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Burma Air Operations Record
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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.

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* 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.)

Record of the Air Operation in BURMA.

October, 1946

The 1st Demobilization Bureau

Part I

(From 15 January 1942 to August 1943)

This record was drawn up by MASA TANAKA, a staff officer of the 5th Air Division, based solely upon his memory. Only the gist of the operation was recorded here because reference materials such as records by war correspondents, reports from various units, and other necessary informations were misssing.

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Note: The 5th Air Division had been called the 5th Air Group until March, 1942. However, in this document, it is always refered to as the 5th Air Division.

Chapter I General Situation.

The enemy air force, which our 5th Air Division confronted at the initial stage of operations, was mainly composed of the BRITISH airforce. However, in March, 1943, the AMERICAN air force in CHINA was organized into a regular unit (known as the 14th Air Units), changing from a volunteer air force, and gradually became superior in strength to the BRITISH air force. Until the beginning of the rainy season (May) of 1942, the enemy air force was merely on the defensive. However, after the rainy season (which ended in October) the enemy became very active, and took the offensive. Their task force in the INDIAN Ocean included two regular aircraft carriers, and four or five auxiliary aircraft carriers at the initial stage of operations. Although this number was gradually increased in accordance with their plan to recapture BURMA, our operations were not affected.

A. Situation of the BRITISH and AMERICAN Air Forces at the Intial Stage of Operations.

In the middle of January, 1942, immediately after our air division advanced from FORMOSA to THAILAND following the PHILIPPINES operation, the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces in BURMA were situated at MINGALADON (RANGOON), while an element of the AMERICAN volunteer air force (the AMERICAN volunteer air unit dispatched to CHINA) was located at TOUNGOO. The total number of enemy air planes was estimated to be less than 120. Because of our RANGOON air raids and other air raids carried out by the 3rd Air Group which had operated in this area ever since the outbreak of the war, the enemy air forces seemed to have been neutralized. Therefore, they were comparatively inactive, and they concentrated mainly on the air defense of RANGOON and other air fields and only occasionally appeared on the border line Between THAILAND and BURMA.

Even after our crack troops of the 15th Army (the 55th Division, and the 33rd Division) penetrated the border line between THAILAND and BURMA and advanced to the TAVOY and MOULMEIN areas in the latter part of January, 1942, the enemy air forces still

held these three aforementioned bases. They concentrated their efforts mainly on the support of their ground forces. Although they made daring attacks against our ground forces, they never tried to gain air supremacy. Occaisionally they attacked the important positions in BANGKOK, trying to discourage THAILAND from participating in the war.

After our front line troops penetrated the border line between THAILAND AND BURMA, the battle front was gradually narrowed down to the SALWIN and SITTANG River areas. When our air attacks became gradually intense the enemy, in order to minimize their losses, employed such tactics as using secret airfields in the RANGOON area during the day, or withdrawing to BASSEIN.

During the initial stage, the types of enemy planes used were the BRITISH Hawker-hurricane (fighter), the BLENHIEM (T.N.?) the Lockheed-hudson (bomber) and the AMERICAN P40 (Tomhawk). The efficiency of their bombers differed little from that of ours. However, their fighters were superior to our type 97's,in speed and for this reason, we occasionally had difficulty in carrying out our air operations.

After our complete occupation of RANGOON and TOUNGOO, the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces, which hitherto had been comparatively on the defensive, assembled their main force in MAGWE in complete secrecy, and were ready to execute a counter-attack. However, on 21 and 22 March, 1942, they were completely annihilated in the invasion operation carried out by the entire strength of our group. A small element of the BRITISH air force escaped to AKYAB, while the AMERICAN air force to the YUNNAN area.

B. Situation of the BRITISH and AMERICAN Air Forces after Their Withdrawal from BURMA.

The remnants of the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces which were annihilated at the end of March, 1942, were gradually reinforced with supplies from INDIA. In August of that year, the main strength of

the enemy air force was mainly composed of BRITISH planes totaling approximately 170. However, their strength began to increase steadily since the beginning of 1943, and the AMERICAN air unit, especially, was reinforced very rapidly. The total number of their planes increased to about 200 at the end of 1942; to 400 in the spring of 1943 , to 700 in the autumn of that same year; to 1000 in the spring of 1944; and to 1500 in the summer of 1944. The main strength of the enemy air force in INDIA and CHINA shifted from the BRITISH force to the AMERICAN force. Thus, the BRITISH force becoming only an auxiliary force.

Although they were on the defensive at the initial stage of the operation, they gradually shifted to the offensive. They were especially rapid in improving types of planes. In the fighters, spitfires, Hawker-hurricanes and P40's were replaced by P38's. Also since the summer of 1943, P51's were gradually increased, and combined fighters and bomber operations thus became possible. In the bombers, B24's appeared (B29's appeared from the end of 1943) and began to raid RANGOON and other key positions in BURMA, seeking, principally, to isolate transportation key points and also to gain air supremacy. It was obvious that the primary object of their operation was to destroy our lines of communication.

Though they did not carry out notable offensive operations during the rainy season (from June to October) of 1942, contrary to our expectations, they continued their offensive during the rainy season of 1943. Although the ratio between our fighters and the enemy fighters was 1 to 3, we barely secured air supremacy due to the superiority of our type I fighters.

The following number of enemy planes which attacked BURMA confirms that after the rainy season (October) of 1942, the strength

of the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces had increased and that their operation were offensive ones.

October, 1942	300 planes
November, 1942	600 planes
December, 1942	1200 Planes
January, 1943	1700 planes
February 1943	2000 planes

The enemy air force was situated at KUNMING and YUNNAN in CHAINA, and in the area north and east of CALCUTTA in INDIA. As the enemy air force in southern and northern INDIA was situated outside of the range of our attacks, it had great value as a ready reserve.

There seemed to be no close coordination between the BRITISH AND AMERICAN air forces at the time of their retreat from BURMA. However, becoming closely linked since the middle of 1943, they fused into one force at the end of the same year, and simultaneously with the improvements in the type of planes, they began to carry out offensive operations against THAILAND and the FRENCH INDO-CHINA area.

Peculiarities of the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces were:

The BRITISH air force was slow in respose to our attacks, when we improved or changed our combat tactics in short periods of time, this, to the contrary, became advantageous to them.

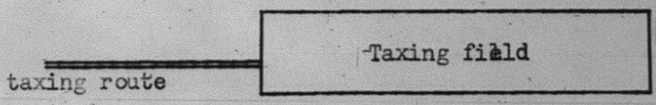
The AMERICAN air force was very responsive to our measures, and retaliated on the very same day, whenever it was attacked.

C. Situation of Enemy Air Fields.

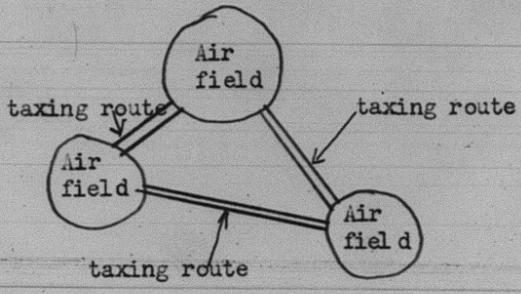
When our division commenced operations, enemy air fields were neither many, nor well-constructed. Training air fields, which had been in use during peace times, were located in the TAVOY, MOULMEIN, TONGOO and RANGOON areas, and these were only slightly repaired after the opening of the war. However, as our air attacks were intensified, these air fields were greatly improved in accordance to their operations.

Note (T.N.)

Old air field idea:



New air field fortress idea:



This group of air fields was called an air field fortress.

Also such strategic measures as the use of secret air fields were employed.

After the withdrawal of the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces from BURMA to eastern INDIA in the summer of 1942, up to the spring of 1943 when their air strength was rapidly being reinforced, the enemy used CALCUTTA as a rear base airfield, and DACCA, AKOLA, FENNY, CHITTAGONG and BARAIL as front line air fields. The YUNNAN airfield was used chiefly in the southwestern CHINA area. In all, their air fields did not exceed 30 in number. In improving the construction and set up of these air fields which were of the old rectangular type, only parapets were used at first as reinforcement. But later runways were gradually constructed. Owing to their mechanical power and also to their abundant man power, the enemy increased and reinforced these air fields, and by the autumn of 1943, had more than 130 airfields in eastern INDIA. Moreover, casting aside the obsolete operation strategy, in which the taxying field was the most important element of an air field, and also according to the new airfield fortress idea, they made much use of the taxing strips, which hitherto had been merely an attached sector of an air field. In order to thoroughly disperse and conceal their planes, they constructed 2 or 3 air fields close to each other, connected by these taxying strips.

In southwestern CHINA, though their air fields were improved and reinforced, their number was not increased; and those bases which hampered our BURMA operation, were only the KUNMING and YUNNAN air bases.

After January of 1943, as a result of the increase in air strength coupled with reinforcement of the INDIA-CHINA air transportation line, the air route connecting CALCUTTA, TENSKIA, and KUNMING was opened, and simultaneously and intermediate air base for the exclusive use of transport planes was constructed at TENSKIA.

For operational purposes, taking into consideration the range of our air attacks, the enemy constructed front line fighter air-

fields near the border line, and located their bomber units in comparatively rear areas, utilizing the intermediate air-fields.

D. General Situation of the Ground Forces.

The enemy ground forces which participated in the BURMA operation were the INDO-BRITISH army and the CHINESE army. At the beginning of 1942 (the initial stage of our operation) the enemy units were inefficient and their morale was comparatively low. Therefore, the operation of the 15th Army progressed as planned. However, after we crossed the SITTANG River, the resistance put up by the CHINESE army in the TOUNGOO area was rather notable in comparison with the INDO-BRITISH army.

At the end of May, 1942, the mopping up operation was roughly completed, with the CHINESE army being driven to the east bank of the NU River in southwestern CHINA, and the INDO-BRITISH army, to the BURMA-INDIA border line. At the end of 1942, while the AMERICAN air force was counter-attacking in the SOLOMON area, the enemy in this area also steadily proceeded with preparations for a counter-attack. The BRITISH strength in INDIA then totaled about 1 million including their INDIAN troops, and the CHINESE army in YUNNAN totaled a hundred thousand.

In December, they launched a counter-attack first on AKYAB from the sea, and then repeated with small attacks on the MANIWAKAKA road at the BURMA-INDIA border line. These activities paved the way for the commencement of a definite counter-attack.

Chapter II General Situation .

Ever since its participation in the BURMA campaign, our air division concentrated its efforts on the annihilation of the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces. However, it had great difficulty in maintaining its necessary strength since this area was merely the supporting front for the 16th Army. After the completion of the mopping up operation in BURMA, our disposition shifted from operational to occupational, and the enemy, both BRITISH and AMERICAN, proceeded with

preparations for a counter-attack. In spite of the fact that the enemy air and ground forces were steadily strengthened since the end of 1942, our strength was frequently decreased. Moreover, the supply of airplanes and air craft materials from the sea was hindered, and it gradually became difficult for our division to carry out operations. However, our division was anxious to perform its mission of annihilating the enemy. In June, 1942, the 3rd Air Army was organized, and this air division was put under its command. Our division commander, Lieutenant General HIDEYOSHI OBATA, who had been with the division since the beginning of the campaign was transferred to command this newly organized air army. Lieutenant General NOBORU TAZOE succeeded him as commander of the air division.

Chapter III Gist of Operations of the 5th Air Division.

Since the outbreak of the PACIFIC War in December, 1941, our air division participated in the PHILIPPINES campaign using FORMOSA as its base of operations. However, after the fall of MANILA, our division was hastely ordered to move to THAILAND to participate in the BURMA campaign. Following its arrival at THAILAND, the air division endeavored to maintain the policy of annihilating the enemy by taking the initiative. Coordination with the ground forces was generally indirect, since our main force was always concentrated on the destruction of the enemy air force. Only a very small part of the air division directly supported the ground forces. Until the autumn of 1943, expected results were obtained through this policy.

A. Aerial Annihilation Combats.

1. General instructions

The policy of our aerial attacks was to destroy enemy planes both in the air and on the ground. At the initial stage of the campaign in 1942, enemy air bases were located within the range of our aerial attacks. Thus there were timely opportunities for our combined fighter-bomber units to bomb these bases. However, after the summer of 1942, the enemy air forces withdrew from BURMA deep into INDIA AND SOUTHEASTERN CHINA. Reinforcing themselves there,

they gradually began to move their planes to the front lines and this made it increasingly difficult for us to carry out our operations. Through secret activities of our headquarters reconnaissance unit, we were able to detect enemy planes assembled in front-line air fields. These were consequently attacked by our combined fighter-bomber units.

In the execution of annihilating the enemy air forces, we primarily endeavored to direct our attacks against their bombers. However, there were times when we shifted our attacks on their fighters which hindered our activities. Since the beginning of 1943, enemy air transportation between BURMA and CHINA became increasingly active, and their transport planes next became the object of our attacks.

In our operations, the principal tactic was the coordinate fighter-bomber attacks. However, due to a scarecity of fighter planes, night attacks had to be carried out by our bomber units.

After the rainy season (October) of 1942, enemy air raids on BURMA increased. However our division, endeavoring to destroy as many enemy aircrafts as possible, frequently intercepted these enemy raids.

2. Operations up to the end of 1942.

During this period, air combats were carried out to annihilate the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces in BURMA as quickly as possible; thus, contributing to the 15th Army's BURMA campaign. Immediately following the air divisional headquarter's transfer from FORMOSA to BANGKOK, the capital of THAILAND, on 15 January, the combined fighter-bomber units from the 4th and 10th Air Groups attacked the RANGOON air fields. However, as this attack was carried out during the day, our losses were comparatively heavy. As a result we gradually altered our combat tactics, using fighters to carry out night attacks. On 9 March, we discovered the enemy air forces, which we had not heard anything of for a while, secretly assembled at MAGWE. However, we did not carry out any small-scale attacks against it. Instead, in order to deceive the enemy, we supported operations in other areas, awaiting a greater assemblage of the enemy's strength.

In March, the 7th and 21st Air Groups were placed under the command of the air division. On the 21st and the 22nd of the same month, utilizing

our entire strength, we suddenly attacked MAGWE, the enemy's only air base in BURMA, and swiftly annihilated all enemy planes there. This successful attack contributed greatly to subsequent operations carried out by the 15th Army.

3. Period of the Mopping up operation in BURMA by the 15th Army.

During this period, since our air attacks were carried out to check the AMERICAN volunteer air unit at LASHIO and YUNNAN, and the BRITISH air units at BARAIL and IMPHAL from carrying out guerilla activities, no large-scaled operations were carried out.

With the arrival of the rainy season, which began from the end of March and continued up to the middle of October, the main force of our division withdrew to the MALAY Peninsula, and concentrated in the training for the next operation; while an element was ordered to move to the other areas.

4. Operation after the Rainy Season of 1942.

The BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces which had suffered a severe blow at MA GWE reorganized themselves at YUNNAN in southwestern CHINA, and in the AKYAB, BARAIL, and IMPHAL Areas in INDIA. They gradually reinforced themselves, being supplied from the rear during the rainy season. Though they had not as yet mustered sufficient strength to carry out a positive Counter-attack, it was understood that unless immediate counter-measures were taken, subsequent operations would become difficult. Thus, each unit of our air division, which had been trained in MALAY during the rainy season, made daring attacks; first against the AMERICAN air unit at YUNNAN in southwestern CHINA, and then against the enemy air forces in the CHITTAGON and FENNY areas. In December, our air division raided CALCUTTA, the enemy air base in eastern INDIA.

5. Operation from January to August, 1943.

During this period, although our strength decreased steadily, we continued to fight for air supremacy frequently destroying enemy planes which appeared on the border line area of BURMA. However, the enemy was gradually reinforced, becoming increasingly fierce in their air attacks to cut off our supply lines. On the ground, the enemy counter-attacked in the AKYAB area, following by attacks on the MAYU river and the NU river (RU CHANG) areas.

This necessitated the greatest skill in carrying out operation so as to gain air supremacy and support the 15th Army. It also necessitated a closely co-ordinated ground and air operation.

In accordance with the afore mentioned tactics, our division, in spite of its small force engaged superior enemy numbers, and continued our operations without rest. Occasionally it attacked YUNNAN and KUNMING in CHINA, or CHITTAGONG and FENNY in eastern INDIA. It also executed surprise raids in the SHILCHAR area.

In the fight for air supremacy during this period, our air division directed attacks against the enemy's northern BURMA , HUNGKING supply line which became increasingly active since the end of the year and made frequent raids on TENSKIA, the enemy's intermediate base. Occasionally, a concealed unit of our fighters at SHWEBO or MYITKYINA intercepted enemy transport planes, and destroyed a considerable number of them .

In carrying out our attacks during this period, since it was comparatively difficult to shelter or disperse our heavy bombers on air fields, they were usually stationed in MALAY or at BANGKOK which were outside the range of enemy attacks. These bombers advanced to BURMA in the evenings, and after completing their missions, quickly returned to these rear bases.

B. Co-ordinated Operations with Ground Forces.

Although, our air division chiefly concentrated in air supremacy operations, we endeavored to co-operate closely with the 15th Army (later the BURMA Area Army) in its ground operations.

1. The Period from the penetration of the THAILAND-BURMA border line up to the Occupation of RANGOON.

In the middle of January, 1942, the 15th Army penetrated the southern border line between THAILAND and BURMA, and commenced the TAVOY and MOULMEIN operation. Although our chief objective had always been air supremacy operations against the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces in BURMA, our air division timely executed direct support of ground operations occasionally securing supremacy

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of the air in the fronts and harrassing enemy ground forces. However, until the army advanced to the SITTANG river, our air division was unable to employ sufficient strength for direct support. Later, as the front shifted northwards, our air division gradually succeeded in gaining air supremacy, and in the RANGOON and TOUNGOO operations, it was able to achieve a comparatively close co-operation with the ground force.

2. The Mopping up Operation in BURMA.

During this period, due to the results of our air supremacy operation which was carried out against MAGWE at the end of March, 1942 and also due to our increased strength, our air division was able to carry out close air and ground co-ordinated operations. The air division contributed much to the 56th Division's encircling movement from TOUNGOO to the eastern SHAN high land area. The air division also co-operated with the 33rd Division, which was pursuing the BRITISH army northwards along the left bank of the IRAWADDY River.

3. Counter-attack Operations in the AKYAB Area.

After the rainy season of 1942, at which time the INDO-BRITISH army counter attacked from the sea, our air division, subduing the increasing enemy air forces, gained supremacy of the air above CHITTAGONG, the enemy rear transportation base, and directly supported the front line ground units in their operations.

C. Air Supremacy Operations and Support of Ground Operation.

Though our air division principally concentrated on air annihilation operations, it also co-operated with the 15th Army (later the BURMA Army) whenever the situation necessitated it.

However, since October, the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces were gradually strengthened, and enemy air attacks were intensified day by day. In spite of this situation, an element of our air division was transfered to other areas because of the unfavourable situation in those areas. Therefore, the air division's strength was considerably decreased making operations difficult. When AKYAB was counter attacked, the 4th Air Brigade, which was ordered to co-operate with the ground forces, closely supported the ground operation in this area.

After the rainy season of 1942, attacks by enemy planes became increasingly frequent, and gradually it became difficult for us to secure our supply lines. Therefore the main force of our division began concentrating on air defense.

D. Interception Operation.

Although our air division's objective was to annihilate the enemy air forces, the improvements in types and efficiency of their planes made it possible for the enemy to situate their bases outside the range of our attacks. Furthermore, since the enemy strength was increased, we could not anticipate much success in the air annihilation operations any longer. Interception operations, in which we still could destroy the enemy air strength, rose greatly in strategic value. Therefore, after the rainy season, as enemy air attacks became increasingly frequent, our air division intercepted the enemy in the air above our air-fields or key positions.

From October to November, 1942 our division ordered the 12th Brigade at MEIMYO to search out. and intercept enemy planes which attacked the area north of TONGOO and MAGWE (excluding TOUNGOO and MAGWE) and the 4th Air Brigade at TOUNGOO to intercept enemy planes which attacked the area south of TOUNGOO and MAGWE (including TOUNGOO and MAGWE).

Both brigades were also ordered to be prepared for a timely invasion at any time. However, at the initial stage of these intercepting operations, we were unable to achieve satisfactory results due to the incapability and inadequate disposition of intelligence units. Therefore, our division designated a fighter unit as a full-time air defense unit of the RANGOON key positions, and also ordered fighter units on all air fields to take charge of the air defense of each respective air field. Thus, we gradually altered the location of type A radio intercept receivers and observation sentries, and were able to detect enemy ~~plan~~ planes in time. 1 anti-aircraft gun regiment and 1 AA gun battalion (which, later, were placed under the command of the BURMA area army) were situated at RANGOON, while 1AA gun battalion guard TONGOO. Each air field was equiped with 3 to 6 automatic guns that had been seized from the enemy. These guns and our fighter planes inflicted considerable losses to the enemy.

E. Protection of Convoys.

Our division carried out the following convoy escort operations.

1. Support of the attack against AKYAB in June, 1942, and also support of transportation to that area in December of that same year.

2. Support of transportation between PENANG and RANGOON in the rainy seasons of 1942 and 1943.

3. Air support during the ANDAMAN Campaign.

In 1942, these supporting operations were carried out without much difficulty with the exception of the AKYAB attack. However, in 1943, since the AMERICAN air force was reinforced by B24's, we suffered considerable losses. Therefore, even during the rainy season, in order to protect our convoys, our division posted an element of our bomber unit at SUNGEI PATANI and at TAVOY, while the main force of our fighter units was located at MINGALADON. Thus, with the close co-operation of the 3rd Shipping Transportation Headquarters, our air division endeavored to escort our convoys as much as possible .
However, the enemy mines layed at the mouth of the RANGOON river made transportation of supplies gradually difficult.

F. Air Raiding Operation .

Following the occupation of TOUNGOO, the 15th Army dispatched the 56th Division from TOUNGOO eastwards through the SHAN. high land area to LASHIO, the key position of the TIEN-MEN route which was the retreating route of the CHUNGKING army. Just prior to the occupation of LASHIO, the 15th army planned to employ the 1st Air Raiding Group and the 7th Air Group. These groups left TOUNGOO, but because of inclement weather , they had to stop the raiding operation.

Chapter IV General Weather Conditions.

The rainy seasons and the dry seasons are notably distnguished in BURMA which is influenced by the equatorial currents. In BURMA, the rainy season begins from the end of May, while the dry season begins from the early part of October. The temperature, although very hot in the plains extending on both sides of the IRAWADDY River, changes greatly according to the seasons in the mountainous regions,

Operations were influenced greatly by the weather in the rainy season. During the rainy season of 1942, the enemy air forces did not attack us because of their small force and also due to the short range of their planes. Therefore, the main strength of our air division could move to MALAY and train for the next operation, improve types of planes, and engage in the air transportation of new planes supplied from JAPAN PROPER. However, during the rainy season of 1943, the enemy air forces were greatly improved in their efficiency, reinforced in their strength, and accordingly, they were able to attack us in spite of the rainy weather. Therefore, our air division had to employ all units, other than bomber units, with operational missions.

One and a half companies of the 3rd Meteorological Regiment (headquarters situated at RANGOON) Took charge of the weather observation services in BURMA.

Chapter V Lines of Communication.

A. Air Fields and Air Field Services.

Our division paid special attention to the maintenance and construction of air fields. Air fields which had been damaged by the enemy immediately following the rainy season of 1942, were gradually repaired and improved. Immediately after our army occupied RANGOON in February 1942, our air division instructed each unit, which was using the old air field formerly constructed and used by the enemy, to disperse and conceal its planes as a precaution against enemy air raids. However, at that time, being busily occupied in maintenance and repair work, we were contented with dispersing our planes within old rectangular air-fields, or taking simple covering measures. However, when the enemy's air attacks were intensified, our air division realized the disadvantage of these improvised defense measures. Therefore, during the rainy season of 1942, all unit commanders under the command of our air division were summoned, and given instructions concerning the prevention of losses and the construction of air-fields. The gist of the instructions was as follows:

1. Each air sector unit will reconnoiter each respective area, and select and report 2 or 3 places appropiate for air fields.

2. The high land area will be reconnoitered for a suitable ground to construct a new air field.

3. For the purpose of dispersing planes, taxying routes will be constructed as wide as possible, and forest will be utilized as much as possible.

4. If our planes on the ground are damaged, reasons for such damages will be thoroughly investigated and the defects improved then and there.

According to this instructions each air sector unit commenced the construction , maintenance and improvement of air fields. These works were greatly promoted, because enemy air raids became increasingly fierce just at that time. Immediately following the BURMA mopping up operation, available air-fields numbered only 15 or 16, being situated at MINGALADON, (Gary) MLEAU, TOUNGOO, southern and northern MEIKTILA, SHWEBO, MAGWE, AKYAB, and LASHIO. However, air sector units and ~~field~~ airfield construction units steadily proceeded with constructing new air fields in order to facilitate our air annihilation operations in the

border line area and also to promote our coordinated air and ground operations. In June 1942, the 3rd Air Army was newly organized, and air fields, which hitherto were under the command of the 15th Army, were also placed under the command of this unit. In August, 1943, the basic preparation for our air operations was roughly completed. Our air fields totaled one hundred.

As for air field services, at the initial stage, 1 air field battalion (or company) took charge of the maintenance and administration of 2 or 3 air fields and performed various duties of the air field service. However, since our air fields increased in number, personnel on each air field was decreased. Therefore, prior to the commencement of operation, the necessary personnel and materials were sent to the required air fields.

B. Air Planes

1. Our plane losses in combat were estimated to be twice as many as planes damaged or destroyed on the ground.

To supplement these losses, at the initial stage of the operation, the reserve planes at SAIGON and FORMOSA were sent as reinforcements.

2. Planes, during the initial stages of operation were supplied by the HEITO Air Depot. However, due to considerable inconveniences, the duty was transferred to the SAIGON Air Depot in the midst of the operation.

3. The conversion or improvement in types of planes was made within this theater, without much difficulty, during the rainy season.

4. In the attack on YUNNAN which was carried out before the rainy season of 1942, the heavy bomber unit of the 7th Air Brigade realized the ineffectiveness of our fire arms on planes. Therefore, during the rainy season (of that same year) the main force was despatched to KAGAMIGAHARA in JAPAN PROPER TO RE-EQUIP THEMSELVES WITH FLEXIBLE AUTOMATIC CANNONS, AND AT THE SAME TIME to study the anti-bullet and anti-fire equipment.

C. Fuel and Ammunition.

Immediately after our division advanced to BURMA, fuel and ammunition, sufficient for 1 month were accumulated at main air fields, while those, sufficient for half a month, were accumulated at other air fields.

Therefore, although during the rain season, 1942 no supplies were transported, our division was still capable of executing operations for one

year. However, in December 1942, the 12th Air Brigade was transfered to the SOLOMON area, carrying with it a great amount of automatic cannon shells and a large number of detachable fuel tanks.

Most of the fuel supplied was the type 77 gasoline, which had to be mixed with high octane fuel oil because the types of our planes were improved.

D. Transportation

In 1942, sea transportation was carried on without much hindrance from the enemy. However in 1943, our sea transportation was frequently intercepted by enemy planes and submarines. For this reason, not even one third of the supplies required by both air and ground forces in BURMA could be transported. This difficulty of sea transportation seriously affected the maintenance of our fighting power.

The transportation within BURMA was chiefly by rail. However, as the capacity of railway transportation was gradually lessened, inland transportation was carried on by the 4th Motor Transport Company which was attached to our air division. The 11th Air Transport Unit was responsible for all air Transportation.

E. Repair and Supply.

1. Repair: The 15th Field Air Repair Depot (located at BANGKOK) and its 1st Sub-depot (located at RANGOON) were responsible for repair and supply of planes for our air division. This depot was placed under the command of the 3rd Air Army immediately after the army was organized.

