

THE PACIFIC WAR



INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1



INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

U.S. Navy

2nd largest navy in the world – if only just barely (Great Britain’s was slightly larger).

Best funded in the world even during the depression. Although this was in part due to the fact that there was little new construction.

Because of the funding, the entire fleet would put to sea for more than two months each year for exercises culminating in the “Fleet Problem.”

Initial exercises would be small units and focus on maneuvering and gunnery. Then the fleets would move to the main exercise in either the eastern Pacific or Caribbean (necessitating either the Pacific Fleet or the Atlantic Fleet passing through the Panama Canal.)

The Fleet Problem exercises aspects of the war plans. These were “free play” battle simulations meaning each fleet could deploy and fight as it wanted and neither was certain to “win” until it did. (Blue force (the U.S.) actually lost more often than the OPFOR).

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

U.S. Navy

Fleet Problems included:

- attacks on enemy islands.**
- invasion of enemy islands.**
- defense against enemy attempts at invasion.**
- Scouting for and engaging against enemy fleets.**
- Defense of the Panama Canal.**

Japan strenuously objected to these exercises clearly aimed at it so the U.S. said it was really about the Brits.

Hawaii proved to be repeatedly indefensible against a fleet attack and particularly vulnerable to air attack. The problems also exercised logistics, staff work, intelligence and tactical use of code breaking.

By 1932, it was determined War Plan Orange would not work. The old plan envisioned the Navy charging across the Pacific to defend the Philippines against Japan. That would not work if Japan held bases between Hawaii and the Philippines. A slower, more methodical approach (one taking months or longer) taking or neutralizing those bases was implemented. (No one really thought to tell the Army.)

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

U.S. Army

U.S. Army was small, but professional and well equipped for the time – at least until the late 1930's. It was the most mechanized in the world at the start of this period and would be one of only two fully mechanized armies in the world by the end (the other being Great Britain.)

It would have been fully mechanized much sooner had the U.S. Cavalry not fought to keep horses for its combat troops. The cavalry did switch to trucks for supply – to include the food for horses. Shortly before it lost its horses, it had even switched to trucks and trailers to move the horses. (To this day soldiers may stable, feed, maintain and get care for their horses on post at government expense.)

Its tanks were mostly adequate for the time (prior to 1941). The problem was it did not have enough of anything.

For an Army of 150,000 men it was world class.

But to be truly world class, it needed way more than 150,000 men.

The National Guard was meant to augment the Army, almost tripling the size. The problem was most were old, out of shape, poorly equipped at best and their training largely consisted of marching around the town square before hitting the bar (after 1933).

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

U.S. Army

George C. Marshall

1899 graduate of Virginia Military Institute.

Served on the staff of Gen. Pershing during and after WWI.

Commanded an infantry regiment in China in the early 1920's.

Was a senior instructor at the Army War College and head of the Infantry School where he influenced staff and regiment organization and procedures.

Headed Army War plans where he told the President that the President's ideas about fighting the next war were nonsense and unworkable.



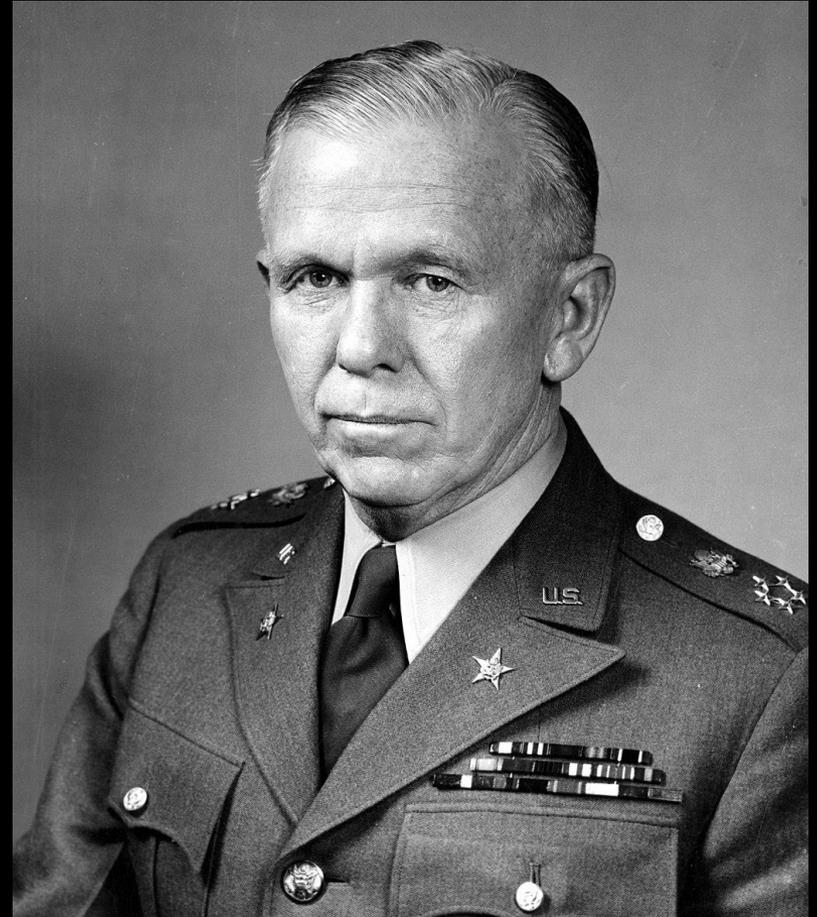
INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

U.S. Army

FDR had called a meeting with senior military officers to “suggest” building up to 15,000 planes a month to prepare for a potential war. Marshall told him that while that might be possible, it would do nothing as the Army was unable to train the pilots and mechanics needed to use those planes and even if it could, planes alone could not win a war.

For telling the President that the President had no idea what he was talking about, he was named Chief of Staff of the Army in July 1939, promoted over 34 more senior generals.

Among his first actions was a purge of the Army and National Guard officer corps forcing out officers deemed too old, too out of shape or too narrow minded to lead the Army he was hoping to build or serve in the war he believed was likely.



INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

Both the Army and Navy thought long and hard about mobilization. It was a focus at both War Colleges. But, aside from establishing and standardizing ROTC programs at numerous colleges and universities to train a reserve of officers for future use, little could be done as there either was no perceived need (1920's) or money (1930's).

Both services recognized that what they had would not be enough to fight a major war much less win one. This was far more acute for the Army. But even the Navy's plans for war with Japan saw its ability to outbuild Japan as more critical for victory than what it had available at the start of such a war.

Neither branch wanted a repeat of 1914 – 1917.

While the Navy did receive a major spending bill in 1916, few of the ships authorized by that bill were built before WWI ended. Almost half of the over 200 destroyers built for that war were finished in the final months or after the war ended and went right from the builder into mothballs.

To “rapidly” expand the fleet the Navy would need shipyards it did not have and time. Even at peak production rates during WWII it still took around two years to build a fleet aircraft carrier and close to three years for a battleship (~18 month for destroyers, ~1 year for submarines.)

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization



INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

The Army before WWI was about the same size as the Army in 1939 in terms of personnel, but it was not nearly as well equipped. It lacked adequate field artillery and what it had was outdated decades before. They had a decent rifle (1903 Springfield) but production was slow, barely adequate to keep it armed.

Compared to Europe, it was small and grossly ill equipped. The Army knew this and had complained to President Wilson that it was not even up to the task of defending its borders but it was ignored ... until Wilson declared war on Germany. No effort to even plan for mobilization had been allowed as it was deemed provocative.

The actual mobilization did not begin for some months as there was no place to train the recruits. Even then, it was a fiasco.

Springfield and Colt – the two primary firearms manufacturers for the Army – could not build weapons fast enough and others (Remington and Winchester) could not retool to pick up the slack. The later two were building weapons for the British (which would be modified for U.S. ammunition and issued to the Army.)

The one thing the Army had and could get were trucks but the British controlled shipping and forced them to leave the trucks behind.

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization



Top: The 1903 Springfield Rifle. “Standard Issue” for U.S. infantry and cavalry from 1905 through the 1930’s manufactured by Springfield Arsenal.

Bottom: The M1917 Enfield rifle manufactured by Winchester and Remington. It was a modified version of the Pattern 1914 Enfield that the companies were making for the British.



Most U.S. infantryman in WWI were issued the M1917 although the War Department and press took great pains to only publish photos of soldiers with the 1903 Springfield.

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

Prior to WWI, the Army had wanted to standardize training and in particular basic training. It had been doing all training at the regiment or unit levels meaning that a soldier had to effectively retrain if he transferred. Interoperability was limited. Congress and the Wilson administration refused to consider the idea as it would cost money to build the facilities.

While it is true that even if the Army had gotten its wish, the bases would have been inadequate to train the mobilizing army, the procedures and trainers would have been in place to expand the training. Instead, neither the bases nor the procedures or trainers existed anywhere when Wilson declared war.

Basically nothing worked as hoped. The U.S. Army muddled through without a real plan. This was something the Army wanted to avoid at all costs in the future.

Despite the massive demobilization in 1919, the Army was able to set up a dedicated basic training facility at Camp (later Fort) Dix NJ.

However, training was only part of the problem. Mobilization would require equipment which, if not in stock (which required Congress to pay for it) needed to be manufactured and war production had been a fiasco in WWI.

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

During the interwar period, mobilization ideas were examined at the Army Command & General Staff College, Army War College and a section of the War Plans division of the Army General Staff.

In addition, as the Army believed that industry and transport during WWI were less than acceptable in terms of efficiency, it set up the Army Industrial College to train officers in procurement and to work with industry in the event of mobilization.

A section of the Ordnance Branch (which at the time bought the Army's stuff) was specifically tasked with visiting factories that might be used for war production in some way to determine whether and to what extent they could retool and scale up production and a list of preferred factories and producers was maintained for future use.

Moreover, the Army considered centralized control of supply chains and transportation to ensure that the various industries and companies were not stepping on each other for raw materials and equipment. These plans, however, would not apply to peacetime.

The Army also reached the conclusion that it was better to have a lot of “good enough” equipment rather than the best as retooling for every better mousetrap would result in not enough of anything.

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

**An example of this in operation:
The M1 Carbine was the most
widely produced individual
firearm of the U.S. in WWII with
about 1 million more than the M1
Garand rifle.**



**The M1 Carbine was adopted in October 1941
30 days after Winchester Firearms
began development. Winchester had been working on a rival to the Garand (adopted in
1937). A MAJ Studel of Ordnance Branch (and graduate of the Army Industrial College) on
a visit to Winchester Firearms plant saw the prototype rifle and said the Army would not
be interested as it was not a substantial improvement over the Garand rifle then in
production but would consider a carbine of similar design and Army testing of competing
carbines from various manufacturers was in a month. The Winchester carbine won hands
down.**

**During the war, Winchester would end up as the largest producer of the M1 Garand rifle.
The largest producer of the Winchester model M1 Carbine would be a division of General
Motors.**

INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

Mobilization

The system did not always work to perfection. In 1940, the Army decided its M1 light tank (above) was under-gunned and wanted an improved version for scouting and infantry support. Rock Island Arsenal developed the M7 (below). It was approved for production at the end of 1941.

There was no place to build it as the factories building tanks were busy so a new factory was built in Davenport IA. But as that factory was not yet building anything, it was a low priority for machine tools.

By 1943, just as the factory was about ready to start building M7's, the Army determined the tank was too heavy for its intended role and lacked the armor for any other and cancelled the program after 20 tanks.

The factory was retooled for existing tanks.



INTERWAR YEARS 1921 – 1941

War Production Board

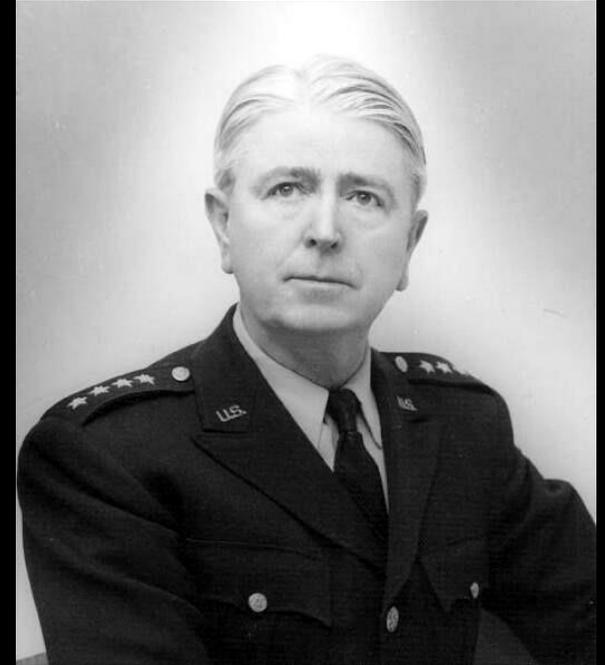
In the early fall of 1940, General Marshall directed the War Plans Division of the General Staff to develop a plan for large scale mobilization. BGEN Eisenhower, then recently appointed head of War Plans assigned the task to then MAJ Albert Coady Wedemeyer.

The plan was submitted for approval to General Marshall in July of 1941. It was over 800 pages single spaced.

The plan focused on production and transportation of war materiel within the Continental United States. (Once anything went aboard a ship for overseas movement, it was somebody else's problem.)

Most notably, the plan recommended that the government establish a single organization to manage industry and transportation to minimize supply chain problems throughout industry. It called for that board to replace most all other regulatory restrictions on industry that had been implemented as part of the New Deal.

It would be implemented mostly as approved within days of America entering the war.



ROAD TO WAR

Isolationism in the United States



More a political sentiment than a movement.

There was not one "type" of isolationist. It was bipartisan and spanned the political spectrum. (It did not help that "Internationalism" was a mantra of the communists.)

A small minority were genuine pacifists.

A far greater number were anti-foreigner and anti-immigrant and therefore not inclined to stick their necks out for foreigners.

Add to it in the 1930's the U.S. was mired in the Great Depression and being engaged overseas cost money most felt was better spent at home...

ROAD TO WAR

Isolationism in the United States

Many also believed WWI was a mistake and the U.S. had been dragged in by bankers and industrialists who were seeking profits.

Some were pro-German and felt any U.S. efforts overseas would be against Germany. Others were anti-British Empire and felt any U.S. efforts overseas would only help the Empire.

And still others just did not trust President Roosevelt to mind his own business.

The movement was very loud, but probably never was close to a true majority. The most vocal – America First (1940-1941), never had more than 800,000 almost all were in Chicago and Illinois.



ROAD TO WAR

THE NEUTRALITY ACTS

In August 1935, Congress passed the first of the Neutrality Acts.

Roosevelt felt the Acts impermissibly impeded upon the constitutional duties of the President of the United States and Executive Branch.

He was probably right. But

- thus far he had lost every time his position had gone up before the Supreme Court.

- while the vote was not by anywhere near the margin needed to suggest Congress could override a veto, it was bipartisan with strong support from the democratic majority and, more critically, almost unanimous support from the southern states.

Roosevelt was up for re-election and could not afford a break with Southern Democrats so he reluctantly signed the bill.

ROAD TO WAR

THE NEUTRALITY ACTS

The Act made it illegal for the United States or any U.S. company to sell arms or military equipment to any country at war with any other country.

The United States could not by treaty or otherwise enter into any form of alliance with any other nation that might allow for or require the employment of U.S. military forces or military support.

U.S. citizens traveling into a war zone did so entirely at their own risk such that the U.S. would not offer any aid if anything happened to them nor diplomatic reaction. A U.S. citizen joining the war effort of a belligerent forfeited their citizenship and would be imprisoned should they ever return to the U.S..

In February 1936 the act was amended to forbid the United States and any banks in the U.S. from extending any credit or loans to a belligerent. Further, U.S. merchant ships could not transport any military cargo to any belligerent regardless of where such cargo was obtained.

The acts specifically exempted civil aviation, oil and the automobile industry.

ROAD TO WAR

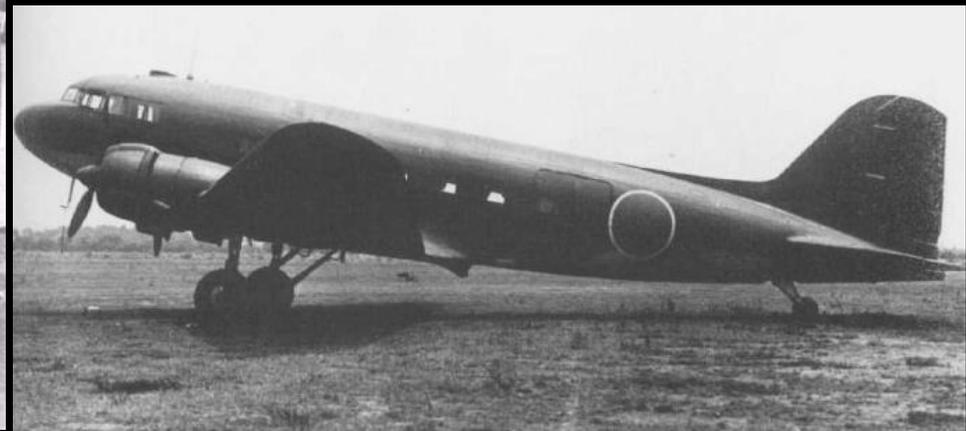


Top: Kawasaki KI-34 (Based on the Douglas DC-2 – a smaller version.)

Middle: Kawasaki KI-36 (Lockheed Electra) (The same type of plane Amelia Earhart was lost flying)

Bottom: Nakajima L2D (Douglas DC-3)

All were built (initially) under license from the U.S. companies. In total some 2,775 were built in Japan between 1936 and the end of the war.



ROAD TO WAR

THE NEUTRALITY ACTS

In January 1937, the Acts were extended to civil wars and forbade U.S. ships from transporting anything or anyone to belligerent nations.

This amendment was made when it was learned that Franco's army in Spain was benefiting from the lack of clarity, receiving oil and trucks from U.S. companies on credit.

Roosevelt was able to gain a concession from Congress. The President was allowed discretion to allow U.S. companies to sell supplies and materials to belligerents he designated, but only on a "cash and carry" basis meaning no credit and the belligerent had to arrange shipping on non-U.S. ships.

When Japan invaded China beginning in July 1937, Roosevelt made the decision that there was no war in China. Neither Japan nor China had declared war and the conflict clearly was not a civil war. As there was no war, there could be no belligerents and thus the restrictions of the Neutrality Acts had no application.

The U.S. would send arms to the Chinese Nationalists on credit and via the British.

