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CREATING AN AMERICAN LAKE: UNITED STATES
IMPERIALISM, STRATEGIC SECURITY, AND THE PACIFIC BASIN,
1945-1947

By

Hal Marc Friedman

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

CREATING AN AMERICAN LAKE: UNITED STATES IMPERIALISM, STRATEGIC SECURITY, AND THE PACIFIC BASIN, 1945-1947

By

Hal Marc Friedman

US policy in the Pacific during the first two years of the postwar period constituted an Early Cold War example of "security imperialism," expansion which was undertaken to consolidate strategic control in the region and ensure that the US never again experienced a Pearl Harbor-type attack from East Asia. While not as great a political priority as policy toward Europe, the Middle East, or East Asia itself, American Pacific policy was nevertheless historically significant because it was the only regional US policy which temporarily considered territorial annexation as the solution to postwar security anxieties. American Pacific imperialism was also important from an origins of the Cold War perspective because the region became intertwined in global political issues between the United States and the Soviet Union. In effect, the Pacific Basin became an arena for soured relations between those two powers as they disagreed about the postwar management of the world.

Moreover, the author has found that policymakers, planners, and strategic thinkers thought of American "national security" in a much broader, multidimensional, and comprehensive manner than is commonly characterized by historians of American foreign relations. Disagreements with the Soviets over the postwar political status of the Pacific Islands north of the

Equator demonstrated to most American officials that national security or "strategic security" in the region entailed absolute physical and military control over the region by the United States. Achieving this desired level of security, however, also entailed coupling the Pacific Islanders' future loyalty to the United States by the imposition of mainland American economic and cultural practices and institutions.

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To Lisa, Jeffrey, and my two sets of parents.

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I have incurred many debts in the process of producing this dissertation. None of the individuals or organizations mentioned here is in any way responsible for the opinions asserted in this work. Any accountability for interpretations or errors is mine alone. However, each of the people cited assisted me in a very significant way.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife Lisa, my son Jeffrey, my parents, Irving and Elaine Friedman, and my in-laws, Ronald and Carolyn Sampsell. Each of them contributed tremendously to this work. My wife Lisa provided me with more support, comfort, and encouragement than I had a right to expect. She made life bearable through seven years of graduate study while she worked full-time, completed her own master's degree, and fulfilled the role of primary caregiver to our son. In every sense of the term, she provided me with an environment conducive to scholarly endeavor. My son Jeffrey furnished me with wondrous times of distraction, antics, love, and, most of all, perspective on the important things in life. I hope he will be able to read and appreciate this work about his country's past, his grandparents' generation, and his father's perspective on that time period.

To my parents, Irving and Elaine Friedman, I owe more than I can ever repay. I am firmly convinced that I am become a historian, in part at least, because of my parents' past. I realized in the process of researching, writing, and revising this dissertation that my fascination with American society in the 1940s began with their childhood stories about growing up during

the Great Depression and maturing during the Second World War. I inherited their sense of politics and history, their views of labor and work, and their encouragement to pursue an advanced education. More importantly, I learned more about their world by writing this dissertation. Every generation goes through traumas of one sort or another, but their generation went through some rather extraordinary ones in the nineteen thirties and forties. Re-searching primary documents from this era showed me that the search for security that engulfed policymakers, planners, and strategic thinkers in the 1940s also enveloped my parents and their generation. I now understand their everlasting concern for money and their fatigue, both of which were, I think, results of enduring the Depression and the war at an early age. At the least, this study provided me with a brief glimpse into their world and I now understand more about their choices and decisions than at any previous time in my life.

My in-laws, Ronald and Carolyn Sampsell, provided a special kind of support as well. Their love, kindness, advice, and hospitality will never be forgotten. Over the last seven years, they furnished me with a "sanctuary" from the stresses and strains of graduate study in history. More than that, they helped me with professional advice and instilled in me a confidence to hurdle obstacles and tackle problems.

The rest of my family I thank for their patience. I could not always fully explain to them what historians do, but they waited for the results anyway. I especially thank my sister Margaret, the first in the family to attend graduate school, for advice about making the transition from a working class to a professional class culture; my brother Alan, for introducing me to Professor John Bowditch, formerly Chair of the History Department at the University of Michigan, and for never doubting what I was trying to accom-

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Army Air Corps
AAF	Army Air Forces
ACNO	Assistant Chief of Naval Operations
AFPAC	Army Forces, Pacific
AFMIDPAC	Army Forces, Middle Pacific
AFSHRC	Alfred F. Simpson Historical Research Agency
AFWESPAC	Army Forces, Western Pacific
AGF	Army Ground Forces
ANZAC	Australia-New Zealand Pact
ASF	Army Service Forces
AUS	Army of the United States
BCOF	British Commonwealth Occupation Force
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
CINCNVFE	Commander-in-Chief, US Naval Forces Far East
CINCPAC	Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Command
CINCPACFLT	Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COMAF 20	Commanding Officer, 20th US Air Force
COMAIRDIV	Commander, 1st Air Division
COMGENAIR	Commanding General, Army Air Forces
COMINCH	Commander-in-Chief, US Fleet
COMNAVJAP	Commander of Naval Activities in Japan
C SPGAR USA	Commander, Special Purposes Garrison, U. S. Army
DCNO	Deputy Chief of Naval Operations
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
FEA	Foreign Economic Administration
FEAF	Far Eastern Air Forces
FECOM	Far East Command
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Library Institute
HUAC	House Un-American Affairs Committee
ITC	Island Trading Company
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff

JIS	Joint Intelligence Staff
JPWC	Joint Post-War Committee
JPS	Joint Staff Planners
JSSC	Joint Strategic Survey Committee
JUSSC	Joint US Strategic Committee
JWPC	Joint War Plans Committee
MARBO	Marianas-Bonins Command
MARC	Micronesia Area Research Center
MMRB	Modern Military Records Branch
NA	National Archives
NHC	Naval Historical Center
OA	Navy Operational Archives
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence
OPD	Operations and Plans Division
OPNAV	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
PAC DIV ATC	Pacific Division, Air Transport Command
PACUSA	Pacific Air Command, United States Army
PHILRYCOM	Philippines-Ryukyus Command
POA	Pacific Ocean Areas
PS	Philippine Scouts
RA	Regular Army
RFC	Reconstruction Finance Corporation
RG	Record Group
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SCAP	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan
SWNCC	State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee
SWPA	Southwest Pacific Ocean Area
TTPI	Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
UN	United Nations
USAFIK	United States Army Force in Korea
USAFNC	United States Army Forces, New Calendonias
USCC	United States Commercial Company
USNIP	United States Naval Institute <i>Proceedings</i>
USSD NF	Notter Files, United States State Department
USSTAF	United States Army Strategic Air Forces
VCNO	Vice Chief of the Naval Operations
WPBC	Western Pacific Base Command
ZI	Zone of the Interior

INTRODUCTION

Between 1945 and 1947, the United States embarked on an imperial course to guarantee its security in the postwar Pacific by taking direct control over several island groups conquered from Japan. American policymakers and planners were convinced by the perceived failure of the interwar Washington Treaty System, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the costly island-hopping campaign in the central and western Pacific, and rising tensions with the USSR that future American security in East Asia could only be ensured by consolidating American control over the Pacific Islands and turning the Pacific Basin into an "American lake."

American actions in the region constituted a unique chapter in American history for a number of reasons. First, these actions were inconsistent with contemporary American foreign policy toward the rest of the world, at least at the rhetorical level, since that policy stressed decolonization and an abstention from "territorial aggrandizement." The Pacific represents the only region of the world where the United States deviated from its wartime political pledge not to obtain direct physical control over foreign territory. Accordingly, American policy toward the Pacific Islands provides historians with a means by which to gauge the wartime rhetoric of cooperative internationalism against the postwar realities of great power competition and interest.

Second, US policy toward the Pacific Basin represents an exception to the notion of a postwar American-led multilateral attempt at obtaining stability in the region. Far from pursuing stability through collective security arrangements, great power cooperation, or the free flow of trade and information, the United States in fact sought to create a closed and unilateral sphere of influence in the Pacific and strove to wring as many military, political, and economic advantages from the area as it could secure.

Third, American Pacific policy warrants attention because it illustrated a broadened concept of "national security" or "strategic security" interests. As in previous periods of US history, American officials in the 1940s assumed that the world would be a safer place if other nations and peoples adopted American political, economic, and cultural institutions and values. Strategic interests and strategic security *vis-à-vis* the international community were composed in a broad multidimensional context, the various strands of which were inseparable to policymakers and planners. American plans for the defense of the Pacific Islands, for example, entailed building a permanent system of military bases to ensure physical security in the region. Those plans, however, also assumed that a system of colonial political administration, economic reorganization along quasi-capitalistic lines, and the importation of mainstream American cultural values would be equally necessary to create an "American lake effect" in the postwar Pacific.

The Concepts

By "imperialism", I mean an unequal political relationship in which a great power attempts to acquire control over a less powerful nation, region, or people in order to satisfy some perceived interest. This "control" does

not necessarily have to be direct or even territorial in nature, though in the case of the islands taken from Japan direct control was the form opted for by the United States. This type of control, however, does entail the loss of autonomy by the less powerful party or, in the case of the Pacific Islands, a continued absence of autonomy since the beginning of the modern age. I have labelled US actions "imperialistic" because the relationship was so glaringly unequal and because the United States exploited that imbalance in order to obtain specific advantages for the postwar period.

These "advantages" need to be clarified. Imperialism by a great power does not have to entail economic exploitation *per se*. Empires throughout history have attempted to extend their control for a variety of reasons and US actions in the late 1940s were no different. US consolidation over the Pacific Basin, as the following chapters will demonstrate, did not take place for purposes of economic gain, but for reasons of strategic gain. Imperialism in this context meant comprehensive physical control in all of its political, economic, and cultural dimensions because American policymakers' ideas about the postwar Pacific Basin encompassed a broad range of measures to ensure US strategic security in a number of situations.

Nor do I mean to imply that imperialism as a great power phenomenon was anything unique to the post-1945 period of US history. The United States sought to guarantee its future national security *vis-à-vis* East Asia as any other great power would have done after experiencing defeats like those suffered in the winter of 1941-1942. The United States succeeded in guaranteeing its future security at the expense of less powerful neighbors in 1945, but this was nothing new in the history of US international relations. Scholars, in fact, have been studying the phenomenon of American imperialism for quite some time.

There have been at least two schools of thought on the concept of an American imperialism. One group of scholars has written about American imperialism as an everyday fact of great power life which was inherent in a balance of power world. Gilbert Chinard, for instance, labelled Thomas Jefferson's policy of expansion into Louisiana in 1803 as "protective imperialism," meaning that Jefferson saw his actions as a defensive expansionism which was undertaken to ensure US security in North America against European colonial powers. A quarter of a century later, Gerald Stourzh found the same idea relevant to Benjamin Franklin's ideas about colonial and US expansion in North America and in the 1940s Eleanor Lattimore employed the term "security imperialism" to describe US actions in the Pacific and Soviet actions in eastern Europe, respectively. This phenomenon entailed great power expansion for purposes of national security, not economic exploitation, and, according to Lattimore, the label of "national security" allowed the US and the USSR to realize their strategic goals in the postwar world while continuing to criticize the western European powers for failing to grant independence to their colonies. More recently, historians such as David Pletcher and Thomas Hietala have also described US imperialism as an outgrowth of great power politics and insecurity.¹

William Appleman Williams and the Wisconsin School also used "imperialism" as a central focus of their critique of American diplomatic his-

¹ For the idea of "protective imperialism," see Gilbert Chinard, *Thomas Jefferson: The Apostle of Americanism* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1929), 396-424; and Gerald Stourzh, *Benjamin Franklin and American Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 251-252. For the notion of "security imperialism," see Eleanor Lattimore, "Pacific Ocean or American Lake?" *Far Eastern Survey* 14 (November 7, 1945): 313-316; see also David Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1973); and Thomas Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1985).

tory, but with a very different emphasis. Most of Williams' works, as well as those of his students, not only narrowly defined American imperialism as economic in nature, but employed the word as a moral judgement on US policymakers and American society. I have tried to avoid moral judgements concerning this time period or any other in US history. The evidence presented below has convinced me that US actions were unavoidable given the history of the interwar and wartime periods, the perceived failure of the Washington Treaty System, and the trauma of Pearl Harbor and the island hopping campaign in the Pacific War. By "unavoidable", I do not mean to argue that the history of the Pacific Basin between 1945 and 1947 was "inevitable" in any way. I do believe, however, that American policymakers and planners, given their experiences, did not see any alternative to US expansion into the Pacific and consolidation over the region. Accordingly, I have tried to treat US actions less in a context of moral judgement over economic aggressiveness and more as a historical investigation of the sources of US strategic insecurity. While my purpose has been less to judge than to learn, I am still convinced that US actions, in spite of the seemingly innocent motives on the part of the participants, did constitute "imperialism" as Chinard, Lattimore, Stourzh, Pletcher, Louis, and Hietala define the term.²

The idea that American imperialism in the postwar Pacific was a multidimensional phenomenon is linked to the concept of "strategic security." The term was coined by William Roger Louis and has been employed by

² New Left historiography is voluminous. Three examples of the history of American expansionism from an economic determinist perspective include William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972); Walter LaFeber, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations: The American Search for Opportunity, 1865-1913* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Thomas McCormick, *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

Emily Rosenberg and Hietala in describing the history of American expansionism. Louis, Rosenberg, and Hietala have all argued that American expansion and concepts of "national security" or "strategic security" have traditionally meant much more than just obtaining military and physical control over a region. All three historians have demonstrated with primary documents that nineteenth and twentieth century American elites and commoners concerned with providing for American security believed that the economic and cultural control over a region was intimately and inseparably linked to its physical control. Thus, the republic's strategic security depended not only on westward expansion to guarantee the nation from direct military attack by foreign powers, but also on conducting foreign relations in a way which ensured American economic prosperity and upheld the nation's image as a cultural role model for the world.³

This intimate connection between American foreign policy and the domestic polity is not a subscription to New Left ideas about the history of American foreign relations. Similar to their overconcentration on the economic dimension of US international relations, the Revisionists have concentrated too heavily on the role of business elites in the formulation of foreign policy. American strategic policymakers and planners have historically not needed the influence of big business or any other domestic group to argue for "the national interest." The post-World War Two period was no exception and US officials needed very little encouragement from any group

³ See Hietala, *Manifest Design*, passim; Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); and William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945* (Oxford, England: The Clarendon Press, 1977).

outside of the government when arguing for the creation of an American lake in the postwar Pacific.⁴

While this work is not Revisionist in nature, its perception of foreign and domestic policy linkages does come closer to Michael Hogan's ideas about "corporatism" and Melvynn Leffler's idea about "national security". Still, the work cannot be classified as corporatist because I have not concentrated on studying American domestic institutions *vis-à-vis* foreign policymaking. Nor have I explored domestic politics to the degree that Leffler thought necessary in his study of the early Cold War. I have found both the Hogan and Leffler schools of thought to be extremely useful in formulating my own ideas about American foreign relations. However, I have been less concerned with formally labelling my work and more concerned with studying continuities and changes in American strategic thought and perceptions of the Pacific Basin.

At the same time, I feel it necessary to warn the reader that although this work is concerned with American actions in an international arena, I have not set out to write a work of international history. The dissertation focuses solely on the actions, concerns, and policies of the United States government and I have written about American ideas for the postwar Pacific in the context of American history. Though this dissertation is about Cold War history and American friction with other great powers in the late 1940s, I see American strategic consolidation of the postwar Pacific less as an episode in the history of international relations and more as the most recent instance of American westward expansion.

⁴ *Ibid.*

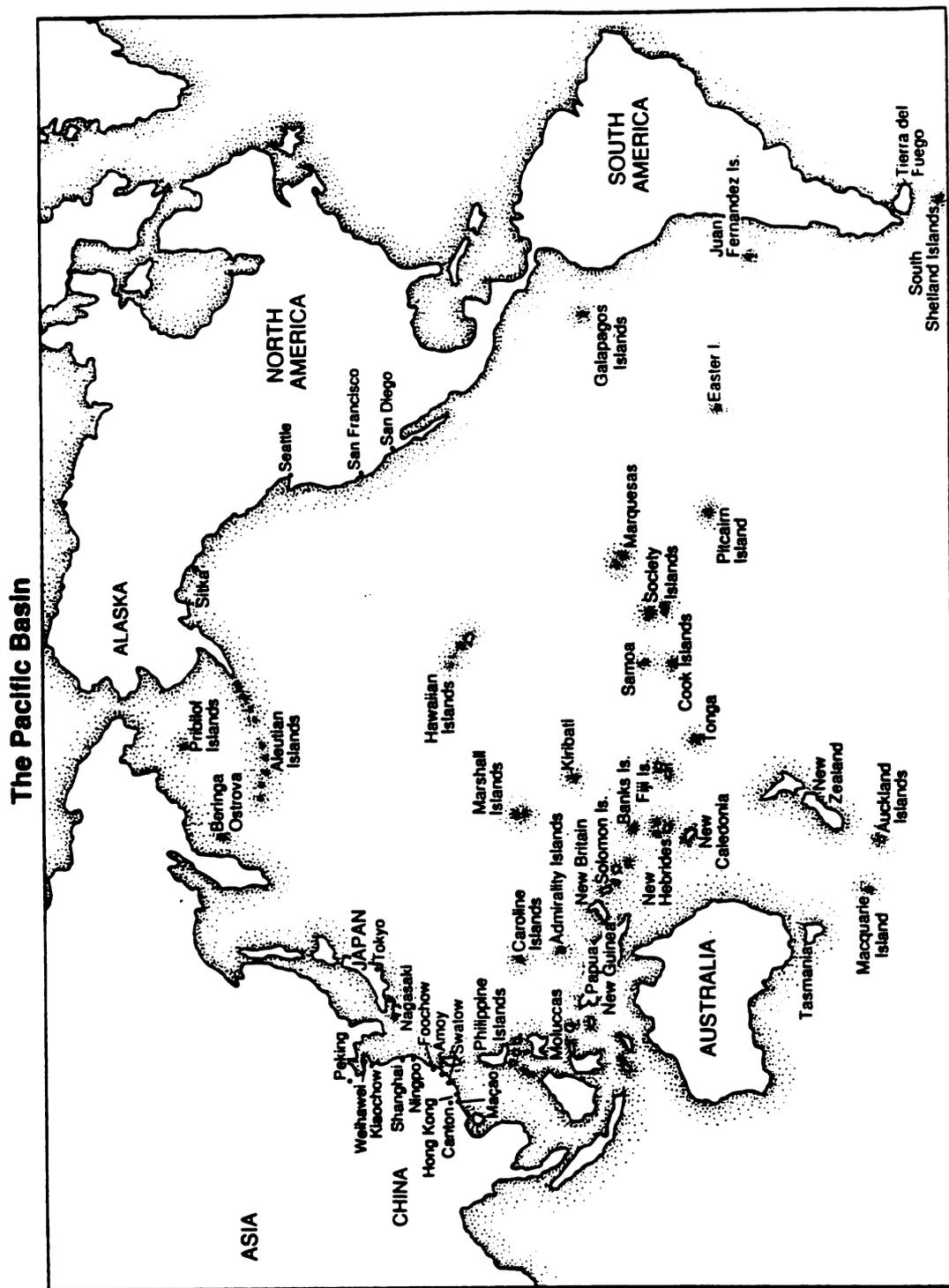


Figure 1. The Pacific Basin (From Arrell Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise*, University of New Mexico Press, 1993)

Finally, a word is necessary about my definition of the "Pacific Basin" (See Figure 1). Initially, this project was concerned with researching American naval policy toward the Micronesian Islands. The Navy's planning for the postwar Pacific depended most heavily on the permanent control of these islands, since the islands' key geographic location combined with the strength of American naval and airpower in 1945 equated, in official minds at least, with American dominance over the entire Pacific and significant influence in East Asian affairs.