A large scaled improvement and repair of planes was made at the air repair depot at SHONAN (SINGAPORE), while new planes and materials were supplied through the air repair depot at SAIGON. From July to October, 1942, the 19th Shipping Air Depot was attached to our division, and from November 1942 up to February 1943, it was attached to the 17th Shipping Air Depot. However, as enemy air raids in the RANGOON area were intensified, the shipping air depot was ordered to withdraw to SINGAPORE.

2. Supply; Ammunition and fuel were supplied by the 20th Field Air Supply Depot (at SINGAPORE) through its agency at RANGOON.
Later the agency was placed under the command of our air division.

Taking into consideration the convenience of inland transportation of supplies within BURMA, we established issuing points at PINMANA (east of MEIKTILA)

F. Intendance and Medical Services.

Taking into consideration the peculiar disposition of air units and the transportation difficulties in BURMA, our division established field storage sheds at RANGOON, TOUNGOO and MEIKTILA, and their agents at MEGWE and SHWEBO, and actually supported ourselves both in food and clothings.

Preventive measures against BURMA ~~verhacular~~ native diseases were taken. In addition, a sanitarium was established at KARO in the SHAN high land area exhausted airmen.

E. Communication

The communication units under the command of our division were the 1st Air Signal Regiment and the 3rd Air Signal Regiment. These regiments and the Air Route Regiment were responsible for establishing important communication lines.

At first we planned to use a wire communication system within BURMA, because intelligence reports and orders could readily be sent between unit headquarters and air fields. However, because of the shortage of communication materials, wire communication was established only between RANGOON (divisional headquarters) , between TOUNGOO and MEIKTILA (command post), and between RANGOON and PROME. All other communications were carried out solely by radios.

Since transportation was generally depressed, very few vacuum tubes for radios were supplied.

In addition, it was the more difficult in the rainy season to maintain communication apparatus in good condition.

Therefore, the intelligence communication system of the air signal regiment, and the communication system of the navigator unit were also used in emergencies.

Special effort and caution were required to keep our operation plans in strict secrecy. Also, in order to mislead the enemy air forces which assembled in the INDIA-BURMA-CHINA border line area, receiving and sending of decoy messages were carried on even during the suspension period when our division was inactive.

Chapter VI Outline of the Progress of the Operations by the 5th Air Division.

A. Invasion of BURMA (from January, 1942 up to March, 1942)

On 10 January, 1942 after the PHILIPPINES operation, our divisional headquarters departed HEITO, passed through CHANGHWA (on HAINAN Island),

arrived at SAIGON where the Southern Army General Headquarters was situated, and received the order of our new missions. The gist of the orders was as follows:

The air division will operate in THAILAND and BURMA, quickly annihilating the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces in this area, and closely co-operate with the 15th Army.

Prior to this, our division had been ordered to put under our command the 10th Air Brigade (headquarters, the 77th, 31st and 62nd Air Regiments) since our arrival at BANGKOK.

The division commander arrived at BANGKOK by air on the 15th of January, and assembled the 4th Air Division (headquarters, the 8th, 50th, and 14th Air Regiments) , which gradually moved from FORMOSA to THAILAND by the 24th, and planned to annihilate the BRITISH and AMERICAN air forces in BURMA prior to the 15th Army's penetration through the THAILAND-BURMA border line. On about 25 January the disposition of our units was as follows:

Division headquarters -----(BANGKOK)

The 4th Air Brigade H.Q.---DOMMAN (BANGKOK) air field

The 8th Air Regiment-------same as above

The 14th Air Regiment------same as above

The 50th Air Regiment------NAKDSAWAN

The 10th Air Brigade H.Q.--LAMPANG

The 77th Air Regiment-----LAMPANG

The 31st Air Regiment------PITSANLOK (BISNULOK)

The 62nd Air Regiment------NAKOSAWAN (Advanced base at DOMMAN)

As soon as the 4th Air Brigade headquarters arrived at BANGKOK, our division, according to the intelligence received from the 8th Air Regiment headquarter reconnaissance unit which had been active in this area, began to reconnoiter the situation of enemy air forces in the RANGOON and TOUNGOO areas on 20 January, employing the 8th Air Regiment headquarters reconnaissance unit.

From the end of January, our division commenced attacking the northern and southern RANGOON air fields (the southern air field at MINGALADON; the northern air field at HLEGU).

During this period, the 10th Air Brigade co-operated with the 15th Army which had penetrated the border line in the TENASSERIM area.

Outline of the operations of our air division during the period from the end of January up to the middle of March, namely the 15th Army's penetration through the border line up to its occupation of RANGOON, was as follows:

1. Air Annihilation Operations:

At the initial stage of the operation, it was quite certain that the main enemy air force was situated at RANGOON, while an element was at TOUNGOO. Our division commenced air annihilation operations against RANGOON from the end of January, employing the combined fighter and bomber units from the 4th and 10th Air Brigades. However, 1 company of the 14th Air Regiment was completely destroyed by the enemy. Following this we changed our tactics as follows:

The assault unit of light bombers were to induce enemy fighters on flight, and then the total strength of our fighter units were to sweep down on the unexpecting enemy fighters. The operations by the 15th Army steadily progressed, completing the occupation of MOULMEIN on January, and began crossing the SITTANG River on 1 March . Our air division, in compliance to the request from the 15th Army, carried out the air annihilation operations, employing bomber units (total strength of heavy bombers, light bombers, and assault planes). In carrying out these operations, a few bombers attacked enemy air fields at nights, and successively fighter units carried out dawn attacks.

During this period, since our type 97 fighters were inferior to enemy fighters in speed and maneuvarability, 1 company of new fighters, the type 2 single-engined fighters, were sent to reinforce our units. However, our pilots not being trained nor accustomed to operating these new type planes, were often injured or killed in the numerous accidents which occurred.

During the early part of February, we commenced an attack on the TOUNGOO and BASSEIN air bases, and following that, we successively attacked 3

air bases in BURMA. Until the early part of March, the number of enemy planes available for operation decreased to 60. This was only half the number of planes they had at the initial stage of operation. However, we too, suffered heavy losses, especially the 14th Air Regiment which had no fighting power after the middle of February. This unit had to be dispatched to Japan to improve the type of its planes (from type 97 heavy bomber model 1 to model 2).

2. Support of Ground Operations.

In order to closely support the ground forces, our air division first of all endeavored to attain air supremacy while attacking enemy ground forces at a required time on a required point.

3. Our division reconnoitered the ANDAMAN Islands during this period.

4. Instructing Method.

Our division always gave a definite order covering a very short period, and the order was always carried out instantenously and to the letter. The headquarters was situated at BANGKOK from the 15th to the end of January; at MOULMEIN from 1 February to 15 March; and after that at RANGOON.

B. Air Annihilation Operation in BURMA. (March,1942)

In the early part of March, the 15th Army completely occupied RANGOON, and the 55th Division drove the CHUNGKING army towards TOUNGOO, while the 33rd division pursued the INDO-BRITISH army along the IRAWADDY River. During these operations, though air annihilation had been roughly completed by our air division, enemy planes attacked our fronts occassionally. Prior to this, at the beginning of March when our army was about to cross the SITTANG River, the enemy air force withdrew to the LASHIO, MEIMYO and AKYAB areas.

However, believing that there were an enemy air base in the areas of the IRAWADDY or the CHINDOWIN Rivers, we urged the headquarters reconnaissance unit to search for enemy air fields in and north of the MANDALAY and PROME areas. Meanwhile two newly constructed enemy air fields were discovered on the photograph taken by the 33rd Division's reconnaissance in the MAGWE AREA.

At that time, since the JAVA operation was roughly completed, the

Southern Army ordered the 7th Air Brigade (Headquarters, the 64th, 12th and 98th Air Regiment) , the 12th Air Brigade (Headquarters, the 1st and 11th Air Regiments) the 15th Independent Air Unit (2 headquarters reconnaissance companies) and the 27th Air Regiment (3 assault companies) from the JAVA area to be placed under the command of our air division. Hereupon our division commenced a large scale repair and maintenance program with intentions of annihilating the remaining enemy air forces with one blow. Following the arrival of these new units, our division refrained from any attacks against MAGWE.

Therefore, the 7th Air Brigade was situated in THAILAND, and attacked the CHINA based AMERICAN air force in the YUNNAN area, while the 4th Air Brigade carried out timely attacks against the AKYAB area.

In the middle of March, just prior to the commencement of our general attack, the disposition of our units was as follows:

Division Headquarters (INSEN in RANGOON)

The 4th Air Brigade H.Q. (TOUNGOO)

The 5th Air Regiment (TOUNGOO - south)

The 8th Air Regiment (TOUNGOO - south)

The 7th Air Brigade H.Q. (BANGKOK)

The 64th Air Regiment (MINGALADON) (TAUNGTH?)

The 12th Air Regiment (DOMMAN)

The 98th Air Reigment (NAKON SAWAN)

The 10th Air Brigade H.Q (LAMPAN) Preparing to move

The 77th Air Regiment (LAMPAN) "

The 31st Air Regiment (PITSANULOK) "

The 12th Air Brigade H.Q. (KLEKU)

The 1st Air Regiment "

The 11th Air Regiment "

The 15th Independent Air Unit (MINGALADON)(TAUNGTH?)

The 27th Air Regiment (TOUNGOO south)

In the middle of March, as the concentration of all units was completed, we decided to carry out a raiding attack against MAGWE on 21 and 22 March.

On the morning of 21 March, an enemy combined fighter and bomber unit consisting of 9 BLAINHEIMS (T.N?) and 10 Spitfires attacked our MINGALADON (TAUNGTH?) AIR FIELD.

According to the scheduled plan, our planes repulsed the enemy air attack, followed the retreating enemy crafts and attacked the enemy air base. Covering both southern and northern air fields completely, our unit carried out high altitude bombing and thoroughly destroyed or set a fire all the enemy planes on the ground. In order to attain better results, we repeated our attack on the following day, and completely annihilated the enemy air force in BURMA. Enemy's losses were estimated to be about 120 planes, and only an element of their fighter unit managed to escaped to southwestern CHINA and the AKYAB areas.

C. Support of the BURMA Mopping-up Operation.

(From the end of March, 1942 up to the end of May, 1942)

Though the enemy air strength decreased temporarily due to our air annihilation operation against MAGWE, enemy planes carried out occasional guerilla attacks from their bases at LASHIO and YUNNAN on the fronts of our 15 th Army. Our 15th Army, which was reinforced with the newly attached 18th and 56th Divisions after the MALAY operation, attacked RANGOON, TOUNGOO CHALK, and other areas south of central BURMA, pursued the INDO-BRITISH army and the CHUNGKING army northwards, and carried on mopping up operations.

During this period, our air division closely co-operated with the 15th Army, while keeping watch on the increasing enemy air forces in the BURMA border line area.

The disposition of our units from the end of March up to the end of May was as follows

Division Command Post (TOUNGOO)

The 4th Air Brigade H.Q. (TOUNGOO, formerly at MEIKTILA)

The 50th Air Regiment (TOUNGOO south, formerly at MEIKTILA)

The 8th Air Regiment (same as above)

The 7th Air Brigade H.Q. (BANGKOK (TOUNGOO))

The 64th Air Regiment (LAMPAN (TOUNGOO - north))

The 12th Air Regiment (DOMMAN (HLEGU))

The 98th Air Regiment (MINGALADON)(TAKE)

The 12th Air Brigade H.Q. (HLEGU(TOUNGOO))

The 1st Air Regiment (HLEGU (TOUNGOO))

The 11th Air Regiment (HLEGU (TOUNGOO))

The 81st Air Regiment (Main force at LEKU an element at TOUNGOO)

The 27th Air Regiment (TOUNGOO south)

The 1st Raiding Group (DOMMAN, (at the time of the general attack at TOUNGOO))

Note: The 15th Independent Air Unit, which had been transferred from JAVA, moved to MANCHURIA in April, and the 81st Air Regiment (consisting of 2 headquarters reconnaissance units) was newly attached to our air division. Also, in order to carry out the airborne raiding operations, the 1st raiding Unit was placed under our air divisions command.

Our division, while proceeding with the air annihilation operation against MAGWE, had ordered the 15th Independent air unit to carry out the photographic reconnaissance of the strategic positions in the SHAN high land area. This was to facilitate the 15th Army's operations, especially the interception of the CHUNGKING Army's route of retreat. At the end of March, this reconnaissance was roughly completed.

In April, as the 15th Army Commenced its operation, our air division issued the following orders: The 27th Air Regiment to concentrate on the direct support of ground operations; the 4th Air Brigade to co-operate timely with the 27th Air Regiment; and the 4th, 7th, and 12th Air Brigades to carry out timely attacks against the LASHIO and AKYAB air fields. When the 50th Division, successfully circling the SHAN high land area, advanced to the LASHIO area and was about to cut off the CHUNGKING army's route of retreat it planned to employ an airborne raiding unit. Though two plans were suggested concerning the descent point (one was the LASHIO area, while another was the SHWEBO area) ; the LASHIO area plan was adopted in order to achieve a decisive victory in cutting off the enemy's retreating route. On 29 April, as the 56th Division approached LASHIO, the 1st Raiding Unit, (commanded by COLONEL KUME) recently attached to our division, left the TOUNGOO southern air field with the ~~heavy~~ co-operation of the 7th Air Brigade. However, because of inclement weather in the destination area, the raiding operation had to be suspended.

During this period, there were no notable air annihilation operations . Our air division searched for and intercepted the enemy planes which attacked us occasionally and also counter-attacked the enemy's advance in the LASHIO and

AKYAB area. (On May, the 64th Air Regiment commander, Lieutenant Colonel TAKEO KATO, was killed in aerial combat in the AKYAB area.) The 7th Air Brigade also carried out timely attacks on key positions in order to cut off enemy's route of retreat in the BARAIL and IMPHAL areas on the northwestern INDIA-BURMA border line.

D. Disposition of Our Division During the Rainy Season of 1942.

After the supporting operation of the mopping up operation in BURMA, units of our air division withdrew to the MALAY area, and concentrated its efforts in preparations for the next operation. The disposition and strength of our units were as follows:

Name of Units	Disposition	Type and Number of Planes		Airmen
Division Headquarters	RANGOON			
The 4th Air Brigade H. Q.	TOUNGOO			
The 50th Air Regiment	SINGAPORE (for improvement of the type of planes)	Model 1 fighter	30	40
The 8th Air Regiment	TOUNGOO & MOULMEIN	Model 100 reconnaissance plane	7	15
		twin engine light bomber	7	30
The 7th Air Brigade Hdq.	SUNGEI PATANI			
The 12th Air Regiment	ALORSTAR	Model 97 heavy bomber	25	100
The 98th Air Regiment	SUNGEI PATANI	"	"	180
The 64th Air Regiment	MONKALADON (TAK?) (under the direct command of our divisional Hdq.)	Model 1 fighter	25	30
The 12th Air Brigade Hdq.	SINGAPORE			
The 1st Air Regiment	"	Model 1 fighter	25	30
The 11th Air Regiment	"	"	"	"
The 81st Air Regiment (lacking 1 company)	LEKU	Model 100 reconnaissance plane	7	15

Note: These are estimated figures in the early part of July.

The gist of preparations for the next operation was as follows:

1. Training

(1) Training for the CALCUTTA attack which was to be carried out after the rainy season.

(2) Training to improve night flights.

(3) Training to increase the skill in aerial combats.

(4) Training to become more efficient in performing original duties of ground services.

II Improvement in armament and lengthening the range of heavy bombers.

III Transportation of fuel and ammunition to BURMA.

IV Repairing and maintenance works for the purpose of increasing available planes.

Chapter V Air Annihilation Operations in the BURMA Border Line Area and Supporting Operations for the Defense Against the Enemy's Counter-attack in the AKYAB Area.

(From the end of October, 1942, up to the end of December 1942.)

Though the attack against CALCUTTA had been planned to be carried out immediately after the rainy season, we could not carry out this plan, partly because of the difficulty in transportation during the rainy season, and partly because it was necessary to co-operate with the 15th Army in repulsing the INDO-BRITISH army which was expected to commence counter attacks. Also because exhaust flame dampers on heavy bombers for night attacks had many defects. Hereupon, our division, in order to annihilate the enemy air force in the BURMA border line area, advanced its command post to MEIKTILA, planning to annihilate the enemy air forces in southwestern CHINA, in the BENGAL Presidency area in eastern INDIA, and in the IMPHAL and CHITTAGONG areas.

The new disposition of our units after the rainy season was as follows:

Divisional Headquarters	(RANGOON)
Divisional Command Post	(MEIKTILA)
The 4th Air Brigade Hdq.	(MEIKTILA)
The 5th Air Regiment	(MEIKTILA)
The 8th Air Regiment	HEHO (T.N?)

The 14th Air Regiment	SUNGEI PATANI (T.N?)
The 7th Air Brigade Hdq.	TOUNGOO
The 64th Air Regiment	TOUNGOO (north)
The 12th Air Regiment	ALOR STAR (DOMMAN LEKU (T.N.?))
The 98th Air Regiment	SUNGEIBATANI
The 12th Air Brigade Hdq.	MEIMYO (~~T.N?~~)
The 1st Air Regiment	MEIMYO
The 11th Air Regiment	MEIMYO
The 81st Air Regiment	Main force- LEKU An element -MEIKTILA

Taking this disposition into consideration, our division ordered the 4th and 7th Air Brigade to attack the enemy air force in the IMPHAL, CHITTAGONG and FENNY areas, and for the 12th Air Brigade to attack on the YUNNAN area in southwestern CHINA and also to intercept enemy planes which attacked northern BURMA.

During this period, enemy air forces were gradually reinforced; and small numbers of their planes frequently carried out guerilla attacks against various places in BURMA, especially on transportation key points. Therefore, our division ordered bomber units to retreat to MALAY and THAILAND in order to prevent our losses caused by enemy air raids and adopted such tactics as follows i.e., our bomber units advanced in the evenings (to front bases), commenced their attack at dawn and returned to rear bases in the evenings.

The INDO-BRITISH army gradually concentrated its strength in the MAYU Peninsula area, and indications of their counter-attack became clear. Therefore, keeping in close liaison with the 15th Army; our division directed the 5th Air Brigade to support our ground forces in that area.

At the end of this period, the supply transportation of the AMERICAN air forces in CHINA; using the INDIA-CHINA air route; became increasingly active. Therefore, in December; we carried out a daring attack against TINSUKIA, the enemy's intermediate base, and achieved a great success.

In December, as the situation in the SOUTH WEST Islands area became urgent, the 12th Air Brigade and the 14th Air Regiment were transfered there.

F

~~Chapter VI~~ Air Annihilation Operations in the BURMA Border Line Area and Support for Ground Operations.

(From January, 1943 up to May, 1943)

At the end of 1942, the enemy's intention to counter-attack BURMA became clear; and it was expected that the enemy would attack the NU River (RU CANG) area or the MAYU Peninsula area in eastern INDIA. Therefore, our air and ground forces in BURMA improved our defensive disposition and concentrated on preparations for coming operations.

At the beginning of 1943, the Indo-British air forces again counter-attacked on the MAYU Peninsula area where they had failed in their counter attack before at the end of the year. The 15th Army commenced its operations in February to repel this counter attack by the enemy; mopped up MAYU Peninsula and drove the enemy far ~~away~~ towards the CHITTAGONG area. In the south-western CHINA AREA, we also defeated the CHUNGKING army which appeared on the left bank of the NU River. The enemy's movement on the INDIA-CHINA air route also became very active. In February, the AMERICAN volunteer unit in CHINA was organized into the AMERICAN 14th Air Unit; (Major General CHENNAULT was assigned to the chief of this unit.) and its strength was gradually reinforced. Also, in INDIA, the AMERICAN air force was gradually strengthenedd and became superior to the BRITISH air force which was situated east of AKOLA and CHITTAGONG, principally on the MAYU Peninsula which was the ground operation theater.

The main purpose of the attacks by these enemy air forces was to cut off our supply line while an element of them attacked our key positions in the RANGOON area and our air fields.

In accordance with this situation, our army, without changing our former disposition, carried on our operations aiming to annihilate enemy air forces in the BURMA border line area and also to co-operate closely with the 15th army.

1. Air Annihilation Operations:

During this period, we altered our operation tactics of the former period when we had concentrated on short-distance attacks aginst enemy air fields in the border line area from the beginning to the end. Our new plan was to ~~be in contact with~~ ENGAGE the enemy in the hinterland (making

the utmost use of our attacking range). In April and in May, we attacked KUNMINOT twice inorder to reduce enemy strength there and contributed to check the enemy's attack against JAPAN Proper.

As for the enemy air bases a short distance away, we attacked TINSUKIA: THE ENEMY's intermediate base of the INDIA-CHINA air route; in February and March and destroyed 25 or 26 enemy planes. We also successively attacked the FENNY, SILCHAR, BATALRURE, KOKSBAZA, DOHAZARE, air fields and delivered considerable damage every time. During this period, taking advantage of the 15th Army's counter attack against MAYU Peninsula; we advanced our air base and"intelligence gathering point"in preparation for the CALUCATTA attack.

2. Support for Ground Operations:

Since the end of December, the 4th Air Brigade successively co-operated with the 55th Division in the AKYAB area. Also, in February; when the 15th Army commenced counter-attack operation in the MAYU Peninsula area, our division, utilizing the spare hours between air annihilation operations; closely supported the 55th Division on the ground; the 4th Air Division attacking the area south of CHITTAGONG (excluding CHITTAGONG) and the 7th Air Brigade attacking the CHITTAGONG area.

3. Air Defense:

As the enemy air force was strengthened, the frequency of their attacks against BURMA steadily increased; and our political key positions and transportation were given high target priority.

Their attack objectives were as follows:

1. Political key positions : RANGOON MEIMYO (?)
2. Transportation key points : AKYAB
3. (Oil) Producing key point : CHALK

Together with intensification of their attacks on these key positions, their attacks against our air bases in the RANGOON, TOUNGOO and MEIKTILA areas became increasingly frequent. However, our division whose air defense strength was very small in general, confronted enemy air attacks depending chiefly upon the anti-aircraft fire arms on the ground. No full-service air defense units were established other than a fighter unit which took charge of the air defense for ~~the~~ RANGOON ~~municipality~~ and

air fields near by. Other important air fields were guarded against air attacks by the fighter units situated in each respective air field and also by the anti-aircraft fire arms possessed by each respective air field battalion.

G. Disposition During The Rainy Season in 1943.

At the end of May, as soon as the rainy season began, our division sent our units to the rear in order to replace their strength which was badly consumed by the successive operations during the dry season, and also to resume the balance of dispositions which was broken due to the transfer of the 12th Air Brigade to the southeastern area. Thus, our division shifted to the rainy season disposition to prepare for the coming operations in the next dry season. However, attacks by enemy planes became increasingly persistent. Therefore, our fighter units were charged with the protection of sea transportation and the air defense of RANGOON while an element of our bomber unit was despatched to SUMATRA to patrol the sea ~~surface~~ west of SAVAN and south of PADANG under the command of the 9th Air Brigade. Another element of our bomber unit took charge of the protection ~~for~~ of convoys against submarines.

In June, the 3rd Air Army was organized; and our division was put under its command. The operation theater of this air army was THAILAND and BURMA, and it could carry out training in FRENCH INDO-CHINA and MALAY at any time. The disposition of our division during this rainy season was as follows:

Division Headquarters	RANGOON
The 4th Air Brigade H.Q.	TOUNGOO
The 50th Air Regiment	MINGALAON (SINGAPORE)
The 8th Air Regiment	TOUNGOO (SUNGEI PATANI)
The 7th Air Brigade H.Q.	SUNGEI PATANI
The 64th Air Regiment	MINGALADON (SUNGEI PATANI)
The 12th Air Regiment	MEDANG and SAVAN
The 98th Air Regiment	PATANG
The 81st Air Regiment	HLEGU (SUNGEI PATANI)

Chapter VII Training.

Our division carried on training in accordance with the following

gist both in operation periods and in rainy seasons.

1. Air crewmen of each unit, either the practised or the unskilled, will be trained in order to improve their skill for flight duties and to give full play to the power of the unit.

2. ~~Every~~ All personnel will have a thorough knowledge of planes and apparatus with which they are equipped and will be trained so as to make the utmost use of the power of these planes and apparatus .

3. Taking advantage of the rainy season in BURMA, the unskilled will be trained; and the training for coming operations in the next period will be carried out in accordance with the instructions of the coming operations.

Our division received the replacement of air crewmen directly from the Air Headquarters or through the Southern Army Field Air Replacement Unit. (If the new air crewmen who arrived from JAPAN Proper were unskilled, ~~he was~~ They were to be sent to the field training air unit) . However, in order that a new crewman might become closely combined in the unit to which he was attached, that he might be thoroughly informed of and skilled in the special tactics peculiar to each respective unit and also that he might be accustomed to the abnormal mental condition in the battle field, our division sent new air crewmen to the unit committed to an operation immediately after their arrival from JAPAN Proper and ordered them to improve their skill through actual combat.

Hoping to make the utmost use of our planes and equipment, we requested ~~to dispatch~~ the a skilled technical expert or instructor be sent from JAPAN Proper ~~and~~ To trained our men to improve their skill for handling and operating the planes and equipment.

TABLE SHOWING STRENGTH OF AIR UNITS OF THE 5th AIR DIVISION Jan. 1942 to Aug. 1943

Year	Month	4th Air Group		10th Air Group	7th Air Group	12th Air Group	15th Air Brig.	81st Air Unit	27th Air Unit	1st Air Brig.
		Hq. 8th Air Unit 50th " "	14th Air Unit	Hq. 77th Air Unit 31st " " 62nd " "	Hq. 64th Air Unit 12th " " 98th " "	Hq. 1st Air Unit 11th " "				
1 9 4 2	Jan.	Trfd. from FORMOSA after the PHILIPPINE Operation		Returned from the 3rd Air Div.						
	Feb.									
	Mar.			31st & 62nd Air Units trfd. to PHILIPPINES	Returned from the 3rd Air Div.	Returned from the 3rd Air Div.	Returned from the 3rd Air Div. but immediately trfd. to MANCHURIA		Returned from the 3rd Air Div.	Returned from the 3rd Air Div. but immediately trfd. to JAPAN PROPER
	Apr.									
	May									
	Jun.			Hq. & 77th Air Unit trfd. to MANCHURIA					Trfd. to MANCHURIA	
	Jul. to Nov.									
	Dec.					Trfd. to [illegible]				
1 9 4 3	Jan.		Trfd. to the SOUTH-WEST Area							
	Feb.									
	Mar.							Returned from the 3rd Air Div.		
	Apr.									
	May									
	Jun.									
	Jul.									
	Aug.									

Volume No. 40

Part II

Air Operations

- from -

Sept. 1943

- to -

Aug. 1945

35

Vol. 40, Part 2

Air Operations

Part 2 - Second Half (from Sept. 1943 to Aug. 1945).

This record was written from memory by Maj. SUSUMU OGATA (Staff Officer of the 5th Air Force Div. from Apr. 1943 until the conclusion of the war). It serves as a reference for one part of the history of the war and was proposed by the units under the command of the 5th Air Force Div. at the time of their demobilization. (The contents are based upon the memory of the Cmdr. and are therefore very rough. Due to the movements of the different units, it does not contain all of the units' reports essential to the making of this report).

