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Southeast Area Air Operations Record, Phase II
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PREFACE

Through Instruction No. 126 to Japanese Government, 12 Oct 45, entitled "Institution for war Records Investigation", steps were initiated to exploit military historical records and official reports of the Japanese War Ministry and the Japanese General Staff.* Upon the dissolution of the War Ministry and the General Staff, and the transfer of their former functions to the Demobilization Bureau, the general research job continued and resulted in the development of a series of historical monographs. Detailed instructions covering the preparation of these monographs were included in memoranda 15 December 1945 and 21 November 1946, subject "Japanese Operational histories".

The basic material contained in this operational record was developed by former officers, on duty in command and staff units within major units during the period of operations. It should be noted at once, that the enormous destruction by aerial bombardment and fire has practically wiped out the Tokyo records; much of this material was reconstructed from memory.

The paucity of original orders, plans and unit journals, which are normally essential in the preparation of this type of record, most of which were lost or destroyed during field operations or bombing raids rendered the task of compilation most difficult; particularly distressing has been the complete lack of official strength reports, normal in AG or G-3 records. However, while many of the important orders, plans and estimates have been reconstructed from memory and therefore are not textually identical with the originals, they are believed to be generally accurate and reliable. Further data as a result of continuing research and the occasional recovery of hitherto unavailable original documents will be covered in the subsequent publication of "supplements" by the Demobilization Bureau.

* The action under this memorandum and incidental detailed instructions, which followed, were initiated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, GHQ, charged with responsibility for execution of the program under G.O. No. 9, SCAP, 2 October 1945.

In order to protect the interest of the United States, in the exploitation of Japanese Military Information, sub-paragraph 4 of G.O. No. 9 further provided for the screening of enemy documents and established inventories in Japanese Governmental Archives. Careful examination of the first records submitted by the Japanese Government in the summer of 1946 detected a misconception on the part of the Japanese as to what should be included in comparative histories; in a memorandum issued by Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, on 21 November 1946, the Imperial Japanese Government was directed to record the operations of the Japanese forces more extensively. The G-2 Section thereafter assumed coordination of the entire program, including the establishment of a small historical research section within the ATIS (Allied Translator and Interpreter Section.)

Air Operation Record
(2nd Period of the Southwestern Area)
August 1946
First Demobilization Bureau

Note:

This document was written from recollection and memory only, by staff officer, Col. NCHAKA commander-in-chief of operations, 3rd Air Force. Since he had no memorandums and notes the contents are bound to be abstract.

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Part I. Condition of the Enemy.

Chapter 1. Enemy air force opposing our 3rd Air Force.

The 3rd Air Force was organized in July 1942 and its headquarters was placed at SINGAPORE until the end of the enemy air force opposing the said air force were as follows:

- A. The American and English Air Force in INDIA.
- B. The air forces in CHINA (especially southwestern CHINA).
- C. The mobile fleet in the INDIAN OCEAN.
- D. American and Australian Air Forces in AUSTRALIA.
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Chapter 2. Situation of American and English Air Forces in INDIA.

About August of 1942, the American and English Air Forces in INDIA totalled 170 planes, composed in the main of English planes. However, in the beginning of 1943 the number gradually increased. This increase was especially striking in the American Air Forces. Toward end of 1942, the American and English Air Forces totalled 250 planes; in the spring of 1943, 400; in the autumn of 1943, 700; in the spring of 1944, 1000; and in the summer of 1944, 1500. Approximately the summer of 1943 the ratio between the American and English Air Forces was about 6 or 7 American planes to 3 or 4 English planes. At the end of 1943, they might as well have been called the American Air Force because the American planes were so numerous. The English Air Force was merely a subsidiary unit. Moreover, several flying units of the English Air Force were composed of Indian Nationals. Their fighter planes, "SPITFIRES" "HAWKER HURRICANES", etc., were gradually improved but our type "ICHI" fighter plane was superior to them. Subsequently, the P-38 appeared and later, about the summer of 1943 the P-51

gradually increased. They became a powerful adversary for our type "ICHI" fighter planes. When the ratio was 3 enemy planes to our 1 we could still fight them although with great difficulty. When it became 5 enemy planes to our 1 in spring of 1944, we underwent futile battles. The enemy planes had a limited cruising range so they sent out few combined bomber-fighter actions. However by the end of 1943 the P-51s were equipped with auxiliary gas tanks, and they attacked RANGOON together with B-24s. The planes which were equipped with auxiliary gas tanks often became the target for our type "ICHI" fighter planes. Thus their combined bomber-fighter attacks became nullified until the spring of 1944. Thereafter, due to improvements increasing the cruising range for the P-51. The activities of enemy planes became vigorous. At first the light and heavy bombers were not powerful but about the autumn of 1943 the B-24s took the initiative in the heavy bomber group and became difficult to shoot down. In most cases, when we utilized the 13 millimeter cannon we shot down enemy planes in increasing numbers. In December 1943, when the enemy became disorganized in the skies because of our use of the 37 millimeter cannons. Their activities were suspended for a time in the light bomber class. The appearance of the "MOSQUITO" about autumn of 1943, made the enemy activities a little more vigorous but we still held superiority in the air. The enemy had no planes solely for reconnaissance duties. They generally substituted fighter planes for those duties and the use of the P-38 as reconnaissance planes gradually became general about the middle of 1943.

Subsequently this increased the enemy fighting power because the fighters became skilled in reconnaissance work.

At first the transport planes were few but at the end of 1943. They were numerous. Transported tonnage between INDIA and CHINA was not quite 1000 tons each month in 1942, but reached 5 or 6000 tons monthly in 1943. In the spring of 1944, it was approximately 10,000 tons each month. Therefore the enemy air force in CHINA was rapidly strengthened. Particularly during the period when we were cooperating with the ground operations in the invasion operation of North BURMA in the spring of 1944, and the IMPAR operation, our ground and air transportations were so poor that we could hardly supply ammunition to the front lines. On the contrary, the enemy reinforced IMPAR with more than one division in just a few days. Thus, at the end of operations the enemy controlled the was situation. The main enemy in the eastern region of CALCUTTA and not in the South INDIA and CEYLON Areas. At first there were only a few score of enemy planes in the CEYLON Area but in the spring of 1944 they numbered almost 300 and utilizing the increase in the cruising range, the attacked ANDAMAN, NICOBAR and North SUMATRA.

The activities of the enemy air forces against BURMA were not remarkable between summer and autumn of 1942 but became vigorous in the dry season from autumn of 1942 till spring of 1943. During the rainy season from the early summer till autumn of 1943 enemy activities were expected to slacken, but contrary to our expectations the enemy was constantly active with the coming

of the dry season in the autumn of 1943. The activities of the enemy planes gradually became frequent and they reached a climax in January and February of 1944. In the dry season about January 1943 a total of about 1000 planes attacked us within a 10 days. But in January and February 1944, they totalled more than 2000 planes. The enemy zone of operations was within the line circling RANGOON and (TONGU) until the spring of 1943 but was gradually extended in the autumn of 1943 to (DOMU UAN), including the coast off MOULMEIN and TAVOY.

Chapter 3. Situation of Air Forces in CHINA (South-western CHINA).

At first the air force in CHINA were composed of the Chinese Air Force and a part of the English Air Force. In the summer of 1942 the actual strength totalled about 80 planes but before long it disappeared and was supplanted by American planes. In the spring of 1943 they totalled 120 planes; at the end of 1943, about 200; in the spring of 1944, about 300; and in the summer of 1944, about 500. At the end of 1943 the enemy air forces in CHINA completely united with the air forces in INDIA, so that in the operations involving the 3rd Air Force, we were obliged to think of BURMA, North INDO-CHINA and THAILAND as one operation. Our air strength in these areas constantly totalled from 250 to 300 planes but on the other hand the enemy air strength at the end of 1944 totalled 1500 to 2000 planes and they held overwhelming superiority. Until the end of summer 1943 the zone of action of the air forces in CHINA was limited to the

vicinity of (MITCHINA), LASHIO and HANOY. But at the end of 1943 was gradually extended to South INDO-CHINA and finally in 1944 to SAIGON .

Chapter 4. Situation of the Mobile Fleet in the INDIAN OCEAN.

