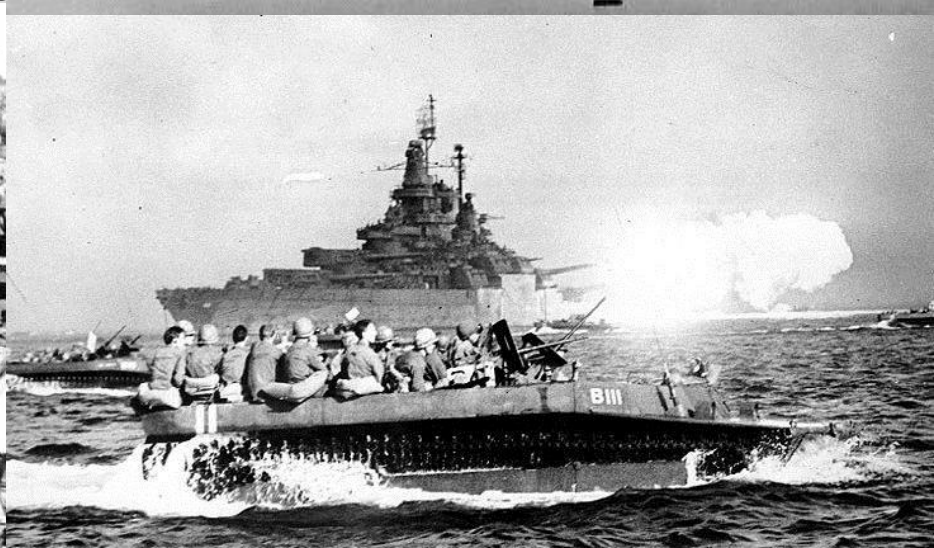


The Endgame That Almost Was: Roosevelt and the Defeat of Japan

James D. Perry



Overview

- Geography and Logistics
- Roosevelt's Global Strategy
- Balancing the European and Pacific Theaters
- Pacific Planning, 1942 – 1945
- The Hokkaido Option

Geography and Logistics



USSR logistically constrained,
focused on Germany

China
logistically
inaccessible

British very far
away, lacked
resources,
focused on
Germany

Roughly 1/3 of the Earth's surface
Best facilities are at the "edges" far
from the fighting

Otherwise...

No docks capable of handling a Liberty Ship
No warehouses, railroads, or local labor
No airfields or POL storage

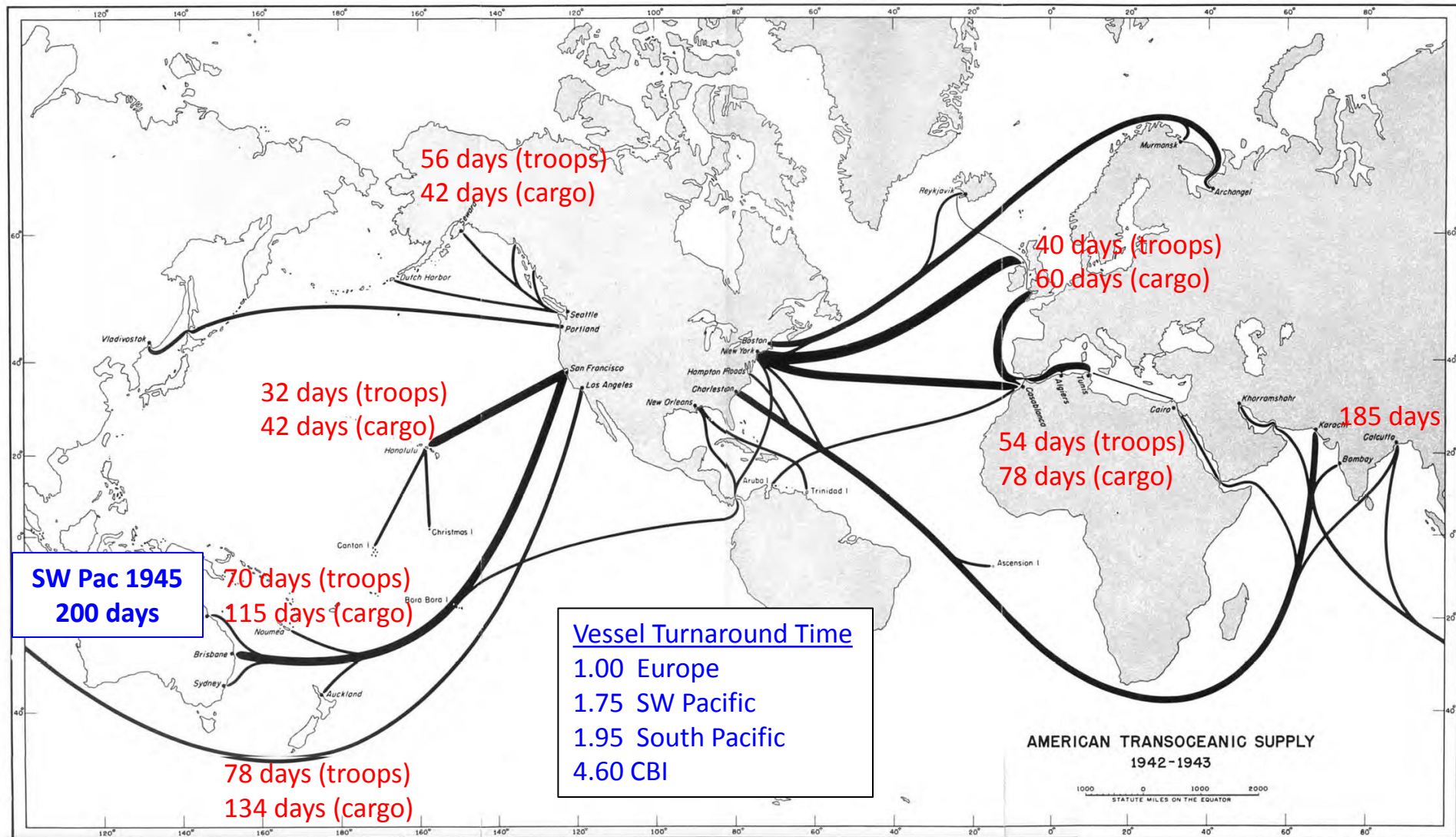
Intra-theater transport
entirely by sea

We have to build everything
and bring everything.

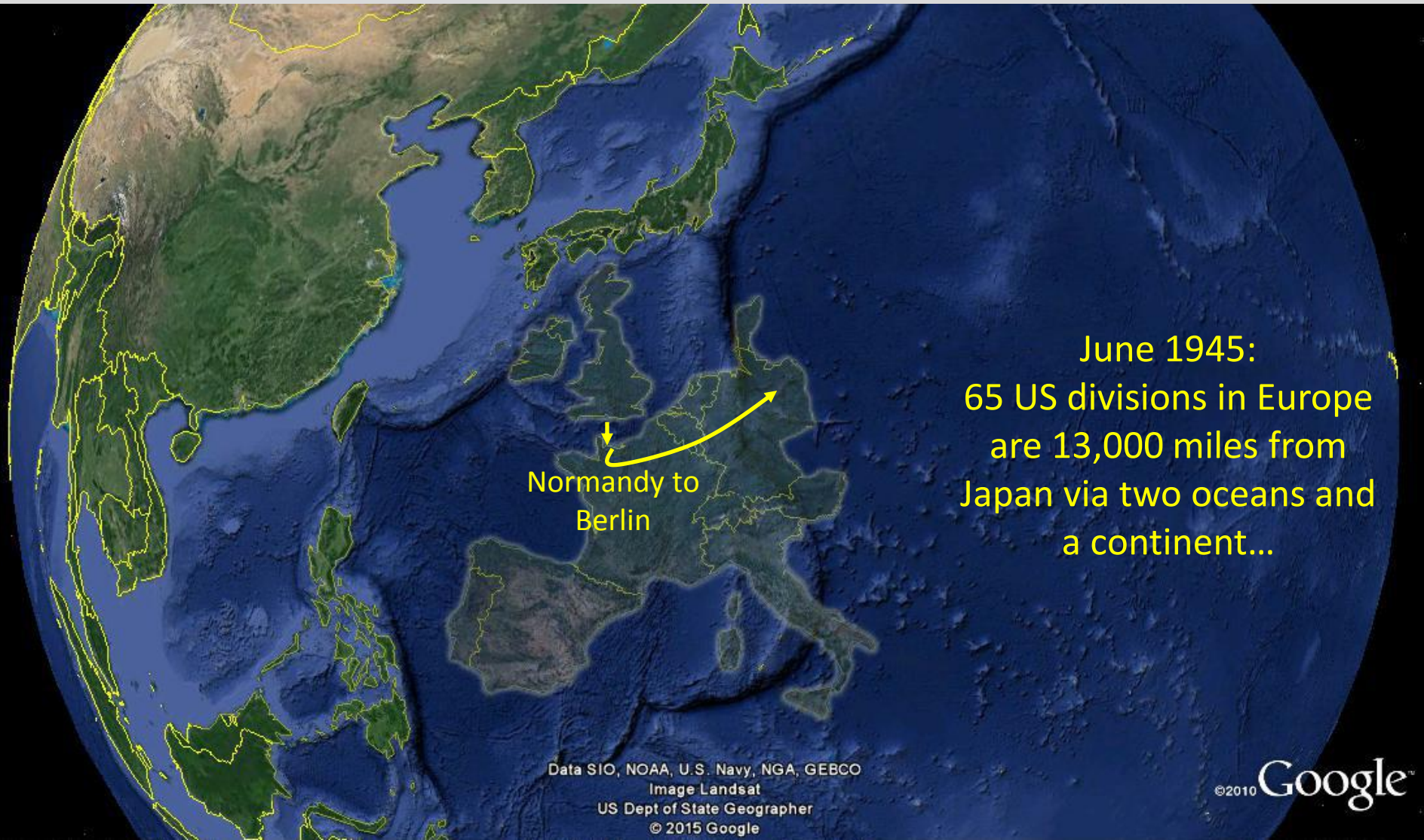
As front moves forward, roll
up rear bases or not?

Vessel Turnaround Time, 1943

(load, sail, unload, return)



Western Pacific is *big*...
as well as far from CONUS



Normandy to
Berlin

June 1945:
65 US divisions in Europe
are 13,000 miles from
Japan via two oceans and
a continent...