I very quickly discovered, however, that strategic planners within the cabinet, Congress, both military services, the State Department, and the Interior Department all perceived the entire Pacific Basin as one integrated strategic physical entity. Accordingly, I found it necessary to broaden the scope of the study so that it encompassed American strategic perceptions of the entire region, rather than just the Navy's ideas about Micronesia. In short, a study of American strategic policy toward the Pacific meant investigating, to some extent, policy toward other major island groups such as the Philippines, the Ryukyus, the Bonins, the Volcanoes, and various South Pacific islands, as well as the US territories of Hawaii and Alaska.

I also found it necessary to explore how policy toward the Pacific Basin interacted with US plans for mainland East Asia since, in the words of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) themselves, the Pacific and East Asia had to be considered as one "inseparable" strategic entity for planning purposes.⁵

⁵ See Enclosure Draft of "Memorandum For The Secretary Of War And The Secretary Of The Navy," part of "Type Of Government To Be Established On Various Pacific Islands," Joint Chiefs of Staff (hereafter cited as JCS) 1524/2, November 15, 1945, file 8-21-45 sec. 1, JCS Geographic File, 1942-1945, Combined and Joint Chiefs of Staff (hereafter cited as CCS) 014 Pacific Ocean Area, Records of the Combined and Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 218, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as RG 218, NA).

The emphasis on base locations changed between 1945 and 1947 and it appears, on the surface at least, that the shift was westward toward East Asia as the United States became more heavily involved in Japanese reconstruction and Southeast Asian affairs. Still, there is some evidence that American bases in Micronesia continued to be perceived by some members of the JCS as the main line of postwar US defense as late as the summer of 1947. Micronesia, moreover, retains a special significance in this study since it was the Pacific Island group which was most heavily integrated into the American polity and which continued to be perceived by policymakers and planners as the "last ditch" defense line for American interests in the Pacific if the East Asian positions were "lost" to Soviet or "Soviet-inspired" aggression.

Historiography

The history of the United States in the Pacific in the 1940s has traditionally been set in the context of Pacific War naval history, the origins of the Cold War, or postwar American colonial administration.⁶ Very little of the historiography has dealt with events in the context of American imperialism, multidimensional strategic security, or territorial expansion-

⁶ For one of numerous examples of Pacific War U.S. naval history, see Clark G. Reynolds, *The Fast Carriers: The Forging of an Air Navy* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1992); for a contemporary view and a more recent view of the origins of the Cold War in the Pacific, see Earl S. Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost: American Strategy in Guam & Micronesia* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1951); and Lester J. Foltos, "The New Pacific Barrier: America's Search for Security in the Pacific, 1945-1947," *Diplomatic History* 13 (Summer 1989): 317-342. Finally, Commander Dorothy E. Richard, USNR, *United States Naval Administration Of The Trust Territory Of The Pacific Islands*, Volumes 1-3 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1957-1963); Arnold G. Fisch, Jr., *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands, 1945-1950* (Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center for Military History, 1988); and Harold F. Nufer, *Micronesia Under American Rule: An Evaluation of the Strategic Trusteeship, 1947-1977* (Hicksville, New York: Exposition Press, 1978) are just three of several accounts which discuss the American administration of the Pacific Islands but do not treat the subject as a recent example of American territorial expansion.

ism.⁷ The historiographical background for this dissertation, therefore, is largely derived from the works of scholars with more definitive opinions about the history of American imperialism and expansionism. At first glance, historians Samuel Flagg Bemis, William Roger Louis, and Emily Rosenberg do not seem to have a thing in common. Yet all three of these scholars, as well as others cited below, have written about American expansionism within a context of "strategic" interests which entailed military, political, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Bemis, for example, argued in numerous books that Americans undertook continental and hemispheric expansion from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries as a means to guarantee their security in the New World. To Bemis, American security did not just mean military security. To be sure, continental and hemispheric expansion was carried out to secure the republic from European encroachment. But "strategic" interests and security also meant ensuring that the mode of government over the entire hemisphere was republican in nature. In addition, Bemis subscribed to the view that the political economy of the other hemispheric nations should conform to the American version of liberal capitalism and free trade and that the United States would only be truly secure when the other nations in Northern and Latin America subscribed to the same cultural values of a middle class based American democracy.⁸

⁷ For an exception to this historiographical rule, see Arrell Morgan Gibson, with the assistance of John S. Whitehead, *Yankees in Paradise: The Pacific Basin Frontier* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

⁸ See Samuel Flagg Bemis, *Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1923); idem., *Pinckney's Treaty: America's Advantage from Europe's Distress, 1783-1800* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1926); idem., *The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1943); and idem., *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949). See also Frederick Merk, *The Monroe Doctrine and American Expansion, 1843-1849* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966) and

To be sure, Bemis was xenophobically moralistic and nationalistic. He repeatedly denied charges of American imperialism and he argued that the US was especially suited to "develop" the American Southwest and Latin America because of its Anglo-Saxon roots. Moreover, Bemis illustrated that he was a product of his time by fully subscribing to the racist idea that African-Americans and Latin Americans were "underdeveloped" because of their origin in tropical climates. Yet in spite of Bemis' nationalistic and racist rhetoric, his idea that expansion was undertaken for comprehensive military, political, economic, and cultural purposes provided this author with an intellectual starting point since he was one of the first historians of American foreign relations to write about "strategic" interests and security in a comprehensive, multidimensional context.⁹

In recent years, several other historians have illustrated that American territorial expansion and imperial activity exhibited strong characteristics of continuity concerning physical control, economic penetration, and cultural aggrandizement as inseparable strands of a multidimensional national security policy. Richard White, for instance, demonstrated that Anglo-Americans not only viewed American Indians in the 1780s and 1790s as military threats but considered them cultural threats as well because of the Indians' differing ideas about land usage, economic livelihood, and spiritual worship.¹⁰

Thomas Hietala also illustrated that Americans in the 1840s pursued territorial expansion in a broad context of political, economic, and cultural

Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation*, for two viewpoints that American expansion, while imperialistic and aggressive, was viewed by contemporary Americans as a defensive move to achieve security in a hostile, balance of power international environment.

⁹ See especially Bemis, *Latin American Policy of the United States*, passim.

¹⁰ See Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 366-523.

security. Hietala asserted that expansionists in the late Jacksonian period, much like expansionists in the 1790s and 1890s, pursued perceived national interests in aggressive and imperial ways, but viewed their aggressive behavior in an anxious, defensive mindset and absolutely denied that US actions were imperialistic, aggressive, or hypocritical.¹¹

Emily Rosenberg has asserted that since 1890 at least the United States has sought to provide for its security as much through economic and cultural expansion as by military and diplomatic means. Rosenberg argued that after 1890 the highest levels of the United States government were increasingly populated and influenced by a group of elites which she labelled the "liberal developmentalists."¹² Liberal developmentalists were white, male, Anglo-Saxon Protestants who believed that the United States had become the most successful example of republicanism because of its limited government, promotion of free enterprise and free trade, dominant Protestant religion, civil liberties, and free exchange of information and culture. Rosenberg argues that the liberal developmentalists conveniently ignored instances in American history when these criteria were not met by American society and that they increasingly grew to believe that the United States was the shining example of a modern, prosperous industrial republic which other nations naturally envied and hoped to replicate.¹³

Far from a New Left conspirational thesis about late nineteenth century American expansion, Rosenberg's book counters the Revisionist claim that expansion was a result of purely commercial motives and big business influence on government. Instead, Rosenberg offers convincing evidence

¹¹ See Hietala, *Manifest Design*, vii-xiv and 255-272.

¹² See Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 3-13.

¹³ *Ibid.*

that the liberal developmentalists were a group of highly educated and capable policymakers and planners who sought to provide for American strategic interests and security through the exportation of American ideas about limited government, liberal capitalism and free trade, and middle class values and who did so without prompting from big business circles. Most importantly, Rosenberg demonstrates that Americans sought overseas expansion and security through this comprehensive pattern, yet they did not or would not recognize that it was imperialistic, hypocritical, and self-righteous.¹⁴

A study done by Frank Costigliola also provided context and intellectual direction for this dissertation. American rule over much of the Pacific Basin was direct, but Costigliola demonstrated that America's informal hegemony over Europe in the 1920s was just as multidimensional as American formal hegemony over the Pacific in the 1940s. Costigliola argues that American policy toward Europe between 1919 and 1933 constituted a search for order, stability, and security in a multidimensional framework of political, economic, and cultural strands. According to Costigliola, American "security" was embodied as much in the exportation and adoption of American material culture to Europe as it was in arms control agreements, reparations, and debt restructuring. The more Europe adopted forms of American political, economic, and cultural ideas, the more secure American policymakers felt about the postwar world they were trying to reshape.¹⁵

A multidimensional framework of American security in the 1920s was also the focus of Akira Iriye's recent study of the interwar period. A

¹⁴ Ibid., 229-234.

¹⁵ See Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919-1933* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1984).

major proponent of the "new cultural history" of international relations, Iriye also asserted that American foreign relations from 1913 to 1945 was conducted in terms of political, economic, and cultural dimensions, all of which culminated in an American national security policy. Iriye takes his argument one step further, however, by asserting that the cultural dimension was the most important of the three since ideas were the main motivator of action in the political and economic realms. Moreover, he argues that the ideology of Wilsonianism was far from a transient phenomenon in the history of American foreign relations and was, in fact, a product of the "guiding light" of twentieth century American foreign relations.¹⁶

Work done by William R. Braisted has added to the historiographical context in which this work was completed. In a two-volume series, Braisted argued that studying the United States Navy in the Pacific in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not simply a matter of exploring naval policy, since naval and foreign policies could not be separated. In fact, Braisted's work is an excellent example of how American strategic policy and imperialism in the prewar Pacific demanded an examination of several executive departments, their various policies toward the region, and the region's interdependence with other areas of the world.¹⁷

In a similar vein, Lester Brune argued that American military and diplomatic policies should not be studied separately. Exploring the development of American seapower, airpower, and diplomatic policy from 1898 to 1941, Brune asserted that American policy in any period should be more

¹⁶ See Akira Iriye, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations, Volume III: the Globalizing of America, 1913-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁷ See William R. Braisted, *The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897-1909* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1958); and idem., *The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1971).

properly scrutinized as "national security" policy and that military and diplomatic factors could not be divorced. Melvyn Leffler continued this line of analysis and significantly elaborated on this thesis for the interwar and early Cold War periods by asserting that studies of national security policy should entail investigating both domestic and international policies since American policy was so significantly integrated in this fashion.¹⁸

The idea that strategic interests comprised political, economic and cultural dimensions was also enunciated by William Roger Louis in regard to US wartime planning for the postwar Pacific. Writing in the context of British decolonization, Louis specifically asserted that American policy toward the Pacific in the 1940s was not only meant to guarantee military security in the region but that it was also meant to ensure a postwar economic dominance of East Asia. Demonstrating that the idea of an exploitable market in East Asia was a fallacy, Louis nevertheless illustrated that American planners hoped to use Micronesia as a system of military bases to create a secure "commercial gateway" to the fabled markets of East Asia and to dominate that region for whatever economic gain might be achieved.¹⁹ Furthermore, Louis perceived a cultural aspect to American policy by citing racial arguments made by American policymakers and planners about maintaining white dominance in the postwar Pacific and East Asia. In effect, Louis illustrated that Bemis' criteria of American-style republican government, free trade capitalism, and Anglo-Saxon cultural dominance not only

¹⁸ See Lester H. Brune, *The Origins Of American National Security Policy: Sea Power, Air Power And Foreign Policy, 1900-1941* (Manhattan, Kansas: MA/AH Publishing, Sunflower University Press, 1981); Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Elusive Quest: America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security, 1919-1933* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); and idem., *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992).

¹⁹ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 68-69.

applied to the Western Hemisphere before 1941 but to the Pacific and East Asia after 1945 as well. More importantly, Louis' evidence dispels Bemis' assertion that the United States was innocent of any imperialistic actions or thoughts.²⁰

Finally, Robert Pollard has gone far in dispelling the Revisionist thesis that American policy was solely economically motivated after 1945 and merely sought to cajole a wartorn world into a global American hegemonic system which was dominated by a domestic American business class. Pollard argues that American policymakers from 1945 to 1950 tried to employ US economic power to reconstruct the world along free trade lines, but that this "economic containment" was undertaken, in their eyes, in a primarily defensive mindset. Pollard's argument, based more thoroughly on primary documents than most New Left theses, asserts that economic policy was just one aspect of a multidimensional national security policy and that it was more a reflection of national insecurity than an example of social class greed.²¹

Similarly, my research has led me to conclude that American policy toward the postwar Pacific was multidimensional in nature. American officials perceived the area's importance to US strategic interests for military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural reasons. More importantly, US actions in the postwar Pacific were the exception to the rule in 1945. Similar to policies in previous periods and policy toward the other regions of the world in 1945, Pacific policy was multidimensional, but it was not grounded in free trade doctrine or rhetoric about national self-determination for non-

²⁰ Ibid., *passim*.

²¹ See Robert A. Pollard, *Economic Security And The Origins Of The Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 1-9.

whites. There were no pretenses made when it came to American control over Micronesia. Collective security, free trade, and decolonization were foresaken for international trusteeship terms in the United Nations which virtually amounted to unilateral annexation, economic integration, and cultural penetration.

Synopsis

Chapter One of the dissertation will briefly describe the Pacific Basin. Concentrating on the geographic and cultural realities of the region, its strategic significance to great powers in the modern era, and the effect of that imperial competition on the indigenous population, this chapter will attempt to set the context and prepare the reader for post-1945 events and American policy.

Chapter Two will investigate the effects of the Japanese Pearl Harbor raid and the defeats of 1941-1942 on American strategic thinking about the postwar Pacific, especially the changing strategic role for island bastions in postwar American planning for the region. Unlike the interwar period, when civilians in the cabinet and State Department were willing to pursue naval arms control and Pacific demilitarization as a strategy of national security, there was a consensus between civilians and military officials after 1945 that mobile forces were the first line of defense in the region and that even unfortified islands had military potential and needed to be occupied by the US in order to deny them to other powers.

Chapter Three will focus on illustrating the growing American perception of the Soviet Union as the primary strategic threat in the Pacific and East Asia. As Japan receded as a potential postwar enemy, the Soviet Union began to take on long-term significance as the "new enemy" in the

Pacific. More than that, however, American worst case scenario planning in Washington and Tokyo in 1946 and 1947 demonstrates that the Soviet Union was viewed as an aggressive power in East Asia, much as it was in Europe and the Middle East at the same time, and that American officials equated its postwar capabilities and intentions with those of prewar imperial Japan. Accordingly, postwar plans for the defense of the Pacific suggest that planners saw a repetition of the winter of 1941-1942 sometime in the future and continued to attach importance to retaining control over islands in the North and South Pacific so as to maintain bases from which to resist "inevitable" Soviet aggression.

Chapter Four will explore the limitations of collective security in American policy toward the Pacific Basin between 1945-1947. American ideas about a unilateral occupation of Japan and US policies toward Micronesia and the other major Pacific island groups went far to subvert wartime internationalist principles upon which the UN was based. American lobbying for international recognition to a unilaterally constructed postwar Pacific also brought about a significant amount of great power disagreement over the future of conquered territories and colonial possessions and provides historians with an early postwar example of American lack of confidence in collective security, postwar great power cooperation, and the United Nations as an arbiter of international security issues.

Chapters Five and Six will use government documents and contemporary literature to explore American ideas about the economic administration and exploitation of the region and American attitudes toward other races and cultures in the Pacific and East Asia. Since the United States actually administered Micronesia in a long-term fashion, these two chapters will focus heavily, though not exclusively, on events in Micronesia. Re-

search indicates that American policymakers and planners perceived economic and cultural penetration of the islands to be central methods by which to turn the Pacific into an American lake, ensure the islanders' future loyalty to the United States, and ease American administration over the area. In turn, the evidence also indicates that the Pacific was one region where American protestations of reconstructing the world upon pillars of free trade and national self-determination for non-whites was mere rhetoric and was never even attempted.

Chapter One

Setting the Context: The Pacific Basin as a Geographic, Strategic, and Human Entity

The Geographic and Cultural Setting

The Pacific Basin contains the largest single body of water on Earth and it is also the largest single region on Earth, covering over one-third of the Earth's surface. The "Basin" begins in northeast Asia at Siberia, works its way down to Japan, the Korean Peninsula, and the Chinese coast, and then proceeds into southeast Asia and the Indonesian Archipelago. The Basin then winds "down and around" to Australia and New Zealand and into its southeastern corner toward South America. Moving up the opposite "face of the clock," the rim of the Basin then concludes on the shores of central America, the continental United States, Canada, and Alaska.¹ However, the reader should realize the difference between the "Pacific Rim," just described, and the "Pacific Basin," which more properly is the Rim plus the interior body of water and the over twenty-five thousand islands and atolls for which the Pacific is so well-known.²

¹ Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise*, 14.

² *Ibid.*, 17; and Douglas Oliver, *The Pacific Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 3-17.

The major island groups of the Pacific Basin, excluding the large islands of Australia, New Guinea, and New Zealand, have been labelled Oceania and are subdivided into Micronesia, ("small islands" in Greek), Melanesia ("the black islands"), and Polynesia ("many islands") (See Figure 2). Consisting of the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana Islands and jutting strategically toward Japan and northeast Asia, Micronesia has figured prominently in this study because it figured prominently in great power strategic planning over the last century.³

Micronesia extends over an area larger than the continental United States, although total land area is smaller than the size of the state of Rhode Island. More important than its size, it represents a cultural grouping of people whom Douglas Oliver refers to as "Austronesians", people originating in southeastern China and Taiwan, speaking languages with East Asian roots, and migrating into the Philippines, Indonesia, the Malay Peninsula, Indochina, and the Marianas and Yap about five thousand years ago. Belonging to kinship units based on matrilineal descent, the Micronesians were heavily influenced by their East Asian origins, especially in language, the use of pottery and looms, and maritime prowess in exploring and settling the tiny islands north of the Equator. Micronesian canoes, for instance, were noted for their sturdy construction and Micronesian economic livelihood centered on significant exploitation of the marine surroundings.⁴

Melanesia consists of the Admiralty Islands, the Bismarck Archipelago, the Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides Islands (now Vanuatu), New Caledonia, the Santa Cruz Islands, and the Fiji Islands. The original inhabi-

³ See Roger Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia: A Story of the Consolidation of U.S. Rule in the Pacific* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), 4-7.

⁴ See Oliver, *Pacific Islands*, 12-16; and I.C. Campbell, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1989), 23-26.

