

HEADQUARTERS HAWAIIAN INTERCEPTOR COMMAND

18 December 1941

SUBJECT: Report of Enemy Activity over Oahu, 7 December 1941

TO: Commanding General, Hawaiian Air Force

At approximately 0802, a large formation of enemy airplanes were heard approaching Wheeler Field from the North at approximately 5000 feet. They peeled off and attacked the hangar line with Dive Bombers, releasing in all about thirty five bombs - of these, approximately four were 600 lbs; about three were 250 lbs; about eight were 100 lbs; the remainder were smaller and some appeared to be oil or other type of incendiary bombs. The airplanes appeared to release their bombs from an altitude of from 500 to 1000 feet. There were two types of bombers in the attack - one with non-retractable wheels appeared to be of the A-17 type, and the others were a little faster and had retractable wheels. Each type had a crew of two.

Bombs struck and burned Hangar No. 1 where the Base Engineering was situated and Hangar No. 3. They also burned a building used as a store house by the Post Exchange and a mobilization-type warehouse filled with cement. One bomb struck the 6th Pursuit Squadron barracks on the Southwest corner entering a window on the second floor where it exploded causing considerable damage to personnel and rendering the building unserviceable. One bomb which landed in the open made a crater approximately 15 feet in diameter and six feet deep.

After the airplanes had expended their bombs, they came to a very low altitude and machine-gunned the airplanes parked in front of the hangars. They also fired bullets through the windows of buildings, attempting to set them afire with incendiary ammunition. From belts of ammunition in one of the captured planes, it was noted that the ammunition was loaded two Armor-piercing, one tracer; two Armor-piercing, one tracer; two Armor-piercing, one incendiary. The bullets punctured the gasoline tanks of the airplanes and set them afire with tracer and incendiary ammunition. This method of attack was very successful and destroyed fifty four airplanes by fire and twenty nine airplanes by other means. After the first raid, the personnel on the post were employed in pulling away unburned airplanes from those that were burning and removing as many as possible from the burning hangars. They were also employed in fighting the numerous fires caused by the raid and in rescuing the wounded.

Before the raid, all airplanes were tied down on the ramp in front of the hangars or were inside the hangars. None of them were loaded with ammunition. After they had been rescued from the fire and pulled away from the hangar line, the crews began arming them.

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At approximately 0910, a second attack was made by seven airplanes, but little damage was done. These airplanes appeared to be expending on Wheeler Field what ammunition was left after the raid on Hickam Field and Pearl Harbor.

The following members of the 46th Pursuit Squadron took off from Wheeler Field about 0850 and were ordered by the Controller at the Information Center to proceed to the vicinity of Diamond Head at 8000 feet:

1st Lieut. L. M. SANDERS
2d Lieut. J. M. THACKER
2d Lieut. G. - STERLING
2d Lieut. P. - RASMUSSEN

They proceeded to the vicinity of Bellows Field and there attacked a formation of nine Japanese two-seater airplanes with retractable landing gears. Lieut. Sanders and Lieut. Rasmussen each shot down a Japanese airplane and Lieut. Sterling was shot down by the enemy. Lieut. Sanders reports that the Japanese two-seater airplanes could out-climb the P-36 airplanes used by the 46th Pursuit Squadron. By about 0920, 1st Lieut. M. A. Moore and 2d Lieut. O. Norris of the 46th Pursuit Squadron got into the air. Lt. Moore fired at a Japanese airplane without result.

The 47th Pursuit Squadron was located at Haleiwa and, between 0815 and 1000, made two flights. In the first flight were 2d Lieut. Kenneth Taylor, 2d Lieut. George Welch, 1st Lieut. John Webster, 2d Lieut. John Daines, each flying P-40's and 1st Lieut. Robert Rogers in a P-36. In the second flight were 1st Lieut. Robert Rogers, 2d Lieut. George Welch, 2d Lieut. Kenneth Taylor and 2d Lieut. Harry Brown in P-40's and 2d Lieut. John Daines in a P-36. Lieut. Welch shot down two Japanese planes in the first flight and two during the second flight. Lieut. Taylor shot down two Japanese planes during the first flight. Lieut. Brown shot down one Japanese plane during the second flight. Lieut. Daines was shot down at approximately 0915 over Schofield Barracks, probably by our own anti-aircraft troops.