Amphibious Invasion Distances

Much Greater in the Pacific

Operation	Transit	Miles	Operation	Transit	Miles
Overlord	Portsmouth-Normandy	100	Olympic	Okinawa-Kyushu	400
Overlord	Plymouth-Normandy	200	Iceberg	Leyte-Okinawa	1,100
Avalanche	Palermo-Salerno	200	Iceberg	Guam-Okinawa	1,400
Husky	Tunis-Sicily	250	King Two	Hollandia-Leyte	1,400
Avalanche	Tunis-Salerno	350	Olympic	Guam-Kyushu, P.I.-Kyushu	1,500
Dragoon	Naples-Riviera	450	King Two	Manus-Leyte	1,750
Dragoon	Oran-Riviera	800	Galvanic	Pearl Harbor-Makin	2,300
Husky	Oran-Sicily	900	Flintlock	Hawaii-Eniwetok	2,700
Torch	Glasgow-Algiers	2,760	Galvanic	Wellington-Tarawa	3,000
Torch	Norfolk-Morocco	3,750	Iceberg	Guadalcanal-Okinawa	3,300
			Forager	Hawaii-Saipan	3,700
			Detachment	Hawaii-Iwo Jima	4,000
			Iceberg	Oahu-Okinawa	4,600
			Flintlock	San Diego-Kwajalein	5,000

Basing Asymmetry

800 miles = B-17 or P-51

Possible bases: Bonins, Ryukyus, Formosa, China

USSR Maritime Province
good but inaccessible

Marianas and Luzon
within B-29 range only

Central Pacific was
“carriers vs. few planes,
few bases”

Invasion of Japan would
be “carriers vs. many
planes, many bases”



Overwhelming air-sea superiority and abundant amphibious lift were the *prerequisites* for taking the offensive in 1944-45.



Ships in Service Commissioned *After* Pearl Harbor

	Class	1942	Jan-Jun 43	July-Dec 43	Jan-Jun 44	July-Dec 44	Jan-Sep 45
CV	<i>Essex</i>	1	4	7	10	14	17
CVL	<i>Independence</i>		5	9	9	9	8
CVE	<i>Bogue to C. Bay</i>	9	14	30	58	60	66
BB	<i>South Dakota</i>	4	4	4	4	4	4
	<i>Iowa</i>		2	2	4	4	4
CA	<i>Baltimore</i>		2	4	4	5	13
CL	<i>Atlanta/Cleveland</i>	6	8	13	17	24	32
DD	<i>Benson to Gearing</i>	76	152	260	331	401	549
AP/APA Navy Transports		21	62	97	185	273	329
USAT Army Transports		362	580	847	1,359	1,626	1,455

Roosevelt's Global Strategy





Interpreting Roosevelt's Strategy

1. He had no strategy – an opportunist who reacted to events
2. He was a prisoner of public opinion and Congressional politics
3. He put aside “politics” and focused only on winning the war
 - Virtuous (naïve?) Americans versus the devious (wise?) British and ruthless Soviets
 - Cold War argument: he should have tried to contain Stalin as well as defeat the Axis (e.g., no “Yalta give-away”)
4. He had a definite vision for the postwar world
 - But was he a dupe, an appeaser, or a realist?



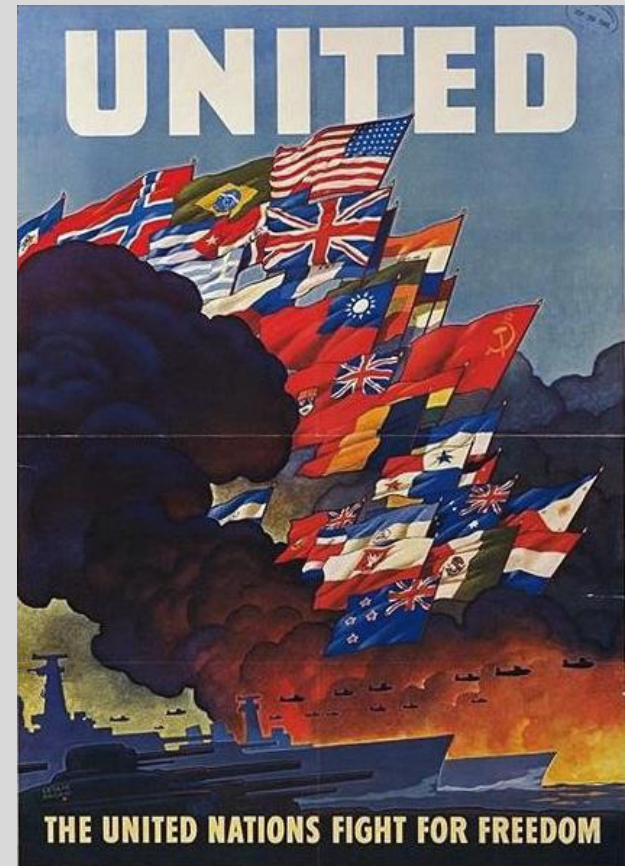
Interpreting Roosevelt's Strategy

Complicating matters...

- Died before he could fully execute his strategy
- Secretive – no diary or memoirs, hated note-taking in meetings
- Deceptive – made incompatible promises to different people
- Outbreak of Cold War made wartime relationship with USSR a political hot potato and a problem for those involved in it
 - Churchill wanted Anglo-American unity after the war, and papered over wartime disagreements with FDR
 - Easier for Americans to assert “we only thought about winning the war” than to justify cooperation with Stalin

The Official Strategy: “Germany First”

- ABC-1 Agreement and Rainbow 5 War Plan (1941)
 - US to make main military effort in Europe, stay on the defensive in the Pacific
- Arcadia Conference (Washington, December 1941)
 - ABC-1 “Germany First” logic endorsed
 - Churchill proposes to invade North Africa in 1942 and France in 1943
 - Allies will contain Japan & defend SLOCs to Australia
 - Declaration By United Nations: Allies, including the USSR, pledge to fight for “complete victory” over Axis and no separate peace or armistice
- Actual conduct of the war deviated from the agreed strategy – but whose fault was this?



Who Deviated from “Germany First” – and Why?

Traditional Criticisms of British Mediterranean Strategy...

Peripheral

Diversion from the Second Front

Hindered Buildup in UK

“Suction Pump” for Resources

Motivated by Considerations of
Postwar Politics

Actually Applied to America in the Pacific

Pacific Peripheral to Entire War
SW Pacific Peripheral to Pacific War

Pacific, not Mediterranean, Prevented
Landing in France in 1942 or 1943

~250,000 US Troops in UK July 1943
Pacific had over *five times* as many

US Pacific Strength Doubled
From June to December 1942;
Doubled Again in 1943;
Increased Another 60% in 1944

Product of FDR’s Political Strategy for
Postwar World Order



FDR's "New World Order"

- Overriding goal: fill the vacuum created by the destruction of the Axis with a postwar world based on US-Soviet partnership
- In 1942 and 1943, FDR sought to meet Stalin *without Churchill*
- FDR deferred the Second Front because he had not met Stalin
- He sketched out ideas in talks with Eden in March 1943
- He reached a deal with Stalin at Tehran and Yalta – in the process, reneging on prior deals with Britain and China
- Roosevelt's vision for the postwar world was diametrically opposed to Churchill's...



Roosevelt's Postwar Order

American-Soviet Hegemony

Soviets Territorially Appeased

Colonial Empires Eliminated

Germany Divided

Weak, Pro-Soviet East Europe

Weak France

Japan Divided

Strong China

Churchill's Postwar Order



Anglo-American Hegemony

Soviets Territorially Contained

Colonial Empires Preserved

Weak But Integrated Germany

Strong E. European Federations

Strong France

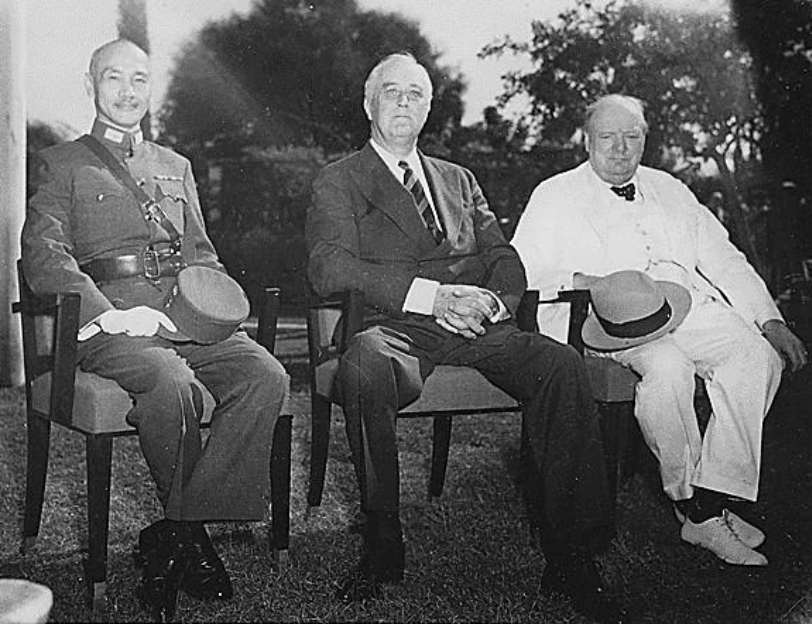
Weak But Integrated Japan

Weak China



Unconditional Surrender

- War aim enunciated at Casablanca in January 1943
- Obvious importance for the endgame of the Pacific War
 - Invasion planning predicated on the need to inflict it
 - Postwar controversy over whether we should have accepted “conditional surrender” rather than dropping the a-bombs
- One purpose was to avoid repeating the perceived errors of 1918
- Immediate purpose in 1943 was to keep the alliance together
 - Stalin had yet to agree to meet Roosevelt, and Germans and Soviets explored a separate peace in early 1943
- Signaled to Stalin from 1943 to 1945 that USA would not conclude an “anti-Soviet” separate peace with Germany or Japan that permitted the resurgence of their militarism



“All the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as **Manchuria, Formosa, and The Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.** Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed. The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that **in due course Korea shall become free and independent.**”

Cairo Communique, 1 December 1943

First Cairo Conference

- FDR promised to make China a major power
- A major campaign in Burma in 1944 would open the lend-lease route
- US would arm and equip 90 Chinese divisions
- China would play “leading role” in the occupation of Japan
- China would get Japanese industry after the war
- US would guarantee China against postwar “foreign aggression” (obviously meaning USSR, Britain, and France)
- Chiang offered Roosevelt joint use of Port Arthur



Roosevelt's Vision

New World Order:

1. Germany and Japan invaded, occupied, and divided
2. Friendly states on the Soviet periphery in Europe and Asia
3. Soviet access to the sea assured through Kiel Canal, Turkish Straits, Persian Gulf, Dairen
4. World organization dominated by Big Four





Tehran: FDR's Promises to Stalin Incompatible With Prior Promises to Chiang

- Stalin promised to enter the Pacific War after Germany's defeat
- FDR proposed giving the Soviets a strong position in Manchuria (in addition to their existing positions in Sinkiang and Mongolia)
 - Dairen a "free port under international guaranty"
 - Soviet goods carried over Manchurian railroad
 - USSR to receive Kuriles and South Sakhalin
- Korea placed under 40-year "tutelage"



Second Cairo Conference: More Broken Promises



- Churchill argued that Soviet entry into the Pacific War made 1944 offensive in Burma unnecessary – and cancelling it would release forces for operations in the Balkans or the Aegean
- FDR relented and canceled Operation Buccaneer – which of course also voided his promise to equip 90 Chinese divisions
- China would end the war facing the Soviets alone – without any American equipment or forces as a counterbalance



“New World Order” Finalized at Yalta

Key Features:

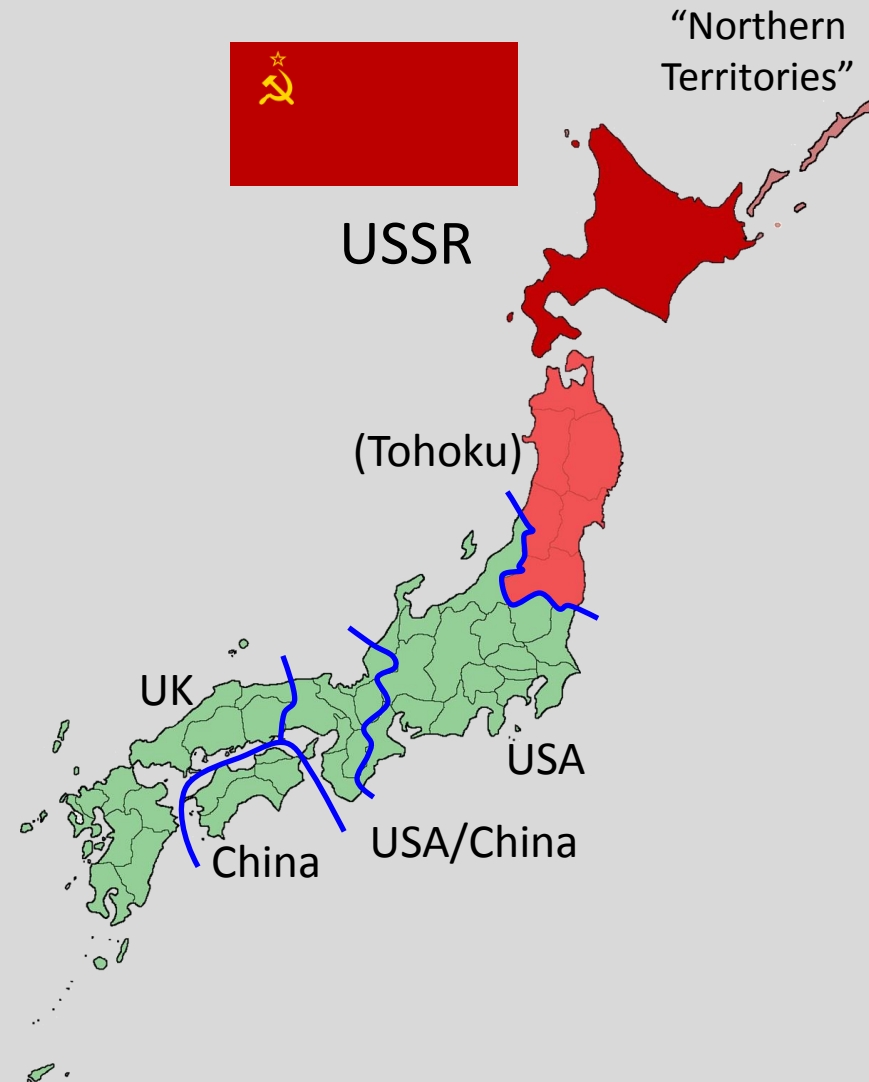
- Germany and Japan divided
- “Friendly” states on the Soviet periphery in Europe and Asia

In the Pacific:

- Soviet “interests” in Manchuria safeguarded (rights to ports and railroads)
- Soviets and Chinese to sign treaty to “legalize” Soviet gains in Manchuria
- Soviet to control Mongolia, and receive Kuriles and South Sakhalin
- Soviets to have effective control over Korea via US-Soviet-Chinese trusteeship (not a formal commitment) – but no American troops would be there



“New World Order” Finalized at Yalta



- At Yalta, FDR and Stalin reached an understanding on the joint occupation of Japan
- Not a formal commitment!
- War Department studied two options:
 1. Soviets occupy Hokkaido
 2. Soviets occupy Hokkaido and Tohoku
- Still under consideration in August 1945 as JWPC-385/1
- Soviets, like the Chinese, not necessarily expected to reach Japan under their own power

Soviet Gains in Asia



1943: Planning for Soviet Entry

Not Racing an Enemy, Encouraging a Friend

- Planners believed Russia would attack Japan six months after German defeat, when Japan was on the ropes
- Nothing US could do to expedite Russian entry
- Could not rely on Russian entry to ensure Japan's defeat
- Knew that Russia wanted weak Japan, control of Sakhalin and the Kuriles, and a dominant influence in Sinkiang, Korea, and Manchuria (Yalta no surprise!)
- Planners recommended urging Russia to intervene, and asking what US could do to facilitate this
- Recommended planning to build up supplies in Soviet Far East, defend Kamchatka, take Kuriles/Sakhalin, and create airbases in the Maritime Province

1944: Planning for Soviet Entry

Not Racing an Enemy, Encouraging a Friend

- JCS urged making every effort to get Russia to enter the war as soon as possible – but again, don't count on it
- To exploit Russian entry, US should strike at Luzon/Formosa or Kuriles/Sakhalin/Hokkaido
- Planners wanted Soviets to destroy Japanese forces in Manchuria and Korea; noted the Soviet need for 1 million tons of US supplies by sea (TSRR inadequate)
- Americans kept asking about airbases in Siberia; Soviets kept stonewalling and asking for heavy bombers
- Planners recommended asking Soviets to “furnish sizeable occupation forces” for Japan!

1944: Planning for Soviet Entry

Not Racing an Enemy, Encouraging a Friend

- October 1944: we want the Soviets to attack in August 1945 in order to precede the US invasion of Japan
- Regarded as desirable but not essential; we can influence the timing by providing logistical support
- December 1944: Stalin transmits his quid pro quo (Kuriles, Sakhalin, Manchuria) – hardly a surprise – and meanwhile denies request for Siberian airbases
- Before Yalta, Soviets had still told us little about timing, what they planned to do, or what they wanted us to do operationally (i.e., other than give them lots of stuff)

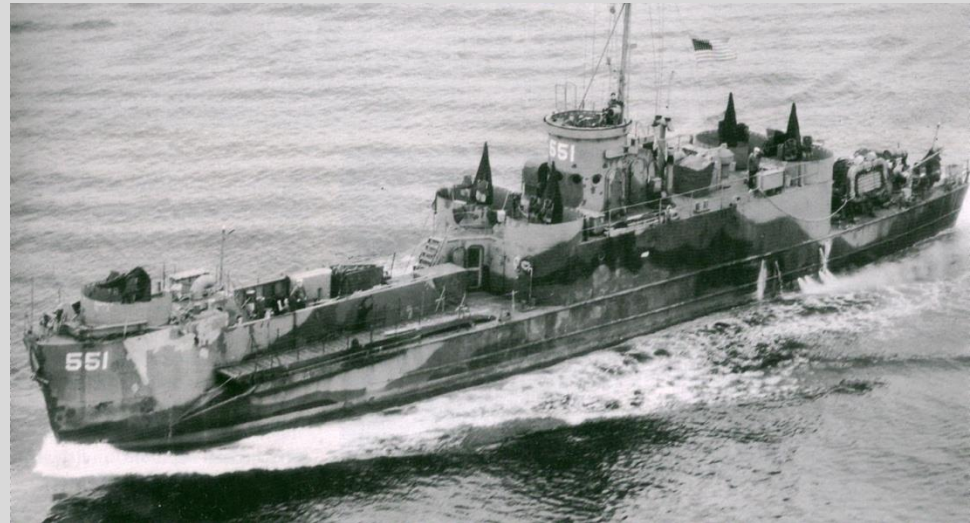
Operation Milepost: Expediting Soviet Intervention

- October 1944 – Soviets requested aid for an attack on Japan
- 37 merchant ships transferred to Soviet flag as carriers
- Soviets wanted 1,056,000 tons of supplies:
 - 120,000 tons of 100 octane gasoline, 70,000 tons of automobile gasoline, collapsible storage tanks
 - Food, clothing and hospital supplies
 - 500 amphibious jeeps, 1,000 DUKW, 30,000 trucks
 - 400 C-47 and 100 C-54 aircraft
 - Escort vessels, frigates and numerous other boats
 - 500 locomotives, 6,000 rail cars, 800 kilometers of rail
- 2M tons sent to Vladivostok in 1945 – 12% of wartime total
- Shipments basically complete by Potsdam in July

Project Hula:

Expediting Soviet Intervention

- January 1945 – Admiral King notified USN commander in Alaska that US would transfer 250 ships and craft to the Soviet Union between April and December 1945
- US had trained 12,000 Soviet crew in Alaska by September
- Soviets received 149 vessels by September:
 - 28 patrol frigates
 - 24 minesweepers
 - 30 large infantry landing craft
 - 31 minesweepers
 - 32 submarine chasers
 - 4 four floating workshops



Roosevelt's Global Strategy: Summary

- Roosevelt desired postwar US-Soviet cooperation
- He intended to satisfy Soviet territorial demands and to eliminate military threats to the USSR in Eurasia
- He did not try to limit or contain Soviet expansion
- Soviet intervention in the Pacific War was an essential pillar of his strategy – he encouraged it, facilitated it logistically, and granted Stalin's desires for territory and spheres of influence
- He wanted Soviets to participate in the occupation of Japan
- Truman later – quite correctly – decided that Roosevelt had given Stalin too much, and changed the deal

Balancing Europe and the Pacific



The 15 Percent War?

Casablanca Conference, 14 January 1943:

- “ADMIRAL KING said that according to his estimates **we were at present engaging only 15 percent of our total resources against the Japanese** in the Pacific theater, which for this purpose included the Indian Ocean and Burma...”
- Marshall and King suggested allocating 30 percent to the Pacific theater – in other words, doubling the Pacific allocation.
- It is widely accepted that the war in Europe got 85% of the nation’s war output, and the Pacific had to make do with what was left.



U.S. made over 50% of its war effort in the Pacific until early 1944,
and the Pacific effort never fell below 45%.

European and Pacific Theater: Manpower Strength

	Pacific (Army)	Pacific (USMC)	Pacific (USN)	Europe (Army)	Europe (USN)	Divisions (Pacific)	Divisions (Europe)	Pacific Effort
Jun 42	315,248	56,783	202,000	54,667	58,000	8	2	85%
Dec 42	463,868	100,000	344,000	346,794	98,000	11	7	67%
July 43	693,298	121,665	549,000	767,862	157,000	13	11	60%
Dec 43	912,942	159,376	750,000	1,365,932	214,000	16	17	54%
Jun 44	1,232,491	218,640	1,000,000	2,358,836	300,000	27	29	48%
Dec 44	1,384,887	230,000	1,300,000	3,198,142	200,000	27	57	46%
May 45	1,533,463	247,558	1,300,000	3,466,856	200,000	27	65	46%

- Pacific totals include CBI, Alaska and Hawaii
- Europe totals include Mediterranean and North Africa
- Army numbers include Army Air Force

Raw numbers understate the Pacific effort, because we could send two men to Europe for every man we sent to the Pacific.

