack by the enemy carriers to avoid the failure at MIDWAY. (Note- In cruising in formation ships must all move at the same speed by adjusting the revolutions of their propellers to maintain ^{proper} position in the formation.)

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The ((CA)) CHOKAI, along with the YUNAGI, entered RABAU Harbor at 1220 on the 7th. The Staff and Headquarters 8th Fleet were shifted aboard the CHOKAI and at 1430 the CHOKAI, leading the TENRYU, the YUBARI and YUNAGI, sortied and were joined by Cruiser division 6 at 1430 outside RABAU Harbor. Passing to the north of BUKA Island, they for the sea area to the east of BOUGAINVILLE Island. In the meantime, based on the reconnaissance and attack by the Base Air Force, they estimated that although the aircraft carriers had not been sighted that there were 2-3 of them ^{present}. Judged by the number of enemy carrier aircraft encountered and that ^{anchored} off TULAGI and GUADALCANAL ^{were} some 3 heavy cruisers, 13-16 destroyers, 40 transports and a ship resembling a battleship. ~~were at anchor~~

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At the time that the Outer South Seas Force made its sortie, Crudiv 6 sighted the 13 B-17 attacking RABAU at 1039, distant about 40,000 meters but were not in contact with any other enemy aircraft and had no concern that the enemy was aware of them. However, according to U.S. sources, the Allied Force was already aware of the movement of the Outer South Seas Force from mid-morning of the 7th. B-17s of the South West Force had sighted six ships prior to their entry into RABAU Harbor from South of NEW IRELAND. This report reached ^{both} the Commanders of both the ^{U.S.} ground and surface forces during the middle of the night of the 7th but movements of Japanese naval vessels in the vicinity of ^a Japanese base being a normal thing, it was not made the subject of an alert or warning. The second occasion was at 1800 on the 7th, when the Outer South Seas Force was passing through SAINT GEORGE'S CHANNEL, it was sighted by the US submarine S-38, which reported "TWO DESTROYERS AND THREE LARGE SHIPS OF UNKNOWN TYPE HEADING SOUTH EAST AT HIGH SPEED". This report reached ^{both} the Commanders of the U.S. ground and surface forces. The report that they were moving south east at high speed was important, but as the ships were still 550 miles from GUADALCANAL, those commanders decided to keep a close watch on the situation and the South West Pacific and South Pacific forces increased the search network of their shore based aircraft.

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FRECONNAISSANCE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION

At 2020 the 7th, Commander Outer South Seas Force made the following visual signal:

(1) MAIN BODY (CHOKAI, CRUDIV 6, TENRYU, YUBARI, YUNAGI) WILL REACH POSITION 5°-40'SOUTH
(AUTHOR'S NOTE: 60 MILES EAST OF BOUGAINVILLE IS.)
157-40 EAST AT 0400 THE 8th AND WILL CARRY OUT AERIAL SEARCH TO 250 MILES BETWEEN
070° AND 130° AND A RECONNAISSANCE OF GUADALCANAL ISLAND. (2) IF INTELLIGENCE REGARDING
THE ENEMY SITUATION IS NOT OBTAINED WILL OPERATE AT DISCRETION IN THE VICINITY OF THE
ABOVE POSITION DURING THE FORENOON OF THE 8th AND DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, WILL
SORTIE IN THE AFTERNOON, SWOOP DOWN ON THE GUADALCANAL ANCHOR ~~AND~~ ATTACK AND DESTROY
THE ENEMY THERE BY NIGHT BATTLE."

When the Main Body of the South Seas Force reached its 0400 position 6 float reconnaissance
planes were launched from Crudiv 6 and the CHOKAI and carried out a search for the enemy to
the eastward end of the GUADALCANAL anchorage. The AOBAs #1 float-plane made a reconnaissance
of the GUADALCANAL area and reported at 0745 sighting what looked like a battleship 90 mile South
west of TULAGI, following this at 0800 with a report of sighting one heavy cruiser, 4 merchant ships
and 3 destroyers off TULAGI and 15 merchant ships, 4 destroyers and 2 light cruisers in the anchorage
at GUADALCANAL. No enemy aircraft were sighted over the anchorage and none of the
float planes searching for the enemy to the east of GUADALCANAL ^{having} made any sightings, they
were all recovered by 1100 ^{except} the KAKO plane ^{which} failed to return.

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The Staff of the Commander 8th Fleet, consolidating the report from the AObA plane
with the Base Air Force's information report of enemy strength estimated the enemy force
at the GUADALCANAL anchorage as of 1200 the 8th to be approximately ^{one} battleship,
four cruisers, nine destroyers and fifteen transports. After launching his enemy-
search planes, the Main Body of the Outer South Seas Force, intensifying its guard against
submarines, ~~and~~ operated opportunely off the eastern coast of BOUGAINVILLE Island.
During this time, around 0820 a Lockheed aircraft was sighted (5°-56'S, 156-10'E)
For about an hour thereafter, that plane having maintained contact, a false northerly
course was taken to conceal their true plans and that aircraft was driven off at
about 0920 by gunfire. The flagship, CHOKAI, at 0903 intercepted the following
report sent by that aircraft: 0927 3 CRUISERS, 3 DESTROYERS, 2 SEAPLANE TENDERS
OR GUNBOATS POSITION 5°-49'S, 156-07E, COURSE 120° SPEED 15 KNOTS" (AUTHOR'S
NOTE - THIS 0927 WAS 0827 JAPANESE STANDARD TIME, WHICH WE WERE USING). As intercepted
by the CHOKAI, it was probably in plain language and urgent precedence. However,

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According to U.S. records, this report was made after that aircraft had landed at MILNE BAY. This LOCKHEED HUDSON aircraft was obeying its orders to maintain radio silence; after completing most of its assigned afternoon search it returned and reported its sighting immediately after landing. However its report could not be sent directly to the Allied Forces on GUADALCANAL because of a lack of communications network; it reached BRISBANE via TOWNSVILLE after sunset and being urgent reached Australian men-of-war at GUADALCANAL at 1639 and was received by U.S. warships via PEAL HARBOR broadcast at 1645. Because of the 2 seaplane carriers in the message, the Ground and Surface Force Commanders estimated the Japanese force to be headed for REKATA Bay to establish a seaplane base. According U.S. material, the delay in receipt of this report and its erroneous contents led the Ground and Surface force Commanders to an entirely erroneous estimate.

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DETERMINATION TO DASH INTO THE GUADALCANAL ANCHORAGE

The radio from Commander Outer South Seas Force at 0830 the 7th giving his intentions for forthcoming operations was quoted above, but, according to it, the Staff of the 8th Fleet had not, prior to their sortie from RABAU, decided to dash into the GUADALCANAL anchorage. Their plan was to proceed southward and to decide on what to do depending on the results of the Base Air Force's reconnaissance and attack on the 7th. It is not known why the Headquarters and Staff of the 8th Fleet adopted that policy but it is believed that up until then the enemy situation was unknown and were the Outer South Seas Force Main Body to penetrate into the GUADALCANAL anchorage it would require them to steam for more than ^{from RABAU to GUADALCANAL} 600 miles and if they were to make such penetration during night time, their advance would be during daylight and there would be a strong possibility of being attacked enroute by enemy carrier planes. The attack by carrier aircraft against surface forces ((MIKUMA and MOGAMI)) was an indelible lesson of the Battle of Midway. It was from such an appraisal that it was determined "to decide on future operations based on the results of the reconnaissance and attack by the Base Air Force.

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Consequently, Headquarters Staff of the 8th Fleet's fervent hope was the attack and destruction of the enemy aircraft carriers by the Base Air Force.

The Staff of the 8th Fleet, upon receipt of TULAGI's urgent report, consulted with the Staff of the 25th Air Flotilla and not only informed the latter of their scheme for the Main Force of the Outer South Seas Force to attack the enemy transport convoy, but also their request that the 5th Air Attack Force ^{immediately} search for and attack the enemy carriers. Thus, based on this consultation, the 5th Air Attack Force carried out search and attack operations on the 7th with the enemy carriers as the number 1 target but in the end failed to sight the carriers.

For the Outer South Seas Force to obtain success in an attack on the GUADALCANAL anchorage on the night of the 8th, it was necessary to know, first of all, the movements of the enemy ^{aircraft} carrier force. Accordingly, the Outer South Seas Force, in addition to anticipating the search for the enemy aircraft carriers on the 8th by the Base Air Force, used his ^{own} force's float-planes to search for the enemy carriers. In addition to one float plane sent to reconnoiter the GUADALCANAL anchorage, three more were dispatched to search the sea areas to the east and north east of TULAGI, the areas thought at that time to be the most likely locations of the enemy carriers. However after searching out for 250 miles these float-planes confirmed the enemy carriers were not in that area of search. The results of the 5th Air Attack Force's enemy search and attack were not known but according to the search-plan (5 search aircraft - search distance 700-800 miles, take off 0330-0340) the search aircraft should have reached the outer limits of their flight by 0900 but there were no reports of sightings of enemy carriers.

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It was certain that there were enemy carriers in the sea area near GUADALCANAL, and from results of the various searches for them, it was estimated that, were the Outer South Seas Force to commence its approach to the GUADALCANAL anchorage during the afternoon of the 8th, there would be little concern over receiving an attack prior to sunset that day. Thereupon the Commander of the Outer South Seas Force decided to dash into the GUADALCANAL anchorage and sent the following radio at 0910 the 8th to Commander South East Area Force, ComC Combined Fleet and the Chief of the Naval General Staff giving the results of his own aerial search and his determination to dash in with his main force:

(1) THIS FORCE CARRIED OUT A RECONNAISSANCE FROM 0400 THE EIGHTH FROM BASE POINT 5° 40' SOUTH 156° 40' EAST OVER A SECTOR 60°-120° TO A DISTANCE OF 250 MILES WITHOUT SIGHTING THE ENEMY. ^(2 DESTROYERS) OUTSIDE TULAGI HARBOR, 15 TRANSPORTS INSIDE, OFF GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD WERE 4 CRUISERS, 7 DESTROYERS (AIRCRAFT CARRIERS NOT

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SIGHTED). IT SEEMS THAT OUR NAVAL LANDING FORCE IS ENDEAVORING TO COUNTERATTACK IN THE VICINITY OF THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD AND ALSO THAT THE TULAGI DEFENCE FORCE CONTINUES TO DEFEND FROM DUGOUTS AND TRENCHES. (2) AS SOON AS AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN RECOVERED (ESTIMATE ABOUT 0930), THIS FORCE WILL PASS SOUTHWARD THROUGH BOUGAINVILLE STRAITS, THENCE ^{PASS} BETWEEN (SANTA) ISABEL AND NEW GEORGIA ISLANDS AT HIGH SPEED AND STORM INTO THE GUADALCANAL ANCHORAGE ABOUT 2030. AFTER MAKING A SURPRISE ATTACK, WILL RETIRE AT HIGH SPEED. (3) AT 0826 AN ENEMY LOCKHEED PLANE WAS MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH US."

THE ADVANCE TO ATTACK

The Main Body of the Outer South Seas Force set speed at 20 knots from 1100 as it headed for ("The Slot") the Central Channel and commenced its run to the South. Around 1200 the CHOISEUL catapulted 2 float planes for an anti submarine patrol and, with intensified lookouts, headed for BOUGAINVILLE STRAIT; on passing through it at 1337, its ASW patrol planes proceeded to SITOTO to stand by.

In the meantime the Staff, 8th Fleet had received the Base Air Force's results of its enemy search and attack. The enemy carrier force having not been sighted there was practically no concern for the Main Body receiving an attack by the enemy's carrier planes while enroute to its attack. Our air attack force had reported its air attack on the enemy transport convoy off TULAGI and the great results obtained. At 1113 the COMBINED FLEET ORDER OF 0200 THE 8TH ((see page 83)) was received

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At that time the Staff of the 8th Fleet were giving consideration to many factors: the difficulties of sinking transports by gunfire; the difficulties, due to the enemy's carriers, of withdrawing for such a long distance after our attack; the great superiority of the enemy's ^(lookout) warning forces over our's; concern that our damage be great, etc. ^(Moreover) The great battle results reported by the 5th Air Attack Force and the order by the Combined Fleet stiffened ^{all the more} their determination to dash into the GUADALCANAL anchorage

The Main Body of the Outer South Seas Force, ^(after) catapulted a float plane ^(from the CHOISEUL) to conduct a dusk reconnaissance of the GUADALCANAL anchorage, increased speed to 26 knots and passing between CHOISEUL and VELLA RAVELLA Islands began its move

to the South.

After deciding to dash into the GUADALCANAL anchorage, the 8th Fleet Staff made careful study of matters concerning night fighting and determined an outline as follows

① "After penetration from the South side of SAVO Island, the first thing will be a torpedo attack against the main enemy forces off GUADALCANAL, then turn left and after a gun and torpedo attack against the enemy in front of TOLAGI, withdraw via the north side of SAVO Island.

② When this "dash in" has been completed, a distant withdrawal from the enemy carriers will be done as rapidly as possible. For this purpose, the "dash-in" will be done prior to 2330 so that withdrawal to a distance of 120 miles outside SAVO Island will be made by sunrise (0440) the next morning.

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③ fighting in a restricted channel, where disorder can arise - avoid confusion; column formation with distance between ships of 1200 meters for individual ship's own direction of its fighting power (free to move to launch torpedoes / fire gun batteries); For the above reason the formation will extend over 8,000 meters, and its maneuverability must be reduced or restricted. An inverse "dash-in" was not even considered.

④ considerations of speed: for gun and torpedo attack, and for retirement, high speed of 26 requires considerable fuel expenditure; to avoid confusion, speed should not be changed during the action

⑤ 3 float planes should be sent to the GUADALCANAL area and one float plane to TOLAGI Harbor to illuminate from behind the enemy ships with flares; float planes to take off from surface of the water and return to SHORTLAND IS.

Meanwhile the staff of the 8th Fleet at 1425 directed the force under its command to set torpedo depths for 4 meters and a run of about 10,000 meters, also since it was expected that torpedo firing would be mostly to starboard, spare torpedoes should be shifted to starboard. The Commander Outer South Seas Force at 1442 signalled his force as follows: VISUAL SIGNAL # 25, ^(DURING PRESENT OPERATIONS) THE FORMATION FOR THE DASH-IN WILL BE

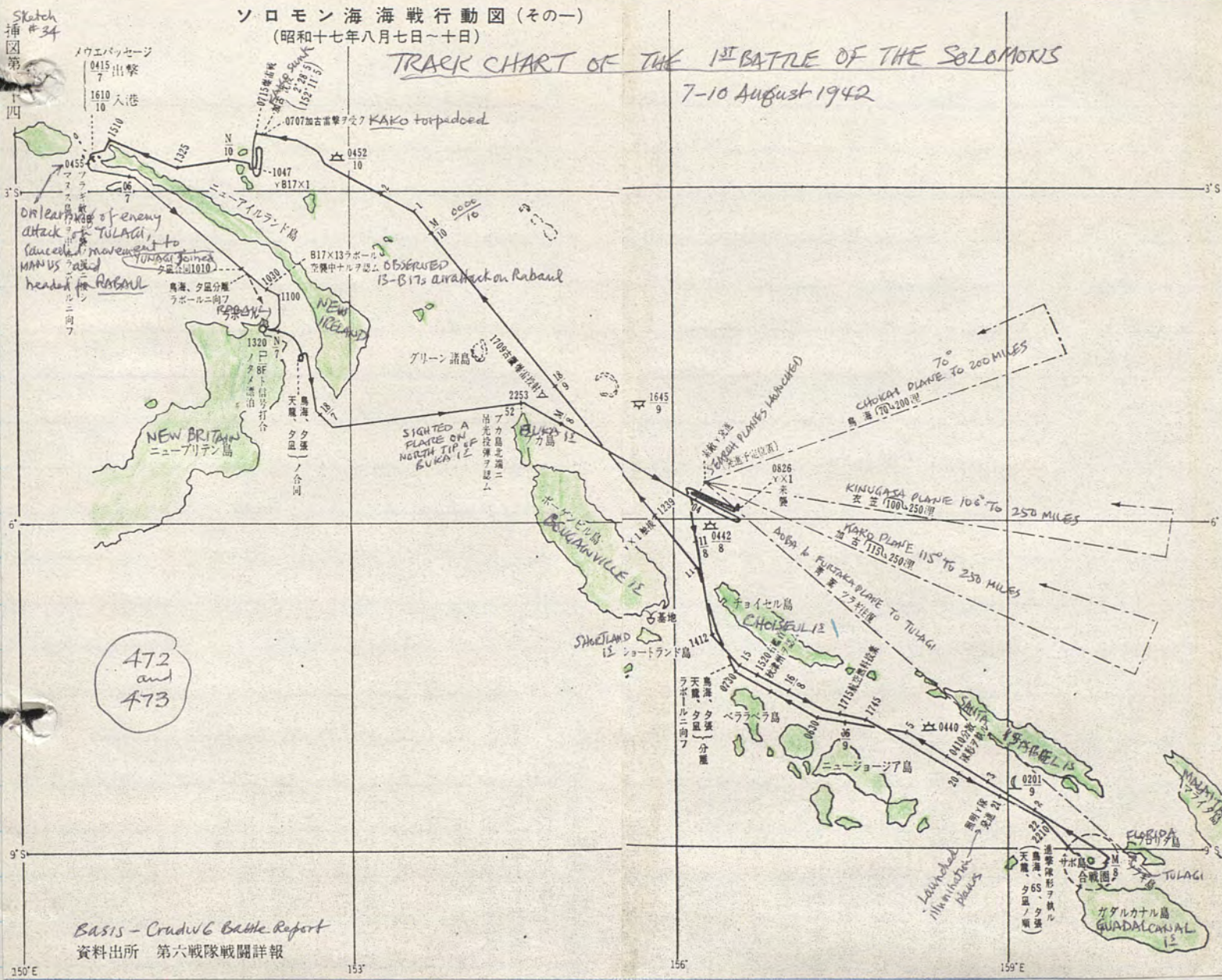
ENEMY SEARCH FORMATION. ① NIGHT ENEMY SEARCH FORMATION: CRUDIV 6 WILL CRUISE 1000 METERS ASTERN OF THE CHOKAI, THE VAN-GUARD WILL TAKE STATION 3000 METERS AHEAD OF THE CHOKAI, THE TENRYU AND YUNAGI TO THE LEFT AND YUBARI TO THE RIGHT, INTERVAL 6,000 METERS ② IF AN ENEMY PATROLLING VESSEL BE ENCOUNTERED PRIOR TO THE ORDER TO DASH IN IS GIVEN, THE VAN-GUARD WILL HOLD IT IN CHECK AND THE MAIN BODY WILL AVOID SLIPPING SOUTHWARD.

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- (3) FORM COLUMN FORMATION AT TIME OF THE DASH-IN, IN ORDER: CHOKAI, CRUDIN 6, TENRYU, YUBARI, YUNAGI, DISTANCE 1200 METERS.
- (4) 'DASH IN' WILL BE FROM SOUTH OF SAVO ISLAND, FIRST THE ENEMY IN FRONT OF THE GUADALCANAL BASE WILL BE ATTACKED BY TORPEDOES, THEN COURSE WILL BE CHANGED AND THE ENEMY IN FRONT OF TULAGI WILL BE ATTACKED WITH GUNFIRE AND TORPEDOES AND RETIREMENT MADE VIA NORTH OF SAVO ISLAND. THE EXECUTION OF GUN AND TORPEDO ATTACKS WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH COMMANDER. (5) TO AID IN IDENTIFICATION, A WHITE PENNANT 7 METERS LONG (DESTROYERS 5 METERS) WILL BE HOISTED ONE METER (DESTROYERS SIX TENTH OF A METER) BELOW EACH YARDARM (6) SPEED 24 KNOTS WILL BE SET FOR THE TIME OF THE DASH-IN.

At 1515 a mast was sighted ahead to starboard and the force temporarily turned to port but it was recognized as the ((seaplane tender)) AKITSUSHIMA deployed to take aboard a plane that had force-landed, so course was resumed. At sunset (1627) aircraft gasoline, motorboat fuel, torpedo fuel and also depth charges and other flammable material were thrown overboard; magazine and powder magazine flooding valves were put on "ready" and all measures taken to check fire that might be started by an enemy projectile. Commander Outer South Seas Force ordered a standby for full speed from 2200 onward and the intention to withdraw after the attack on course 300° and for the CHOKAI to be in position 90 miles, bearing 305° from SAVO Island at 0430 the following morning. That commander also sent the following encouraging visual signal at 1642: WE ARE ABOUT TO DASH INTO THE ENEMY CONFIDENT OF CERTAIN VICTORY IN THE IMPERIAL NAVY'S TRADITIONAL NIGHT BATTLE, ALL HANDS ARE EXPECTED TO EXERT ALL THEIR EFFORTS COOLY, CALMLY AND SKILLFULLY."

At 1720 speed was increased to 26 knots and at 1743 night enemy search disposition was formed. Between 2100 and 2113, 3 float planes were catapulted for illumination assignments and at 2120 formed column for the "dash-in". From this time onward there were passing ^{rain} squalls but visibility was generally good. From 2140 made out a reddish ^{ahead} glow above the TULAGI anchorage caused by the burning U.S. cargo vessel GEORGE F ELLIOTT. Sighted outline of SAVO Island at 2207. At 2237 CHOKAI #1 floatplane which had been sent ahead as one of



the illumination planes reported: "3 ENEMY CRUISERS 140° 8 MILES FROM SAVO ISLAND COURSE 290 SPEED 18"
At 2240 ordered "Prepare for battle" and all preparations for night battle were completed.

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DISPOSITION OF ALLIED FORCES AT THE GUADALCANAL ANCHORAGE

Damage to Allied Forces by Japanese air attacks on 7 and 8 August were lighter than anticipated. However due to these air attacks the cargo ships had not been able to remain at anchor for long periods and those landings of their cargoes had not progressed, creating a serious problem. By the evening of the 8th of August, there were ships that had landed only 25% of their cargoes and they would require ^{at least} another two days at anchor.

On the other hand, the Commander of the U.S. carrier force which had been in support of both the sea and land forces since the 7th, after recovering his aircraft at 1607 the 8th proposed a withdrawal of his carriers to the Commander of the

South Pacific Forces: "FIGHTER AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN REDUCED FROM 99 TO 78 AND IN VIEW OF THE SUPERIORITY IN THIS AREA OF JAPANESE TORPEDO BOMBERS AND DIVE BOMBERS RECOMMEND IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF THE CARRIER'S FORCE. FUEL IS RUNNING LOW PLEASE SEND TANKERS"

At ^{a conference held when} the time the expeditionary force joined up on 26 July in the FJI Islands, Vice Admiral Fletcher, the Carrier Force Commander (who was to be the Operational Commander of the forces), ^{at a conference} announced that the carriers would not remain within supporting distance for more than two days. The Commander of the Amphibious ((TURNER)) Force protested that there was no prospect of unloading the amphibious shipping in less than four days, and would need support for that entire period. This problem was not resolved; moreover the Commander South Pacific Force was not present at the above conference, so the problem remained unresolved. The Commander of the U.S. Carrier force, who had lost the ^{carrier} LEXINGTON in the battle of the Coral Sea and the carrier YORKTOWN in the Battle of MIDWAY, did not wish to run such risks, now.

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At the time of the request to withdraw, the Carrier Force was off the northwest coast of SAN CRISTOBAL, about 120 miles from Savo Island and, without waiting for reply, it headed south. Afterward, the Commander South Pacific Force agreed to the request.

The Commander of the Amphibious Force, on receiving ((Fletcher's)) request to withdraw his carriers, summoned to his flagship the Commanders of the Screening Force and the ((Marine)) Landing Force and they conferred on the steps to be taken. Not only had the landing of cargoes not progressed, but there was the report from the ^(PRATT) LOCKHEED ^{search} aircraft and the likelihood of air attacks by Japanese forces, ^(from the morning of the 9th) supported by large bombers which would advance to REXATA Bay. As a result of this conference it was agreed that the unloading of urgently needed items would be completed during the night of the 8th, and that three transports and cargo vessels would withdraw the following morning.

