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From: Commander North Pacific Force.  
 To : Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.  
 Subject: Evacuation of Kiska by Japanese - 1943.  
 Enclosure: (A) Analysis Operations Aleutian Area Prepared  
 by A.I.C. North Pacific Force. -P.3

1. Enclosure (A) has been prepared by Advanced Intelligence Center, North Pacific Force, in order to correlate all information of own and enemy activities during the period between May 24, when occupation of Attu reached the mopping-up stage, and August 15, when our unopposed occupation of Kiska took place.
2. There is no concrete information as to when or how evacuation of Kiska by the Japanese was accomplished. Pertinent indications and deductions are set forth in the following paragraphs.
3. It is probable that, coincident with our occupation of Attu, evacuation of certain key aviation personnel from Kiska was initiated. It is believed submarines were used exclusively at this time. Thereafter, the presence of our heavy ships, the establishment of the Kiska blockade on June 24th, the enemy's loss of three submarines between June 10th and 22nd, the increasingly heavier aerial bombardments after June 24th, and the commencement of heavy ship bombardments on July 6th, all combined to force upon the enemy the decision to evacuate completely. A captured document indicates an evacuation order may have been received about July 7th.
4. While the initial evacuation was exclusively by submarines, it is possible that a combination of submarines and small surface vessels were used in the later stages, and finally, near the end of July that surface ships, effecting rendezvous with barges, were used.
5. From the quantities of food, ammunition, clothing and medical supplies remaining, and incomplete destruction of equipment, the final stages of evacuation appear to have taken place very hastily. A few personnel may have remained into August.
6. Submarines destroyed during June may well have been crowded with evacuees. The night engagement of surface forces on radar contact



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south of Kiska on 26 July may have prevented additional Japanese from reaching Paramushiru or the Empire. These possibilities, and the toll of Japanese lives exacted by aircraft and ship bombardment, must remain in the field of conjecture. That the "softening-up" operations during the spring and summer had a decisive effect is clear from all evidence, including captured diaries.

T. C. KINKAID.

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SUMMARY OF ENEMY OPERATIONS

## OUTLINE OF ENEMY OPERATIONS:

- (a) Air Activity
- (b) Ground Activity
- (c) Surface Shipping
  - (1) Combatant
  - (2) Supply
- (d) Submarine Activity
- (e) Radio and Radar Activity

(a) AIR ACTIVITY

Evidence of enemy air activity comes from various sources: actual observation of enemy aircraft, radar contacts, visual or photographic observation of enemy air facilities, etc. During the period, May 24 - August 15, which is under consideration, the only positive contacts on enemy aircraft were on planes that were probably based on the KURILES. The last evidence of Aleutian based Japanese aircraft occurred in early May. On May 3rd a seaplane was observed near ATTU, on May 5th a similar plane was strafed and burned on the beach at CHICHAGOF HARBOR, and also on May 5th a plane was photographed in one of the beach revetments on KISKA. Since that time there were six or seven doubtful contacts reported on planes which might have been Aleutian based, but which more probably came from the KURILES (See Annex B, Table p). It should be noted that during the last three weeks of July and the first week of August there was an increase in contacts on Japanese patrol planes, presumably based on the KURILES. (See Annex B, Table p; Annex C, Graph C).

Evidence concerning enemy air activity may also be found in photographs of certain ground installations. The Japanese had been working on runways both at KISKA and ATTU for some months. Our occupation of ATTU necessarily ended work on the HOLTZ BAY strip. Work on the KISKA strip was apparently accelerated after our attack on ATTU and was virtually completed on May 26th. The strip was kept up without any obvious changes until July 2nd, but was not used during this period as far as is known. After July 2nd, bomb craters remained unfilled. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 1; Annex A, Table e). Also the seaplane revetments on the beach were allowed to fall into disrepair between May 26th and June 11th. There is evidence that aviation personnel were being evacuated as early as the middle of June.