The mobile force in INDIA was composed of a regulation sized air craft carrier and 4 or 5 auxiliary carriers so they did not cause us much concern. However, the enemy had more ships than were necessary for security in the European Campaign so they were sent here. Therefore in the autumn of 1943 the mobile force had increased to 10 auxiliary carriers, and by spring of 1944 totalled 5 or 6 regular aircraft carriers and more than 10 auxiliary carriers. Their activities against Northern SUMATRA, ANDAMAN and NICOBAR gradually became more vigorous. the enemy activities were , however, still held in check and it was after the summer of 1944 that the enemy took active part in the PALEMBANG Area. We were then held in check and threatened by the enemy because we had no scope to our military power.

Chapter 5. Situation of American and Australian Forces in AUSTRALIA.

Australian Forces in AUSTRALIA in the spring of 1943 the American and Australian Air Forces in AUSTRALIA totalled only about 70 or 80 planes and the number of fighters and bombers was almost the same . This increase was not striking because by the end of 1943 they totalled less than 100 and in early summer of 1944 totalled about 150 planes.

For a long time used "HAWKER HURRICANES" and "SPITFIRES" for fighters and in the late spring of 1944 the B-24 bomber appeared. The duties of the enemy planes were chiefly the observation of our defenses in the ARU,

KEI, TANINBAR and TIMOR ISLAND Areas. In the autumn of 1942 they persistently bombed fishing vessels supplying TANINBAR and attacked our military defenses there.

About spring of 1943 the enemy attacked SERANG ISLAND, AMBOINA, Western NEW GUINEA and BABAR. From the end of 1943 to 1944 they extended their operations to (KENDALY), MACASSAR, SUMBAWA ISLAND and (WAINGAPOE). Finally they moved forward again to include BALIKPAPAN and the eastern part of JAVA ISLAND.

Chapter 6. Situation of the mobile fleet in the area around AUSTRALIA.

The mobile fleet in AUSTRALIA was not worth mentioning. Its duties were to stand guard against our military activities.

Chapter 7. Condition of the Enemy Airfields.

We can mention the speed of airfield reconstruction as an element of air power. In the southern operations and especially in the jungle areas in the southeastern area of the ARCHIPELAGO we rivaled the enemy in the construction of airfields. But the utilisation of motor power by the enemy for airfield construction gave them the edge on speed and the resulting difference between their air power and ours was obvious in Eastern INDIA. During the autumn of 1942 enemy airfields totalled a little over 30, but in the beginning of 1944 totalled more than 130. In southwestern CHINA the increase in airfields was lowest and was not worth mentioning. But compared to the end of 1942, the quality of enemy planes by the end of 1943 was considerable.

About spring of 1943, enemy airfields in the PORT DARWIN Area totalled a little more than 10 but in the spring of 1944 totalled more than 30. After the summer of 1943, the following diagrams aided us greatly in the construction of airfields.

Part II. Basic Operational Requirements of the 3rd Air Force.

Chapter 1. Movements and Variations in Strength of the Military Force.

Article 1. Outline of movements and changes in air units.

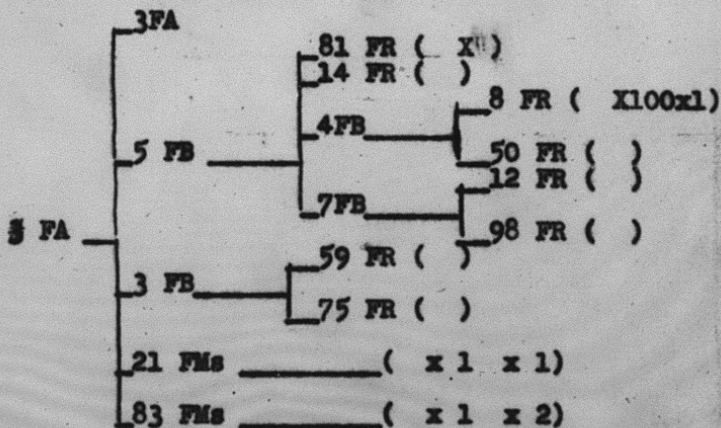
A. Outline:

In July 1942, when the 3rd Air Force was organized, it was composed mainly of the 5th Air Division, 3rd Air Brigade, 21st Independent Air Unit, and the 83rd Independent Air Unit. But in September after the extraction of the small naval unit, the 9th Air Brigade was attached to the 3rd Air Force, and they were all fighting earnestly in the BURMA Area operations. Due to conditions in the SOLOMONS Areas. The 12th Air Brigade was transferred in December, the 14th Air Regiment moved to the southeast-ern areas of BURMA. In February 1943, and the 8th Air Brigade was added to the 3rd Air Force. However, in April the 59th Air Regiment was transferred to the area southeast of BURMA and in June the 8th Air Brigade was sent to CHINA. In July the 7th Air Division Headquarters was organized without any increase in numbers. However, in August the 106th Air Training Brigade was organized and attached to it. In September and October the 8th Air Brigade, the 33rd Air Regiment, the 77th and 204th Regiment and the 1st Raiding Group successively reinforced 7th Air Division Headquarters. In December the 9th Air Division Headquarters was organized.

It can be said that the last months of 1943 were the most powerful period of our 3rd Air Force.

The 2nd Area Army of the 7th Air Division was transferred and in January 1944, due to rapid reorganization the 98th Air Regiment was transferred to Japan proper. In February the 8th Air Division, the 34th, 62nd and 77th Air Regiments were successively transferred to the southeastern areas of BURMA. In May and June the greatly exhausted 33rd Air Regiment, returned but they effected no actual increase in the air strength of the 7th Air Division. Moreover the 7th Air Brigade was transferred to strengthen the 2nd Air Division in the PHILIPPINE ISLAND Area. The enemy confronting the 3rd Air Force was rapidly strengthened. On the contrary, our air strength slowly decreased. We were therefore, compelled to defend a broad front with a weak air force and the enemy planes ran rampant.

B. In July 1942, when our 3rd Air Force was organized the air strength was as follows:



C. The Outline of the Movement of the Air Unit is as Follows:

August 1942. Headquarters of the 3 FD transferred to CHINA.

September 1942. 9 FD (2 F , 61 F) arrived from MANCHURIA.

October 1942. 21 FMs was reorganized (became the 21 F and 34F)

December 1942. 12 FB was transferred to RABAUL.

February 1943. 14 FR was transferred to RABAUL.

8FB (lacking 33 F and 60 F) arrived from CHINA and 70 FCS arrived from JAPAN Proper.

March 1943. 83 FMs was reorganized into an air regiment (lacking 73 FC and 83 FR).

April 1943. 54 FR was transferred to NEW GUINEA.

May 1943. Headquarters of 7 FD as organized (3 FD, 9 FB).

June 1943. 8FB (lacking 33 F) was transferred to CHINA.

August 1943. 106 KFB was organized.

September 1943. 33 F arrived from CHINA.

October 1943. 8 FB (lacking 33 F) arrived from CHINA, 77 F and 204 F arrived from MANCHURIA, and 1st Raiding Group arrived from NANKING.

December 1943. 73 FCS was transferred to the area north of AUSTRALIA, Headquarters of 9 FD (PALEMBANG Defense Command Consisting of: (FB, 77 F, 33 F, 71 FC and 21F) was organized.

January. 98 FR was transferred to JAPAN Proper.

February. 8 FB, 62 F and 77 F were transferred to NEW GUINEA.

March. 34 F was transferred to NEW GUINEA.

June. 109 KFB was reorganized into 7 FB and 4 FA.

Article 2. Outline of increased in the air sector forces.

In July 1942, three air sector commands were placed under the direct control of the 3rd Air Force Commander. The BURMA Area with an insufficient airfield battalion (company) was one of the air sector commands. The other two air sector commands were at SINGAPORE and SAIGON. The airfield battalions (companies) were very weak in THIALAND, INDO-CHINA and BORNEO. However, in MALAY, SUMATRA and JAVA they were at their lowest in the autumn of 1943 two more air sector commands were established in the BURMA Area, one each in the THIALAND, INDO-CHINA, MALAY, JAVA, BORNEO Areas respectively and two in the SUMATRA Area. The strength of the airfield battalions (companies) was also increased the majority of the replacements and reinforcements seldom came from JAPAN Proper and were merely remnants of former forces. Moreover, those reinforcements which were from JAPAN Proper were not fully equipped, so there was actually no great increase in our military strength.