ROAD TO WAR

THE NEUTRALITY ACTS

Following the Battle of Nanking, the U.S. joined with the League of Nations to condemn Japanese aggression in China. Beyond that it took no immediate action. In June of 1938, it further condemned aerial bombing of civilians – regardless of whether said civilians were truly targets or merely in the vicinity of targets.

The Roosevelt administration imposed a “moral” embargo on Japan regarding the sale of airplanes or aviation components (such as instruments and engines). This meant that should a U.S. company decide not to sell to Japan or to honor a contract with Japan or a Japanese company, the Japanese had no recourse in U.S. Courts.

This “embargo” was not binding on any U.S. company meaning they could sell if they wanted to. It was the Great Depression. The embargo was non-existent.

Japan would remain dependent upon the U.S. for oil and scrap iron and neither the Neutrality Acts (said to be inapplicable) nor Roosevelt’s “moral” embargo had any significant impact upon trade with Japan.

(Japan did not buy weapons or ammunition from the U.S.)

ROAD TO WAR

When Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, the U.S. merely made a diplomatic protest and refused to recognize the Japanese created state of Manchukuo as legitimate. It took no other action.

When Japan invaded China proper at Shanghai in 1937, the U.S. again protested. As that war expanded, the U.S. then offered to mediate a truce or, in the alternative, tried to convince Japan to withdraw.

It lacked any true “big stick.” There was no public demand for war with Japan over China and the Neutrality Acts limited options short of war.

To use the Acts, the war in China had to be recognized as such. In that case, both countries would be belligerents and both would be subject to mandatory embargo.

Politically, the President neither wanted to nor could he embargo China.

But without using the Neutrality Act, he was bound by an existing trade treaty with Japan that granted Japan “Most Favored Nation” status thus barring any form of trade restrictions.

ROAD TO WAR – North or South?

Japan realized sooner or later the U.S. would probably reduce or even cut off trade in steel, oil and other strategic materials. Japan had few natural resources: almost no oil, limited amounts of coal and iron ore; it imported over half of its food.

The Japanese military had debated the options if trade to the U.S. was cut. The Army favored a northern strategy – invasion of eastern Siberia.

The Navy was opposed.

First, very little was accessible in Siberia. It was possible it was rich in natural resources but they were untapped and thus unavailable and that assumed the Army could win.

Conversely, Southeast Asia had the third largest tapped oil reserves in the world as well as rubber. Manchuria had iron and was already under Japanese control.

The Army opposed this because it required shipping. With a northern strategy, the Navy was not needed a point the Navy was also keen to observe. A northern strategy would see the Navy budget cut to the bone.

ROAD TO WAR – North or South?

The Japanese Army and Navy were political rivals, each out to garner as much of the budget as possible.

(The U.S. Army and Navy were not all that different aside from the fact they had no constitutional say in such things.)

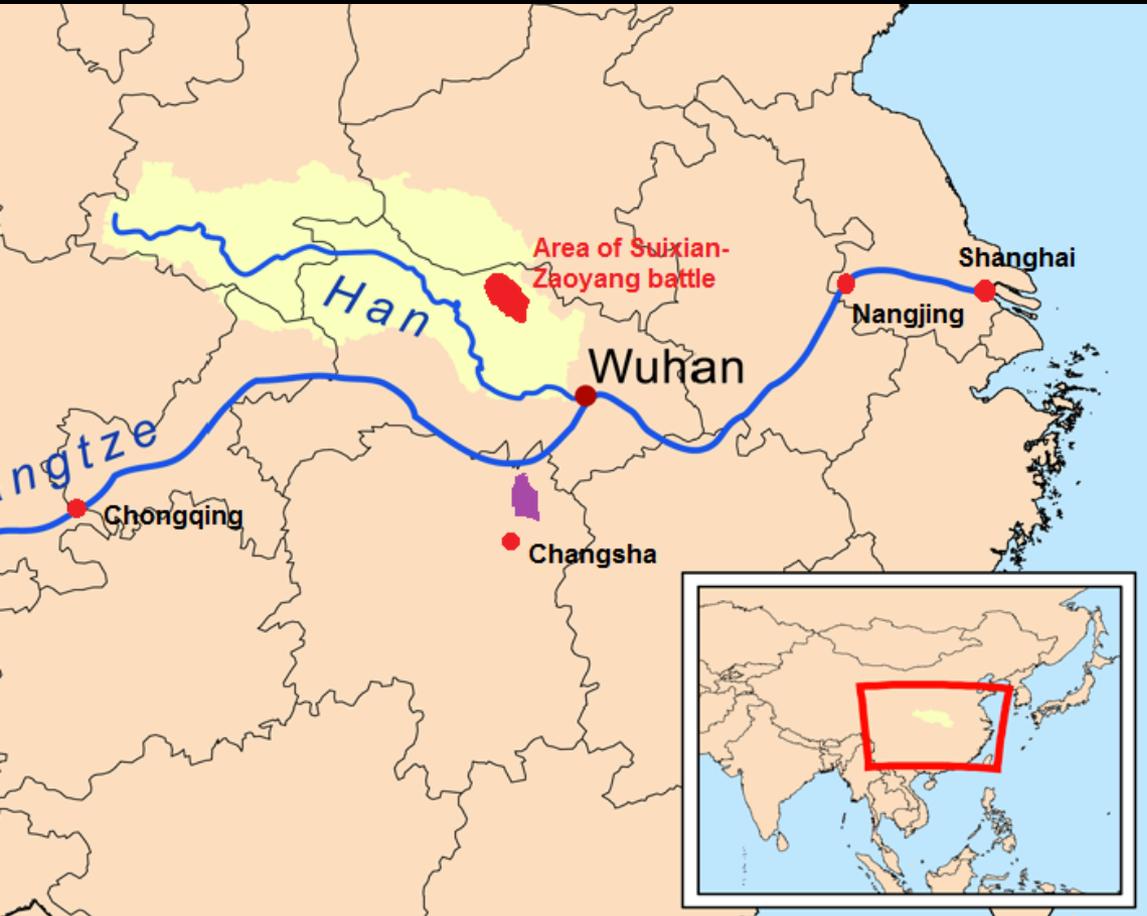
The Japanese Army and Navy cooperated reluctantly the few times they ever bothered to do so. The Army was more militant and held the West in contempt.

The Navy was less belligerent. It saw no advantage in a war on the continent and saw a war in the Pacific as a bad option unless it was won quickly. A long war meant defeat.

War in China was mostly the Army's show. Naval Aviators took part but the carriers and surface fleet were of little use. So long as the war was restricted to the mainland of Asia, the Army ran the show and in 1939 they intended to win the war without any help from their rivals in the fleet...

1939 turned out to be a very bad year for the Japanese Army...

ROAD TO WAR – 1939



In April 1939, the Japanese Army launched a major offensive along a road leading northwest from Wuhan in the Han River Valley. The goal was to secure their base at Wuhan and possibly flank the Chinese defending their new capitol at Chongqing.

The result was the battle of Suixian-Zaoyang fought around cities of Suizhou and Zaoyang. The Chinese stopped the Japanese offensive cold and threw it into retreat back to Wuhan. It was the first major Japanese setback of the war although not as costly in manpower as the prior battles for Shanghai and Wuhan.

ROAD TO WAR – 1939



In May, a series of violent border skirmishes broke out on the border of Japanese Manchuria and Mongolia (a Soviet client state). The Kwangtung Army, not engaged in the greater war in China, undertook the attacks (as usual without authority) to prove that Mongolia and Soviet Siberia would be an easy fight.

In August at the Battle of Khalkin-Gol, the Soviets launched a massive combined arms assault against three Japanese divisions and virtually wiped them out. (tanks, air force, artillery and infantry).

The Soviet tank corps was led by Georgi Zhukov.

As a result of the battle, the Japanese Army staff conceded that a northern strategy was not possible.



ROAD TO WAR – 1939



The Japanese learned that their tanks were inferior to the Soviet models – and the Soviets only deployed light tanks. (The T-34 was not yet in service).

Soviet field artillery was also substantially better.



Russian aircraft were inferior, but the Russians had far more of them in support of their Army than the Japanese and this was a case where – as Stalin would later say – quantity has its own quality.

Finally, as the Japanese were learning in the south (although preferring to ignore), their soldiers were not qualitatively superior to the Russians.

But their solution was to avoid war in the North, not rethink their reasoning for war in general...

Yang Kyoungjong
1920 – 1992

Born in what is now South Korea.

Conscripted into the Japanese army 1938.

Captured by the Soviets at the Battle of Khalkhin Gol, August 1939 and sent to a Gulag.

Conscripted into the Red Army 1942.

Captured by the Germans at the 3rd Battle of Kharkov, March 1943.

Conscripted into a German “Ost” Battalion, 1943 and posted in Normandy.



Above: Yang Kyoungjong and a German soldier being processed.

He was captured by the U.S. 101st Airborne Division less than a week after D-Day. Sent to the U.S. as prisoner, he remained and died in Chicago in 1992.

ROAD TO WAR

THE NEUTRALITY ACTS

The 1937 Act expired in January 1939. Upon its expiration, the more restrictive provisions of the 1936 Act resumed thus ending “cash and carry” and Presidential initiative in supplying (or not supplying) belligerents with materiel.

The war in China remained a stalemate. Japan made few gains that year and subsequently needed to consolidate its supply lines against persistent guerrilla activity.

When Germany invaded Poland, Roosevelt used the Neutrality Acts to beat Congress into submission by declaring it applicable to all Europe (given that one had to pass through the war to get to even the neutral ports.) This would have cut U.S. trade by more than half.

He then managed Congress to pass a new Act allowing him to sell arms and any other material to such countries as he deemed appropriate on a cash and carry basis. (Under all prior versions, arms sales were barred without exception.)

This effectively ended the economic effect of the Act as the President also could bar trade to any nation without congressional approval. All that truly remained was the prohibition on entering into any formal military alliances.

ROAD TO WAR

But, while the President could now sell arms to his friends, he could not embargo Japan so long as the 1911 grant of “Most Favored Nation” status remained. The “Moral” embargo had been mostly useless and entirely ineffective.

In July 1939, as allowed in the 1911 trade agreement with Japan that granted such status, the U.S. announced its intention to abrogate the treaty. Under that 1911 Treaty, the announcement would have no effect for six months and only if not withdrawn (or renegotiated), would the Treaty then be abrogated and the U.S. could then consider true economic sanctions.

From the Japanese point of view, the war had cost too much already for them to simply walk away just because it upset the Americans. (The fact that it had never truly been wanted and largely had escalated against the wishes of the Tokyo government never entered into the reasoning.)

In 1938 they made negotiation more difficult by declaring that Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT were not the legitimate government in China. They did not say who was (and could not), but made it clear they would not negotiate an end to hostilities until there was a legitimate government to negotiate with. In the meantime, they intended to “eradicate” the usurper Chiang and his support.

ROAD TO WAR

While the U.S. was hard pressed to provide any meaningful support to China – due to the prevailing attitudes in the public and restrictions imposed by Congress, Britain had no such restraints.

Keeping Japan occupied in China meant Japan could not threaten British interests elsewhere.

And while Britain hoped to contain the appetite of Nazi Germany, they could not be certain of success. But they felt they could contain Japan and without using force.

And that meant ensuring Chiang and his armies were supplied. Supply from the east (South China Sea) was not practical. While Japan had not imposed a blockade, their Navy controlled the sea approaches.

Overland was not immediately possible. There was a railroad that ran from the port of Rangoon, Burma to Lashio. Burma was a British Colony. But there was no overland route from Burma or India or Nepal over the Himalayas into China.

So the British and Chinese built one. They began in late 1937 and finished within a year.

ROAD TO WAR

The road connected Lashio with Kunming China. From there existing roads connected to the Nationalist capital at Chongqing.

The British were not particular who contributed supplies.

Germany still supplied arms and materiel to the Chinese Nationalists. (That would change in September 1939 when the two countries were at war).

What the British could not supply were vehicles.

But trucks were one commodity that the U.S. had not included under the restrictions of the Neutrality Acts so in short order U.S. trucks were on the road.

For now, Japan was unconcerned.



ROAD TO WAR

When the road began as a supply route, Japan was still debating its north or south strategy. To the Army at that time, Burma's road was a minor distraction. They could not believe such a road – mostly one lane traffic and mostly dangerous to such traffic – could effectively supply the Chinese and to try to do more than bomb it on occasion was a dissipation of effort particularly if they were to go North.

But with the end of that idea following the defeat of the Kwangtung Army, and the obvious evidence that the road was working, Japan took greater interest.

When the Army began planning its part in the Southern strategy, one of its objectives was to cut off supplies to China and that necessarily meant closing the Burma Road or effectively closing it. It was not necessary to take the road, only cut its access to the sea via the Burma railway.

Rangoon fell to the Japanese March 7th 1942. It had taken them almost three months to achieve their objective – which by their plans should have taken at most three weeks. The fighting in Burma continued for most of the war. The allies trying to reopen a land supply route to China and Japan trying to prevent that.

A new road outside of the reach of the Japanese opened in early 1945.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

The notion that Hitler's Germany and Japan were ... closely allied and acting in concert is false.

Prior to 1936, Japan had little to do with Germany directly except when asked. Its diplomats with the League of Nations were instrumental in facilitating the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. This was an international agreement signed initially between Germany, France and the United States that agreed to condemn offensive warfare. It was not a League of Nations treaty as the United States was not a member of the League.

52 additional nations ultimately signed on.

The treaty meant little in the end given that Japan invaded Manchuria less than three years later and the international community said much but did nothing.

There was an ancillary agreement (not a treaty) wherein France and Germany would renegotiate reparation payments in a manor more favorable to Germany and France would evacuate the Rhineland earlier than as allowed in the Versailles Treaty.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

Beginning in 1935, Germany attempted to negotiate an agreement to resist the spread of communism. It was reluctant to address the Soviet Union directly given that it had secret military arrangements with the Soviets wherein since the 1920's and technically in violation of the Versailles Treaties it was "assisting" the Russians in the development of military aviation, artillery and tanks.

The Communist International (Comintern) was another matter which was a league of extraterritorial communist parties tasked to spread communism throughout the world. Most countries were, at this time, opposed to such.

Germany believed that Nationalist China would be one of the key members of this pact. The KMT was anti-communist, it was then engaged in a shooting war with the Chinese Communist Party, and it was then being equipped and advised by Germany.

The KMT was, however, also anti-Western and more importantly would not take action that might encourage more direct Soviet support or intervention in their struggle.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

Germany also hoped to include many of the major European Powers and possibly the United States to form a united front against communism. On the surface, this seemed reasonable given that most nations were anti-communist politically.

Unfortunately, by the end of 1935 they had successfully alienated most of Europe (aside from Italy). In 1935 they openly rejected all restrictions remaining in the Versailles Treaty.

They announced publically they had submarines.

They announced the reformation of the Luftwaffe (air force).

They began to build a new class of heavy cruisers (the Admiral Hipper class), and a new class of “armored cruiser” – actually true battleships – the Scharnhorst Class.

This was “allowed” under the Anglo-Germany Naval Agreement signed in June of 1935 that removed all restrictions on Germany naval construction provided that Germany built a fleet no more than 35% the tonnage of the British.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

France was stunned and furious. They had not been consulted and were already spending a small fortune on new ships just to counter the earlier “pocket battleships.” They considered the move a British betrayal.

The Japanese Navy was also stunned both that Germany would seek such a deal and that the British would agree. Japan had little real respect for Hitler except as a foil for the Western Allies and a probably distraction for the Soviet Union. The British agreement suggested a weakening of resolve by Britain rather than a threat from Germany given that its navy was years away from coming close to the limits of the Agreement.

The Germans then reoccupied the Rhineland in March 1936 and no one did more than complain.

But no major western power (not including Italy) was about to enter into any kind of deal with the Germans, particularly one they offered.

Germany was too far to be a threat. The Soviets, however, were far too close to ignore so Japan felt a pact to resist the expansion of communism was in their interests regardless of who proposed it. They were the first to sign up.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

The Kono government had tried (and utterly failed) to limit and contain the war in China. When Kono resigned, the new government was made up primarily of men who wanted to sustain if not expand the war in China and its aims.

(The exception was the Navy Minister Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai and his deputy Vice Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, both of whom felt China was a bad move and threatened war with Britain and the U.S. – a war neither of them believed Japan could even hope to win. Yonai was an able politician and kept his own counsel. Yamamoto was less discrete.)

The new government seriously debated seeking some form of alliance with Germany. Most still had little real regard for the Germans. But such an arrangement could keep Britain and the U.S. from causing too much trouble over the China situation and could also deter the Soviet Union in the north.

Then ... before any diplomatic move had been made, Germany signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union (July 1939), thus ending Germany's usefulness as a counterbalance against the Soviets and the Kwangtung Army was crushed at Khalkhin-Gol (August 1939). The government resigned.

ROAD TO WAR

GERMANY and JAPAN

By August, Yamamoto was promoted and named Commander-In-Chief of the Combined Fleet, in operational command of all naval forces. This was not a political position. He was sent there because there were threats on his life from the radical elements in the Army regarding his 'defeatist' views on the China situation.

The new Prime Minister was Army General Nobuyuki Abe, a compromise candidate after the Emperor's Privy Council expressed a lack of confidence in the more radical generals the Army wanted and the Army's top choice fell ill. A professional staff officer, the Army command had little regard for him as he had never seen combat.

Abe was not part of either of the nationalist factions in the Army. He had no desire to enter into any agreement with Germany feeling Europe was none of Japan's business. He also felt the war in China was a waste and would have sought to bring it to an end under any circumstances.

Only the Navy supported him and he was forced to resign after only four months.

ROAD TO WAR

Born in northern Honshu, Isoroku Takano (Yamamoto) was the fifth son and youngest child of a former samurai. His father had fought on the losing side in the Boshin War and had been disposed as a consequence.

(Yamamoto) was educated by an American Missionary School in Nagaoka Japan (which is still there) largely because his father's "disgrace" was well known and he was not welcome in the local Japanese school.

He was fluent in English and kept a King James Bible with him until his death. He was not Christian. He read to keep up his English skills and because he felt the Bible provided an insight into the Western mind.

He graduated from Eta Jima (the Japanese Naval Academy) in 1904. While there he learned that he and alcohol were not on friendly terms. He never drank after his first unfortunate attempt.



**Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto
(1884-1943)
CinC Combined Fleet
(1939 – 1943)**

ROAD TO WAR

He served and was severely wounded at the Battle of Tsushima in 1905, the wound almost ending his career.

By 1916, he was a graduate of the Staff College and a Lt. Cmdr. He was then adopted into the more prosperous Yamamoto clan from Nagaoka (which had no sons).