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Chap. I - Enemy Movements

Essential Points

The AMERICAN and ENGLISH Air Forces in EAST INDIA, which gradually showed signs of counter-attacks have changed to the offensive since the beginning of 1943 especially the AMERICAN Air Force, which has been rapidly reinforced due to the evacuation of the GERMAN and the ITALIAN Forces from EAST AFRICA during the autumn of 1943. For this reason, many new and improved models of planes appeared in succession and the power of the enemy air force in BURMA was greatly strengthened. The guerilla attacks gradually changed into large scale attacks and bombing by several planes at night turned into day light raids by large formations. The AMERICAN Air Force directed their attacks chiefly on strategic operational and aerial transportation between INDIA and CHINA. The ENGLISH Air Force engaged in tactical operations (judged chiefly through the activities of the enemy planes). Contrary to reports, the activities of our reconnaissance planes of our BURMA Air Force gradually became difficult and the activities of our bombers in the day time were made almost impossible due to their inferior performances, and the effectiveness of our air attacks fell rapidly. The activities of our fighters, which at one time held air supremacy, became difficult yearly. Even to obtain air supremacy in one locality with our combined forces was quite impossible due to rapid reinforcement and increased efficiency of the enemy.

Furthermore, the air operations in the BURMA Area were shifted to detached operations with the SOUTHERN Army from the latter half of 1944, namely at the time of the preparation for the decisive battle in the PHILIPPINES. This was during the period when our air forces in BURMA were dispatched to the PHILIPPINES and the supplies from the rear were gradually decreasing.

The marked difference between the JAPANESE and enemy air

forces became rapidly greater. The rapid increase in efficiency of the enemy air transports was very noticeable. That is, the transports running between INDIA and CHINA were able to handle nearly 10,000 tons a month. (According to an intercepted radio broadcast). The transportation of a large number of reinforcements in the IMPHAL operation was made possible by converting these transports into airborne troop carriers.

The enemy air forces were able to attack at will in the BURMA area due to our loss of air bases and high casualties since April 1945. On the other hand, the enemy fleet in the INDIAN OCEAN seemed to have been strengthened since the end of 1943. We were taking precautionary measures against attacks directed toward the BURMA SEA. However, at the time of the decisive battle in the PHILIPPINES, it seemed that a part of the ENGLISH Fleet was used in that area. They did not attack this front, but attacked several times in the SUMATRA and ANDAMAN areas on a small scale.

A. State of the Enemy Air Forces from Sept. 1943 to Aug. 1944.

1. EAST INDIES Area.

Since early 1943, the AMERICAN and ENGLISH Air Forces in the EAST INDIES have been continuously growing in strength. The AMERICAN increase was especially significant. In the spring of 1943, there were approximately 400 planes and the number had increased to about 700 by autumn of the same year. In the spring of 1944, the AMERICAN Air Force had approximately 1,000 planes and by summer it had about 1,500, giving them absolute air supremacy. The AMERICAN Air Force concentrated on strategy, large scale raids, whereas the ENGLISH concentrated on tactics, small scale raids and had the responsibility of guarding the vital EAST INDIES area against our air force.

Since the enemy strength increased, both the AMERICAN and ENGLISH Forces were able to replace their obsolete planes. From about autumn of 1943, new type fighters P-47, P-51, P-38 and SPIT-FIRES appeared in large numbers. Newer type bombers

were the B-24's and B-25's, which were also utilized to a great extent.

In BURMA, the strength of the EAST INDIES Air Force was noticeably increased. (Data based upon statistics taken from the enemy air attacks). In addition to the diverse attacks by the ENGLISH Air Force, large scale raids by the AMERICAN Air Force, and harassing night raids were replaced by large scale day time raids. After the arrival of the P-51's, long range raids with fighter escorts were made possible. The activity of our reconnaissance planes were becoming more difficult, whereas enemy reconnaissance flights became more frequent. Because the enemy air-raids became more effective and well-timed, they were able to execute large scale bombings on important targets.

2. SOUTHWESTERN CHINA Area.

Until the end of 1943, a part of the AMERICAN Air Force in CHINA was stationed in SOUTHWESTERN CHINA Area.

In BURMA, only minor raids were undertaken around the vicinity of the mouth of the NUCHIAN RIVER. However, in 1944, these raids became more frequent, because of the reinforcement of the CHINA-INDIA air-route. The defense of KUNMING and other air bases became stronger.

At first, there was absoulutely no communication between enemy air force in INDIA and the AMERICAN Air Force in SOUTHWESTERN CHINA. However, about the middle of 1944, both forces were able to secure NUCHIAN as their cooperative and active communication center. (Concluded from the condition of the raids).

3. INDO-CHINA Air Route.

The AMERICAN Air Force was responsible for the INDO-CHINA air route. From about the middle of 1943, it was gradually strengthened. Particularly in 1944, air transports suddenly became active and from the beginning of 1944, the planes that were in actual flights numbered from 80 to 100. Military material which was sent to CHINA by air, amounted to more than 60 tons per month. (Data concerning communication).

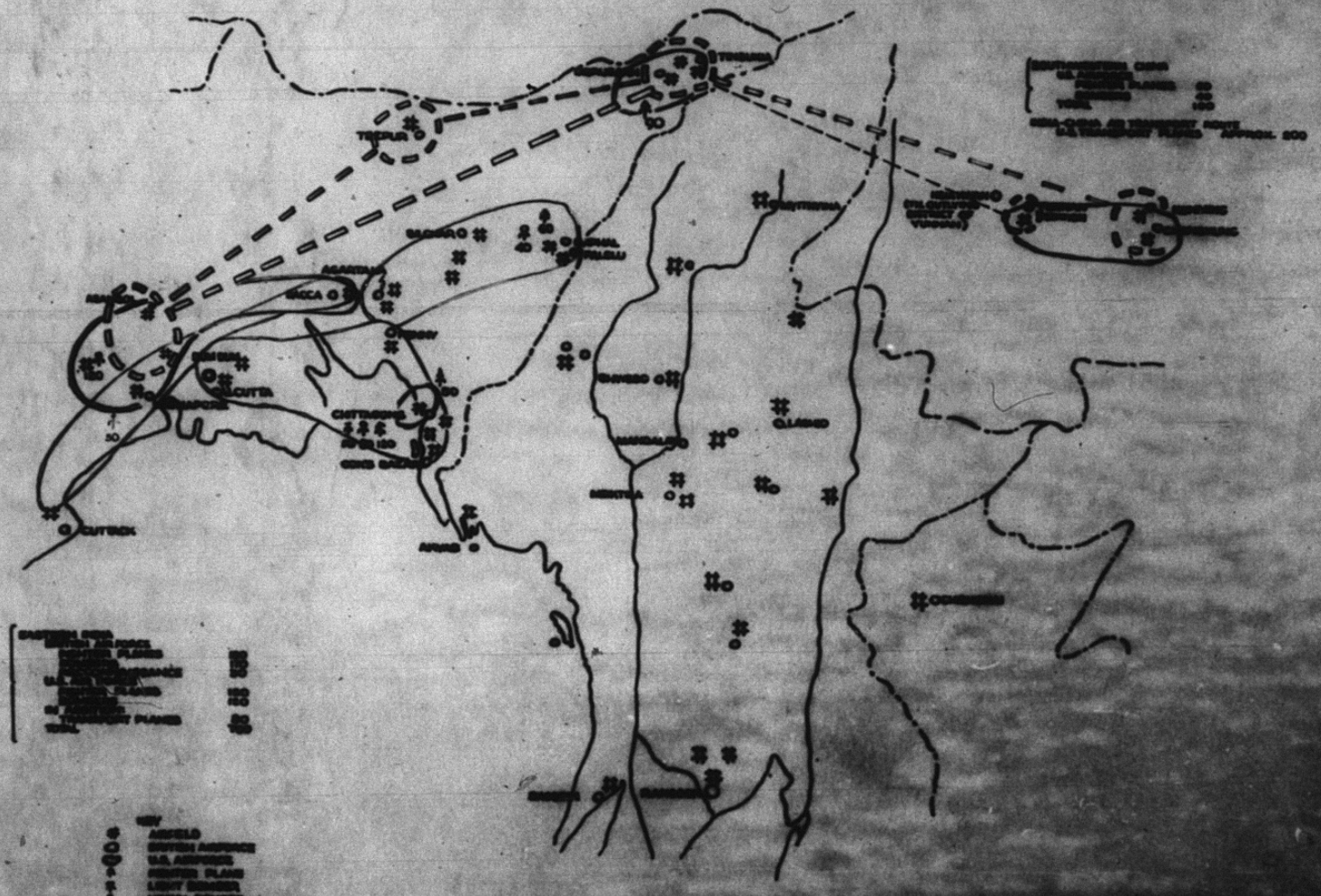
Appended Map # 1

DISPOSITION OF ENEMY AIR FORCE IN BURMA AREA

End of 1943

DISPOSITION OF ENEMY AIR FORCE IN BURMA AREA END OF 1943

APPENDED MAP NO.1



4. INDIAN OCEAN Area.

The ENGLISH Fleet was stationed in the INDIAN OCEAN area. In the latter part of 1943, it was partially reinforced by the MEDITERRANEAN Fleet, and its activities gradually became more frequent. (Report received from the Navy).

5. The survey on the disposition of the enemy air force in the BURMA area toward the latter part of 1943 is indicated on Map No. 1. (This map is based upon data compiled from enemy records, research by H.Q., reconnaissance planes, communications and reports received from other higher headquarters).

B. State of Enemy Air Force from Sept. 1944 to Aug. 1945.

1. In June 1944 the IMPHAL Operations failed. In addition, since enemy troops were flown to their air base in NORTHERN BURMA, warfare recommenced in BURMA. Till the end of the rainy season in 1944, this air base was used only as a supply base for enemy airborne troops. However, the enemy planned to secure an air base and this air base was immediately prepared in order to prepare for future operations. The number of enemy airplanes were based on enemy raids, our attack and reconnaissance.

2. Because of the completion of the BURMA ROAD in the latter part of 1944, the air forces in EASTERN INDIA and SOUTHWESTERN CHINA were merged. Consequently, NORTHERN BURMA became a much superior air base for the enemy tactical force. (Reports received from our raids and reconnaissance).

3. From the beginning of 1945, large scale enemy raids suddenly became intense. Our important transportation depots and airfields used as supply bases were bombed continuously. These attacks were coordinated with the enemy land forces, rendering the operation of our land forces extremely difficult. The survey of the disposition of enemy air forces in the BURMA area in Jan. 1945, is as indicated on Map No. 2. (This map is based upon reports compiled from enemy raids, research by H.Q., air reconnaissance and reports received from other higher H.Q.).

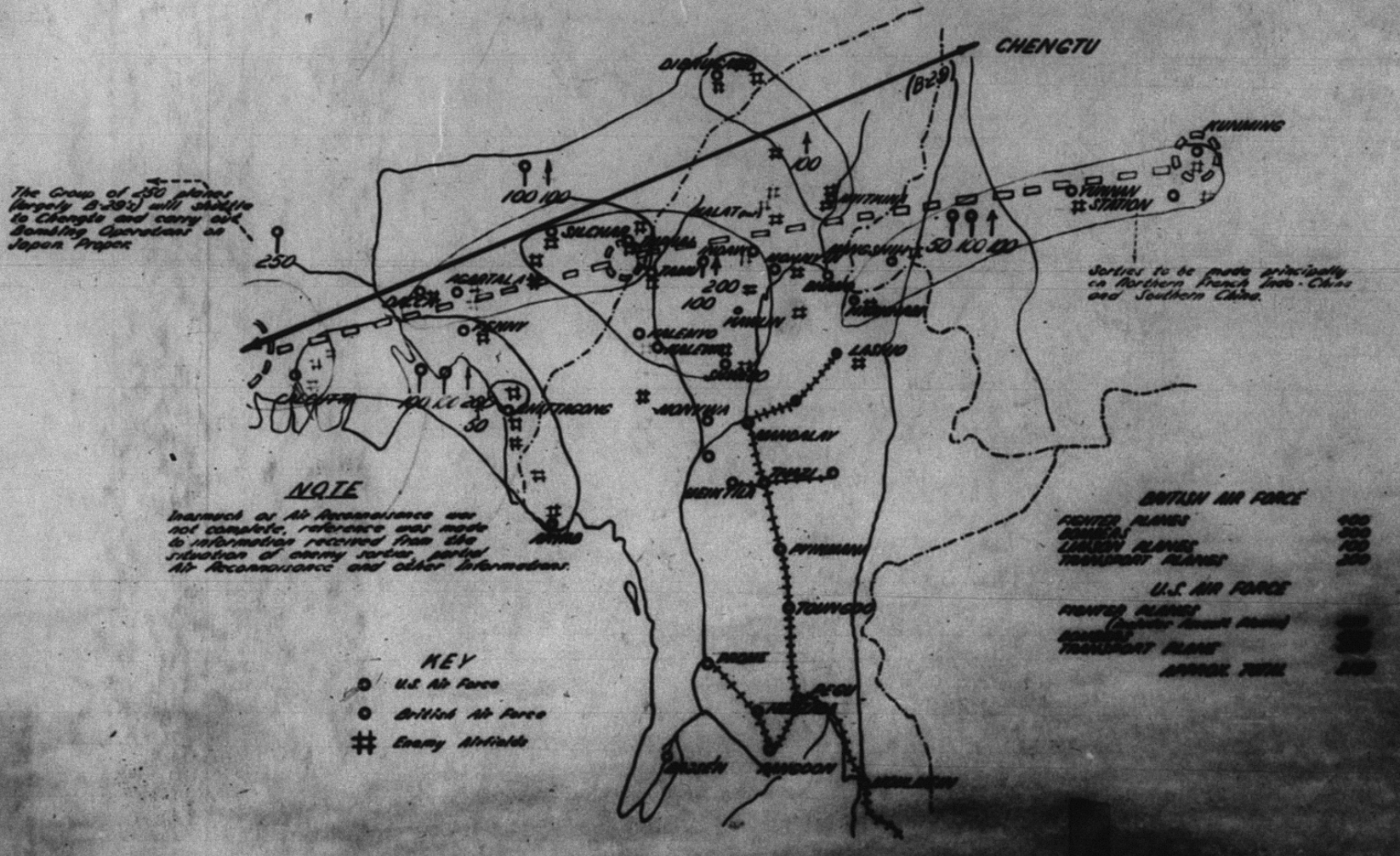
Appended Map #2

DISPOSITION OF ENEMY AIR FORCE IN BURMA AREA

End of January 1945

DISPOSITION OF ENEMY AIR FORCE IN BURMA AREA
END OF JAN. 1945

APPENDED MAP NO. 2



4. The enemy fleet in the INDIAN OCEAN area showed definite signs of being reinforced, after the end of the rainy season in 1944, and indications definitely pointed to an invasion of the coasts of BURMA and MALAY. Therefore, our air force was constantly on the alert for enemy large scale invasion of the shores of BURMA. Beyond several raids on SUMATRA and ANDAMAN by carrier planes, the shores were untouched. However, along the shores of BURMA and the coast of BATAAN, small scale land operations were attempted with the intention of invasion.

5. In Jan. 1945, the AMERICAN Task Force executed air-raids on the SOUTHERN FRENCH INDIES. Since the landing of the AMERICAN Army in the PHILIPPINES strongly indicated that the FRENCH INDIES would be invaded next, the air power of that area was partially strengthened. We also made immediate preparations to utilize most of our air power against this threat. (At that time, the zone of operations of the 5th Air Div. was the entire theatre of BURMA, THAILAND and FRENCH INDIES).

6. In March 1945, our powerful air base MEIKTILA in CENTRAL BURMA fell into enemy hands. Thus the air supremacy of the BURMA area returned to the enemy. Moreover, enemy fighters were able to extend their striking power over SOUTHERN THAILAND.

7. In May, 1945, except for MOULMEIN and TAVOY, all of our air bases fell to the enemy. The enemy air force secretly began to establish airfields at strategic location in THAILAND (Based upon reports from ground forces and Hdqs. air recon.)

CHAPTER 2

General Conditions in the Preparation and Progress of Oper.

A. General conditions of the operational preparation.

In preparation of our BURMA AIR FORCE, we took advantages of the rainy season, when air operation was difficult by striving to improve the conditions of the air bases to the utomost. Our secondary aim was to make general preparations for theater

operation with the air force for the coming dry season. That is, during the rainy season such measures as: collecting and compiling reports; revision of plans for operation; educations and training based upon former dry season operations; instruction pertaining to battle, orientation of replacements; imporovements and maintenance of airplanes; replacing present aircraft with new type planes; establishing and equipping air bases; collection and transportation of military goods.

2. Even though a large air force was employed in protection of water transportation in the RANGOON area, during the operational preparations in the rainy season of 1943, our ships were heavily damaged by the enemy airforce and submarine. Transportation from the rear bases was carried out by means of the THAILAND-BURMA railway during 1944, but since the main steel bridges were destroyed by enemy bombing, transportation facilities became crippled. Therefore, transportation and communication from the rear bases for the forces in the BURMA THEATER was carried out on the one remaining railway. Consequently, the operational preparation during the rainy season became more difficult.

B. The General Condition of the Progress of Operations.

II. From the end of the rainy season in 1943 until the beginning of 1945, that is all through the first half of this operation, our air force had been comparatively active as the important element of the SOUTHERN ARMY. It carried out such offensive operations as combat for air supremacy, attacks on strategic rear areas, and co-operation with the ground forces. However, since that time, air control in the entire BURMA THEATER has fallen into the hands of the enemy. This is due to: the quality and quantity of reinforcements of the enemy airforce; the failure of the IMPHAL Operation; the establishment of air bases by the enemy airborne troops in BURMA.

II. On the other hand, from the beginning of the preparation for the decisive battle in the PHILIPPINES (about Sept. 1945), the BURMA THEATER became an area of secondary operation for the

SOUTHERN ARMY. It airforce had been gradually drawn to the PHILIPPINE THEATER. Therefore, while the enemy air power increased in the BURMA area, our air power decresed. Even during this period, though inferior in number, our airforce (in BURMA) was fighting bravely from air bases which took many years to complete.

Although they attacked the enemy and succeeded in achieving a part of their objective, they did not contribute to the general progress of the war.

III. The conditions in BURMA became more and more critical in 1945. Induced by the defeat in the decisive battle of the PHILLIPPINES, the mission of the main air-force in BURMA shifted to FRENCH INDO-CHINA. Complete utilization of the air power in the BURMA THEATER became restricted.

In the BURMA THEATER, we strived to co-operate with our far inferior air force (a fighter unit and a part of a light bomber regiment), in intensified ground operations, against a decidedly superior enemy air force. This continued even after the start of the rainy season, but due to the difficulties involved in the utilization of air bases during the rainy season and since the weather grew worse along the THAILAND-BURMA border, air operations in the BURMA THEATER ceased at the end of June.

Chapter 3

Summary of the Preparation and the Progress of Operation during Each Season.

I. The operational preparation during the rainy season of 1944.

A. The enemy by rapid re-inforcement of its airpower in BURMA, especially in EAST INDIA, and by the constant usage of such ports as CHITTAGONG and CALCUTTA by its transports showed definite signs of intending to attack BURMA, (This is based upon navy communicational reports).

The preparations for air operations after the rainy season were made with the prihciple aim of neutralizing the enemy attacking power.

This was done by raiding enemy air bases just after the rainy season and before the enemy began its attack, raiding important habbors used as bases of operations.

In view of the re-enforcement of the INDO-CHINA air route, the secondary aim was to strike at air bases and destroy transport planes. Although headquarters restricted us in making plans to attack CALCUTTA at that time, we expected it at any time so we secretly planned.

II. Education and Training.

A. During the rainy season in BURMA some fighters were distributed to the RANGOON area for the purpose of protecting our ships. A few recon. planes and bombers were also distributed to patrol the BENGAL BAY. General air units were allocated to the TENASSERIUM Theater for the purpose of protecting our transports sailing to RANGOON. A part of the heavy bomber unit was also dispatched to patrol the INDIAN OCEAN in the SUMATRA area.

Others were sent mainly to MALAY for education and training.

Thus, an outline of power was planned for operations during the next dry season.

B. With regard to education and training; we planned future operations from battle experiences acquired before the rainy season. We strove to make each fighter and bomber unit utilize its full power satisfactorily. At the same time, we endeavored to raid co-operatively with fighters and bombers. Fighter units, along with combat training, practiced methods of attacking bombers and ground attacks. (bombing and strafing). Bomber units trained for long range night raids and ship bombing. Hdq. recon. unit trained chiefly in secret reconnaissance at high attitude at dawn and in the evening.

III. Maintenance of planes and the introduction of new types of airplanes.

A. Due to the fact that some planes were engaged in the previously mentioned operation during the rainy season, they

could not be adequately serviced. The number of aircrafts with complete maintenance which were able to operate just before the end of the rainy season for the various units were as follows:

4th Air Brig:

50th Air Reg. (fighter) Model 1 fighter Type 2----27 planes.

8th Air Regt. (light bomber) Model 99 Twin-engine ----27 planes.

34th Air Reg. (light bomber) Model 99 Twin-engine-----20 planes

7th Air Brig:

64th Air Reg. (fighter) Model 1, fighter Type 2, ----30 planes.

12th Air Regt. (heavy bomber) Model 97-----15 planes

98th Air Regt. (heavy bomber) Model 97,----15 planes

81st Air Regt. (Headquater recon. planes) Model 1 Type 2 ----15 planes

21st Air Regt. (fighter) Model 2 12 planes

B. The Introduction of New types of aircraft and Improvements on the old types of aircraft.

During the rainy season, the 50th Air Regt. planes changed from Model 1 (fighter) Type 1 to Type 2, and the 81st Air Regt. gradually changed its planes to Model 100 HQ.Recon. Plane Type 2. There were no major changes other than these.

Such improvements as equipping light and heavy bombers with exhaust flame dampers, for use in night raids, and the adding of nitrogen to the gasoline of heavy bombers to prevent fires were made.

C. The arrival of transport type planes, except bombers, was generally successful.

IV. Establishment, Maintenance and consolidation of Airbases.

From 1943, we strived to establish and maintain the air bases through experiences gained from former operations and by looking ahead to future operations. The important air-bases were divided into groups consisting of a few air-fields. Hangars and other buildings were dispersed and concealed as much as possible.

By constructing secret and dummy airfields and by usage of camouflages, we endeavored to prevent our planes and bases from being damaged. Thus, we made satisfactory preparations for mobile operations against superior enemy air-forces.

Repair of equipments for planes was improved as much as possible.

The condition of our airbases in BURMA around the end of the rainy season in 1943, was as indicated on Map NO. 3.

V. The Collection and Transportation of Military Supplies.

A. The collection and the transportation of aviation gasoline and bombs was carried out by water transportation from SINGAPORE to RANGOON. However, ships were attacked by enemy submarines enroute or after entering the port of RANGOON.

About half of the estimated amount, or about 25,000 barrels of aviation gasoline and about 1000 tons of bombs were transported during the rainy season. (Statistics show that during the last dry season, the consumption of aviation gasoline averaged 5000 to 7000 barrels per month.

B. Military supplies, other than airplane parts, were supplied by the BURMA ARMY or manufactured in BURMA.

C. Although the supply of planes was insufficient to replace the losses, there were enough fighter planes because the losses were small due to the inactivity during the rainy season. The numbers of bombers, however, became inadequate and began to seriously handicap our operations.

D. Operations after the Rainy Season of 1943 until the end of the same year.

I. The Situation After the Rainy Season Until Octoboer.

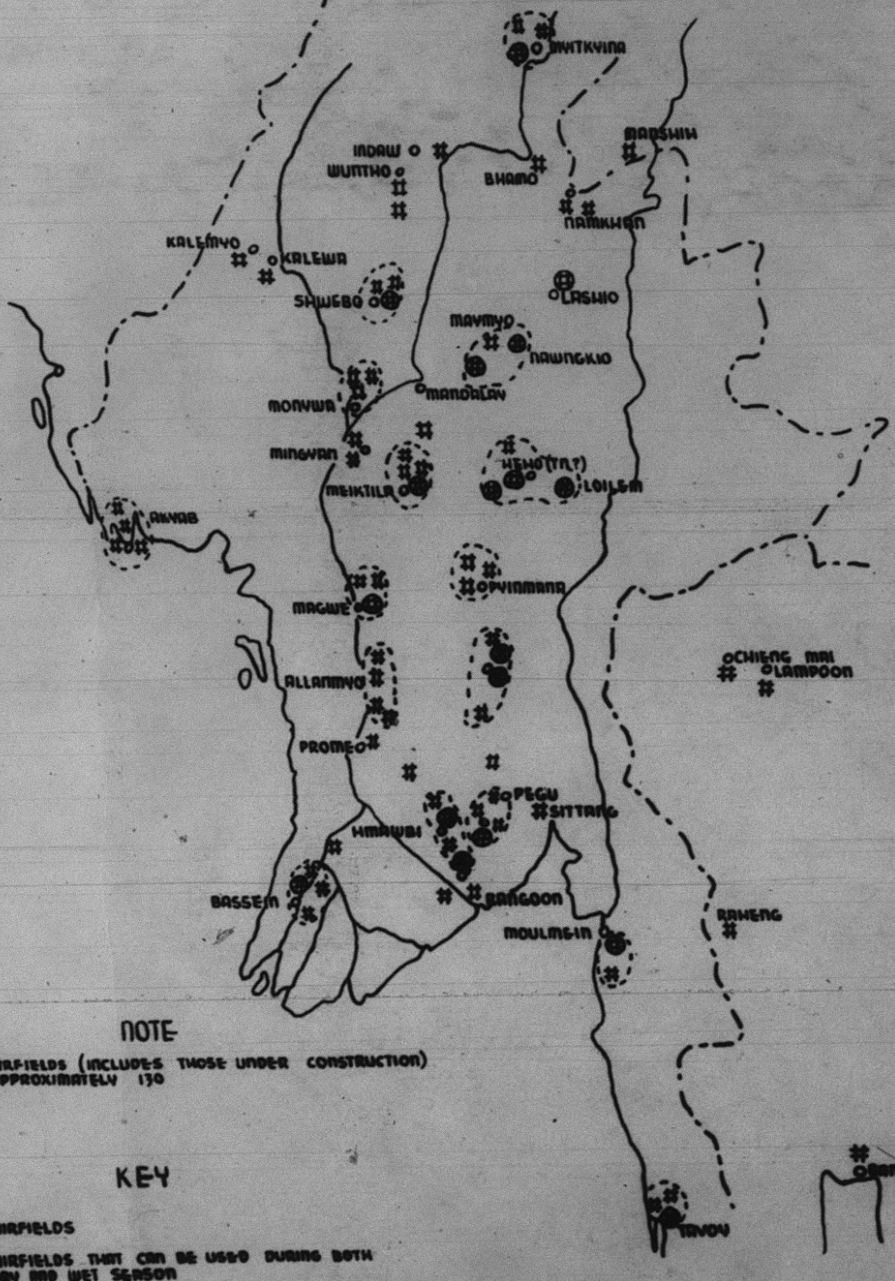
Appended Map #3

AIR BASES IN BURMA

At the End of Rainy Period, 1943

AIR BASES IN BURMA
AT THE END OF RAINY PERIOD, 1943

APPENDED MAP NO. 3



NOTE

AIRFIELDS (INCLUDES THOSE UNDER CONSTRUCTION) APPROXIMATELY 130

KEY

- AIRFIELDS
- AIRFIELDS THAT CAN BE USED DURING BOTH DRY AND WET SEASON
- AIRFIELD GROUP

1. The 5th Air Division ceased its maintenance and training, which had been carried out during the rainy season at the end of Sept., and changed to a state of operations for the dry season at the beginning of Oct. The condition of the Air Div. at the beginning of October was as follows:

Headquarters of the 5th Air Div. - RANGOON Headquarters of the 5th Air Div. - MEIKTILA. The 50th Air Regiment (fighter) MEIKTILA (MINGALODON) The 8th Air Regiment (light bomber) "HEHO" The 34th Air Regt. (light bomber) "LOILEM" Headquarters of the 7th Air Brigade, "HLEGU" (SUNGEI PATANI) The 64th Air Regt. (fighter) MINGALODON (TN?) The 12th Air Regt (heavy bomber) MAUBIN ALOR STAR. The 98th Air Regt. (heavy bomber) HLEGU (SUNGEI PATANI) The 81st Air Regt. (Hq. Recon.) HLEGU. The 21st Air Regt. (fighter) MINGALODON

2. From the end of the rainy season, the 81st Air Regt. (Hq. Recon. Planes) reconnoitered CALCUTTA and other important harbours and airbases in EAST INDIA and SOUTH-WESTERN CHINA. They generally accomplished their intended mission. However, from the end of the same year (1943), activities of enemy fighters and raiders became more and more aggresive and accurate.