Article 3. Outline of Aignal Units.

At first, the 1st and 3rd Air Signal Regiments and and air route regiment were placed under the direct control of the 3rd Air Force Commander. And we were able to establish a satisfactory communication network in the BURMA Area. This was, however, not possible in other areas. In 1943 the air route regiment was expanded to form the air route department and in JAVA, a 9th signal Regiment was organized.

We were forced to a great deal of air signal security for communications with various operations. A few wire communications were used in the BURMA Area but we depended almost entirely on wireless communications.

Article 4. Outline of the field air depot and field supply depot.

A. At first a field air main depot was placed in BANKOK and SINGAPORE and its sub-depots in other remote places. By the end of 1943, the sub-depots at JAVA, PALEMBANG and SAIGON were re-established as new main air depots, since they were merely raised in status the strength of the depots was not increased. The 3rd Air Force was able to reinforce their military strength and continue their operations despite the scarcity of airplanes due to the efficiency of the air depots in repair damaged planes.

B. Field Supply Depot.

At first a main field supply depot was established at SINGAPORE as well as branch depots in other locations. By the end of 1943, the branch depot at BANKOK was re-established as a supply main depot. Fuel was produced abundantly in PALEMBANG and SURABAYA but our allotted quantity was not always sufficient to meet our needs due to the necessity of supplying the southern fuel depot. Great difficulties were encountered in transportation (shipping and railway) and supplying empty gasoline drums but we were finally able to accumulate the necessary amount. There were also great difficulties encountered in the transportation of ammunition, inspite of this we were still able to carry out the regular operations.

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Article 5. Outline of other units.

A. Field Airfield Construction Unit.

This unit was composed of six sections and was in great need of personnel and construction equipment. The majority of the airfields were constructed, expanded and repaired with the aid of the inhabitants under the guidance of the engineers and assistant engineers of the intendance department.

B. Construction Duty Unit.

This unit was composed of two sections and was constantly below their potential in construction because of a lack of equipment.

C. Field Meteorological Unit.

At first this unit was composed of four companies of the 3rd Meteorological Battalion. There were 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ companies in BURMA, $\frac{1}{2}$ company in THIALAND and INDO-CHINA, 1 company in the MALAY, BORNEO and SUMATRA Areas, and 1 company at JAVA.

The majority of the group in THIALAND and INDO-CHINA made use their formerly issued equipment. At MALAY we revamped and utilized the equipments on hand within a few months and transferred three squads to BURMA. In JAVA, we slowly repaired and revamped the equipments on hand to its former shape. At all other places, we tried to repair th equipment on hand under the guidance of the military administration. All matters meteorological concerning the were decided by the meteorological unit commander. In the summer of 1943 the 3rd Meteorological Regiment was organized and was composed of two battalions and six companies. The headquarters of the two battalion was BURMA and JAVA. There were two companies in BURMA; two companies in THIALAND and INDO-

CHINA; one company under a unified command at MALAY, BORNEO and North SUMATRA; one company in JAVA and South SUMATRA. The battalion in JAVA gradually transferred meteorological squads to North AUSTRALIA and by the end of 1943, they controlled the meteorological company of the 2nd Air Route Department (at MANILA). They took charge of HALMAHERRA and the eastern part of NEW GUINEA, but the 2nd Area Army controlled the eastern part of the smaller SUNDA Archipelago after its organization.

Although there were great difficulties due to a lack of equipment the weather signals were well organized. In short, the 3rd Meteorological Regiment took charge of weather observation duties in the southwestern area.

Through cooperation with the military administration they repaired the equipment on hand and endeavored to expand the meteorological squads. Especially at BANDOENG the manufacturing and repairing of meteorological equipment became possible and they accomplished this work excellently despite the insufficiency of military power.

D. The 1st Raiding Group.

In October 1943, this group arrived from the areas north of AUSTRALIA and they underwent extensive training in North SUMATRA to prepare for future operations. However, in the midst of their training, they took a large part in moving personnel to the NEW GUINEA Area because of their ability to transport military forces.

E. Radar Unit

In order to defend the skies over PALEMBANG

during August 1942, 56 men under a newly commissioned second lieutenant, equipped with one receiver and three transmitters (2 kilowatt) were attached to the 3rd Air Force. Although they had earnest cooperation from the 9th Air Brigade commander, Major General ISHIKAWA and others at PALEMBANG at that time, they encountered much difficulty in carrying their mission in December later at PALEMBANG, radar gradually came into use for practical purpose and installations were fully completed. Later on, this radar system became the foundation of others in the southwestern area. Following this plans to increase the radar units were advanced but the delivery of implements and personnel was very slow. In the summer of 1943, after a radar unit had been established at RANGOON, advantage was taken of the experiences gained at PALEMBANG. They were thus able to put the radar to practical use within a month, so that the RANGOON Air Defense showed remarkable improvement. Consequently the replacement of equipment and personnel was gradually speeded up and by the end of 1943 the organization in the PALEMBANG and BURMA Areas was rapidly improved. Therefore due to the excellent navy radar system and the improved organization of the Army, a protective radar screen connecting BURMA, ANDAMAN, NICOBAR, SUMATRA, JAVA Small SUNDA and Western NEW GUINEA was constructed in the rough in the spring of 1944.

F. Training Replacement Force.

1. A field air replacement unit, (located at first at NHA-TRANG and later at KURUAN) took charge

of training inexperienced air crewmen and produced excellent results in supplementing the air force. During the training period a part of the field air replacement unit took part in the operation of protecting convoys, etc. , and were part of the air-defense at PALEMBANG and BENKULEN PLANTUN after the spring of 1944. About April 1944, they participated in the air-defense of SINGAPORE and North SUMATRA, and established an excellent record.

2. The 106th Air Training Brigade (Headquarters at BANDOENG).

This brigade was organized in August 1943 and consisted of three fighter units and one heavy bomber unit. They surmounted the great shortages of equipment and carried on supplementary training rendering a great services in replacing air crewmen.

3. Training Unit of the 3rd Aor Force (SINGAPORE).

After organization in August 1943 the training unit devoted itself to the supplementary training of non-commissioned officers and endeavored to increase the ability of the trainees who were far below the regular standard.

Chapter 2. Outline of the Naval Forces in the South-western Area.

In September 1942, the majority of the land based attack planes and the fighter plane forces in the southwestern area were transferred to the SOLOMON Area. Consequently the 3rd Air Force took over the patrolling of the INDIAN OCEAN area. Soon after this a portion of the large flying boats land based attack planes and fighter plane forces that remained were transferred to western of JAVA and

INDO-CHINA, only a little more than ten reconnaissance seaplanes could be found at SINGAPORE and several planes of a similar type at SAIGON (at both places several planes were scattered). The 23rd Air FLOTILLA at KENDALY had about 30 land attack planes and fighters respectively and until the end of 1943 were an important factor in the area north of AUSTRALIA. However, in 1944 the main force was transferred to the southeastern area.

In the summer of 1943, the 13th Air Fleet was organized, but actually it was under the control of the area fleet and later under the 1st Air Fleet. In the summer of 1943, the 28th Air FLOTILLA was organized at SABANG and at the end of 1943, there were several land attack and fighter planes based at SABANG, several fighter planes at ANDAMAN and one unit of the training land attack planes at EILTOWER. For a short while, they took charge of patrolling and the air-defense of the SABANG and ANDAMAN Areas, using SABANG as a base. Before long the majority were transferred to the SOLOMONS and CAROLINE Areas. During that time, 27 land based attack planes cooperated with the 3rd Air Force in an attack on CALCUTTA on December 1943. The 1st Air Fleet trained at MALAY from December 1943 till March 1944, (using SENBAWAN, KOTABARU etc.) but the situation in the CAROLINES became urgent and grave so that they were mobilized before the training was perfected.

Chapter 3. Zone of Operations of the 3rd Air Force.

The zone of operations of the 3rd Air Force in July 1943 consisted of BURMA, THAILAND, INDO-CHINA, MALAY, ANDAMAN, NICOBAR, SUMATRA, JAVA (including MADURA ISLAND) and North BORNEO (the former English

territory).