He spent two years at Harvard University studying languages and would serve two tours in the U.S. as a naval attache during which he came to what he saw as the inescapable conclusion that Japan could never hope to win a war against the U.S.

As a newly promoted Captain, he became a Naval Aviator to accept posting as Executive Officer of the Naval Air Pilot School.

By the time he assumed command of the carrier Akagi, he was convinced aviation was the future of naval warfare.



**Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto
(1884-1943)
CinC Combined Fleet
(1939 – 1943)**

ROAD TO WAR

Promoted to Rear Admiral in 1930, he was assigned as one of the senior advisors to the Japanese delegation at the London Naval Conference. While he felt a strong navy was in Japan's interest (as anything less meant they were merely boat drivers for the Army's misadventures), he did not feel as strongly about the treaty as many others in the Navy mainly because he felt it unwise to antagonize the U.S.

He then served as head of the Naval Air Bureau. His efforts to modernize Japanese air industry would result in the planes he would one day send against the American fleet.

Politically, he opposed the Army, the invasion of Manchuria, the War in China and any relationship with Germany.

As Deputy Navy Minister he was the official who formally (and genuinely) apologized to the U.S. Ambassador for the sinking of the U.S.S. Panay.



**Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto
(1884-1943)
CinC Combined Fleet
(1939 – 1943)**

ROAD TO WAR

Yamamoto was both beloved and reviled. In the fleet he was beloved by most subordinates and highly regarded.

Ashore on staff he made more than a few quite deadly enemies.

The “battleship clique” considered him a turncoat as he had given up chance of command to become an aviator and then was of the opinion that the battleship was a waste of resources.

The Army hated him as he was opposed to their adventures and was effective at communicating his opposition. As Deputy Naval Minister, his unofficial role was to publically denounce the ultra-militarist factions.

He was sent to command the Combined Fleet to get him out of politics and into a role the Navy felt no other could fill as well...



**Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto
(1884-1943)
CinC Combined Fleet
(1939 – 1943)**

ROAD TO WAR

The restrictions imposed by the Washington and London Naval Treaties were set to expire at the end of 1936. There was an attempt to extend them – the world economy was still in depression – but only Britain and the United States turned up.

France was not about to accept restrictions with Germany re-arming.

Japan was fed up with restrictions.

Italy was now convinced it was the Roman Empire reborn.

By the end of 1939, the world was already building warships:

	In Service		Building		Authorized	
	CV	BB	CV	BB	CV	BB
U.S.	6	16	2	5	3	5
U.K.	7	15	7	7	0	2
Japan	9	10	3	2	1	1
France	1	6	1	1	1	2
Italy	0	4	1	4	0	0
Germany	0	2/5	2	3	0	4
USSR	0	0	0	2	0	2

ROAD TO WAR

On September 1st, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. While this had no immediate effect on the Far East, it changed the equation.

Britain and France declared war on Germany. France withdrew its small garrisons of troops from Shanghai and Beijing soon after. Britain would follow suit in July 1940. Both occurred over U.S. protest – in the Far East. Washington was silent.

Roosevelt believed that Germany was both the greater threat to the world and the U.S. The U.S. was by no means ready for war and would not be any time soon. His position was to put diplomatic pressure on Japan to leave China but not so much as to provoke an escalation in the region or an attack against U.S. interests.



ROAD TO WAR

Yamamoto was sent to the fleet to keep him out of the increasingly chaotic politics in Tokyo ... and keep him alive. The Navy saw him as their best man should the situation in the Pacific deteriorate.

General Abe was replaced by Yamamoto's former boss in the Navy Ministry Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai. Yonai would have been near the bottom of the Army's list. He opposed the war in China. He was against antagonizing the Americans. And he felt any alliance with Germany was not in Japan's interests.

But there was one person who the Army could not ignore and that was the Emperor and through his Privy Council he made it clear he wanted Yonai to form a government.

The Army continued their unsuccessful war in China but otherwise took no action until July 1940. Shortly after the fall of France to the German Army, the Army Minister resigned thus forcing Yonai from office.

The Army Staff then made it clear they would remove and retire any general officer who accepted to serve as War Minister to any Prime Minister who opposed entering into an alliance with Germany.

ROAD TO WAR THEY'RE BACK!!



Prince Fumimaro Konoe
Prime Minister
July 22nd 1940 – October 18th 1941



Yosuke Matsuoka
(Now) Foreign Minister
July 22nd 1940 – July 18th 1941

ROAD TO WAR

With Yonai's resignation, Prince Konoé was asked to resign his position in the Privy Council and form a government. He did so. He asked Matsuoka to leave his position with the Manchurian Railroad to take up the position of Foreign Minister.

Konoé was luke-warm on the idea of an alliance with Nazi Germany. But he was no longer willing to end the war in China without something to show for it. It had cost too many lives and too much treasure for Japan to simply walk away.

But tensions with the U.S. appeared to be escalating and war with the U.S. needed to be avoided at all costs. Konoé saw an alliance with Germany as a deterrent as it was clear to Japan that the United States was disinclined to go to war.

His Foreign Minister Matsuoka was more certain that the U.S. would never stand up to a Japan allied with Germany.

With such an alliance, threatening Japan would be tantamount to threatening Germany and it was hoped the U.S. would not take such a risk.

His decision was prompted in part by recent diplomatic actions by the United States that suggested the U.S. was no longer content to do little but complain...

ROAD TO WAR

Prior to July 1940, U.S. efforts to curb Japanese expansion in the Far East had been limited. Partly, this was due to the 1911 Commercial Treaty which was still in effect.

The State Department convinced Roosevelt that it was best to order the Pacific Fleet to remain in Hawaii after the annual Fleet Problem concluded in May. They argued this would deter Japanese aggression.

Neither Roosevelt nor the State Department spoke to the Navy before reaching that conclusion.

The first the Navy learned of it was when they were told to stay in Hawaii following the Fleet Problem that had concluded in May 1940.



ROAD TO WAR

The commander of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral James Richardson was livid.

First, Hawaii lacked the facilities to support the entire fleet for any prolonged length of time and no money had been allocated to change that.

Second, it was the experience of the Navy that they could not effectively defend Hawaii against an attack.

Third, the Navy was convinced that rather than deter the Japanese, moving the fleet to Hawaii only gave the Japanese a fat target to open a wider war.

Richardson sent scathing letter after letter to Washington arguing that the Fleet should return to the West Coast bases and went to Washington twice over the next eight months to complain. He was fired in February 1941.



ROAD TO WAR

July 2, 1940: With the expiration of the six month notice of termination of the 1911 commercial treaty with Japan, the U.S. was free to place economic pressure on Japan. Roosevelt signed the Export Control Act which gave the Executive Branch the authority to license or prohibit the export of any materials or products to any country that were considered essential defense materials.

This meant the Executive Branch could dictate trade in such materials, allowing business to trade with certain countries barring trade with others. Exporting such materials without a license or exporting to a country prohibited under the company's license would result in fines against the company and criminal penalties against individuals within such companies.

July 31, 1940: Under the Export Control Act, Roosevelt barred exports to Japan of aircraft, aircraft components, aviation fuel and aluminum.

Such a move might have had an impact a few years earlier. But Japan had been working hard to make itself less dependent upon the U.S. in aviation. By 1940, it no longer needed to buy airplanes or aircraft engines from the U.S. and was able to process aluminum (the territory in China it controlled included some of the larger deposits of bauxite). It also had refineries and could make its own aviation gasoline – at the expense of civilian products. So long as crude oil flowed, it was not harmed.

ROAD TO WAR

The U.S. limited embargo was imposed partly because it would not cripple Japan. It was narrowly tailored to target a predominantly military sector of the economy.

The situation in Asia was less important to the U.S. government than the situation in Europe. While the U.S. was not about to turn a blind eye to Japanese expansion, it was now more concerned about being drawn into the war in Europe.

U.S. policy in Asia was to stall.

It was now increasingly apparent war was more than possible with Japan. But the U.S. first was not ready for war at all and second felt if the U.S. had to fight, Germany was the greater and more immediate threat. Diplomatic efforts in Asia were to keep China in the war and keep the U.S. out for as long as possible and preferably for some years.

At this point, U.S. aid to China was virtually non-existent. U.S. companies sold trucks to British companies that shipped supplies over the Burma Road. China had to buy arms with cash which was in short supply. (The British were not so greedy).

U.S. commanders in the Pacific and diplomats were specifically instructed not to take any action that might be provocative.

ROAD TO WAR

The Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere

The term was first used publically by Foreign Minister Mastusoka on August 1st 1940. He had adopted a concept kicked around in the Army since 1937 to justify a war they started in China for no real reason.

He would argue this was entirely reasonable. The U.S. after all had its Monroe Doctrine and Japan as the leader in Asia had similar responsibilities in the Far East. Therefore the U.S. was hypocritical to complain that Japan was doing in Asia what the U.S. was doing in the Western Hemisphere.

This thesis would morph into far more than a paternalistic role in keeping out western Imperialism.

But the further notion that East Asia served Japan (and not the reverse) did not truly emerge until after the Pacific War broke out.

It was (briefly) effective propaganda. Indochina, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies were eager to end their status as colonies and presumed the Japanese would support their independence and provide merely economic assistance to develop their economies once the colonial system was dismantled. They initially welcomed Japan ... a welcome Japan would overstay in weeks if not days.

ROAD TO WAR

Saburo Kurusu was the Japanese Ambassador to Germany from 1939 to 1941.

He was a career diplomat, predominantly assigned to positions in the United States. His wife was the former Miss Alice Little of Chicago. His two daughters married Americans and were U.S. citizens.

He did not like Germany or the Nazi's and was opposed to any alliance between the countries. He objected to the idea but Matsuoka ordered him to negotiate a defensive alliance. He did ensure Germany promised to keep out of "Greater East Asia" and recognize "Greater East Asia" as entirely within Japan's sphere of influence.



ROAD TO WAR

The Tripartite Pact was signed Sep 27, 1940 in Berlin between Germany, Japan and Italy. It was a defensive alliance meaning the nations had no obligation to support the others unless the other was attacked by a third party.

Germany would have no say in anything in Asia.

As a side note, since 1938 Japan had been issuing resident visas to European Jews to emigrate to Japan, Manchuria or China without restrictions.

The emigrants had to provide for their own transport.

At least 30,000 emigrated before the route east through the Soviet Union closed. Hundreds still made the trek after and while officially Japan stated it would respect the laws of its allies, its consulates continued to issue the visas without restrictions.

They were appalled at the German attitude. But their motivation was not completely altruistic. They felt developing good will with the global Jewish community (and banks) would be beneficial to Japan. The only European Yeshiva to survive the war had emigrated to China. In 1941, Germany sent a senior SS official to try and convince Japan of the need to exterminate Jews. He was politely told it was none of his business.

ROAD TO WAR

The Immediate effect of Japan's alliance with Germany was Japan "asked" and was granted permission to occupy northern Indochina, basically what is now the northern half of Vietnam and Laos. The territory belonged to Vichy France which while notionally an independent country was under the control of and answered to Germany. The military reason was to have a base on the Chinese flank and airbases that could bomb the Burma Road and its terminus in Kunming China.



It could also be used as a jumping off point for further expansion in Southeast Asia as envisioned in their southern strategy but at this point that was not contemplated or even planned.

ROAD TO WAR

For Roosevelt, the Tripartite Pact was not so much a deterrent as Japan hoped but a threat. Germany was the great evil in the world, Japan had been an annoyance. The Pact raised Japan to co-conspirator. Proof lay in their immediate occupation of Indochina.

Following a diplomatic protest over Japan's new friends and new territory, on October 16, 1940 using his authority under the recently enacted Export Control Act, Roosevelt barred all exports to Japan of iron, iron ore, scrap iron or steel.

Japan had ignored the earlier embargo. This time, Ambassador Joseph Grew – who had been ambassador to Japan since 1932 – was informally advised by the Japanese government that the new embargo was viewed as “provocative.”

U.S. diplomacy from this point onward was aimed at ending the alliance between Japan and Germany by pressuring Japan to withdraw. Furthermore, Japan had to agree to remove all the troops from Indochina and promise to stay out. In return for these “reasonable” demands, the U.S. would lift the embargo.

The U.S. was somewhat willing to allow Japan to remain in China if, in the end, they broke relations with Germany and stopped advancing elsewhere.

ROAD TO WAR

Japan, however, was not about to tie its hands further in nor compromise on China. As they saw it, Indochina was a basing agreement with France that while it supported the ongoing war in China, was not an immediate threat to anyone else moreover France was free to agree or disagree. They agreed so why should the U.S. complain?

Furthermore, as France had agreed, the U.S. had no right to impose economic sanctions.

Their position was that the U.S. had no right to dictate Japan's diplomatic relationships or dictate terms in China. The U.S. was (certainly in Matsuoka's opinion) a paper tiger. It's navy in the Pacific was smaller than Japan's. It's army was smaller period. And Japan was convinced the U.S. was as isolationist as the proponents such as America First (Jan 1940) said it was.

Roosevelt was not. In September 1940 he had passed the Selective Service and Training Act, the first peacetime draft in U.S. history with little opposition. The Act called for all males age 18 to 35 to register and up to 1,000,000 would be conscripted for training and active service of one year (to be followed by service in the National Guard.)

This was, however, in response to the situation in Europe, not in the Far East.

ROAD TO WAR

Only one American was convinced Japan would never back down without a fight and he was no longer either in the U.S. or truly affiliated with the U.S. government.

He was a retired Army General Douglas MacArthur, Marshall of the Philippines.

MacArthur's father Arthur Jr. was an officer commissioned from the ranks in the Civil War who would become a Lt. Gen. He had an older brother who was a naval officer (USNA 1896).

MacArthur graduated first in his class from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point Class of 1903. He still holds the second highest grade point average at that school. Robert E. Lee holds the highest.



ROAD TO WAR

He was commissioned into the Army Corps of Engineers.

His career began oddly, serving as an aide to his father during the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1913), and in various staff positions as an Engineer when his peers were assigned to platoons and companies.

Around 1912, he was relieved of a position in Wisconsin for gross insubordination and dereliction of duty. He had vehemently disagreed with his commander and refused to do as he was told. (He was right, which may be why he was not court-martialed as his C.O. had wanted.)

He was assigned to a “hard luck” engineer company which he turned around.



ROAD TO WAR

He distinguished himself in Mexico in 1916, but was denied a medal because he wasn't supposed to be there.

In WWI, he was assigned to the staff of the 42nd INF DIV as a brevet Col. (He had just made LTC). He then took over a brigade of the division and again distinguished himself in combat, ending the war as a brevet BGEN. He was the only senior officer to receive permanent retention at his brevet rank.

He was a skilled commander of troops. He was also arguably insanely brave and personally reckless (he never wore a helmet, ducked or carried a gas mask at the front and was gassed at least once.)

After the war he was posted to West Point where he overhauled the entire school.

He would be the only officer to vote to acquit Billy Mitchell for insubordination and disobeying orders.



ROAD TO WAR

After a tour as Army commander in the Philippines, in 1930 he was promoted to Major General (the youngest then on active duty) and became Army Chief of Staff.

He was an advocate for Air Power and maintaining a mobilization base (but not a draft). He also overstepped his authority in 1932 when he was asked to deploy troops to protect government buildings during The Bonus March (he sent the troops in to break up the camps).

He believed the country needed a strong Chief Executive to combat liberalism. Yet he mostly got along with Roosevelt.

His aide throughout this period was Maj. Dwight Eisenhower (USMA '15).



ROAD TO WAR

Under Roosevelt he supported the New Deal, particularly the Civil Conservation Corps which was under Army control and would provide a mobilization base later.

He had a near falling out over the budget when the President wanted to cut the Army budget (already puny) by 50%. He made an impassioned (and somewhat disrespectful) plea not to do so and was admonished for speaking that way to the President.

Yet he was asked to remain as Chief of Staff for another year.

He was then effectively forced to retire from the Army. He had wanted to return to the Philippines but was too senior for any of the regular army positions...



Army Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur with President Roosevelt 1933.

Roosevelt was the only person who got away with calling MacArthur “Douglas.” His wife Jean called him “General” or “Sir.”

ROAD TO WAR

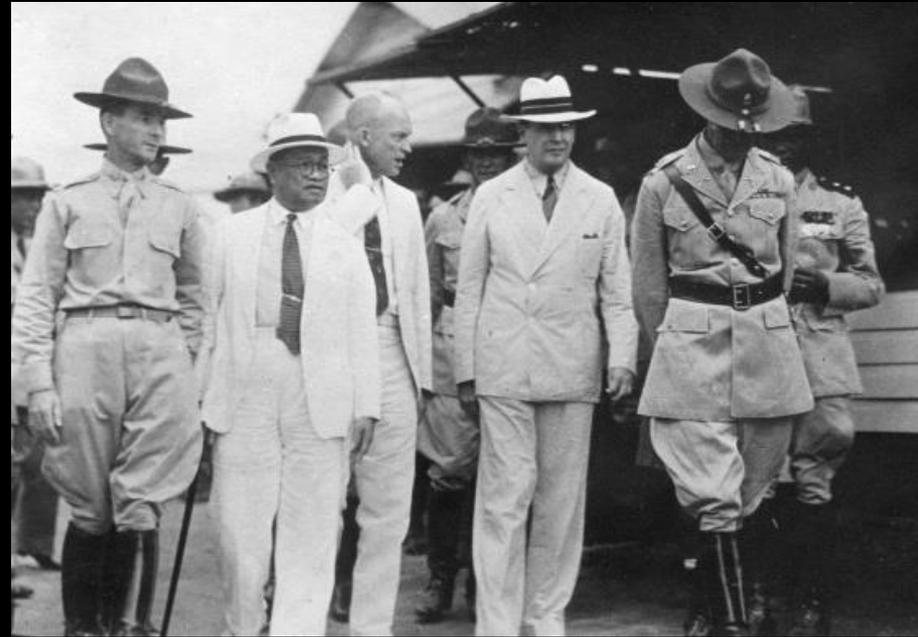
He was named Field Marshall of the Philippines. It was a job made for him (literally by special Act of Congress).

It was in effect command of the almost non-existent Philippine National Guard.

He had no authority over U.S. troops in the Philippines nor authority over Philippine troops in the Regular Army.

He began with a budget of 6 million. There was a draft but no bases. The weapons available dated to the turn of the century...

He managed to develop an exceptional working relationship with the regular army (who could ignore him) and begged, borrowed (and maybe stole) what was needed to build a small but passable fighting force by 1940.



ROAD TO WAR

From his arrival in the Philippines in 1935 until 1940, MacArthur worked to build an army from nothing and with little. He complained, but no more than any other commander in an era of little money for defense.

