

FIRST BATTLE SAVO ISLAND

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6-42777

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(From CinCPac War Diary)

2 August 1942.

GENERAL

The interest of ORANGE in the NEI-MALAY-BAY of BENGAL area is definitely increasing with renewed interest shown in CEYLON where reconnaissance apparently has been carried out recently. Indications appear today to point to an impending campaign in this area rather than in the DARWIN area. Preliminary to this, ORANGE is making a general clean up in the BANDA Sea area.

There are as yet no indications of the direction of movement of any carrier away from home waters. Around the 17th of July association of the ZUIKAKU with SINGAPORE area was noted.

EIGHTH FLEET - Traffic file continues to be highest from this area.

Commander in Chief, under Rabaul cover still sent numerous despatches to air commands in his area. 11th Air Fleet was frequently addressed for action.

The #5 Special Landing Force originated several; Maru and Base Force vessels being chiefly addressed, while ComCruDiv 18 in is role as Commander of a "Force" in that area was addressed for information.

A recheck of traffic from MOKUWA, tentatively identified as an army unit bound for Rabaul from the Indies aboard Maru Maro 7, shows it to be a construction unit, possibly a battalion of engineers which has now set up headquarters at or near Rabaul. The unit is associated with the #5 Special Landing Force.

ELEVENTH AIR FLEET - Fifth Air Attack was strong originator to his Command. ComCruDiv 18 and Combined and Eighth Fleet Staffs were included for information in several despatches.

Maru Tender RISO 88 is in the vicinity of New Britain and associated with Fifth Air Attack and Kavieng.

The 14th Air Corps (MENU 55) was an active originator to Southern Commanders.

An Apparent 2 part report of an air attack (?) on Wake went from KOSE 66 there to all air attack corps and Mandate Fleet and air activities.

Note: When name of ship is not known, its call sign is used in this text.

ULTRA3 August 1942.GENERAL

The Fourth Fleet command appears confined to the Mandates area while CinC Eighth Fleet is in charge of operations in the New Guinea area and southeastward thereof.

FOURTH FLEET - The 9 part despatch from CinC Fourth Fleet mentioned in last summary still being circulated.

CinC Fourth Fleet appears to be busying himself solely with his various Bases and Base Forces in the Marshalls-Truk area.

By traffic routing the KASBIMA is still in Empire waters.

ComCruDiv 18 (NOTE 4) still under Rabaul cover addressed enciphered "Comdr Landing Force at Buna" information to 5th Air Attack Force and CinC Eighth Fleet (RIYO 33) at 1600/1st.

The active ComDesRon 10 (MISE 66) at 1000/2nd sent a despatch to his squadron information to All Major Commands (MINA 304) Chief of Staff Eighth Fleet (NEO 104) Sasebo and Chief of Staff 1st Air Fleet (KANO 304). The vague association of this 1st Air Fleet Destroyer Squadron with the Eighth Fleet may be only the result of the heavy escort duty now being given to destroyers.

The 8th and 6th Base Forces continue their activity but nothing new seen.

11TH AIR FLEET. - The movement of a new air group RITI 66 to the Rabaul area is indicated by a series of despatches.

Comdr 6th Air Attack Corps (OTA 44) addressed Misawn Air (ROYU 22), who in another despatch was addressed at unidentified NETA 1, information to Chief of Staff 11th Air Fleet (IMA 404); 5th Base Force, 5th Air Attack Force, the Maru TUU 0 and 11th Air Fleet Tender REYO 99 at 1720/2nd.

At 1700/2nd REYO 9, the 11th Air Tender, indicated in company with NORE 4 of DesDiv 34, addressed the Air Group RITI 66, Comdr 11th Air Fleet (SUGA 5) information Yokosuks, Chief of Staff Combined Fleet (KEME 6). 8th Base Force, 5th Base Force, 6th Air

ULTRA

Attack Corps and the Maru TUU Ø.

FOURTH-EIGHTH FLEETS -

The exclusion of the Fourth Fleet and Staff from many despatches originated by 8th Fleet staff or Rabaul area commands appears to confirm or delimit the responsible areas of the two fleet commanders. The 4th Fleet is more or less confined to the so-called Mandated area while 8th Fleet commanders seems to have a free rein in the New Guinea-New Britain area.

Chief of Staff 4th Fleet was moderately active with traffic to both Empire addresses and to a few of his Madate shore activities. The communication Officer Second Escort Force is observed addressing the base force communications officers in the Marshalls, Saipan, Bonins, and Ponape (UHO 55) and 34th Defense Force (MINO 5) info to Chiefs of Staff 4th & 8th Fleets.

