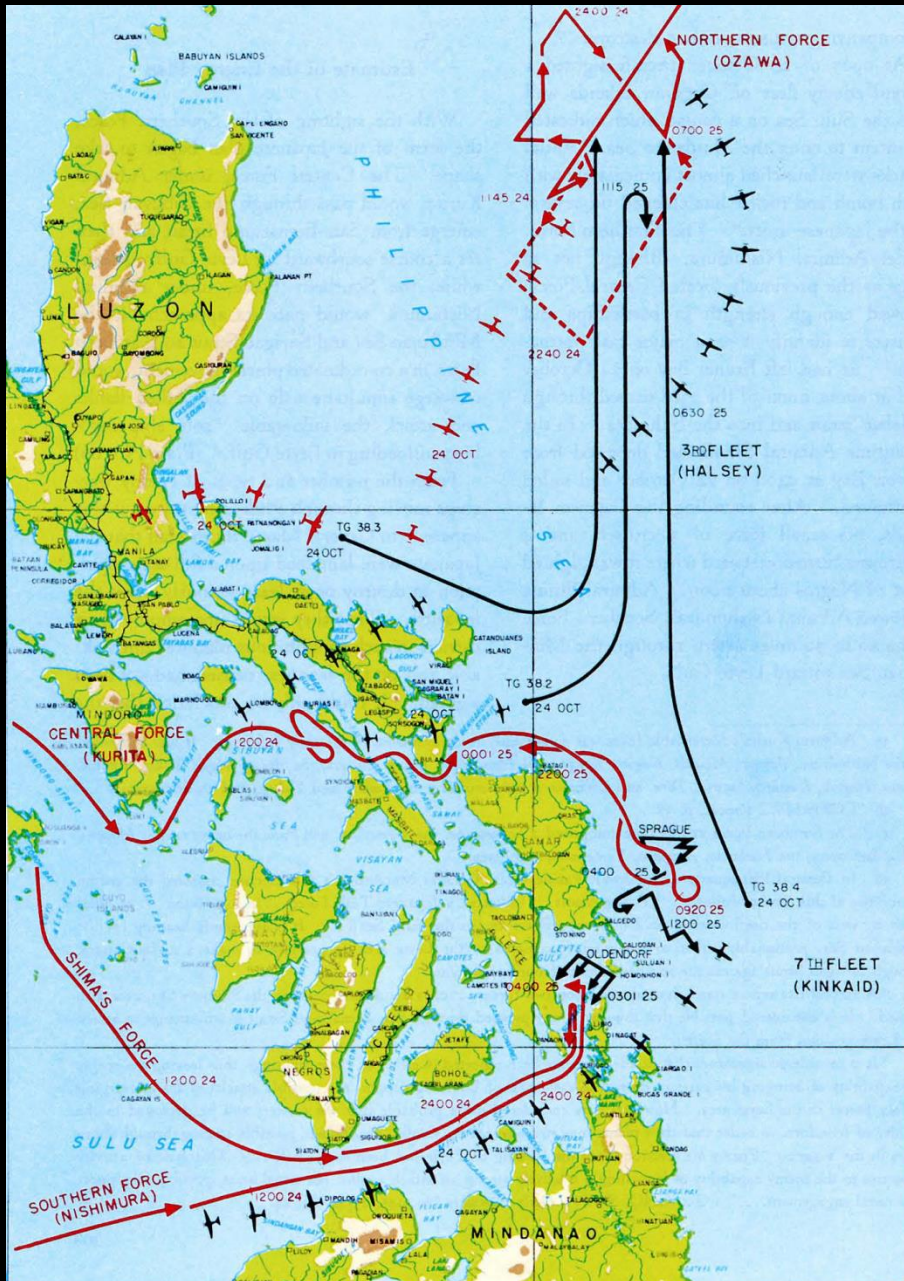


THE PACIFIC WAR



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



The Battle of Leyte Gulf was actually five interrelated engagements fought over two days none of which actually occurred in Leyte Gulf. Leyte Gulf was the Japanese objective.

The first was the Battle of Palawan Passage.

U.S. Submarines detected the Center Force on October 23rd in the Palawan Passage west of Luzon. They radioed their sighting and then pursued. Just before dawn they attacked hitting three heavy cruisers and sinking two including the flagship.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



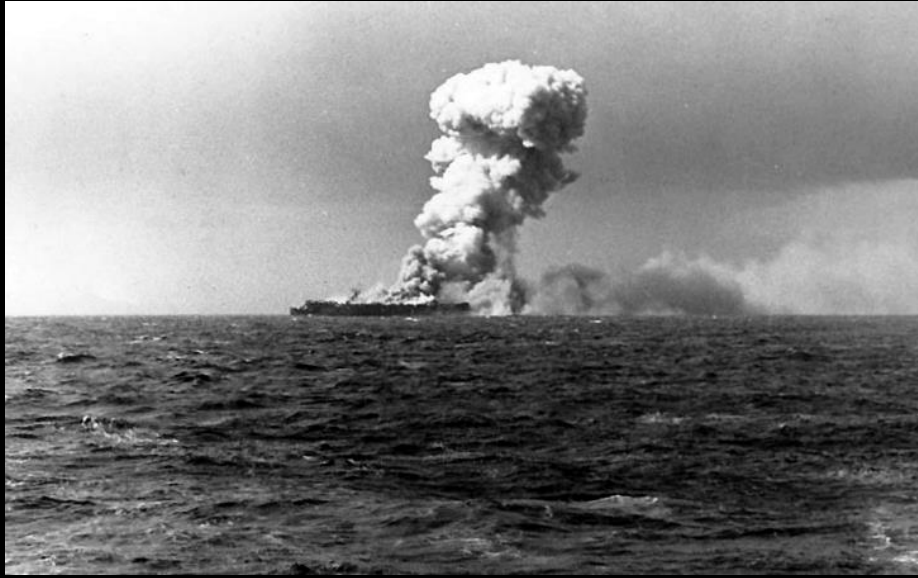
The second was the battle of Sibuyan Sea. TF-38 and sent half its carriers west to Ulithi to refuel when the report of the submarines was received. Halsey recalled one of the two groups. The other group continued to Ulithi with 40% of Halsey's planes embarked.

The remainder launched attacks at the suspected fleet. The Musashi and a heavy cruiser were heavily damaged and the Musashi eventually sank.



Two other battleships (including Yamato) were slightly damaged. The Center Force turned around hoping to get out of range. It turned back near dusk hoping to make its run under cover of darkness.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



As the airstrikes were underway against the Center Force, Japanese planes from Luzon found one of the U.S. carrier groups. This was a conventional attack, but it proved very costly to the attacking Japanese who lost most of the strike.

One plane hit the light carrier USS Princeton crippling it and setting it on fire.



Riddled by internal explosions, it would be abandoned and scuttled before the day was over.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



Meanwhile, scout planes from TF-38 found the Japanese carriers to the north. They were too far away to strike that day so Halsey recovered the strike and turned north in pursuit. He proposed a contingent Task Force 34 made up of his battleships to cover the San Bernardino Strait, but never heard it was needed.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



The third battle took place before dawn on October 25th, 1944. It was called the Battle of Surigao Strait.

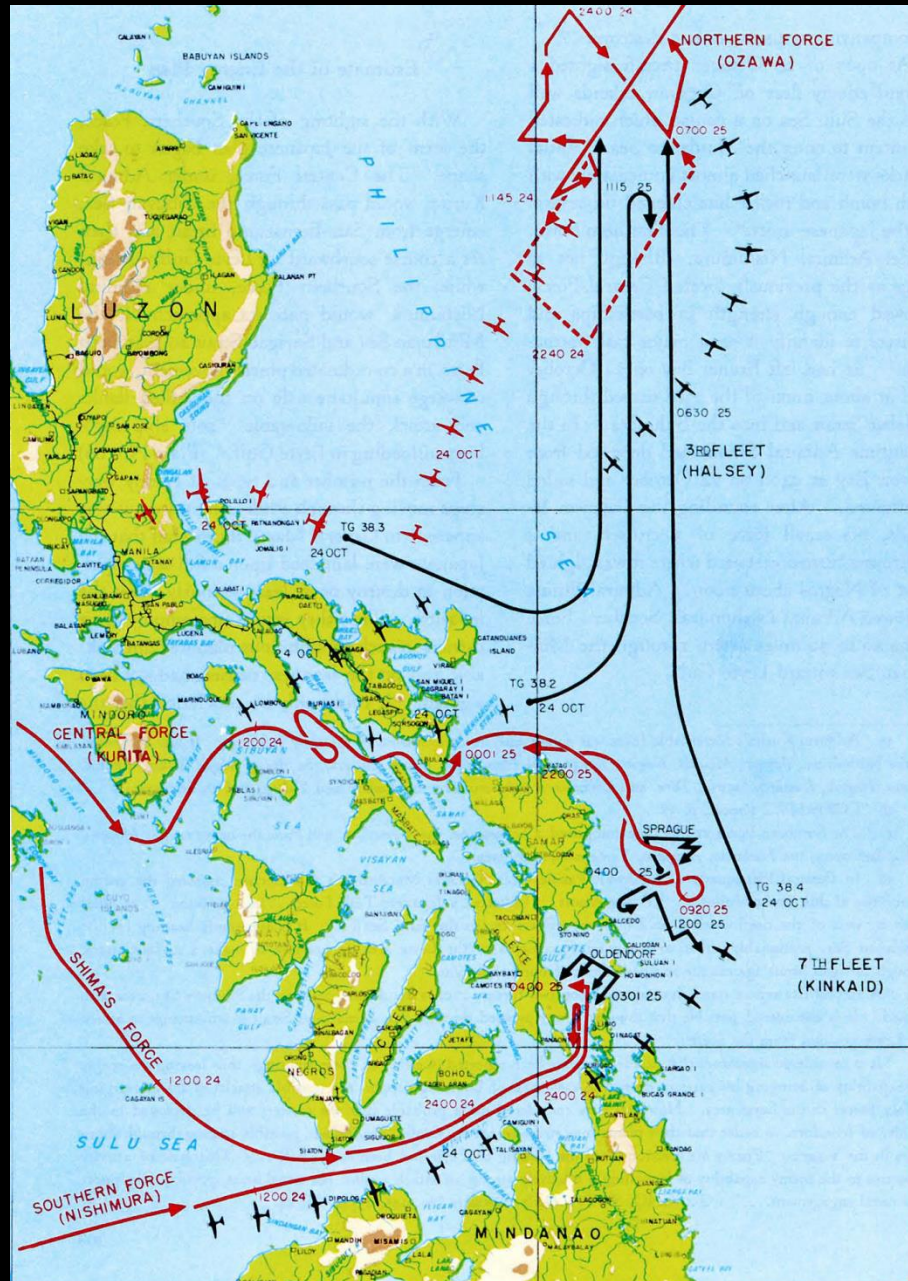
To the south, search plane from 7th Fleet discovered the Southern Force. RADM Oldendorf was sent to deal with it. He had six old battleships – five that had been at Pearl Harbor, four heavy cruisers, four light cruisers, 28 destroyers and 39 PT boats.

He set an ambush.

Most of the Southern force was crippled or destroyed by torpedoes. The few survivors came under the guns of the old battleships and were blown out of the water.



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



The fourth battle was joined not long after sunrise on the 25th. It was the most lopsided in terms of forces opposing each other with the most unlikely winner in history.

The Center Force had made it through the San Bernardino Strait into the Pacific unopposed by the non-existent Task Force 34 (battleships) and ran into one of three groups of escort carriers supporting the invasion.

4 Japanese battleships, 7 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers and a dozen destroyer attacked 5 escort carriers, 3 destroyers and four destroyer escorts ... and lost.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF

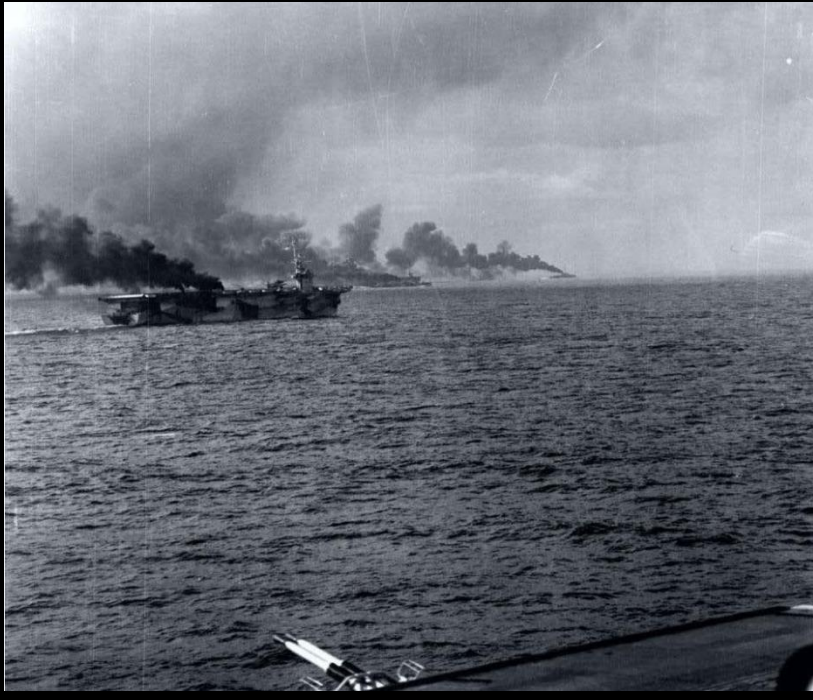


The American force had planes, but only with weapons meant for bombing troops on the ground or submarines (depth charges). None would seriously hinder a battleship or heavy cruiser.

The escorts had torpedoes, but had to get close to hit, under fire from heavy guns the whole run in. The carriers turned to run – at 20 knots – 8 knots slower than the slowest Japanese ship. The escorts attacked.



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



It should have been a slaughter.

But the ferocity of the escorts' attack crippled a heavy cruiser and forced Yamato to turn away to avoid a torpedo attack at a critical moment.

Even the escort carriers manage to damage a couple of heavy cruiser with their single, 5" guns.



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



The Japanese admiral mistook the ferocity of the American's desperate attempt to defend themselves as effectiveness and was convinced he had run into TF-38 with its large carriers and battleships.

He assumed he was heavily outnumbered and outgunned and ordered a general retreat. He was miles away by then, his ship having turned away to avoid a torpedo attack. The commanders in the thick of the action knew what they were up against ... but followed orders.

Task Force 38 was too far away to help and the battleships never formed into Task Force 34.



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF

The Battle Off Samar would leave one CVE, 2 destroyers and a destroyer escort sunk. The Japanese would lose a heavy cruiser with another crippled (later sunk) and three cruisers damaged.

The savaged escort carrier group was not out of the woods.

Later that day, Japanese Kamikazes attacked hitting the escort carrier St. Lo. It later sank after a series of explosions. It was the first Kamikaze sinking...



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



While “Taffy” 3 was under attack by the Center Force, Halsey and Task Force 34 were far to the north attacking the decoy force of Japanese carriers.

It was after the first strike was on its way to the targets that he received the first messages of trouble to the south. Communications were hours behind “real time.” ADM Kinkaid thought Halsey was close by. Halsey had sent a message otherwise but it was not received until well after the battle was joined.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



A message would get through in a timely manner, but miss-decoded. It was from Nimitz and asked Halsey “Where is Task Force 34? The world wonders.” The second part was padding meant to confuse code breakers, not a part of the message.

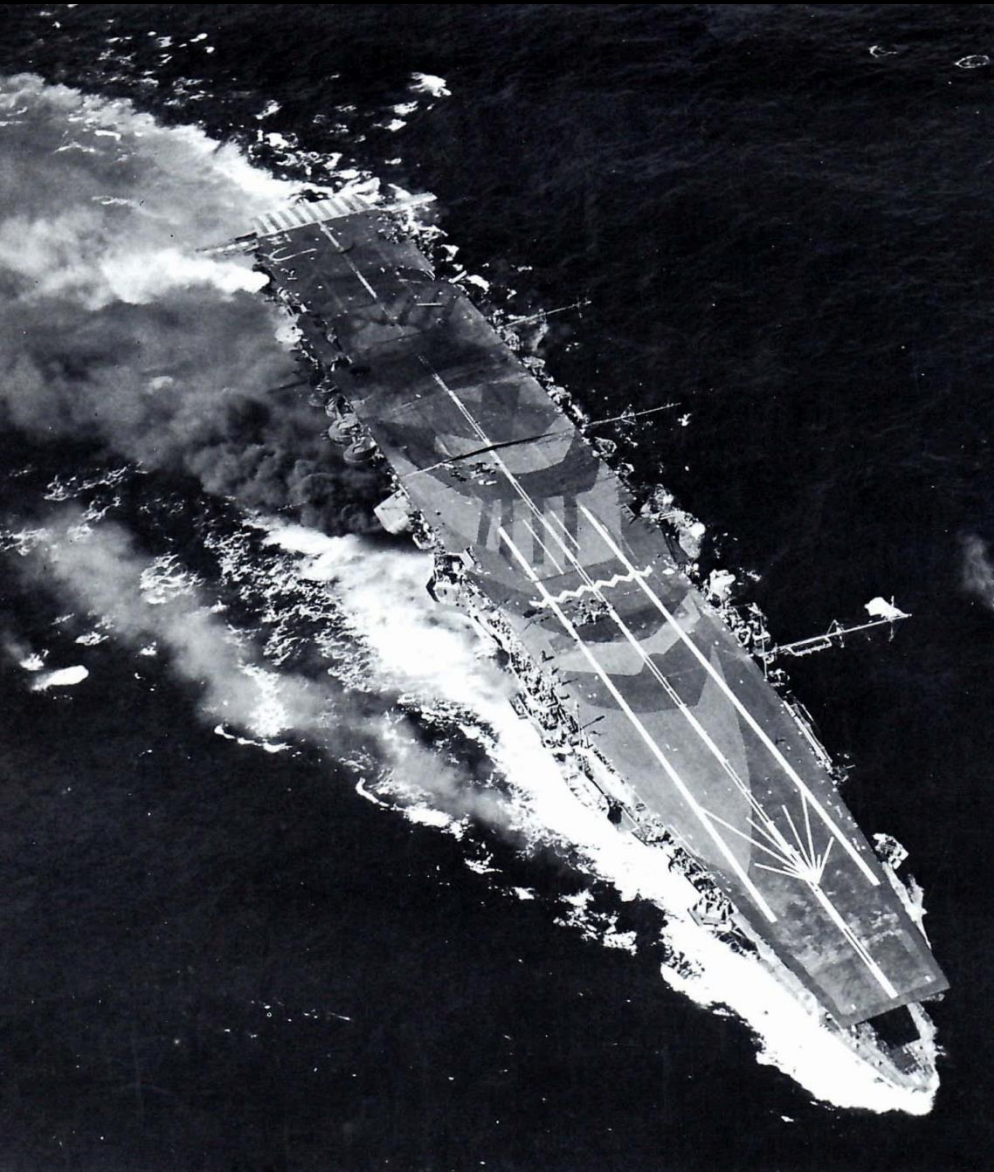
But the decoders aboard Halsey’s ship thought it was part of the message and left it in.