In order to protect the shipping in the GUADALCANAL anchorage and that outside of TULSA Harbor against Japanese surface forces and submarines, it was necessary to guard three areas: the passage between

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Southern SAVO Island and GUADALCANAL (about 7 miles), the passage to the north of SAVO Island and Florida Island (about 13 miles) and the channels to the east of TULAGI between FLORIDA Island and GUADALCANAL Island (SEALARK CHANNEL and LENO channels). To this end, the Commander of the SCREENING ((GUARD)) Force, Rear Admiral Crutchley set the following dispositions:

SOUTHERN FORCE (Guarding the Southern passage)

Commander: R/Adm. Crutchley

HMAS CANBERRA (Australian Heavy Cruiser)
 HMAS AUSTRALIA (" " "
 USS CHICAGO (U.S. Heavy Cruiser)
 USS PATTERSON (U.S. Destroyer)
 USS BAGLEY (" ")

As stated above, at 1833 the Commander Amphibious Force summoned the Commander Screening/Guard Force and the Commander of the ((Marine)) Landing Force. In response to this, Adm. Crutchley, in his flagship HMAS AUSTRALIA, left the Southern Force's area and closed LUNGA Point

NORTHERN FORCE (Guarding the Northern Passage)

Commander: C.O. USS VINCENTES

USS VINCENTES (U.S. Heavy Cruiser)
 USS QUINCY (" "
 USS ASTORIA (" "
 USS HELM (U.S. Destroyer)
 USS WILSON (U.S. Destroyer)

EASTERN FORCE (Guard the Eastern Channels)

Commander R/Admiral Scott

USS SAN JUAN (U.S. Light Cruiser)
 ((HMAS)) HOBART ((Australian Light Cruiser)) ((Author states in error "U.S. light cruiser"))
 USS MONSSEN (U.S. Destroyer)
 U.S.S. BUCHANAN (ditto)

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In addition, 2 U.S. Destroyers, USS BLUE and USS RALPH TALBOT were stationed to North west of SAVO IS for early warning to cover the approaches to SAVO Island from the westward.

Amphibious shipping was divided between LUNGA anchorage and the anchorage outside TULAGI Harbor, continuing their discharge of cargo; a few destroyers and mine sweepers acted as close-in guards/screen for them

The details listed in the box at the top of the next page show the armament and displacements of the Allied ships of the Northern + Southern Forces, plus pocket destroyers,

Which were engaged by the Main Force of the Outer South Seas Force:

NAME OF SHIP	YEAR COMPLETED	STANDARD DISPLACEMENT (TONS)	GUN BATTERIES		TORPEDO BATTERY	
			MAIN	AA	TORPEDO TUBES	TORPEDOES CARRIED
CHICAGO	1931					
VINCENNES	1936	9,950	9-8" GUNS	8-5" AA	0	0
QUINCY	1935					
ASTORIA	1933					
BLUE	1938					
RALPH TALBOT	1938	1,500	4-5" GUNS	16-20 inch (over for 20 inch)	16-20" torpedo tubes	unknown
HELM	1938					
WILSON	1939					
PATTERSON	1937					
BAGLEY	1938					
CAMBERRA	1927	9,870	8-8" guns	8-4" AA	8-21" torpedo tubes	unknown

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SLIPPING BY THE ENEMY PATROL LINE

Having completed all its battle preparations, the Main Force of the Outer South Seas Force, formed "DASH-INFORMATION" and took course 140°, speed 26 knots, to head for SAVO's southern pass. At 2243, the CHOKAI made out the silhouette of a warship bearing 200° distant 9,000 meters. "COMBAT" was ordered and while preparing for attack at any moment, course was changed about 20° to the left to avoid. The Commander of the Outer South Seas Force advised his forces by voice radio of his intention to enter the transport anchorages via the northern passage,

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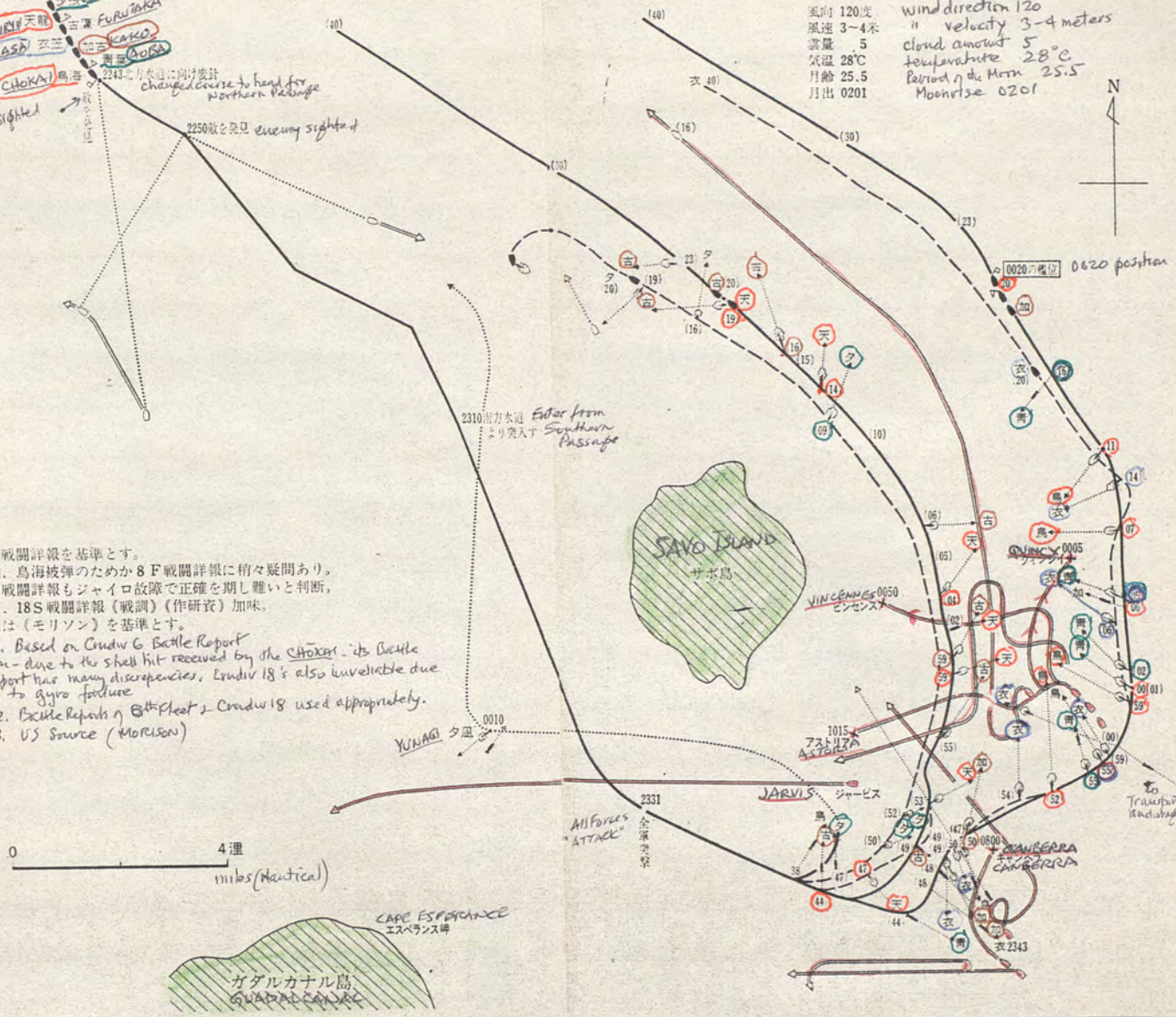
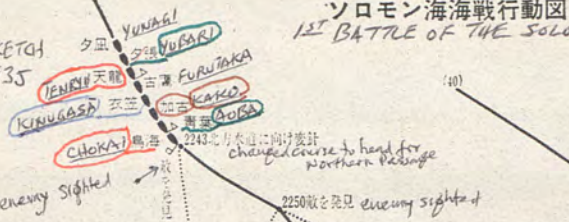
At 2250, course was changed to the right when another destroyer was sighted bearing 144° on the same course, to avoid that destroyer. The previously sighted destroyer was now seen to reverse course as if preparing to fire his torpedoes but continued to open the range (without firing). Fortunately neither of these destroyers sighted our force which thereby slipped by the enemy's ^{picket}/patrol line.

At 2308 Commander Outer South Seas Force passed the word "WILL ENTER FROM THE SOUTHERN PASS" and course was adjusted to head for the Southern passage close to the southern shore of SAVO Island. At 2326 that commander ordered "ACT INDEPENDENTLY" (each ship would fight independently under the direction of its Commanding officer), followed by the order ^{"ALL FORCES"} "ATTACK" at 2331 when south of SAVO. At that time the CHOKAI's course was 120°, making 26 knots; the weather was cloudy with slight mist, wind ESE at 5 meters/second, seas calm and visibility 10 Kilometers.

TRACK CHART
ソロモン海海戦行動図 (その二)
1st BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS (2)

(昭和十七年八月八日2243-九日0040) TIME: 2243 8 August -
0040 9 August 1942

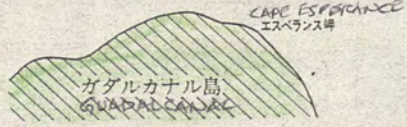
挿図第三十五
SKETCH #35



- 注 1 6 S 戦闘詳報を基準とす。
理由: 島海被弾のためか 8 F 戦闘詳報に稍々疑問あり。
18 S 戦闘詳報もジャイロ故障で正確を期し難いと判断。
2 8 F. 18 S 戦闘詳報 (戦調) (作研資) 加味。
3 本圖は (モリソン) を基準とす。
- NOTE 1. Based on Crudiv G Battle Report
Reason - due to the shell hit received by the CHOXAI, its Battle Report has many discrepancies, Crudiv 18 is also unreliable due to gyro failure.
2. Battle Reports of 8th Fleet & Crudiv 18 used appropriately.
3. US Source (Morrison)

風向 120度 wind direction 120°
 風速 3-4米 " velocity 3-4 meters
 雲量 5 cloud amount 5
 気温 28°C temperature 28°C
 月齢 25.5 Period of the Moon 25.5
 月出 0201 Moonrise 0201

0 4 哩
miles (Nautical)



It should be noted that Commander Outer South Sea Force's voice radio messages concerning the changes of course, changes of intent, enemy situation etc were on a communications circuit also used by Crudiv G but not held by the YUBARI, YUNAGI and TENRYU, so the latter ships followed those ahead but ignorant of the changes in the situation.

According to U.S. records, the two U.S. radar picket destroyers were the BLUE and the RALPH TALBOT, the former assigned to cover the South passage, the latter the North passage, approximately 8 miles ahead of SAVO Island, both ships were equipped with old-type search radars which under good conditions had a detection range of about 10 miles but because land was in the vicinity of their search zone their search-capability was reduced. Their crews, probably tired from more than 36 hours at battle stations, did not sight the Japanese force, although they had picked up the float planes of our illumination force that had been launched earlier, and the RALPH TALBOT had reported at 2145 - "WARNING AIRCRAFT OVER SAVO-COURSE EAST."

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This warning report was repeated several times but was not received by Commander Amphibious Force who was only 20 miles distant. Alerted by the RALPH TALBOT's report, the BLUE picked up our aircraft and issued a report which was received by only a part of the ships there and even those who sighted the aircraft and received the warning reports did not understand their importance. The C.O. of the VINCANNES of the Northern Force saw the glow of the plane's exhaust but believed they were friendly aircraft.

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THE FIRST PHASE ACTION

With the order "ALL FORCES ATTACK", the Main Force of the Outer South Seas Force in column order - CHOKAI, AOBA, KAKO, KINUGASA, FURUTAKA, TENRYU, YUBARI, YUNAGI prepared to dash into LUNGA Anchorage. The moon had not yet risen (Moonrise - 0201). This action, carried out at high speed, in a constricted sea area with a column exceeding 5000 meters in length and in pitch darkness, became confused and therefore many points are not entirely clear. There are many inconsistencies in the various ^{existent} "BATTLE REPORTS" of the 8th FLEET, CHOKAI, COMCRUDIV 6, COMCRUDIV 18 etc but by synthesizing these materials and the post war recollections of relevant personnel, the following is deduced, and plotted as TRACK CHART of The 1st BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS (2) ^{Top} _{Page 111}. While this is mostly based on Comcrudiv 6 material, it also includes data from U.S. post-war sources.

Immediately after the order "ALL FORCES ATTACK", the CHOKAI sighted the silhouette of a ship bearing 117° and recognized it as an ACHILLES class cruiser. Commander Outer South Seas Force ordered the CHOKAI to attack with torpedoes and at 2338 four torpedoes were fired at a sight range of 4000 meters, but no hits were made. Immediately after the torpedoes were fired, several silhouettes of warships were sighted bearing 110° and 117°. Course was changed to the left to attack and the CHOKAI aircraft were ordered to "ILLUMINATE TARGETS"; those float planes dropped parachute flares near the beaches back of LUNGA Anchorage creating a splendid back illumination of the ships. At 2347 the CHOKAI fired 4 torpedoes at an AUSTRALIA class cruiser and saw hits; sight range was 3,700 meters. At this time the enemy began to fire star shells overhead.

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The Aoba, flagship of Crudiv 6, was following the Chōkai and at 2336 sighted a destroyer ten degrees to port distant 7000 meters and again at 2339 sighted another destroyer five degrees to starboard at quite a distance, both on reverse courses; also at 2340 sighted what looked like a battleship 9000 meters, four degrees on the starboard bow and 2 cruisers 35° on the port bow, for a total of 3 ships. Later on the battleship was identified as a LONDON class cruiser.

These cruisers, illuminated and silhouetted by the aircraft's parachute flares, were taken under gun and torpedo fire from 2344 by the cruisers Aoba, Kako and Kinugasa and 6 torpedo hits were observed.

The Furutaka, the rear guard of Crudiv 6 fired torpedoes at an enemy destroyer (at 2344) advancing from her port side and sank it; following in the wake of the leaders, the smoke from the burning enemy cruisers began to penetrate our own formation and the Furutaka turned left to avoid them, parting company from the preceding ships. She then, at 2349, fired 9 torpedoes at the enemy cruisers and saw 3 hits and continued north firing her gun batteries.

Following in the wake of the Furutaka, the Tenryū at 2342 sighted what it took to be a destroyer bearing 035° distant about 3000 meters on an opposite course and at 2346 saw 5 large cruisers illuminated by parachute flares about 6000 meters ahead and to starboard; also, at 2347 a Craven class destroyer was sighted bearing 080° distant 3000 meters, firing starshells; against which the Tenryū illuminated it with searchlight and opened fire with its guns, sinking it at 2350. Post-war the Commander of Crudiv 18 stated that the Tenryū was the first ship to illuminate by searchlights and attack with gunfire. However the concussion of their gunfire damaged their gyro-compass, and as they did not trust their magnetic compass, they were forced to follow in the wake of the Furutaka.

At 2347 the Yūbari fired torpedoes from about 1500 meters at the Aethiops class cruiser (which ^{the Chōkai} first attacked with torpedoes) and obtained one hit causing fires to break out. It sighted a Craven class destroyer ^{to starboard} at 2350 on opposite course and opened fire with its guns, sinking it. This gunfire caused a malfunction in the director and there was temporary confusion. Prior to this, ^{in following} the Tenryū to the point of the left turn, the Yūbari offset its turn a little to the left and thereafter held its course ^{(continuing the} battle from its new position.

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The rearmost ship, the YUNAGI while followingⁱⁿ the wake of the YUBARI, lost sight of that vessel during its unexpected large change of course, because an electric failure extinguished the illumination of the compass during which the rudder had been put over. In order to avert the confusion to follow the YUNAGI continued its reversal of course, and, at 2352 torpedoed and sank an enemy light cruiser; in addition when on a westerly course at 0010 it engaged an enemy destroyer on a parallel course to port, damaging it heavily, after which the YUNAGI headed north for the north side of SAVO Island where it joined the Main Force.

According to U.S. Post War material, the pattern of the fighting was as follows: The ACHILLES class cruiser that was ^(first) sighted ^(and attacked) by the CHOKAI ^{to port,} on a reverse course ^{to port,} was the destroyer JARVIS which was headed for NOUMEA for repairs having been damaged in the attack by the 5th Air Attack Force that day at about noon; she was sunk by the concentrated attack by the 5th Air Attack Force on the 9th but at that time she was down by the bow and leaking oil and probably received additional damage in this action. -

The Commander of the Screening Force (and Commander Southern Force), being summoned to the conference by the Commander Amphibious Force, proceeded there in his flagship, the HMAS AUSTRALIA, and when he left, the Captain of the U.S.S. CHICAGO became Commander Southern Force. The Southern Force was now composed of the CANBERRA and CHICAGO, in column - distant 500 meters, with the destroyers BAGLEY and PATTERSON, stationed 1200 meters on the starboard and port bows of the CANBERRA, patrolling a line SE x NW in SAVO Island's Southern passage at 12 knots.

The PATTERSON was the first to sight the Japanese force (at 2343) and issued a warning-report; at about the same time parachute flairs were dropped over the transport convoy at LONGA Point, which silhouetted the CANBERRA and CHICAGO which were under torpedo and gun attack. As two torpedoes hit the CANBERRA's starboard side and 24 shells struck, her General Alarm bell was ringing but her guns were still trained fore and aft she got off two torpedoes and several rounds from her secondary (4 inch) battery. Fires had broken out and were spreading, she took a list to port and within five

minutes was knocked out of action, being disposed of by torpedo fire ^{at 0600} after personnel had picked up.

The CHICAGO sighted wakes of torpedoes at 2346 and tried to avoid them but one hit her on the port bow; she fired starshells to search for targets but all were duds and afterward received gunfire, but damage was minor and while engaging an enemy destroyer on a reverse course, ^{having} separated from the battle area but turned back at 0310 to assist the CANBERRA.

After the PATTERSON had sent out its warnings, it fired star shells for illumination and engaged the Japanese force with gun fire; its #4 gun received a shell hit putting two guns out of action. The BAGLEY did make its preparations for engaging the enemy in time so fired torpedoes at the rear end of the Japanese force, without making any hits. The Japanese force had passed within a mile but that force was directing its gunfire at the enemy cruisers so the BAGLEY did not receive any firing.

THE SECOND PHASE ACTION

ACTION BY THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE:

Immediately after the CHOKAI had changed course to the north east and fired torpedoes at ^{about} 2348, three enemy cruisers were sighted on the port bow; this appearance of the enemy was entirely unexpected. A fierce battle ensued at ranges from 7,000 to 3,000 meters using main batteries, anti-aircraft guns and machine guns, and for the first time since the dash-in, searchlights were used. The enemy was caught in a cross fire, the FURUTAKA, TENRYU and YUBARI proceeding northward to the west of the enemy firing to the eastward, the CHOKAI group firing to the westward. The three enemy ships, ^{immediately} became covered with flames from our gun and torpedo attacks and lost their fighting power. In this fighting the CHOKAI received shell hits in her operations-center and elsewhere but they were all "duds", and her battle capability was unimpaired. The AOBA also was hit by a machine gun bullet in a torpedo mount, causing a small fire to break out. The fighting was quite confused, ^{due to} the mist, the bursts of fire from the burning enemy ships, the flashes from own gunfire all making the visibility extremely poor plus the ear-numbing noise of the machine guns. However, our spirits were raised seeing the many gunfire hits at close range causing fires to break out.

The Commander Outer South Seas Force sighted the FURUTAKA group (recognizing them

by their pennants flown from their yardarms) in the beam of our searchlights and learned for the first time that his force had divided. He estimated their range to be about 7000 meters and to avoid friendly fire, had the CHOKAI group move to the north with all speed to open the range to the FURUTAKA group. In the meantime the KINUGASA had fired four torpedoes, with long-range settings, toward the LUNGA anchorage, but no hits were obtained.

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The following details of the battle are from their "Battle Reports"

CHOKAI BATTLE REPORT:

about 2347. Sighted silhouettes of several vessels dead ahead - Headed for them.

2353 - opened fire on the first ship (SAN FRANCISCO class) 50° to port; ^(estimated) range 5000 meters, made continuous hits from initial shot through three salvos; entire ship immediately enveloped in flames, without returning our fire; our AA guns opened continuous fire.

As CruDiv 6 began to concentrate on the first ship, shifted our fire to the second ship after our fifth salvo at the former. Hereafter the return fire from all enemy AA guns and machine guns became fierce.

2355 - The noise of our gunfire - main, Anti-aircraft and 25mm machine gun batteries creating a terrific din. Opening range in shifting fire to second ship (Australia class?), 5,700 (meters) - made continuous hits from third salvo onward - from first hit, that ship entirely in flames and on the verge of sinking, so shifted target to third ship after having fired eight salvos at the second ship. From this time onward, the third and fourth enemy ships concentrated the fire of their main batteries on the CHOKAI.

2359.30 - opened fire on third ship (SAN FRANCISCO class), range 5,900 (meters) made hits continuously from second salvo on - CruDiv 6 now concentrating its fire on it. of our nine salvos, three were confirmed hits.

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9 August 0004 - commenced firing on fourth ship (SAN FRANCISCO class), range 4,900; first shot set afire aircraft on enemy's catapult and to deck beneath it. Continuous hits until fourth salvo.

(about) 0005 - Main battery fire from third and fourth enemy ships (firing red and blue dye-load shells) - one hit our number one turret, and three hit the aft section of the bridge; 15 men killed in Number 1 turret (put out of action) and 36 men killed in bridge structure.

0007 - opened fire on third ship, range 3,000 - CruDiv 6 concentrated fire vicious - many

hits and many straddles; shifted target to fourth ship after seventh salvo - began using searchlight - that ship, although its after part burning fiercely, is reversing course and heading for our formation. 0011-20. We open fire against it, range 6,500 - first shot a near miss but second salvo of 2-3 shells hit its bridge, which is seen to blow-up; continue to make hits until fifth salvo when enemy is seen to sink by the stern.

0011-40. Suspend firing - no trace of enemy in the vicinity. In the 35 minutes since this force fired its first torpedoes and the 20 minutes after our cruiser group to port opened gunfire, we have swept clear these seas. 38 Main Battery salvos (302 projectiles)

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CRUDIV 6 BATTLE REPORT

2348 - sighted enemy ships ahead - one ASTORIA class and one PORTLAND class, followed by another ASTORIA class ship.

2358 The ASTORIA and PORTLAND class heavy cruisers to starboard hit by gunfire and torpedoes, one after another and soon catch fire; covered with fire and smoke and with black smoke rising to the sky, their list gradually increases and they are sinking.

9 AUGUST - 0000 - Change course to 0°.

0001 - sight another ASTORIA class heavy cruiser - in a brief, terrific attack the enemy ship stops, burning fiercely.

0002 - A PORTLAND class heavy cruiser (flying an admiral's flag (?) on the main mast) appears just in front of the above burning ASTORIA class cruiser and on the same course; taken under gunfire, large fires break out.

0005 - still another ASTORIA class heavy cruiser appears in the CHOKAI's searchlight beam - taken under gun fire, in an instant huge fires break out.

0007 - The above PORTLAND class heavy cruiser still afire and burning fiercely, approaches our formation from 20° on the port bow.

0008 - the PORTLAND class heavy cruiser (above) when 80° to port and distant 2000 meters, puts rudder over to reverse course and at 0014 explodes and sinks.

0016 - the above ASTORIA class heavy cruiser, which was the last ship that we took under fire, is burning furiously abeam to port distant 1700 (meters) on a reverse course is presently hit by a torpedo and sinks.

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0020 - Order from CinC 8th Fleet - "ALL FORCES WITHDRAW." In the meantime, the FURUTAKA, TENRYU and YUBARI, which had split-off from the main force, after changing to a northerly course were charged by an enemy destroyer firing torpedoes, which were avoided to port.

the torpedoes exploding on hitting SAVO Island. At that time the situation of opposing forces being disclosed by the CHŪKAI's searchlight illumination, a pincher's movement was attempted, by holding their northerly course but they were too far advanced over the Main Force due to their premature turns so speed was reduced and maintaining their distance to the Main Force they headed to pass Savo Island close aboard to the west while engaging the enemy there with gunfire. The YŪBARI, while enroute, eased to port of the FURUTAKA and TENRYŪ and took under fire an enemy destroyer sighted ahead to port.