In August 1942, a part of the 16th Army (consisting mainly of 2 Infantry Battalions under the command of a regimental commander. And later consisting chiefly of one infantry regiment and two artillery companies, under an infantry group commander) cooperated with the navy and took charge of guard and military security on TIMOR ISLAND. A part of the 3rd Air Brigade (several light bombers) operated in cooperation in the event that planes were needed and the zone of operations were extended to the smaller SUNDA ISLAND. In December 1943, when the defenses in the areas north of AUSTRALIA became gradually dangerous, the 19th Army was organized and established there and put under the control of the southern army. When the zone of operations of the southern army and the 8th Area Army was divided at 140 degrees east longitude, the operations zone of the 3rd Air Force was extended to a point in the area north of AUSTRALIA, west of 140 degrees east longitude and south of 5 degrees north latitude (excluding South BORNEO which was under the control of the Navy). Toward the end of 1943 when the 2nd Area Army was organized, the 22nd Air Division was placed under their control. The perimeter of combat zone became the MACASSAR and LOMBOK STRAIT. Its former zone of operations was almost fully restored.

Chapter 4. Outline of Climate Conditions.

The equatorial front reaches the northern extremity of BURMA about June (start of the rainy season in our country) and gradually goes southward, reaching the southern extremity about November when

the equatorial front hits BURMA from an easterly to westerly direction and remains there. During June, July and August, the rainy season occurs. The rainy season begins about May and the dry season about 5 November. The phenomenon of rainy and dry seasons is very striking in BURMA, our chief zone of operations. However, in the other areas they are not so contrasting, although there are differences between the rainy and dry seasons. The period when the rainy season begins and ends in BURMA was an important problem viewed from the standpoint of planning and guiding operations great efforts were made to study the weather conditions. We decided that the operations in BURMA should be executed in the dry seasons and that when the rainy period came our forces should withdraw to THAILAND, INDO-CHINA, MALAY, ETC. and engage in education and training. Moreover, we were thus able to improve our aircraft and return to JAPAN Proper to bring back airplanes to be used for replacements. In order to transport military forces and supplies to BURMA safely, during the rainy summer season in 1942, our vessels required a considerable force for protection against submarines between VICTORIA POINT and RANGOON. Due to the decrease of military forces in SUMATRA, MALAY and JAVA during the rainy summer season of 1943, a part of our forces in BURMA were used in these areas. As the enemy attack on BURMA became more violent, we were forced to leave a force behind for air-defense. Our plans for the expansion of military power during the rainy season were greatly upset because in order to protect our transport ships we had to supply not only an anti-submarine force

but also a force to be used for defense against air-attack. The rainy season in the PALEMBANG vicinity is quite severe in January and February. In this season, the PALEMBANG Areas have great quantities of clouds with large amounts of rain, while the BURMA Areas have only dense, low-hanging clouds that bring continuous shower of fine raindrops.

This constitutes only a slight obstacles in flying.

Chapter 5. Condition of the Airfields.

In matters concerning the maintenance of airfields; the method of acquiring grounds, allotting and arranging labor; material etc. depended on each ground force. The air divisions, air bigades, and air section commands assigned to the 3rd Air Force took charge of the maintenance of most of the airfields and an army intenance department directly maintaing some of the others. Groups like the air divisions and air brigades that were already equipped with necessary equipment. Progressed rapidly in their maintenance work. The air groups and the army intenance department in charge of the airfields gave technical assistance to the ground force, which also took charge of maintenance of some of the other airfields. When and conscientious and earnest air force contributed their services to improve the maintenance work at the airfields controlled by the ground force excellent results were obtained. Actual manual labor was done by using the local inhabitants guided by airfield construction units or air sector forces. In other cases, it was done exclusively by the local habitants on a few rare occasions the ork was done by our men. The INDO-NESIANS helped a great deal but the BURMESE were the

most cooperative.

Only a little mechanical equipment was utilized in the construction of the airfields. This was especially so after the end of 1943, because the majority of the machinery was transferred to the southeastern area when the maintenance of the airfields in that area was threatened by enemy planes. Therefore, we did not actually use any mechanical equipment. Due to the great damage inflicted by the enemy ground strafing attacks on our airplanes in the BURMA Area airfields (losses of airplanes through combat were the same as and at times less than, those inflicted on the ground or through air accidents) thoroughness in scattering and concealing planes was emphasized. This same condition gradually prevailed in the other areas. It was therefore necessary for us to scatter the planes that were on the ground about one or two kilometers (at times more than 3 kilometers) from the runway. We had to construct well camouflaged shelters and taxi strips to connect the runway. Consequently we needed vast areas and large amounts of labor to maintain and repair the airfields.

Due to the rapidity and thoroughness of the work in the BURMA area the damage to our planes was greatly reduced despite the frequent attacks on our airfields. This was the main reason why we could maintain our fighting strength.

Article 1. BURMA Area;

The airfields were gradually organized through the constant efforts of the 5th Air Division. Despite the difficulty of working during the rainy season, there were about 30 airfields in the summer of 1942, and about 110 in the spring of 1944,

in BURMA. Concealing the airfields (during the rainy season some of the airfields could not be used) was an easy matter. After the spring of 1944, the threat of enemy airborne forces became greater and we were compelled to blockade many airfields.

Article 2. THIALAND and INDO-CHINA Areas.

Although THIALAND and INDO-CHINA Areas were our allies, we had a hard time acquiring grounds and levying labor there.

Even our funds were limited. Therefore, in comparison with other occupied areas, conditions were unfavorable and only a few air sector force s available. Consequently the use of the airfields by the air forces was not widespread and the maintenance of these fields were very poor. However, at the end of 1943, due to increase in the cruising range of the enemy bombers and reinforcements of the enemy forces, we were compelled to use the airfields in THIALAND and INDO-CHINA for bases, maintenance, supplementing of education and air defenses. Moreover, we were compelled to complete them for the continent of CHINA and the "GIGI" Operation, their maintenance was hastened greatly but we failed to obtain any satisfying results.

Article 3. MALAY Area.

Since there was only a small force here and suitable grounds were difficult to find, we laid s stress on the expansion and maintenance of the already constructed airfields. This being the case, the number of our airfields did not increase much. In 1943, the training forces were increased and stress laid on the importance of the operation, so we hastened airfield construction but we could only build

about 3 or 4 new fields.

Article 4. SUMATRA Area.

Until the end of 1943, large scale maintenance was not possible and only expansion work on the already fields at PALEMBANG, MEDAN, etc., was done. This was chiefly because we were not rushed in our operations, had only a few air sector forces and air forces using the airfields, and had to work in difficult geographical areas. Together with the above factors it was difficult to acquire labor because of the poor communication and transportation systems and the small size of the population.

At the end of 1943, simultaneous with the establishment of the 9th Air Division Headquarters. We commenced to increase the airfields in the PALEMBANG Vicinity. In 1944 we increased the air sector forces, imported laborers from JAVA and took various other measures. Thus we maintained several anti-aircraft defense airfields and some operational airfields but we lacked the satisfactory numbers.

Part II.

Chapter A-5. BORNEO Area

Having been practically neglected until the summer of 1943, there were only one or two indications of progress in the expansions of airfields in BORNEO; thus, the airfields could not sufficiently cope with the air traffic between SINGAPORE and MANILA.

From the beginning of 1944, we began rushing the building of these airfields in order to move units into the PHILIPPINES Area and to establish of air training units in that area; but this was started too late to complete more than 2 or 3 airfields.

Chapter A-6. JAVA Area.

From 1942 to the beginning of 1943 the insignificant airfields were converted into farmland in order to increase the output of food; while the airfields in BATAVIA, BANDONG, MALANG, and SOERABOEVA, were enlarged. Since the number of airfields was insufficient for operations, we endeavored to increase the number from the end of 1944.

Chapter A-7. Area North of AUSTRALIA.

Though the building of airfields was entrusted to the navy at the beginning, after the organization of the 19th Army at the end of 1942, both groups combined their efforts towards building of airfields. The work was accelerated anew after the activation of the 7th Air Division in the summer of 1943 but due to transportation difficulties, the progress of the project was up to expectations. However, as soon as the 7th Air Division came under the command of the 8th Area Army in the autumn of 1942, the greater part of the air sector unit personnel and the construction materials were diverted to the NEW GUINEA Area, thus producing a great obstacle to future airfields preparations.