Nimitz merely asked for clarification. It was not a rebuke.

The Ensign who encoded the message on Guam (Nimitz new headquarters) was swiftly reassigned.



THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF

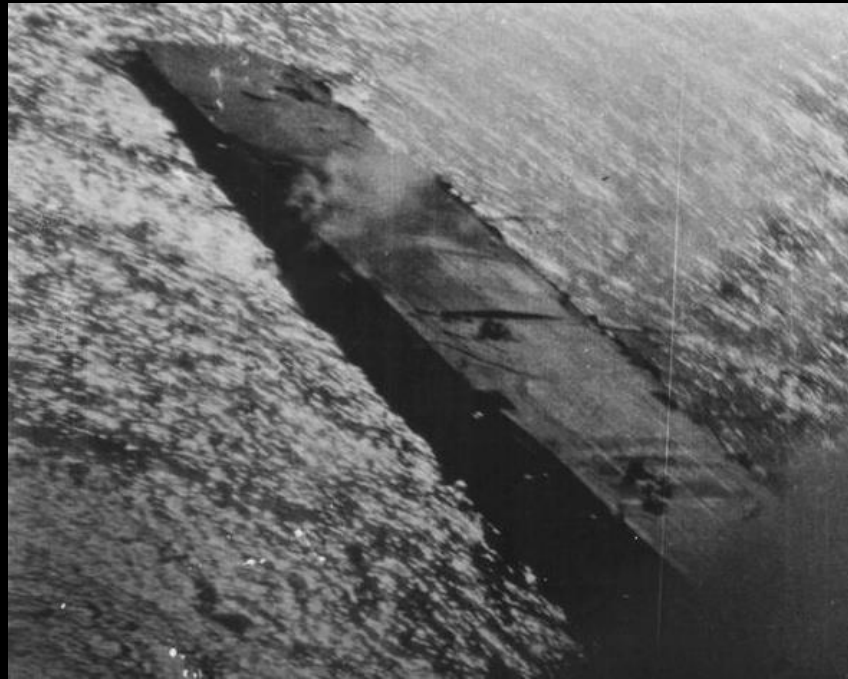
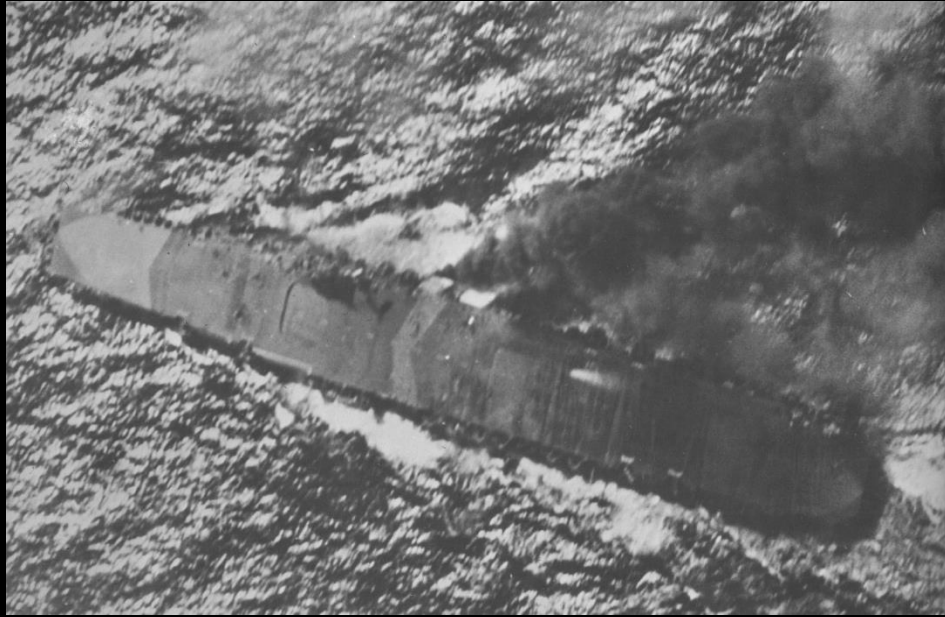


The Japanese Navy effectively ceased to exist after Oct 25th, 1944.

It had lost 4 carriers, 3 battleships, 9 heavy cruisers, a light cruiser and 11 destroyers with two battleships damaged and 4 heavy cruisers heavily damaged along with smaller ships as well as over 300 planes and 12,500 men.

The U.S. lost 1 light carrier, 2 escort carriers, two destroyers and a destroyer escort. 200 planes were lost. There were around 3,000 casualties.

THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF



“I Shall Return” - Leyte



The battles at sea had not slowed the landings at all. The Japanese forces on Leyte were destroyed as were divisions of reinforcements from elsewhere in the Philippines. Eventually, Japan gave up on Leyte.

Leyte was secured on December 26th, 1944.



It was not a cheap victory. The U.S. lost 3,593 KIA and 11,991 WIA. The Japanese lost over 49,000 killed, which they could ill afford.

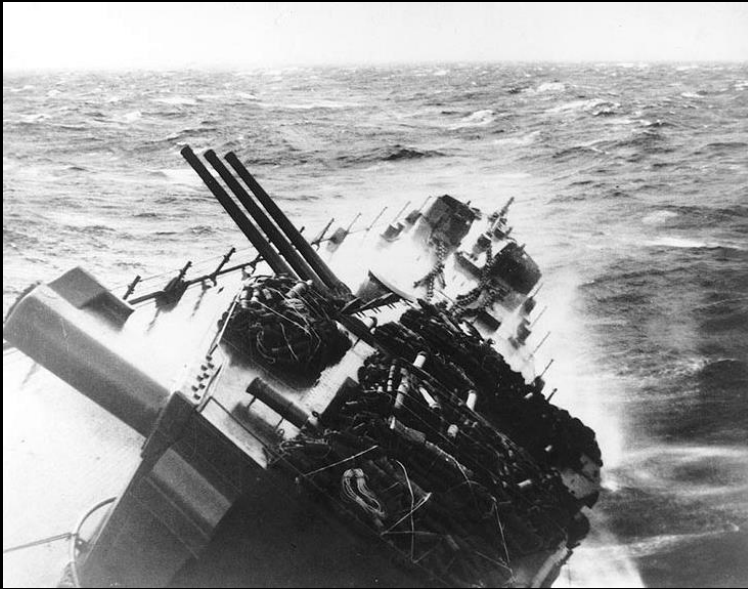
POST-SCRIPT – HALSEY'S TYPHOON

On December 15th, 1944, while trying to refuel before providing support for the ground forces, Task Force 38 blundered into a typhoon off of the Philippines.

There had been little warning.



POST-SCRIPT – HALSEY'S TYPHOON



3 destroyers sank with all hands.

Several ships were severely damaged.

Over 300 planes were damaged beyond repair.

809 lives were lost.

A court of Inquiry would find no one culpable for the decisions that were made.

Many recommendations were made. The Navy did not see it as an immediate priority. They would get around to implementing most of the recommendations eventually.

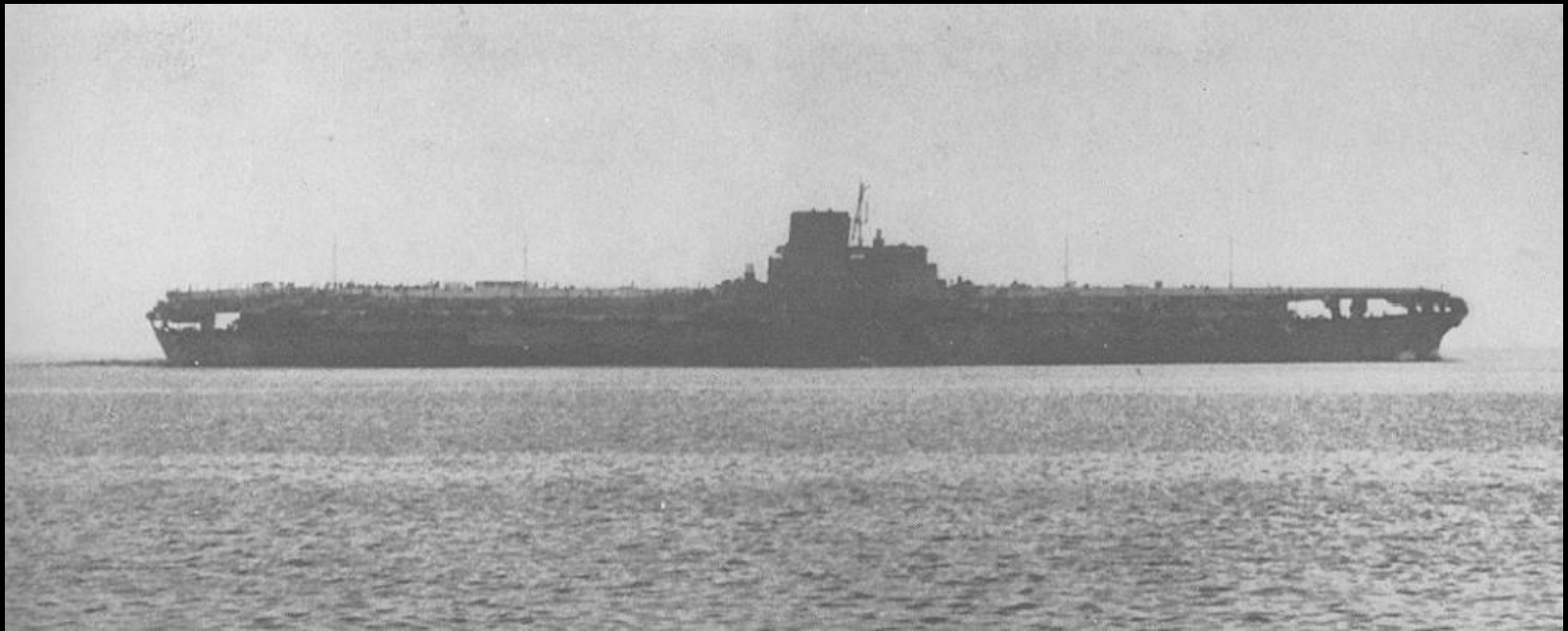
But not soon enough...



KICK THEM WHEN THEY'RE DOWN

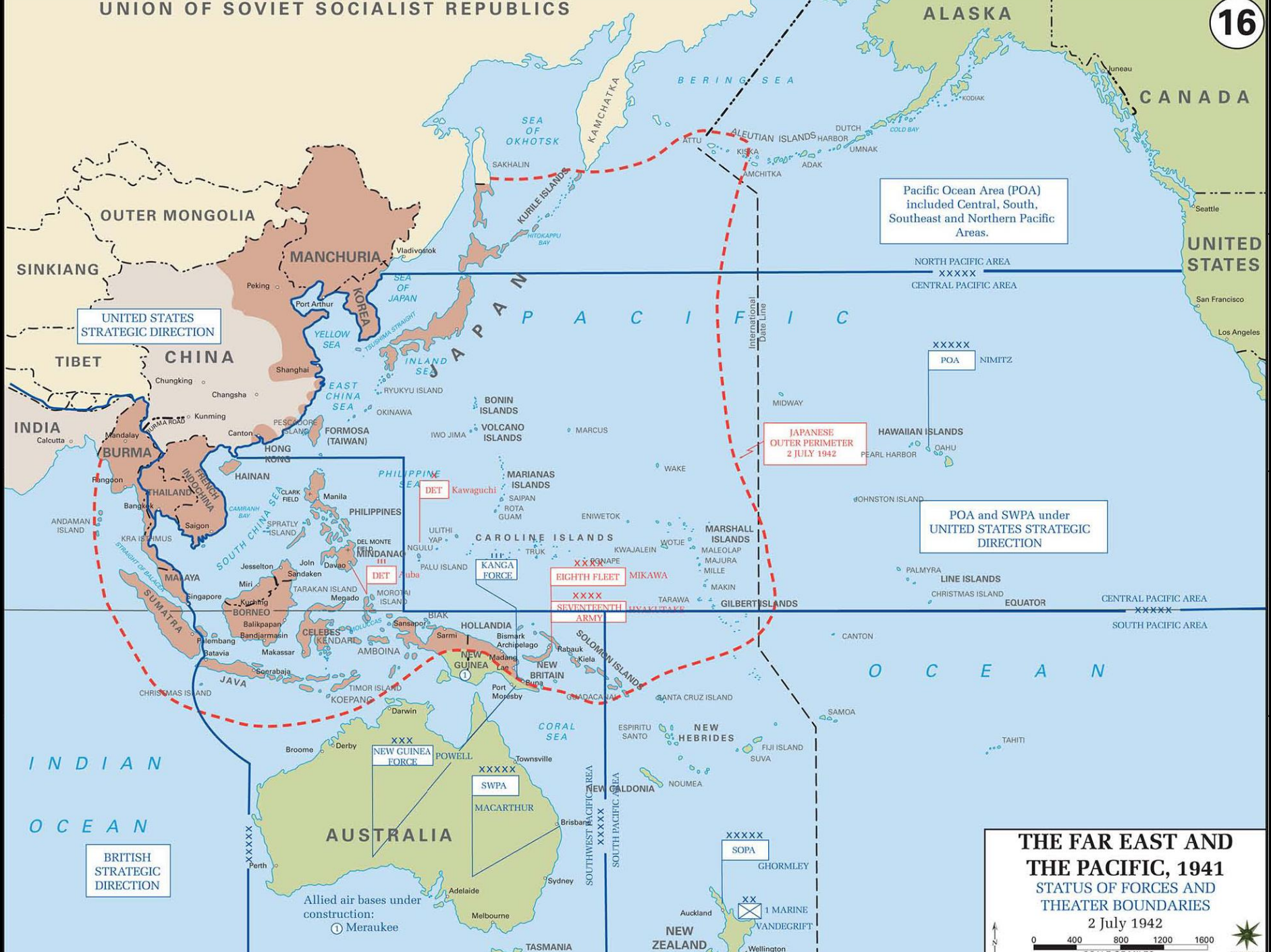
On November 19th, 1944, Japan commissioned Shinano, the largest aircraft carrier in the world until USS Forrestal was commissioned in 1955.

Shinano had one voyage. On Nov, 29th, 1944, less than two days after leaving Yokohama for Kure, she was torpedoed and sunk by USS Archerfish. She was the largest ship ever sunk by a submarine.



PRINCIPALS OF WAR

OBJECTIVE	A clear and attainable objective to be gained through employment of combat power.
SIMPLICITY	Plans should be simple, not based on achieving perfection.
ECONOMY OF FORCE	Or the concept of how not to put 100 lbs of stuff in a 10 lb bag.
MASS	Concentration of combat power on a critical point.
UNITY OF COMMAND	There should be one chain of command focused on one objective. Multiplicity leads to disaster.
CONCENTRATION OF EFFORT	Multiple thrust work best if they are coordinated and intended to achieve a singular objective.
LOGISTICS	An army that is well supplied can fight. An army that is not supplied has already been defeated.



Pacific Ocean Area (POA) included Central, South, Southeast and Northern Pacific Areas.

