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PART VII

Combined Fleet Doctrine, 1943

BOOK ONE: COMBAT

COMBINED FLEET ULTRASECRET STANDING ORDER 81 (1943)

SEPARATE VOLUME 1

Combined Fleet Doctrine

Book One: Combat

Combined Fleet Headquarters

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INTRODUCTION

1. Combined Fleet Doctrine comprises two books. The contents of each book are as follows:

Book One: Combat

I. Combat

Prescribes the outline for combat.

III. Essentials

Compiles the essentials for execution of combat.

Book Two: Screening

II. Screening

Prescribes matters concerning screening.

Appendix

Compiles matters concerning order of cruising, screening, lookout sectors, etc.

2. Types of surface action compare as follows with former provisions:

Types of day action have not changed, but in the absence of special orders, Method 2 will be used for Day Actions KO and OTSU.

Types of action on opposite course have not changed, but in the absence of special orders, Method B will be used.

Types of dusk action have not changed, but in the absence of special orders, Dusk Action KO will be used.

Types of night action will vary according to objective; they are reclassified as Night Actions KO to BO.

Types of dawn action have not changed.

Types of approach and types of battle deployment are not established.

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- i. Preparations for continuous supply
- ii. Transport in the face of the enemy, and harassing enemy transport
- iii. Combat for repulsing an enemy attacking from an adjacent area

C. Advanced Expeditionary Force (SEIKEN BUTAI) operations

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P. General action reports and urgent action reports

Appendix (Note: II and the Appendix are in Book Two.)

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GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. This doctrine prescribes the outline of combat for the Combined Fleet, plans and stratagems to be used before, during and after major engagements, and principles to be followed by commanding officers.

2. The basic organization of forces of the Combined Fleet is established in the following table.

Each force commander will establish doctrine for the force; he will have his subordinate commanding officers establish doctrine and combat regulations (SEISOKU) on the basis of this doctrine.

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(TH Basic Organisation of Forces of the Combined Fleet.)

Combined Fleet

FORCE

STRENGTH

COMMANDING OFFICER

FORCE					STRENGTH						
Main Body					Squadrons and divisions under direct command will be the nucleus						
Task Force	Basic Organization 1		Task Force		3 Fleet will be the nucleus.	Sometimes submarines or flying boats will be added to the task forces under each of the organizations					
	Basic Organization 2		1 Task Force		3 Fleet (CarDiv 2 missing) will be the nucleus						
			2 Task Force		2 Fleet and CarDiv 2 will be the nucleus						
	Basic Organization 3	Organization KO	Combined Task Force	Main Body	Carrier groups of 3 Fleet will be the nucleus						
				Vanguard	Cruiser elements of 2 and 3 Fleets will be the nucleus						
		Organization OTSU	Combined Task Force	1 Task Force	Same as for 1 Task Force in Basic Organization 2						
				2 Task Force	Same as for 2 Task Force in Basic Organization 2						
Diversions Attack Force					2 Fleet will be the nucleus, plus all or the major part of the cruisers and destroyers of the Combined Fleet. Sometimes battleships and aircraft carriers for scouting will be added.						
Night Operations Force					Same as for Diversions Attack Force						
Advanced Expeditionary Force (SENKEN BUTAI)					6 Fleet will be the nucleus, plus all or the major part of the submarines of the Combined Fleet. Sometimes cruisers, converted cruisers, aircraft carriers, flying boats, etc, will be added.						
Base Air Forces	Basic Organization 2	Basic Organization 1		Base Air Forces	Each air fleet (base force) (KICHI) will be the nucleus.	Air flotillas operating independently within an area will conform to air fleets.					
		Organization KO		Combined Base Air Force	All or the major part of the base air forces will be the nucleus.						
		Organization OTSU		Combined Base Air Force	The base air forces of contiguous areas will be brought under a unified command.						
Northeast Area Force					The Northeast Area Fleet will be the nucleus.						
Inner South Seas Force					4 Fleet will be the nucleus.						
Southeast Area Force					The Southeast Area Fleet will be the nucleus.						
Southwest Area Force					The Southwest Area Fleet will be the nucleus.						
Communications Force					1 Combined Communications Unit: will be the nucleus.						
Tracking Force					1 Fleet will be the nucleus; however forces in battle areas will be excluded.						
Attached					Ships and other forces attached.						