Therefore, recon. by our Hq. Recon. Planes became more difficult and our experienced pilots were downed in large numbers.

3. We endeavored to collect the aforementioned information in preparation to counter-attack strong enemy raids and expected raids. We planned to attack enemy planes in the vicinity of RANGOON and MEIKTILA.

4. The attack on the port of CHITTAGONG. An examination of photographs taken on a recon. mission showed a group of enemy naval vessels in the harbor of CHITTAGONG. In the middle of Oct., the 7th Air Brigade consisting of two air regt. of fighters and heavy bombers attacked ~~but~~ but the bombing was ineffective, and there were no noticeable results.

5. Arrival of REINFORCEMENTS

The 33rd Air Regt. (fighters), in the middle of Oct.

The 204th Air Regt. (fighter), in the middle of Nov.

These new arrivals in BURMA were placed under the command

of the Air Div.

II. Progress and Enforcement of Attacks on the Port of CALCUTTA.

1. The progress of attack on the port of CALCUTTA.

a. Striking at a group of airfields and harbors in CALCUTTA, on a large scale, was very necessary in order to cripple the enemy.

At the end of 1942, a few heavy and light bombers carried out well planned night raids, to harass the enemy. Due to faulty exhaust flame dampers on our bombers and night fighters, our casualties increased gradually. Consequently, we were forced to abandon this operation.

2. During and after the end of the rainy season of 1943, many reports were received stating that a group of enemy ships had entered the port of CALCUTTA and enemy attack on BURMA became more inevitable. Therefore, when an opportunity arose to strike the enemy by raids upon the central base, namely, the port of CALCUTTA, a large scale attack with the cooperation of the naval air force was in order. This preparation was started in the beginning of Oct.

3. Through photographic recon., we found over sixty large and medium size vessels in the port of CALCUTTA.

4. From the middle of Nov., the naval airforce had to be withdrawn to the SOUTH-EASTERN Area, due to the seriousness of the battle in that area. Therefore, the raids were carried out only by the Army Air Force for a time. From the end of Nov., a part of the Naval Air Force again operated with the Army.

5. The plan of attack on the port of CALCUTTA.

The Principal objective.

a. Our objective was to cripple the enemy by raiding the port of CALCUTTA and inflicting heavy damages on the enemy building and vessels assembled in the harbor. This was done by our fighters and bombers working in close unison with the naval air force.

b. Raiding Tactics.

1) In order to divert the enemy fighters defending CALCUTTA, our air force made recon. flights and raided air fields

in the vicinity of CHITTAGONG, SILCHAR and FIENNY, before raiding CALCUTTA. The units employed in these raids were as follows: the 4th Air Brigade, the 8th Air Regt. (about twenty light bombers), the 34th Air Regt. (about fifteen light bombers), the 50th Air Regt. (about twenty seven fighters), the 33rd Air Regt. (about twenty fighters and a part of the 81st Air Regt. (H.Q. reconnaissance about five planes).

2) The attack on CALCUTTA Was scheduled for 5 December,

3) Disposition of strength for the attack:

Army - 7th Air Brigade
12th Air Regt. (9 heavy bombers)
98th Air Regt. (9 heavy bombers)
50th Air Regt. (27 fighters)
64th Air Regt. (27 fighters)
33rd Air Regt. (20 fighters)
part of the 81st Air Regt. (8 HQ. reconnaissance planes)
204th Air Regt. (20 fighters)

Navy - 28th Air Flotilla (Mistranslation K.T.) consisting of 9 medium size attack planes and 30 "zero" fighters.

The airfields to be used for take-offs and landings are as indicated on the map.

4) Security measures for the operation

All arrivals at the airfield will be made on the evening prior to the raid, and all air-ground liaison and communication will be prohibited. We must appear to be unconcerned by keeping the plan of the raid from other forces and controling air-ground communications.

e. Preparation for storage of aviation fuel and bombs.

General preparation for storing will be as usual and partial removal of bomb fuses will be enforced.

d. Agenda concerning cooperation with naval air force.

1) Preparation of the bases to be used for storage of clothing and food and also for billets.

2) The data for the raid

3) The designated targets, bombs to be used, height of bombing, etc.

3. Air operations were in order to facilitate the raid based upon the plan of attack on the part of CALCUTTA.

a. By diverting the enemy air force around CALCUTTA, especially, fighters, we raided the enemy's EAST INDIAN front line air base at IMPHAL, PALELU, SILCHAR, FENNY, etc. from the middle of November until the end of the same month. This was done by the following air groups:

4th Air Brigade

33rd Air Regt. (approximately 15 fighters)

50th Air Regt. (" 25 fighters)

8th Air Regt. (" 15 light bombers)

34th Air Regt. (" 15 light bombers)

A part of the 81st Air Regt. (2 or 3 planes)

These air offensives resulted in heavy enemy losses. The result in regard to the enemy fighters in CALCUTTA are unknown. Because of the defensive actions of enemy fighters while attacking CALCUTTA, we suffered some losses; nevertheless, we were able to divert the enemy attention to the border area.

b. The attack on the port of CALCUTTA.

1) The attack on the port of CALCUTTA was very carefully prepared, based upon the aforementioned plans. During the preparation, there were some changes in the plan because of co-operation with the navy, but the final plan was formulated at the end of November. It was carried out smoothly as planned.

2) In the Middle of November, the 7th Air Brigade commander carried out his attacks with fighters and bombers on SUNGEI PATANI, MALAY.

3) On 1 December, a great number of enemy fighters and bombers raided the vicinity of RANGOON. Our fighter units, in that area at the time of the raid, retaliated.

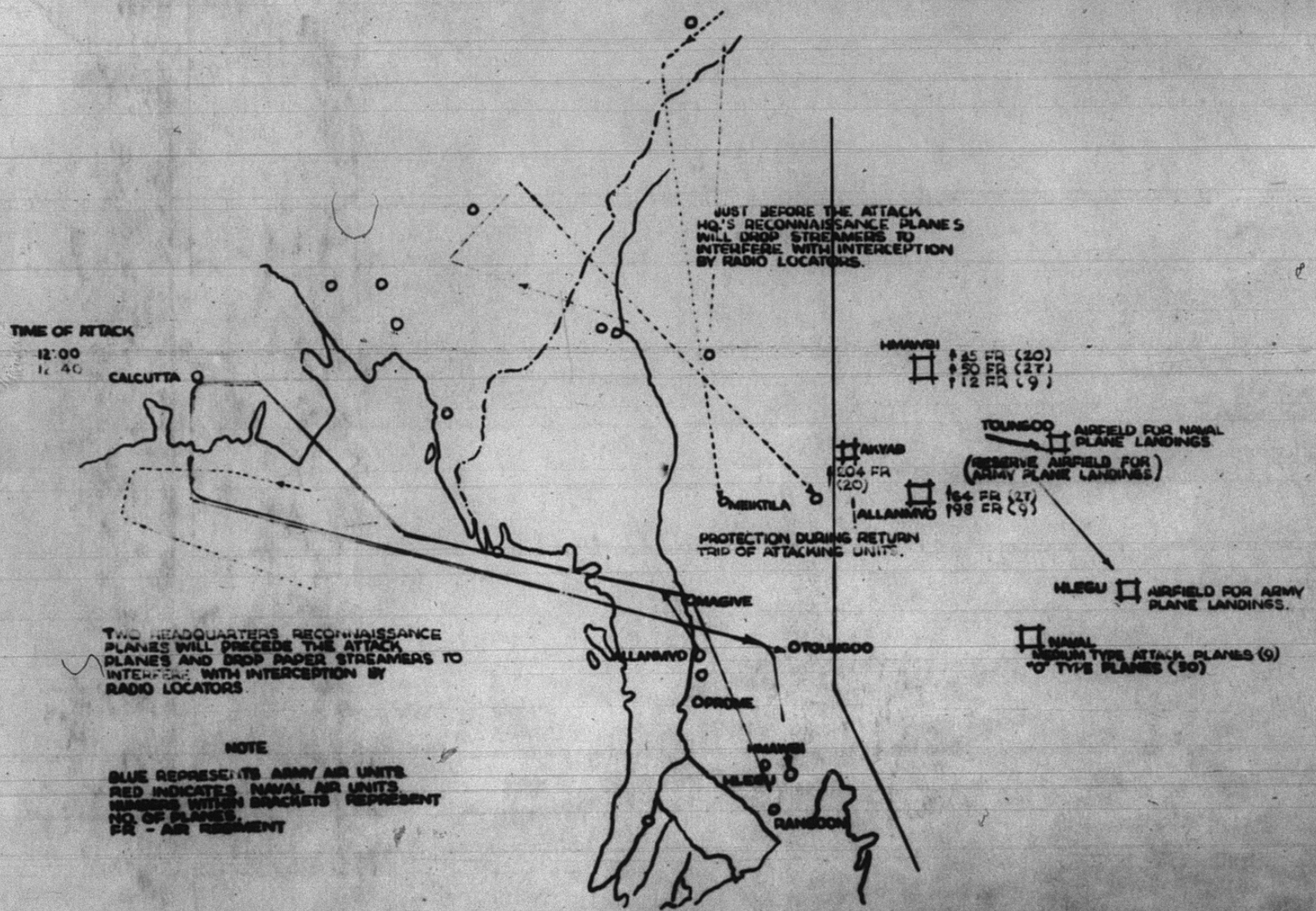
Appended Map #4

ESSENTIALS OF ATTACK ON CALCUTTA HARBOR

AND AIRFIELDS FROM WHICH PLANES TOOK OFF

ESSENTIALS OF ATTACK ON CALCUTTA HARBOR AND AIRFIELDS FROM WHICH PLANES TOOK OFF

APPENDED MAP NO. 4



Consequently, our damages were comparatively small, and the enemy losses exceeded ten planes. Therefore, changes in the plans were not necessary.

4) Attacks on the port of CALCUTTA on 5 November were effective and heavy damages were inflicted upon various buildings and ships that were in that area. Although, we expected the enemy to counter-attack with superior fighters over CALCUTTA on that day, strangely enough, we were attacked only by about ten planes. On the way to CALCUTTA, some enemy fighters from CHITTAGONG unexpectedly attacked from the rear and downed one of our army bombers. However, on our return flight, fighters pursued us but our fighter escort, (the 204th Air Regt.) which were previously dispositioned at the AKYAB Airfield and the MAGWE Airfield attacked and inflicted damages on the enemy fighters and as a result they withdrew.

III Attack on the INDO-CHINA air transportation bases.

A. The enemy's INDO-CHINA air transportation was daily strengthe In order to cripple the INDO-CHINA air transportation, an air transportation base unit which was in the area Northeast of INDIA Was ordered to attack the enemy airfields at TINSUKIA and destroy them. The preparations were coordinated with the preparations for the attack on CALCUTTA. As the attack upon the port of CALCUTTA gave the enemy unexpected losses, on 5 November, successive attacks were planned and their preparation accelerated.

B. On 8 November, the 4th Air Brigade (approximately fifty fighters and eighty light bombers) attacked TINSUKIA airfield. This attack took the enemy BY SURPRISE since no opposition WAS encountered. Although, a few planes WERE fired upon, all planes returned after inflictin heavy damages on the enemy.

C. Attack on the airfield at YUNGNING Station. After attack upon TINSUKIA airfield on 11 and 12 December, the 4th Air Brigade attacked the airfield at YUNGNING Station. On the first day, although, the enemy was taken by surprise there were few enemy losses due to low hanging clouds.

On the second day, the weather was clear. Therefore, the enemy anticipated our attack and avoided us in the air prior to the attack and did not suffer many losses.

D. Attack upon KUNMING Airfield.

The first attack was on 18 December and the second on 22 December. On these days, approximately 70 fighters and bombers of the 7th Air Brigade and an air regt. of heavy bombers which were recently distributed for this special operation, attacked KUNMING Airfield. The first bombing of the airfield where many planes were located was not effective but we inflicted heavy damages on numerous buildings and the airfield. At the time of the second attack there were heavy cloud formations and we suffered heavy damages from enemy fighters and in the ensuing air-battles between our escort fighters and the enemy planes. Heavy damages were sustained on both sides. Bombing was generally effective, but there were no outstanding results because the greater part of the enemy planes which had been on the ground took to the air to avoid us.

IV Attack on the port of CHITTAGONG.

On the other hand, from December, our air force in BURMA enforced offensive air operations to the areas north, east and west. The movement of enemy ships along the coast of BENGAL BAY continued to be vigorous as before. As a result of observation by HQ. reconnaissance, we found that enemy ships were assembling in the port of CHITTAGONG. Therefore, on 25 December, the 7th Air Brigade again attacked the same port with about 50 fighters and bombers and inflicted huge damages on enemy ships.

C. The Progress of the Battle from the beginning of 1944 until the Combined Operations with the Units in IMPHAL.

I. The battle in January

A. Since the beginning of 1944 the enemy ships became active in BENGAL BAY and began to bombard the west coast of BURMA at night. These operations were judged to be reconnaissance for suitable landing places. Therefore, the air division made a more thorough reconnaissance of the area than ever before with HQ. reconnaissance planes. Fighters and bombers units which were patrolling the bay

made a few attacks on enemy ships.

B. In spite of the attacks on CHITTAGONG toward the end of 1943, the ships entered and cleared the harbour of this city. Air defense for the harbour was reenforced. All searches made by the reconnaissance planes were failures. The fighters also carried out reconnaissance on the enemy in an attempt to discover the landing date of the enemy beforehand expecting nothing less than an attack in the middle of January.

C. Interceptor planes attacked the air transoprtation route from INDIA to CHINA. The number of airplanes along the air route from INDIA to CHINA was increasing every day in spite of repeated attacks. For the reason the division made a few surprise attacks on the enemy air transportation planes in the skies above SUMPRABUM in the middle of January, using all fighter units of the division after having planned the assault according to statistical reconnaissanc over the enemy routes and take-off time, (on the basis of the report of observations and intercepted enemy communications by the SUMPRABUM anti-aircraft observation post). The enemy suffered heavy damages through these unexpected attacks so that planes either stopped their air transportation activities during the day, taking the roundabout route or flew with escort fighters. Consequently, our objective to menace and hinder this supply route to the air units in CHINA was achieved. But the attacks with our interceptors became impossible, because the long distance transport aircraft route from TINSUKIA to CHENGTU was opened and MYITKYINA Airfield was captured by the enemy.

D. The supplying of the 18th division by air. The 18th Division which was fighting in the HUKAWNG District in North BURMA and along the frontier of INDO-BURMA, was gradually surrounded by the enemy offensive and so was in critical need of medicine and ammunition. Therefore, a part of the air unit supplied the 18th Division by orders of the commander in the BURMA area.

II The preparation of joint operation with the 28th Unit operating on the ground and advancing to IMPHAL.

A. The army in the BURMA district intended to make an attack on the enemy in IMPHAL since the middle of 1943 before the enemy prepared to take the initiative against us. The plan for the operation was completed at the end of 1943. It was determined, first of all, to hold the enemy in check in the AKYAB area with the 28th Unit in the middle of February and to advance to IMPHAL toward the end of March. Since the beginning of 1944, the air unit in BURMA (the 5th Air Division) was operating as usual. It was also repleting its strenghh and making other preparations to cooperate with the units on the ground.

B. The plan for cooperation between the 5th Air Division and the units in the BURMA area.

In order to cooperate with the units advancing to AKYAB and IMPHAL in the BURMA area, the 5th Air Division agreed on the following concerning copperation between air and ground.

1. The 28th unit in the AKYAB district will begin to attack on 3 February and will achieve its designated objective in the operation 10 days before the ppening of the offensive on IMPHAL.

2. A part of the 5th Air Division (the 7th Air Bn.) will cooperate in this operation. The air unit will principally control the sky and attacks the powerful enemy in this joint operation. Judging from the situation, the main force of the air division with the addition of the 4th Air Bn will be required to cooperate for a short period.

3. The main force of the 5th Air Division will cooperate with the units advancing on the ground to IMPHAL. After the end of the joint operation int the AKYAB area, we will postpone the joint operation in order to advance to IMPHAL, so that the air unit may prepare for the next operation.

4. The plan of the joint task to advance to IMPHAL, is as follows:

To control the sky over the battle field.

To make an attack on airplanes and gun implacements on the airfield which will obstruct our progress on the ground.

To execute attacks on the powerful enemy especially the

mechanized units and artillery.

5. During the two operations, a part of the 5th Air Division (a part of the heavy bomber unit of the 7th Air Division) will watch the enemy ships on the INDIA OCEAN (BENGAL BAY).

6. The 5th Air Division will attack air borne troops.

7. The 28th Army, the 15th Army and the 15th Air Division will make arrangements in detail concerning the joint operation on the basis of this agreement.

C. The preparation of the Air Units.

Since the beginning of February 1944, a part of the 5th Air Division retreated to THAILAND.AND MALAY area. The main force was equipping the planes and was training at air fields in the BURMA area, especially for strafing and night, evening and dawn attacks, in order to cooperate with unit on the ground forces.

D. The preparations of the air field troops.

1. In order to maintain close liaison between air and ground, the air fields on the first line were completely equipped for this purpose and new airfields just behind the front line, were constructed as connecting fields.

2. In order to immediately use the airfields occupied by the units on the ground, the airfield company prepared to advance with the forward units on the ground in the IMPHAL area.

3/ The air and ground communication company (wireless communication), which had been recently sent from the rear was attached to the army and main divisions on the first line in order to maintain close liaison with the units on the front lines.

4. Aircraft maintenance and supply organizations were sent gradually to the airfields on the front lines and the army was making every necessary preparations for the next operation.

E. The situation of the 5th Air Division on February 1944 was as follows:

1. The disposition of the air units is as shown in illustration no. 5.

Appended Map #5

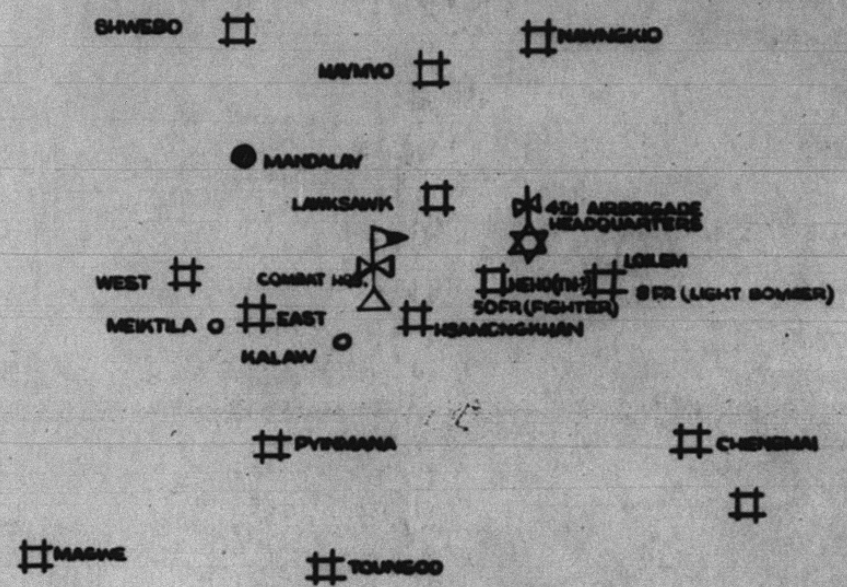
DISPOSITION OF AIR UNITS

February 1944

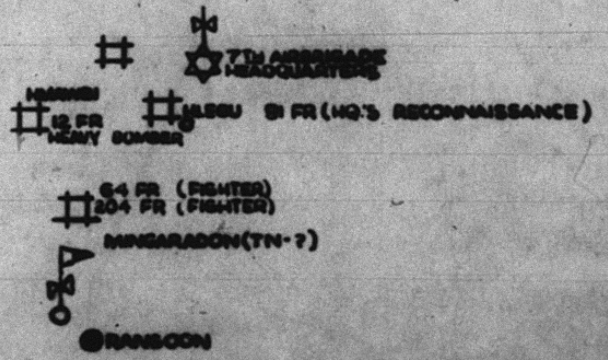
DISPOSITION OF AIR UNITS

FEB. 1944

APPENDED MAP NO. 5



5TH AIR DIVISION		
4TH AIR BRIGADE		
30 FR (FIGHTER) APPROX.	24	PLANES
8 FR (LIGHT BOMBER) -	15	PLANES
7TH AIR BRIGADE		
64 FR (FIGHTER) APPROX.	24	PLANES
12 FR (HEAVY BOMBER) -	10	PLANES
ATTACHED UNITS UNDER DIRECT COMMAND:		
8TH AIR REGT. (HQ REGIMENTAL-BASED) APPROX.	10	PLANES
204 FR (FIGHTER) APPROX.	30	PLANES
TOTAL APPROX.	100	PLANES