NORTH PACIFIC AREA
XXXXXX
CENTRAL PACIFIC AREA

XXXXXX
POA
NIMITZ

JAPANESE OUTER PERIMETER
2 JULY 1942

POA and SWPA under UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CENTRAL PACIFIC AREA
XXXXXX
SOUTH PACIFIC AREA

THE FAR EAST AND THE PACIFIC, 1941
STATUS OF FORCES AND THEATER BOUNDARIES
 2 July 1942

0 400 800 1200 1600
 SCALE OF MILES

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DIRECTION

BRITISH STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Allied air bases under construction:
① Merauke



Scale: 1:36,000,000 at 30°S
 Mercator Projection
 0 500 Kilometers
 0 500 Miles

HORSE TRADING

INF	Infantry Division
ABN	Airborne Division (503rd RCT)
CAV	Cavalry Division (dismounted)
CP	Central Pacific (Nimitz)
SP	South Pacific (Halsey)
SWPA	Southwest Pacific Area (MacArthur)
Aus	Australia
AK	Alaska (Aleutian Islands)
HI	Hawaii
GI	Gilbert Islands (Makin Atoll)
GM	Guam
NC	New Caledonia
NG	New Guinea
Pa	Palau Islands
PI	Philippines
Ok	Okinawa
SI	Solomon Islands
SP	Saipan



HORSE TRADING

MacArthur

Deploy	Combat	Transfer
32 nd INF May 42 (Aus)	Sep 42 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
6 th INF Jul 43 (HI)	Jan 43 (NG), Dec 44 (PI)	
41 st INF May 42 (Aus)	Jan 43 (NG), Dec 44 (PI)	
43 rd INF (SP)	Jan 44 (NG)	
7 th INF (CP)	Oct 44 (PI)	to CP Apr 45
23 rd INF (SP)	Feb 45 (PI)	
24 th INF (CP)	Jan 43 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
11 th ABN Jan 43 (Aus)	Jun 43 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
40 th INF Sep 42 (HI)	Apr 44 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
33 rd INF Jul 43 (NG)	Jul 43 (NG), Dec 44 (PI)	
1 st Cav Jul 43 (NG)	Jul 43 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
31 st INF Apr 44 (NG)	Jul 44 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
38 th INF Jan 44 (NG)	Jul 44 (NG), Oct 44 (PI)	
77 th INF (CP)	Oct 44 (PI)	to CP Apr 45
96 th INF Jul 44 (HI)	Oct 44 (PI)	to CP Apr 45
93 rd INF (SP)	Nov 44 (NG)	
43 rd INF (SP)	Dec 44 (PI)	
25 th INF (SP)	Jan 45 (PI)	
37 th INF (SP)	Jan 45 (PI)	
81 st INF (CP)	May 45 (PI)	

HORSE TRADING

Halsey

Deploy
23rd INF May 42 (NC)
25th INF (CP)
37th INF Jun 42 (Fiji)
93rd INF Feb 44 (SI)

Combat
Oct 42 (SI)
Nov 42 (SI)
Jul 43 (SI)
Mar 44 (SI)

Transfer
to SWPA Jan 45
to SWPA Jan 45
to SWPA Jan 45
to SWPA Nov 44

Nimitz

Deploy
25th INF Oct 41 (HI)
24th INF Dec 41 (HI)
7th INF May 43 (AK)
27th INF Mar 42 (HI)
77th INF Mar 44 (HI)
81st INF Jul 44 (HI)
7th INF (SWPA)
77th INF (SWPA)
96th INF (SWPA)

Combat
Dec 41 (CP)
Dec 41 (CP)
May 43 (AK)
Nov 43 (GI), Jul 44 (SP), Apr 45 (Ok)
Jul 44 (GM)
Sep 44 (Pa)
Apr 45 (Ok)
Apr 45 (Ok)
Apr 45 (Ok)

Transfer
to SP Nov 42
to SWPA Sep 43
to SWPA Oct 44
to SWPA Nov 44
to SWPA May 45

REAR AREAS



It was not as simple as it was in Europe.

Some places were always in the rear – Hawaii, Samoa, Fiji, New Caledonia Australia and New Zealand.

Some saw the war come and pass through and then beyond: Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Kwajalein, and the Aleutians.

Others remained in combat but also became rear areas once the nearby Japanese were paralyzed by lack of supply: Bougainville, New Britain, New Guinea.

All became supply depots. Many – especially any with jungles – became training areas. And others became hospitals and recreation areas.

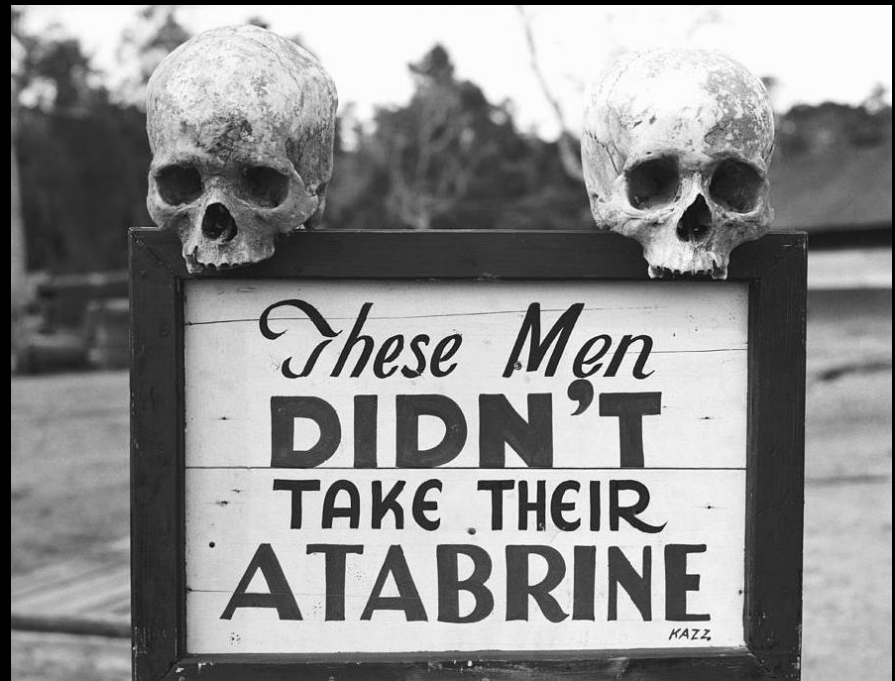


REAR AREAS



The arrival of nurses was usually a sign that a former battlefield was now a rear area.

However, that did not mean it was safe to drink the water or stop taking those pills that made you sick to keep you from getting really, really sick...



REAR AREAS



The arrival of this guy – center stage next to a woman – did not mean it was a rear area. Bob Hope would do his show even if they were shooting at the enemy a few yards away.

REAR AREAS



The availability of a Coke was not an indication that things were quiet.

Coke was available before beer. Moreover, in all theaters, Coca-Cola bottling plants were in the holds of the assault transports to be unloaded ... at some point.



REAR AREAS



However, if one of these odd looking things showed up in the Pacific theater, you were in luck.

They were barges so they had to be towed and could not get away from the enemy so if they arrived, the enemy was nowhere around – in other words, you were in a rear area.

But more critically, while they performed several support roles, several of them were specifically configured for one mission only.

They made ice cream.

In large quantities.

For both the ships of the fleet and for the soldiers ashore.



REAR AREAS

HOWEVER:

Even if you were absolutely certain you were in a Rear Area, there was one thing – always ridiculed and often detested – that you could not avoid even if it was always there when the bullets were flying...

REAR AREAS



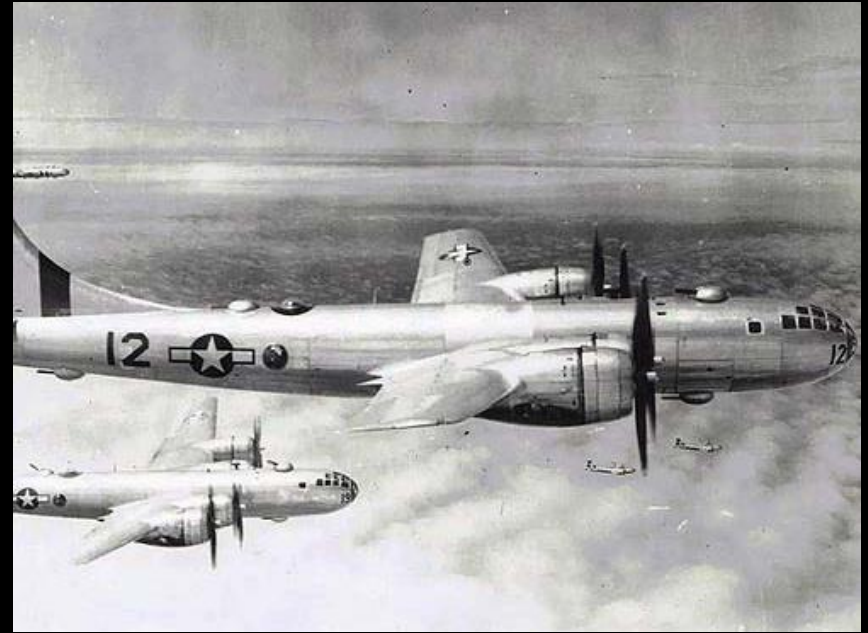
Even home on leave – and those who served in the Pacific were far more likely to get that than their European Theater counterparts – there was no escaping Spam. It was the only meat product that was never subjected to war rationing ... and still far too common on ships and in GI rations.

OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

20th Air Force would ultimately be composed of XX and XXI Bomber Commands. Each was further subdivided into Bomb Wings each with three to four Bomb Squadrons plus support units.

These units would be equipped with the new B-29 bombers. XX Bomber Command was based in India with forward bases in China. In April 1944, the first units arrived in the Far East.

GEN “Hap” Arnold, Air Corps Chief of Staff was in direct command of the 20th Air Force. This meant unlike all the other numbered Air Forces in the Pacific Theater, 20th Air Force was not subordinate to any of the Pacific commanders.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

GEN Arnold fired the first commander of his B-29 force following a disappointing and costly first raid on Japan on June 15th 1944.

He sent a veteran of the 8th Air Force to take over – 33 year old newly promoted Major General Curtis LeMay.

LeMay was a graduate of Ohio State and Army ROTC. In 1939, he was a First Lieutenant although he was also considered one of the best pilot/navigators in the Air Corps.

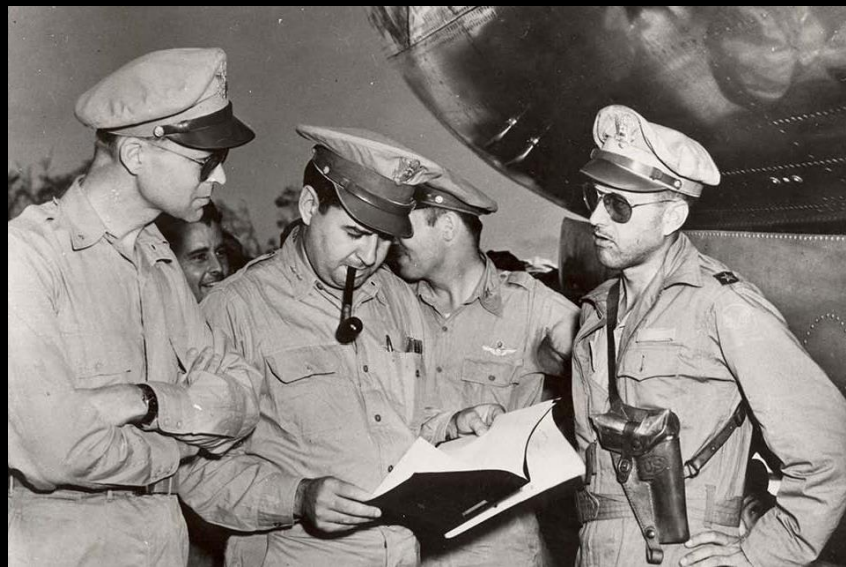
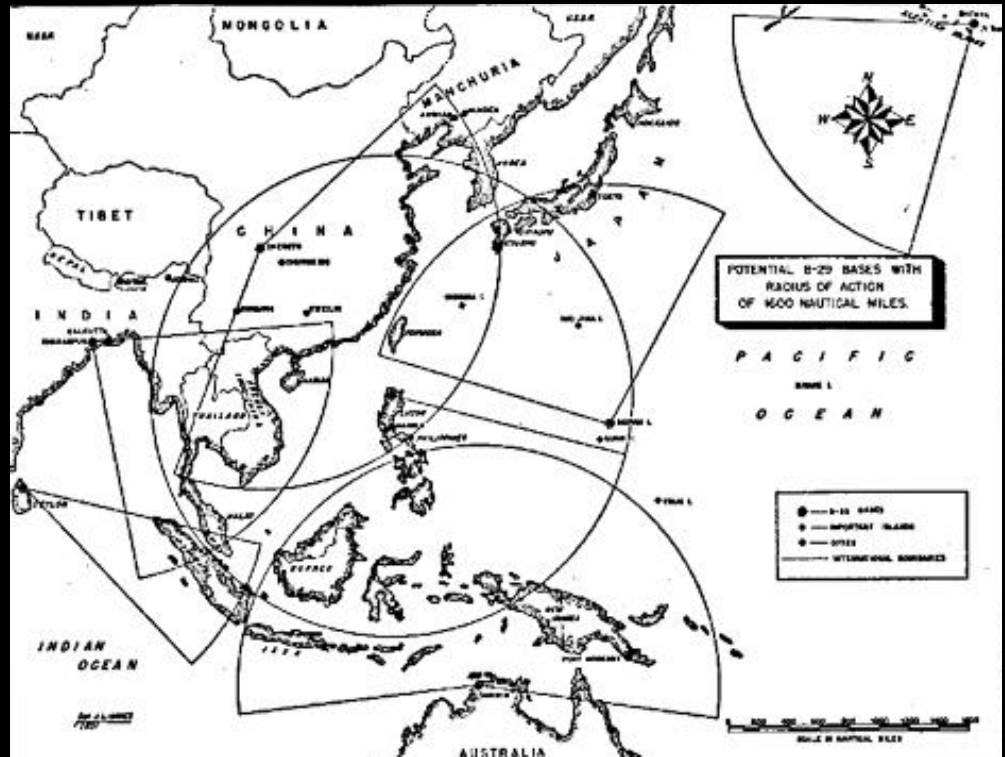
With the 8th Air Force, COL LeMay flew the lead plane on the raid on Regensburg Germany on August 17th, 1943 – part of the costliest mission of the war.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

The purpose of the 20th Air Force was strategic bombing – attacking industry. It did not support any of the ongoing campaigns.

The missions out of the CBI proved mostly useless. While performance had improved under LeMay's leadership, the raids did little material damage at high cost (30 planes shot down, 95 lost in accidents). The bases also could only hit the southern most Japanese island of Kyushu and most of the industrial targets remained out of range.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

Which was why GEN Arnold had wanted the Mariana Islands. Construction of bomber bases began on Saipan even before the fighting ended.

XXI Bomber Command in the Marianas flew its first raids on Japan on Nov. 24th, 1944. It was a fiasco. Less than a third of the bombers found the target. It did cause damage, but not what had been hoped.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

Arnold decide to experiment with incendiary raids rather than high altitude precision bombing. XXI Bomber Command's general protested as this was not how they did business.

After some additional less than acceptable missions, Arnold fired him and sent LeMay to take over the bombing campaign against Japan.

The poor results brought the entire notion of Strategic Bombing into question as well as whether the expense of the B-29 (more expensive the Manhattan Project) was worth the effort at all.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

But while the plane had problems, what was truly a problem was weather. The planes often got separated passing through Pacific storm fronts. The targets were often clouded over. And for the first time, they had to contend with the jet stream which made accurate bombing impossible even if everything else worked perfectly.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

LeMay decided to throw out the rule book. Raids would be at night (when weather was better) and at low altitude.

Another reason for change was that Japanese industry was not concentrated in factories like in Germany. Only final assembly occurred at a factory. Most of the components were made in neighborhood shops.



OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

On March 9th, 1945, LeMay went after the neighborhood shops. Intelligence could not tell anyone where they were so they decided to destroy everything. 279 planes attacked at night at low altitude. It was the deadliest and most destructive air strike in history to this day. 80,000 – 100,000 were killed, 50,000 serious injured, over 1,000,000 were made homeless. 10 square miles of Tokyo ceased to exist – along with all the factories and neighborhood shops.

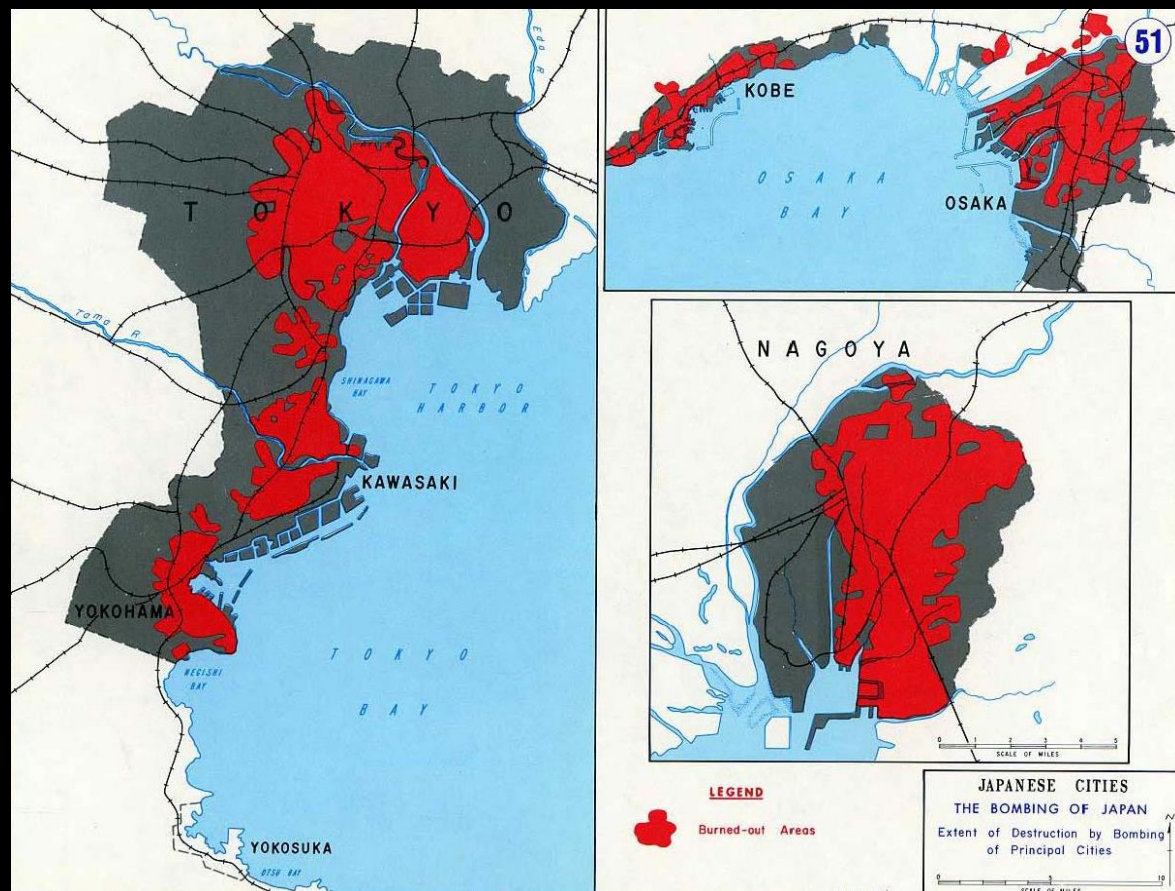


OUTLIER – 20th AIR FORCE

LeMay had not asked for specific permission to fire bomb Tokyo. Incendiaries had been used – targeted on factories. Widespread area bombing was being discussed but not yet authorized.