European and Pacific Theater: Number of Combat Aircraft

	Pacific (AAF)	Pacific (USN / MC)	Europe / Med (AAF)	Europe / Med (USN)	Pacific Effort
June 42	1,218	678	26	0	99%
Dec 42	1,749	738	1,780	105	57%
July 43	2,583	1,929	5,403	23	45%
Dec 43	3,488	3,447	7,238	135	48%
June 44	5,363	7,303	12,429	134	50%
Dec 44	5,998	8,548	14,261	182	50%
May 45	7,680	9,828	13,538	170	56%

- Excludes utility, transport, training, and lighter-than-air aircraft
- Excludes aircraft in CONUS, Canada, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa

European and Pacific Theater: Transport Shipping Allocation

	Army Transports (USAT)		Navy Troopships (AP/APA)		Navy Cargo Ships (AK/AKA)		Pacific Effort
	Average Number of Vessels		Average Number of Vessels		Average Number of Vessels		
	Pacific	Atlantic	Pacific	Atlantic	Pacific	Atlantic	
Jan-Jun 1942	185	115	32	31	20	11	60%
July-Dec 1942	195	291	30	33	20	11	42%
Jan-Jun 1943	211	398	63	28	43	9	42%
July-Dec 1943	357	546	71	21	69	7	46%
Jan-June 1944	533	597	102	22	86	9	53%
July-Dec 1944	719	980	102	22	106	9	48%
Jan-Jun 1945	823	695	135	11	141	4	61%

- Army operated a transport fleet with twice the tonnage of the Navy's transport fleet!

Trivial Strategic Payoff, June 1942 to December 1943

With 1.8 million men, we got...

- The Solomons
- Eastern New Guinea
- Tarawa and Makin
- Attu and Kiska

North Pacific (31 Dec 43)

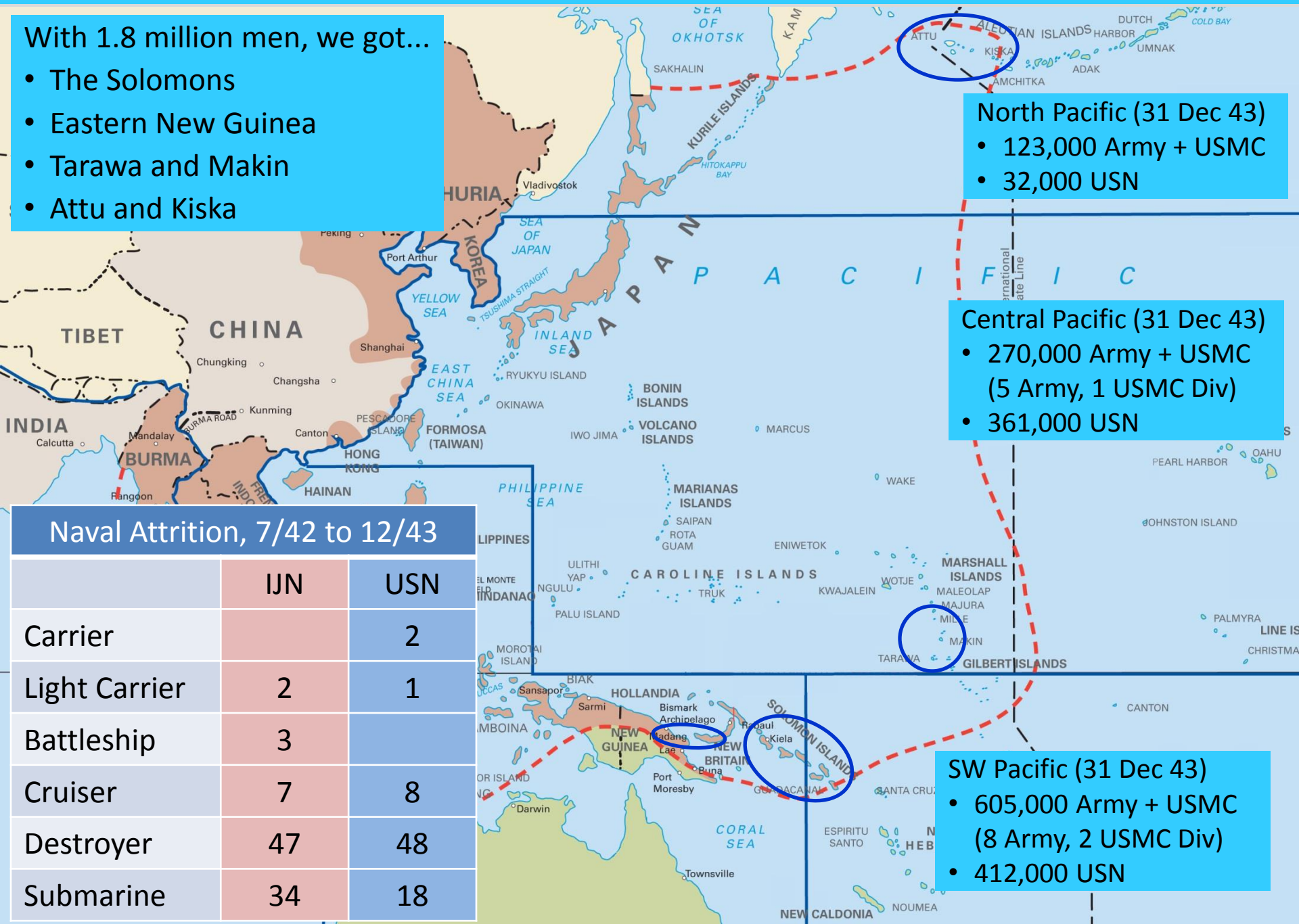
- 123,000 Army + USMC
- 32,000 USN

Central Pacific (31 Dec 43)

- 270,000 Army + USMC (5 Army, 1 USMC Div)
- 361,000 USN

Naval Attrition, 7/42 to 12/43

	IJN	USN
Carrier		2
Light Carrier	2	1
Battleship	3	
Cruiser	7	8
Destroyer	47	48
Submarine	34	18

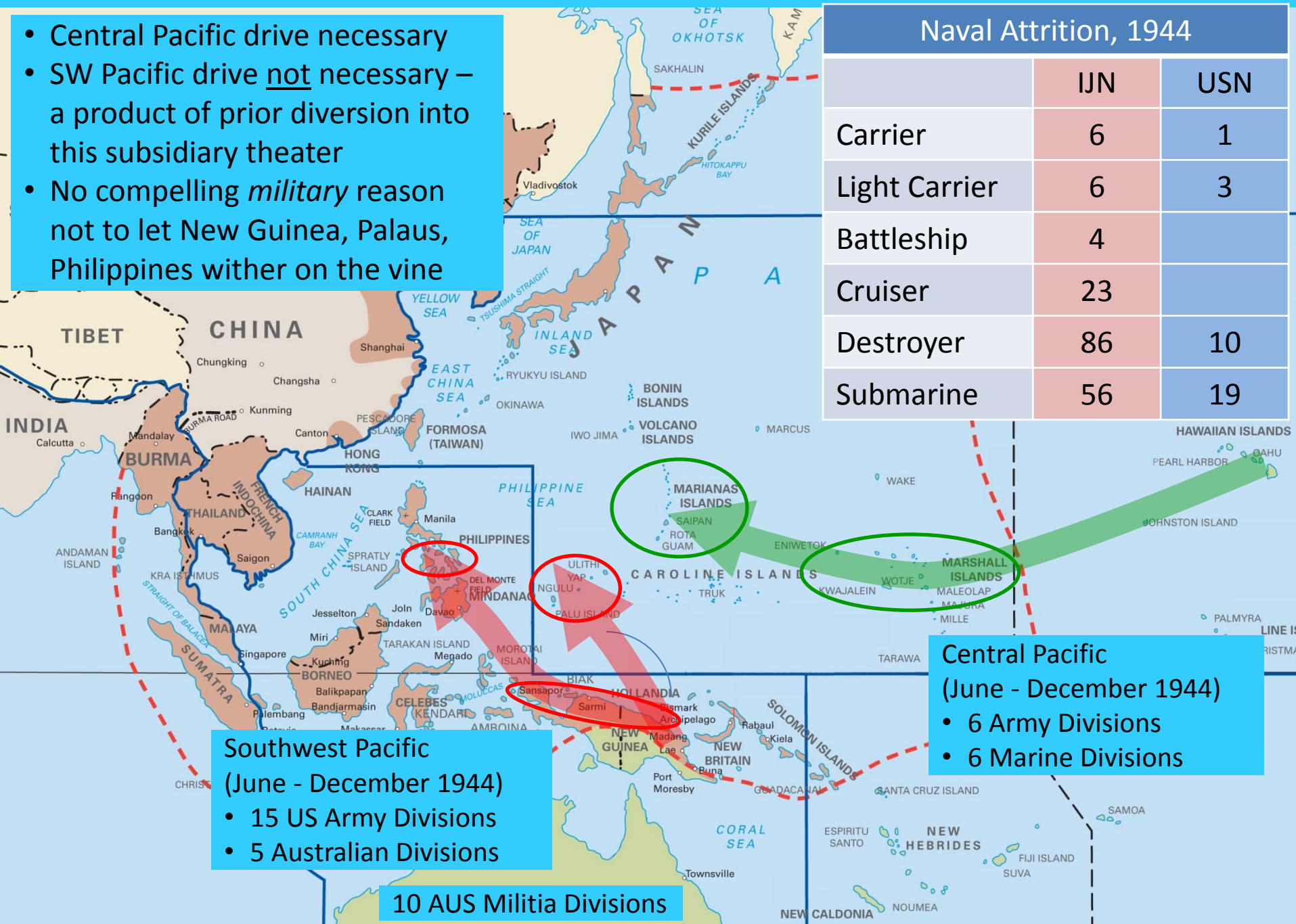


Big Gains in 1944 – but U.S. Still Overinvested

- Central Pacific drive necessary
- SW Pacific drive not necessary – a product of prior diversion into this subsidiary theater
- No compelling *military* reason not to let New Guinea, Palaus, Philippines wither on the vine

Naval Attrition, 1944

	IJN	USN
Carrier	6	1
Light Carrier	6	3
Battleship	4	
Cruiser	23	
Destroyer	86	10
Submarine	56	19



Opportunity Cost of Pacific Commitments: Weaker Effort in Europe

	Pacific (Army)	Pacific (USMC)	Pacific (USN)	Europe (Army)	Europe (USN)	Divisions (Pacific)	Divisions (Europe)	Pacific Effort
Jun 42	315,248	56,783	202,000	54,667	58,000	8	2	85%
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1. No Sledgehammer in 1942
2. Weaker Torch in 1942 (precludes Roundup or rapid attack on Sicily / Italy)
3. No Roundup in 1943
4. Weaker Italian campaign, 1943-45
5. Weaker Anzio invasion, 1944
6. No campaign in the Balkans, 1944-45
7. Weaker campaign in France and Germany, 1944-45

Summary:

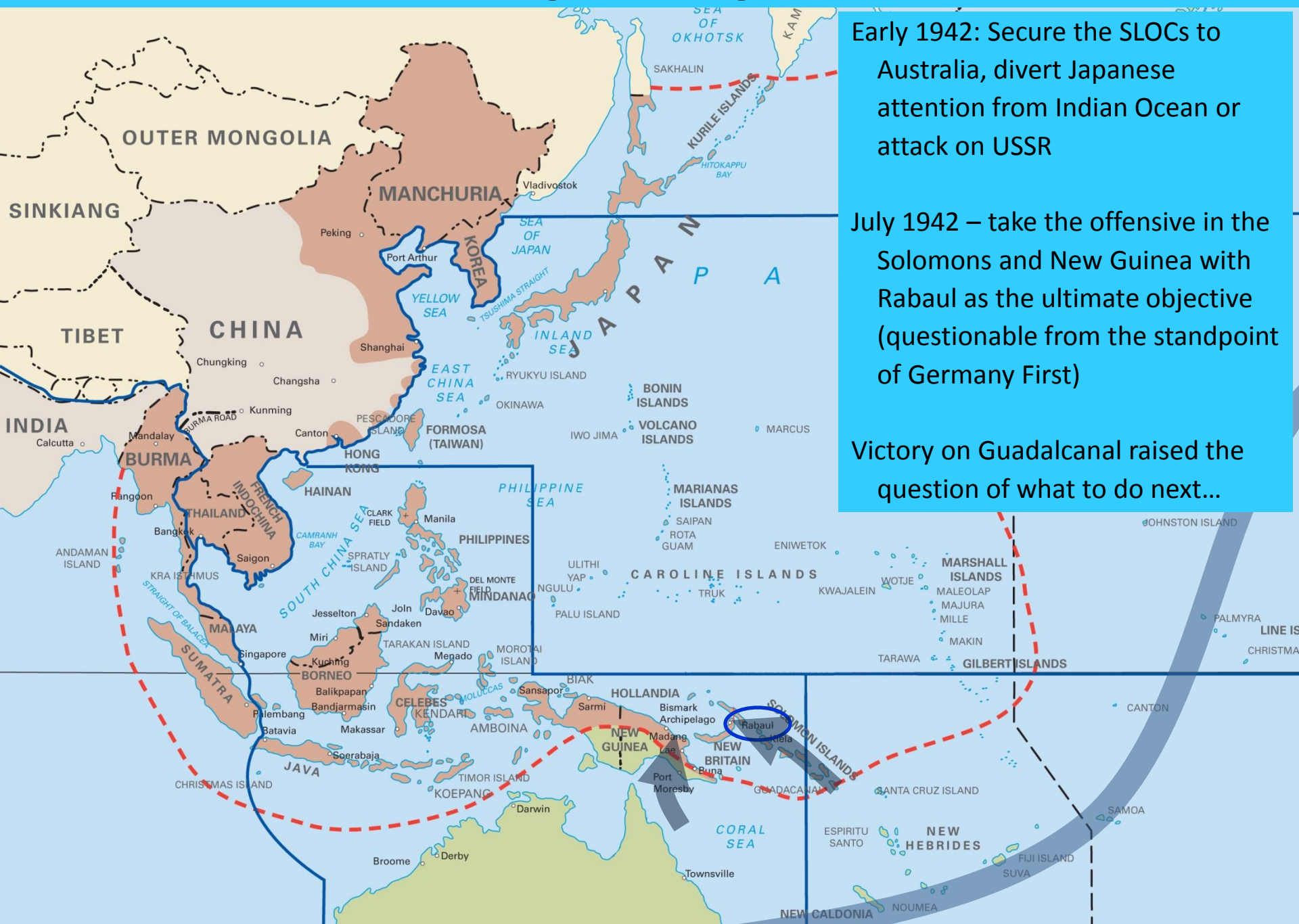
“A War of Broad Fronts”

- Global broad front – evenly balanced between Europe, Pacific
- European broad front during the campaign in France, 1944, and in Germany, 1945
- Pacific broad front – Central and Southwest Pacific drives
- American military officers *did* understand the importance of concentration of force on the main effort and economy of force on the subsidiary effort
- American planners *did* know where the main effort should be
- Failure to concentrate on the global and theater main efforts slowed down progress in each theater and in the war as a whole
- Reasons for this failure are clearly political

Pacific Planning 1942-1945



Strategic Planning, 1942

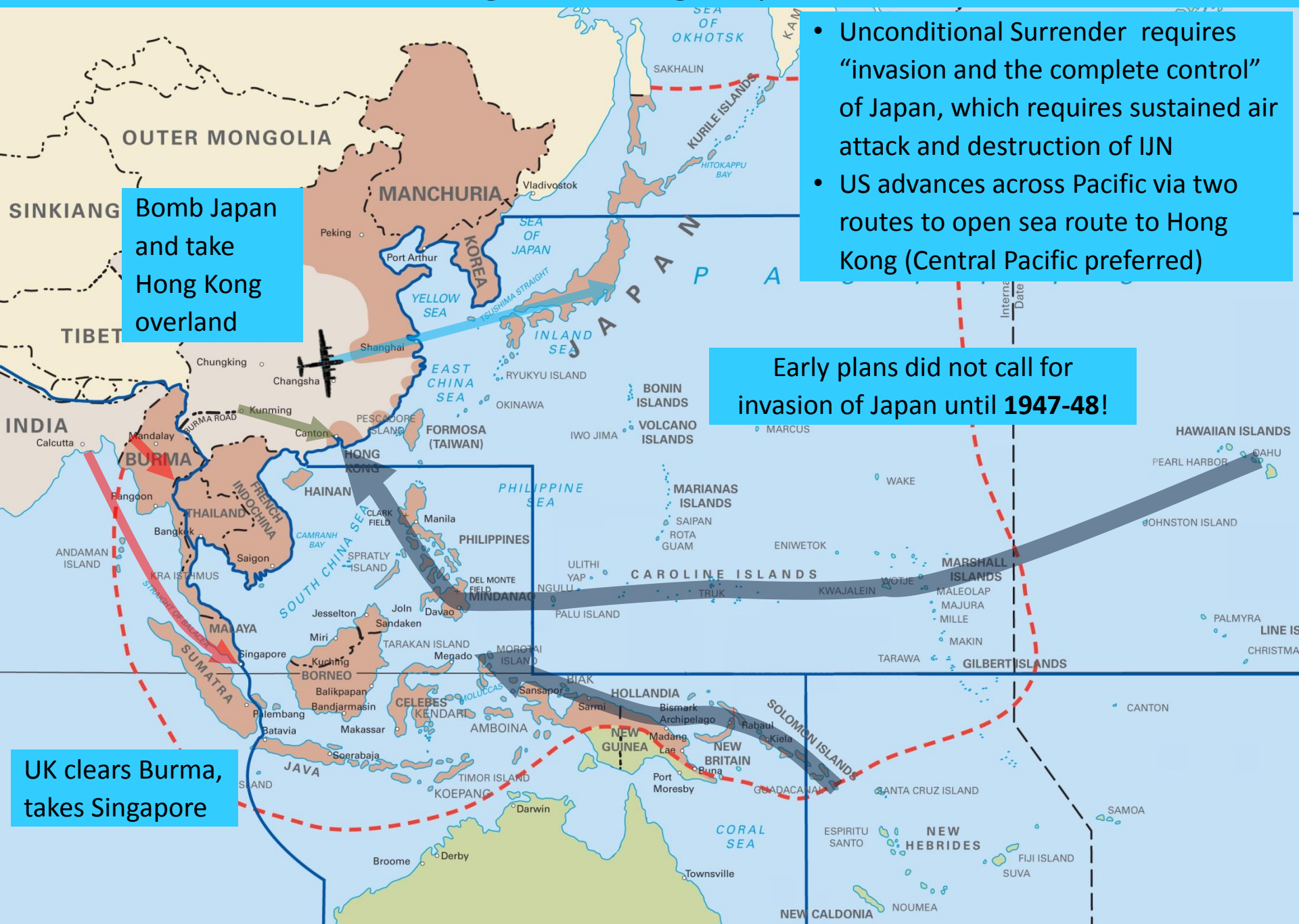


Early 1942: Secure the SLOCs to Australia, divert Japanese attention from Indian Ocean or attack on USSR

July 1942 – take the offensive in the Solomons and New Guinea with Rabaul as the ultimate objective (questionable from the standpoint of Germany First)

Victory on Guadalcanal raised the question of what to do next...

1943 Strategic Planning Emphasized China



Bomb Japan
and take
Hong Kong
overland

- Unconditional Surrender requires “invasion and the complete control” of Japan, which requires sustained air attack and destruction of IJN
- US advances across Pacific via two routes to open sea route to Hong Kong (Central Pacific preferred)

Early plans did not call for
invasion of Japan until **1947-48!**

UK clears Burma,
takes Singapore

Blockade, Bombardment, and Invasion Considered in 1943

JUSSC 40/2 April 1943	<p>“Strategic plan for the defeat of Japan must extend to the invasion and complete control of the Japanese homeland”</p> <p>“Might” be possible to induce surrender by blockade / bombardment – but they are prerequisites for invasion anyway</p>
CPS 83 August 1943	<p>Ultimate defeat of Japan “may well involve” invasion</p> <p>Main objective is Tokyo-Yokohama (but not until 1947-48!)</p> <p>Bombing “might” cause surrender “but we cannot rely on this”</p> <p>Blockade and bombing are an “essential prelude”</p> <p>China and Formosa needed as bomber bases</p>
CCS 323 August 1943 (Air Plan)	<p>Assumed NO Pacific bases within 1,500 miles of Japan in 1944-45</p> <p>784 B-29s based near Changsha flying 5 missions/mo for 6 months could destroy Japan’s “capacity for effective armed resistance”</p>
CPS 86/2 October 1943	<p>Directive to defeat Japan within 12 months of defeating Germany</p> <p>“Clearly as the need for speeding up the defeat of Japan is increased, so the prospects of actually having to undertake invasion increase.”</p>

Blockade, Bombardment, and Invasion Considered in 1944

- China no longer a factor in defeating Japan, and Hong Kong no longer a vital objective
- Bombing and blockade not guaranteed to force defeat; must seize “objectives in the industrial heart of Japan”
- Various options studied for direct assault on Kyushu or Hokkaido instead of Luzon or Formosa, and also for bypassing Philippines in favor of Formosa
- Ultimate decision was the incremental “broad front” approach; Central Pacific (Marianas, Iwo Jima), SW Pacific (New Guinea, Philippines), then Okinawa and Kyushu

