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COMBINED FLEET MEMORANDUM 18: ON ULTRASECRET OPERATION ORDERS

15 Aug 43

TO: Chief of Staff of All Fleets

FROM: Chief of Staff, Combined Fleet

106 of 500 copies

(TN Seals:) SHIBUYA (*1)

KOIZUMI (*2)

Memorandum on Combined Fleet Operation Orders

The following orders are issued today. The Outline for Combined Fleet Operations and the Basic Organization of the Combined Fleet are explained in the Separate Volume. In order to attain objectives, measures will be taken immediately in cases requiring action.

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The distribution list is given in the Separate Table.

Operation orders issued by the various force commanders will be modeled on the above and their distribution will be suitably restricted.

1. Combined Fleet Ultrasecret Operation Order 38 - Outline for Combined Fleet Operations.

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2. Combined Fleet Ultrasecret Operation Order 40 - Combined Fleet Third Phase (DAI SAN DAN) Operations Orders.

3. Combined Fleet Ultrasecret Operation Order 41 - Combined Fleet Dispositions for a Decisive Battle.

4. Combined Fleet Ultrasecret Operation Order 42 - Outline for Establishment of Interception (YŌGEKI) Zones.

5. Combined Fleet Ultrasecret Operation Order 43 - Basic Organization of Combined Fleet.

(Editor's Note: These titles do not correspond exactly with those of the relevant operation orders, translated on the following pages.)

(21) etc:-

(1) 海行

(2) 小泉

Combined Fleet Memorandum 13 on Ultrasecret Operation Order

Separate Volume

I. EXPLANATION OF THE OUTLINE OF COMBINED FLEET OPERATIONS

This memorandum has been issued to indicate the basic future policy of Combined Fleet operations and to attempt to unify concepts regarding the art of war in this period of transition when rules of naval warfare and Combined Fleet Doctrine are being re-examined.

II. EXPLANATION OF THE BASIC ORGANIZATION OF VARIOUS FORCES OF THE COMBINED FLEET

A. Object in Promulgating These Orders

From the outset of the war to the present operations for the most part have been based on pre-arranged plans. Since commanding officers and subordinates trained in the Combined Fleet before the war have conducted most of the action of the fleet, no matter what changes in the fleet have taken place, in general operations have not been impaired. In the future however, such will not necessarily be the case. The number of commanding officers and other personnel who are taking up duties and participating in operations for the first time is increasing, and there will be many changes in the grouping of forces. Doctrine, combat regulations (SHIMOKU), standard procedure (YOMU JUNSOKU), etc., suitable for each type of tactical unit will be established, therefore, concepts regarding the art of war will be unified. Training will be given whenever the opportunity presents. Otherwise there is little hope that the fighting strength of the Combined Fleet can be maintained or improved.

At the present time the Outline for Combined Fleet Operations not only establishes the basis for carrying out Combined Fleet operations, but also fixes the pattern for the basic organization of the forces. In addition, all commanding officers and staff officers will quickly establish doctrine and other matters required for combat. Training in these matters will be strictly enforced. It is anticipated that all these efforts will replenish and increase the fighting power of the Combined Fleet. These orders are promulgated to this end.

B. Significance of Basic Organization

1. Although the division of forces is ordinarily determined anew for each operation, it is advisable to point out in training pertinent divisions of forces selected from the entire range of operations. Hence, divisions of forces will be shown here as basic organizations for the various forces and will be set up alongside those determined for particular operations.

2. In issuing orders, particularly at important times, care will be taken not to mix the two types, as indicated below:

BASIC ORDERS	ROUTINE OPERATION ORDERS
Basic organization, 1 Task Force Commander	Previous examples will be relied on.
Basic organization Night Operations Force Commander	

C. Classification of Doctrine of the Various Forces

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Because there can be two types of doctrine for individual forces (doctrine for each force in Combined Fleet operations and doctrine for individual forces operating as detached units), when necessary the two types will be set forth separately. However, the force commander concerned will decide whether the doctrines will be placed in one or two volumes.