Such tactics were a dramatic departure from 20 years of American planning and doctrine as well as long held diplomatic position.

The bombing was believed a massive success and other cities soon followed, although not quite to the same degree.



Above: maps of Tokyo, Kawasaki, Yokohama, Kobe, Osaka and Nagoya – all targets of area fire bombing in March and April 1945. The red areas were totally destroyed. Some cities were specifically not to be touched: Hiroshima, Kokura, Kyoto, Nagasaki and Niigata.

LUZON

For much of 1943 and all of 1944, American forces bypassed as many major Japanese strong points as possible, cut them off and left them to starve.

But in 1945, they now had to take and hold ground for both political and strategic reasons.

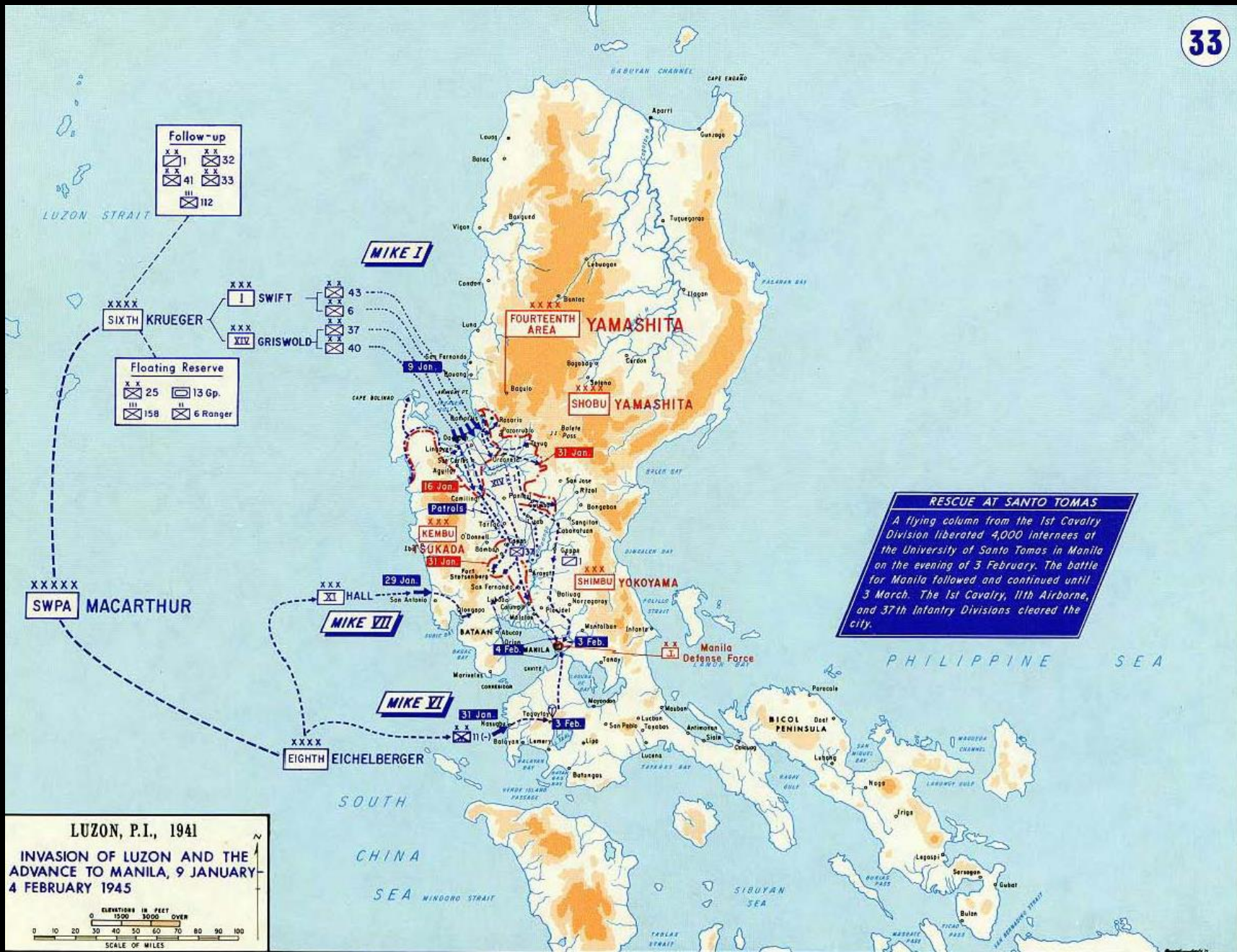
The Philippines was both political and strategic. It was pro-American in an at best indifferent part of the world and it was where the U.S. suffered its greatest defeat.

Its liberation meant something to Americans that names like New Guinea, Tarawa and even Guadalcanal had not.

The key to the Philippines was Luzon.

It was the largest and most populated island in the archipelago. It had natural harbors and airfields from which it would then be possible to sever Japan's supply lines permanently.

LUZON



Follow-up
 I 32
 41 33
 II 112

Floating Reserve
 X X 25 13 Gp.
 III 158 II 6 Ranger

RESCUE AT SANTO TOMAS
 A flying column from the 1st Cavalry Division liberated 4,000 internees at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila on the evening of 3 February. The battle for Manila followed and continued until 3 March. The 1st Cavalry, 11th Airborne, and 37th Infantry Divisions cleared the city.

LUZON, P.I., 1941
INVASION OF LUZON AND THE ADVANCE TO MANILA, 9 JANUARY 4 FEBRUARY 1945

LUZON



In December 1941, the main Japanese landing on Luzon was at Lingayen Gulf on the western coast from the South China Sea.

This was the logical place for a landing.

It had a wide, sheltered beach leading to a level plain between mountains to the north and south. The low ground led directly to Manila, the main city.



Even though it was predictable, MacArthur landed there. His opponent, LGEN Yamashita (who had taken Singapore in Feb 1942) chose not to fight at the beaches but to withdraw into the mountains.

LUZON



Perhaps the Japanese should have made some effort. The surf conditions were less than ideal and more than a few craft washed up on the beach. But the landing got ashore almost without firing a shot and rapidly pushed inland.



LUZON



The Japanese Army was fighting a rear-guard action, delaying but not making a serious effort to stop the U.S. advance. It was holding open roads around the left flank of the U.S. advance to allow its troops to move to the north and take up positions in the mountains.

The Americans moved cautiously. They were facing 275,000 Japanese.



LUZON - CABANATUAN



In late January, after three weeks of slowly moving forward, the U.S. had not suffered a major set back, but were still not yet at Manila.

U.S. intelligence received word from Filipino guerillas about U.S. POW's at a camp outside of the city of Cabanatuan, about thirty miles behind enemy lines.

By this time, U.S. intelligence had also received word from Filipinos and escaped POW's of at least one attempt by the Japanese to exterminate their prisoners at Palawan, an Island to the south of Luzon and west of Leyte.

General Krueger, (6th Army) decided to do something.

LUZON - CABANATUAN



The mission was simple in concept: get through the Japanese lines, move deep into their rear and attack a camp and rescue the prisoners.

All without the Japanese knowing until it was too late.

And then get back to the U.S. lines without the Japanese catching you.

It was given the LTC Mucci of the 6th Ranger Battalion with recon support from the Alamo Scouts. Mucci would then have his assault team leader CPT Robert Prince plan the actual assault and extraction.

They had two days to get ready before they had to go.



LUZON - CABANATUAN



The 6th Ranger Battalion had no connection whatsoever to COL Darby's Rangers of North Africa and Italy or the Rangers that took Point Du Hoc on D-Day in Normandy besides their name.

Not one man had ever served or trained with men from those units.

The Battalion had begun life as the 98th Field Artillery at Ft. Sill which was a mule drawn 75mm unit that was meant to go over rough terrain and bad ground.

It was sent to New Guinea, whereupon the U.S. Army Veterinarians decided the jungle was no place for mules and the mules never arrived ... leaving the battalion without a job.

LUZON - CABANATUAN



LTC Mucci arrived in New Guinea as a supernumerary – meaning to do what the Army asked until some battalion commander got killed or relieved and then he'd get the job he wanted.

Except that wasn't happening.

Mucci was not a Ranger, but he had read about them – probably in Life Magazine.

He was a training expert, however.

He found the jobless 98th and got permission to turn them into super-infantry.

In any other army in the world this was not even thinkable. You can't turn artillerymen and muleteers into elite infantrymen. It's just not possible!



LUZON - CABANATUAN

Even in WWII they knew this was a seat-of-the-pants job.

A mission like this took weeks of preparation, planning and rehearsals, ideally with full scale mock-ups of the target or similar.

(In 1970, Army Special Forces did a similar mission at Son Tay outside of Hanoi to free U.S. P.O.W.'s. It took six months to plan, prepare and practice. It went in and would have been a stunning success – except the prisoners had been moved to the Hanoi Hilton in Hanoi a couple of weeks earlier).

The 6th Rangers were tasked to liberate Cabanatuan on Jan 28th, 1945. They had to complete the mission not later than February 1st.

They did not even know how many prisoners were in the camp or exactly where in the camp they were, nor how many Japanese were there.



LUZON - CABANATUAN



The force of 133 Rangers crossed into Japanese territory on January 30th.

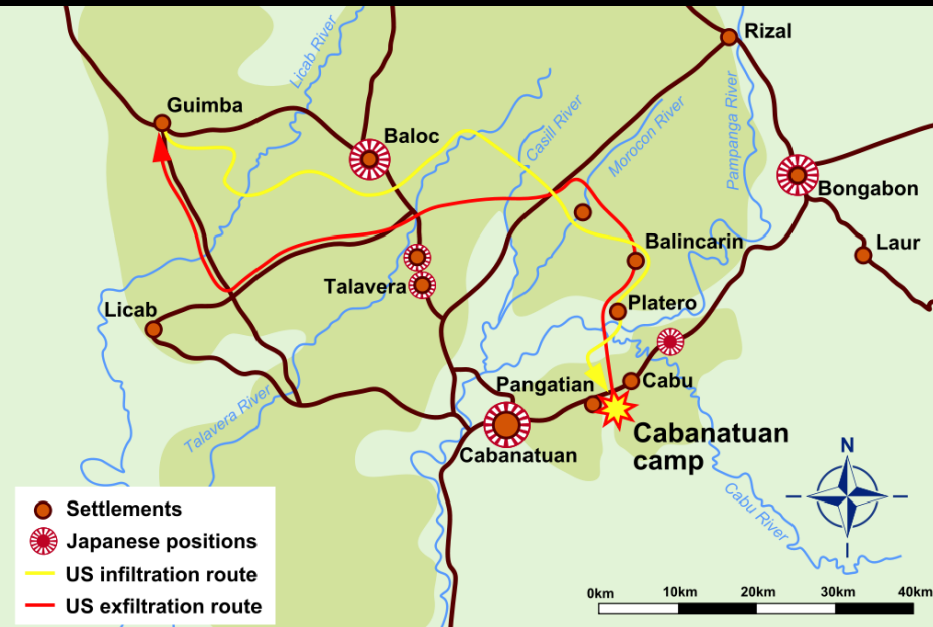
It made it to a village a couple of miles from the target by the 31st, but needed a day to gather more information and organize the local guerrilla units – and get ox carts to transport the weaker POW's.

To get the village, the entire force had to cross the main road the Japanese Army was using as it retreated into the mountains.

The attack force had to crawl about a mile across an open field to get to their assault positions. Filipino guerrillas took positions to block Japanese counter attacks – and especially a tank battalion less than three miles away.



LUZON - CABANATUAN



The Rangers attacked taking the Japanese at the camp by surprise. It helped that the Japanese had not been stationed there – the guards had left days before.

The Filipinos slaughtered the tank battalion that tried to counter-attack, dropping several tanks into a river when they blew the bridge and mowing down Japanese infantry that tried to cross on foot.

Two Rangers were killed, both being hit by the same mortar round – an unlucky shot. Four others were wounded.

21 Filipinos were wounded.

2 POWs died – not of wounds but from the stress of it all.



LUZON - CABANATUAN



Japanese losses were greater than the entire attacking force plus prisoners. 522 prisoners were rescued. The attacking force numbered at most around 400 men. At least 800 and possible more than 1,000 Japanese were killed in the raid. It was big news. Then the Marines raised the flag at Iwo Jima.



LUZON

The rescue did not end the war. The drive on Manila had not stopped so that the Ranger's could do their job. Quite the opposite as the Ranger's major concern was being targeted by their own artillery.

The Americans used tanks and artillery to great effect – Luzon being one of the few places in the Pacific where tanks were somewhat useful.

The Japanese could not counter either. Their aircraft had long since been destroyed by the Navy and Army Air Corps. Their tanks were the best the Americans met in this war – and were far inferior.

The American drive was, however, only as fast as its artillery could advance.



LUZON – Battle of Manila

The Japanese Army commander, GEN Yamashita had no intentions of defending Manila. It would be a death trap for his army so he ordered its evacuation.

He did not, however, command the Naval garrison troops nor did he have effective communications with his own troops south of the city.

The Japanese naval commander decided to defend the city to the last man and rounded up Army units coming up from the south to the defense.

The fight for the city was the most grueling and brutal urban combat American troops encountered during the Pacific War.



LUZON – Battle of Manila

No matter the age or technology, urban combat is always the most brutal form of warfare. It can and often does devour armies.

For MacArthur – who hated wasting lives, street to street fighting was not his idea of how to fight. But there was no alternative.



LUZON – Battle of Manila

The Japanese in Manila used civilians as human shields or slaughtered them for not fighting the Americans. For the U.S., Manila became part rescue mission and part extermination campaign – Filipinos were saved whenever possible. Japanese were not suffered to live.



LUZON – Battle of Manila

The fighting lasted a month. 1,010 Americans were KIA, 5,565 WIA.

About 100,000 Filipino civilians died in the fighting.

At least 16,665 Japanese were dead. Not one prisoner was taken. This was not because they would not surrender but because they were shot regardless.



LUZON – Corregidor

Even as the battle raged in Manila, other objectives were secured.

Manila was worthless without its huge, natural harbor. And the Japanese held Corregidor, which was just as effective a barrier as it had been in 1941 – 1942 when it was held against them. To truly open Manila, Corregidor had to fall again.

It was a fortress built to bar access to Manila Bay by ships. Its defenses were such that a sea borne assault would be costly. (It surrendered in '42 when it ran out of food.)

But it was designed before the war and was vulnerable to a new form of attack. On Feb 16, 1945 – the 11th Airborne division dropped in.

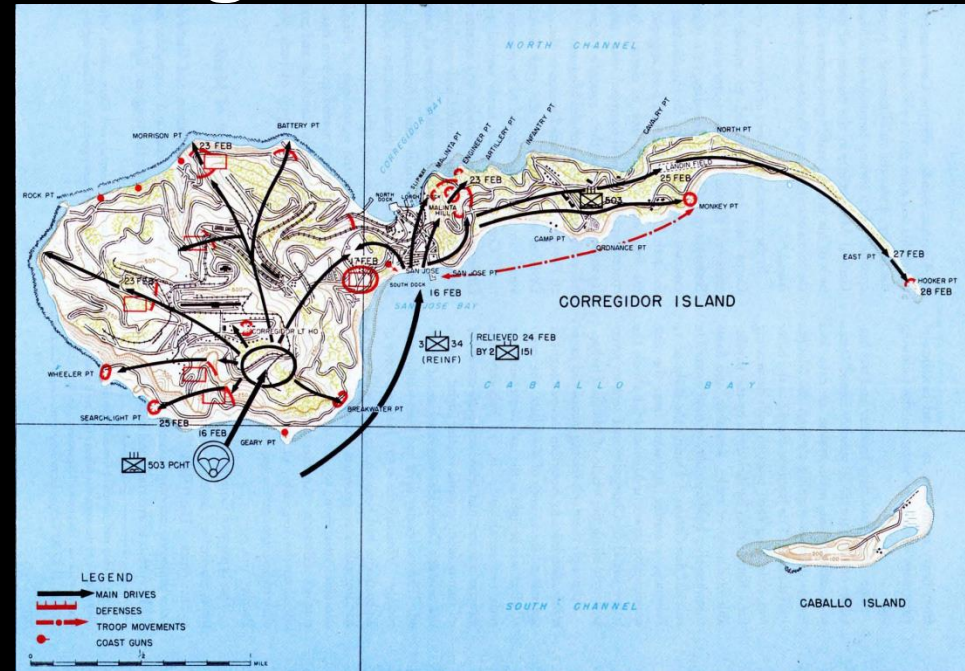


LUZON – Corregidor

Corregidor had 6,700 Japanese defenders. Some 7,000 paratroops dropped onto the island. The initial drop was the 503rd PIR which had been dropping in on the Japanese since 1943.

No paratroopers were lost in the drop onto the former Army barracks.

The fighting would be most intense on the 18th when over 500 Japanese tried to overwhelm the Americans in a single assault. Only 50 Americans were involved in the fighting. Most of the Japanese were killed. 14 U.S. soldiers were killed, 15 wounded.



LUZON – Corregidor

The fighting on the island was over by February 26th, 1945 and Manila Bay was officially opened to shipping in March once resistance in Manila had ended.

On March 3rd, MacArthur returned to the island by PT Boat – the same type of vessel that had taken him off the island three years earlier almost to the day.

The flag was raised over the island again.

207 Americans had died retaking “The Rock.” 684 were wounded.

About 6,600 Japanese died. 69 were taken prisoner and another 20 showed up after the war ended.



LUZON

By the middle of March, Manila, Subic Bay, and the central plain which included Clark Air Base were all firmly in American hands. Luzon would soon become a major base for subsequent operations.

But the battle against the Japanese on the Island was far from over.

The Japanese Army would remain and fighting would continue until Japan's final surrender on August 15th, 1945.