Part III. Summary of Operations of the 3rd Air Force.

Chapter 1. General Situation During the Operation.

The operational area of the 3rd Air Force in July 1942 was BURMA, THAILAND, FRENCH-INDO MALAY, SUMATRA, and JAVA (including MADURA ISLAND), and its chief mission was defensive. During that period they endeavored to stabilize the conditions of self-sustenance (food; clothing; industry for producing a part of the weapons; and mining, especially the production of aluminum; etc. within the operations area of the Southern Area Army; however, due to circumstances, the strengthening of defenses progressed very slowly. The operations were carried out by the 3rd Air Force and the 15th Army. The 5th Air Division BURMA, the 21st Independent Air Unit at HANOI, and the Anti-aircraft Defense unit at PALEMBANG all attached to the 3rd Air Force, gave their undivided attention to the operational mission.

Since the aerial defense of PALEMBANG, which was considered as important through the most important mission, the 3rd Air Force as the back-bone unit made preparations for it. Although operational preparations for attacks by the 15th Army on the CHITTAGONG and TIENTSIN Areas were completed around September 1942, these could not be carried out owing to the battle situation in the GUADALCANAL Area.

On the other hand due to the battle situation in the SOLOMONS Area practically the entire naval air strength in this area had been pulled out; consequently, the 3rd Air Force gradually took over the duties of sea patrol, convoy escort, etc, thereby hampering the efficiency of other operations to a great extent. Although acceleration of preparing defenses was advocated about the summer of 1943, so much labor and materials were required in each area at the same time that the prospect of being restrained in carrying out the work made the situation very dark.

After the summer of 1943, observing the possible enemy plan of landing in the vicinity of MORMON, VICTORIA POINT, 24

ANDAMAN, and NICHOBAL, we concentrated much fighting power into the coastal defenses of these areas. The enemy, frustrating our anticipation of this plan, attacked the weak point of our disposition in the spring of 1944, and threw our INPOL operations into confusion by occupying a key point in Northern BURMA by employing an air raiding unit which was gradually strengthened with aerial supplies.

Chapter II. Aerial Defensive Operation.

A-1. The Principles of Operations After the Summer of 1942.

The objective of the attack operations in the beginning was to nip the ever increasing enemy air power in the bud. However, the enemy air power was generally strengthening in areas beyond the range of our bombers. For instance in INDIA, the fact that they were transporting strength into the rear part of that area where they were training and making preparations was known by our spies but we could not grasp the true situation. Due to the difficulty involving in execution, our plan which lasted until approximately the summer of 1943 was abandoned, allowing the enemy air power to rise sharply over a period of time.

A-2. Plan of Operations after the Summer of 1944.

A little after the summer of 1943, anticipating the destruction and suppression of enemy attacking power we placed the following plan into effect in the CALCUTTA, CHITTAGONG, TJENSKVA, KUNMING, and PORT MORESEY Areas.

A-3. Coordination of Operations on the CHINA Continent.

Although preparations progressed in the KUNMING and NANNEI Areas for the sake of coordination of operations on the CHINA Continent, only a part of the plan was carried out in the KUNMING Area., due to the situations of operations in the Northern BURMA Area.

A-4. Operations in the Autumn of 1943.

In the autumn of 1943, with the intention of blocking trade between INDIA and CHINA, we searched for and attacked the region north of MICHINA enemy air transports which flew from TJENSKJA to the KUNMING Area, thus confusing their transportation for a while. However, because this operation lacked thoroughness, we felt that it rather accelerated enemy operations in Northern BURMA.

Chapter III. Cooperation with Lan Operations.

One of the important operational duties of the 3rd Air Force was to cooperate in the defense of each ground army. The chief land operation to which the air force gave cooperation was the CHINA Continental Operation, (End of 1943-spring of 1944)

Chapter IV. Harmony in the Coordination with land operations and offensive air operations.

Until the summer of 1943, we could make an attack at any time without taking coordination with ground operations, convoy escorting, into consideration; however, after the rainy season of the autumn of 1943, the harmony between air attack operations became a big problem. When the operation plans were, the commander of the assigned units assembled at PENANG, where, being confident of success, they made military plans on board on the basis of the following principles:

1. Being strengthened considerably, the enemy air power, which confronted us extended from Southwest CHINA to East INDIA and CEYLON, and was estimated to number about 2000 airplanes including the naval airforce; thus with only 500 or so planes, the entire strength of the 3rd Air Force, we could not more to cope with them unless we took the initiative.

2. Since it was judged that there was a good chance that the enemy planned to land on the beaches from the western coast of BURMA to MOLMEN and TABOI it was necessary, if such a plan were attempted, to attack their convoys with our entire strength. Furthermore, we must destroy the enemy plan of landing on ANDAMAN and NICHOBOL by pouring as much of our strength as is possible into those areas.

3. With the starting of operations in the CHINA Continent, we must cooperate with land operations as well as aerial attack operations.

4. We must cooperate in the IMPAL Operations.

5. We must have still more strength for sea patrolling and convoy escort duty.

Chapter V. Air Defense.

1. Air Defense of PALEMBANG.

Bring the South Area Army's most important, defense has always been an important operation of the 3rd Air Force.

2. Miscellaneous.

The air defense plans of the RANGOON, SINGAPORE, ANDAMAN, SABAN, and SOERABOEVA Area were to be carried out in accordance with the situation.

Chapter VI. Sea Patrolling.

1. Since September 1942 we had carried out patrols over BENGAL BAY using SABAN as our base.

2. Entering the summer of 1943 we made patrols over CHMOL and BANDA SEA using CHMOL ISLAND as our base.

Chapter VII. Convoy Escort.

1. The escorting of shipping in MILI HARBOR will be effected from the start.

2. Until the end of the fall rainy season of 1942, escort was provided for the transportation of the supplies, which were being concentrated in BURMA.

3. After the summer and autumn rainy seasons of 1943, escort was provided of supplies to BURMA.
4. During the summer of 1943 the escorting for transportation, was provided east of SURABAYA for the deployment of 7th Air Division.
5. From the end of 1943, escort was provided for transporting fuels to be stored in SINGAPORE from PANKARANSUS.
6. Entering 1944, the escort to JAPAN Proper from SINGAPORE via the northern coast of BORNEO, and from the east coast of MALAYA via the coast of FRENCH-INDIA together with local transportation along the Northern Coast of BORNEO.
7. Besides those mentioned above every transportation facility from SINGAPORE to BATAVIA: from SUMATRA, SINGAPORE: MIDAN to ANDAMAN was provided escort.

Chapter VIII. Cooperation with Navy.*

Anticipating close coordination at all times, it was endeavored to maintain coordination with the area fleet, especially the 1st Air Fleet,

Part IV. Summary of the Course of 3rd Air Force Operations.

Chapter 1. From July to October of 1942 (until the end of Rainy Season), in BURMA.

A-1. Fifth Air Division (BURMA Area)

One element was held responsible for the reconnoitering of the enemy situation in Eastern INDIA, as well as air defense in RANGOON. Another element held the responsibility of escort for shipping between PENANG and RANGOON as protection against possible enemy submarine attack. While the main force was undergoing training in MALAY, THAILAND and FRENCH INDO-CHINA and element was responsible for the transportation of replacement planes from JAPAN. During this time, preparations were being made for the offensive operation in Eastern INDIA. The 83rd Independent Air Unit was designated to cooperate with the 15th Army. 12th Air Brigade was gradually deployed to BURMA.

A-2. 21st Independent Air Unit(HANOI Area).

While preparing for the operation in the KUNMING Area, P-40's attacked repeatedly. There were times when much damage was due to the lack of pilots to operate our Model II double seater fighter (approximately 10 planes). Moreover, the aircraft listening devices, consisting in the main of FRENCH aircraft listening units were below par. It took approximately 5 or 10 minutes after the enemy planes had crossed the borders before the listener would receive the notification. There was, furthermore, a lack of trained personnel to handle the devices.

A-3. Air Defense (or PALEMBANG).

