

decided to concentrate all forces for the defence of the homeland. The aircraft available, therefore, were mainly trainers which were not easy to send back to Japan. In all, the enemy had, for the defence of Malaya, Sumatra and Java, approximately 800 serviceable aircraft all of which, in the last resort, were to be used as Tokkoki (special attacker suicide aircraft).

454. On D-Day, the enemy planned that there should be no daylight sorties whatever owing to the difficulty in providing sufficient fighter cover to break through the British fighter defences. About 50 to 60 suicide sorties were to be made at twilight with a fighter escort of 30 to 40 aircraft. The suicides were to fly in flights of about 5 aircraft and all attacks were to be concentrated on shipping. Even if balloons were used by the Allied convoys no other method of attack than that of suicide attack was considered feasible. Ground targets were also to be ignored and no fighter defence put up against R.A.F. bomber attacks. Once the Japanese fighters had fulfilled their escort tasks to the suicide aircraft they, in turn, were to be used as suicide aircraft themselves since there were not enough aircraft to use for both purposes.

455. One Japanese source of information, as the result of interrogation, was extremely revealing. This source declared that the whole of the aircraft available to the Japanese for the defence of Malaya against the Allied invasion would, as the result of the mass suicide attack policy, "have been knocked out in about a week".

Direct attack on Mainland not Expected.

456. Following upon the Allied victory in Burma, and the capture of Rangoon in May, the Japanese expected attacks by the Allies on the Andamans, Nicobars, Mergui and Puket in August or September, with the main attack on Malaya coming at the end of October or nearly in November.

457. As soon as the airfields around Rangoon had been made serviceable by the Allies, the Japanese expected there would be a programme of softening-up attacks on Japanese bases by R.A.F. aircraft, with some 200 bomber sorties and 200 escorting fighter sorties daily. The enemy intended to put up little opposition on air attacks against Mergui, the Nicobars or Andamans, while no defensive fighter sorties were to be flown against the R.A.F. softening-up attacks unless Singapore itself were attacked.

458. A direct landing on the mainland of Malaya was not anticipated at the outset. Instead it was expected that the Allies would work gradually south, during which time there would be consolidation and the systematic building up of bases. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Japanese considered any landing in the Puket area (an operation which we had earlier planned and then abandoned after the fall of Rangoon) would have proved exceedingly dangerous for them, as the short range of the available Japanese fighter aircraft would have made it most difficult to oppose a landing there. The area of Port Swettenham on the Peninsula, it was believed, would not be reached until the end of 1945.

459. As "Zipper" was planned for September, and would undoubtedly have taken place

on that date but for the cessation of hostilities, it is evident that the dispositions by the Japanese for counteracting the Allied invasion would have been lamentably behind schedule.

Japanese Build up of Suicide Aircraft.

460. Taking into account the enemy's limited aircraft resources, the Japanese air strategy, on paper, was quite logically prepared.

461. In February, a little more than six months before surrender came, the Japanese Southern Area Army in South East Asia was informed by Tokio that there must be a change in air strategy in the Southern Area. The High Command had visualised that, before long, the Southern Area (French Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, Burma and Netherland East Indies) would be almost entirely cut off from the Empire and would have to develop their own air defence from an already diminishing air force in that area.

462. Training was accordingly speeded up, and all training aircraft and some operational and second line aircraft were ultimately modified to carry bombs.

463. As far back as February, 1945, the Japanese had already had some experience in the use of suicide attacks in the Philippines campaign and had seen how effective these suicide attacks could be against concentrations of shipping and, in particular, against large battleships and carriers.

464. It was the eventual plan of the Japanese, once the Allied invasion of Malaya had started, to use all their aircraft (first line, training and transport) as suicide aircraft against Allied shipping and then continue to fight on the land without an air force.

465. In the Southern Area, all Japanese aircraft were widely dispersed over the vast areas of Malaya, Sumatra and Java, while airfields were, in many instances, poor in condition. To effect this concentration of aircraft in Malaya, Sumatra and Java in preparation for the Allied invasion of Malaya, the Japanese had left Siam and French Indo-China almost bare of aircraft, except for some trainers, and it had not been thought possible to transfer to Malaya.

No Shortage of Suicide Pilots.

466. It seemed that there was no shortage of pilots in the Southern Area to man Japanese suicide aircraft, and that Major-General Kitagawa, G.O.C., 55th Air Training Division could, on his own admission, have called on 2,000 pilots for the 8/900 suicide aircraft at his disposal. On the other hand, few had any operational experience and consisted of training instructors and student pilots with little more than 100 hours flying. It was from these that only the best were selected as suicide pilots. Here, however, an exceedingly interesting and important factor must be noted. This special attack corps of suicide pilots was made up of ardent volunteers. They had determination to proceed to their doom elated in the thought that they were dying for their Emperor.

Major Factors Overlooked by Japanese.

467. The Japanese considered that they would have been able to defeat the Allies' first attempt at landing in Malaya by the use of their suicide aircraft, but considered that when the second attempt at landing was made by the