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(b) ENEMY GROUND ACTIVITY

Various estimates of enemy personnel have been made. Documents captured at ATTU and prisoner of war interrogations in general confirmed these estimates and from neither of these sources was there any evidence of an intention to evacuate. There is some evidence from captured enemy documents of a shortage of supply at KISKA in April (rationing of food, some indication of lack of fuses and repair materials.) But this evidence is not conclusive and ground examination of surplus supplies at ATTU indicated few shortages of essentials which could not be replenished by submarines. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 2).

The volume of AA fire is an indication of availability of certain supplies and personnel. Although this fluctuated somewhat, it held up fairly well until July 27th. After this date a diminishing volume of AA fire was reported until August 4th when it stopped altogether, with the exception of six to eight bursts reported on the twelfth. Reports of small arms and automatic weapon fire continued up through August 14th, but the volume was so small as to be negligible. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 4 and 5; Annex B, Table k; Annex C, Graph B.) Very light return fire was reported by some naval vessels on August 3rd. However, this return fire was not generally reported and cannot be highly evaluated.

The greater part of the evidence concerning enemy ground activity is that furnished by photographs. Photographs show that the Japanese garrison on KISKA was improving the defenses of the island up until July 26th, the date of the last photo coverage, prior to August 2nd. During the period July 2nd to July 26th, the Sub Base - Gertrude Cove road was completed and additional road construction was noted in the Main Camp and North Head areas. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 1 and Annex B, Table h). In contrast to the continued building up to July 26th, the photographs of August 2nd and August 4th showed large scale demolition. (See Annex B, Table a, c and f.)

New trenches were constructed during the period July 2nd to July 26th, in the Reynard, North Head, Camp and Lief Areas, and a new three (3) gun medium and a two (2) gun light AA batteries were completed in Gertrude Cove Camp between July 15th and July 22nd. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 1; Annex B, Tables d and f.) After July 26th, photographic interpretation reports indicated that there were no new installations, except for three small positions which were possibly new since July 25th. However, on the basis of visual observation, flying personnel reported many new positions and installations during the first two weeks of August. These were probably older positions which were seen for the first time during this period when the planes were going over lower than they had previously. (See Annex A, Memorandum No. 5.)



(c) ENEMY SURFACE SHIPPING (See Annex B, Table c.)

As far as can be told, the last enemy attempt to maintain contact with his outposts in the Aleutians by force was checked on March 26th in the Battle of the KOMANDORSKIS. After that date, in spite of the presence of a very considerable concentration of strength at PARAMUSHIRO (revealed in the photographs of July 18th), no contacts on what were known to be combatant vessels were made east of the 160° East meridian.

In addition to a few contacts reported off the KURILES, there were three reports and visual contacts of surface ships near or enroute to KISKA. On July 10th our search planes picked up four small merchant ships at 51-20 N, 165-55 E. These were later bombed, two of them being sunk. On July 27th, a 200 foot AK was reported in KISKA Harbor by search planes, and on August 15th, the masts of three ships were reported by a submarine at 47-15 N, 164-15 E.

There were Radar contacts on groups of ships on July 23rd at 49-50 N, 170-04 E; early in the morning of the 26th at 50-48 N, 176-14 E; and on the 29th at 53-26 N, 166-45 E. The first contact was undoubtedly friendly, but the other two may have been enemy surface units operating according to an evacuation plan. The targets of July 26th were subjected to heavy shelling.

Photographs taken July 26th, when coverage of both Gertrude Cove and Kiska Harbor was obtained, showed 19 barges in Kiska Harbor. The next coverage, which was partial coverage of Kiska Harbor only, taken on August 2nd, revealed one barge and one small boat on beach in front of Main Camp. On August 4th, complete coverage of both Gertrude Cove and Kiska Harbor was again obtained and showed only the same barge and small boat revealed on August 2nd. (See Annex B, Table j; Annex D, Diagram 1.) It should be, in addition, that 16 barges were reported in Kiska Harbor from visual reconnaissance by army planes on July 27th, and that on the 29th of July, the FARRAGUT reported sinking an apparently empty barge about four miles east of Sobaka Rock.