THE TENRYŪ'S ACTION REPORT (from Com Crudiv 18 Battle Report)

2358 - Attacked a "KENT" class cruiser having (small fires aboard) 50° to starboard distant 6,000 meters

9 AUGUST - 0004 - Opened fire on an enemy destroyer on opposite course, 40° to starboard, distant 3000 meters - minor damage

0006 - confirmed sinking of the previous "KENT" class cruiser.

0010 - opened fire on sighting a "SOAMES" class destroyer in a searchlight beam - 30° to starboard, distant 5,000 meters

0020 - order: "ALL FORCES WITHDRAW"

0025 - sighted enemy destroyer 50° to port and issued orders to open gun fire but ceased when ^{the} YŪBARI moved into our line of fire and commenced firing at this enemy.

(Lt. Junsaburō ARASE

The Gunnery Officer of the YŪBARI, post war, gave his recollection of the action as: "after firing torpedoes to port, ^{the} TENRYŪ illuminated and opened gunfire on the first of three enemy destroyers on opposite course to starboard; the YŪBARI fired nine salvos at the second ship, without illumination, average range 3,000 meters, three shells of the third salvo hitting the enemy aft, while 2-4 projectiles of two other salvos hitting amidships, starting large fires; its sinking was believed certain. During the meantime the enemy did not return our fire.

Next, gunfire against the 3rd ship was commenced without illumination, five salvos being fired at an average range of 4,000 meters; one hit aft was observed on the second salvo but the effective field of fire ^(was small and) overlapped that of the TENRYŪ. The enemy returned our fire, one shell hit the YŪBARI but did minor damage. After the order "ALL FORCES WITHDRAW", one destroyer ahead to starboard and on a

parallel course was taken under gunfire but believing it mistaken for Crudiv 6, firing was suspended but before long it was confirmed to be an enemy ship and fire was resumed with illumination at ranges from 3000-4000 meters; it counter attacked to port and was hit by 15-20 shells and its sinking was considered certain. At first the enemy turned on its recognition lights and then counterattacked making many near misses

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Other than as stated above, details of this sea battle are unknown. In August 1944, the YOKOSUKA NAVAL GUNNERY SCHOOL prepared a "GUNNERY RECORD" (including this 1st Battle of the Solomons) which carries the following table: $\left(\frac{486}{F} - \frac{487}{F}\right)$

SHIP	TIME	MIN/SEC	TARGET	COLLY INDY	RANGE (meters)	BATTLE RESULTS	AMMUNITION EXPENDED	REMARKS	
C H O K A I	2352	2 ^m -46 ^s	SAN FRANCISCO CLASS	collective	5000	of 5 salvos - 3 salvos hit; fires started no return fire (sunk afterward)	20 ^{cm} - 368 12 ^{cm} - 120 25 ^{mm} - 500		
	2355	3 ^m -35 ^s	AUSTRALIA CLASS		5700	of 8 salvos, 6 salvos hit - no return fire - set afire - sunk			
	2359	4 ^m -6 ^s	SAN FRANCISCO CLASS	coll.	5900	of 16 salvos, 3 salvos hit - concentrated fire with Crudiv 6 - Diverging light range - finding difficult - was ^{was} sunk afterward - 1 attack			
	0007	2 ^m -30 ^s		coll	3000				
	0004-0011	6 ^m -0 ^s 3 ^m -30 ^s	SAN FRANCISCO CLASS		4900 6500	made hits with 8 out of 9 salvos sunk during second attack.			
A O B A	2356	5 ^m -6 ^s	AUSTRALIA CLASS		6600	After being hit by torpedoes and guns (3 rd salvo) set afire and sinking	20 ^{cm} - 68 20 ^{cm} - 19 20 ^{cm} - 48 20 ^{cm} - 48	20 ^{cm} - 183 12 ^{cm} 84 25 ^{mm} 190	Only a part of the enemy force returned our fire and that was for the most part AA and machine gun firing
	0001	1 ^m -15 ^s	ditto	collective	5,150	hits made after second salvo - set afire probably sunk			
	0002	2 ^m -15 ^s	PORTLAND class		3,650	made hits from 1 st salvo onward after section set afire positively sunk			
	0005	3 ^m -0 ^s	AUSTRALIA class	collective	2,300	hits obtained from 2 nd salvo on - set afire positively sunk			
K A K O	2349	1 ^m -0 ^s	KENT class		4500	from 1 st salvo made hits	20 ^{cm} 192 12 ^{cm} 130 25 ^{mm} 149		
	2350		AUSTRALIA CLASS	collective	less than 5000	made hits from 1 st salvo onward large fires broke out			
	#2 target		ditto	ditto	less than 5000				
	#3 target		ditto	ditto	same				
K I N U G A S A	2349	3 ^m -46 ^s	destroyer		7000	Hits obtained - set afire - sunk in 4 minutes	20 ^{cm} 185 12 ^{cm} 146	fired AA battery only Main Battery only	
	2350	2 ^m -0 ^s	LONDON class cruiser		2000	Hit from first, thru 4 salvos - large fires			
	2354	4 ^m -0 ^s	Heavy Cruisers		8500	continuous hits large fires			
	2359	4 ^m -0 ^s	LONDON class 2 nd ship		5000	many hits			
	0000	3 ^m -0 ^s	destroyer	individual	6500	hits - large fires - sunk 4 minutes later.			
	0006	3 ^m -0 ^s	heavy cruiser	collective	4000	on fire - made hits large fires broke out			
	0014	8 ^m -10 ^s	heavy cruiser		6500	continuous hits - large fires			
F U R U T A K	2349	2 ^m -0 ^s	AUSTRALIA CLASS		3000	made hits - large fires - sinking confirmed	20 ^{cm} - 10 20 ^{cm} - 44 20 ^{cm} - 37 20 ^{cm} - 38	20 ^{cm} - 153 12 ^{cm} - 94 25 ^{mm} 147	hits by torpedoes and gun fire simultaneously (Author's Note Ammo expenditure totals don't add correctly)
	2355	4 ^m -6 ^s	SAN FRANCISCO CLASS		8600	Seven out of thirteen salvos hit started large fires			
	2359	3 ^m -0 ^s	ditto		4800	hits on 6 of 9 salvos - started big fires			
	0006	3 ^m -0 ^s	SAN FRANCISCO CLASS		4400	more than 8 hits in 15 salvos			

489 E	FURUTAKA	0016	8 ^m -10 ^s	destroyer	collective	7900	one salvo of three hit starting large fires	}	
		0023	2 ^m -6 ^s	destroyer		3200	hit it with one salvo - sunk		
T E N R Y U		2347	2 ^m -30 ^s	CRAVEN class Destroyer		2500	made hits on more than 4 salvos large fires - sunk	}	14 ^{cas} - 80 8 ^{cas} - 23
		2353	3 ^m -30 ^s	FARRAGUT class destroyer		5000	more than 2 salvos were hits fires broke out - damaged		
		2359	3 ^m -36 ^s	KENT class		6000	sunk by gun and torpedo attack while burning		
		0004	3 ^m -40 ^s	CRAVEN class Destroyer		3000	hits started small fires		
		0014	3 ^m -0 ^s	SOAMES class Destroyer		5000	more than 2 salvos were hits caused large fires		
Y U B A R I		2350	0 ^m -45 ^s	CRAVEN class destroyer		3000	made hits - sunk	}	14 ^{cas} - 96
		2352	1 ^m -0 ^s	ditto		4000	hits - large damage		
		0009		ditto		4600	same		
		0016	5 ^m -0 ^s	AUSTRALIA class		5000			
		0026	3 ^m -30 ^s	CRAVEN class destroyer		3500	confirmed sunk		

According to the post-war recollections of the KAKO's gunnery officer, LtCdr Haruyoshi NISHIMURA, the firing ranges were extremely short and as the trajectories of the 20^{cas} guns was practically horizontal, they were able to make many hits. It would appear that the ranges given in the above table are somewhat different than was actually the case. Hits penetrated and they were so close that one could see the fires from shell explosions in side the enemy ships through the shell holes. Also the aircraft carried on the enemy cruisers caught fire so that ship types etc., could be readily discerned.

THE BATTLE, FROM THE ALLIED VIEWPOINT

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According to U.S. material ("THE STRUGGLE FOR GUADALCANAL, August 1942 - February 1943" by Samuel Eliot Morison) the second phase was as follows, i.e., the Northern Force (patrolling the Northern Passage of Savo, speed 10 knots,) was in column formation, VINCENNES, QUINCY and ASTORIA with destroyers HELM and WILSON stationed on the port and starboard bow of the VINCENNES. These ships received the RALPH TALBOT's warning message "ENEMY AIRCRAFT DETECTED" and heard the sound of the plane's motor several times, but did not go to general quarters. The Commander Northern Force, the C.O. of the VINCENNES, heard the gunfire to the south and saw starshells there but believed that the CHICAGO (group) was shooting at the Japanese aircraft. Afterward, all ships ordered general quarters after the PATTERSON's warning and the glare of parachute flares appeared over the Guadalcanal anchorage but they were put under gun and torpedo attack before they fully man their battle stations - their main batteries still being trained in - fore and aft. At that time the Northern Force

was changing course from South West to North West and the rear-most ship, ^{the ASTORIA} was the first to receive our attack.

Immediately after the ASTORIA sighted the aircraft flares on her port quarter and in the Guadalcanal area, she was illuminated by searchlight at about 1150^(1235?) and then received gunfire attack and torpedo hits. She also received gunfire from the FURUTAKA group, and endeavored to answer these attacks but in a few minutes received many hits, ^{and losing its ability to fight back;} her speed dropped and she came to a stop near Savo Island, capsizing and sinking at 1615 the 9th.

The QUINCY's aircraft on its catapult was hit and burst into flames, soon becoming a fine target, requiring no searchlight illumination. Subject to a cross-fire by the CHOKAI ^{and having a large hole from a torpedo hit in her port side,} and FURUTAKA groups that ship was destroyed before even the Japanese forces were aware of it. At 0635 the QUINCY capsized to port and sank.

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The VINCENNES also had her aircraft on its catapult set on fire and was then subject to concentrated gunfire from port and starboard; to evade the devastating gunfire she moved to starboard but received 2-3 torpedo hits in her port side from the CHOKAI group and in addition one torpedo hit from the FURUTAKA group and at 0003 came to a stop. Its hull being badly shot up, the VINCENNES wanted to lay a smoke screen but it had lost its ability to do so; afterward she received concentrated gunfire amidships and sank at 0050.

There was no damage to the HELM and WILSON.

While the battle was going on in the vicinity of Savo Island, the transports were busy with interruptions; first parachute flares were dropped above the transport Convoy off LUNGA, then more were dropped over the shipping at TULAGI; the shipping was brightly illuminated, ^{and} warnings were issued and all ships ceased their unloading and got underway. The transports were blacked out and milled around in the vicinity of their anchorage, without guidance, in confusion and in uncertainty.

THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW

At 0023 on the 9th, the Commander Outer South Seas Force, seeing the battle about over, ordered "ALL FORCES WITHDRAW", followed by "CRUISER DIVISIONS MAKE 30 KNOTS" and "MY COURSE 300°"; at 0027 the CHOKAI showed her position by searchlight. The Headquarters/Staff 8th Fleet, in their report "The 1st First Sea Battle of the SOLOMONS (The Night Battle of TULAGI straits) of the 'KA' operation", stated that:

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In 35 minutes of fierce fighting the greater part of the enemy ships present were sunk or damaged; as it was such a melee fought at close ranges our forces became separated and

there even arose the danger of attacking own forces (fortunately this was avoided by being able to identify friendly forces by means of ^{illuminated} white pennants); Once the need to concentrate and regroup all our forces was perceived, the withdrawal of all forces was ordered at 0023 the 9th. At about 0130, concentration was effected north of SAVO I^E when it became known that with the exception of the CHŌKAI, the entire force was undamaged. At that time careful consideration was given to again making a dash-into (the enemy's positions) but this would require ^(two hours) time, and incidentally torpedoes were practically expended, so it was decided to continue to withdraw (as sun rise would be at 0440) to be outside the radius of attack by enemy carrier aircraft (at least 120 miles from SAVO I^E) (if another dash in were to be made, we would only be about 30 miles from SAVO Island by sunrise).

By consolidating the post-war recollections of the Chief of Staff, 8th Fleet, Rear Admiral Shinzo ŌNISHI and Staff officer Takaichi ŌMAE, we have:

A. If the withdrawal from the dash-in were delayed, they would receive attacks from the enemy carriers the next morning, a repetition of MIDWAY.

1. It would require 2 hours to regroup the formation and make another dash-in and they would not be able to withdraw outside the attack zone of the enemy carriers by sunrise. In their state of trainings it was impossible to reform the force without slowing down.

(Authors Note: According to the track chart -- Page 107 top -- at the time of the order to withdraw the CHŌKAI, AOKA and KAKO were in column formation, the KINGASA about 1.3 miles astern of the KAKO and the FURUTAKA and TENRYŪ were about 5.5 miles on the port bow of the CHŌKAI, the YŪBARI ^(about 1.5 miles) being broad on the FURUTAKA's port bow. When the order to withdraw was issued the TENRYŪ was firing its guns and it is not clear whether she could be seen from the CHŌKAI while the YŪBARI which had separated earlier could not be seen from the CHŌKAI. According to the above report by the HQ/Staff 8th Fleet on the "Night Battle of TULAGI straits", at the time of the order to withdraw, the CHŌKAI, AOKA, KAKO and KINGASA had formed into column formation. Therefore the statement "another dash-in ... would require ... two hours" did not apply to for this main power of 4 ships to be lead into action, but applied to completion of a concentration of all ships and to dash-in again subsequent to 0130, requiring 2 hours)

2. Subsequent to the evening of the 8th there was much radio telephone traffic from the enemy aircraft carriers, and in view of the fact that our search planes had been unable to find them, it was believed that they were in the vicinity of 100 miles to the south east of GUADALCANAL.

B. Even if they were to withdraw immediately, the enemy carriers would learn of the night battle and there was a good probability that they would pursue our force, which offered a good chance to decoy them within the attack range of our Shore Based Air forces.

C. "torpedoes were practically expended"

(Author's Note: According to a study of the operational data, the number of torpedoes expended in the 1st and 2nd phases of the battle were: CHOKAI - 8; AOKA - 13, KAKO, KINUGASA, and FURUTAKA - each 8, TENRYU - 6, YUBARI - 4, YUNAGI - unknown, a total of about half the number carried) ((this of course includes "reloads"))

D. CHARTS and navigational material was lost by an enemy shell hitting the Operations Room.

(Author's Note: It is believed that there were others than those in use at that time. If none remained at all, the AOKA could have been directed to take the lead.)

The Captain of the CHOKAI, Captain MURIO HAYAKAWA urged that another dash-in be made in order to achieve their operational objectives but his advice was not accepted. This opinion of battle lessons in the "CHOKAI'S BATTLE REPORT" in regard to the withdrawal were as follows:

A "It is felt that when we were able to attack and destroy the enemy fleet in the "Night Battle of TULAGI STRAITS", we should have made another foray into the anchorage and completely destroy the enemy shipping there

1. It is easy to be content with a small success. In the night battle of TULAGI STRAITS, our fleet attacked and destroyed the enemy fleet and had more than 60% of its ammunition remaining while suffering only light damage and I am convinced that we should have courageously and boldly made another foray into the anchorage and completely annihilated the enemy transports and other shipping,

2. At that time these transports and shipping were loaded with personnel and material to strengthen a base on GUADALCANAL and had these been destroyed this would have had a ^{great} psychological effect on the enemy's country. According to Staff Officer WATANABE'S postwar recollections, when the CMC Combined Fleet learned of the Commander Outer South Seas Force's

order to withdraw, he believed that that force, not having achieved its operational objectives, would again make a foray after refuelling at SHORTLANDS, and was greatly displeased that the retirement had been made to RABOUL and that the operational objectives had not been met. All ships of that Command had received the impression that the Commander of the Outer South Seas Force, as shown in his previous order outline for night battle (at 1440 on the 8th), had decided prior to the foray on only one swing around SAVOIE, and that the ^(original) aim had not been a foray to annihilate the enemy.

When Admiral MIKAWA, Commander of the Outer South Seas Force left ^{To Kavi} to become the Comd 8th Fleet, the Chief of the Naval General Staff cautioned him, saying: "It may be an unreasonable order, but as Japan's industrial power is small, please see to it that ^(own) ships aren't destroyed", according to his post-war statements; perhaps there is an inference that this matter may have influenced his battle direction.

THE WITHDRAWAL AND THE SINKING OF THE KAKO

After assembling at 0130, the Outer South Seas Force took up a reverse of the course of the outbound movement and at 0445 formed a dispersed formation preparatory for enemy air attacks, but none appeared. According to U.S. records, when the American carrier force was SW of SAN CRISTOBAL Island at 2300 the 8th and approval for their withdrawal had not been received from Commander South Pacific Force, they turned around and headed for GUADALCANAL. Then at 0100 the 9th, a report that some kind of ^{surface} fighting had broken out in the GUADALCANAL area arrived. Captain Sherman, the C.O. of the WASP proposed that the WASP accompanied by a few destroyers having sufficient oil proceed at high speed to the north west, launch its aircraft and pursue the Japanese fleet up "the SLOT" but at 0130 a message from the Commander South Pacific Force arrived, approving the withdrawal of the carrier force. For this reason the Commander of the Carrier Force, without requesting a ^{dis} situation report with regard to the surface fighting, once again headed south east and left the area.

Well, on the 9th at 0700 the Commander Outer South Seas Force directed Crudiv-6 to return to KAVIENG; at 0800 when 30 miles north of VELLA LAVELLA Island, that Cruiser Division left the formation. Also, the YUBARI and the YUNAGI left the formation and headed for SHORTLAND, the former because of a condenser break down and the latter to refuel; the CHOKAI and TENRYU passed west of BOUGAINVILLE and arrived at RABOUL the next morning, the 10th. The YUBARI and YUNAGI, together with the OIKAZE which had

previously proceeded to BUKA Island, returned to PABAU on the 10th

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 Meanwhile, Crudiv 6 had passed north through the BOUGHANVILLE Strait and passing to the east of NEW IRELANDS was headed for MOEWE PASSAGE. However at 0710 on the 10th in position 16.5 miles bearing 47° from the top of SIMBERI Island (2-28°S, 152-11°E) the KAKO, following 800 meters astern of the ASBA received a torpedo hit on the starboard bow, followed by torpedo hits amidships to starboard and on the starboard quarter - a total of three torpedo hits, she took a large list to starboard and sank at 0715. At that time the visibility was 40 kilometers; the weather was clear and the sea calm; each section was in normal formation - distant 800 meters, course 275°, speed 16 knots, with one aircraft flying anti-submarine patrol ahead, but the formation was not zig-zagging. The KAKO sighted what appeared to be an air bubble caused by a submarine discharging a torpedo at a little after 0709, fifty degrees to starboard distant about 1,000 meters and attempted to evade but were not in time. Six officers and sixty seven men were lost with their ship; Crudiv 6, less KAKO arrived at MOEWE PASSAGE at 1610 that day. The survivors of the KAKO, after landing on SIMBERI Island, were transported to KAVIENG on the 11th by the 8th Base Force and were received aboard their sister-ships. According to the post-war statements of the KAKO's gunnery officer, Lieut. Comdr. Haruyoshi NISHIMURA, at that time the crew was extremely tired and weren't as alert as normally. American records disclose that the KAKO was sunk by the S-44, which fired 4 torpedoes from 650 meters distance; it was later attacked by our depth charges but was able to escape handily.

BATTLE RESULTS AND DAMAGE SUFFERED

After the battle was over, at 0100 the 5th, the Commander Outer South Seas Force reported to all commands concerned "SANK 5 HEAVY CRUISERS." After obtaining reports from all of his ships the totals became: SUNK - 8 cruisers, 1 light cruiser, 5 destroyers; DAMAGED - 5 cruisers, 4 destroyers but ComC 8th Fleet reported the battle results as follows, based on actual observations in the battle: ENEMY LOSSES: BLEW UP AND SUNK - 1 BRITISH HEAVY CRUISER (LONDON OR AUSTRALIA CLASS), 1 US HEAVY CRUISER (SAN FRANCISCO CLASS), 1 US LIGHT CRUISER (OMAHA CLASS); SUNK - 1 BRITISH Heavy Cruiser (LONDON OR AUSTRALIA class), 4 U.S. HEAVY CRUISERS (SAN FRANCISCO class) (one of these flying an Admiral's flag), 6 destroyers. HEAVY DAMAGED -

2 destroyers; MODERATELY DAMAGED; 1-BRITISH LIGHT CRUISER (ACHILLES class)

(B) DAMAGE RECEIVED: CHOKAI'S OPERATIONS ROOM, #1 TURRET, SMOKE STACK and SHIP'S SIDE 13-15 HITS; 34 dead, 48 seriously wounded; also machine gun hits on AOBATS torpedo tubes. In addition, the KAKO was sunk and one float-reconnaissance plane failed to return on the 8th. The enemy concentrated practically all its fire on the CHOKAI, the leading ship, nearly all being near-misses and it was only after the battle that the considerable damage became known. Holes and fragments of enemy shells ^{showed} some 6 hits were (8") 20 cm ~~but~~ only 10-14 were A.A. hits; some shell fragments were found on the main deck but no fires broke out; there were also innumerable ^{fractures/cracks in} places that had been hit by machine-gun fire. The 20^{cm} (8") shell that hit the CHOKAI'S #1 turret penetrated the right upper gun sight slit (thickness 25^{mm}) and after striking the top of the gun saddle and inner surface of the hood exited through the after part of the turret (thickness 25^{mm}) and exploded outside to starboard, a part of the shell remaining on the deck. As a result of inspection by all ships, it appears that all the enemy shells were ("duds") blind-shells, none exploding. The Commander Outer South Seas Force cautioned that this matter should be kept "top-secret".

At 1500 the 9th, Imperial General Headquarters made the following announcement:

A Forces of the Imperial Navy have continued violent attacks against the American-British Allied forces which appeared in the Solomons area since the 7th of August and inflicted annihilating losses on the enemy fleet and its transports and are even now carrying out attacks. ^{Battle} Results up to today have been: SHIPS SUNK: 1 Battle ship, class unknown; 2 ASTORIA class heavy cruisers; 2 AUSTRALIA class heavy cruisers; 4 or more cruisers, class not yet identified; more than 10 transports; SHIPS DAMAGED: - 3 MINNEAPOLIS class heavy cruisers, 2 or more destroyers; 1 or more than transports. Enemy aircraft shot down in air battles: 32 or more fighters, 9 or more fighter-bombers; Our own losses: 7 planes damaged and destroyed, 2 or more cruisers minor damage, but fighting ability unimpaired. Note: This sea battle is called the "Solomons Sea Battle".

On the other hand, American records lists the following losses to the Allied force:

(A) SUNK: Australian Heavy Cruiser CANBERRA, U.S. heavy cruisers ASTORIA, QUINCY and VINCENNES; (B) HEAVY/MEDIUM DAMAGE: U.S. heavy Cruiser CHICAGO, U.S. destroyers

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RAIF TALBOT & PATTERSON (L) PERSONNEL - U.S. - 1035 killed, 709 wounded; Australian - about 150 killed. However no damage was suffered by the Transport Convoy (in this action) but the retirement of the aircraft carrier force, the attacks by our air force on the 7th and 8th and the night surface battle caused great losses to their screening force^{and} resulted in their retirement on the evening of the 9th without completing their unloading of stores and material. Most of the personnel had completed unloading but only 25 of 60 days food, four of ten units of fire, and only 18 rolls of barbed wire had been unloaded; they had been unable to unload about 1390 troops, heavy artillery, radar, and all heavy equipment. Moreover Divisional liaison aircraft had been destroyed onboard the cruisers, so they could not reconnoiter GUADALCANAL.

