

Fighting spirit Iwo Jima

By
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PERSONAL HISTORY of the AUTHOR

Yoshitaka Horia graduated from the (Imperial Japanese Army) Military Academy. He was commissioned October 1, 1936. He fought in China from August 1937 through December 1939. He was seriously wounded during that campaign.

He attended and was graduated from this war College in November 1939. He then was assigned as staff officer at the army shipping headquarters, as a liaison officer between RB Ed Navy, and then served as a staff officer for General Obata, commanding General, 31st Army, a staff officer for General Kuribaysahi at Iwo Jima. He missed the Iwo Jima campaign because of his duty on Chichi Jima located 160 miles north.

He now works at the US Air Force KANTO BASE COMMAND in Japan. EXP

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Preface

The author was a staff officer of Iwo Jima defense command. For the 20 years since the end of World War II he has heard voices of antipathy and abuse of war. Sometimes he has followed it to the line, sometimes he has felt unhappy to hear them, and sometimes he has come to be full of words.

When they talk about Iwo Jima campaign, however, they just always admire and respect greatness of fighters, both Japanese and American, and they can't find no chance for a criticism.

The author returned home alive because of TDY on Chichi Jima, located 160 miles north of Iwo Jima, when American forces assaulted it. He has been anxious to write about those who'd died for their bereaved families.

To talk about the Iwo Jima campaign, we must know why the bloody battle occurred for Iwo Jima, located at the entrance of Japan proper, and why the Japanese warriors were isolated. In other words, we must analyze the true stories about the operations of the combined fleet and the fate of the sea transportation, which was not announced to the public at those days.

Before the author left for Iwo Jima, he was a liaison officer between the army and navy in Tokyo, so he can write of the events in those days based upon his experiences.

When any war history is talked about, the author believes that the truth, and nothing but the truth, must be written. Namely, he does not want to give any modifications or considerations to the facts. He is afraid that his stories may give a bad feeling to some concerned, but he likes to have their understanding about his position.

Because 20 years has passed, and it might happen that date, strength, places, etc. is incorrect. If any readers have exact records, he would like to be informed. There are many dramatic persons in this book, and readers will find some differences concerning date, strength, places, etc. The author respects each person story that has not corrected their views.

In writing this book the author acknowledges most gratefully assistance from Mrs. Kuribayashi, Mrs. Ichimaru, Mrs. Takaishi, Mrs. Nakane, Mrs. Nishi, widows of Army and Navy officers. Mr. Yamanouchi, the father of the late lieutenant colonel Yamanouchi, members of the demobilization Office; Mr. Omoto, former adjutant to general Kuribayashi, three survivors, and Mr. Sakurai, former Iwo Jima industry Co. director.

The author owes a great debt to the office of the chief of US military history. This office through Colonel McKenzie, armor US Army has given to

the author authority to translate and publish the book Strategy and Command, Pacific war, United States Army in World War II, written by Louis Morton.

A great measure of thanks is due to the US Marine Corps “Gazette.” The author has a long historical relation with this honorable organization. Lt. Col. Tinsley, first Battalion commander, US Marine occupation forces, Chichi Jima, who came there right after the end of the war, became one of the horseback riding friends of the author. He and the author used to ride horses, talk and drink with Colonel Rixey, his commander, Maj. Shaffer, his executive officer, and Captain Kusiack. Later, Colonel Kinsley was assigned to the Marine Corps schools as assistant chief. He wrote to the author recommending that he write some about the Iwo Jima campaign. Since then, my articles have come to appear in the “Marine Corps Gazette” occasionally. This time, when the author wrote the “Gazette” authorities about his intention to publish this book in Tokyo in Japanese; Lt. Col. Trayno took action immediately to send many pictures by air. So, most of the pictures in this book are from the Marine Corps “Gazette.”

15 August 1965

Yoshitaka Horie

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PART I
MEMOIRS OF ONE STAFF OFFICER
Toughest Battle In World War II

The last day of Death Island.

There are some hand grenades exploding in the vicinity of the entrance of our cave. Someone is moaning, saying, "kill me please, water...." Some enemy propaganda -- "don't you think soldiers pitiful? Surrender quickly. Your life will be guaranteed if you surrender"--is heard through smoke and buzzing. Now the enemy is using a loudspeaker.

I still have 3 more messages given by lieutenant colonel, Nakane to send Tokyo through Chichi Jima radio station. Already we have burnt all code books. I am ready to destroy this radio. Could our fellows defend our cave until I have sent all these messages? My hands shake.

Heated atmosphere spreads in our cave. As soon as I finish my communications, I have to make a banzai charge.Ah! I finish my duty. A drip of sweat came down along my face. I sent the last words, "goodbye to my dear friends of Chichi Jima," in clear. This radio man broke his radio down by a pick, ran out of the cave for the banzai charge. It was 23 March 1945. Three days later, on 26 March 1945, there was no longer any systematical resistance by Japanese warriors.

On 20 March 1945, the newspaper "The Asahi" wrote as follows:

"Glorious! all officers and men led by the commanding general advance for the banzai charge."

Our troops, on Iwo Jima had five bitterly for about one month, particularly after 13 March 1945. They have been fighting around all pill-boxes and caves in North Village and Higashiyama area. The Imperial Japanese headquarters received the following last message from General Kuribayashi, "We came to the critical moment. We, praying victory for the mother country, will make a banzai charge at the midnight of 17 March 1945." No more communication between Iwo Jima and Tokyo. Iwo Jima finally fell into the hands of the enemy.

The enemy, after invasion, surrounding Iwo Jima with 20 or 30 vessels, fired 4,000 – 8,000 round of naval ammunition, and covered by hundreds of planes. The enemy announced that the volume of steel they fired or bombed during the first two days” amounted to 8,000 tons.”

Twenty years ago, the fiercest and most tragic warfare in the world thus ended, covering Iwo Jima with the smell of death. The warfare inflicted 23,000 dead and wounded to the Americans and 19,000 dead to the Japanese.

Why did the Iwo Jima campaign become so famous?

There are many reasons. Let me enumerate some main ones:

1st – Japanese tradition. The Japanese warriors fought in complete isolation, with no planes and no vessels. Their position was very bad. Just like a few sheep against a great many lions, they continued their death resistance until the last moment.

General Wainwright, who raised a white flag on Corregidor Island, became a hero. General MacArthur, who fled from Philippines, was counted as a hero. General King of Bataan and General Percival of Singapore were also counted as heroes. But for the Japanese warriors on Iwo Jima, there was no rear door to be captured alive or to flee. There was only death or victory left for them. They had to fight a desperate battle until the last second. This came from the Japanese tradition.

2nd – Commanders. Expecting no more planes or vessels, and realizing that they had to fight by themselves, General Kuribayashi, an expert on modern tactics with the experience from a 6-year stay in the United States and Canada as an exchange officer or military attaché, fought a primitive warfare by necessity, with a firm determination and without any fear of the American

forces. In addition to this, Adm. Ichimaru, a man of calmness and braveness, cooperated with the general. Iwo Jima was fortunate to have a great general and a great admiral.

3rd – War experience of the defenders. The lessons from the battles of Guadalcanal, Attu, Makin, Tarawa, Saipan, Tonian, Guam, Paliliu, etc. taught the Iwo Jima warriors the tactics of a few sheep against a number of fierce tigers.

4th – Too hasty plan, big loss and big news release of the American side. Under encouragement of the US Navy authorities, Adm. Nimitz planned the Iwo Jima assault using normal tactics. But he met the courageous tactics of cornered mice. Since the Iwo Jima invasion, US authorities, in particular US Marines, frankly realizing the heavy losses, admire the braveness of not only US fighters but also of Japanese fighters, and have released through official publications, announcements, newspapers, magazines, etc. The story of the battle.

5th – Terrain. The main landing beach was limited to the southern beach. This gave the Garrison a way for serious resistance.

6th – Arms and ammunitions of garrison. The Imperial Japanese Headquarters gave medium and small arms, such as machine guns, anti-tank gun, 25mm machine guns, howitzers, propelled guns, etc. which could be used in caves. This helped Kuribayashi's tactics a lot.

7th – Non-intervention by Imperial Japanese Headquarters Realizing the true strength of the US forces from many experiences of complete defeat on

the isolated islands (in the past), Imperial Japanese Headquarters did not make any intervention, and left everything to General Kuribayashi's own discretion to resist the enemy, being rather grateful to him and his men. (Before, the Imperial Japanese Headquarters used to say "Annihilate the enemy at beach, make counter attacks, and move under darkness at night and attack the flanks of the enemy, etc.) That is to say, the warriors on Iwo Jima could set up their own resistance until death without any disturbance by meddlers. Thus the sacred death-resistance plan was made.

Post of Iwo Jima

In addition to the above, there was the power of the pen. There were many serious battle fields, such as Tarawa, Guadalcanal, Biak, Imperial, Myitkyina in Burma, Hengyang in China, etc. Nobody can hear these stories without shedding a tear. At Okinawa several hundred high school girls devoted their lives – Hineyuri is a well-known monument. From the viewpoint of tactics, the 2nd Infantry Regiment and other troops under the command of Col. Nakagawa at Pelilin conducted similar battles and caused heavy loss among the famous 1st US Marine Division.

But the majority of the war historians in the world have named Iwo Jima as the "No. 1 battle field" in the Pacific. I have read many war histories and memoirs written by Americans, British, Russians and Germans. It is a common conclusion that the turning-point in Europe was Stalingrad, and that in the Pacific it was Midway Island. They have cited El Alamein in North Africa, Iwo Jima, and Stalingrad as the three "Toughest Battle Fields." Why?

Battles at Tarawa, Guadalcanal, Imphal and Pelilin had to be kept secret by the Allied Forces and Japan in those days – only a few announcements were made. Also there was the considerable strong power of the Japanese Combined

Fleet, and the Japanese army had some ability to move troops in the Pacific area. Iwo Jima belonged to Tokyo city, and it was thought and said that Iwo Jima was located at the entrance to Tokyo – that might be a big reason why it has become so famous. At midnight of 17 March 1945, NHK (Nippon Broadcast KK) broadcast “Iwo Jima Song,” composed by the warriors of the island to express gratefulness the Japanese people and the last fighters – this made the Iwo Jima campaign very famous in Japan.

However, there was another reason there. There was a poet and writer. We can not forget the power of his pen. Who was he? He was General Kuribayashi himself. His reports, word for word, sent to Tokyo by wire through Chichi Jima, were composed in cave under candle light with his small pencil letters until his departure for a banzai charge. I believe these reports can be compared with any world literature. I remember the sweet melody of two songs – “Early Morning Prayer” and “Horse song” which were made in Tokyo under his chairmanship when he was working in the War Department in the position of the section chief of administration of horses as a full colonel.

Isolated island with no planes and no vessels

Now let us talk about the reason why Iwo Jima had been isolated. What was the real reason? Why had it happened at the entrance of Tokyo? A ridiculous story? It must be natural that every body generally had doubts about it.

In those days, the people of Japan generally said that “Saipan is the key point of war,” or “Leyte is the deciding point.” To tell the truth, these stories were just society chats. We must analyze the truth in the Pacific, which was not announced from the necessity of security, and from the desire of the

Imperial Japanese Headquarters to prevent the issue of war-weariness in the people from rising.

Japan had lost the Pearl Harbor assaulting forces at Midway

On the 4th and 5th of June 1942, just 6 months after Pearl Harbor, the Combined Fleet lost the most of its 1st Air Fleet which had assaulted Pearl Harbor under the command of Vice-Adm. Nagumo. Four carriers (Kaga, Sohryu, Akagi and Hiryu) and about 400 aircraft and pilots were lost. The popular story – “We could fight boldly in the Pacific for one year or one year and a half”- expressed by Adm. Yamamoto before Pearl Harbor, disappeared.

In the US war history “Strategy and Command,” Louis Morton has written in “Transition of war in the Pacific” as follows”:

“The loss of many well-trained pilots and aircraft carriers at Midway decided the issues. Unless these losses were replaced and superiority regained, as it never could be in a race against American production, the Japanese would have to go on the defensive. The tide of victory had finally turned.”

According to the Book Lend-Lease, written by Stettinius, Secretary of State, US vessels came out one after another in accordance with the big ship-building plan after 1939, and the sides of defensive and offensive were changed. The increase of US vessels became greater and greater against that of the Japanese vessels.

During the war of attrition at Guadalcanal from August 1942 to February 1943, Japan lost not only many naval vessels, aircraft and pilots, but also many high speed merchant ships – 400,000 tons. The US war history has written as follows:

“The main role was conducted by aircraft in the operations at Guadalcanal. At the beginning, there was not a big difference of power between the Americans and the Japanese, but later the difference became

bigger and bigger. The Japanese lost 900 planes. Out of 900, two-thirds were aircraft carrier-based.”

From March 1943 to the end of the year, the Japanese forces lost not only the main portion of the naval air power, but also more than 200 army planes of the 4th Air Army under the command of General Imamura in operations around the Rabaul-Solomon Island area and in New Guinea.

The US war history has said, “Adm. Koga, successor of Adm. Yamamoto, was contained by the situation of the South-Eastern area, and he diverted 173 planes from the 3rd Fleet located at Truk harbor to the ground base of Rabaul when the US Pacific Fleet captured the Gilberts. It was very ironic for Adm. Koga. Before the above Gilberts’ operation, realizing the necessity of a decisive battle of the main powers of the American and Japanese Fleets, he had tried two times to go out and catch the US Fleet, but had failed to find it. At the end of 1943 Koga’s dream had gone.”

As of 31 December 1943, the US Navy had the below listed strength and the strength of the Japanese Navy was less than the half of the US Navy, except for heavy cruisers:

US Navy strength in the Pacific (As of 31 December 1943)

Battle ship (New)	6	Light Cruiser	13
Battle ship (Old)	7	Destroyer (New)	175
Air Carrier (Large type)	7	Destroyer (Old)	13
Air Carrier (Ten thousand ton type)	7	Submarine (New)	105
Escort Air Carrier	14	Submarine (Old)	18
Heavy Cruiser	12		

Carrier-based planes

Bombers (Medium, Small, Dive and Torpedo)	386
Patrol Bombers (Heavy, Medium and Small)	660
Fighter	384
Photo-Reconnaissance Plane	36
Reconnaissance Plane	36
Troop Carrier Plane	72

Land-based Navy Planes

Torpedo Bomber	519	Reconnaissance Bomber	432
Fighter	884	Others	106
Cooperative Army Planes			
Bomber	745	Fighter	973
Reconnaissance Plane	118	Troop Carrier Plane	312

Thus, around the end of 1943, the Imperial Japanese Headquarters had to employ the ominous strategy to send some army troops to each isolated island to make it into a never-sinking aircraft carrier and reconstruct the Combined Fleet, by necessity. The 52nd Division was sent to Truk in December 1943 for emergency use.

Adm. Yamamoto, who had been opposed to the War and had succeeded in the surprise attack against Pearl Harbor became very popular and was respected by the people in Japan.

However, Adm. Yamamoto, despite of the opposition of the Imperial Japanese Headquarters (Eventually he was given permission), forcibly conducted the Midway campaign and Guadalcanal campaign, so it is inevitable that war historians feel cool toward him, for his failure in both campaigns.

Furthermore, after WW II, I found that the failure at Midway and his untimely death en route to Buin on 18 April 1943, from the ambush by P-38 fighters of the enemy, both based upon the fact that the Japanese code had been broken by a retired US army lieutenant colonel. It is very sad that his reputation suffered.

The US war history has written as follows:

“The Japanese surprise attack against Pearl Harbor apparently succeeded and inflicted heavy losses to the US vessels. But it had the following 3 weak points: 1st, the US air carriers were out at that time, so US Navy could

organize task forces immediately to proceed to take operation. 2nd, the US supply tank facilities received no damage, so the US Navy had no trouble in fuel supply. 3rd, no damage was made to the ship maintenance facilities, so the US Navy could repair the damaged vessels easily. Furthermore, the Americans united very firmly, saying “Remember Pearl Harbor,” while the Japanese were elated with victory.”

Ship damages by the fierce attacks of the US submarines

Graduating from War College in November 1942, I worked in the Army shipping Headquarters as a staff officer; then I worked more than one year from June 1943 as a liaison officer between the Army and Navy, being assigned to the 1st Convoy Escort Fleet and then to the Convoy Escort General Fleet. I will tell the bitter stories from my experiences.

In spring of 1943 Japan had ships as follows:

A group (Merchant ships chartered by Army)	2,200,000 tons
B group (Merchant ships chartered by Navy)	1,100,000 tons
C group (The rest of the merchant ships in Japan)	2,400,000 tons
Total	5,700,000 tons

Right after the beginning of the War, Japan had about 6,200,000 tons, including some captured ships. From the judgment of the Naval Staff about the prospect of damages and new production of ships, it was said the Cabinet Planning Board and the General Staff were thinking that 5,800,000 tons could be enough to maintain a long-range war. So, the above figure – 5,700,000 tons – was not so bad.

In those days the 1st Convoy Escort Fleet was located at Takao, Formos. A Vice-Adm. Nakajima was in charge and Rear-Adm. Horie was his chief of

staff. With good personnel, I was happy to stay there.

However, as I went in the Navy for the first time, the very poor condition of the convoy escort system surprised me indeed. About 10 old destroyers such as KURETAKE, some sub chasers, and a few newly-built coast defense ships were the strength of this Fleet. This strength was not only taking charge of convoy escort operation in the South-West Pacific Ocean, but was the main power of the whole Japanese convoy escort ships. A series of sad dispatches-- "So and so ship was damaged, so and so ship is sinking, etc."-- came in the Headquarters one after another. The dispatches asking how to dispose the awaiting ships at harbors came from every harbor. It was almost non-defense condition against the enemy submarines. I had read the memoirs of WW I written by Winston Churchill. I picked out the part of "Menace of Submarines" of the books, printed 300 copies in Japanese and distributed them to high ranking army and navy officers all over Japan. They were very much surprised when they read the copy. Both Vice-Adm. Nakajima and Rear-Adm. Horie admitted that the Japanese Navy had done nothing for convoy escort business after WW I. They joked, "Don't blame the Navy only. The Japanese don't like any defensive business generally, and we, good men, have been forced to do this business." The Japanese convoy escort status was very poor and miserable.

From autumn to the year end of 1943, Japan sent the 2nd Area Army Commander General Anami (who committed suicide on 14 August 1945) to be Army Minister for the northern coast of New Guinea. The code name of this operation was KAME-Tortoise. I was sent to Manila to be the liaison officer on sea transportation and convoy escort operation.

We had a staff meeting in front of General Anami at the Manila Hotel every morning. I was the 1st man to report about shipping conditions of the troops going to New Guinea from Japan proper, China, and Korea, mostly

through Manila. I had to say, “I am sorry but I can’t say how many troops and supplies arrive at each destination on so and so date. Even the percentage of arrival of these troops I can’t tell because the damage rate is increasing every day and night.”

In November 1943, the Japanese Navy was reorganized as follows: The whole Navy was divided into 2 groups: Combined Fleet and Convoy Escort General Fleet. The Combined Fleet would be in charge of the Pacific Ocean outside the line – Truk-Palau-Singapore. The Combined Escort General Fleet composed of the 1st Convoy Escort Fleet, 2nd Convoy Escort Fleet (which was in charge of convoy escort between Tokyo and Rabaul), and all naval stations and ports, would be in charge of the Pacific Ocean inside the line – Truk-Palau-Singapore. At that time I was at Soerabaja, Java, on an official trip, and I received an emergency telegraph from Vice Chief of the General Staff. It read: “Come back to Tokyo immediately.” At the end of year I returned to Tokyo and started work at the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters located in Tokyo, after 2 February 1944.

The Headquarters had very good officers. The Commander-in-chief was Adm. Oikawa, Chief of Staff was Rear-Adm. Shimamoto (Later he became Vice-Chief of Staff, and Vice-Adm. Fukuji Kishi came as Chief of Staff), Senior Staff was Capt. Goto, and Operation Staff was Commander Chi. Other members were also first class personnel. This Headquarters never discriminated against the army liaison officer, as well as the 1st Convoy Escort Fleet. I still respect them. It was one of the strong points of the old Japanese Navy. In the morning I read telegraphs and reported on the damage conditions of ships from the last night to the general staff. I read more telegraphs, attended meetings. I went to the general meeting in the afternoon, explained the naval situation to the army members concerned, then I read army telegraphs, and at night I returned to the Convoy Escort General Fleet

Headquarters and slept in a room at the Navy Department with Rear-Adm. Shimamoto and Commander Ohi.

I was surprised here again. In the Navy, the Combined Fleet was boss and the Naval Staff was just like an organization taking care of paper work. Furthermore, the operation section of the naval staff was under the orders of the 1st section of naval administration division, and the 12th section, which was in charge of convoy escort operation, was behind the scenes. The main power of the Combined Fleet was at Truk under the command of Adm. Koga. It was too busy to pay attention to convoy escort business. The officers of the Combined Fleet, having been influenced by Adm. Mahon, a US Navy strategist and instructor to Lt. Commander Akiyama about 80 years ago, insisted on the decisive battle first and did not like convoy escort duty. Their ideas had been also influenced by the specific character of the Japanese – The Japanese do not like “Defensive.”

The Convoy Escort General Fleet could have only less than 50 vessels – composed of old destroyers, coast defense ships and sub chasers. Because the Naval Staff was not powerful enough to control the whole navy, the Combined Fleet reluctantly cooperated with the Convoy Escort General Fleet operations. Vice-Adm. Kishi said to me, “We like to have at least 57 vessels because there are 57 admirals under the control of Yokosuka Naval Station.” His story was very ironic as a joke. Later the 101st land-based air Sq., 4 small escort air-carriers, and some army aircraft came under the command of the General Fleet. But when we would compare the strength with the British Convoy Escort Fleet established by Naval Minister Churchill during WW I, it would be very poor.

Anti-submarine policy of the Imperial Japanese Headquarters in spring of 1944

In those days the outstanding members in the Navy were as follows:
 Adm. Shimada – Chief of Naval Staff, Vice-Adm. Oka – Vice-Minister of the Navy, Capt. Yamamoto – Chief of 1st section, Administrative Division, Rear-Adm. Tomicka – Chief of 1st Division (Operation), Commander Suzuki – general operation, Commander Genta – air operation, and Commander Sogawa – Member of the 12th section. Commander Sogawa was very modest and kind, but he was pushed by other members. The situation of the Navy was different from the General Staff – General Staff had a strong centralized power.

In those days the outstanding members in the Army were as follows:
 General Tojo – Chief of General Staff, Lt. General Hata – Vice-Chief of General Staff, Maj. General Sanada – Chief of 1st Division (Operation), Col. Hattori – Chief of the 2nd section (Operation), Maj. Sejima – Senior operation staff, Col. Arao – Chief of Shipping section, and Col. Nishiura – Chief of army affairs section of the War Department.

Ships sunk or lost:

January	87	340,000 tons	Note: The figure includes the losses caused by other than submarines.
February	115	520,000 tons	
March	60	230,000 tons	
April	37	130,000 tons	
May	70	280,000 tons	

Total losses of Japanese ships in 1944 (Reference author’s article of October issue of 1956 US Naval Institute Proceedings) was as follows:

Loss by submarine attacks	565	2,480,000 tons
Loss by aircraft attacks	234	1,230,000 tons

I remember that someone said, “From the whole Japanese nation, the

AREA of Shikoku sinks every night.”

The story that 5,800,000 tons would be enough for Japan to maintain a long-range war had gone somewhere. There had happened a crucial humanity problem, because the Convoy Escort General Fleet had to think more of the escort of the petroleum convoys, bauxite convoys and iron ore convoys than that of troop's convoys for the national industry. The army was very angry with the navy. The army resorted to a joint meeting before the Emperor as the escort of convoys was the part of main war. Then the army committed more and more army aircraft for the duties of convoy escort, sent the convoy inspection mission headed by Lt. General Sosaku Suzuki (Lt. Col. Miyoshi and Lt. Col. Ureshino joined this mission from the shipping section, Major Jim from the operation section, Commander Eguchi and Major Horie – author – from the Convoy Escort General Fleet) to Okinawa-Formosa-Philippines-Borneo area and ordered a test, the manufacture of a petroleum-carrying submarine to KANEGAFUCHI Textile Co., Ltd (I went to see the test of this army petroleum-carrying submarine at Yodogawa Plant in Osaka and at Wakanoura Bay).

At 9 o'clock in the morning, as soon as Col. Arao, Chief of the Shipping section, received my report concerning the loss of ships of the previous night, he reported it to General Tojo immediately. General Tojo called Adm. Shimada immediately and they started arguments about the convoy escort.

General Tojo used to say that the convoy escort was the key to the conduct of war and worked on this problem very hard. While Adm. Shimada cooperated with him very well, although there were so many officers who called him a brief-case carrying adjutant of General Tojo. The annoyance and uncertainty of the army and navy leaders were serious. To me the situation in those days looked as follows:

The father of a poor family (General Tojo), worrying about a sick patient (Local troops) and his relatives, was sending his lovely daughter (ships)

for nursing. But his wife (Adm. Shimada) did not have any train fare to give to the daughter. The daughter had to go along a dark road to which many hungry wolves were to appear. The parents asked their 1st son to go with her, but this son (the Combined Fleet) was too busy on his specific business. The 2nd son (Convoy Escort General Fleet) who was very obedient to his parents, in spite of suffering from tuberculosis of the spine, got out of his sick bed and went out to escort his sister. Immediately after their departure, the poor brother and sister became prey of the wolves.

We can find the following articles in the US war history written by Maurice Matloff in connection with US submarines:

“...US submarines received little publicity, since the very nature of their work demanded tight security measures if they were to stand a chance of returning safely to their home bases. As the US submarines fleet in the Pacific increased, its impact upon Japanese naval and merchant shipping mounted. Operating individually during the first half of the war, US submarines in the Pacific theater had sunk 17 naval vessels and 142 merchant ships plus 4 probables, totaling 666,561 tons by the end of 1942. The pace quickened during the first six months of 1943 when 9 naval vessels and 125 merchant ships were sent to the bottom – Japan lost 575,416 tons. During mid-1943, the US undersea raiders operated in small wolf packs as well as singly, and the addition of new and improved submarines made the last half of the year a most fruitful period. From July through December, 12 Japanese naval vessels and 166 merchantmen were destroyed for a total bag of 793,673 tons. Japan was not in a similar position; its limited shipyard facilities made full replacement impossible. With the AAF using low-altitude and radar bombing techniques against Japanese shipping and Chennault employing fighter bombers to destroy inland merchant shipping in China, further inroads were made upon the enemy’s dwindling merchant marine. The rising rate of Japanese losses

imposed restrictions upon her offensive capabilities and even made maintenance and repair difficult.”

Reinforcement of Central Pacific Defense – Crane Operation

In February 1944 Truk was attacked by US task forces. The Combined Fleet fled to Palau, but in March Palau was attacked too. The situation of the Combined Fleet became very bad. At the end of March Adm. Koga became missing, and the remaining power of the Combined Fleet fled to the anchorage of Towi Towi Island location south of Halmahera Island.

The Imperial Japanese Headquarters organized the Central Pacific Fleet headed by Vice-Adm. Nagumo, who was in charge of Pearl Harbor and Midway attack. Under him 11th Air Fleet headed by Vice-Adm. Kakuta – Land-based air forces – and 31st Army headed by Lt. General Obata were organized. Chief of Staff of the 31st Army was Maj. General Iketa. Col. Shimamura already had been assigned to the Combined Fleet and now Major General Tamura was assigned to the Central Pacific Fleet as vice-chief of staff. Col. Shimamura and Maj. General Tamura were advisors for Commanders-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet and the Central Pacific Fleet respectively, concerning the usage of the army on the defense of islands.

From March to May 1944 so-called “Crane” (Code name) operation was carried out to reinforce the defense of the islands in the Central Pacific Ocean. 14th Division (to Palau), 43rd Division (to Saipan), 29th Division (to Guam) and some independent brigades and independent regiments – totaling about 50,000 troops – were sent. During this Crane operation, except for the loss of Sakito-maru (29th Infantry Regiment was on board this ship and most of the

officers and men sank to death), the loss of the shipping was not so bad. After the end of WW II, I found the period of our Crane Operation was just the time of rotation of the US submarines.

One Saturday afternoon I returned home riding in the car of Vice-Adm. Kishi. On our way home Kishi said, “Major Horie, I have heard that General Tojo told Chief of the Naval Operation Division that he could have reinforced Saipan with the big help of convoy escort by the Navy, and Saipan would be impregnable. What do you think about it?”

Being in a difficulty to reply, I said to him, “He might have said so, under the assumption that the Combined Fleet might be still strong enough to fight against the US Navy.” However, from the atmosphere of the General Staff when the enemy actually came to Saipan, it seemed to me that General Tojo said so in earnest.

In those days I had said, “Those who become in charge of conduct of war must have passed through “Hell” aboard any merchant ship or any convoy escort ship (I, myself, had passed through hell aboard one sub chaser from Formosa to Manila). Without this experience they would not be able to understand the picture.” I believe that my story was right.

In those days, the Navy used to have study meetings occasionally. About 20 – 30 officers including Adm. Nagano, Adm. Shimada, Capt. Prince Tokamatsu and Adm. Oikawa attended. I was only one khaki-uniformed man among them. Adm. Nagano (?) said, “The people of Japan are thinking that the Army started the war and the Navy is losing the war. We must recover our reputation.” The meetings were conducted in hot discussions. Very often I wiped my tears with a handkerchief. However, already the enemy submarines were fighting with radars and our submarine crews were fighting with eyes. The prospect of war was out of question. Capt. Oka sitting beside me said, “With our ships 20 years behind, how can we fight this war?” He concluded that the level of science would decide victory or defeat.

The story “Army started the war” was often heard. In connection with this story many problems are involved. For instance, Japan-Germany-Italy Pact, 2.26 Incident, Defeat of Adm. Yonei’s Cabinet, etc. Apart from these problems, Lt. General Sosaku Suzuki, whom I respect most and who was killed in action at Leyte as the commanding general of the 35th Army, used to tell me as follows:

“In the Navy they say that the Army started the war. In the Army they say that Adm. Nagano, Chief of Naval Staff, said in front of the Emperor on 8 September 1941, “Now we could have a chance to win the war, but the future prospect would become worse and worse. So we should start the war now if we should.” Therefore, the Army decided his mind to start war. As the situation becomes worse, they mutually try to protect themselves. Both seem to have a good reason. But I believe the responsibility of the outbreak of the war must rest upon 2 service chiefs and all ministers legally, and upon the public from the viewpoint of morale. Because our activities must be based upon the Imperial Prescript, and the Meiji Constitution describes that the Emperor has no responsibility and every responsibility comes upon his advisors. Therefore, 2 service chiefs and all ministers who are advisors to the Emperor should take responsibility regardless whether or not they were war advocates. All the people must take moral responsibility, because since the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War they have been happy to see the prosperity of Japan and they have made an atmosphere under which they have been apt to say, ‘Defeat the foreigners.’ They must take responsibility regardless whether or not they knew the real situation. Every body is the same about the following facts: ‘He or she likes peace, wants victory rather than defeat, and has no malicious intent.’ Then, what shall I do? I must just obey the Imperial Prescript.”

On this point, Adm. Oikawa used to say as follows:

“All over the country, 99% of the people have neither principle nor constancy. What course shall we take? We must just follow the course decided by the Emperor. That is to say, we should obey the Imperial Rescript.”

But there is one episode about Adm. Oikawa:

After WW II, I had been respecting Adm. Oikawa since General Suzuki was killed in action at Leyte. One of my friends in my office asked me if he could see any big leaders of the war period. I wrote Adm. Oikawa, asking him if I could visit him with some of my friends at his convenience. He wrote me back immediately ‘Yes,’ indicating his convenience. The friend and I visited him in the afternoon one Sunday. To my surprise, he did not say anything about the Imperial Rescript or principle and moral, but he charged the old Army. He continued speaking ill of the Army for two hours without any stop. To begin with, he said, “There were no politicians in the Army, although there were some politicians in the Navy. It led our country to the Japan-Germany-Italy Pact and the outbreak of WWII.” The friend of mine said, “I was happy, because I had been looking for the opportunity to hear that kind of story. During the war we had been deaf.”

My lectures to the Army concerning anti-submarine tactics

I, who had been very nervous of the daily work between the Army and

Navy, was requested by the Headquarters of Education General. I felt happy and I made trips to give my lectures to the army officers of the headquarters of Eastern Army, Central Army, and Western Army, the Military Academy, the preliminary Military Academy, Toyohashi Army NCO School, etc., in accordance with the schedule made by the Education General Headquarters. Everywhere, they listened to me in earnest. Attendance of the officers was 100%. They were indeed anxious to know the situation of the Pacific. I still remember the frozen faces of Lt. General Makino, then the commandant of the Preliminary Military Academy (Later was killed in action at Layte as the 16th Division Commander), and Lt. General Ushijima, then the commandant of the Military Academy (Later was killed in action at Okinawa as the 32nd Army Commander).

At the big auditorium of the Military Academy, when I was going to close my lectures, Maj. Kuroiwa, who went with me as a member of the Education General Headquarters, ran to me and said, "Your lecture is so miserable that the listeners may lose their fighting spirit. Please tell them that our Imperial Army still has fighting spirit at the end of your speech." I did as he asked me.

3. Although Saipan was said impregnable

Major Horie transferred to Saipan (31st Army)

On 10 June 1944, the 50th anniversary ceremony of the Army Shipping

Headquarters was held at Hiroshima. On the eve I arrived at the Headquarters and reported to Lt. General Suzuki about the recent situation of the convoy escort operation. The general had asked me to give him the information of the Combined Fleet, because, he said, it was the main power of the Japanese armed forces in the Pacific.

Very often he had talked about General Ugaki, General Imamura, and General Nagata, and if General Nagata had been a live Japan would not be in such a miserable situation. He used to say that the most gangrenous evil of the Army was the fact that many officers came to erroneously worship General Yarashita, General Ishiwara and Col. Tsuji, talking about the hard times he had between General Yamashita and Col. Tsuji while speaking nothing 2 or 3 days at Malay as Chief of Staff of the 25th Army.

It was very fine on 10 June 1944. In the morning I attended the solemn ceremony, and just before noon I moved to the Dining Hall. It was a ceremony under darkness mentally, but Lt. Sashi, an actor, incidentally drafted some time before, had invited first level movie stars such as Tamaki Miura, Miss Setsuko Hara and Miss Yukiko Todoroki, and there were many events arranged.

After lunch, while I was busy in conversation with Actress Setsuko Hara (She and I were talking about my last-year visit to her studio, when I was writing the scenario 'Sea transport'), Col. Matsuo, Adjutant to General Suzuki, with a frozen face, came to me and said, "Telegraph." Then he took me to General Suzuki. He read the "Telegraph" to the general and me, "Major Horie was transferred to the 31st Army as of 5 June 1944." It was about 13:30. I asked one lieutenant to buy a ticket and a sleeper ticket for me to return to Tokyo. In the evening General Suzuki, Maj. General Isoya, Chief of Staff, and some 10 staff officers held a farewell party for me. I thought that it was the last time for me to see them in my life, and I thanked them for their

kindness. Then I left Hiroshima for Tokyo.

On the evening of 11 June 1944, I arrived at the General Staff. The members of the General Staff told me, “The focusing point is coming to the Central Pacific. You will work with the Navy on the supply work to the 31st Army.” The next morning – 12 June 1944, I went to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters, and I explained about my transfer to the 31st Army to Rear-Adm. Shimamoto and Capt. Chi (He was promoted to Captain in March 1944). Then I went to the last section of the Naval Staff to ask Commander Sogawa air-transportation from Yokohama to Saipan. Commander Sogawa found that air-transportation was held every 4 days. Today it had gone, and I could go to Saipan on 16 June 1944. I thanked him and I came back to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters to see the telegraphs which had been received for the past 4 days. I found one telegraph, “A big convoy left Ulithi is moving north-west.”

The members of the general staff and naval staff had different opinions – The enemy might come to Palau; no, they might come to Saipan; no, they might come to Guam, etc. I went to the Army Medical Department to see Lt. Col. (Doctor) Takatsuki. I solicited a package of potassium cyanide. He kindly gave it to me immediately. The purpose of this was to avoid being captured by the enemy. When I returned to the general staff, someone said to me, “Ah! The enemy just started bombing there. Hasten! I am afraid you might not be in time.” I entered the shipping section quickly and read the telegraphs. One of them read: “The enemy task forces are bombing Saipan. Behind them there are seen many transports. From Chief of Staff, 31st Army.”

On 13 June 1944 I went to my birth house in Ibaraki Prefecture to see my mother and to visit my ancient members' graveyard. I told my mother that my wife shall send 30 yen to her every month, and if I were killed my mother

might help my wife and one daughter. Furthermore, I told my mother, if my wife wanted to go back to her birth house, to have her go ahead. She said to me, "You escaped by a hair's breadth in the Northern China (In 1938 I was machine-gunned during our attack against the Chinese army defending Kaifeng. I drew 5 bullets in a moment when I was 1st lieutenant. One of them penetrated my skull, taking away some portion of the motion-nerve of legs, and I am still a crippled person). I am sure you will return alive this time, too. I built a small shrine at the side of my house and I pray for you every day and night. Never mind about death."

When I returned from the graveyard with my mother and brother, one of my cousins who returned to Japan from Saipan in March with her 2 daughters, leaving her husband there (had come to my house) (This man was working with MANYO KOHHATSU KK, and when Saipan was invaded, he was drafted by the army and was killed in action at the beginning of July 1944. At the end of December 1943 I stayed at his house on my way to Tokyo from Java). I finally told her that I was going to Saipan. While I was talking with my mother in front of the Buddhist altar, my cousin boiled about 10 eggs and wrote a letter to her husband. She asked me to take the letter and eggs to her husband on Saipan Island. I returned to my home in Tokyo by night train, and I cleaned up my study.

On 14 June 1944 I went to the general staff in the morning and the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters in the afternoon. I read some telegraphs. Everywhere everybody was busy and looked annoyed.

Telegraphs read: "several hundred vessels of the enemy are now surrounding Saipan," "Another enemy convoy is seen," "The enemy started naval gun firing," etc., etc. There were some telegraphs about the damage of ships, but nobody paid attention to these. I went to the naval staff to see Commander Sogawa. On my way there, incidentally I met Rear-Adm. Horie.

We both said, "A long time we have not seen each other." He told me that he just arrived at the naval staff because he had been transferred to work there as the chief of sea-transportation. I told him that I had been transferred to the 31st Army. He said, "Then I will introduce you to the main members of the naval staff and the naval department for convenience of future cooperation." He took me to 3 or 4 rooms and introduced me to the navy officers. Everybody looked annoyed and did not have time to pay attention to my greeting. When, in the hallway, I met Commander Sogawa. "Major Horie," he said, "You can't go to Saipan on 16 June. The air transportation has been cancelled." I said, "Well," when he had gone somewhere. I told Rear-Adm. Horie, "Anyway, let me go back to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters." As I returned to the Headquarters there was Adm. Oikawa at the entrance of the Headquarters, smiling. He said to me, "You are leaving this office tomorrow, I heard." I replied, "Yes." He said, "Come about 10 minutes early to my office before you leave because I would like to give you a gift." I entered the staff room, and I listened to the arguments whether or not Japan should put the Combined Fleet into this time operation.