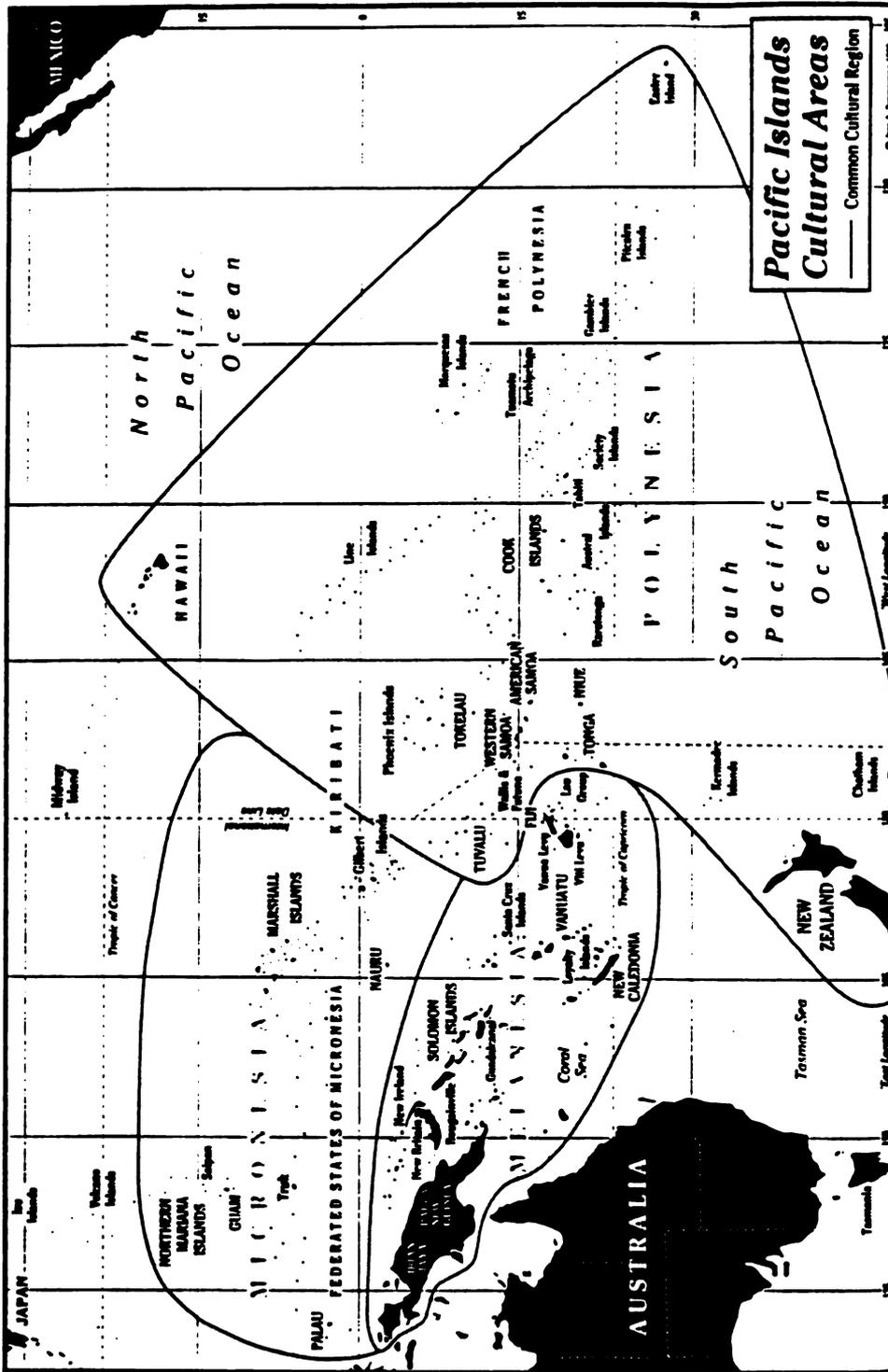


Figure 2. Pacific Islands Cultural Areas (From John Dorrance, *The United States and the Pacific Islands*, Praeger Publishers, an imprint of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc. Westport, CT, 1992)

tants included "Sundanoids", people who migrated to the islands from mainland southeast Asia and the Philippines and who subsisted on hunting, gathering, and later horticulture. The Sundanoids were later joined by Austronesians who had taken a more southerly route out of the Philippines than the people who settled in Micronesia. Given the interaction of the two peoples, Melanesia has been characterized by its diversity of languages, Austronesian and Papuan, its various forms of social organization, its subsistence material cultures, and its small, fragmented political units. Given the larger islands which comprise Melanesia, especially New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago, and thus the lesser significance of marine exploration and exploitation for survival, Melanesians have also had less of a reputation for maritime prowess than either the Micronesians or the Polynesians.⁵

Polynesia, which covers the largest single geographic area of Oceania, consists of the Hawaiian Islands in the north, New Zealand in the south, Easter Island at its easternmost extreme, the Ellice Islands at its westernmost extreme, and a vast number of small islands and atolls in its interior, including the Line Islands, the Society Islands, the Phoenix Islands, Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, the Marquesas Islands, and Palmyra Reef. Polynesia, like Micronesia, has been noted by Pacific Island historians and anthropologists for its homogeneity. Polynesian language, for instance, is derived largely from the Austronesian family in East Asia and Polynesian society was characterized by larger and less divisive political and social organizations than were found in Melanesia. Material culture, also similar to that in Micronesia, focused on extensive maritime travel, exploration, and

⁵ See *ibid.*; and Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands*, 18-22.

settlement of the neighboring islands, as well as significant marine exploitation for subsistence.⁶

Another series of island groups which this study focused on are the four Japanese home islands of Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, and Hokkaido, as well as the neighboring Ryukyus, Bonins, Volcanoes, and Marcus Island. These islands were the object of fleeting American strategic interest since the 1850s, primarily because of their location *vis-à-vis* northeast Asia and southeast Asia. Japan proper consists of the four main islands of Kyushu, Honshu, Shikoku, Hokkaido as well as the Kurile Islands in the north. It is "bordered" on the south by the Ryukyus Islands, a series of 140 islands and islets, only thirty or so of which are populated, with the most populated and the most strategically important being the island of Okinawa. Tiny Marcus Island, the Volcanoes, and the Bonins complete the islands south of Japan. The most interesting aspect of these last groups is their extremely small size. Iwo Jima in the Bonins, for example, comprises about one square mile of territory. Moreover, they are characterized by their coral or volcanic geological origin, their linguistic similarities to Japan (though with significant differences in dialect), the predominance of communal agriculture as the main means of subsistence and social organization until 1945, and a long history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of Japanese subjugation and rule (See Figures 3 and 4).⁷

⁶ See Oliver, *Pacific Islands*, 14.

⁷ See Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire In The Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989) x; and Fisch, *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands*, 31-33. For early American interest in the Pacific Islands, especially Commodore Matthew Perry's suggestions to annex the Ryukyus, see John H. Schroeder, *Shaping a Maritime Empire: The Commercial and Diplomatic Role of the American Navy, 1829-1861* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), 149-157.



Figure 3. Japan And The Western Pacific (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

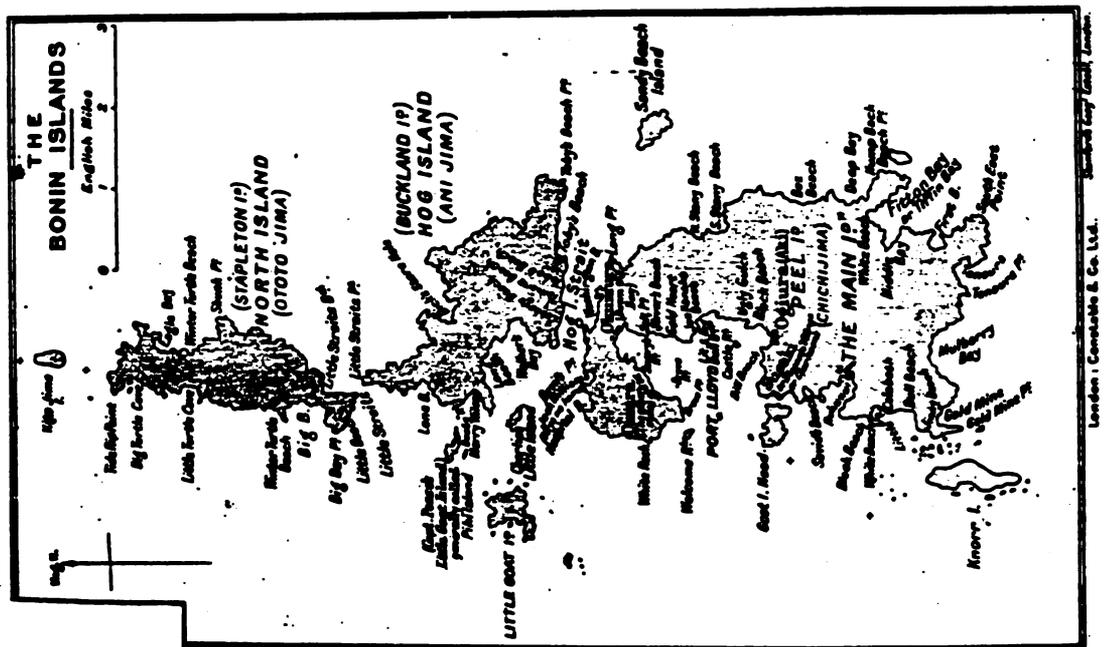
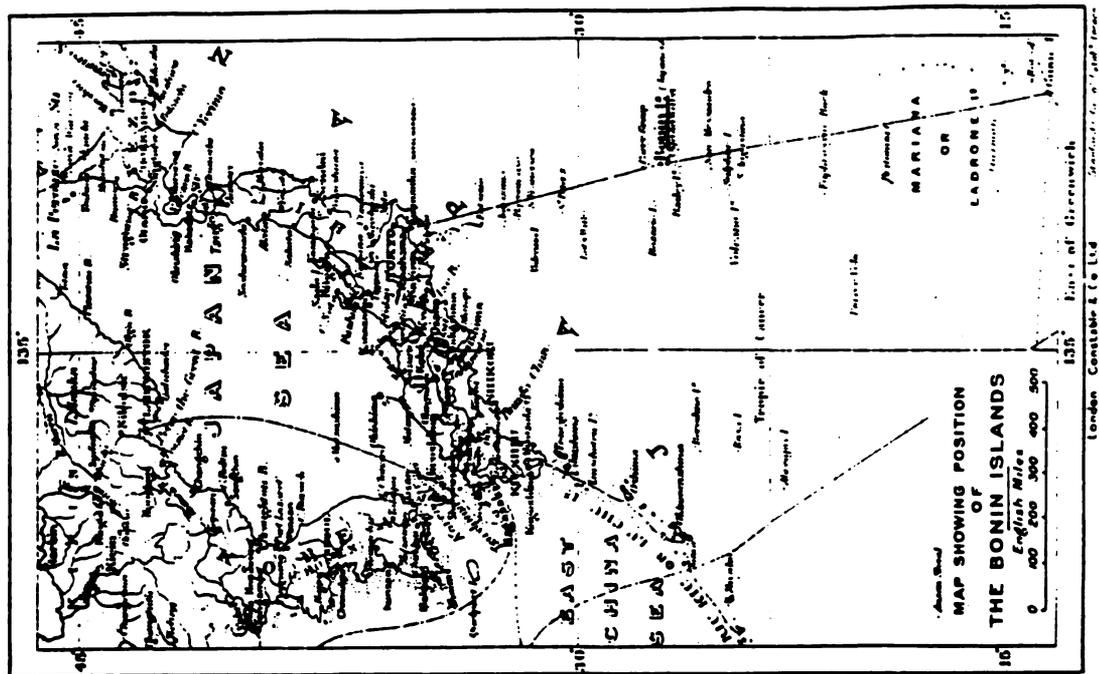


Figure 4. The Bonin And Volcano Islands (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

The Philippines were also important to this study because of their location astride the Straits of Malacca and proximity to East Asia, but they differs remarkably from Japan and Japan's southern island groups. The Philippines consist of well over one thousand islands, many of them uninhabited, with the majority of the population inhabiting the main islands of Luzon, Leyte, Negros, Samar, Panay, Mindanao, and Mindoro. What is most significant about the islands from a cultural perspective is the central place of Spanish culture in everyday life. Nearly four hundred years of Spanish rule bequeathed a strong commitment to Roman Catholicism and the use of Spanish as the official language among local elites, especially the landed gentry. Spanish culture also proved to be a source of divisiveness between the elites, who were largely loyal to the Spanish, and peasants who farmed the elites' properties as tenant farmers and who spoke Asian Tagalog as their means of everyday communication.⁸

Finally, American policy toward Alaska and the Aleutian Islands was studied, though not to the degree that Japan, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, and Micronesia were investigated. Alaska and the Aleutians were originally inhabited by people who could claim their origin in Siberia and Mongolia. The Eskimos and the Aleuts were related to the American Indians who came from East Asia by way of the ancient land bridge across what is now known as the Bering Strait. Hunters and gatherers more so than the Pacific Islanders, the Eskimos and Aleuts became well-known for their survival skills in the Arctic, their use of dogsleds and kayaks for transportation, and their individual autonomy.⁹

⁸ Karnow, *In Our Image*, 26-77.

⁹ Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise*, 32-34. For an excellent view of Russian colonization of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, see S. Frederick Starr, ed., *Russia's American Colony* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1987).

Alaska is also interesting because it is at the coldest extreme of the Basin in terms of temperature, commonly experiencing 40 degrees Fahrenheit below zero during winter! The rest of the Basin is warmer, though areas like Japan and Korea can experience bitter winters. Still, the "typical" climate of most of the Pacific seems to be either the hot and humid temperatures of New Guinea and the Philippines or the warm, breezy climate of Micronesia. Average temperatures throughout Oceania, for example, range from 70 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year, in significant contrast to conditions in the northern Western Hemisphere or northeast Asia.¹⁰

The Strategic and Cultural Relevance

The geography of the region explains to some degree why the Pacific Basin has been the object of great power competition since the 1500s. The island chains of the Basin form strings of outposts or "way stations" along the route between the Western Hemisphere and East Asia. To Americans in particular, but also to western Europeans, the Pacific has meant a route to the fabled markets of East Asia and the strategically important area of northeast Asia. Distances between the various island groups and East Asia can add perspective to their strategic locations. Okinawa, for example, is only 350 miles south of Japan, Yap and Belau in the Carolines are only 600 miles from the Philippines and Indonesia, the northernmost island in the Marianas is only 600 miles from Iwo Jima, and Iwo Jima is only 660 miles from Tokyo. In addition, the easternmost island in the Marshalls is only 800 miles from Hawaii,¹¹ which is strategically located in the center of the

¹⁰ Ibid., 19.

¹¹ See Gale, *Americanization of Micronesia*, 5-6.

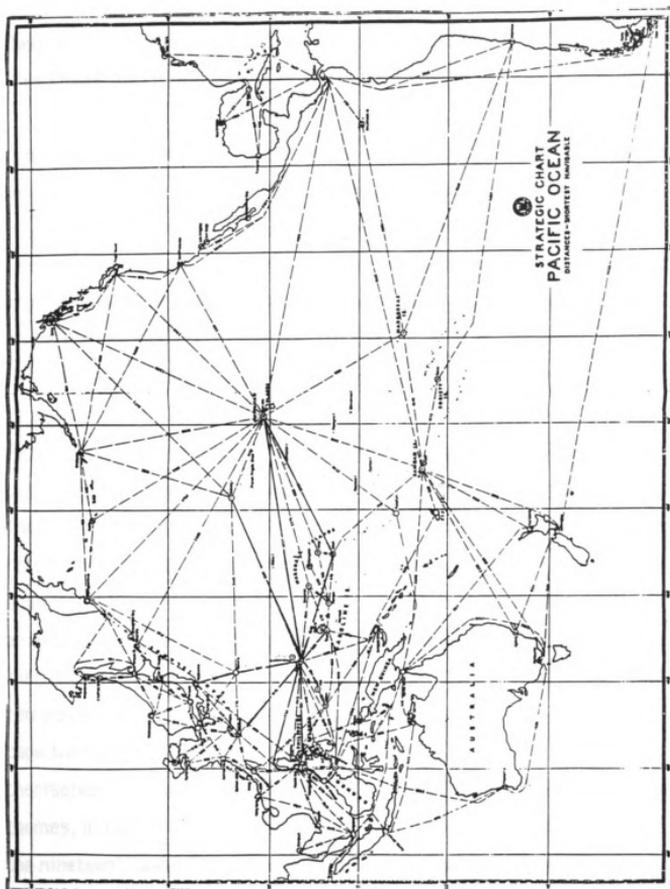


Figure 5. Strategic Chart, Pacific Ocean (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

Basin and sports the excellent anchorages at Pearl Harbor and Lahaina Roads (See Figure 5).

Harbors and other places to rest men and ships, such as Pago Pago in Samoa and Ulithi Atoll in the Carolines, also partially explain great power intrusion into the Basin. The imperial competition since 1500, however, had more to do with the exceptionalist thinking of the various colonizers, who seemed determined to "convert the natives" to the Western way of life and who seemed equally determined to convince the indigenous population that conversion was for their own good. In addition, it must not be forgotten that the Pacific Basin represented a cultural and literary frontier as much as a political, military, economic, or religious one. American images of the Pacific consisted largely of scantily-clad Islanders indulging in sexual fantasy or sturdy Eskimos and Aleuts leading an existence as "noble savages." These idyllic images were the perfect setting for an escape from the urbanization, commercialization, and industrialization of Western society. In addition, the Pacific as the embodiment of both an untouched Paradise and an example of "uncivilized people" needing guidance from the West meant that it continued to be an arena for the "rugged individualism" of the American western frontier, especially for those white Americans seeking to escape the harsh realities of the metropole or hoping to make a name for themselves by conquering a part of the Pacific for American society. These themes, in fact, have been consistently portrayed to the American people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by such well-known authors as Herman Melville, Mark Twain, Jack London, and James Michener.¹²

¹² See Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands*, 68-82 and 116-127; see also Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise*, 379-409.

The Pacific first saw European explorers from Spain, Portugal, Holland, England, France, and Russia come in successive waves from the early 1500s to the late 1700s. Then European and American traders on the way to China and other areas of East Asia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries began to use the islands as rest and refitting areas for their ships and crews. By the early 1800s, however, European and American traders were not stopping temporarily in the various Pacific Islands, but were staying to exploit products such as sandalwood, copra, whales, and sea otters, while missionaries by the 1820s were trying to spread the Christian religion. These waves of explorers, traders, whalers, sealers, and missionaries were also at times followed or even preceded by their nations' farmers and planters, who hoped to settle in the islands for exploitative economic reasons, and by naval officers and government administrators who were intent on bringing "order and stability" to the region.¹³

The result of these "waves" of intruders was that by the late nineteenth century most of the Basin was claimed or occupied by one great power or another. Spain controlled the Philippines and Micronesia, Japan was beginning to take control of the Ryukyus, the Bonins, the Volcanoes, and Marcus Island, Britain and France controlled much of the South Pacific area, and Holland had held sovereignty over the Indonesian Archipelago since the 1600s. Hawaii clung to independence of a sort until annexed by the US in 1898, but even by the 1840s Americans had infested so much of the government, economy, and society of Polynesia that classifying Hawaii as "independent" after 1840 is questionable.¹⁴

¹³ See Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise*, passim; and W. Patrick Strauss, *Americans in Polynesia, 1783-1842* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1963), passim.

¹⁴ See Oliver, *Pacific Islands*, 60-75; and Strauss, *Americans in Polynesia*, 43-106.

Moreover, the Basin suffered the changes brought about by international political events in other areas of the world and was itself a microcosm of great power imperial competition (See Figure 6). The late nineteenth century global phenomenon of imperialism in Asia and Africa spread to the Basin, as evidenced by the US-UK-German "tangle" over Samoa, the US annexation of Guam and the Philippines from Spain in 1898, the German 1898 annexation of the rest of Micronesia and, in 1914, the Japanese annexation of German Micronesia. The US also sought to exploit opportunities in other areas of the Basin in these years, such as the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 and the occupation of Midway, Wake, Phoenix, Howland, Baker, and Jarvis Islands between the 1860s and the 1930s.¹⁵

The reader must realize that travel in the Basin between the 1500s and the 1800s was largely at the mercy of the currents and winds and that crossing the Basin took weeks, if not months. Even with the advent of steam-powered vessels in the latter half of the nineteenth century and coal and oil fueled ships in the twentieth century, travel from one point of the Basin to another could still take weeks because of the huge distances involved. The airplane reduced this time to days, but aircraft still required numerous stops on the islands for fuel, provisions, and crew rehabilitation. In short, even into the mid-twentieth century, the Pacific Basin retained its importance both because of its role as a strategic highway with way stations between East Asia and the Western Hemisphere and because of its image as a difficult strategic frontier to control.¹⁶

This perceived need for bases explains much of the competition between the nations in the twentieth century, especially between the US and

¹⁵ Oliver, *Ibid.*; and Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands*, 136-196.