In this battle, the Outer South Seas Force did not attack the enemy transport group and consequently failed to attain its operations objective. As previously stated, the C-in-C Combined Fleet expressed his dissatisfaction. However his Chief of Staff recorded in his diary: "This will be a jolt to the vain Americans and Australians, who have considered as supreme victories their Battles of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway"

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THE SINKING OF THE MEIYO MARU

It was previously mentioned ((page 78, top)) that a Naval Landing Force of 579 men, embarked in the MEIYO MARU and SOYA, and escorted by the TSUGARU, Minisweeper # 21 and Subchaser # 16, (under the command of the C.O. TSUGARU, had left RABAUL for GUADALCANAL at 2100 7 August. However, at 1155 the 8th Commander Outer South Seas force ordered the C.O. TSUGARU - "CANCEL LANDING OPERATION ON GUADALCANAL AND IMMEDIATELY TURN BACK TO RABAUL". C.O. TSUGARU received the above radio at 1245 when 160°, 20 miles from GREEN Island. The reason for Commander Outer South Seas Force's cancellation is recorded in his diary entry for 8 August: "ACCORDING TO THE MORNING RECONNAISSANCE [AUTHOR'S NOTE - The AOKA's aircraft's morning reconnaissance] learned that the force landed by the enemy was large; had the MEIYO MARU turn back.

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Commander Outer South Seas Force knew from various reports by the 5th Air Attack Force that as of the evening of the 7th the enemy had landed a considerable force and after confirming this by a^{float-} reconnaissance plane from his own force, ordered the MEIYO MARU "SUSPEND LANDING - RETURN TO RABAUL". The Transport Force immediately turned around and headed for RABAUL. At 2025 the 8th, when Cape ST. GEORGE bore 270° distant 14 miles, the MEIYO MARU was torpedoed by an enemy submarine and sank.

in five minutes, the escorting ships endeavored to master the submarine and to rescue personnel. Not only was there only a short time from the torpedo attack until sunset, there was an enemy submarine in the area where the rescue operations were taking place. So the operations did not progress as expected and only 163 persons were picked up, 373 becoming "missing in action". According to U.S. records, the American submarine S-38 torpedoed the MEIXO MARU

OPERATIONS OF THE SUBMARINE FORCE

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At the time that the enemy invasion force attacked, the nearest force to that place (GUMORANGAL) was Subron 3 (I-11, I-74, I-75, I-69, and I-71). This Squadron, having completed its commerce destruction patrol in the Australian area, was then returning to TRUK. On receipt of the report of the enemy landings, the CINC Combined Fleet at 0650 7 August ordered Subron 3 to attack the enemy in the TULAGI area and on the same day placed that command under the command of the Outer South Seas Force. As a result of the above order, with the exception of the I-71 (which was out of torpedoes), the four submarines sped to the TULAGI area to operate under the command of the Outer South Seas Force Submarine Force (Commander Subron 7). The I-69 and the I-71 (sic), in accordance with the above command, sped to the sea area ^{east} of SAN CRISTOBAL and MALAITA Islands, and for a short time after the 8th carried out patrols there but failed to sight the enemy; they then retired to TRUK for endurance reasons. On 10 August the I-74 and the I-75 reached the northern tip of NEW CALEDONIA, then they proceeded northward to the west of SAN CRISTOBAL to attack the enemy transport group (which had attacked TULAGI) on its return but did not sight the enemy. Later on they returned to RABAU on the 17th for emergency repairs and fuel. At the time that the enemy invaded TULAGI, the 2 subs of Subdiv 13 (I-21 and I-22) of the Outer South Seas Force's Submarine Force were in RABAU and a third (I-23) was at TRUK.

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Also, Subdiv 21 (Ro-33 and Ro-34) were operating off PORT MORESBY and in the area to the north of AUSTRALIA, respectively. The Commander of the Outer South Seas Force's Submarine Force ordered these two submarines to speed to the

GUADALCANAL area, concentrate in the area of INDISPENSABCE Straits, and in addition to attacking enemy ships, to establish liaison with the Lookout Stations on land in that area. The I-21 and I-22 departed RABAUl on the evening of the 7th and arrived in the vicinity of SAVO Island on the 9th; the Ro-34 also arrived off TULAGI on the 10th and all ships carried out an enemy search of the LUNGA ^(and TULAGI) anchorages but were unable to sight enemy ships. The I-23 and Ro-33 arrived off LUNGA Point around the 11th and thereafter carried out a surveillance patrol of the GUADALCANAL area, carried out a gun bombardment of the enemy shore positions in the LUNGA Point area and established liaison with the Lookout Stations ashore.

THE BATTLE BY OUR FORCES ON GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI

Just before the enemy landed, we had on GUADALCANAL the 11th Construction Unit (1,350 men), the 13th Construction Unit (1,221 men) and the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force (247 men); the latter were equipped with AA guns, mountain artillery, etc as related previously (see page 43). Construction Unit personnel were not equipped with individual weapons but a Construction Unit had about 180 small arms issued to it.

On TULAGI and in that area were: the Headquarters of the 84th Guard Force (approximately 400 men) under the command of Commander Masaaki SUZUKI, from which some 50 men had been dispatched to defend GAVUTU Island. There was a seaplane/patrol plane base on GAVUTU having the main YOKOSUKA Air Group (342 men) commanded by Captain Shigeyoshi MIYAZAKI and 144 men of the 14th Construction Unit, connected with armaments, etc. The principal armaments in this area were 6-8 cm AA guns and 6-13 mm machine guns.

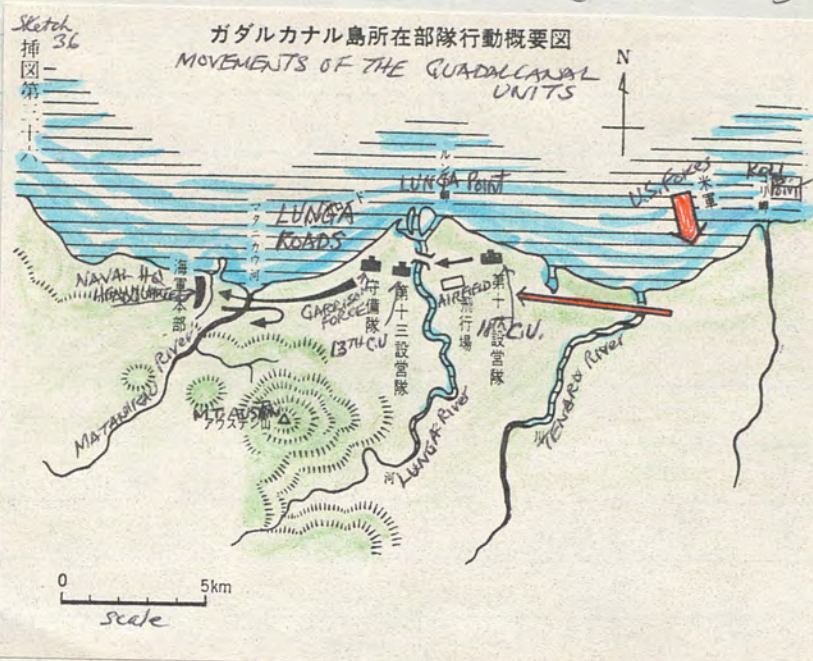
THE GUADALCANAL BATTLE

As there is almost no data/material remaining from that time, details are unknown but from post war statements/recollections, the following pattern of the fighting emerges:

At that time, the Headquarters of the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force had been established to the west of the mouth of the LUNGA River (See sketch next page). They learned of the enemy's attack on the morning of the 7th by the sound of gunfire. Their ordnance (as described above) was not emplaced and they were practically unprepared against the enemy's amphibious attack. Enemy shell fire came from the area of LUNGA Point but the enemy ships could not be seen due to the dense

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coconut groves. However judging from the sounds of the gunfire, the enemy force was judged to be strong. Immediately equipment was issued and three days rations provided. Liaison between the various units was cut off by the cutting of land telephone lines by enemy shell fire and aerial bombing, so the situation was entirely unknown. After a while, scout reported that a strong enemy fleet accompanied by many transports were attacking.



In order to counter-attack, the Garrison Force planned to approach the air field on the night of the 7th via the thick groves to the west of the airfield but they became confused in the deep coconut groves at could not reach their objective. Therefor they joined up with the Constructors Units and a unit that had already withdrawn to the vicinity of the MATANKAV River and began the construction of a camp on high ground 3-4 kilometers west of that river. Afterward, this became the Navar Headquarters.

The 13th Construction Unit had intended to carry out the urgent work of setting up the airfield on the 7th; arising early that morning, after breakfast, they set out for their work when they came under gunfire bombardment. Prior to their departure for GUADALCANAL they, with 2nd Air, ^{had been scheduled} were to go to NOUMEA in the F.S. operation and had a good many steel plates to be used for the construction of airplane revetments. In previous air attacks there had been some damage incurred so they had used those steel plates to construct a strong air-raid shelter and fortunately, on the day previous to the enemy attack, small arms had been issued to their personnel. Thus their personnel did not become scattered and because of their air-raid shelter their casualties were only 2 despite the severe bombing and shelling. However the land telephone lines were cut and messengers could not be dispatched, so there was no liaison with the radio station or with the 11th Construction Unit.

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At that time the Headquarters of the 11th Construction Unit were situated ashore in the vicinity of the left bank of the LUNGA River but afterward it was shifted to the right bank of that river near the sea coast and was therefore nearest to the enemy's landings. Moreover, before arising on the morning of the 7th they were ~~attacked~~ by gunfire and air bombardment with heavy casualties, resulting in confusion and the personnel getting out of the hand of their Commander. Ships' bombardment continued for some 1-2 hours, the radio station was destroyed, ^{and} the bridge that had been erected across the LUNGA River was smashed. From the vicinity of the 13th Construction Unit's Headquarters the coast was invisible, the enemy situation was unknown but the noise of boat engines ^{and} the beams of searchlights indicated that a large force had landed. After nightfall the 11th CU and the 13th CU, joined-up, ~~and~~ retired along the coast to the westward and on the morning of the 8th joined the Garrison Force some 3-4 kilometers from the west bank of the MATANIKAU River ^{where they} constructed a fortified position. After they had joined-up, the commanding officer of the 11th C.B. ^(Captain MONZEN) took over-all command and became Commander WADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE. Captain MONZEN observed the ^{furious} night battle that occurred in TULAGI Straits and felt that the Japanese force had achieved a great victory and also estimated that our forces would make counter-landings. Accordingly, to effect a concentration with such, his forces began an advance toward the LUNGA River along the coast at dawn the 9th but encountered the enemy ~~enroute~~ and received a furious concentration of fire, as a result of which they immediately reversed direction and returned to their original position, which they endeavored to strengthen.

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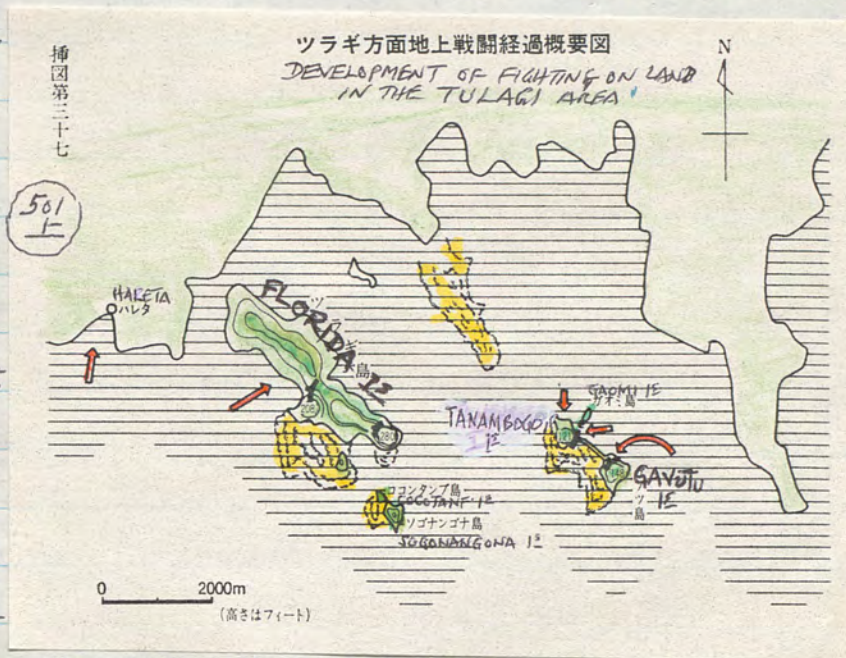
THE FIGHTING IN THE VICINITY OF TULAGI

^{all} As the naval force in this area were, for the most part, killed in action, there are no records or data. The following is an outline of the fighting there from radio messages from the TULAGI base, and from the official history of the U.S. Marine Corps.

From about 0410 ~~and~~ the 7th there were attacks by enemy carrier aircraft and our aircraft which were moored were completely destroyed; continued bombing attacks were made on shore facilities causing fires to break out ~~and~~ at the same time the enemy surface force appeared south west of TULAGI. The enemy promptly made preparations for a landing and one ~~unit~~, at 0540, using 8 landing craft, landed at

HALETA on FLORIDA Island. In the meantime 1 cruiser and 2 destroyers bombarded the N.W. shore of FLORIDA Island and its opposite shore line in support of landings there.

At about 0600 the enemy shifted its gunfire bombardment to TULAGI Island, now many landing craft headed for the central section of TULAGI's west coast under the cover of this bombardment, and attacked. This was the time that the messages - "THE ENEMY HAS COMMENCED LANDING" and "LARGE ENEMY FORCE - WE WILL

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DEFEND TO THE LAST MAN - PRAYING FOR SUCCESS" were dispatched and communications ceased. Using TULAGI Island's favorable topography, the 84th GUARD FORCE had previously constructed trenches on part of it. The main line of resistance was the ^{saddle of the} southern slope from 208 meter hill where defensive positions were constructed; 280 meter hill in the south east corner of the island was the other one of these fortifications.

The enemy, which had landed on the central-western coast at 0610, sent one unit across the island; as it advanced along the east coast it gradually turned to the right and spread to the north slope of the saddle. A strong follow-up force, after its landing, turned to the left and attacked toward the north western part of the island where the 84th GUARD FORCE was not deployed.

The enemy, under the cover of heavy fire support, began its attack and advanced at about 0930 towards 208 meter hill and after about an hour of furious fighting, resistance ceased and the position fell. Slow support fire from Cruisers continued for about 40 minutes while the enemy advanced to the valley in front of 280 meter hill where they halted and put out guards. The 84th GUARD FORCE, which had retired to 280 meter hill, made night attacks to destroy the enemy forces - one unit attacked to the east of the island's ridge penetrated the enemy's first line reaching the vicinity of their headquarters but its losses were heavy and by daybreak,

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but the 8th had withdrawn back to 280 meter hill. The same morning the enemy landed a strong reinforcement force which began an attack to surround 280 meter hill under heavy supporting fire. ~~Because~~ Due to losses suffered in the night attack, the previous night, the greater strength ~~was~~ prevailed and by night fall our forces were wiped out after a bitter struggle - only 3 prisoners were taken by the enemy and some 40 escaped to FLORIDA I².

As stated previously, at 0918 the 8th when Commander Outer South Seas Force reported to all commands his decision to foray he reported "OUR NAVAL LANDING FORCE IS STRIVING TO COUNTER ATTACK IN THE VICINITY OF THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD AND THE TULAGI GARRISON IS RESISTING IN ITS TRENCHES". This report was probably based on the reconnaissance of TULAGI and GUADALCANAL by the AOBAs float plane; that plane ^{is believed to have} reported seeing the gunfire smoke of the fighting at 280 meter hill and TANAMBOGO Island. When the above report reached the Chief of Staff of the Combined Fleet, he wrote in his diary: "BRAVE FELLOWS - HOLD ON FOR OUR RESPONSE! AS LONG AS ONE MAN LIVES AND CONTINUES THIS, THE ENEMY WILL BE PREVENTED FROM USING THE AIRFIELD, HIS SHIPPING WILL BE PINNED TO IT AND OUR ATTACK WILL BE THEREBY FACILITATED"

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We had sea-plane (flying boat) bases, Communication Stations, AA guns and other defensive installations on GAVUTU and TANAMBOGO Islands. Connecting both islands was a 450 meter causeway and on the east side of each island was a seaplane ramp. On both their west sides were coral reefs, unsuitable for amphibious landings, so that such landings would have to be conducted on their east coasts near the seaplane (patrol plane) bases. The 148 meter hill in the center of GAVUTU and the 121 meter hill on TANAMBOGO had the capability for mutual ^{supporting} flank defence weapons, and the topography lent itself to the construction of fortified caves and bunkers. Our units here were under the unified command of the Commander YOKOHAMA Air, who used the hills and the caves to strengthen the defences; also a small defense force was stationed on GABMI Island, 300 meters north east of TANAMBOGO Island.

At a little after 1000 on the 7th, after a furious bombardment by 1 cruiser and 2 destroyers, ^{about} one battalion of the enemy divided into three groups landed on the north east coast of GAVUTU. The garrison force poured on them concentrated fire from GAVUTU's 148 meter hill and from TANAMBOGO's 121 meter hill but were unable to prevent the enemy's landing but caused large casualties, pinned down the greater part of the enemy to the beach and checked their movement; the direction of gunfire from

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TANAMBOGO Island was especially destructive. However by afternoon of the 7th, most of GAVUTU had fallen into the enemy's hands.

In the meantime aerial bombing and ships' gunfire had been concentrated on TANAMBOGO. They planned to land reinforcements during the night of the 7th on a small pier to the north east of that island. One part landed successfully but the supporting gunfire ~~now~~ set fire to aviation gasoline that lit up the scene of the remainder landing as if in daylight. The Garrison Force poured machine gun and small arms fire on these ^{brilliantly} illuminated targets. Of the six landing craft to land, three were practically wiped out and the others withdrew. The landing craft of the late arrivals followed the causeway to GAVUTU.

The following morning it was decided to throw in the Divisional Reserve of 2 battalions into TULAGI, GAVUTU and TANAMBOGO. After this, 1 battalion (the other battalion reinforced TULAGI) landed on GAVUTU between 0800 and 0900 the 8th and just before noon landed two tanks. At around 1400, after a severe bombardment by ships' gun fire, the enemy began its attack, lead by the two tanks, from GAVUTU toward the southern tip of TANAMBOGO. The Japanese forces using "human bullet" tactics, rushed out of their dugouts, stalled the ^{leading} tank's track with an iron bar and set fire to it. In the immediate surroundings of this tank 42 Japanese officers and men fell in their rash attack.

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As a result of their attack the enemy secured the southern bridgehead to TANAMBOGO and brought in reinforcements. The Garrison Force from its caves and trenches constructed in the coral and causeway resisted tenaciously and bravely; they also interfered with the enemy's movements by flanking fire from GAOMI Island, but before long GAOMI was neutralized by ships' gunfire. With nightfall close in fighting began but the Garrison Force was finally overcome by the steady influx of enemy reinforcements and late the next day, the 9th, all resistance on TANAMBOGO ceased-- the enemy took 27 prisoners of war but some 70 men escaped to FLORIDA Island.

Captain MIYAZAKI, the Commander of YOKOHAMA Air and others of his Staff joined in the "human bullet" attack on the tank that had landed on GAVUTU and all perished. Those who escaped to FLORIDA Island probably fled into the interior or tried to get a boat to escape by sea all failed to escape; part of them, short of food, were ^{captured and} made prisoners of war.

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CHAPTER III - TRANSPORTATION OF THE ICHIKI ("IKKI") DETACHMENT TO GUADALCANAL and the 2nd SEA BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS

Neither the 5th Air Attack Force, nor the Submarine force that had moved up to that area, were able to sight any enemy surface force in the GUADALCANAL area on the 8th of August. The South East Area Force estimated that our attacks from the seventh and thereafter had been able to drive away the enemy invasion force. Our reconnaissance aircraft had sighted ^a considerable ^(number of) small craft in the vicinity of Guadalcanal Island and the TULAGI area and had also been fired on by AA guns, confirming the fact that the area was held by the enemy, probably survivors. Even Imperial General Headquarters' Army and Navy Sections estimated that there was a ^{good} probability that the enemy would withdraw.

Based on such an estimate, South East Area Force recommenced, beginning the 12th the transportation of the Construction Unit to BUNA which had previously ^{been} suspended, to speed up the completion of the BUNA airfield. Even Imperial General Headquarters on the 13th issued a Central Army Navy Agreement outlining forthcoming operations in the South East area, the gist of which was "carry out promptly the invasion of PORT MORESBY based on previous plans, and capitalizing on the results of the SOLOMONS sea battle, recapture the airfield on GUADALCANAL". In effect this determined the operations policies for forthcoming operations in both the NEW GUINEA and SOLOMONS areas. On the 15th a fighter aircraft ^{force} ~~was~~ moved forward to BUNA; that same day the main strength of the SOUTH SEAS DETACHMENT landed at BASABUA ((anchorage to the west of GONA))

In the meantime, as we did not come to grips with the enemy in the GUADALCANAL area, we tried hard to find out the situation, carrying out reconnaissance by aircraft, submarines, and destroyers; we sought confirmation on the enemy from our existing Lookout Stations and being unable to clarify the enemy situation, estimated that the enemy strength there was probably not great. However the South East Area Force believed that it would be disadvantageous to postpone the attack on GUADALCANAL and after conferring with the XVII Army decided on a policy to promptly recapture GUADALCANAL sending the ICHIKI Detachment and a Naval Landing Force there as soon as possible.

The Advance Echelon of the ICHIKI Detachment departed TRUK in 6 destroyers on the 16th and landed on GUADALCANAL on the 18th; the 2nd Division, the follow-up

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boarded transports in TRUK the same day, and proceeded south under escort; on the 18th an agreement was made at Rabaul to throw into GUADALCANAL the KAWAGUCHI Detachment. At that time the enemy intelligence available to the South East Area Force was that the enemy's strength was about 2,000 men, with AA guns, ~~some~~ tanks and a large number of machine guns. There was also a report that part of these were trying to escape. The 2nd Division was to land on GUADALCANAL on August 22nd.

However, on August 20th, a search plane from the 5th Air Attack Force reported sighting an enemy task force containing an aircraft carrier to the south east of SHORTLAND. Again, ~~at~~ ^{on} that day, another aircraft carrier was sighted. Also, our force on GUADALCANAL reported that ^{more than 20 enemy} ~~20~~ carrier type aircraft had moved up to the airfield there.

From mid August, as soon as preparations were completed, the Main Body of the Combined Fleet, the ADVANCE FORCE (centered in the 2nd Fleet) and the STRIKING FORCE (nucleus of the 3rd Fleet), left home waters for the TRUK area, their departure speed by the reports of sighting ^{the} enemy aircraft carriers. Hence the 2nd BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS occurred - As a result, the landing of the 2nd Division on GUADALCANAL was a failure, and a shift was made to secret night-time transportation of troops to GUADALCANAL.

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This chapter will concern itself principally with the operations in the GUADALCANAL ^{Island} area; the operations which were conducted simultaneously in the NEW GUINEA area will be covered in the next chapter.

I. OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES AFTER THE 2nd BATTLE OF THE SOLOMONS
THE ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE 1st SEA BATTLE OF THE ^{SOLOMONS}
SOUTHEAST AREA FORCE. The battle results reported by the Outer South Seas Force on the 9th of August were enormous. The Headquarters and Staff of the Combined Fleet, on receiving this report, when combined with those of the Base Air Force from the 7th onward, indicated the sinking or damaging of all the ships and half the transports, thus suggesting that the state of affairs had been taken care of. As possible evidence of these battle results, the attacking unit of the 5th Air Attack Force

when heading for GUADALCANAL on the morning of the 10th received AA fire from that island and while ~~many~~ small craft were seen there, no surface ships were sighted. In addition, submarines of Subdiv 13 which had moved up to that place, had been unable to discover any ^{enemy} surface ships in its search of the anchorages there.

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Under these conditions, the 11th Air Fleet conferred on the 10th, with Headquarters of the 8th Fleet and the XVIII Army with regard to forthcoming operations in the South East area. As a result the Chiefs of Staff of the 11th Air Fleet and 8th Fleet reported to the Combined Fleet, etc., on the same day at 1928 as follows:

1. TODAY THE AIR ATTACK FORCE AT THE TIME (1040) OF ATTACKING SAW NO ENEMY SHIPS EXCEPT SMALL CRAFT IN THE VICINITY OF GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI. COMBINING RECONNAISSANCE REPORTS OF BOMBER FORCE AND BY FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TULAGI IS POSITIVELY OCCUPIED BY THE ENEMY AND THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD IS DEFINITELY IN ENEMY HANDS (AT THE PRESENT TIME SOME FIGHTING IS STILL GOING ON IN THE INTERIOR OF GUADALCANAL ISLAND. DETAILS BY SEPARATE REPORT) (AUTHOR'S NOTE: THE SEPARATE REPORT IS NOT AVAILABLE).