The 12th Air Brigade was held responsible for air defense, however, as the same unit was transferred in preparation for operations in the BURMA Area, the 54th Air Regiment took charge.

A-4. 3rd Air Brigade. (BANDUNG) was mainly in charge of training. Several planes of the 75th Air Regiment stationed at TIMOR ISLAND coordinated their movements with a detachment from the 16th Army.

A-5. Field Training Replacement Unit.

Took charge of training in NATORAN.

An element was permanently stationed at MIRI to protect the ships in the harbor.

A-6. Re-assignment of the 9th Air Brigade to patrol the INDAIN OCEAN.

As the naval air unit was transferred in view of the situation in the SOLOMON Area, the 9th Air Brigade was transferred from MANCHURIA (immediately after reequipped the 7th and 61st air regiment, with Model 100 Heavy bombers), to take charge of sea patrolling over BENGAL Area.

The air brigade headquarters took charge of air defense in PALEMBANG and up to the time of the advance to the area north of AUSTRALIA in the spring of 1943, the fundamentals of

PALEMBANG air defense strengthened. In MEDAN the 61st Air Regiment dispatched one squadron alternately to SABAN, which was used as a base for carrying out patrols over an offing area of from 800 to 1000 Km. against possible enemy activities from the CEYLON Area.

In the beginning the ability of army planes to operate over water was doubtful. However, this was overcome by causing army personnel to attend lectures given by the navy and there after coordinating army air activities with those of the navy. The army planes compared favorably with the navy plane. There were instances when, in bad weather, the navy planes returned to their base while army planes, under the same conditions continued their missions. The type of plane was the Model 100 Heavy bomber. Inasmuch as Major MAKOTO YAGI, ~~commander of the regiment~~, had thorough knowledge of this type of plane, and despite the fact that the regiment was transferred from MANCHURIA immediately after the improvement of this type of plane, the commander fulfilled his duty by training his men skillfully.

The 7th Air Regiment was stationed on KARIJATI for the most part ~~to~~ train.

A-7. Patrols over the shipping in MIRI HARBOR for protection against enemy submarines.

Since oil tankers had often been attacked by enemy submarine while in MIRI HARBOR, three light bombers were extracted from the field replacement unit to offer a protection against enemy submarines. This condition prevailed over quite a period of time.

Chapter II. From October 1942 to end of the Year. (after the rainy season)

A-1. The 5th Air Division.

In the first part of the dry season, attacks were made on the TINSUKIA, CHITTAGON and KUNMING Areas. In December, attacks were made on CALCUTTA the results of these attacks were

satisfactory. Successful surprise sorties were also made on the above mentioned areas. The attacking enemy planes were ambushed each time inflicting considerable losses upon the enemy.

A-2. 21st Independent Air Unit, ~~at~~ the

As the Model II fighter compared unfavorably with P-40's and twin-engined light bomber suffered great losses on the ground, the unit was forced to retreat to the vicinity of PUNONPEN. In November, while the 12th Air Brigade was concentrating in SINGAPORE in the midst of deploying to the southeastern area, the 1st Air Regiment was extracted and dispatched to HANOI for one month, where they combated the P-40's attacks, and attacked the MOJI Area, coordinating with the 5th Air Division attacks on the KUNMING Area. The twin-engine light bombers of the 21st Independent Air Unit also participated.

In the same area, due to the enemy's precise anti-aircraft observation networks. Surprise attacks were very difficult.

Note: In the KUNMING Area and in the eastern part of BURMA, due to the geographic conditions, the enemy anti-aircraft observation network was very thin so that surprise attacks were not difficult.

A-3. Transferring of 12th Air Brigade.

Due to the serious situation in the SOLOMON Area in December the 12th Air Brigade was transferred to the 6th Air Division Areas. At that time, the airfield in the NEW GUINEA Area was not completely equipped, therefore the PAVO and WEWAKK Bases could not be used. The planes were therefore transported by aircraft carriers from SURABAYA to TRUK. From TRUK the plane were flown to RABAU under the protection of Navy land attack planes.

A-4. Training for Attacking Ships.

From December to January, instructions from the HAMAMATSU Aviation School gave lectures to the command elements of bomber units in PENANG, with the cooperation of the 9th Naval Special Base Force with the object of to improving their tactics in attacking ships.

A-5. Reconnaissance During the Construction of Airfields, In the ANDAMANA Area

As the navy was responsible for the construction of airfields to be used in the defense of the ANDAMANA Area. On the occasion of inspection of the area by the flagship of 1st Air Fleet, staff officers boarded the ships to reconnoiter and. We cooperated with the navy by supplying materials necessary for the construction of the airfield.

Chapter III. From the Beginning of 1943 to the Middle of May
(Until the beginning of Rainy season)

A-1. 5th Air Division.

Attacks on Eastern INDIA and Southwestern CHINA were continued. Attacks on CALCUTTA were carried out at nights with a small number of planes. This continued till the end of January. The attacks on the KUNMING Area in April were so effective that the enemy air force in CHINA could not recover for several months after being diminished by more than one-half. Attacks made by enemy planes were returned with such vigor that their enthusiasm waned. The light bombers of the 21st Independent Air Unit were placed under the command of the 5th Air Division commander. They were, later, reorganized as a part of the 34th Air Regiment. In February, the 14th Air Regiment was extracted and transferred to the southeastern area.

A-2. FRENCH INDIA Area

Air units were temporarily stationed in this area. Headquarters reconnaissance planes were temporarily despatched to

HANOI from the 5th Air Division to reconnoiter the Southwestern CHINA Area.

A-3. PALEMBANG Air Defense.

1. Double-seater fighter units.

From 21st Independent Air Unit were added to the PALEMBANG Air defense units, were later reorganized to form the 21st Air Regiment.

2. By the order of the southern Army, PALEMBANG Air Defense maneuvers were carried out from January 22, 1943 for three days under the command of the 3rd Air Force commander. After the maneuvers, discussion pertinent to air defense were held. It was very convenient to have the southern fuel depot, shipping units, military government organs and 25th Army units in such close liaison (25th Army units--2AA Regiments from the 3rd Air Force). As a result of these maneuvers, reinforcement of Air defense power, intelligence; reorganization of communication networks; enlargement, dispersal and camouflage of airfields, and an increase in defense facilities was effected.

Measures such as the mooring of transport ships and loading and unloading of fuel; dispersal of ships in the event of air attack; obstruction of shipping in the MUSHI River, all of these were recognized as urgent matters. However, these measures were not effected easily.

3. In April the 54th Air Regiment is as transferred to Southeastern Area. From that time the 21st Air Regiments carried out air defense alone. Later, due to the battles situation in the BURMA Area, they transferred to RANGOON leaving one company of the 21st Air Regiment behind. Here they were responsible for air defense, and one company of the 50th Air Regiment was temporarily attached to the air defense of PALEMBANG.

4. In March, when defense headquarters was set up at PALEMBANG and the 25th Army transferred to SUMATRA (Operational Areas of the 25th Army was in MALAY and SUMATRA, with SINGAPORE

as headquarters. However, as MALAY came under the direct command of the Southern Army, the 25th Army took command of SUMATRA Area only, with their headquarters at BUKICHINGI. PALEMBANG Air defense became one of the responsibility of the 25th Army. The entire anti-aircraft unit came directly under the command of the 25th Army defense Headquarters and one element of the fighter units and the air sector unit came under the command of the 3rd Air Force. The 3rd Air Force took command of military training and supplies in conjunction with the 25th Army.

A-4. Patrolling of BENGAL Bay with SABAN as base.

As patrolling continued, in March the 9th Air Brigade was transferred to north of AUSTRALIA. At the same time, the 8th Air Brigade (60th Air Regiment) came from CHINA to replace the 9th Air Brigade.

A-5. Reconnoitering of (COCOS ISLAND).

Fearing lest the enemy establish an air base, the 7th Air Regiment patrolled COCOS ISLAND. COCOS ISLAND is located 1100 Km. from BATAVIA. Since the maximum range of the Model 100 heavy bomber is around 1100 Km., temporary landing points were immediately established at MANA (approximately 300 Km. from the southwest coast of PALEMBANG). This was used as a base for planes returning from patrolling COCOS ISLAND.

A-6. 3rd Air Group.