The Naval Staff had instructed the Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet to prepare the A-Go Operation (The name of code for the decisive battle of naval power). Adm. Toyoda, Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet, had ordered Vice-Adm. Ugaki, Commander of Kon operation (The name of code of the operation to reinforce Biak Inland defense), to stop his operation and move north to join the main Task Force off the east coast of the Philippines. Toyoda also had ordered Vice-Adm. Ozawa, Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Task Force – the main power of the Combined Fleet – (Ozawa had been respected by most of the navy officers in those days) to move north and control Ugaki's Fleet and be ready for A-Go operation. In those days the operation orders used to be issued as GF Operation No. so and so, and the

operation orders used to be issued as 1KD operation order no. so and so.

Around 16:00 hours I left there for my home. I intend no longer to stop at the general staff. Because I thought I could do nothing without knowing the intent of the enemy.

15 June 1944, Saipan was invaded by the US forces.

On the morning of 15 June I went to the General Staff. The enemy had started the invasion of Saipan. For the first time I saw the busy offices at this time. They were very unhappy with the chiefs of the 31st Army.

“What an ignoble army the 31st Army is! What a loose man Maj. General Iketa is! Why were they so weak? ...”

Why was Maj. General Iketa spoken ill of like this? Because General Obata, Commander of the 31st Army was inspecting Palau with Maj. General Tamura when the enemy came to Saipan.

Someone said, “The chief of staff should be relieved. He is too loose and too weak. We had better get Maj. General Cho from Manchuria and make him replace Iketa.”

Lt. Col. Miyoshi of the shipping section told me, “Major Tsukamoto submitted some suggestion to General Gojo, and he is now to be expelled to Saipan. You had better work together with him to get there.” Major Tsukamoto and I agreed to go to Saipan by air, not by sea, because we could

not expect to be able to arrive there by ship. But how could we get there? I sent one telegraph to Maj. General Iketa to give me some guidance.

I doubted if it were true that the 31st Army was weak. But the reputation of the 31st Army was very bad, and I, a low-ranking man, could say nothing. Actually I was stalled. I remembered the question “Is it true that General Tojo said that Saipan might be impregnable?” asked by Vice-Adm. Kishi.

Note:

Maj. General Iketa, assisting Lt. General Saito, 43rd Division

Commander, conducted the warfare very hard. In particular, the 31st Army suffered big losses at the beaches at the beginning of battle, and Iketa led the retreat operation expertly. The US war history has written about the retreat tactics, admitting that the US forces had a hard time. From the instructions gained through Saipan warfare, the US forces extended the period of softening-up against Guam. Iketa had known the fact that Tokyo would be bombed if the Aslito Air field fell in the hands of the enemy before he received the orders of “DEATH DEFENSE” of the airfield. On 7 July 1944, when Iketa went out for the banzai charge at the north end of the island, he had been very skinny just like a ghost, the same as General Saito. It tells us how he fought so bitterly. The instructions sent by him became the key tactics for the Pelilin and Iwo Jima campaigns.

I went to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters to attend the last lunch, then I prepared to attend the “retiring” ceremony. In those days the Japanese navy had a custom to see off the retiring officer by all the officers and men. The atmosphere of this Headquarters was completely different from the general staff. There was a pathetic feeling in every room. Everybody looked as he or she was seeing me as a sheep going to be butchered. They offered me words of comfort or sympathy. Several female clerks said to me, “So long!” with handkerchiefs on their cheeks. What a difference between the Japanese armed forces there is!

I, at 13:00 hours, entered the room of Adm. Oikawa. Adm. Oikawa, the greatest scholar in the Navy about Chinese literature, stood, stopping reading some big book and said to me, "You know the situation. GF (The Navy used to call the Combined Fleet like this) went out already." Tears, tears and tears. He presented me one of his portraits with his signature at the upper right corner with his trembling hands. For the past six months he used to talk about girls only at lunch, making us laugh. Now his tears moved me to emotion. Suddenly tears came out of my eyes too.

The members of the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters lined up in front of the Headquarters and saw me off. I hear someone sobbing hither and thither. Just outside the Headquarters I asked my driver to give me about 10 minutes, and I went to the Naval Staff to see Commander Soqaw. All navy officers I met on the way said, "Is there any chance for Adm. Ozawa to win? Victory or defeat will come in a few days." Nobody spoke about Saipan. In other words, the key point was the success or failure of A-Go operation. I agreed with these people completely and I prayed for victory of our Combined Fleet.

I went to the General Staff and visited Col. Hattori. He told me, "Tomorrow, Maj. General Cho who is supposed to be Chief of Staff of the 31st Army will arrive here. You will make a plan to retake Saipan with him." I was given some maps of Saipan. He went on to explain the situation: "The strength to be used for retaking operation will be 109th Division and 9th Division. 5th Fleet will cooperate with our counter-landing. The 145th Infantry Regiment is moving to Yokohama from Kagoshima. The 9th Division is coming to Pusan, Korea, from Manchuria. The 5th Fleet is hastening to Yokohama from the Northern Pacific." On the next morning 16 June 1944, I went to the General Staff and tried to see Col. Hattori or Maj.

Sejima. Both of them were too busy to see me. I went out of the operation section on the 2nd floor and came down to the shipping section on the 1st floor. I read the following telegraphs:

“The enemy planes are now covering Saipan in the sky. The naval gunfire comes from several hundred vessels. The enemy is continuing the landing against Saipan!” Lt. Col. Miyoshi showed me the telegraph, which read: “To Major Horie, Come to Saipan. Maj. General Iketa.” which came from Saipan. Major Tsukamoto was busy cleaning his desk.

As I liked to know the situation of the Combined Fleet, I went to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters of which I came out yesterday to see the navy dispatches.

There were many dispatches on the tables. Everybody was interested in the telegraphs related to the A-Go operation. Nobody paid any attention to the reports of ship damage. The terrific telegraphs such as “The fate of our Empire depends upon this single battle,” “Z flag was raised,” etc. were read. These telegraphs were issued by the Combined Fleet Headquarters then located at Kisarazu and by the 1st Task Force Headquarters under the command of Vice-Adm. Ozawa, and we could understand the situation of each plane and each vessel. On the other hand, some dispatches had arrived from the 11th Air Fleet under the command of Vice-Adm. Kalkuta, telling that they had been bitterly fighting against the enemy air-raids. They said that Guam, Tinian, Rota and Palau had been raided. Incidentally one staff who had visited the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters from the Combined Fleet said, “The enemy has much more carrier planes. But after taking off and attacking the enemy, our planes could land on Guam and refuel, then they could attack the enemy again and again. Our Fleet could have a chance to win the battle.”

Note: The above story was completely wrong, it was learned very soon.

The airfields on Guam were torn up by the enemy air-raids and our planes landing there were all destroyed.

I returned to the general staff at about 11:30. I was surprised when I saw Maj. General Cho, because he was very tall. We were given one room on the 2nd floor. He asked me, "What is the situation at Saipan?" I explained the situation, based upon the dispatches sent from Saipan and the navy dispatches. He said to me, "Until we have known the result of A-Go operation, we can't do anything. For the time being, be at ease." In every room of the general staff the same situation continued as yesterday. They still spoke ill of the 31st Army. Someone from the Army department brought 2 ea #5 radios to us, saying, "For counter landing against Saipan." Cho and I said to him, "Ah! OK," with no feeling.

In the afternoon, I visited the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters to read dispatches. Now I could see the move of Ozawa's Fleet and Ugaki's Fleet clearly. On the other hand many planes of the 11th Air Fleet disappeared after communicating: "I am attacking an enemy vessel." The attrition of the planes of the 11th Air Fleet was thought serious. We anticipated the decisive battle between the Combined Fleet and the 5th US Fleet on the 19th of June 1944.

On the morning of 17 June 1944, Col. Ikeda, Commander of the 145th Infantry Regiment, visited me in our room on the 2nd floor of the general staff and asked me to give him some guidance. Soon after, Major Nakazawa, a staff officer of the 9th Division, came to ask me the same guidance. I told Major Nakazawa to wait until the afternoon of 19 June 1944. At that time a dispatch from Maj. General Iketa telling me to go to Palau to join General Obnta,

Commanding General of the 31st Army, was delivered to me.

In the afternoon, 17 June 1944, I borrowed a side-car and its driver from the 145th Infantry Regiment, put the radios on it, and went to Yokohama Harbor. The officers and men were on the Noto-maru (one of the remaining best ship – 14 knots per hour) in the harbor. I made a lecture how to watch and fight the enemy submarines and aircraft during the navigation. I gave the radios to the regiment.

Then I came back to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters to see the situation of the A-Go operation, and called a staff of the Yokosuka Naval Base and asked him to tell that I would visit Cruiser Yubari, Flag Ship of the 5th Fleet, for negotiation of retaking operation against Saipan.

The dispatches read: “The enemy troops are advancing in the interior of Saipan and the Japanese officers and men are fighting the desperate warfare.

The members of the 6th Fleet (This Fleet was the Submarine Fleet, and Rear-Adm. Shimamoto used to be the chief of staff of this Fleet) Headquarters missed the chance to go back to the ship and were determined to fight with the ground force personnel.

On 18 June 1944, I went by side-car to Yokosuka Port to have a meeting with the staff of Cruiser Yubari. Commander B, Senior Staff officer of Yubari, met me. I was ushered to the Officer’s Room and there we started a meeting to discuss how to retake Saipan. I was very much surprised that the navy officers on the boat were very vigorous. I heard here one funny story.

One lieutenant said, “We are very happy. The enemy is the 5th Fleet, and incidentally we belong to the 5th Fleet. We are honored to fight against the same No. Fleet.”

When I asked Commander B how many vessels and aircraft he had with

his 5th Fleet, he replied that his Fleet had 2 cruisers, 8 destroyers and 2 aircraft carriers. I kept myself silent for awhile. I was moved by the maintenance of security of the navy and the purity of the officers of the Fleet. I thought that I was lucky because I had heard that story before I told them the 5th Fleet of the enemy had more than 150 vessels and 1,000 aircraft. I told them that I would inform them the result of A-Go operation and left Yubari around 16:50.

I was hit by the boldness of the general staff and the 5th Fleet, and I regretted that my study of Chinese literature – I shall not be afraid of ten million people if I am right – was poor. I gave up everything. I thought that I should worry of nothing. Just throw off my life, that is all right! It was very ridiculous to worry about the strength of the enemy and ours. I checked the potassium cyanides in my pocket.

I came to the Noto-maru at Yokohama harbor. Col. Ikeda met me. I asked him to allow me to stay on the ship overnight. He emptied his cabin for me. I told him not to do so, but he said, “Tonight you had better have this room.” Col. Ikeda, his adjutant, and myself had supper in the cabin. Each of us drank one bottle of beer. The taste was very good.

On this ship I heard another funny story. One lieutenant colonel of the Ship Engineering Regiment came to see me. He gave me a piece of paper and asked me to write my name, then my wife’s name. When I finished writing, he turned his face to read and told me, “The number of strokes of Chinese character in your name and your wife’s name makes us anticipate your death. Change your name and also your wife’s name tomorrow. If you change, you will be able to return alive, I am sure.” I remembered when I was a 2nd lieutenant in the 2nd Infantry Regiment, Col. Ishiguro asked me to buy and distribute some books of a new religion, and I thought that the same thing was happening there. I told him, “Don’t worry about my life. I have given up my

hope, and I have no time to change my name officially.” I tried to flee to the deck, but he chased me. He was enthusiastic to keep me alive.

The subject was changed to Col. Ikeda from me. Then I gathered the battalion commanders on the deck and explained the situation to them.

A-Go operation lost

The day of the fate of Japan came. It was 19 June 1944. The patient of a fever, influenced by the success of surprise attack against Pearl Harbor and a lantern parade celebrating the fall of Singapore, suffered dislocation of his waist bone and legs at Midway and then suffered from arteriosclerosis in the convoy escort operation in the Pacific. But the patient, receiving some emergency treatment, was expecting his revival. The decisive moment came on this day. The heavens, however, did not favor him. The patient was driven into the bed of paralysis.

Japan lost A-Go operation completely. The 1st Task Force which had been making every effort for reconstruction with “Hope” of Japan on her shoulders was completely defeated. As at Midway, although the aircraft carriers and aircraft could be built again, the veteran pilots would never come back. The 19th of June 1944 was the death day of Japan indeed.

Praying to God for happiness for the brave pilots now sleeping on the bottom of the Pacific, let us read the US war history written by Philip A. Crowl:

“On 11 June 1944 Adm. Toyoda received word of Mitscher’s carrier strike against Saipan and immediately suspended the Kon operation, ordering the task force bound for Biak to join forces with the main body of Ozawa’s Mobile Fleet. Ozawa himself sortied from Tawi Tawi two days later, and on the morning of the 15th A-Go operation was activated. Contrary to earlier Japanese expectations, the Americans had chosen to attack the Marianas rather

than the Western Carolinas. Hence the scene of the impending “Decisive Fleet Engagement” could only lie somewhere in the Philippine Sea – that vast stretch of ocean between the Philippines and Marianas.

On the evening of 15 June, Ozawa’s Fleet had completed its progress from Tawi Tawi up the Visayan Sea and through San Bernadino Strait into the Philippine Sea. On the next afternoon it was joined by the Kon force that had been diverted from Biak. Both fleets were sighted by American submarines, and it was apparent that the Japanese were heading in a northeasterly direction toward the Marianas.

All together, Ozawa had mustered 5 carriers, 4 light carriers, 5 battleships, 11 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers, 28 destroyers, and 430 carrier-based combat aircraft. He was outnumbered by the Americans in every respect except in heavy cruisers. Spruance had at his disposal 7 carriers, 8 light carriers, 7 battleships, 8 heavy cruisers, 13 light cruisers, 69 destroyers, and 891 carrier-based planes. The mammoth American fleet was divided into four carrier task groups under Vice-Adm. Mitscher, Commander, and Task Force 58. Mitscher was in tactical command, but his major tactical decision had to be approved by Spruance as Commander, 5th Fleet.

By the morning of 18 June 1944 all four American carrier groups had rendezvoused and were steaming in southwesterly direction toward the approaching enemy. Spruance had ordered: “Action against the enemy must be pushed vigorously by all hands to ensure complete destruction of his fleet,” but had added the precautionary note, “Task Force 58 must cover Saipan and our forces engaged in that operation.” That night Adm. Mitscher learned the full meaning of this qualification when his superior ordered him to change course to the east and maintain it until daylight. Mitscher protested but was overruled. Adm. Spruance was fearful that Ozawa might attempt an end run under cover of darkness and put the Japanese fleet between him and Saipan.

On the morning of the 19th, after the American carriers had turned west again, Ozawa's planes, which were lighter and less well armed and therefore capable of greater range than their American rivals, delivered the first blow. In four separate raids, delivered for almost five hours, Japanese planes roared over the horizon in a futile effort to knock out Mitscher's mighty fleet. Out of all the American surface vessels present, only one was hit – the battleship South Dakota, which lost 27 men killed and 23 wounded, but was not seriously damaged. By evening the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot" was over with disastrous results to the Japanese. Out of 430 carrier planes, Ozawa lost 330. Some went down under the fire of American ships and planes; others were destroyed on Guam and Rota; and still others were counted as operational casualties. Against this, only twenty-four American planes were shot down and six lost operationally. The same day, two Japanese carriers, Shokaku and Taiho (Ozawa's flagship) were sunk by American submarines operating well to the south of Mitscher's fleet.

That night Ozawa changed course to the northwest hoping to put distance between him and the American fleet and to allow him opportunity to refuel. Mitscher launched a twilight air attack that succeeded in destroying about 65 of Ozawa's remaining 100 aircraft, sinking the carrier Hiyo, hitting another carrier and a battleship, and damaging the fleet oilers. American plane losses came to 100, mostly incurred through crashes when the returning planes tried to land on their carriers after dark. Personnel casualties were not so heavy.

Thus, the Japanese land forces on Saipan, Tinian, and Guam were doomed, no matter how bravely and doggedly they fought."

Saipan must be abandoned

After 19 June we awaited and awaited the coming news, but only bad

news came. On the other hand some officers headed by Col. Ohmura had come to Tokyo from Army Shipping Headquarters at Hiroshima for the preparation of counter landing against Saipan. At noon of 20 June, Col. Arao held a farewell luncheon party for me, Col. Ohmura, and some other officers. I was grateful to Col. Arao, but as I was so anxious to know the result of A-Go operation that I left the party early and motored to the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters to read the dispatches coming from Ozawa's Fleet Headquarters. The faces of navy officers looked frozen just like holding a wake. No good news came on 20th and 21st of June 1944.

At 14:00 hours, 22 June 1944, 2 service chiefs, General Tojo and Adm. Shimada, went to see the Emperor. They had to report to the Emperor that they could find no alternative than abandoning Saipan. Thus, the military situation moved to a new stage.

Around noon, 22 June 1944, I found a memo addressed to me from Maj. Tsukamoto at the shipping section. It read: "Major Horie, I made every effort to find you. But now no more time. I leave here ahead of you. Very sorry. Maj. Tsukamoto."

Later, I found the true story. Maj. Tsukamoto received information that one heavy bomber would leave Tachikawa Air Base at about 10 o'clock. The plane would go to Formosa. In accordance with the promise that he and I would get together by air, he tried to seek for me. Failing to find me, he left a memo for me and went to the Tachikawa Air Base. I said to Lt. Col. Miyoshi, "Maj. Tsukamoto had promised me to go with me. He broke the promise. He is not good anyhow." I was angry, and I started worrying how I could find other air transportation to reach General Obata.

Maj. Tsukamoto went to Palau through Taipei and Manila. He joined General Obata and Maj. Fen. Tamura there. They went to Guam by navy plane, then they were killed in action when American Forces invaded Guam.

Maj. Tsukamoto and Maj. Gen Cho used to stay about one week with me in a room on the 2nd floor of the general staff, saying, “Let’s die together.” Now, about 20 years have passed after they were killed on Guam and on Okinawa.

Had the saying “A bad thing never dies” been made for me?

4. Iwo Jima would be next target of the enemy

Establishment of Bonin Islands Force and 32nd Army

The Imperial Japanese Headquarters which lost A-Go operation decided to make strong Bonin Islands and Okinawa Islands. Hattori-Sejima line was still powerful. Because the Army still had 20-30 perfect divisions. But without the Navy, could these divisions be used in the Pacific? Was it adequate? I believe it was the point in those days. But the situation of Japan in those days was just like that of a ship on an ocean – There was no alternative to help Japan.

As of 1 July 1944, Bonin Islands Force and 32nd Army were newly established and the troops belonging to the Bonin Islands Force were separated from the 31st Army and came under the direct command of the Imperial Japanese Headquarters, and the 32nd Army went under the command of Lt. General Ando (once fired with Chief of Staff Prince Kanen when he invaded South Indo-China as the Southern China Expeditionary Army Commander, and committed suicide after WW II), Commanding General of the tenth Area Army located in Formosa.

109th Division was ordered to be the main power of the Bonin Islands Force, and 9th Division was ordered to go to Okinawa.

On 23 June 1944, Col. Hattori told me, “Maj. General Cho will go to Okinawa to be Chief of Staff of the 32nd Army. You will go to Bonin Islands.” “Thank you, Maj. Horie, So long,” General Cho said and left our room.

Lt. Col. Miyoshi and Maj. Tomida said to me, “There is no harbor at Iwo Jima, so probably you will stay at Chichi Jima. Continue to give us information after you leave here. Particularly your Force will come under the direct command of the Imperial Japanese Headquarters” These members of the shipping section were always kind.

Commitment of 13,000 troops to Iwo Jima

Maj. Sejima (in charge of general operation) Maj. Haruko (in charge of operations of the Central Pacific) and Lt. Col. Itagaki (in charge of logistics) cooperated with the members of the organization section of the general staff and the ammunition section of the Army Department, and worked out to send the following troops to Iwo Jima:

<u>Area coming from</u>	<u>Harbor to leave</u>	<u>Troops</u>
Kagoshima	Yokohama	145 th Infantry Regiment
All over Japan	Pusan	26 th Tank Regiment
Kanto	Shibaura (Tokyo Bay)	109 th Divisional Headquarters
All over Japan	Shibaura	109 th Division Communication Unit
All over Japan	Yokohama	109 th Division Radar Unit
All over Japan	Yokohama	109 th Jet Propelling Gun Battery
Hiroshima	Hiroshima	3 rd Battalion, 17 th Independent Mixed Regiment
North-Eastern area of Honshu	Shibaura	Iwo Jima Provisional Ammunition Service Unit
North-Eastern area of Honshu and Kanto	Shibaura	Iwo Jima Provisional Material Service Unit

Kanto	Shibaura	2 nd Mixed Brigade Field Hospital
Kyushu and Chugoku	Yokohama	20 th Special 25mm Machine Gun Unit
Kyushu and Chugoku	Yokohama	21 st Special 25mm Machine Gun Unit
Kyushu	Yokohama	5 th Fortress Construction Company
Kanto	Yokohama	8 th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion
Kanto	Yokohama	9 th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion
Kinki (Osaka-Nara area)	Osaka (By a cruiser)	10 th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion
Shimane and Hiroshima	Yokohama	11 th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion
Kanto	Yokohama	1 st Independent Machine-gun Battalion
North-Eastern area of Honshu	Yokohama	2 nd Independent Machine-gun Battalion
Kyushu	Yokohama	2 nd Medium Howitzer Battalion
Kanto	Yokohama	3 rd Medium Howitzer Battalion
All over Japan	Yokohama	109 th Charge Company
All over Japan	Pusan	20 th Independent Howitzer Battalion

Total strength about 13,000 men

Some of the above troops – 109th Divisional Headquarters and 109th Division Communication Unit – stayed at Chichi Jima. Furthermore, about 1,700 men of 17th Independent Mixed Regiment (Minus 3rd Battalion) went to Chichi Jima.

Shipment and convoy escort

Maj. Tomida of the shipping section made the plan for shipment and Capt. Uri was busy for the escort of these troops.

Except for a few troops that went to Iwo Jima directly, most of the above troops were sent to Chichi Jima harbor by some transports with escort vessels, where I would unload them, disperse them at night, divide them into small groups and put them in fishing boats and sailing boats next evening, send them Iwo Jima via Haha Jima (one island between Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima).

Anti-submarine-aircraft tactics during navigation

Right outside the harbors of Japan proper, there were awaiting some American submarines. Also nobody could know when enemy task forces would visit our convoys. I went to Noto-maru at Yokohama Harbor and asked Col. Ikeda to buy some bamboos for the 145th Infantry Regiment. When the ship would be sunk, they could float on the sea with the help of these bamboos; they might have a chance to be rescued by escort vessels or some other ships. I am now 50 years old. During the past 50 years, very many times I have taken a teacher's place. Now, almost every night, I teach some Japanese students, or American students, too. However, I believe that the instructions to the troops on board the ships on the subject of anti-submarine-aircraft tactics during navigation was the best position. Because these students listened to the instructions for their survival, not for credit or employment. All of these students were very sincere.

In March 1944, as a member of a special mission sent by the Imperial Japanese Headquarters, I taught anti-submarine-aircraft tactics during navigation to the officers of the 14th Division at Dalren and the 35th Division at Tsingtao. Because of no national power, no defensive power at sea, and a poor level of technique, innocent individuals had to go into the threatened areas. In those days I thought of myself as a teacher. I had to tell them the life-or-death story forcing individual sacrifice, and I felt very sad. What said Lt. General Inoue (14th Division Commander), Col. Tata (Chief of Staff of the Division), Col. Nakagawa (2nd Infantry Regiment Commander), Lt. General Ikeda (35th Division Commander), Col. Imada (Chief of Staff of the Division) and Col. Ikeda (145th Infantry Regiment Commander) to me? "Please let us reach the destinations. Help us," they said. What sad words these

were! I also read the following dispatches issued by the commanders of the convoy escort vessels:

“We stop rescuing floating personnel...”

I understand the position of the escort vessel commanders. Because they did not have time to continue rescue operations from their original duties, or as they had to worry when their vessels would be hit. However, I am still sad when I remember how the floating people sank to the bottom of the Pacific after waiting a long time. During WW II, a tremendous number of soldiers and sailors ended their lives in the sea. Of course the situation of the escort vessel crew and merchant ship crew was miserable.

I will write down here the loss of Japanese merchant ship crew during WW II:

Merchant Ship Crew	Total 137,044 men
Total killed	103,000 men
By enemy submarines	67,000 men
By enemy aircraft	21,000 men
By mines	14,300 men

According to the US War History, there were the following US submarines in the Pacific as of 31 December 1943:

Submarine (new)	105
Submarine (old)	18
Total	123

About 40-50% actually were at sea. The rest were in for maintenance, I guess. So, about 50-70 submarines gave hard times to the Japanese ships.

After mid-1943, the US submarines operated in small wolf packs as well as singly, but the Japanese submarines could not have the wolf pack system because they were afraid of mutual conflict of friendly submarines.

But in those days the Tokyo Shipping Branch Office located at Shibaura

worked very well for us. I sincerely thank the officers and men of that office for their labor in the background.

5. What is Iwo Jima?

History of Iwo Jima

A rice-scoop shaped island it is. No winter and no water. It is located in lat. 25° 10'N and long. 141°20'E. Less than 6 kilometers from East to West and no more than 3 kilometers from south to north in size. There were many bananas, papayas and pineapples. There were jungles and valleys on Iwo Jima.

In 1889 Iwo Jima was clearly indicated to belong to the Bonin Islands through Imperial Ordinance #190. Before 1890 the territorial relationship of the island was not clear. On some map it was being written as a Spanish territory, I heard. It was a tragedy caused by the seclusion policy of the Shogunate Tokugawa. In 1903, a small number of people moved to Iwo Jima from Haha Jima and engaged in farming and fishing.

There are 3 islands – North Iwo Jima, Middle Iwo Jima and South Iwo Jima. The campaign was held on Middle Iwo Jima. Since now on I will call it just Iwo Jima. In 1913 one village office was established for these 3 islands, and in 1940 Iwo Jima clearly belonged to Tokyo city.

Arrival of the Japanese forces and evacuation of inhabitants

Mr. S. Sakurai now living at Tokumochi-machi, Ota-ward, Tokyo, a

director of Iwo Jima Industry Co., Ltd., told me as follows:

“I was born in Gunma Prefecture, but I lived on Iwo Jima for 24 years. First, I was sent to Iwo Jima as a manager of the company. In those days our company was called “Iwo Jima Sugar Manufacturing Co., Ltd.” However, our business condition was not good, and later our company changed the name to “Iwo Jima Industry Co., Ltd,” and mainly manufactured medical herbs. Our company bought the land of Iwo Jima up to 90%, so there were only about 10 land-owners, although the Japanese Agriculture Ministry used to have some part of the island.

There were 4 officials in the Village Office which belonged to Sonin Island Office at Chichi Jima.

There was one 8-year school and one youth school, and 7 teachers were taking care of both of schools. Schools were run until just before the evacuation of the inhabitants. But some of the senior class students went to work in the armed forces. There was one inn for which the Governmental officials used to be the main customers. The name of the inn was Taihei-kan. There was one bar in which 3 girls (islanders) used to work. There was no movie theatre. Ships visited 6 times a year.

In 1940 Mabuchi Construction Company came from Yokosuka and started the construction of the 1st airfield under the leadership of the Imperial Japanese Navy. In the spring of 1941 Lieutenant Tankard brought 93 Navy men and started some gun positions in the middle of Iwo Jima.

Around that time about 2,000 labors came to the islands for construction of the airfield. I established Ogasawara Food Co., Ltd., and I became the Managing Director. I sold some rice-cake, noodle, raw pineapple, coffee, black tea, etc. to the labors. Navy personnel came to buy some food with some containers.

In late 1942 Commander Wachi brought more than 1,000 garrison troops. I sold some watermelons, egg-plants and cucumbers to his troops. Water was taken by some gutters put under the roof, and also it was saved by some tanks installed under some rocks. At the beginning, the rain water had some colors, and the boiled rice looked brown. There were papayas, mangoes, bananas, etc. There were white-eyes, bulbuls, doves, booby gannets and Japanese buntings, but no crows nor sparrows.

Around April 1944 Col. Atsuji brought about 1,000 army troops. But, mainly I had contact with Commander Wachi, and I met Col. Atsuji only 4 or 5 times. General Kuribayashi came to Iwo Jima on 13 June 1944 suddenly. He said to me, "Let us borrow your house until our offices have been built." Very soon communication troops completed a telephone net making my reception room the center of the net. I was surprised, seeing the swiftness of the army.

On 15 June 1944, the US task forces air-raided the island for the first time, and I was surprised very much. There were about 1,150 islanders. Through the Village Office we were ordered to draft some young men and the evacuation of the rest.

The evacuation of the inhabitants was conducted as follows:

- 1st group 3 July 1944 about 320 members
- 2nd group 7 July 1944 about 500 members
- 3rd group 12 July 1944 about 300 members

I sent back my wife and children by ship and I, myself, evacuated there by a naval plane Commander Wachi specially arranged. The plane left Iwo Jima on 25 July 1944 right after a heavy rain for Kisarazu, Japan proper. The manager of Taihei-Kan evacuated there at the beginning of August 1944.

Those who were younger than 40 and drafted by the army were about 25, and those who had been married to island women and were drafted by the

army were 5. Out of these 5 returned alive after WW II. I used to dine with General Kuribayashi on porch of my house very often, and I was surprised by his attitude of water saving. There were Col. Hori who had a good beard, Chief of Staff, and Lt. Fujita, Adjutant to the general, with us.

At the beginning of July 1944, when we heard a broadcast telling of the fall of Saipan, I said to General Kuribayashi, "General, now Iwo Jima would contain the enemy for a big slaughter." He replied, however, "Very sorry that we have given you trouble because of lack of our power. Now, we can no longer do anything." I was shocked by his answer.

Japanese armed forces on defenseless island

Mr. Musashino, former Lt., commander of the pioneer company, who returned alive after the battle, wrote about the situation of Iwo Jima in those days as follows:

I (Mr. Musashino) went to Iwo Jima on 23 March 1944, taking one pioneer company. At that time Iwo Jima was completely defenseless. Already one infantry battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Watanabe had been stationed at the southern beach. There had been a watch-word: "Those who want to return home alive must make fortification." At the end of March there were about 7,000 troops, army and navy together. The expansion of the 2nd and 3rd airfields and fortification of the island were conducted. On 19 June 1944 some US carrier-based planes appeared. 101 Japanese land-based navy planes scrambled immediately, and there was an air battle for about 15 minutes 15,000 meters south of Iwo Jima. Those who had been watching the battle felt very sad when they knew that none of our planes returned. After that time, some 10 or 20 planes came to Iwo Jima from Japan proper. But all of them were destroyed by the enemy air-raids, and when the enemy invasion was made there were no Japanese planes and no vessels.

After his arrival on 16 June 1944, General Kuribayashi stayed with me for about one month. Except for official business, he was just like a friend of mine. He talked with me and smiled often. He was a scholar-type general indeed. One time he told me, “I was in the States for about 5 years. Once a war comes, a great peace-time industry will be changed into a war-time industry in a few hours through one telegraph notice. Japanese war planners had not been careful on this problem. They had not been able to understand my explanation. In this war there should be no chance for Japan to win. But we must fight until the last moment.”

Terrain of Iwo Jima and landing point of the enemy

The north-eastern coast is composed of a series of cliffs, and it was apparent that nobody could find any landing points for large forces. At the south-western corner there is Mt. Suribachi. Between Mt. Suribachi and Motoyama there is a wide sand-land. There was a navy airfield. It was called sometimes “1st Airfield,” and sometimes “Chidori Airfield.”

It was understood that the southern beach and western beach would allow the enemy to land. However, the western beach was narrow in width and shallow for some distance from the shore.

There was no harbor and the waves were rough. Also there was no breakwater. Both boarding and discharging at the southern shore were dangerous.

There was a shrine called Iwo Jima Shrine, but I did not have time to check who had been enshrined.

On Iwo Jima sulphur gas was gushing everywhere. Everywhere we might dig, land was hot. Even when we dug in about one meter deep, the land was still hot. I believe that the height of Mt. Suribachi was 169 meters and the highest position of Motoyama area was about 110 meters.

At a glance of Iwo Jima, any amateur strategists would say that the enemy would come through the southern beach. General Kuribayashi, a modern professional strategist, had the same judgment.

6. Bonin Islands troops and US Pacific Fleet

Bonin Island Force and 27th Navy Air Division

Even after the outbreak of WWII, Bonin Islands used to be a peaceful area. The army had Chichi Jima Fortress and the navy had a special naval base headquarters at Chichi Jima. It was true that they said the area was a health resort for sick personnel. However, Iwo Jima was a staging island for the navy planes, and Chichi Jima had “Futami Harbor” serving as a port of call for the army and navy ships going to Rabaul from Japan proper.

The commander of Chichi Jima Fortress was Maj. General Osuga. After the beginning of 1943 he commanded the all army troops in the Bonin Islands. In March 1944, when the 31st Army Headquarters was established at Saipan, Osuga and his troops came under the 31st Army.

Yokosuka naval air forces used to use Iwo Jima as the staging base

between Japan and Marianas, and around June 1944, the 27th Navy Air Division was established under the command of the 3rd Air Fleet Headquarters at Kisarazu.

In June 1944, Osuga was ordered to organize the 2nd Mixed Brigade, gathering 5 battalions of fortress infantry, one battery of artillery, one company of pioneer, one unit of communication, etc. Then he was ordered to move his Brigade to Iwo Jima from Chichi Jima.

Maj. General Tachibana was ordered to Chichi Jima from Tokyo to be the 1st Mixed Brigade Commander. The 1st Mixed Brigade consisted of some troops gathered at Chichi Jima and some troops which were sent from Japan proper.

Col. Gaido, commander of Chichi Jima Fortress Artillery, took some of his artillery to Iwo Jim. He controlled the artillery and some anti-aircraft guns at Iwo Jima.

About 3,000 army troops headed by Col. Masaki and some of navy troops were the garrisons of Hita Jima.

The Bonin Islands Force were provisionally organized, and it could be said that the regular troops were only the 145th Infantry Regiment and the 26th Tank Regiment. The 145th Infantry Regiment had been left at Kagoshima after the 46th Division headed by Lt. General Wakamatsu was sent to Sunda Islands because of lack of ships. The regiment had about 3,000 men. The 26th Tank Regiment came from Manchuria, and it had about 760 men. Almost all battalion commanders of 1st and 2nd mixed brigades were reserve officers. They were Lt. Colonels and about 60 years old.

From the viewpoint of timing, Truk was attacked by the enemy task

forces in February 1944 and the combined fleet was driven out when the Imperial Japanese Headquarters started the defense of Marianas. In those days we called the line of Kurile Island –Hokkaido-Bonin Islands Marianas-Palau-North West part of New Guinea “The Absolute National Defense Line.” When the enemy came to Saipan in June 1944, Japan started the defense of Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima. Therefore, it was natural that Bonin Islands were defenseless in June.

Movement of the U.S. forces in the Pacific

The following is an outline of the situation of the U.S. forces in the Pacific.

Throughout WWII, the Combined Chiefs of Staff- U.S.: Adm. Leahy, Chief of staff to the president, General Marshall, Chief of staff, Adm. King, Chief of Naval Operations, and General Arnold, Chief of the Army Air Force. On the British side: Adm. Of the fleet Sir Dudley Pound (After 1944 Adm. Of the fleet Sir Andrew B. Cumingham), Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles F.A. Portal and Field Marshal Sir John Dill, Chief of the British Military Mission to Washington-conducted the Anglo-American strategy.

They adopted the slogan “Defeat Germany First,” and the Pacific theater was the secondary area. However, the main power of the U.S. Navy was in the Pacific and Adm. King, Chief of the Naval Operation and Commander and Chief of the U.S. Fleet was proud of being able to say that the U.S. Navy was the main power waging war against Japan and insisted on his opinion that the commander-in-chief of the South West Pacific Area, General MacArthur should come under the unified command of Adm. Nimitz. However the U.S. Army did not concede that Adm. Nimitz and General MacArthur conducted the war parallel. (Actually, MacArthur was under the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but

Nimitz was directly under the command of the Commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet and had freedom of operation and having large task forces, had much greater strength than General MacArthur).

It was after November 1943 while the British-American Conference was being held in Cairo that the U.S. Government started hastening the war against Japan. Since then the U.S. chiefs had a tendency to think the main offensive should have been directed in Nimitz's front. After the surprise attack against Truk in February 1944 the main offence was directed actually in the Central Pacific.

Before or after February 1944, not only the U.S. Navy but also the army air force started thinking of the Marianas. Around this time the joint Strategic Survey Committee started insisting to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the Central Pacific front was closer to Japan proper than any other front, and suggested that the main offensive should be directed from the Central Pacific area and the war effort in the South-West Pacific area and China-India-Burma area should be reduced. Even General Marshall concurred with this suggestion.

Actually the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed Adm. Nimitz to plan the following invasions. (Secret order No. 5137)

<u>Target</u>	<u>D date</u>
Saipan	15 June 1944
Palau	15 September 1944

However, when the U.S. forces invaded Saipan, President Roosevelt, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other leading military members were in London in connection with the Cross Channel operation. (The invasion of the Normandy Peninsula was started on June 6 1944.) On June 12, 1944 Marshall and King were visiting the front line in Normandy with General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe. That is to

say, the U.S. Chiefs were paying too much attention to the European theater and failed to exploit the victory of the 5th Fleet.

In connection with the occupation of Marianas (Saipan, Tinian and Guam), the Army Air Force planned to prepare B-29 attacks against Japan proper by the end of October 1944 and expected to place 784 B-29 aircraft there by February 1945. In light of this plan, the “MATTERHORN PLAN” which called for operating B-29’s from Cheng-tu against Japan by the 20th Air Force, under the direct command of General Arnold, was cancelled.

After the occupation of Marianas (Saipan, June 15th through July 7th, Tinian, July 24th through July 30th, and Guam, July 21st through August 10th), Nimitz was ordered to prepare for the invasion of Formosa. But due to the unexpected delay in Germany (The Combined Chiefs of Staff had expected the defeat of Germany in October 1944,) it was considered that the diversion of the resources from Europe would be impossible for the subject invasion. Therefore, the U.S. Chiefs concluded that the resources available for Nimitz would be all right for the occupation of Bonin Islands and Okinawa instead of Formosa. The official order to invade the Bonin Islands and Okinawa was, thus, issued on October 3rd, 1944.

How our tactics were planned.

The policy of the 31st Army to annihilate the enemy at the beach.

After my arrival at Iwo Jima, I heard the following story from Major General Osuga, Colonel Atsuji and Lt. Col. Nishikawa:

One day in May 1944 General Obata and Major General Tamura visited Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima. They gathered all the officers and Major General made a big speech. Tamura asked them what a “beach line” meant. Nobody could give him any right answers. He said that the “beach line” meant the boarder line between water and land, changing from time to time by the tide. The “beach line’ had to be defended .He was enthusiastic about annihilating the enemy at the beach. It was an eloquent speech.

It was called “The Tamura Doctrine,” they told me. Tamura and Obata were very vigorous at that time.

After the above speech the defensive line which had been made by order of Major General Osuga was moved to the “beach line. It was mandatory. Therefore, when I arrived at Iwo Jima there were many dugout-holes at the beach and the officers and men of Iwo Jima respected the “Tamura Doctrine”. When we read the battle instruction reports coming from Saipan, Guam and Tinian, they reflected the “Tamura Doctrine” expertly. (In the battles of Peliliu the Japanese tactical idea could diverge from the doctrine.)

