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The Divine Wind

Rikihei Inoguchi

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BOOKS

Inoguchi, Riklhei, et al. *The Divine Wind*. Annapolis, Md., U. S. Naval Institute, 1958. 240 p.

An authoritative and detailed account of the desperate aerial kamikaze tactics employed by the Japanese against the United States Navy in the final stages of World War II in the Pacific. Written by two key officers of the Japanese Naval Special Attack Force, and ably translated into English by an American naval reserve officer, the book vividly portrays the story of the suicide pilots. This Force was originally organized in October, 1944 as a short-term project to assist the Imperial Japanese Navy in preventing the imminent American landings on Leyte. The initial objective was limited to rendering the flight decks of the U. S. carriers inoperative for about one week, so that Admiral Kurita's surface forces, including the big battleships MUSASHI and YAMATO, could strike the large concentration of American transports off the Philippine Islands without air opposition. The kamikaze concept, however, was subsequently adopted for all defensive operations as the best means to employ dwindling resources in aircraft and pilots against overwhelming enemy forces. The book contains photographs of kamikaze pilots, their planes, and some of the ships damaged by suicidal attacks. Also, at the end of the volume are appendices, itemizing in tabular form the results of all recorded kamikaze attacks during the entire campaign. The closing chapter of the book is a compilation of last letters written and sent home by some of the kamikaze pilots about to go on their final missions. The kamikazes were unusual in that their operations were sustained for many months, in contrast to the short duration of the traditional last banzai charges made by Japanese ground troops when faced by a hopeless situation. It is interesting to note that there was much adverse public opinion about the kamikaze tactics, even inside Japan, many people feeling that resort to such extreme methods was not justified and should not have been ordered.

Thursfield, H. G., ed. *Brassey's Annual 1958*. New York, Macmillan, 1958. 390 p.

Brassey's Annual 1958 contains 29 well-written articles on various subjects of interest to officers of the armed forces.