2. WITH REGARD TO FORTHCOMING OPERATIONS IN THAT AREA 11th AIR FLEET, 8th FLEET AND XVIII ARMY CONFERRED AND AGREED AS FOLLOWS: (A) CARRY OUT THE BASIC PLANS, EXCEPT FOR A TWO DAY DELAY, FOR THE "RE" ("MORESBY") OPERATIONS (B) CARRY OUT OPERATIONS TO RECOVER GUADALCANAL USING THE ^{MAIN FORCE OF THE} ARMY'S KAWAGUCHI DETACHMENT, AND THE ICHIKI DETACHMENT OF THE ARMY AND THE YOKOSUKA 5th SPECIAL NAVAL LANDING FORCE; BELIEVE ^{THESE} OPERATIONS POSSIBLE ^{ABOUT} AUGUST 25th AND WILL ENDEAVOR TO ADVANCE THIS DATE.

3. DELAY IN BOTH THE ABOVE OPERATIONS WILL NOT ONLY BE GREATLY TO OUR DISADVANTAGE, ~~AS~~ ^{THE} ENEMY MOST PROBABLY WILL REBUILD ITS SEA POWER AND SUPPLY AND REINFORCE GUADALCANAL AGAIN, IT IS REQUESTED THAT PREPARATIONS BE ACCELERATED SO THAT THE 2nd FLEET AND THE 3rd FLEET WILL MOVE FORWARD TO TRUK NOT LATER THAN AUGUST 22nd "

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As can be seen from the above radio message, the South East Area Force had made the decision to go ahead, first, with the Eastern NEW GUINEA operation which had been temporarily suspended, and to wait to assemble the ICHIKI and KAWAGUCHI Detachments and the YOKOSUKA 5th Landing Force, and then recapture GUADALCANAL

by the 25th. It seemed probable that the enemy, having occupied the GUADALCANAL and TULAGI areas, would hereafter build up his strength and again reinforce and resupply that force; but in view of the above reported battle results and the fact that he had withdrawn his naval vessels, ^{(it was estimated that} the enemy's remaining force ashore on GUADALCANAL was not a powerful one. It is believed that the XVII Army estimate was based on intelligence reports from the South East Area Force; ^(on the 10th) but the XVII Army reported to Imp. Gen HQ in regard to the recapture of GUADALCANAL that "THE OPERATION IS FEASIBLE IF THE ^{NECESSARY FORCES OF} THE ICHICI FORCE AND THE 35th BRIGADE BE MOVED TO THE SOLOMONS"

In this way both the Army and Navy Commanders on the spot estimated that operations to recapture GUADALCANAL would not be very difficult ^{that day} and decided on the policy to reactivate on the 12th the transportation to BUNA of the 14th Construction Unit (which had been suspended), to expedite the completion of the BUNA airfield and to transport the SOUTH SEAS DETACHMENT to BUNA on the 16th ((Map showing BUNA, etc - see page 49))

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The principal point of operations for that area of the South East Area now moved to EASTERN NEW GUINEA. But on that same day, the 10th, the Commander South East Area Force, issued orders regarding operations hereafter in the GUADALCANAL area as follows:

(1) ACCORDING TO AIR RECONNAISSANCE TODAY, THE 10th, NO ENEMY NAVAL VESSELS OR OTHER SHIPS, OTHER THAN SMALL CRAFT, WERE SIGHTED IN THE GUADALCANAL - ~~AND~~ TULAGI AREA AND ALTHOUGH THE SITUATION ASHORE THERE IS UNCLEAR, THE ENEMY SEEMS TO HAVE OCCUPIED THAT AREA. (2) SOUTH EAST AREA FORCES WILL USE THE MAXIMUM EFFORTS TO SPY OUT THE SITUATION, ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY FORCES AND RELIEVE FRIENDLY FORCES THERE. (3) ALL FORCES WILL OPERATE AS FOLLOWS: (A) OPERATIONS BY THE BASE AIR FORCE WILL BE BY SEPARATE ORDERS IN EACH CASE. (B) THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE, AS ORDERED BY THIS COMMANDER, WILL PROMPTLY MAKE PREPARATIONS TO SORTIE SHOULD THE ENEMY AGAIN MAKE AN APPEARANCE AS EXPECTED; IN ADDITION THE SUBMARINE FORCE WILL CONDUCT SURVEILLANCE AND ATTACKS AGAINST ENEMY SHIPS MOVING INTO THAT AREA (C) THE INNER SOUTH SEAS FORCE, UNLESS GIVEN SPECIAL ORDERS, WILL OPERATE AS ORDERED BY ITS COMMANDER.

At the same time of this order, that Commander issued orders to the 5th Air Attack Force to carry out attacks on RABI and also make reconnaissance of the GUADALCANAL area on the 11th.

COMBINED FLEET HEADQUARTERS AND IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

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The Cinc Combined Fleet having received the report of battle results from the Outer South Seas Force encouraged the Base Air Force and the Outer South Seas Force on the evening of the 9th "THE FIERCE ATTACKS AND BRAVE FIGHT BY YOUR FORCE ARE APPRECIATED AND WE ANTICIPATE GREAT BATTLE RESULTS; ENDEAVOR TO RELIEVE OUR ^{ISOLATED} ISOLATED FORCE WHICH IS ^{NOW} FIERCELY FIGHTING THERE." The next day, on receipt of the report that no enemy naval ships had been sighted ^{in the GUADALCANAL anchorage area}, Headquarters Combined Fleet believed that the enemy ships had fled from the threat of ^{our} attack. However the enemy's situation ashore, which was to seriously influence forthcoming operations, received serious thought, as the Chief of Staff recorded in his diary on the 10th: "Neither submarines nor aircraft have made a real ^{and} investigative report of the situation ashore and we lack ^{new} awareness of important data for our operations. Both have been ordered to expedite investigative reports from that area"

The next day, the 11th, a report was received of a reconnaissance by the 5th Air Attack Force that the enemy was working on the decoy air field that had been constructed by our C. U. on GUADALCANAL. The above Chief of Staff then ^{sent to} the Chiefs of Staff of the 11th Air Fleet and 8th Fleet: "PLAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH AND REINFORCE OUR GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE ENEMY BE ABSOLUTELY DENIED USE OF THAT AIRFIELD." Thus the Headquarters Combined Fleet ^{perceived that if} the enemy's surface force's withdrawn from the GUADALCANAL area did not permit optimism ^{as they were concerned for the situation ashore should the enemy use the airfield and make GUADALCANAL into an advanced base;} as they were concerned for the situation ashore should the enemy use the airfield and make GUADALCANAL into an advanced base; In accordance with plan, they endeavored to accelerate the preparations for the move of the main strength of the Combined Fleet to the South East area.

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Headquarters Combined Fleet ^{on the 10th} summoned the operations officers from the Headquarters of the 2nd and 3rd Fleets to go over operational arrangements and study the Combined Fleet operations Doctrine and plans. Also, the same day, Cinc Combined Fleet ordered Desdiv 4 (less 2nd Section) to escort the ICHIKI Unit in its voyage from GUAM to TRUK and Desdiv 17 to TRUK to transport the ICHIKI Detachment to GUADALCANAL. Acting on orders of the Cinc Combined Fleet, the Cinc 2nd Fleet ordered ComDesron 2 to proceed

quickly to TRUK and confer with units concerned with regard to the transportation of the ICHIKI Detachment to GUADALCANAL. The next day, the 11th, the ADVANCE FORCE left the INLAND SEA, headed for TRUK.

In the meantime the Army & Navy Sections of Imp. Gen. HQ. judged that the enemy ~~force~~ that had landed at GUADALCANAL - TULAGI consisted of one Marine Division of about 15,000 men but on receipt of the report on the 10th that no enemy surface forces had been sighted, joint study by the Army and Navy Sections reached the conclusion that it was highly probable that the enemy had retired. The Army Section, in particular, estimated that ~~since~~ in comparison with our army's experience, since their time for unloading had been extremely short, the enemy had been unable to unload the necessary men and equipment and that without doubt the attack had failed and they had withdrawn. Under ~~such~~ an optimistic estimate, the Chief of the Naval General Staff and the Chief of the Army General Staff, at a customary conference on the 10th, agreed to ~~quickly~~ carry out all-out invasions of TULAGI, SAMARAI and PORT MORESBY. That day the Army Section ordered the ICHIKI Detachment placed under the XVII Army and the AOKA Detachment, the ~~Independent~~ ^{15th} Tank Company and part of the 21st Heavy Field Artillery Battalion, which had previously been under the command of the XIV Army in the Philippines, returned to the XVII Army. The next day, the 11th, the Army Section directed the Commanding General of the XVII Army to aid the navy with regard to the defence of the SOLOMONS, as follows:

1. IN CASES OF CAUSING THE ENEMY TO WITHDRAW FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AREA, THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE XVII ARMY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE SIX OF THE ARMY NAVY CENTRAL AGREEMENT CONCERNING EASTERN NEW GUINEA OPERATIONS, WILL QUICKLY DISPATCH A UNIT TO A STRATEGIC PLACE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AND AID THE NAVY IN REGARD TO THEIR DEFENCE. THEREAFTER THE DEFENCE OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS WILL BE, FOR THE PRESENT, THROUGH ARMY-NAVY COOPERATION.

2. SEPARATE ORDERS WILL BE ISSUED REGARDING ACTION IN CASE THE ENEMY BECOMES SECURED IN A STRATEGIC POSITION IN THE SOLOMONS."

The next day, the 11th (as will be related later on) the Army & Navy Sections drew up a "CENTRAL AGREEMENT regarding operations in EASTERN NEW GUINEA - SOLOMONS as required

by the situation" and decided to quickly carry out operations to invade Port Moresby based on previously agreed plans, together with a policy of utilizing their results of the Battle of the Solomons to quickly recapture the Guadalcanal area. In other words, the operations to capture Port Moresby and the operations to recapture Guadalcanal would be carried out at the same time, or to give priority to the former and proceed with those operations.

This operations policy was to have a tremendous effect on subsequent operations in the South East area and had as its background the estimate at that time by Imp. Gen. (HQ) that the recapture of the Guadalcanal area would be easy.

RECONNAISSANCE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION IN THE GUADALCANAL AREA

On August 11, the 5th Air Attack Force carried reconnaissance of the TULAGI area with land based bomber aircraft at the same time that ^(Zero) G¹ fighters made a reconnaissance-in-force of the GUADALCANAL area. The South East Area Command that evening reported to all forces as follows:

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1. ALTITUDE OF GUADALCANAL RECONNAISSANCE - 250 METERS. (A) SOME 50 SMALL CRAFT ALONG THE COAST, 4 OF THESE UNDERWEIGHT, IDENTIFIED AS ENEMY. (B) RECEIVED FIERCE MACHINE GUN FIRE IN THE VICINITY OF THE DUMMY AIRFIELD ESTABLISHED NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE LUNGA RIVER. (C) PILES OF CRATES IN THE VICINITY OF THE MOUTH OF THE LUNGA RIVER.
2. TULAGI RECONNAISSANCE ALTITUDE - 7,000 METERS. ABOUT 8 SMALL CRAFT UNDERWEIGHT
3. EVEN THOUGH YESTERDAYS AND TODAY'S RECONNAISSANCE CONFIRMED THE ENEMY'S OCCUPATION OF GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI, SINCE THEIR STRENGTH AND PLANS ARE UNKNOWN, WILL CARRY OUT RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE BY DESTROYERS AND SUBMARINES TOMORROW AND THEREAFTER AND AT THE SAME TIME ENDEAVOR TO THE UTMOST TO LEARN THE SITUATION OF OUR FORCES ASHORE AND AID THEM.

Once again Comdr. 5th Air Attack Force reported the results of reconnaissance: APPARENTLY THE ENEMY IS CONSTRUCTING THE DUMMY AIRFIELD; THERE IS NO ACTIVITY AT OUR PREVIOUSLY CONSTRUCTED AIRFIELD"

The 5th Air Attack Force had planned an attack ^(on RABU) with 21 land bombers and 20 Zero fighters for the same time as the above reconnaissance on the 11th. This attack on RABU had been pending ever since early August and moreover as it was the nearest enemy airfield to GUADALCANAL, there was a concern that the enemy would use it as a relay base to send aircraft to GUADALCANAL. In addition, it could be a great hindrance to restarting the transportation to BUNA.

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* RAAF Airfield north of MILNE BAY, SE NEW GUINEA ((see map page 1))

The air attack Squadron headed for RABU in the mornings but as weather in that vicinity was bad, they turned back. However, 6 Zero fighters became separated and after reconnoitering SAMARA, they penetrated to the RABU airfield. In an air battle (in the rain at about 1300 meters altitude) with some 25 P-40s, they reported shooting down 9 aircraft (of these 2 not confirmed); 2 of our own fighters made forced landings, one each in the suburbs of BUNA and RABUL. This air strike confirmed that the RABU airfield had a good runway of 1300 meters with anti-aircraft guns.

The next morning, the 12th, 3 land bombers made a bombing attack on the dummy airfield on GUADALCANAL, after which they conducted a reconnaissance in force of the vicinity. The Senior Staff Officer of the 8th Base Force, Commander Keisuke MATSUNAGA, rode in one of the above planes and saw no signs of personnel in the settlement nor were there any recognition signals observed; all seemed tranquil. After return to base Staff Officer MATSUNAGA made the following report: "While there were a great many enemy troops in the vicinity of the GUADALCANAL airfield, their movements were listless and without spirit; also, ^{although} small craft were frequently moving along the shore line, one received the impression that either the main force had already withdrawn or that they were about to be pulled out. It appears that these are residual troops and small craft that were left behind". This report by the Senior Staff Officer of the 8th Base Force was ^{not only} accepted on its face value by the Commanders on the spot but also reported to all forces. In this manner, those on the spot as well as at Imperial Gen HQ became more and more optimistic; ^{even} Headquarters Combined Fleet also made optimistic estimates/judgements, its Chief of Staff made the following entry in his diary for August 13: "Although there are a considerable number of enemy on GUADALCANAL, at the time of the withdrawal, they, and their small craft, were left behind. I have given the Staff a major policy to work out -- the 11th Air Fleet and the 8th Fleet at this juncture to vigorously ^{and quickly} push forward a force as a reinforcement to clean up and quickly ^{make} ready the airfield; at the same time the SUPPORT FORCE will operate as previously decided and after completing the invasions of Moresby, OCEANA and NAURU, destroy the enemy forces"

In the meantime the RO-33 had succeeded in establishing contact with the Lookout Station on CAPE HUNTER (see map page 92) and reported as follows:

1. BY 1300 THE 11TH, RADIO CONTACT POSSIBLE WITH THE FOLLOWING LOOKOUT STATIONS: ^{CAPE} ESPERANCE, TAIBO, MARABA, BANIKA, ZERE ((CAPE ZELEE - S. MALATTA))

2. AT THE CAPE WINTER LOOKOUT STATION, ((OBSERVATIONS ON AUGUST 7TH WERE) =
 " 0425- the 7th HEARD SOUNDS OF ENEMY ^{AIRCRAFT} BOMBING; 0515 HEARD SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE;
 0530- CONTACT LOST WITH HEADQUARTERS (Author's Note: HQ, GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE);
 0835- ENEMY FLEET (2 CARRIERS, 2 BATTLESHIPS, 5 CRUISERS AND ¹⁰ OTHERS, NO TRANSPORTS) APPEARED
 TO THE SOUTH, HEADING SOUTH WEST; 1100- ENEMY FLEET OUT OF SIGHT TO THE SOUTH "

The RO-34 established contact with the TAIBO Lookout Station that same day at 1600 and carried out a feint gun bombardment in the vicinity of LUNGA Point to spy out the enemy dispositions and counter-attack situation there.

Commander Outer South Seas Force, through the RO-34, ordered the TAIBO Lookout Station to set bonfires along the coast line between 2100-2400 and that the destroyers OIKAZE AND YUZURI would arrive in the vicinity of ^{Cape} TAIBO at the above time. The two ships used two small boats and carried out a search for 2 miles along the shore but sighted no bonfires and were unable to establish contact. Both ships then bombarded the vicinity of the airfield with starshell from 0340 for about 10 minutes from ranges of from 4500 to 6000 meters. One starshell sent out several red streaks of fire but there was no reaction from the others. After consolidating all intelligence, the Chief of Staff of the 11th Air Fleet on the 12th reported to all forces: " ALTHOUGH IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE ENEMY FORCE ASHORE AT GUADALCANAL IS STRONG AND THAT IT CONSISTS OF MORE THAN A UNIT LEFT BEHIND PLUS A NATIVE FORCE, SINCE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONFIRM THESE MATTERS BY AIR RECONNAISSANCE, HEREAFTER IT IS INTENDED TO GREATLY CLARIFY THE SITUATION BY CONTACT RECONNAISSANCE BY DESTROYERS AND SUBMARINES." Thus, at that time the South East Area Force may have had a tinge of anxiety but for the most part they were extremely optimistic.

On the following day, the 13th, Subdiv-13 reported their reconnaissance of the area for enemy intelligence, as follows:

I-123 (0800) AT 0800 enemy strength in the whole region in the vicinity of LUNGA POINT, several hundred, about 10 landing craft and some 30 amphibious tanks.

I-123 (1700) (1) surfaced at 0900, 7000 meters north of LUNGA Point and bombarded enemy concentrations and small craft for about 8 minutes (14 rounds). Received counter battery fire from ^{several} 8^{cm} AA guns and ^{several} small caliber guns in the vicinity of the green roof to the west of LUNGA POINT. No damage. (2) Although the enemy is maintaining communications in the vicinity of KOLI Point by vehicles resembling amphibious tanks, have not sighted any particularly large force being moved.

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I-122-(?) surfaced 3000 meters south west of TULAGA at 1530 and ~~during~~ a reconnaissance flying the naval flag, received field artillery and small arms fire from ashore, and evaded by submerging. No damage to our ship. (2) 4 landing craft at the GOLFLINK PIER, 2 loaded with Marines, fleeing to the north. (3) Ashore there are quite a few troops building positions (4) Sighted nothing like friendly forces I-123 (2200) consolidation of today's results of intelligence reconnaissance: (1) Sighted considerable numbers of enemy troops ashore in the vicinity of LUNGA Point; about 100 seen in the vicinity of the coast. (2) enemy forces are scattered along the coast from the green roofed building about 1500 meters west of the mouth of the LUNGA river and the red roofed building (has a pier) 1000 meters to the east of the river's mouth; they are particularly concentrated in the vicinity of the buildings. (3) Enemy gun positions are in the ~~dense forest~~ ^{about} 500 meters to the east of the green roofed building and about 200 meters to the east of the red roofed building; the former has a field artillery ^{piece} (range about 10,000 meters) plus one 8^{cm} AA gun, the latter has one 8^{cm} AA gun; ~~and~~ in addition to the above, several small caliber weapons (range 5,000 meters) ^{also} are ~~emplaced~~. (4) It seems that the enemy keeps a rather strict lookout, counter attacks against this submarine were extremely swift. (5) Scattered along the coast in the vicinity are ships-boats, landing craft and what seems to be amphibious tanks (a landing craft like a tank, fitted with armor and caterpillar treads, without large armament and painted grey. (6) In this vessel's gun bombardment of the above two positions, observed about 10 hits with satisfactory results.

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RO-33 on the 13th made contact with the LOOKOUT STATION on Cape Esperance and ~~after that~~ replenishing their food and supplies, established contact with other LOOKOUT STATIONS and reported that all was well with them.

In addition, on the 13th, a Tyke 2 flying boat ("EMILY") of the 5th Air Attack Force scouted the SANTA CRUZ Islands but saw nothing pertinent.

The results of reconnoitering the enemy's situation up to the 11th ^{were} ~~as set~~ forth above. ^{both} the Central Authorities and those on the spot were optimistic and seem not to have given the I-123's report serious consideration.

That same day, based on the above reconnaissance reports, the Chief of the Naval General Staff reported to the Throne his estimate of the situation in that area and on the situation of our forces; his conclusions were as follows:

INTEGRATING THE ABOVE ((REPORTS)), WHILE THE STRENGTH OF THE ENEMY THAT LANDED ON GUADALCANAL IS UNKNOWN, THEIR MOVEMENTS AND ACTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN VIGOROUS; ^{IN VIEW OF THE} HEAVY DAMAGE/LOSSES THEY HAVE SUFFERED BY OUR ATTACKS OF THE 7TH AND 8TH AND THE FACT THAT THEY HAD WITHDRAWN ALL OF THEIR NAVAL SHIPS PRIOR TO THE 10TH, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE FORCE REMAINING ASHORE IS NOT LARGE. FROM NOW ON WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE EVERY MEANS TO SPY OUT THE ENEMY'S SITUATION AND CONFIRM THE SITUATION OF OUR TROOPS, REINFORCE AND CARRY OUT REPLENISHMENT AND OTHER SUCH MEASURES FOR OUR FORCES THERE. ^{SP}IT IS SUPPOSED THAT THE REPORT OF STAFF OFFICER MATSUNAGA'S RECONNAISSANCE MAY HAVE HAD A STRONG INFLUENCE ON THIS.

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THE ARMY-NAVY CENTRAL AGREEMENT REGARDING OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH EAST AREA

The Army and Navy Sections of Imp. Gen. HQ, in view of the above estimate proceeded with joint studies with regard to a summary of operational directives for the South East Area to cope with the new situation and on the 12TH concluded an Army Navy Agreement - as follows:

^{IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN THAT AREA,}
NAVY SECTION IMP. GEN. HQ. DIRECTIVE # 20 OPERATIONS IN EAST NEW GUINEA AND IN THE SOLOMONS SHOULD CONFORM TO "THE CENTRAL ARMY NAVY AGREEMENT WITH REGARDS TO OPERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN EASTERN NEW GUINEA AND THE SOLOMONS ISLANDS", ANNEXED HERETO.

ANNEX: (1) OPERATIONS POLICY. QUICKLY CARRY OUT THE "RE" ((MORESBY)) OPERATION BASED ON PREVIOUS PLANS AND, AT THE SAME TIME, CAPITALIZING ON THE NAVY'S SUCCESSES, ^{QUICKLY} RECAPTURE THE STRATEGIC PLACES IN THE SOLOMONS THROUGH ARMY-NAVY COORDINATION. (2) COMMANDER, AND FORCES FOR USE: NAVY - CINC COMBINED FLEET; 8TH FLEET and greater part of the 11TH AIR FLEET; greater part of the 2ND and 3RD Fleets. ARMY - COM GEN XVII ARMY; XVII ARMY (nucleus - 13 Infantry Battalions).

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(3) OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS: (a) PROMPTLY CARRY OUT "RE" OPERATIONS BASED ON PREVIOUS PLANS. (b) AS SOON AS THEY CAN BE STARTED USE A PART OF THE XVII ARMY, IN COORDINATION WITH THE NAVY, TO ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY ON GUADALCANAL ISLAND AND ^{ESPECIALLY} RECAPTURE THE AIRFIELD ON THAT IMPORTANT STRATEGIC POSITION. ALSO ENDEAVOR ^{QUICKLY} TO RECAPTURE TULAGI. (c) DURING OPERATIONS SET FORTH ABOVE, AND ALSO AFTER INVASION OPERATIONS OF STRATEGIC PLACES IN EASTERN NEW GUINEA, CARRY OUT OPERATIONS TO SUPPRESS DISORDERS ((MOP UP AND COME NATIVES)) AS SET FORTH IN THE CENTRAL ARMY NAVY AGREEMENT'S (Hereafter referred to as "A Agreement") 4TH section "OPERATIONS OUTLINE" 4TH paragraph "OPERATIONS TO SUPPRESS DISORDERS" (4) COMMAND RELATIONS - IN ACCORDANCE WITH "A-AGREEMENT."

(5) DEFENCE: DEFENCES SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT BUT FOR THE TIME BEING, THE DEFENCES OF THE SOLOMONS STRATEGIC POINTS WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY JOINT ARMY-NAVY COORDINATION AND THE DETAILS OF THIS SHALL BE BY AGREEMENTS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY COMMANDERS ON THE SPOT.
(6) AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE ARMY AND NAVY COMMANDERS. THE COM. GEN XVII ARMY AND THE CINC.