The above mentioned “Tamura Doctrine” was not invented by Major General Tamura but it was the main principle of defensive tactics. It was common sense that any defender should keep a large reserve in rear areas, and once the enemy came the defender should take the offensive with the reserves and annihilate the enemy at the beach. This idea was being widely spread in the world. In the Military Academy and War College, which I attended, the above idea was simply common sense. Therefore, it was not surprising that Tamura insisted on his opinion that the annihilation of the enemy at the beach was key. But there was one point in the “Operation Manual” -SAKUSEN YOMUREI- that a warning sentence was adopted by the army after the Nomonhan incident. (In 1939 at Nomonhan, outer Mongolia, a desperate battle was conducted

between the Japanese army and the Soviet army.) It read: Against overwhelming armored enemy a series of position groups must be made in depth.

Anyway, from the story of General Tojo, Saipan could be impregnable. The atmosphere of the general staff was optimistic when the enemy invaded. There were some members who were dreaming of the possibility of the invasion of Saipan by 30,000 ground troops. We can not discuss this point only in connection with the Saipan campaign; we must also remember that over confidence was wide spread. For instance someone spread the idea that the damage coming from the enemy's incendiary bombs in Tokyo could be prevented by the hand delivery of water in a series of buckets. We actually believed this to be true. There is no more evil thing than the low level of our judgment. I would like to apologize to the people of Japan here about the low level of judgment of the graduates of the Military Academy that caused the tragedy, as one of these graduates. The same apology must be made by the Naval Academy graduates, I guess.

Arrival of General Kuribayashi

General Kuribayashi came to Iwo Jima by air from Kisarazu on June 13 1944. He was accompanied by 1st Lt. Fujita, adjutant. After inspecting Iwo Jima, he told Major General Osuga and Colonel Atsuji that he would take over the tactical policy set up by the 31st Army.

The troops on Bonin Islands were under the command of the 31st Army until the end of June 1944. Although the army and the navy were in the miserable battle of Saipan, General Obata, accompanied by Major General Tamura and Major Tsukamoto, flew to Guam by navy plane. General Obata was directing the troops under his command through the communication net of the 29th Division located in Guam. Therefore General Kuribayashi had to obey

the policy set up by the 31st Army until the end of June 1944.

Arrival of Major Horie

Through kind help of Commander Sogawa of the 12th Section of the naval staff, I was given air transportation from Kisarazu to Iwo Jima on the 29th of June 1944. On the morning of June 28th, my wife and I exchanged cups of water for everlasting separation at home. I stopped at the house my wife was born in, in Ichikawa city, located along the way from Tokyo to Kisarazu. I asked her parents to take care of my wife, first daughter and our second child who was to be born in October 1944. "In case of my death" I said, "please have a small funeral service for me given the circumstances and that some money would come from my mother."

I went to the Hotel Mikasa in Kisarazu on the evening of June 28th. Before midnight my brother came from the home of our birth for final good-byes. Both of us went to bed, but our talks did not give us any sleep.

29 June 1944 was very fine and hot. Lt, Commander Nonaka (younger brother of the late Capt. Nonaka, an army officer who joined the 2.26 Incident and committed suicide), Commander of the Kisarazu Air Base, saw me off.

Watching the final scenery of Japan proper, I feel asleep in the plane. When I woke up the plane was flying over North Iwo Jima. Soon the plane started one turn over Iwo Jima. "Ah! Oh! A tiny island." I said to myself. There were many remaining parts of aircraft destroyed by the recent enemy air raids.

"Sink this island into the bottom of the Pacific," I said to myself, when our plane landed on "hell" Island.

Oh! That is Mt. Suribachi. Ah! What a hot place this island is! This is a sand island. I came to a tasteless island, or poor island. Maj. Tsukamoto is lucky because he went to a better place. Grumbling feelings came one after

one.

By a poor old car, I was taken to the Staff office located at North Village. It was a little after 12 o'clock. Lt. Col. Shirakata, staff officer, and 2 or 3 other officers were having lunch. "Where is the Division Commander?" I asked. Some one answered, "Have lunch first. One orderly gave me a bowl of rice with some pickles. Col. Shirakata who looked very modest and gentle and others were so busy that. I could not speak so much. . After 13:00 I was taken by one Non-Commissioned officer to General Kuribayashi's quarters about 150 meters west of the staff office.

General Kuribayashi, standing in front of an inhabitant's house, wearing a soldier's short shirt and soldier' chikatabi - a kind of sock, was the man whom I was going to see for the first time.

"Ya! Maj. Hories!" said the general.

'Being unable to go to Saipan, I shall be changed to a staff of your command in a few days,' I said to him.

"I used to be the commander of Tokyo Division, but as a cadet caused a fire in some barracks, I was fired. Soon after, I was ordered here. How is the situation of Japan proper?"

While I was trying to answer to it, a side-car came to him.

"I have made an appointment to see the fortification of some troops, Let's talk later. I'm sorry," he said, and went somewhere.

I returned to the staff office and read some telegraphs and thanked the officers and men at Saipan for their brave fight. Then I went to the Navy Headquarters. I was anxious to read the navy dispatches. I talked with Rear-Admiral Ichimura and commander Mase for about 30 minutes. We talked about what would happen in Japan after A-Go operation. But these two did not know the true situation of the world. They recognized the sad condition of Japan, but still they were bluffing to some extent. I knew the number of the receiving telegraphs of the front line Headquarters was so small that they could

not catch the detailed information. Commander Mase, smiling, said to me, “As you are a friend of ours, because you have stayed in the navy for more than one year, you can enjoy a privilege to have this ice cream. As only our Headquarters can make ice cream on this island, say nothing to any one else.” The ice cream he gave was very tasteful.

I said to them, “I have been ordered by the Imperial Japanese Headquarters to go to Chichi Jima to make arrangements for the sea transportation over Bonin Islands, in particular, to strengthen Iwo Jima. If you have any air transportation, let me know.” Adm. Ichimaru and Commander Mase nodded.

I came back to the staff office of the 109th Division and talked with some officers and men. Most of them came there recently and it was apparent that they were not familiar with Iwo Jima business. But the atmosphere of the office was completely different from that of Tokyo, particularly from that of the Convoy Escort General-fleet-Headquarters which had had the shadow of death. My impression was that the office had the easy-going atmosphere seen in the southern front lines plus a little bit of uncertainty. Some one said that General Kuribayashi picked out trivial defects. I remember it was around 17:00 hours when Lt. Fujita came to see me and said, “General Kuribayashi wants to have supper with you this evening. As soon as the supper is ready I will come here to tell you.” “Thank you,” I said. Then I went to the adjutant’s office, the ordinance office, and went to a forest behind the staff office. I was interested in the jungle. Someone taught me the whereabouts of the divisional air-raid shelter. It was very important for a new comer to know about it. I had several experiences of running into the air-raid shelter at Ambina and Timor the previous year.

Just before 18:00 hours, when the sun was going to set in the west, a senior private came to tell me that the general was awaiting me for supper. I followed the private.

“Come in. Sorry, it is different from Toyko; the food is not so good.”
said the general.

“Thank you”, I said. When I took off one of my boots, we heard a siren notifying of any enemy air-raid.

“It is a long distance to the air-raid shelter. Let’s go,” said the general.

General Kuribayashi, Lt Fujita, the private and I went to the air-raid shelter. It was my first time in the Iwo Jima air-raid shelter. I smelled sulphur. General Kuribayashi wearing a short shirt and solid socks had a stick. He sat on a chair in the shelter and started giving small instructions. Now I understood why he was called a chicken-shit. I thought he was a different kind of man from Adm. Oikawa and Lt. General Susuki. I also thought that I should have heard about him in Tokyo.

The air-raid was made by an unknown type of enemy plane, and soon we heard the “all clear” siren. Getting out of the shelter in the same order as before, we returned to the general’s quarters. It had already become dark.

“The enemy wanted us to eat cooled food. Come in, Horie,” said the general.

We sat on TATAMI - Japanese mat- in an eight tatami room. At the right side there was a wide ground room in which there was a cooking room. At the left side there was another eight tatami room. It was Fujita’s room. After WWII, I knew that the house was Mr. Sakurai’s. (Sakurai was the managing director of Iwo Jima Industry Co., Ltd).

Some privates were cooking in the cooking room under the direction of Lt. Fujita.

“Do you drink sake” asked the general. “I drink whiskey only, though either is all right, sir,” I replied.

K:(Kuribayashi): ‘If Maj. General Magata were alive, the present miserable situation would have never come.’”

H:(Horie): “Lt. Suzuki said the same thing.”

We poured whiskey into cups mutually.

H: “Excuse me. Let me sit more easily because I am a wounded person.”
I stretched my left leg towards left.

K: “Surely,” saying so, he improved his posture, too.
Food came from the cooking room through Lt. Fujita’s hands.

H: “Lt, Fujita, why don’t you sit with us to eat together?”

F(Fujita): “Thank you. Later I will.” He continued to deliver food.

K: “Oh! You were a staff officer for General Susuki! One of the smartest men he is. I was with him in the Education General. There were excellent members, such as General Nagata, Col. Imamura and Major Suzuki, and others in the Education General. Aisawa, an insane man (Lt. Col. Aizawa killed Maj. Gen Nagata during daytime in the office of Chief of Military Affairs Bureau before the 2.26 Incident), killed the national treasure. Saying Patriotism! National Security! Etc., blind and stupid members made imprudent things, and now we have the miserable situation.”

H: “Were you particularly friendly with the late General Nagata because of birth in the same prefecture, Nagano?”

K: “Yes. He was a great man. He had known the world. He was the No. 1 Follower of General Ugaki. If there was no fire incident in the Tokyo Division, I would not be in such a “hell” place.”

H: “If I had been at Saipan I should have been between death and life.”

K: “Nobody can tell the fate of some one. This is quite an old story. I was in the States for three years when I was a captain. I was taught how to drive a car by an American officer, so I bought a car. I drove around the states. I knew the close connection between the military and the industry. I saw the manufacturing plants around Detroit too. With the push of a button, it seemed all the industry could be mobilized for military business. Business men could become the secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Navy to take care of the supplies. In Japan, infantry officers who came through the Young Military Academy say that they are the main members of the Imperial Army; they exercise great influence over all the army and conduct

of war. I don't believe we can help. Well, are you also a staff officer who came through the infantry, passing through the Young Military Academy?" His voice was very tough.

H: "I came from a military school, but I used to be an infantry officer."

K: "Were you so? Even though we explained the detailed situation of the States, the army members coming back from the European countries never listened." His speech became tougher and tougher. "I was also in Canada while Prince Tokugawa was the Minister. When I was leaving Tokyo General Ushiroku (Vice Chief of Staff) told me the enemy would come to Iwo Jima without fail. What do you think about it, Major Horie? I feel the same way. When the enemy would come here we could contain them and our Combined Fleet would come from the homeland or Okinawa and slap his face. That is to say, our role could be a great containing operation."

H: "General, we have no more Combined Fleet in Japan. Some tiny naval forces still remain, but there are no more striking powers. Do you know the result of the A-Go operation?" I told him very clearly.

K: "What a stupid man you are: This island belongs to Tokyo City."

K: "The death date of Japan was 10 days ago. It was 10 June 1994."

H: "Then you mean that we must just die at the entrance of Tokyo, don't you? You must be drunk!"

H: "Today I saw this island from the sky. I thought that the best thing to do would be to sink Iwo Jima into the bottom of the sea. If impossible, sink the last airfield. If just only Mt. Suribachi and Motoyama area would remain the enemy might not be able to utilize this island. If, in the future, Japan could have any opportunity to make any offensive, Iwo Jima would not be necessary."

K: "Adjutant, give us some rice." Eating rice, Kuribayashi repeated, in a low

voice, “ You are drunk.” Suddenly, a siren rang. I said to him, “Thank you for the good supper,” and I stood up. This time, General Kuribayashi wore his boots and took the stick. It was about 21:30 hours, I guess.

Walking with him to the air-raid shelter, I thought that I should explain the detailed situation of Japan, particularly of the real status of our navy, to this expert of America and Canada, and have him establish an adequate policy of operation. But at this time, both of us could not believe in each other. He showed a face that said he could not depend upon a young kid like me.

I remembered the faces of Lt. General Suzuki, Admiral Oikawa, Rear Admiral Horie, Rear Admiral Shima\moto and Major General Nakayama, who was my regimental commander when I was a cadet at the 2nd Infantry Regiment. One after another, I thought that these officers would believe me without fail. I became disappointed.

In front of the staff office, the siren sounded “All clear,” and I said to him, “good night. I will report to you tomorrow morning again.”

I went in the staff office and soon went to bed. However, I could not fall asleep so easily as I was bothered by some one else’s snoring. Further more, I had a preoccupation that I was still a member of the 31st Army Headquarter. If I were in the 31st Army Headquarter, other people should not treat me as a stranger, I thought. I awoke.

No chance for Japan.

The next day, June 30, 1944, was fine. General Kuribayashi and I went to the southern beach where we expected that the enemy would come to invade.

1st Lt. Masashino, commander of the pioneer company, ran to us and saluted. Kuribayashi laid himself down at the beach and behaved just like the enemy.

K: “Well, this beach is very wide. The airfield is also very wide when we lay ourselves down there. The enemy must come here. There will be no alternative for the enemy.”

H: "If we sank this airfield, Iwo Jima would lose the value. That is my idea."

K: "That is true."

At this time, Lt. Musashino said that he had difficulties in fortification of the positions on the sand. For about 2 hours he and I went around the airfield by car. He got out of the car and asked me to lay myself down. He made me a target, making his stick a rifle. "Stand up, Horie, lie down, make yourself lower, etc. etc." His requests were many.

I remember Colonel Ishiguro, the commander of the 2nd Infantry Regiment and I understood why his adjutants and staff officers had told me, "General Kuribayashi speaks too much in details."

I confess, I thought that I would have the same trouble as I had with Colonel Ishiguro, who took irregular actions and preached about some religion. The words of General Kuribayashi were harsh and he flatly spoke ill of other members.

I saw the shore of the southern beach and knew that the waves were rough. I worried about unloading ammunition and materials from sailing boats and fishing boats here.

I said to the general, "Let me bring some shipping officers and men down here this afternoon to study how to unload the ammunition and materials." Frankly speaking, I tried to flee from him that afternoon. I thought he could be a good squad or platoon commander. I thought that I should have been in Saipan. Anyhow I could have no alternative other than being killed wherever I might go, I felt time after time. I returned to the Divisional Headquarters with the general and took lunch at the staff office.

That afternoon I went to the Shipping Branch Office. I complained that their office was too far from the southern beach. Two or three officers and some NCOs' discussed the shipping with me for about two hours. These

members belonged to the Army Shipping Headquarters at Hiroshima. They were particularly friendly and kind to me. The rice cake presented to me was very tasteful. I told them to go to the southern beach the next morning to study the shipping situation there.

On returning I stopped at the Naval Headquarters. Captain Matsunaga, Chief of staff of the 3rd air fleet was there. I talked with Rear Adm. Ichimaru, Commander Mase and Captain Matsunaga for about twenty minutes. I was given a pack of ice-cream again. I was impressed by a feeling that Matsunaga was a good looking young man.

As soon as I returned to the staff office some one told me to go to the hot spring located on the northern beach. In accordance with this recommendation I went there with two or three members. As I was taking off my shirts I heard the air raid siren and hastened to get in to the sea and hide myself under a cliff. There were already 40 or 50 members there.

I liked the hot springs very much. The temperature of the hot springs was good, and the circumstances looked good too. I thought it would be good if we could visit this hot spring in peace time.

Returning to the staff office, I started reading the dispatches. Lt. Fujita came and said that the general was awaiting me at his Quarters. I followed him there.

K: "How was the natural bath? It might be good because it is free. Come in, let's eat."

Everything was the same as the previous night. Both of us started drinking whiskey and eating some. The main food was canned stuff, the same as the previous night.

Drinking whiskey, I explained the situation of the war in the Pacific to him in detail. I told him that Japan could not win the war with out the navy. On the 4th of June 1942, at Midway, the aircraft carrier Kaga was sunk by enemy air

attack, aircraft carrier Soryu was sunk by submarine attack, on the 5th of June the carriers Akagi and Hiryu were sunk by air attack. Actually, the entire 1st air fleet which had assaulted Pearl Harbor went to the bottom of the Pacific and the positions of Japan and America had changed from offensive and defensive. Then I explained to him the miserable condition of the convoy escort operations.

I had been reading about 2000 telegraphs every day in the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters and the General Staff. I was walking around the army and navy sections feeling sad and in shock. I conveyed the status of the naval vessels and merchant ships sinking day after day and night after night to him, just like letting out the string. I was recalling the aircraft, ammunition, armed forces, supplies, etc. on board the sunken ships, when and where and how. At first the general was teasing me, saying that I could be an encyclopedia. When I came to talk about the fiftieth ship, however, the general, who was thought to be one of the smartest officers and an officer that received a sword from the Emperor at the graduation ceremony of the War College, came to change his face. Looking at me, he stopped eating and drinking and just listened to me in earnest.

I went on to tell him as follows:

“It was indeed the key point of strategy for the Imperial Japanese Headquarters to send army troops to the isolated islands in the Pacific and use the 11th Air Fleet to make up for the lost carrier based air power, while intending to reconstruct Ozawa’s fleet. However, our combined fleet fled to Palau from Truk in February 1944, then fled to Tawi Tawi from Palau in March. Finally it was completely defeated by the 5th U.S. Fleet in the so called A-go operation. In other words, the 19th of June 1944 was the death day for the Combined Fleet of Japan. But, as Lt. General Suzuki and Adm. Oikawa

had been telling me, as long as we have been ordered to fight by the Imperial Declaration of War, there is no alternative for us other than devoting our lives. The object now is to see how many enemy troops we can kill. If we can kill ten enemy troops per man, when we die the mathematics will tell the world's people that we won the war with death."

My voice was mixed with tears and some times my throat was blocked. General Kuribayashi looked very sad, saying, "Ahh... I did not know these facts."

I continued further:

"As there were many war advocates in the army and there are still 20 or 30 perfect division, the army can't express any weakness. While even though there were not so many war advocates in the navy, they can't express their defeat. Checking each other, the army and navy are continuing this hopeless war. However, at this time, after the annihilation of our troops at Attu, Guadalcanal, Makin and Tarawa, the Imperial Japanese Headquarters might not be able to order the island commanders to allow them to surrender their troops after Saipan. This is the most difficult point for Japan from the traditional national organization and custom. I, myself, have given up my life.. Up to date, I have escaped death by a hair very many times. If I were in Saipan, naturally under Major General Iketani, if I were in Guam naturally under General Obata with Maj. Tsukamoto, I should await my death."

I showed him the pack of potassium cyanide which had been given by Dr. Takatsuki.

Lt. Fujita said to me at this moment, "Maj. Horie, a telephone-call came to the staff office from the navy headquarters a minute ago. One aircraft would go to Chichi Jima tomorrow morning. It would leave here at 6 o'clock."

I said to Lt. Fujita, "Tell them to give me a ride."

H: "Let me go to Chichi Jima tomorrow. I should like to send the 145th

Infantry Regiment, the 26th Tank Regiment, guns and ammunitions first.”

K: “Go ahead, please.”

Both of us were silent for a while with pale faces. It was a little after 22:00 hours, I believe.

Returning to the staff office, I prepared for the tomorrow’s trip. Almost all members were in bed. I told the night-duty MCOIC to wake me up at 5 o’clock tomorrow morning, and breakfast would not be necessary for me.

I thought that the 145th Infantry Regiment might come to Chichi Jima tomorrow. However, as I had told everything to the general, I fell asleep immediately. Nothing bothered me that night.

8. Supply via Chichi Jima

I went to Chichi Jima for emergency supply to Iwo Jima.

On the morning of 1 July 1944, I was taken to Chichi Jima by a navy plane piloted by a young navy lieutenant. The plane flew with 2 bombs for anti-submarine tactics and made a wheel-up landing at Chichi Jima. Wheels did not come out. Here again I escaped from death. The pilot was wounded a little bit on his face but I received no injury. I motored to the old Chichi Jima Fortress Headquarters located at Omura. What a peaceful island it was! What a beautiful scenery this island had! The water of Futami Harbor was very pretty too. I remembered my trip from Java to Tokyo the previous year. When our aero boat landed on the lake of Manado, Celebes, Capt. Yamamoto, Lt. Commander Tanaka, Lt. Commander Naito and I joked simultaneously, “I would like to stay here when I get old.”

When I arrived at the headquarters, I found Lt. Col. Nishikawa, who had been waiting for me. He had been ordered to Iwo Jim after turning over his job to me. There was Major General Tachibana, 1st Mixed Brigade Commander. First Lt. Nishiyotsuji who had been working under Lt. Col. Nishikawa, reported to me that Noto-Maru would come to Chichi Jima on that day.

I started work immediately. I gathered some officers of the Chichi Jima shipping branch and the 17th shipping engineering regiment (both of these belonged to the Army Shipping Headquarters at Hiroshima), Lt. Nishiyotsuji and Maj. Yokota, Adjutant to Major General Tachibana, and told them as follows:

“A big sea transportation will begin in a moment. We may have to work without any sleep and rest. Any and all sailing boats and fishing boats will be mobilized. I wish your cooperation.”

I instructed them about the unloading of the 145th Infantry Regiment and its reloading to the sailing boats and fishing boats.

In the headquarters there was still a female clerk, and she gave me a cup of black tea. Some officials of the Bonin Islands Office came to give me their greeting. A few stores were still selling something.

Soon our lunch time came. Around a table in front of the Headquarters, Major General Tachibana, Lt. Col. Nishikawa, Major Yokota, myself and several other officers sat. Tachibana was the highest ranking officer, and he and I faced each other. The table was under some trees.

It was very surprising for me that these people were so leisurely. According to Major General Tachibana, his favorite books were “Nobunaga Oda (A Japanese general in the 16th Century) and “Isamu Kondo” (A Japanese general in the 18th century), and we could win the war if we would use their

tactics. He was not joking. I wondered whether or not I was insane or he was insane. Because even though we were studying many modern western tactical books, we were still worrying how much we were behind the modern tactics.

As I was hungry, the lunch was good, and a piece of watermelon was very tasteful.

In the afternoon, 1 July 1944, the Noto-Maru came in. I went to the ship to meet Col. Ikeda. He and I had helped each other in Tokyo.

Suddenly a colonel appeared in front of us. He had a beard and was wearing a staff officer's decoration. He was the Chief of Staff of our Division. I remembered that he used to teach us about railway service in our Military Academy days. He was Col. Hori. I arranged immediately to send the Regimental Flag and main power of the 145th Infantry Regiment, by a high speed naval transport, and then I took Col. Hori to the headquarters at Chichi Jima. The reason why I took Col. Hori to the headquarters was that I liked to explain the general situation of the world to Col. Hori and Lt. Col. Nishikawa. Col. Hori was very gentle and he became friendly immediately to me because he used to work under Lt. General S. Yokoyama when he was the commanding general of the 2nd Railway Brigade in Northern China.

Yokoyama was colonel and the commander of the 2nd Infantry Regiment when I was wounded in China. As I explained the situation of the world to these two, Col. Hori wrote down some memo and was surprised by my story, but Nishikawa complained against me. Nishikawa said that our Imperial Army and Navy must be still strong enough to defeat the enemy and my will had been psychologically defeated.

On the evening of the day, one non-commissioned officer and one private took me to an officer's residence. It was a very good house. I remembered that some one said Chichi Jima was a health resort for sick personnel.

On 2 July 1944, Col. Hori and Lt. Col. Nishikawa left Chichi Jima for Iwo

Jima. Nishikawa was missing Chichi Jima because he used to work there for a long time. Many island inhabitants came to see me about their evacuation. The female clerk wanted to stay for a while. They looked sad to leave their birth land. I sympathized with them and personally I wanted to keep them at Chichi Jima as much as possible. The girl was about 17 years old, and when I told her that I would try to keep her as long as possible, she looked very happy. The sea transportation of the 145th Infantry Regiment was very smooth.

Evacuation of Islanders

I went to the Chichi Jima Navy Headquarters. I talked with Rear Adm. Mori, Commander Kamiura, Senior Staff, Lt. Commander Yonehara, Engineering Staff and some others. These officers were very friendly.

On 3 July 1944, I was busy over the problem of the islanders. Many of them had come from Iwo Jima and Hara Jima by small boats to Chichi Jima. So Chichi Jima was crowded with the inhabitants. Most of them asked me to allow them to look over the general situation without hastening to go to the mainland. I, actually, was moved by them and inclined to listen to their request.

A series of violent enemy air raids

On the early morning of 4 July 1944 I was awakened by some bombing while in the mosquito net in the official residence. It was a complete surprise attack. It was very shameful that I could not find my trousers for a while. Later they were found on the mosquito net. It was still dark. The sound of machine gunning might be the Japanese navy anti-aircraft guns, I assumed.

When I arrived at the air raid shelter of the former Chichi Jima Fortress, Major General Tachibana was there. The bombing continued the whole

morning. We could not do anything. Some sea fighters scrambled but they were shot down, I heard. The telephone net was completely cut out.

Questioning of US prisoners of war

And

My study of English from these prisoners of war

In the afternoon of 4 July 1944 the weather was getting better. It seemed that the enemy air raids were coming to the end. Lt. Junior Grade Connell, USN, prisoner of war, who was forced down by some Japanese antiaircraft guns, was taken to me. According to him, on this US Independence Day, a US Task Force headed by Rear Adm. Clark raided Bonin Islands area with the carriers Hornet and Enterprise. It was difficult for me to understand what he said. With difficulties I could pick up his main points through conversation in writing. He said that this air attack foreshadowed the forthcoming invasion against Guam.

Through the above English conversation I found how my English knowledge was poor. By necessity I started the practice of English conversation, making Lt. Connell my first instructor.

Thus my special English study began in the afternoon of 4 July 1944, with the help of the first American flyer I had ever seen. Later #2 and #3 instructors came. Finding some time during my very busy life with my duties of sea transportation, cave digging, position inspection and teaching tactics to the officers, I tried every effort to improve my broken English. In a sense I wanted to dissipate the gloom of the battle field. Three instructors taught me very urgently. One student was taught by three teachers. One of them became the chief instructor and the other two became assistant instructors in turn. At least I studied for about three hours every day. In case of the enemy air raid we entered the air raid shelter and English study began. Many Japanese

officers and men laughed at me when I had hard times facing some difficulties.

The information obtained from these prisoners of war gave me the outline of the US strategy. As I sent the information to the general staff and General Kuribayashi, Vice Chief of Staff sent me appreciation telegraphs two times.

I, with 11 years of study of English from the beginning of the middle school to the graduation of the War Collage, could not speak so well in conversation with the first prisoner of war on 4 July 1944. But I made progress, and when I met Capt. Smith, Senior Representative of the Commander Marianas (Capt. Smith, USN, resembled the late President Roosevelt) on USS Den Lupp on 3 September 1945 for the surrender ceremony, my English was better than the Japanese of the Nisei Interpreter of Capt. Smith. Although I was helped by Petty Officer Tamamura and army cadet Oyama, Nisei members, I could make speeches for 2 or 3 hours before US missions visiting Chichi Jima after the war.

I remember that Lt. Connell was a nice looking boy. About 10 years ago, I heard he was working in the 6th US fleet in the Mediterranean as a Lt. Commander.

After WW II, when the war criminal case was taken up over the Central Pacific, my former instructors protected me and the Commander Marianas gave me good treatment. I became just like a national guest, while many officers and men were executed by hanging.

When I returned home alive but jobless, my English knowledge became the key for gaining a slice of bread for myself and family. Most of other regular officers had to be heavy labor had to sell their boots and medals for their chow. Later I came to teach Japanese language and culture to the American students at the University of Maryland and to teach English to the Japanese student at Takushoku University and some other schools. Sometimes I am asked by some American magazines to write some as a military critic. I, myself, wonder what the fate of the human being is.

Evacuation of Islanders became busy.

On 5 July 1944, crowds of islanders came to my office to ask me to accelerate their evacuation. The enemy air raids helped my business. They no longer wanted to stay at Chichi Jima. The lovely female clerk also wanted to evacuate immediately. Now, still, I don't know whether or not they evacuated safely.

Lt. Col. Nishi, Olympic Horseman, Baron

Around 16 July 1944, Lt. Col. Nishi visited me. I noticed that he had suffered from the ship damage. I said to him, "I have heard your name, but, ..." and urged him to have a chair. I offered him some beer. He looked very sad and said, "all the tanks have gone to the bottom of the sea."

He was very famous as the No. 1 horse rider in the Olympic held at Los Angeles in 1932. Many people used to call him "Baron Nishi."

Drinking beer, he said to me, "I had been transferred to the armored forces from the cavalry, and I had been thinking to fight in Manchuri or China employing the maneuvering power and fire power of the tank. Now I have to go to Iwo Jima. Furthermore, now I have no tank. I have lost more than 20 tanks."

H: "The air raid shelter is over there. Drink more. I understand your position very well. On Iwo Jim, probably you must put your tanks in the caves. So the tank could be a pill-box, but could never use their maneuvering power."

N(Nishi): "In a cave? Can't you send any telegraphs to the Imperial Japanese Headquarters asking a consideration about our tank regiment. If they demand me to die for the country, I sincerely would devote my life. But I want them to give me a place where I could fight adequately."

A siren rang.

H: "Let's go to the shelter."

Suddenly some sparks flew in my office. Nishi, with long legs stood up. When I went out of my office, he was running towards the air raid shelter. I gave up and returned to my office. I found one hole on my table and on the floor. I knew the sparks had come from the enemy bullet.

When the siren “All clear,” Nishi returned and we drank beer again.

H: “As I have known that the policy of the Imperial Japanese Headquarters would never want to divert the troops or to transfer the personnel once directed towards some isolated island, I can’t send any telegraph about your story. The central power is still held by Col. Hatteri – Maj. Sejima line, but if you know anyone in the Imperial Japanese Headquarters you could send some telegraphs.”

I gave him a piece of paper and a pencil.

N: “I am sorry. I have known America. I have some friends there, in connection with a horse. Everything is ironic. Well, let me go to Iwo Jima, than I’ll talk with General Kuribayashi. Thank you.”

Later, he went to Tokyo from Iwo Jima by air, gathered some tanks in Japan for about one month and came back to Iwo Jima.

In his letter dated 16 December 1944, addressed to his wife he wrote as follows:

“The situation of Iwo Jima becomes more serious day after day. We can’t expect when the enemy would come. If all the members of Nishi Family get together, I would go to fight without any uncertainty. I believe that I could fight ahead of my officers and men for the country. My heart is now very pure just like a mirror. Cooperate together.”

Judging from the letter, he did not raise the problem of diversion or transfer of his troops or himself officially, or even if he raised it, it was not taken up, I believe.

Handling of Japanese is rather difficult

On or after 20 July 1944, right after the whole sale resignation of the Tojo Cabinet, suddenly Commander Otani and Col. Shimamura, staff officers of the combined Fleet, visited me. It was about 16:00 hours. Otani stayed at the Navy Headquarters, but Shimamura stayed at my headquarters. Col. Shimamura had the whole information covering the army and navy. Just like I did in the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters he could read any and all telegraphs of the army and navy and could see so many high level people every day.

After, he said to me, “In some way I feel that the handling of the Japanese people is more difficult than that of the enemy. Now, some important aides to the Emperor headed by the former Prime Minister Adm. Okada have been working on how to conduct this war. However there are rightists and leftists. War advocates, etc. in Japan, and it is hard for the government to handle these people. They are driven by vanity, showmanship and struggles for power. Some times they cast stones at high ranking people’s houses, destroying these homes, even assassinating officials and other atrocious things. It is a big problem controlling these issues. At this stage, the enemy must only demand “Unconditional Surrender.”

I said “At least I hope Japan surrenders after Germany, because Japan is the secondary target of the enemy and I don’t want Japan to have a bad name.”

The next morning he left my office with Commander Otani by way of a navy car. Later I heard that he was shot down over Hong Kong. I am very sorry that Japan lost a great man.

Locations of the 1st Mixed Brigade Headquarters and
Detached Divisional Headquarters.

After the air raids of July 4th 1944, Major General Tachibana was looking for a location for his headquarters. Around July 10th he moved his

headquarters to Tatsumidani, a valley located in the northeastern part of Chichi Jima.

The location of my office, the former Chichi Jima fortress headquarters, was very bad for being defendable against enemy air raids, so I moved my headquarters to the middle part of Chichi Jima, on or shortly after the 20th of July 1944. My new headquarters was surrounded by mountains, valleys and a small river. I had just 100 people including eleven officers. My office was composed of the office staff, a code group, communication unit, cooks, etc.

My duties were to be in charge of sea transportation, supplies, communications, liaisons with the Hara Jima Garrison and with the navy and to assist the Commander of the 1st Mixed Brigade in tactics.

Just before my departure from Iwo Jima, General Kuribayashi solemnly told me, "I depend on Major General Tachibana as far as tactics are concerned. You be in charge of tactics yourself. If anything happens send telegraphs immediately. In connection with sea transportation you will have contacts with the Imperial Japanese Headquarters directly." Actually it was hard for me from my rank.

When is Japan going to surrender?

One evening a telephone call came from the Navy Headquarters stating Commander Kamiura was coming to visit me alone. I asked him to have supper with me in my office since I hadn't yet offered him any gift after our move here.

He used to work at Rabaul as a staff officer; he was nervous there because of the enemy air raids. After a rest in the homeland he was transferred to Chichi Jima.

Kamiura said to me, "I have not told Rear Adm. Mori this story. Just

between you and I, truthfully. When do you think Japan will surrender?" I replied, "I hope Japan surrenders after Germany." I said no more regarding this as, I did not want to be misunderstood.

Later he was sent back to Japan by hospital ship because of nervous trouble. After the war he was brought to Guam from Japan as a war crimes witness. I was also there and there were only three beds between his and mine at the witness camp. Every day he would come to me and say that the U.S. forces had planted a bug(a hidden listening devise), and ask me to check the roof. I told Lt. Commander Shinoda and Lt. Commander Miyasaki to watch him and if necessary to ask the U.S. medical doctors to examine his mental condition.

One morning, a few days later some one cried, "Ah, Commander Kamiura!" I was surprised and went to his bed. He had died. He had hung himself with a rope from his mosquito netting. He was a graduate of the naval academy. His English knowledge was quite high. According to him, he had studied English and Spanish at the Foreign Language College for two years after his graduation from the Naval Academy. He was also a casualty of the war.

Shipping under darkness.

As B-24s came to Chichi Jima during the day time, the loading and unloading and shipping had to be done under the cover of darkness.

Whenever any transport came in to Futami Harbor we unloaded the materials from the ships and brought them to the Omura Pier. These materials would be dispersed into the mountains by trucks before dawn. The next night these materials were brought back to the Omura Pier by trucks, then loaded on to sailboats and fishing boats; then these boats proceeded up to Haha Jima. On the third night these went to Iwo Jima, unloaded the material there, than returned to Haha Jima. We mobilized about fifty sailboats and fishing boats. It was not very difficult to unload and reload the troops, but there were many

problems with unloading and reloading ammunition and food.

For the unloading and reloading work I used about 3,000 officers and men from the Chichi Jima Garrison, thirty trucks and about 20 landing craft as go between from the transports to Omura Pier.

Every night I went to the Omura Pier to supervise the work. Some times, after midnight, it happened that I would have to beat some officers for failing to control their men. That was the first time that I broke my policy of never beating any one. Now, twenty years after World War II, I feel very sorry. However, in those days , even though the workers got tired or sleepy we had to complete the unloading and dispersing work as early as possible. Any delay in departure of the transports could cause damage by the enemy planes or submarines, and the delay of the dispersing work would lead to destruction by enemy bombing. After midnight the workers would become tired and hungry. They would squat down and no longer move. Some times I made arrangements to give them some midnight food, but it was a very hard job to give food to all the workers. Even if I sincerely requested their cooperation, scolded them, or flattered them, they would not move an inch. Finally I would become so angry I would threaten them with a club. At that time Major General Tachibana cooperated with me very well. He would drive the tired solders with a steel rod and it was most effective. He was the commanding General of the solders and I was staff detached from Iwo Jima; therefore the solders would more readily obey his commands. Now I feel very sorry for these solders. Under the handicapped condition of Japan (already powerless), the war made us semi-insane and led us to drive the soldiers like this.

After the fall of Iwo Jima, Tachibana was promoted to Lt. General and appointed the 109th division commander. One hundred members of my detachment and about eighty members of the 1st Mixed Brigade made up the new division. I came to work under him as chief of staff. He was a strong man

of action, but he was executed by hanging in Guam in connection with the B Class War Criminal Case. Shipping of troops from Chichi Jima to Iwo Jima

I will show the situation of troops shipped from Chichi Jima to Iwo Jima as much as I know.

Date of arrival of troops to Chichi Jima	Departure from Chichi Jima	Date of arrival of troops to Iwo Jima	Troops
1 July 44	1 July thru 30 Oct	1 July thru 5 Nov	145 th Infantry Regiment
1 July	1 July	1 July	8 th Independent anti-tank Bn
	14 July	20 July	10 th Independent anti-tank Bn
1 July	14 July	20 July	11 th Independent anti-tank Bn
1 July	14 July thru 25 Aug	18 July thru 28 Aug	12 th Independent anti-tank Bn
29 June	12 July	14 July	2 nd Medium Howitzer Bn
29 June	12 July	14 July	3 rd Medium Howitzer Bn
18 July (Tanks sank)	29 Aug thru 30 Oct	30 Aug thru 5 Nov	26 th Tank Regiment
	11 July	18 July	109 th anti-aircraft artillery
3 Aug	10 Aug	12 August	109 th Radr Unit
1 July	16 July	16 July	109 th Jet-propelling Artillery
1 July	16 July	16 July	20 th Special 25mm Machine Gun Unit
1 July	18 July	18 July	21 st Special 25mm Machine Gun Unit
4 Aug	8 Aug	10 Aug	2 nd Independent Machine Gun Bn
20 July (Sank but rescued)	16 Aug thru 24 Aug	20 Aug thru 16 Aug	3 rd Bn, 17 th Independent Mixed Regiment

Note: 1. Troops that arrived at Iwo Jima on the day they left Chichi Jima were shipped by navy high speed transport.

Note: 2. Troops spending many days to get to Iwo Jima stayed at Haha Jima or suffered from ship trouble.

Iwo Jima troops staying at Chichi Jima.

Troops such as the 26th Tank Regiment and the 3rd Battalion of the 17th Independent Mixed Regiment who had been sunk by U.S. submarines had to receive clothes and be re-equipped. They also needed rest and medical treatment. The 26th Tank Regiment, in particular, had to wait for the tanks to be gathered by Lt. Colonel Nishi in the homeland.

Thus there were many troops that were supposed to go to Iwo Jima at Chichi Jima under my command. Even in the case of the 145th Infantry Regiment, many people were waiting for shipping. At times I had from 3,500 to 4,000 troops. The biggest problem I had was accommodating these troops. Chichi Jima troops had air raid shelters for themselves. Even if the other troops dug trenches I could not expect them to be safe. I did not want them to suffer big losses by the enemy air raids or naval gun fire.

At this time tunnels at Chichi Jima helped a lot. There were five long tunnels; most of the Iwo Jima troops stayed in these tunnels. Men would sleep in these tunnels during the day time on mats on the tunnel floors, but at night these tunnels were used by trucks to the unloaded materials. We still had serious trouble because there were no toilets in the tunnels. There were many men with diarrhea caused by the unhealthy living conditions.