JCS 713, March 1944



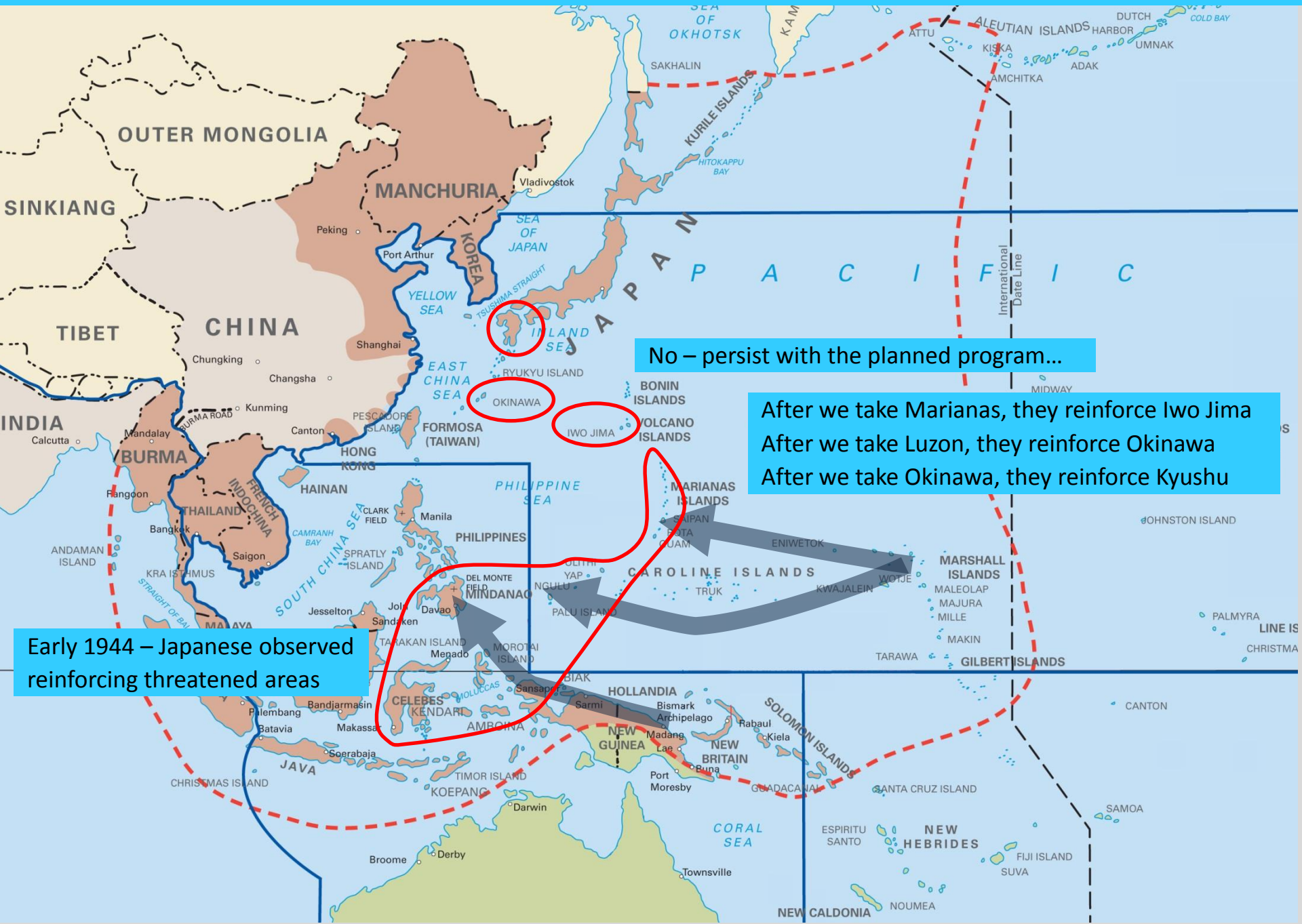
Luzon, Formosa, or Kyushu?



After Marianas, bypass southern objectives, do either Luzon, Formosa, or Kyushu from the Central Pacific?

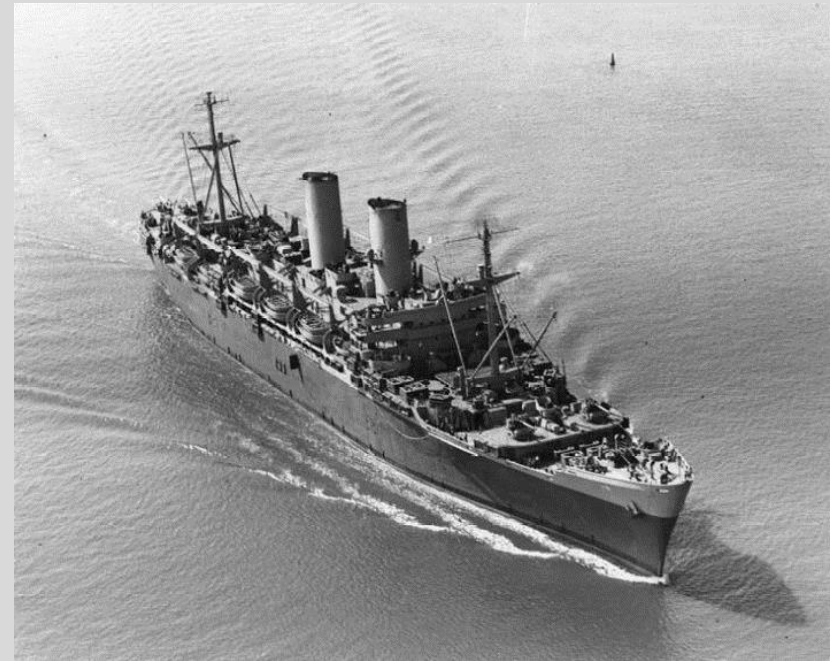
Early 1944 – Japanese observed reinforcing threatened areas

Dual Advance Predictably Predictable



Blockade, Bombardment, and Invasion Considered in 1944 and early 1945

- When will European war end?
Late 1944? Late 1945?
- It will release US troops, shipping, aircraft – if too late, could push invasion of Kyushu into 1946
- Also expected to bring the Soviets into the war six months later
- What “intermediate” objectives to take between Okinawa (April) and Kyushu (November)?
- Hokkaido, Korea, China coast, Kuriles examined and rejected



Joint Intelligence Staff Study, April 1945

- Blockade and bombing can break Japan's will – *but when?*
- Estimates vary “from a few months to a great many years”
- Bombing would include “concentrated attacks” on Japan's internal transportation system
- “Probable” that Japan would not unconditionally surrender through blockade/bombing before mid- to late-1946
- Recommended clarifying the meaning of “unconditional surrender” (i.e., it does not mean national extinction)
- If USSR entered the war, “all Japanese will realize that absolute defeat is inevitable”

Marshall, MacArthur, Nimitz

April 1945

- Marshall laid out the options – blockade / bombardment, perhaps with lodgments in China or Korea, or invasion as the “quickest and cheapest way to end the war”
- MacArthur examined three options:
 - Encircle Japan prior to attacking Kyushu and Honshu
 - Encircle Japan and attempt to bomb her into submission
 - Attack Kyushu and install air forces prior to an invasion of Honshu
- Course 2 would “prolong the war indefinitely” and assumed airpower could succeed though it failed in Europe
- Course 3 would be decisive and enough forces were on hand for it to succeed – thus, he recommended it
- Nimitz: we should plan to invade Kyushu at the earliest date in order to achieve decisive victory, but expect heavy casualties

JCS Assessments, April 1945

- Blockade and bombardment would still require 28 divisions (versus 36 for invasion), and require “several months to several years” to produce surrender
- “Optimum Strategy” – bombing, blockade, sever communications with Korea, invade Japan at earliest possible date, occupy her vital industrial centers

Atomic bomb was not a factor in the discussion (yet)

Every option had negative implications for civilians in Japan

Battle Experience Through April 1945

Date	Island	Defenders	Prisoners	% KIA	US % KIA+WIA
1943	Attu	2,900	29	99	26
1943	Tarawa	4,819	146	97	18
1944	Kwajalein	5,000	174	97	4
1944	Roi Namur	4,000	87	98	
1944	Eniwetok	3,940	66	98	
1944	Admiralty Is.	4,000	75	98	
1944	Saipan	29,662	921	97	19
1944	Guam	18,657	1,250	93	13
1944	Tinian	8,039	252	97	5
1944	Peleliu	13,600	202	99	23
1944	Angaur	1,400	50	96	16
1945	Leyte	70,000	828	99	6
1945	Luzon	275,685	9,050 + 61,100	75	23
1945	Southern PI	105,865	2,695 + 52,910	47	
1945	Iwo Jima	22,060	216	99	37
1945	Okinawa	107,199	7,401	94	36

Blockade, Bombardment, Invasion: Summary

- From early 1943 to April 1945, planning always assumed that blockade/bombardment *might* precipitate surrender
- But, we could not count on this and thus had to prepare for invasion
- Impossible to estimate how much bombing a nation will endure before crying uncle – we *still* don't know how to predict this
- Predictable trans-Pacific drive – Japanese knew where to expect us long before summer 1945
- Every reason to expect a very bloody fight on Kyushu
- Nevertheless, by April 1945, consensus was that invading Kyushu was the quickest way to achieve unconditional surrender

HOKKAIDŌ

Islands and Peninsulas: RIBUN-JIMA, RISHIRI-JIMA, SHIKOTAN-TŌ, TARAKU-TŌ, SHIBOTSU-SHIMA, NOSAPPU-MISAKI, NEMURO, KUNASHIRI-JIMA, SHIKOTAN-TŌ.

Major Cities and Towns: WAKKANAI, ESASHI, MOMBETSU, ABASHIRI, BIHORO, NOKKEUSHI, AKKESHI, KUSHIRO, POMBETSU, OBIHIRO, URAKAWAO, ERIMO-SAKI, SHIRIYA-SAKI, OMINATO, FUKUYAMA, OSENGEN-DAKE, OESASHI, HAKODATE, ESAN-SAKI, KOMAGA-TAKE, YURAPPU-DAKE, SETANA, KARIBA-YAMA, IWANAI, OTARU, SHAKOTAN-MISAKI, IWAMIZAWA, SAPPORO, TOMAKOMAI, POROSHIRIS-DAKE, FURANO, ASAHIGAWA, ASAHIDAKE, ASHIBETSU-DAKE, RUMOE, HABORO, NAYORO, TESHIO, YANGESHIRI-JIMA, TEURE-JIMA, OSHAMAMBE, MURORAN.

Mountains and Peaks: ASAHIDAKE 7513, ASHIBETSU-DAKE 5666, KARIBA-YAMA 4987, YURAPPU-DAKE 4193, OSENGEN-DAKE 13517.

Water Bodies: SŌYA-KAIKYŌ, RURUI-MISAKI, KUNASHIRI-SUIDO, NEBURO-KAIKYŌ, OTARU-WAN, UCHIURA-WAN, SIKOTSU-KO, KUTCHARO-KO, SUKESHI-WAN, OYASU-KO, OYASU-KO, OYASU-KO.

Other Labels: SHIRETOKO-MISAKI, RAUSU-DEKE 5449, TOMARI, SHIBOTSU-SHIMA, NOSAPPU-MISAKI, NEMURO, AKKESHI, KUSHIRO, POMBETSU, OBIHIRO, URAKAWAO, ERIMO-SAKI, SHIRIYA-SAKI, OMINATO, FUKUYAMA, OSENGEN-DAKE, OESASHI, HAKODATE, ESAN-SAKI, KOMAGA-TAKE, YURAPPU-DAKE, SETANA, KARIBA-YAMA, IWANAI, OTARU, SHAKOTAN-MISAKI, IWAMIZAWA, SAPPORO, TOMAKOMAI, POROSHIRIS-DAKE, FURANO, ASAHIGAWA, ASAHIDAKE, ASHIBETSU-DAKE, RUMOE, HABORO, NAYORO, TESHIO, YANGESHIRI-JIMA, TEURE-JIMA, OSHAMAMBE, MURORAN.

“Bold Action in the War Against Japan” (OPD, July/August 1943)

OPD noted that existing plans “involve costly step-by-step advances”
Examined “direct long-range attack” on Hokkaido, Luzon, or Formosa *without* first capturing the Marianas

Conclusion:
Best way to defeat Japan: invade Hokkaido then Honshu

Disadvantages of the New Guinea-Philippines-Ryukyus approach noted;
loss of surprise, great distance, concentrated Japanese defenders
("compressing the spring")

“The Defeat of Japan 12 Months After the Defeat of Germany”

CPS 86/2 (October 1943)

Main objective of invasion was Tokyo, but Hokkaido was closely studied as a staging base.