The CinC 8th Fleet at Rabaul originated one despatch which indicated arrangements for registered publications and logistics in general were being made with Empire addresses. The suffix 65 used with ORI 3 probably refers to Issuing Officer or Officer couriers.

ComCruDiv SIX using Rabaul Radio as a cover on the 31st addressed the repair ship AKASHI, Kure Dockyards - Military Stores and Tokyo HIYUTU. It looks as if AKASHI were to be involved in effecting temporary repairs to a CruDiv 6 unit prior to competing repairs in Kure.

The Hospital Ship ROYO 7 is enroute Saipan to Rabaul. The BRAZIL MARU (RESE 6) appears to be leaving Truk for Yokosuka via Saipan. Destroyer YUWI Ø of DesDiv RIYU 7 may be bound for Truk from Rabaul.

ELEVENTH AIR FLEET -

The most active air command in the Rabaul area continues to be Tainan Air which command shows a detachment separated from the commander.

There was considerable traffic between Northern components of the 11th Air Fleet. This traffic centered around 3rd Air Attack Corps Commander who appears to overshadow the 6th Air Attack in the Tokyo Area. The 11th Air Fleet tender or destroyer EMA 3 has been associated for some time with 6th Air Attack Corps. As this fleet vessel is now on a radio circuit with 3rd Air Attack Control station, it is assumed to be in general Hokkaido area which means either a transfer to this area or that a movement of some part of 6th Air Attack will exercise in the Hokkaido area.

ULTRA

Chinkai Radio accepts for delivery traffic for Detachment of Genzan Air. There are several despatches associating Bihoro and Genzan Air plus fleet vessel EMA 3 Air Attack Corps.

Commander Misawa Air is at Marcus Island ? (META 1).

4 August 1942.

Believed in JAPAN area. Although possibly ready to move. CRUDIV 8 thought in JAPAN area and still associated with the 1ST AIR FLEET (i.e. STRIKING FORCE).

SOUTHEAST AREA

This area continues to be quiet indicating that the major interest of consolidation of bases is continuing. The transport of aircraft from the EMPIRE to the MANDATES and to the RABAU area continues.

A renewed interest by Orange in OCEAN and NAURU is indicated. It appears that they contemplate taking these two islands in the near future.

If three cruisers of CruDiv 7 are still on the scene, the unit at TRUK would have to be the MOGAMI - but how did it get there from the MIDWAY area? A supposition is that this cruiser is the SUZUYA and that another CA was added to this division to accompany the KUMANO to the Bay of Bengal area.

EIGHTH FLEET - Traffic in this area was considerably below par with no significant associations seen.

Commander in Dief originated several under usual Rabaul cover addressed to air and base force addresses in his area.

Enciphered "TONEI MARU" was addressed by Eighth Fleet Staff and indicated at Kure.

ELEVENTH AIR FLEET - Traffic was at an extreme low for this usually prolific activity.

Commander Omura Air addressed enciphered "Commander "NE" Army Unit" at Kanoya Air.

6 August 1942.

GENERAL

There is still no significant change in the disposition of enemy forces.

ULTRA

Reinforcements continue to flow from the EMPIRE to the ALEUTIANS as well as the NEW BRITAIN Area.

The shipping sighted in RABAUl yesterday along with the recent reconnaissance by the enemy would indicate early pushes to the South and East of NEW BRITAIN. No additional fighting units are in the vicinity.

ELEVEN AIR FLEET - The air command M004 which at one time (28 May) was aboard AKAGI, is now at KISARATSU air station. At 2030/5th he addressed Cinc 11th Air Fleet (WAKA55) General Staff, Kure movements office and Truk military stores (NEMITU). This air unit may be moving again as he has not been very active recently.

KIYOKAWA MARU is still indicated to be in the area north of Truk.

7 August 1942.

RABAUl AREA

No new units have shown up in this area since the attack on TULAGI yesterday.

It is believed that planes from RABAUl and submarines ordered to the area are the only effective outside opposition our forces have in the TULAGI Area at the present. Undoubtedly plane reinforcements are enroute RABAUl.

EIGHTH FLEET - As previously noted Cinc 8th Fleet sent a stream of despatches from his Rabaul cover. These were to the units all ready in the area. From the inclusion of the 5th Special Landing Force at BUNA in several of his despatches it may be indicated that he intends to move that unit.

Crudiv 6 (ORU 55) is associated with the KIYOKAWA MARU in one despatch.