¹⁶ See Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*, *passim*.

Japan.¹⁷ Mutual animosities and fears over the possible loss of the Basin as a strategic buffer zone helped fuel suspicions over conflicting imperial spheres of influence in East Asia. By the 1940s, the US, Britain, France, and Holland were fighting Japan for control of the Pacific and the Pacific War had a most devastating effect on the Basin as a whole. By 1945, the floor of the Basin was littered with ships, planes, and the bodies of combatants from the various powers. In addition, the destruction of indigenous life, property, and culture was widespread throughout the entire Basin and the US, the most powerful nation at the end of the war, had to decide how to "reconstruct" the area and wield hegemony over the region so as to prevent another conflict like the Pacific War.¹⁸

The Effect on the Population

The most obvious post-1945 effect of great power competition on the people of the Pacific Basin was the death and utter destruction which had been visited upon them. John Dower reports, for example, that an estimated fifteen million Chinese died in the Pacific War, as well as possibly four million Indonesians, over two million Japanese, twenty thousand Filipinos, thirty thousand Australians, and ten thousand New Zealanders. Micronesia, as well, suffered significant civilian casualties. According to Timothy Maga, the Guamanian population numbered 80,000 people in 1941, but it had been reduced to 60,000 people by 1945 and he asserts that other areas of

¹⁷ See Mark Peattie, *Nanyo: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988); and Timothy Maga, *Defending Paradise: The United States and Guam, 1898-1950* (New York: Garland Press, 1988).

¹⁸ See Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*, 161-180.

Micronesia typically lost up to a quarter of their prewar population as well.¹⁹

In addition, physical devastation throughout the Basin was widespread and severe. Manila, for instance, was considered the second most destroyed city in the world after Warsaw, Poland. On Okinawa, forty-five percent of the population was displaced and made into refugees either by Japanese defense preparations, which included confiscating land and food, or by the activities of the invading American forces. Arnold Fisch estimates that at least ten percent of the Okinawan population died in the battle for the island and his research also demonstrates that social and economic rehabilitation took years. Moreover, while the Okinawans before 1945 had been feudal land tenants and while the postwar American occupation authorities sought to turn them into independent yeoman farmers, many Okinawans, in fact, lost their land to postwar American base sites on the island and the island's economy was reconfigured to one which largely provided services to the American military establishment on the island.²⁰

In Micronesia at the end of the war, the islanders, numbering some 93,000 people in 1945 (not counting Guam), had to contend with the destroyed buildings and infrastructure which Japan had built before 1941 and with thousands of unexploded shells and bombs which it took the US government years to remove. Micronesians had also been significantly brutalized by the Japanese as Japan came increasingly under siege in their "South Sea Islands." Some Micronesian men, for example, were conscripted into labor

¹⁹ See John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 296-298. Also, see telephone interview with Dr. Timothy Maga, Senior Professor of Modern Diplomatic History, Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts and a recognized specialist on US-Pacific relations, February 2, 1995.

²⁰ See Fisch, *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands*, 33-38, 42, 44-60, and 176-178.

and naval auxiliary units for service elsewhere in Japan's Pacific empire, while their fellow Micronesians had to endure increasingly scarce supplies of food, water, and medicine as the Japanese confiscated whatever was available to feed their own troops and civilian populations. Throughout Micronesia, as well as other Pacific Islands such as Okinawa, the first duty of the American occupation forces was the short-term one of feeding and housing large percentages of the population while the long-term goal was to facilitate some sort of viable economic reconstruction.²¹

If areas like Micronesia, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, and even the Solomons were heavily damaged by the Japanese and by American liberation, much of the South Pacific (See Figure 7) went not only unscathed but also saw a great deal of economic "development" and introduction of American and European material culture. Areas such as New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, Fiji, and Samoa become the major supply bases for Allied forces fighting in New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago, and the Philippines and Indonesia. One historian even argues that American-European material culture had an effect on Melanesian religion, with South Pacific Islanders employing "cargo cults", or blends of traditional religion with elements of western material culture, to explain the vast changes in the islands wrought by the war and the immediate postwar return to colonial rule or United Nations trusteeship.²²

The United States, out of self-interest, self-righteousness, and the recognition of its own postwar power, felt it had to be primarily responsible for reconstructing the Pacific Basin. Thus, the US also had to deal with a huge region of the world which was, to a great extent, physically de-

²¹ See Peattie, *Nanyo*, 257-320.

²² See Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands*, 183-185 and 193-196.

stroyed or damaged, which had a population either displaced or stunned by their recent experiences, and which was comprised of an indigenous culture which had been "modified" by its past and recent exposure to European, American, and East Asian cultures. It is in this context that we turn to the US' hegemony over the Pacific Basin in order to explore the phenomenon of American imperialism in the postwar Pacific.

Chapter Two

Offensive-Defensive Warfare, Strategic Physical Complexes, and Strategic Denial: The "Lessons" of the Pacific War and American Postwar Perceptions of the Pacific Basin

Between 1945 and 1947, the United States sought to impose an imperial structure over the Pacific Basin as a way to guarantee future security in the region. American strategic planners became convinced by their interwar and wartime experiences that the future security of the United States could only be guaranteed by the complete control of Micronesia, the exercise of dominating influence throughout the rest of the Pacific Basin, and the wielding of significant influence in continental East Asian affairs.¹

Most importantly, this imperial solution to American anxieties about national security in the postwar Pacific exhibited itself in a bureaucratic consensus about turning the Pacific Basin into an "American lake".² Unlike

¹ See Enclosure Draft of "Memorandum For The Secretary Of War And The Secretary Of The Navy," part of "Type Of Government To Be Established On Various Pacific Islands," JCS 1524/2, November 15, 1945, file 8-21-45 sec. 1, JCS Geographic Files, 1942-1945, CCS 014 Pacific Ocean Area, RG 218, NA.

² Apparently, this term was first enunciated in the 1940s by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur in late 1945 and it was used by John Dower to describe American attempts at the unilateral postwar control of Japan and the Pacific Basin. See Dower, "Occupied Japan and the American Lake, 1945-1950," in Edward Friedman and Mark Selden, eds., *America's Asia: Dissenting Essays on Asian-American Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), 146-206. Bureaucratic consensus within the United States government over strategic goals in the 1940s was nevertheless accompanied by interdepartmental disagreements over tactics. Interestingly, this

the interwar period, when civilian and military officials clashed over the strategic efficacy of the Washington Treaty System, there was general agreement in 1945 by officials in the concerned government agencies about the need to treat the Pacific as an exclusive American strategic preserve. There was little, if any, talk of postwar arms control or multilateral agreements as a strategy of national security and even vocal critics of American military rule over civilian populations in the Pacific Islands, such as Harold Ickes, were not opposed to American rule *per se*.³

In addition, it was an accepted strategic "lesson" of the Pacific War that the solution to American security was to treat the Pacific Basin as one "integrated strategic physical complex" and to control entire chains of islands with either permanent bases, mobile forces, or a combination of the two. In effect, pre-war Mahanian doctrine was reaffirmed by the experience of Pearl Harbor and the island-hopping campaign, but with a different emphasis on the role which island bases would play as support infrastructures for mobile forces. While Mahan had talked about a "string" of island bases stretching across the Pacific as a support system for the US fleet, he nevertheless put his emphasis on the mobile fleet itself. No longer willing to leave island bases in the Pacific "unattended", postwar American strategic policymakers and planners asserted that some key islands had to be main-

consensus over goals accompanied by a lack of consensus over means was not confined to Pacific policy. In fact, interdepartmental rivalry over means seems to have been the norm for American strategic policy in the late 1940s. Aaron David Miller, for instance, describes a situation in which the War, Navy, State, Interior, and Commerce Departments, as well as the President and the Congressional foreign relations committees, agreed on the goals of a postwar American oil policy toward the Middle East but disagreed vehemently with each other over how to attain those goals. See Miller, *Search For Security: Saudi Arabian Oil And American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina, 1980), 75 and 78.

³ For interwar disagreements between the Navy and the State Department over Pacific policy, see Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 580-688; and Roger Dingman, *Power In The Pacific: The Origins of Naval Arms Limitation, 1914-1922* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

tained as support bases for mobile forces, but then argued that entire chains of undeveloped islands also had to be occupied or "denied" to other powers even if the United States did not intend to develop them as military bases. Still, the prewar Mahanian emphasis on mobile power as the key to postwar Pacific defense was reasserted and was now more widely subscribed to by officials outside of the Navy Department.

Mahanian "Offensive-Defensive" Warfare and the Use of Mobile Forces in the Postwar Pacific

The Pacific Basin constituted a strategically important area for the United States since before the 1940s. Any nation with palpable interests in East Asia would find the Pacific the key to projecting power toward mainland East Asia.⁴ Perceived strategic interests in East Asia and the Philippines in 1898 provided the incentive for the United States to acquire individual islands, such as Guam and American Samoa, as logistical bases for American naval forces and American naval officers expressed a desire to acquire entire chains of islands in Micronesia when opportunities presented themselves in 1898 and 1919. Though a variety of domestic and international political considerations prevented naval officers from convincing policymakers to annex the islands at these times, the idea that American control was necessary for strategic security remained a constant in US naval thinking in the interwar period.⁵ Guaranteeing American security in

⁴ See Gale, *Americanization of Micronesia*, 4-6.

⁵ It is true that American naval officers in 1898 and 1919 argued for some stronger form of American control over key islands in Micronesia. In each case, however, political and diplomatic considerations by civilian leaders usually overrode the military services' arguments. See Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*, 3-74. For a more recent viewpoint which pits Wilson's hopes for Japanese membership in the League of Nations against the Navy Department's concerns for strategic security in the central and western Pacific, see Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 78-112.

the Pacific and East Asia, however, was not merely a case of occupying islands and "neutralizing" them from the possibility of a hostile takeover. Indeed, strategic thought from the 1898-1941 period and wartime experiences combined to dictate that American defense in the post-1945 Pacific would become synonymous with offensive base development in the western Pacific and mobile power projection toward mainland East Asia.

According to Lester Brune, Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan originated the idea of offensive actions for defensive purposes within the United States Navy in the 1890s. Mahan, searching for an alternative strategy to America's alleged policy of isolationism, argued that the Navy should be geared toward "offensive-defensive" actions.⁶ An "offensive-defensive" naval strategy was one involving a blue water navy capable of patrolling global waters, supported by an overseas system of bases, and able to strike instantaneously at any enemy which threatened or seemed to threaten American strategic interests. In essence, what Mahan seemed to be suggesting was a strategy which bordered on continual peacetime preparations for preventive wars since even potential rivals could become enemies at any time.⁷

⁶ See Brune, *Origins Of American National Security Policy*, 4-6, 23, 29, 31, and 108.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4 and 85. If Brune is correct, then Mahan, credited with bequeathing so much of the United States Navy's modern strategic heritage, may also have been responsible for starting the Navy down the road to peacetime offensive war planning. This conclusion, however, may give too much credit to Mahan, since his theories did not germinate in an intellectual vacuum but in conjunction with similar ideas about strategic planning enunciated by other American naval officers in the 1890s. For example, the war plans developed by Lieutenant William Kimball in case of a war with Spain were rife with ideas which could be labelled "offensive-defensive" in nature and were Kimball's creation entirely. See J.A.S. Grenville and George Young, *Politics, Strategy, and American Diplomacy: Studies in Foreign Policy, 1873-1917* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973), 267-296. The issue of preventive wars and preemptive strikes would reappear numerous times after Mahan's death. Perry Smith, for instance, argues that AAF postwar planners between 1943 and 1945 also defined defense and deterrence in terms of immediate offensive capability and even preemptive strikes against potential enemies, in their case a resurgent postwar Japan. See Perry Smith, *The Air Force Plans for Peace, 1943-1945* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 48-49. If offense and

The Army Air Corps (AAC) also adopted a strategy of "offensive-defensive" warfare in the late 1920s as a means to promote land-based airpower as the new "first line" of American defense. According to Brune, Colonel William Mitchell, fresh from his court-martial for insubordination toward War and Navy Department authorities, changed his emphasis on airpower strategy from a hemispheric defense supporting an isolationist foreign policy to an offensive strategy which used airpower to actively support an assertive American foreign policy in Latin America, the Pacific, and elsewhere.⁸ Brune demonstrates that Mitchell, like Mahan, also walked the fine line between retaliatory strikes against a hostile nation and preemptive first strikes against possible enemies. At first not widely adopted by the AAC, that institution came to gradually accept the strategy of forward deployment and deterrence in the late 1930s and early 1940s.⁹ In fact, it is reasonable to assume that the 1930s and 1940s was a breeding ground for strategic thinking which stressed a constant state of peacetime readiness and instant retaliation against enemy nations. It is inconceivable that officers who were professionally trained in the parsimonious 1930s and who matured during the disasters of the early 1940s could have taken different lessons about preparedness from these events.¹⁰

defense could be intellectually merged concerning the postwar containment of Japan, then it was not a far leap to planning for preemptive military strikes against the postwar Soviet Union as a way to "keep the peace." For the issue of preventive wars in early Cold War American strategic thought, see Russell H. Buhite and William Christopher Hamel, "War for Peace: The Question of an American Preventive War, 1945-1955," *Diplomatic History* 14 (Summer 1990): 367-384.

⁸ See Brune, *Origins Of American National Security Policy*, 92-95, 99-102, 104-105, 125-131, and 134-135.

⁹ *Ibid.*; and Jeffrey S. Underwood, *The Wings of Democracy: The Influence Of Air Power On The Roosevelt Administration, 1933-1941* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), *passim*.

¹⁰ See Michael S. Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War: American Plans For Postwar Defense, 1941-1945* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977), 190-238; and Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 52-57.

The role of island bases should be kept in perspective concerning strategies which so heavily emphasized the deployment of mobile forces. Concerns for overseas bases occupied a great deal of strategic planners' attention between 1898 and 1941. William Braisted and Donald Yerxa have demonstrated that American naval planners charged with base development in the prewar Pacific and Caribbean were very concerned with potential base sites falling to "enemy" powers in peacetime and being used against the United States upon the initiation of war. Braisted, especially, illustrated that American naval officers desired to control entire chains of Pacific islands in order to deny them to potential enemy naval powers.¹¹

Yet because of funding limitations on base development and ship construction, as well as strategic-political limitations on acquiring base sites in the first place, naval officers chose to concentrate scarce resources on building large, mobile fleets of armored battleships and developing a select few base sites in the Pacific. As Braisted asserts, American naval officers detested the idea of the Japanese being allowed to exercise control over the Marianas, Carolines, and Marshalls after 1914 and they feared that Japan's control over these island chains would bode ill for the US in the future. Nevertheless, these officers consistently strove to limit base development to Pearl Harbor, Guam, and Subic Bay in the Philippines, confident that a strong mobile fleet supported by a few well-fortified bases along this "Mid-

¹¹ See Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897-1909*, 53-55, 57-63, 70-71, 94, 100-101, 124-126, and 128; *idem.*, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 231-246, 441-453, and 522-534; and Donald A. Yerxa, *Admirals And Empire: The United States Navy And The Caribbean, 1898-1945* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 26, 36-38, 39, 58-59, 60, 117, 118, 120, 123-124, 129-130, and 131.

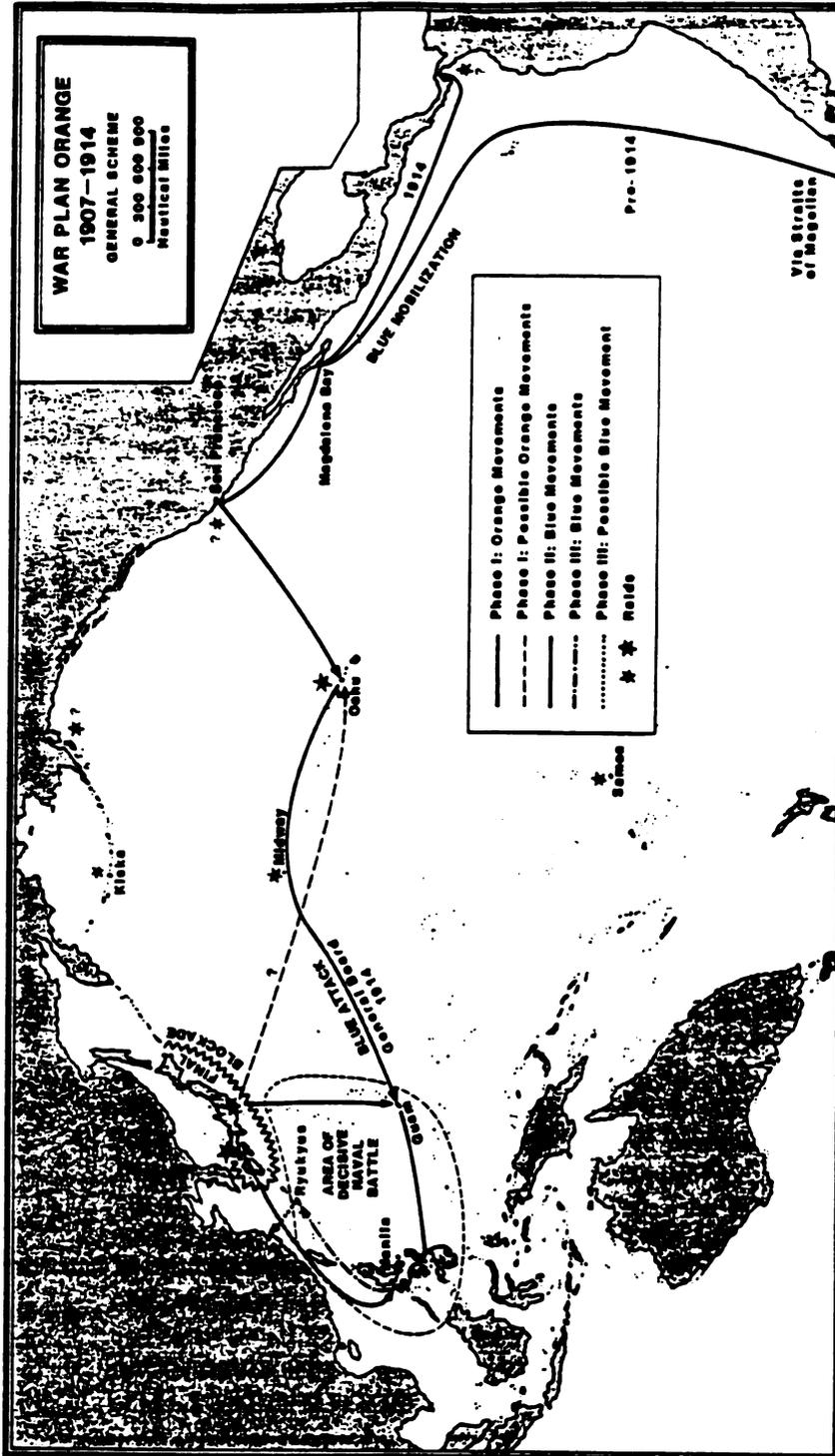


Figure 8. The Mid-Pacific Route (From Edward Miller, *War Plan Orange*, Naval Institute Press, 1991)

Pacific Route" could successfully prosecute a war against Japan.¹² (See Figure 8)

The area took on added importance for the United States after the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor reinforced interwar naval convictions that dominance in the Pacific was the only way to ensure long-term American security from future attacks by other great powers. More importantly, however, Pearl Harbor and the Pacific War convinced many policymakers and advisers outside of the Navy that American security demanded control over Micronesia at least and the entire Pacific Basin if possible. The attack on Pearl Harbor had an especially traumatic effect on American planners who had to consider the strategic reverses of the winter of 1941-1942 as possibilities in any future wars.¹³

High casualties sustained by the United States throughout the war also had a searing impact on civilian officials and military officers charged with the nation's security. High casualties especially helped form a strong postwar strategic mindset about annexing island groups and creating an "American lake" in the Pacific Basin.¹⁴ For example, the more than 107,000

¹² See Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897-1909*, 52-53, 56-57, 118-119, 135, 152, 177, 178, 238, and 241; and *idem.*, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 36-48, 58-76, 127-128, 206-208, 246-262, 441-453, 473-476, 477-484, 488-489, 505-521, 591-592, and 610-617. Not all American naval officers believed in the efficacy of the "Mid-Pacific Route." After the Japanese gained control of Micronesia in 1914 and this control was confirmed at Versailles in 1919, some naval officers worried about the vulnerability of American bases on the Mid-Pacific Route. In fact, between 1917 and 1921, Admiral Robert Coontz, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Hugh Rodman, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet, and Admiral Albert Gleaves, Commander-in-Chief, US Asiatic Fleet, attempted to convince their civilian superiors to use British and French war debts to the United States as a *quid pro quo* to gain American control over the South Pacific and obtain an alternative naval route to the Philippines and East Asia. Though the officers seemed to have Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes' ear for a time, their ideas were contrary to President Warren Harding's and Hughes' policies for multilateral naval arms control and Pacific Basin demilitarization and the idea was shelved. See Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 522-534.