A small number of these patients were put in the Chichi Jima Army Hospital.

I used some of these troops to construct a highway in the center of Chichi Jima. It was 2,000 meters long and 6 meters wide. It was good exercise for

their health.

Due to the shortage of food at Iwo Jima, we kept some of the troops at Chichi Jima intentionally. When the American forces invaded Iwo Jima there were about 800 troops which included some liaison members visiting my office and 100 members of my detached office. These 800 members returned home alive after the war.

The use of anti-aircraft guns against ground troops.

There were 17,000 army and navy troops at Chichi Jima. General Kurobayashi had command of the ground defense for the entire chain of the Bonin Islands. Major General Tachibana was in charge of the ground tactics of Chichi Jima. However, General Kurobayashi put me in charge of the tactics at Chichi Jima, with the following duty assigned to me: "Major Horie will assist the 1st Mixed Brigade Commander in tactics."

I often visited Rear Adm. Mori and Major General Tachibana and tried to persuade them to forget about the tactical idea of the 31st army. My idea was that each man would dig out his own cave-position as his tomb, no reserve, no maneuvering. Each man would then "snipe" ten enemy troops.

My critical idea was to divert the anti-aircraft guns to be used for ground battle.

I insisted that 90% of the anti-aircraft guns should be put in caves and no longer use for anti-aircraft battle. Many people were opposed to my idea. The navy had a lot of 25mm machine guns they were using as anti-aircraft guns. I wanted to turn these guns over to the army and send some big army guns to Iwo Jima. However the army felt strongly that the anti-aircraft battle was more important at this stage. I felt the anti-aircraft battle was wasteful and meant nothing. I told them even if the enemy planes came by the thousands they

could not hurt us if we stayed in caves and tunnels. Instead we should prepare to fight the enemy ground forces advancing to kill us.

At Iwo Jima, navy officers and Lt. Colonel Nishikawa objected to my idea and General Kuribayashi could not decide. From battle lessons learned at Saipan, Tinian and Guam, I argued my point, saying, "If the enemy tries to soften us up with bombing and naval gunning each anti-aircraft gun wouldn't last five minutes." Eventually 50% of the anti-aircraft guns were ordered to lay down fire against the enemy ground forces by General Kuribayashi.

I persuaded Rear Admiral Mori to give many 25mm anti-aircraft guns to the army gradually. But I was sorry that the enemy attacked Iwo Jima before we could arrange to send big guns there from Chichi Jima.

Farming teams grew vegetables.

One day I gathered representatives of the army and navy units together at Chichi Jima. I insisted that we consider the local farming in fishing practices because of the separation from mainland Japan. I tried to allocate areas for each unit.

To my surprise, Lt. Commander Yoneshara, representative of the navy declared, "We get vegetables and fish from the main land by ship, so allocate the land areas and sea areas to the army units, forget the navy." His generosity stemmed from the naval custom of getting their supplies by ship, I guess. On the other hand he may have lacked the foresight to see that Chichi Jima would be completely isolated soon by enemy submarines.

Later, Commander Kamiura and Lt. Commander Yonehara went back to Japan, and Lt. Commanders Shinoda and Miyazaki came. The vegetables grown by these teams were presented to Iwo Jima troops privately by the Chichi Jima army units. The people of Iwo Jima were very pleased, but I wonder how many people actually received these gifts.

Later I presented some fish and vegetables harvested by army teams to

Adm. Mori and gained some 25mm machineguns. Adm. Mori said he used to be staff for Adm. Yonai (Former Prime minister of Japan); he was always talking about Adm. Yonai. His birth town was Shizuoka Prefecture, I remember, and was a good man. Sometimes he made cakes himself and would give us some. He was a very friendly man to every one he encountered. He was promoted to Vice-Admiral in March 1945.

After World War II he was tried in Guam as a B Class war criminal. We witnesses tried to defend him, but he was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment and later he was sent to the Australian court at Makassar, Celebes, and was finally executed there by hanging. I was very sad for him.

My return to Iwo Jima for reporting.

On August 10th 1944 I flew to Iwo Jima to report the situation of the sea transportation, defense of Chichi Jima ,etc. to General Kuribayashi. I took two bottles of water and some vegetables as my gifts for the 109th Divisional Headquarters personnel at Iwo Jima. These items were high level gifts from Chichi Jima in those days.

When I arrived at the staff office there were Colonel Hori, Lt. Colonel Mishikawa and Major Yoshida (a new face). Colonel Hori met me at the door pulling his long beard and smiling cheerfully. But, when I got inside the mood was different. Nishikawa and Yoshida looked very unhappy. Colonel Hori introduced Yoshida and me to each other. Yoshida said to me, "I used to be a pioneer officer, now I am in charge of fortification. The division commander would correct me, and he would never speak to me about the corrections. I have lost my position and respect. He fools with me because I am a graduate of the special course of War College." When I said that I would go to see the divisional commander, Nishikawa said cynically, "You war College graduates

have a good time, please.” I felt there was something between General Kuribayashi and his staff officers.

When I arrived at his headquarters General Kuribayashi was sitting on the porch; he stood up and said “Come in, I was waiting for you.” He looked very happy.

We went in and I proceeded to take some documents out of my briefcase, as I was doing so I was telling him I would report about the sea transports. He said, “You have some important ammunition and equipment at Chichi Jima. That’s not good. For instance, you sent some 37mm anti-tank guns and you kept the 47mm anti-tank guns at Chichi Jima. That’s a strange thing.” I said what do you mean General? You know that I would come to Iwo Jima as soon as the sea transportation is finished and die with you. Anyhow, Chichi Jima is mountainous and the enemy would not be able to use tanks. I had ordered the load of 37mm. and 47mm. anti-tank guns sent simultaneously, but due to trouble with some of the boats the 47mm. anti-tank guns have been delayed, I guess.” “Don’t get so mad!” he said, smiling.

General Kuribayashi was happy about the arrival of the main power of the 145th Infantry Regiment, saying “The regular standing troops are very good.”

I explained about the remaining troops and supplies at Chichi Jima and the prospect of future sea transportation to the general. He said “The soldiers eat food. So, how about if you stop sending common soldiers and send mainly arms and ammunition for a while?” “All right” I said. “I’ll arrange it.” Then the general invited me to eat with him that evening. After I left his quarters I went to the Navy Headquarters

Rear Adm. Ichimaru and Commander Mase were there, so were Lt. Commander Okazaki and Lt. Akada. Okazawa was a Graduate of the Naval Engineering Academy and worked as a supply officer. Akada was a graduate of the naval academy and worked as a ground defense officer. Akada said to

me “ I’m just a baby about ground defense, so teach me please.” He was vigorous. However, Okazaki said, “I am an engineer. There is nothing on this island. I would like to be transferred to some place where I could work. Here I can’t do anything.”

One evening I had supper with General Kuribayashi in his quarters. It had been forty days since I left from Chichi Jima. He and I drank a few glasses of whiskey. He told me

K: “My staff here are all graduates of the special course of War College and I can’t depend on them. The commanders of the independent Battalions are all old. They will be going down hill very soon. They are slow in every action and I can’t help being impatient. What about Chichi Jima?”

I remembered what happened at the staff office when I arrived there this morning.

H: “At Chichi Jima there are many old men unloading and reloading of ships, after mid-night they work. Almost all battalion commanders are 17th or 18th military graduate reserve officers. It is natural that they can’t control their subordinates so well. A Lt. Colonel told me, “Soon I must go to heaven. I am already more than 60. We had better not dig so many caves because we must die soon anyhow.” Some of them are bent in the back. It may be inevitable that they prefer some easy going ways.”

K: “Japan has come to the end.”

Saying so, he poured whiskey for me again. I felt that he was nervous. He just worked and worked by himself.

I left General Kuribayashi’s quarters comparatively early and came to the staff office. I talked with Col. Hori for about one hour and went to bed around 22:30 hours. There was no siren all night.

On the morning of 11 August 1944 I attended the morning ceremony of the Divisional Headquarters. All officers and men lined up, saluted General Kuribayashi, then saluted facing towards the Imperial Palace. Maj. Omoto, Adjutant to the Division Commander, started telling some daily news to the

officers and men. Then General Kuribayashi started scolding Col. Hori in front of all the officers and men, saying that “That beard will never serve to operation.” I fled from the spot and came to the staff office. Drinking a cup of tea, I thought of the situation of the Headquarters

I went to the skirt of Mt. Suribachi, but I found that it was too steep for me to climb in a short time as a wounded person. I gave up climbing mountain. I met Col. Atsuji accidentally. He told me that the shortage of dynamite was giving him a hard time for fortification. Furthermore, he said that the navy had much dynamite, and I should make more efforts to get dynamite from the main land of Japan. He complained to me.

I stopped at the 145th Infantry Regiment Headquarters, located at Hyobyuboku, and talked with officers and men who used to talk with me on the Noto-Mura at Iokohama Harbor. Col. Ikeda and some other officers urged me to have lunch with them. I told them I had an appointment with the 2nd Mixed Brigade Headquarters to visit them, and I left the Headquarters. The officers and men of the 145th Infantry Regiment saw me off with tears. We thought together that this time might be the last time for us, so tears came out.

I stopped at the 2nd Mixed Brigade Headquarters in a hurry. Incidentally there were Col. Gaido and Col. Hori coming to this Headquarters. Maj. General Osuga and Col. Hori had been scolded by General Kuribayashi recently, they said. I listened to these three officers for about 15 or 20 minutes, and I felt that there had been some differences between General Kuribayashi and other officers in opinion.

Difference of Judgment over war situation between
General Kuribayashi and other officers

I found that many officers still believed that Japan would never abandon Iwo Jima and the Combined Fleet would come to help them without fail. For

instance, Col. Gaido asked me to send more rounds of ammunition for anti-aircraft guns because they needed so many rounds of ammunition. I told him not to worry about the enemy aircraft because they could not take our lives if we were in caves and worry about the landing forces who would take our lives, so lay down the anti-aircraft guns for that purpose. He replied, saying, "You are much too pessimistic over the war situation, that Japan was not yet so weak." I understood that these officers had not known the real situation of the war.

The difference of opinions had come between those who had known the result of A-Go operation fought on 19 June 1944 and those who had not known that. However, actually we could not tell the truth to everybody.

In Tokyo all newspapers were showing pictures of Adm. Toyoda (Only a few men had known the main power of the combined fleet had gone to the bottom of the Pacific).

Arguments on tactics between Army and Navy

Beach operation or Cave operation?

At 13:00 hours, 11 August 1944, Rear-Adm. Ichimaru, Commander Urabe (a staff officer of the 3rd Air Fleet), Commander Mase, and Lt. Akada came to our Division Headquarters to have a meeting with us about defense tactics. The staff office became the meeting place. Present from the army were: General Kuribayashi, Col. Hori, Lt. Col. Nishikawa, Maj. Yoshida and myself.

First, Commander Urabe told us that he should convey the opinion of the Imperial Navy Headquarters and not his own opinion:

"The navy would like to bring some arms and materials to Iwo Jima.

The navy wants the army to build some pill-boxes around the 1st airfield. The navy is ready to bring about 300 ea 25 mm machine guns

and necessary materials for pill-boxes. The enemy could land only near the 1st airfield. Therefore, if the 1st airfield were defended by so many pill-boxes in depth, Iwo Jima could be impregnable.”

Commander Urabe was trained in the army infantry school before, and he said that he was No. 1 ground defense expert in the Imperial Navy. From his appearance I felt that he was a well-meaning gentleman.

Immediately I opposed his story as follows:

“I would like to know how long the seaside guns could last at Saipan and Guam. Would you please teach me how the seaside pill-boxes at Tarawa were effective. The frontal defense against hundreds of the enemy naval guns and aircraft is out of question. The past battle lessons we have received from Saipan, Guam, Tinian, etc. have taught us clearly that there are no alternatives to sniping the enemy troops from the hidden caves. It might be a baby play that the pill-boxes with 25 mm machine guns are used against the enemy naval gun fire. The 40 centimeter naval guns of the enemy will blow off any pill-box itself.

“How, for instance, can we prevent the enemy from landing, or can we annihilate the enemy at beach; how many days could we hold this Iwo Jima? We, garrison, must fight against the joint enemy – ground forces, air forces and naval forces – with only ground forces. If the navy has so many guns and materials, I hope these resources be employed for the defense of Mt. Suribachi and Motoyama area.” I said the above very excitedly.

“I agree with Maj. Horie,” declared General Kuribayashi.

Commander Urabe explained the atmosphere of the homeland and other problems in a sharp tone and asked the general to reconsider. He said, “In particular, I was surprised by the fact that Maj. Horie who had been thought favorable to the navy opposed my story.” He smiled.

I said, “If I had not known about the battle reports from Saipan, Guadalcanal, Guam, etc. I might have agreed with the navy without any

hesitation. Now my consciences do not permit me to do so.” I never conceded.

We, the meeting members, had early supper at the staff office. Urabe and I became friendly privately. That evening, we failed to reach any compromise. He tapped me on my shoulder with his hand and said to me. “Reconsider the pill-box problem tonight.”

The next morning, 12 August 1944, General Kuribayushi came to see me and said, “Major Horie, in connection with the pill-boxes your opinion is right from the viewpoint of tactics. But the resources the navy would bring here are important. Particularly, dynamite and cement are very valuable for this island. Three hundred each 25mm machine guns are also valuable. What do you think about this- we build some pill-boxes with 50% resources and we use the rest for the army?”

I replied, “If you utilize this change politically, I have no objection.”

I called the Navy Headquarters and told Urabe that General Kuribayushi would like to have another meeting at any time.

Urabe, Ichimaru and Mase came immediately by car. The staff office became the meeting place again.

General Kuribayushi started by saying “I would like to deal with the pill-box problem as follows. We, the army, make pill-boxes using 50% of the resources the navy brings. The army then will use the rest of resources for positional construction. How about my compromise?” Urabe and Achimaru nodded slightly. Nobody spoke for a while; then, Urabe said, “Yesterday I said that the resources for three hundred pill-boxes would be sent here. But on returning to the homeland I will make every effort to get resources for three hundred fifty pill-boxes.” General Kuribayushi, Commander Urabe and I sat together and smiled, but no one spoke again for a while. Some started smoking and some drank tea.

I don't remember who said it, either General Kuribayushi or me: “The navy

will deliver the resources. One hundred sixty-five pill boxes will be made at the southern beach and western beach. The rest of the resources will be used by the army. The army will furnish a 1,000 man working party everyday. Major Yoshida will be in charge of construction of the pill-boxes. With no objection the proposal was accepted. The argument over the pill-boxes came to an end.

Later, while at Chichi Jima, I heard Major Hara's 1st Battalion of the 145th Infantry Regiment worked every day, and some other troops cooperated with his battalion. Working six months they made up to one hundred thirty-five pill boxes.

According to Lt. Musashino, who returned home alive after the war, these pill-boxes were all useless as no one could stay in them under the enemy naval gunfire,

Cave operation and death resistance only.

I am not saying that Commander Urabe was wrong or the navy was wrong. A first class officer, Major General Tamura, director of the 31st Army, defended beaches and took offensive actions at Saipan, Tinian and Guam. As a result, repeatedly we found that appearing above ground, getting out of the caves, taking the offence, was just meeting the enemies wishes. Even at night we could not move our troops because the enemy was able to effectively illuminate the landscape. I just insisted that cave operations and resisting death were the only things left for us.

Yamato spirit (Japanese traditional spirit), fighting spirit, or the help of God could have some effect on our battles while we where fighting against the poorly equipped Chinese Army. But in the isolated island defense in the Pacific, such psychological elements could never help us. Even if we could get out of the caves, the huge volume of iron of the American industry would hasten our death, and it could never meet the purpose of a delaying operation.

10. My trip to the Imperial Japanese Headquarters.

On the evening of August 12th 1944 I had supper with General Kuribayashi again at his quarters. During the supper I asked him to allow me to go to the Imperial Japanese Headquarters to get some replacements for the old commanders of the battalions, to get more arms, particularly anti-tank arms, ammunition, dynamite and increase the ships and convoy escort vessels and get more food supplies.

General Kuribayashi gave me permission immediately.

On the morning of August 13th 1944 I became a passenger on a navy plane. I felt a little bit funny when I thought about how I left Tokyo, exchanging cups of water with my wife. However, when I saw the mountains of mainland Japan on the horizon my heart felt glad and I was happy to be returning, if only for a short while. The human instinct to return home is strong. When I arrived home suddenly, my wife did not know what to do, but my daughter, who was two years and seven months old, was very happy to see me again.

On the morning of August 14th 1944 I went to the general staff and reported to Colonel Hattori and Major Sejima the situation of the Bonin Islands. Lt Colonel Itagaki, who was in charge of logistics, was also listening to my report. After I was finished Colonel Hattori said to me, "If you find any possibility of sinking Iwo Jima we would like to consider it. When you return to Iwo Jima send us your estimates on how much dynamite will be required to

sink it.” I was emotionally moved. I felt there was at least one officer who had the same idea I had.

Already General Tojo had left the general staff and General Umezu had taken over the job of chief of staff. The atmosphere had changed completely. Colonel Hattori told me to make a presentation to the key officers of the Army Department and the general staff the next morning. The meeting would begin at 10:00 hours.

After leaving the meeting I went down to the shipping section and I spoke with Colonel Arao, Lt. Colonel Miyoshi and Lt. Colonel Uroshino for a long time. Then Lt. General Suzuki accompanied by Lt. Watano, Adjutant, came into the section. I ran to him and asked him what had happened to him. He explained that he had been ordered to be the 35th Army Commander at Bayte, Philippines, and was going to see the Emperor. We saw tears in each others eyes and didn't talk about the damage to the ships or the condition of the convoy escort strategy. We wondered which of us would die first. Naturally, we both wanted to stay alive as long as possible. When I said “so long” I felt what an ironic assignment he had been given, because he did not like General Yamashita. The 35th Army belonged to the 14th Area Army of which General Yamashita was in command.

The next morning, August 15th, I gave the presentation about the Bonin Islands Forces before the officers in a large auditorium in the general staff offices. To my surprise there were a lot of brass there, at least fifty officers. They came from not only the general staff and army department but other organizations as well. The outstanding thing was that the commandant and many instructors of the War College were there. I thought if I had known this opportunity would present its self I would have studied more in the War College. The prestige of the War College was declining because the instructors now had to listen to the poorest graduate. The listeners showed sincerity on

their faces. The atmosphere of the general staff had changed since the enemy had taken Saipan. That is to say, no one spoke ill of the 31st Army or Major General Ikota. They had learned what the U.S. Forces were capable of, and the War College instructors came to listen to me about how to set up counter measures. The cooperation of each section was splendid. Later I heard some officers took action during my presentation to arrange personnel, organization, supplies, etc. and I thanked them again.

I was moved emotionally because I felt the general staff and army department, for the first time, might be taking seriously the voices from the theatre of war. They accepted my request for dynamite and arms generously. However they could only give me one 41-type mountain artillery gun. My favorite gun for anti-tank tactics given my experiences in the theater of Northern China. After my presentation, I stopped at the ordnance section of the army department and paid a visit to Lt. Colonel Oneda who used to work with me in the 2nd Infantry Regiment. He told me they could give me as many people as we needed but it was difficult to supply arms, and that that was the biggest problem in the office. This was the real situation of Japan in its last moments.

Maj. Hori working in the Intelligence Office, 2nd division of the general staff, made an arrangement to give me a party on the evening of 17 August 1944 by my classmates in the War College. He made telephone calls to the classmates who were in the Tokyo area and said that at least ten men would attend the party. I was pleased to receive the party.

My return to Iwo Jima. My nick name was a pessimistic staff

On the morning of 16 August 1944, I visited the Convoy Escort General Fleet Headquarters and the 16th section of the naval staff. The story of the A-

Go operation was already an old one, and Saipan and Guam had already fallen into the hand of the enemy. To tell the truth, the atmosphere of the navy was out of harmony. Anyhow, in WWII Japan was attacked through the sea first, and the sick condition of the navy was much more serious than that of the army. I was in the navy more than one year, and once I went on the convoy escort vessel from Takao, Formosa, to Manila, Philippines, and saw some survivors whose ship had been sunk where floating on the sea and knew the real sick condition of Japan as a whole. At Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima officers and men had given me a nickname – “Pessimistic Staff;” on the other hand, some one said to me later that I was a man of foresight. It is completely untrue. The reason why I was pessimistic was just coming from the fact that I was working in the bottom of “Hell” – the convoy escort business – and was picking up the sick condition of Japan through 2,000 army and navy telegraphs (As General Tojo was the Prime Minister, all telegraphs coming to the foreign office and the cabinet were coming to the general staff. So, actually I was reading any and all telegraphs coming to the government, Army and Navy in those days.”

After talks with the old acquaintances of the navy I returned to the shipping section of the general staff and I started talks with Lt. Col. Miyoshi. One Lt. Colonel working at the administrative Branch of the general staff told me as soon as he came in, “How long are you fooling around here? Didn’t you finish your presentation? You should know how General Obata had been worrying about the impossibility of going back to Saipan. I dare tell you kindly because I was an instructor in your neighboring section in the Military Academy.”

His story was correct. Col. Miyoshi said, “Don’t worry about his story, because he just said a spiteful thing to me since our section is too friendly to the old comrades.”

However, I called Maj. Hori and declined the tomorrow night party for me, and I made an arrangement to fly over to Iwo Jima next morning.

On the morning of 17 August 1944, when I was walking to the airplane, Lt. Col. Nishi joined me. He told me that he had been gathering 23 tanks in Japan proper and now he was going back to Iwo Jima. There came another man – Major Matoba. He had been ordered to go to Chichi Jima to replace the commander of the 308th Independent Battalion (This man was famous as a battalion commander of the 18th Division which attacked Singapore. At Chichi Jima, later, he became famous again because his battalion dug out so many caves under Maj. General Tachibana. But after WWII, he was executed as a B class war criminal at Guam). We were happy in the air-plane, talking together.

When we arrived at Iwo Jima, there was a car awaiting Lt. Col. Nishi from the 28th ran regiment. We returned to Nishi's Headquarters and we had lunch at that Headquarters. The lunch was prepared by Maj. Matsuyama Adjutant to Nishi.

In the afternoon Major. Matoba and I motored to the Divisional Headquarters. When I reported to General Kuribayashi about my trip to Tokyo, he was much pleased. The dynamite allocated to Iwo Jima by the Imperial Japanese Headquarters at my personal request proved to be the biggest gift for all the officers and men.

As the result of my trip almost all battalion commanders were to be replaced by younger officers by about 30 of age (A Lt. Colonel who was 62 was replaced by a captain who was 25. So the difference of age was 37). It was very sad for young majors and captains who replaced the old battalion commanders. But those members became the center of fortification, training and battle.

The Imperial Japanese Headquarters allocated more dynamite, arms and ammunition, and the shipping section cooperated with our Force to send more ships. Thus the sea transportation between Tokyo and Chichi Jima, and

between Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima increased again.

The following troops were newly added to Iwo Jima:

<u>Area coming From</u>	<u>Harbor to Leave</u>	<u>Troops</u>
Kanto, Nagano & Hiigata	Yokohama	43 rd Independent 13mm machine gun unit
Kanto	Yokohama	44 th Independent 13mm machine gun unit
Northern part of Honshu & Kanto	Shibaura	109 th Division Howitzer Unit
Kanto	Shibaura	1 st Independent Howitzer Unit

The next morning, 18 August 1944, I went to the southern beach with General Kuribayashi to see if we could sink the 1st airfield.

After about one hour inspection, General Kuribayashi said to me, “It is impossible for us to sink this area. Can you calculate how much dynamite we need? It is easier for us to increase the defense. We can’t help.” Thus the discussion of sinking Iwo Jima came to the end.

It was very funny that some rumors were made that Major Horie was driven to Chichi Jima due to the conflict between Horie and Kuribayashi concerning the idea of sinking Iwo Jima.

Distribution of forces

Everyone will kill 10 enemy troops

General Kuribayashi established the following plan:

“Iwo Jima Garrison will place some troops around Mt. Suribachi and place the main power in depth, and once the enemy invades the island everybody will resist against the enemy until the last moment, making his position as his tomb. Everybody would try to kill 10 enemy troops.”

The most serious problem was how to use about 5,000 navy troops for battle. Most of them were anti-aircraft gun units, construction units and radar units, and had not any training for ground battles. The special ground navy units under Commander Tachimi had a few experiences and a little training, too. However, the navy had many anti-aircraft guns (The navy had about 250 anti-aircraft guns); therefore, if these guns would be employed for the ground battles expertly, they could have important effects over the Iwo Jima campaign. That was why I seriously insisted that the navy troops should be placed under the command of sector commanders and also I insisted that the anti-aircraft guns should be laid down for the ground targets. But it was very difficult for the navy to understand my idea – the employment of the anti-aircraft guns for ground battles.

Right after the discussion about the pill-boxes we talked about the distribution of the navy troops. Rear Adm. Ichimaru requested that the navy troops be put together in one place to fight as the navy had the specific custom and wanted to die together. Gen Kuribayashi accepted his request and main power of the navy was decided to be placed between the east sector and south sector under the command of Rear-Adm. Ichimaru. The navy seaside gun units, anti-aircraft gun units and radar units were to be placed under the command of each army sector commander. The main power of the army artillery officers opposed the diversion of the anti-aircraft guns from their original duty to the ground battle. When the time of the enemy invasion approached only 50% anti-aircraft guns – about 150 guns – were brought to be

ready for the double purposes – anti-aircraft and anti-ground battles.

5 sectors were made

The troops were distributed into 5 sectors, East, South, West, North and Mt. Suribachi Sectors. In normal cases, the commanders of 2nd Mixed Brigade and 145th Infantry Regiment would be ordered to be sector commanders. At Iwo Jima they were not ordered to be the sector commanders. This was different from the other cases. It was the character of Kuribayashi tactics.

In the case of Mt. Suribachi Col. Atsjuji was ordered to control every thing. But in the case of four other sectors, the sector commanders were active for only watch and reconnaissance, liaison and cooperation. In battles, every unit or every man should fight until the last moment. There was no consideration for usage of reserve forces, change of artillery positions, maneuvering of troops under darkness, etc. The exposure to the enemy even for a minute could not be considered.

Total Japanese strength – 21,000 men

I will write down the detailed figure about the man-power, arms, ammunitions, etc. per sector:

SOUTH SECTOR headed by Captain Hokatsu Awatsu

	<u>Commander</u>
(Army) 2 nd Mixed Brigade Senda	Maj. General Sadatoshi
309 th Independent Infantry BN	Capt Hokatsu Awatsu
310 th Independent Infantry BN	Capt Iwaya
1 st BN, 145 th Infantry Regiment	Major Mitsuaki Hara
109 th Division Charge Company	Captain Katsunari Furuta

2nd Independent Machine-gun BN Major Taokio Kawasaki
 The main power, 2nd Mixed Brigade
 Pioneer Company 1st Lt. Kikuso Musashino
 8th Anti-tank (Independent) BN Captain Hajime Shimizu
 A part, 5th Fortress Construction Co.
 109th Division Radar Unit
 20th Special 25mm Machine-gun Unit (Attached to the Navy)
Army Total 4,100 men

(Navy) 27th Air Division Headquarters. Rear-Adm Rinosuke
 Ichimaru
 South Air Force Headquarters Captain Samaji Inoue
 South Air Force Special Navy
 Ground Force Commander Kotaro Tachimi
 Anti-aircraft gun unit Lt. Commander Tokiwa
 Construction Force
 Seaside Gun Unit
Navy Total 3,000 men

EAST SECTOR headed by Major Yoshinobu Hakuta

(Army) 314th Independent Infantry BN Major Yoshinobu Hakuta
 A part, 311th Independent Infantry BN
 Main power, 2nd Mixed Brigade Col. Chosaku Gaido
 Artillery Regiment
 A part, 2nd Mixed Brigade Pioneer Co.
 Main power of the 3rd BN, 145th
 Infantry Regiment
 3rd Medium Howitzer BN Maj. Kotaro
 Kobayashi
 2nd Mixed Brigade Field Hospital Capt (Dr.) Iwao Noguchi
 26th Tank Regiment Lt. Col Takeichi Nishi
 44th Independent Anti-tank Gun Unit
 12th Independent Anti-tank Gun BN Capt Masao Hayauchi
 A platoon, 109th Div Jet Propelling Gun

Battery Army total 3,900 men
(Navy) Anti-aircraft Unit Lt. (J.G.) Ito
Navy total 300 men

NORTH SECTOR headed by Captain Kaichi Shimoma

(Army) 3rd BN, 17th Independent Mixed Reg Capt Kaichi Shimoma
Main power, 145th Infantry Regiment Col Masuo Ikeda
109th Division Howitzer Unit
109th Division Headquarters Lt. Gen Tadamichi Kuribayushi
109th Communication Unit 1st Lt. Toyokichi Morita
1st Independent Howitzer Company
Provisional Field Ordnance Unit
Provisional Field Supply Unit
Chichi Jima Military Police
Iwo Jima Special Weather Unit
A part, 2nd Mixed Brigade Pioneer Co
Disease prevention water supply unit
Matsunaga's Special Secret Service Unit
Army Total 4,200 men

(Navy) Special Navy Ground Force Lt. Takahashi
Anti-aircraft Unit Ensign Iizuka
Navy Total 1,000 men

WEST SECTOR headed by Maj Shigeo Tatsumi

(Army) Main power, 311th Independent Infantry BN Maj. Shigeo Tatsumi
A part, 12th Independent Anti-tank BN
109th Division Anti-aircraft Gun Unit
A part of the 2nd BN, 145th Infantry Reg
1st Independent Machine Gun BN Maj. Ko Kawanami
43rd Independent 13mm Machine Gun Unit

2nd Medium Howitzer BN Maj. Naosuke Nakao
 21st Field Well-Digging Company 1st Lt. Kawai
 20th Independent Howitzer BN Capt. Mitsuo Misubashi
 109th Division Jet Propelling Gun Battery (Less a part)

Army total 2,800 men

(Navy) Ogaka-Yama Area Anti-Aircraft
 Gun Unit Lt. (J.G.) Matsuno

Navy Total 300 men

MT. SURIBACHI SECTOR headed by Col. Kanshiro Atsuji

(Army) 312th Independent Infantry Bn
 10th Independent Anti-tank Gun Bn
 One Battery, 2nd Mixed Brigade Artillery
 A part, 2nd Medium Howitzer Bn
 A part, 5th Fortress Construction Co.
 One Platoon, 2nd Mixed Brigade Pioneer Co.

Army Total 1,000 men

(Navy) Anti-Aircraft Unit Lt. (J.G.) Hirunuma
 Seaside Gun Unit Same as above

Navy Total 630 men

Army Grand Total 16,000 men
 Navy Grand Total 5,000 men
Army-Navy Grand Total 21,000 men (Approx)

Arms and Ammunitions Possessed

<u>Arms</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number of Ammunitions</u>
Gun (More than 75mm)	120	Rounds 100,000
Anti-Aircraft Gun (More than 25mm)	300	500 per each
		Bullets

		Dollars
Rifle, Light Machine Gun	18,000	20,000,000
Howitzer (80mm and 10mm)	130	80 per each
Howitzer (150mm)	20	40 per each
Jet Propelling Gun	70	50 per each
Anti-Tank Gun (47mm)	40	100 per each
Anti-Tank Gun (37mm)	20	80 per each
Tank	23	

Food Possessed

For 2 months

Death Determination of General Kuribayashi

General Kuribayashi had determined to die before the enemy came. He had determined to win the battle with death. His letters sent to his family have explained this very well:

“After my death, my belongings left behind may not return to Japan, I believe. So I will keep only necessary belongings with me, and I will send back the rest of them while I am alive (His letter of 2 August 1944, to his wife).”

Another letter read:

“The battles in the theater of China were just like maneuvers. This island has been crowded with army and navy personnel. All of them are saying that China had been good. Everybody is determined to be killed the same as the soldiers and sailors of Attu or Saipan. Everybody has a gloomy face and no smiling. The other night I dreamed of my return to my home. At the time you and Takako were very much pleased, but as I told them that I returned home to write my will and I had to go back to the battle field, Takako looked very sad.”

Urgency of General Kuribayashi for the evacuation of islanders

Most of the islanders had evacuated during the period from 3 July to 20 July. But about 50 or 60 members were remaining at Chichi Jima up to the end of August 1944. Because these people wanted to stay very urgently, and since I was busy because I went to Iwo Jima and Tokyo, I was not very careful.

At the end of August I came back to Chichi Jima from my trips through Iwo Jima and Tokyo. Soon I started suffering from a fever, and my health condition became worse and worse. Then I received a personal telegraph from General Kuribayashi. It was an emergency telegraph and it read:

“According to some rumors, there have remained some civilians at Chichi Jima. Don’t you know that they become encumbrance to the armed forces in the case of battle? Reply immediately, Kuribayashi .”

I was struck by this telegraph completely. Immediately I picked up a pencil and a piece of paper and wrote as follows:

“To : General Kuribayashi
From: Major Horie

Very sorry, my carelessness caused the delay of evacuation of some islanders. I am sure that they will be sent back with the earliest ship. Pardon me.”

At this time Capt. (a doctor) Tersazawa examined me and declared that I had suffered from A-type paratyphus. That is to say, I drew two strikes. Anyhow, Gen Kuribayashi’s determination was serious, and nothing could move this firm mind.

5 vows and 6 instructions of General Kuribayashi

General Kuribayashi ordered his adjutant to print 5 vows and 6 instructions and distribute them to the officers and men. He sent me some copies and asked me if I could print more at Chichi Jima and distribute to Chichi Jima troops

5 vows for mental training of the officers and men

The basis of Japanese spirit has come from the respect to God and ancestors.

We hereby make an oath to purify our mental condition and increase this spirit.

The growth of Japanese spirit has come from the 3,000 year history of our nation. We hereby make an oath to annihilate the enemy who is going to overrun this spirit, overcoming any and all difficulties.

The Japanese spirit will be shined up by accomplishing the Imperial

Instructions to the army and navy officers and men. We hereby make an oath to keep discipline, to train ourselves, and develop our fighting spirit more and more.

Now we are on the front line of national defense. We must go with the operational policy. We hereby make an oath to do everything for the Emperor, for the perished personnel and for the people in the homeland. We are the representatives of the people of Japan. We must be proud of our position and accomplish our responsibility. We hereby make an oath to behave ourselves right, to be generous to the others and develop the Japanese spirit all over the world.

Six instructions for mental training of the officers and men.

We shall defend this island with all out effort
We shall run over the enemy tanks with explosives and destroy them.
We shall infiltrate into the enemy and annihilate them.
We shall kill the enemy with one shot one kill system.
We shall not die until we have killed ten men.
We shall harass the enemy with guerrilla tactics even though one man remains.

Construction of cave positions

The key point of position construction was to make a cave from which we could snipe and link these caves with underground paths. The idea to make fox-holes was already too old. Everybody, including the general, staff officers and men made his own position –tomb by himself. The Iwo Jima Forces were given the name of “Underground Forces”

The rocks of Iwo Jima, different from those of Chichi Jima, are weak and easily broken. So it was not easy to make caves. Using an army pick I continued digging the rock and I found an average person could not continue digging for ten minutes. Sulphur came up and made breathing difficult. We became dizzy quickly. I tried to wear my gas-mask, but while using the gas mask it was too hot and it was very hard for me to breathe.

We dug the underground paths twenty to thirty meters deep. Along these underground paths we made some side rooms. The officers and men made these rooms their bedrooms, dining rooms or resting areas. At Chichi Jima I called these caves “Mole Caves.”

General Kuribayashi set up the “Cave Digging Discipline” and forced the officers and men to accomplish an individual share, a kind of quota system.

Training

The things we focused on mainly in training were sniping, infiltration attacking at night and anti-tank attacking. Victory on Iwo Jima would only be possible if we were able to kill more of the enemy than they could kill us. The number of defenders was about 21,000 men. Therefore, if the enemy were to lose more than 21,000 men the defenders could have an opportunity to win the campaign. Of course nobody could expect any one to return alive.

Of all the training we were engaged in, target practice and sniping were the most important. However, with ammunition supplies being of concern officers and men could not engage in firing bursts with live rounds as much as they should have been able to ideally.

The night infiltration attack was picked up from the battle lessons of the Saipan garrison. But later, General Kuribayashi, who was the commanding officer on Peleliu, warned the Japanese forces that this tactic should not be overestimated. General Kuribayashi was wondering about the effectiveness of the night infiltration attack plan. He had been involved with the U.S. armed forces before; he knew about the night time illumination and the defensive fire of the Americans and was hesitant to urge this training. However as a moral booster he ordered this training for all officers and men.

Unlike Saipan, Guam and Morotai, Iwo Jima was not so heavily covered with vegetation. Because of this factor I believe it made it difficult for the defenders of Iwo Jima to get the results they wanted with the night infiltration attacks. Also I observed the U.S. forces had become aware of this tactic and were wary of it.

The anti-tank attack was the second most important training after sniping. Some officers and men chose their deaths via this attack.

In the battle report sent by General Kuribayashi, the following information was found.

“Some of the officers and men laid there bodies among there dead comrades or wore U.S. uniforms taken from the dead American solders. Then they waited for the U.S. tanks to advance and then caused them great damage.”

Another side of general Kuribayashi was his ability to be disciplined. When it came to conserving water he was number one. He urged water conservation, he was able to use one cup of water to shave, wash his face (mainly he washed his eyes), and finally he used the remainder of the cup of water at his lavatory.

There were rumors that an officer was using too much water or that some NCO's were careless about water saving. Therefore the water conservation shown by General Kuribayashi was very influential to all officers and men.

The strong will of General Kuribayashi.

I don't know how he got that strong will. It might have come from the blood of the Kuribayashi family. He used to express his opinion flatly before his officers and men; he had even conceded that he did not know.

After World War II, I had an opportunity to talk with Vice-Adm. Kaneko, who was one of his classmates at Nagano High School and later became the Commander-in Chief of the China-Expeditionary Naval Force. He told me, “Ah! Kuribayashi was once the leader of a strike against the school authorities. He just escaped being expelled from school by a hair. In those days he was

already good at poetry, composition and speech making. He was a young literary enthusiast.”

Modest types could not go with his strong will. Colonel Hori, Chief of staff and Major General Ohsuga, 2nd Mixed Brigade Commander, were relieved when their replacement authorities for infantry tactics came. Ohsugas health was bad and after his dismissal from the brigade he was hospitalized.

12. Two Months before the storm.

Sea transportation became more and more difficult.

On my return trip to Chichi Jima from Tokyo I had a two or three day stay on the island of Iwo Jima; then I departed for Chichi Jima. On the flight we passed over Chichi Jima and I noticed U.S. B-24's had already began bombing the Bonin Islands from Saipan.

Now even at night we had to expect the enemy to be bombing our ships at Futami Harbor. Between Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima not only were there enemy submarines but also enemy surface ships appeared. The navigation of sailboats and fishing boats became very difficult, many times they were forced to stop at Haha Jima. The conditions for these sailors had become as dangerous for them as the conditions once were for the big transport ships that had navigated along the coast of New Guinea a year ago. Now navigation from the homeland to Chichi Jima could only be carried out by high speed destroyers or navy high speed transports. Japan had lost all of its high speed merchant ships and only transports that could reach speeds of seven or eight knots remained. The faces

of the newly arriving troops looked pale with uncertainty and tension.

