

JAPANESE STORY OF 1942 RAID

ATTACK ON SYDNEY

Susumu Ito, proprietor of a little fishing tackle shop at Iwakuni, Japan, claims that he flew over Sydney Harbour the night before the Japanese midget submarine attack on May 30, 1942.

It was then a Japanese naval lieutenant, aged 21, told his story in Japan on Monday.

This is what he said:

"I was a pilot of a Zero float-plane, carried by a Japanese ocean-going submarine of 3,302 tons.

"We arrived off Mayor Island, Bay of Plenty (New Zealand), in pitch dark one morning late in May, 1942. Our submarine carried midget submarines which were designed to be used to attack naval ships at Auckland and Sydney.

AUCKLAND SLEPT

"Our warplane was launched from the submarine and I quickly reached Auckland. While the city slept I cruised overhead unmolested and never climbing above 1000 feet. I was never challenged or disturbed by intercepting fighters.

"I had large scale maps of Auckland and Sydney.

"I soon located Devonport Naval Base and gave it special attention. For the better part of an hour I looked for warships but found nothing that would warrant attack by one of our midget submarines.

"I flew back to the mother submarine and reported that there were no warships at Auckland.

"The submarine commander then decided to proceed to Sydney. We crossed the Tasman and surfaced off Sydney Heads on May 29. Once again I took off in darkness.

FLIGHT OVER SYDNEY

"Unlike Auckland, I found the Sydney air rather crowded. There were Australian planes doing night-flying exercises, but I was not molested.

"The Australian pilots did not appear to notice me, although the long, streamlined single float of my Zero should have been conspicuous.

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"I sighted what I considered to be suitable targets in Sydney Harbour and lost no time returning to the submarine and making my report.

"Midget submarines were released. Later I left in the mother submarine for Rabaul."

Ito said he spent about an hour over Auckland. His flight over Sydney was "very much briefer."