Three landings (8 divisions with 2 in reserve) envisaged in spring 1945.

“Hokkaido is the most promising first step in invasion and provides bases for bombing the most important Japanese islands at comparatively short range.”



US/UK Navy:
16 CV
11 CVL
85 CVE
19 BB

CPS 86/2 (October 1943)

Why Hokkaido?

Pro:

- Strategic and tactical surprise likely
- Less populated and strongly defended than Kyushu
- Easier for us to isolate, harder for enemy to reinforce
- Fewer Honshu airbases in range of Hokkaido than Kyushu
- Tokyo more easily approached from the north after landing in Tohoku

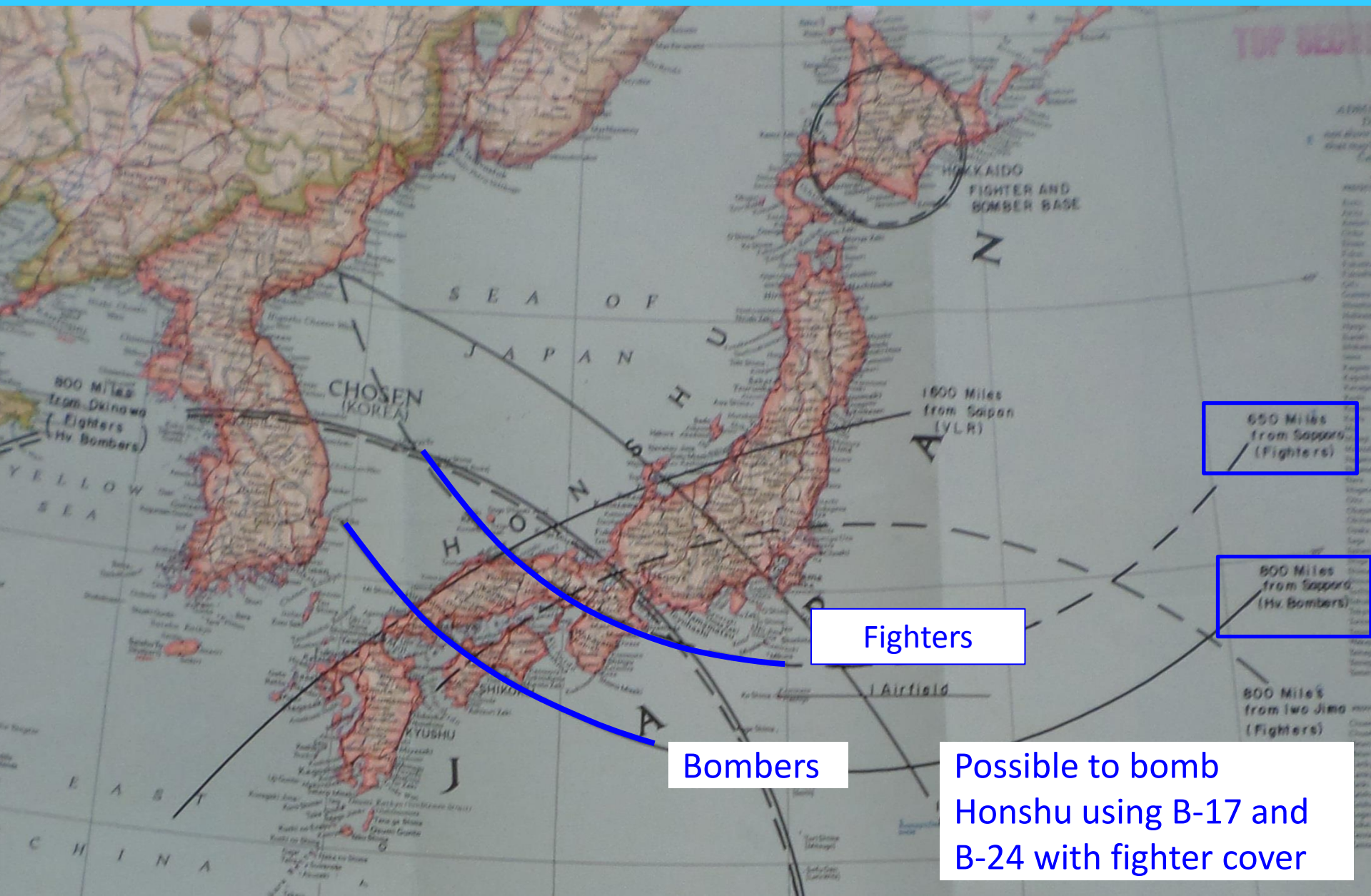
Con:

- Very long distance invasion, requires improved bases in North Pacific
- Weather, terrain
- Need to clear the island quickly in order to build airfields before winter
- “Fanatically hostile” population



CPS 86/2 (October 1943)

Why Hokkaido?



Fighters

Bombers

Possible to bomb
Honshu using B-17 and
B-24 with fighter cover

“Logistic Feasibility of Hokkaido Plan”

May 1944

- Off-road terrain suitable for armored and motor vehicles
- Troops can be maintained over the beaches
- “The Hokkaido plan can be supported logistically” – though everything depends on what else is happening at the time...



“Operations Subsequent to Iwo Jima”

OPD, October 1944

Kyushu vs. Hokkaido:

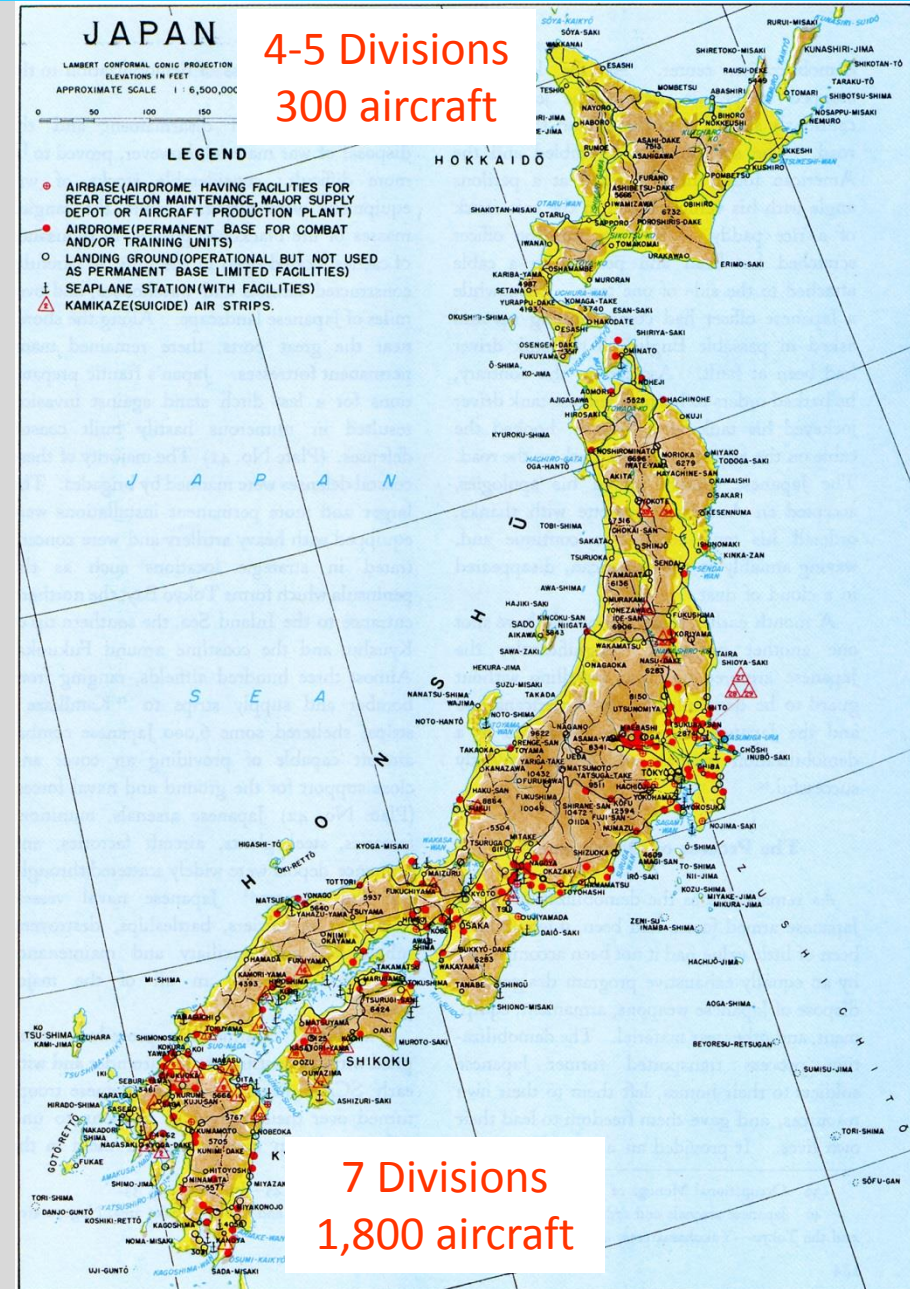
- “An operation against Kyushu is feasible in May, 1945”
- We will only take southern Kyushu; it will need a strong garrison
- Hokkaido has suitable beaches for landing, May to November
- Land with 7 divisions + 3 follow-up
- Troops and shipping are available
- Hokkaido can hold 20 bomber and 8 fighter groups; can be operational within 3 months after invasion
- Kyushu, only 14 groups, and would need more fighters for defense
- “Hokkaido would cost less for results obtained [than] Kyushu”
- “It is recommended that Hokkaido be occupied, 1 May 1945”



“Operations Subsequent to the Capture of Luzon”