In October 1940, his tone changed. More confident in the Philippine Army under his command, he now saw Japan as a real and immediate threat to the Philippines.

While there were already some indications of Japanese interest in the region, his warning was more gut feeling than based upon hard intelligence. He now argued that as things stood the Philippines could not be defended. He argued for massive reinforcement (by 1940 standards) to meet the threat.

(Except he only asked for about 50 PT Boats to augment the Navy Asiatic Fleet based in Manila).

He asked for at least two, preferably 4 regiments of infantry with separate tank units, about 150 of the new B-17 bombers and twice that number of the new P-40's. His wish list included half the available regiments in the continental U.S. and more B-17's and P-40's than were even anticipated to be in existence that year.

He was ignored. For now...

ROAD TO WAR

In early November 1940, the Japanese General Staffs directed the Combined Fleet and Southern Army to prepare plans for the invasion of the “southern resource area” for consideration.

This was not planning for certain operations but more a feasibility study request. It asked did the Army and Navy have the assets to move south? It presumed that any such move would provoke U.S. military intervention and thus asked for their estimates on the possible effect of such intervention and what Japan could do to counter such intervention.

Yamamoto remained convinced provoking any war with the United States was effectively national suicide.

Unless it could be won quickly, preferably in weeks if not days and in such a manner that the U.S. could not hope to interfere with Japanese operations for at least six months if not a year which, he believed, could give time for Japan to negotiate a favorable settlement.

He knew the U.S. Fleet was now in Hawaii, but had insufficient information. That and any such attack would necessarily divide his fleet setting up the possibility that it could be defeated in detail.

JAPAN'S STRATEGIC PROBLEM

For a southern strategy to work, the Japanese had to seize and secure multiple objectives almost simultaneously so that they had strong footholds throughout their "resource area" before the U.S. could respond.

The offensive would be mostly amphibious – launched from the sea. As such each landing needed naval support.

The fleet would need to be divided into multiple fragments to escort and support multiple landings, usually several for each separate objective.

No such force would be capable of fending off a counter-attack by a concentrated battle fleet.



JAPAN'S STRATEGIC PROBLEM

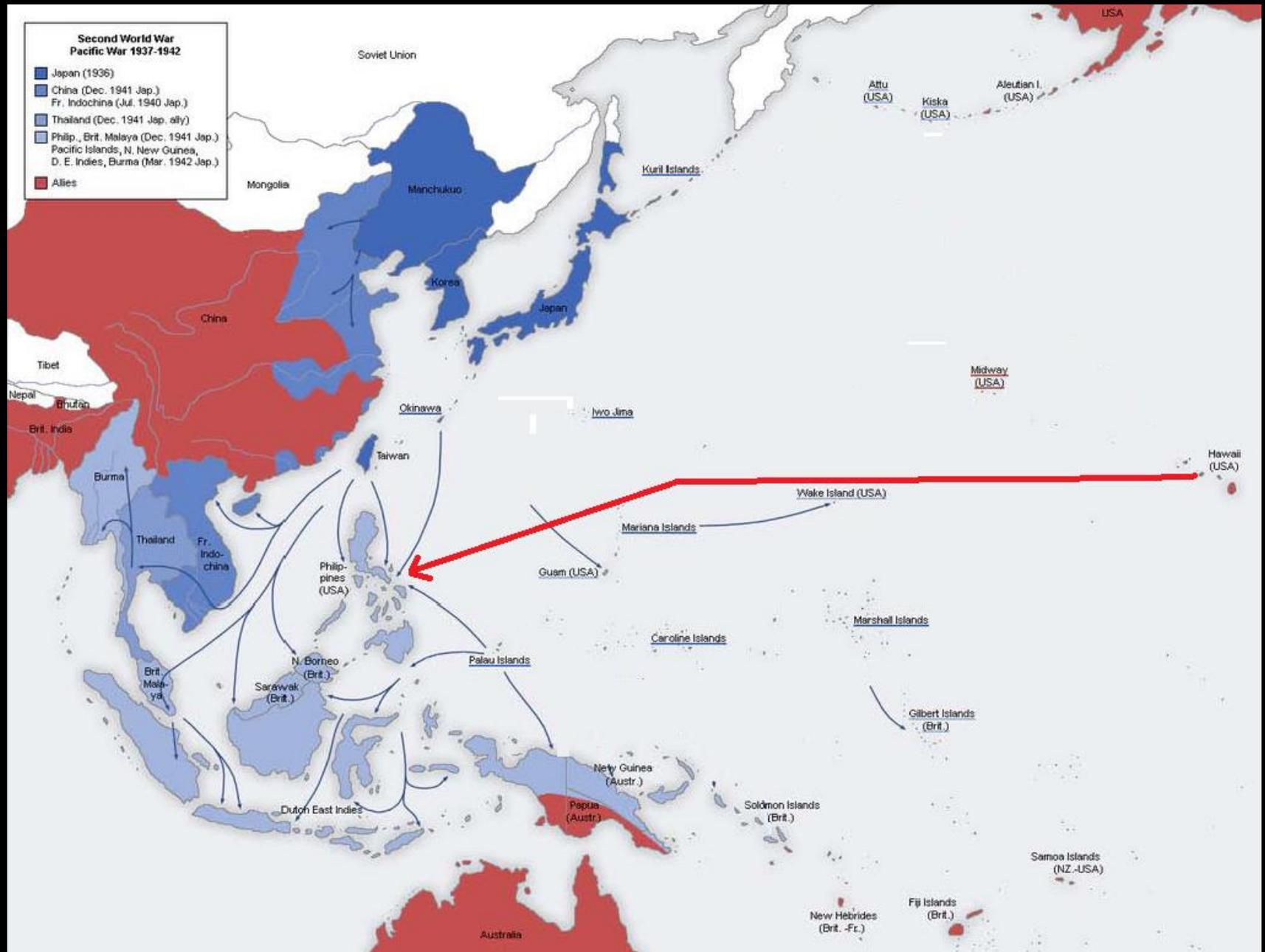
Moreover, this plan effectively abandoned Japan's prior plans for a decisive battle against the U.S. The old plan was to hit the U.S. fleet with air strikes and torpedo attacks from submarines, land bases, carriers and destroyers to reduce the U.S. force as it crossed the Pacific.

The southern strategy required stripping the central pacific of planes to support the operations in Southeast Asia and precluded using ships to hit the U.S. Navy before it could threaten the Japanese operations in Southeast Asia.

And with the fleet divided, it could not quickly concentrate to counter the attack and still support ongoing landing operations.



JAPAN'S STRATEGIC PROBLEM



ROAD TO WAR

On November 11th, 1940, the Royal Navy launched an air strike against the Italian naval base at Taranto, Italy.

The British sent in a total attack force of 21 antiquated torpedo bombers. Two planes were shot down.

In exchange, one battleship (Conte di Cavour) was sunk. Two others were heavily damaged along with three smaller ships. The effect removed half the Italian Battle Fleet from the war (or so it seemed).

(The actual impact was far from hoped. The raid was intended to cripple Italy's ability to supply North Africa and had no such effect and to remove the threat of the Italian Fleet, which it did for about two weeks.)



ROAD TO WAR

In late November 1940, the Combined Fleet Staff discussed what had happened at Taranto. (They were hardly the only navy staff to do so. It was discussed throughout the U.S. Navy as well as it was tactically innovative.)

Yamamoto was intrigued and thought a similar idea might be useful.

But such a strike over such a distance would be risky.

Moreover unless it was more than a wild idea the Navy Staff and the Army would never approve as such a move would remove a critical part of his striking force from supporting the main offensive.

In other words, it was only an idea and not worth pursuing unless it seemed unlikely the Southern Operations could succeed without it.

In late December 1940, at a reception at the U.S. Embassy, the Peruvian Ambassador commented that the Japanese had plans to attack Pearl Harbor. This was not the case. But it was well known to U.S. Naval Intelligence that the Japanese War College had prepared a staff paper in 1936 suggesting such an operation if the U.S. Fleet should concentrate in Hawaii. The Peruvian ambassador's comment was seen as cocktail gossip about something known but without more recent and credible information deemed highly unlikely.

ROAD TO WAR

Yamamoto was a gambler by nature. He was particularly successful at poker and had once said if the Navy did not work out for him he could make a good living at the card tables.

The idea of taking the U.S. Pacific Fleet out of the picture before it could become a problem was too good to ignore.

Taking the Pacific Fleet out of the picture early would make the Southern Operations easier.

In January 1941, he asked the senior plans officer for the Air Staff, 1st Air Fleet (the carriers) to determine if it was possible for a carrier strike to attack Hawaii and inflict a crippling loss on the U.S. Navy and if so whether the risks could be acceptable.



ROAD TO WAR

Yamamoto tasked RADM Takijiro Onishi, Chief of Staff 11th Air Fleet with determining whether such a pre-emptive attack was possible. 11th Air Fleet controlled shore based naval aircraft, not the carriers which were 1st Air Fleet. But Onishi was an aviator.

VADM Chuichi Nagumo commanded the Carriers and was not an aviator and his Chief of Staff was about to be transferred.

Yamamoto also did not completely trust Nagumo. He was not an aviator and had been opposed to aviation in the 1920's. He also had been opposed to the Naval Treaties, in favor of the war in China, and not sufficiently concerned about Japan's chances in a war against the United States to earn from his boss even grudging respect.

While gregarious and affable, Nagumo was intellectually cautious and conservative, temperamentally Yamamoto's opposite.



ROAD TO WAR

Onishi turned to CRD Minoru Genda. Genda was a planner with the 1st Air Fleet. He was a fighter pilot and Yamamoto had known him since flight school (Yamamoto being the Executive Officer of the school at the time.)

He was also brilliant at details.

For now, he was one of about four who knew such an operation was being contemplated. Nagumo (his boss) and the staff he worked for were not informed of what he was doing, only for whom.

He would present his conclusions to Yamamoto in February.

Such an operation had merit. It was risky. There were technical questions that had to be addressed and intelligence that should be addressed before it could be seen as feasible.



ROAD TO WAR

STRIKE FORCE:

Genda recommended the Strike Force include all six of Japan's largest carriers: Akagi, Kaga, Hiryu, Soryu, Shokaku and the Zuikaku which was still under construction in early 1941. This would give the strike force over 400 aircraft but it would leave the southern operations with three small carriers. The Pearl Harbor option would deprive the offensive of over 75% of the possible carrier striking capability for up to three weeks assuming no damage to the Strike Force.

The trade off placed a huge strike force off Hawaii, capable of delivering a devastating blow in a matter of hours. A smaller force would have to linger to achieve the same result and was less likely to overwhelm the defenses.

The obvious place to assemble the strike force for a quick strike was the Marshall Islands under Japanese control some 2,100 nautical miles from Hawaii.

It was also obvious to the Americans. Surprise was essential and the Marshall's were probably watched. Genda recommended attacking via a northern route out of the shipping lanes. This would require tanker support for the escorts which was one complication. (The Japanese were not as skilled at refueling at sea).

ROAD TO WAR

STRIKE FORCE:

To reduce the time needed to fuel the easy solution was to use as few escorting ships as possible. Furthermore, all ships had to be as fast as the carriers so the run in and withdrawal could be at high speed and faster than a battle fleet could pursue.

The risk was that should the Strike Force encounter a U.S. Battle Force it would be outgunned by a wide margin. On the day of the strike, few planes would be available to scout for a surface fleet or U.S. carriers. Thus the Strike Force would be particularly vulnerable. It also made the force particularly vulnerable to submarine attack.

It was critical to strike on a day and at a time when the bulk if not all of the Pacific Fleet was in port either at Pearl Harbor or Lahaina Roads (or both). But in early 1941, the Japanese had little accurate intelligence on day to day ship movements in Hawaii or whether there was an operational schedule that could be exploited.

Yamamoto considered the loss of two of his carriers an acceptable risk. Any more would jeopardize future operations assuming even a short war. An engagement with the Americans during the strike could cripple his force. (He had to assume that as he was certain a long war of attrition would destroy Japan.)

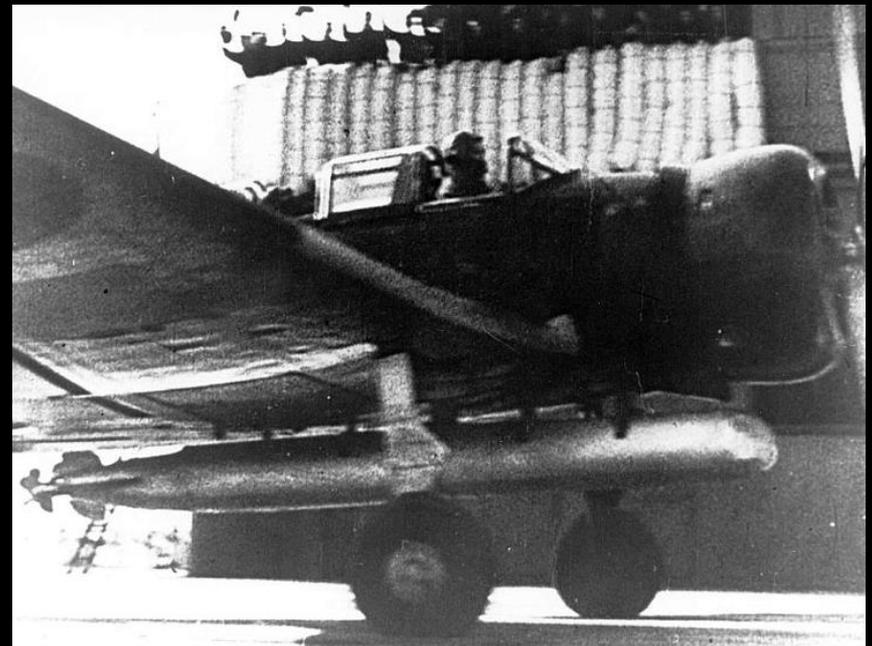
ROAD TO WAR

TORPEDOES:

The self-propelled torpedo was a ship killer. Bombs could ruin a ship's ability to fight but torpedoes would sink a ship.

An attack on a fleet at anchor would be most effective if torpedoes could be employed. But air launched torpedoes dove to a depth of 70 - 100 feet below the surface before rising to their cruising depth of around 10 - 20 feet.

If the U.S. Fleet was at Pearl Harbor, torpedoes were useless at the time as the harbor was no more than 45 feet deep (Taranto had been over 100 feet deep). But without torpedoes, an attack could not truly hope to take out the enemy fleet.



ROAD TO WAR

By the beginning of March 1941, Yamamoto was convinced his idea of an opening attack against the U.S. Pacific Fleet had merit, but it was not yet a viable possibility.

The torpedo problem had to be resolved for the plan to be at its best. The torpedoes were fine if the U.S. fleet was off Lahiana where there was deep water but useless if they were against ships at Pearl Harbor. Bombs would be used, but torpedoes were preferred to ensure maximum destruction of shipping.

There was little information on the movements and routine of the Pacific Fleet. In March of 1941 two officers from Naval Intelligence were sent to Hawaii as accredited diplomats. Their job was to observe the fleet.

Both were known to U.S. Counter-intelligence but as neither was engaged in trying to recruit spies, engage in obvious sabotage, or break into any safes, they were not watched too closely. (They had immunity and there was nothing to stop them from having lunch at public parks that happened to have commanding views of the harbor or anchorage.)

Neither of them knew why they were there beyond what they were told to observe and report.

ROAD TO WAR

AMATEURS: IDEALISM v. REALITY

The first six months of 1941 probably destroyed any chance of peace between the United States and Japan, not because neither country was keen to go to war, but because of the well intended and completely bungled efforts of two Maryknoll priests.

In January 1941, they managed to get on the calendar to meet with President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State Cordell Hull for ten minutes. They were there for over two hours stating they had a deal that they knew Japan could live with that would ease tensions in the Pacific.

Roosevelt (and Hull) were then focused entirely in the other direction (Europe). Informal staff talks were about to begin between the U.S. and British militaries about eventual U.S. involvement in Europe and a two front war was not feasible.

The deal was less than the U.S. wanted, but more than Japan had offered before. The problem was, Japan was completely unaware of the new offer. It was entirely the idea of the two priests.

ROAD TO WAR

AMATEURS: IDEALISM v. REALITY

Believing an offer had been made, Hull made a counter offer which was far more than the U.S. had conceded in the past. It was, effectively, that Japan advance no further in the Pacific and agree to armistice talks with China.

This was transmitted to Tokyo with an enthusiastic endorsement.

It was initially ignored. Konoe was not told.

The two priests then travelled to Japan and spoke with some Japanese men they knew who had connections with the Prime Minister. They told the Japanese that the Americans were willing to make an offer (offering more than Hull had) and would agree to a summit in Hawaii or Alaska between Roosevelt and the Prime Minister to finalize a peace treaty.

Foreign Minister Matsuoka was abroad travelling to the Soviet Union and Germany. Konoe, while not willing to accept all the terms offered, saw this as a breakthrough and communicated partial acceptance and his agreement to a summit to the Washington Embassy. Hull already knew the message when Nomura delivered it and, while not ideal, saw it as a significant change from which a rapprochement seemed possible.

ROAD TO WAR

AMATEURS: IDEALISM v. REALITY

The problem was the messages came from the priests and not as they represented from the respective governments. Each side thought the other had blinked when in fact neither had.

Moreover, while Konoe's enthusiasm was genuine, constitutionally he overstepped his bounds. The Emperor could have agreed. Otherwise it was up to the Foreign Minister.

Matsuoka returned from his trip to learn both of the developments and Konoe's response to the U.S. Government and blew up. He sent a message to Nomura taking everything off the table and reiterating his earlier position that the U.S. must stay out of Asian affairs.

Nomura, opposed to war with the U.S. and seeing the message as a provocation, did not deliver the response.

Unfortunately Hull knew it anyway. Japan clearly was not being honest and nothing they said could be trusted.

ROAD TO WAR

Matsuoka had been away for weeks mostly in Germany and Italy. He had travelled through the Soviet Union and on his way west, stopped in Moscow where he negotiated and signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union.

This was supposed to be secret. He did not tell Japan's new allies.

But the U.S. knew. This meant that Japan was securing its northern flank which further meant they planned to go south regardless.

The U.S. knew this because they had broken the highest level Japanese diplomatic code that they were reading the English translations often sooner than the Japanese were reading the original messages...



Above: Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka signs the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. April 13th, 1941.

CODE BREAKING

In 1917, the United States got into the code breaking business. They did so because they could see the utility but also because while the British were allies, they did not share.

After the war the program was funded through the State Department and staffed by military and civilian personnel from both the War and Navy Department.

