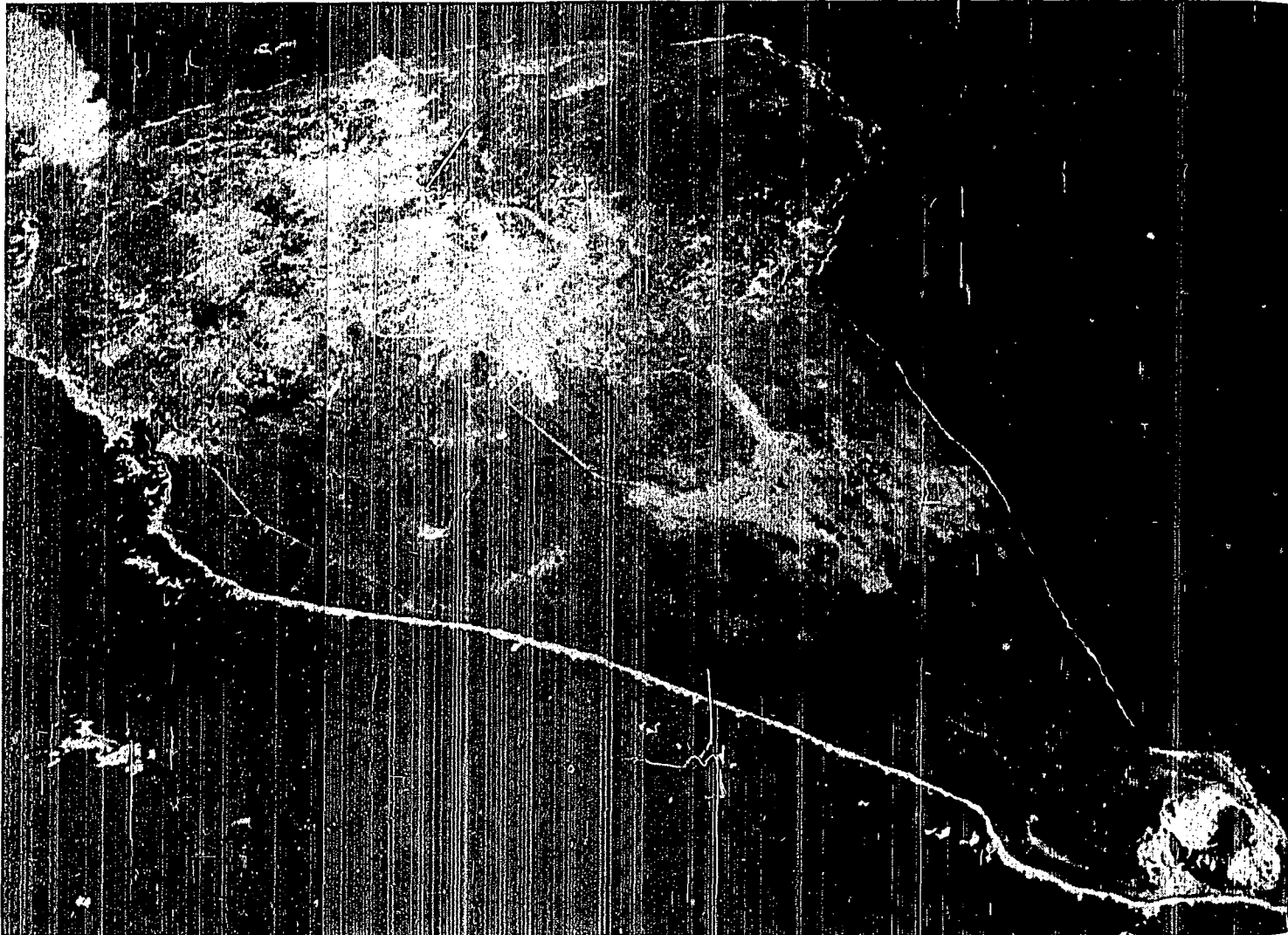


Japanese Defense of IWO JIMA



"The best plan is to sink this island in the sea . . ." — Y. Horie.

Less than a year after the bloody fight for Iwo Jima, a Japanese officer, imprisoned on Chichi Jima, used his newly-learned English to write about the battle. This is his story

By Y. Horie, former major, Imperial Japanese Army

I. Preface

BY THE KIND ADVICE OF AN AMERICAN OFFICER, I will state the outline of the Japanese defense plan and battle of Iwo Jima. To tell the truth, I have a very deep impression in regard to this problem because I was concerned with the defense plan of Iwo Jima and especially devoted my body and soul to its supply under my respectful LtGen Kuribayashi.

Every day after the American forces landed on Iwo Jima on the 19th of February 1945, I wrote on my map all battle reports communicated from Iwo Jima, studying the tactics and noting my opinion of them. But I am very sorry to say I burnt all of them when Iwo Jima fell and I have to pick it out from my poor memory.

I am unable to state my opinions without rending my heart to the many officers and men of Japan and America who sacrificed their lives.

I express my grateful thanks to Col Rixey, island commander of American occupation forces, Chichi Jima, and Capt Kusilak, his staff officer, for their helpful criticism to my booklet.

II. General Situation

A. History of Iwo Jima—About 70 years ago Iwo Jima became the territory of Japan with Chichi Jima and Haha Jima. But we had no special product on this island and it had been written down in the geographical book as an island of sulfur springs, no water, no sparrow, and no swallow. And it was indeed after Truk Island was raided by an American Task Force in February, 1944, and our Grand Fleet retired from there, that we (except several officers) began to think much of this island in connection with our strategy.