In all, 10,380 Americans died on Luzon between January 9th and August 15th. 36,550 were wounded.



LUZON

205,535 Japanese died. 9,050 were taken prisoner before the war ended. About 61,000 surrendered – but among those was GEN Yamashita.

GEN Yamashita was the only commander to enjoy even limited success against the Americans after the Philippines had first fallen in 1942. And yet he was opposed to the war and to the government that let it happen.

He would be tried as a war criminal – for the events in Manila which were outside of his command and communications.

MacArthur commuted many death sentences. Yamashita was not one. He had ... not failed when he stood against MacArthur.

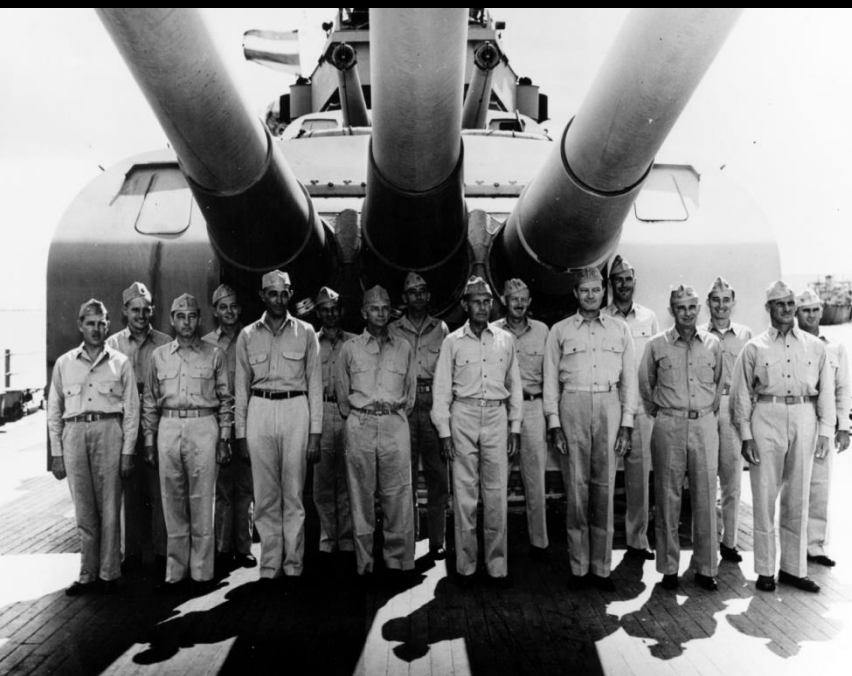


IWO JIMA



As commander of the Third Fleet, Halsey had command of the Big Blue Fleet from September 1944 until January 1945 for the invasions of Peleliu, Leyte and Luzon.

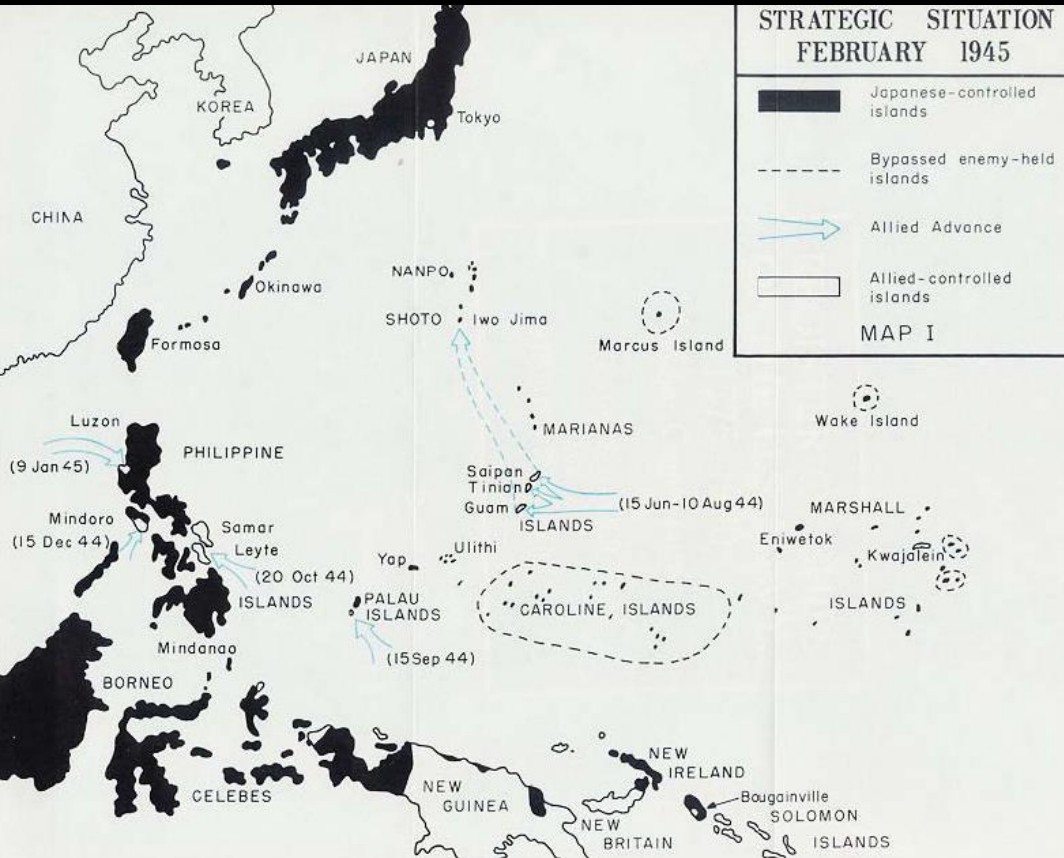
In late January, he turned over operational command of the Navy and Amphibious forces to ADM Spruance and the 5th Fleet staff for the next series of operations.



The first was one that Spruance was not convinced was necessary. The one that would follow he saw as vital but not decisive in and of itself. He had tried to get the first one dropped, but it was vital to someone with far more pull:

Once again, General Hap Arnold was about to make lives very difficult...

IWO JIMA



Losses in the initial bombing raids on Japan from the Marianas were worrying the Air Corps. They wanted a base that could be used as an emergency field for damaged bombers and for fighters to escort the bombers.

The ideal location was Iwo Jima, roughly half way between the Marianas and Japan. It had two airfields and a third under construction but few planes as those were bombed almost as fast as they arrived.

Arnold wanted Iwo Jima. Washington ordered it (as King seemed to agree with Arnold) and Spruance was assigned to take it.

IWO JIMA

Spruance agreed that if one believed bombing was important then Iwo became important.

The problem was he and most of the commanders in the Pacific had little use for strategic bombing. It might make sense against Germany, which was a continental power. But Japan was an island with few resources.

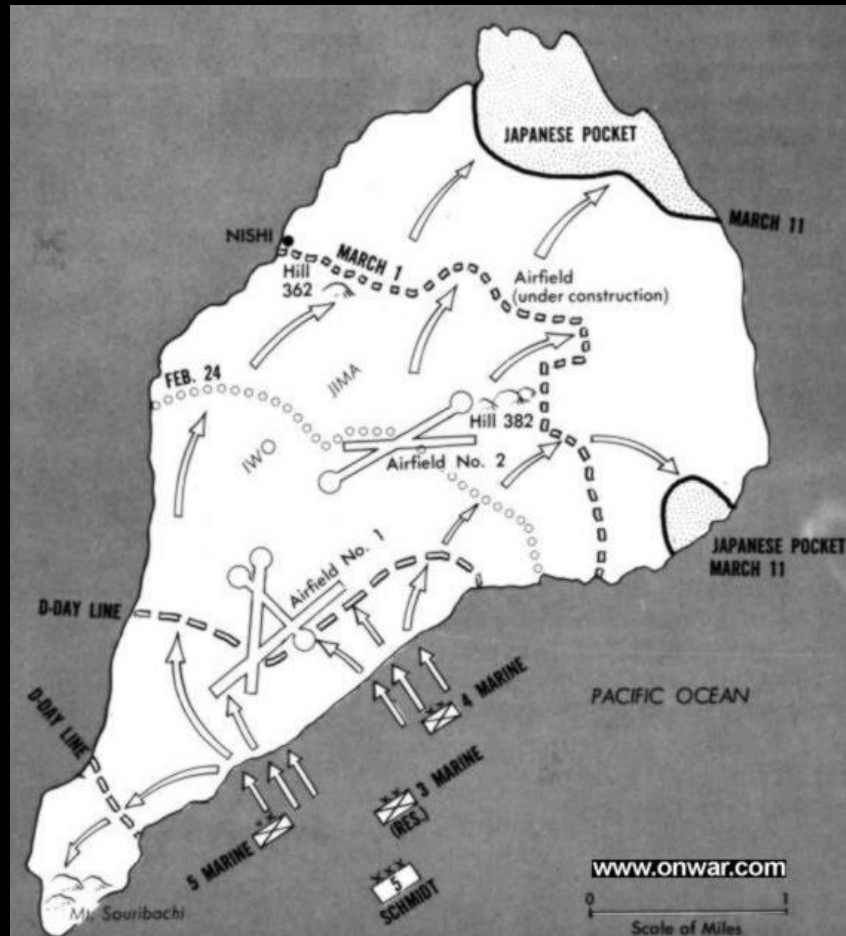
Sinking ships would break Japan more quickly than bombing cities. Moreover, sinking ships would starve Japan. Bombing cities only made a mess.

Japan could not feed its population. Cut off its access to China and Korea and its people would be lucky if they saw 500 calories a day – way below starvation levels. That would break them much more certainly than bombing their factories.

But Washington wanted Iwo so Spruance would take Iwo.

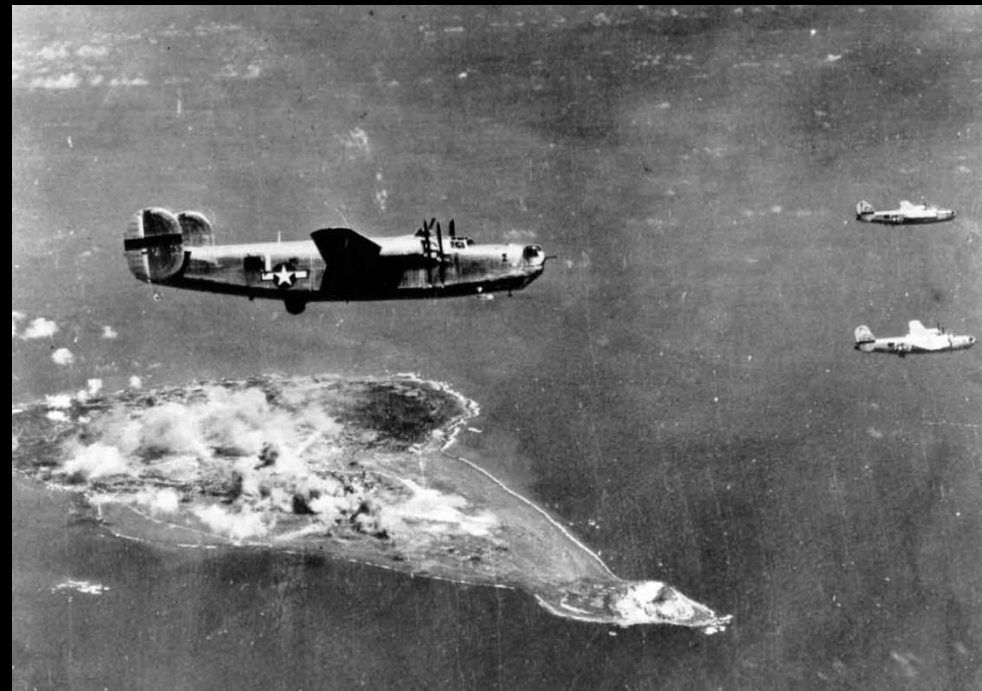
This time there were few illusions about it being easy. Three Marine Divisions would be used to take the small island, two in the assault (4th and 5th Marine Divisions) and one in reserve (3rd Marine division.)

IWO JIMA



Iwo would be bombed for weeks before the invasion by B-24's of the 13th Air Force on Saipan (not under LeMay, but Nimitz). It would be shelled for days, but not as long as the Marines wanted. The problem was the Marines wanted more shelling than the Navy had shells.

They still did not expect it to be easy.



IWO JIMA



The Japanese Commander, MGEN Kuribayashi, chose not to defend the beaches but relied upon concealed positions inland, hidden artillery and mortar positions preregistered on the beaches, machine gun bunkers, over 18 km of tunnels between the positions, and camouflaged fighting positions for his riflemen.



They would wait until the Marine had landed and the beaches were crammed with men, equipment and supplies before they opened fire.

It would begin the bloodiest fight of the war to date.

It began on February 19th, 1945.

IWO JIMA



The landings went well initially – for the first half an hour or so. The first wave made it ashore without coming under immediate fire. Some made it off the beach, although the sand made moving difficult.

Then the Japanese opened fire and it was a whole new ball game...



IWO JIMA



The Marines were pinned down but it was also in part due to the sand which meant that most of their equipment was stuck. The tracked vehicles could not get over the rise at the edge of the beach.

The island was volcanic and active – although not erupting. The sand was ground lava, coarse and loose and would not compact.



There had been vegetation, but it was gone – defoliated by weeks of bombardment.

The place stank of sulfur. Steam rose in places. Ground water was undrinkable...

And they could not see the enemy, but clearly the enemy could see them.

IWO JIMA



Taking Mt. Surabachi was an immediate goal in the plans. It was the high ground and dominated the beaches. The Marines would dive across to the other shore – a short distance at the base of the mountain – cutting it off from the rest of the Japanese and then take the hill.

It went almost as quickly as planned.

And led to unfortunate expectations...



IWO JIMA



The flag was first raised atop Mt. Suribachi at around 10:20 AM, Feb 23. A Marine patrol was ordered to secure the summit and ... well if possible maybe they could raise a small flag they were given.

They did and they did. For those who were there, that is the flag they all remember...



IWO JIMA



The world remembers the second flag raised about three hours later. It was raised because someone thought the first one was too small (and some else wanted the first one). Those who were there don't remember the second flag raising.



IWO JIMA

The flag raising was controversial in some ways from the beginning.

The photographer did not even know if he got the picture until weeks later. It was developed in Guam and immediately wired to the press – making the front page of most papers on Feb 25th.

The secretary of the Navy remarked the picture guaranteed a Marine Corps for the next 500 years.

But most Americans thought it meant the battle was over. There were more than a month of bloody fighting remaining on the day the picture was published.

And there was confusion over who was in the picture that lasted for years.

Then there's a separate group that believes it was staged.

It was not. It was just a good and lucky photographer.

But there are people who will believe anything if it suggests that the government is truly evil.

IWO JIMA



The Flag Raising did mean one thing: Mt. Suribachi was no longer a Japanese strong point. Men and equipment could now come ashore somewhat less at risk.

But beyond the beach it was still a bad place to be...



IWO JIMA



The Marines were entirely above ground and exposed with little cover.

The Japanese were in holes, caves and tunnels that were next to impossible to see at a distance.

The Marines rarely saw the Japanese. The reverse is probably not true, but few Japanese survived to bear witness.



IWO JIMA



The most effective weapon was one meant for dealing with bunkers – the flamethrower. If it did not burn the enemy out, the flames sucked the oxygen out of the caves and bunkers suffocating the enemy.

But to use the weapon, you had to get close to the enemy – and with enough covering fire to keep the enemy from shooting the gasoline tank on your back. It was a slow process.



IWO JIMA



The whole point had been to secure the island as an airstrip in part for damaged B-29's. The first B-29 landed before the battle was over on March 4, 1945. It was the first of about 2,251 such landings. However, it is not clear how many of these landings were truly necessary.



As for using it as a base: Before the battle was over LeMay had switched to night fire bombing raids. Only ten fighters ever flew a bomber escort mission from Iwo Jima.

IWO JIMA



The Island was declared “secured” on March 26th, 1945 after nearly six weeks and a month after the flag raising.

6,821 Marines were killed, 19,217 wounded.

The Japanese lost around 18,000 killed with 216 captured during the fighting.

Another 3,000 survived the battle hiding in their caves. Most eventually died or surrendered. The last surrendered in 1949.



The best anyone can say about Iwo Jima was it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Or, perhaps, it was not quite as pointless as Peleliu.

KAMIKAZE

The first deliberate suicide attacks occurred during the invasion of Leyte in October of 1944 with some success.

It was not the first time a Japanese pilot crashed into a U.S. ship – or tried to. During Halsey's raid on Kwajalein in February 1942, a bomber tried and failed to do so after it was shot up and too damaged to survive.

And a couple of U.S. pilots had plunged into Japanese ships when their planes were too damaged to avoid crashing.

But until Leyte, no one had taken off on a mission with the specific intent of crashing their planes into an enemy ship. And even at Leyte it was considered a one-time emergency measure.



KAMIKAZE

In those first attacks, the Japanese did manage to sink the Escort Carrier St. Lo and damage some other ships including the Light Carrier Belleau Wood and the Fleet Carrier Franklin (right).

The success had more to do with the surprise of the tactic than the overall effectiveness of the idea.

But the Japanese saw it as a possible game changer and it became policy. They were the Special Attack Corps.



KAMIKAZE

There was resistance to the idea in the Japanese Navy and Army so it would not materialize as a tactic for some months. But Air Staff was asked to look into it.

They studied air attacks on the U.S. Fleet in recent engagements (Philippine Sea and Leyte Gulf.) In the conventional attacks the Japanese had lost well over 90% of the planes and pilots sent out on the mission and scored a single bomb hit (on Oct 24th against TF 38 which ultimately sunk the light carrier USS Princeton.)

The desperate Kamikaze attack on Oct 25th had seen the loss of well over 90% of the planes and pilots – all of those who were not forced to return due to mechanical issues or could not find a target, hit three ships sinking an escort carrier. Fewer than 30 planes were involved in that strike compared to over 100 in the conventional attack the day before and yet far more damage had been inflicted.