D. Points to be Applied by Cruiser Divisions, Destroyer Divisions and Similar Forces

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In basic organization cruiser divisions and destroyer divisions are included in the Task Force, Diversion Attack Force, Night Operations Force, area forces, etc. These orders set forth doctrine for the Task Force and area forces and especially points to be applied in operations by cruiser and destroyer divisions. Matters based on doctrine and standard procedure (YOMU JUNSOKU) determined by Diversion Attack Force and Night Operations Force orders as in the past will be carried out so as to give full scope to the fighting power of each of the so-called light forces. Accordingly in establishing doctrine, combat regulations (SENSOKU) and standard procedure (YOMU JUNSOKU), force commanders will confer whenever necessary to prevent conflicting demands being made on cruiser divisions, destroyer divisions and similar forces.

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E. Procedure for Determining Doctrine and the Like

1. Force commanders will form boards, and the boards at their discretion may order specially designated commanding officers to carry out the work. It is sometimes wise to obtain the co-operation of naval KOKUTAI, schools, etc. At such times, the responsible commanding officers will take suitable measures.

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2. When doctrine is determined, closest liaison will be maintained with Combined Fleet Headquarters. To co-ordinate concepts, doctrine will be promulgated to all force commanders.

3. It is especially important to promulgate important matters without delay, if necessary in rough draft form.

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F. Direction and Execution of Training

1. Obviously these orders depend on a training of personnel organized basically within fixed commands. For example, Commander in Chief, 3 Fleet will train cruiser divisions and destroyer squadrons of 2 Fleet in their capacity as elements of the Task Force, and Commander in Chief, 2 Fleet will train cruiser divisions and destroyer squadrons of 3 Fleet in their capacity as elements of the Task Force.

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Consequently, force commanders will lead ships of forces placed under their command for operations in accordance with battle experience and a unified conception of the art of war and without regard to the fixed organization of the forces. A unified conception of the art of war is derived from doctrine, combat regulations (SENSOKU) and standard procedure (YOMU JUNSOKU) established beforehand. Training will be given at every opportunity so that operations may be carried out without hindrance regardless of time or division of forces.

2. At first glance the contents of these orders are complex. Moreover, because force commanders have been made responsible for putting the orders into effect, the possibility of confusion in their execution may cause anxiety. In practice it is impossible to allow the orders to go into effect as they are. Because it is virtually impossible to carry out co-ordinated Combined Fleet training as in peacetime, each fleet headquarters and each of the other responsible headquarters will maintain close liaison with Combined Fleet Headquarters and with one another. In this manner they will provide for smooth training programs. When necessary, training will be carried out under Combined Fleet orders and all possible efforts will be made to put these orders into effect.

G. Task Force Basic Organization

Although it is expected that the organization of the Combined Fleet Task Force, especially Organization OTSU, will be under the immediate control of Commander in Chief, Combined Fleet, basic organization will be in accordance with these orders.

H. Diversion Attack Force Basic Organization

1. The character of the Diversion Attack Force is the same as that of the former Advance Force. The old terminology was not suited to the style of present operations; therefore the designation has been changed to Diversion Attack Force.

2. It is anticipated that opportunities for the operations of the entire Diversion Attack Force as a single unit will be far fewer than for the Task Force. The Diversion Attack Force however, bears some relation to the organization of amphibious groups (KAIJO KIDO HEIDAN) (temporary designation) which is presently the subject of special study. Some factors in Diversion Attack Force operations also require further study. In consideration of situations in which cruisers and destroyers are dispersed in a manner unusual according to the distribution of forces, the organization and commanding officer of the Diversion Attack Force will be clearly set forth. Suitable doctrine, combat regulations (SENSOKU) and standard procedures (YOMU JUNSOKU) (for example, formulation of combat regulations for engagements in narrow waters) and training will be established for each type of organization of these light forces. This organization will be established to facilitate the carrying out of operations. Accordingly, all cruiser divisions, destroyer squadrons and destroyer divisions of the Imperial Navy will establish their doctrine and the like in conformity with the doctrine established by the Diversion Attack Force Commander.