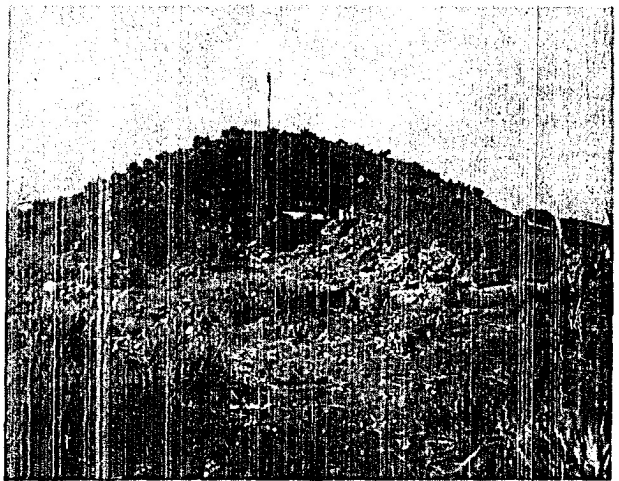
B. Situation of Spring, 1944—In 1943, our Navy constructed the first airfield (near Mt. Suribachi) on Iwo Jima and made it an intermediate aircraft base from Japan to the Marianas, and used it also as an aircraft base for our convoy strategy. In February, 1944 we had only 1,500 Naval Air Forces men and 20 aircraft on the island. From February to March, Japanese Imperial Headquarters increased the strength on Iwo Jima to 3,000 Army and 2,000 Navy. In those days the Army

was under command of the Chichi Jima fortress and the Navy was under the command of the Yokohka Air Force.

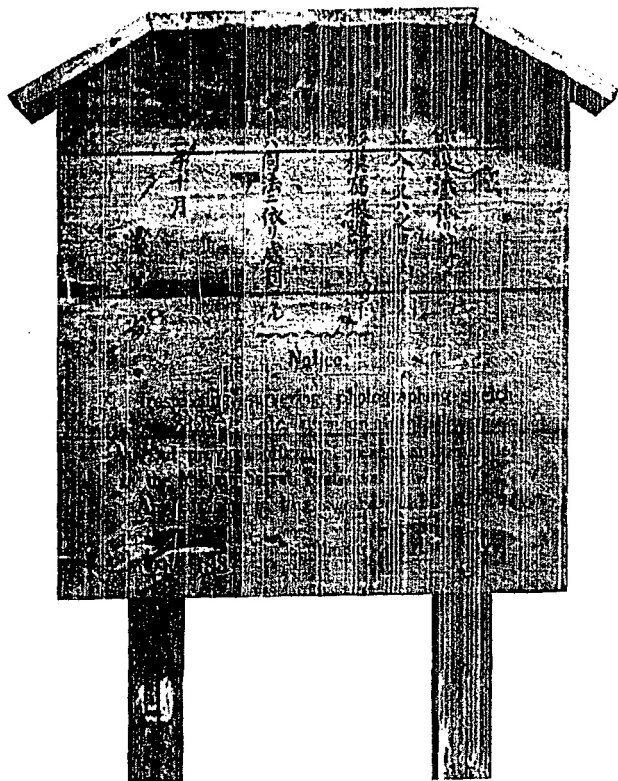
C. Situation of Summer and Autumn, 1944—From March to June, Japanese Imperial Headquarters had sent about 10 divisions to the Middle Pacific area and especially did their best to strengthen Saipan, Guam, and Palau and endeavored to reestablish our Great Fleet. On the other hand Japanese Imperial Headquarters came to recognize the value of Iwo Jima and began to study what influence this isolated island would have on the mainland of Japan if the Marianas fell to the enemy's hand. From March to June the Chichi Jima fortress commander was under the command of the 31st Army on Saipan, and the Army and Navy in the Bonin Islands were under the single control of the fortress commander.

June 15th, American forces landed on Saipan and on the 19th our Great Fleet was defeated by the American 5th Fleet 270 sea miles north of Yap Island. Japanese Imperial Headquarters gave up their plan of repossessing Saipan and determined to reenforce Iwo Jima with a part of this repossessing strength.

On the 15th of June about 100 of our naval aircraft were defeated by the first American air raids on Iwo Jima. In those days we did not have any strong defense



RIGHT: (top) One of hundreds of pillboxes Japanese constructed on Iwo. (bottom) Five-inch dual-purpose gun positioned to fire on targets in the air or on the water.



As early as 1937, Japanese realized the strategic importance of Iwo Jima, as evidenced by this sign discovered on the island by the Marine landing force.

fortifications on this island and it was as hazardous to be on as a pile of eggs. At that time if American forces had assaulted Iwo Jima it would have been completely occupied in two or three days.

On the 30th of June, Japanese Imperial Headquarters activated the 109th Division, appointed LtGen Kuribayashi as the divisional commander, and put him under the direct command of the Imperial Headquarters. I, who had been concerned in the plan of repossessing Saipan as a staff officer of the 31st Army, became on this same day a staff officer of LtGen Kuribayashi. At the end of June, the Navy created the 3d Aircraft Fleet at Kisarazu and brought the air forces of Iwo Jima under the command of this fleet as the 27th Air Forces.