The conclusion reached by the study was that if Japan was going to lose the planes and pilots regardless, it was more efficient to lose them in an attack that promised both more hits and more damage per hit. It was perfectly logical and absolutely inhumane.

KAMIKAZE

The opening round in October had been flown by veteran pilots.

The Special Attack Corps were mostly men who were barely able to take off without killing themselves. But they were now the great hope.

In the 13th Century, Japan stood at the brink of being conquered by the Mongols of Kublai Kahn. The Mongols had landed and crushed the Japanese sent to defend the islands.

Then a typhoon destroyed the Mongol Fleet. They tried again and again a Typhoon destroyed their fleet. It was the Kamikaze, the divine wind that protected Japan from its enemies.

In 1945, the wind could barely fly its planes.

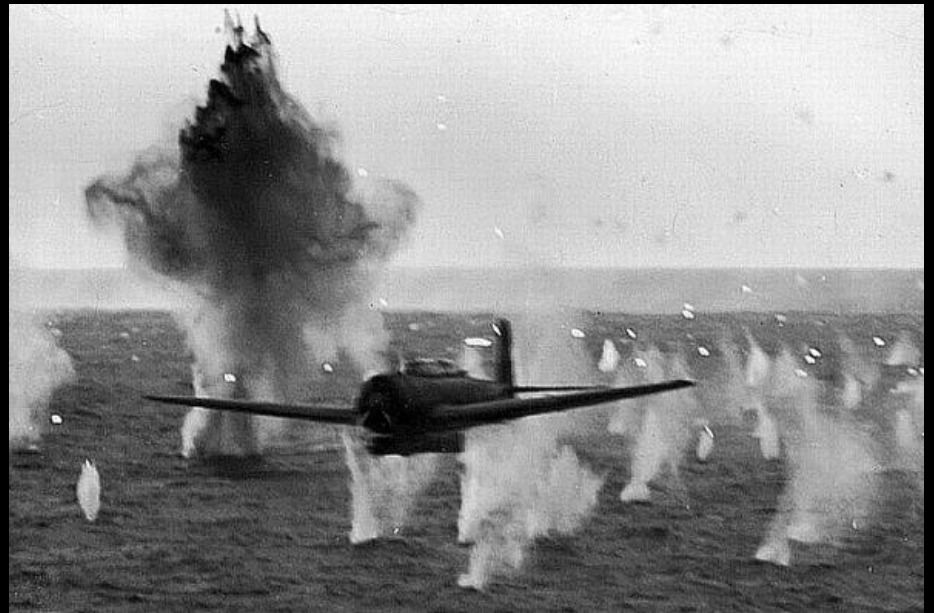


KAMIKAZE

Tactically, the Kamikaze was an anti-ship cruise missile – and not even a particularly effective one. If it hit it was rather impressive. But its success rate was less than that of the pilotless guided weapons of the 1960's – much less the current generation.

As a psychological weapon, however, it was far more effective – for both sides. For the Japanese it gave them a measure of hope (despite how useless the weapon was).

For the Americans, there is something unnerving about someone willing to do that. It ended any pretense at playing by rules. The rule became kill them before they killed us.



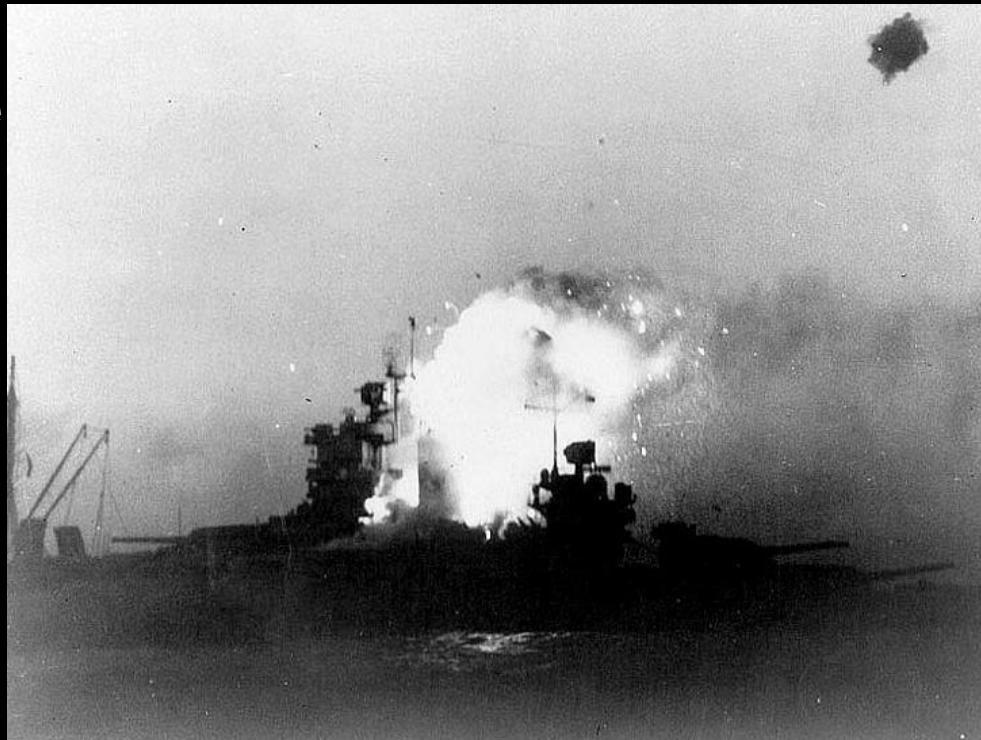
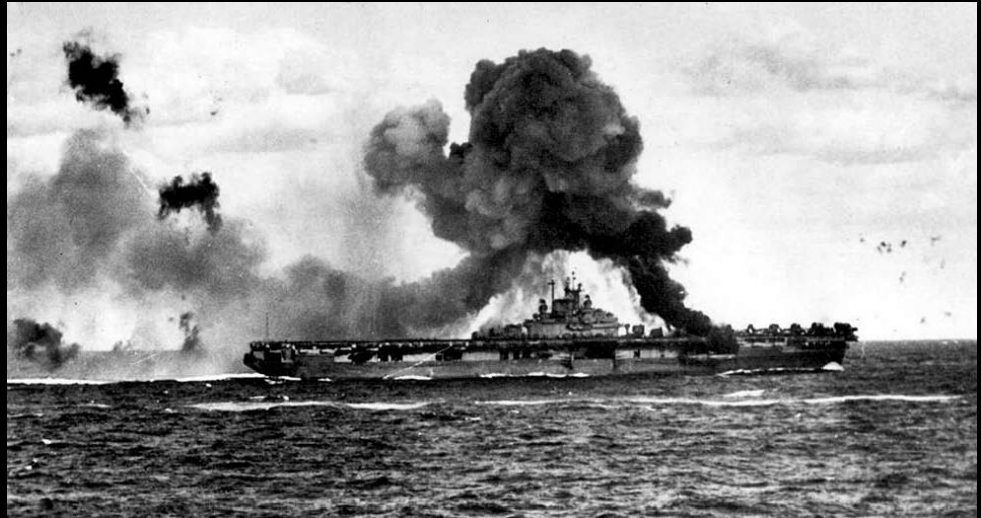
KAMIKAZE

Over 4,000 special attack sorties were launched against the U.S fleet from October 25th, 1944 until the end of the war. Several missions were aborts, the pilots returning usually with mechanical problems.

3,912 never returned. They managed to hit 415 ships. They only managed to sink 47. Of those, three were escort carriers, fourteen were destroyers, one was an oiler, six were cargo ships and five were LST's. The rest were smaller vessels.

About 4,900 sailors were killed with about the same number wounded.

It had no meaningful effect on fleet operations.

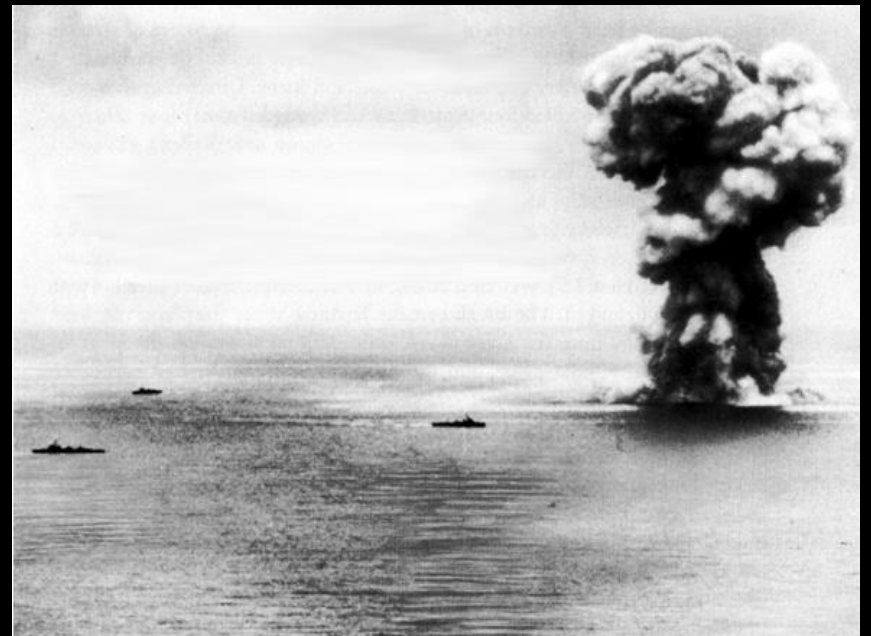


KAMIKAZE

The Japanese became obsessed with their special weapons. They never came close to working as advertised but that did not stop the Japanese from dropping everything to make more of them.

Even the surface navy got in on the act. On April 6, the battleship Yamato, a light cruiser and 8 destroyers left Japan to destroy the invasion of Okinawa. They had all the bunker fuel the Japanese navy had left in their tanks. Enough for a one-way mission.

Yamato, the cruiser and four destroyers were sunk by the aircraft of Task Force 38.



KAMIKAZE

Afterwards, when he asked about the Navy's further plans to defend against the Americans the Emperor was told Japan no longer had a Navy.

It was the first time he had been told the full extent of the Navy's losses since Midway.

It would cause a rift between the Japanese government and the Emperor. More critically, the Army and Navy lost the trust of the Emperor they were sworn to serve. The effect would not be immediate, but the Emperor would stop listening to his military.



KAMIKAZE

On April 7th, 1945, the day after Yamato sank, the ineffective Prime Minister Koiso resigned and his cabinet fell.

Admiral Suzuki took his place. He had retired from the Navy in 1929 and had been on the Emperor's Privy Council. He survived an assassination attempt during the disastrous coups attempt of 1936. He was opposed to the Army's militant faction.

He was opposed to the war in China and the war against the United States. By 1945, he had come to loath the Army for its positions on just about everything.

He took over the government with the goal of ending the war while there was still a Japan left to end it.



Prime Minister: Kantaro Suzuki (ADM, Ret.)

War Minister: Gen. Korechika Anami

Navy Minister: Adm. Mitsumasa Yonai

Army Chief of Staff: Gen. Yoshijoro Umezu

Navy Chief of Staff: Adm. Soemu Toyoda

Foreign Minister: Shigenori Togo

THE BIG SIX



THE BIG SIX

With the formation of the Suzuki government, Japan was now ruled by what was known as “The Big Six.” They were the Prime Minister (a retired Navy Admiral), the Foreign Minister (who was the only one who never served in the military), the Army Minister (a general), the Navy Minister (an admiral and former Prime Minister), the Army Chief of Staff and the Navy Chief of Staff.

All decision had to be unanimous.

The Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Navy Minister wanted to end the war even if it meant conceding defeat but for now hoped for a negotiated settlement.

The remaining three wanted to fight on believing the Americans would blink first.

The Emperor sided with the “peace faction” but for now chose not to intervene or impose his will.

Thus, for now the war raged on while the men who could end it remained deadlocked.

THE BIG SIX

“In both the United States and Japan, it is often argued that Japan was virtually a defeated nation in August 1945 and thus the atomic bombings were not necessary. This argument confuses “defeat” with “surrender”:

“defeat” is a military fait accompli, whereas

“surrender” is the formal acceptance of defeat by the nations’ leaders – an act of decision-making.

“After the loss of Saipan in early July 1944 brought Japan within range of B-29 bombers, its defeat had become certain, and Japan’s leaders knew this. But because its governmental machinery was, to a large extent, controlled by the military and hampered by a cumbersome system that required unanimity of views for any decision, Japanese leaders had failed to translate defeat into surrender.”

Sadao Asada, Japanese historian.

OKINAWA



Okinawa was the largest of the Ryukyu Islands south of Japan and had a strategic purpose. Control of the Island would put the southern most of Japan's home Islands within range of land based close air support.

Bombers from Okinawa could hit all of Japan.

And aircraft could then complete the blockade of Japan by making it impossible for any vessel to leave or make port.

It was also an ideal forward base for any future invasion of Japan.

The task of invasion fell to LGEN Simon Bolivar Buckner – who answered to ADM Spruance.

OKINAWA



In early 1945, a lone U.S submarine slipped into the harbor of Jeju Island off Korea and had a field day sinking Japanese merchant ships and escorts before slipping away into the night.

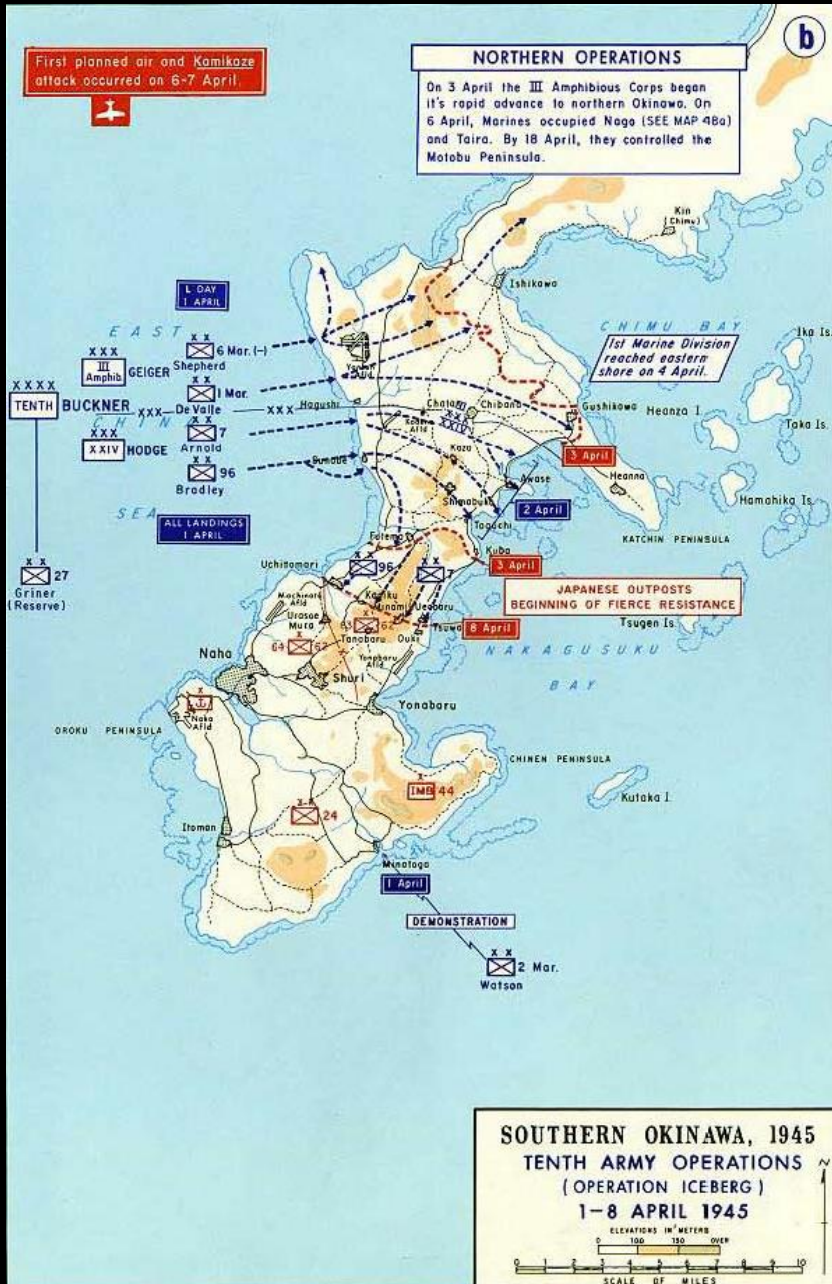
Add to it the Americans had bombed it from China, and the Japanese knowing America wanted a base near Japan were convinced this was the target, sending about half a million troops to defend it.

This included troops from Okinawa.

Oddly, neither did the Americans ever consider Jeju Island nor had they ever set out to deceive the Japanese about their next objective.

The Japanese chose to deceive themselves.

OKINAWA



The invasion would be the largest of the Pacific War to date. Four divisions would land on D-Day, two Army and two Marine. Three additional divisions were in reserve, two would land later.

The invasion would be preceded by the most massive air and naval bombardment of the war. They were not going to let anything remain that could pin them to the beaches.

The Japanese had no plans to even try. They were dug in deep on a series of hills that ran from just near the coast north of Naha, through Shuri to the east side of the Island.

They would let the Americans land and wait for them to hit their line.

OKINAWA



The pre-invasion bombardment went as planned – except they hit nothing. They did not yet know the Japanese had conceded the beaches completely.



The Kamikaze stayed away on the opening days of the operations, planning a massive and ultimately futile strike for later.