3. "Aircraft carriers will be added to the Diversion Attack Force" means principally that carriers will be added to assist in such matters as scouting. (A force which includes carriers with offensive power is a task force, therefore, when such carriers are added, operations are carried out in accordance with Task Force Doctrine).

I. Night Operations Force Basic Organization

1. "Aircraft carriers to be added to the Night Operations Force" refers for the most part to carriers whose chief function is scouting. Further, in cases where engagements begin as task force engagements and subsequently become night battles, the Night Operations Force will be responsible for the night combat and some of the aircraft carriers will come under its command. Co-operation and other necessary matters will be considered in terms of the establishment of doctrine. (Night combat doctrine is needed even in Task Force doctrine.)

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2. In view of the fact that there are many opportunities for engagements in narrow waters, some of the essentials of night combat require re-examination if they are to be included as doctrine.

J. Advanced Expeditionary Force (SENKEN BUTAI) Basic Organization

1. It is intended that submarine squadrons, submarine divisions, and individual submarines not included in 6 Fleet will be trained on the basis of unified concepts.

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2. "Cruisers, aircraft carriers, etc, to be added to the Advanced Expeditionary Force (SENKEN BUTAI)" refers to suitable cruisers, converted cruisers and aircraft carriers, the chief function of which is scouting and which are added for such operations as destruction of sea traffic.

K. Base Air Force Basic Organization

At present base air forces operate in separate areas and on occasion place elements under command of another. In the future, however, they will operate as the Combined Base Air Force. Further, since units of all air fleets and air flotillas will be increasingly placed under the command of commanding officers of other forces, it is necessary to establish Combined Base Air Force doctrine, standard procedure (YOMU JUNSOKU) and doctrine suitable to all air flotillas, KOKUTAI, HIKUTAI and similar forces.

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This basic organization is established in accordance with the above. To carry out and direct these provisions and the training relative to them is the responsibility of the base air force commander who is the senior commanding officer. He may make suitable commanding officers responsible for any necessary work as he sees fit.

Copies of this memorandum will be sent to all squadrons, flotilla and division headquarters and to all base headquarters.

STANDARD DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATION ORDERS

		SUPPLY OF OPERATIONS	THIRD PHASE (D.F.) OPER- TION ORDERS	DISPOSITIONS FOR DECISIVE BATTLES	INTERCEPTION ZONES (YOGE- FITAI)	BASIC ORGANIZATION
COMBINED FLEET	Fleet Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Squadron Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Base (KO, YAOCHI) Unit Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Surface Escort Unit Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Combined Fleet Communications Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Combined Fleet, Special Service Hq	○	○	○	○	○
	Warships	△	○	○	○	○
	Air Units	△	○	○	○	○
	Destroyer Divisions	△	△	○	△	○
	Submarine Divisions	△	△	○	△	○
	Subchaser Divisions	△	△	/	△	△
	Minoswoper Divisions	△	△	/	△	△
	Fleet Auxiliaries	△	△	/	/	/
	Communications Units	△	△	○	△	○
	Destroyers	/	△	○	△	○
	Submarines	/	△	○	△	○
	Minosweepers	/	△	/	△	/
	Subchasers	/	△	/	△	/
	Guard Units (KEIBI)	/	△	/	△	/

		SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS	THIRD PHASE (DAN) OPERA- TION ORDERS	DISPOSITIONS FOR DECISIVE BATTLES	INTERCEPTION ZONES (YOG- KIT-I)	BASIC ORGANIZATION
	Converted ships and special naval land- ing parties	/	/	/	/	/
OTHER THAN COMBINED FLEET	Naval General Staff	○	○	○	○	○
	Navy Dept	○	○	○	○	○
	His Majesty's Aides-de-camp	○	○	○	○	○
	Various naval stations and defense stations	○	○	○	○	○
	China Area Fleet, 2 China Expedi- tionary Fleet, and HAINAN Guard Unit (KEI)	○	○	/	○	○
	1 Air Fleet	○	○	/	○	○
NOTES	1. ○ - Distributed. 2. △ - Indicates that although distributed, the order must be returned to Fleet Hq after reading. 3. / - Not distributed. 4. The various commanders in chief of fleets may control the distribution and reference lists without being bound by this table.					