We planned to send the following Army strength (total—about 14,000 men) to Iwo Jima from Chichi Jima after July:

- 145th Infantry Regt
- 3d Bn, 17th Mixed Regt
- 26th Tank Regt
- 4 Independent Anti-tank Gun Bns
- 2 Independent Machine Gun Bns
- 2 25mm Machine Gun Cos
- 1 Mortar Co

- 1 Rocket Gun Co
- 1 Assault Co
- Other Units

But enemy disturbances by air forces and submarines were severe and we had bad weather many times, so the transportation of this strength by sea was delayed and continued to be delayed to the very time American forces landed on Iwo Jima. The Navy also increased its strength on Iwo Jima by crushing many difficulties. Lt-Gen Kuribayashi placed the detached headquarters of the division of Chichi Jima with Maj Horie the head of it, and put him in charge of transportation, supply, and communication.

III. Chief Persons

A. *LtGen Kuribayashi*—Graduated Military Academy and Military College, cavalry officer. Stayed in Canada for two years, had a long service in the War Office, and was mostly appointed as staff officer. He was a poet and wrote *Aiba Koshin Kyoku* (A song of loving horses) and *Aikoku Koshin Kyoku* (a song of loving his nation).

At Iwo Jima, one night, I talked with him thoroughly and he told me as follows:

"When I was in Canada, I went to the United States and saw many factories. I pay my respects to the greatness of American mass production. I think that 'Victory or Defeat' of this war will be decided by production power. Don't you think so?"

B. *MajGen Osuga* (Ex-Commander of 2d Mixed Brigade)—Graduated Military Academy and Military College, artillery officer. Appointed as the Chichi Jima fortress commander in March, 1944, from Kyurun fortress commander. Appointed as commander of the 2d Mixed Brigade on the 30th of June when the 109th Division was formed. In December, entered field hospital at Iwo Jima, suffering from paratyphus. Had gentle and quiet personality.

C. *MajGen Senda*, (Commander of 2d Mixed Brigade)—Appointed as the commander of the 2d Mixed Brigade, as successor to MajGen Osuga, from commander of Sendai Reserve Military Academy. Graduated Military Academy. Served in Infantry School for Non-Commissioned Officers, etc. Had experience as infantry regimental commander. Well acquainted with infantry battle.

4. *Col Hori* (Ex-Chief of Staff)—Graduated Military Academy and special course of Military College. Had experience as teacher at Military Academy, as infantry regimental commander, and as Chief of Staff of the Homeland Division. Appointed as Chief of Staff of the 109th Division on 30th of June. Was discharged from this position and was attached to the 2d Mixed Brigade headquarters in December, 1944. Had gentle and quiet personality.

5. *Col Takaishi* (Chief of Staff)—Graduated Military

Academy and special course of Military College, infantry officer. Appointed as the successor of Col Hori in December, 1944. Well acquainted with infantry battle, very energetic, and was a poet.

6. *LtCol Nishi* (Commander of 26th Tank Regt)—Baron, cavalry officer, a champion of Olympic horse games.

7. *Staff Officers* (from old to young by age)—LtCol Nakane, operations staff; LtCol Nishikawa, supply staff; Maj Yoshida, fortification staff; Maj Yamanonchi, intelligence staff, and Maj Horie, head of the Chichi Jima detached headquarters.

8. *RAdm Ichimaru* (Commander of 27th Air Forces)—Graduated Naval Academy. Famous pilot of Navy Air Forces.

9. *Naval Staff Officers*—Comdr Mase, senior and operations staff; LtComdr Okazaki, supply staff; and LtComdr Akada, defense staff.

IV. Defense Plan of Iwo Jima

A. *Discussions regarding the defense plans of Iwo Jima*—Iwo Jima was very near to the mainland of Japan and was able to hold many aircraft. We thought much about this island and discussed the value of it many times at Tokyo and Iwo Jima.

First, at Iwo Jima some officers said, "We will not be left as an isolated force, we can keep on fighting, expecting the assistance of air forces and fleets from the main-

land of Japan. So the plan should be an offensive defense."

At Tokyo, some officers said, "We must make a plan of how to use this Iwo Jima and need not be anxious about the fall of Iwo Jima."