8 August 1942.

GENERAL

As was to be expected, the primary interest of ORANGE was in his forces in the BISMARCK and KISKA areas and primary activity concerned the tactical distribution of the forces in these two areas. In both places, except for movements of GRUDIV ISX and EIGHTEEN in the former area, ORANGE is depending entirely upon aircraft and submarines.

The appearance of WAKE in the midst of this general activity apparently reflects his fear that we may also

ULTRA

attack there is view of our recent photo reconnaissance.

Prospective movement of carriers or other major fleet units from the EMPIRE has not been observed as yet.

NEW BRITAIN-TULAGI AREA

All available aircraft in the southeastern area are being moved to the RABAU-BUKA area and there are some indications that further aircraft units are enroute there or soon will be from the north, (#6AAF).

All available submarines in MANDATES, RABAU and AUSTRALIA waters are also enroute to this area. This is believed to include units of SUBRONS THREE, SIX, SEVEN and EIGHT.

There has been no new evidence of a carrier in the BISMARCK area, although at least 2 AV's are present.

EIGHTH FLEET

ComCrudiv Six (ORU 55) was addressed for information in intelligence despatches.

Comdr. Eighth Base Force addressed Cruiser NORA 33 in Crudiv 18, info #5 Special Landing Force (ROMA 66) and local high commands.

ComDesdiv NOSA 8 in Desron 6 uses Rabaul cover.

Akikaze (H008) is apparently an integral part of 5th Air Attack and is associated with air station REHA 88 in Rabaul area.

Some unit unidentified as yet, made a preliminary movement report under Rabaul cover at 6/0800 indicating imminent departure for Kure. This operation may have been subsequently changed due to the Tulagi Action.

FOURTH FLEET - Commander in Chief Fourth Fleet appears to be taking over command of the operations in the Rabaul area, indicating that he is still 3OPA for the entire Mandates. The emphasis continued to be on submarine and air, with ComSubRon 3, sub units MANO 3 and NUTU 6, of SubRon 3, SubDivSUE 3 of SubRon 7 and SubDiv KORI 6, of SubRon 6 (TRKA 9), originating traffic and heard on the air.

Commander in Chief Eighth Fleet on 7 August shifted back aboard his flagship (UNIDENTIFIED) from Rabaul and commenced originating under the "NATE 1" concealment. Attempts to place him aboard a known vessel are still unsuccessful, the CHOKAI not having sent any intercepted traffic since May.

ULTRA9 August 1942.GENERAL

* The enemy's principle concern is in the SOLOMONS area, to the extent of withdrawing air striking power from all available sources to reinforce the Eighth Fleet. At least a part of the 6th A.A.F. has been ordered South, leaving the commander of 3rd A.A.F. in charge in the Northern area. Part of the 2nd A.A.F. may also reinforce the air arms in the SOLOMONS. Commander 11th Air Fleet is believed to have arrived in the RABAU area by plane.

There are indications of a convoy of approximately seven marus, half of which are tankers, being escorted by crudiv 5 and destroyer units to the RABAU area.

From associations, the carrier fleet may be departing EMPIRE for the RABAU-SOLOMONS area. This has not been verified. The GOSHU and KAMOI are in the area, but there is still no information on the reported V sighting.

It is noted that the allied air attack on VANAKANAU at 0140Z/7 caused considerable damage, to the extent of curtailing the air coverage for convoys moving in that area at least temporarily.

Orange, again fearful of an attack on the homeland, has reformed her patrol lines.

SUBMARINES

Units of Subrons 3, 6, and 7 are in the general TULAGI area.

ELEVENTH AIR FLEET - Location of Comdr. 11th Air Fleet in Rabaul area has been mentioned. About 3 hours ago much tactical traffic was seen, passing between the 11th Air Fleet Command and unidentified HIMO 4. NASE 8, a call identified as Guam is involved in this traffic. If this identification is correct, a movement of aircraft between Guam-Tenian area and Rabaul is indicated. Some traffic intercepted however is definitely of the contact report type which may indicate that new air forces have all ready arrived in Rabaul air and are operating. Further reports will be made as more traffic is seen.

10 August 1942.

GENERAL

Air reinforcements are being rushed to the RABAU area from throughout the MANDATES.

Carriers are still believed in JAPAN.

The enemy may be considering a move toward the EASTERN NEW GUINEA coast with the occupation of PORT MORESBY as the objective. The number of ships in RABAU lately indicate that another such movement may be planned.

All submarines in the CORAL SEA area are searching for out task forces.

SOUTHERN THEATER

Commander in Chief Eighth Fleet is at sea, probably aboard CHOKAI (NTI 9) which was heard frequently.