By 1921, the Navy section had broken the Japanese consular codes.

This proved pivotal during the Washington Naval Conference as the U.S. delegation knew the instruction that Japan had sent to the Japanese delegation.

In other words, they knew the Japanese bottom line, knew how far they could push the Japanese and knew when the Japanese were bluffing.

CODE BREAKING

At this time, codes and ciphers were book codes.

A code is a word that means something other than the obvious meaning.

In WWII, Navajo Code Talkers not only used a language that was impossible to understand, their messages were in a simple code.

A cipher is basically a system of letter substitution.

A book code or cipher means that the code or encryption procedure are written down in a book and so long as the book is in use, the code or procedure remains the same.

The easiest way to break a book code or cipher is to steal the book.

The hard way is to translate it or work out the encryption manually.

The U.S. did both. (Intelligence Officers took courses on lock picking and safe cracking and the Japanese New York consulate was always a good target as no one lived there.)

CODE BREAKING



In 1929, Henry Stimson (top) became Secretary of State in the Hoover administration. When he learned of the code breaking operation he pulled funding. In his mind “a gentleman does not read another’s mail.” (He would have an entirely different opinion from 1940 – 45 as Roosevelt’s Secretary of War.)



Herbert Yardley (below) was then in charge of the section having been the Army’s chief cryptographer in WWI and then head of the combined operations since then. He was of a very different mind from his new boss and resigned in disgust.

And wrote a book about it which was not illegal as there was not yet a law against it.

The Japanese were infuriated that the Americans had the upper hand at the conference and changed their codes.

CODE BREAKING

The Americans broke the new code in weeks.

This was helped in no small part by Naval Intelligence which broke into the Japanese consulate in New York on weekends to photograph the new code books.

The Japanese never noticed.

A book code could be broken to at least some degree without resorting to burglary. This was the work of mathematicians and linguists and it took time. And it rarely ever resulted in reading all the other gentleman's mail, just bits and pieces.

Unless you had the codes and cipher, much was left to the analysts to determine the missing (unreadable) information.

The Americans would prove to be exceptional at both breaking into codes and ciphers and at accurately determining Japanese plans from otherwise disparate pieces of information.

CODE BREAKING

JN-25, the naval operational code that came into use in 1939 and remained in use with revisions through the end of the war, was a particularly complex book code.

Purple was the name for the Japanese diplomatic code in use since 1937. Knowledge of Purple was “Magic.” It was a machine cipher meaning the random letters and numbers were generated by a machine. Such ciphers cannot be broken by the same procedures as a book code.

In the case of Magic, the cryptographers figured out the basic algorithm in use and built a machine that replicated the patterns. One of men had a background in the telephone industry specifically in the new electro-mechanical switch system that was replacing the telephone operators.

Using something like the telephone switch, they made a machine that broke the code reliably and consistently.

After the war when the Signals Intelligence people got their hands on the real machine, they found that the machine the Americans had made was actually better at reading the Japanese code than the Japanese machine.

CODE BREAKING

However, someone having the information at some time is not enough.

For any intelligence to be of any use the right people (decision makers) must have the right information at the right time.

In 1941, U.S. Military Intelligence potential was top notch.

The ability of the U.S. Military intelligence community to properly and in a timely manner disseminate such information was non-existent.

- The community was tiny. (Fewer than 300 worldwide – by 1943 Hawaii alone would have an intelligence operation ten times as large).**
- The community was compartmentalized to an extreme degree.**
- The various offices rarely shared information.**
- Certain stations handled certain collection tasks, but while efficient on paper, the assignments of task was illogical given that the material might be of no use to the local commander but critical to another far away.**

CODE BREAKING

The Army and Navy rarely shared information and then only grudgingly.

In the Army, the Air Corps was becoming an entity unto itself and was also not inclined to share either with the Navy or the Army.

In the Navy, Intelligence was one office. Their job was to determine enemy capabilities plans and intentions.

Code breaking was not under intelligence but Navy Communications.

Naval communications was about communicating. Codes and ciphers were in a small subsection with two different missions:

- Providing the navy and the fleet with secure codes and ciphers (communications security).**
- breaking enemy codes and ciphers (communications intelligence).**

CODE BREAKING

Navy Communications saw its primary role as communicating. Communications Intelligence often was at the short end in budgeting and manpower.

Navy Communications also did not see a need to provide COMINT to Naval Intelligence for analysis and dissemination. (This happened informally as at Hawaii at this time and had happened in Washington, but it was dependent upon the people in the jobs being willing to cooperate).

While both COMINT and Naval Intelligence had middle grade officers with years of experience (always interrupted by years at sea), more often than not the heads of the departments had no experience in their fields.

Thus the man in charge typically could not tell if it was broken, much less if it needed fixing.

The offices were undermanned and overworked. Work had to be prioritized. But if the boss did not give it priority, it was not done quickly if at all.

CODE BREAKING

Example:

Translation of “Magic” intercepts – the Japanese diplomatic cipher – had the highest priority in the Fall of 1941. Lower level book ciphers were decoded based on their own priority and translated only when higher priority sources were not being processed.

Some low priority messages might have been crucial. Messages in the low level Japanese Consular Code (used mainly for administration) included specific instruction to the two Japanese naval intelligence officers in Hawaii detailing just what they must report – specifically which ships are anchored where and when. They were intercepted in early November 1941. (Known now as the “Bomb Plot” message.)

The messages were not decoded and translated until ten days after Pearl Harbor was attacked.

CODE BREAKING

And then there were those who could not leave well enough alone:

In September 1940, RADM Richmond K. Turner became head of War Plans at the Navy Department. War Plans dealt with both long range strategic planning – that would in turn be used to develop future needs for ships, aircraft and manpower – and operational planning – what the Navy needs to do today.

Turner believed that meant his office had to be in charge of all intelligence estimates. Turner was brilliant, but not opened minded. Once he was certain of something, little would change his mind.

In addition to being certain he and his staff were the best situated to make intelligence estimates – that the Fleet should not do so on their own – he was also convinced he was an expert on the Japanese.

He did not speak the language.

He had been to Japan once ... for less than a week ... as C.O. of a cruiser there to return the ashes of the Japanese Ambassador who had died (1938).

And contrary to the rest of the U.S. government, Turner was convinced Japan was going to invade Siberia.

CODE BREAKING

Left: RADM Richmond K. Turner in 1942. Brilliant and combative, he was known as “Terrible Turner” for his short, loud and un-publishable temper.

One of the most senior Naval Aviator admirals, unlike most others he never hoped or lobbied for a carrier command. He was the Navy expert on amphibious warfare and would command the invasions of Guadalcanal, New Georgia, Tarawa, the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands and Okinawa.

He would insist he was “at least 50% certain” Japan would attack Hawaii but made that assertion in 1946. Nothing from 1940-41 supports it. It is now believed most of his testimony re: Pearl Harbor was an effort to cover the fact that he dropped the ball big time.



CODE BREAKING



Left: CDR Edwin Layton. Fleet Intelligence Officer, U.S. Pacific Fleet 1940-1945. Served most of his career in intelligence billets. Fluent in Japanese and served for four years in Japan. He considered Admiral Yamamoto a personal friend.

Right: CDR Joe Rochefort. Navy cryptographer also fluent in Japanese and who had served six years in Japan. He was head of Signals Intelligence, 14th Naval District (Station Hypo) 1939 – 1943. His team would break the JN-25 code beginning in February 1942.

CODE BREAKING

Cryptography is not absolutely useful.

It only ever tell you what A and B are talking about.

If A and B are not talking, you cannot learn anything.

If A and B are talking about baseball, it does not tell you that B is about to attack you (unless it's code and then you have to also know it's code and what the code means.)

Even if A an B are talking, if Washington knows and you don't it does you no good.

In late 1941 we were reading the Purple cipher which was for messages between the Japanese Foreign Ministry and its ambassadors overseas. It was not used by their military nor did any messages discuss what the military was up to.

Only the War Department and Headquarters, U.S. Army Philippine had the decoding machines. Hawaii did not. Moreover, neither Washington nor the Philippines sent the decoded messages to anyone else.

CODE BREAKING

The U.S. Navy had codebreakers in both Hawaii and the Philippines (Station Hypo, 14th Naval District Hawaii and Station Cast, Cavite Philippines).

Cast was trying to break into JN-25 without success.

Hawaii thought they could but were forbidden to try. They were assigned a seldom used "Admirals' Code" that would never be broken.

Hawaii did have the ability to RDF (radio direction finding) and to conduct Traffic Analysis. The later was based on call signs (which changed but were not encrypted and usually easily identified). A call sign is an address that identifies who is sending to whom.

Traffic Analysis tells the code breaker who is talking to whom but nothing about what they are talking about. Still, there are patterns that can allow an educated guess.

By November, Hawaii and the Philippines knew the Japanese were about to embark on major operations and knew that they were sending the bulk of the fleet with army troops into Southeast Asia. They were confident that one of the targets was the Philippines.

CODE BREAKING

There had been nothing about Hawaii.

Hawaii thought that one Japanese carrier was operating in the Marshall Islands but was not certain because the call signs had just changed.

It had lost track of the six largest carriers. Without any more information, it was assumed the carriers were in port in Japan as the Japanese did not use radios in port since they had phone connections.

This was reported to Admiral Kimmel (PACFLT) in early December by CDR Layton (Fleet Intelligence Officer). Kimmel asked if it was thus possible that the carriers could be rounding Diamond Head as they spoke.

“I would hope we would have spotted them before then,” was the reply.

The one message in U.S. possession that might have caused concern (the “Bomb Plot” message about ship locations in harbor) would not be decoded and translated until Dec. 17th 1941.

ROAD TO WAR

1 Feb 1941: Admiral Husband E. Kimmel relieved Admiral James Richardson as Pacific Fleet Commander.

22 Jun 1941: Germany invaded the Soviet Union. It will soon call upon Japan to declare war on the USSR (as Italy did) under their alliance. Japan did not believe the USSR attacked Germany and therefore stated it had neither the intention nor obligation to declare war.

Jun 1941: Newly established Imperial General Staff (joint Army-Navy) ordered the Combined fleet and southern army to plan in detail for one of four operations: Invasion of Java followed by Philippines and Malaya, or to seize the Philippines as an staging area for the conquest of southeast Asia, or to seize the rest of Indochina and then Malaya followed by the Philippines, or lastly to attack the Philippines and Malaya simultaneously.

18 Jul 1941: Foreign Minister Matsuoka was forced to resign given his absolute refusal to negotiate with the United States. The new Imperial Government insisted that negotiations continue to buy time to prepare for the Southern operation.

ROAD TO WAR

24 Jul 1941: Japan invaded Southern Indochina and seized the port at Cam Rhan Bay.

26 Jul 1941: Douglas MacArthur recalled to active duty as Commander U.S. Army Far East in command of all U.S. and Philippine troops. He was promoted to Lt. Gen. On the same day, Roosevelt barred all oil exports to Japan and froze all Japanese assets in the United States. Britain and the Netherland East Indies reciprocate cutting Japanese access to oil by about 90%.

A war warning was sent out to all U.S. Pacific Commands.

After being ignored for months, MacArthur was informed that the Philippines will be reinforced with troops and aircraft as soon as they are available.

B-17 bombers begin to be transferred and from here until Dec 8, most B-17 built will be flown to the Philippines.

Hawaii has demanded a large number as well for long range air patrols. Assets in Hawaii are incapable of dawn to dusk patrols over more than a 120% arc. The B-17's will pass through on their way to the Philippines.

ROAD TO WAR

In response to the Alerts in Hawaii:

U.S. Army initially deployed ground troops to defend beaches. Will recall them when it is clear invasion is not imminent. They will not deploy again until Dec 8.

U.S. Army Air Force, fearing sabotage and not attack, removed aircraft from dispersal and parks them “wing tip to wing tip” when they are not being prepared for a flight. This makes them easy to guard, but easy to destroy in an air attack.

In dispersal the planes are scattered, never more than two in near proximity, often either under camouflage netting and/or in revetments (berms on three sides) making them hard to find and needing direct hits to be destroyed.

U.S. Navy: 2/3 of all ships were at sea six days a week from the end of July until Dec. 7. But unless the fleet was on maneuvers or a task group was on an exercise or mission, all ships were in port on Sundays. It was still peacetime.

Army and Navy conducted dawn to dusk long range patrols in the direction of the Marshall Islands (Southwest), the closest Japanese bases and believed to be the most likely direction of an attack.

ROAD TO WAR

~ 6 Aug 1941: Type 91 v 2 aerial torpedo passed test and evaluation. The new stabilization system was initially designed in April 1941. Designed for shallow water such as Pearl Harbor, it also proved to be effective in high speed attacks, heavy seas and will allow for a much larger warhead later without redesign.

Aug 1941: Meeting of the Japanese Cabinet. Disparities in production between U.S. and Japan spelled out. The U.S. leads Japanese Empire by 20:1 in steel production; 10:1 in coal; 5:1 in aircraft manufacture; 2:1 in ship construction; 100:1 in oil. Japan is fully mobilized, the U.S. has barely begun.

Aug 1941: Japan will run out of oil in about a year, less time if it must engage in combat operations.

Yamamoto submitted his recommendation that it is essential that the Japan destroy the offensive capabilities of the Pacific Fleet at the outset of hostilities and his plan for a pre-emptive strike on Pearl Harbor to the Navy Staff.

They were stunned as this was contrary to doctrine and over 30 years of planning.

ROAD TO WAR

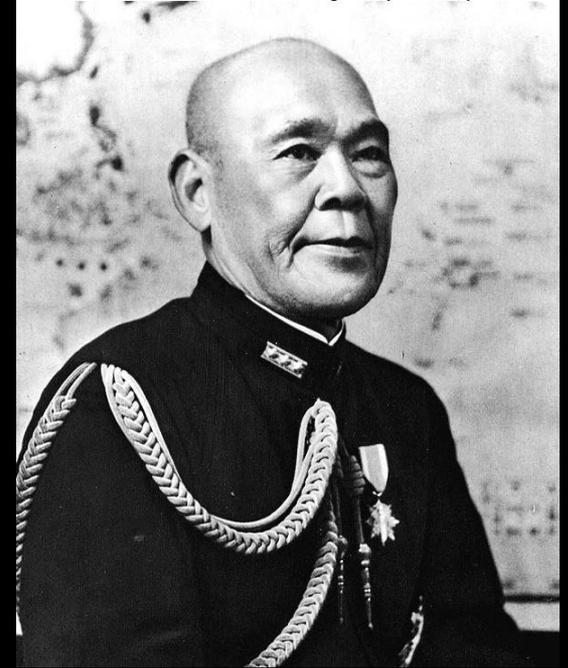
ADM Osami Nagano was Chief of the Navy Staff and Yamamoto's boss and had the authority to reject any plan from his subordinate.

He was convinced that Japan could not hope to win a war against the United States, thus it was to be avoided at all costs.

The solution was simple. Do not provoke them. And attacking European interests in Southeast Asia alone would not provoke the Americans.

And given American politics at the time, so long as the U.S. is not attacked, they will not join the war. He rejected Yamamoto's plan as unnecessarily provocative. Yamamoto threatened to resign.

But it was soon clear to Nagano that the Japanese Army would never consider not invading the Philippines – a move he considered unnecessary. In so doing, war with the U.S. would be unavoidable and so he approved Yamamoto's plan because it was the most likely means to keep America out of the Western Pacific for as long as possible.



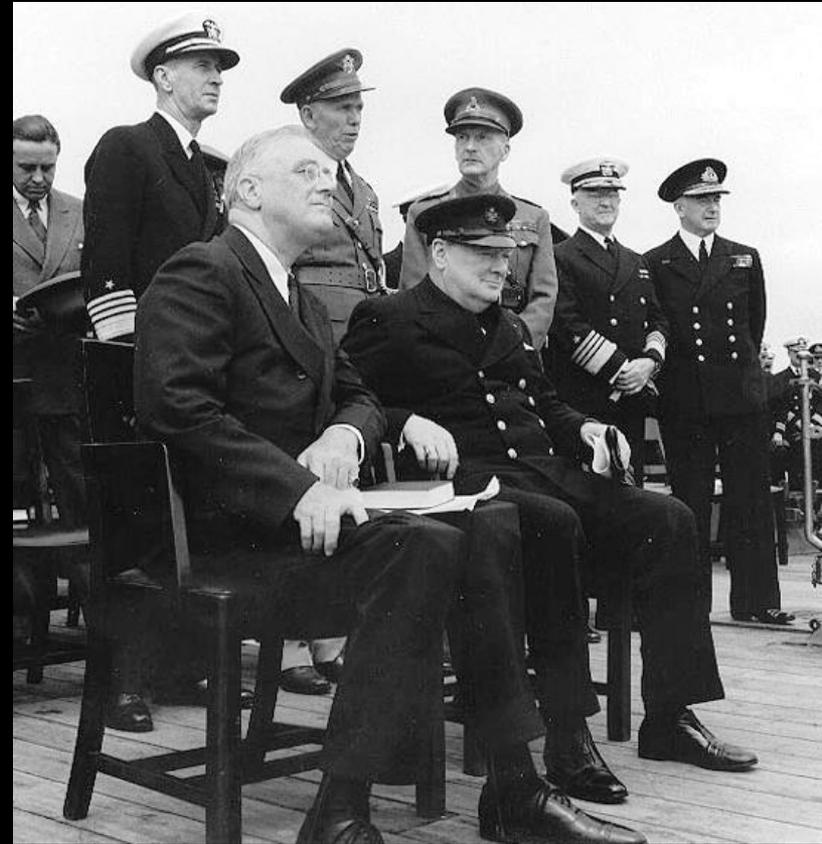
ROAD TO WAR

14 Aug 1941: Roosevelt and Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter. While the U.S. was not yet at war and Congress was still hostile to anything that looked like a military alliance, and while the language in the publicized document cannot be truly construed as an alliance, that is what it was.

More critically, it stated that the war in Europe was to be the top priority.

Separate agreements between the British and American high commands make it clear that America's war effort, when it begins will be in Europe. The U.S. will remain entirely on the defensive in the Pacific.

Ever since the failed attempt at a summit in April, Konoé continued to try to arrange one. Mid-August had been the date tentatively agreed upon. Roosevelt cancelled on short notice and without explanation.



Behind L-R: AMD Ernest King
CINUS; Gen George Marshall,
Army Chief of Staff; Field Marshal
Sir Alan Brooke, Imperial Staff;
ADM Harold Stark, CNO; FADM Sir
Dudley Pound, RN, First Sea Lord.