¹³ See Dower, "American Lake," *passim*.

¹⁴ See Sherry, *Preparing For The Next War*, *passim*.

American casualties (killed, wounded, and missing) sustained in the Marshall, Marianas, Carolines, Volcano, and Ryukyu Island campaigns had a telling effect on American officials, who specifically and repeatedly discussed the islands in the context of the "blood and treasure" expended for them. In fact, in July 1945 Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal used American casualty figures in these campaigns to justify American postwar rights in the Pacific and eagerly provided this information to Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia in order to reinforce the idea of annexing the islands after the war.¹⁵

Moreover, the high monetary cost of conquering the islands from Japan, creating military bases for prosecuting the war against Japan, and policing the postwar Pacific had an influence on those concerned with Pacific policy. What were the financial costs of creating an American lake? Looking at the cost of constructing bases in just two areas of Micronesia gives the reader some sense of the dollar costs to the US taxpayer. Guam, which became Pacific Fleet and 20th Air Force headquarters in 1945 and had become a central focal point of US strategic power by that time, cost the

¹⁵ For total American casualties incurred in the island-hopping campaign as compiled by Forrestal's office and for Forrestal's willingness to share this information with members of Congress, see Forrestal to Senator Harry Byrd, July 24, 1945, file 33-1-22, box 65, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, General Records of the Department of the Navy, Record Group 80, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as RG 80, NA); for the 1946 reference to "blood and treasure" by Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, Chief of Naval Operations, see *The Forrestal Diaries*, October 22, 1946. For other documents which convey the military's fear of having to repeat the island hopping campaign in the Pacific at some future date, see the JCS to the President, JCS 656/1, July 1, 1944, file 1-8-44 sec. 1, CCS 093, RG 218, NA; and Joint Planning Staff (hereafter cited as JPS) 633/4, "U.S. Postwar Military Policy and Strategic Plan," July 18, 1945, American British Conversation File (hereafter cited as ABC) 093 sec. 1a, Records of the Army Staff, Record Group 319, National Archives (hereafter cited as RG 319, NA), both in Foltos, "New Pacific Barrier," 317-342; see also "Memorandum by the Secretaries of the War and Navy Departments to the President," April 13, 1945, *Forrestal Diaries*; and "Sites for Bases," Annex A to General Board No. 450, "Post-war Employment of International Police Forces and Post-war Use of Air Bases," March 20, 1943, file "Post-War Bases," P-1, box 170, Strategic Plans Division Records, Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Strategic Plans, OA, NHC).

United States government \$275 million as of June 30, 1945 for reconstruction, island government, military base construction, and the stationing of forces. Even island groups which were secondary support bases by 1945 could cost a not inconsiderable amount. The Navy alone had spent over \$4.6 million on Palmyra Reef by the summer of 1945 and over \$7.8 million had been spent on five islands in the Marshalls which had been conquered from the Japanese before the end of the war. Granted, the Navy's budget in Fiscal Year 1945 was over \$31 billion dollars. Still, these wartime amounts were not the norm for the US government and there was a repeated emphasis by policymakers and planners about not having to reconquer bases in the region because of the significant expenditure of national treasure involved in the process.¹⁶

In addition, World War Two had produced more technologically sophisticated weapons with shorter reaction times. To American military officers, the attack on Pearl Harbor epitomized America's loss of the geostrategic advantage of distance from Eurasia. Thus, Pearl Harbor taught them that the best way to prevent a future attack on the continental United States was to have a defense-in-depth with far-flung bases, or what General of the Army Dwight Eisenhower called a "cushion of distance." At the same time, the lesson of Pearl Harbor was that the best future defense was also a good offense and that defensive bases should be simultaneously prepared as support areas for offensive action against "aggressor" nations in East Asia. This peacetime preparation of military bases and mobile forces

¹⁶ See US Congress, House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Study of Pacific Bases: A Report by the Subcommittee on Pacific Bases*, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, 1096-1097, 1106, and 1110; and Captain W.F. Jennings, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (ACNO) for Island Governments, to the Senate Appropriations Committee, US Senate, *Navy Department Appropriation Bill for 1948: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Appropriations*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, 119-120.

in the Pacific was also linked to a domestic program of industrial mobilization and government-sponsored scientific research for technologically advanced weaponry.¹⁷

The prewar tradition of planning for offensive warfare in a defensive context was already apparent in 1946. One of Forrestal's wartime aides, Captain William Beecher, asserted to the Secretary in an analysis on the effect of atomic weapons on naval warfare that "... [o]ne enduring principle of war has not been altered by the advent of the weapon: that offensive strength will remain the best defense." Naval planners, in particular, assumed that potential enemies had learned these Mahanian principles when they pointed out that the world's oceans should no longer be considered defensive barriers but "open highways" for attacking forces and that the US Navy should be able to commence offensive operations before "any enemy" could deliver an attack on American territory.¹⁸

Probably the best example of postwar continuity in prewar Mahanian thought applied to the Pacific was expressed in Admiral John Towers' 1946 report on the strategic lessons of the island-hopping campaign. Towers, the

¹⁷ For a superb analysis of how these various ideas about postwar preparedness blended together in wartime planning, see Sherry, *Preparing For The Next War*, passim; and Smith, *Air Force Plans For Peace*, 80; for the statement on offense as defense, see William A. Shurcliff, *Bombs at Bikini: The Official Report of Operation Crossroads* (New York: W.H. Wise, 1947), 198-199; for an elaboration on "war without warning" and the need for the United States to be instantaneously ready for an attack, see "Post-War U.S. Navy," Part 3 of "Basic Determination of Active U.S. Naval Forces Required of Post-War World," box 212, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. See also Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 48-49 and 80; and Eisenhower to the House Subcommittee on Military Appropriations, February 19, 1947, box 194, Pre-Presidential Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas (hereafter cited as DDEL).

¹⁸ See Beecher to Forrestal, "Memorandum for the Secretary," July 31, 1946, file 39-1-37, box 72, RG 80, NA; see also "Post-War U.S. Navy," Part 3 of "Basic Determination of Active U.S. Naval Forces Required In Post-War World," box 212, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. For global American naval strategy against the Soviet Union in the postwar Pacific which emphasized the use of mobile forces, see Michael Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy: The Development of American Naval Strategy, 1945-1955* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1988), 30-37.

Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific Fleet, Commander-in-Chief/Military Governor of the Pacific Ocean Areas (CINCPAC-CINCPOA), the Navy's senior naval aviator in 1946, and a strong advocate of carrier-based air power as the basis for postwar defense, wrote an after-action report which captured Mahan's ideas about mobile defense in the Pacific and combined them with tactical lessons derived from combat experience in the Pacific War.

Towers was decidedly against continuing to base the naval defense of the region on large gun platforms and surface forces. He was convinced that surface forces had important support roles to play in the Navy, but the best use of scarce postwar resources was to concentrate on maintaining a mobile carrier fleet in the Pacific. He discussed how easily US possessions such as Guam and Wake had fallen to Japanese air and naval forces in 1941 and he repeatedly insisted that the US not become bogged down in defending the large number of island bases it now had under its control. Too many bases to defend, he asserted, would restrict the mobility of the postwar carrier fleet and allow for a possible resurgence of Japanese mobile strength in the Pacific by tying scarce resources to those locations rather than the maintenance of mobile forces. He emphasized that the US in 1941-1942 and Japan between 1942 and 1945 both came to rely too heavily on static bases and that the primary strategic lesson of the war was to maintain a mobile fleet which combined aviation, surface, and amphibious power in a way which was reminiscent of the central and western Pacific campaigns of 1942-1945.¹⁹

¹⁹ See "Extract From Secret Information Bulletin No. 17, Battle Experience Supporting Operations For The Occupation Of The Marshall Islands Including The Westernmost Atoll, Eniwetok," Comments by CINCPAC-CINCPOA, "Mobile Forces Versus Bases," file "Joint Operations, February 1946-October 1946," box 198, series 12, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

Towers' outlook was eminently Mahanian, but with the postwar changes to Mahanianism readily apparent. Like Mahan, Towers' main emphasis was on the mobile fleet, with the difference that Mahan had talked about a battleship fleet, not a carrier-centered one. This change in platform aside, Towers, similar to Mahan, stressed a very aggressive, "free-wheeling" use of carrier fleets throughout the Pacific War and protested to his superiors whenever he believed that US carriers were being misused or squandered in strictly defensive ways. Towers believed, unlike Mahan, that the US could not simply acquire sovereignty over a few islands and use them as support bases. Instead, the US should "strategically deny" as many locations to other nations as possible, but it could ultimately only afford to develop a few of those locations as support bases for the mobile fleet.²⁰

Towers was not alone in his ideas. Naval officers represented a continuity between prewar and postwar strategic thought, but after 1945 Army officers, cabinet officials, joint strategic planners, and key members of Congress all subscribed to very similar ideas about postwar Pacific defense. Bases and mobile forces, whatever the variety or mix, were no longer separate in any concerned minds. The Pacific War had demonstrated to those Americans charged with the republic's security that the strategic future in the Pacific lay somewhere in between.

²⁰ See Towers to Truman, September 30, 1946, Towers Diary, Papers of John Towers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as John Towers Papers); and Clark G. Reynolds, *Admiral John H. Towers: The Struggle for Naval Air Supremacy* (Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1991), 522-523 and 530. Michael Palmer argues that Vice Admiral Forrest Sherman, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (DCNO) for Operations, was the postwar architect of using mobile forces for "offensive-defensive" warfare. I am not disputing Palmer's findings here. I have focused on Towers, however, because of his crucial role as postwar CINCPAC-CINCPQA; see Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy*, 30-37.

"Strategic Physical Complexes" and "Strategic Denial"

Given these prewar ideas and wartime experiences, it is not surprising that the United States wanted to monopolize strategic influence in the Pacific after World War Two. Planning documents illustrate that the ghosts of the interwar period and the winter of 1941-42 died hard in the minds of American strategic planners.²¹ While some islands were left in Japanese hands during the island-hopping campaign of 1943-45, nothing was to be left to chance after the war and primary sources reveal just how significant in-terwar and wartime events were in shaping a postwar American strategic consensus which entailed controlling as much Pacific Island real estate as possible.

The key differences with strategic thinking after 1945 were, first, the belief that entire chains of islands now had to be acquired by the US for the nation to be truly secure in a hostile international environment and, second, the subscription by numerous officials in and out of the military that the Pacific had to become an American lake. "Strategic physical complexes" rather than individual bases had to be "denied" to "any other power" in the region. Even though the United States lacked the resources to develop every Pacific island and atoll into a bristling fortress after 1945 and even though bases continued to take on a secondary role in relation to mobile forces, many strategic planners and thinkers in the United States hoped to acquire complete control over entire island chains in order to preclude a possible repetition of the interwar period.

Policymakers and planners used consistent themes to argue that the Pacific was one entity which should come under US control after the war.

²¹ See "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific," JCS 1619/19, September 19, 1946, file 12-9-42 sec. 28, CCS 360, JCS Central Decimal File, 1946-1947, RG 218, NA.

One such theme was the alleged inability of the European powers to defend their colonies in the postwar environment. For example, retired Admiral Harry Yarnell, wartime Head of the Chief of Naval Operations' (OPNAV) Special Planning Section for Postwar Demobilization, made it quite clear that the US should be strategically interested in any area of the Pacific in which the European colonial powers were deemed "weak" and unable to repel assaults from foreign powers. In an attempt to blame American defeats in 1941-42 on European military weakness in the region rather than American unpreparedness or Japanese proficiency, Yarnell claimed that the Japanese were able to attack the Philippines because of Anglo-French inability to defend Indochina and Malaya.²² Yarnell's assumption was that stronger European forces in Southeast Asia would have prevented the disasters of December 1941 and that American forces would not have been as necessary or vulnerable in the region if the Europeans had merely done their job. Of course, the assumption ignores the fact that the United States decided against strengthening its bases in the Philippines and Guam in order to preserve the Pacific Fleet and other vital strategic assets in Hawaii, the At-

²² See Admiral Harry Yarnell, "Memorandum on Post-War Far Eastern Situation," June 16, 1944, file "Intelligence, A-8," box 195, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. For a complete analysis of Yarnell's role in postwar planning and the Navy leadership's disappointment with his conceptions of postwar American naval power, see Vincent Davis, *Postwar Defense Policy And The U.S. Navy, 1943-1946* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 15-19. For subsequent concerns about postwar funding for base development which were very similar to Yarnell's, see "Over-All Examination Of U.S. Requirements For Military Bases And Base Rights," JPS 684/31, June 24, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA. The JPS argued that because of the national debt and adverse Congressional and public opinion against high military expenditures, there would be minimal funding for overseas base development. In fact, the JPS estimated that it would take over 27 years to construct all of the bases called for in Alaska, Hawaii, the Philippines, the Ryukyus, the Marianas, the Caribbean, and the North Atlantic. The best that the JPS could argue for was attempting to complete the "primary bases" by 1957!

lantic, and the Caribbean, just as the Europeans were doing *vis-à-vis* their positions in Europe and the Middle East.²³

There were other consistent themes which policymakers and planners used as evidence to argue that the United States was entitled to the control of these strategic islands. Cabinet members thought the islands should come under US control not only because of the role these areas had played in the Japanese attacks of 1941-42, but because the United States had supposedly been "cheated" out of their possession by the Japanese in 1919. For instance, when Secretary of War Henry Stimson and Forrestal wrote President Harry Truman on April 13, 1945 and urged him to take sovereign control of the former Japanese Mandated Islands, they justified seizing the islands by claiming that Micronesia had been "... taken by the Japanese by fraud ...", an allusion to Japan's consolidation of its 1914 seizure of the German Islands through secret treaties with Britain and France in 1917.²⁴ The secretaries also charged the Japanese with "illegal" military development of the islands in the 1920s and early 1930s, fortification allegedly undertaken in violation of Japan's League of Nations mandate. While it has been determined that Japan did not undertake military development before 1934, by which

²³ See Yarnell, "Memorandum on Post-War Far Eastern Situation," June 16, 1944, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. Clearly, the British, French, and Dutch were not very well equipped to deal with the Japanese in 1941 and 1942, nor were those nations very prone to strategic or tactical cooperation with each other or with the United States. Nevertheless, American officials in the interwar period were just as unwilling and unable to foster closer European-American cooperation and were set on a unilateral course when it came to defending US interests in the Pacific Basin. James Herzog places the major blame for lack of cooperation in the western Pacific at the feet of the western European powers, yet he cites numerous documents which demonstrate that US officials were unable to agree on closer cooperation with the European powers because of high level strategic decisions which placed greater emphasis on keeping military assets in the Atlantic, the Caribbean, and the eastern Pacific and because of domestic isolationist opposition to peacetime cooperation with European belligerents. See James H. Herzog, *Closing The Open Door: American-Japanese Diplomatic Negotiations, 1936-1941* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1973), 102-136.

²⁴ See "The Secretaries of War and the Navy to the President," April 13, 1945, *Forrestal Diaries*.

time it had withdrawn from the League, popular beliefs at the time subscribed to the notion that Japan had illegally and unethically fortified strategic bases in Micronesia and used them against Allied positions in 1941. To be sure, this suspicion of Japanese fortification was reinforced by difficulties in obtaining interwar intelligence on the area, difficulties which provided additional "evidence" to strategic planners about Japanese deceit.²⁵

Similarities between military and congressional recommendations occurred over these matters as well. For example, the House Naval Affairs Subcommittee on Pacific Bases, which toured literally every major island group in the Pacific in August 1945 to determine postwar base requirements, ignored the fact that Japan may have begun to fortify Micronesia after withdrawing from the League, blamed Japan for the Pacific War, and claimed the Japanese had legally forfeited any claim to the Mandated Islands because of this alleged interwar fortification.²⁶ The subcommittee also found fault with the military weaknesses of the European powers in the Pacific in 1941-42. Asserting that island mandates were meaningless if not properly defended against aggression, the legislators ignored the reality of American military weaknesses in 1941 and seemed to conclude that the European colonial powers were unfit to defend their possessions in a postwar environment. Of course, this conclusion conveniently allowed the sub-

²⁵ Willard Price, a scholar who was contracted by the United States government to travel to Micronesia and determine the authenticity of the rumors about military development, found very little evidence of Japanese militarization in the 1930s. However, the second edition of his book on the subject, *Japan's Islands of Mystery*, which was published in 1944, coincided with wartime opinion by confirming "reports" about long-term Japanese fortification during the interwar period. See Price, *Japan's Islands of Mystery* (New York: The John Day Company, 1944). For the most recent and credible account which dispells the Allied charges by exploring Japanese military documents from the interwar period, see Peattie, *Nanyo*, 230-256. For an account which suggests that Japanese and American suspicions were actually cases of mutual paranoia, see Dirk Ballendorf, "Secrets Without Substance: U.S. Intelligence in the Japanese Mandates, 1915-1935," *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (January-April 1984): 83-99.

²⁶ See House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Study of Pacific Bases*, 1014.

committee to justify postwar American control over Micronesia and any other island group felt to be necessary for American security in the Pacific.²⁷

The idea that the Pacific now represented an integrated strategic complex (See Figures 9 and 10) was enunciated more strongly by Secretary Forrestal in December 1945. A strong advocate of US annexation of Micronesia, the Bonins, Volcanoes, and Marcus Island, Forrestal stated that the official Navy position on the strategic value of the islands was their use as a "... farreaching, mutually supporting base network ..." from which large-scale offensives could be launched and which would permit a "full exploitation" of mobile forces in the Pacific. More specifically, Forrestal told Congress that American security in the postwar Pacific depended upon the US forming a "defensive wedge" in the region based on positions in the Aleutians, the Ryukyus, and Micronesia and defended by mobile "sea-air power." John Lewis Gaddis claims that George Kennan was the first person to set forth this idea for a "strategic defensive perimeter" in the Pacific during a March 1948 conversation with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. In fact, Forrestal, key naval officers, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were elaborating on this idea of a strategic defensive perimeter as early as the fall of 1945 as a result of their interwar and wartime experiences and perceptions.²⁸

²⁷ Ibid., 1010-1016.