(d) ENEMY SUBMARINE ACTIVITY

In addition to various contacts reported along the Aleutian chain during the entire period, there was a concentration of sound and visual submarine contacts in and around the western Aleutians between June 9th and June 22nd. Further, there was a similar, but even more marked concentration of D/F's between June 6th and June 24th. (See Annex B, Tables m and n; Annex C, Graphs C and D.)

(e) ENEMY RADIO AND RADAR ACTIVITY

Radio communications from KISKA ceased on July 28th.

The radar installations on KISKA may have been able to track and plot our destroyers on patrol so as to take advantage of their movements and positions. Radar reconnaissance missions flown over KISKA on July 22nd and 26th heard signals evaluated as emanating from the KISKA installations, but thereafter no radar signal definitely identifiable as Japanese was picked up. Reconnaissance missions were flown on August 4th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th; signals which could not be definitely identified were picked up on August 12th, 13th and 14th. (See Annex, Memorandum 3.)



SUMMARY OF OWN OPERATIONS

OUTLINE OF OWN ACTIVITY:

- (a) Air Activity.
- (b) Surface Activity.
- (c) Submarine Activity.
- (d) Ground Activity.

(a) OWN AIR ACTIVITY

During the period May 24 to August 15, our air activity against KISKA reached a crescendo. The target was attacked by 1,581 planes which in addition to strafing dropped a total of 2,618,338 pounds of bombs. (See Annex B, Table t and Annex C, Graph A.) Whenever weather permitted, searches, according to search plan Fox, were carried out to cover the approaches to KISKA, as far west as the KURILE chain. (See Annex D, Diagram 2 and Annex C, Graph F.) In addition weather and reconnaissance missions were flown often during weather which would not permit attack missions. When possible photographic missions were completed. (See Annex D, Diagram 1.)

(b) OWN SURFACE ACTIVITY

A task group of cruisers and destroyers, sometimes battleships, cruisers, and destroyers was on station during the major part of the period either to the north or south of the island. During part of the period groups were stationed both in the north and the south. (See Annex B, Table r.) Destroyer blockade of KISKA Island was maintained continuously from June 8th through the period except for two days, July 23rd and 24th, when a submarine was on patrol to the west of KISKA. During 8 days the destroyer blockade was supplemented by a submarine on station off the west side of the island. (See Annex B, Table s and Annex C, Graph F.)

On July 6th, 22nd and on August 2nd and 12th task groups bombarded KISKA with 200,000, 423,500, 370,600, and 116,710 pounds of shells respectively in the form of 5", 6", 8", and 14" shells. Sixteen additional bombardments, conducted by destroyers with 5" shells during the period, bring the total weight of shells to 1,202,610 pounds. (See Annex B, Table 1 and Annex C, Graph E.)

Early in the morning of July 26th a task group opened fire on a radar target and expended over 500 rounds of 14" ammunition. (See Annex B, Table O).



**(c) OWN SUBMARINE ACTIVITY**

During eight days of the period one of own submarines was stationed off the west coast of KISKA. (See Annex B, Table s and Annex C, Graph F.) In addition submarines from the North Pacific force patrolled off PARAMUSHIRO and other islands in the NORTHERN KURILES.

**(d) OWN GROUND ACTIVITY**

Our bases at ATTU, SHENYA, AMCHITKA, and ADAK were built-up and strengthened during the period. Towards the end troop transports and troops were concentrated in the area preparatory to our assault on KISKA.

In general our forces were maneuvered toward the objective of driving the enemy from the Aleutian Islands. It is believed that the Japanese were first forced to abandon the idea of reinforcing the Aleutians and, during the months subsequent to the seizure of ATTU, were forced to recognize that under the concentrated and increasing tempo of U.S. attacks on KISKA from all sides the period during which they could hope to effect a defense of the island that would be costly to the attacking force was rapidly coming to an end. Therefore, in spite of very heavy commitments in material and labor for the defense of KISKA, they abandoned their traditional policy of defense-until-annihilated and evacuated their personnel from the island.

