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Appendix 2 to Annex BAKER to FO 1 ABLE.

ENEMY CAPABILITIES

1. ENEMY CAPABILITIES.

a. The enemy is capable of the following lines of action in opposing our amphibious assault on the island of OKINAWA in the vicinity of the HAGUSHI BEACHES. He can:

(1) Make an air attack on our forces while water borne and after a landing has been made.

(2) Defend the beaches in force.

(3) Defend lightly at the beaches and employ his main strength for counterattack.

(4) Defend on successive prepared positions.

(5) Launch a counter-landing against our beachhead.

(6) Make a vertical envelopment.

(7) Reinforce the island garrison.

b. Discussion of capabilities.

(1) Make an air attack on our forces while water borne and after a landing has been made:

The Japs are well aware of the importance of the control of the air. They have the aircraft available and necessary fields for staging major air operations. The fact that the Jap has in the past dribbled his aircraft into combat is no indication that he cannot, or will not employ power tactics. The vital position of OKINAWA will unquestionably call for an all-out air effort, directed initially against our shipping and later our installations ashore.

(2) Defend the beaches in force:

Unless the Jap should be forewarned or divine our purpose it is unlikely he will employ his main strength in a cordon defense of the HAGUSHI BEACHES. It is impossible to provide a cordon defense of all beaches without considerable dissipation of his forces. A fair estimate, therefore, of the troops allotted to the static defense of the HAGUSHI BEACHES would be in the neighborhood of 6000.

The enemy has had ample time and means for the construction of extensive beach defenses. This is evident on the E shore along YAKAGUSUKU MAN. On the other hand, photo interpretation indicates there was no extensive organization of the ground back of the HAGUSHI BEACHES as of 10 Oct 44, nor has there been any appreciable improvement in these defenses since that time.

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The enemy is well aware of the nature and power of our amphibious assaults. On the smaller islands where he had his back to the wall the Jap doggedly defended the beach line. On the larger islands, i.e. IYU and LUZON, the enemy elected to pull back from the beaches in order to escape bombardment. Based on the enemy's reaction in these operations it is believed he is more likely to follow the next capability.

(3) Defend lightly at the beaches and employ his main strength for counterattack:

The most effective manner in which the enemy could employ his forces against our amphibious landing would be to hold the beaches lightly and with just sufficient strength to delay our advance. Then at the critical time, perhaps before our artillery has been landed, or when the weather or surf has interrupted reinforcement of the beachhead, the enemy may employ his main strength in a coordinated attack against our flank. For the XXIV Corps this would be the right (south) flank.

Terrain would favor an attack against the right flank. The escarpment on the south flank approaches close to shore and would be an excellent place from which to launch a counterattack aimed in a northwesterly direction. The enemy would have excellent observation. The terrain would facilitate close artillery support.

Further, the compactness of the vital enemy installations on OKINAWA will enable the Jap to keep his mobile reserve centrally located. Likely positions would enable the enemy to make contact with his leading elements, in two to six hours. It is possible for the enemy to launch a coordinated attack against our right flank with two divisions by dawn of L plus 1. This represents his maximum capability. Taking all factors into consideration such as dispersion of troops, distant locations of reserves, etc., it is probable that no more than one division would be available for counterattack on L plus 1.

(4) Defend on prepared positions:

Assuming our initial landing to be successful, it is possible the enemy may decide to contain our forces from prepared defensive positions. Here again the enemy may have anticipated this possibility. If so, he has had ample time and means to effect extensive construction of positions and emplacements.

Possible locations of defensive positions are: the high ground E of IYU Airfield and the rugged hill mass SE of SUKUBI. A point in favor of the Japs is the reduction of the frontage he is required to defend the farther south on the isthmus he is driven. When an E-W line through CHITAN is reached his front will not exceed 6000 yards with both flanks resting on the sea. Unless his forces are greatly decimated when this line is reached the enemy should be able to hold a strong defensive position with a portion of his force and to reconstitute the remainder as a sizeable reserve.

(5) Launch a counter-landing against our beachhead:

The enemy touches the use and possibilities of counter-landings. He has in some previous operations made attempts to counter-land troops. These have not been marked with success, and it is believed that so long as our naval forces continue to operate in the waters around OKINAWA the threat of a counter-landing is not serious.

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(6) Make a vertical envelopment;

The enemy has the equipment and trained troops available for a vertical envelopment. He already has risked many aircraft and sacrificed many men and much equipment in the landing of paratroopers during a recent operation. He may be expected to repeat this operation on a larger scale.

Regardless of the enemy's estimate of the success or failure of his latest paratroop operations, they demonstrated to the satisfaction of all that it can be done. Conceived, carefully planned, and skillfully executed, the enemy can land paratroopers at any point of his selection. Even a battalion of fanatical, suicidal troops, landed in a critical rear area, will require for suppression numbers of troops far in excess of the number sacrificed by the enemy. While a vertical envelopment may not seriously effect the outcome of the operation, the harassment to our troops and the immobilization of a considerable force for counter-measures may at a critical period during the operation justify any loss incurred by the enemy.

(7) Reinforce the island garrison;

OKINAWA is Japanese homeland. The enemy may be expected to defend far more doggedly than at any previous time in the Pacific War. In the LEYTE campaign, the Jap showed his willingness to lavishly sacrifice men, ships, and equipment in an endeavor to reinforce the island garrison. In spite of all counter-measures he succeeded in landing an estimated 50,000 troops. This was in defense of captured soil. With the added incentive of the defense of the homeland, it is to be expected the enemy can and will attempt to reinforce the OKINAWA garrison after L-Day.

As in the LEYTE campaign, reinforcements will consist largely of units with a preponderance of infantry weapons and a limited amount of artillery, rations and other supplies. While maximum effectiveness cannot be expected of such unsupported troops, experience has amply demonstrated their ability to materially lengthen an operation by their suicidal defensive tactics.

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