²⁸ For Forrestal's assertion, see CINCPAC letter, December 12, 1945, serial 52855, as quoted in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 20; and Forrestal to Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Navy Department Appropriation Bill For 1946: Hearings Before The Subcommittee On Navy Department Appropriations*, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, 13, 14, and 25. For key naval officers' perspectives on "sea-air war," see "Extract From Secret Information Bulletin No. 17, "Battle Experience Supporting Operations For the Occupation Of The Marshall Islands Including The Westernmost Atoll, Eniwetok," Comments by CINCPAC-CINCPAC, "Mobile Forces Versus Bases," file "Joint Operations," February 1946-October 1946," box 198, series 12, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. For the JCS' idea of "minimal" security requirements in the

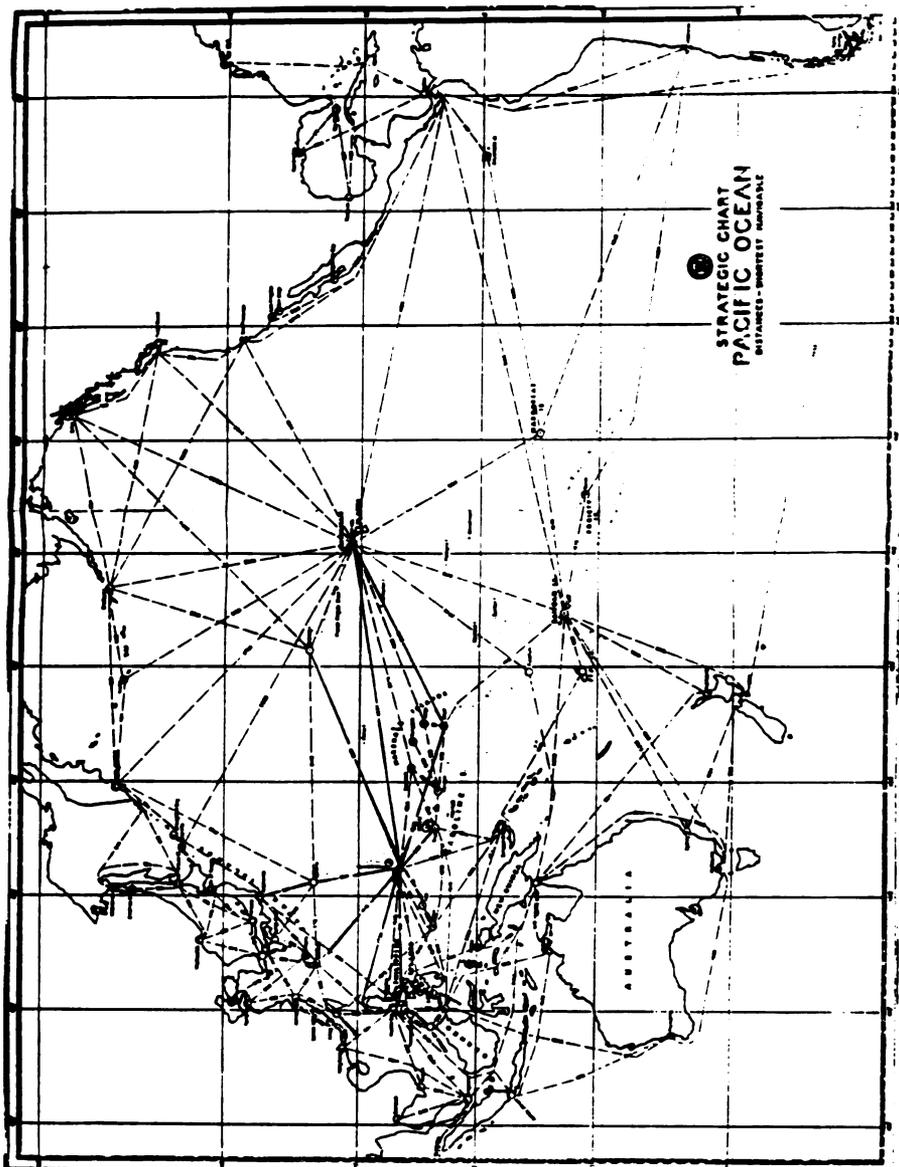


Figure 9. Strategic Chart, Pacific Ocean (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

postwar Pacific and East Asia, see U.S. Postwar Policy in the Far East," Operations and Plans Division (OPD), Executive Files, Exec. 5, Item 21a, Record Group 165, Records of the Army General and Special Staffs, Modern Military Records Branch, NA (hereafter cited as RG 165, MMRB, NA) as cited in Marc S. Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Surrender of the Japanese Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 35. For Kennan's 1948 assertion, see Kennan to then-Secretary of State George Marshall, March 14, 1948, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter cited as *FRUS*) 1948, 1:531-538 as found in John Lewis Gaddis, "The Strategic Perspective: The Rise and Fall of the 'Defensive Perimeter' Concept, 1947-1951," part of Dorothy Borg and Waldo Heinrichs, eds., *Uncertain Years: Chinese-American Relations, 1947-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 63-64. See also Oliver, *The Pacific Islands*, 233-234.

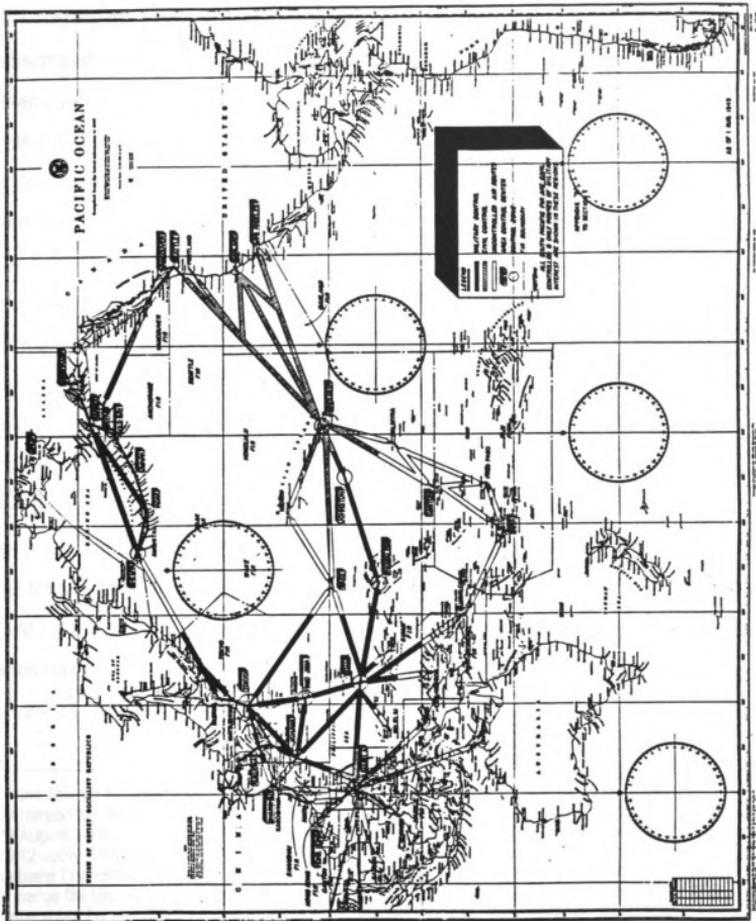


Figure 10. The Pacific Basin: An Integrated Strategic Physical Complex
 (Courtesy of the Alfred F. Simpson Historical Research Agency, Maxwell
 AFB, Montgomery, Alabama)

Army officers concerned with the postwar defense of the region also subscribed to the idea of a Pacific Basin defense-in-depth which equated offensive readiness for war with peacetime deterrence. In August 1946, for example, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief of US Army Forces, Pacific (CINCPAC) and Lieutenant General Ennis Whitehead, Commanding General of the Pacific Air Command, United States Army (PACUSA), agreed with Admiral Towers that the Pacific should be considered as an integrated defense zone, especially in terms of air defense. All three officers were determined to prevent any "... limited concept of local area defense ..." from becoming the postwar strategic order of the day in the region. Whitehead, in particular, was emphatic that "... air power in the Pacific should not be divided ..." since the Pacific is "... one air area ...". He concluded that the AAF should be constantly ready to assume an active defense of the region by practicing "air power war," a land-based version of the Navy's "sea-air power" and that the majority of the Army Air Forces' (AAF) air units should be stationed in Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines with Hawaii and the Marianas constituting the training and supply "rear areas" of this defense zone.²⁹

²⁹ See Towers to MacArthur, 23 August 1946; MacArthur to Towers, 26 August 1946; and Whitehead to Lieutenant General John Hull, Commanding General, US Army Forces, Middle Pacific, 29 August 1946; all in 168.6008-3, Whitehead Collection, Officer Correspondence, October 1942-July 1951, Alfred F. Simpson Historical Research Center, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama (hereafter cited as AFSHRC). PACUSA was the result of General George Kenney's efforts to merge the United States Army Strategic Air Forces (USSTAF) in the Pacific and the tactical Far Eastern Air Forces (FEAF) into one command in the fall of 1945. Supported by MacArthur, PACUSA came into existence in early December 1945 under Kenney's command. Later in that month, Kenney was reassigned as Special Adviser to the US Military Staff Committee to the UN Security Council and in March 1946 he became the first commanding general of the Strategic Air Command (SAC). Whitehead was his successor in December 1945 as commanding general of PACUSA and became commanding general of FEAF when PACUSA was reorganized and renamed in January 1947. See 0900 Reports, December 3, 1945; and December 7, 1945, both in OPD Diary, box 5, DDEL. See also Harry Borowski, *A Hollow Threat: Strategic Air Power And Containment Before Korea* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), 36.

Other officials and planning bodies argued along similar lines about the defensive and offensive potential of the islands by indicating that the Japanese had used their Pacific mandates in 1941 as offensive staging areas against Allied positions. In addition, there was a defensive attitude among the planners when it came to interwar events, a defensiveness probably brought about by the on-going Congressional investigation of Pearl Harbor in 1945 and 1946. For example, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC), a long-range strategic planning body subordinate to the JCS,³⁰ asserted that during the interwar period the War and Navy Departments had recognized the dangers to American security if Japan acquired control of the western Pacific. The JSSC claimed, however, that the military services had been unsuccessful in preventing their legitimation to Japan in 1919 because of the wartime special treaties. The JSSC also intimated that President Woodrow Wilson's unwillingness to allow Pacific policy to interfere with his plans for reconstructing Europe prevented a firm American response to Japan's expansion.³¹

³⁰ According to Thomas Buell, the JCS established the JPS in 1942 as its long-range strategic planning body. However, the JPS, consisting of over thirty senior officers from the Army and Navy, was too unwieldy and too concerned with immediate problems to devote attention to long-range planning. Thus, in late 1942 the JCS created two other committees which were detailed with long-range strategic planning duties, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC) and the Joint US Strategic Committee (JUSSC). The JSSC consisted of only three officers, Army Lieutenant General Stanley Embick, Navy Vice Admiral Russell Willson, and Army Air Force Major General Muir Fairchild, thus creating a more coherent body. Fleet Admiral King apparently criticized postwar historians for devoting so much attention to the deliberations of these committees, claiming that the JCS made decisions without their consultations. See Buell, *Master of Sea Power: A Biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1980), 207, 252, and 311. Contrary to King's assertion, however, this author has found that JSSC reports were significantly endorsed by the JCS when it came to the formulation of Pacific Basin policy.

³¹ See JSSC to JCS, "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific," study attached to "Draft Trusteeship Agreement -- Pacific Islands," State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (hereafter cited as SWNCC) 59/7, October 19, 1946, file 12-9-42 sec. 28, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

Whether or not the military services were really aware of these "strategic realities" during and immediately after the First World War remains to be seen. However, the 1946 JSSC document asserted that American consent to Japan in 1919 acquiesced in "grave danger" to the Western Hemisphere, the Pacific Islands, and the Philippines. To a great extent, the effect of the Pearl Harbor strike was reflected in the committee's use of phrases such as "very vulnerable" and "militarily unsound" in describing the prewar strategic positions of Guam and the Philippines.³² Moreover, the Japanese control of Micronesia was seen, in hindsight at least, as a direct risk to Hawaii and the JSSC asserted that "effective political denial" of the islands to Japan would have been of "supreme importance" to prewar American preparations, as well as to the conduct of the Pacific War. The JSSC even implied that if Micronesia had been under US control in 1941 the Japanese carrier strike on Pearl Harbor would not have been successful and that US relief of the Philippines would have been possible in 1942.³³

This increased attention to entire chains of islands was not restricted to military and congressional officials after 1945. The consensus to blanket the Pacific with American power was subscribed to by civilian officials outside of the military departments and it resulted from an increased perception that strategic denial was an important element of strategic security in the region.³⁴ For example, Warren Austin, US Ambassador to the UN Security Council in 1947, used Japanese military dispositions in 1941 as a

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ See "Pacific Bases," file 48-1-24, box 90, RG 80, NA. One American naval officer, writing in the United States Naval Institute's professional journal *Proceedings*, placed the blame on civilian political leaders and the State Department by specifically mentioning "foolish diplomacy." See Commander Russell H. Smith, "Notes On Our Naval Future," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* (hereafter cited as *USNIP*) 72 (April 1946): 489-503.

case for a US "strategic trusteeship" over Micronesia. A form of the League of Nations mandate system carried over to the UN Charter, trusteeships were supposedly a means by which great powers would develop former colonies into independent nations. In reality, the multilateralism implied in "international trusteeship" gave way to the unilateralism of "strategic trusteeship" when it came to the US trusteeship in Micronesia. A concept developed specifically by Under Secretary of the Interior Abe Fortas in early 1945 to find a middle ground between the military's call for annexation and American political opposition to "colonialism", strategic trusteeship entailed a situation in which the United States would have sole authority for the occupation, defense, and administration of Micronesia and most of the islands taken from Japan north of the Equator.³⁵

Labelling Japan's possession of the islands as a "tremendous advantage" to its prewar preparations, Austin and his staff argued that Japan had "mutually self-supporting" and fortified naval and air bases throughout the western Pacific and that these bases had literally been "strategic barriers" between American, British, and Dutch positions in the Pacific. According to Austin, these barriers had been used in a variety of ways to defeat Allied forces in the Pacific in 1941 and 1942.³⁶ He pointed out, for instance, that most of the Japanese submarines used in the Pearl Harbor operation were based at Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. In addition, he asserted that the Marshalls had been used as bases for naval and air forces attacking

³⁵ See Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 349-377; and Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 461-573.

³⁶ See statement by Austin to the United Nations Security Council, February 26, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA. See also Norris, Assistant Secretary of the United States Military Staff Committee of the UN Security Council, to the JCS, February 22, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

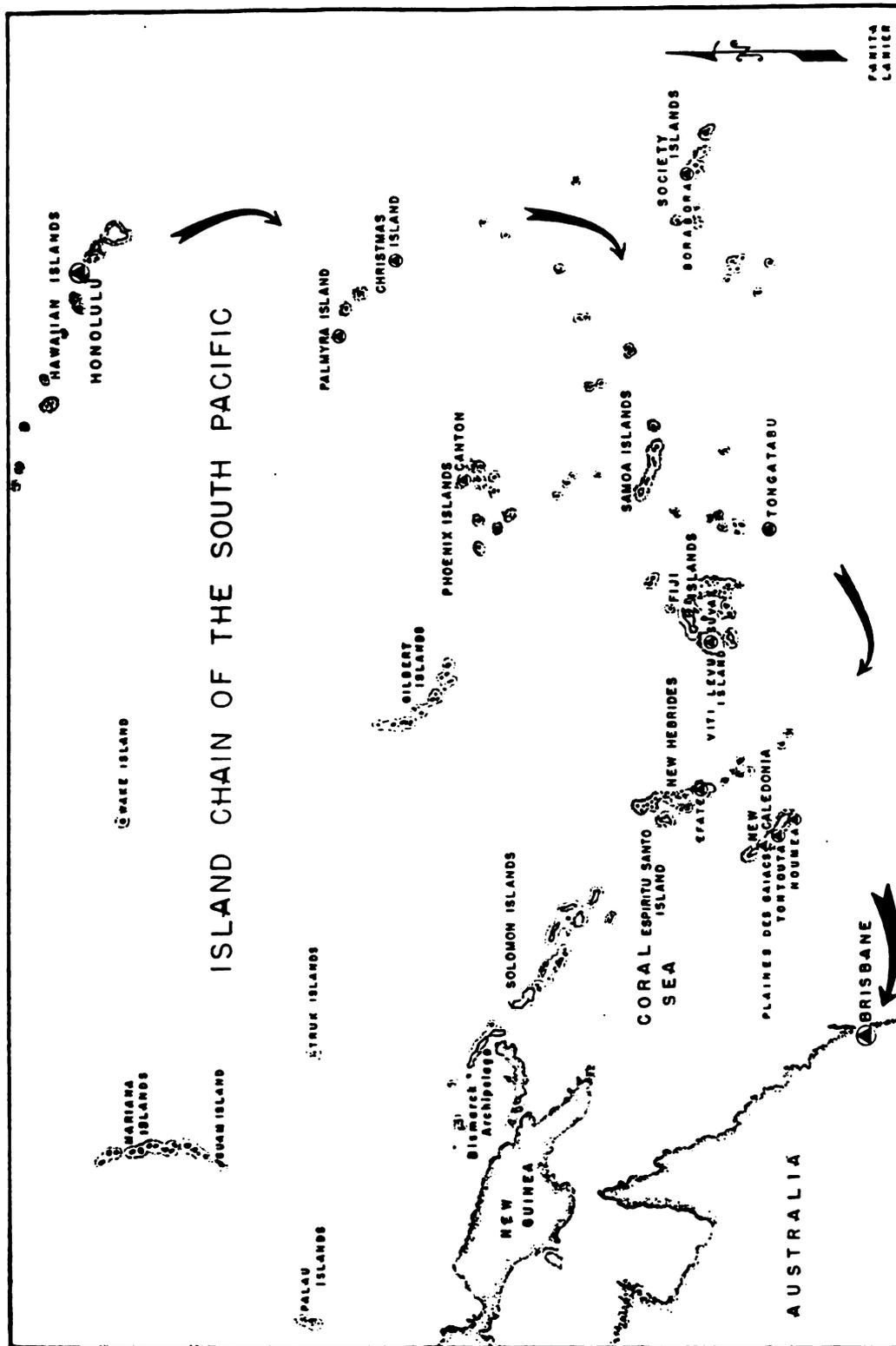


Figure 11. Island Chain Of The South Pacific (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

Wake Island, that Guam was captured by forces originating in the Marianas, and that Palau (now Belau) was used as a staging point for attacks on the Dutch East Indies and New Guinea.³⁷ Austin specifically mentioned Truk as the main Japanese naval base in the western Pacific and the staging point for operations against New Britain, the Solomon Islands, New Ireland, and the Bismarck Archipelago and he argued that Japan's use of these Islands as a mutually self-supporting complex of strategic assets prevented early American reinforcement and relief of Allied positions in the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and China.³⁸ (See Figure 11)

What are scholars to make of the assertions that US possession of Micronesia would have prevented so many Allied military defeats in the winter of 1941-1942? Given the sensitivity of the Pearl Harbor investigations, it can easily be argued that the military services were merely using historical hindsight to point fingers at the Washington Treaty System for their own failures since the argument that American control over Micronesia would have made a strategic difference in December 1941 is disingenuous.

It is true that the American commanders in Hawaii in 1941 believed Japanese attacks would come from Japan's bases in the Mandated Islands.³⁹ It is therefore understandable that American military officers in the inter-war period would have been opposed to Japan's control over Micronesia. By 1945, however, American officials knew that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had come from the northwest and that patrol planes from Hawaii had

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Paolo E. Colletta, "Rear Admiral Patrick N.L. Bellinger, Commander Patrol Wing Two, and General Frederick L. Martin, Air Commander, Hawaii," in William B. Coker, ed., *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Eighth Naval History Symposium* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1989), 263-278.

only slight chances of detecting the Japanese task force even if they had been properly deployed.⁴⁰ More importantly, Micronesia under US control would have been too far to the south to be useful as a system of patrol bases for planes trying to detect naval movements in the North Pacific. American control of Micronesia would have prevented the Japanese from staging attacks on Wake, Midway, and the Philippines from the Mandate bases, might have prevented a Japanese attack from the home islands or Taiwan toward the western and central Pacific, and might have precluded Japan from deploying submarines to the Hawaiian area. But the islands as American bases in 1941 would have done little to prevent a Japanese carrier attack on Hawaii which originated from northern Japan. Moreover, the US had failed to develop even Guam as a reconnaissance outpost because of Congressional parsimony and the military services were so badly coordinated in terms of patrolling, intelligence, and communications that it is difficult to envision a more alert peacetime force ready for an attack on Hawaii.⁴¹ I am convinced by these primary sources, however, that military officials sincerely believed that there was some connection between interwar Japanese control over Micronesia and the raid on Pearl Harbor, even if their ideas were not clearly thought out. As Forrestal put the matter as late as February 1947, the islands in the interwar period " . . . figuratively, if not literally, . . . became stepping-stones to Pearl Harbor."⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ For differing views about American readiness for war in the Pacific, see Gordon W. Prange, *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor* (New York: Penguin Books, 1981); and Edward S. Miller, *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897-1945* (Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1991).