ROAD TO WAR

4 Sep 1941: Japanese Cabinet met with the Emperor. He was informed of the effects of the embargo and the general agreement that diplomacy may well prove fruitless thus war may be unavoidable. He asked if Japan can win. No one says that they will but it is possible.

He was informed that Japan must either obtain an agreement with the U.S. that would end the oil embargo or it must commence offensive operations into Southeast Asia, and go to war with the U.S. by the end of October.

He spoke to the surprise of the cabinet: “If all four seas all are brothers and sisters then why, oh why these rough winds and waves.”

The Emperor’s response was seen as approving war by those who sought it (the Army) and demanding peace by those who did not (the Navy and others).

6 Sep 1941: Japan submitted its proposal to U.S.: unfreeze Japanese assets and Japan will negotiate for peace in the Pacific, open trade in Asia, withdraw from Indochina and it will withdraw from China once an acceptable armistice can be arranged with the Chinese.

ROAD TO WAR

7 Sep 1941: Konoe tried, through an intermediary, to convince his Army Minister to accept diplomatic compromise rather than a war Japan cannot win. Hedeiki Tojo, convinced the Emperor has backed the timeline and thus Japan must gain an acceptable concession from the U.S. or go to war by the end of October responded that if Japan does nothing it was doomed, if it fights it may be doomed. If it was doomed regardless, better to go down fighting.

Oct 1941: The Imperial General Staff (reluctantly) approved Yamamoto's plan to attack Pearl Harbor.

Japanese radio intelligence fixed the area covered by Hawaii long range patrols. The north was not patrolled.

18 Oct 1941: After months of frustration at trying to avoid war and numerous near starts at a diplomatic solution ruined first by Matsuoka's brinksmanship and later by Army refusals to compromise on China and Indochina, Konoe resigned.

Tojo was named Prime Minister. He was briefed on the economic situation and realizes Japan has no hope to win a war. He demanded an absolute outside date (early December), and demanded an all out effort by the foreign ministry to obtain a treaty that would end sanctions even if Japan must compromise.

ROAD TO WAR

Oct 1941: The diplomatic negotiations have gone nowhere. By October, Sec State Cordell Hull, who had personally come to the conclusion months earlier that peace with Japan is impossible, tried to urge Roosevelt to ignore the Japanese and their ambassador. Roosevelt, more worried about Germany, told Hull to try and get the Japanese to agree to something that will keep the peace until at least April of '42.

The date was based upon MacArthur's assurances that by then U.S. forces in the Philippine will be able to repel any Japanese invasion if not deter them from trying.

Tojo's cabinet was split. Half arguing for war now, the other half either for peace or for more time to prepare.

Negotiations stalled with the change in the Japanese government.

The Japanese Ambassador Nomura was frustrated. He is given little discretion in what he could and could not agree to and it seemed every time progress was made his government retreated back to its starting position – which he knew was unacceptable to the United States. He did not know anything about the simultaneous war plans, only that he is expected to accomplish in weeks what would take months.

ROAD TO WAR

5 Nov 1941: Ships that will participate in the attack on Hawaii began departing their bases in the home islands for a fog shrouded bay far to the north in the Kurile Islands. The force will be assembled by 22 Nov.

8 Nov 1941: Japan's new Foreign Minister Togo (no relation to the Admiral), dispatched Saburo Kurusu to Washington with proposals for peace. His instructions were to submit the first and then, if rejected a second one. The proposals will be transmitted in code around the date of his arrival in Washington.

Kurusu was a poor choice. While an able diplomat and like Nomura personally opposed to much of what Japan has done over the last decade, he was recalled from his post as Ambassador to Nazi Germany for this assignment and he had signed the Tripartite Pact the year before. Hull considered him nothing more than a Japanese Nazi.

15 Nov 1941: Kurusu arrived in Washington. He and Nomura read the proposals (as does Hull). The first proposal was discarded out of hand. In the opinion of the two diplomats, the U.S. would never agree and it was entirely likely they would break off relations and not accept the second proposal.

ROAD TO WAR

17 Nov 1941: Kurusu and Nomura met with Hull and Roosevelt and presented the second proposal. Hull was surprised, but kept silent. The proposal stated that Japan will evacuate southern Indochina immediately upon agreement and reduce the force in Northern Indochina. Japan would agree to an open trade agreement in Asia and to accept mediation from the United States with China aimed and an armistice and eventual withdrawal of Japanese troops. The U.S. would lift all embargoes upon the evacuation of southern Indochina.

Hull wanted to accept nothing that did not abrogate Japan's participation in the Tripartite Pact. Kurusu suggested Japan might accept a non-aggression agreement with the U.S. that would effectively negate the Treaty such that Japan would remain neutral should the U.S. enter the war against Germany. Hull was instructed to work with this proposal. (Kurusu did not have such authority but hoped he would get it.)



ROAD TO WAR

~ 20 Nov 1941: Army headquarters in Washington recommended transferring most of the P-40's in Hawaii to the Philippines. Both ADM Kimmel and LGEN Short (U.S. Army commander in Hawaii) object in no uncertain terms as this would strip Hawaii of any air defenses.

22 Nov 1941: Message to Nomura from Tokyo, negotiations must be concluded by 29 Nov after which "things will automatically happen."

25 Nov 1941: Hull offered verbal counter-offer. U.S. will drop its demands about the Tripartite Pact provided Japan signs a non-aggression treaty. The U.S. cannot act as a mediator in the dispute between China and Japan but will agree to end the embargo if Japan ceases offensive action and enters into negotiations with the Nationalist government. The Japanese agreed their government might accept this and Hull agreed to submit it to Roosevelt and prepare the formal proposal.

26 Nov. 1941: After meeting with Roosevelt the night before, Hull submitted the U.S. final offer: Japan must evacuate Indochina immediately. It must evacuate China immediately. It must withdraw from the Tripartite Pact and sign a non-aggression treaty with every East Asian Nation, every European Nation with colonies in East Asia – the allied governments, not the German controlled ones, and revoke its recognition of and support for Manchukuo – only after all is accomplished will the U.S. lift sanctions.

ROAD TO WAR

26 Nov 1941. The Japanese carrier striking force departed the Kurile Islands.

27 Nov 1941. Tokyo received the U.S. final position. Foreign Minister Togo characterized it as an unconditional surrender without a shot being fired. Tojo saw it as a de facto declaration of war but orders Nomura and Kurusu to keep trying.

4 Dec 1941. All U.S. carriers have departed Pearl Harbor. USS Saratoga was bound for California for maintenance. USS Lexington was transporting a Marine fighter squadron to Midway. USS Enterprise was transporting a Marine fighter squadron to Wake Island.

5 Dec 1941. Tokyo sent a message to its Embassy: “Stand by for a very long message in 14 parts...” The message includes instructions that no one with less than the top security clearances may decode, translate or type the message.

7 Dec 1941 (~7:00 A.M). The message is completed. The English translation was in the hands of SECSTATE, the President, the CNO and the Army Chief of Staff before the Japanese Embassy even finished decoding. A follow-up (also in U.S. hands) orders Nomura to deliver the 14 part message not later than 1:00 EST 7 Dec and upon delivery to destroy all codes and ciphers...

ROAD TO WAR

6 Dec 1941. War warnings were sent out by the Army and Navy to all Pacific Commands. Japan was breaking off diplomatic relations at or after 1:00 PM EST. An offensive is expected against Guam, the Philippines and the Kra Peninsula (Malaya).

Hawaii will not receive the message until the afternoon of Dec 7, Hawaii time. Radio communications were garbled “due to atmospheric” and the warning was sent Western Union ... without a priority.

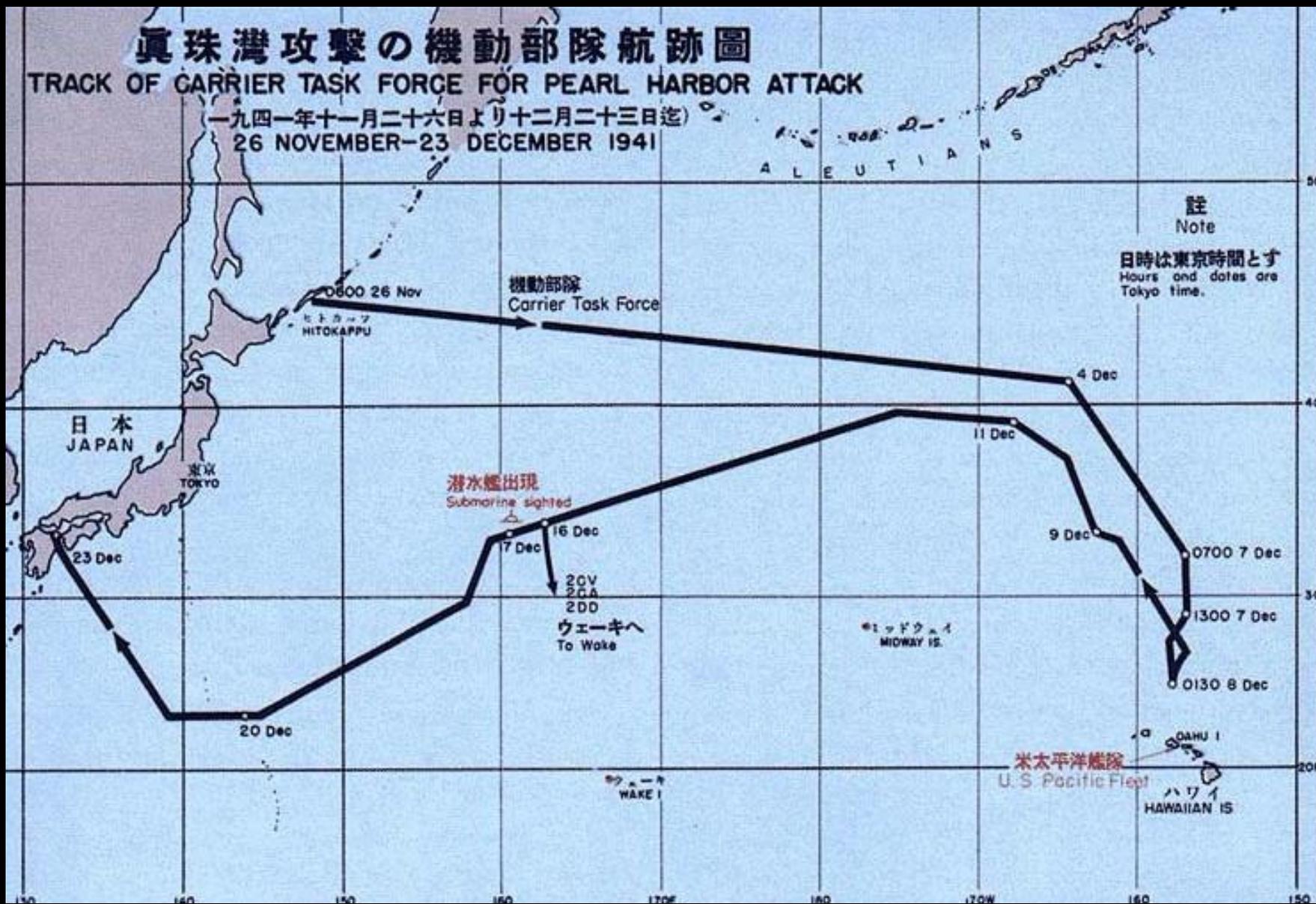
At dawn, Hawaii time, the Japanese strike force is about 230 miles due north of Oahu. The first planes began to take off...

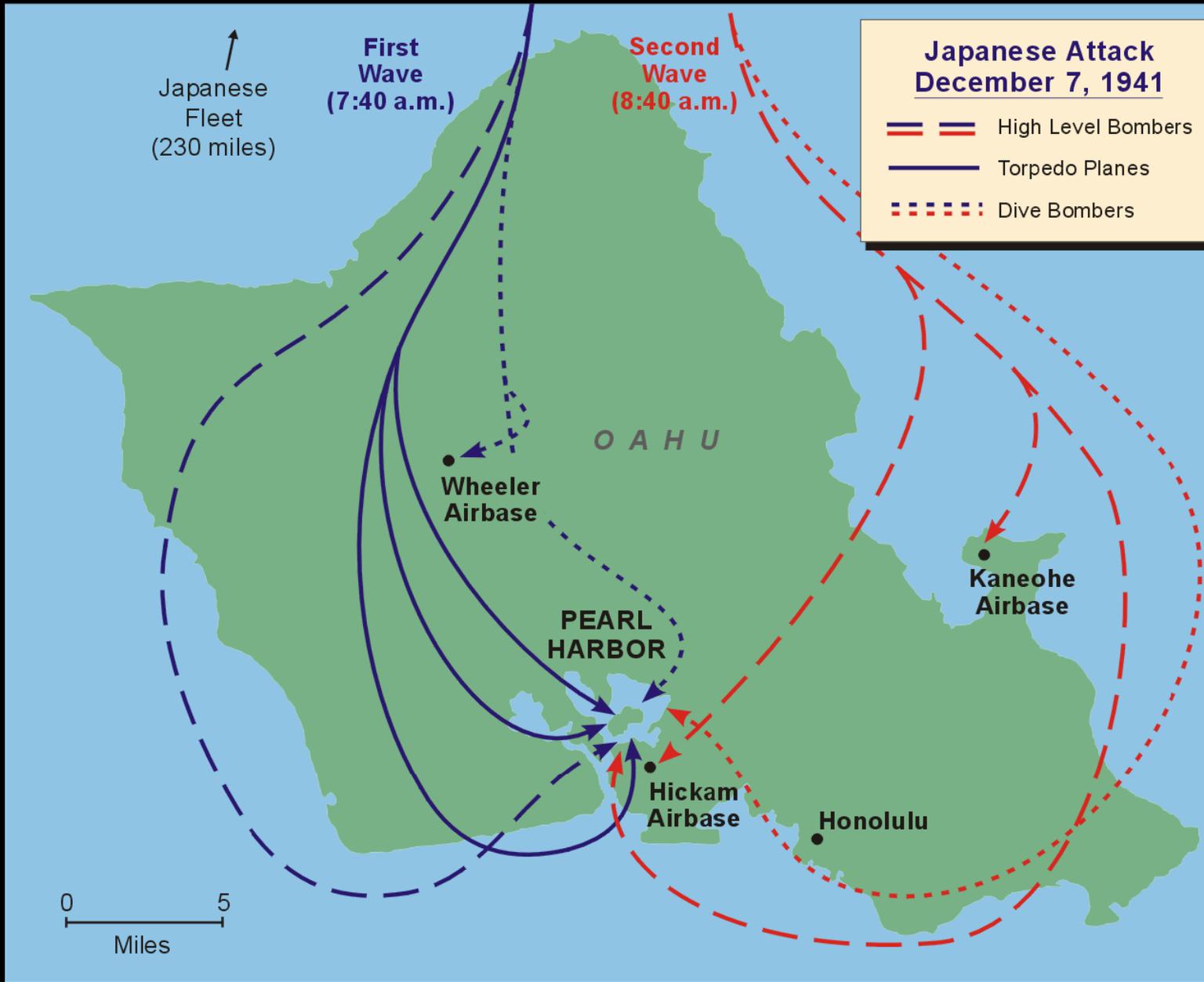


真珠湾攻撃の機動部隊航跡圖

TRACK OF CARRIER TASK FORCE FOR PEARL HARBOR ATTACK

一九四一年十一月二十六日より十二月二十三日迄
26 NOVEMBER-23 DECEMBER 1941







**U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
December 7, 1941**

The first bombs fell on Hawaii (at Wheeler Army Air Field) ten minutes before the time Nomura and Kurusu were scheduled to deliver the message.

Lack of a typist delayed preparation of the translation.

They met with Secretary Hull over an hour and a half after the attack began.

Hull knew the Japanese had attacked.

Nomura and Kurusu did not. They were not even aware that Japan was preparing an offensive having been told their efforts were to prevent a U.S. attack in the Far East.

8 hours after Hawaii was hit, the U.S. air fields in the Philippine were bombed. Most of the planes stationed there were caught on the ground.

(About ½ of the B-17's in the Philippines had been moved to bases on Mindanao days before but they were out of range of any Japanese targets).

“I must say that in all my conversations with you I have never uttered one word of untruth. This is borne out absolutely in the record. In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions ... infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any Government on this planet was capable of uttering them”

Sec. Cordell Hull to Nomura and Kurusu, Dec 7th, 1941

“I fear all we have achieved it to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve.”

Adm. Yamamoto, Dec 7th 1941. (The only source for this is the movie Tora, Tora, Tora although most historians believe it expresses his doubts.)

Japan	1941	Built	Total	Sunk		
CV:	6	7	13	11	54 – 90 aircraft	
CVL:	3	3	6	5	30 – 48 aircraft	
CVE:	2	7	9	6	<30 aircraft	
BB:	10	2	12	10		
CA	18	0	18	16		
CL	20	5	25	22		
DD:	122	59	172	139		
DE:	0	0	0	0		
SS	61	118	179	100		
U.S.	1941	Built	Total	Sunk		
CV:	7	17	24	6	78-100+ aircraft	
CVL:	0	9	9	1	33 aircraft	
CVE:	1	69	70	6	24 aircraft	1 sunk in the Atlantic
BB:	18	10	28	2		both sunk at Pearl Harbor
CA:	18	11	29	7		
CL:	19	34	53	3		
DD:	171	346	517	74		14 sunk in the Atlantic
DE:	0	414	414	11		6 sunk in the Atlantic
SS:	112	201	313	53		

GLOSSARY of ABBREVIATIONS

CV: Fleet aircraft carrier. 66-100 planes. (The Americans had 5 more that would enter service in the six months after the Japanese surrendered.)

12/41 U.S. 7 Japan: 6

Built: U.S. 17 Japan: 7

CVL: Light aircraft carrier. Fast enough to operate with Fleet Carriers (25 knots cruising speed) 36 – 42 planes

12/41 U.S. 0 Japan: 3

Built: U.S. 9 Japan: 3

CVE: Escort Carrier. Smaller, slower (18 – 20 knots) cheaper and faster to build. 24 – 28 planes. In the Atlantic, they would be the center of Hunter-Killer groups against the U-boats. In the Pacific they were used to ferry planes to forward bases and provide close air support for amphibious assaults. Their crews said “CVE” stood for: Combustible, Vulnerable and Expendible. (Only 11 were lost, 5 in the Pacific)

12/41 U.S. 2 Japan: 2

Built: U.S. 80 Japan: 7

(11 for the Royal Navy).