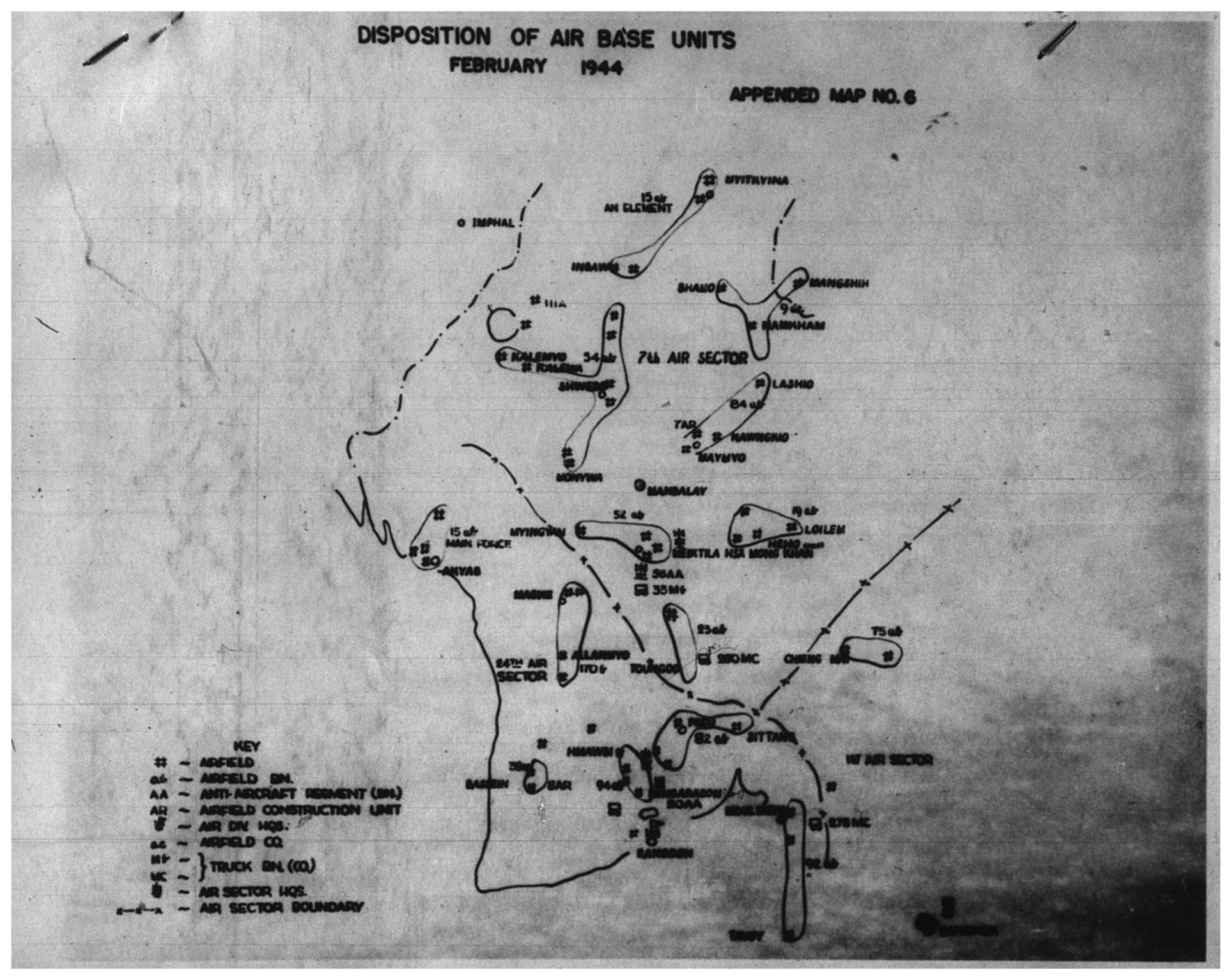
Appended Map #6

DISPOSITION OF AIR BASE UNITS

February 1944

DISPOSITION OF AIR BASE UNITS
FEBRUARY 1944

APPENDED MAP NO. 6



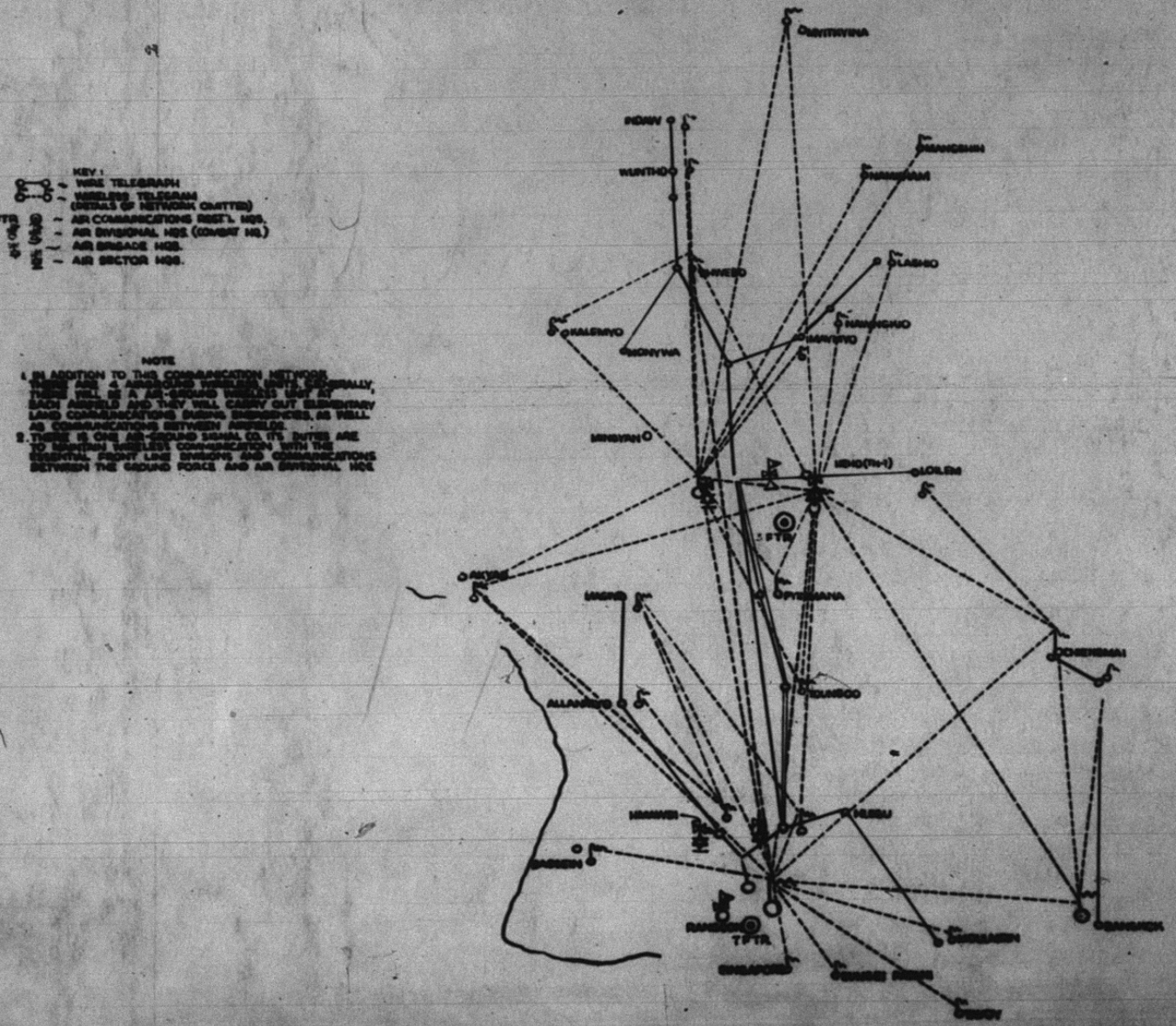
Appended Map #7

DISPOSITION OF AIR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

February 1944

DISPOSITION OF AIR COMMUNICATION NETWORK
FEB. 1944

APPENDED MAP NO.7



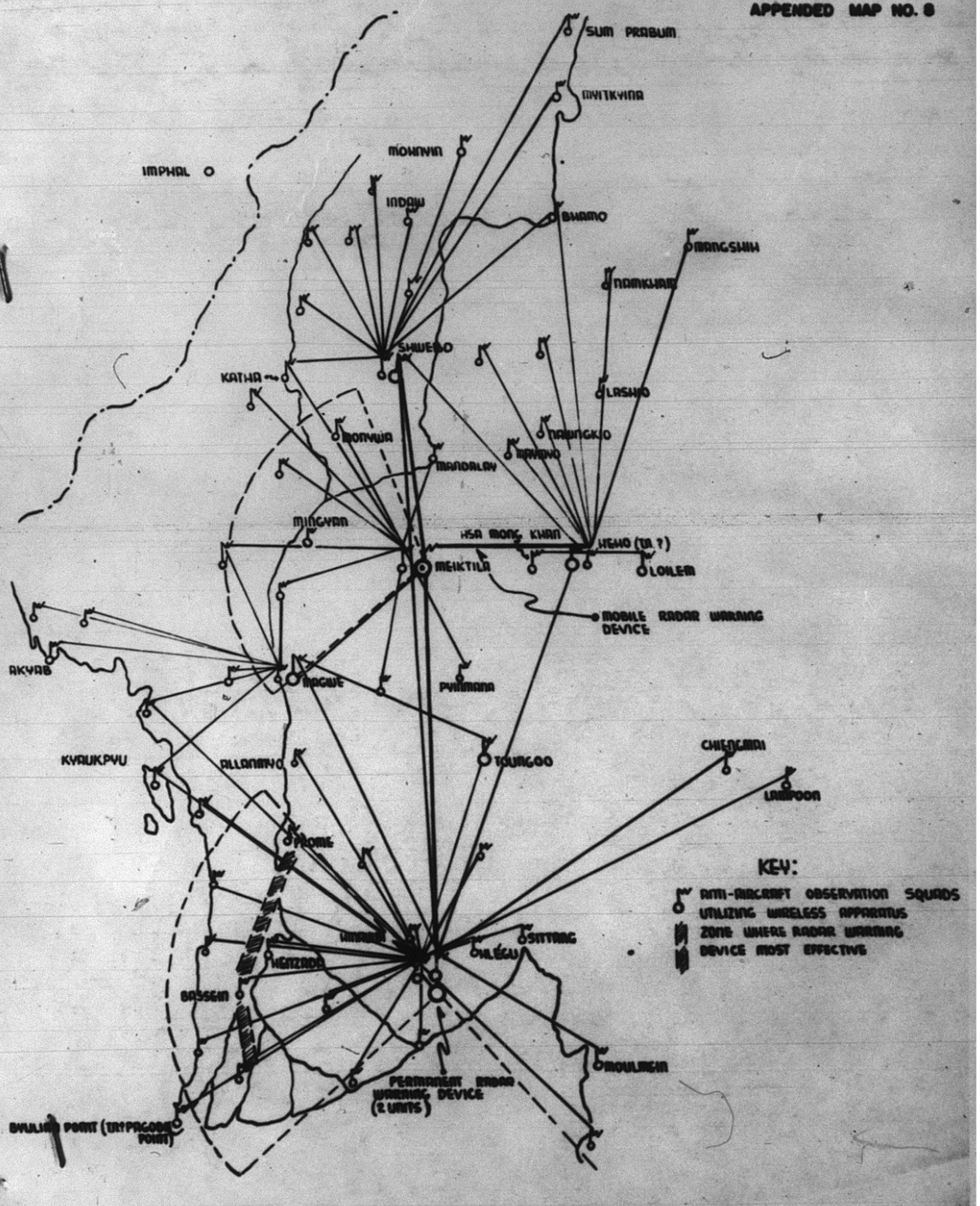
Appended Map #8

DISPOSITION OF AIR INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

February 1944

DISPOSITION OF AIR INTELLIGENCE NETWORK
FEB. 1944

APPENDED MAP NO. 8



2. The disposition of the airfield troops is shown in illustration no. 6.

3. The outline of the air communication system is shown in illustration no. 7.

4. The summary of the air intelligence system is shown in illustration no. 8.

III Cooperation in the ground operations of the 28th Army at AKYAB.

A. The 55th Division of the 28th Army began to attack the vicinity of BOTHIDAUNG, the area Northwest of AKYAB on the night of 3 February 44.

B. The 55th Air Division, chiefly the fighter units of the 7th Air Brigade (64th FR, 204th FR, 12th FR) successively attacked in accordance with previous preparations, controlled the air over the battlefields and strafed said area. Due to the distance, this air control was rather short lived. The enemy held airfields near the front from where they could attack repeatedly. The period in which we held control of the air, they avoided us and after we had returned to our base would appear in the air over the battlefields. As a result, they disrupted the attacks of our ground army, taking advantage of the unfavourable conditions existing when we attacked the ground with our fighters, they would challenge us to an air battle. Thus, with the passing of time, battle became more difficult.

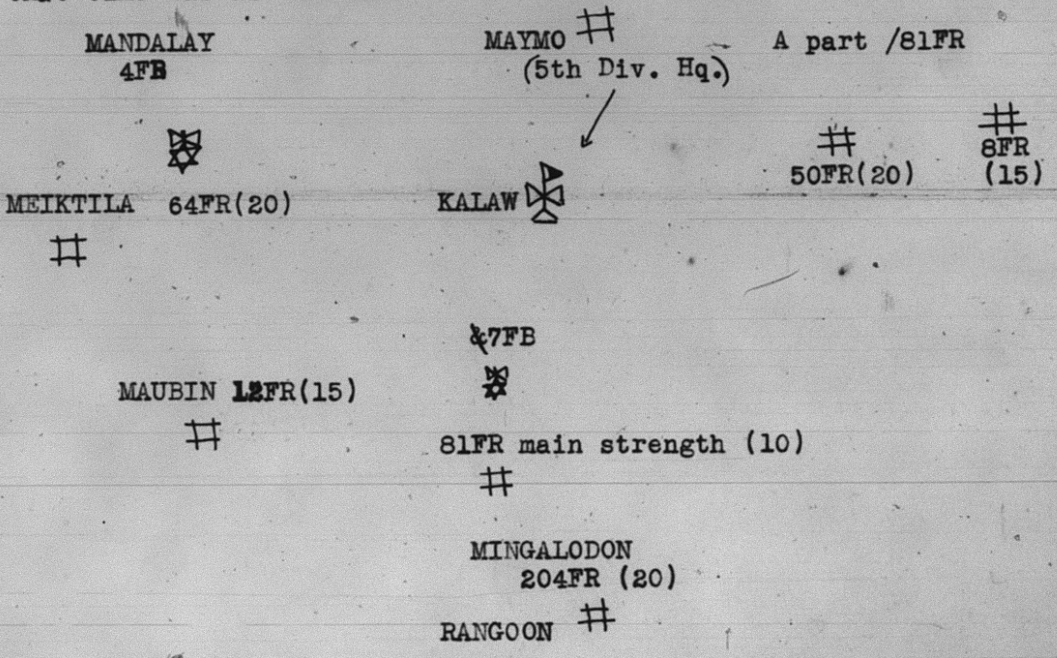
C. Even after defeat and with the 55th Division surrounding them, the enemy offered strong opposition, taking advantage of the natural terrain surrounding SHINZEIWA. As a result, even by the middle of February battle conditions had not improved. Moreover, enemy air supply was carried out on a large scale during the time that we had no control of the air, thus, we realized that siege by the forces was of no value.

D. Air Division planned an attack with its main force upon the following plan to surround the enemy force; On 21 February, about 75 of our fighters and bombers attacked SHINZEIWA (TN?), but the bombing was not effective; therefore they did not succeed in their mission. At dawn the following morning , light bombers repeated

attacks from a lower altitude and inflicted some damages to the enemy. However, the enemy overcame the obstacles and arranged anti aircraft defenses. Consequently, our air attacks became ineffective. Our ground forces attacked repeatedly but none the less we could not succeed. Gradually the supply situation became difficult and as a result we had to abandon the siege.

IV Cooperation with the IMPHAL operation and operation against the enemy air borne troops in BURMA.

A. The main strength of the 5th Air Division transferred its Headquarters to KALAW in the beginning of March in order to closely cooperate with the IMPHAL Operation. State of the Air Division at that time was as follows:



B. The IMPHAL Operation was begun by the 33rd Division in the area west of KALEMYO ON 8 March, and on 11 March, the main strength of the 15th Army began its offensive by crossing the CHINDWIN River. In the beginning that is, at the time of the crossing of the river, it seemed that resistance and the defence of the enemy planes was very strong and agressive. Therefore, the main strength of the Air Division undertook the task of protection and control of the air in that sector. On 11 March, this operation was out, but there was no enemy resistance as expected. Therefore,

on the second day (12 March) fighters and bombers of the 4th Air Brigade, attacked SILCHAR Airfield and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

C. Before crossing the river with the main force of the 15th Army, on 9 March, we received a report that enemy glider troops had landed in the area Southeast of KATHA. Therefore, on 10 March the fighter units and the light bomber unit attacked. On the 13th, the fighter unit attacked them successively and hindered the establishment of an airfield by the enemy glider troops, damaging gliders on the ground and small liaison planes. However, the majority of the gliders, planes, etc. had already been hidden near the forest. The details of the situation were not clear.

D. On ~~the~~ 15~~th~~, 16~~th~~ and 17~~th of~~ March we attacked a group of airfields at SILCHAR and IMPHAL. Aside from these attacks, our fighters and bombers also attacked the new airfield in MONYWN on the 16th where the enemy airborne troops had landed.

E. The BURMA Area Army made preparations in proportion to the necessity for attack against the enemy airborne troops. We received the report that from the night of 18 March the ground forces will open an attack against enemy airborne troops in the area southeast of KATHA. Therefore, the main force of the Air Division attacked and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. But the commencement of the ground attack was delayed for a few days due to incomplete preparations.

F. Because of such successive offensives, such as, joint operation and attack upon the enemy airborne troops in the IMPHAL Operation, the Air Division was depleted in its strength. Therefore, during the 4 days from 20 March, they strived to replenish their ranks. During ~~their~~ this period HQ reconnaissance planes kept watch over the enemy airborne troops in North BURMA.

G. From 25 March, the operation was begun again and we endeavored to cooperate with the IMPHAL Operation and to attack the enemy airborne troops in North BURMA. Especially, from 24 April,

at the decisive IMPHAL battle of the 10th Army, and at the time of this operational failure, successive attack was attempted with all strength. Since May, because of adverse weather conditions at IMPHAL HEIGHT, our cooperative attacks became difficult, but taking advantage of the weather, we continously attacked them and thereby cooperating with the attacking forces in the assault against the enemy airborne troops in North BURMA.

H. From June, the weather in the IMPHAL area became worse. Thus, ground operations also became difficult. As soon as cooperation became difficult due to the stoppage in communications, cooperation with the IMPHAL Operation was ceased with the last attack upon the IMPHAL Airfield on 17 June. Since then, in June and July, they cooperated chiefly with the operational forces in Northern BURMA and NUCHIAN.

I. The utilized strength of the 5th Air Division concerning cooperation with the IMPHAL Operation and in operations against the enemy air borne troops in Northern BURMA, is listed on the attached sheet.

J. The redeployment of the air forces during this operation was as follows:

1. The 62nd Air Regt. (heavy bomber) arrived in BURMA in the middle of March, and was placed under command of the Air Division. (Withdrawn from that command in the middle of August.)

2. The 87th Air Regt. (fighter) arrived in BURMA on 7th May, and was placed under the command of the Air Division and returned to SUMATRA on 22nd of the same month.

3. The 7th Air Brigade HQ and the 12th Air Regt. (heavy bomber) were withdrawn from the Divisional command in the middle of July, and were redeployed to the area north of AUSTRALIA.

V. Other Operations during the period of the Combined Operations in IMPHAL

A. Aerial Operation

1. As afore mentioned, the air units advanced and destroyed the enemy planes at the IMPHAL and SILCHAR air field in the IMPHAL

Chart
Attached No. 1

The utilized strength in the cooperation with the IMPHAL Operation and with operation against the airborne troops in NORTHERN BURMA.

DATE	STRENGTH EMPLOYED	OBJECTIVE OF ATTACK	RESULTS & OTHERS
March 10	50FR. 8 FR. (← 20 ⌐ 2)	The force landed by gliders at the area South East of KATHA	
March 11	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 60)	Air control at crossing Point of Chindwin	
March 12	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (⌐ 6, ← 60)	Silchar Airfield	Destroyed on ground - 8 Shot down - 14
	64 FR. 204 FR. (← 35)	INWA (TN?) Crossing point	
March 13	50 FR. 64 FR 204 FR. 8 FR. (← 55 ⌐ 3)	An Airfield established by the enemy force at the area east of MOHNYIN	
March 15	8 FR. (⌐ 3) (⌐ 3)	- Night attack upon Imphal Silchar Airfields	
March 16	50 FR 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 36)	Dawn attack upon Imphal Airfield	
	50 FR. 8 FR. (← 20 ⌐ 6)	Attack upon airfield used by landed force at MOHNYIN	
March 17	50 FR. 204 FR. 64 FR. (← 18)	Dawn attack upon Imphal Airffeld	
	204 FR. (← 15)	Attack upon airfield used by the landed force at MOHNYIN	
March 18	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. 12 FR. 62 FR, (← 54, ⌐ 12, ⌐ 6)	Attack upon airfield used by the landed force at the area south-east of MOHNYIN and KATHA	
March 19 24	Maintenance		
March 25		Attack upon airfields of CHITTAGONG and COX'S BAZAR	
March 26	50 FR. 204 FR. 8 FR. (← 14. ⌐ 6)	Attack upon TINSKYA The enemy key position of TONZA in front of 33 D.	
March 27		Attack upon LEDO oil-field	
March 28		Attack upon NEW NAMI Airfield in Notthern Burma	
March 30	8 FR. (⌐ 2)	Parachuting ammunition to WAKIYAMA force, who occupied the MOHNYIN Airfield	
March 31	8 FR. (⌐ 2)	"	
April 3 5	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 Fr. (← 36)	Night counterattack Against the enemy air transport planes The enemy utilized the Airborne troops in Notthern Burma	
April 6	12 FR. (⌐ 6)	Night attack upon IMPHAL	

DATE	STRENGTH EMPLOYED	OBJECTIVE OF ATTACK	RESULTS & OTHERS
April 7 9	64 FR. (←9)	Harassing of night air transportation in Northern Burma	
April 12	50 FR. (←9)	Searching of enemy reinforcements in DIMAPUR	Because of foul weather, could not succeed
April 13	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. (←47, o-12)	Attack upon MAWLU position of the enemy air transport forcein Northern Burma	
April 14	8 FR 64 FR. (←27, o-9)	"	
April 15	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. (←50, o-9)	Attack upon Northern IMPHAL Airfield	
April 17	50 FR. (←20)	Air control of 33 D front in IMPHAL	
	64 FR. 12 FR. 204 FR. (←50, o-5)	Attack upon PALELU Airfield	
April 18	204 FR. (←20)	Attack upon MAWLU position	
April 21	50 FR. 204 FR. (←28)	Attack upon IMPHAL Airfield	Report on the enemy Transportation strength to IMPHAL
April 22	204 FR. (←20)	"	
April 24	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. 8 FR. (←50, o-6)	Cooperation with the decisive IMPHAL battle Attack upon the enemy artillery position at BINENBULU (TN?)	
April 25	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. 8 FR. (←54, o-9)	Attack upon SILCHAR and HAILAKANDI Airfield	
April 26	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. 8 FR. (←50, o-3)	Attack upon IMPHAL	Shot down - 9 o-2 - were lost
April 28	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (←40)	Attack upon a group of artillery and tanks at ZUBUZA (TN?)	Destroyed about 200
April 29 May 1 May 3	Maintenance		
May 4	50 FR. 64 FR. (←25)	Cooperation with 15 D fronrin KOHIMA	
May 4	"	On the way back, attacked the NAMI Airfield	
May 5	64 FR. 204 FR. (←30)	Cooperation with 15 D front in KOHIMA	Foul weather partially succeeded. Others attacked MEULU position
May 6	64 FR. 204 FR. (←25)	Attacked upon IMPHAL	Shot down - 2 2 were lost
May 10	50 FR. 204 FR. (←25)	Attack upon the enemy artillery positions in JIANTIAPUR and BOLIBAZAR	

DATE		STRENGTH EMPLOYED	OBJECTIVE OF ATTACK	RESULTS & OTHERS
May	14	50 FR. 64 FR. (← 25)	Attack upon a group of the enemy artillery and tanks in KOHIMA	Inflicted heavy damages
May	15	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. 87 FR.(← 35, 0- 6)	Attack upon the air-fields in HUKAWNG area	
May	18	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. 87 FR.(← 35, 0-6)	"	Shot down - 12
May	19	8 FR. 50 FR. 64 FR. 64 FR.(← 25, 0-8)	Attack upon the air-borne troops in MYITHYINA	Hit bad weather on the way back in the air above PINPU R. Shot down - 17
May	20	50 FR. 64 FR. 87 FR. (← 22)	Air control of IMPHAL	Because of bad weather, using of airfields in NORTHERN BURMA gradually became difficult
May	21	50 FR. 64 FR.(← 20) 12 FR.(0- 4)	Cooperation with 33D front in IMPHAL Night attack upon MYITHYINA	
May	23	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 35)	Cooperation with 15D front	Shot down - 4
May	24	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 15)	Attack upon IMPHAL Airfield	
May	25	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 15)	"	Shot down - 7 Lost - 1
May	29	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 34)	Attack upon IMPHAL (2 times)	"
May	30	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 33)	Raid upon IMPHAL	Did not meet enemy planes
May	31	"	"	Because of bad weather, returned
June	1 4	Maintenance		Foul weather
June	5 6	50 FR. 64 FR. 204 FR. (← 35)	IMPHAL	Because of bad weather, returned
June	7	8 planes of 50 FR and 204 FR; 5 of 8 FR. and Hq. Recon. plan es.	Were kept in MEIKTILA	Others were withdrawn to RANGOON area and serviced.
June	8	50 FR. 204 FR.(← 15) 8 FR. (0- 2)	Raid upon IMPHAL Night raidd on IMPHAL	Shot down - 6
June	17	50 FR. 204 FR (← 14)	Attack upon IMPHAL	Shot down - 2 Lost - 4
June	22	204 FR.(← 9)	Air control and attack upon MOGAUNG and MYITKYINA	Shot down - 2
June	25	204 FR.(← 10)	Parachuted nutritious foods to 18D	
June	28	204 FR.(← 6)	Parachuted ammunition to 56D	
June	29	50 FR. 204 FR. (← 12)	Parachuted clothing and foods to 18D8	On way back---- Shot down - 1
June	30	50 FR. (← 12)	Attack upon the enemy in KAIMON (TN.?)	

DATE	STRENGTH EMPLOYED	OBJECTIVE OF ATTACK	RESULTS & OTHERS
July 2 4	50 FR. (← 10)	Parachuted ammunition to MYITKYINA	Because of bad weather, returned
July 5	"	"	
July 7	50 FR. (← 15)	Attack upon the enemy airfield in MYITKYINA	Succeeded
July 9	50 FR. 204 FR.(← 24)	Attack upon the enemy ground forces in MYITKYINA	Shot down - 12 Lost - 3
July 14	204 FR.(← 8)	Dropped ammunition to 56 Disposition in LAMENG	Succeeded
July 15	204 FR.(← 8)	"	"
July 20	50 FR. 204 Fr. Recon. planes - 2	Parachuted ammunition to LAMENG position	Because of bad weather, did not succeed
July 21 23	50 FR. 204 FR. Recon. planes - 2	"	Succeeded
July 25 26	50 FR. (← 8)	"	25th did not succeed 26th succeeded
July 29	50 FR. 204 FR. (← 22)	Attack upon MYITKYINA	Shot down - 6
July 30	50 FR. 204 FR. (← 20)	Attack upon the ending airborne (TN.?) troops stationed around CHIYONWA and INDOSHI (TN.?) Lake	

REMARKS:

1. Due to the inaccessibility of records, results of battles on losses were unknown to a great extent but were partially recorded.
2. During this operation, counter-attacks and cooperation with attacks upon other area, etc. are not recorded.
(Attacks upon the enemy airfields in CHITTAGONG and COX'S BAZAR (TN.?). Raids upon LEDO Oil-fields, and cooperation with the operation of NUCHIAN front, etc.)
3. "FR" indicates Air Regiment.
← " Fighter
" Light Bomber
" Heavy Bomber

area and at the fields occupied by the air borne troops in the North BURMA area. These advances to IMPHAL and attacks on the air-borne troops are a part of the cooperation with the ground units.

B. The enemy planes intended to recapture the front line area occupied by our forces on the coast of BENGAL BAY, especially the AKYAB Front. Therefore, on 25 March, three attacking forces were organized with 24 fighters from the 50th and the 64th Air Squadrons and 3 light bombers from the 8th Air Squadron. The units scouted and made an attack on the CHITTAGONG and COX'S BAZAR Airfields and inflicted considerable damage in spite of powerful enemy air defense at CHITTAGONG airfield.

C. Guard against and scouting for enemy warships.

The enemy patrolled the coast of the BURMA area, sent patrol boats and proposed a counter landing there, as aforementioned. Therefore, the air units guarded the coast with heavy bombers and searched for enemy ships with HQ reconnaissance planes.

D. The attacks on strategic points.

1. The increase of U.S. air strength in CHINA and the fortification of the INDO-CHINA air route intensified our efforts to destroy the LEDO oil wells. At that time, the 62nd Air Squadron (composed of type 100 heavy bombers) increased its strength to carry out the attacks against the oil wells.

2. On 26 March, 3 attacking units composed of 8 fighters each from the 50th, 64th, and the 204th air squadron bombed the TINSUKIA Airfield runway, then flew on to the LEDO oil fields, but due to unfavorable weather the planes could not strike their targets.

3. On 27 March, the 62nd Air Squadron (9 heavy bombers) and the Air Division with a total strength of about 60 fighters took off to attack the LEDO oil wells, but could not make contact with the HQ reconnaissance planes which went out before to get reports on the weather over the target. The bombing units came over low clouds which seemed to be over the target. The target could not not be seen but bombs were dropped. The effect of this attack is not definitely known. On the return trip, the air units were

attacked by enemy fighters. Our units could not fight with maximum efficiency because they were low on fuel after long hours in the air, but destroyed about 10 enemy planes. The 62nd Air Squadron lost 8 planes. One plane made a forced landing behind our lines.

E. Intercepting enemy aerial attacks.

1. During the IMPHAL battle, the enemy planes made frequent attacks on our air field. As a result the planes took off and landed when not under attack. During enemy attack on the field, our air units were forced to change the time for take off and the landing Field to be used. ~~Field~~ After June all of these intercepting flights were cancelled, except for planned attacks due to great losses of fighters. The fighters were concealed in small groups from the enemy when on the field.

2. In the middle of May, the 87th Squadron (type 2 fighters) was dispatched to BURMA from the SUMATRA and PALEMBANG area. This squadron was ordered to make counter-attacks in MEIKTILA. In the beginning, the squadron did not utilize the full power of its type 2 fighters since it had no combat experience. Later, however, they participated in combat and were able to inflict much damage on the enemy.

F. At that time, the enemy forced our planes into air engagements against their superior Spitfires, P-51's and P-38's at high altitudes. When our planes could not make a counter-attack, the enemy bombed our airfields. Their well planned aerial combat tactics and superior planes always gave the enemy an upper hand in the engagements.

D. Operations and its preparations during the rainy season of 1945.

1. Operations during the rainy season.

a. With the descent of the enemy air-borne unit on MYITKYINA on 17 May and with their activities for opening the land transportation route between INDIA and CHINA, which had made great progress since the end of May, the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY Force increasingly added its pressure on our LU RIVER FRONT (SALWEEN) by utilizing infiltration tactics.

b. Since the middle of June, the air-borne division as mentioned above, suspended its cooperation with the IMPHAL Area operation and devoted itself to the NORTHERN BURMA Operation. However, along with the urgent war situation of the front line units of the 33rd. Army and the 56th Div. in the forward sector of the LU (SALWEEN) RIVER Front, it had been forced to send some of its element to cooperate with the IMPHAL Area despite adverse weather conditions.

From the middle of June till the end of July, the aerial supply of ammunitions were mainly carried out to our positions at LAMENG, which had been completely encircled by the enemy. These aerial supplies were undertaken more than 10 times, but only succeeded 6 times due to bad weather conditions and interception by enemy planes.

c. In July, with the superiority of the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY Force and with the southward advancements of the Americanized Chinese Army and the BRITISH Army from the MYITKYINA Area, the opening of the land transportation route by the enemy became a matter of days. Therefore, with the intention of cutting-off the route by bombing its key point at the HUITUNG BRIDGE, fighter pilots were trained for a special raid tactic of carrying large bombs on fighter planes. In the middle of August, utilizing favorable weather conditions, it was put into practice several times. However, the complicated topographical features made diving difficult and also, because of the superior enemy air strength, we could inflict only small damages. Consequently, the plan was abandoned.

2. Our general situation during the rainy season.

a. On 30 May, the headquarters of the 5th Air Division dissolved its KALAW Command Post. All of its personnel, including the division commander returned to the divisional headquarters in RANGOON.

b. In the middle of July, seizing the opportunity of the suspended cooperation in the IMPHAL Area, every commander of the main units, under the command of the division assembled at the divisional headquarters in RANGOON and received orders for the orientation and training of the men.

The number of planes of each unit, capable of operational activities, were as follows:

The 50th Air Regiment----------19 fighters
The 64th " " ---------- 6 "
The 204th " " ----------11 "
The 8th " " ----------11 light bombers
The 81st " " ----------2 headquarter recon. planes.

NOTE The number of planes denotes the combined strength of planes and air-crewmen.

c. Previously, at the end of November, 1944, the 98th Air Regt. of heavy bombers was transferred to JAPAN PROPER for the training in torpedo bombing. Moreover, in the middle of July, the hdq. of the 7th Air Brig. and the 12th Air Regt. of heavy bombers were drawn out to be reassigned to the area north of AUSTRALIA; causing the strength of the 5th Air Div. to decrease considerably during the rainy season.

Disposal of the air units as of the end of July were as follows:

The Hdqs. of the 5th Air Div. RANGOON.
The Hdqs. of the 4th Air Brig. HEHO (TN?).
The 50th Air R egt. MINGALADON(TN?), (SAIGON).
The 8th Air Regt. SAIGON,(MINGALADON) (TN?).
The 204th Air Regt.
(An element to HLEGU)
HLEGU--
(Main force to PHNOMPENH)

NOTE The paranthesis designates the bases each unit was stationed at after August.