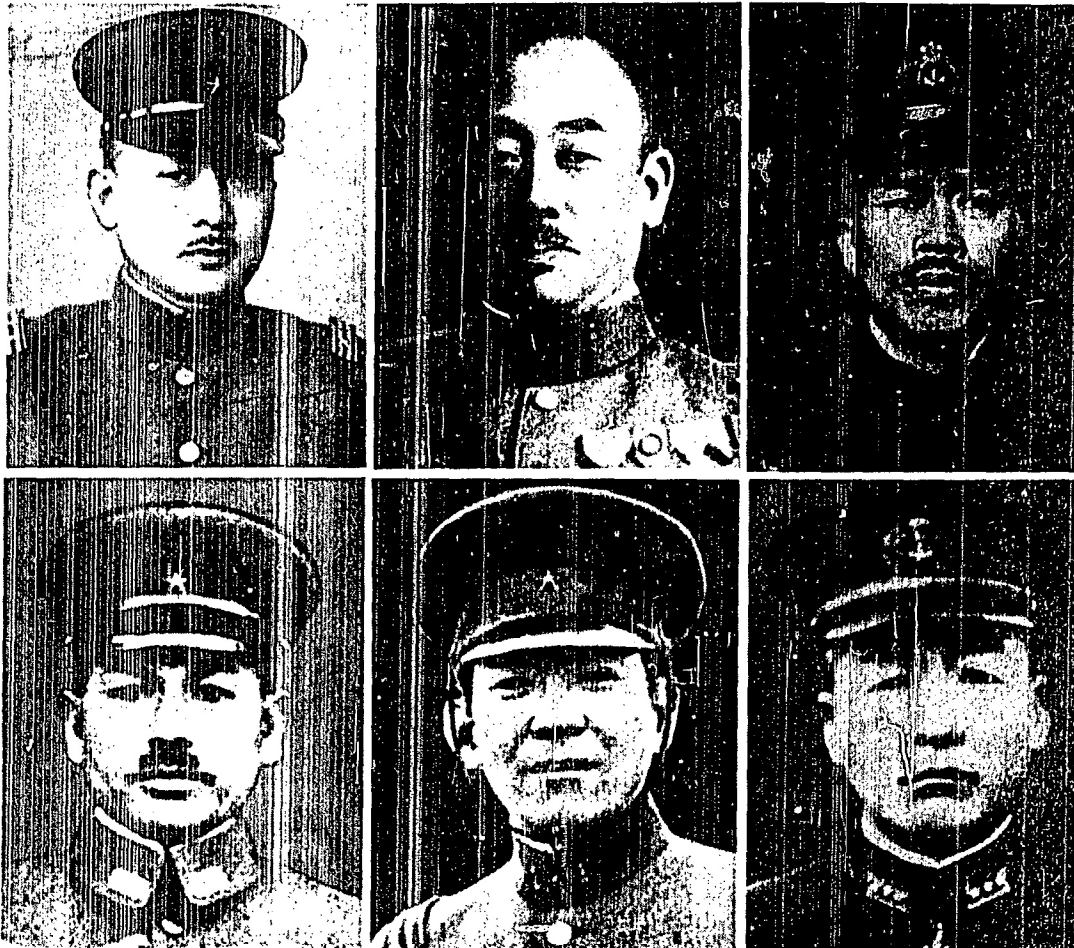
At that time, I, Maj Horie, was one of the officers who observed the situation in this war most pessimistically and insisted on my opinion as follows:

Now we have no fleet and no airforces. If American forces will assault this island it will fall into their hands in one month. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary not to let the enemy use this island. The best plan is to sink this island in the sea or cut the island in half. At least we must endeavor to sink the first airfield. In the future, if by any chance we have an opportunity to take an offensive step again in the Pacific area, we will not use Iwo Jima.

At the General Staff Office and the Naval Staff Office there were some officers who had the same ideas. Especially one staff officer asked me to calculate the necessary explosive quantity to sink Iwo Jima. LtGen Kuriyashiki also concurred with me, but in September, 1944 he inspected the whole island of Iwo Jima with me and investigated how to dispose of this island, and we found out that the disposition of this island was quite impossible and we should make this island much stronger by fortification.

However, we had the same idea that even if we placed

TOP: (left to right) LtGen Tadamichi Kuribayashi. Maj-Gen Sadasue Senda. RAdm Toshinosuke Ichimaru. BOTTOM: (left to right) Col Tadashi Takaishi. LtCol Takeichi Nishi, as a first lieutenant. 2dLt Hiroshi Murakawa, CO of the Special Charge (antitank) Unit



any strength on the first airfield it would immediately be defeated by the enemy under his severe bombardment of airforces and vessels, and it would be better not to place any strength on this airfield. Later, one staff officer of the 3d Aircraft Fleet came to Iwo Jima and insisted on giving many 25mm machine guns and materials from the Navy in order to make many pillboxes around the first airfield.

At first, LtGen Kuribayashi did not agree with him, but later he came to concur with him. And in October he ordered the pillboxes made, using several battalions every day, and after three months he had 135. When American forces landed on Iwo Jima all of them were barely completed. In fact, this airfield was trodden by American forces in only two days. If we had infused this great strength, many materials, and three months of labor which were used on the airfield, into the defense of Motoyama district and Mt Suribachi, we could have been able to make these areas much stronger.

B. Our judgment regarding the enemy's plan—We got various information that many American vessels were gathering at Ulithi, Guam, and Saipan from the end of January, 1945, and we thought at Tokyo and Iwo Jima that American forces would land on Iwo Jima or Okinawa. In my opinion, the possibility of landing of American forces at Iwo Jima was 40 per cent and at Okinawa 60 per cent. We thought that if American forces landed on Iwo Jima they would occupy the first airfield and make an offensive base there and use many tanks. Therefore, we endeavored especially to strengthen the defenses of Mt. Suribachi and the front of Minamiburaku, Tan-kuiwa, and Osakayama while emphasizing training for antitank battle.

C. Discussions regarding the location of the 109th Division headquarters—Many officers insisted that since Iwo Jima was the first front line it would be better to let the 2d Brigade commander be island commander. And that the divisional commander should stay at Chichi Jima where it was convenient to control the supply and communications of all the Bonin Islands. But Vice Chief of Staff Gen Ushiroku and LtGen Kuribayashi said,

"Iwo Jima is the most important island and the enemy will surely come to get it, so we should place the divisional headquarters at Iwo Jima." And LtGen Kuribayashi determined to place the detached headquarters at Chichi Jima in order to supply and communicate with each island.

D. Changes of plan and execution of defensive dispositions—Until October, 1944, we had a plan not to place any strength on the first airfield, but because of the above mentioned reason, we changed our plan and placed there two battalions.

E. A problem of how the Army and Navy should be disposed—The Army had the opinion that they should be disposed for defense all over the island and that naval



Concrete underground shelter on Iwo Jima was some Japanese naval officer's "home away from home."

troops should be disposed under the control of each district Army commander. But the Navy was very anxious to defend one district by itself and insisted that it would be better to make plans for mutual understanding, strengthening our union, and displaying fighting power. So the main power of the Navy was put in charge of the defense of the Minamiburaku district and the Army was put in charge of the defense of all the rest of the island.