In the beginning of September 1944, I was suffering from Type-A paratyphoid fever and was hospitalized in the Chichi Jima Army Hospital. The hospital buildings had been dispersed in the forested areas. Chichi Jima itself was only about 12 square miles and we had to expect the enemy bombing at any time. I had a high fever of more than 41degrees C, which continued for more than seven days. I actually thought that I would go to Paradise by being killed as a result of the enemy's "blind bombing."

Thanks to many good doctors, headed by Lt. Colonel Shibata and the kind help of Sargent Hasegawa and some other members for there courage in carrying me to an air raid shelter five or six times a day, I was able to leave the hospital after about a month. During my hospitalization I was able to carry out my duties through 1st Lt. Nishiyotsuji.

A shortage of food at Iwo Jima.

At Chichi Jima there were about 17,000 army and navy troops. The size of manpower of Chichi Jima was about 15% smaller than that of Iwo Jima.

At Chichi Jima there was enough water and we had plenty of vegetables. The officers and men made charcoal, too. The contribution of the islanders who were drafted by the army as farming team members was very good. First Lt. Kosuga, 2nd adjutant to Maj. General Tachibans, was a graduate of some Agriculture High school, and he directed not only farming but honey-bee feeding. Many products were sent to Iwo Jima with bottles of water. In those days the empty bottles were very valuable. These bottles were filled with water and were presented to Iwo Jima troops. The notice "This bottle must be returned to Chichi Jima" was put on each bottle. The charcoal was sent to Iwo Jima for heating in caves. I regarded the above gifts as private one and did not

control them. So it might have happened that some one was lucky and someone was unlucky.

Until the end of October, I gave high priority to arms, ammunitions, explosives, personnel; I gave secondary priority to food. First Lt. Tase was the food expert and I never interfered with his food supply plan. Frankly speaking, I had approved Tase's recommendation blindly.

Around the mid-part of November, I received a telegraph from Iwo Jima telling that the shortage of food was serious at Iwo Jima and it emphasized that priority #1 should be given to food supply.

Since that time my main effort was concentrated upon the food supply. When the US forces invaded Iwo Jima, there was two months supply of food for the defenders.

Air Transportation between Iwo Jima and Homeland

Until the end of October 1944, many air transports flew between Iwo Jima and Kisarazu. As the third Air Fleet Headquarters, parent Headquarters of Rear-Adm. Ichimaru's 27th Air Division, was located at Kisarazu, liaison were made very often.

The air transportation of the army depended upon the navy 100%. The navy authorities cooperated with the army very well.

The army department used to send newspapers and the General staff used to send some whiskey to the Division Headquarters . There was a trend that the airplane riders from the homeland used to bring some vegetable from Kiserazu area.

The army and navy urged the troops to send the mail of soldiers and sailors to their hometowns.

Outstanding army officers were put in Iwo Jima

In November, Lt. Col. Shirakata was transferred to Hachijo Jima Garrison, and for his replacement Lt. Col. Nakane came. Nakane arrived at Iwo Jima on 6 November 1944. Nakane had 5th grade of Fencing and he was called God of Infantry tactics. He was No. 1 graduate of the army infantry school and he was given the Emperor's award at the graduation ceremony. He came from Ohshima Island Garrison.

On 20 December 1944, Maj. Yamanouchi was assigned to the 109th

Division. His father was a man from Tosa, Shikoku, and a cavalry officer. He became a major general in the Imperial Japanese Army. Like his father, he was commissioned as a cavalry officer in 1935 (one year senior to me), and later he was transferred to the armored force. He was a man of tragedy, because he was ordered to Iwo Jima when he graduated from War College. He took the opposite course from Maj. Fujiwara who had come to Iwo Jima as the commander of the 3rd battalion, 17th Mixed Regiment and had gone back to Tokyo in November in order to enter the War College.

On his way to Iwo Jima, he stopped at Chichi Jima because of an emergency landing of his air transport on 27 December 1944. On the night he became my guest, he and I talked together overnight. He looked very sad and pitiful. Next morning we parted, wishing safety mutually. This was the first and last meeting with him.

On 30 December 1944, Col. Horii was transferred to the 2nd Mixed Brigade and Col. Takaishi came as his replacement. Takaishi was an authority on infantry tactics. I received a letter written with a paint brush from him. I knew that he was a good writer and a modest man.

Around this time Maj. General Ohsuga was transferred to the Headquarters of the 109th Division and Maj. General Senda came from the Sendai Reserve Officers Academy.

At the last part of 1944, three authorities of infantry tactics – Maj. General Senda, Col. Takaishi and Lt. Col. Nakane – were committed into Iwo Jima. I

know that this commitment was made by the army department along the wishes of General Kuribayashi. But the Japanese army's selection of these three was very important.

Song of Iwo Jima

The officers and men at Iwo Jima composed "SONG of IWO JIMA." Singing this song, they had waited for the enemy's invasion.

The song was sung by the Japanese people at midnight on 17 March 1945 through NHK radio broadcast when the remaining fighters at Iwo Jima were making their Bunzai charge.

Iwo Jima just before the enemy's assault

The enemy's assault was coming nearer and nearer. The uncertainty of the officers and men was increasing day after day.

Here, I would like to introduce the following three letters to explain the real situation in those days:

Letter of 18 December 1944 addressed to his wife from Lt. Col. Nishi:

"I am sympathizing with you because I believe that it is very cold in Tokyo, I guess. This place is just like a winter resort. If we stay in our caves we don't feel cold. We have no braziers, but we don't need them. We are now nervous because the enemy's bombers visit us almost always day and night. The biggest trouble is the shortage of sleep caused by the bombing.

In order to avoid the psychological strategy, we are concentrating our energy in cave digging and in expansion of our underground living rooms. As soon as we complete these underground rooms we could get enough sleep. Even B-29's could do nothing to these rooms. We are going to dig the land 20 meters deep and make underground streets. Then we may not have to worry about the enemy's one-ton bombs."

Letter dated 18 December 1944 from Lt. Col. Nakane to his wife:

“... the enemy’s air-raids come more than ten times a day. Also the enemy’s task forces assaulted this island two times. There was no damage. Everybody is vigorous, and you don’t have worry about me. The beans brought from our house were planted and now the bean plants are in full bloom. The time of harvest is coming. The squashes and egg-plants are very good. Luckily I could have new harvests twice this year. The trouble is that the quantity of them is small. These vegetables are valuable because we produced them by our own sweat. Now we have saved enough water. Yesterday we had a bath. Everybody was happy. We can get some fish. Because whenever the enemy makes air-raids many fish come to beach, being killed by their bombs. Sometimes we are presented some scombroids and sharks. The enemy air-raids come almost regularly every day. So if they do not come we miss them. The enemy task forces attacked us on 11 November and 8 December. Now we have a strong position and are God’s soldiers. We are gladly waiting for the enemy.”

Letter dated 3 February 1945 from Gen Kuribayashi to his wife:

“...How is the evacuation business from Tokyo to a rural district? Do you want to stay in Tokyo? The enemy’s air-raids will increase more and more. They may go to bomb our homeland with much bigger number of bombers. So I believe that you had better evacuate from Tokyo quickly. Over here the enemy dropped some incendiary bombs and some napalm bombs recently. They can make a sea fire.

Under the violent air-raids, I am still healthy. I am trying to get some fresh vegetable, and I have a small farm for myself.

This place is not good for health. We have many patients. Almost all members get sick once, but fortunately I have never suffered from any disease.”

One of the greatest operations of the US MARINES

US Operations in the Pacific:

One of US War Histories has written as follows:

“The Americans had made a plan to force the unconditional surrender of Japan within 12 months after the defeat of Germany. However, the war in which the defeat of Germany had been expected before October 1944 did not show any indication of its end. Therefore, the resources necessary for the assaults against Formosa to be made by the Pacific Fleet would not be transferred from the European Theater in time.

After a two-week discussion, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the 3rd of October 1944, came to the decisions to get General MacArthur take Luzon after the seizure of Leyte and get Admiral Nimitz to take Bonin Islands in January 1945 after his cooperation with General MacArthur in the operations in the Philippines.”

On 3 October 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued the directives to perform the above operations to General MacArthur and Adm. Nimitz through the classified dispatch no. 40782.

The Americans thought that even though Iwo Jima is a small island, as it is located in the mid-point of the Marianas and Tokyo, the seizure of it would help the emergency landing of B-29's based on the Marianas.

As the Joint Chiefs of Staff accepted the recommendation to make the main effort in the Central Pacific submitted by the US Joint Strategy Survey Committee, we could say that the spear-head of the national strength of the United States was to be directed to Iwo Jima.

CHANNEL OF COMMAND US FORCES

President Roosevelt

Joint Chiefs of Staff

Commander-in-Chief
Us Fleet
(Adm. King)

Commander-in-Chief
The Pacific Fleet and the Central Pacific Area Fleet
(Adm. Nimitz)

Commander-in-Chief
5th US Fleet
(Adm. Spruance)

Commander
Amphibious Operation & Close Support Operation for Landing
Close Support Operation Forces
(Vice-Adm Turner)

Commander
5th Amphibious Corps
(Lt. General H. Smith, USMC)

Deputy-Commander
5th Amphibious Corps
(Maj. General Schmidt, USMC)

3rd Marine Division
(Maj. General Erskine, USMC)

4th Marine Division
(Maj. General Cates, USMC)

5th Marine Division
(Maj. General Rockey, USMC)

Close Support Operation Forces
(Vice-Adm. Turner)

Fast Carrier Forces
(58th Task Force)
(Vice-Adm. Mitscher)

Strength of the US Forces:

(1) Landing Force:

It consisted of 70,000 (Approximately) Marines, the main power and some others.

(2) Fast Carrier Forces:

There were more than 900 aircraft

(3) Close Support Operation Forces:

They consisted of 140 vessels, including 5 small-size air-carriers, 3 battle ships,
8 cruisers, 30 destroyers and about 400 aircraft.

Note: The following points must be considered:

A Marine division was not only larger than an army division in the number of officers and men, but it had some close support Marine air groups

High Level Leaders of the US Forces:

(1) Joint Chiefs of Staff were:

Adm. Leahy
General Marshall
Admiral King
General Arnold

Chief of Staff to the President
Chief of Staff, US Army
Chief Operation Staff, US Navy
Chief of the Army Air Force

Before, Adm. Leahy used to be the Chief Operation Staff, US Navy, then the Ambassador to France. During WWII, accepting General Marshall's recommendation, President Roosevelt brought him on the above position.

In the US Navy, the Chief Operation Staff had two hats – Chief Operation Staff and Commander-in-Chief, US Fleet. That is to say, if it were applied to the Japanese Navy, he should be the Chief of the Naval Staff and Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet.

General Arnold was under General Marshall, but as the Army Air Force was so large that he was ordered to be seated as a member.

(2) Vice-Adm. Turner:

At the beginning of WW II, Turner, then Rear Admiral was the Operation Division Chief of the US Navy, just like Brig. General Eisenhower was the Operation Division Chief of the US Army.

Later, he went overseas, and as Vice-Admiral, he led the landing operations at Guadalcanal, Gilbert Islands, Marshall Islands and Mariana Islands. He was described as one of the sharpest US Navy Officers in those days.

(3) Lt. General H. Smith, USMC:

Since the assault against Saipan he had been the commander of the 5th Amphibious Corps under Vice-Adm. Turner. Like a fierce tiger, he is like some Japanese fierce officers. During the Saipan assault, he removed Maj. General Smith as Commander of the 27th Infantry Division, causing the popular arguments "Smith versus Smith." (Also infuriating the US Army)

(4) Vice-Adm. Mitschner:

Mitschner was the Captain of the air-carrier HORNET which carried the B-25's commanded by Lt. Col. Doolittle that raided Tokyo on 18 April 1942.

(5) Marine Division Commanders:

Maj. General Erskine, Commander of the 3rd Marine Division, used to work for Lt. General H. Smith as Chief of Staff, 5th Amphibious Corps.

Maj. General Cates, Commander of the 4th Marine Division, captured Tinian Island.

Maj. General Rockey, Commander of the 5th Marine Division, was a veteran of the Guadalcanal campaign.

Let us check the history of each Marine Division.

The 3rd and 4th Marine Divisions fought in the operations in the South Pacific and Central Pacific. The 5th Marine Division was organized in California, making the veterans of the South Pacific operations the main body for Aleutian operation.

Comparison of strength between Japanese forces and US forces, and US forecast of Iwo Jima operations:

I calculated the firing power of Iwo Jima Garrison as 2-division power. Then, I estimated the US power as follows:

1 battle ship:	5 divisions
1 cruiser:	1 division
1 destroyer:	1 division
1 aircraft:	1/10 division (100 aircraft were always expected)

Over Iwo Jima)

Totally the US forces had the power of about 50 divisions.

So, from my estimation, the comparison of the strength between the Japanese forces and the US forces should be about 1 to 25 for about one month.

However, right after the end of WW II, one captain, USM, visited me from the Commander Marianas, and said to me, “Your calculation is coming from ‘addition.’ Did you consider any coefficient of mobility and supply? We used ‘multiplication’ and considered the coefficient of mobility and supply. Eventually our estimation of COMPARISON of STRENGTH become 3,500 to 1. In the case of Saipan campaign, the comparison became 5,000 to 1.”

In those days the US Pacific Fleet scheduled the 2-phase operations:

1st phase – Iwo Jima operation

2nd phase - Okinawa operation

On the other hand, after the Joint Chiefs of Staff made a decision to take Bonins at the meeting of 3 October 1944, the Americans expected considerable effects from the air-raids of the army bombers, strikes by the fast task forces, and the naval gun-fire against Iwo Jima.

Bloody Battles, Good-bye to Chichi Jima Fellows

Preparation for landing by US Forces:

On 23 January 1945, I received a phone call from the Chichi Jima Naval Base Headquarters. According to the phone call, a patrol plane of the Japanese Navy found about 170 enemy vessels moving north 80 miles west of Saipan.

Were these vessels headed to Iwo Jima or Okinawa? I figured there was about a 60% chance they were headed to Okinawa, because Okinawa had a higher strategic value.

On 16 February, Task Force #58 raided the Kanto area of Honshu, Japan, and the Bonins in general; they also started bombarding Iwo Jima with naval gunfire.

According to some telegraphs coming from Iwo Jima there were some enemy destroyers anchored 1,500 meters off the shores of Iwo Jima and they were shelling the island. Behind them were some cruisers and further behind them were some battle ships, and these vessels, with several hundred guns firing, looked like distant mountains.

General Kuribayashi, by way of radio, ordered all officers and men on Iwo Jima to go to their defensive posts. He sent telegraphs to the Chichi Jima and Haha Jima, Garrison Headquarters, telling them to defend their own islands respectively themselves.

I thought that my seniors and fellow members on Iwo Jima would meet the same fate as those who had defended Saipan and I felt very sad. As a man who could not reach Saipan in time to defend it, due to time delays, nor did I have a chance to join General Obata and the 31st army, who were in Palau, I felt very sorry I could not join the battle. I did however fulfill my duties on Chichi Jima. I relayed telegraphs coming from Chichi Jima to the Japanese Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo. I was also concerned that the enemy would be invading Chichi Jima as well and thusly had to be prepared to place myself at the fighting post.

Two U.S. prisoners of war, a Marine captain pilot and an Ensign co-pilot,

were brought to me because my command of the English language had improved. I could get information from these two prisoners who had flown from the carrier Hornet. I reported the information obtained from them to Tokyo and Iwo Jima. The information I obtained indicated that the main landing forces attacking Iwo Jima were the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Marine Divisions. Also the enemy would not be landing on any other islands in the Bonins, and I learned the enemy would launch an even bigger operation against Okinawa next month. My seniors at Iwo Jima and Tokyo were very happy to get my urgent telegraphs. Furthermore, the prisoners told me that the seizure of Iwo Jima would be completed in about a week; then some army forces would come to Iwo Jima to relieve the Marines and the landing craft would be converted for Okinawa. They were worry free; they joked and hummed songs to themselves. They told me that as soon as the U.S. forces landed on Kyushu the war would be over and they could return home; they said if they did return home, they would be treated as heroes and be promoted. They felt their accumulated earnings would all be paid at once and they could use the money for their honeymoons. They even wanted to teach me to dance. The Ensign told me that his father died when he was young and his mother worked as a hairdresser. She sent him to college, and he would like to get married and please his mother as soon as he could when he returned home.

Nothing had ever surprised me as much as the psychology of the prisoners of war from a democratic country. It was diametrically different from the psychology of the Japanese soldiers.

On the 17th and 18th of February 1945, the enemy bombardment against Iwo Jima continued. The number of the vessels firing was increasing. According to the news issued by the Imperial Japanese Headquarters, Vice-Adm. Mitcher's Task Force #58 raided Japan proper on 17 February 1945 too.

The Enemy Landing Started:

At 0900 hours, 19 February 1945, the enemy started landing on Iwo Jima with about one hundred landing craft under the protection of fierce naval gunfire and desperate air strikes.

As anticipated, the U.S. forces landed on the south beach, and then followed their tradition and occupied some beach-heads. They moved in tanks and artillery guns and exploited the results.

Our Iwo Jima garrison forces did not counter attack the landing forces. No, no! The Iwo Jima commander had prohibited any counter attacks. It was the key tactic of General Kuribayashi. Kuribayashi was implementing a battle plan that had been learned from our perished fellow warriors at Saipan, Tinian and Guam. He was determined to fallow through with the plan. Counter attacking meant nothing but easily becoming victims of the awaiting tremendous enemy naval gunfire.

Not going out was the key to the defense of Iwo Jima, and it was the key to great battle achievements.

Note: On the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Guam, the Japanese defenders attacked at night against the invading forces. Even under the cover of darkness the attackers lost about 50% of their troops within two or three hours. Later on Okinawa the 32nd Army shortened its effectiveness by making counter attacks, ordered by higher authorities. In the defense of Iwo Jima the Imperial Japanese Headquarters never intervened.

By around noon on the 19th the U.S. landing forces already had about 10,000 marines and 200 tanks on shore.

General Kuribayashi's battle conduct:

The words calmness, boldness, philosophic ripeness and prudence are not enough to describe the greatness of General Kuribayashi . Because he took the following attitude:

Right after the enemy's landing, he started reporting his subordinates' distinguished service and battle instructions to Tokyo. He also made arrangements to collect all the money from the officers and men and donate it to the National Treasury. He indeed wanted to have accomplished everything by the time he died.

In the afternoon of the first day of the invasion he sent a telegraph to Tokyo, stating that 2nd Lt. Nakamura, Platoon Commander of the 8th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion, had destroyed more than twenty enemy tanks before he was killed in action, and he wrote a letter of appreciation for Nakamura's bravery in action. He requested a two-step promotion (from 2nd Lt. to Captain) for Nakamura.

Later he wrote letters of appreciation for distinguished service for Captain Maso Hayakawa, Commander of the 12th Independent Anti-Tank Battalion, Captain Hajime Shimizu, Commander of the 8th Independent Anti-Tank Gun Battalion, and Captain Katsuya Furuta, Commander of the 109th Charge Company, and requested two step promotions for all of them. Twice he wrote letters of appreciation for the 145th Infantry Regiment and the troops as a whole.

He wrote Tokyo warning them not to overestimate the value of night infiltration attacks and that the 37 mm. was not effective against the enemies M-4 tanks.

The total money counted by all the organizations amounted to about 125,000 yen. After he reported that that amount of money was donated to the National Treasury. All the money was burnt by every organization.

General Kuribayashi never asked for reinforcements. His only complaint was that he had to commit many of his troops to the expansion work of the #2 and #3 airfields by order of Tokyo; it was not only a waste of time and labor,

but it was done at the expense of other important fortifications.

Bloody Battles:

An outline of the battles will be shown on the following battle map of Iwo Jima.

The enemy landed with the 4th Marine Division on the right, 5th Marine Division on the left and 3rd Marine Division as the Corps' reserve. The 5th Marine Division attacked Mt. Suribachi and the 4th Marine Division attacked Motoyama Plateau. As both of the front divisions suffered heavy losses, the Corps Commander committed the 3rd Marine Division against the Japanese East and North Sectors.

Although the US Marines suffered heavy casualties, they expanded their occupied area, committing additional artillery guns and tanks.

While more than 100 fighters were flying over Iwo, about 500 naval guns fired for protection of the landing forces.

Not only the dead but also the wounded of the garrison forces were left as they were. However, the remains of the US Marines were picked up and the wounded were evacuated to some hospital ships.

Up to 26 February 1945, desperate battles were carried out, particularly around Mt. Suribachi, Jinetsuga-hara, Minami-buraku, Ishikiriba, Byobuyama, etc. To avoid exposure, move and physical contact were not allowed for the garrison forces, the defenders fought individual desperate battles — resisting to death.

After the beginning of landing the US forces thought much of the attacks by the 5th Marine Division in the Mt. Suribachi Sector. Col. Atsuji and about 1000 army and 680 navy officers and men continued a severe fight. The enemy finally came to burn up the defenders in the caves with flame throwers. The struggle for the top of Mt. Suribachi was repeated several times. On 22 February, Col. Atsuji sent the following telegraph to General Kuribayashi:

In addition to the occurrence of our casualties in succession, the enemy air-sea-land attacks are serious. Now the enemy began to burn us with the flame throwers. If we keep ourselves intact, we shall just get nothing but self-extermination. We would like to go out for a banzai charge.”

Against the above telegraph, General Kuribayashi replied to him with the following angry telegraph:

“I had imagined the fact that the 1st airfield should fall in the enemy’s hands. But what is the matter that Mt. Suribachi would fall within only 3 days?”

We can see how the general had determined to have his officers and men stay in their positions as their tombs until dying. On 8 March 1945, when Maj. General Sanda, Commander of the 2nd mixed brigade, sent a telegraph to the general stating that he would like to go to for a banzai charge, the general immediately ordered Senda by radio to keep his positions until the last moment. (Actually, Senda did not obey this order.)

Since before the enemy’s landing General Kuribayashi used to say that although everybody would like to get an easy way to die early, he would not be able to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy if they died so early.

Everybody should have patience and stay in his position as long as possible.

The general sent the following telegraph about the loss of the garrison and the enemy by 26 February 1945:

“Our loss: The front line troops have lost 30% on an average. But they have lost 2/3 officers. Most of the machine guns have gone. Sixty percent big guns have been destroyed.

Enemy’s loss: Casualties ...13,000 officers and men.
210 tanks destroyed or stranded
60 aircraft shot down
2 battle ships, 9 destroyers and 3 landing crafts
sunk
More than 30 landing crafts burnt

Telegraphic Reports of Desperate Fighting:

Even after 27 February 1945, the Japanese officers and men continued brave resistance, staying in the caves around Taman-Iama, Moto-Iama, Man Buraku, Kita Buraku and Hyoryuboka. The US forces, committing their tanks and artillery guns and using newly landed army air forces, moved step by step, ploughing the ground and gradually tightening their ring. On the other hand they began to suggest surrendering.

Let's see the battle situation through telegraphs:

- (1) Tan San Report #306 (Tan San means "The 10th Division Staff Office")
At 0750, 4 March 45, Iwo Jima (Via Chichi Jima)
To Vice-Chief of Staff, IJA

The enemy has finally come to some parts of Motoyama Airfield (#2 airfield) and North Airfield (#3 airfield). Thus, our systematical resistance has come to have some gaps. In addition, the enemy's attacks against other defense positions have increased (Note: At this time the enemy committed the 3rd Marine Division to the front line).

Our forces are trying every effort to annihilate the enemy. But we have already lost most of our guns and tanks, and two thirds of our officers. We may have some difficulties for our future battles. Particularly, now as our headquarters and communication center are exposed to the enemy's front line, we are afraid of a possibility of telegraphic interruption between our headquarters and Tokyo. Of course, every strongpoint may be able to work out delay battles for several more days. Even though the strong points are broken through by the enemy, the survivors may continue their last fight. Anyhow, from the fact that the enemy has almost achieved their main purpose

to occupy this island, we are very sorry that we could not have defended this island completely.

Now, I, Kuribayashi, believe that the enemy fighters would invade Japan proper from this island. Our country would be placed under the enemy plane wings. I am very sorry because I could imagine the disastrous scenes in our Imperial land. However, I comfort myself a little, seeing my officers and men die without any regret after struggling inch by inch-in land battles against the overwhelming enemy with many tanks, exposing them to the indescribable bombardments.

Although I am just before death, I calmly pray to God for a good future for my mother country. Upon the big change of battle situation, considering the telegraphic interruption, I, here, apologize to my seniors and fellow members that my power was too small to stop the enemy's invasion.

I remember the old the old war history:

Although Generals Mune and Taira, officers, men and their families were totally killed when they met the Mongolian Invasion, resulting in losing Iki and Tsushima Islands between Honshu and Korea, the Japanese army could win the battle at Tataru Beach in Kyushu, making the God's Japan safe. Believing that my mother country would never go to ruin, my soul would always assault the mean enemy and defend the Imperial land permanently.

Please see our battle instructions and opinions sent through telegraphs. If they are good for modification of the military tactics and training plans I should be pleased.

Chichi Jima and Haha Jima garrisons would be strong, utilizing the terrain. But I suggest that the 109th division headquarters be reestablished on Chichi Jima and place a brigade headquarters on Haha Jima.

At last I hereby thank my seniors and fellow members again for their

kind help during my life.

I add here that we could get along with our navy until the last moment.

Good—bye, T. Kuribayashi

- (2) Tan San Report #329
At 2300, 5 March 45, Iwo Jima (Via Chichi Jima)
To Vice-Chief of Staff, IJA

The fatal blows came upon us from air and sea. Against this small island the enemy gave serious naval gun-fire with 2 battle ships, 5 heavy cruisers, 10 light cruisers and 40 destroyers. The enemy used at least 400 naval guns on the above ships. How serious the firing was nobody could describe. Particularly, the enemy fired, aiming at our important areas and positions through the expert target control of observation planes. Even at night the enemy continued.

Up to date about 300, 000 rounds would have been fired. Most of our beach positions, main positions and many facilities were destroyed by this firing.

The air superiority of the enemy is absolute and conclusive, and one day there were more than 1,600 sorties. From dawn to dusk there is no gap to lack any aircraft in the sky. There are always 100-230 fighters, and they can strafe or bomb against any targets at anytime. During daytime, they can not only pin our troops down but the enemy ground forces can infiltrate through our weak points making their tanks spearheads under the air protection.

Our forces can not take any counter methods under these circumstances, losing gradually any and all guns. We are forced to fight the enemy with only our rifles and hand-grenades

This might be though “our grievance,” but as it is exactly true I dare report this to you.

- (3) Tan San Report #430
At 10:00, 17 March 45, Iwo Jima (Via Chichi Jima)

To Vice-Chief of Staff, IJA

The enemy troops in the North Sector have been attacking our strong points since this morning. Their spear-heads are tanks.

The enemy troops now are attacking with flame-throwers against our divisional Headquarters and Naval Headquarters. There are close and desperate fights.

To date the enemy's casualties mounted to 33,000 men. Our present strength at this time was about 500 troops in the northern sector and about 500 troops in the eastern sector.

(4) Tan San Report #427

At 17:25, 18 March 1945, Iwo Jima (Via Chichi Jima)

To Chief of Staff, IJA

The battle is approaching the end.

Since the enemy's landing, the bravery of the officers and men under my command would make even the Gods weep.

In particular, I am pleased that our troops have continued a series of desperate fights against the enemy at sea, in the air and on land; despite being overwhelmed by material superiority, we have fought with little more than our empty hands.

However, my men died one after another, and I am very sorry that I have let the enemy occupy one part of Japanese Territory.

There is no more ammunition and no more water. All survivors must now go out for a banzai charge.

As I think of my debt of gratitude to my country, I have no regrets.

Unless this island is retaken, Japan will never be safe, I believe. I sincerely hope my soul will be a spear-head for the future renewed attack.

Praying to God for the final victory and safety of our mother country,

let me say “Good-Bye” everlastingly.

About Chichi Jima and Haha Jima Garrisons. Although I believe they would hold their islands firmly against any enemy attempts, I hope you do them a favor. At least let them read some of my poor poems.

With no longer any ammunitions,
Very sad for me to leave this world,
Failing to achieve my important duty for the mother country.

I could never rot in the fields,
Unless my soul would take vengeance.
I would like to take up arms
Even to the seventh life

I worry about what would happen on the future of Japan,
When weeds would grow up on this island.

General Attack Order:

General Kuribayashi issued the following general order to the surviving warriors at 05:50 hours, 17 March:

.The battle is coming to the final phase.
Our garrison will make a general attack against the enemy tonight.
The starting time will be 00:01 hours, 18 March 1945
Each unit will go out of the present position at 00:01 hours, 18 March
1945 against the facing enemy. Everybody will fight until the last
moment. Nobody will worry about himself.
I will be always at the head of our troops.

Lt. General Kuribayashi

The Imperial Japanese Headquarters made arrangements to broadcast the Iwo Jima song all over Japan through NHK (Japanese Broadcast Corporation), starting at 00:01 hours, 18 March 1945 to extend the peoples thankfulness to the surviving fighters.

On the morning of 17 March 1945, I sent the following telegraph to General Kuribayashi :

“Being unable to fallow you my heart is breaking.

Major Y. Horie.”

I became spiritless, and I could not do anything but feel sorry.

Last Telegraphs from Iwo Jima:

During the night, 17 March 1945, I was ordered by Tokyo to communicate with Iwo Jima in order to notify General Kuribayashi that he had been promoted to the rank of a full general as of 17 March 1945. I wanted to reach the general before it was too late. But unfortunately, there was no answer. I ordered my radio men to continue calling Iwo Jima on the 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 March. I did so expecting a miracle. But Iwo Jima radio never answered.

At 0800 hours, 23 March 1945, I gave up my attempt to reach the Iwo Jima Radio Station. While I was trying to ride my horse out for defense position inspection, one of my radio men ran toward me and said to me breathlessly, “Major Horie! Iwo Jima answered!”

I cancelled my inspection plan, and told the radio man to send the promotion news to Iwo Jima immediately. I went to the Chichi Jima radio center.

The radio man of Iwo Jima was too urgent to send the accumulated telegraphs to us and did not try to receive any of our telegraphs. Iwo Jima radio sent the following telegraphs continuously. I wept and wept. I could not stop weeping as I thought of the radio man who was urgent to send the last telegraphs just before his death.

(Note: after WW II, I heard from one of the survivors that the radio man did not receive any telegraphs from us because the code-books had been burnt already).

Telegraphs received from Iwo Jima after 23 March 1945:

Situation at 1200 hours, 21 March 1945

- I. At 0001, 18 March I left the division headquarters. I gathered all the survivors of the 145th Infantry Regiment, South Sector, North Sector, East Sector and West Sector at the western area of Kita Buraku. We are still fighting. The strength under my command now is about 400.
- II. The enemy siege us on 18 and 19 March, and come toward us with tanks and flame throwers. Particularly, some of the enemy troops were trying to reach the entrances of our shelter with some explosives.

Situation at 1300 hours, 21 March:

- III. 20 and 21 March we were still fighting.
- IV. The distance between the enemy's front line and our shelter is 200 – 300 meters. Some tanks were attacking us.
- V. The enemy suggested us to surrender through a loud speaker. But our officers and men just laughed and paid no attention.
(Note: Using some Nisei, Koreans and captives, the U.S. forces announced, "General Kuribayashi, don't you think that the soldiers are pitiful? Surrender them please. ...Here, we have good fresh water. We will give you medical treatment too.")

Situation at 09100 hours, 22 March:

The naval headquarters came in our shelter and joined us at 16 March.

Situation at 1000 hours, 22 March:

General Kuribayashi and his men are still fighting. Officers and men continued fighting for 5 days without having any food or water. But our fighting spirit is still running high. We are going to fight bravely to the last.

Around 1700 hours, 23 March 1945, our radio crackled and caught the following message from one radio man of Iwo Jima:

"All officers and men of Chichi Jima, Good-bye."

Silence.

I wept again. I had never wept because of having been scolded. Nor had

I wept because of difficulties of my duty. But I failed to stop weeping when I read the radio man's good-bye message. Tears, tears and tears. Not only myself, but also his fellow members at Chichi Jima Radio Station wept, saying, "Oh, the last moment came on them!" Corporal Kawajiri and Cadets Oyama and Hiroishi of the Code Unit wept too.

I expected to get the second miracle, and ordered the Chief of the radio station to intercept any and all messages on 24-hour basis for 3 days, every 30 minutes for 3 days and every 1 hour for 3 days. But, no message came from Iwo Jima. Ah!

The Last Moment of General Kuribayashi

About the last moment of the general, I have heard many stories from many sources, including some U.S. Marines.

Former Major Omoto, who used to be the Senior Adjutant to the general and flew to Tokyo on 3 February 1945 on official duty and missed the battle on Iwo Jima, recently gave me a letter. He mentioned about this subject.

According to him, the various stores were obtained about the last moment from the survivors after the end of WW II. Let me pick up the main part of his letter here:

"General Kuribayashi was very strict in the military discipline. He was punctual, and was a man of action. But he was also warm-hearted. He always inspected every corner of the island and remembered the terrain very well. He directed how to organize and fortify the defense positions. He used to have some cigarettes given by the Emperor in his face and brush his teeth with a cup of water.

The officers and men of the division headquarters produced some vegetable and sent it to the kitchen. The leaves of the sweet potato grew up throughout the year. The general liked to eat the boiled new leaves, putting some soy source on them.

About the last moment of the general, many stories have been told by

many survivors. It seemed to be true that he died on 27 March 1945. According to one sergeant who was always with him, the general was wounded on one of his legs and had inconvenience in walking, and on the morning of 27 March he committed suicide along with Col. Takaishi, Chief of Staff, and Lt. Col. Nakane, Operation Staff. ...This seems to be true.”

Well, I have mentioned above about the objective circumstances concerning Iwo Jima campaign. About actual battles, I had better yield to the stories of some survivors.

Memoirs by Three Survivors (Captured by U.S. Marines)

Memoirs by Lt. K. Musashino, commanding officer of the pioneer Company, 2nd Mixed Brigade

Heavy casualties coming from a series of banzai charge:

During the night, 15-16 February 1945, the enemy vessels enveloped Iwo Jima with several rings, and serious air strikes and severe naval gun-fire began. Hundreds of aircraft in the sky and hundreds of naval guns on the sea shook this small island. Vessels on the horizontal line looked just like big mountain ranges.

On 19 February 1945 the enemy started landing. Soon desperate battles developed at Minami Buraku, Jinetsuga-Hara, 1st airfield and the skirt of Mt. Suribachi. The 135 pill-boxes that had been constructed at the South beach and many coast gun positions under the command of 1st Lt. Matsuo were swept

away by the enemy bombardment before the landing. These pill-boxes were completely useless. The enemy troops around Jinetsuga-hara and Chidori Buraku were pinned down for 2 days by our fire.

General Kuribayashi had ordered us to get in the enemy's pockets in order to avoid his bombardment. Capt. Nakagome's troops and Lt. Taki's troops at Jinetsuga-Hara developed a series of close battles and most of them were annihilated on 22 February. They were trodden mainly by the tanks.

At noon, 23 February, Mt. Suribachi Sector troops commanded by Col. Atsuji were raided by general attacks of the enemy. They went out for a banzai charge.

At night the colorful flare bombs shot by the enemy guns made every tree and every grass clear just like as it was during daytime.

On 23 February 1945, all of our defense positions located south of Minami Buraku were destroyed by the enemy and the 1st Airfield became a wide tank-gathering area. Our defenders who lost their positions went out for banzai charges into the enemy in succession, raising a battle-cry, and no one returned.

After the enemy landed, 20-30 teams of infiltration warriors went into the enemy, but it was true that little success was obtained, and none of them returned.

On the evening of 23 February, the enemy with some tanks ahead assaulted the defense positions at Minami Buraku commanded by Capt. Awatsu. The caves were destroyed by the enemy's explosives. The enemy troops accompanied by some tanks advanced, using some flame throwers, while the naval gun-fire and air strikes supported them. The anti-tank trenches and fox-holes that our forces had prepared were useless against the enemy tactics. Thus, our defense plan to stop the advance of the enemy around Minami Buraku became hopeless.

The air-sea-land cooperation of the enemy before us was too overwhelming for me to describe it, while our disastrous situation was out of question.

Abreast of Capt. Awatsu's battalion there had been five companies of Japanese navy troops (with every company commanded by an army officer) at a part of Minami Buraku plateau. They were trodden within 10 minutes, and the survivors evacuated north. By the evening of 23 February, one third Iwo Jima had fell in the enemy's hands. Our telephone lines were cut down everywhere, and there was no way to repair them. The duty of orderlies became very important, but very many orderlies could not return. They were killed on their way.

My air-raid shelter had been strongly constructed. There were 11 entrances. The shelter had been linked with defense positions, and the camouflage of them was very good. I was proud of my shelter and positions, saying that they were strongest on Iwo Jima. The trenches between the positions had a zigzag shape. The enemy troops who met the serious resistance in front of my positions by-passed us, and advanced toward Tamana-Yama positions where the 2nd Mixed Brigade command post was located. The enemy troops having many tanks ahead, attacked Tamana-Yama, under the protection by the air strikes and naval gun-fire. The garrison forces of Tamana-Yama resisted desperately, and the casualties of our forces and enemy forces mounted very high.

The main forces of the battery of the Brigade Artillery at the western plateau of Tamana-Yama under the command of 1st Lt. Hirota, one machine gun battalion located around Byobu-Iwa under the command of Major Kawasaki and the Brigade reserve (Strength of about one infantry battalion) defending Tamana-Yama under the command of Major Anso had been killed in action by 6 March 1945.

7 March 1945 Maj. General Senda, Commander of the 2nd Mixed Brigade, seeing the battle situation, decided to make a banzai charge.

8 March 1945 Senda reported to General Kuribayashi through radio that he would like to go out with his surviving troops for a banzai charge. Against this, Kuribayashi issued the following order immediately:

“Cancel your banzai charge.”

But Senda’s determination was strong, and he did not obey the above order. On 8 March Senda issued the following order:

2nd Mixed Brigade General Attack Order

The enemy has been pushing us.

The Brigade will go out of the present positions at 1800 hours, 9 March 1945, attack the enemy, and advance toward Mt. Suribachi.

Major Anso’s troops will be on the right, 1st Lt. Musashino’s troops will be on the center, and Akagi’s troops (including 1st Lt. Sohma’s company) will be on the left front. Every unit will advance toward Mt. Suribachi to the last.

Every gun of the howitzers, rockets, etc. will start firing at 1800 hours, 9 March 1945 and protect the advance of the front line troops.

I will be always ahead of our forces.

Major General Senda

REMARKS: Major General Senda told every officer to suggest the wounded personnel to commit suicide in front of their commander before the commencement of the banzai charge.

Hand-grenades were given to the wounded:

Officers understood the feeling of General Senda. But it was very hard for them to suggest the wounded subordinates to commit suicide in front of them. Because these subordinates had worked for them just like their children or younger brothers for a long time.

Finally, officers agreed not to tell the wounded subordinates about the suicide but to tell them about their departure for a general attack, to explain to them that they would not be able to see them any more, and to give one hand-grenade to every wounded person. When they received the hand-grenades, tears came out of their faces under the candle light. I felt pitiful for them more than for the healthy soldiers. In the shelter there was no longer rice, nor water, and nobody could go out for hunting water. Only the same number of the wounded and hand-grenades were left there.

(Note: We were very jealous of the enemy using the canned water)

As I stood outside the shelter, I faced toward my shrine in Kyushu, Japan, and prayed to my god for extending his help to the wounded personnel.