⁴² See "Proposed Speech" by Forrestal, "The United States' Role in the Trusteeship System," February 22, 1947, file 86-5-45, box 134, RG 80, NA; see also attached memo for Forrestal by Vice Admiral Sherman, February 25, 1947, *ibid.*

Austin's use of evidence, like that of military officials, is also questionable from a historical point of view. It was geared toward convincing skeptical allies and the Soviet Union about the need for an exclusive American strategic trusteeship in the Pacific. Moreover, his rendition of the events of 1941-42 reflects the sincere fears on the part of American planners toward any postwar strategic situation in the Pacific which might have led to a repetition of interwar events. His speech and supporting data, however, are interesting from a number of other perspectives.

Historians now know, for instance, that some of the assertions about American reinforcements for Allied positions in East Asia were inaccurate. As Waldo Heinrichs has illustrated, Franklin Roosevelt and his closest strategic advisers never placed China high on the priority list for relief by the United States.⁴³ In addition, while American reinforcement and relief of the Philippines would have been much easier with the control of Micronesia, it should not be assumed, as it was by Austin and others, that operations in the central and western Pacific would have been successful in this context. The US Pacific Fleet in 1941 was outnumbered in aircraft carriers and deficient in the quality of its planes and pilots. In addition, the Japanese Navy had been preparing for just such a decisive battle in the region for more than twenty years.⁴⁴ Still, Austin's staff did sufficient research to enable him to "show" that Japanese control and development of Micronesia provided it with the strategic capability to strike literally every Allied possession in the Pacific Basin. Thus, he could argue to the western European colonial

⁴³ See Waldo Heinrichs, *Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), passim.

⁴⁴ For interwar Japanese naval war plans, see Rear Admiral Hironaka Yoichi, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (Retired), "Japanese Naval Preparations for World War Two," *Naval War College Review* 44 (Spring 1991): 63-81.

powers and the USSR that the US' inflexible position on a strategic trusteeship in the western Pacific was in British, French, Dutch, and international security interests as well as American ones.

Finally, Austin's assertion that Micronesia and the entire Pacific Basin should be considered as a single " . . . integrated strategic physical complex vital to the security of the United States . . ." ⁴⁵ was significant because it was a perception that was consistently repeated by American strategic planners throughout the United States government in the 1940s. Accordingly, it marked a major change in interwar US strategic thinking for that region of the world since naval officers were no longer the only group advocating the occupation of entire chains of islands and their defense with mobile forces. As such, the wider subscription to ideas about offensive-defensive warfare, strategic physical complexes, and strategic denial made it easier for military officers to plan on turning the entire Pacific Basin into an American lake.

Blanketing the Pacific

Because American bases in Micronesia rapidly became a secondary line of defense during the Cold War as the US projected power toward mainland East Asia from Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines, it is easy to forget to what extent American planners during the war perceived the Pacific Islands as the first line of postwar defense and to what extent they believed they could turn wartime American bases into permanent postwar bastions. In fact, American planning documents during and immediately after the war illustrate the ubiquitous nature of American planning for the region.

⁴⁵ See Austin to the Security Council, February 26, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA.

As early as March 1943, the Navy's General Board outlined what it believed were American postwar needs for bases in the Pacific. The tone of the document suggests the Board's subscription to the idea of postwar cooperation between the western Allies and the Soviet Union in "policing" the world against "international lawlessness and aggression". To be sure, Japan was seen as the primary threat in the postwar Pacific and the United States Navy was perceived to be the primary "policing agency" against Japan since Great Britain and the Soviet Union were assumed to have major responsibilities in Europe. Since the Board thus saw the United States as an essentially unchallenged power in the Pacific Basin, it saw fit to make base requirements in the area which were both wide-ranging and comprehensive.⁴⁶

For example, Clipperton Island and the Gallapogos Islands were desired as bases to cover the strategic approaches to Panama. In addition, numerous bases in the Fiji, Gilberts, Marques, New Hebrides, Phoenix, Solomons, and Tongan Islands as well as New Calendonia and Palmyra Island were required for "ease of contact" with Australia, New Zealand, New Ireland, and New Britain. Of course, the Japanese Mandated Islands were necessary for general US security and "strategic contact" with the Dutch East Indies, China, and the Philippines. However, locations such as Marcus Island, Chichi Jima in the Bonin Islands, Taiwan, and Shanghai, China were also desired as strategic bases.⁴⁷ (See Figures 12 and 13)

⁴⁶ See "Sites for Bases," General Board No. 450, file "Post-War Bases, P-1," Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. For a contemporary account which subscribes to similar ideas about postwar Allied cooperation, Japanese resurgence, and the United States Navy as an international police force, see David Nelson Rowe, "Collective Security In The Pacific: An American View," *Pacific Affairs* 18 (March 1945): 5-21.

⁴⁷ See "Sites for Bases," General Board No. 450, file "Post-War Bases, P-1," Strategic Plans, OA, NHC; see also Leonard Gordon, "American Planning for Taiwan, 1942-1945," *Pacific Historical Review* 37 (August 1968): 201-228.

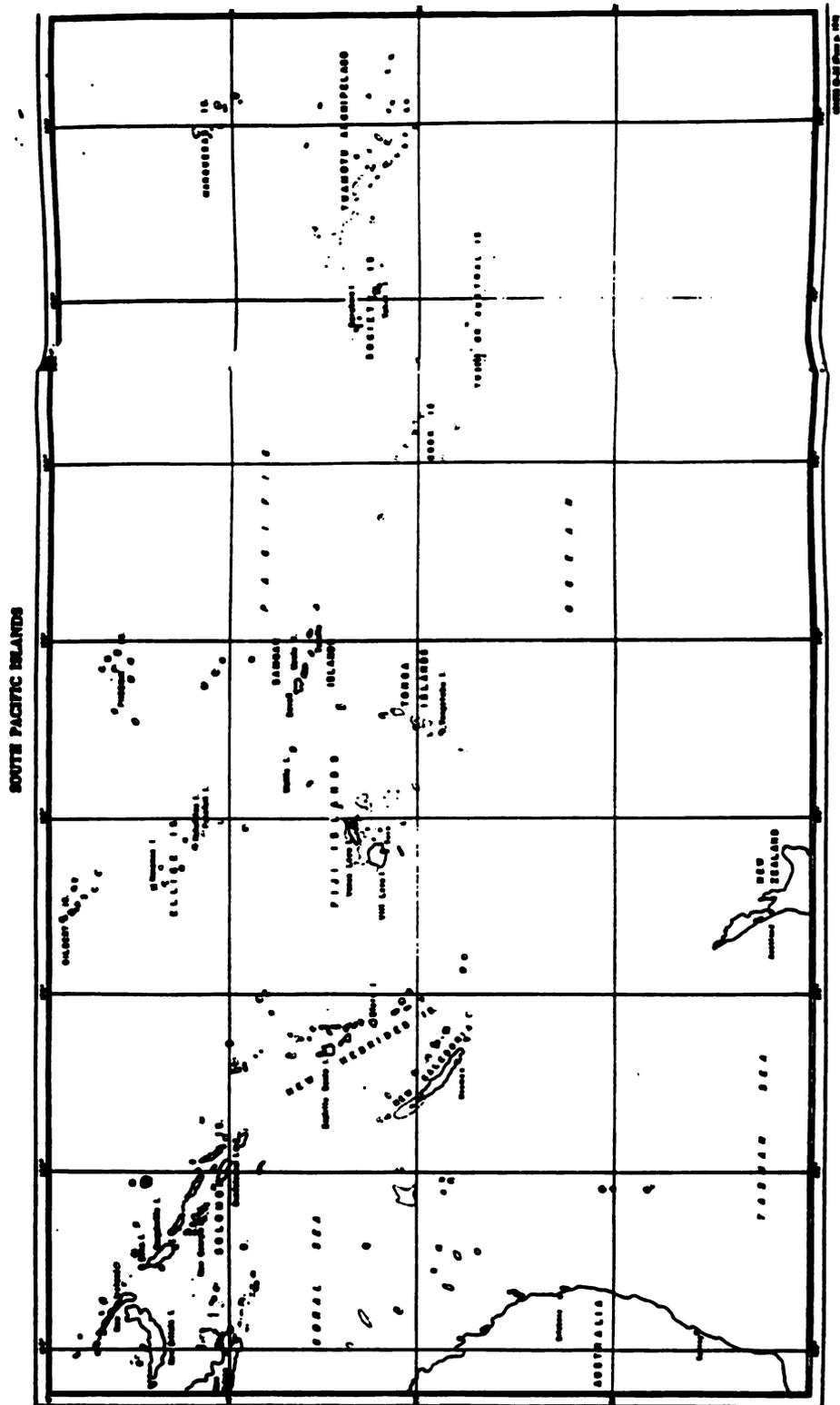


Figure 12. South Pacific Islands (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)



Figure 13. Eastern China, Korea And Japan (From Roger Thompson, *The Pacific Basin Since 1945*, Longman Group Limited UK, 1993)

Some planners went even further in their ideas for a postwar American lake. In 1944, Vice Admiral Richard Edwards, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations and Deputy Commander-in-Chief, US Fleet (Deputy CNO-Deputy COMINCH) and Rear Admiral Donald Duncan, COMINCH Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans, asserted to Admiral Ernest King, CNO-COMINCH, that since the Pacific was an integrated strategic entity, the United States should assume direct sovereign control over every island in the Pacific Basin or at least every base which the US had expended "blood and treasure" to liberate or develop into a military facilities.⁴⁸

Some individual officers expressed similar sympathies. Admiral William Halsey, Commander, US Third Fleet, subscribed to a blanketing of the Pacific as the solution to the US' security dilemma. In a May 1945 reply to Congressman Clifton Woodrum's inquiries about postwar military policy, Halsey labelled the Washington System a "great" but failed experiment in altruism and asserted that postwar American security required naval striking and amphibious forces which were capable of both disrupting potential enemy offensives and carrying out US offensive action in the area. He also insisted on and emphasized the need for " . . . full and absolute control of all bases needed for the operation and support of our forces in order to prevent even initial successes by potential enemies." In addition, Halsey made no bones about his hatred for the Japanese. He asserted that no peace treaty should be signed with Japan until they had learned to " . . . play ball in

⁴⁸ See memorandum by Edwards and Duncan to King, November 20, 1944, attached study "Post-War Naval Bases In The Pacific," file "Bases General, B-3," box 156, series 12, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

accordance with decent rules . . . " and that until that time a "terrier force" should be kept " . . . at the rat hole until we know Japan is . . . impotent . . ."49

Though this rather drastic kind of thinking never percolated upward into actual policy, even President Roosevelt sent Rear Admiral Richard Byrd on an exploratory mission throughout the Pacific in 1944 to scout out postwar American bases and air routes to East Asia. According to Roosevelt's instructions, Byrd's mission was not limited to prewar American possessions or even islands captured from Japan during the war, but was concerned with any island or area the US deemed necessary for postwar American and "international security."⁵⁰

It should also be noted that AAF wartime planning reflected very similar strategic thinking about the postwar Pacific. Perry Smith has shown that between 1943-1945, AAF planning officers also subscribed to Roosevelt's idea about the "Four Policemen." These officers not only foresaw postwar cooperation between the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China in maintaining peaceful international relations but even assigned the same geographic regions to the various powers as Navy planners had done.⁵¹ The AAF planners thus assumed that the United States would

⁴⁹ See Halsey to Woodrum, May 20, 1945, file "Navy 1945," box 29, White House Central Files, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri (hereafter cited as HSTL).

⁵⁰ William Roger Louis and Elliot Converse have both illustrated that in addition to concerns about postwar military security, Roosevelt and Byrd believed that "commercial security" could be obtained by developing joint commercial-military air bases in the Pacific for secure communication routes to the fabled markets of East Asia. See "Report of Survey of Certain Pacific Islands by Special Mission," box 2, Richard E. Byrd Papers, OA, NHC, as found in Elliot Converse, "United States Plans For A Postwar Overseas Military Base System, 1942-1948," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1984), 100-102. See also Byrd to Roosevelt, April 14, 1944, MR box 162, Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York (hereafter cited as Roosevelt Papers) as found in Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 271.

⁵¹ See "Deployment of the Initial Post-War Air Force: Study by Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Plans, June 14, 1944, 145.041A-20; 2-2141-60, Air Force Archives, Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama, as found in Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 77-78; see also *ibid.*, 56.

be tasked with sole responsibility for the postwar Pacific and AAF documents took it for granted that the Japanese Mandates would be brought under American sovereignty. This condition seemed logical to AAF planners since they, like their Navy counterparts in 1943 and 1944, thought of a resurgent Japan, and not the Soviet Union, as the probable immediate postwar enemy with which the United States would have to contend.⁵² Given this postwar mission, AAF planners argued that the United States would have to place significant aviation contingents within striking distance of Japan, requiring a strong American air force in the central and western Pacific.⁵³ While a few AAF intelligence officers saw the Soviet Union as a long-term potential enemy and even feared it leading a "European-Asiatic" combination against American interests in postwar East Asia, most AAF planning officers looked at Japan as the enemy for the next twenty years and wanted *carte blanche* on any air bases they deemed necessary in the Pacific to "enforce the peace."⁵⁴

Not surprisingly, other agencies of the United States government enunciated similar kinds of ideas about the Pacific. For example, in August 1945 the House Naval Affairs Subcommittee on Pacific Bases agreed with

⁵² See memorandum to Major General Lawrence Kuter, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Plans from Colonel R.C. Lindsay, Chief of the Combined and Joint Staff Division of the Air Staff, Plans, May 26, 1944, 2, 145.041A-20; 2-2142-60, Air Force Archives, as found in *ibid.*, 79.

⁵³ *Ibid.*; and memorandum for Colonel Reuben C. Moffat, Chief of the Army Air Force's Post War Division, June 30, 1944, 1, 145.86-67; 4334-161-5, Air Force Archives, as found in *ibid.*, 79-80.

⁵⁴ It is notable that between 1943 and 1945 Navy and AAF postwar planners discounted the Soviet Union as an immediate postwar enemy for similar reasons. The state of Soviet aviation technology and the Soviet Union's "minimal potential" for a strategic air force largely discounted the Soviets as an enemy to most AAF planning officers, just as wartime naval planners largely ignored the USSR because of its lack of a blue-water navy. Perry Smith argues that AAF planners thought in this context because they actually subscribed to Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan's theories about sea power and modified them for application to strategic air operations. If Smith is correct about "modified Mahanianism," his theory would explain why Navy and AAF postwar plans, which were not revealed by each service before 1945, were so similar in content. See Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 35-38, 51-52, 69, and 81-82.

the JCS about having dominating control in Micronesia, the Ryukyus, and the Bonins.⁵⁵ The subcommittee not only also endorsed the JCS' and Navy's recommendations for various classifications of bases, but its recommendations for bases followed almost exactly the Navy's ideas about establishing "main fleet bases," "secondary bases," and "fleet anchorages."⁵⁶ In addition, the subcommittee justified base requirements with another theme consistent in military planning documents. Asserting that the United States had spent great sums of money in building military bases throughout the Pacific, the subcommittee strongly implied that postwar base rights should follow automatically on any island where the US had built military installations during the Pacific War.⁵⁷ By breaking down each major island campaign by lives lost, equipment destroyed or damaged, and dollar amounts expended, the subcommittee also conveyed the sense of outrage felt by many Americans about perceived interwar weaknesses in the Pacific and the losses incurred during the Pacific War itself. In fact, the report, similar to many of the military planning documents, made each island base sound so crucial and significant to postwar American security that readers probably could not have missed the point that the Pacific was considered one integrated strategic complex which should be blanketed with American forces and bases as soon as possible.⁵⁸

There was, however, one important difference between the Navy's and the subcommittee's base recommendations. The subcommittee saw the Kurile Islands as part of a northern flank guarding the Pacific. (See Figure 14)

⁵⁵ See House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Study of Pacific Bases*, 1010-1011.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1011.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1014-1015. See also John J. Dedman, "Encounter over Menus," *Australian Outlook* 20 (August 1966): 139.

⁵⁸ See House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Study of Pacific Bases*, *passim*.

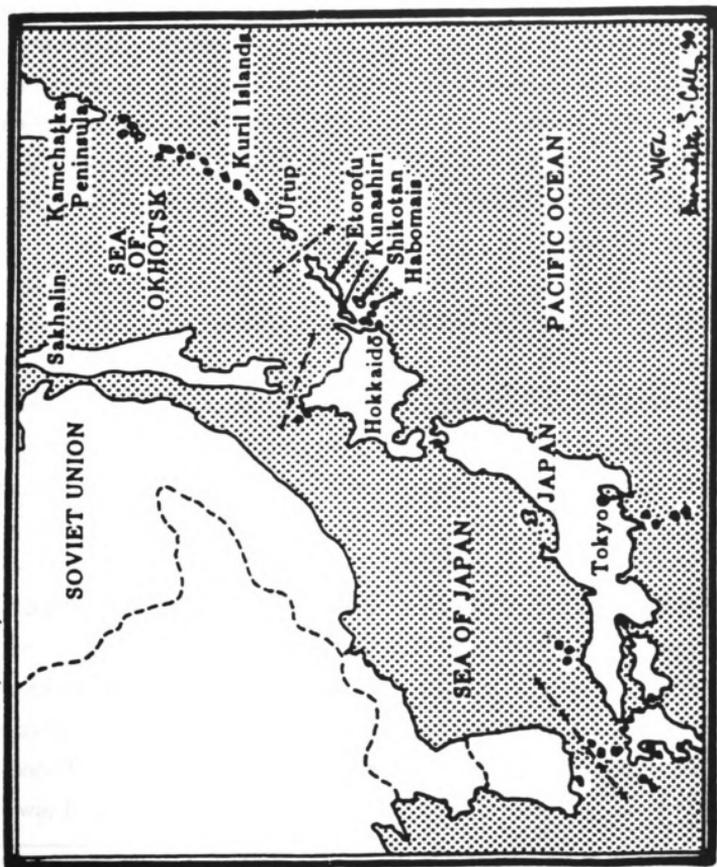


Figure 14. The Japanese Home Islands And The Kuriles (Courtesy of Marc S. Gallicchio)

Similar to calls in 1943 by Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle for acquiring base rights by "internationalizing" the Kuriles, the subcommittee obviously ignored or failed to realize significant Soviet interests in that area as well as the implications of the Yalta Agreement, which had awarded the Kuriles to the USSR. The subcommittee members simply did not "... see how anyone could challenge our retention of authority over the area after the war."⁵⁹

The widespread idea of turning the Pacific into an American lake in order to guarantee postwar security was even subscribed to by the most vocal critic of American military rule in the Pacific Islands. Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior from March 1933 to February 1946, was opposed to allowing the American military to rule the Pacific Islands and govern civilian populations. Writing in the magazine *Collier's* in August 1946, Ickes accurately compared naval rule on prewar Guam and American Samoa to life aboard a battleship and he argued that international trusteeship through the UN, rather than annexation of the islands, had to be pursued as a way to guarantee America's international prestige as well as the human rights of the indigenous population.⁶⁰ But even Ickes did not question America's right to control the central and western Pacific. In fact, Ickes' key aide while he was Secretary of the Interior, Undersecretary Abe Fortas, had developed the concept of strategic trusteeship in conjunction with the State Department as a way to quell military fears that a UN device would fail to secure the

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1015-1016. For Berle's ideas about acquiring American control over the Kuriles, see T Minutes 52, July 16, 1943, box 42, "Notter Files" (Post-war Planning) of the State Department (hereafter cited as USSD NF), Record Group 59, Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as RG 59, NA), as found in Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 80-81. For Truman's views on the Kuriles, see Truman to Stalin, August 17, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 6:670.