3. Operational preparations during the rainy season.

a. Orientation and training.

1). Because of the casualties inflicted on the skilled air-crew personnel of the air units during the dry season operations and with the conscripts consisting mainly of inexperienced men, training of the men was stressed.

2). Fighter units.

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a). Because of the weakening of our bomber strength and without superior replacements, the duties, especially those during the daytime of the bomber units, inevitably fell to the fighter units. Emphasis was placed upon the training of strafing, bombing and air combat. Training for bombing ships was also carried out.

3). Bombers: Twin engined light bombers.

a). The daylight raids by twin engined, Model 9 light bombers gradually became difficult, due to the improvement of the enemy planes combat abilities. Therefore, great emphasis was placed on night raids and training for night bombing tactics.

4). Reconnaissance plane units: Model 100 hdqs. recon. planes.

Reconnaissance during the daytime even at high altitudes, was very hazardous and unsuccessful. As a result, recon. planes seldom returned. Consequently, importance was placed on reconnaissance at dusk, daybreak and during the night and training for such was carried out. Simultaneously, in order to supplement the deficit in the ~~in the~~ attacking strength of our air units, training for bombing was also undertaken.

5). Training for units, other than the air-crew unit, were aimed towards the improvement of abilities concerning their respective individual duties; skill in anti-aircraft firing, and land combat .

6). In the middle of September, an inspection of the training of the air units was held in INDO-CHINA; during which the result of the orientation and training were displayed. Also, measures necessary for the realization of our objective were delivered. Simultaneously, training in the special tactic necessary for attacking ships was carried out in general, under the guidance of instructors dispatched from JAPAN PROPER.

b. The reorganization, maintenance and modification of the planes.

1). Maintenance and modification of planes.

a). The arrival of replacements from the Homeland were gradually delayed so that the replacement of our losses could not be realized. However, by establishing necessary measures for eliminating air mishaps and by promoting the maintenance of planes, the rebuilding and recovering of the air strength was achieved " step by step " during the rainy season.

b). Mechanical bomb suspensions for fighter planes, attacking of additional fuel tanks on light bombers for night raids, and the

modification of its exhaust flame dampers were also gradually completed.

2). Reorganization of planes.

The 64th and 204th Air Regt.: from Model 1 fighter type 2 to type 3.

The 50th Air Regimet: from Model 1 fighter type 2 to Model 4 fighter planes.

Each regiment planning to reorganize as mentioned during the rainy season, could not progress as expected. As for the 50th Air Regt., its reorganization could hardly be achieved after 1945, due to frequent operational defects of the Model 4 fighters.

c. Strengthening the establishment and maintenance of the air bases.

1). When the IMPHAL Operation was commenced, we had more than 150 airfields in BURMA. Enemy counter-attacks from the land and air were anticipated, making it of great importance to merge several airfields in key points, so they could keep in mutual contact as a body for bolstering their defenses. The strengthening and rearrangement of the airfields was thus planned.

Taking into consideration the present number of our air units, some air fields were destroyed due to possible changes in the coming war situation. The units stationed at these fields were concentrated at the key points.

2). Although some inevitable delay took place by the end of the rainy season, the strengthening and rearrangement of the air bases were roughly achieved as planned.

3). The disposition of the air bases in BURMA, as of the end of the rainy season of 1944, was as shown in the inserted sketch No. 9.

d. Transportation of munitions for accumulation.

1). The transportation for accumulation of munitions during the rainy season was carried out by the THAILAND-BURMA Railroad, which had been opened for the reason that the sea route to RANGOON was practically cut off by enemy submarine warfare, air attacks, and also by the deficit number of our ships.

2). The capacity of this railroad was so limited, the transportation of reinforcements and munitions for the BURMA Area Army was scarely possible. Consequently, there was a pessimistic feeling concerning the transportation of munitions for the air-force, but because of the decrease in our air units in BURMA, especially in the heavy bomber units; the transportation for our

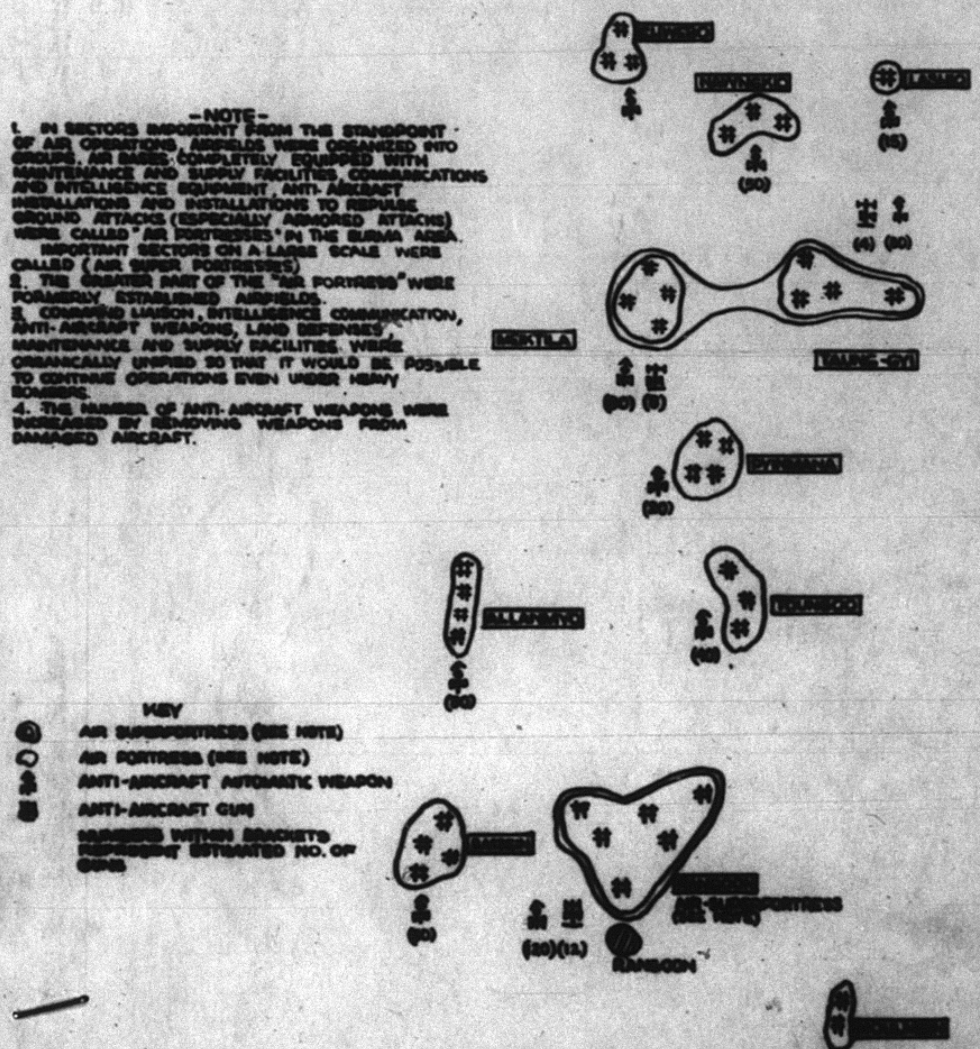
Appended Map #9

BURMA AIR BASES

End of Rainy Season, October 1944

BURMA AIR BASES
END OF RAINY SEASON, OCTOBER 1944

APPENDED MAP NO. 9



operations for the next dry season was generally completed after a hard struggle.

3). Military supplies, such as ammunition for the 20M.M. Machine Cannons; aerial mineral oil; etc., were supplied stringently, to meet the minimum requirements of an operation.

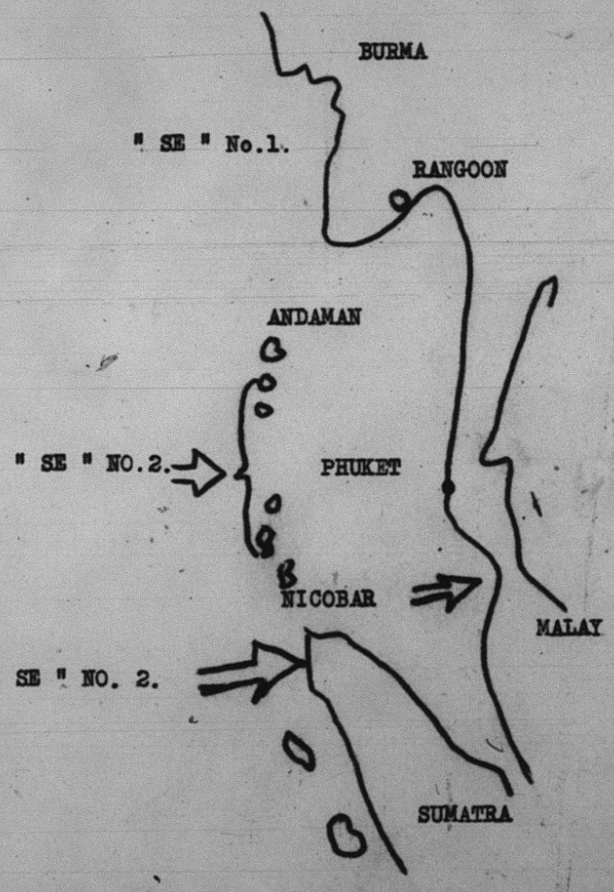
Ee. Operations for the rainy season of 1944 until the end of year.

1). Operational plans and the agreement on the air and land operations.

a). The commander of the 3rd Air Army called the divisional commanders together at headquarters in SINGAPORE and held an operational conference for the formulation of the SE Operational Plan. Orders were issued to conform to this plan in the preparation for the defense against possible enemy attempts to land on SUMATRA and BURMA from the INDIAN OCEAN.

b). The 5th Air Division, to abide by the order, formulated a plan and ordered the assigned units to prepare for crushing any enemy landing operations on the BURMA sea coast.

Principles of the plan were as follows:



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(1) The 5th Air Div. by consolidating the entire strength of our air units and in close cooperation with the navy, is to strive for the annihilation of the enemy on the sea, if a large scale landing attack by the enemy takes places on the BURMA sea coast.

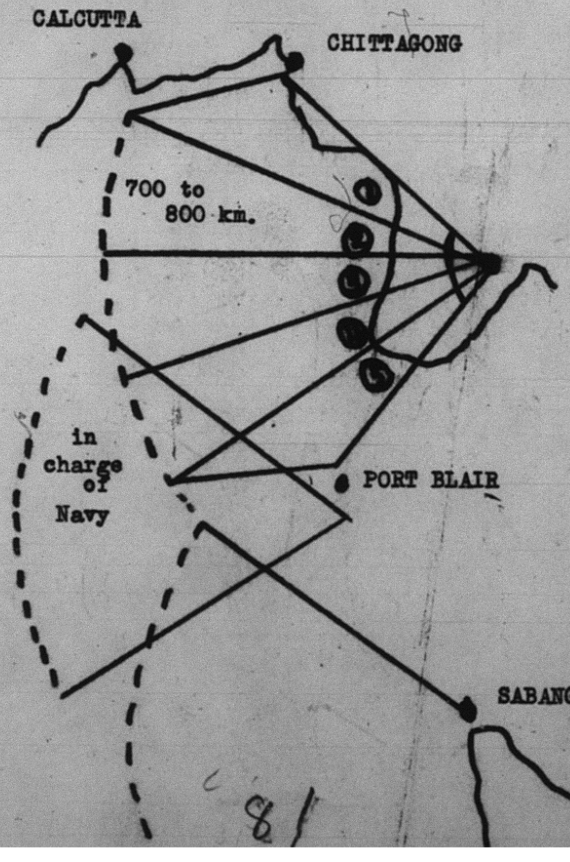
(2) In anticipation of the enemy landing areas, our codes are fixed as shown in the inserted chart.

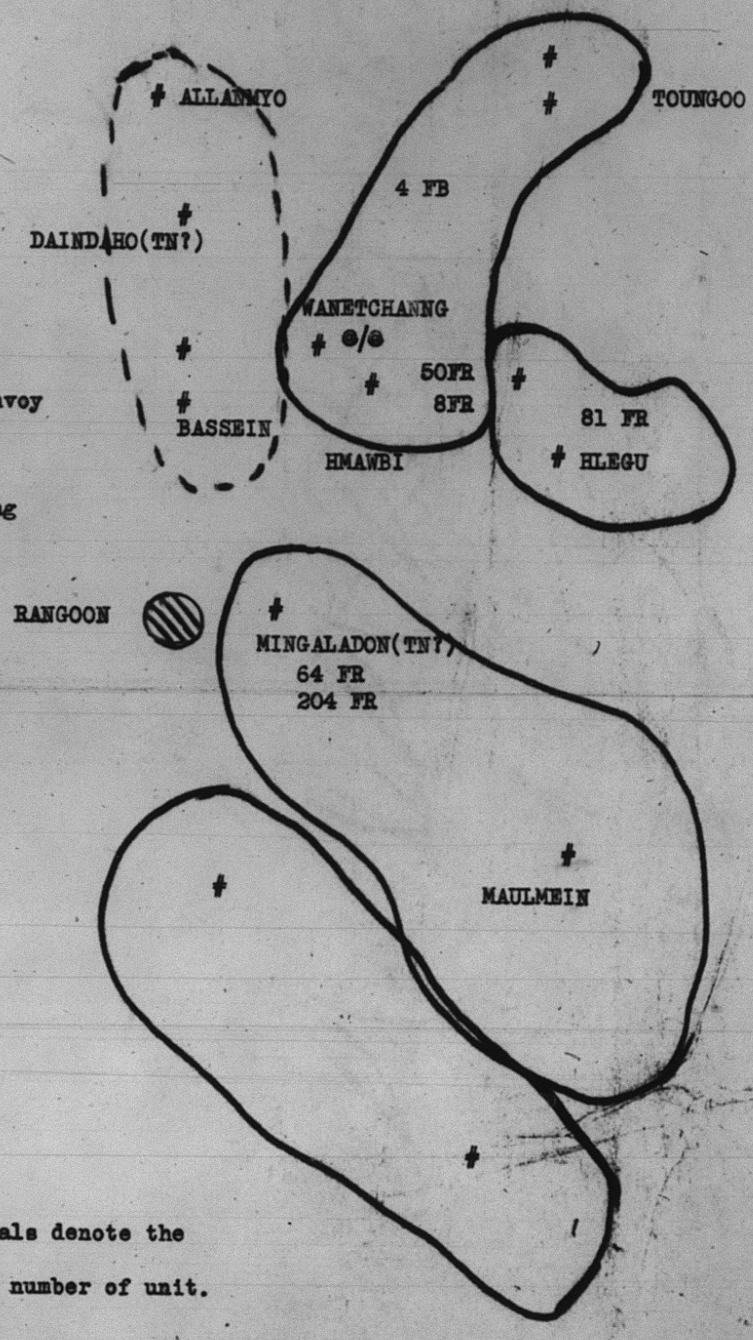
(3) Should the SE Number 1 Operation be ordered, all the air units; regardless of the operational duties or training engaged in and air fields they were employing; will immediately make preparations for a action and wait for further orders concerning the means of attacking and movements. (4)

(4) If the SE Number 1 Operation is undertaken, an element of the 3rd Air Army will be reassigned to the BURMA area.

(5) If only the SE Number 1 Operation is ordered, the 5th Air Division will make preparations for action and wait for further orders. However, if any other operation is undertaken, the 5th Air Division will continue its present duties.

(6) In close cooperation with the navy, early detection of the debarkation of troops from the enemy convoy is to be stressed upon.





Airfields to be used in case any enemy convoy of landing troops be searched out at a long distances.

LEGEND

FR---Air Regt.

⊕/⊕ ---Hq. of Air Brig.

✈ ---Airfield

NOTE Arabic numerals denote the organization number of unit.

(7) Patroling over BENGAL Bay by the 81st Air Regt. will be carried out according to the following principles:

*(a) The ordinary patrol-over course NO. 1.

(b) The areas necessary for a special patrol-over courses No. 2 and 3.

(c) The emergency patrol- to patrol successively according to the necessity.

* Refer to the inserted reference.

(8) If the SE Number 1 Operation is undertaken, the air fields shown in the inserted sketch will be utilized.

c). At the end of September, 1944, the order for the SOUTHERN Army were issued to the following effect:

The commanders of the BURMA Area Army and the 3rd Air Army will hereafter refer to the "Principles of Guidance for the BURMA Area Operations" stated in a seperate volume, for leading the BURMA Area Operations.

(1) The main points of the separate volume.

(a) General plan

(a1) To crush the enemy landings in order to secure the important districts in southern BURMA; thereby, forming a strong support for the Northern Sector of the Southern Sphere. Meanwhile, every measure will be taken to strangle the enemy communication lines between INDIA and CHINA, to assure the smooth operation of our units.

(b) Guidance principles.

(b1) To roughly complete the present operations by the end of the rainy season. Also, to make preparations for operations after the rainy season by recovering the ability to fight on land and in the air.

(b2) The operations after the rainy seasons will be aimed at securing the important districts in Southern BURMA and special emphasis will be placed on the following points.

(b2) 1. The important coastal districts of Southern BURMA are to be under our control at all times so that if a large scale counter-attack by the enemy should take place, it can be annihilated by directing our main operation against it.

(b2) 2. In the Northern BURMA area, the following operations are to be carried on.

(b2) a. In the North-eastern Front, the enemy communication lines between INDIA and CHINA are to be cut off.

(b2) b. In the North-western Front, every measure is to be taken to check the further advance of the enemy. Even if these actions become impossible, our key points in the vicinity of LASHIO and around MANDALAY, are to remain intact to hamper the forward movements of the enemy.

(b2) 3. The Air Army will arrange its operations with the main purpose of being prepared to take action in unison with our sea front operations at anytime. Also, the reduction of the enemy air force will be strived for. When the main force should be extracted, subsequent to the operations, will be decided upon according to the circumstances.

Based upon the above orders, the commander of the 3rd Air Army issued an order to the commander of the 5th Division to the same effect.

d). Based upon the same orders, the commanders of the 5th Air Div. and the BURMA Area Army formulated the Agreement of the Air and Land Operations, concerning the air cooperation with the land operations. This took place at the beginning of October.

At that time, the BURMA Area Army was carrying out the following tasks:

In the BURMA Sea Front, the strengthening of its positions and the operational preparations in anticipation of the enemy counter attack landing. In the North-western Front, the leading of the BAN Operation--the withdrawal of our units---which ensued as a conseaquence of the failure in the IMPHAL Operation.

The BURMA Area Army was contemplating a decisive counter-attack to be made in the near future in the IRRAWADDY River site around MANDALAY, against the enemy which were shadowing our retreating units from their north and north-western flanks. The preparations for this counter-attack were in process. Therefore, the air Div., with the aim to correspond with those operations of the BURMA Area Army, put the Agreement of the Air and Land Operations into practice in conformity with the said orders.

The outline of the Agreement of the Air and Land Operations between the 5th Air Div. and the BURMA Area Army was as follows:

The Agreement of the Air and Land Operations between the BURMA Area Army and the 5th Air Div.

I Fundamental Principles

A. The 5th Air Div. will cooperate with the land operations of the BURMA Area Army. The main purpose being to coordinate with the BURMA Sea Front Operations at any time.

B. Though it depends upon the circumstances, if the main force of the BURMA Area Army is with-drawn, the guidance of the subsequent air operations will be undertaken to the best of the Division's ability in compliance with the above principles.

II Details of the Principles

A. In order to cooperate with the land operations of the BAN operational area, (The IMPHAL withdrawal operation of the 15th Army) an element of the 5th Air Div., if necessary, will be dispatched.

The cooperation will be carried out mainly by the 4th Air Brig. (consisting of the 50th and 8th Air Regt.) by checking the drive of the enemy mechanized units and to further the withdrawal to the IRRAWADDY River site of the entire 15th Army.

B. Ordinarily, for the operations in the North-eastern Front by the 33rd Army, cooperation of the air units will not be expected. When the need is imperative, the requirements of the 15th Army will be fulfilled.

C. In the IRRAWADDY major engagement, which is anticipated to take place towards the beginning of 1945, the main force of the 5th Air Div. will assist in the engagement, should the situation necessitate it.

D. In all the cases mentioned above, should a large scale counter-attack landing by the enemy take place, the 5th Air Div. will consolidate its full strength at the air bases in Southern BURMA and cooperate towards annihilating the enemy.

E. The attack on the enemy landing units by the air units are to be aimed at crushing them before their debarkation.

F. Against the possible enemy attempt of a large scale air borne raid, the entire communication net works of the BURMA Area Army of both the 5th Air Div. and the navy are to be utilized to the utmost. The 5th Air Div. is to attack the air-borne units with all of their available strength, preferably during the descent or immediately thereafter; before the enemy can consolidate

their positions.

G. In precaution against the enemy counter-attack landing, patrols over BENGAL Bay--in general, once a day--are to be carried out from the RANGOON Air Base. Reconnaissance of the enemy shipping in CHITTAGONG Harbor will be carried out despite enemy opposition.

2. Circumstances in the reassignment of the air strength for the decisive engagement in the PHILIPPINES.

At the end of September- prior to the operational agreement mentioned above--the 5th Air Div. was going to rearrange its dispositions for the rainy season to those of the dry season. At that time, however, the 5th Air Div. received an unofficial order to detach its main force (two fighter regt., one light bomber regt. and one headquarter recon. plane company) for the coming decisive engagement in the PHILIPPINE Theater. Therefore, preparation for this was undertaken. On the other hand, after negotiating with the BURMA Area Army, the 5th Air Div. submitted an opinion to the Southern Army concerning the minimum air Strength to be reserved for the security of the BURMA Operation.

The opinion was adopted by the higher authorities, so that two fighter regiments, one light bomber regiment, and one headquarters recon. plane company could remain in the BURMA Theater to manage subsequent air operations.

3. Course of the operations after the rainy season to the end of the year.

a. By the middle of October, the 5th Air Div. finished the rearrangement of its disposition for the dry season.

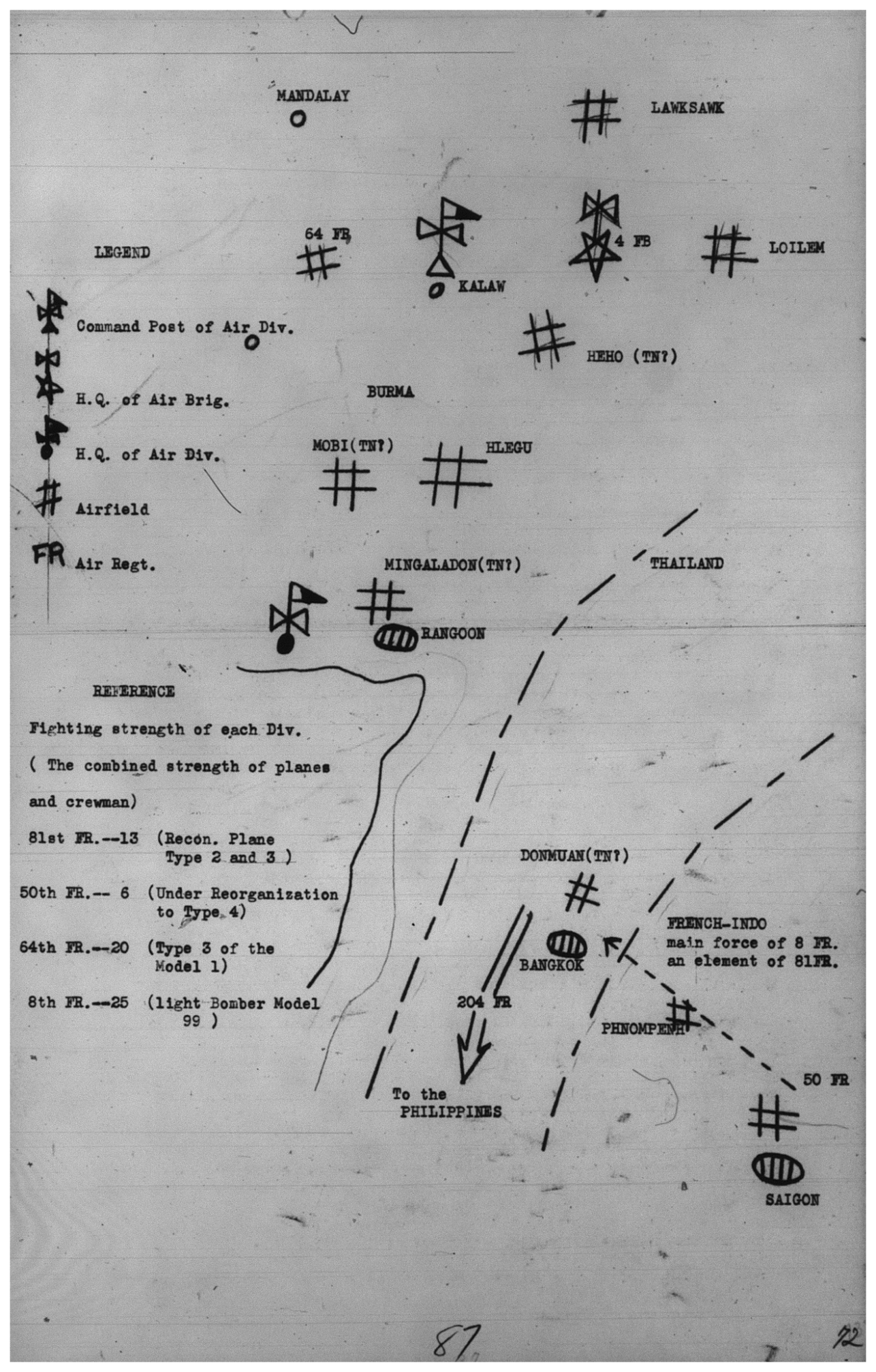
The disposition immediately after completion were as follows:

* Refer to the inserted chart.

b. Character of the disposition for the operations of this dry season.

1). Because of the decreased strength of the air units was stationed at several airfields so that each air regiment could swiftly maneuver its air units at anytime to everywhere, without transfering their ground personnel. As a result, more effective operations were maintained with the comparatively small air strength.

2). Air repair crews were also positioned by the same dispersal system, aiming for the swift repair of the planes damaged in operations in the front lines.


MANDALAY
LAWKSAWK
LEGEND
64 FR
4 FB
LOILEM
KALAW
Command Post of Air Div.
HEHO (TN?)
H.Q. of Air Brig.
BURMA
H.Q. of Air Div.
MOBI(TN?)
HLEGU
Airfield
FR
Air Regt.
MINGALADON(TN?)
THAILAND
RANGOON
REFERENCE
Fighting strength of each Div.
(The combined strength of planes
and crewman)
81st FR.--13 (Recon. Plane
Type 2 and 3)
50th FR.-- 6 (Under Reorganization
to Type 4)
64th FR.--20 (Type 3 of the
Model 1)
8th FR.--25 (light Bomber Model
99)
DONMUAN(TN?)
FRENCH-INDO
main force of 8 FR.
an element of 81FR.
BANGKOK
204 FR
PHNOMPENH
50 FR
To the
PHILIPPINES
SAIGON

c. With the termination of the rainy season, the enemy air attacks suddenly increased. When the 204th Air Regiment was making preparations for the reassignment to the PHILIPPINES, they were raided by enemy fighters of the DONMUAN (TN?) air field of BANGKOK. Therefore, the 204th Air Regt was forced to retaliate.

At first, the 5th Air Div. had planned to intercept the enemy air raids systematically in the Middle BURMA Area. However, the enemy air raids later became intensified in the RANGOON sector. Also, judging from the recent enemy radio activities, there was an unmistakable indication that the enemy would either counter-attack with a landing force or a task force against the ANDAMAN Area. Therefore, the Air Division commenced consolidating its fighter units since the middle of October in the vicinity of RANGOON. Then, interception operations were launched against the enemy air raids, together with the strengthening of the patrols and general defence.

d. Night raid operations.