F. The defense plan of LtGen Kuribayashi—In June, 1944, the plan was to strengthen the Motoyama and Mt Suribachi districts and especially to hold a big reserve (including the 26th Tank Regt), and if the enemy landed on the first airfield to make offensive operations towards seaside and annihilate the enemy. In January, 1945, the plan was changed to having each man think of his defense position as his graveyard, to fight until the last, and to give many damages to the enemy.

G. Discussions regarding the value of antiaircraft—I insisted upon this problem as follows:

We should change our plan to use most of the anti-aircraft guns as artillery and to retain a very small part of them as anti-aircraft guns. Anti-aircraft guns are good to protect disclosed targets, especially ships, but are worthless for the covering of land defenses.

But the opinion of the staff officers of Iwo Jima have inclined as follows:

At Iwo Jima it is best to use anti-aircraft guns as artillery and as anti-aircraft guns. And as the natural features of Iwo Jima are weaker than those of Chichi Jima, if we have no anti-aircraft guns, our defensive positions will be completely destroyed by the enemy's air raids.

And so most of the 300 anti-aircraft guns were used in both senses mentioned above. But later when American

forces landed on Iwo Jima, these antiaircraft guns were put to silence in one or two days. And we had evidence that antiaircraft guns were not valuable. But the 7.5cm antiaircraft guns, prepared as antitank guns, were very valuable.

H. Fortification of an underground tunnel—In order to connect with each defense position in the Motoyama district, we planned to make 28,000 meters of underground tunnel and began this work in December, 1944. But by the time American forces landed on Iwo Jima we had only finished 5,000 meters.

I. Training for battle—LtGen Kuribayashi insisted on emphasizing training in (1) Bodily attacks against enemy tanks, (2) Cutting-in attacks, and (3) Sniping. He had special badges made for the men in charge of bodily attack against enemy tanks, and the men in charge of cutting-in attacks.

Dummy Japanese tank, carved from soft volcanic stone, drew considerable fire from our tanks and antitank guns.



V. Strength, Arms, and Ammunition on 1 February 1945

Strength	23,000 (17,500 Army; 5,500 Navy)	
Arms	No. of Arms	Ammunition (Rounds)
Big guns (more than 7.5cm)	120	100,000
Antiaircraft guns (more than 25mm mg)	300	Each gun 500
Small guns (including all machine guns)	20,000	22,000,000
Howitzers (8cm, 12cm)	130	Each howitzer 90
Mortars (20cm)	20	Each mortar 40
Rocket guns (20cm)	70	Each gun 50
Antitank guns (47mm)	40	Each gun 600
Antitank guns (37mm)	20	Each gun 500
Tanks	27	

VI. Situation of Supply

A. System of supply—The Army and Navy both used two systems; (1) Tokyo—Iwo Jima, by destroyer, high-speed transport, and SB (something like the American LST but smaller in size); (2) Tokyo—Chichi Jima—Iwo Jima, by ship and/or high speed transport and then by sailing boat, fishing boat, or SB. Most transportation belonged to the latter system.

B. Damages of Ships—Especially after August, 1944, the power of American airforces and submarines was very severe and from Tokyo to Chichi Jima, to Futami Ko, and especially from Chichi Jima to Iwo Jima, we had many damages. We lost on the sea more than 1500 men and 50,000 tons of material.

C. Work of loading and unloading at Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima—When materials were sent to Chichi Jima from the mainland of Japan, we unloaded them on Omura during darkness and the intermissions from the enemy's air raids. The supplies were dispersed to the interior of the island. They were sent to Iwo Jima by sailing boats and fishing boats. This was very hard work and many times we used 2000 men and 50 trucks a whole day without sleeping or resting. No harbor, rough waves, and severe air raids gave the greatest hindrance to the unloading work at Iwo Jima. At Iwo Jima, we could not leave landing craft on the sea, so when we finished unloading we had to pull them up on the land.

D. Supply crisis of November, 1944, and the supply situation in February—In November, 1944, we had only 30-day supply of grain and 15-day supply of supplementary food, and we came to a very dangerous situation. But afterwards, we were able to increase the food a little by brave and self-sacrificing transportation. By February 1, 1944 Army and Navy had on hand on Iwo Jima about a 70-day supply of grain and 60-day supply of supplementary food.

VII. Supply Convoy Strategy

Until June of 1944, American aircraft did not come to the Chichi Jima area, so we only thought of anti-submarine convoys. Namely, our transports were protected primarily by our destroyers or coast defense ships with a little assistance from aircraft at Tateyama, Hachijyo Jima, Chichi Jima, and Iwo Jima. After June, American aircraft started attacking our transports in this area and we were obliged to use night transportation and night work, and, to protect our ships, we were forced to send one Army aircraft squadron to Iwo Jima. I experienced bitterly how miserable our transportation by sea was when the air was in the hands of the enemy.

VIII. Everyday Life of the Iwo Jima Garrison

Officers and men of Iwo Jima were suffering from lack of water. They gathered rain water in empty barrels and

used it. As they were unable to take baths because of the water shortage, they were obliged to go to Kitawaihan to take hot sulfur-spring baths. I also went to that hot spring once. There were no fresh vegetables, and many had malnutrition and paratyphus. And in those days, I think, 20 per cent of the whole troops were patients.

