

15. MORALE & PROPAGANDA

MORALE

Economic conditions in Japan PW last heard from his people in NAGOYA at RAUBUL, in August '42 and he replied right away. He had not received any comfort bags, and has no wish to write home again.

PW had been away from Japan for so long that he had no idea of conditions there. He knew nothing about rationing or shortage of food supplies.

Political conditions in Japan After Primary school PW spent 2 years at a Commercial School and can read English a little. He had no political views of his own and had no idea what his father's were. In his opinion war was a bad thing and he didn't believe in it. What the Emperor thought about it he didn't know, and he had no notion whether Tojo was obeying Imperial orders or, following his own ambitions. Newspapers expressed the view that Japan's present alliances were for the best, but he had no personal views on the matter.

He was at school at the time of the Manchukuo incident, but at home when the war with China broke out. He read at the time a magazine article predicting that the China war would not be over quickly and he formed a similar view. Owing to the wide area of operations, and to China's greater population the war would take a long time to finish, and he thought China had grown stronger. He did not consider that Japan had become weaker. The general opinion was that the China war had lasted longer than anticipated but he could not judge whether or not Tojo had blundered. He could not concede that a shortage of ships and planes would cause Japan's defeat.

As a Jap he did not think well of Communism, and he was too young to give a thought to the 26 Feb '36 incident.

Conditions in Fighting Services PW had no idea of the number of troops mobilised by Japan. He had no relatives serving, and had heard that 2 or 3 of his old schoolmates had been killed. He himself had not been wounded, but had suffered from malaria and foot-trouble in New Guinea. In SHANGHAI, brothels with Korean girls were under Army control but he had not visited any. He had heard that one was to be established at RAUBUL.

Morale of Jap troops was high at time of landing, but underwent a change when ordered to retire to GOMA before they had been in action. PW stated the men openly grumbled at being ordered back in Sept when their inclinations were to go forward.

Attitude to Allied Nations PW had not seen any Whites working as coolies.

Chinese dislike of Japanese was due to the political disagreements between the higher circles in both countries. He thought Emperor Meiji's rescript had been followed and that natives in occupied territories were being treated as equals.

Attitude to Axis nations PW had heard very little of Hitler and had not heard of the German idea of racial superiority. He could not agree with Hitler's claim for esteem.

PROPAGANDA

Broadcasts PW had never listened to radios in camps in S/WPA, but had heard Tokio broadcasts in SHANGHAI. Some of his companions he believed had listened to "domasho" (enemy demagogic propaganda). PW did not know if radio-broadcasters lied but there was very little difference between their description of war and what he had experienced in New Guinea.

14. ENEMY INTENTIONS

PW had no idea of enemy intentions in NEW GUINEA.

15. WASTAGE OR CASUALTIES

Malaria and foot trouble contributed largely to depletion.

16. CHEMICAL WARFARE

PW was taught nothing about the various types of gases. Instruction was limited to respirator drill. He believed gas-masks were left in the vicinity of SHANGHAI.

17. TOPOGRAPHY

RAUBUL PW's transport berth alongside a wharf on arrival 1 Sep '42. He believed troops landed with rifles and MGs but he saw no Dn or Regtl guns. They were billeted in nearby houses.

18. MEDICAL

Supplies and Medicines One medical orderly, an ordinary soldier, was attached to each Platoon. There was no shortage of medical supplies. No Red Cross Hospitals were seen by PW.

19. ALLIED FORCES

Claimed to have no knowledge of Allied aeroplanes. He was never strafed by them, but stated he saw them in action at a distance.

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