

## INTERROGATION REPORT NO. 63

PW's Name: [REDACTED]

Rank: Corporal

Unit: SEIBU 34 BUTAI

Where Captured: GIRUWA

How Captured: Surprised by patrol

By whom Captured: Aust Troops

When Captured: 25 Jan '43

Height: 5' 5"

Weight: 115½ lbs

Age: 28

Private Address: [REDACTED]

Education: 6 years Primary School; 1 year Higher Primary and 5 years MATSUYAMA Commercial School.

Civil Occupation: Clerk - later a Civil Servant.

1. PREAMBLE

PW has not hesitated to answer questions and appears to have been truthful. Has little knowledge of military affairs and gave the impression of not being particularly interested therein. This man had Allied leaflets in his possession at time of capture. These appear to have created an impression on him but to what extent they induced him to surrender cannot be estimated.

2. CHRONOLOGY

Personal History PW was examined by the military in 1935 and placed on the reserve. Prior to his call up in 1942 he worked for KAWAHARA and Co., OSAKA, dealers in oil, and subsequently at the MATSUYAMA KENCHO (Prefectural Office), EHIME KEN.

Pre SWPA

1 Sep '42 Called up at KOCHI and assigned to SEIBU 34 BUTAI.

Voyage Out

13 Oct '42 1000 troops (formed into 3 Coys) of SEIBU 34 BUTAI proceeded to SAKAIDE (see Sec 11) as replacements for KUSUNOSE BUTAI (see Sec 4).

Oct '42 Boarded TEIRYU MARU and sailed via SHIMONOSEKI, TAKAO, MAKO Is. and MANILA to RABAUL. (See Sec 11).

In SWPA

18 Nov '42 Arrived RABAUL.

19 Nov '42 PW and about 850 men of the SEIBU 34 BUTAI boarded 3 destroyers and sailed for BASA. (See Sec 11).

20 Nov 1942  
25 Jan 1943

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PW agreed that JAPAN should have established stable Government in North China as she did in Manchukuo, instead of pressing on with the campaign.

PW himself had worried in the past about probable ship and plane shortages and he believed that this question was causing concern in JAPAN. The Navy spokesman HIRAIDE, made a broadcast speech on Navy Day (27 May '41) in which he assured his listeners that the Navy was ready to take on any opposition and had 500 planes safely stored away at strategic points. HIRAIDE received many letters criticising this talk as bombastic, and he subsequently taunted his critics in a broadcast after the successes at PEARL HARBOUR.

Conditions in Fighting Forces PW hazarded a guess that JAPAN could mobilize 3,500,000 men, but did not know the actual number mobilized during the past 5 years. About four of his relatives were absent on active service. A few of his school mates had been killed or wounded but he himself had never been touched although he had contracted malaria.

He had heard that there were brothels in RABOUL and believed they were run by civilians under the direction of REIJO KIKU (Land Duty) Units. The women in them were "played out" Japanese. ☆

PW had never heard men being warned against being taken prisoners. Questioned as to why more men did not surrender when lying helpless with fever and hunger PW replied that while individual men might have a desire to surrender, they were deterred by the presence of other soldiers. If they did surrender and were unaccounted for, they would be posted as missing. After a lapse of 3 years they were presumed dead and would be enshrined at YASUKUNI-JINJA. PW stated that it would be strange to return to JAPAN after the war, if it lasted more than three years, to find himself "dead". In view of enshrinement it might become necessary for PW to do away with himself and in this connection he asked concerning the numbers of Jap PsW captured. If a very large number of PsW were returned to JAPAN there would have to be some declaratory legislation that they were not expected to commit suicide.

PW stated there was considerable discussion in the vicinity of KUM regarding the Navy's announcement that 9 Naval ratings had been enshrined following the loss of 5 midget submarines at Pearl Harbour. People wondered only 9 were enshrined when it was known that each submarine carried a crew of 2 men. It was finally announced that one man was a prisoner of war.

Rumours There were stories in NEW GUINEA of officers abandoning their men in order to get back to RABOUL. Rumour had it that they shot men in order to get places on boats.

PW heard that JAPAN and the SOVIET were at war and, upon being assured that they were not, remarked that the Japanese general staff had probably started the rumour to excuse the lack of reinforcements and aerial cover in NEW GUINEA.

KEMPEI (Military Police). Men of this force were among the first to desert their posts, even going to the extent of trying to force themselves into hospitals on the pretext of being ill.

TAKASAGO BUTAI (Formosans). PW stated that CO of this Force had requested CO of TOMITA BUTAI to make some provision for the safety of his men on the ground that they were not combatant troops. He had been roughly refused and was extremely incensed over the matter.

Attitude to Allied Nations PW did not know why the anti-English movement was started. Whilst he was in OSAKA, he met many foreigners and enjoyed good relations with them.