IX. Battle

A. *Landing operations of the American forces on the first airfield and our battle*—On the 19th of February American forces landed on the first airfield under cover of their keen bombardments by aircraft and warships. Although their landing direction, strength, and fighting methods were the same as our judgment, we could not take any countermeasures toward them. The 135 pill-boxes we had at the first airfield were trodden down and occupied only two days after their landing. We shot them bitterly with the artillery we had at Motoyama and Mt. Suribachi, but the guns were immediately destroyed by the enemy's counterfiring. At that time we had many opportunities to make offensive attacks against the enemy, but we knew well that if we did we would suffer many damages from American bombardments of aircraft and vessels. Therefore, our officers and men waited for the enemy to come closer to their own positions.

B. *Fall of Mt. Suribachi*—We were very discouraged when we heard of the fall of Mt. Suribachi after only three days' fighting. I received the telegram at Chichi Jima from Iwo Jima that the district commander of Mt. Suribachi had informed LtGen Kuribayashi that "enemy's bombardments from air and sea and their assaults with explosions are very fierce and if we try to stay and defend our present position it will lead us to self-destruction."

We would rather like to go out of our position and choose death by 'banzai' charge." I was bursted with emotion. I knew about the fall of the first airfield, but I never thought of losing Mt. Suribachi in only three days.

C. *The American M-4 Tank*—When the American M-4 tank appeared in front of Osakayama, LtGen Kuribayashi was very anxious to know how to dispose of this tank. Even our 47mm antitank gun could not destroy it, and he at last came to the conclusion that bodily attacks with explosives was the only way to destroy it.

D. *Value of bombardment by American airforces and vessels*—LtGen Kuribayashi informed Tokyo by wireless that he was not afraid of the fighting power of only three American Marine divisions if there were no bombardment from aircraft and warships. This was the only reason why we have to see such miserable situations.

E. *Battle command of LtGen Kuribayashi*—LtGen Kuribayashi was usually at his commanding place in the cave. As soon as his staff officers composed telegrams, using the information that came into their hands from time to time from all troops, he inspected, revised, and ordered them dispatched. As he was very skillful in making compositions, his telegrams made all Japanese weep in those days.

F. *Value of cutting-in (infiltration) attacks*—At first we received information that our cutting-in attacks were giving great damage to the enemy. But early in March the information sent to Tokyo by wire was that "The lookout of American forces has become very strict and it is difficult to pass through their guarded line. Don't overestimate the value of cutting-in attacks."

G. *Supply from Japan by aircraft*—I pay many respects to the brave aviators who supplied weapons to Iwo

Jima by aircraft. They made arrangements with the Iwo Jima commander and started from Hamamatsu (Japan) airfield and supplied hand grenades and flame projectors. It is indeed difficult to express how the hearts of the fighting youth of Iwo Jima were, as they stood before their death, when they saw these brave flyers.

H. *Desperate fight of the Army and Navy*—According to the telegraphic reports of LtGen Kuribayashi, we have knowledge of the following desperate fights:

1. *7th March*—All troops of Tamanayama district are fighting desperately, facing

BELOW: (left) Computer and director used to fire dual-purpose battery on Iwo Jima. (right) Japanese observation post with ceiling constructed from Japanese plane wings.



the enemy at only 80-meters distance. Seven small units sent for cutting-in attack from Tamanayama on the 6th night are not back yet and results are unknown.

2. *8th March, 1000*—Today, from 0630, the enemy has been attacking the Northern district. His bombardments from mortars and warships are very severe. Several troops of the enemy are advancing toward Naval Headquarters hill (near Kitburaku) and Hyoriuboku. All surviving fighting bases have sustained heavy losses, but their fighting spirits are running high and they are giving great damages to the enemy.

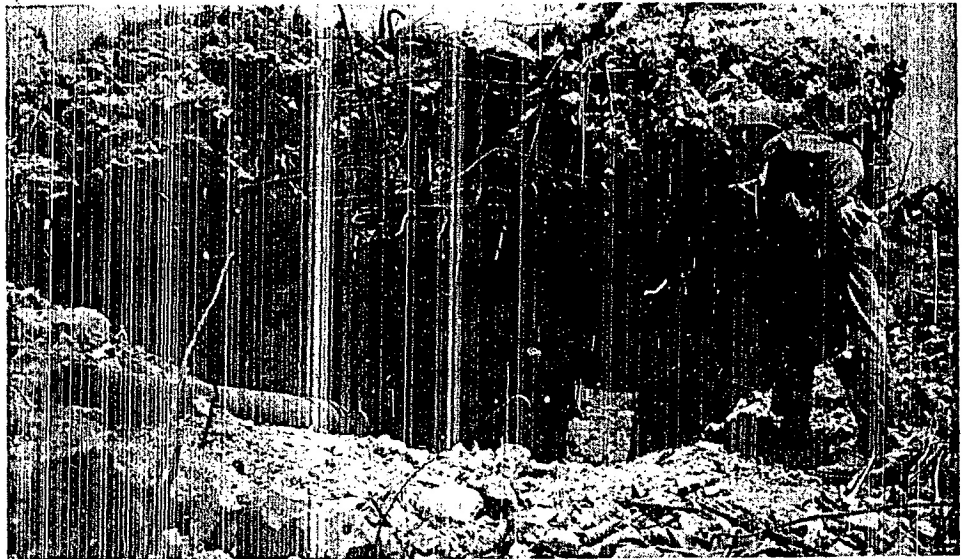
3. *8th March, 1800*—Troops at Tamanayama and Northern districts are still holding their positions thoroughly and continue giving damages to the enemy. Their fighting spirit, believing in their country's victory, looks god-like.