The 70th Independent Air Squadron (Headquarters reconnaissance) which was transferred from the homeland in February, was assigned to the 3rd Air Group. Completing training, they cooperated with the navy (23rd Air Regiments stationed in KENKALI in reconnoitering PORT DARWIN Area and the TIMOR Sea Area as well as escorting the transportation of the 19th Army with TIMOR ISLAND as base.

A-7. Transferring of the 9th Air Brigade to north of AUSTRALIA.

In March, leaving the headquarters at AMBON, the 9th Air Brigade was transferred to north of AUSTRALIA to patrol the BANDA Sea Area, maintaining close liaison with the 19th Army. The mission of the 60th Air Regiment was the destruction of submarines. The 7th Air Regiment returned to the homeland to be reorganized into torpedo units.

A-8. Liaison with the Southeastern Area and the competition of our bases, north of AUSTRALIA.

1. On March 3rd, staff officers were dispatched to RABAU where they discussed future methods for coordination by conferring with 8th Area Army and the 6th Air Group. The air force, as well as restoring the health of its personnel and repairing planes for the 6th Air Division, conferred on re-assignment of strength in the 6th Air Division area, in accordance with the situation and the movements of the 6th Air Group.

2. Since the need for coordination with the southeastern, the defense of the area north of AUSTRALIA and for offensive operations upon AUSTRALIA was great, the completion of the air base in the area north of AUSTRALIA was accelerated by cooperating with the 19th Army. The Southern Army, General Headquarters aided in the acceleration.

A-9. Problem in Bullet Proofing and Fire Proofing of Bombers.

Since the number of bombers damaged or lost by fire during the attacks on CALCUTTA was great, repeated research was made at the air depot as to bullet proofing and fire proofing the oil tanks of bombers. Covering the tanks with rubber sheets and replacing the nitrogen, which remained in the tank after the fuel had been consumed with gas showed the most efficiency. Later, fire extinguishers were made for night fighters. From that time, all planes from the homeland were equipped with

fire proof and bullet proof equipment.

Chapter IV. From the end of May 1943 to the middle of October (BURMA rainy season).

A-1. The 5th Air Division.

During the rainy season complete restoration of THIALAND, FRENCH INDIA and MALAY was attempted. However, due to the fact that we were pressed by operational duties plans were not fulfilled. In June, the 8th Air Brigade was put under the command of the 3rd Air Division commander and transferred to CHINA due to relationship with the CHINA Area operation. For this reason, one element of the 7th Air Brigade replaced the 8th Air Brigade in patrolling BENGAL BAY using SABAN as its base. During this rainy season, by taking advantage of favorable weather conditions in eastern INDIA, especially the TINSKYA Area, the enemy made frequent attacks on BURMA. For this reason, a fair air defense strength was left behind as defense against attacking enemy planes.

An element carried out the transportation of replacement planes from the homeland. In order to store materials for the next dry season, transportation was effected by large ships to as far as VICTORIA POINT; and from there to RANGOON by small ships via TAYOY. Because the enemy was attacking the southern coast of MOULMEIN with submarines as well as bombers, both bombers and fighter planes were used. For this reason a fair sized strength was allotted. Later, this became a virtual necessity.

A-2. 7th Air Division.

In May, the 7th Air Division Headquarters was organized, at MALANG. The 3rd and 9th Air Brigades were made subordinate units.

Operation areas were in SUMATRA, JAVA and north of AUSTRALIA, however, shortly thereafter SUMATRA was excluded.

Deployment of air sector units to north of AUSTRALIA and the completion of airfields were endeavored.

In July, attacks were made for three days on PORT BARWIN by coordinating with 23rd Naval Air Flotilla. The auxiliary tanks for the Type 99 twin engine planes which made at great expense and expenditure of effort by the MALAN Air Depot and the LAUTEN concealed airfield, enable and facilitated the 75th Air regiment in its participation in this attack. The main force of the 7th Air Regiment was placed under the command of the 8th Area commander and was transferred to the WEWAK Area. The 3rd Air Brigade remained north of AUSTRALIA and was put under the operational command of the 3rd Air Force.

A-3. JAVA Area.

With the transferring of 7th Air Division to the southeast air operation in JAVA the area north of AUSTRALIA became weakened, therefore, 83rd Independent Air unit was transferred from BURMA. The 3rd Air Brigade remained north of AUSTRALIA. However, the main force was in the 75th Air Regiment. For a time, the main strength of the 50th Air Regiment was also transferred to JAVA and one of its elements was dispatched to AMBON for air defense.

A-4. 106th Air Training Brigade.

Headquarters was organized in SINGAPORE and transferred to BANDUNG placing heavy bomber unit in KARIDJATI and fighter units in BANDUNG, BUITENZORG and SULAKARTA.

Students arrived in September by air transportation and the heavy bombers (higher twin engine training plane and Model 100 heavy bombers were used together) arrived within a month. However, the training planes of the fighter units (Model II training plane) were not satisfactory due to faulty engines made by the MANCHURIAN Aviation Co. therefore the army reconnaissance Model 97 fighters, usually used in direct cooperation with the army, were assembled.

At the beginning of training, there was only one training plane for 30 students.

A-5. FRENCH INDO Area.

Attacking from enemy planes from the southwestern CHINA Area on FRENCH INDO increased. The damage, especially, on railways to the north of YUE and the cement factories in HANOI were serious. The strength allotted for this purpose was insufficient, and for this reason we were defenseless.

In September, when the 83rd Air Regiment returned to BURMA, one squadron was transferred to SAIGON where it was placed under the command of the FRENCH INDO CHINESE Expeditionary force, taking charge of escorting convoys in the vicinity of SAIGON.

Chapter 5. From the middle of October, 1943 to the end of the year. (Till the end of rainy season.)

The enemy air force strength in every area had increased considerable. It appeared that the enemy were using a new model plane, for the performance of the planes had improved remarkably. The air situation turned gradually to one of defense. Even if considerable damages we were gradually forced to adopt a policy of concentration airpower in important objectives regardless of the degree of losses we might suffer.

Special attention should have been paid at this period, to the fact that Type 100 Headquarters Reconnaissance planes were frequently falling into the clutches of enemy planes. Entering 1944, missing planes were very numerous.

The cause for this situation is mainly derived from the reasons as stated in the following two paragraphs:

1. With the intentions of annihilating our Model 100 Headquarters Reconnaissance planes tactically, the enemy planes used such tactics as encircling, thus making it difficult for headquarters planes to escape regardless of their speed.

This situation was true mainly in AUSTRALIA Area.

2. Improvements in the performance of enemy fighter planes. Phenomenon of this kind occurred mainly in eastern INDIA Area.

On the other hand more replacements fell in the 3rd Air Force, especially the 5th Air Brigade, which was quite certain of ultimate victory. Furthermore, the naval air unit in the southwest area gradually received replacements for lost planes and men. For a time, since the northern SUMATRA, ANDAMAN and NICOBAR Areas were handled by the navy the burden upon the army was lessened.

The land operation was a sign that enemy had finally made preparations to counterattack, therefore, defensive and counter measures were taken out against their plans for landing on the west coast of BURMA, ANDAMAN and NICOBAR ISLANDS. Organization of the 28th Army (west coast of BURMA) and the 29th Army (MALAY Peninsula and Northern coast) was gradually being accomplished an Independent Brigade was stationed in ANDAMANG. Strict precautions were taken against the enemy plan for landing in SUMATRA, especially along the northern coast. On the other hand, there were many cases in which enemy spies made attempts to sneak into SUMATRA and JAVA and later BORNEO by approaching the coasts in seaplanes and submarines and landing from rubber boats. As the enemy attack on various areas grew intense, air patrol over the northern district of SUMATRA began. As the transportation by air between INDIA and CHINA gradually increased, the enemy air force in CHINA recovered the battle power which had been diminished for a long time. Therefore, it became clear to us that the air forces in INDIA and CHINA were united as one body with the main force of the AMERICANS Air Force.

4-1. The 5th Air Division.