OPD, October 1944

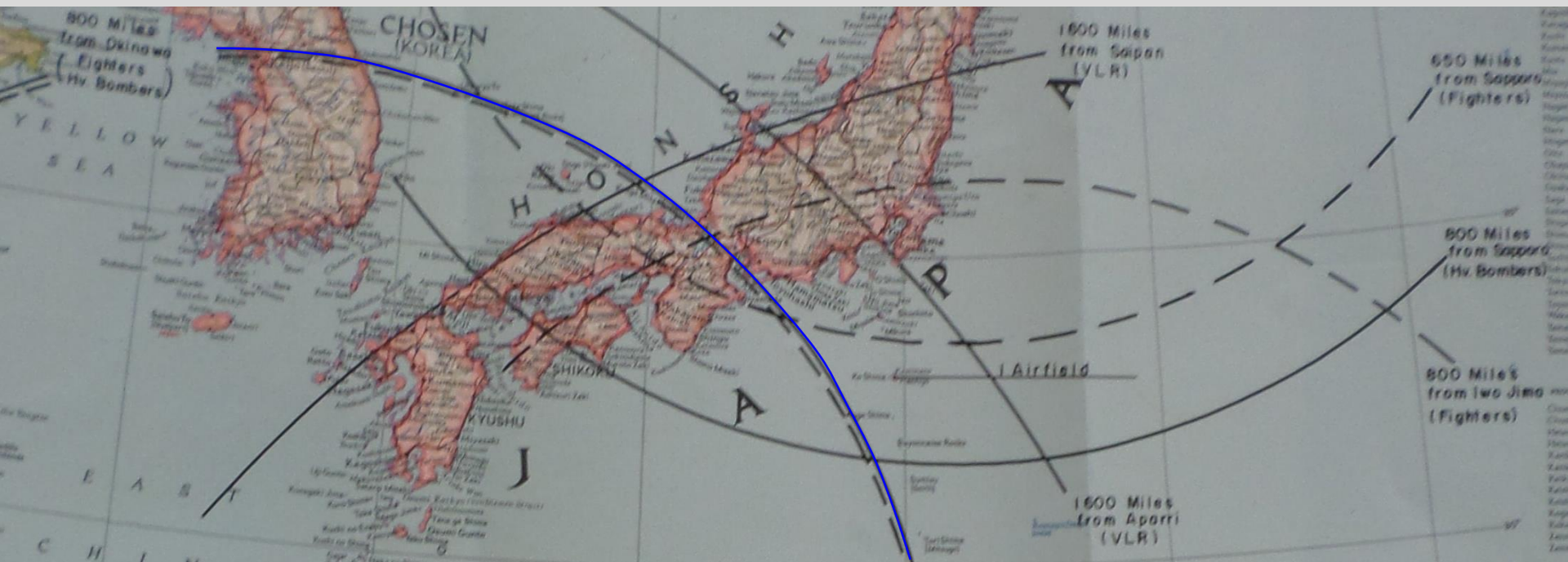
- Kyushu disadvantages:
 - More heavily defended
 - 160 airfields within range, vs. 14
 - Island divided by mountains
 - Few beaches, and only located in the south (predictable for defender)
- “Kyushu may involve us in protracted and heavy fighting” that delays Coronet
- Hokkaido disadvantages:
 - WX poor but not enough to preclude
 - Harder to reinforce by air
- Hokkaido advantages:
 - Surprise, weak defenses, easy to isolate, opens SLOC to Russia
- Troops are available (Armor/ASF issue)
- “It is recommended that Hokkaido be occupied, 1 May 1945” and CINCPAC should prepare plans at once



“Operations Subsequent to the Capture of Luzon”

JCS 924/5, October 1944

- “Hokkaido and Kyushu remain for consideration as primary intermediate objectives.”
- *Either one* feasible in May 1945
- Kyushu more suitable for intensifying the blockade of Japan and to base the fleet
- Kyushu can get better air and naval support from current/planned bases
- Hokkaido would achieve surprise, offer lesser resistance, and provide more airbases more quickly
- Hokkaido would divide the fleet, and lacks good anchorages
- **Kyushu selected** – but typhoon risk means can’t invade before September



“Operations Subsequent to the Capture of Luzon”

JCS 924/5, October 1944

- “In the event that Japanese defensive measures including reinforcement of Kyushu and Honshu require [further preliminary] operations both Formosa and Hokkaido would be suitable for that purpose.”
- “In that event, however, it is highly improbable that operations against Kyushu and Honshu could be executed in the fall and winter of 1945 as proposed.”
- “The operations against Formosa and Hokkaido are retained as contingent operations.”



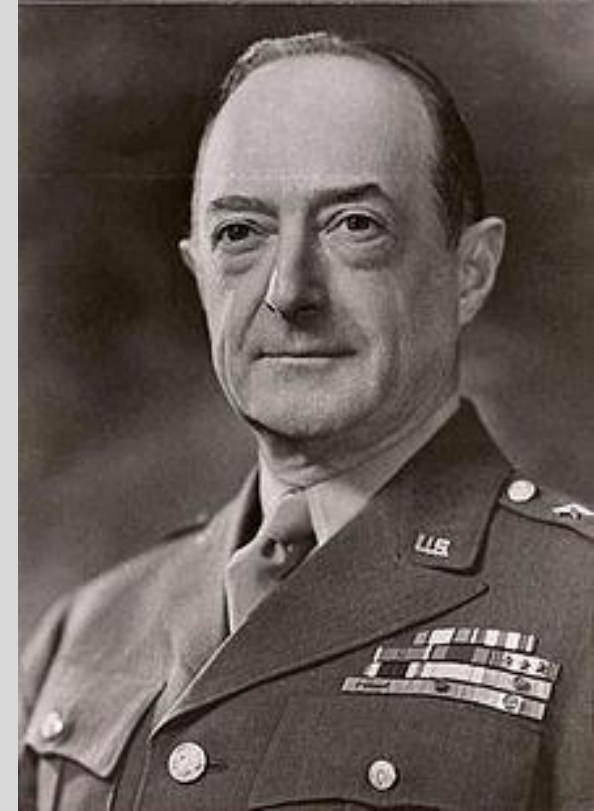
Reactions to JCS 924: GEN “Hap” Arnold, November 1944

- Final assault on Honshu requires intensive and sustained air preparation
- Bonins, Ryukyus, and China inadequate for this
- Kyushu cannot be seized until fall 1945, whereas Hokkaido can be occupied in May
- Hokkaido “would provide us, at an early date, with the additional air bases necessary to carry out the intensive and sustained air offensive against Honshu”
- More air could be brought to bear against Honshu in December if we invaded Hokkaido in May than if we invaded Kyushu in September
- Defeat of IJN means dividing the fleet would not endanger our LOCs
- Hokkaido would assure a LOC to Russia



Reactions to JCS 924: Commanding General, Pacific Ocean Areas

- Japanese have been observed shifting forces from Manchuria to Formosa, Philippines, Ryukyus, Bonins
- They expect an attack in the south
- Let's feint towards Kyushu, and then attack Hokkaido instead
- This would surprise and disorient the Japanese
- Once we take Hokkaido, "it would be impossible for the Japanese to shift the center of gravity of their forces which is now oriented towards the south and west."
- Hokkaido should be primary intermediate objective, and Kyushu secondary



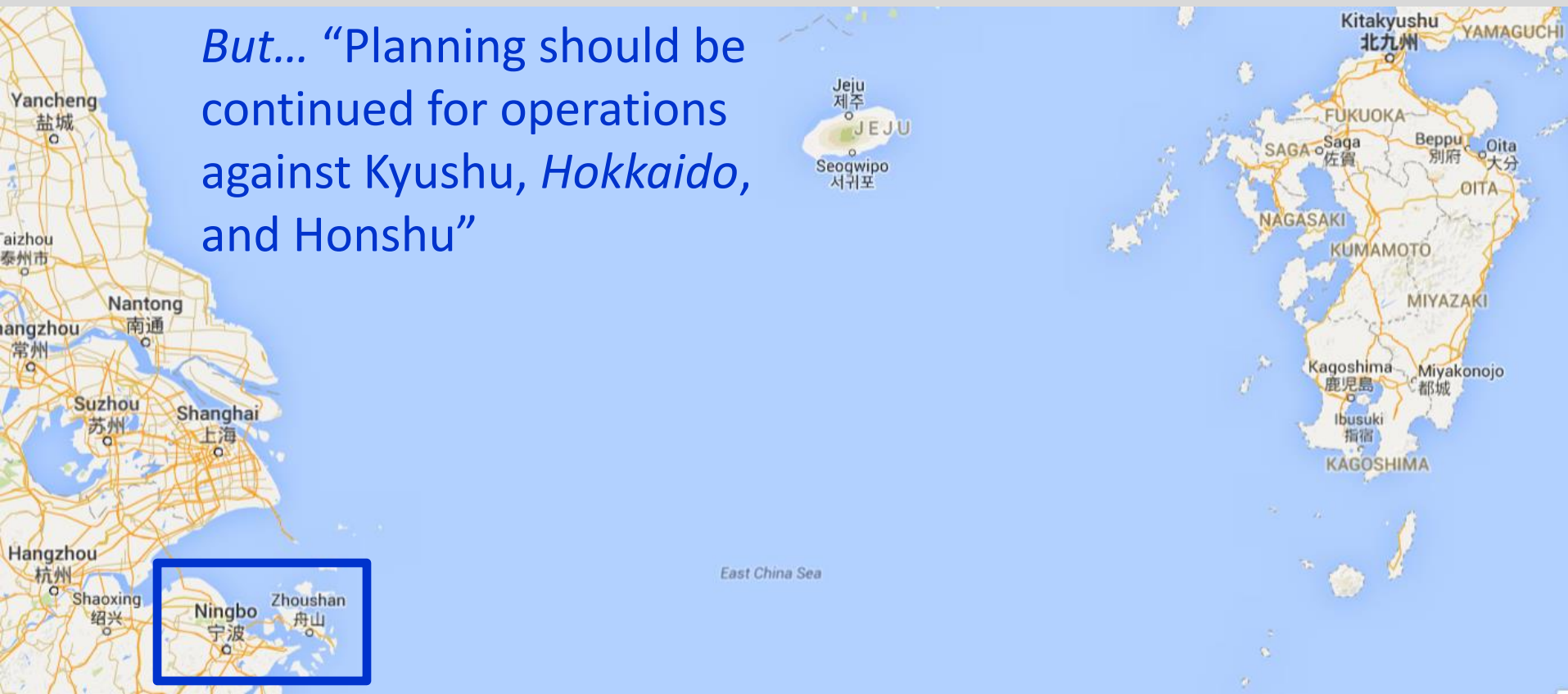
LTG Robert C. Richardson
ComGenPOA
("Nimitz's General")

“Alternates to the Campaign for Defeat of Japan”

Joint Staff Planners, January 1945

- Paper addresses what to do if Kyushu has to be postponed until 1946
- 9 divisions available for “limited operations” after Okinawa
- Recommends Ningpo-Chusan in September 1945 (then Kyushu ASAP)
- Subsequent operations against Hokkaido, Korea, Formosa, Hong Kong not feasible due to lack of forces

But... “Planning should be continued for operations against Kyushu, *Hokkaido*, and Honshu”



[illegible]

- Hokkaido perceived as a critical objective and militarily viable operation from 1943 through early 1945
- Decision for Kyushu heavily influenced by prior choices
- Disadvantages of Kyushu known over a year before Olympic
- Window of opportunity to decide on a Hokkaido landing in May 1945 was mid/late 1944
- In retrospect, probably should have done that instead of Okinawa
- Would the shock of an invasion have precipitated early surrender and avoided the atomic bombings and Soviet intervention?
- Planning continued, and Hokkaido remained under consideration in summer 1945
- Not as good in October 1945 as in May, but better than Kyushu?

Conclusions

- Roosevelt did not “only” want to win the war – he had very definite ideas about the post-war world
- He envisaged partnership with China until Tehran
- At Tehran and Yalta, Roosevelt proposed a vast role for the USSR in post-war Asia – Stalin naturally concurred
- So, the Soviets were “off-stage” in the Far East until August 1945, but nevertheless loomed large in Roosevelt’s thinking
- He did not get to execute his strategy, but he had laid the groundwork by the time he died – and in particular, Operation Milepost meant the Soviets could not be kept out of the war
- Meanwhile, by April 1945 plans and preparations were in place for an invasion of Kyushu in the autumn...

Questions?