Banzai Charge of the 2nd Mixed Brigade Began:

At 1800 hours, 9 March 1945, the firing of the Japanese and U.S. forces was serious. The enemy had provided barbed wires, loud-speakers and some cables (Japanese army used to call them piano lines) to the defense line. If any thing would touch the cables a kind of flame would develop. Flare bombs were making the ground brighter than during daytime, and hundreds of machine guns began firing.

Our troops dug the ground under the barbed wires with scoops and charged against the enemy. But they suffered heavy casualties and there was no control over the troops. It seemed that most of the attackers were killed around the line between Byobu-Iwa and Minami Buraku.

This general attack was over at dawn of 10 March 1945, leaving several

hundred corpses including General Senda's. Senda had put one white band on which a rising sun had been marked on his head, wearing socks and cloth-gaiters. He had his sword on his waist and a hand-grenade in this hand. He had advanced ahead of the right front line troops. It has been said that he was killed in action at the southern corner of Byobu-Iwa.

When he issued his order of the general attack on the evening of 8 March he had dressed the same. After he read the order, he asked the officers to drink a cup of water for a toast. Then he said, "Many thanks for your effort. Let's meet again at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo."

Guerrilla Activities:

The general attack of the 2nd Mixed Brigade was over at dawn on 10 March 1945. But around Jinetsuga-Hara there were many commander less officers and men. As individuals, they traveled hither and thither without any specific idea. Day and night, the sounds of guns and rifles were heard everywhere. The area south of Minami Buraku was covered by hundreds of the enemy tents. The terrain had been completely changed. There were many shell holes. The former plain fields became mountains and valleys. We could not recognize any direction. At night thousands of stars shined in the sky peacefully. During daytime we hid ourselves in some broken caves and wandered in the field, hopelessly at night. Two men followed me at Jinetsuga-Hara. We were always silent and none of us had any spirit to speak up. If I sat on the ground, they sat, and if I walked, they followed me. We could depend upon nothing but the water in our canteens. These two men were killed by the enemy's fire on the night of 13 March, then I traveled alone. On the evening of 14 March, I met a soldier called "Kurata", when I knew that we were in front of my old air-raid shelter. As I removed the stone door of the

entrance, I heard some Japanese talking in it. When I said, “Nogi,” someone replied with the answer “Togo”.

(Note: Nogi is the name of a famous general and Togo is the name of a famous admiral in the Russo-Japanese War. These were used for passwords).

As I entered the shelter, I found 1st Lt. Solma, Doctor Benitani, 1st Lt. Kawai, Warrant Officer Mashiko, Master. Sgt. Takano and about 80 army and navy men. Lt. Sohma had been charge of them, but after I joined I took over the command. None of us were healthy. Every night several teams consisting of several members went into the enemy positions to get water and food. Every time some of them were killed, and the population of this shelter decreased night after night. This shelter had been by-passed by the enemy, and Kita Buraku area became full of the enemy troops.

Ah! “Iwo Jima” What for were you born? Since you became the territory of Japan it is 70 years. What have you done? You just offered a place for the 30,000 dead. What an island of tragedy you are!

Later, I learned from one of the wanderers of the 145th Infantry Regiment that the Regimental Flag was burnt by order of Col. Ikeda, Regimental Commander, on the evening of 17 March 1945, and the survivors of the regiment went out for a banzai charge.

General Kuribayashi General Attack Order:

The battle of the whole island came to the last phase on 17 March 1945. General Kuribayashi issued the general attack order of the day. He could gather about 800 men, consisting of the survivors of 145th Infantry Regiment, Major Hakuta’s battalion, Oka’s troops, etc. including naval personnel.

Later, I heard the following stories:

“Just before issuing the general attack order, the general had been singing some poems. Then he told the officers and men that as hungry men could not fight; all remaining water and foods should be consumed before the departure for a banzai charge. At 0001 hours, 18 March 1945, the general and 800 men went out of their shelters and advanced toward the #3 airfield. Most of them including the general were killed at dawn, 18 March 1945.”

The general had anticipated this situation before WW II. Right after he arrived at Iwo Jima, he told me as follows:

“The Japanese war planners have not paid any attention to the real American situation. Even though I explain it to them they cannot understand. Even with a favorable view, Japan could never win the war in the Pacific against the United States.”

Tell This Disastrous Status to the Japanese People:

During the banzai charge, Major Yoshida, Fortification Staff, was ordered by the general as follows:

“You stay on this island and get a chance to go to Japan in order to tell the disastrous situation of Iwo Jima to the people.”

Joining the individual travelers, Major Yoshida was looking for a chance to get out of this island.

In the middle part of May 1945, he, with one naval engineer, tried to get on one of the US aircraft parked at the #3 airfield to fly over to Japan. But before taking off he was discovered by the enemy and was shot to death.

Not only Major Yoshida but many other men tried to get out of Iwo Jima. There were 50 or 60 rafts ashore the east coast. Very many officers and men tried to get off of this island by these rafts made of logs. Nobody succeeded because they tried to use these rafts only in cases of bad weather in order to avoid the watch by the enemy.

Battle Continued Even After the General Kuribayashi Banzai Charge:

I believe that there were at least 3,000 officers and men even after the death of General Kuribayashi. Each unit had been disorganized, and individuals made some groups.

Hostilities were carried out by each group with no control.

By 19 April 1945, my group had increased up to about 230 men. Even myself, group commander, could not know the exact number of my group's members because it changed every night.

Our Shelter Was Filled with Flame on 19 April 1945:

On 19 April, as soon as one US Marine approaching toward our shelter was shot to death, the enemy came to open the entrances of our shelter, and poured aviation gasoline into it; then the enemy used some flame throwers. Our shelter got suddenly a vast fire-ball, and the flame expanded very quickly. Our shelter converted to the hell of bloodshed and the lives of about 150 men were taken away in a minute. I did not know any words enough to describe the situation. Only about 70 men could save themselves from death. They were those who were making an additional shelter and some suffered burns.

Determination of Death:

On 21 April 1945, in the additional shelter we decided to go out for a banzai charge. I made a speech as follows:

“You fellows and I have done best for more than one year for the defense of this island. But now every thing is over. Your distinguished service will everlastingly remain in the Japanese history. The day before yesterday about 150 fellow members were killed. I believe that now the enemy must try to mop us up. We might not be able to live very long,. We had better go out and die in the fresh air. We do not like to show our dirty

shape. But we cannot do any more at present. Let's go out for a banzai charge. Every one will act free. One thing I have to tell you. Any one who could survive will tell this disastrous status to the Japanese people. Good-by."

1st Lt. Kawai, Doctor Benitani and five more soldiers did not agree with me and remained in the shelter.

Getting out of the Shelter:

Around 2200 hours, 21 April 1945, 1st Lt. Taki and I went out of the shelter first. In front of the shelter there were hundreds of the enemy tents, and above the shelter there was the enemy airfield. I knew that Warrant Officer Mashiko and M/Sgt. Takano came out of the shelter after us, but they did not follow us. When I thought that about ten men had come out of the shelter, the enemy started firing at the shelter. Probably many members were killed just outside the shelter.

Lt. Taki and I walked toward the east coast. On our way we met about ten Japanese soldiers. They knew only about themselves. When we arrived at the east coast it dawned and we could no longer move. We entered a cave and awaited all night. M/Sgt. Takano, with five or six soldiers, came to the east coast, too. When it dawned they hid themselves behind a rock. But they were discovered by the enemy and were shot to death, it was learned later. Warrant Officer Mashiko was seemed to have been killed right after he got out of the shelter. Mashiko was fifty-three and Takano was thirty years old. Mashiko was good in composition and when he was young he used to be a grammar school teacher. He was a man of good character. He liked sake (Japanese wine) very much. So even now when I drink sake I offer a cup of sake to Mashiko's soul first. Takano was born at Kanda in Tokyo and used to run a taxi service. He could drive a car by himself He was very good in letter painting and was obedient to his parents.

It was true that Capt. Ohtsuka and 1st Lt. Watanabe were alive up to the middle part of May 1945. They were heavily wounded at the banzai charge of the 2nd Mixed Brigade and were evacuated to an air-raid shelter. At the middle part of May they exchanged “Good-bye” with fellow members of the shelter and went out of it.

It was learned later that they told some fellows that they would die after washing their bodies at the east coast beach, but nobody could see them after that time. Captain Ohtsuka came from Kanto Garrison in Machuria as the commanding officer of the Independent Pioneer Company. Lt. Watanabe was one of my platoon commanders. He was a graduate of Tokyo University and used to be a high ranking official in the Imperial Forest Bureau.

Lt. Kawai and Doctor Benitani committed suicide on 21 June 1945 with four soldiers.

1st Lt. Asada (Pioneer) showed an outstanding example of the Japanese tradition. He was heavily wounded at the banzai charge which was held on 12 March 1945 at Mr. Suribachi. Then he lived up to 12 May. In the meantime the US Marines suggested he surrender several times. On 13 May 1945 he left the following letter addressing to Adm. Spurance and committed suicide together with Sgt (Pioneer) Kameda and several soldiers:

13 May 1945

“To : Adm. Spurance, USN

“From: 1st Lt. Shinji Asada, Japanese Army

Thank you very much for your kindness. We received Gratefully Your cigarette and canned stuff. We are sorry that we cannot accept Your surrender suggestion due to the traditional custom of the old Japanese samurai. No more water and no more food. At 0400 hours, 13 May 1945, all of us would commit suicide to go to paradise.

Good-bye.”

I heard later the above story from one soldier while I was wandering in the field.

1,500 Japanese Travelers:

Lt. Taki and I continued a cave life at a plateau in the east coast. The enemy put an explosive in our cave and we suffered from yellow phosphor. I wished to kill myself using a hand-grenade, but Taki persuaded me not to do so. The enemy began hunting the Japanese survivors, following the trails of their socks. The enemy exploded the cave entrances having trails of socks.

It seemed that the enemy thought that the Japanese survivors might be suffocated by blocking these entrances. But as there were some scoops or shovels in every cave the survivors could make some exits by this equipment.

By the middle part of May 1945 there were still more than 1,500 Japanese travelers, I believe. There were no more systematic battles. Individuals just continued hunting water and food. Every body worried just about himself.

During night time whenever we might go to the places where we expected water we would see some Japanese travelers. As every body disposed his human waste just like animals, the caves became dirty like hell. During day time they slept under cover and at night they became thieves or burglar. When we met, everybody would tell about his own hard life, and hours would pass easily. Then every one would start again his hopeless traveling. Lt. Taki always said, "Let's die at the same time." At the nights of moon light, I particularly felt sad. Watching the moon I used to count the age of my son or think of my wife's face.

One night, under the limpid moon light, Taki and I, hiding ourselves

behind a rock, were sinking into deep thoughts. Accidentally we found two big green clozas. They were about one foot high. Probably some troops grew them. We ran to the green, ate, ate and ate them up. We thanked to God. To taste was wonderful. We thought that we could last 4 or 5 more days. Suddenly two men approached toward us. They were Lt. Sohma and one more soldier. We four members embraced each other, wept and laughed. Mutually we had thought that the other members had gone to paradise.

Lt. Sohma said, “Now the Imperial Japanese Headquarters would commit any and all aircraft and naval vessels plus the budget of 70 billion yen for counter attack to Iwo Jima. I could cooperate with the counter-attack. I have Grade #5 for Fencing.”

(Author’s note:

Author heard from a lady who evacuated from Saipan (then she Was 12 years old) that in Saipan the Japanese officers, men and Civilians were always talking that as Japan was a divine country The reinforcement would come without fail, tomorrow the Combined Fleet would come to rescue them.)

Soon after his story finished, he and his fellow man went to a cave. Unfortunately they were buried alive by some enemy’s explosives.

Major Maeda, an artillery battalion commander, had been alive until the later part of May 1945, I later heard. One night Taki and I went to his big shelter located north of Tamana-Yama. There were some Japanese machine guns at the entrance of the shelter and they fired any time when they heard any sound of foot-step (regardless of the Japanese or Americans). We could not get in the shelter. Major Maeda was a 47th Military Academy graduate and came from Kanto Garrison in Manchuria. He was respected by his men. His artillery battalion inflicted heavy loss on the enemy at Jinetsuga-Hara, but he talked about other people’s distinguished service only.

The 2nd Mixed Brigade Shelter Filled with Smell of the Dead:

On the night, 8-9 June 1945, Taki and I trudged to the old Brigade shelter.

We decided to stay here one night. We wept, remembering the face of the late General Senda. We walked to the former General Senda's command post. The whole shelter was filled with many corpses. Hundreds of dead bodies were still keeping their shape. Black hair was still growing from so many kinds of dead bodies' heads. Thousands of big black flies were flying. The late fellow members worried about their mother country and finally they died, giving three "Banzai!" for the Emperor. Forgetting wives and children, they devoted themselves to the country. To begin with, a war is a struggle between some countries' privileged classes and others'. We, officers and men, were just brought for their service. I believe that all of the Japanese people should be generous enough for the perished people's souls.

Became a Prisoner of War:

Taki and I stayed in this shelter three nights. On the evening of 11 June 1945 we left this shelter, after saluting the perished people's souls. We made our mind to get out of this island by a raft. As we passed through the enemy tents, Taki told me to go to a shelter of which he had known to get some dried bread. To reach the shelter we had to pass under the enemy's barbed wire. We crawled toward the barbed wire. Soon we drew the enemy machine gun fire. After about 30 minutes the machine gun firing ceased, when Taki cried. I crawled about ten meters to reach Taki. Oh! What a sad pose Taki had changed to! He drew some bullets to his head and bleeding was serious. I wept and regretted that I had not been killed with him. But I could not stay with his dead body. I left there for the east coast. I no longer had any fearfulness.

12 June 1945, I hid myself under a rock at the east coast. I had no

sword, nor hand-grenades anymore.

13 June 1945, I made up my mind to kill myself by starving. There were some banana trees in a small valley. I lay under a rock covered by these trees. 16 June 1945 I was almost just before dying. I could not move even an inch any more. I was just in a dream.

Accidentally, I noticed a dog scratching the ground, when I saw so many US marines directing their rifles toward me. I closed my eyes. They put me in a blanket and took me to a field hospital.

Against my expectation, the American were very kind. They gave me not only medical treatment but much nutritious food. They gave me shots several times a day. As their treatment was good, serious patients recovered very quickly.

In Chidori Buraku they constructed a US grave-yard for 4,800 Americans and a grave-yard for 23,000 Japanese.

The number of the Japanese prisoners of war was 1,019 men.
(Author's note: Some US war histories shows the following figures:

Dead ... Japanese: A little under 19,000
Americans: 5,521
POW'S: Japanese: 1,125)

Letter to Wife of the Late Col. Nishi from Former 1st Lt. Yamazaki,
Survivor, 26th Tank Regiment.

No. 1 Unfortunate Battle:

In ancient times our ancestors said, "Bushido – The way of samurai-is to die." These words look beautiful but I think that they are too convenient for the upper class people.

For both of the survivors and the perished personnel, Iwo Jima was the worst battle field, I believe. Indifferent words such as "Bushido is to die" could not be applied there. The modern war does not allow such easy-going

words to exist. Heartless iron stands before the warriors. That is to say, the dying scene described in the poem “Bushido is to die” never exists in the modern wars.

When I remember your husband, I come not to be able to control my weeping. I do not weep because of his death. For he was the regimental commander and he died from his responsibility, I believe. The reason why I come to weep is that the battle field was too bad. Where, how, when, who died nobody knew. They just died by the roadside.

It is very sad for me to write these things to you. But it was true that Iwo Jima was different from other battle fields – In the other battle fields the soldiers could give medical treatment to the wounded personnel, talk about warm-hearted stories, write their wills, see friendship, etc. I wonder even if grasses and trees could grow at Iwo Jima in the future.

Our troops had been well-trained and performed their duty very well
Let me write about some battle situation:

On 8 March, Kashima’s company took the guns out of the cave and put them in the exposed positions. All of the company members were annihilated. The members of Company #1 (tank company commanded by Capt. Suzuki) were annihilated around Nidan-Iwa next day, 9 March. On the same day Capt. Saito’s tank company went out from attacks from the north coast, and all of the tanks were destroyed. A bullet penetrated Capt. Saito’s shoulder, and he joined the regimental headquarters. On 9 March officers who could come to Col. Nishi’s command post were Capt. Saito, Capt. Katayama, Capt. Nishimura (5days before the enemy landed he had made an emergency landing on Iwo Jima on his flying to Japan proper from Marcus Island, 2nd Lt. Yamashita, myself, Lt. Col. Suzuki and 1st Lt. Ohtani.

After 10 March 1945, we fought the infantry battle.

One day, as I could not go back to my company, I stayed at the

regimental headquarters. At that time Lt. Ohtani was investigating an American prisoner of war. In the meantime one navy engineering officer came in our headquarters. He had studied a bazooka gun. Under his leadership I fired this gun for the first time in my life. After this time I could fire this gun against the enemy tanks and machine guns everyday. Meanwhile Capt. Katayama and Lt. Ohtani were killed in action.

In order to receive the regimental orders I was at the regimental headquarters every day. The shelter was about 300 meters long. There were three floors. These floors were filled with the wounded personnel. There was only one lamp in the room of the regimental commander. About 50 blankets were hung at the curves of the shelter to protect it from the enemy's flame. The entrance of the shelter was discovered by the enemy. As it was attacked by the flame throwers and explosives, Col. Nishi suffered burns on his eyes. But he had no trouble for walking. After this time his adjutant was always with him.

One day (Probably, the day of General Kuribayashi's banzai charge), as our regiment could not stay in the shelter, we decided to go out of the shelter toward north. We took much time for saying "good-bye" to the wounded personnel. We left the following materials to every wounded person:

Food	3-day dried bread
Hand-grenade	8 each
Pistol	2 each
Water	None

We went out of the shelter around 2000 hours. I was the commander of the advanced guard company.

Soon we drew a volley from the plateau on the left, and I was wounded on my right thigh. Although Dector Kawashima was beside me, he went away to the main column body without seeing my wound. I alone continued walking and crawling north, having difficulties in walking.

I arrived at a cave in which there was Lt. Col. Suzuki. I was pleased to see him. I slept and slept for two days and two nights. Col. Suzuki woke me up and gave me two rice-balls. We could not stay there anymore. Suzuki and I went out of the cave and again began walking north. I had no power to walk. In the mean time I missed Suzuki. I became only one traveler again. I made my sword a stick. I had only the blade, having lost the scabbard. The blade went in the ground, and it was hard for me to pull it out. Finally I threw away the blade. There were still four hand-grenades with me. Where and when I should use these for suicide? I rather wished to die in the rain naturally.

It dawned. There was one man ahead of me. I shouted, "Ohi." The man was a Japanese soldier. He shouldered me and took me into a cave. There was a lamp in the cave. Some one put some sake in my mouth from a lunch-box type container. Soldiers were drinking sake. It was learned that the sake was found in this cave. Why did they give me sake? Because there was 1st Lt. Matsui, one of my class-mates.

Matsui carried me to his bed. I stayed there for four days. My recovery was comparatively good.

In bed, I heard many things. What happened at the regimental headquarters? Where was Col. Suzuki? Many people came in and went out.

Matsui was under the command of Major Hakuta. So I heard about the last moment of Hakuta from him. I also heard about Col. Suzuki there.

Then Matsui and myself changed caves twice. Lt. Yokoyama, commander of the 109th Division rocket gun company, was with us, I think. In the last cave I heard about the details of Col. Nishi's death. I also knew the death of General Kuribayashi. One staff officer tried to get out of Iwo Jima by raft. These things were all not interesting for me because I could not move at all.

I was just dreamily watching the mobile people.

Memoirs by former Sea Man 1st Class T. Koizumi, Hinode
Gun Position, East Sector

(Author's note: Mr. Koizumi's father used to be author's senior officer
In the 2nd Infantry Regiment. He was killed in action in
The Operational theatre in the Northern China in 1937)

Sent to Iwo Jima:

I was drafted by the navy on 13 July 1944, and was given basic training
at Yokosuka Naval Gun-Firing School.

On 20 October 1944, we, 100 sea-men, my class-mates in the above
school, left Yokosuka for Iwo Jima by a high speed naval ship under the
command of Ensign F. Kato. 23 October we arrived at Iwo Jima. We were
taken to Tamana-Yama tent area and placed under the command of Capt. S.
Inoue, Iwo Jima Naval Garrison Commander. Around 1500 hours, 23 October
I was bombed by on EB-29 for the first time in my life. After bombing, it
flew away. In the sky far away from Iwo Jima some zero fighters pursued it,
but, to my regret, some of them were shot down.

It was very hot, and I was surprised to know that there was no natural
water.

After 2 or 3 days, we were distributed to the naval garrison headquarters
and several naval gun positions. Ensign Kato was assigned to this headquarters
and I was ordered to be orderly for Ensign Kato.

Every day around 1500 hours some B-29's or B-24's raided this island
from the level of 8,000 or 10,000 meters. They used to bomb our airfields
only. Our anti-aircraft guns made every effort to shoot them down, but no
rounds reached them.

Assign to Hinode Gun Position:

On 1 November 1944 Ensign Kato and I were assigned to Hinode Gun Position in the East Sector. When we went to the position, I found that it was located on a cliff, and there had been some old members working for 10 25mm anti-aircraft guns. Ensign Kato became the Gun Position Commander, and the strength of the position was 30.

Soon after we arrived there, we drew the enemy air strikes and naval gun-fire. The naval gun-firing was very serious for me.

I was ordered to be a gunner of a 10 lb. gun. Our shelter was located under a cliff about 100 meters far from the gun position. Our tents were found near the shelter. The tents were under tree leaves. Beside each tent there were some drums in which rain water was being stored with the sign board installed – the sign read “No water will be used without permission of the Gun Position Commander.”

There were very many flies. We dined outdoors. Throughout the dining time we had to expel these flies with fans. Meals were made by Petty Officer C. Komatsuzaki everyday. Number one trouble was the air-raid during his cooking time. He had to put out fire immediately, stop cooking.

Our Hinode gun position used to be raided first by the enemy aircraft because most of them came over to Iwo Jima from the east coast.

After the beginning of December 1944, the enemy air sorties increased very much. They came to raid in the morning, afternoon and at night. As I had not taken bath since I arrived at Iwo Jima, one day I went to the beach and

washed my body with sea water including some sulphur.

On the day I saw the pictures of my parents, an amulet worn next to my skin, and a small round mirror given by my mother. To my surprise, I found that the mirror had been broken. It felt ominous, and I put the broken mirror in an ammunition box. Many people used to use the ammunition boxes as their desks for letter writing. In those days I was 24 years old. Although my father was killed in action in the Northern China in 1937, there were mother, two younger brothers and two younger sisters at home. So I wrote a letter per day to my family. My ammunition box had been penetrated by an enemy machine gun bullet at an air raid. This day I wrote a long letter, using some pieces of stationery with a bullet hole. There was not any shop (even one coffee shop was not there). So I sent all money which I had in my pocket to my mother (After WW II, my mother told me that she could know how serious the status of Iwo Jima had become when she saw my money order and the stationery with a bullet hole).

Soon the new year, 1945, came. The enemy air strikes became more and more serious. Only three or four zero-fighters stayed at the 1st airfield some times. It was very sad for us. Sometimes the enemy naval vessels visited for firing.

After 1 February, the air strikes, naval gun-fire, appearance of submarines of the enemy threatened us day after day and night after night. Face to face, we worried about the time of the enemy's invasion. On the other hand, it did not rain so long. This was a big headache, because the water storage was running shorter and shorter.

On 15 February 1945, we heard that our naval plane had discovered lots of enemy vessels moving north in the Central Pacific. I felt immediately that they would come to Iwo Jima. We became very busy. We inspected the 25mm machine guns. We carried food, water drums, etc. into the shelter,

reinforced the defense of the entrance of the shelter with sand-bags. We rearranged the camouflage of the shelter. Our shelter's size was as follows:

Height:	About 2 meters
Width:	About 1.5 meters
Length:	About 30 meters

Sulphur came up in the shelter, and we felt as if we were in a Turkish bath. During the night, 15-16 February 1945, except some guards all members including myself awaited the enemy in the shelter. Most of us could not sleep.

Enemy Naval Gun-Firing Began:

At dawn, 18 February I looked at the sea through the entrance of the shelter. About 4 kilometers off the shore, there were many war ships anchoring and arranging their guns against Iwo Jima. We could see many enemy personnel walking on the decks of the vessels. Hundreds of the landing crafts were covering the sea. Both of the enemy and the garrison forces had not fired even one round yet.

When the carrier-based aircraft started raiding against this island, the enemy naval guns also started firing. However, we had been ordered to await the enemy, without firing. The enemy naval gun-fire against the southern beach was beyond my description. We could see the situation clearly from the entrance of our shelter. While the enemy aircraft repeated diving against our defense positions.

Our anti-aircraft guns intensively fired at the hostile aircraft. In our (Ensign Kato's) positions, nobody was killed or injured.

At 0800 hours, 19 February 1945, when the big battle ship in front of our Hinode Gun Position started firing against Iwo Jima, every enemy vessel followed her. To my regret, there was no Japanese naval vessels, nor aircraft. It was fine, and the sea was calm. The hostile gun firing continued for about two and a half hours. The sounds of their air bombing and naval firing were very serious.

The enemy started landing around 1000 hours, I think. Some troops of our army started firing against the landed Marines and landing crafts with machine guns and howitzers. At this time the enemy planes were concentrated over the landing area. The US Marines having tanks ahead climbed up the sand in the southern beach. When the enemy front line advanced about 300 meters ashore, any and all Japanese weapons concentrated firing on the enemy. Many tanks broke down and Marines were pinned down. But the enemy continued the landing.

On the day our 25mm anti-aircraft machine guns at Hinode Gun Position fought against the enemy aircraft which were protecting the landing. There were no casualties and no damage for us. Because every gun had been put in a foxhole deeply dug, and it had been protected from the hostile naval gun-fire. But the trees and grasses around our gun positions were cleaned away by it.

Reconnaissance of the Enemy by Myself:

When it was dusk I was surprised to see the tremendous number of the empty cartridges scattered around my gun. We had been firing the gun dreamily.

Meanwhile, most of the enemy aircraft left, although a few rounds of naval gun-fire were being continued. Between the enemy vessels there were some light signals.

Most of the 1st airfield area had been occupied by the enemy. As a result, Mt. Suribachi Sector had been cut from the main portion of Iwo Jima. The enemy shot lots of illumination bombs and it was bright just like during daytime. All telephone lines had been cut off, and there was no way to contact the other units except for sending orderlies.

I was wondering why it became so quite – there were only a few aircraft in the sky, the enemy vessels fired only a few rounds and the landed troops were also quiet.

We quickly cleaned guns, placed some guards and went into our shelter. The enemy vessels started the usage of search-lights.

Suddenly Ensign Kato issued the following order to me:

“Sea-Man 1st Class Koizumi will take three men and Reconnoiter the enemy around the Southern Coast.”

We four members said, “Good-bye” to Ensign Kato and the other fellow members, exchanging cups of water. We went out of the shelter for the southern coast. On our way we were surprised to see big changes caused by the enemy bombardment on the ground.

Some enemy bullets passed over our heads. We walked, trying to avoid the enemy search-lights, and finally reached near the southern coast. Suddenly we saw a man standing in a fox-hole. He was indeed an enemy sentry. When I looked at him under the search-light, I knew that he was a tall Negro. He was mumbling and playing the trigger of his auto-rifle. Although we had some hand-grenades, considering of our duty, we decided to return without challenging any enemy. In the southern beach the enemy was very busy landing materials.

While hastening our return without detection, one of us was wounded by some shell splinters on our way. Fortunately we were passing through our army positions and many soldiers helped us. Eventually we carried the wounded person to an army shelter in which there was a doctor. Leaving him under the medical care of the army doctor, we came back to our shelter. Apologizing to Ensign. Kato for having got one fellow member wounded, I reported about the enemy. The enemy shells were falling hither and thither.

Close Attacks Against The Enemy Tanks:

On 20 February, the enemy air strikes and naval gun-fire became more intensive than yesterday. The entrance of our shelter was partially buried by

the explosion of a shell. We gunners of 10 anti-aircraft. guns continued shooting at the enemy carrier-based aircraft. I believe that we shot down 2 or 3 aircraft.

Around 1600 hours, one big war ship was firing, and we saw many crew members walking on the deck, Finally we volleyed at this war ship. In turn, our gun positions were volleyed by this war ship. As their firing was so intensive that Ensign Kato ordered us to retreat to the shelter.

After dusk, we went to the gun positions. To our surprise, all of the guns had been destroyed.

After this time we turned to night infiltration attacks against mainly tanks. We performed the close attacks to the tanks every night.

One time when I was pinned down by the hostile rifle firing, I further suffered the hostile flame thrown by an enemy tank on my feet.

Several nights later, we received an order from Capt. Inoue, navy garrison commander, through an orderly to come to join his headquarters.

Nobody knew about the new location of his headquarters. At first, being directed by the orderly, we, in several groups, walked avoiding the enemy search-lights. But later our group lost contact with the orderly. We, 6 or 7 men, came into the enemy-occupied area. There were seen many friendly dead bodies in the fox-holes and behind rocks. Once we met barbed wire, and then we drew the hostile machine gun-fire. Then we came to an old Japanese trench. There were lots of dead bodies. Finally we, 6 men including Lt. (J.G.) S. Ito, Kamiyamna Gun Position Commander (Membership had been changed), trudged to a quite big shelter located in the North Sector (Probably).

This shelter was about 70 meters long, having 2 or 3 entrances. We found some water in a drum, some rice and some mess kits. Immediately we cooked rice and ate it. It was a long time since we ate rice.

We stayed in this shelter for several days, and every night we went out of this shelter to look for friendly troops. Day after day we come to see more and

more enemy sentries and barbed wires everywhere. We turned out to be thieves at night. We looked for food and weapons every night. We tried to collect some cables to build some rafts. But it was very difficult to find enough cables.

One day two Marines came in the entrance of our shelter with a flash light. We waited for them to approach. We were ready to throw hand-grenades. But when we threw some hand-grenades, they fled quickly, leaving the flash light.

Later, a group of several Marines came to the entrance and fired auto-rifles. We stayed in the side caves with silence. Looking face to face, we thought that this might be our last time.

Announcement by the enemy: "We will put some suffocation gas into your shelter."

My feet suffered from the enemy flame several nights ago swelled up. Particularly the heat in the shelter was bad for my feet. I felt painful very much, and I had difficulties in walking. I wanted rather to go out with a hand-grenade for a banzai charge. But, Lt. (J.G.) Ito persuaded me not to do so, saying, "Don't hasten for death." Silence.

The firing of the enemy auto-rifles ceased. Then the enemy started the following announcement through a loud speaker, with a special Japanese accent, "We don't kill you. Come out." Silence. Then in good Japanese (Probably a prisoner of war was used), the enemy said "We go back for lunch. By the time we come back here, consider about your future."

We looked out of the entrance and were surprised to see many enemy tents about 100 meters far from this shelter.

We talked each other face to face, and we decided that we would get out of this shelter after dusk and go to the east coast for the purpose of getting out of Iwo Jima by some rafts.

The enemy came back, and they announced that they would put some

suffocation gas into our shelter. Red smoke came in. We moved to the central entrance. Fortunately here was good ventilation, and we were not affected by this red smoke. With fearfulness we awaited the night coming.

Around 2200 hours we got out of the shelter and hastened toward the east coast. Illumination bombs sporadically shot, looking now for us just like some fire-works. We succeeded in arriving at the east coast. We hurried in a raft-making, and actually we made a rough one. Six men pushed it into the Pacific, but tough breakers pushed it back immediately. Already it had dawned.

We gave up the raft project, and entered one old Japanese pill-box linked with a cave. To our surprise, there was Lt. Itabashi alone in the pill-box. We were pleased, embracing each other. Tears, tears and tears. The sun rose.

It was 17 May 1945. The worst day came, I thought. Because several Marines were approaching toward this pill-box, talking to each other. Probably they paid attention to our trials. They put some stones into our pill-box, crying aloud. We could not understand them. Then they threw a hand-grenade toward the pill-box. But the hand-grenade was stopped by a stone located just in front of the entrance of the pill-box. However, at the moment of explosion of the hand-grenade, Lt. Itabashi committed suicide with his pistol. The Marines did not come in, but they went away. We buried the body of the late Lt. Itabashi under the pill-box.

When night came we started a move again. Lt. (J.G.) Ito shouldered me and went in a cave – the size was about one tatami room. The other four men entered another cave. They were cheerful indeed. They started singing war songs. We could see the enemy tents which had been installed under our eyes. Four members did not see the tent, they said.

Prisoner of War:

At dawn Lt. Ito told me to tell the other fellows to stop singing, when we heard some sounds of foot-steps. Suddenly some hand-grenades were

thrown into their cave, and their song-singing stopped. On the other hand, we were not aware that there had been a hole in the ceiling of our cave, and Lt. Ito was shot to death. I tried to pull out the safety-on of my hand-grenade, but it was rusty and one of my teeth was broken. I had still Yamato-Damashii (Japanese traditional spirit), but I had no weapons but one rusty hand-grenade in my right hand. I was just leaning against the rock-wall. Soon one marine shouldered me and took me to his tent. My life as a Japanese sea-man ended on 18 May 1945. The US Marines gave me medical treatment for my burnt feet. One bottle of red colored tablets (Bitamin) was given. Then I was put in the camp for the Japanese prisoners of war. The camp was a 50m x 50m square. In the camp there were two tents. At every corner of the camp there was a tower on which there was a machine gun. When I was taken to the camp there had been 22 men. So when I was added, the number of the Japanese prisoners of war in the camp became 23. There, I heard from one of prisoners that the total number of the prisoners up to that date was about 1,000. Already two ships took the main power of the prisoners of war to some places. One day one US Marine officer visited us and said, "We could win the war by the overwhelming weapons, but we lost the war in the fighting spirit."

3 June 1945, we 23 men left Iwo Jima by a ship and were taken to Guam.

From Guam to Hawaii:

I was surprised when I saw Guam, because it was being covered by green trees and leaves. I wondered it was true or not that serious campaigns were carried out about 11 months ago. Prisoners of Iwo Jima were put in a corner of the big prisoners' camp. At the end of June 1945, we left Guam again by a ship and taken to Hawaii. The scenery of Pearl-Harbor was wonderful. I remembered the Japanese air-strikes and nine gods of war who came in the harbor with tiny submarines. In Hawaii, we navy prisoners were separated from the army prisoners. There were very many Japanese prisoners

in our camp. We were given some medical shots and were treated well. Some investigations about the commanders of the Japanese fleets, Japanese Balloon Bomb, etc. were held. Many members gave untrue answers. A good photo-map of Hitach Manufacturing Co., Ltd. surprised me very much

From Hawaii to San Francisco, then to Texas:

Around the end of July 1945, a group of 138 Japanese prisoners including those not only from Iwo Jima but also from Saipan, Tinian and Guam left Hawaii. Among us there was one colonel. After this sea-trip we began to enjoy our daily life. The crew members of the ship were joyful, and we exchanged something with each other. They gave us chewing gum and chocolate, and we gave them the pictures of Mt. Fuji. Some one painted Mt. Fuji on a loincloth which was liked very much by many people. On 15 August 1945 I heard the news of the end of WW II at the prisoners' camp in San Francisco. I felt very sad and worried about my mother, brothers and sisters.

After about one month we left San Francisco through the Rockies and to Huntsville, Texas. We were put in the prisoners' camp in the city. Before, there were German prisoners in this camp, I heard. There were a big movie theatre, fire department, big halls, etc. in the camp. The commander of this camp used to live in Yokohama for three years, I heard. He spoke good Japanese and addressed us very modestly when we arrived at this camp. He had organized a ticket system, and every prisoner could buy cigarettes, cake, stationery, etc. free. We could play baseball and some other sports. There was even a piano. We were authorized to write letters, but at that time no Japanese prisoners wrote.

At the end of 1945 we asked the commander to buy some Japanese rice, soy sauce, etc. for our New Year ceremony. He kindly bought them from Hawaii for us. I particularly thank 1st Lt. Buckstar in this camp for his special kin treatment to me.

Return to Japan:

At the middle part of January 1946, Washington authorities decided to send us to Japan. The camp commander planned an air trip for us up to Hawaii first. But later it was changed, and we were sent to Seattle by train. USS General Wable carried us from Seattle to Uraga located about 20 miles southwest of Yokohama. We landed Uraga on 23 February 1946.

To my astonishment, in Japan, the prices of commodities had become very high and so many cities had been destroyed by the US bombing and fire. The trains were very much crowded.

26 February 1946, wearing new navy uniform given by Uraga naval Demobilization Branch, I returned to Mito City which had been destroyed by the bombing. At night I found a small shack made of galvanized steel plates at my old house area in a vast burnt field.

It was indeed my family's living quarters. Hearing my voice, mother came out of bed. Brothers and sisters were still in bed. Mother, with no words but with tears on her face, looked at me from my head to feet two or three times, then she and I wept, embracing together.

When I heard the Mito city was bombed on 2 August 1945, I had to regret that Japan had not stopped war earlier.

At the end, I sincerely pray to God for happiness in the other world of the perished personnel.

Memoirs by Two US Marines

This is a Japanese Translation

Not a reprint of the Original Articles in English

Memoirs by Lt. General H. Smith. USMC, Commander, 5th
Amphibious Corps (Quoted from “Coral and Brass”)

US Casualties: 21,000

It was indeed the most disastrous battle in the US marine history. Iwo Jima, a tiny volcanic island having only 20 square kilometers, had been fortified with unbelievably elaborate devices, and inflicted heavy casualties.

For the first five days, our forces suffered casualties more than 1,200 per day. Out of the landed US Marines 1 in 3 were killed or wounded in action. For the first fifty hours our forces lost more than 3,000 personnel. During the twenty-six day battle and the following mop-up action, our forces had 21,553 casualties. Out of them 5,521 were killed in action or died after being wounded. When the war was over, the fighting power of each Marine Division had been reduced to a level lower than a half.

As the air-raids of B-29's by the 21st Bomber Command at the Mariana Islands started 24 November 1944 increased, the Bomber Command suffered from the Japanese interruption over Iwo Jima. On the other hand the Japanese radar system on Iwo Jima informed Tokyo about the anticipated assaults of B-29's toward Japan proper. Thus the importance of Iwo Jima came to be recognized by US authorities.

For seventy-two days before landing Iwo Jima, the 7th Air Force had the Strategic Air Force based on the Mariana Islands raid Iwo Jima every day. In

addition to two or three air-raids during daytime, they raided during night time too in order to bother the garrison personnel's sleep. Some times our naval surface force and the carrier-based aircraft attacked Iwo Jima. So the Japanese forces on Iwo Jima should not have had any time to rest. But they continued fortification. Col. Brown, my chief of staff, said, "The bombing for more than seventy days against the fortified defense positions on Iwo Jima showed no affect."

The Marine troops fought on Iwo Jima under my command were best-equipped ones among the US Marines engaged in operations in the Pacific.

Except for Task Force 58, which supported the landing operation against Iwo Jima after raiding Japan proper and pressing down the Japanese sea power, 480 US vessels and combat crafts were mobilized for Iwo Jima operation. About 110,000 men including the main power of 70,000 US Marines were committed to Iwo Jima.