The 44th Pursuit Squadron was on Detached Service at Bellows Field for Gunnery Training. Upon notified of the attack at Wheeler Field, the crews began arming the airplanes. In an effort to take off under heavy fire from the enemy, Lieut. Whiteman was shot down immediately after take-off, Lieut. Hans C. Christensen was killed while getting into a P-40 to take-off. Lieut. Samuel W. Bishop took off and was shot down into the ocean. Although wounded in the leg, this pilot swam ashore.

The following casualties were incurred at Wheeler Field, excepting officers who were killed in flight:

38 Enlisted Men Killed.

59 Enlisted Men Wounded.

These casualties were suffered mostly by the men sleeping in the tents and those sleeping in the 6th Pursuit Squadron barracks that was hit by a bomb.

The Information Center for the Interceptor Command which had been set up in a temporary installation near Fort Shafter was operated as follows on 7 December 1941:

(a) 0400-0700

(1) All six detector stations operating per orders C/S, HHD.

(2) 1st Lieut. KERMIT A. TYLER, AC, was Watch Officer

- (3) A plotting detail consisting of one NCO and 10 enlisted men was on duty.
- (4) The Control Center at Wheeler Field was manned by Sgt Starry.
- (b) 0700
 - (1) All detector stations closed down except one, the Opana Station at Kahuku Point, which remained in operation in order to continue training a new man operating the oscilloscope. This Station picked up plot at 0702 indicating airplanes at 136 miles bearing 0° to 3° and kept tracking the target.
 - (2) Lieut. Tyler continued as Watch Officer as his schedule stipulated that he remain on duty until 0800.
- (c) 0720
 - (1) The Opana Station called to inform the Information Center switchboard operator that they were plotting a large group of airplanes. In view of contemplated arrival of B-17's from the mainland and probability of Naval aircraft operating, the Watch Officer did not consider it necessary to take any action.
- (d) 0800
 - (1) Attack underway and all AWS personnel were called to duty.
- (e) 0820
 - (1) Lieut. Grover C. White, Signal Corps, Communications Officer, and Master Sergeant Harold Taylor, Information Center Chief, arrived.
- (f) 0830
 - (1) Major Lorry N. Tindal, Air Corps, arrived and took over the duties of Controller.
- (g) 0920
 - (1) 1st Lieut. Edwin R. Granberry, CAC, arrived and manned AA position.
- (h) 0940
 - (1) 1st Lieut. A. A. Konkell, SC and Captain N. L. Tittle, SC, arrived.
- (i) 0945
 - (1) 2d Lieut. V. A. Harril, CAC, arrived at AA position.
- (j) 1015
 - (1) Major K. P. Bergquist, Air Corps, arrived.

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(k) 1030

(1) Lt Comdr W. E. G. Taylor, arrived.

(1) After 0800

Since 0800 the Station has remained in continuous operation.

The following is a recapitulation of the airplanes at Wheeler Field as of 9 December 1941:

Type	Stock Record	In Commission	Repairable Locally	Repair Upon Receipt of Major Assembly	Fire	Destroyed Other Causes
P-40B	88	25	9	5	36	13
P-40C	13	2	4	0	4	3
P-36A	39	24	2	2	5	6
P-26A	8	2	0	0	4	2
P-26B	6	3	1	0	2	0
O-47B	1	1	0	0	0	0
A-12A	4	1	0	0	0	3
B-12A	3	2	1	0	0	0
B-18	1	1	0	0	0	0
OA-8	1	0	1	0	0	0
OA-9	3	1	0	0	2	0
AT-6	4	0	1	0	1	2

/s/

H. C. DAVIDSON

Brigadier General, Air Corps
Commanding