CinC Combined Fleet

COMMANDING OFFICER	
Under direct command	
CinC 3 Fleet	
CinC 3 Fleet	
CinC 2 Fleet	
CinC	CinC 3 Fleet.
3 Fleet	CinC 2 Fleet
CinC	CinC 3 Fleet
3 Fleet	CinC 2 Fleet
CinC Combined Fleet	
CinC Combined Fleet	
CinC Combined Fleet	
Respective air fleet commanders in chief	
The senior air fleet commander in chief	
Respective senior air fleet commanders in chief	
CinC Combined Fleet	
CinC 4 Fleet	
CinC Southeast Area Fleet	
CinC Southwest Area Fleet	
CO 1 Combined Communications Unit	
CinC 1 Fleet or a commanding officer designated by him.	
Under direct command	

Combined Fleet

CinC Combined Fleet

(TN Basic Organization of Forces of the Combined Fleet.) (Continued)

Notes

1. In the "Division" column, "Combined Task Force" and "Combined Base Air Force" sometimes are referred to simply as "Task Force" and "Base Air Force".

2. Although the composition of the Night Operations Force varies, the basic organization will be the maximum organization. Cinc 2 Fleet will prescribe suitable doctrine to be used by the entire Night Operations Force

3. In cases of special necessity, terms such as "Commanding Officer, Basic Organization Night Operations Force" will be used in issuing orders and the like.

4. When 1 Air Fleet and similar forces are included in the Combined Fleet, they will be called "Mobile Base Air Force".

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3. This doctrine contains provisions based on Regulations for Naval Warfare (NAISEN YOMUREI). In using this doctrine, it is necessary to keep in mind the general principles of these regulations and to recognize fully that only by putting them into practice will best results be achieved.

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I. Combat

A. GENERAL OUTLINE

4. The principal object of Combined Fleet action is to destroy the enemy quickly by ascertaining the enemy situation, by concealing our own plans, by dominating the battle through seizure of the initiative, and by concentrating the offensive power of all forces against enemy strong points through close co-operation between units and exploitation of our own strong points.

5. The general trend of battle is decided by the fighting power of air forces; ultimate victory is decided by the combined fighting power of all forces. In Combined Fleet action, in other words, all forces work together to the end, first, of fullest realization of air power and, second, of exploitation of its successes. Then battle objectives are attained by bringing to bear the fighting power of all forces.

Where our air power is numerically inferior, victory is obtained by co-operation between all forces and by heroic combat. The enemy will be kept from utilizing his air power, which will be reduced at every opportunity. Through perseverance and through the combined strength of all our forces, in the end the enemy will be forced to yield.

6. Interception (YÜGEKI) zones are not established solely for defense. While their impregnability will be maintained, they will be used for either offensive or defensive operations against the enemy. In Combined Fleet operations, enemy fighting power will be crushed by aggressive offensives executed in accordance with this principle.

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7. Since new tactics and improved weapons must catch the enemy unprepared, changes in enemy tactics and weapons must be observed closely during operations. Meticulous planning and superior original ideas must lead to tactics and weapons superior to those of the enemy. The effort to disseminate and employ new weapons and new tactics promptly and widely is as vital to attaining continual success in continual combat as is confidence in victory and superior technical skill. All personnel of the Combined Fleet, from the commanding officers down, while constantly perfecting their technical and tactical skills and daily renewing their faith in victory, will be prepared above all to cope with any situation with respect to the physical environment, our forces, and the enemy; flexibility in combat is important.

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When the enemy has superior new weapons, our attention will be concentrated on plans for diminishing their effectiveness or for turning them to use against him. The fighting spirit of the enemy who has vast material strength, will be crushed by counter-attacks.

B. OUTLINE OF INTERCEPTION (YÜGEKI) ZONE COMBAT

1. General Outline of Interception (YÜGEKI) Zone Combat

8. Interception (YÜGEKI) zone combat will be carried out under the direction of the force commanders in the areas concerned. Force commanders in adjacent areas will maintain close liaison with them; when circumstances require, the former will be responsible for support. Occasionally reinforcements will be dispatched by special orders.

9. Interception (YÜGEKI) zone combat normally will be carried out in co-operation with Army forces. The command relationship between Army and Navy will be that of combined operations, unified command or partially unified command. The outline for Army - Navy co-operation will be established by agreement between force commanders in the various areas and Army force commanders, except as already established by directives from Imperial General Headquarters and by agreement between Commander in Chief, Combined Fleet and senior commanding officers of Army forces.

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10. In interception (YÜGEKI) zone combat, the principal objects are to keep abreast of the enemy situation and to prevent enemy patrolling, reconnaissance, espionage, etc; to maintain strict security and to conceal our plans; to carry out feints, deceptive communications and stratagems in order to confuse the enemy; to attack and destroy the enemy when the opportunity arises; to give the enemy no chance to make sorties and at the same time to be prepared to shift to the offensive; to keep vital bases secure; and when engaged in sorties, to move forward the interception (YÜGEKI) zone while keeping a firm foothold.