1). Towards the end of October, our night raids were commenced to weaken the enemy air strength. The light bombers of the 8th Air Regt., which had completed its operational preparations by a thorough training during the rainy season, were utilized for this raid.

2). The night raids were carried out as follows, each with fair success:

27 October----------4 light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. on the MYITKYINA Airfield.

28 October----------3 light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. on the CHAKARIA and COX'S BAZAR airfields.

29 October----------3 light bombers of the 8th Air Regiment on the RANGAATEI and FENNY airfields.

3). At the end of November, night raids were launched again in the following order:

24 November----------on the KUNMING airfield.

25 November----------on the MYITKYINA airfield.

28 November---- -----on the YUNNANI airfield.

29 November----------on the KAMAING airfield.

2 December----------on the newly established airfield of MAWLU.

This was carried in series by 3 or 4 planes of the 8th Air Regt., with great

success.

4). At the beginning of December, an intelligence report was received to the effect, that the B-29 units of the American Air Force in CHINA were returning in succession to the MIDONAPUR air fields, west of CALCUTTA. They had been utilizing the airfields around CHENTU for the special assignment of bombing JAPAN PROPER. Therefore, on 7 December, a night raid was carried out on the MIDONAPUR airfield with much success.

This raid was significant from the viewpoint of its psychological effect on the enemy rather than its material damage. It was our first raid in the vicinity of CALCUTTA after a year's interval since December. Also, since the enemy had already eliminated the blackout in that area, we were able to make the most of their negligence of precautions.

5). On 23 December-KALEWA; and on 25 December--BHAMO and MIDONAPUR airfields, were targets of our night raids.

The raid on MIDONAPUR airfields was frustrated because of interception by enemy fighters, where as that on KALEWA inflicted heavy damge.

e. Meanwhile, at the beginning of November, our fighters of the 64th Air Regt. launched night raids on the MYITKYINA, PALERU and THAMETMYO airfields, aiming at the reduction of the enemy air strength.

f. Cooperation with the land operations.

1). During the rainy season, the withdrawal of the IMPHAL OPERATION units had been carried out under adverse circumstances. The withdrawal of the 33rd Division being especially hazardous. At the beginning of November, the 33rd Div. was attacked from its flank and its retreating route was cut off in the vicinity of KALEMYO by a powerful enemy force--utilizing tanks and artillery--which had pushed southward from the THAYETMYO Area. As a result on 8 November, the 5th Air Division reinforced them twice, with 12 fighters of the 64th Air Regt. and turned the situation in ~~its~~ its favor by inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. Following up these raids on 12 December, the entire strength of the same regiment of 15 planes raided the enemy force in the vicinity of KALEWA, destroying the enemy fighters and pontoon bridges.

2). In the AKYAB Front, it seemed that with the enemy's sufficient progress in preparing for its decisive counter attack by land, the time of its onset was approaching.

In view of the enemy's energetic activities in accumulating munitions;

transferring groups; in constructing and repairing operational roads, as well as in establishing new airfields in the sector behind their front lines; and at the request of the BURMA Area Army, we launched an air raid with the full force of the 64th Air Regiment on the enemy depot in the vicinity of MADUNG DAWA.

3). In the Northeastern BURMA Front of the 33rd Army, our forces were under heavy pressure of the enemy improvised army which had pushed southward from MYITKYINA Area, and of the Chinease Expeditionary Army which had assumed the offensive by crossing the LU River. Our units, by delivering occasional counter-atfacks, was able to gradually retreat, since the end of the rainy season, towards the LASHIO Area where they had intentions of making a last ditch stand. At that time, information was received to the effect that an enemy air borne unit had descended to the rear of our front line units, a district about midway on the road between NAMHKAN and LASHIO. On 14 December, eleven planes of the 64th Air Regt. left their air-base to raid the enemy. However, because of the thick forest in that district, they were unable to locate the enemy and returned to the base, downing only six enemy transport planes and two P.47s which happened to be around that vicinity. Our loss was two planes. After that operation, they cooperated with the land battles on the road between BHAMO and NAMHKAN, but with poor results due to the topographical features which hampered their direct cooperation with the land units.

4). The protection of the MINBU Bridge at the southern side of MANDALAY.

Along with the transition of the war situation, our usage of the LASHIO-MANDALAY Railroad became more difficult so that the BURMA Area Army planned to transfer, in one movement, all its rolling stocks to the area south of MANDALAY and strived ~~for~~ to repairing the MINBU Bridge, which had been destroyed by an enemy bombing raid. However, this project was always being frustrated by the enemy bombing of the bridge whenever nearing completion; so air protection for the maintenance of the trains was carried out.

Towards 25 December, the repair being near completion, the entire strength of the 64th Air Regt. was assigned for its aerial protection. Thereby, it was completed on the 29th; and by the 31st, the removal of all the locomotive engines and vehicles was achieved.

5). The withdrawal of the IMPHAL operational units had made progress and they now entered into the district between the IRRAWADDY and CHINDWIN Rivers. At this time, the 15th Division, shadowed by an enemy mechanized unit, was struggling to break away from it. Therefore, on 31 December, the 50th Air Regiment launched a raid, with its entire strength of fourteen Type 4 fighters and four Type 1 fighters, against the mechanized unit in the district northwest of SHWEBO. Heavy losses were inflicted on tanks and about 150 trucks were destroyed on the convoy travelling in close order. As a result, the enemy mechanized unit was forced to remain stationary for several days. Thereafter, the convoy travelled only by night and in spread formation.

Our 20 MM Machine Cannons on the Type 4 fighters proved very effective against the mechanized unit.

6). Along with the operations of our air units in this period, the anti-aircraft guns of our air base units also proved effective by downing or damaging approximately 80 enemy raiding planes per month since the end of the rainy season.

F g. Operations since the beginning of 1945.

Dispositions of the Air Div. at the beginning of 1945 did not greatly differ in general from those at the end of the rainy season of 1944. The air-borne units, including the repair and supply units, however, were systematically transferred to the INDO-CHINA and THAILAND Areas, owing to the necessity for strengthening the THAILAND Area and INDO-CHINA Front. In BURMA, the tide of the war had turned against our land units ~~in these areas~~.

1). Preparations for the cooperation with the IRRAWADDY River battles.

a). At the beginning of November, with the progress of the 15th Army's preparations for the coming IRRAWADDY River engagements the 5th Air Div. mapped out a detailed agreement on the cooperation with the Army; and the 4th Air Brig. was mainly responsible for making preparations for carrying out this plan .

b). Cooperational principles of the agreement between the 5th Air Div. and the 15th Army on the air and land operations were as follows:

(1) Air units which were assigned for the cooperation

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successively:

The headquarters of the 4th Air Brig.

The 64th Air Regt. (approx. 20 fighters).

The 8th Air Regt. (approx. 10 light bombers).

An element of the 81st Air Regt. (2 hqs. recon. planes).

Depending on the circumstances, the 50th Air Regt. (approx. 20 fighters) will be assigned to the cooperation.

(2) Cooperation with the land operation will be carried out mainly by raiding the enemy's front air fields, which will hamper our land operations; checking the advance of the enemy mechanized units and impeding the crossing of the IRRAWADDY River by the enemy's main force.

(3) The 4th Air Brig. will, in response to the demand of the 15th Army, carry out successive recurrent attacks in any emergency.

(4) Prior to the commencement of the IRRAWADDY Battle, air raids will be launched on the enemy mechanized units by locating them with headquarters recon. planes and by exploiting informations from our land units in the front lines.

(5) Against the enemy attempt of landing with large scale air-borne units, our maximum air strength will be concentrated toward crushing this attempt.

Should a large scale counter-attack landing take place on the BURMA Sea Front, our entire strength will be assembled in Southern BURMA and will strive to destroy it.

c). The Air Div., although having endeavored to prepare for the above operations, especially for the reinforcement of its air strength, could not achieve satisfactory results. This was due to the fact that the 33rd Army (LU River Front---(SALWEEN) --) demanded our cooperation in that area, where the war situation had become urgent. Also, the protection for the rail road bridges, to the south of MANDALAY, was requested by the BURMA Area Army. Meanwhile, with the growing possibility of an enemy counterattack landing on the BENGAL Bay coast, patrols over the bay were stressed for the effective guidance of our general operation by the BURMA Area Army.

2). Cooperation with the IRRAWADDY Engagement.

a). The attacks on the enemy mechanized unit, which

had been shadowing our withdrawal unit from the IMPHAL Operation, were launched again on 7 January, when the whole strength of the 64th Air Regt. (18 planes) raided them. Two raids were carried out against the enemy line, to the front of the 15th Div. and in the vicinity of SHWEBO.

b). On 9 January, the 15th Army assumed the offensive in the IRRAWADDY Engagement.

****NOTE**** As will be mentioned in the following pages, an imperative necessity for attacking the enemy convoy of landing troops took place in the AKYAB Area, and in the INDO-CHINA Front, where an American carrier task force had launched an attack. As a result, the major portion of the 5th Air Div., the entire 50th Air Regt., and an element of the 8th Air Regt., were forced to be reassigned to that area. Consequently, our cooperation with the IRRAWADDY Engagement became very difficult. *****

To correspond with the course of the engagement and at the request of the land force, the division cooperated as shown in the inserted diagram.

More than five hundred enemy planes were attached to the enemy mechanized unit which had penetrated into MEIKTILA. The planes, while furnishing aerial protect on for the mechnanized unit, raided our defensive positions and enabled the mechanized unit to continue its push without difficulty. The coordination between the air and land units were closely carried out.

3). Our raids on the enemy ships, carrying landing troops in the AKYAB Area.

a). The BURMA Area Army and the 28th Army decided on their operational plan for the period after the rainy season of 1944 as follows:

In view of their general land strength and supplying capacity, only an element will be spared for the defense of AKYAB. If this proved impossible the area will be abandoned.

The main defensive line against any possible enemy counter-attack landing will be formed between the ARAKAN Mountain Range at the opposite coast of RAMREE Island and the coast west of BASSEIN.

****NOTE**** The air units laid importance on the fact that, in case the air bases on AKYAB, RAMREE, and CHEDUBA Islands should fall to the enemy, our cooperation with the land units would become more difficult. In the light of the general situation, we could not help but to assent to their meager defenses.

TABLE SHOWING OUR ACTIONS FOR THE COOPERATION IN THE IRRAWADDY ENGAGEMENT

DATE	STRENGTH	TARGETS OF ATTACKS	RESULTS OR OTHERS.
10 Jan.	HQ.R.P. 1 8th FR (o— 2)	Patrol over the front line of our ground units in the Northern BURMA. The enemy in the streets of YEU.	At night.
11 Jan.	8th FR (o— 2) 64th FR (←18)	The Northern Airfield of YEU. The enemy mechanized unit in front of 15th Div.	At night. Fired 2 planes
12 Jan.	H.Q.R.P. 1 64th FR (←17)	Patrol over the Ford of TABEIKIN. The TABEIKIN Ford North-east of SHWEBO.	
18 Jan.	64th FR (←13)	The TABEIKIN(TN) Ford.	
20 Jan.	H.Q.R.P. 1	Patrol in Quest of the enemy Air-borne Unit in the area North of HSUMHSAI.	
27 Jan.	8th FR (o— 2)	Attack on the SHWEBO AIRFIELD.	At night. Fired 2 planes.
28 Jan.	8th FR (o— 2)	The enemy artillery position at MYINMU. (at the bank of IRRAWADDY R.)	At night.
31 Jan.	8th FR (o— 4)	Attacks on the Airfields of SHWEBO and KALEMYO.	At night. Fired 8 Planes.
9 Feb.	8th FR (o— 2)	The enemy units assembled at THAMETMYO.	At night. In adverse weather.
12 Feb.	8th FR (o— 2)	" " " " " "	At night. Successful.
13 Feb.	At dawn, Information was received to the effect that the enemy had commenced crossing the river.		
15 Feb.	64th Fr (←13)	The enemy mechanized unit at MYINMU.	Dammaged 15 or more vehicles.
17 Feb.	64th FR (←13)	The enemy mechanized unit in the DAKOKKU area.	Engagement with enemy planes, downed 2.
19 Feb.	8th FR (o— 2)	The enemy at MYINMU.	
19 Feb.	64th FR (←14)	" " " "	
24 Feb.	8th FR (o— 2) 64th FR (←14)	The DAKOKKU Ford	
26 Feb. 27 Feb.	64th Fr (←14)	The enemy mechanized unit pushing towards MEIKTILA.	
28 Feb.	The enemy rushed into MEIKTILA.		
March	8th FR (o— 4)	Attacks on the Airfield of MEIKTILA and OMATOI (TN?).	At night.

REFERENCE:::

←------Fighter

o—-------Light Bomber

Hq.R.P.------Headquarters Recon. Plane.

FR. ------Air Regt.

b). Early on the morning of 1 January, on receiving information pertaining to an enemy landing on AKYAB Island, our recon. planes were sent out. The landing had already taken place during the night and there were no larger ships evident in that area. Therefore, it was judged to be of small scale. Nevertheless, our patrols were continued.

c). Towards 5 January, the enemy seemed to have been reinforcing its landing units.

With the ever increasing number of the enemy ships in that harbor and because of the remarkable reconstruction of the damaged airfields, the entire strength of the 50th Air Regt. attempted to raid the enemy ships on the 7th. However, they were intercepted by enemy fighters before reaching their target and the attempt only ended in an air combat.

d). In view of the urgent necessity of delivering a major blow on the enemy ships before the AKYAB airfield is put into operation, an all-out raid was launched by the 64th and 50th Air Regt. on 9 January. The latter was called back on 8 January, from its cooperation with the IRRAWADDY Engagement. This attack was successful in delivering great losses to enemy ships. Due to the fact that they were intercepted by enemy fighters immediately after the bombing, a severe air combat ensued, resulting in considerable loss to both sides.

e). The 50th Air Regt, in order to raid the enemy aircarft carrier task force in the South CHINA Sea, was ordered to be re-assigned to the SAIGON Area after 13 January.

After a negotiation with the BURMA Area Army, our subsequent cooperation was decided first of all to be with the IRRAWADDY Engagement and an element was to be assigned to the AKYAB Area. (However, in case a large scale counter attack landing should take place in the BASSEIN Front, the full strength of the 5th Div. was to be responsible for repulsing the enemy.).

f). Our subsequent raid on the enemy ships in the seas off the coast of AKYAB were as follows:

(1) On 12 Jan. , two light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. performed a night raid on the AKYAB Harbor and sank one ship.

(2) On 13 January, two light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. launched a dawn raid on MYEBON Harbor. Following this, sixteen fighters of the 64th Air Regt. raided the same target.

(3) On 21 January, sixteen fighters of the 64th Air Regt. and three light bombers of the 8th Air Regiment made a raid on the anchorage off the north side of the RAMREE Island and sank two large transports.

(4) On 30 January, seven fighter of the 64th Air Regt. made a night raid on the AKYAB Harbor, and three ships were set afire.

(5) On 11 February, twelve fighters of the 64th Air Regiment carried out aerial cover for the units withdrawing from RAMREE Island.

(6) On 25 March, four light bombers, seven fighters, three heavy bombers, and one headquarters recon. plane of the 8th, 64th, 58th, and 81st Air Regt. respectively, raided the AKYAB Harbor and its airfield; setting a fire to four ships and approx. twenty planes.

g). The enemy counter-attack from the BURMA Coastal Area was carried by a major force which advanced along the coast "step by step" under the aerial protection of aircrafts, other than from a task force. Our air units, therfore, could not find an opportune time for launching an all-out raid.

With the advancement of the enemy air bases to AKYAB and CHEDUBA, and their newly gained air base of MEIKTILA in Central BURMA, they roughly established air superiority over the THAILAND-BURMA Railroad and the THAILAND Area, as well as over SOUTHERN BURMA.

4). Operation for the gradual reduction of the enemy air strength.

a). When our air cooperation with the BURMA Area became urgent because of the war situation in that area, an American task force suddenly appeared in the South CHINA Sea and commenced its action. Consequently, the air operation in the INDOCHINA Front became more important than that in the BURMA Area. The headquarters of the 5th Air Div. was ordered to move either to the THAILAND or INDO-CHINA Area.

b). Therefore, in order to transfer the main force of the 5th Air Div. after delivering a major blow on the enemy air forae in the BURMA Theatre, a raid plan was mapped out. This raid was to be launched on the night of 3 March continuing until the following morning.

The preparations for that plan was commenced since the end of February.

Units to participate in the raid:

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The 50th and 64th Air Regt. (17 fighters).

The 8th Air Regt. (9 light bombers).

The 58th Air Regt. (4 heavy bombers).

The 81st Air Regt. (3 hdqs. recon. planes).

Total----------33 planes.

These figures were the number of all the planes capable for night raids.

Airfields to be used:

Airfields aroumd RANGOON, namely; the MINGALADON(TN?) , HMAWBI, HLEGU, and WANETCHANG airfields.

On the night of 3 March, the raids were simultaneously launched on the airfields of SHWEBO, THMADAW, KALEMYO, COX'S BAZAR, AKYAB, and KYAUKPYU, inflicting considerable damages on the airfields.

c). Guidance of interception.

Considering the increased number of the enemy fighter planes and their improved performance and in view of our fighter planes with so many tasks and limited number, our intercepting operations were to be darried out only when we could take the initiative in anticipation of their attacks.

d). Because of the considerable success in downing enemy planes by the air base units in the previous year, it was practiced again with fair results.

5). Cooperation with the land operation after the IRRAWADDY River Engagement.

a). After the enemy mechanized unit rushed into MEIKTILA, the enemy reinforced their force in that sector.

At the IRRAWADDY River site in the vicinity of MANDALAY, our front-line units were holding out under heavy pressure.

The enemy in the vicinity of MEIKTILA, after securing that vicinity, immediately resumed its push toward the RANGOON Area.

b). During this period, the 5th Air Division cooperated with our land units mainly by attacking the mechanized unit and the enemy front-line air bases.

Cooperation was carried out as follows:

(1) On 8 March, three light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. hampered the enemy's utilization of the MEIKTILA air fidd by bombing its runways.

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(2) On 12 March, three light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. performed the same task as stated above.

(3) On 14 March, similar actions took place.

(4) On 20 March, four light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. performed the same task as (1).

(5) On 12 April six fighters of the 64th Air Regt. raided the enemy mechanized unit at YAMETHIN.

(6) On 18 April, two light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. raided the enemy units which were assembling at PYINMANA.

(7) On 20 April, eighteen fighters of the 50th and 64th Air Regt. raided the enemy mechanized unit at PYINMANA.

(8) On 21 April, two light bombers of the 8th Air Regt. performed a night raid on the PYINMANA air field.

(9) On 22 April, eight light bombers of the 50th and 64th Air Regt. raided the enemy mechanized unit at TOUNGOO.

(10) On 24 April, fifteen fighters of the 50th and 64th Air Regt. when raiding the mechanized unit at TOUNGOO, sighted and attacked approx. 1,200 vehicles travelling southward and heavy damage was inflicted on them. One of our planes failed to return.

(11) On 29 April, six fighters each, of the 50th and 64th Air Regt., raided the mechanized unit in the sector south of TOUNGOO, damaging approx. sixty vehicles.

c). Our cooperational air units in the BURMA Area, after having being stationed at the RANGOON Air base and the MOULMEIN Airfield until 25 April, returned to the air bases in the THAILAND Area.

d). On 29 April, the HMAUBI Airfield was ordered to be destroyed. This was the last airfield of our BURMA Air Bases destroyed by our own forces in the area south of the SITTANG River.

The enemy's abilities in constructing and reconstructing air fields were so remarkable that by the end of May, they were able to utilize the air bases in the RANGOON Sector. Immediately therafter, enemy ships entered the RANGOON Harbor.

Considering the possibility of the enemy landing operation in the vicinity of MOULMEIN, the 5th Air Div. carried out patrols over the coastal area near RANGOON.

e). After the middle of May, both the 28th Army, isolated in the sector north of RANGOON in BURMA and the 33rd Army, isolated in the SHUN Sector, were suffering from the lack of military material especially medical supplies. Therefore, the 5th Air Div. endeavored to supply them with medical supplies from the air.

6). Other air operations.

a). With the increase of the enemy raids on the THAILAND -BURMA Rail Road, counter raids were undertaken at the end of March and April, by an element of the fighter unit.

b). In the middle of April, in order to protect our sea route between RANGOON and the MOULMEIN Sector, fighters of the 30th Air Regt. escorted our shipping in the vicinity of the MOULMEIN Harbor.

G. Air operations of the 5th Air Div. in the areas other than the BURMA Area in 1945.

1. Operations against the American task force which attacked Southern INDO-CHINA.

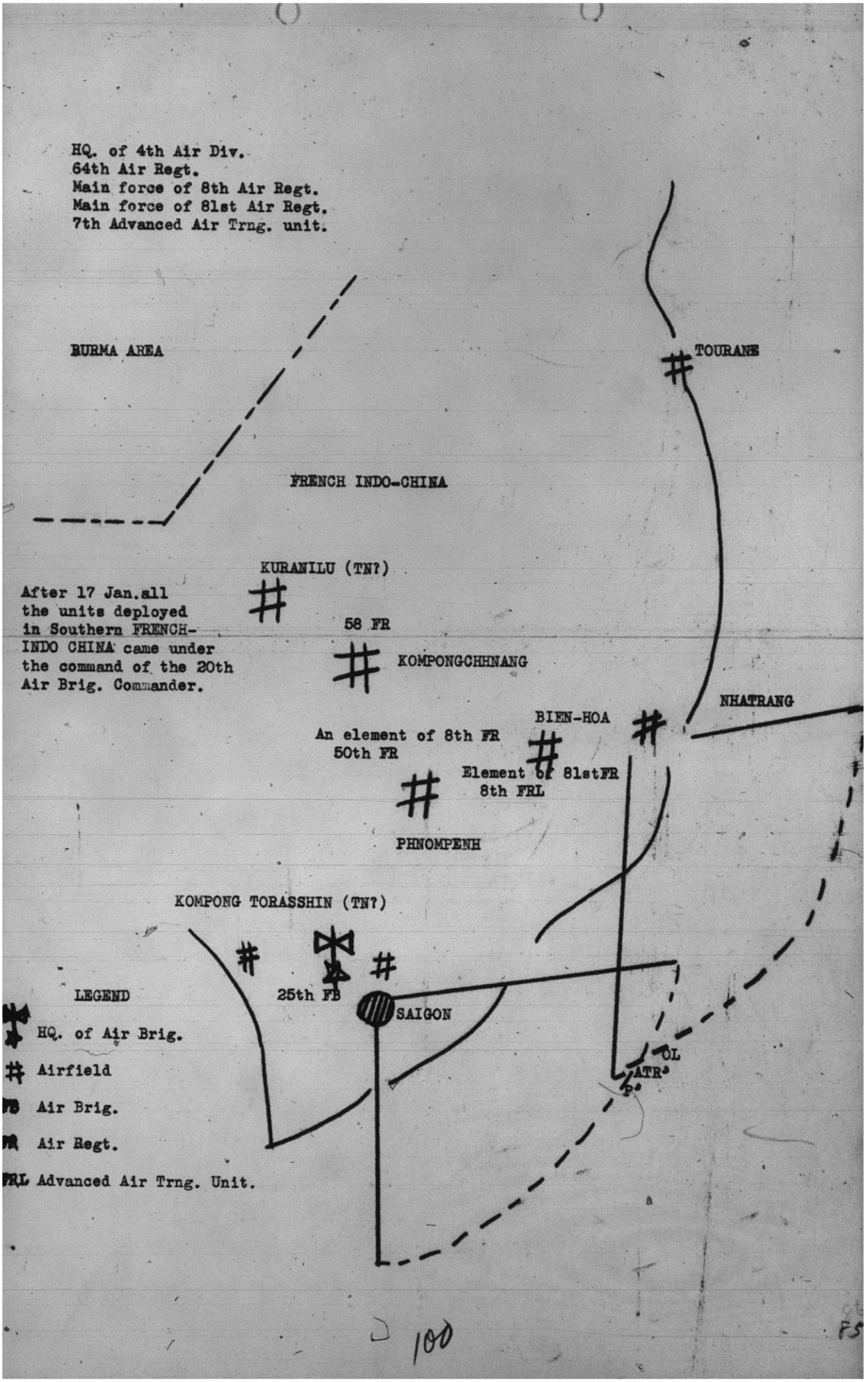
a. The 5th Air Div. was in charge of operations in the INDO-CHINA, BURMA and THAILAND theaters.

b. Along with our failure of the decisive battle in the PHILIPPINES Theater, which resulted in the capture of MANILA by the American forces, the SOUTH CHINA SEA had became a theatre for the American carrier task forces.

From early morning of 12 Jan., an all day attack by a powerful force of the enemy carrier planes raided SAIGON and CAMRANH Bay.

The 3rd Air Army, in comformity with the order from the Southern Army, ordered the 5th Air Div. to counter raid the task force with their main force. Furthermore, the 58th Air Regt. of heavy bombers was reassigned to Southern INDO-CHINA from SUMATRA. Also, the 8th Advanced Air training Unit of fighters, which had been in the SAIGON Sector, and the 7th Advanced Air-training Unit in BANGKOK, were put under the command of the 5th Air Div.

c. On the 12th, the 5th Air Div. issued an order; dispatching the 50th Air Regt. of fighters, an element of the 8th Air Regiment of a approximately eight light bombers, and an element of the 81st Air Regiment of four headquarters reconnaissance planes from the BURMA Area, to Southern INDO-CHINA . The 5th Air Division also summoned the commander of the 25th Air Brig. to SAIGON from HANOI.


HQ. of 4th Air Div.
64th Air Regt.
Main force of 8th Air Regt.
Main force of 81st Air Regt.
7th Advanced Air Trng. unit.
BURMA AREA
FRENCH INDO-CHINA
TOURANE
KURANILU (TN?)
After 17 Jan. all the units deployed in Southern FRENCH-INDO CHINA came under the command of the 20th Air Brig. Commander.
58 FR
KOMPONGCHHNANG
NHATRANG
BIEN-HOA
An element of 8th FR
50th FR
Element of 81st FR
8th FRL
PHNOMPENH
KOMPONG TORASSHIN (TN?)
25th FB
SAIGON
LEGEND
HQ. of Air Brig.
Airfield
Air Brig.
Air Regt.
Advanced Air Trng. Unit.

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Commanding all the air units in Southern INDO-CHINA, the division utilized them in reconnoitering the enemy task force, and pushed the preparation for attacking it.

Dispositions of the 5th Air Div. for the raid were as follows:

** Refer to the inserted chart.

With the dispositions as shown in the sketch, the 5th Air Div. carried out patrols. Also, each air regiment organized a special attack unit for the purpose of raiding the enemy task force. However, further raids never took place.

d. In the middle of February, the headquarters of the 25th Air Brig. was reorganized to the 25th Independent Air Brigade Headquarters and as a result, the Air Brig. HQ. was greatly strengthened.

Furthermore, during the period from the middle of February to the middle of March, the 15th Air Regt. of HQ. recon. planes, the 204th Air Regt. of fighters and the 13th Air Regt. of fighters arrived in Southern INDO-CHINA and all these units were put under the command of the 5th Air Div. After their previous participation in the decisive engagement in the PHILIPPINES, they had been in JAPAN PROPER or in the MALAY theater for restoration of strength at present; being put under the command of the 25th Independent Air Brig., they continued their restoration of fighting power in preparation for the coming operations.