1. The Japanese were evacuated from KISKA on May 24, 1943, although some construction was continued until the end of June.

2. The naval engagement of March 26, 1943, in which a superior Japanese force defeating two AEs was turned back, indicated that risks involved were considered by the Japanese greater than the value of reinforcing their Aleutian bases.

3. During the resistance at ATTU in May, reports of possible aid appears to have come in support of the defenders with the completion of two fast-attack raids by landers and an isolated and ill-timed and unsuccessful submarine attack.

The U.S. occupation of ATTU in early May placed the defending Japanese at KISKA in a far more serious and isolated position. The scope of the successful operations undertaken was such that the Japanese command was almost certainly aware of further imminent American operations in this area, either against KISKA or, possibly, against their Northern Kurile bases.

This being the case, the Japanese command possibly faced the following alternatives and considerations:

1. To reoccupy ATTU so that KISKA could be reinforced to some degree and attacked.



INDICATIONS OF JAPANESE INTENTIONS  
KISKA, MAY 24 to AUGUST 15, 1943.

For the following reasons, it would appear that, as far back as December 1942, the Japanese Aleutian bases at KISKA and ATTU reverted from active offensive bases to the status of being defensive barriers and outposts:

1. The so-called SEMICHI Expedition of late November turned back without accomplishing its mission of occupying the SEMICHI and subsequently AMCHITKA and building air fields on these islands.

2. The submarine base established at KISKA, when destroyed by bombing, was never observed to have been re-established.

3. The Japanese were unable to muster sufficient naval or air forces to oppose the occupation and building of the air field by United States forces at AMCHITKA in January 1943.

4. KISKA air strength, although built up at one time to about twenty planes in March, was allowed to deteriorate so that to all intents there was no appreciable air activity after the middle of April and the last Aleutian based Japanese plane was noted on May 5th.

5. The development of the KISKA and ATTU runways was very slow and inconclusive. The former was first observed on December 31st in photographs and the latter on March 7th and 10th. The ATTU runway was only about 50% complete on May 10th and the KISKA runway was only "virtually complete" about May 26th, although minor construction continued until the end of June.

6. The naval engagement of March 26, 1943, in which a superior Japanese force escorting two AKs was turned back, indicated that risks involved were considered by the Japanese greater than the value of reinforcing their Aleutian bases.

7. During the resistance at ATTU in May, almost no outside aid appears to have come in support of the defenders with the exception of two ineffective raids by bombers and an isolated and likewise unsuccessful submarine attack.

The U.S. occupation of ATTU in early May placed the defending garrison at KISKA in a far more serious and isolated position. The scale of the American operations likewise was such that the Japanese command was almost certainly aware of further imminent American operations in this area, either against KISKA or, possibly, against their Northern Kurile bases.

This being the case, the Japanese command probably faced the following alternatives and considerations:

1. To reoccupy ATTU so that KISKA could be reinforced to some purpose and defended.



2. To order the KISKA garrison to maintain an active but relatively unaided defense as long as possible for the purpose of making its occupation as costly as possible to American forces and also to gain time in which to build up their defenses in the Northern Kuriles.

3. To evacuate the island.

It is probable that the first alternative was not seriously considered, owing to insufficient naval and air forces available after reverses in the South and Central Pacific to risk encountering strong American naval forces and land based aircraft. Time to build up the defenses of the Northern Kuriles, which enemy documents captured at ATTU indicate were not strongly defended in 1942, probably became the primary consideration. There is no evidence of an immediate decision as to whether it was advisable to make the loss of KISKA as costly as possible or to evacuate. It is probable, however, that in view of the hopelessness of the situation, specialized personnel would be evacuated soon after the loss of ATTU. Moreover, there is much evidence which points towards a policy of stubborn resistance in order that the cost of taking KISKA would be as high as possible to American forces. These may be listed as follows:

1. Continuation of heavy AA fire.
2. Continued construction during June and July of defenses, roads, and other installations, many of them directly related to defense of the approaches to the island.
3. Use of land based planes from PARAMUSHIRO, the threat of basing them at KISKA, and increase of Japanese air searches reported in July.
4. Shipping concentrations at PARAMUSHIRO.
5. The surge of observed submarine activity in June.
6. The interception of four small ships on July 10th. It is reported that the decks of these ships were laden with supplies.