The commander of Iwo Jima was Lt. General T. Kuribayashi. Under him there were Maj. General Senda and Rear Adm. Ichimuru. The most terrible officer for us was General Kuribayashi. His personality had been symbolized in the defense positions when we attacked them. His troops continued resistance by pill-box after pill-box and cave after cave. The specific character of Iwo Jima Defense was continuance of their systematic resistance until the last moment (Usually the Japanese systematic resistance continued for only several days at the beginning).

Kuribayashi had ordered the non-combat personnel to be evacuated from the island several months before. He did not want to be bothered by them. He did not allow his officers and men to have a good time. There were no women. He ordered them to swear to die for the Emperor and when they would die everyone would have killed 10 Americans. He did not permit a banzai charge after drinking.

(Aurthor's note:

US official history has written that this kind of banzai charge was carried out on Saipan and Guam.)

The Japanese fought until the last moment. Therefore, US casualties inflicted by them during our mop-up operations were very high.

26 March 1945 the remaining Japanese came out for a banzai charge. It was the last counter-attack of the Japanese troops. According to one of the Japanese prisoners of war, General Kuribayashi had joined this banzai charge. But we could not find any of his body, sword and belongings. I don't know whether he was killed in this banzai charge or he died in one of the thousands of caves.

On 14 March 1945, two days before the official announcement of occupation of this island was declared, a ceremony to raise the American Flag was held. I was proud of our success in occupying this island, but at the same time I felt very sad that so many casualties had been inflicted. The battalions that landed with the strength of 36 officers and 855 men had been reduced to 16 officers and 300 men on an average per battalion when the operation was over.

Memoirs by Robert Leckie, a member of US Marines who joined Iwo Jima Operation (Quoted from "Strong Men Armed")

Iwo Jima of 1,500 caves:

Number one necessity of occupying Iwo Jima was to save the crippled B-29's returning to the Marianas from Tokyo. Then, the occupation of Iwo Jima could stop the Japanese air-raids through the island against the Marianas.

General Kuribayashi rejected Major Horie's plan to sink the island into the sea. After a few more disagreements, he transferred Major Horie to Chichi Jima, 160 miles to the north.

(Author's note: This is untrue)

Kuribayashi was like that: curt, stern, cold one of those moon-faced, pudgy men who are all ruthless energy and determination. The troops did not like him. They had no girls of the “comfort troops,” no sake, only duty. They called him a martineat.

But he was a perfectionist. He told his troops to fight to death. He issued the Iwo Jima Courageous Battle Vow based on Bushido – Way of the old samurai. Kuribayashi utilized the terrain of Iwo Jima very well. He was a genius in distributing strength appropriately.

(Author’s note:

When I returned to Iwo Jima from my trip to the Imperial Japanese Headquarters, General Kuribayashi and I talked together about the Suspension of the shipping of personnel from Chichi Jima. He rather wanted me to hurry up the shipment of guns, ammunitions and food. In other words, we decided to keep personnel who should consume food off Iwo Jima. As a result, there were about 800 men who actually did not go to Iwo Jima despite their Assignment.)

General Kuribayashi placed 1,500 – 2,000 troops around Mt. Suribachi (550 ft high), the main power in Motoyama area and a few troops in the 1st airfield. He planned to annihilate the enemy coming into the airfield by firing. On Peleliu the garrison had 500 caves but Iwo Jima garrison had 1,500 caves. Iwo Jima had pill-boxes as well as Tarawa. But those on Iwo Jima had been hidden. Tarawa had only 4 ft ground level and the pill-boxes had to be built on the ground while Iwo Jima could be dug deep.

Kuribayashi wished to get a 30 mile long under-ground path. Officers and men worked a 24 hour system per day. Everybody worked three hours then rested five hours. At least everybody had to dig a 3 ft long path a day. But when the US Marines landed he had built only a 4 mile long under ground path.

The US naval forces were commanded by Vice-Adm. Turner and Maj. General Schmidt would be in charge ashore once the 5th Corps had landed. Lt. General H. Smith was commander of the expeditionary troops, a position which was purely titular.

The Marines, still mindful of how little was knocked out at Tarawa and Peleliu, made the request for 1-day pre-invasion shelling. But the navy refused. The navy approved only 3-day pre-invasion shelling.

On 16 February 1945 when he met the press off Saipan Gen H. Smith told them there would probably be 15,000 casualties and said: "We have never failed and I don't believe we shall fail here."

It was Schmidt who had done most of the planning for the Iwo assault, but the man who had contrived the masterpiece at Tinian had found no lonely unguarded beaches on Iwo Jima. The 4th division would go in on the right or north, the 5th division on the left.

19 February 1945, it was a bright clear day. They hit the beaches at about 9 o'clock and within an hour both divisions had all their battalions ashore and fighting.

One hour.

That was all that Kuribayashi gave the American Marines. Then his gunners struck at the invaders with all the fury of their formidable armament. Shells shrieked and crashed among the invaders, every hummock spat automatic fire and the very beaches erupted with exploding land mines.

Against Mt. Surihuchi, there were navy and marine fighters slashing the volcano's slopes in strafing runs or dropping tanks of napalm, but the fire-bombs merely flamed and went out. Marines had to go in on foot with dynamite and flame throwers.

In the daylight of March 26 there were 223 Japanese bodies counted on the western beaches, 196 of them in the 5 Pioneers' area. The Marines looked

eagerly for the body of Kuribayashi, for they had heard it was he who had led this last lash of the Japanese tail on Iwo Jima. Like Senda's, it was never found.

Warrior to be remembered

In connection with Iwo Jima campaign, there were so many people to be remembered. Let me write about particularly impressive personnel. I like to omit the article about General Kuribayashi here because his story appears everywhere in this book.

Col. Ikeda, Commander, 145th Infantry Regiment:

Right after the beginning of Saipan campaign, Col. Ikeda and myself were in close contact in connection with the Saipan retaking project.

There was a episode between us. In 1937, while the 14th division was engaged in operations along the Keikan Railway Line in the theater of Northern China, he was the Senior Adjutant, 14th Division, in a position of Lt. Colonel. I was 2nd Lt., and the signal unit commander, 2nd Infantry Regiment belonging to the 14th division. In those days, 2nd Lt. Kikuchi, Assistant Adjutant to the 2nd Infantry Regiment Commander, used to go to the divisional headquarters to receive orders every day.

One day, near Hotei city, as Lt. Kikuchi had been sent to some other unit, I reported to the divisional headquarters which was located on a small plateau for Kikuchi. There were Lt. Gen Dohihara, divisional commander, Col. Sano, Chief of Staff, Lt. Col. Yazaki, operation staff and Capt. Mizumachi, Intelligence staff on the plateau, directing the battle. Lt. Col. Ikeda soon started the roll call of the order receivers in a small forest near the plateau.

When I answered “Yes” as the order receiving officer of the 2nd Infantry Regiment, Col. Ikeda asked me, ‘What happened to Lt. Kikuchi?’

“As Kikuchi had been sent to some other unit, I came here for him,” I answered. “Only Adjutant Kikuchi can do this job. Go back to your regiment and send Kikuchi immediately,” yelled Ikeda.

I was very unhappy.

“I am a regular officer and senior to Kikuchi. I am working in the operational section, so I could be enough for the job,” I said.

“I am afraid of some mistakes which could be caused by a man who is not in the right position,” said Ikeda, very angrily, moving his small mustache.

I, being quite embarrassed, finally went to Capt. Mizumachi whom I had once met to get his help. Capt. Mizumachi said to me, “Ok. I will tell him.”

By his help, I was allowed to receive the divisional orders. At that time, I noticed the fact that a captain staff officer was much more powerful than a Lt. Colonel adjutant.

Six years later, in the summer of 1943, I was on a train from Hiroshima for Tokyo. I was a captain staff officer at this time. Accidentally, I found Col. Ikeda and his wife sitting side by side to me. As I had known that their daughter had been married to Capt. Tozaka, one of my classmates in the Military Academy, I greeted him and told them that I had been associated with Tozaka, their son-in-law. When I told them about the story in the Northern China, Col. Ikeda said, “Very sorry. It was my big mistake.”

Thus, he and I were in a friendly relationship when we were planning the project to retake Saipan.

The 145th Infantry Regiment was a regular organization on active duty, consisting of the young people of Kagoshima Prefecture. It was indeed one of General Kuribayashi’s treasures. Its battle service was excellent, and General Kuribayashi issued his letter of appreciation twice. I remember Col. Ikeda’s

sad telegraph: “We have just burnt our regimental flag. Regiment Commander.” It was the 7th of March 1945, I guess. My heart was full of deep emotion when I read the telegraph.

Side-Car Driver 145th Infantry Regiment:

For about ten days from the beginning of Saipan retaking project to the time of my departure for Iwo Jima, the side car driver drove me between the Imperial Japanese Headquarters at Ichigaya, the Convoy Escort Fleet Headquarters at Kasumiga Seki, Yokohama Harbor, Shibaura Army Shipment Branch, etc. He was a very loyal and righteous man. Anyhow, he was a typical Satsuma-Hayato (A samurai of the old Kagoshima area). I visited the 145th Infantry Regimental Headquarters at Hyoryuboku twice. In both cases he came to see me first. I am sorry that I don't know about his last moment.

Major Ando, Battalion Commander, 145th Infantry Regiment:

I talked with forty or fifty officers of the 145th Infantry Regiment aboard the Noto-Maru, at Chichi Jima and Hyoryuboku of Iwo Jima. Major Ando was particularly amiable. He was very regrettable that his regiment had missed the chance to go to Sunda Archipelago with the main power of the parent division – the 46th division – due to the lack of shipping. From the telegraphs issued by the 145th Infantry Regiment and from the stories of some survivors, he was very brave and his battalion inflicted heavy casualties to the enemy.

Captain Oka (Navy), Convoy Escort Staff:

Captain Oka was sitting next to me in the office of the Convoy Escort Fleet Headquarters. He was a carefree naval gunner, and had a special character different from Captain Ohi, a scholar-type man. At any leisure times, he used to tell dirty stories and became the resource for a laugh in the

dark atmosphere of the staff office.

He was assigned to our office two months after I was, but as we sat side by side, and as he was so amiable that we became friends. Sometimes we went to Shihbashi area to drink out of desperation. On the night when Japan lost many ships, he and I drank until about 11 o'clock in the afternoon. Although I suggested we pay each own account, he paid the whole expense very often, saying, "My pay is bigger than yours." He did not have any children, I guess. Whenever he drank out of desperation, he regretted that the Japanese technique level was so low. "Even during night time or in the fog, while the enemy aircraft and vessels were engaged in operation, depending on their radar system, we Japanese had to fight against them with bodies inherited from parents and Yamato-Damashii (Japanese spirit), he said. Tears came down from his face when he emphasized that the Japanese ship crew, sailors and troops aboard the ships who had to die due to handicap of technique were to be pitied.

(Author's note: After WWII, I heard the following story from some engineers:

"The big obstacle in the development of Japanese technique was Yamato-Damashii – easily heated and cooled. Since 1937 every war ship had set up a radar system, but many ship captains had taken it off or had not utilized, saying, 'such a thing can not be used.'

Yamato_Damashii broke the man's patience. Actually, in Attu and Kiska operations, the Japanese navy was forced to use the radar system in the fog, resulting in gaining a great success.")

On 4 August 1944, Convoy Matsu (Pine Tree) (Consisting of 2 transports and the Destroyer Matsu) came in the Futami Harbor, Chichi Jima.

This convoy brought the 1st Independent Machine Gun Battalion. Loading my car, I took many watermelons to the destroyer Matsu. Captain Oka came as the convoy escort staff officer for this convoy. He had two or three more officers

met me. We talked to each other, drinking some soft drinks on the deck. The biggest water melon was offered for us, and the others were given to the sailors. I asked him to hand over my personal letter (in which I had put \$200 - \$100 – I could not use) addressed to my wife to one typist attending to the Convoy Escort Fleet Headquarters from near my house. At that time, as the war situation was so serious that even he did not tell any dirty stories. Suddenly the warning siren rang. He and I looked at each other face to face. His face turned to pale.

“Be careful, Captain Oka,” I said.

“We may get out of this harbor. I will take care of that letter,” said Oka. It was around 1 o’clock in the afternoon, I guess. I ran into my car, and told my driver to go to the nearest air-raid shelter.

But very soon the siren rang again, and the warning was released. Destroyer Matsu went out of the Futami Harbor being accompanied by two transports. Looking at them I prayed to God for their safe return.

About 20 minutes later, the warning siren rang again, when sixty or seventy US carrier-based aircraft assaulted Chichi Jima. I worried about Captain Oka’s party. Around 2 o’clock in the afternoon, several US naval ships started firing against Chichi Jima. The naval gun-fire continued for about an hour.

After the enemy left, I motored to the Naval Headquarters to see the telegraphs. “We are going to make a dash to the enemy fleet. Matsu Commander.” The above was the last telegraph issued by Matsu. Ah! Captain Oka devoted himself for the army of Iwo Jima.

1st Lt. Kawai, Commander, 21st Well-Drilling Company:

It was probably the middle part of July 1944 that 1st Lt. Kawai visited me at Chichi Jima Detached Headquarters. I discussed about the well-drilling problem with this handsome boy for 20 or 30 minutes. Our talks expanded to

the chemical separation on sea-water. This man had been well-educated, and his behavior was very noble in contrast with mine.

According to some survivors, this man was alive until the end of May 1945, wandering from cave to cave with Doctor Benitani. When the enemy ring became smaller and smaller, and the enemy suggested him surrendering; he said that he could not break the Japanese traditional custom and cut off a part of his artery around his wrist with his sword to death. He was a man of men, I believe.

Captain Iwaya, Commander, 310th Independent Infantry Battalion:

When Captain Iwaya arrived at Iwo Jima, and whether or not he went to Iwo Jima via Chichi Jima, I don't remember. However, it is true that he was a close friend of the commanders of the 304th and 308th Independent Infantry Battalions at Chichi Jima. I met him several times. He was very sincere and told me about his battalion. He also asked me about the battle instructions of Saipan and Guam.

In battle he fought with the survivors of the 109th division headquarters and the 145th Infantry Regiment in the North Sector until the last moment. He was a good man for his friends.

Doctor Tomiyama, 109th Division Headquarters

On 1 July 1944 when I arrived at Chichi Jima, Dr. Tomiyama was not in the office during daytime. At night he came to my quarters with a car.

Introducing himself to be a doctor corresponding to the 45th Military Academy graduate in rank, he asked me if I could go up to the office for the last drinking with Lt. Col. Nishikawa. I thanked for his kindness and went with him. Soon, Nishikawa came to the office too.

Dr. Tomiyama had prepared much beer and sake. Saying, "Tonight may be the last chance to drink," he drank very much. Nishikawa and I drank much

too.

At first, we three men were talking about the general situation of the world, the future of Japan, etc. But soon our talks turned to field sanitation. Then Dr. Tomiyama said, “If I could have a chance to return home, I would like to retire from the army and open an obstetric-gynecologic hospital. Please introduce me to beautiful ladies as many as possible.”

Our talks continued for about three hours. This was the first and last party for Dr. Tomiyama and myself.

After this party, I wondered if he had been transferred to Japan proper. But last year when I checked the list of the perished people on Iwo Jima I found his name. I sincerely prayed to God for his happiness in the other world.

Lt. Col. Nishikawa, Intelligence Staff:

Lt. Col. Nishikawa was a graduate of #37 Class, Military Academy. He finished the special course of the war college. He used to be staff for Maj. General Ohsuga, Commander of the Chichi Jima Fortress. He went to Iwo Jima, being replaced by me upon my arrival at Chichi Jima. For about two days he and I talked and drank. As General Kuribayashi took “War College Graduate First Policy” in tactics, other war college special course graduates were usually in any discussions and arguments.

Nishikawa did not follow the others, and insisted on his opinion boldly. Particularly in connection with anti-aircraft gun, he sharply attacked me, and eventually getting help from Commander Mase, Navy, and Col. Gaido, Artillery Commander, he criticized my opinion – My opinion was: Stop attacking the enemy aircraft, and put anti-aircraft guns in caves to aim at the enemy tanks and ground troops – and concluded, “Any other officers except artillerists can’t understand the usage of artillery.”

I stayed on Iwo Jima for only short time, but the arguments between Nishikawa and myself were very serious. However, as we had no private

interest, we did not have any hatred. On the other hand, he often remembered the peaceful life at Chichi Jima, and as he had suffered from piles, he expressed his hope to be replaced by me as soon as my sea transportation business would be over.

1st Lt. Morita, Signal Commander, 109th Division:

The signal company, 109th division, came to Chichi Jima in September 1944. It was right after my return to Chichi Jima from my trip via Iwo Jima – Tokyo – Iwo Jima. He stayed at Chichi Jima for a while. Particularly as some of his subordinates were at Chichi Jima he could have justification to stay at Chichi Jima. Almost every day he visited me. He suggested me to keep his headquarters at Chichi Jima because Chichi Jima was the center of the divisional operation area. I told him, “From the wireless system it is true that Chichi Jima is center of the divisional area. But as it is considered that his signal company is just like a part of the divisional Headquarters and now the main power of the divisional headquarters is at Iwo Jima, you should go to Iwo Jima first, then you speak to Lt. Col. Nishikawa and Col. Hori, Chief of Staff.”

After he went to Iwo Jima he gave me a letter. He wrote that he had trouble because the telephone lines were cut off by the enemy air-raids.

After the beginning of the enemy pre-invasion shelling, the telephone lines were completely cut off, and only about 50 radios and orderlies could be used for liaison business. As the divisional headquarters reported that one orderly officer took eight hours to move one kilometer during night time, the liaison business through orderlies was very difficult, I believe.

At the beginning of March 1945, number one radio (Biggest one at Iwo Jima, and it could directly communicate with Tokyo Radio Station) was destroyed. Then, Iwo Jima radio station used No. 3 and No. 5 radios (although No. 3 radio could communicate with Chichi Jima, No. 5 radio had not been

used until the middle part of March 1945).

At the last phase of the Iwo Jima operation, the biggest trouble with the radio men was that there was no time between the burning of the code books, breaking of the radios and the banzai charge. Lt. Morita faced difficulties at this phase, I believe.

1st Lt. Fujita, Special Adjutant to General Kuribayashi:

Fujita, a modern youth, wearing glasses, was liked by General Kuribayashi. He had been picked up by the general in the Tokyo Division before they came to Iwo Jima. He was a boy of a good family and a graduate of Aoyama Gakuin University. I remember that General Kuribayashi and I had supper alone five times. Every time he directed cooking and carried the food and drinks. Although I told him to sit with us, he used to “say yes later.”

It was some time in December 1944 that he suddenly came to my office at Chichi Jima. He came there for personal business of the 1st Mixed Brigade. During his stay, two or three days, at my office, I gave a good treatment just like for a VIP, thanking him for his kindness at Iwo Jima. Bath, fresh vegetables and well-water pleased him so much. To my regret, whenever he was in the bath, the air-raid siren used to ring, making him run away from the bath. He sincerely wished to have the general taste the bath, vegetable and well-water.

In those days the storage level of food at Iwo Jima was low (there was about a 25-day's level at the middle part of December). If I could increase the level up to about two month level by the drastic night sea transportation, I would go to Iwo Jima. Then I could join him and the general at supper again, I said.

When I told him, “The enemy may come to Okinawa-China proper,” he said, “General Kuribayashi says that the enemy would come to Iwo Jima without fail.”

Although almost all staff officers and adjutants were rather unfriendly to the general, he was a close friend.

A Mr. Sadaoka in pursuit of General Kuribayashi:

This man – looking a middle aged man – was from Kohchi Prefecture. In Canton, China, while the general was Chief of Staff of the Southern China Army, this man used to work for him as a tailor. Then he worked again for him in Tokyo while the general was the commander of the Tokyo Division, I heard.

It was around the end of August 1944, he came to my office and said, “As a civilian for General Kuribayashi, Sadaoka arrived here now. Send me to Iwo Jima.”

Horie : “How did you come here?”

Sadaoka : “I waited for a sea transport a week at Shibaura harbor Tokyo.”

H : “What for did you come here under this serious sea condition?”

S : “I want to work for General Kuribayashi

H : “As you are a civilian, you might be able to find some job in the mainland of Japan, I wonder.”

S : “Please send me to Iwo Jima, by all means.”

I was moved by his sincerity. But I told him, “I wonder if you could reach Iwo Jima. I don’t want you to get killed on the way to Iwo Jima. Wait for a while. I will ask General Kuribayashi through wireless what to do about you.”

I sent a telegraph to the general about this problem. The general’s answer was to persuade him to return to Japan proper.

In connection with this case, I was moved again by greatness of the general, and I was surprised by the heart to heart linkage between two persons.

Rear-Adm. Ichimaru, 27th Air Division:

Ichimaru was a graduate of the 41st Class, Naval Academy, I heard. So, he was corresponding to the 26th class graduates of the Military Academy. He was the top level pilot the Japanese Navy had.

According to his wife, he was the chairman of the Establishment Committee of the junior students of the pilot training school. He stayed at Oppama for five years as the first 1st Department Chief, Navy Pilot Training School. His hobbies were to write poems, 31-syllable Japanese odes and 17-syllable verses. He was a man of taciturnity and sobriety. In the army-navy meetings (I attended only twice), he did not speak except some special cases, and he used to give the final answers “yeses or noes.”

Several times I visited his headquarters. He made his staff talk, and he did not talk so much. But he was not unsociable by all means. To begin with, as commander of the air force, with no aircraft, he had to fight a ground battle. What a sad heart he had! Furthermore, the number of officers and men under his direct command was very small, and the anti-aircraft gun units, radar units and construction units had composed the main naval power. In the meeting (Second army-navy meeting for me), when the distribution of army and navy strength was discussed, I said that it should be a best plan to distribute the naval personnel fairly to each sector. The admiral said aloud, “The navy has the traditional customs, and we would like to die at the same place as well as at the same time. So I want the army people to allow the main part of navy personnel to fight and die between Tamana-Yama and the southern beach.” In his words we found a sharp humanism. I had to shut my mouth and General

Kuribayashi approved his wishes. As a result, the main power of the navy was to be concentrated between the South Sector and the East Sector.

In battle, according to a telegraph report from General Kuribayashi, the admiral moved to the Kuribayashi's shelter with his staff on 16 March 1945 and joined the banzai charge. According to a survivor he was separated from army and navy officers after the banzai charge. With a sergeant of the 109th division Signal Company, he, having some hand-grenades in his hands, went into the enemy trucks near the southern beach. Then he gathered the naval survivors and continued fighting. I don't know about his last moment.

Commander Mase, Naval Senior Staff:

Mase entered the Naval Academy from the 4th grade of Hiroshima Middle School. He was a graduate of the 57th Naval Academy Class. When I visited the naval headquarters first, it was he who gave me one ice-cream, saying, "Don't tell anybody else."

(Author's note: In those days there was only one ice-cream making machine on Iwo Jima. That was the reason why he said, "Don't tell anybody else.")

He also used to make others speak first then answer.

When Commander Urabe came from Kisarazu and we held tactical arguments, I had a dinner at the army staff room with him. I met him five or six more times at his headquarters, and talked on 20 or 30 minutes every time, eating ice-cream.

Lt. Commander Okazaki, Naval Supply Staff:

In August 1944, I stayed at Iwo Jima for several days. During these days I met him every day. Later, he visited Chichi Jima, and he and I had supper at the Chichi Jima Naval Headquarters with other naval personnel. He repeated many times that his supply staff's job was not good for him because he was a graduate of the Naval Engineering Academy. He said, "I would like to have even a few aircraft and war ships. Then I could utilize my techniques.

Now my job is mainly to distribute dynamite and ammunitions. Very sorry.”

In battle, he came in the General Kuribayashi’s shelter with Adm. Ichimaru on 16 March 1944. He joined the banzai charge. But I don’t know what happened to him after that.

Lt. Commander Akada, Ground Battle Staff:

In August 1944 when I went to Iwo Jima I met him for the first time. He was full of fighting spirit. At this time his rank was lieutenant.

He aggressively asked me about ground tactics saying, “As the military training given at my middle school or the ground tactics given at the Naval Academy is childish, and it is not used effectively, please teach me.”

When I said, “The tactical idea coming from war-ship battle is different from the ground tactics. He said, “that is my problem he was trying to study ground tactics sincerely.

I said to him, “Different from the army, the navy is rich and has many weapons. Now to use them will decide your existence, and also influence the delay action of the Iwo Jima Garrison.” He said, “That is my point,” and showed his determination on his face. He and Lt. Commander Okazaki were friendly, but their attitudes were in good contrast.

When I told him, “If even only 100 anti-aircraft guns, which the navy has are transferred to the army for ground battle, a great contribution could be expected.” He, shaking his head, said, “But it, but, ” and sighed. Then he said, “You have a quite different idea.”

When Commander Urabe and I exchanged strong arguments, he did not say anything, but later he said to me, “I was very much surprised by the big difference between army and navy. I felt very friendly to him, and I came to see him just like to see my younger brother.

It is clear that he had been alive until the beginning of the banzai charge on 17 March 1945. What happened on him after that I don’t know.

Col. Takaishi, Chief of Staff, 109th Division:

A graduate of #30 Military Academy Class. An infantry officer, and a graduate of the Special Course of the War College. As he arrived at Iwo Jima at the end of December 1944, I did not see him. Everyday I exchanged army telegraphs with him, so I knew his character. At the middle part of 1945, I was injured on my right leg, falling from my horse. He immediately gave me a letter of sympathy at that time. It had been written by a painting brush, and it was a very polite and splendid one to me. To my regret, I have lost it.

He used to be in infantry tactics. Together with Lt. Col. Nakane, Operation Staff, he helped the general, I heard. He was courageous even after the banzai charge, and he committed suicide with his pistol with General Kuribayashi and Lt. Col. Nakane in a cave on the morning of the 27th of March 1945.

Lt. Col. Nakane, Operation Staff:

A graduate of Toyohashi Middle School, then a graduate of #35 Military Academy Class. He was first assigned to the 18th Infantry Regiment, Toyohashi, Aichi Prefecture. It has been said that he walked a very long distance when he attended Toyohashi Middle School, and he was very obedient to his parents. Upon graduation from the Infantry School he was given the Emperor's present. Later, he finished the Special Course of the War College. He was very bold, and was called a god of infantry tactics. He had 5th grade of fencing (Kendo). From the enemy landing to his suicide, he was always calm and was being the center of morale of the Divisional Headquarters; I heard of it from one of the survivors.

On 6 November 1944, when he left Japan proper for Iwo Jima there

were a 9 year old daughter and a 9 month daughter. From some letters sent from Iwo Jima to his wife, it is distinct that he was not only obedient to his parents, but also was very kind to his wife and children.

Major Yoshida, Fortification Staff:

A graduate of #43 Military Academy Class. Finished the Special Course of the War College. He was very vigorous and directed fortification. He had a character to tell his complaint frankly. Once he hated the general by reason that the general corrected the defense positions which he had directed. For a while he was partly a staff of some air force in Japan proper and he was talking that the army aircraft would be brought to #2 and #3 airfields.

Around 10 March 1945, I read the following telegraph going to Vice-Chief of Staff from Iwo Jima:

“Expecting that many aircraft would be sent to Iwo Jima, our force had put in much power for the expansion Of the airfield in vain.”

I immediately perceived that he drafted the above telegraph and showed his complaint against Tokyo. About his last moment, the following story has been spread:

“During the banzai charge, he was ordered by General Kuribayashi to keep his life as long as possible and get a chance to tell the actual status of battle to the Japanese people, and he tried to get out of the island by raft. At the end of May he tried to capture an enemy aircraft and go to Japan proper. With some help of a navy lieutenant he could capture an aircraft. Before taking off, he was discovered and shot to death.”

Major Inmanouchi, Intelligence Staff:

A cavalry officer. A graduate of #47 Military Academy Class. He was

ordered to Iwo Jima right after his graduation from War College at the end of December 1944. Due to an aircraft accident, he landed on Chichi Jima and stayed one night at my headquarters and then went to Iwo Jima.

The boy of a good family looked very pitiful. I often still remember him.

Lt. Col. Nishi, Commander, 26th Tank Regiment:

A graduate of #36 Military Academy Class. As the Olympic horse rider even children know him.

It was the time when he visited me after this ship trouble at my Chichi Jima Detached Headquarters that I saw him for the first time. I had heard of his name, of course. When I saw him I was impressed with the following two factors from his pose:

An aristocratic gentleman with long legs
A tough boy

The above two factors had harmoniously made a Nishi. During our talks he confessed that he was a heavy drinker and told me how he drank in Hokkaido and Manchuria. So I knew that my second factor was correct.

At the middle part of August 1944, when I was getting on the aircraft for Iwo Jima at Kisarazu Airfield on the way from my Tokyo trip, I accidentally met him. He was returning to Iwo Jima after collecting tanks in Japan proper spending about a month. We became good companions on the plane. When we arrived at Iwo Jima, we went to his headquarters to have

lunch. After that time I once more met him on the road.

According to a story told to his family by one survivor, his attitude in fighting was wonderful. At some coast, facing toward Tokyo he committed suicide.

I don't know whether or not the enemy suggested to him as follows:

“Baron Nishi, stop your meaningless battle and surrender.”

On the other hand, every perished warrior, a general, a private, or a Lt. Colonel, must be missed. Nishi was a world-wide horse rider. So I miss him so much.

Last year, during the Olympic games held in Tokyo, some Americans visited his surviving family and talked about his life time.

Col. Hori, former Chief of Staff, 109th Division:

A graduate of #29 Military Academy Class Mminly worked in the railway field. Finished the Sepcial Course of the War College. He used to listen to the others very carefully and take memos. He was very modest, but I don't k now why he had a big mustache. Also I don't know why he and General Kuribayashi became so unfriendly.

In August 1944, when I went to Iwo Jima,relations between them had come to worst point. Both of them had strong points, but their feelings had become worse and worse, I heard. Particularly, on an isolated island, they live together, eat together and work together for 24 hours a day, so the relations of the military personnel became extremely good or bad.

As of 30 December 1944 he was replaced by Col. Takaishi and was transferred to the 2nd Mixed Brigade Headquarters.

In battle, it has been said that he was killed during the Brigade's banzai

charge or he lived up to May 1945 in some cave. To myself, he was a very friendly, kind and conservative senior. He was a man of tragedy.

Colonel Atsuji, Commander, Mount Suribachi Sector:

In the spring of 1944, Colonel Atsuji was ordered to be in charge of the defense of Iwo Jima with about 1,000 army troops. Under the command of Major General Oshuga, then Chichi Jima Fortress Commander, he made his defensive positions a little further in from the beaches.

In May 1944, after the visit made by Lt. General Obata, 31st army Commander, and Major General Tomura, Assistant Chief of Staff to the Commander and Chief, Central Pacific Fleet, Colonel Atsuji had to move his to the beaches with their instructions. By order of General Kuribayashi, he had to move the defensive lines again, this time inland. So, he had lost the faith of his subordinates. However, he was ordered to be in charge of the Mount Suribachi Sector, so it can be said he was given a good place to die as a soldier.

He was born in Kagoshima Prefecture, and had an unyielding spirit. I remember he told me to get more dynamite.

Major General Oshuga, Commander, 2nd Mixed Brigade:

A graduate of the #27 Military Academy Class. An artillery officer, a graduate of the War College and a conservative gentleman. He was an officer who listened to his subordinates and approved their plans. He was a good contrast to General Kuribayashi who made decisions by himself and led the way. General Kuribayashi's way came from the U.S. Army, he said so himself.

Oshuga was particularly friendly with Colonel Gaido, artillery commander, and Colonel Hori. I visited his headquarters twice, coincidentally, all three of these gentlemen were there drinking tea each time.

In December 1944, he was replaced by Major General Senda, Commandant of the Sendai Reserve Officers Academy. Then he was transferred to General Kuribayashi's headquarters, but due to sickness he was hospitalized in the field hospital.

Once it was rumored that he had come back to Japan by air before the enemy landed. But it seemed to be true that he was killed in the field hospital.

18. Stone of Iwo Jima.

War Criminal Trial:

The enemy did not come to Chichi Jima. It was very sad for me that so many seniors and fellow members were killed on Iwo Jima. I could not do anything at Chichi Jima.

The war was over on 15 August 1945. It was my frank feeling that it was good that Japan surrendered after Germany. However, I was placed between the following feelings:

Japan could continue the war for a long time without navy and air power. It was a surprising story.

However, as the war was over without seeing any hostile invasion, it might happen some big mouth holders start bluffing again.

On 3 September 1945, we signed the instrument of surrender on USS Dunlop off Chichi Jima.

Next day we had to start the evacuation of our troops and repair work on the roads, docks and airfield, etc. This day I threw the potassium cyanide into the sea.

The number one problem of which I worried was the war criminal case. Although there were no suspects in my Detached Headquarters, there were some suspects discovered in other army and navy units. All senior members were confined, and I was ordered to be the regular representative of the Japanese Army and Navy by the US Occupation forces.

Fortunately, I had been studying English conversation by necessity and for diverting my mind from gloom, so when the war was over I did not have any trouble on language. On the other hand, as the prisoners of war who had taught conversation during the war protected my position I could stand outside the war criminal suspicion. There were no longer any people who called me a pessimistic staff officer.

When 17,000 army and navy personnel were evacuated to Japan proper, spending about six months, there was one LST at Ohmura pier which was ready to take twenty-five war criminal suspects and forty-five witnesses to Guam for trial.

Every individual had been placed under the former enemy's mercy, being separated from our national power and protection.

Some suspects and witnesses came from Truk Island, Wake Island, etc., and the total number of them at Guam mounted up to sixty-three suspects and sixty-three witnesses.

Sixty-three suspects were put in the solitary cells inside the stockade surrounded by barbed wires, and sixty-three witnesses were put in three tents made in a forest outside the stockade. I was ordered to be in charge of the witness camp and was used sometimes as a witness and sometimes as an interpreter.

The only task left upon us sixty-three witnesses – was to speak in

defense of the suspects. The US investigation had reached thousands of the related personnel, and the documents of evidence had been piled up. I, myself, translated several hundred petitions, but to my regret, they were so effective.

Thinking about the war criminals and their families, I had to be disappointed of the tragedy coming from:

Insufficient teaching of international law in schools and colleges
General tendency in Japan to mistreat individual life.
Stoppage of the national power.

Yesterday's enemy is today's friend

In October 1945, the war criminal trials held at Guam by the Commander Marianas were over. I was sent to Uraga, near Yokahama, with the other sixty-two witnesses, and I was demobilized there. As a man with no property but his own body, I had to seek for a slice of bread for tomorrow.

I immediately went to GHQ to see Major Shaffer who used to be the executive officer, 1st Battalion, US Marine Occupation Forces, Chichi Jima. I asked him if he could find any job for me in GHQ. He called Captain B., Labor Officer, and asked him to come to his office with the GHQ Employee Roster. As Captain B. came in his office, Major Shaffer asked him to find a job for "this friend of the battle field." Captain B. said, "All important positions in GHQ have been occupied by Nisei's and there is no vacancy for Major Horie. At Tachikawa Air Base there are four positions for interpreters."

I told them, "Let me think oneight, because Tachikawa is a local city." When I returned home, my wife said, "There are many former officers living on sales of their own medals and clothes. There is no choice for job."

The next morning, I went to GHQ again and with Major Shaffer's recommendation I went to Tachikawa Air Base to get an interpreter's job. In those days there were about 7,000 American and 6,000 Japanese working there.

My supervisor was Lt. Col. Huffman who was older than me by one

year. Soon we became companions of war. He used to fight in Europe as a pilot.

Once I said, "Iwo Jima," he asked me, "Do you know about General Kuribayashi?" I was surprised and said that I used to be on his staff. We concentrated our talks on the Iwo Jima campaign.

During our talks he whispered to a beautiful typist sitting near him. When I was leaving, he handed the "MESS PASS" which the typist had prepared saying, "This is our present to yesterday's enemy and today's friend. Also you will be authorized to get transportation for your attendance. Base Motor Pool has been ordered," with his left hand over to my left hand and shook my right hand with his right hand.

My position was promoted from "Interpreter" to "Supervisor," to "Office Manager," and to "Advisor." In those days there were only four slots of "Advisor" at Tachikawa Air Base.

He introduced me to Brig. General Doyle, Commanding General of the Base, then to Col. Morgan, Wing Commander. Doyle, Morgan and myself met very often to talk about Iwo Jima. I still thank the souls of the perished personnel on Iwo Jima. Because their help has brought up these officers' kind treatment to me, I believe.

In those days as the Tachikawa Air Base was increasing employees, I

could extend my help for the employment of 430 families, including fifty-one former regular army and navy officers and very many bereaved families. That was my repaying for their kindness.

After the Korean War was over, Iwo Jima came under the command of Tachikawa Air Base. Major General Ruestow, Successor of General Doyle, made a plan to visit Iwo Jima with me. However, due to difficulties of issuance of visa to me, he could not make it. On the other hand, when Iwo Jima Commander comes to Tachikawa Air Base he stops at my office.

I became friendly with General Ruestow, Brig. General Huddnell, Vice-Commander, Col. Sears, Chief of Information Services and Personnel and Major Ritchie, Col. Sears' assistant.

As I submitted the following suggestions, they accepted:

To get some stones from Iwo Jima and distribute them to the bereaved families for the ashes.

To employ General Kuribayashi's son by Tachikawa Air Base.

To invite some (less than 10) Japanese former army and navy officers to show them the US Air Force Movies

One pilot flew over to Iwo Jima and brought one big stone unofficially. Then, the stone was cut into several pieces with a saw by Major Ritchie. General Huddnell invited wives of the late General Kuribayashi, Col. Takaishi, Lt. Col. Nakane, Lt. Col. Nishi, Major Yamanouchi and my wife. At the same time Mr. Nakajima, Mayor of Tachikawa City, was invited. These pieces of stone were presented to the widows by Mr. Nakajima. The remains of the stone were given to my wife for the general bereaved families. They were distributed to the bereaved families at the Iwo Jima Memorial Ceremony held at Yasukuni Shrine in 1964.

The son of General Kuribayashi has been working at Tachikawa Air Base as an architect, occupying the important position. For the movie show

Lt. Generals Iemura, Shibayama, Nakamura and Teshima (Army members) and Rear-Adm. Horie and Captain Ohi (Navy members) attended. Adm. Oikawa missed the chance because of his personal affairs, and General Imamura did not attend the show, saying, “I want to decline the invitation from the US Bases as far as I am an advisor for the Self Defense Force.”

The above events were good for friendship between both countries. The US personnel pay attention and respect to the souls of American and Japanese personnel who were killed on Iwo Jima.

My heart is full of Deep emotion as I look back on the past twenty years.

PART II

RECOLLECTION OF BEREAVED FAMILIES

1. General Kuribayashi's Letters from Iwo Jima to His Family

General Kuribayashi wrote many letters to his family with small pencil letters. In those days there were wife and three children – Taro, first son, Yohko, first daughter and Takako, second daughter – at home.

Takako was a grammar school girl, and had been sent to a village in Nagano Prefecture. It seemed that the general worried about Takako most. Yohko died of typhoid fever just before the end of the war in Nagano

Prefecture. Let me introduce here all of his letters.

Letter to his wife dated 2 August 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

There is a good opportunity today to send a letter to Japan proper, so I will write one.

Are all members of my family all right? Did Takako go the country with her school mates or go to Hiaku alone? I sincerely sympathize with her because she must live separated from her parents. As Taro and Yohko have quite grown up, they may be able to live by themselves in any emergency case.