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8th Fleet and Cinc 11th AIR FLEET WILL MAKE AGREEMENTS FOR APPROPRIATE OPERATIONS

(7) REPLENISHMENT. REPLENISHMENT/RESUPPLY FOR ARMY FORCES IN THE SOLOMONS WILL, FOR THE PRESENT, BE BASED ON THE "A Agreement." (8) THE OPERATION TO RECAPTURE STRATEGIC POINTS IN THE SOLOMONS WILL BE CALLED THE "KA" OPERATIONS ((KA" FOR "GADAMARU"))

Along With the above agreement, the Army Section Imp Gen. HQ, on the 12th, sent advance notice of the Army-Navy Agreement's gist to the XVII Army: "As there seem to be some enemy remnants in the SOLOMONS area, you will be ordered to recapture that area in accordance with a Joint Army-Navy Cooperative plan which will be sent to you forthwith" — This was followed by a message informing them of the

intentions of Imp. Gen. HQ: SCOPE OF "KA" OPERATIONS: (1) Decisions made by the Commanding General XVII Army ^{for use of the 35th Brigade, the "AOBA" Detachment, etc, aside from shipping allocations} to be guided by the enemy situation and the Central Authorities views. In the present circumstances, we are giving serious consideration to the preference for a quick strike, if possible, using the 16th KI Detachment and the Navy Landing Force to quickly recapture GUADALCANAL, and believe such to be feasible." Such authoritative guidance, even from the Deputy Chief of the Army General Staff shows most clearly the estimate of the situation by Imperial General Headquarters.

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The next day, the 13th, the Navy Section Imp Gen. HQ transmitted the Army-Navy Agreement to the Cinc Combined Fleet as a directive. The Army Section also issued the Commanding General XVII Army this Imperial Command: "THE XVII ARMY WILL CARRY OUT OPERATIONS AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED IN EASTERN NEW GUINEA AND AT THE SAME TIME, IN COORDINATION WITH THE NAVY, RECAPTURE STRATEGIC POINTS IN THE SOLOMONS," and also sent the JOINT ARMY NAVY CENTRAL AGREEMENT. Assent to the above Imperial Command was received by the Supreme Commanders of the Army and Navy in the presence of the Emperor on the 13th; the Chief of the Naval General Staff ((the Supreme Commander of the Imperial Navy)) made the following presentation of the Imperial Navy's operations in connection with the above Imperial Command:

"With the outbreak of fighting in the SOLOMONS on the 7th, the Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet ^{immediately} took measures to send reinforcements to that area. Accordingly, ^{most of} the ADVANCE FORCE, comprising the 2nd Fleet, CruDiv 5, Desron 2, Desron 4 and ^{will} ground forces assembled at TRUK by the 17th of August; the Carrier Striking Force's Carrier-Division One, CruDiv 8, BattDiv 11 and Desron 10^{are}

are scheduled to depart home waters for TRUK on the 18th, to expedite this movement and arrive TRUK about the 23rd; the YAMATO ((Flagship, CMC Combined Fleet)) will leave home waters on the 18th and arrive TRUK about the 24th.

In the meantime, CruDiv 7 and 2 Destroyer Divisions of Destron 3 have cancelled their operations in the BAY OF BENGAL and are hastening to the east but yesterday, due to a report that enemy ships had appeared off AMBON, they were assigned temporarily to the East INDIES Force and are scheduled to arrive at MAKASSAR on the 14th and if the situation in that area permits, to speed on to TRUK.

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In addition, KASARATSU Av of the 26th Air Flotilla was also advanced to SAIPAN to stand-by; The sum and substance of our operations to recapture GUADALCANAL and SAIPAN will depend on the situation in that area on both sides; the Navy has concentrated the bulk of the Decisive Battle Force of the Combined Fleet in that area to cope with whatever ^{the} enemy situation may be, ^(and) expecting perfection in its operations, plans to use its Advance Force and Carrier Striking Force in direct support of the coordinated operations to recapture ~~(the)~~ (the SOLOMONS) by the 8th Fleet, the 11th Av Fleet and the Army."

II TRANSPORTATION OF THE ICHIKI FORCE TO GUADALCANAL

THE ARMY-NAVY ON THE SPOT AGREEMENT

As previously stated, after a conference with the XVII Army on 10 August, the South East Area Force decided to wait for the main strength of the KAWANUCHI Detachment, the ICHIKI Force and the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force to assemble and to begin the operations to recapture GUADALCANAL about 25 August. However, as a result of a subsequent reconnaissance of the enemy situation, while the details were not clear, it was estimated that enemy force remaining there was not a strong one. Also, the Army Navy Central Agreement's contents were received on the 12th and also the XVII Army ^(received) the Army Section's radio-directive saying they were giving serious consideration ^{to the feasibility of a} quick strike using only the ICHIKI Detachment and the Naval Special Landing Force to recapture (GUADALCANAL).

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The South East Area Force also had high hopes to recapture (that position) quickly. After that commander ^{had} conferred with the ComGen XVII Army, he decided on a policy to recapture (it) with the ICHIKI Detachment and the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force, and

made arrangements for the actual operations.

The ICHIKI Detachment consisted of some 2400 picked troops under the command of Colonel Kiyono ICHIKI ((sometimes rendered - "IKKI")) the Commander of the 28th Infantry Regiment.

The YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force was formed 1 May ((1942)) for the purpose of the invasion and securing MIDWAY; its Commander Captain Yoshitatsu YASUDA. After the above operation was suspended they returned to GUAM and one part of it was shifted to the defence of the North Eastern Area, the remaining part was incorporated into the 4th Fleet on 30 June and scheduled for the NAURU and OCEAN Invasion Force. Personnel totalled 616 men and when Allied Forces counter-attacked GUADALCANAL Island they were assigned on 7 August to the Outer South Seas Force. One part, (113 men) moved forward to RAABAUL on August 12th. The ICHIKI Detachment, embarked in the BOSTON Maru ((5487 g.t.)) and TAIFUKU Maru ((3150 g.t.)) and escorted by Desdiv 4 (less 2nd Section) moved up to TRUK on the 12th at 1830, where food and coal were supplied and preparations moved forward. The YOKOSUKA 5th S.L.F. ((Special Landing Force)) was still at Guam at that time but were informed by Commander Desm 2, commanding the Ocean Escort Force of their scheduled arrival at TRUK on 15 August.

The two ships carrying the ICHIKI Detachment were both slow speed ships (maximum speed 9.5 knots) and consequently it was felt that they would be inadequate for a quick strike. Therefore, South East Area Force, after consultation with XVIII Army, decided to divide them into two parts, the "Advanced Expeditionary Force", to be speedily dispatched in 6 destroyers and the remainder, ^{sent} along with the YOKOSUKA 5th S.L.F. in a ^{ship} Convoy. The landing site was determined as the vicinity of TAIVU Point. Also, an on the spot joint Army-Navy agreement was concluded and promulgated in the names of the Chiefs of Staff 11th Air Fleet and 8th Fleet at 181900 as follows: "INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE ON THE GUADALCANAL - TULAGI AREA UP TO 1200 AUGUST 13TH IS CONTAINED IN 11TH AIR FLEET SECRET RADIO #13 AND (AUTHOR SKIPS SOME TEXT) ... SITUATION OF OUR GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE AND CONSTRUCTION UNIT UNKNOWN AND NOT ONLY IS THE ENEMY FORCE THERE NOT POWERFUL, BUT AS ANY DELAY IN OUR ATTACK WOULD BE GREATLY DISADVANTAGEOUS TO OUR SIDE, THE

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11TH AIR FLEET, 8TH FLEET AND XVIII ARMY HAVE CONFERRED AND DECIDED QUICKLY TO RECAPTURE ((GUADALCANAL)). THE GIST OF THEIR AGREEMENT FOLLOWS: (1) OPERATIONS POLICY - ^{QUICKLY} ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY FORCES ON GUADALCANAL AND SECURE THAT PLACE. (2) STRENGTH OF LANDING OPERATIONS - ICHIKI DETACHMENT AND YOKOSUKA 5TH SPECIAL LANDING FORCE. (3) DATE OF LANDING - AUGUST 18TH (W-DAY) PART OF THE ICHIKI DETACHMENT CARRIED ON 6 DESTROYERS; W+3 DAYS - REMAINDER OF THE FORCES (TRANSPORTED IN 2 SHIPS). (4) ESCORT FORCE - DIRECT ESCORT FORCE ((CL)) JINTSU AND 6 DESTROYERS UNDER COMMAND OF COMDESRON 2; INDIRECT PROTECTION FORCE - CRUDIV 6 UNDER COMMAND OF COMCRUDIV 6. (5) COMMANDER ICHIKI DETACHMENT IN COMMAND UNTIL ^{AFTER} THE NAVAL LANDING FORCE HAS LANDED ON GUADALCANAL AND SECURED THE AIRFIELD AND VICINITY. (6) IF ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, ETC., APPEAR, THIS OPERATION WILL BE POSTPONED OR CANCELLED, AND IN SUCH CASE, COMGEN XVIII ARMY AND COMDR. 11TH AIR FLEET WILL CONFER AND MAKE THE DECISION. (7) THIS OPERATION IS CALLED THE "KI" ((FOR ICHIKI?)) OPERATION.

Based on this agreement, Commander SOUTH EAST AREA FORCE, that same day, issued orders to the Shore Based Air Force to be prepared should an enemy carrier task force put in an appearance, ^{and to make} searches of its operational sea area; and to the Outer South Seas Force for the transportation of the ICHIKI Detachment in accordance with the agreement. The next day Commander Outer South Seas Force issued operation orders for the transport of the ICHIKI Detachment to GUADALCANAL; his organization of forces was as follows:

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ORGANIZATION OF FORCES (FORCE'S NAME, COMMANDER, STRENGTH - DUTIES & MOVEMENTS)			
NAME	COMMANDER	STRENGTH	DUTIES AND MOVEMENTS
A MAIN FORCE	UNDER DIRECT COMMAND	CHOKAI	SUPPORT ENTIRE OPERATION
B SUPPORT FORCE	COM CRUDIV 6	CRUDIV 6	DEPART KAVIENG 16 th ; SUPPORT REINFORCEMENT FORCE ATTACK ENEMY SURFACE FORCES
C. REINFORCEMENT FORCE	COMDESRON 2		Minesweepers #1 & #2 will join, depending on the situation, departing TRUK 0500 th 16 th direct duty; escort of Army Convoy arrive at Landing Point at 2200 th 21 st
1. ESCORT FORCE	"	JINTSU, Mine Sweeper 34, Minesweeper 35 - YOKOSUKA 5 th S.L.F. (less a part)	
2. "VOLUNTEER" FORCE	COMDES DIV 4	Desdiv 4 (less 2 nd Section) Desdiv 17 (less ISOKAZE) KAGERO	Depart TRUK 16 th at 0900 - High speed transportation of ICHIKI Detachment to GUADALCANAL BASE, to enter anchorage and land forces ashore at 2000 th 18 th
D. SUBMARINE FORCE	COMSOBRON 7	Subdiv 7 - Subdiv 3	Surveillance of the GUADALCANAL area - Attack enemy ships.
E. (Sea?) Floatplane Force	Comdr. 8 th Base Force	4 scout float planes from KIYOKAWA MARU	Establish a seaplane base at GIZO, ^{if} New Georgia Is.; reconnaissance of the GUADALCANAL area and search of the adjacent sea areas.

In the meantime, ComGen XVIII Army at 1500 th 13th ordered the Commander of the ICHIKI Force " THE ICHIKI FORCE IN COORDINATION WITH THE NAVY WILL RECAPTURE AND SECURE THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD. IF NECESSARY, OCCUPY A CORNER OF GUADALCANAL

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AND AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF THE FOLLOW-ON FORCE. FOR THIS REASON AN ADVANCE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (ABOUT 900 MEN) ^{BEING} ORGANIZED, WILL BE EMBARKED IN 6 DESTROYERS AND SENT FORWARD TO GUADALCANAL". At that time the XVIII Army's intent was inclined toward opening the attack with only the "Advanced ~~((IKHAKI))~~ force" to recapture the airfield.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE ICHIKI FORCE

The Commander of the Reinforcement Force, Com Desron 2, Rear Admiral Raigo TANAKA in the ^(CL) JINTSU, escorted by the ((DD)) KAGERO, arrived at TRUK at 1520 the 15th; Desdiv 17 (less the ISOKAZE) had reached TRUK the previous day at 0630. At the same time that Com Desron 2 entered TRUK, Staff officers sent from the 8th Fleet and from the XVIII Army were waiting for him to explain the contents of the above Fleet order, which he had just received. The decision was made for departure the next morning at 0500.

He immediately summoned the commanding officers of the ships under his command and ^{also} the Commander and Staff of the ICHIKI Force to his flagship, JINTSU, to make arrangements for the operation and work out a joint Army-Navy agreement between the Reinforcement Force and the ICHIKI Detachment. Com Desron 2 did not know the performance efficiency of his force of destroyers and minesweepers or even the names of their Captains, but the arrangements progressed nicely; signals, and orders for distributing the troops among the ships, and operations orders were ^{quickly} distributed, for there was no time to spare.

First of all, the "VOLUNTEER FORCE" OF 6 destroyers [the ARASHI and HAGIKAZE (of Desdiv 4), the URAKAZE, TAKIKAZE and HAMAKAZE (of Desdiv 17) and the KAGERO (of Desdiv 15)], under the command of Com Desdiv 4, Captain Yasuo SATO, would leave TRUK the morning of 16 August, arrive at the anchorage at 2000 the 18th and land the ^{Detachment's} ICHIKI "Advanced Force" at TAVU Point. This ICHIKI Detachment "Advanced Force", under its Commander would consist of 916 men, about 150 men to each destroyer.

The Second Echelon, the remainder of the ICHIKI Detachment (about 1500 men), embarked in the BOSTON Maru and the TAIYUKU Maru, ^{(under the escort of} the JINTSU, Mine Sweeper #34, Mine Sweeper #35, would also depart TRUK on the morning of the 16th; the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force, embarked in the KINRYU Maru (19309 G.T.) which had been included in the Reinforcement Force on the 15th, under escort of Minesweepers #1 and #2 would depart TRUK as soon as

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preparations could be completed, follow the 2nd Echelon and land together at THANU Point on W+3 days (21st August). However, after studying this, in consideration of the convoy's speed of 8.5 knots, a landing on W+3 day was found to be infeasible and after recommending that the landing be changed to W+4 day (22nd August), that change was made in the plans.

On the 16th Comdesron 2 issued his operation orders based on these considerations. In order to evade the zones of search of enemy shore based aircraft the track of the 2nd Echelon was to advance to the south east and far to the east of the SOLOMONS, passing through a point about 100 miles to the north-east of ONTONG (JAYA Islands) and thence directly south to GUADALCANAL.

TRANSPORTATION OF THE ICHIKI "ADVANCED FORCE" (ADVANCE ECHELON)

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At 0500 the 16th, the "VOLUNTEER FORCE" and the "SECOND ECHELON" departed TRUK together and headed for GUADALCANAL, the former making the high speed of 22 knots, the latter zig-zagging at its slow speed of 8.5 knots. The KINRYU Maru, carrying the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force, under escort of Minesweepers #1 and #2 left TRUK at 0700 the 17th and followed the track of the 2nd Echelon. Also, Desdiv 24 of Desron 2, which had moved up to TRUK with the ADVANCE FORCE on the 17th [the UMIKAZE, KAWAKAZE, and SUZUKAZE], now ^{at 1500 the same day} set out to overtake the JINTSU, ^{that day at 1500} as ordered by Comdesron 2, to escort the ICHIKI Detachment. They joined the convoy at 1200 the 18th, which was in turn joined by the KINRYU Maru and Minesweepers #1 and #2 at 0530 the 19th, while heading south.

In the meantime ^(on the 16th) all forces in the South East Area received ^{an} intelligence report from the Head of the 1st Section of the Navy Section, Imperial General Headquarters, with reference to the enemy situation in the GUADALCANAL area, as follows:

① ON 12 AUGUST, ACCORDING TO A SOVIET INTELLIGENCE REPORT, THE AMERICAN NAVY DEPARTMENT ^{IS SAID TO HAVE} INFORMED THE SOVIET NAVAL ATTACHE THAT THERE WAS NO METHOD OTHER THAN BY AIR TO EXTRICATE THE AMERICAN MARINE FORCE NOW ASHORE IN THE SOLOMONS AND THAT THEY WERE IN AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SITUATION. CONCERNED OVER THE EFFECTS ON OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY CHINA, THEIR URGENT TASK AT PRESENT IS TO CALL OFF THE PRESENT OPERATION AND WITHDRAW THE MARINES ASHORE AND SEND AIR REINFORCEMENTS TO ((PORT)) MORESBY AND ((NEW)) CALEDONIA USING THE EXCUSE THAT THE CURRENT OPERATION'S OBJECTIVE WAS TO DESTROY THE JAPANESE BASES IN THE SOLOMONS.

② WHETHER OR NOT THE ABOVE IS TRUE, THE ENEMY IS PLANNING ON WITHDRAWING ITS FORCES ASHORE ON FLORIDA ISLAND AND FROM THE VICINITY OF MALAITA ISLAND (BY PATROL PLANES AND SUBMARINES) AND THEREFORE IT IS BELIEVED THAT HIS FORCES ASHORE WILL PROBABLY BE

PULLED OUT BY SMALL CRAFT";

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Also, as will be related later, we were able to establish contact with our GUADALCANAL Garrison Force around the 16th and learned from them that the enemy there were about 2,000 men with A.A. guns, a few tanks and a great many machine guns and that our Garrison Forces were concentrated on the west bank of the MATANIKAU River.

From the above intelligence reports the Reinforcement Force estimated the enemy strength on GUADALCANAL at 2000 men, of ~~poor~~ fighting spirit and that the enemy was probably planning to evacuate the TULAGI area. These intelligence reports were passed on to the Commander of the ICHIKI Force who was charged with the attack, who was worried ^{that is} "If we don't do it quickly, the enemy will have fled".

Even the Staff of the 8th Fleet did not change this assessment. They believed that the ICHIKI Force plus the ~~GUADALCANAL~~ Garrison Force would be able to drive off the enemy and planned to ^{use the} subsequently reinforced Naval Landing Force in Eastern New Guinea area. The Commander Outer South Seas Force at 1806 on the 17th issued directions for the movements of the destroyers of the "Volunteer Force" after their completion of their transportation duty; among these, one destroyer of Desdiv 4 was to go to the TULAGI area to prevent the enemy's escape from that area. Also, ~~on the 17th~~ he passed to the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force the information that the Advanced Force/Echelon of the ICHIKI Force and the 2nd Echelon would both land at TAIVU Point, on the 18th and 22nd, respectively, and also ordered ~~that~~ the Garrison Force not to advance from the line of the MATANIKAU River and to construct a strong defensive position, to cut off the enemy's retreat and to attack and destroy him.

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In the meantime the GIZO Invasion Force under the command of 8th Base Force, which was to support the advance of the Reinforcement Force, landed successfully at 0600 the 16th; immediately float-planes of the KIVOKAWA Maru ^(KAWA) moved up and began searches of the nearby seas. As will be related later, the 5th Air Attack Force, also, from the 16th onward, began search/patrols along the route of advance of the Reinforcement Force and to the East of the SOLOMONS.

The Support Force of the Outer South Seas Force, centered in Crudw 6, left KAVIENGI the afternoon of the 17th and patrolled ahead of the Reinforcement Force and had advanced to REKATA (BAY) on the afternoon of the 19th. The Commander

Ober South Seas Force, also, in the CHOKAI with ISOKAZE left RABAUl at 2000 the 17th headed for the sea area to the east of the SOLOMONS.

Under the indirect support of these forces, the "VOLUNTEER FORCE" passed ^{South} through INDISPENSABLE STRAIT on schedule; ~~thence~~ via LENGO channel east of FLORIDA Island and arrived at their anchorage west of TAVU Point at 2030 August 18th. All troops of the ICHIKI Advanced Echelon were landed, without incident or accident, between 2100-2300 using the destroyers' motor launches.

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PLANS TO SEND THE KAWAGUCHI DETACHMENT TO GUADALCANAL

It was previously related that after the conference on August 10th between XVII Army and the South East Area Force, it was planned to send the main part of the strength of the KAWAGUCHI Detachment (the 35th Infantry Brigade) to GUADALCANAL in addition to the ICHIKI Detachment and the YOKOSUKA 5th S.L. Force. Afterward, on the 12th there was the radioed directive from the Army Section Imp. Gen. HQ ^{and} the XVII Army was sending only the ICHIKI Detachment; as it had the responsibility for sending troops, it was decided to follow the original decision and send the main strength of the KAWAGUCHI Detachment. It was not only necessary quickly to recapture GUADALCANAL Island, but the Army-Navy Central Agreement with regard to the "KA" operation assigned it the duty of recapturing TULAGI also.

With the measures to send the ICHIKI Detachment disposed of, the XVII Army proceeded with plans to send the KAWAGUCHI Detachment ^{(less one Battalion) which had been} scheduled to depart PARAU 16 August and arrive TRUK the 20th, ^{or} to GUADALCANAL. The One Battalion of the KAWAGUCHI Force ^{that} had been ^{removed} ^{was} assigned as Army reserve at RABAUl.

South East Area Force assigned Desron 3 (less Desdivs 11 & 19) which was then enroute to TRUK from the Indian Ocean area (and which had been assigned to that command by Combined Fleet order #13) as escort for the KAWAGUCHI Detachment; Desron 3 (less the 2 Desdivs) was scheduled to arrive TRUK on August 23rd.

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Thus, having completed preparations for the dispatch of the KAWAGUCHI Detachment, the Army and Navy ^{on the 18th} concluded an on-the-spot agreement, as provided for in the Joint Army-Navy Central Agreement, which would control all operations thereafter in the South East Area. On the 19th this agreement was sent to all forces; its contents were:

ON THE 18th THE 11th AIR FLEET, THE 8th FLEET AND THE XVII ARMY CONCLUDED AN AGREEMENT WITH REGARD TO THE "KA" OPERATIONS, AS FOLLOWS: (1) OUTLINE OF

OPERATIONS POLICY AND DIRECTIVES FOR OPERATIONS; (A) TOGETHER WITH CARRYING OUT PREVIOUS PLANS FOR THE "RE" ((MORESBY)) OPERATIONS, THE MAIN STRENGTH OF THE KAWAGUCHI DETACHMENT WILL FIRST BE LANDED ON GUADALCANAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND ANNIHILATE THE ENEMY ON THAT ISLAND AND SECURE THE AIRFIELD. (B) AFTER NAVAL AIR FORCE HAS MOVED UP TO GUADALCANAL, THE ARMY AND NAVY IN COOPERATION WILL, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, RECAPTURE TULAGI AND ADJACENT ISLANDS (2) FORCES TO BE USED: ARMY 35TH INFANTRY BRIGADE (LESS ONE BATTALION) OF THE 124TH REGIMENT, AND THE ICHIKI DETACHMENT; PART OF THE NAVAL BASE AIR FORCE, THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE; IN ADDITION, ASSIGNED FORCES OF THE COMBINED FLEET (3) COMMAND RELATIONS: ACCORDING TO ARMY-NAVY AGREEMENTS. HOWEVER NAVAL LANDING FORCES ON AND NEAR GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI ISLANDS WILL COME UNDER THE COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL KAWAGUCHI FROM THE TIME HE LANDS ON GUADALCANAL UNTIL THE RECAPTURE OF TULAGI. (4) LANDING DATES: DEPART TRUK V-4 DAYS; LAND ON GUADALCANAL ON V DAY; COMPLETE LANDINGS DURING V+1 DAYS; V-DAY - AUGUST 28TH. (5) SEA ESCORT FORCE: DESRON 3 (LESS 2 DESDIVS) (6) ITEMS CONCERNING AIR OPERATIONS: (A) BY V-1 DAY MOVE UP TO GUADALCANAL A PART OF THE FIGHTER FORCE (B) AS SOON AS CONSTRUCTION ON THE GUADALCANAL AIR FIELD IS COMPLETED, MOVE UP A PART OF THE LAND BOMBER FORCE TO GUADALCANAL AND COOPERATE IN THE ATTACK ON TULAGI. (C) CARRY OUT PATROLS AHEAD OF THE TRANSPORT CONVOY FROM V-1 TO V+1 DAYS. (7) ITEMS CONCERNING THE RECAPTURE OF TULAGI: (A) THE NAVY WILL COOPERATE WITH THE ARMY BY AIR AND SHIP BOMBARDMENT PRIOR TO AND DURING THE OPERATIONS TO RECAPTURE TULAGI. (B) THE NAVY WILL COVER THE MOVEMENTS OF THE ARMY'S SHIPS AND SMALLCRAFT AND WILL COOPERATE IN TRANSPORTING ARMY FORCES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SITUATION. (8) AFTER THE RECAPTURE OF THE SOLOMONS: (A) PROMPTLY STRENGTHEN THE DEFENSE FACILITIES. (B) IT IS INTENDED TO STATION ABOUT 2 ARMY BATTALIONS, FOR THE TIME BEING, ON ISLANDS IN THE VICINITY OF GUADALCANAL AND TULAGI (9) OPERATIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE CALLED "KI" ((for "ICHIKI"??)) OPERATIONS AND ALSO "KA" ((for "GUADALCANAL"??)) OPERATIONS."