On the other hand, there was little evidence of an intention to evacuate the island until the end of July. Deception, if used, was good and the only evidence of such an intention may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. Failure by the Japanese to attack any of our bases in force.
2. Failure to complete and use the airfield at KISKA for land based planes.
3. A report that aviation and other specialized personnel were withdrawn from KISKA early in June.



4. The possibility of the use of the small ships intercepted July 10th and other Japanese shipping and submarines reported in occasional contacts for evacuation rather than supply.

It is probable that with the concentration of American forces and the increasing severity of attacks on KISKA as well as the increase in the difficulty and in the risks of supplying KISKA, even with bare necessities of food and ammunition, the Japanese command concluded that, within a limited period of time, a strong defense capable of inflicting heavy casualties on an invasion force would be impossible. Therefore they were forced to attempt the third alternative of evacuation while the means of resistance to an invasion were still available.

The exact date of the evacuation of KISKA is not known nor is the method of evacuation.

On July 27th attacking missions reported the usual activity and opposition, and photographic interpretation of photographs of July 26th showed no appreciable change. On July 27th air attacks were made on KISKA but reconnaissance was negligible on account of cloud cover and no photographs were taken. During the period July 28th through August 1st the weather prevented attack missions or reconnaissance of the island.

On August 2nd and thereafter there were indications of a radical change in the Japanese situation at KISKA. Air attack missions and ships carrying out naval bombardment reported only very sparse and light return fire (since evaluated as probably non-existent), installations showed destruction by Japanese demolition charges (including the Radar) as well as from the heavy attacks of U.S. forces, radio activity ceased on July 28th, landing barges were not present. The changes were mostly observed in the areas of greatest Japanese defensive installations, all of which were subject to naval bombardment, as well as air attacks. On August 2nd, it became obvious that the Japanese had either:

1. Withdrawn to prepared positions in the mountains, where they would be less vulnerable to naval bombardment and concentrated air attacks, in order to defend the beaches with mobile forces, take advantage of the mountainous terrain, and maintain a defense to the last which would be most costly to invading troops, as at ATTU.

2. Evacuated the island or were in process of evacuation. No definite contact with evacuating forces was made. However, in view of the evacuation, it appears that personnel which at a minimum included anti-aircraft gun crews was evacuated between July 27th to August 2nd, while weather conditions prevented air reconnaissance of the island.

Any or all of the following three methods of evacuation could have been used:



1. By barges based at KISKA or brought in for the purpose of evacuation and used to carry personnel to a ship rendezvous or even direct to the KURILES.

2. By submarines.

3. By actual entry of a ship or ships into KISKA. Contacts with Japanese ships the end of July were as follows:

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Location seen</u>	<u>Reported by</u>	<u>Date</u>
200' AK	49°08' N, 159°42' E.	Patrol plane	25 July
3 objects	50°48' N, 176°14' E.	Radar contact only heavily shelled by CTG 16.7 and CTG 16.12.	26 July
200' ship, central structure with mast (from description thought to be possibly No. 51 Sub-chaser).	KISKA Harbor	Patrol plane	27 July
7 objects	53°26' N, 166°45' E.	Radar contact patrol plane	29 July

The above summary of Japanese intentions on KISKA Island made from May 24 to August 15, 1943, is prepared without reference to material found or that may be found on KISKA Island as a result of the occupation.

ANNEX A  
MEMORANDUM