Well, our inconvenient daily life continues here. From war situation we must have always uncertainty and tension. The enemy who captured Saipan and is now capturing Guam would come here very soon. General Imamura staying at Raboul by-passed by the enemy may survive, but here we could never expect our survival. I heard that Mr. Yanagita said that the enemy air-raids were not terrible. Probably he said about the air-raids at Canton. The air-raids over here are completely different. You can't catch truth from some specific people. About the situation over here, you may have heard from Lt. Col. Nishi who returned to Tokyo the other day. Actual situation is very serious.

You say that the daily life in Tokyo is getting worse and worse, and it is like a beggarly life. It will be still much better than ours. Over here, no river, no wall and no water. We could store rain water only. With a cup of water I must wash my face (actually eyes only), then Lt. Fujita used the water. After he uses, I keep the remaining water for toilet usage. The soldiers, in general, can't do even so. Everyday, after I inspected the defense positions I wished I could drink a cup of cool water in vain. There are a lot of flies. They come in our mouths and eyes. Also many ants come and climb up our bodies. Also many cockroaches crawl around us. They are very dirty. Fortunately, there are no snakes and no poisonous insects. Before, there were some wild bananas and papayas, but the soldiers have already taken them away and no more. As this is a new volcanic island, it is not easy for us to produce vegetables here. There used to be some islanders. They have evacuated to the mainland of Japan, and soldiers and sailors are located everywhere.

When we compare the island battles with the battles in China, the battles in China are just like maneuvers. There are many officers and men who used to stay in China. All of them simultaneously say that China was good. All expect the fate of the garrisons of Attu and Saipan. So, they feel very sad and there are no smiles. I, myself, always think of the above fate, except sleeping time. Even during sleeping time I dream of it. The other night, in dream, I returned home, when you and Takako were very much pleased, but as I told

you, "I just returned home to make a will, and now I have to return to the battle field." Takako looked very sad. Another dream was as follows: "One day I went to the temple, riding horse. You and Takako had been there when I arrived there."

Open my army suitcase which was taken by Lt. Col. Nishi as soon as possible. Particularly, try to kill the insects of Iwo Jima. I am afraid of them growing in Tokyo. See some cake which I put in the suitcase.

Should I be killed in action here, no remaining properties would be returned. I am going to send backmost of my belongings before I die.

How to evacuate from Tokyo I can't tell you now. After the capture of Iwo Jima, the enemy air-raids against Tokyo will be started within one month. So, I believe that the best way for you is to return to Nagano Prefecture. Chiba city or Inage-town (5 miles far from Chiba city) is not safe, because the enemy attempting to take Tokyo will land Chiba and Inage beaches (the war situation has grown to the point we must worry about the enemy invasion to the mainland of Japan). Nagano prefecture is safe, I believe. It will be a good idea to go to Niaku (near Matsushiro city, Nagano Prefecture).

When you close our house in Tokyo, it is necessary to divide things into the following two groups:

Commodities of daily necessities

Commodities of deluxe

However, if you could charter one train, you could send everything at once. You could sell whiskey and cigarette. If Taro can't quit smoking, you may be forced to keep cigarette.

I will send you my field allowance for June and July by next mail. The field allowance will be paid directly to you from the Army Headquarters in Tokyo effective 1 September 1944. I wonder if my life could be kept by that time.

Well, let me close this letter today. I don't write to children today.

Letter to his wife dated 9 August 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

Today I want to write mainly about the enemy air-raids. It could be a good information to you for cases you would see the air-raids in Japan proper. The enemy carriers would approach toward our island, then fifty or eighty aircraft in formations would assault us. Machine gunning, they would dive for bombing. One group would attack us for about 1 hour or 1 hour and a half, then another group would come. This method would be repeated for a day. Although our anti-aircraft guns and machine guns try to shoot them down, it is very difficult to do it because their speed is very high. During the air-raids officers and men except some ones who are on special duty stay in the air-raid shelters.

Sometimes, after the air-raids the enemy would send some warships near our island and fire against us. The naval gun fire inflicts us more damage than the air-raids. Any and all houses on this island have been completely destroyed by the enemy air-raids and gun fire. Of course some villages have become burnt fields.

After Saipan was captured, the enemy attacks us with big bombers. We don't foresee when these big bombers would assault us. They come at dawn, during daytime, at dusk or during night time. Recently at dawn or dusk one or two bombers suddenly assault us. The carrier based air-raids are very tough, but they do not come so often. On the other hand, the Saipan-based bomber raids come at anytime, so we can't be careless even for a minute. (The air-raids against Tokyo may be carried out by the Saipan based bombers first, then by the carrier based aircraft). At any time we must be ready to run into the air-raid shelters as soon as we hear the warning sirens. Particularly we must be careful at night. Usually we live in shacks or tents built near our air-raid shelters. We finish supper before dusk. In the future, the same thing will happen in Tokyo. Children may worry about school textbooks, but food and tea must be more important than books.

There are many things I like to write to you. As I was notified that the plane to carry mails would leave here soon for Kisarazu, let me close this time. Good-bye.

P.S. I will send you my field allowance. Did Takako go to Hiaku? Did the house-maid go home? Does Taro have to be drafted by the army?

Letter to his wife dated 19 August 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

I am very well. Your letters dated 28 July and 30 July (including letters from children) arrived. Newspaper and magazines also arrived. Lt. Col. Nish and Major Horie returned and explained about the situation in Tokyo to me.

As it was decided that newspaper and magazines would be sent here by the war department you don't have to send them anymore. The general staff sends me whiskey, so you have nothing to send to me. I have no way to spend money here, so don't worry about money too.

I am happy to hear that Takako has moved to the country. As she is very small, write her often, give some instructions for her daily life.

I am also happy to hear that there were no insects in my army suitcase. Be careful, because they might have laid eggs in it.

Lt. Fujita is very loyal to me. Mr Iwanashi of Tokyo Division gives me information often. Sonoda and Hozawa still stay in Tokyo Division, but Tachikawa and Nakajima were transferred to some other organizations. Mr. Sadaoka arrived at Chichi Jima safely. He is a wonderful man, isn't he?

Good-bye.

P.S. In my last letter I could not complete the story about the air-raids. So, let me write here again. Against the island the carrier based air-raids came once or twice a month up to this date. Saipan based bombers come almost every other day. We sleep with our uniform on every night. We must be ready to run into our shelters. Someone who are in sound sleep get in trouble. Recently we found some dead and injured from the enemy air-raids. Very often we finish supper or breakfast in the shelters, having only dried bread or rice-balls. If the air-raids would come to Tokyo, you would have to be ready to run into the shelter with some important belongings, food and water. Your clothes must be war-time ones. I always keep one flash lamp and helmet at my bedside when I sleep. I can't turn on light carelessly. Because it becomes a good target for the enemy aircraft. Now we get up at 0430 in the morning and go to bed at 1930. We go to bed early because we can't use light, and we must get up at anytime against the air-raids.

Letter to his wife dated 5 September 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

From the noon of 31 August to the evening of 2 September 1944, we were raided by the carrier-based aircraft. Particularly on 2 September, from morning to evening not only the air strikes were violent but also the naval gun fire was serious. On 3 September big bombers in a formation came from Saipan.

The enemy attacks become more serious day after day. If the enemy would land, our fate would be decided sooner or later just like at Attu or Saipan. How many times more I could write letters I don't know. How as we have some planes between Kisarazu and this island we can write letters. If the enemy would land, we could have no more planes. So, although I wrote a letter the other day, I write this one today. I believe that I have written everything I want to tell you in my last letter.

You know we have built our family with everyone's cooperation. Now I am placed under this condition. Everything comes from war, and we can't help. Please live with children strongly. Children have not finished schools or colleges, and you must worry about our daughter's marriage. I am very sorry for you. Because too much heavy duties come upon your shoulders. Many people must have the same fate as same as I have. I would protect you from the other world.

Since now on, be careless about appearance or reputation. Go with unshakable faith. On the other hand, some people may approach toward you kindly by reason of non-existence of husband. However, it may bring a bad result for our family. Be careful of it.

Well, let me close at this point today. Thank you for your kind care for

me for a long time.

Good-bye.

P.S. Have you given any money to Takako? Have you prepared any envelopes, stationeries, postage stamps, etc. for her to have her write to you? Have you given toothpaste, toilet paper and other daily necessities to her?

Letter to his wife dated 12 September 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

Today as one plane is scheduled to fly to Kisarazu I write a letter to you. I believe all of you are well. Before, you wrote me that the house-maid would have gone home after 1 September. So, I am always worrying about the house-maid problem. Can't you find any other house-maid?

On the other hand, Yohko and Taro must do the things the house-maid used to do, to help mother.

Do you write very often to Takako? Even though the relatives of Hiaku would be kind for her, it is natural that Takako feels lonesome and she will get homesick. So, you must write often and tell her what to do.

Recently over here, every day we draw the enemy air strikes. One or two aircraft come during night-time and about twenty during daytime. Our airfields and defense positions are ploughed by these air-raids. The plants and grasses were burnt and the terrain has been changed. I believe that the people in Japan proper could not even imagine this situation. The enemy may try to destroy everyone of our defense positions by the air-raids. I imagine if Tokyo would be raided, many dead bodies would be seen. To tell the truth, I don't want to get Tokyo raided.

The enemy planes would not only come to bomb but also come to reconnoiter. Anyhow, whenever a siren rings we must run into the shelters. On 10 September we ran into the shelters four times.

If we would run into the shelters we would be usually safe. Sometimes the shelter itself is broken by some direct bombs, resulting in having some victims.

We thought that we had better sleep inside the shelters. It is very bad for health to do so. So, I have decided to sleep outside the shelters for the time being. Anyhow, we don't have any certainty for even one second. Even during the letter writing time I have to worry about the warning siren.

You may have known the general situation of war through newspaper and radio. The enemy is trying to ring against Japan. The enemy may land this island very soon. Once landed, our fate must follow the examples of Attu and Saipan.

Our officers and men know of "Death" very well. I am sorry to close my life here, fighting the United States of America. I want to defend this

island as long as possible and to delay the enemy air-raids against Tokyo.

Ah! You have worked well for a long time as my wife and as a mother of three children. Your life will become harder and more serious. Be careful of your health and live long. The future of our children will not be easy, too. Please take care of them after my death. Make fatherless children cheerful as is they had father.

Check my army suitcase again. Make sure the annihilation of bad insects of this island.

It will become cooler day after day in Tokyo. Be careful not to have a cold. Since now on, the availability of planes will become scarce, and we may not be able to have so many opportunities to write letters accordingly.

Good-bye

Letter to his wife dated 20 September 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

I received your letters dated 5 and 11 September (and a letter from Takako) on 19 September. I am glad to hear that all of you are well.

I presume that it is cool in Tokyo now. Over here it is very hot. There are many flies, mosquitoes, moths and cockroaches. We live just like primitive men. It is natural that very many officers and men become sick. I am very healthy fortunately.

The enemy air strikes come now every day and night. During daytime a formation of twenty or thirty bombers comes between 1000 hours and 1400 hours, and at night one or two come between 1900 hours and 2400 hours. We call them "Periodical visitors." By the night bombing, the enemy aims at a war of nerves, I guess. The daytime bombing is usually carried out from 5,000 – 6,000 meter level. It is quite effective. As you said, now we are under the air war.

Well, Mr. Kimoto used to be very kind to us. This time he was transferred from Tokyo Division to the Traffic Section, War Department. So, now those who know me very well in Tokyo Division are Sonoda, Iwanashi and Ikeda (The divisional commander is Lt. General Mononobe, one of my class-mates of the Military Academy).

Try to find a house-maid. Check with Miss Toyoko. Get help from Taro and Yohko until you find the maid. Both of them must work for mother. They should not be sticky only to their desks. I used to help mother when I was young.

Letter to Taro and Yohko dated 27 September 1944:

Dear Taro and Yohko:

I hope both of you are well. I think that your school study may not be

performed smoothly due to the labor service for the army. It is natural because Japan is now at war – the greatest war Japan has ever met. We have come to a turning point Japan goes to ruin or not.

Tokyo has not suffered from the enemy air-raids. Once the island which your father is now defending would be captured, Tokyo would be raided day and night (It will be just like: the island where your father stays now has been raided day and night after Saipan was captured).

The enemy is now speeding up to defeat Japan. The enemy landing against my island will be a question of time. If the defense of this island fails, then Tokyo will be raided.

The lurid scene, heavy damage, confusion, etc. coming from the air-raids are beyond words. These who live idly in Tokyo can never even imagine. Therefore, in case of an air-raid, the most important thing is to move in union for a family. Any isolated member is forced to die on the road side. It happened actually in the great Kanto Earthquake in 1923. You should realize that you must work for your family with your mother as the central figure.

Regardless of your school regulation, you must protect your house first. You don't have to obey the regulation honestly, because the situation is so serious that you can't worry about the safety of school. Suppose you try to go to school to protect it (Actually you many not be able to go or return under the air-raids), and at home your house is destroyed and your mother is killed. What happens? You must share your fate with your mother.

To begin with, the fact that Tokyo is raided means that this island has been taken by the enemy. It means the death of your father. In other words, you-fatherless brother and sister- must live, depending upon your mother. Fatherless children must be very pitiful, but what happens if you lost your mother? Since now on, you must worry how to live without father. Now, there is no maid. So, mother's trouble must be big. You must help mother.

Good-bye.

Letter to Taro dated 10 October 1944:

Dear Taro:

I received your letter. According to you, attending school, you go to the labor service for the army. It is inevitable because our country is now at war. However, when you think about your future, school lessons are very important. You must study hard. So, you must work for the country, must study in school and must protect our home.

Till now, generally speaking, students in Japan do nothing for their own family. That is very bad. Particularly at our home, father is in the battle field, there is no maid and mother is not so healthy. Therefore, it is indeed your responsibility to help mother and protect our family as a boy.

In particular, the situation of Japan is getting worse and worse day after day. The life of your father is just like a light before the wind. It is apparent that your father would meet the same fate of the commanders at Saipan, Tinian and Guam. There is no possibility of my survival. Therefore, you must be the central figure of our family and help mother. Until now you have been a boy of hothouse growth. When I was in Tokyo I tried to give you a kind of Spartan education. But, I presume, you did not realize your fathers real love. In the future, you may take note of it. Please think of the education your father has provided and get mothers affection, and make yourself a righteous, honest and strong man. Then, you could have a happy life.

Read educational and enlightening books, you should quit smoking by all means. Most of the solders and sailors on this island smoke. Now it is difficult to get cigarettes. Lt Fujita told me he started smoking after he had become a salary man. Now he has two difficulties. He can't quit smoking and it is difficult for him to get a cigarette. Of course now you don't drink and you had better not drink in the future.

At home, try to talk cheerfully with your sister and mother. Sometimes joke and make them happy. Take care of your health. Good-bye.

Father at the battle field

P.S. You wrote on the top side of the paper with one side only.

Write on both sides to save paper.

Letter to his wife dated 29 November 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

I received your letter dated 21 October and 20 November on 27 November 1944. I also found a letter from Takako's teacher in your letter of 20 November. I am very happy to hear all of you (including Takako) are well.

Although you visited Mr. Yoshida, you had better not go out, in connection with the air-raids. You should communicate with other by mails under these circumstances.

It was good that you changed Taro's study to the 6-tatami room toward winter.

Did you take any action to close the gaps of the floor boards in the kitchen?

According to you, there are so many visitors that you can make packing work for army explosives. You must stop visiting mutually.

Good-bye

Letter to his wife dated 11 December 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

I am very sorry to hear that you have suffered from the chapping and cracks on your hands and feet. After using water you must wipe the water away and massage your hands and feet well. I am also sorry to hear that you can only take a bath every tenth day due to the lack of fuel. Comparing this month with last December, I can see how the situation has gotten worse, worse than I could have imagined. Over here we can take a bath every five days, but still my body gets dirty.

Well, I will tell you my daily life:

0530 hours	I get up (Some units get up at 0400 Hours, some at 0500 hours and some Continue work throughout night and Sleep during daytime).
0630 hours	Breakfast
0700-1100	Inspect the defense positions or maneuvers
1130-1230	Lunch
1230-1400	See paper work
1400-1630	Inspect the defense positions and maneuvers
1700-1750	Super
Around 1800	Go to bed

The above schedule is disturbed very often. Because at least once during day time and once or twice during night time we draw the air-raids. You may think that we could sleep more than ten hours. Actually we must run in to our shelters often, so our sleeping time becomes shorter.

Our meals consist of one bowl of rice (70%) and barley (30%), one dish of dried vegetables and one cup of bean soup. Sometimes I am given some fresh vegetables, so don't worry about the meals. Recently my orderlies produced some pumpkins. Very soon some sweet potatoes will be obtained. Now it does not rain. So, we can't get any rain water. Every day we look at the sky and sigh.

You can see my dirty clothes in the pictures taken by Major Toyama. Recently as it has been cool I changed the knee-breeches to the normal trousers. I wear always a belly-band and a thousand stitch belt. When I sleep, I take off my cap and shoes, and put one futon – a kind of bedcover.

Many officers (including my chief of staff) and men catch a fever and stay in bed for 40-50 days, but I never catch it. It's miracle, I guess. How is Tsuneko? I dream of her sometimes.

Be careful for your health. Use a bell-band. You can use my camel's hair shirt. Wear my clothes, because there is no heating system.

Good-bye

Letter to his wife and children dated 15 December 1944:

Dear Yoshii:

I am very sorry to hear that Japan proper is often raided by the enemy bombers now. For the time being the enemy may attack our war industries. In the future the enemy may start an indiscriminate bombing. Particularly the fire caused by the enemy bombing must be very troublesome. I am always worrying about my family in Tokyo consisted of a woman and children. Now Tokyo is a kind of battlefield. Be strong as same as the warriors in the overseas battlefields.

On 8 December 1944 the enemy struck this island whole day with the carrier based aircraft and naval gunfire. After that day, the enemy bombers come to this island five or six times a night. We must always repeat running into our shelters and returning to bed for sleep. We can't take any sound sleep.

It seems to me that the enemy bombers attack Tokyo at night and dawn. Be prepared for fighting the air-raids and cold. Put some mattresses and many blankets in your shelter to get warm. Have Taro make a thick board door for the entrance for the shelter. The solid cover of the shelter is too thin, I believe. Have Taro dig a hole in the garden (in front of the 4.5 tatami room), and use the soil for the cover. You may use my lace boots. Prepare some devices to control the incendiary bombs. Some ladders, sand and fireman's axes might be needed. Wet gloves are very important.

I received a letter of 25 November from Yohko. Her penmanship is not so good, and there are many wrong words and omitted words.

The enemy air-raids may become more intensive, but you must realize that everyone has a hard time everywhere.

Take it easy.

Good-bye.

Letter to his wife dated 22 December 1944:

Dear Yoshii

I am very sad to know that Tokyo is now raided very often.

Your air raid shelter is strong enough against a blast from a bomb shell, but is weak against shell-splinters of our anti-aircraft guns. Make the soil cover thicker. Make it at least one foot thick. Did Taro make a thick wooden door for the shelter entrance?

It might be a good idea to carry in a hot water bottle (a food warmer). Finish your meals as early as possible. Because the air raids during your dining times are very troublesome for you. Go to bed earlier than usual, and get as much sleep as you can.

We can't use lights here so we go to bed very early. Preparation of food and water is very important. For food, parched rice may be good. You had better keep some salt in the shelter. Keep the canned stuff currently stored at home for an emergency.

If the Tokyo city authorities take responsibility to keep your property

under their custody, it may be a good idea that you and the children pack it up. Be careful to pack the invaluable items first. The plan to bury the invaluable items (Insurance Policies, stock securities, etc.) in the corner of your garden might be good for the time being, but it might not be a good permanent answer. It would be good to leave them in the hands of your relatives in Hiaku, and give them an item list, give each family member a copy of the list to keep.

Find out about your shoes because when your area is burnt you may have to walk fifteen or twenty miles to get out of the area. So be sure you have good shoes. I think army shoes would be the best don't you?

Good-bye.

Letter to Taro dated 22 December 1944:

Dear Taro:

I received your letter (including letters from your mother and Yohko) on 12 January 1945. You had a good new year, it was very good. Particularly I am pleased to hear that your grandmother came to Tokyo from Hiaku to join your new years party. Give her my best regards.

About the evacuation of our family from Tokyo. You and your mother need to see the reality of the situation.

The enemy air raids against this island are very intensive, particularly at night. They come at least six or seven times a night sometimes twelve times a night. Therefore, now I sleep in the shelter. It is now quite cool, but inside the shelter it is warm.

I sincerely thank 1st Lt. Ikeda for his kindness to my family. I will write to him.

The prices of commodities are now very high in Tokyo, I heard. Also I heard that the exchange of cigarettes and rice has been popular in Tokyo.

Taro, I found many wrong words and omitted words in your letter. Personality, educational background and character of a person will be judged by his letter. So, be careful when you write letters.

Good-bye

Letter to Taro and Yohke dated 18 January 1945:

Dear Taro and Yohke:

In your last letter I found some wrong words and omitted words and corrected them, but I am sorry what I found one mistake in my corrections. At present you had better not write simplified characters.

I don't know when this war would end, and the situation of Japan is getting worse. Tokyo may become a burnt field. You know, London and Berlin are already burnt fields. Therefore, our family members must evacuate

from Tokyo to the country. Yohko should go with mother, but Taro will have to stay in Tokyo in connection with school life. I sympathize with Taro who must stay in Tokyo alone. It might be a good chance for you to train yourself. As you are promoted to sophomore, you may have to work in some military plant, when the plant will be a target for the enemy aircraft. While you obey the plant's regulation and instructions, you must manage to avoid any air-raid trouble.

Good-bye.

Letter to his wife dated 21 January 1945:

Dear Yoshii:

I address this letter to Hiaku, because I believe that you have evacuated to some place from Tokyo. After evacuating, you may have difficulties in seeking for food and fuel. If you have evacuated to Nagano city or Natsumoto city, there will be no trouble. Because there are many relatives in both cities.

If you have evacuated to Kohfu city, and if Tokyo Division Headquarters moved there, you could get some help from some officers of the division. I have no idea when you have evacuated to another place.

You may be accompanied by Yohko, and Taro will remain in Tokyo.

What action are you going to take on Takako? If your destination becomes your permanent living place, you had better bring Takako to your new living quarters. Please you manage this problem.

Well, the war will continue long, and it will become more intensive. So, your action must be based upon the real situation.

I have heard that the enemy has now about 150 B-29's for raiding Japan proper, but they will increase up to 250 in April and 500 at the end of this year.

Should our island be captured, additional planes will join the air-raids. It may happen that the enemy would invade Chiba beach and beaches in Kanagawa prefecture for the purpose of occupying Tokyo.

Therefore, listen to radio and read newspaper well.

The situation of the Japanese forces in the Philippines is becoming worse. The enemy will come to this island, too. I have been determined to die. At home, don't expect my survival. As I have written many things to you, you may not be surprised when you hear about my death. Don't tell anything to the newspaper men. If you show my letters to them, they will immediately write in the newspaper.

I don't care about my graveyard's location. My ashes will not return home, and my soul will stay in you and children. Live long as much as possible. Take care of children, please.

Goody-Bye.

Letter to his wife dated 28 January 1945:

Dear Yoshii:

Your letter posted around 10 January 1945 (date stamp is unclear) arrived here on 21 January 1945. In the letters there had been enclosed letters from Takako and children of your relative at Hiaku. On the day I received letters from Satoko and her two children (6 and 9 years of age), too. So, I felt that many letters came from children this date. You wrote that while your mother of Hiaku is chanting Buddhist sutras she never gets afraid of the enemy air-raids. It may be based upon her faith. It is good for her to depend upon faith, but as you know the bombs and incendiary bombs will drop at any time at any place with no relation to her faith. Never be careless to the enemy air-raids. Every body must run into shelter sincerely to save his or her life. Over here lazy people suffer from the air-raids.

Well, my transfer will never be considered. From the war situation, the supreme commander of one island will not be changed by all means. Please forget my return alive. The battle fields except those in Manchuria and China are almost same. Recently General Baba was transferred to be an army commander in the southern area. Sooner or later, he will have the same fate. Generals Ushijima, Kijima, Sato, Watanabe, Kitamura and so on will have the same fate. Major Takahashi was ordered to Formosa to be a battalion commander. He will share the same fate, too.

Let me close this letter at this point, today.

Be strong and live long.

Good-bye.

Letter to his wife dated 3 February 1945:

No letters have come from you for twenty-four or twenty-five days. Have you had a cold? How is your evacuation from Tokyo? Do you want to send your belongings to Kofu city and stay in Tokyo by yourself?

As I repeatedly wrote, the enemy air-raids will get more and more intensive since now on. Even you don't get hurt from the enemy bombing, you may get hurt from the fire to be caused by the incendiary bombs.

So, now you should evacuate from Tokyo, I believe. Even on this island, recently the enemy drops some incendiary bombs. It seems to me that there are no materials to be burnt. Still the fire occurs. Sometimes the enemy drops some napalm bombs.

In spite of the intensive air-raids, I am very health. Hoping we get some fresh vegetables, I have started land cultivation by myself. Recently I got fat a little bit. When I take bath, I feel that I have got fat. Almost all officers and men got sick, but fortunately I have never been sick since I came here.

Today, as Major Omoto, Senior Adjutant, goes to Tokyo on official

duty, I am writing this letter. When he comes back to this island, don't ask him to bring anything here, because I need nothing.

Be careful not to have a cold. Try to get yourself massaged often to recover from fatigue.

Tell Taro to keep a punctual life.

Now as the plane is leaving, let me close this letter at this point.

Good-bye

3. Words of Six bereaved families

Letter from my father

By

Taro Kuribayashi, son of General Kuribayashi

My father used to care very much for children. I will give you some examples here.

From March 1928 to July 1930 my father stayed in the United States as an exchange officer (from captain to major). In those days he often gave me, a grammar school boy, picture-letters. He always composed easy letters in order to let me read them without any help from others. He used to enclose some sketches with letters. I have made a book from those picture – letters.

In the sketches there are so many scenes:

Going to maneuver with some US army officers, riding horses; having a trouble being asked to dance by an American beauty when he was invited to some officers' party; driving his new car in a wide plateau; being at a loss due to his car trouble in the snow field; being teased by some Japanese friends whom he invited. They said that this room was too good for Major Kuribayashi; Inviting more than sixty guest to a first class hotel; playing with some American children; being invited to the house of Medical doctor Furukohchi; etc., etc.

When he traveled in Mexico, he drove Commander Takeshita (Assistant naval attaché to Mexico) and his wife. During this trip he told them that he had been writing letter to his wife and children every seven to ten days. This was true. He wrote home very often.

His sketches further included the following scenes:

While visiting Boston, he was lying sprawled in the garden of Harvard University and watching the clock-tower; taking a walk in Buffalo; exercising gymnastics; being a good friend of many American children, taking pictures at Fort Riley and in Texas.

He wrote from New York that he was surprised to see very tall buildings at Broadway.

Throughout his letters, it is clearly said that my father used to drive in many directions in the United States, studied very hard until late every night, and tried to be a gentleman. Also he used to have many friend in the foreign countries.

Recollections of my Uncle, General Kuribayashi
by
Sunae Kuribayashi, Nephew of General Kuribayashi

There are many recollections about my uncle. Let me write two or three of them. I am the son of his elder brother, Yoshima Kuribayashi. General Kuribayashi was born in the house I am keeping now.

In November 1943, I returned from the operational theatre of China to be demobilized in Japan. On my way to Nagano prefecture, I stopped at his official residence of Tokyo Division. As soon as he saw me, he said to me, "I would like to go to the southern area to die."

Not, I think that he had been hoping to find the best place for death. Because while he was a student of War College he used to return home and talk with my father (his elder brother) and their mother. These three members used to talk together until late at night, saying that all great generals in the world found good places for death.

As my uncle was a fatalist, he could maintain his courage and calmness until the last moment, I guess.

After staying in the United States, he became gorgeous a little. Before that time he liked a plain life more than his younger brother (this brother died of sickness when he was 1st Lt.).

Once my father said, "In the days when Tadauichi was a grammar school boy, Matsushiro Clan used to give scholarship to samurai family boys for future army navy cadet education. Matsushiro Clan thought much of family rank rather than boy's ability. Tadamichi complained about it. "He was an ability emphasize", I believe.

When my father wrote a letter to him saying that his second son, Takehisa (my younger brother) was going to Iwo Jima leaving Yokohama Harbor at the end of December 1944 as a drafted soldier, my uncle wrote back the following letter to my father:

12 January 1945

".....Thank you for your kind letter. I sincerely sympathize with

Takehisa. Because he was drafted again.

Now it is the right time he should arrive here. I am awaiting him. Yesterday, fifty or sixty soldiers arrived here but I could not find Takehisa among them. Two or five days ago one transport arrived at Chichi Jima, so he may have been aboard the ship.

Well, this island, everlasting summer island, has only men. We have a trouble for fortification due to eruption of sulphur and lack of water.

The enemy air-raids increase intensity day after day. Particularly the enemy uses his naval gun fire with air strikes recently. With tremendous roaring, this island shakes.

I believe that the enemy would come to assault Japan proper rather than going to the Philippines with the main power. Therefore, it may be very soon that the enemy comes to this island.

Of course I have been determined to meet this enemy with death. I would like not to hurt the name of my ancestors. I am glad to die with Takehisa in the battle field. I believe that it will be the honor of the Kuribayashi family.

I have written to my family in Tokyo what to do in case of my death. In connection of the future of Japan, I am afraid of my family get in trouble for their daily life. Please extend your help to my family at such a time.

For my tomb, please install one stone putting on it, "Tomb of the last Lt. Gen. Tadamich Kuribayashi." Don't have any newspaperman or magazine writers play me with good stories.

I was born in the house you are now keeping. I could grow up smoothly at home, then I could come through Nagano Middle School, Military Academy and War College comparatively satisfactorily, thanks to the helps of family members, senior and fellow members. I like to keep a clean name even after my death.

Well, take it easy.

Good-Bye."

Recollections of my Husband

By

Mrs. Suiko Ichimaru, wife of the late Rear-Adm. Ichimaru

My husband used to enjoy making poems, 31-syllable odes and 17-syllable verses. He was the chairman of Committee of the Establishment of the Naval Junior Pilot School. Then, he stayed for five years at Oppama as the first 1st Department Chief, Naval Junior Pilot School.

On 17 March 1983 many remaining former naval junior pilots gathered at Karatsu city, Saga prefecture and held a big memorial ceremony for him. I like to express my thankfulness to the old members who used to be familiar

with my husband during his life time.

I wish all the remaining gentlemen to live as long as possible and work for the reconstruction of Japan.

Olympic Game, my husband and Iwo Jima

By

Mrs. Takako Nishi, wife of the late Lt. Col. Nishi

On the last day of Tokyo Olympic Game, I was watching the great equitation steeple race. Some newspapermen came to see me. I told them to leave me just quiet. I had remembered the Olympic race which was held in Los Angeles 33 years ago. My husband became the winner in the equitation steeple race in Los Angeles. He failed to win the Olympic Game in Berlin after four years.

He always worried about the treatment of horses in Japan, and he tried his best to improve the attitude of the Japanese people for horses. Because the horses are treated very well in the foreign countries.

Now, I understand that the physical condition of the Japanese horses has been much improved. I believe that my husband may be joyful about it in the other world.

Well, when my husband was leaving for Iwo Jima twenty years ago, he said to me, "The United States is a country where I have many recollections. There are some good friends, too. Personally I like this country. But, I must fight this country as a Japanese soldier."

I have heard that he killed himself at the last moment at a clean coast of Iwo Jima, wearing his boots and facing toward Tokyo. At this time Adjutant Matsuyama and three soldiers were very kind for me, I heard.

The other day during Tokyo Olympic time, former Col. Blair (retired from US Army), a writer of the Saturday Evening Post, visited me and said, "I have known one American mother who lost her three sons in WW II. One of those three sons was Killed in action on Iwo Jima." I sincerely sympathize with this American lady.

In Tokyo Olympic Game area, there was one atmosphere that the world is one. It was hard for me to control my feeling wanting to shout "I wish I could watch this Olympic Game with my husband."

Husband and Father

By

Mrs. Tsuyako Nakano, wife of the late Lt. Col. Nakane

My husband left home for Iwo Jima on 6 November 1944 with spirit to fall as a martyr in the national crisis. At that time our first daughter was

twelve years and our second daughter was nine months old. So, although the first daughter can remember her father, the second daughter can not.

During his life time, he was very obedient to his father and cared much for his children. When we are give some stones of Iwo Jima, or are invited to some memorial ceremonies or are told about him, we can't control weeping, being moved to emotion.

My son, Yasutake

By

Yasutsugu Yamanouchi, Father of the late Major Yamanouchi

Yasutsugu Yamanouchi was born on 1 January 1912 as my first son. I was then an instructor of the army cavalry school (later I was promoted to Major General).

He entered the Saijyo Middle school, and was the monitor of his class for five years. In his middle school days, he joined Zen (silent meditation) practice and like to climb mountains.

Finished Military Academy in June 1935. Commissioned in September 1935 as a second lieutenant assigned to the 24th Cavalry Regiment. Was wounded on his right should in action in Manchuria. In May 1939 he became a tank company commander, 1st Cavalry Brigade. Became instructor of the army automobile school in December 1940. Entered War College in December 1943 and graduated from it on 24 December 1944.

On 24 December 1944, was appointed a staff to the 109th Division.

On 29 December 1944, on the way to Iwo Jima, his aircraft was assaulted by one of the B-29's. His plane landed ChichiJima airfield in emergency. He stayed at Major Horie's Detached Headquarters one night, and went to Iwo Jima next morning.

He worked for General Kuribayashi at Iwo Jima, but about his last moment I don't know. On 31 March 1945 Col. Tanemura came to my house to offer condolence.

He was married to Mariko, third daughter of Major General Sugiu in February 1942. Teruko, first daughter, was born in 1945. When Yasutake was killed in action in action in March 1945, Mariko was 22 years old. Since his death she has been obedient to us (Yasutake's parents) and has brought Teruko up, working as a dressmaker under the leadership of Nobuko Hara.

Yasutak used to be kind to his wife and us. When he wrote home, he tried not to make us worry about him and the war.

POSTSCRIPT

Several years ago a Mrs. Yuki Takeoka wrote me a letter asking if I

knew her son (23 years old in 1944), Kanichi Takeoka, who belonged to Matsunaga Special Secret Service Unit on Iwo Jima.

On 17 March 1983 when a memorial ceremony for the perished personnel of Iwo Jima was held at the Yasukuni Shrine, I was asked the following questions after my small speech:

By a young lady: “My father was a 1st Lt. He loved me very much. He went to Iwo Jima when I was 8 years old. What face did my father have at that time?”

By a middle-aged lady: “My older brother was a sergeant called Matsuno. He was from Saitama Prefecture. He went to Chichi Jima. Then, he wrote home that he was leaving there for Iwo Jima. Did you see my brother?”

By a girl of about 20: “As I was a baby, I don’t remember my father’s face. Did he have mustache?”

When I heard these questions, I could not stop weeping. The bereaved family members were very anxious to know any and all things about their fathers and brothers. It was very hard for me to say, “I don’t know,” but I could not tell a lie.

When I tried to break the stone of Iwo Jima for distribution for the bereaved families, with a hammer, hundreds of them ran into me. Some ones wept, grasping some pieces of stone fragments, some ones were just looking at the stone, some ones were wrapping some fragments in a cloth and a lady was putting a bag of stone powder on her cheek.

There were tears, tears and only tears. It is natural that everybody wants to know the last moment of his/her father or brother. Particularly, the Japanese soldiers and sailors devoted their lives for their country without being taken prisoner. I tried my best to make the situation of Iwo Jima clear, but I have failed to make everyone’s status clear for more than 19,000 men in this book.

Finally I have two things I would like to appeal to the public:

No. 1 question is: “Is it all right for us to leave the Bereaved people intact?”
No. 2 question is: “Shouldn’t we use the tragedy Of Iwo Jima for war prevention?”

In connection with No. 1 question, has Japan done any sufficient dedication to the perished people? In the United States, West Germany, Russia, etc., there are unknown soldiers’ tombs. Each tomb is visited by not only the own country people but also by the foreigners. How is the Japanese tomb – Yasukuni Shrine? It is placed under very sad condition. In foreign countries the bereaved families are highly paid and given good treatment. In Japan why are they given so meager pension and so poor treatment?

In connection with No. 2 question we must analyze the Japanese tradition and improve it.
We must think back the tragedy coming from feudalism.
Frankly speaking, European countries expanded their territories abroad and established a fait accompli. In Japan, the Takugawa Shogunato took the seclusion policy in those days. Historians say that the seclusion policy was taken for Tokugawa’s own interest, not for the nation. This policy checked the growth of Japan, and our generation people had to fight for expansion in the 20th century.

We must consider of the tragedy came from the independence of precognitive of supreme command.
A number of powers in the world fought WW II keeping the military business under politics. In Japan the military business was being separated from the administration. In common sense, whether or not the war is opened should be statesmen’s business. In Japan the people of the High Command came in the business. Many people blame to the military personnel, but I do think that they should blame to the system first.

There was the tragedy came from education
There was trend to underestimate the foreign countries and overestimate Japan. It was exactly against the principle of Sun Tzu, a great Chinese strategist. “A general who knows both of the enemy and himself will always win the war.”
Did Japan teach to the people frankly about the population, terrain, resources, industry, culture, etc. of each country in the world and the level of Japan? If

not, we can't blame to so-called war advocates. Actually there were some words such as "The corners of the world under one roof – under the power of the Japanese Emperor," or "1,000 bamboo-spears would be enough to defeat the enemy." The modern young people of Japan may think that they are too audacious and arrogant. Most of the Japanese government prohibited the study of foreign languages. During the war many Japanese gave mistreatment to the prisoners of war. These came from wrong education. While overestimating the spiritual factor, the Japanese underestimated the material factor. While thinking much of militarism, they thought little of science.

We have to check the weak points of our national characters. Wasn't a beaster (who said, for instance, that he was ready to die at any time) thought to be a brave man or a patriot? Wasn't a prudent man (who said, for instance, that the war status was bad for Japan) judged to be a coward of an unpatriotic person? In other words, was there any tendency in the Japanese to judge the people with a simple feeling, apart from the key point of psychology. The Japanese people were too simple and too young.

We must discuss about humanity.

Wasn't there any tendency in the Japanese to think little of the human life?

Well, what improving ways should we take?

I dare say that we should realize DEMOCRACY in Japan. If we are easy going, thinking that DEMOCRACY was forcibly given to the defeated country by the victorious countries as one condition of surrender. I like to warn the people that we may have to see "2nd Iwo Jima" and "2nd Hiroshima." One of the most difficult things for the Japanese is that we, the Japanese (I am one of them) can hardly get out of our bad tradition.

We must expand DEMOCRACY in our life. Every body must join the administration of our country and establish a new good tradition, and have the perished people who became the victims of our old tradition sleep peacefully in the other world.

Recently I feel fearful about the political status of Japan. Because the atmosphere of Japan has come to resemble that of Germany after WW I. In those days, in Germany, the people shouted, "We were defeated in politic, but

not in military business.” They dreamed of revival of the past Germany. Thus, the people of Germany wished a hero under the inflation and decadence. Finally they welcomed Hitler and blind enthusiasm.

What happened on Germany led by Hitler later? Everyone know about it. Now, Japan should not want any hero. Japan should not have any dictatorship.

When our children or grand-children realize DEMOCRACY, Japan would have a beautiful daylight.