GLOSSARY of ABBREVIATIONS

BB:	Battleship		
	12/41:	U.S. 17	Japan: 6
	Built:	U.S. 11	Japan: 2
CC:	Battle Cruiser		
	12/41:	U.S. 0	Japan: 4
	Built:	U.S. 2	Japan: 0
CA:	Heavy Cruiser		
	12/41:	U.S. 18	Japan: 18
	Built:	U.S. 11	Japan: 0
CL:	Light Cruiser		
	12/41:	U.S. 19	Japan: 20
	Built:	U.S. 34	Japan: 5
DD:	Destroyer		
	12/41:	U.S. 171	Japan: 122
	Built:	U.S. 346	Japan: 172

GLOSSARY of ABBREVIATIONS

- DE:** Destroyer Escort
These were cheap, anti-submarine escort ships originally designed and built for the Royal Navy which the U.S. then began building for its own use.
- | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|
| 12/41: | U.S. 0 | Japan: 0 |
| Built: | U.S. 414 | Japan: 0 |
- SS:** Submarine
- | | | |
|--------|----------|------------|
| 12/41: | U.S. 112 | Japan: 61 |
| Built: | U.S. 201 | Japan: 181 |
- AO:** Fleet Oiler – capable of refueling ships while underway.
- | | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|
| 12/41: | U.S. 27 | Japan: 20 |
| Built: | U.S. 58 | Japan: 5 |
- LST:** Tank Landing Ship. Known to sailors as “Large, Slow Target.” Despite the name, only 26 were sunk by enemy action in both the Atlantic and Pacific and another 13 lost due to accidents.
- | | |
|--------|------------|
| 12/41: | U.S. 0 |
| Built: | U.S. 1,051 |
- 113 built for Royal Navy

ROAD TO WAR

25 Nov 1941: After meeting with Nomura and Kurusu, Hull was close to a deal that will keep the peace in the Pacific for now. He told the men he would have a proposal acceptable to the U.S. available the next afternoon after he meets with the President.

The deal would see Japan evacuate southern Indochina, reduce its forces in northern Indochina and seek a cease fire with China to begin negotiations that might lead to a withdrawal. Japan would agree to sign a non-aggression pact with the U.S. Upon initial withdrawals, the U.S. would lift the embargo.

The deal was only good for three to six months.

But it met Roosevelt's goal of keeping the U.S. out of a Pacific War for now...



ROAD TO WAR

26 Nov 1941: Nomura and Kurusu met with Hull and are handed the proposal. Hull told them it was final.

Japan must evacuate Indochina immediately.

It must begin evacuation of China immediately.

It must break relations with “Machukuo” and return it to Chinese control.

It must abrogate the Tripartite Pact.

It must sign non-aggression pacts with the U.S. and all East Asian nations (including China) and all European governments (those in exile, not the German puppets.)

Only then will there be discussion of lessening the embargo.



WHAT HAPPENED?

Hull met with Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins in the Oval Office the evening of Nov. 25th. No notes or records were kept and no one else was present. (Only Hull survived the war and he never said.)

We know there was a lengthy phone call with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

There are records of highly classified notes made in London on that date ... notes not due to be declassified until 2021 and assuming they were have not been published to date.

Obviously, something changed.

Revisionists like to think that Churchill told Roosevelt about Pearl Harbor.

There is no credible, direct or circumstantial evidence in support of this. But it is entirely possible the British knew Japan would invade Southeast Asia regardless ... because that is exactly what they intended to do regardless.



ROAD TO WAR

TORPEDOES:

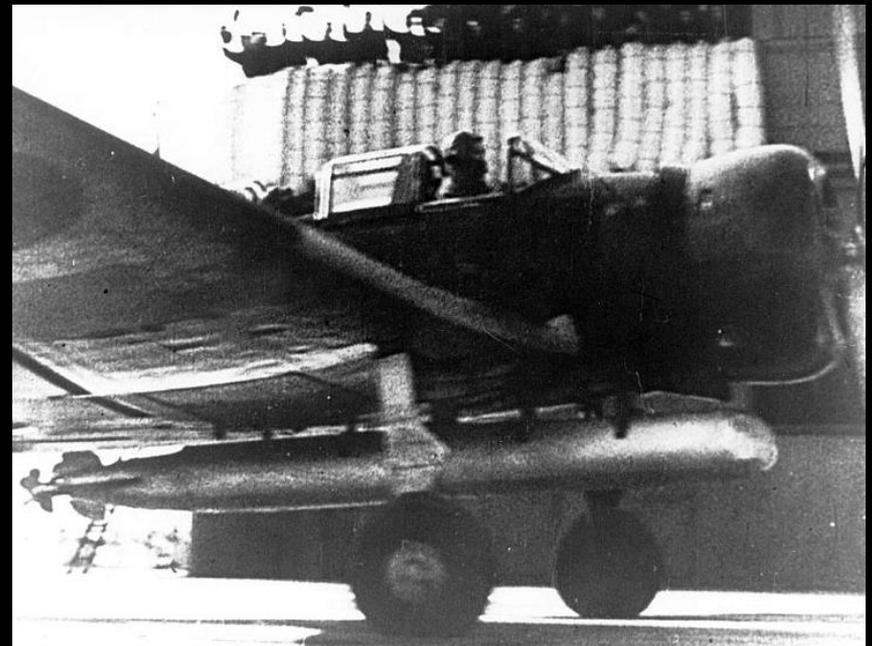
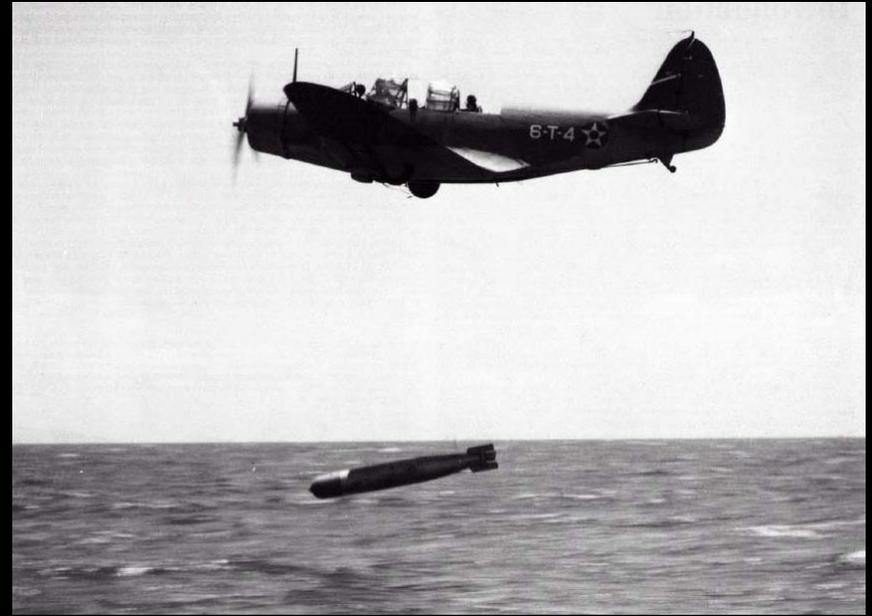
The Japanese developed an anti-roll stabilizer for their aerial torpedoes by April 1941. It passed tests by late July.

This prevented their torpedoes from diving upon entering the water, thus meant they could be used at Pearl Harbor (and were used to devastating effect).

They also learned it meant torpedoes could be used in heavy seas – before they could not.

And they could double the weight of the warhead making it that much more effective.

The latter two benefits were not known until after Pearl Harbor.







JAPAN 1941

CV: 7
CVE: 3
CVL: 5
BB.CC: 10
CA: 18
CL: 20
DD: 122
SS: 61

UNITED STATES 1941

Pacific:

CV: 3
CLV: 0
CVE: 0
BB: 9
CA: 12
CL: 11
DD: 79
SS: 56

(Atlantic)

4
0
1
8
6
8
92
56

General Locations of U.S. Pacific Fleet 12/07/41

Pearl Harbor

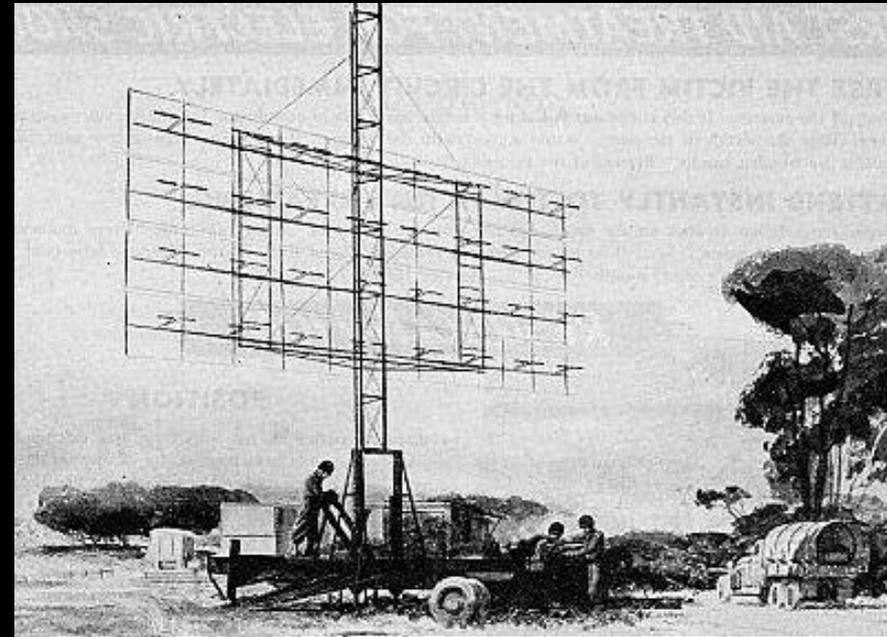
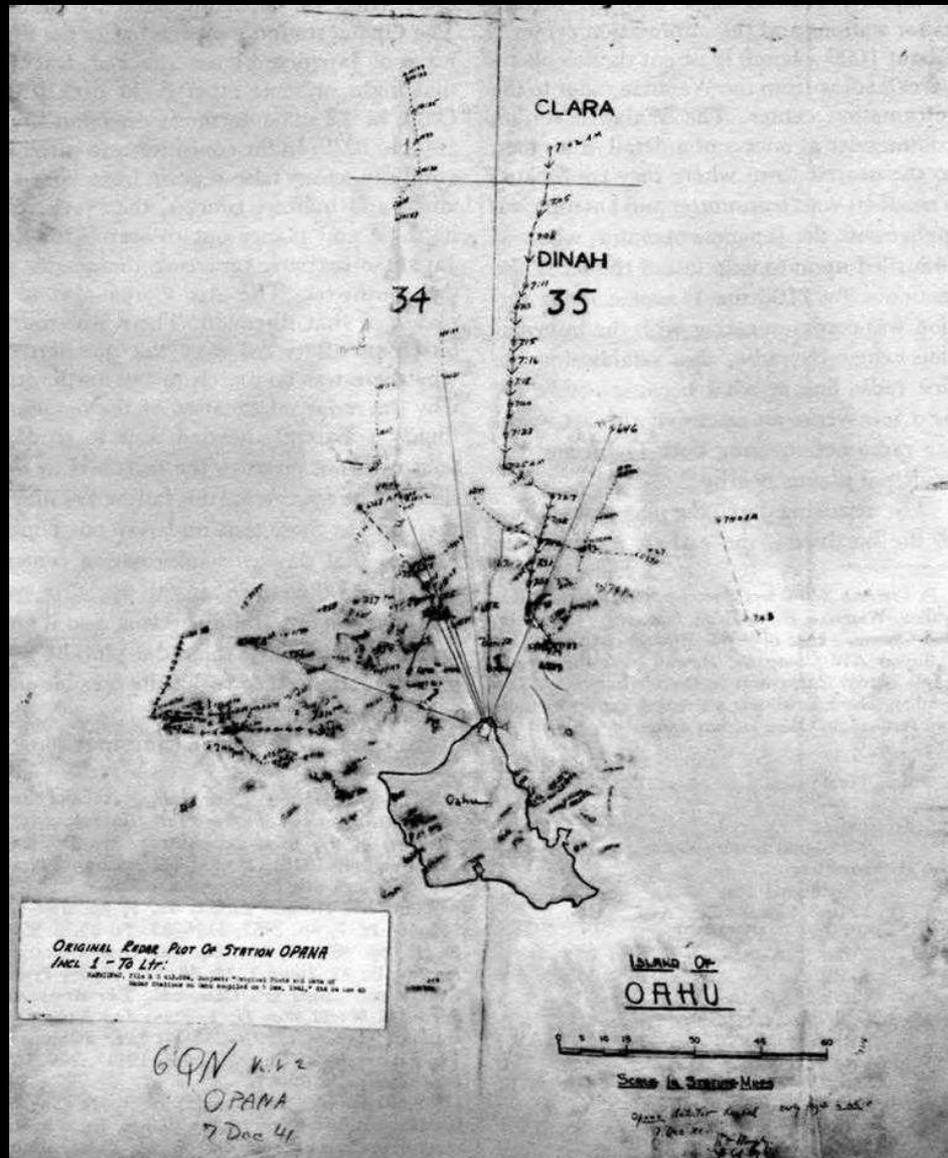
Asiatic (Philippines)

At Sea

West Coast

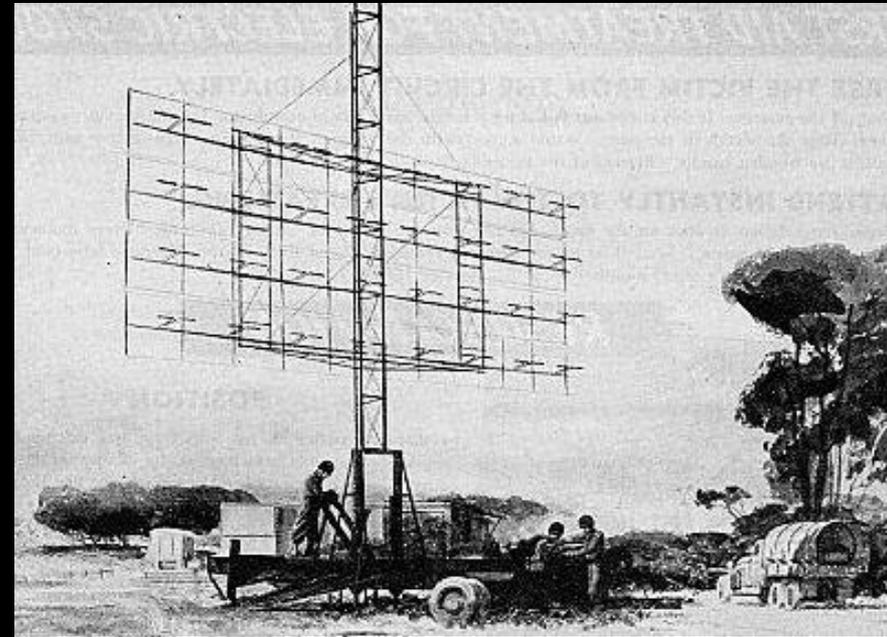
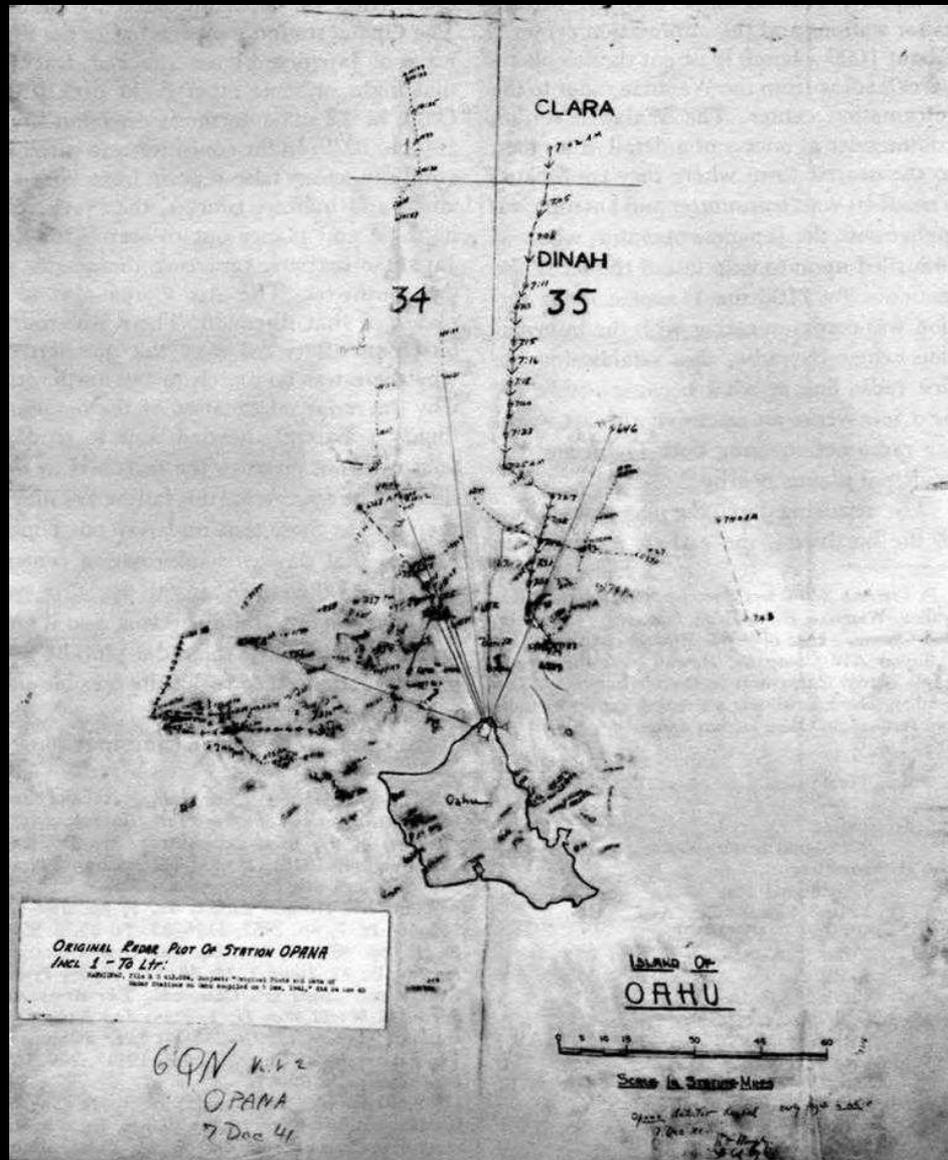
CV	0	0	3	0
BB	8	0	0	1
CA	2	1	9	0
CL	6	2	2	1
DD	30	13	17	19
SS	4	27/24	16	12

ONE LAST CHANCE



There was one radar site at Opana Point. It was still unfamiliar technology – but that had not stopped the Hawaii commanders from demanding more sets. Lower down the chain of command, it was not understood. The site was not used all the time and the fighter control station 40 miles away was only staffed during exercises...