OKINAWA

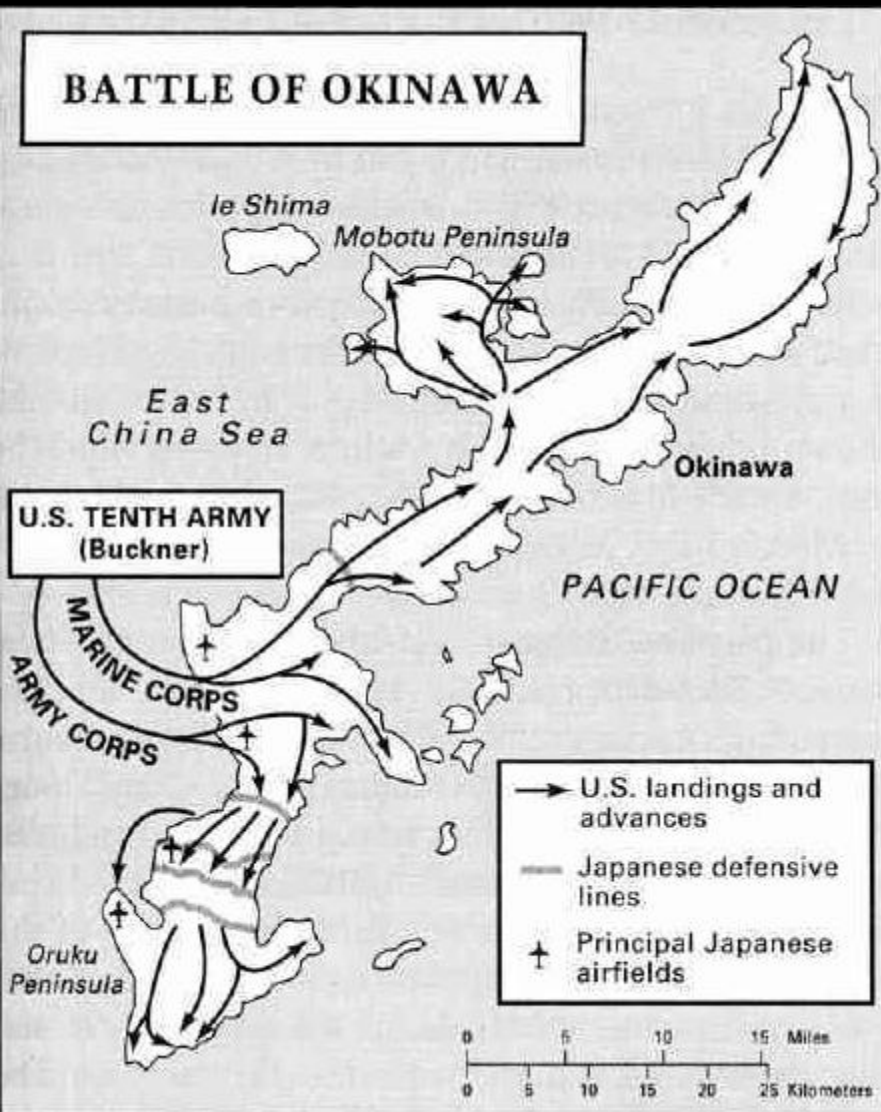


The soldiers and Marines were told to expect heavy fighting and casualties on the beaches. They found nothing – not even recently prepared defenses.

They over-ran one of the major airfields on the island on the first day, even killing a Japanese pilot who landed not knowing it was already in American hands.



OKINAWA



The Marines were to drive due east across the island and north. They would find some Japanese – about a Regiment in total – and deal with them quickly. Within two weeks they had seized all of their assigned objectives.

The Army was to take the south of the island – and soon hit the Japanese forward lines and were stopped cold.



OKINAWA



The Army was as methodical as always, but failed to gain any ground.

The Marines assumed it was poor tactics, or leadership or soldiers and not the Japanese defenses – at least from what they had heard. They would soon learn the truth. At the end of April, they were sent south and into the real battle.



OKINAWA

President Roosevelt died on April 20th and Harry Truman became President.

The Army on Okinawa was still stalled before what would become known as the Shuri line.

It was fighting off Japanese attacks, it just was not able to gain ground.



OKINAWA



The War in Europe ended May 8th, 1945. The Army barely noticed for their war was far from over.

The Marines were sent south into the western side of the line and soon learned that the Army was not lacking in ability. The Marines were just as stuck fighting over the same bad ground.



OKINAWA



The fighting would be the most intense of the entire Pacific War. The Japanese were well prepared and in strong positions and the Americans had to cross open, broken ground to close the enemy.

The going was painfully slow and costly. But the Japanese were weakening, it just was not apparent.



OKINAWA



At the end of May, the Japanese line broke partly by the efforts of the Americans but also because the Japanese commander knew his men could not hold any longer.

He retreated to the south. The Americans advanced cautiously suspecting a trap.



OKINAWA



The Americans followed south, destroying the Japanese who stood their ground or tried to hide.

The battle was nearing its end. The Japanese were almost out of everything and the Americans were well supplied and now moving with some ease.



OKINAWA

With the end of the battle almost in sight, General Buckner was killed by Japanese mortar fire observing the advance of his troops.

For a brief time, an American Army was commanded by a Marine Aviator – LGEN Roy Geiger.

He would turn over to Joe Stilwell on June 23rd.



OKINAWA



The battle ended June 22nd 1945. Many Japanese killed themselves on or just before that day including their commanding general.

12,520 Americans were KIA. 55,162 were wounded.

The Japanese lost between 77,000 and 110,000. More than 7,000 were taken prisoner.

Between one quarter and one half of the civilian population died during the battle.

The Americans tried to avoid civilian casualties. Many were killed directly or indirectly by the Japanese. They had drafted some 1,780 boys under the age of 18 for front line service. Most of them did not survive.

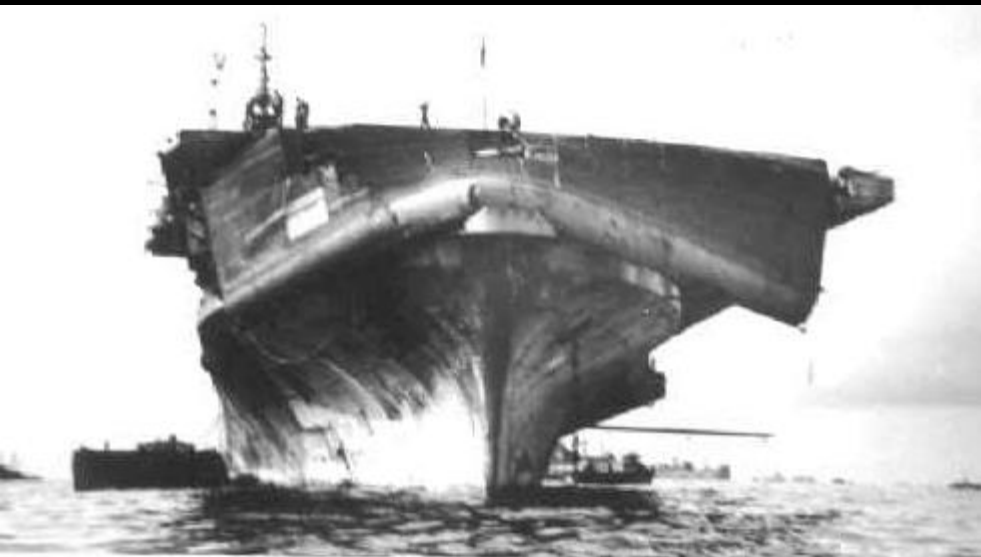


ENDGAME

In May, ADM Halsey and Third Fleet staff took over the navy off Okinawa.

Spruance had two flagships hit by Kamikazes – USS Indianapolis and USS Mississippi – his former command.

On June 5th, despite a warning, Halsey sailed his fleet into another Typhoon. This time he was trying to avoid it but he guessed wrong.



ENDGAME

While no ships had sunk in this second “Halsey Typhoon,” the fleet suffered far greater damage – or at least that portion of it that had sailed into it. It was not large. There were ships twenty miles away that were not aware it was around.

There was another court of inquiry and this one found Halsey culpable – which usually meant he would be fired and if the Navy was particularly angry – kicked out.

Except it would not be good for morale back home to fire a popular commander.

So King decided he would force the Carrier Task Force Commander to retire ... in a couple of months. King didn't like Admiral McCain anyway so there was no loss.

For now, there was the end game to consider.

And that meant an invasion of Japan and for once King could not win his war against MacArthur. While Nimitz would remain in charge at sea, the ground game went to MacArthur.

ENDGAME

A colonel from Okinawa made it back to Japan with a message from the now dead commanding general to the military leadership.

The message was the war was lost and Japan must surrender.

The militarists had other ideas and began preparing to send everyone out to defend the home islands.



ENDGAME

As a banzai charge, it would have been impressive. As a war winning strategy, it was a fool's errand.

Many of this civilian home guard would be armed with the Type 99 rifle (below). When introduced early in the war it was arguably the best military bolt action in service.

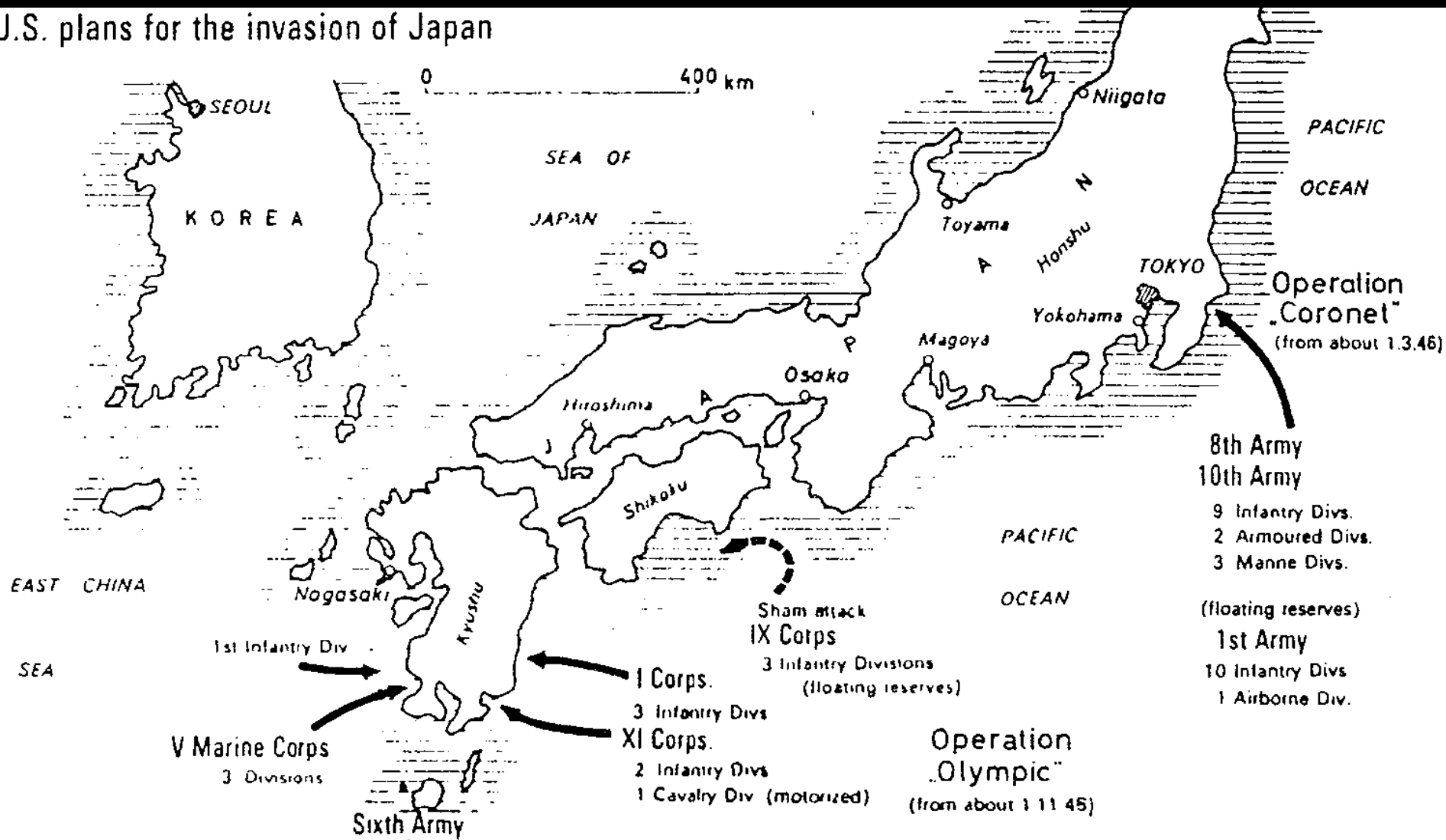
But by the late war, the lack of quality steel, lack of gunsmiths, lack of machine tools, lack of any quality control, meant the rifles entering service were basically junk, more likely to kill the user than anyone or anything else.

This was the result of the recent bombing campaign and blockade.



ENDGAME

U.S. plans for the invasion of Japan



ENDGAME

There were not enough divisions then available for operations in the Pacific Theater to man the invasion force. Divisions that had already won the war in Europe were now alerted that they would redeploy to the Pacific.

The estimates as to the potential costs of the invasion varied. The most optimistic estimates predicted around 250,000 casualties. Most of the planners and decision makers were thinking a million U.S. casualties was more realistic.

The first invasion would be of the Island of Kyushu, the southern most. Its purpose would be to seized harbors and ground for airfields and ports to support the main invasion near Tokyo.

The first invasion would be Operation Olympic. Its scheduled date was November 1st, 1945.

The much larger Operation Coronet was set to commence on March 1st 1946.

No one was thrilled with the idea. Most planners were convinced it was all over but for the formality. Japan was cut off from all supplies. In six months, all that would be truly needed for the invasion would be grave diggers for the starved population...

ENDGAME

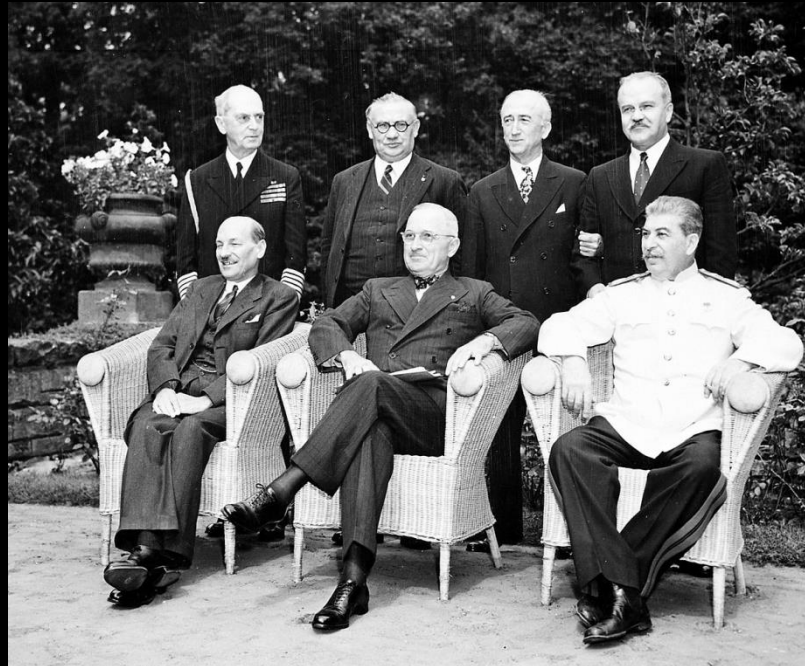
In July 1945, the last great power summit of the Second World War took place at Potsdam in what would be East Germany. It was Truman's first. In the end, only Joseph Stalin was a true veteran.

The critical matters were more discussions about Europe, but for the first time the war with Japan was at the forefront.

Two interesting things happened.

First, Prime Minister Winston Churchill had called for a General Election (it was not required) hoping to stave off the threat from the Labour Party by seeing his party returned.

His party lost. Halfway through the conference he was replaced by the new Prime Minister – Labour Party Leader – Clement Atlee.



ENDGAME

On July 16, 1945, the world changed forever.

An atomic bomb worked.

The men who build knew that one of their designs would work. Trinity was a test of another, supposedly more efficient design and one they were not so certain would work.

It did.

Truman learned of the bomb only after he became President despite having been vice president for a couple of months.

He learned it worked within minutes.



ENDGAME

Truman did not waste much time in making up his mind. As soon as he knew it worked he had an ultimatum sent to Japan ... surrender or else.

The Soviets reaffirmed their agreement to enter the war within 90 days of Germany's surrender, but Truman was not counting on that to end things.

If Japan did not surrender, the bomb would be used as soon as possible.

The alternative – an invasion – was too horrible to contemplate.

His Pacific Commanders only learned of the bomb after the Trinity test. None of them thought it would change things.

But if it would force the issue, then it had to be used. The other options were a million U.S. casualties and another nine months of war or to await a famine from the blockade which could take a year or more.

Politically anything that added to the cost and delayed what was seen as inevitable was suicide.

TRUMAN'S DILEMMA

The Navy and Air Force did not want an invasion of Japan. They felt it was unnecessary and too costly. They preferred to blockade and bomb Japan (with conventional bombs) until they surrendered or there was no one left. This would take months and the American public wanted this war to end. Moreover, the death toll in Japan would be well over ten million.

(Asian historians are of the mind “so what?” On average, over 4,000 Chinese civilians had died every day since the Sino-Japanese War had begun in 1937 and an additional 4,000 civilians had died elsewhere in Asia and the Pacific every day since December 7th, 1941 and those are conservative estimates. 10 million or more dead Japanese is hardly much at all. The only argument in avoiding that fate was other Asians would continue to die in unacceptable numbers each day the war continued.)

MacArthur wanted an invasion (so he could win the war). At least as many Japanese would die. American losses would at least equal the number of Americans who died during the war in all theaters from December 7th through the fall of Okinawa.

Over 1,000,000 Purple Heart medals were made in preparation for the invasion. They are still being awarded despite all the wars the U.S. has fought since 1945; in other words not one has been made since.

TRUMAN'S DILEMMA

By the middle of July, MacArthur and his court were about the only ones who thought the invasion was a good idea.

The plans for the invasion of Kyushu set for November 1945 were made based upon the size of its garrison in early 1945 – 3 divisions. By mid-July this had expanded to 13 divisions. The American plan could handle up to six divisions although with difficulty.