4. *8th March, 2000*—I am very sorry that I have let the enemy occupy one part of Japanese territory, but I am taking comfort in giving great damages to the enemy.

5. *10th March, 1930*—Although the attacks of the enemy against our Northern districts are continuing day and night our troops are still fighting bravely and holding their positions thoroughly. Divisional radio station was fighting under the siege of many enemy troops from the 8th, but finally had to destroy the radio-telegraph today at 1130. Two hundred or 300 American infantrymen with several tanks attached, attacked Tenzan all day; the enemy's bombardments from one battleship (or cruiser), 11 destroyers, and aircraft were very severe. The bombing and machine gun firing against divisional headquarters from 30 fighters and bombers was so fierce that I cannot express nor write it here. Before American forces landed on Iwo Jima there were many trees around my headquarters, but now there is not even a grasp of grass remaining. The surface of the earth has changed completely and we can see numerous holes of bombardment.

6. *10th March, 2000*—At Tamanayama the 2d Mixed Brigade headquarters has become dangerous and they might have gone out for a 'banzai' charge at midnight on the 8th, because we cannot contact them after that time.

7. *11th March, 1050*—Surviving strength of Northern districts (Army and Navy) is 1500 men. On the 9th we gave the enemy losses of 798 men and one tank.



Five-inch gun emplacement with reinforced overhead cover.

8. *11 March, 1400*—On the 8th, one M-4 tank stopped on the rugged ground of the Northern district and one man tried to go out from the canopy. Just at that time, Superior Private Goudo sniped him, threw a hand grenade into the tank, and burnt it. We cannot contact the commander of Tamanayama district since yesterday. This morning the enemy began to concentrate their shooting of warships, firing of mortars and heavy artillery, and bombing of aircraft on the Northern district.

9. *13th March, 0800*—By captured documents we found out that the enemy is the 3d, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions, and that the 5th Division is now in the Tenzan area. On the 12th we gave the enemy the following losses in the Northern district alone: one aircraft shot down and 200 men killed.

10. *14th March, 1500*—The attack on the Northern district this morning was much more severe than before, and at about noon one part of the enemy with about 10 tanks broke through our left front line and approached to 200 meters east of the divisional headquarters.

11. *15th March, 0800*—To: Chichi Jima Signal Corps Commander; From: Iwo Jima Signal Corps Commander; Situation is very dangerous. Do your best to contact us. Present strength of the Northern district is about 900 men.

12. *15 March, 0930*—Since the 10th, main power of the 26th Tank Regiment and one part of the Navy (about 300 men altogether) near Manburaku have repulsed the enemy several times.

13. *16th March, 0800*—Our surviving strength is now 500 men in the Northern district and 300 men in the Eastern district.

14. *17th March, 0200*—From: LtGen Kuribayashi;

To: All surviving officers and men; The battle situation has come to the last moment. I want my surviving officers and men to go out and attack the enemy till the last. You have devoted yourself to His Majesty, The Emperor. Do not think of yourself. I am always at the head of you all.

15. 17th March, 0500—The 145th Infantry Regiment fought bravely near Hyoriuboku, holding their Regimental Flag in the center. The last telegram sent to me on the 15th was as follows: "Here we burnt our brilliant Regimental Flag completely, Goodbye. . . ."

16. 21st March, 1200—At midnight on the 17th I went out of my cave and gathered all survivors of the 145th Infantry Regiment, Tamanayama, Northern, Eastern, and Western districts, westward of Kitaburaku and we are continuing fighting. I have 400 men under my control. The enemy besieged us and on the 18th and 19th approached us by firing and flame of their tanks. Especially they are trying to approach the entrance to our cave with explosives.

17. 21st March, 1300—My officers and men are still fighting. The enemy's front line is 200 or 300 meters from us, and they are attacking by tank-firing. They advised us to surrender by a loud speaker, but we only laughed at this childish trick and did not set ourselves against them.

18. 22d March, 0910—Divisional commander, officers, and men are continuing fighting.

I. *The last moments of LtGen Kuribayashi*—LtGen Kuribayashi commanded his battle under the candle lights without having a single rest nor sleep day after day. Radio broadcasts, newspapers, and magazines of Japan encouraged him thoroughly. Especially, old and young men, boys and girls of his native place, prayed God for his victory. On the 14th of March, *Song of Iwo Jima*, composed by the fighting men of Iwo Jima before the American forces landed, was broadcast to LtGen Kuribayashi, his officers and men from Tokyo, and he sent his thankful message to all Japanese.

On the 15th of March he informed Tokyo by wire as follows: "I am determined to go out and make 'banzai' charges against the enemy at midnight on the 17th. Now I say goodbye to all senior and friend officers everlastingly." And he added three farewell songs in this telegram. From the morning of the 17th we were unable to communicate with him and we thought the 17th was his last day.

He was promoted to general on the 17th. We were all greatly surprised when we received his telegram on the morning of the 21st. We know from this telegram that he and his men (Army and Navy, altogether about 400 men) went out at midnight on the 17th and shut themselves in a cave about 150 meters northwest of his old cave.

He sent the following last telegram to us: "We have

not eaten nor drunk for five days. But our fighting spirit is running high. We are going to fight bravely to the last." I tried vainly at Chichi Jima to send him the telegram of his promotion to general on the 17th of March. On the evening of the 23d one radio operator informed me that he had heard "to all officers and men of Chichi Jima, Good-bye . . ." from Iwo Jima. I tried to communicate with him for three days after that, but I did not get any answer.