ONE LAST CHANCE

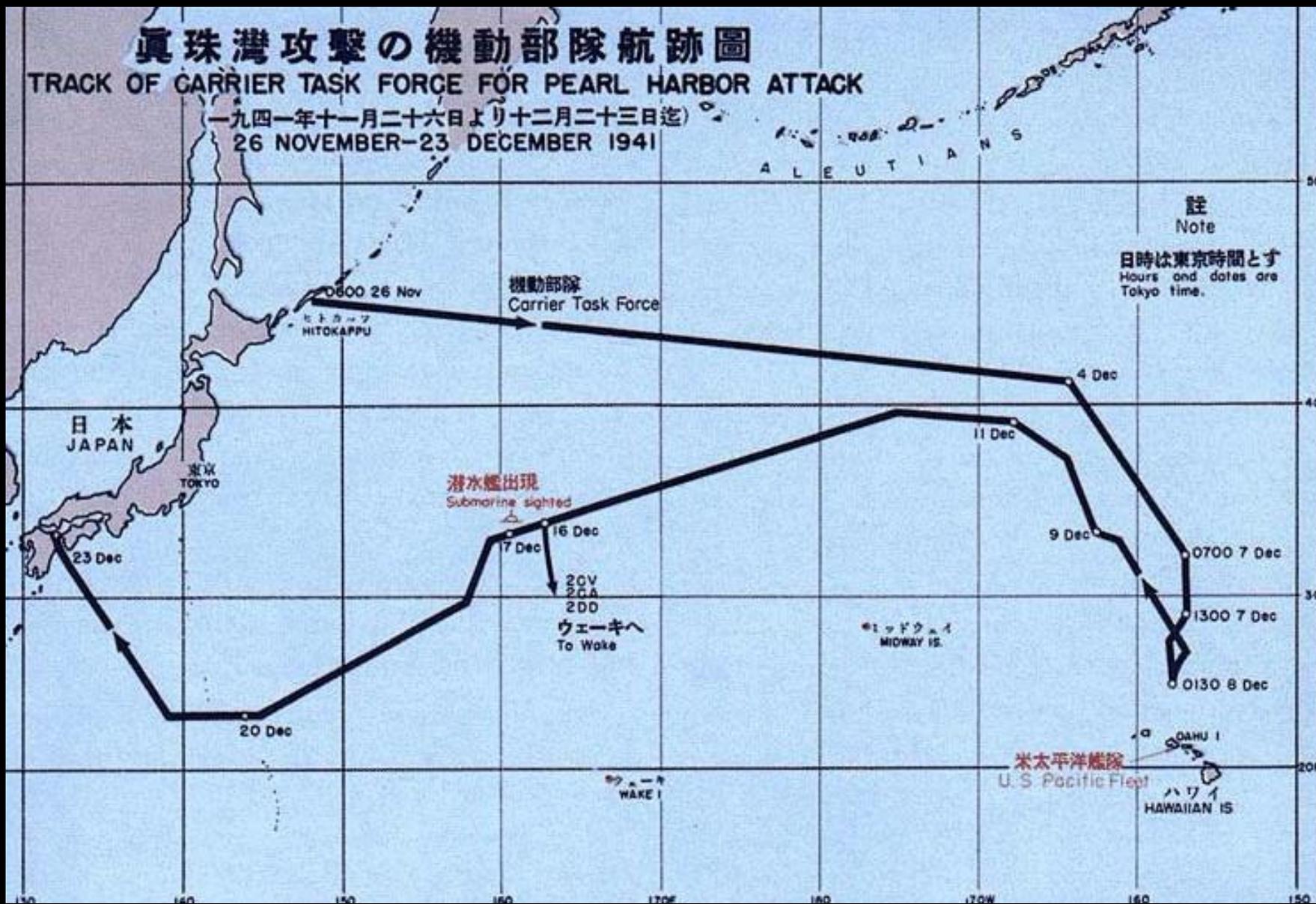


The site picked up the Japanese 1st Wave more than 120 miles out. It was reported. The lone watch officer knew a flight of B-17's was expected soon, and such flight would be about that out ... to the northeast. The strike was due north, but this detail – the exact compass bearing – was not reported nor requested. The station continued to track for training, but did not report.

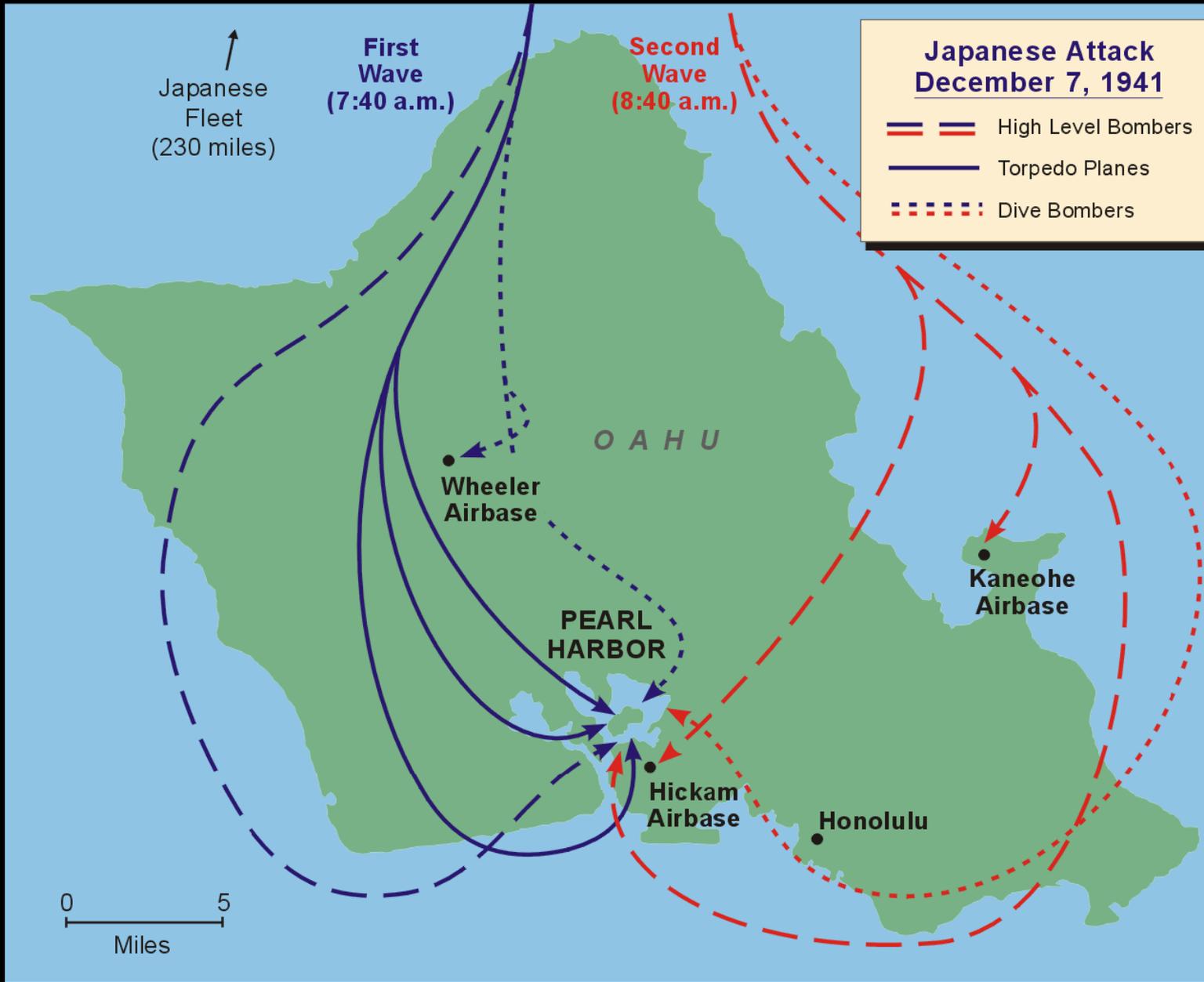
真珠湾攻撃の機動部隊航跡圖

TRACK OF CARRIER TASK FORCE FOR PEARL HARBOR ATTACK

一九四一年十一月二十六日より十二月二十三日迄
26 NOVEMBER-23 DECEMBER 1941



米太平洋艦隊
U.S. Pacific Fleet





U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii December 7, 1941

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunk Heavily Damaged Moderately Damaged Undamaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route of U.S.S. Neosho, December 6, 1941 Route of U.S.S. Neosho, December 7, 1941 Channel Lane
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0 1/4 Miles

CUTTING (OR AVOIDING) LOSSES

The first two waves had devastated the U.S. Battle Fleet. The plan called for a third wave to take out the port. But there were no aircraft carriers in port which, to Nagumo (left), meant they were out possibly looking for his force. His strike leader, CDR Mitsuo Fuchida (center), recommended launching the third strike to take out the oil. His senior air commander, RADM Tamon Yamaguchi (commanding Hiryu and Soryu) (right), insisted on a third strike.

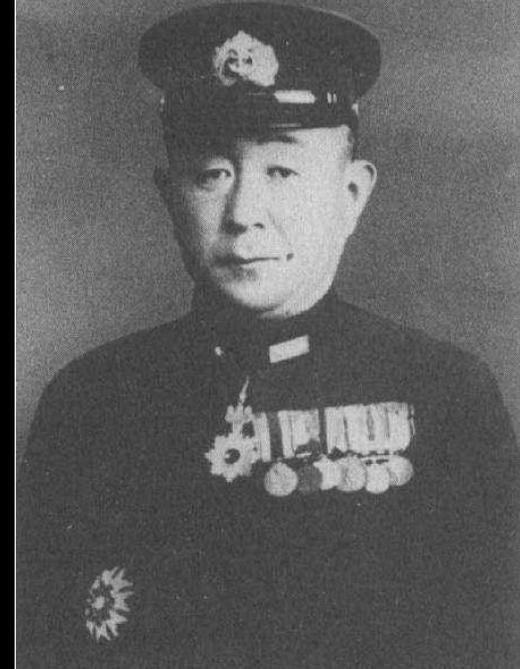
Nagumo refused to risk his carriers, surprised he had gotten away with this plan in the first place (he had never thought it would work).

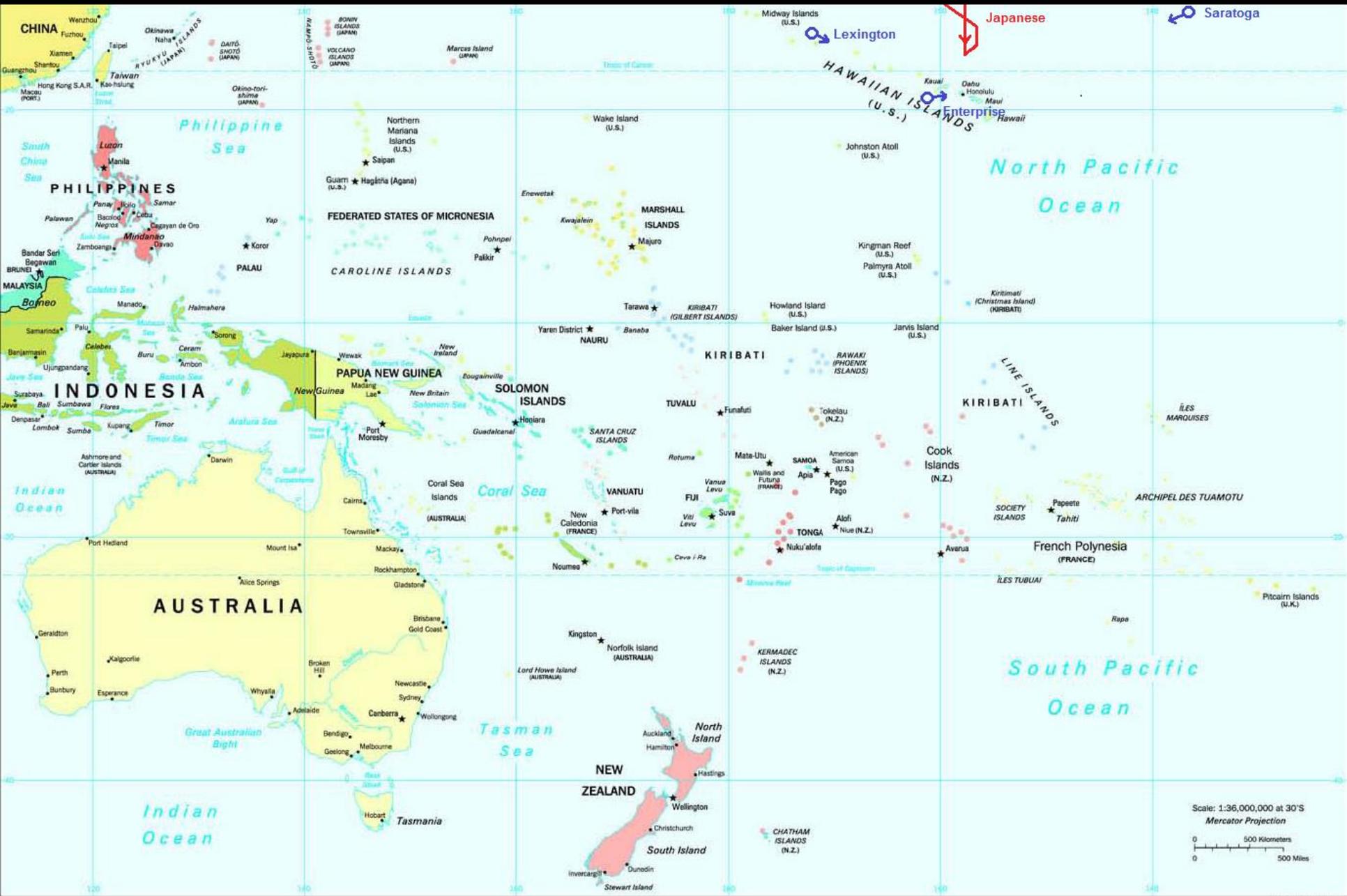


CUTTING (OR AVOIDING) LOSSES

That is the popular narrative. The problem is there was never a plan to attack the oil or shipyards nor launch a third strike and a third strike could not have been made ready before late afternoon in any event. The Japanese did not know where the three American carriers were except they were at sea somewhere as they were not at Pearl Harbor.

The only source about a debate about a third strike was Fuchida well after the war and he was the only “witness” still alive. He has proven to be an unreliable narrator although Nagumo was later chastised for lack of aggression.





Japanese

Saratoga

Lexington

Enterprise

Scale: 1:36,000,000 at 30°S

Mercator Projection

0 500 Kilometers

0 500 Miles

WILD GOOSE CHASE

Even while the bombs were falling, U.S. Forces were trying to organize a counter-attack. USS Enterprise was about 150 miles west of Kauai returning from Wake Island and a flight from Enterprise would land during the air raid (it was a one-way flight, Enterprise was too far away for the planes to return.)

Search Patrols had taken off about one half hour after the Japanese began launching their 1st Strike. But there were not enough long range planes available to cover all (or even most) directions. The patrols were oriented on what local Intelligence thought was a most probable direction should the Japanese attack: southwest as they had ships (unknown types but believed to include a carrier) in the Marshall Islands.

Signals Intelligence picked up communications from the Japanese ships on RDF. It gave bearings of 003° or 187°. The system could not differentiate which was the correct bearing by itself. 187° was the “expected” direction so Enterprise, all ships that cleared port and any aircraft that could carry a bomb and had not been damaged were sent off to the south to attack.

The Japanese were to the north and steaming away to the north...

WHAT IF?

The only “safe bet” would be for the fleet to be somewhere else. Unless this was like Midway months later, no warning would have been timely enough for the U.S. to concentrate its forces.

The battleships were slow. Unless they encountered the Japanese fleet before the Japanese could spot them, the Japanese could easily keep out of the range of the guns and pound the Americans with strike after strike.

There were only two carriers immediately available and both had been sent to the west to deliver Marine fighters to Wake and Midway. Even if they were with the fleet, the Japanese planes had longer ranges such that the Japanese could hit the American Fleet without the Americans getting close enough to respond.

Only an ambush would work which required accurate intelligence, planning and skill. The Americans would try to achieve this on several occasions during the war – aided with accurate intelligence – and truly succeed only once.

Admiral Nimitz would remark less than two months after Pearl Harbor that the Japanese had done him a huge favor (by ridding him of slow and now useless battleships.)

AFTERMATH OF INFAMY

U.S. Losses:

USS Arizona BB-39 (Blew up, sunk)
USS California BB-44 (Sunk)
USS Nevada BB-36 (Sunk)
USS Oklahoma BB-37 (Capsized, sunk)
USS West Virginia BB-48 (Sunk)
USS Utah AG-16 (Capsized, Sunk)
USS Oglala CM-4 (Capsized, Sunk)
USS Shaw DD-373 (Sunk)
USS Cassin DD-372 (Sunk in dry dock)
USS Downes DD-375 (Sunk in dry dock)

USS Maryland BB-45 (Damaged)
USS Pennsylvania BB-38 (Damaged)
USS Tennessee BB-43 (Damaged)
USS Raleigh CL-7 (Heavily Damaged)
USS Vestal AR-4 (Heavily Damaged)
USS Helena CL-50 (Damaged)
USS Helm DD-388 (Damaged)
USS Curtiss AV-4 (Damaged)

U.S. Losses

188 aircraft destroyed
159 aircraft damaged
2,403 KIA (1,177 on Arizona,
429 on Oklahoma)
1,178 WIA
68 civilians killed, 35 injured

JAPANESE LOSSES

4 2-man midget submarines
sunk
29 aircraft shot down
64 KIA
1 POW

“...LIVE IN INFAMY...”

When Winston Churchill learned of Pearl Harbor he was said to have been ecstatic for now, he believed, the War was won ... or would be.

Roosevelt had no trouble getting his declaration of War against Japan. Germany was another matter. His informal agreement with Churchill (and the combined strategic plan worked out between the U.S. and British staffs) envisioned a defensive in the Pacific while all offensive effort was applied against the greater threat – Germany.

But Germany had not attacked the U.S. Japan had. It was the wrong war in the wrong place.

Then Hitler proved the fool and declared war in solidarity with Japan ... despite Japan not doing so against the USSR...



Roosevelt before a joint session of Congress asking for a declaration of war against Japan, Dec 8th, 1941.

Germany would declare war against the U.S. on December 11th.

Congress declared war hours later after merely being notified of the German declaration.