On October 22, with the 4th Air Brigade as its main body an attack began on TINSKYA with 120 planes. The beginning

the enemy transportation centers between INDIA and CHINA were confused and attack were carried out on the Eastern INDIA and KUNMING Areas by diminishing enemy fighting power, dealing effective counters blows to attacking planes. There were many cases in which single fighter planes shot down several enemy planes. The effective blows delivered on the B-24's in the end of December suppressed their activities for approximately one month. However, as the enemy, far outnumbering us dominated the gaps in our air unit activities, they caused considerable damages especially to transportation networks. After October, in north of MICHINA, 10 or more planes were shot down by ambushing transport planes which were moving between INDIA and CHINA, this confused and reduced enemy transportation facilities and caused the enemy to carry out their transportation by night flight for over a month.

On 10 December we added over 20 land attack planes, over 130 planes attacked and we destroyed enemy ships concentrated near the wharfs of the CALCUTTA Harbor. In this attack, TINTAPE foiled various enemy radio location. This facilitated our attack, and we suffered no losses.

A-2. FRENCH INDO Area.

Attacks by enemy planes gradually increased in frequency, however, they had to be overlooked inasmuch as we lacked the surplus power necessary.

A-3. ANDAMAN, NICOBAR and Northern SUMATRA Areas.

As the naval air units gradually increased these areas were left under their jurisdiction. Area fleet and the 13th Air fleet advanced to PENANG and the 28th Air Flot Headquarters to SABAN.

A-4. Area North of AUSTRALIA.

In October, the 3rd Air Brigade attacked PORT DARWIN Area, coordinating with the 23rd naval Air Flot.

A-5. Organization of the 9th Air Division.

In December, the 9th Air Division was organized with its headquarters at PALEMBANG. The main body was the 8th Air Brigade and the PALEMBANG Air defense unit with SUMATRA as its operational area, the main mission was to cooperate with the 25th Army; to destroy enemy landing plans on SUMATRA, especially, on the northern coast; to take charge of the PALEMBANG Air defense.

Along with organization, as the PALEMBANG defense headquarters returned, the 3rd Air Force took charge of Air defense of PALEMBANG.

Chapter VI. From January to June 1944.

The actual counter attacks were carried out in the year 1944. The duties of the 3rd Air Force were to gradually set up in the tempo of air attack in coordination with land operations and air defense. Convoy escort was to be increased immediately reassignments and shifts in strength were to be carried out quickly. The necessity for well laid plans and bold fighting tactics became more and more evident.

In March, the southern army was reorganized and general headquarters transferred to MANILA. The 7th Area Army was organized, taking command of the 29th Army (MALAY) 32nd Army (BORNEO) 25th Army (SUMATRA and the 16th Army (JAVA). As soon as the 2nd area army had been organized, the area north of AUSTRALIA had no mission with the exception of assisting in the rear echelon duties of the 7th Air Division.

A-1. Movements and Shifts in Troop Strength.

In January, the 98th Air Regiment returned to the homeland for reorganize into torpedo bomber unit. By March, the 8th Air Brigade (33rd Regiment and 60th Air Regiment); 34th and 67th Air Regiments were transferred to the NEW GUINEA

Area. Therefore, the 3rd Air Force, which had been up to strength gradually diminished. In June, the 2nd Air Division was made the principle force in the PHILIPPINES and along with the fullfilments of air units the 7th Air Regiment was also detached. Subsequently the pace of the oprations increased. These movements were facilitated and carried out rapidly by the unique use of air transportation by the 1st Raid Group.

A-2. 5th Air Division

At the beginning of April cooperation with the operations of the 55th Army, (in the BURMA Area) in defense against possible enemy invasion of the AKYAB Area did not anticipate invasion. Although the losses in fighter units was great for this operation, the fighting strength was almost up to par by the time of the INPOL Operations. During the INPOL Operations in May, corrdination was thought unnecessary with the exception of the determination of the time for crossing the CHINDOUING River (Interpretation of the 15th Army in the BURMA Area). However, the primary phase of operation, it was found be necessary to utilize almost the entire strength of the 5th Air Division. At the same time with the enemy invading north BURMA, liaison with the 30th Army was almost impossible. Since the enemy fighting strength out-numbered ours by ten times, the enemy withoutmaneuvered our air units without any effort regardless of our superior fighting and thus our air units suffered great losses. In view of the battle situation in the BURMA Area the enemy planes took a terrific toll of our Model II single seater fighter which had been detached from the PALEMBANG Air defense units. The air units of the 1st Air Raid Groups often surpassed their transportation as ability in supplying the operations in the BURMA Area.

A-3. 9th Air Division.

1. Air defense of PALEMBANG.

Air defense was fulfilled by the execution of air defense manuevrs in the beginning of February. By examining the

results from various angles; required troop strengths were met; fighter unit were strengthened to four units and anti-aircraft guns to 150 guns; four airfields were added; increase of the number and the capacity of Radio locaters; various other equipments was also increased in number. After July, the majority of the strength had been detached to the PHILIPPINES Area and again weakened.

2. Air defense of DANKANLANG BRANDAN.

From the end of 1943 since the fuel output was gradually increased and fuel refinery equipment increased, the strengthening of air defense was endeavored. However, the strength did not exceed more than one fighter squadron and one anti-aircraft regiment. At this time the enemy began to attack northern SUMATRA with using seaplane in the CEYLON Area or with task forces.

3. Patrolling our BENGAL BAY Area.

The naval air unit, which was finally up to full strength at the end of 1943, advanced toward the TRUK Area with the majority of its strength immediately after the entry of the New Year 1944. When the area fleet returned to SUMATRA, the 1st Air Fleet was responsible for its own, and that of the 13th Air Force. However, in the MALAY, SUMATRA and ANDAMAN Areas, only the headquarters of each unit remained; For this reason the main body of the 3rd Air Force, (due to the lack of liaison with other areas), it was impossible to make reinforcements except for allotted bomber units.

A-4. JAVA Area.

As the enemy air raids on eastern JAVA increased in intensity, the disposition of air defense units was a vital problem. However, due to the lack of the necessary strength, the disposition of air defense units was impossible. Therefore, the 106th Air Training Brigade was made responsible for air defense while in training.

A-5. Protection of Convoys.

1. Protection of direct transportation from the homeland

As the activity of enemy submarine increased, each voyage was protected according the situation. The routes were: from SINGAPORE passing by SAIGON via the east coast of MALAYA; along the north coast of BORNEO; between the afore mentioned routes. From the first of March the agreement within the area BOSING on the Army-Navy Central agreement, the 3rd Air Force was made responsible for protecting convoys running along the north coast of BURMA. The 83rd Air Regiment was stationed at RABUAN for this purpose, at the same time protecting, the ships in MITI Harbor. With the large number of convoy passing along the northern coast of BORNEO, we were extremely busy providing cover, not only to direct transportation between MANILA and BURMA, SINGAPORE and BORNEO.

2. Protecting of the transportation of fuel bound for northern SUMATRA to be stored in SINGAPORE.

The transportation of fuels from PANKARANSUS and MEDAN to be stored in SINGAPORE was protected. However, as the transportation became incessant one heavy bomber regiment was permanently detailed fixed to protect transportation.

3. Protection of Convoys off the wst coast of MALAY.

North of VICTORY POINT smaller ships were utilized for transportation of supplies to the BURMA Area but south of VICTORY POINT larger ships were utilized, use of larger ships became more and more general. For this reason field replacement air units were gradually utilized in this area.

4. Miscellaneous.

In other areas, protection was carried out on agreements as determined in each case.

A-6. Air defense of SINGAPORE.

There were many discussion as to the problem of placing an air defense unit in SINGAPORE, There was actually not available force. Since the necessity of air defense became

acute, fighter units from field replacement air units were placed at TENGA to take charge of air defense.

A-7. Preparations for following operations.

Due to the fact that the enemy planes were overcoming our air units in the BURMA Area, the situation became such that headquarter reconnaissance planes were almost no value and our Model I fighters were no match for the enemy. Therefore, the following request was submitted to the central government: Reorganization of the headquarters reconnaissance to Model 100 Type 3 planes and if possible Model 4 fighter planes; if not possible Model I Type III lacking all else on increasing in number of Model II Single fighters and supplies for the restoration of fighting power.

Due to various unfavorable conditions, such as the urgent situation in PHILIPINE Area and the decrease in the output of domestic products requests were not filled immediately. Thereafter, every effort was made to fill the requirements.