2. Plan for the Guidance of the Two Front Operation in BURMA and INDO-CHINA.

a. As a result of the PHILIPPINES decisive engagement, South CHINA Sea had become a theater for the American task forces. Judging from the general situation, the probability of the American task force and the American troops in the PHILIPPINES to attempt a surprise landing on TAIWAN, South CHINA or INDO-CHINA had become so certain that the Southern Army come to lay importance on the defense of INDO-CHINA Peninsula and especially of the INDO-CHINA Sea Front. Also, there was a further possibility of the enemy counter-attack landing against the INDO-CHINA Sea Front, in coordination with that in the BENGOL Bay. If these simultaneous attacks took place, the 3rd Air Army's air operation will place emphasis on the former landing. Based on the instruction of the 3rd Air Army, the 5th Air Div. mapped out a plan for the guidance of the two-front operation in BURMA and INDO-CHINA by swamping

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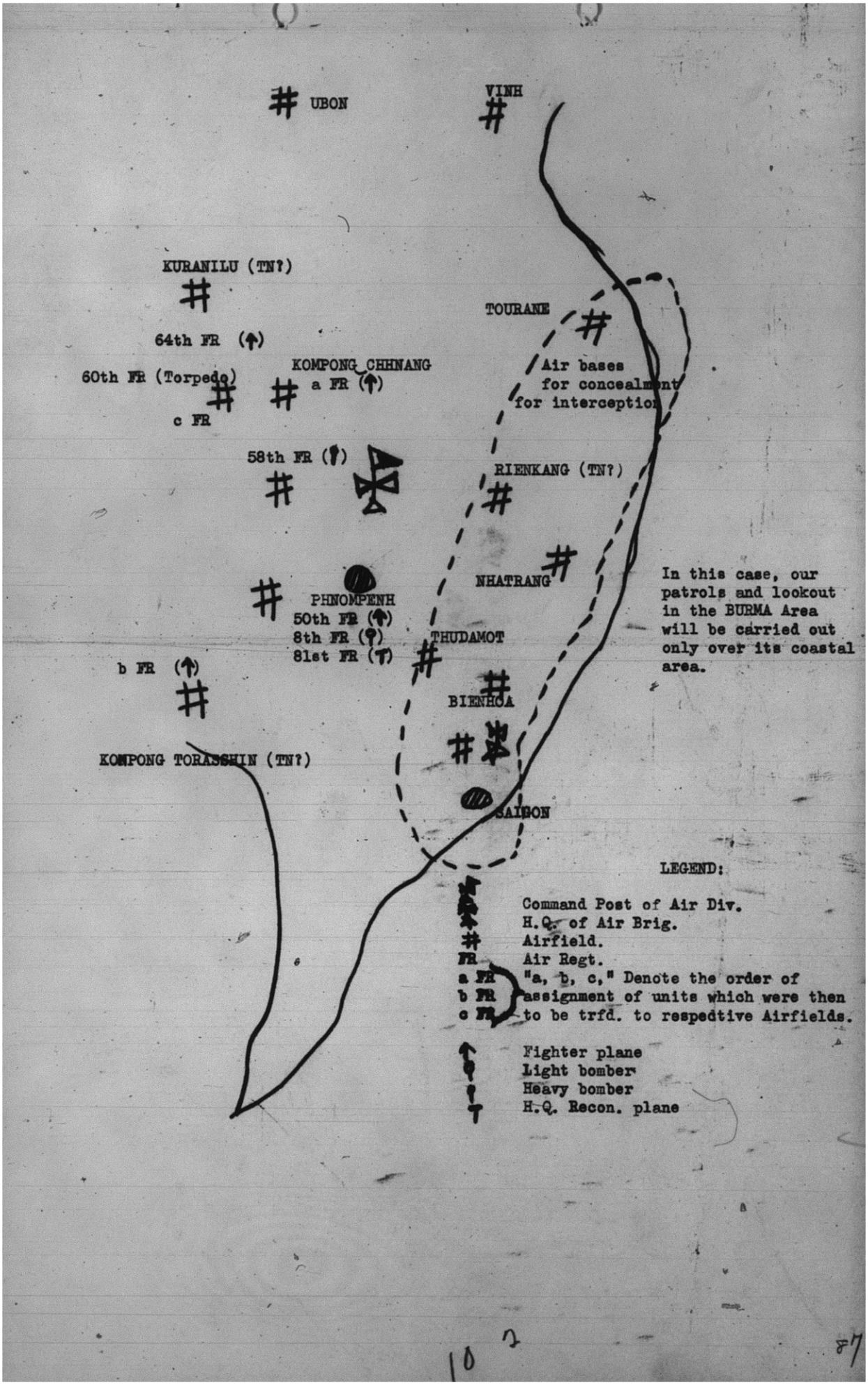
UBON
VINH
KURANILU (TN?)
64th FR
60th FR (Torpedo)
c FR
KOMPONG CHHNANG
a FR
TOURANE
Air bases
for concealment
for interception
58th FR
RIENKANG (TN?)
NHATRANG
PHNOMPENH
50th FR
8th FR
81st FR
THUDAMOT
b FR
BIENHOA
KOMPONG TORASSHIN (TN?)
SAIGON
In this case, our patrols and lookout in the BURMA Area will be carried out only over its coastal area.
LEGEND:
Command Post of Air Div.
H.Q. of Air Brig.
Airfield.
FR Air Regt.
a FR
b FR
c FR
"a, b, c," Denote the order of assignment of units which were then to be trfd. to respedtive Airfields.
Fighter plane
Light bomber
Heavy bomber
H.Q. Recon. plane

10 2

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the previous operational plan.

b. Outline of the plan for the operational guidance was as follows:

Plan for the Guidance of the Two Front Operation in BURMA and INDO-CHINA.

I. General Plan

A. The 5th Air Div. will keep the present close cooperation, with its main force, in the operation of the BURMA Area Army and guide the general air operations in consideration of the strategic trend in both the eastern and western fronts.

B. Against the possible enemy counter-attack landings in the Eastern and Western Fronts simultaneously, importance will be placed on the former.

II. Principles of guidance.

A. For repulsing the counter-attack landing in the Eastern Front, the 5th Air Div., supplemented with several air regt. and torpedo planes from the 60th Air Regt., will attack the enemy by utilizing air torpedoes and special suicide bombing tactics. Our raids will be directed only on the task force, especially on the aircraft carriers. Each plane will endeavor to sink at least one ship in the convoy. Close cooperation with the navy will be strived for.

B. Outline of the dispositions of our air units in case of an enemy counter-attack landing in the Eastern Front.

** Refer to the sketch.

C. In case of an enemy counter-atfack landing in the Western Front, although the special attack units will be organized in compliance with the conditions prescribed in the SE Operational Plan, raids will be undertaken by seizing any favorable opportunity; preferably at night, dawn or dusk.

D. In case an enemy task force should attack in the Eastern Front, counter-attacks will be carried out according to the "a" clause and in the event the attack is against our Western Front, the crushing of the enemy will be endeavored for only when they enter the ANDAMAN Sea. In all other occasions, our orders will be issued in compliance with the situations.

E. Patrol and reconnaissance.

In view of our present capabilities in both the Eastern and Western Fronts, patrols will ordinarily be suspended and will be resumed only when the enemy counter-attack is detected by intelligence reports.

F. Every effort will be made to check any enemy attempt of air-borne

attacks. In case the enemy should descend with air-borne units in coordination with a landing by sea, no time will be lost in annihilating the former.

C. For the realization of the above mentioned plan for the operational guidance, promoting the construction and maintenance of the air bases were of most importance. Also, the accumulation of fuel and ammunitions and the rearrangement of the communication network for immediate aerial information were necessary. Therefore, various air base units were summoned from the BURMA Theater for that purpose.

D. Changes in our plans for the guidance of operations.

With the capture of the PHILIPPINES, the American forces' main operation came to be aimed toward JAPAN PROPER. Accordingly, the Southern Army changed its previous operational guidance by transferring its neucleus from INDO-CHINA Peninsula to SINGAPORE. A new plan was then formulated (namely for attracting the enemy to SINGAPORE--SINGAPORE was of special interest to the BRITISH for political as well as strategic reasons) by directing the Southern Army's main force there. This plan was undertaken to modify the enemy push toward JAPAN PROPER.

Based upon the above principle, the operational plan of the 5th Air Div. was readjusted again.

3. Security of the Western Sea Routes.

a. With the air bases in the PHILIPPINES in enemy possession, resulting in activated raids by the American air forces in Southern INDO-CHINA and in the Southern Sea, actions by the enemy submarines were also intensified. The resumption of raids by the enemy carrier task force was also anticipated. Consequently, the sea routes from our Southern Sphere to JAPAN PROPER became more perilous.

At the end of January, an order was issued from the Southern Army concerning the allotment of territorial responsibilities for the security of the so-called Western Sea Route Zone which runs from SINGAPORE to JAPAN PROPER, via the coasts of Southern INDO-CHINA and CHINA.

b. The 5th Air Div.'s main tasks were to furnish air cover for anchorages and for the transport convoys navigating in the Western Sea Route Zone, north of latitude 5° north; and south of latitude 20° north.

The 25th Independent Air Brig. was then assigned these duties in cooperation with the navy air units in that area.

c. Sea transportation by the Western Sea Route Zone, though

fair losses could not be avoided, was achieved better than had been anticipated. This was chiefly due to the untiring efforts of the air units.

d. Together with the above tasks, escorts for the convoys by the Southern Army from SINGAPORE to SAIGON were continued until the suspension of hostilities.

4. Operations from the Northern INDO-CHINA against South-western and Western CHINA.

a. As for the air operations from the Northern INDO-CHINA against South-western and Southern CHINA, strengthening of our air bases and collection of munitions to cooperate with our CHINA Expeditionery Army were carried out from the end of 1944.

Due to the change of the operational plan of the Southern Army, cooperation with our front line units in Northern INDO-CHINA was restricted to the extent of being carried out only by our hdqs. recon. planes.

b. At the end of March, based on information that the enemy had been making preparations in the vicinities of CANTON, MENG-TZU, POSEH and LOLIN, the reconnaissance planes of the 81st Air Regt. recconnoitered those districts.

NOTE No such signs were recognized in the recconnaissance.

5. Air transportation for reassignning air crewmen in the Southern Sphere to JAPAN PROPER.

It was decided that some fifteen hundred air crewman trained in the Southern Sphere be transferred, by air, to participate in the eventual decisive engagement in JAPAN PROPER. Since the end of April, their transportation to JAPAN PROPER was controlled from our air bases in SOUTHERN INDO-CHINA.

6. The " KAKU " maneuvers and subsequent operational preparations.

a. It had been decided that the major portion of our air strength of the Southern Army be drawn out to participate in the decisive engagement in JAPAN PROPER. Therefore, the preparations for its transfer were pushed forward in strict secrecy.

It was called the "KAKU" Maneuvers.

b. In relation to the "KAKU" Maneuvers, the 5th Air Div. conformed to the following principles:

1). In strict secrecy, the main force of the air strength of the Southern Army will be transferred to FORMOSA to participate in the

the decisive engagement in JAPAN PROPER.

2). The 5th Air Div. will command and regulate the transferring of the air units to FORMOSA after their arrival in INDO-CHINA.

3). The units of the 5th Air Div. to be reassigned will be as follows:

The headquarters of the 25th Ind. Air Brig:

The 13th Air Regt. (fighters).

The 50th Air Regt. (fighters).

The 204th Air Regt. (fighters).

The 8th Air Regt. (light bombers).

The 58th Air Regt. (heavy bombers).

4). The transfer will be commenced on 30 June and every endeavor will be made for its swift completion; especially for its positive arrival to its destination.

5). The fighting strength of the air units to be reassigned will be reinforced as much as possible by receiving planes, etc., from the remaining units.

6). In case the enemy task force should commence attacking during the "KAKU" Maneuvers, the air units which happen to be in INDO-CHINA, destined for FORMOSA, will be utilized for counter attacks. Our fighter units will carry out air escort for the transferring air units, when enemy attacks are anticipated.

7). The heavy bomber units will mainly be transferred from Southern INDO-CHINA directly to FORMOSA; while the fighter units by way of our air bases in South CHINA.

In consideration of the recent trends in the enemy air raids, each unit will carefully determine its departing hour so as not to be attacked on its arrival.

8). Five or six transport planes will be allotted to each fighter unit for the transportation of its maintenance personnel and material.

c. The above mentioned plans will be successfully performed as planned.

d. Operational preparations during the rainy season after the " KAKU " Maneuvers.

1). Due to the "KAKU" Maneuvers, planes of the 5th Air Div.

were reduced to the following numbers:

The headquarters of the 4th Air Brig.

The 64th Air Regt. (approx. 15 fighters).

The 81st Air Regt. (approx. 10 hdqs. recon. planes).

The 8th Advanced Air Trng. Unit (5 or 6 fighters).

The 45th Air Trng. Unit. (approx. 10 twin engined advanced trainers)

2). Due to the difficulties in air transportation after the "KAKU" Maneuvers, the 5th Air Div. unable to receive replacements, tried to reorganize its air units by consolidating the remaining maintenance personnel, material, and planes to be repaired.

This was scheduled to be undertaken as follows:

a). The "KO" Fighter Unit.

With the 8th Advanced Air Training Unit as the main body, adding the remaining personnel and unskilled pilots of the 13th and 50th Air Regt. and by repairing and maintaining the remaining Type 4 Fighters of these same air regts., this unit will be designed to have a strength equivalant to one air regt. by the end of the rainy season. The organization will be completed by 1 August.

b). The "KO" Light Bomber Unit.

By merging with the remaining air crewmen and maintenance personnel of the 8th Air Regt. and by gathering the remaining planes to be repaired and some twin engined light bombers which had been left in MALAY and SUMATRA Areas, this unit will be designed to have a strength of one half of an air regt. (strength of approx. 15 planes) by the end of the rainy season. The organization will be completed by 1 August.

c). Strengthening of the 64th Air Regt.

The remaining maintenance personnel, unskilled air crewmen, and planes to be repaired of the 204th Air Regt. will be merged with the 64th Air Regt. to reinforce the latter.

3). Although the plan was laid down and preparations were being made, due to the serious war trend in the Homeland, reinforcement of planes was completely suspended. Even if the restoration of our fighting strength had roughly been achieved, maintenance of the strength would have been in possible.

In order to utilize our planes to the utmost into the coming vital air

TABLE SHOWING THE AIR UNITS OF 5TH AIR DIVISION

Yr.	MONTH	STRENGTH OF AIR UNITS														
	Sept.	4FB ( )	50FR (↑)	8FR (ƍ)	7FB ( )	64FR (↑)	12FR (ƍ)	98FR (ƍ)	81FR (T)	34FR (ƍ)	21FR (↑)	33FR (↑)				
19	Oct.											B/Oct	204FR (↑)	60FR (ƍ)	77FR (↑)	
43	Nov.														B/Nov	
	Dec.															
	Jan.							E/Jan		B/Jan	B/Jan	M/Jan		M/Jan E/Jan		
	Feb.														B/Feb.	
1	Mar.														62FR (ƍ)	
9	Apr.													87FR (↑)		
	May.													B/May E/May		
4	June															
4	July				M/July		M/July									
	Aug.														M/Aug	
	Sept.				25FB											
	Oct.				E/Oct								B/Oct			
	Nov.															
	Dec.														8FRL	7FRL
	Jan.										15FR (T)				M/Jan	M/Jan
	Feb.				25FBS					13FR (↑)	M/Feb		E/Feb			
1	Mar.						B/Apr 2FR			M/Mar						
9	Apr.						M/Apr					30FR (↑)				
4	May										Returned	B/May		45FRK (ƍ)		E/May
5	June											E/May		B/June		
	July		B/July	B/July	B/July					B/July			B/July			
	Aug.															

LEGENT:
- FB H.Q. of Air Brig
- FBS H.Q. of Ind. Air Brig.
- FR Air Regt.
- FRL Advanced Air Trng. Unit.
- FRK Air Trng. Unit
- ↑ Fighter Plane
- ƍ Light bomber
- ƍ Heavy bomber.
- T H.Q. Recon. Plane.
- ↟ Two seater fighter.
- — Attached unit under tactical command
- ---- Original unit
- ==== Organic unit under tactical command
- B. Begining
- M. Middle
- E. End

Appadix NO 2

APPENDIX NO.1 TABLE SHOWING MAIN AIR OPERATIONS OF 5thAIR DIVISION AND LAND OPERATIONS RELATIVE TO THE FORMERS.

ENEMY OPERATIONS	PRINCIPAL LAND OPERATIONS RELATIVE TO RIGHT COLUMN	PRINCIPAL AIR OPERATIONS	COMPILATION * OF AIR & LAND OPERATION	MONTH	YRS.
			Operations ↑	Sept.	
		Attacks on CHITTAGONG Hr.	Aiming to destroy	Oct.	
	HUKAWNG Operation by 18th D.	Attacks on SILCHAR, Fenny, & IMPHAL Air field	Enemy's Air strength	Nov.	1943
On 1 Dec. enemy's Air force attack RANGOON EN MASSE.		Attacks on CALCUTTA Hr. and CHITTAGONG and on Air field of TINSUKIA, KUNMING, andYONNAN-I.	Around BURMA Theatre ↓	Dec.	
		Interceptions against INDO-CHINA Air transportation route, Air Supplies to HUKAUNG.	↑	Jan.	
	2 Feb.	Cooperation with "HA" Operation		Feb.	
5 Mar. Enemy's Air borne unit descended in Northern BURMA	"HA" Operation. 8 March. 5 Mar.	Operation aimed to crash enemy's air strength. Cooperation with "U" Operation attack on HEDO Oil field.	Operation	Mar.	
	"U" Operation 7 April	Cooperation with attacking operation on enemy's Air borne unit in No.BURMA.	Against	Apr.	1944
	Attacks on the enemy's Air borne unit in No.BURMA 17 May			May	
	LU-River Front Operation	Cooperation with LU-River Operation.	Enemy's Counter Attacks.	June	
Rainy season	Air raiding on MIYTKIYNA Annihilated			July Aug.	
	IMPHAL Withdrawal Operation	Cooperation with IMPHAL WITHDRAWAL Operation.		Sept.	
	Preparations for IRRAWADDY battle	Night attacks aimed to reduce enemy air-		Oct.	
Enemy's Air borne raiding intensified		strength.		Nov.	
		Protection of MANDALAY railway bridge.		Dec.	
12 Jan. American task force came to the attack on Southern French INDO.	IRRAWADDY Battle	Attacks on enemy ships in AKYAB Area. Cooperations with IRRAWADDY battle and Subsequent Operations		Jan.	
	Subsequent counter attack	(preparations for attacking american task force in French INDO-CHINA.)		Feb.	1945
28 Mar. Enemy's Mechanized Unit rushed in MEIKTILA.	Operation. French INDO "MEI" Operation.	Operation aimed to reduce enemy's air strength in BURMA Area.		Mar.	
		(coop.w/MEI Oper.)		Apr.	
				May	
		KAKU Oper.		June	
		Escorts for convoy in Southern Sea		July	
				Aug.	

* NAMES AS GENERAL OPERATION 108

NOTE:

engagement, even transport planes were trained for special attack tactics.

4). Of the air base units, the units relative to repairs made every effort to increase the fighting strength of the air units; while the others, for the training of all-out defense tactics for the protection of each air base.

* Two diagrams to be inserted.

APPENDIX NO. 3.

Tables on the Units of the 5th Air Div. (air units not included).

A. September, 1943

1. BURMA Area.

a. Air Sector Units.

Headquaters of the 7th Air Sector.

The 15th Airfield Battalion.

The 18th " "

The 19th " "

The 23rd " "

The 34th " "

The 52nd " "

The 82nd " "

The 84th " "

The 92nd " "

The 94th " "

The 9th Airfield Company.

The 17th " "

The 7th Field Airfield Construction Force.

The 8th " " " "

The 36th Field Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion.

The 36th Ind. Motor Bn.

The 275th Ind. Motor Co.

The 280th " " ".

The 86th Line of Comm. Motor Co.

The 67th Land Duty Co.

The 80th " " ".

The 62nd Construction Duty Co.

b. Air Signal and Intell. Units.

The 1st Air Signal Regt.

The 3rd " " "

The 2nd Air Intell. Regt.

c. Air Defense Unit.

The 20th Anti-aircraft Art. Regt.

d. Repair and Supply Units.

The 3rd Sub. depot of the 19th Field Air Repair Depot.

The 1st Branch Depot of the 13th Field Supply Depot.

2. THAILAND and FRENCH-INDO CHINA Area.

a. Air Sector Units.

Headquarters of the 1st Air Sector:

The 5th Airfield Co.

The 12th " "

The 18th " "

The 38th " "

The 28lst Ind. Motor Co.

The 68th Land Duty Co.

b. Air Signal and Intell. Units.

Elements of the 1st and 3rd Signal Regts.

An element of the 2nd Air Intell. Regts.

c. Repair and Supply Units.

The 19th Field Air Repair Depot.

The 13th Field Air Supply Depot. (under the delegated command).

3. In addition to the above units, the 1st Bn. of the 3rd Meteorological Regiment was stationed in BURMA and was under our delegated command.

B. September, 1944

1. BURMA Area

a. Air Sector Units:

Headquaters of the 7th Air Sector Unit:

The 19th Airfield Bn.

The 23rd " "

The 34th " "

The 52nd " "

The 9th Airfield Co.

The 17th Airfield Co.

The 7th Field Airfield Construction Unit.

The 36th Field Anti-aircraft Art. Bn.

The 36th Ind. Motor Bn.

The 280th Ind. Motor Co.

The 80th Land Duty Co.

Headquarters of the 24th Air Sector Unit.

The 15th Airfield Bn.

The 17th " "

The 82nd Airfield Bn.

The 92nd " "

The 94th Airfield Bn.

The 38th Airfield Co.

The 8th Field Airfield Construction Unit.

The 275th Ind. Motor Company.

The 86th " " "

The 67th Land Duty Co.

b. Air Signal and Intell. Units.

The 1st Air Signal Regt.

The 3rd " " "

The 2nd Air Intell. Regt.

The 31st Ground Radio Unit.

The 32nd " " "

The 33rd " " "

c. Air Defense Unit.

The 20th Anti-aircraft Art. Regt.

d. Air Repair and Supply Units.

The 1st and 3rd Sub-depots of the 19th Air Repair Depot.

The 1st Branch Depot of the 13th Field Supply Depot.

2. THAILAND and FRENCH-INDO CHINA Area.

a. Air Sector Units.

Headquarters of the 1st Air Sector.

The 75th Airfield Bn.

The 90th " ".

The 12th Airfield Co.

The 85th " "

An element of the 68th Land Duty Co.

Main force of the 281st Indl Motor Co.

Headquarters of the 25th Air Sector.

The 76th Airfield Bn.

The 81st " "

The 126th " "

The 5th Airfield Co.

The 18th " "

An element of the 281st Ind. Motor Co.

Main force of the 68th Land Duty Co.

b. Air Signal and Intell. Units.

Elements of the 1st and 3rd Air Signal Regts.

An element of the 2nd Air Intell. Regt.

The 34th Ground Radio Unit.

c. Air Repair and Supply Units.

The Main Depot, the 2nd Sub-depot and the 4th Ind. Maintenance unit of the 19th Air Repair Depot.

The Main Depot, the 1st and 2nd Sub-depots and the 1st and 2nd Ind. Maintenance Units of the 22nd Air Repair Depot.

The Main Depot and the 2nd Branch Depot of the 13th Air Supply Depot.

3. In addition to the above units, the 1st and 2nd Bn. of the 3rd Meteorological Regt. were under our delegated command.

4. The total personnel of the above units were approx. 20,000, INCLUDING ~~exclusive of~~ approx. 7,000 personnel of the Air Units.

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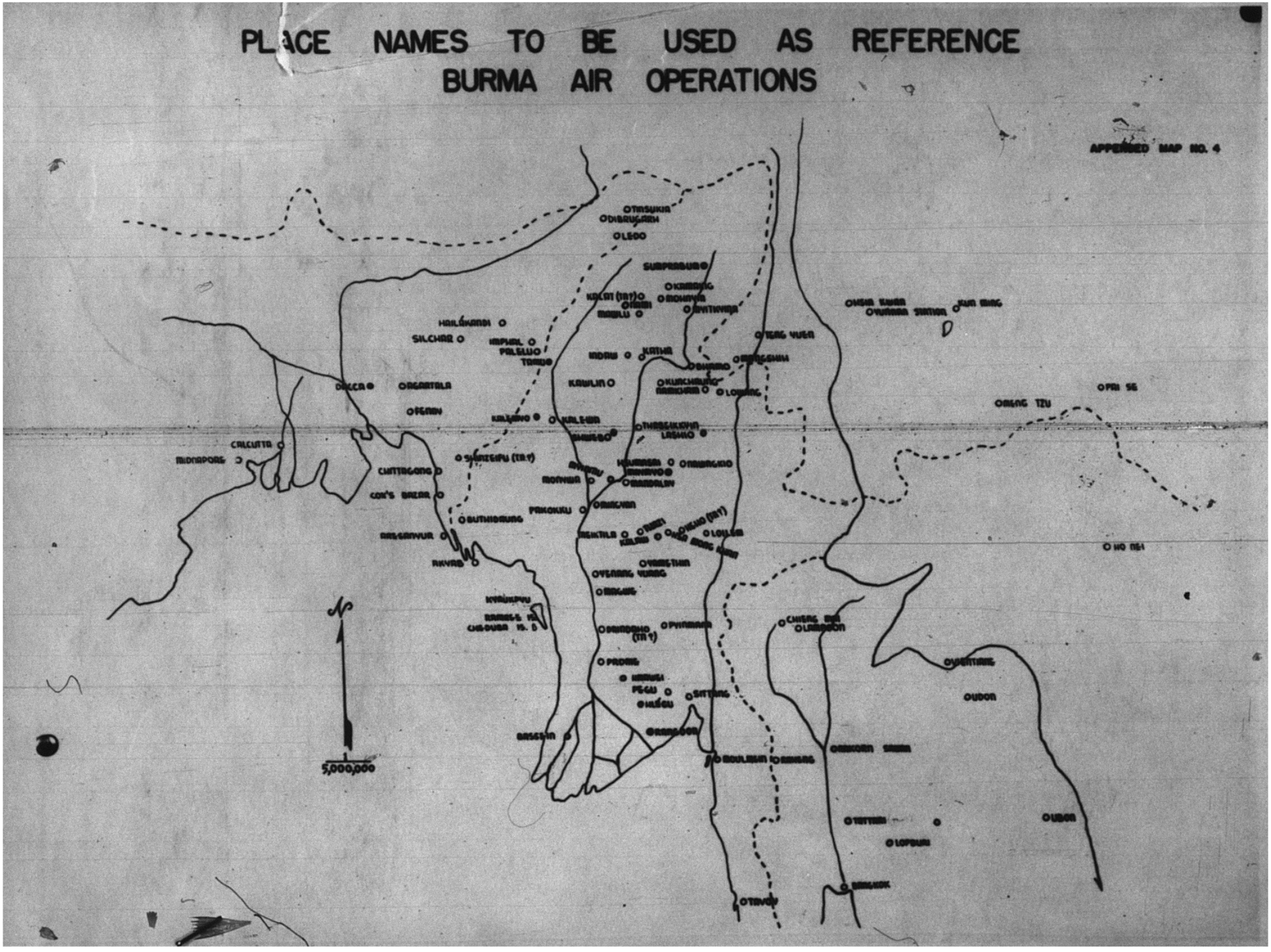
Appended Map #4

PLACE NAMES TO BE USED AS REFERENCE FOR BURMA AIR OPERATIONS

PLACE NAMES TO BE USED AS REFERENCE
BURMA AIR OPERATIONS

APPENDED MAP NO. 4



Remarks:

1. Units within squares will be sent to other operational areas after the Burma operation is completed.

2. In the event it is impossible to form the (x) new units as specified the equivalent strength will be substituted in its place.

3. If necessary increase the number of headquarters reconnaissance planes of the newly established units and organize the headquarters reconnaissance planes after the completion of the BURMA operation with the (x) newly established fighter unit in MALAY and the 41st Air Company as the basis.