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As one can see from the text of this "on-the-spot agreement," it was expected that the KAWAGUCHI Detachment would land on GUADALCANAL

On the 28th and on V-1 day, i.e., the 27th a fighter aircraft force would have already moved up to the GUADALCANAL airfield. The prospects during the 15th-18th, when this agreement was worked out, were that ^{Since} the Advance Echelon of ~~KAWAUCHI~~ ^{Advance Echelon} would land on the 18th, ^{and} their follow-up force plus the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force would land on the 22nd, they would be able to recapture the GUADALCANAL airfield. Influenced by the ^{Influenced by} televisual reputation of the ~~KAWAUCHI~~ Force and by the previously mentioned optimistic estimate of the enemy situation, XVII Army and South East Area Force ^{were} exceedingly confident that that force's attack on the airfield.

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The Commander of the South East Area Force, with the establishment of the on the spot agreement concerning the "KA" operation's, at 1030 the 19th ordered the Base Air Force to cooperate with necessary searches, enemy air patrols over the GUADALCANAL anchorages, and operations to recapture TULAGI and ordered the Outer South Seas Force to cooperate in the transportation etc., of the KAWAUCHI Detachment. The above Commander also ordered Commander (Inner) South Seas Force to reinforce the forces on MAKIN. This latter Commander had reported, early in the morning of the 17th, that the enemy had landed and that the South Seas Force and the 4th Air Attack Force had commenced a counter-attack. The South East Area Force estimated that this enemy landing was a diversion operation by the enemy in connection with his SALOMONS operations; Imperial Gen. HQ and Staff, Combined Fleet also saw it as only a diversion attack. This attack was made by a force, that came in two submarines, and which withdrew on the 19th; for details see: ^{"NAVAL} OPERATIONS IN THE CENTRAL PACIFIC OCEAN, Vol 2' of the WAR HISTORY COLLECTION.

At 1400 the 19th the Commander Outer South Seas Force issued the following orders in connection with the transport of the KAWAUCHI Detachment: OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE RADIO ORDER #36.

(1) OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE IN COORDINATION WITH THE XVII ARMY WILL SPEEDILY TRANSPORT ^{AND} ESCORT THE ARMY FOLLOW ON FORCE TO THE GUADALCANAL VICINITY, SECURE THAT PLACE AND THEN INVADE TULAGI (2) COMDESRON 3 (LESS 2 DESDIV) WILL ESCORT THE ARMY KAWAUCHI DETACHMENT (NUCLEUS OF 2 BATTALIONS IN 2 TRANSPORTS), DEPARTING TRUK AUGUST 24TH, PASS THROUGH 3°-34' NORTH 160°-20' EAST AND ARRIVE GUADALCANAL AUGUST 28TH AFTER SUNSET AND BE LANDED THERE. AFTER COMPLETION OF THE KAWAUCHI DETACHMENT'S LANDING, 2 DESTROYERS WILL REMAIN AS ANCHORAGE-WATCH, THE REMAINDER OF THE FORCE WILL ESCORT THE TRANSPORTS TO RABAU (3) ONE DESDIV OF DESRON 3, AFTER REFUELLING AT TRUK WILL PROCEED PROMPTLY TO RABAU

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Comd. Gen XVII Army summoned Maj. Gen Kiyotake KAWANUCHI, Commander of the 35th Infantry Brigade to RABAU and on the 19th of August, the 35th Infantry Brigade (nucleus - 2 Battalions) became the "KAWANUCHI DETACHMENT", and ordered to carry out the prescribed operations set forth in the Joint Army-Navy agreement regarding the "KA" operations.

III OPERATIONS OF THE BASE AIR FORCE

SITUATION OF BASE READINESS, AND CONCENTRATION OF FORCES

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The Commander of the BASE AIR FORCE (the CMC 1st Air Force, in command of all shore based (heavy) bombers and shore based fighters, plus some dive and torpedo bombers) on learning of the enemy attack on GUADALCANAL the morning of 7 August, immediately ordered ^{the Commander of the} the 6th Air Attack Force (its nucleus - 26 Air Flotilla) under the command of Vice Admiral Masaaki YAMAGATA to move part of MISAWA AIR, which was at SAIPAN, to RABAU and place it under the command of the 5th Air Attack Force, and for others of his command to go into a stand-by condition. Thus, MISAWA AIR took part in Air operations from the 8th onward.

On receipt of the above orders, the Commander 5th Air Attack Force, considering that air power would concentrate in the RABAU area, issued orders ^{at 2130 the 7th} to commence work on enlarging RABAU's West Airfield (IVUNAKAWA) and also for the 12th Construction Unit to speedily make ready the airbase at KAVIENG. As previously mentioned ^{work on the} KAVIENG air base had commenced in mid July and by 6 August had been able to take an emergency landing of a land based bomber but had not reached the stage of accommodating many aircraft.

The Commander on the morning of the 7th (7 August), in consideration of the long flights by Zero fighters and carrier type dive bombers to make attacks in the GUADALCANAL area, sent a part of the 10th Construction Unit and a part of the 8th BASE FORCE's Naval Landing Force ^{(in the (DD) AKIKAZE)} to ready the airfield at BUKA to receive planes making emergency landings. However BUKA air field was not considered at that time for use other than as a base for forced/emergency landings.

The CMC Combined Fleet at 0200 the 8th issued orders to various units for necessary operations in view of the enemy's attack (as noted previously) and among them, ordered the BASE AIR FORCE to make ^{repeated} counter attacks on the enemy, at the same time "to secure and make ready an airbase in the BOUGAINVILLE area", and also to

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Speedily move up the 26th Air Flotilla to the RABAU area. Thus the base at KAVIENG was to be speedily readied for use, new revetments and taxiway constructed at RABAU WEST airfield, while endeavoring to establish the new facilities in the background of the lines of coconut groves, to increase the capacity of the base and take measures to limit damage. In the meantime the 14th Construction Unit had been sent to BUNA in connection with the "RE" (MORLESBY) operation and on the 18th a fighter aircraft unit had moved up there. They had worked hard to set up and equip air bases for the SN operation (SUVA-NOUMBA) but there was a limit to what could be done by man-power and, moreover, due to the enemy's attack (in the SOLOMONS) it now became necessary to expand and equip (air facilities).

On the other hand, in addition to the seaplane/patrol plane base at RABAU, there was one at SHORTLAND and as mentioned above, the 8th Base Force established a seaplane base at GIZO on the 16th.

Along with the development of operations in the south east area, and the progress in readying the air bases at KAVIENG and WEST RABAU, the headquarters of 26th Air Flotilla and the fighters of 6th Air moved up to RABAU and the land bombers of KISARATSU air moved up to KAVIENG on August 21st. With this move to RABAU of the 6th Air Attack Force, MISAWA Air which had been incorporated into the 5th Air Attack Force in operations, now returned to its regular command. The 6th Air Attack Force's activities will be covered later.



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Also, on the 13th Commander Base Air Force ordered 3 patrol planes (Type 9) "MAVIS" (of 14th Air) under orders of the 5th Air Attack Force effective the 15th and that the Type-2 ("EMILY") patrol planes which had been operating in the SOLOMONS and Eastern New Guinea since the commencement of the "S-N" operations, continue to be deployed to the RABAU area. The next day, the 16th, the 3 "MAVIS" and 1 "EMILY" arrived at RABAU and came under command of 5th Air Attack Force. Prior to this, ^(on August 11th the) CINC Combined Fleet had ordered the Detachment of TOKO Air (patrol planes "MAVIS") incorporated into the Base Air Force; TOKO Air, at that time, was attached to 21st Air Flotilla (under South West Area Fleet) then operating in the Indian Ocean area, while the Detachment of TOKO air had been assigned to the Northern Force after the ALEUTIAN operations and ^{had} moved to KISKA on 9 July but had returned to YOKOHAMA on 14 August to prepare to move to the South East area.

The concentration of aircraft in the RABAU area and the requirements of the operations against the GUADALCANA area brought forth an urgent need for an

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intermediate air base between RABUL and GUADALCANAL. For that reason, ^(Combined Fleet) Headquarters on the ^(once more) 21st expressed the desire for the prompt provision of such a base in the BOUGAINVILLE area. As mentioned previously, this wish had been made in mid-June but did not materialize; the text of that radio ^(of the 21st) not being available, we are ignorant of its contents but the reply by the Chief of Staff, 21st Air Fleet on the 22nd at 1152 was:

(1) SHORE BASES: BUKA BASE IS 1000 METERS LONG, 100 METERS WIDE. WAS ROLLED AFTER GRASS WAS CUT AND ^{ALTHOUGH} ^(ON THE 18th) READING WAS COMPLETED AS AN ADVANCED BAY FOR 18 FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, IT IS NOW IN USE FOR FORCED LANDINGS AND AS A FIGHTER DISPERSAL BASE, FURTHERMORE TO READY IT FOR LAND BOMBERS WOULD REQUIRE 1000 MEN'S WORK FOR ONE MONTH, BUT NO EXCESS ^{LABOR} AVAILABLE HERE. KIETA BAY, AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, UNSUITABLE AS A BASE AND ^(ALTHOUGH) ACCORDING TO RECONNAISSANCE TO DATE HAVE NOT ^(A) DISCOVERED SUITABLE PLACE ON THE MAIN ISLAND OF BOUGAINVILLE WHERE ONE CAN BE CONSTRUCTED IN A SHORT TIME, WILL MAKE A DETAILED INVESTIGATION AS SOON AS I ^{CAN} ^{THE} FIND TIME. (2) SEAPLANE BASES ^{(A) SHORTLANDS}:
 (A) CAN ACCOMMODATE ^{ABOUT} 8 TYPE 97 (EMULS) FLYING BOATS; THE USE OF TYPE 2 (EMULS) FLYING BOATS WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE. (B) ^{GIZO:} 4 FLOAT PLANES ARE NOW OPERATING FROM HERE"

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At this time the South East Area had 6 Construction Units assigned - the 11th and 13th on GUADALCANAL, the 10th at RABUL, the 12th at KAVIENG and the 14th and 15th at BUNA, each engaged in constructing air bases and other urgent work but they had no spare strengths or capabilities. Moreover ~~Dispersing~~ their capabilities for air field construction and preparation to RABUL, KAVIENG, LAE and BUNA ~~reached~~ ^{current} the limit of their ability. The provision of Anti-Aircraft Defence facilities was also similar, while 11th Air Fleet recognized the necessity for a relay base, he lacked the military force to acquire it.

OPERATIONS OF THE BASE AIR FORCE

The Base Air Force, according to the operations policy of the South East Area, was to ~~press~~ ^{above related} ~~air~~ ~~with~~ ~~some~~ ~~time~~ the "RE" ((MORESBY)) and "KA" ((GUADALCANAL)) operations at the same time, but due to the ^{above related} conditions in the area and the estimate of the situation by the Central Authorities, emphasis of operations shifted to the "RE" ((MORESBY)) operations. Commander 5th Air Attack Force, as will be described in the next paragraph, on 15 August issued "5th Air Attack Force's order for the "RE"

Operation and the "KI" operations, Emphasis was on the "RE" operations but it obtained an air patrol plan for the "KI" operations ^{providing} air patrols from RABOUL and SHORTLAND to patrol ahead of the Reinforcement Force and against the appearance of an enemy carrier task force. According to this plan, these air patrols would begin the same day that the Reinforcement Force left TRUK, August 16th. To provide support for these patrols the (AVP) AKITSUSHIMA left RABOUL the 15th and moved to SHORTLAND the 16th as a base for large flying boats. After the (DD) AKIKAZE had escorted the AKITSUSHIMA to SHORTLAND, it remained there a guard-ship. 4 Patrol planes, the "4th Air Unit" ("MAVIS" patrol planes of YOKOHAMA AIR and 14th AIR) moved up to SHORTLAND the 16th.

PLAN FOR "KI" OPERATIONS' AIR PATROLS - (RR = RABOUL - RXE = SHORTLAND)

	METHOD #1 August 16 th	METHOD #2 August 17 th	METHOD #3 August 18 th	METHOD #4 August 19 th & August 20 th	METHOD #5 August 21 st	METHOD #6 August 22 nd	METHOD #7 August 23 rd	METHOD #8 August 24 th
4 th AIR UNIT	Patrol from RABOUL on: 70° (C-2), 80° (C-1) out to 650 miles and return to SHORTLAND	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 100° (D-5) 110° (D-4) 120° (D-3) 130° (D-2) 140° (D-1) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 112° (D-4) 122° (D-3) 132° (D-2) 142° (D-1) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 118° (D-1) 108° (D-2) 98° (D-3) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 138° (D-1) 128° (D-2) 118° (D-3) 108° (D-4) 98° (D-5) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 150° (D-1) 140° (D-2) 130° (D-3) 120° (D-4) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 120° (D-1) 110° (D-2) 100° (D-3) and return	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 100° (D-1) 90° (D-2) 80° (D-3) 70° (D-4) and return
14 th AIR Detachment		Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 90° (D-6) and return to RABOUL	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 102° (D-5) and return to RABOUL	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 88° (D-4) and return to RABOUL	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 88° (D-6) and return to RABOUL	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 110° (D-5) 100° (D-6) and return to RABOUL	Patrol from SHORTLAND on: 90° (D-4) and return to RABOUL	
2 nd AIR UNIT		Patrol from RABOUL on: 153° (B-1) 143° (B-2) and return		Patrol from RABOUL on: 148° (B-1) 138° (B-2) 175° (A-1) 165° (A-2) and return		Patrol from RABOUL on: 153° (B-1) 102° (C-1) 175° (A-1) 165° (A-2) and return		Patrol from RABOUL on: 158° (B-1) 148° (B-2) 138° (B-3) and return
YOKOHAMA AIR	Patrol from RABOUL on: 48° (C-4) 50° (C-3) out 600 miles and return		Patrol from RABOUL on: 145° (B-1) 97° (C-2) 107° (C-1) 175° (A-1) 165° (A-2) and return		Patrol from RABOUL on: 152° (B-1) 142° (B-2) 175° (A-1) 165° (A-2)		Patrol from RABOUL on: 140° (B-1) 130° (B-2) 175° (A-1) 165° (A-2)	

- (1) When not specified, patrols will be to 700 nautical miles, turn right for 60 miles and return.
- (2) These patrol lines may be enlarged/increased in response to changes in the enemy situation.
- (3) The Search Sector Numbers/classes are enclosed in parenthesis - these will be used as call signs for the planes.
- (4) Orders will be given in case it is necessary to change the allocation of patrols/sectors in response to the condition of aircraft.

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Starting on the 16th, 5th Air Attack Force began their aerial patrols according to schedule but none sighted enemy ships but on the 18th and 19th, enemy patrol planes (flying boats) were sighted to the east of the SOLOMONS and exchanged fire with them. At the same time, ^{from the 15th onwards, the} 5th Air Attack Force had also covered the transport convoy to BUNA, attacked PORT MORESBY and carried out other operations in Eastern NEW GUINEA. Now, on the 20th of August, the number of aircraft available for use by the 5th Air Attack Force were:

RABAUL-WEST - Land ^{based} Bombers 23; RABAUL EAST - Zero fighters 13; carrier dive bombers 5, land based reconnaissance planes - 2; LAE - Zero fighters - 18; RABAUL SEAPLANE/PATROL PLANE BASE - Type 2 ("Emily") patrol planes - 3; SHORTLAND - 8 ("Mavis") Type 97 patrol planes.

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MOVEMENT OF THE 6TH AIR ATTACK FORCE TO THE SOUTH EAST AREA

It was intended to dispatch a ^{squadron of} fighter aircraft to the GUADALCANAL airfield the day before (the 17th) the KAWAGUCHI Detachment was to land on ^{GUADALCANAL} in accordance with the on-the-spot agreement of the 18th for the KA operations. Commander Base Air Force this fighter squadron to be provided by 26th Air ^{Florida} and issued orders at 0814 the 19th for the move to the South-east area.

BASE AIR FORCE RADIO ORDER # 70. (1) EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21ST AUGUST, SIXTH AIR ATTACK FORCE (LESS MISAWA AIR AND MAIN BODY OF 6TH AIR) WILL, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, MOVE ITS HEADQUARTERS TO RABAUL, THE OTHERS MOVING TO KAVIENG. ON THE ARRIVAL OF 6TH AIR ATTACK FORCE'S HEADQUARTERS AT RABAUL, MISAWA AIR WILL REVERT TO THAT COMMAND.

(2) OPERATIONS OF THE 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE AND THE 6TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL BE AS FOLLOWS, SUBJECT TO SPECIAL ORDERS IN EACH CASE: (A) UNTIL AUGUST 23RD AIR PATROLS WILL BE AS SET FORTH IN 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE'S ORDER # 12 (THE "KI" OPERATION AIR PATROLS) ((see page 159)). (B) COMMENCING AUGUST 24TH PATROL SECTORS WILL BE AS FOLLOWS: 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE: ^{SECTORS} "A", "B" (BY SPECIAL ORDER, DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION) "D", and "E". 6TH AIR ATTACK FORCE: ^{SECTORS} "C", "F" (COOPERATE IN "B" SECTOR PATROLS) UNTIL MOVED FORWARD TO GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD, (C) PROTECTION AND PATROLS OF THE VICINITY OF BASES WHERE DEPLOYED. (D) 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL CARRY OUT "MO" ((MORESBY)) OPERATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS PLANS. 2ND AIR WILL MOVE FORWARD TO "RABI" ((at the head of MILNE BAY)) AND MORESBY. (3) AS SOON AS THE GUADALCANAL AIRFIELD IS MADE READY, 6TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL MOVE UP THERE ABOUT ONE SECTION OF KISARATSU AIR ((land bombers)) AND 6TH AIR ((zero fighters)) AND PREPARE TO MOVE UP 27 LAND BOMBERS AND 36 FIGHTERS, TEMPORARILY (ABOUT ONE WEEK), AS SOON AS THEY CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AND OPERATIONS ARE FEASIBLE.

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As of August 19th, the Base Air Force's policy for employment of forces thereafter was to move forward the 6th Air Attack Force, and with the recapture of GUADALCANAL, to advance ^{and use} to that air base for operations in the SOLOMONS area while using the 5th Air Attack Force for operations in the Eastern New Guinea area. The 6th Air Attack Force moved up to RABAUL on the 2nd

as scheduled.

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IV THE BATTLE FOR GUADALCANAL

THE SUBSEQUENT SITUATION OF THE GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE

It was previously related that the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force and the Construction Units retired to the area along the west bank of the MATANIKAU River on 8 August and ^(clashed with the enemy while) on the 9th moving to the east in anticipation of a counter-landing by friendly forces, and returned to their former position. That battle was the first real clash with the enemy on GUADALCANAL and there were a number of casualties on both sides. The next day, the 10th, a small force of the enemy tried to cross the MATANIKAU River in the vicinity of that river's mouth but were driven off by our forces. According to American sources, both of these clashes with our forces were a result of U.S. marine's reconnaissance to ascertain the location of our forces.

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Again, at 2000 the 12th a ^{small} enemy force landed on the coast to the west of POINT CRUZ; our force which was lying in wait for them, made a fierce surprise attack and repulsed them. According to American sources, it was a reconnaissance party of 25 men, ^{commanded} by the Intelligence Officer of the 1st Marine Division that had come ashore to persuade the Japanese force to surrender. The American force had captured a Japanese Warrant Officer after landing near KUKUM on the left bank of the LUNGA River who had said that the Japanese force to the west of the MATANIKAU River might be induced to surrender. Also, a reconnaissance patrol had reported seeing a white flag on the 12th, so the Division Intelligence officer jumped to the conclusion that the Japanese force was starving and ready to surrender; adding a Medical officer and a Japanese Language officer, the reconnaissance patrol landed, ^{but} were attacked a few minutes after landing, only 3 men escaped. The American Forces on receiving a report of this state of affairs, immediately landed two Companies as a rescue force, to the west of POINT CRUZ, ^{where they} received only light resistance as they moved east, and returned to their front lines.

SKETCH #38
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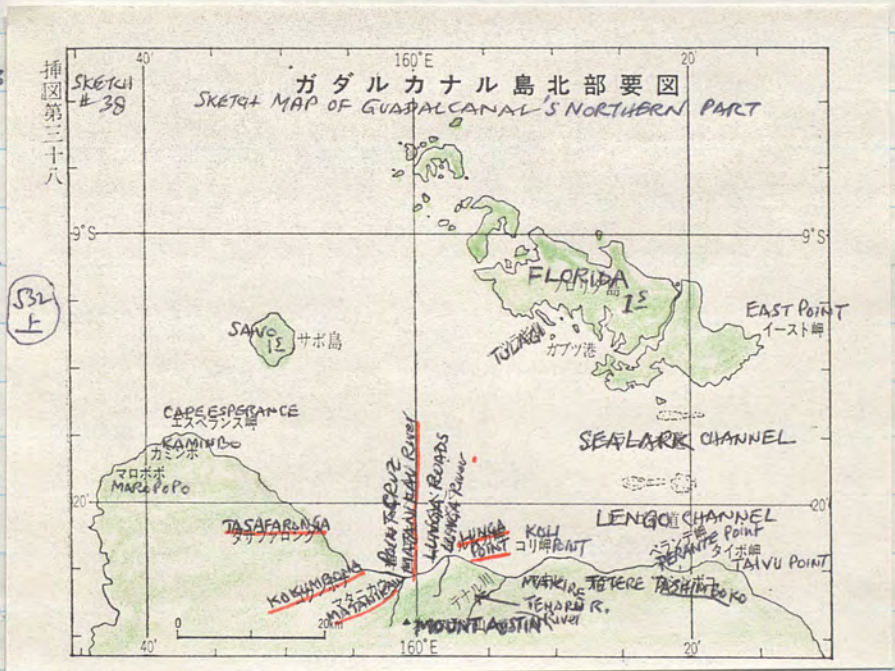
As of the 13th the situation of our Garrison Force was reflected by three reports passed through Com Subdiv 13 which was in the vicinity (received at 2200 the 14th by Condor 2): RECEIVED THIS MORNING FROM FRIENDLY FORCES ASHORE AT THE GUADALCANAL BASE THE FOLLOWING RADIO MESSAGES: (A) SENDER BELIEVED HEADQUARTERS NAVAL LANDING FORCE - "ENEMY LANDED FROM 4 LANDING CRAFT 500 METERS EAST ALONG COAST FROM THIS PLACE WILL REPULSE THEM IF THERE IN THE MORNING 0740"

(B) SENDER LOOKOUT STATION CAPE ESPERANCE. FIGHTING IN PROGRESS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE NAVY LANDING FORCE ON THE WEST SIDE OF LUNGA BAY WE HAVE BEEN SHORT OF FOOD SINCE THE SEVENTH REQUEST ARRANGEMENTS (FOR FOOD SUPPLIES). BECAUSE OF BEING AWAY FROM OUR HEADQUARTERS REQUEST YOU MAKE CONTACT WHEN WE RETURN NEXT TIME AT 1600 THE 16th.

