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C O P Y

Report of Interrogation: No. 5220.

SECRET

24 May 1945
I/O: Capt HALL.

P/W : KESSLER, Ulrich
Rank : General der Flieger
Unit : Kampfgeschwader I Hindenburg
Capt'd : 15 May 1945, surrendered to Americans at sea.

Veracity: Believed reliable.

Report: Information Regarding the Background of the Improved Aerial Torpedo:

P/W mentions that Germany received an improvement on a torpedo which was not utilized for 1 1/2 years. This torpedo is an aerial torpedo. P/W explains that the non-utilization was mainly due to structure and tactical employment of the German airforce. P/W further states that he discovered the plans lying idle at GÖTTENHAFEN in July 1944. The Japanese were looking for a solution as to how to inflict a PORT ARTHUR on the USA at PEARL HARBOR. They studied water conditions in Pearl Harbor and came to the conclusion that their present torpedoes would not be effective. The water was too shallow. After long experiments it was found that by attaching a fin on the tailpiece they would have a torpedo which would be effective in shallow water. In addition it was suitable for use by fast flying aircraft and also remained in the water without jumping under heavy sea.

In 1939 the torpedo carrying aircraft had been rejected by GOERING as not being essential. After England's declaration of war P/W went to higher headquarters and asked for torpedo carrying aircraft presenting the argument that with engagements coming up in the North Sea it was not only a matter of hitting a ship by a bomb but also depended where a ship was to be hit most effectively. At that time he also explained that they were still using a model in use since 1927 at which time only a weight of 0.6 tons could be allotted to a torpedo. At present however a greater weight was permissible which would help increase the range. P/W however hastens to add that they did have a torpedo in 1936. Udet and Milch however were against constructing torpedo planes and favored bombers. JESCHONNEK used his prestige with the Reichsmarschall with the result that when the question finally reached Hitler he did not only prohibit the development on torpedoes for aircraft but their manufacture in general.

The initial successes of the Japanese prompted GOERING and HITLER to demand torpedoes which awakened the interest in torpedoes. The matter was however placed into the hands of men who had never seen a torpedo.

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