The Americans knew this through code breaking and communications intelligence. They had “watched” those divisions arrive and deploy.

General Willoughby, MacArthur's Chief of Intelligence (who could barely spell the word and would never learn how) thought it was at worst a deception and as an invasion was what MacArthur wanted he chose to ignore intelligence that contradicted his idea – a problem that would truly come back to bite him about six years later.

It was understood that each bomb would kill 80 to 100,000 – less than the number killed in Tokyo in a single raid. This was far less than the millions who would die under either other option.

Sec. State Byrnes would later note it was the least horrible of the terrible options available.

ENDGAME

Unknown to the U.S. at the time, Japan had its own atomic bomb program, one which was about as far along as Germany's and it was not in any way known to or supported by Germany.

When Truman issued his ultimatum, which included warning of a "rain of ruin from the air", the Big Six called in the head of Japan's bomb program and asked if this meant the U.S. had the bomb.

The Japanese physicist told them that a bomb was technologically feasible. It was for Japan and thus it was for the United States. The problem was manufacturing enough weapons grade uranium or similar fissible material to make the bomb detonate.

He had no doubt a bomb was possible in the next few years.

He had serious doubts even the United States could have devoted the resources necessary to achieve a bomb at the time...

ENDGAME

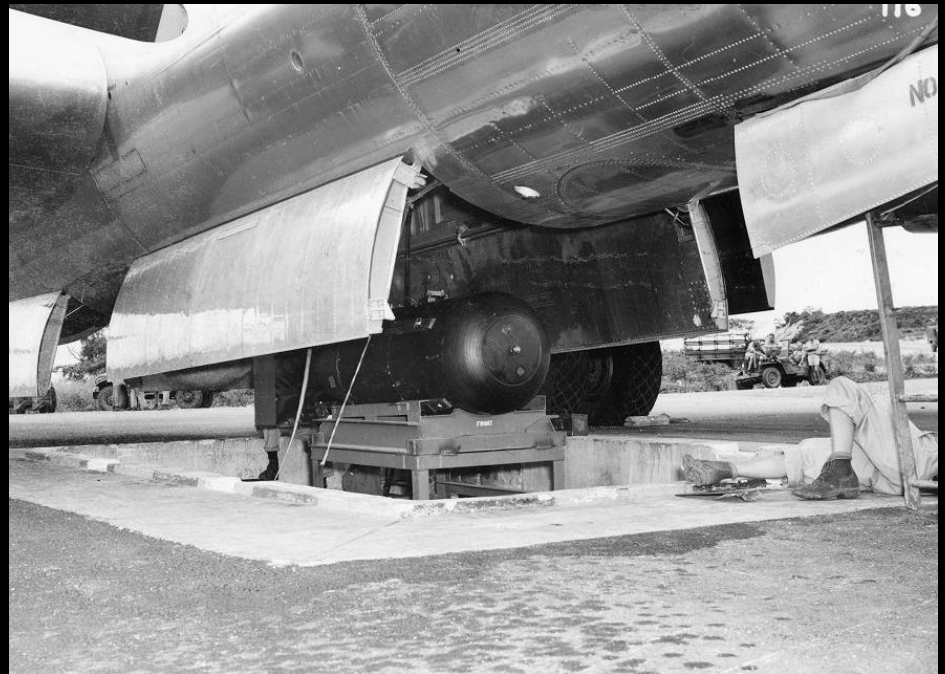
By August 2nd, 1945, the United States had two atomic bombs, one had just arrived on Tinian and the other was due shortly.

Actually, most of the first was already there, it was just the uranium core that had just arrived.

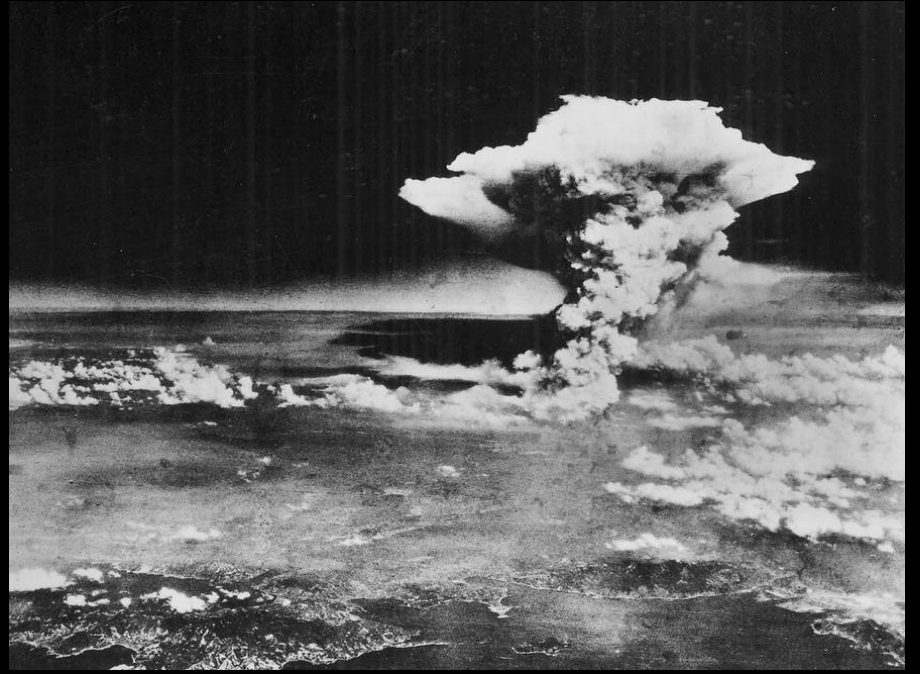
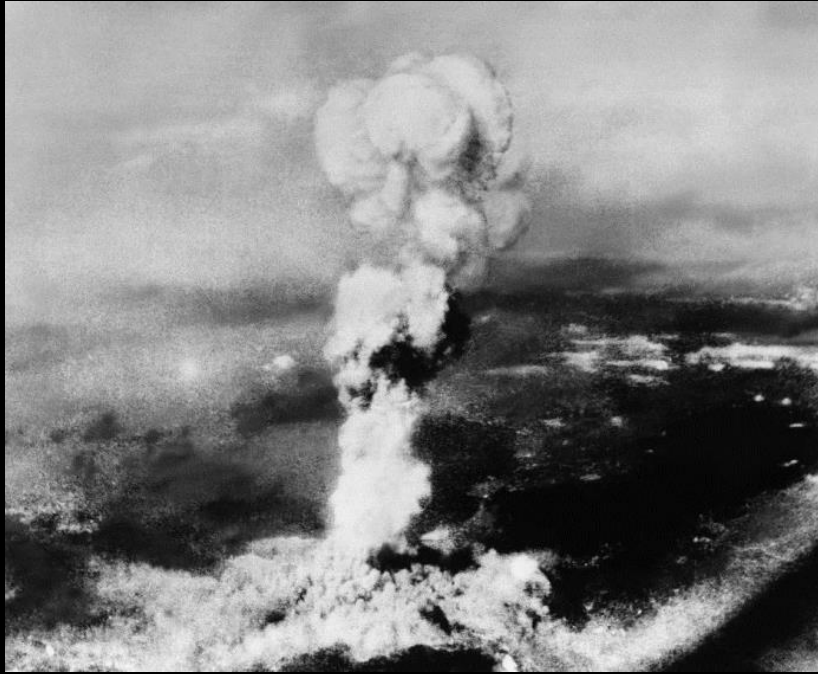
The bomb was the one the scientists knew would work.

It was scheduled to drop first. Two targets were selected. Hiroshima would be the primary. If it was clouded over, Nagasaki was the secondary target.

The mission was scheduled for August 6th, 1945.



ENDGAME



ENDGAME

Between 60,000 and 80,000 people died in the first atomic attack of the world's first nuclear war at Hiroshima. The mission had been perfect.

The bomb was not as destructive as LeMay's raid on Tokyo, five months earlier but that raid had over 200 planes. This was only one.

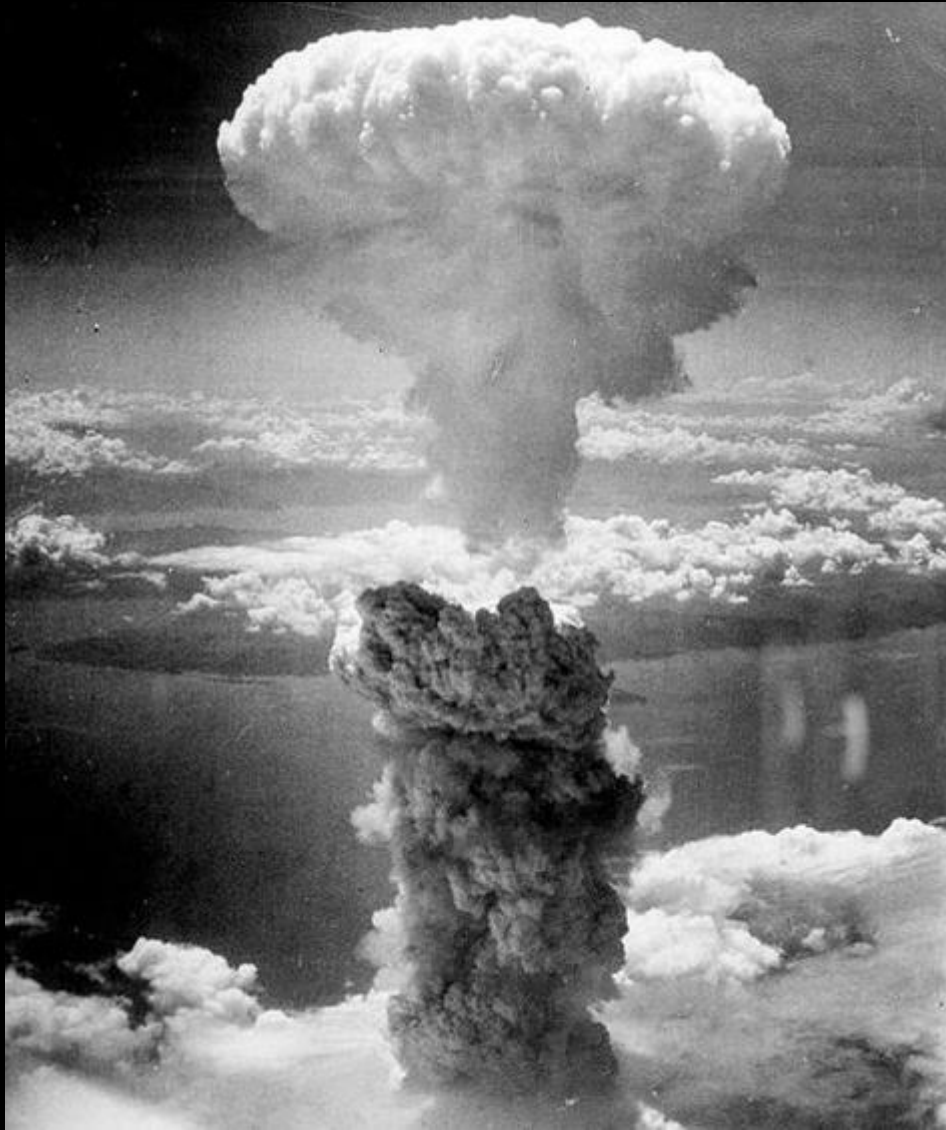


The first indication anything was wrong was when all communication with Hiroshima and the surrounding area was lost. A team of scientists from the Japanese bomb project and others were dispatched.

The head of the project reported their findings to the Big Six later that night. It was an atomic bomb and in his opinion if they had one, they must have an arsenal of them because why would anyone use their only bomb?

The Big Six was not yet convinced.

ENDGAME



ENDGAME

The second mission was not as flawless.

First it had been scheduled for August 11th, but a front was approaching Japan which would make bombing problematic for a few days. The mission was moved up to August 9th. The target was Kokura, Japan.

The bomb mission arrived over the target to find it entirely cloud covered. It was smoke from one of LeMay's incendiary attacks on the nearby city of Yawata. A radar run was attempted, but the radar could not clearly identify the target. They went for the secondary target Nagasaki.

It was clouded over too. The Weapons Delivery plane waited, tried a radar run and eventually there was enough of a break to make a run. The bomb missed its aim point by over a mile. The delivery plane had to land at Okinawa. It had less than five minutes fuel remaining when it landed.

The bomb was less effective than the one on Hiroshima partly because the topography limited its effects and partly because it missed its aim point. Between 35,000 and 40,000 were killed.

ENDGAME

An interesting side note:

On August 6th, 1945, a Japanese businessman from Nagasaki was in Hiroshima for a business meeting.

Obviously, that meeting never occurred. He was there and survived the bombing.

It took him a couple of days to get home to Nagasaki...

Just in time to be there for the next atomic bombing.

He survived that bombing as well.



ENDGAME

On August 10th, LGEN Leslie Groves – Officer-in-Charge of the Manhattan Project – informed GEN Marshall that the third bomb could be delivered to Tinian in time for an attack on or after August 17th with three per month thereafter.

The reply stated that all further attacks were at the sole discretion of the President.

The plan had been to drop them as soon as they were ready on targets from an approved list or – once such targets were destroyed – at the discretion of the military commanders. Truman revoked that order after Nagasaki.

The new plan would use the entire arsenal then available in the pre-invasion bombardment of Japan.

ENDGAME

After the issuance of the Potsdam declaration which Japan decided was unworthy of reply, the Foreign Minister contacted his Ambassador in Moscow and asked about getting the Soviets to mediate a peace deal. The Ambassador poured cold water on the idea.

The Soviets would not do so unless they had something to gain that could not be gained otherwise. What could Japan possibly offer the Soviets that they could not take whenever they wanted?

The Americans were aware of this exchange (having long before broken the Japanese diplomatic code.)

At around 10:00 PM, August 8th, the Foreign Minister was called before the Emperor and told to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration without reservation. A meeting of the Big Six was then scheduled for the next morning to discuss...

ENDGAME

The meeting of the Big Six convened and the Emperor's "suggestion" was discussed. The three "peace faction" members knew an order when they heard it even if Navy Minister Yonai had been in favor of negotiation. The other three did not see how the bomb changed anything and, despite knowing about Soviet intervention, saw no reason to entertain anything until after the invasion.

Then a messenger came in and told them that Nagasaki had been nuked.

While a decision was not made immediately, the Six left with the opinion that something had to be done while there was still a Japan left as it was clear that to do nothing would mean the absolute end...

Within a couple of days, the resistance to the Potsdam Declaration within the Big Six had evaporated...

(These details were not known for decades. The final details being revealed when the papers of the then Keeper of the Privy Seal, Marquis Kido were made public in the early 2000's.)

ENDGAME

The silence from Japan after Hiroshima was puzzling.

The problem was, Japan did not know what had happened. Communications with Hiroshima were out and the government had nothing but rumors. They learned that Hiroshima was gone and probably by a single bomb the same day and then Nagasaki suffered a similar fate.

The Prime Minister now demanded that Japan accept the terms of the Potsdam Convention (unconditional surrender – but with a secret proviso that allowed the Emperor to remain as some kind of Head of State). He was backed up by the Emperor.

A Major in the Army would have none of it. On August 14th, (while the third bomb was being readied for shipment to Tinian) he tried to take over the government only for his regiment to be routed by the Imperial Guard and the generals who had supported him to have either killed themselves or suddenly forget who he was. He killed himself in a park the next morning upon learning his Emperor had announced Japan's surrender.

It was done over the radio. It was the first time the Emperor had been heard by the Japanese people.

SURRENDER – SEPTEMBER 2nd 1945



SURRENDER – SEPTEMBER 2nd 1945



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SURRENDER – SEPTEMBER 2nd 1945



Above: Japanese survivors at the surrender of Rabaul – Sep 1945.

Right: Japanese survivors at the surrender of Truk – Oct 1945.

(It took that long for the allies to send someone there.)



SURRENDER – SEPTEMBER 2nd 1945

114,000 Americans died in combat in the Pacific War between December 7th, 1941 and August 15th, 1945.

442,000 Americans died in combat in all of World War II.

Over 1,400,000 Japanese died fighting against the Americans in World War II.

That number does not include any who died in the bombing attacks on Japan, civilian or military.

A U.S. soldier was less likely to become a casualty from enemy action in the Pacific than in Europe.

He was also far less likely to contract a social disease.

But he was far more likely to be hospitalized for any one of a number of tropical diseases. The disease rate was the highest in the 20th Century in warfare.

OPERATION MAGIC CARPET

Within days of the surrender, the Navy was “drafted” to bring the Army, Air Force and Marines home to the U.S. from wherever in the world they were. It would take over a year.

Close to 9 million men (and women) needed transport, all had to remain in the military until they returned home regardless of what their contracts said.

POW’s and wounded had priority. How the rest were scheduled was determined by their theater commanders.

For the Navy, you remained until your ship was no longer needed...



OPERATION MAGIC CARPET





Above: Japanese carrier Amagi – sunk at Kure in an American bombing raid.

Left: Map showing the number of Japanese troops still overseas as of Sep 1945. It would take over two years for most to get home and over 5 years for any of the Soviet prisoners to be released from the Gulags.

The Americans did not offer any help...

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		





The U.S. military of today is a product more of the Second World War than anything that had occurred prior to that time.

The Army looked to the European Campaign for much of the next 50 years if, for no other reason, than it faced the Red Army over much of the same ground it had fought over in 1945.

If the European War was the genesis of the Army (and Air Force) that has followed, for the Navy and Marine Corps it was the Pacific War.

Modern blue water U.S. naval operations have little connection to the naval doctrine existing before 1942. The modern navy centers on the carrier battle group which did not exist prior to Pearl Harbor.





USS Coontz (DDG-40) and Middle East Force, Persian Gulf, June 1987



USS John F. Kennedy Battle Group, Mediterranean, August 1988

Today the Japanese Navy is the second most capable in the world behind the U.S. and fourth largest behind the U.S., China and Russia.

All the ships pictured are called “destroyers.”