It was surmised from these messages that when the Garrison Force retired to the west they had not brought with them radio transmitter and had sent a messenger to contact the LOOKOUT STATION at CAPE ESPERANCE, and that station had established contact (with Subdiv 13) and, personnel of the LOOKOUT STATION would bring back a radio transmitter and the above Headquarters could contact RABAU from the 16th onward using submarines as relays.

The South East Area Force

thus learned from Comsubdiv 13 that the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force was stubbornly resisting. On the 15th the 5th Air Attack Force made (a) bombing attack(s) on the above airfield and at the same time 3 land bombers dropped about a ton of ammunition and food on a grassy clearing about 6 kilometers to the East of LUNGA



POINT. In addition, another half that amount was about to be dropped on the west bank of the MATANIKAU river, but were unable to do so because of enemy AA fire. At the time that supplies were dropped to the east of LUNGA Point we were sure they were picked up by the GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE but believed that they were to the east, or west, or ^{both} east and west of LUNGA Point.

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The Outer South Seas Force, in accordance with the above messages, sent the (DD) 'OIKAZE' of Desdiv 29, loaded with ammunition and rations and communications equipment, etc plus a part of the YOKOSUKA 5th Special Landing Force (113 men under the command of Lieut. Tatsunosuke TAKAHASHI) as a reinforcement force to Guadalcanal. The 'OIKAZE' landed that force and supplies ^{at TASAFARINGA} on GUADALCANAL during the night of 16th

and the TAKAHASHI unit established contact with the Garrison Force during the morning of the 17th; this was the first reinforcement of GUADALCANAL and through its success, direct communications were reestablished between that island and RABAU. As a result of this the Commander 8th Base Force reported to all forces the situation on GUADALCANAL on the 17th as:

THE FORCE UNDER THE COMMANDER AT PRESENT CONSIST OF A GARRISON FORCE OF 100 MEN PLUS 328 MEN FROM CONSTRUCTION UNITS, TOTAL 428 MEN HAVE SECURED AN AREA 8 KILOMETERS WEST OF LUNGA POINT AND TO THE WEST. IN ADDITION, ^{WHILE ABOUT} 1000 MEN OF THE CONSTRUCTION UNITS AND GROUND FORCE ARE IN THE SURROUNDING DENSE JUNGLE, CONTACT WITH THEM HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE.

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The morale of the GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE was boosted considerably by the reinforcement by the TAKAHASHI Unit and the news that the ICHIKI Detachment was to land soon. However at 0625 the 18th, a report was received that LOOKOUT STATION ^(12 men) on East Point of FLORIDA were under attack by about 50 enemy that had landed from a boats; Commander Outer South Seas Force immediately issued orders to Desdiv 4 ^{to repulse the above enemy} after the ICHIKI Detachment had been landed ^{and during its} to patrol ^{of} the vicinity of the GUADALCANAL anchorages, Commander 8th Base Force also ordered the float-planes at GIZO Island to reconnoiter the vicinity of EAST POINT. However there are no data on East Point after that; probably all hands there were killed in action.

Also, early in the morning of the 19th, some 300 enemy landed at KOKUMBONA to the west of our position and attacked our position supported by artillery fire from the right bank of the MATANIKAU RIVER. The GUADALCANAL GARRISON FORCE, attacked front and rear, counterattacked the enemy in the KOKUMBONA area and forced them to withdraw to sea, after considerable casualties and the loss of 3 amphibious craft and 1 machine gun captured. However the Garrison Force on the left bank of the MATANIKAU RIVER withdrew 2 kilometers to the westward of that river due to the enemy's intense artillery fire.

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According to American sources, this enemy was a Marine reconnaissance force, one company reconnoitering from KOKUMBONA, and two companies from the mouth of the MATANIKAU RIVER

RECONNAISSANCE AND ATTACKS BY THE "VOLUNTEER FORCE" (DESTROYERS)

Of the "VOLUNTEER FORCE", after completion of transporting the ICHIKI Detachment, Desdiv 17 returned to RABAU at 1400 the 21st and was incorporated into the "Escort Force". The other 3 destroyers were ordered, under the command of Comdesdiv 4, to watch over the vicinity of the landing point and prevent the escape of enemy troops. The HARUKAZE and KAGERO moved into the TULAGI anchorage between 0330 and 0600

but did not sight any enemy craft so bombarded the shore and sunk or damaged several enemy landing craft. The ARASHI, at 0630 the same day ((19th)) established contact with our Garrison Force by semaphore signals and when closing LUNGA Point were fired on by enemy artillery which they immediately took under counter-battery fire, causing considerable damage.

Comdesdiv 5 at 0830 the same day ((19th)) made the following report on the situation of the ICHIKI Detachment: "THE ICHIKI DETACHMENT IS RESTING AT NOON AFTER A NIGHT ADVANCE. ON THE NIGHT OF THE 20TH (DEPENDENT ON THE ENEMY SITUATION, THE 21ST) EXPECTS TO CAPTURE THE AIR FIELD. NOW AT TETERE (15 KILOMETERS WEST OF TAINU POINT"

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However at 1015 2 B-17s attacked, making a hit on the HAKIKAZE's #3 gun mount. In addition to flooding #3 magazine, its rudder was also jammed at 15° starboard but could hold course using both screws but its maximum speed was 6 knots, Comdesdiv 4, in view of more bombing attacks the next day and thereafter, after receiving permission from Commander Outer South Seas Force, sent the HAKIKAZE, escorted by the ARASHI, to TRUK, where they arrived safely on the afternoon of the 23rd.

The KAGERO continued to remain in that area and on the morning of the 19th, after a gun bombardment of TULAGI, reported ^{to all forces} regarding the enemy situation in that area, as follows: OBSERVED THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER ^{OUR} PRESENT GUN BOMBARDMENT, MANY LANDING CRAFT FULL OF ENEMY TROOPS, ABOUT TO FLEE IN DISORDER; ^{WE} BOMBARDED THEM AND ^{AS} THEY SCATTERED IN ALL DIRECTIONS. ^{AND} ^(WERE NO INDICATIONS OF ANY) AS THERE ^{WAS} NO RETURN FIRE DURING OUR ATTACK AND ^{AS} THE MOVEMENTS OF OTHER ENEMY (OF UNKNOWN NUMBERS) WERE WITHOUT ^{ANY} VIGOR, BELIEVE THAT THE ENEMY ^{IS} PROBABLY LOW IN MORALE. WE CONTINUED ^{ON} TO VICINITY 2 KILOMETERS OF HORN POINT ((see map page 92)) AND ALTHOUGH WE MADE REPEATED EFFORTS TO CONTACT THE LOOKOUT STATION, THERE WAS NO ANSWER."

Just prior to and after dawn on the 20th, the KAGERO again bombarded TULAGI harbor for about an hour beginning at about 0345 and then reconnoitered the waters to the south, bombarding shore installations there. While moving to LUNGA to contact friendly forces ashore there at 0530, it was attacked by 2 enemy 4 engine planes, and at 0610 by 2 single engine planes, without any damage in either case, and at 1150 the KAGERO retired to the north.

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As will be related later on, that morning a patrol plane from the 5th Air Attack Force reported sighting one aircraft carrier, 2 cruisers and 2 destroyers bearing 118°, 500 miles from SHORTLAND. Later the same afternoon the GUADALCANAL Garrison force reported that 20 carrier type ^(enemy) aircraft had landed on that airfield; finally, the control of the seas there was shifted to the enemy.

Prior to this, ~~at 1444~~ on the 20th, Com DesRon 2 had ordered Com DesDiv 24 with the KAWAKAZE which was escorting the 2nd Echelon convoy to proceed to the GUADALCANAL area and change places with the KAGERO. The next day ^(the 21st) after the KAGERO had moved to a position about 10 miles west of NDAI ^(also called "GOWER IS" - due north of the northern tip of MALAITA Island)), it was relieved by the KAWAKAZE and headed for SHORTLAND to refuel.

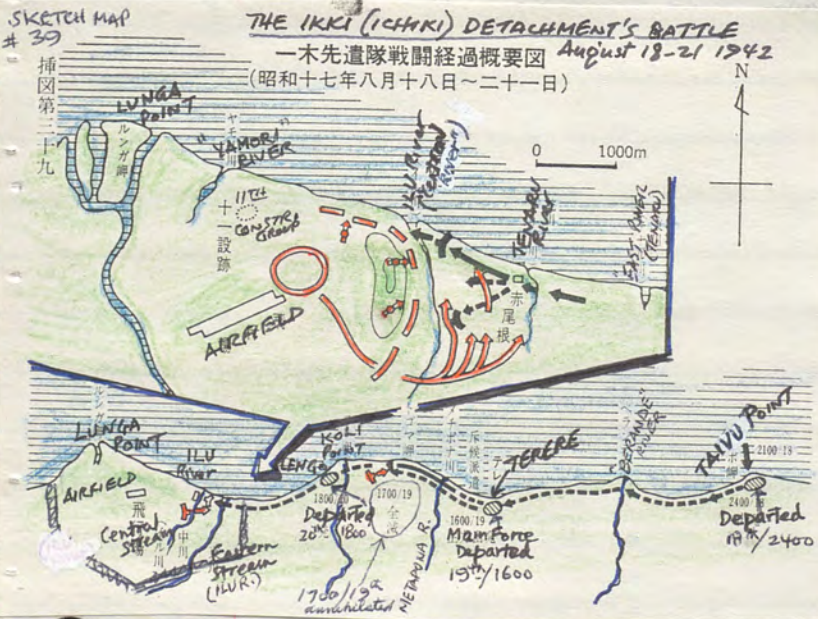
THE ICHIKI ADVANCED FORCE'S BATTLE

The "Advanced Force" landed at TAIVU Point and completed its assembly in that vicinity at 2300 the 18th. Based on the intelligence report that the enemy force was about 2,000 and bent on escape, the Commander of the Detachment decided to attack without waiting for the arrival of the 2nd Echelon. Their advance began at midnight, heading west along the coastline and at 0430 the 19th they arrived at TETERE where they had a long rest in the jungle. To conceal their plans, they moved during night time and avoided movement during daytime. That day the Detachment commander in order to gather intelligence

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sent a group to the vicinity of the "Central Stream" (the ILU River, called by the Japanese Forces the "Central Stream" or "Central River") and an additional four Officer Scouting parties from the Central Stream toward the airfield. However, he learned that the intelligence personnel and the scouts encountered the enemy at 1430 in the vicinity of KOLI Point and fighting broke out. At 1500 one company was sent forward as relief and at 1600 the main force left TETERE on a forced march but at 1700 received the sad news that the intelligence group and the scouts had been annihilated.

THE IKKI (ICHIKI) DETACHMENT'S BATTLE
一木先遣隊戦闘經過概要図 August 18-21 1942
(昭和十七年八月十八日~二十一日)



According to American sources the enemy sent a company of marines to make a reconnaissance based on a report that the Japanese force had established a radio station near TAIVU Point.

The Detachment arrived at "BENGO" ((LENGO?)) at 0230 the 20th and took a long

rest. At that time enemy landing craft were observed moving in the direction of LUNGA POINT and enemy troops were sighted, moving with ~~vigors~~ ^{vigors}, in the area of our 11th Construction Unit's ^{former} ~~billets~~ ^{billets}. Thereupon the Detachment Commander issued orders for the attack dispositions. Their gist was ^(said to be) ~~to depart~~ ^{to depart} present position at 1800, advance to the ^(line of the) ~~NAKAGAWA~~ ^{Central River} - the ILU River (see map page 165) by 2300, there ^{enemies} make preparations to attack the position near former billets of our 11th Construction Unit, ^{and} ~~at 0230~~ ^{at 0230} advance to attack and ^{and in one stroke} ~~to extend~~ ^{to extend} control toward the YAMORI River. ^(to overrun the airfield)

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The Detachment departed their ^(LUNGA) ^(RENGO) rest area at 1800 and arrived at the TENARU River at 2000. At 2230 the Advance Guard received ^{from a few troops} enemy fire when it had advanced to 100 meters of the right bank of the NAKAGAWA (ILU River); the enemy was pursued, advancing to the right bank of that river and a halt called there. The Detachment Commander ordered the advance guard to dash over to the opposite bank under the cover of concentrated mortar fire but this did not occur as he had hoped. (i.e. - they failed to cross to the opposite bank). Before dawn the 21st, the Detachment had advanced one unit to front on the NAKAGAWA (ILU River) and the Main Body had commenced their attack from a sand bar of that river but were halted by ^{enemy} violent artillery fire. At ^{around} 0900 they received the enemy's counter attack, to which 6 tanks were added in the afternoon, ^{overrunning} the rear of the Detachment. Despite fierce attack by all the officers and men the battle situation turned unfavorably and around 1500 the Detachment Commander burned the Regimental colors and committed suicide; officers and men under his command followed their commander in ^{sublime} death in battle.

In this manner, the first attack to recapture Guadalcanal Island failed, temporarily. Japanese casualties were 777 killed in action and about 30 wounded. Those who retired, or became separated from the fighting, ^{plus} those who had been left at the landing place, totaled 128 men, who in addition to endeavoring to contact Headquarters XVII Army, awaited the arrival of follow-on forces.

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Through the Navy, Commander XVII Army knew that the ICHIKI Detachment had landed its forces at TANU Point on the 18th and that they intended to occupy the airfield on the 20th. On the morning of the 21st the GUADALCANAL

Garrison Force informed him that " FROM 0200 THE 2ND TIME HAS BEEN CONTINUOUS SOUND OF LIVELY GUNFIRE IN THE VICINITY OF THE AIRFIELD x FOUR ENEMY LANDPLANES HAVE TAKEN OFF AND ARE CIRCLING THERE" and " BELIEVE THE ^(ICHIKI) ADVANCED FORCE'S ATTACK ON THE AIRFIELD IS PROGRESSING FAVORABLY FOR OUR FORCES", thus making him think that the attack was succeeding.

However, through the navy, ~~the same day~~ there arrived a message sent from the GARRISON FORCE at 1745 which read: ALTHOUGH THE ^{ICHIKI} ADVANCED FORCE REACHED THE VICINITY OF THE AIRFIELD THIS MORNING THEY WERE PRACTICALLY ANNIHILATED. HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH THE EASTERN LOOKOUT STATION, PLEASE PASS THIS TO THE BOSTON MARU. As there was no originator's name in the radio it was not known whether it was factual or not but Headquarters XVII Army, ^{estimating that the ICHIKI force was in a desperate battle} cancelled the movement of one Battalion of the KAWANUCHI Detachment (the Reserve) to RABOUL, ~~intending~~ to throw in to Guadalcanal the entire strength of the KAWANUCHI force, 3 Battalions, and simultaneously requested the Navy to re-supply the ICHIKI Detachment with food and ammunition.

However on the 25th it was learned that the above signal about the ICHIKI Advanced Force "being practically annihilated had been sent at the request of the Signal officer of the ICHIKI Detachment, 1st Lieutenant SAKAKIBARA, and thus confirmed the overwhelming defeat of the ICHIKI Force.

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V. ENEMY PLANES ADVANCE TO GUADALCANAL - OPERATIONS OF THE COMBINED FLEET
ENEMY CARRIER FORCE SIGHTED - ENEMY AIRCRAFT MOVE UP TO GUADALCANAL

A flying boat which had taken off from SHORTLAND the morning of the 20th in accordance with 5th Air Attack Force's Air Patrol Plan ((see page 159)) reported sightings the enemy:

- 0820 - D-2 (Author's note: plane patrolling along 108°) - ENEMY SIGHTED.
- 0830 - D-2. 1 CRUISER, 2 DESTROYERS BEARING 118°, 500 MILES FROM ^(ANY) BASE, COURSE 50° SPEED 16 KNOTS"

On receipt of this report, the Commander 5th Air Attack Force ~~hoping~~ an enemy aircraft carrier would be present, ordered a search for the enemy to be continued along the designated patrol lines. Now at 0930 the Patrol Plane flying Sector D-2 sighted an enemy carrier and reported its movements as follows: 0940, D-2, ENEMY STRENGTH 1 CARRIER 1 CRUISER 2 DESTROYERS AND OTHERS BEARING 116° FROM BASE 520 MILES COURSE 350° SPEED 14 KNOTS.

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The enemy carrier was ^(250 MILES) about SE of GUADALCANAL and from its course, it was estimated to be moving to the northward toward that island, ~~being~~ about 500 miles from RABOUL.

it was outside the operational radius of our land based bombers

When this report reached Commander South East Area Forces, ^{immediately} he ordered the Second Echelon Convoy to reverse course and retire. He resolved to wait for the enemy to draw near, then attack him with the full strength of the shore based air force together with surface forces of the Outer South Seas Force to annihilate the remaining enemy; that day at 1057 he issued the following order:

- " SOUTH EAST AREA FORCE RADIO ORDER # 9. ① ENEMY STRENGTH UP TO 0930 THE 20TH IS ONE AIRCRAFT CARRIER TWO CRUISERS AND THREE DESTROYERS (117° - 220 MILES FROM TULAGI). ② ^{EARLY} TOMORROW, THE 21ST, SOUTH EAST AREA FORCES WILL USE ITS AIR POWER TO ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIER AND AT THE SAME TIME USE ITS SURFACE FORCES TO GRAPPLE WITH AND DESTROY ENEMY STRAGGLERS. ^(EARLY TOMORROW MORNING, THE 21ST) ③ THE 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL SEARCH FOR, ATTACK AND DESTROY THE ENEMY AIRCRAFT CARRIER. ④ THE OUTER SOUTH SEAS FORCE WILL HAVE ITS CONVOY TURN AND ALSO WILL MAKE CONTACT WITH, ATTACK AND DESTROY ENEMY STRAGGLERS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE BATTLE RESULTS BY THE 5TH AIR ATTACK FORCE. ⑤ THE INNER SOUTH SEAS FORCE AND THE 4TH AIR ATTACK FORCE WILL BE ON STRICT ALERT IN THEIR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

BASED ON THIS ORDER, the Commander Outer South Seas Force ordered Crudiv 6, after recovering its float planes, to proceed at high speed to a position 5° S - 158° E (80 miles, 280° from ONTONG JAWA, for the 2ND ECHELON to withdraw on course 250° until special orders, and for Subdiv 13 to speed to the seas South East of San Cristóbal Island. ^{(When the} South East Area forces had taken the dispositions as ordered, the search aircraft, D-1 (patrolling the 118° line) reported sighting an enemy carrier striking force:

- 1140 - D-1 SIGHTED LARGE ENEMY FORCE, 240 MILES, BEARING 130°, FROM TULAGI.
 1205 - D-1 - ENEMY STRENGTH: 1 AIRCRAFT CARRIER, 4 CRUISERS, 9 DESTROYERS.
 1215 - D-1 - ENEMY CARRIER STRIKING FORCE POSITION IS 133° 247 MILES FROM TULAGI, COURSE 130° SPEED 18 KNOTS.

The D-2 aircraft, that had previously sighted an enemy aircraft carrier, continued to maintain contact and afterward reported that "his" aircraft carrier had no bridge structure, that the number of planes on deck was unknown and that he had fought with an enemy 2-place fighter. The position of the aircraft

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carriers sighted by the D-1 aircraft was about 70 miles distant, and was believed to be a separate one. After D-1 aircraft returned to its base it reported that the carrier it had sighted did have a bridge structure or "island."

In the meantime the Guadalcanal Garrison Force reported that at 1400 15 carrier type aircraft had put in an appearance and again at 1420 sent: "20 ENEMY AIRCRAFT INCLUDING 2 FIGHTERS LANDED ON THE AIRFIELD." Prior to this the (DD) KAGERO had reported being attacked by 2 single-engine enemy aircraft near LUNGA POINT. Thus, before the capture of the Guadalcanal Airfield by the ICHIKI Detachment, enemy aircraft had finally moved forward to that airfield.

The Second Echelon began its retirement at 1200, heading on course 320° but this was change to 250° in accordance with the above order by Outer South Seas Force, in order that the Convoy head toward REBAUL. Later the Convoy was cautioned by the Chief of Staff, 11th Air Fleet, against drawing near to the enemy search sectors from SAMARAI (600-700 miles) (S.E. tip of NEW GUINEA), and subsequently change course to 0° to retire to the northward.

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After the Outer South Seas Force's Support Force of Crudiv 6 plus (DD) YUNAGI had left KAVIENG on the 17th as indirect support of the ICHIKI Advanced Force's movement to GUADALCANAL, it entered the anchorage at REKATA (NE SANTA ISABEL Is.) and set up a temporary float-plane base. It was intended that float planes from that base would patrol ahead of the 2nd Echelon's route to Guadalcanal anchorage on the 22nd meanwhile that force acted as indirect support. That force, less the YUNAGI, which was left behind, sortied from REKATA (Bay) at 1200 the 20th. The Main Body (CHOKAI and (DD) ISOKAZE) at 1000 the 20th reported its position as 4°-22' S. 155°-35' E (50 miles North East of BUKA Island). Afterwards on the receipt of the GUADALCANAL Garrison Force's report that enemy planes had landed there, ^{Commander Outer South Seas Force} ordered Crudiv 6 to join the Main Body the next day, the 21st, at 0500 at a point 80 miles West South West of ONTONG JAVA. Also that ^{ordered} Commander, the (DD) KAWAKAZE, which was headed for Guadalcanal, detached from the Escort Force and to change places with (DD) KAGERO which was temporarily withdrawing from the Guadalcanal anchorage, and for the KAGERO to go to SHORTLAND and refuel there from the (AVP) OKITSUSHIMA and then cruise at discretion awaiting orders in the vicinity of 40 miles South West of ONTONG JAVA.

At this time the Communications situation was bad, delays and non-arrivals

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brought about great confusion. The Commander Base Air Force, based on the above listed operation order from South East Area Force, ordered 5th Air Attack Force to use his patrol planes the next day to search the sector 080°-150° to 700 miles from SHORTLAND and for the entire force of land bombers (armed with torpedoes), covered by fighters of his command, to carry out search and attack missions.

Comdr. 5th Air Attack Force at 1333 the 20th ordered: 6 patrol planes to take off 0445 and search D. Sectors (88°-138°) to 700 miles; the full strength of land based bombers of MISAWA AB and the 2nd AIR UNIT, be armed with torpedoes and take off at 0600 escorted by the entire fighter strength of RABOULS 1st AIR UNIT.

At ^{about} this time the ICHIKI Advanced Unit was carrying out its attack on the GUADALCANAL airfield. Both South East Area Force and XVIII Army had great expectations of capturing the airfield and had the ICHIKI Second Echelon expedite its landing to be certain of securing the airfield. This objective was not only unchanged by the appearance of enemy aircraft carriers, it now became an absolute necessity. Then, having had the 2nd Echelon Convoy reverse course, Commander South East Area Forces decided to have it land on the 24th, supported by the main strength of the Combined Fleet, and made the request for that support, as follows, at 1730 on the 20th (to Cinc Combined Fleet)

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① IN VIEW OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE ENEMY (A FEW FIGHTER AIRCRAFT BASED ON 2 AIRCRAFT CARRIERS), INTEND TO CHANGE V-DAY TO AUGUST 24TH AND LAND THE ICHIKI ^{DETACHMENT'S} 2ND ECHELON WITH THE AID OF THE SUPPORT FORCE.

② IN THE ABOVE CIRCUMSTANCES, ^{AS} THE CONVOY WILL BE IN THE VICINITY OF 6°-30' SOUTH 163°-30' EAST ON THE EVENING OF V-1 DAY, REQUEST THAT THE THIRD FLEET ((AIRCRAFT CARRIER FORCE)) ^{PROMPTLY} MOVE UP TO A POINT FROM WHICH IT CAN GIVE SUPPORT. REQUEST NOTIFICATION WHETHER OR NOT SUCH MOVEMENT FEASIBLE

THE MAIN STRENGTH OF THE COMBINED FLEET MOVES SOUTH

After receipt of the report of the sighting of the enemy carrier task force, the Staff of the Combined Fleet believed that the enemy was not intending to attack our GUADALCANAL Island but was heading northward with the 2nd Echelon Convoy of the Reinforcement Force (which was believed to have been sighted the 19th) as its target and ^{that} the battle situation ^{now} required a new plan. Accordingly, at 1340 the 20th, orders were issued to the Support Force to move up,