11. The various area force commanders will have supplies transported to advance bases and stored before the fighting has intensified and they will prepare plans for continuous supply. They will carry out necessary supply and reinforcement, preventing enemy interference even after the fighting has intensified. They will reduce enemy strength at the front by interfering with his transport, thus checking his advance. Necessary preparations for continuous supply are outlined in III, B, i, "Preparations for Continuous Supply".

12. In the vicinity of an interception (YÜGEKI) zone, engagements in narrow waters are frequently brought on by the counteroperations subsequent to attempts by either side to effect supply and reinforcement. Since weather, terrain and the enemy situation create special conditions in engagements in narrow waters and since the suitability of troops, armament and tactics affects the ease or difficulty of an operation, appropriate forces and tactics must be selected. This type of fighting will be carried out in accordance with III, B, ii, "Transport in the Face of the Enemy and Harassing Enemy Transport", and I, E, viii, "Engagements in Narrow Waters".

13. In interception (YÜGEKI) zone combat, air combat generally will be extremely violent. Since air combat conditions the general trend of battle, it is of paramount importance to be thorough in equipping bases and in planning replacement of air strength, and to fight tenaciously in the air, choosing suitable methods of combat to avoid battles of attrition. Air combat will be conducted as outlined in I, D.

11. Interception (YÜGEKI) Zone Combat Involving Sorties

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14. In sorties in an interception (YÜGEKI) zone where the enemy is confronted, air strength as well as local surface and land forces will be concentrated. First, ground forces will maneuver and advance with small boats or by land attacks, smashing and maintaining pressure on enemy first-line air forces and surface forces. Strong base points will be seized; bases or groups of bases and connecting supply routes will be prepared; and finally the interception (YÜGEKI) zone will be expanded. Operations will be executed as outlined in I, B, i.

15. Sorties against outlying islands will usually be made after such islands have come into the attacking range of our land-based airplanes through expansion of the interception (YÜGEKI) zone. In certain cases, however, raiding forces will be put ashore by submarine or other means to occupy the islands and destroy enemy forces and installations.

16. When planning sorties, allowance will be made for terrain, the enemy situation, etc, and thorough plans will be prepared in advance. When the enemy counterattacks in force, no opportunity will be lost to engage him in decisive action and overpower him. Original tactics will be employed. If necessary, special orders will be issued concerning matters not covered by I, C.

111. Checking Enemy Raids and Counterattacking in Interception (YÜGEKI) Zone Combat.

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17. A basic principle is to make every effort to counter-attack and crush enemy raids promptly. Operations will be executed as outlined in I, B, i, except as provided in iii.

18. When co-operating with the Army in checking enemy raids and counterattacking, tactics will be determined in advance and preparations will be made for engaging in full-scale combat as soon as the opportunity arises.

19. The best method for countering an enemy attack is to upset his plans by a preliminary thrust: that is, to observe enemy movements carefully, and when it is evident that he is assembling forces for a sortie, to raid and smash them with airplanes, submarines, raiding landing forces, etc. Or repeated air attacks may be carried out to force the enemy to abandon his plans.

20. When an attack is expected, interception stations will be established in advance. The enemy will be destroyed by turning his plans to our advantage and by trapping him through original tactics.

21. Where the enemy attacks from an adjacent area the essentials of his tactics will be concentrated on. The enemy will be smashed on the water or at the beach; his attack will be broken. Details of combat procedure will be based on III, B, iii, "Combat For Repulsing an Enemy Attacking from an Adjacent Area".

22. When the enemy comes to make a landing, our full strength will be concentrated at his first move and a counterattack launched to sweep him away. Even if the enemy has succeeded in getting ashore, no opportunity must be lost to counterattack and annihilate him (without bonding or yielding).

In land areas for the defense of which, the Army is chiefly responsible, all matters will be thoroughly covered by special agreements. It is essential that no conflict arise between Army and Navy policies in the event of an enemy attack.

Page 14/15 23. When enemy attacks are on a large scale, base air forces and surface forces will be used to strengthen the area forces concerned. When it is evident that the enemy is making his main countereffort, the Combined Fleet will concentrate all its base air power and major surface units, plan its operations and engage in decisive action; and by using its entire strength it will wipe out the main striking forces of the enemy. The outline for major engagements will be as prescribed in I, C.

C. MAJOR FLEET ENGAGEMENTS

1. General Rules

24. When the enemy attacks in force a forward area of an interception (YUGENKI) zone, the Combined Fleet will concentrate the necessary forces and intercept and annihilate the enemy. When the enemy enters an area where we have strong bases and strong base air forces, or where conditions are unsuitable for surface movements of the Task Force, action will be centered around the operations of base air forces; otherwise major engagements will be centered around the operations of the Task Force.