IX. Why Japanese Soldiers Do Not Surrender

In Japanese opinion, if the Japanese soldier stands on a battlefield he ought to devote his body and soul to the only way, victory or honorable death. From ancient times this has been the Japanese soldier's custom, tradition, and common sense, and if by chance the prisoners of war return to their homeland after the war ceases they will be treated as cowards by all Japanese. Therefore, on Iwo Jima, on the 23d of March, even though there were only about 300 survivors, most of them did not surrender to the enemy and fought until the very end of their lives.

X. Conclusion

When I look back on the Japanese defense plan and battle of Iwo Jima, I must pay many respects to the overwhelming material quantity and skillful operation of American forces. On the other hand, I am bursting with emotion, seeing the sacred spirit of Gen Kuribayashi and his officers and men who fought bravely for their honor.

Many Japanese and American brave men died for their country on Iwo Jima and I cannot calculate how many families and relatives these had. Now the bloody war has come to an end and the feeling of peace is here. There is no hatred and anger between American and Japanese.

I am very honored if my humble booklet will give a mere suggestion to American officers and men who served on Iwo Jima and to all Japanese and American surviving families to remind them of the situation in those days.

Appendix

Instructions of war telegraphed from LtGen Kuribayashi to the Chief of the General Staff. I will write down the American tactics, effect of our arms, etc., from my poor memory.

1. From the landing of the enemy on Iwo Jima to February 20th, 2dLt Nakamura, attached to the 8th Independent Tank Gun Unit, destroyed one score amphibious tanks by personally handling his 47mm antitank gun. He died an heroic death.

2. However firm and stout you may build the pillboxes at the beach they will be destroyed by bombardment from the main armament of battleships. It is better to build dummy pillboxes at the beach and concentrate

the enemy's shooting at that point.

3. As the enemy uses plain language for reporting information, it is wise to listen to them and understand their plans and movements.

4. The violence of the enemy's bombardments are far beyond description. On a small island like Iwo Jima, when bombarded by various warships day and night and with 40 or 50 aircraft always in the air ready to fire on any target they are able to find, one man can scarcely move a step during daytime. Even at night it takes more than ten hours for a young officer to walk about one kilometer for communication purposes. Telephone lines are completely cut off.

5. All positions, especially the Southern district, are almost completely destroyed by the severe bombardment from ships. Camouflaged installations are greatly damaged. The bombardment from ships cannot be less than 30,000 rounds per day.

6. We need to reconsider the power of bombardment from ships. The beach positions we built on this island by using much material and many days of great effort were so destroyed within three days that they were nearly unable to be occupied. Every main position was also destroyed by day and night bombardment from ships and the lay of the land changed completely.

Beach-position firing was done from battleships and other warships anchored at a distance of 1000 to 2000 meters. Firing against main positions was done by sea-plane scouting and observing and was unsparing in time or ammunition.

The power of American warships and aircraft makes every landing operation possible on whatever beachhead they like and preventing them from landing means nothing but great losses. Therefore, for landing operations we must cut the number of coast guns and installations to the smallest and concentrate on crushing the ships. Defense of an isolated island that lacks this condition could not exist.

7. Adjacent to the command post of the enemy there is generally clamour, and there are some using lights.

8. The enemy finds radio stations by using a direction finder and concentrates his fire on them, therefore, the command post must be pretty far from the radio station, but at the same time it is necessary to take measures to insure continued communication between the two.

9. If you want to use telephones, you must bury the lines or at least build a gutter for them.

10. Long periods of time and enormous numbers of men used for the extension work on the first and Motoyama airfields have impeded defense, fortification, and drill greatly. We must avoid constructing hopeless airfields.

11. Positions must be selected where they are out of ships' range and yet have direct covering of the airfield. Especially we must attach great importance to antitank



25mm AA guns overlooking one of the landing beaches.

defense. Antitank obstacles must be built in and in front of the positions.

12. It is no exaggeration to say that victory or defeat in fighting on land is decided by aircraft and tanks. In the future we must endeavor our best to construct these two arms.

13. For artillery, middle-sized mortars (20cm) and rockets (20cm), and for antitank guns, type-90 field guns (7.5cm) are most effective.

14. Nearly all Army and Navy guns placed near the beach for firing on landing craft and troops were destroyed by the bombardment from ships before the enemy landed.

15. For defending an isolated island, it is absolutely necessary to accumulate large quantities of ammunition for guns and mortars, plus hand grenades. On this island most guns except the ones at seaside existed pretty long, but the ammunition ran short in only a week.

16. The enemy's air control is very strong, 100 or at least 30 aircraft are flying ceaselessly from early morning to night above this small island. And if they discover any targets they begin to attack them, led by observation planes that are quick and exact and give unimaginable damages to defense positions with the obstinate fire which they call from warships. If our antiaircraft guns start firing, the enemy aircraft usually destroy our guns at once.

17. The enemy tanks have strong destructive power, slow but steady advance, make full usage of material power, and are extremely hard to destroy. If our anti-tank guns appear they retire quickly, let the naval guns led by observation planes destroy them, and then advance.

18. The enemy has two or three handlers of flame projectors among 50 or 60 men, so it is necessary for us to snipe these handlers immediately.

19. The enemy's penetrating attack through our front line is done with tanks under cover of violent machine gun, artillery, and mortar fire so that we have no means to counter them.

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