⁶⁰ See Harold L. Ickes, "The Navy at Its Worst," *Colliers* 117 (August 31, 1946): 22-23 and 67.

region for the US. In addition, Ickes and other Interior Department officials made it clear that the military would have complete control over its base facilities in the islands and complete territorial control of the entire region in times of war or national emergency.⁶¹

Moreover, in December 1945, Ickes had written Truman to argue that placing the Pacific islands under civil administration would "strengthen" the US' international position and its case for a unilateral strategic trusteeship *vis-à-vis* the UN. Even after Ickes resigned his cabinet post in February 1946, the Interior Department continued to argue for civil administration in the context of strengthening the US' concept of creating an American lake in the Pacific Basin. Interior Department officials wanted a civilian agency, rather than the military, to administer the Micronesian Islands, including Guam, as well as Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Howland, Baker, Jarvis, and Johnston Islands, and the Bonins, Volcanoes, and Ryukyus. They believed this new security zone would be enhanced if it was ruled in an "enlightened" manner by civilians who could integrate the Pacific islanders into American domestic life.⁶²

In spite of the overwhelming evidence that planners and policymakers thought the entire Pacific should be "politically denied" and strategically developed, there were some individuals who thought that US plans were too encompassing. Admiral Raymond Spruance, soon after relieving Admiral

⁶¹ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 480-484. See also Appendix B of "Future Administration Of The Trust Territory Of The Pacific Islands," 15, file "E.J. Sady," box 76, Philleo Nash Papers, HSTL.

⁶² See Appendix B, "Future Administration Of The Trust Territory Of The Pacific Islands," file "E.J. Sady," box 76, Philleo Nash Papers, HSTL; and Ickes, "Navy at Its Worst," 22-23 and 67. See also Ickes to Truman, December 29, 1945, file OF 85-L, "Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945 to 1950," box 572, White House Official Files, HSTL; and February 20, 1946, "Memo for the War, Navy, State, and Interior Department Secretaries," file "Pacific Islands Commission," box 133, President's Secretary's Files, HSTL.

Nimitz as CINCPAC in late November 1945, gave two press conferences to the Associated Press in which he stated that the US should not attempt to develop military bases on Okinawa and Taiwan or maintain a large postwar fleet in the region. Spruance asserted that the US would not want military bases developed close to its borders by another power and he believed that the Soviets would feel threatened by bases and forces which could "blockade" their coast. He thought the US should be more sensitive to this Soviet "sore spot" and that the US' real mission in the East Asia was to solve problems caused by the war, not create new ones because of US insecurity. Neither the point about mobile forces nor the one about bases seems to have endeared him to the Navy's higher leadership.⁶³

The Ambivalence of Prioritization

What is significant about these early postwar plans is their very universal nature. Although early plans categorized and prioritized the various sites according to strategic value, the plans were very ambiguous about these classifications and they largely failed to discuss the ease or difficulty of obtaining base rights from other sovereign powers. Strategic planners in a number of agencies simply laid an American carpet of bases over the Pacific in order to satisfy postwar American security requirements and they justified this blanketing of the region in terms of ensuring "international peace and security." This universal attitude toward Pacific base rights is interesting as well since post-1945 documents illustrate tensions and uncertainties between providing for American security in the Pacific Basin while limiting American base requirements in the face of postwar

⁶³ See Thomas B. Buell, *Quiet Warrior: A Biography of Admiral Raymond A. Spruance* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1974), 371-372.

budget cuts.⁶⁴ While there was a willingness on the part of policymakers and planners to qualify and limit their requests, there was a simultaneous mindset that to provide for postwar security the entire Pacific Basin had to become an American lake in a comprehensive sense.

Even before the war ended there was doubt about blanketing the postwar Pacific with American bases. This doubt was illustrated in a June 1944 study of postwar naval base requirements which Admiral Yarnell conducted for Admiral King and Vice Admiral Frederick Horne, Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO). Yarnell perceived a need to limit the number of postwar bases in the Pacific because of projected limited postwar funds. Because of these projected cuts, Yarnell placed utmost importance in the United States acquiring firm control over Micronesia and the Bonin Islands as the "minimum necessary" for postwar security. At the same time, however, Yarnell believed that the United States should still insist on base rights at any location in the Pacific it thought necessary for postwar security and he called for annexation of any sites where the controlling power attempted to impose restrictions on US fortification and base usage.⁶⁵

Conflicting ideas about America's ability to blanket the Pacific with bases becomes apparent in later documents as well. For example, by late 1944 it seemed to be an accepted idea that there would be areas the US could not or would not develop as bases but would leave to be developed by

⁶⁴ Perry Smith argues that the very nature of postwar planning led to plans which were too broad to ever be practical for the United States in the postwar world. He contends that in the AAF, postwar planners were encouraged to be "creative" with their ideas and only then were budgetary constraints placed on them to bring their plans into line with funding realities. This broad, initial nature to postwar planning, followed by reductions in force and base infrastructure, could explain a great number of phenomena in the Navy's plans for the postwar Pacific as well. See Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 43 and 63.

⁶⁵ See Yarnell, "Memorandum on Post-War Far Eastern Situation," June 16, 1944, file "Intelligence, A-8," box 195, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

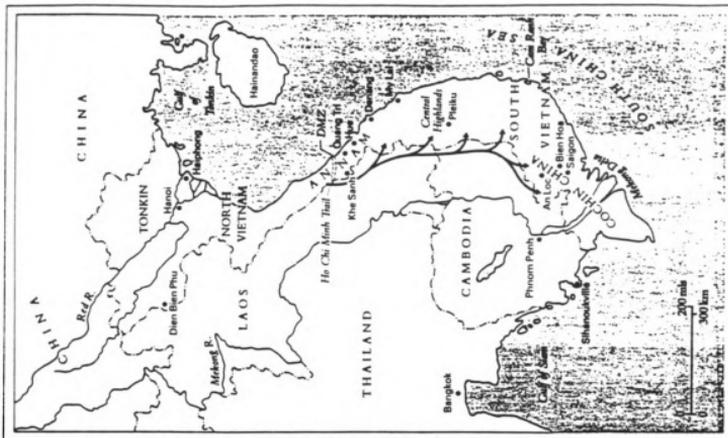


Figure 15. North And South Vietnam (From Roger Thompson, *The Pacific Basin Since 1945*, Longman Group Limited UK, 1993)

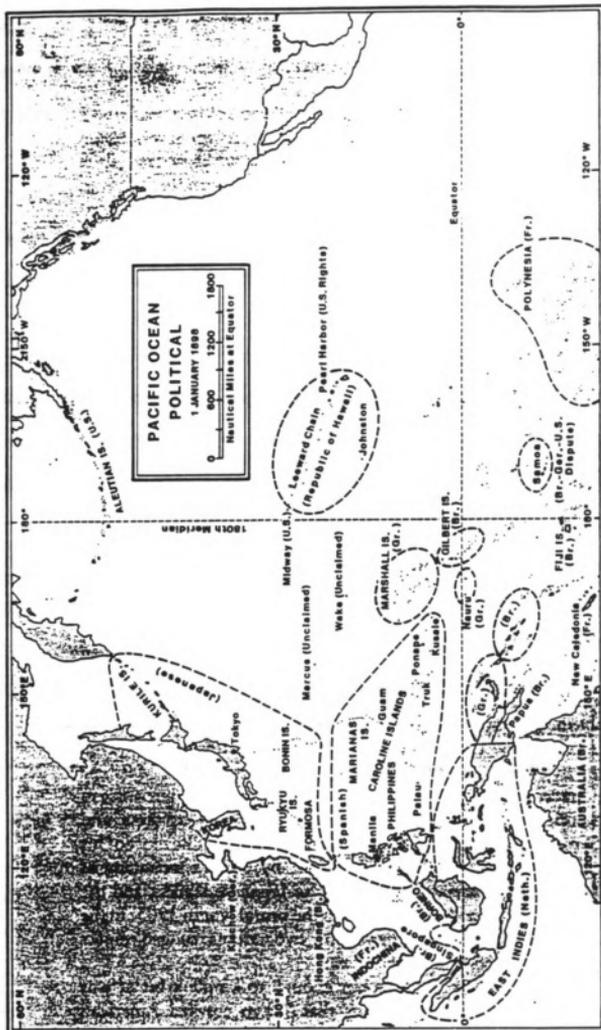


Figure 16. Pacific Ocean Area (From Edward Miller, *War Plan Orange*, Naval Institute Press, 1991)

American allies for rapid use by the United States in times of international crises.⁶⁶ Naval planners, for example, now began to classify and prioritize bases according to their perceived strategic worth and foresaw "major bases" at Pearl Harbor, Truk in Micronesia, and Tutu Bay in the Philippines, "secondary bases" throughout the rest of Micronesia, the Philippines, the Aleutians, the Bonins-Volcanos, the Ryukyus, the South Pacific, and Marcus Island, and "international bases" at Hainan, China, and Camrahn Bay, French Indochina (now Vietnam).⁶⁷ (See Figure 15)

This type of prioritization and proposed concentration of power at a smaller number of bases continued as the war drew to a close. Hawaii, for example, was later labelled a "complete main naval base," while Guam-Saipan became a "major naval base", and Okinawa, Midway, Marcus, the Philippines, and Adak, Alaska became "secondary Operating Bases." Most of the remaining bases in Micronesia, meanwhile, were downgraded to "Fleet Anchorages with Naval Air Facilities" and locations such as Iwo Jima, Wake, and Marcus became mere "staging points" for military, naval, and civil aircraft.⁶⁸ Still, it should be made clear to the reader that as late as November 1944 American naval planners continued to define the ideal postwar situation as one in which American forces were present in some form at almost every point in the Pacific. (See Figure 16)

This vacillation in base planning continued after 1945. With the defeat of Japan and American attentions becoming more focused on the Soviet Union as the main strategic threat in the Pacific, there was a decided shift in base orientation north of the Equator, a move toward eliminating bases in

⁶⁶ See Edwards and Duncan to King, November 20, 1944, attached study "Post-War Naval Bases In The Pacific," file "Bases General, B-3," box 156, series 12, *ibid.*

⁶⁷ See "Pacific Bases," file 48-1-24, box 90, RG 80, NA.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

the South Pacific, and a downsizing of forces throughout the Pacific. Moreover, the domestic political pressure for demobilization and significant budget cuts played more than a share in the military services "rolling up" bases in the South Pacific and reducing others that were not considered essential.

For instance, in September 1945, MacArthur proposed withdrawing all Army Ground Forces (AGF) from Hawaii and predominating AAF and Army Service Force (ASF) personnel in Japan, Korea, and selected Pacific Islands as part of an effort to reduce the number of Army personnel in the Pacific to 400,000. In fact, MacArthur saw the need to scale ground forces back to one regiment each in the Ryukyus and the Marianas and to order all US Army units at Manus in the Admiralty Islands and Emirau Island in the Bismarck Archipelago to be withdrawn as soon as shipping for them became available.⁶⁹ (See Figure 17)

In the fall of 1945, MacArthur further elaborated on the idea of the Pacific Basin as a geographic entity which had to be defended in an integrated, regional, defense-in-depth manner but with a very selective choice of locations for US forces. In November, he wrote General of the Army George Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, about postwar dispositions in the Pacific. MacArthur was primarily concerned with conducting an "active" defense based on land-based airpower in the Philippines, the Ryukyus, the Marianas, and the Aleutians. MacArthur envisioned an eventual US military withdrawal from Japan and Korea with the "frontline of defense" becoming

⁶⁹ See MacArthur to Marshall, September 21, 1945, file "Troop Deployments," Blue Binder Series, Record Group 4: Records of General Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, 1942-1947, Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia (hereafter cited as RG 4: General Headquarters, Blue Binders, MacArthur Memorial Archives). For Marshall's response, see Marshall to MacArthur, September 21, 1945, *ibid.* See also MacArthur to Nimitz, then-CINCPAC, September 21, 1945, Plans and Operations File, *ibid.*

the four island groups mentioned above and the "rear area" for training and supply being focused on the Hawaiian Islands. In MacArthur's opinion, this postwar defense line would allow the US to mass offensive strength against any potential threat from East Asia and still allow for an "economical" disposition of forces.⁷⁰

By early 1946, the JCS, probably because of pressure from President Truman over the need for budget cuts and because of the increased policy attention to Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East, seemed willing to limit American base requirements in the Pacific to Micronesia, the Ryukyus, the Bonins, and Marcus Island. While the Joint Chiefs hoped for sovereignty over Micronesia and strategic trusteeships in the other three areas, they were somewhat willing to settle for strategic trusteeships over all of these areas, a significant concession considering wartime planning criteria against trusteeship ideas of any kind.⁷¹

In January 1946, General Whitehead told MacArthur that reduction of AAF forces in the Pacific made the withdrawal of Army Ground Forces necessary from Iwo Jima, Saipan, and Tinian and that these locations should merely be retained on a "caretaker airdrome" status. Whitehead was very clear that he thought Okinawa was the key base to be preserved as long as the US felt it needed a striking force for intervention in East Asia and as long as the United States continued to occupy Japan and South Korea. He

⁷⁰ See MacArthur to Marshall, November 1, 1945, 168.6008-3, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

⁷¹ See the JSSC to the JCS, "Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee," part of "Trusteeships For Japanese Mandated Islands," JCS 570-48, January 17, 1946, CCS 360, RG 218, NA. See also "Memorandum for the Secretary of State," part of "Strategic Control By The United States Of Certain Pacific Areas," January 21, 1946, SWNCC 249/1, file 12-9-42 sec. 13, *ibid.* See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 68-87, 259-273, 366-377, 475-496, and 512-531 for JCS resistance to the concept of trusteeship.

thought that once the occupation phase ended, however, islands like Iwo Jima would resume their status as outposts covering the northern flank of the Marianas and serve, along with Alaska, as the first line of defense for American military security in the Pacific Basin.⁷²

In February 1946, Whitehead wrote General George Kenney, US Special Adviser for Military Affairs to the UN, to further embellish the defense-in-depth concept which had become so widespread in American strategic thinking. Whitehead, like MacArthur, saw a similar concentration in the Philippines, the Ryukyus, and the Marianas after the withdrawal from East Asia, with Hawaii as the region's rear area.⁷³ The lightly garrisoned rear area would then blend into a very heavily defended line comprising the Philippines, the Marianas-Bonins, and the Ryukyus. In addition, many of the smaller atolls in the central and western Pacific, such as Midway, Johnston, Wake, Marcus, the Marshalls and Carolines, and South Pacific islands such as Canton and Christmas, would comprise fighter, supply, and communication bases.⁷⁴

More specifically, Whitehead believed the Philippines was "... the most important piece of real estate which we have ... I regard Okinawa as a most important base and an outpost for the Philippines. In the atomic age we might lose what we have in Okinawa but with the same weapon we could prevent the enemy from using Okinawa as an air base so long as we "own the air over the Philippines." As long as we own the air over the Philippines we own the Orient." Whitehead believed that if the US did not defend the Phil-

⁷² See Whitehead to MacArthur, January 30, 1946, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC. See also Whitehead to Colonel Clarence Irvine, PACUSA Assistant Chief of Staff, June 8, 1946, *ibid.*; and Whitehead to Major General Thomas White, PACUSA Chief of Staff, April 28, 1947, *ibid.*

⁷³ See Whitehead to MacArthur, January 30, 1946, 168.6008-1, *ibid.*

⁷⁴ See Whitehead to Kenney, now first Commanding General of the Strategic Air Command (SAC), March 16, 1946, *ibid.*

ppines with airpower in the future, it would "lose" the islands in the next war. But if the US held those islands, "... no enemy can move petroleum and other supplies from the Indies to the east coast of Asia and any enemy operating from eastern Asia would be dependent upon an overland supply line 5,000 miles long."⁷⁵

Similar to naval plans which began to limit and prioritize bases in 1944 and 1945, by the winter and summer of 1946 MacArthur's headquarters saw a definite limitation of American forces in the Pacific Islands to a few select areas, though MacArthur's principal subordinate commanders disagreed on some of the details of these dispositions. MacArthur specifically saw bases limited to Hawaii, the Marianas, the Philippines, the Volcanoes, and the Ryukyus. In addition, Major General Clements McMullen, Chief of Staff of PACUSA, thought Tinian and Saipan in the Marianas should be garrisoned with small detachments on a "caretaker" basis. However, McMullen, like Whitehead, continued to see Iwo Jima as the major fighter base in the area and the "north flank" covering the approaches to the Marianas.⁷⁶ Conversely, in July 1946, Lieutenant General John Hull, Commanding General, US Army Forces, Middle Pacific (AFMIDPAC), cited both strategic and budgetary reasons for recommending the withdrawal of all but 100 men from Iwo Jima and reclassifying the volcanic island from a forward fighter base to an emergency landing field with a caretaker garrison. Citing the proximity of

⁷⁵ See Whitehead to Kenney, February 27, 1946, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ See MacArthur to Hull and Major General James Christiansen, Acting Commanding General of US Army Forces, Western Pacific (AFWESPAC), July 26, 1946, Record Group 9: Collections of Messages (Radiograms), Troop Deployment, MacArthur Memorial Archives; Lieutenant General Wilhelm Styer was Commanding General of AFWESPAC until July 1946 when he left the Pacific because of ill health. Christiansen became interim commander at that time and remained so until relieved by Major General George Moore in November 1946. Christiansen then became Moore's chief of staff until May 1947 when he too returned to the United States for medical reasons. See McMullen to Whitehead, subj: Outgoing Messages, February 23, 1946, 720.1623, AFSHRC.

Iwo to both Japan and the Marianas in case of a need for fast wartime augmentation and the stringent budget cuts coming from the War Department, Hull saw no reason to continue operating Iwo as a major airfield.⁷⁷

In spite of some disagreement on how and where to reduce Army units in key areas of the northern Pacific, MacArthur and his subordinate commanders did agree on a systematic reduction of garrisons in the South Pacific, island bases which had proved important against Japan in 1942-1945 but which were considered questionable for use against the Soviet Union and probably frivolous during the fiscal retrenchment. Still, War Department records simultaneously suggest a general reluctance to withdraw from the South Pacific area entirely. Similar to naval officers in 1944 and 1945 who only slowly began to recognize the need for base limitation, some Army officers in 1946 and 1947 seemed to think the US might still need base facilities in the South Pacific at some future date.

For instance, in August 1946 Hull recommended to Lieutenant General Wilhelm Styer, Commanding General of US Army Forces, Western Pacific (AFWESPAC), that the over 500 Army personnel garrisoning Penrhyn and Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, Guadalcanal in the Solomons, Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides, New Calendonla, and Fiji be withdrawn as soon as base facilities and the surplus equipment at those locations were turned over to New Zealand military personnel.⁷⁸ Hull saw the need for a small number of weather technicians and topographic personnel to stay temporarily in order to carry out an aerial mapping survey in conjunction with the 20th Air Force based in the Marianas, but even he continued later in the same month to call

⁷⁷ See Hull to MacArthur, July 12, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁷⁸ See Hull to MacArthur, August 3, 1946; and Hull to Christiansen, August 10, 1946, both in RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

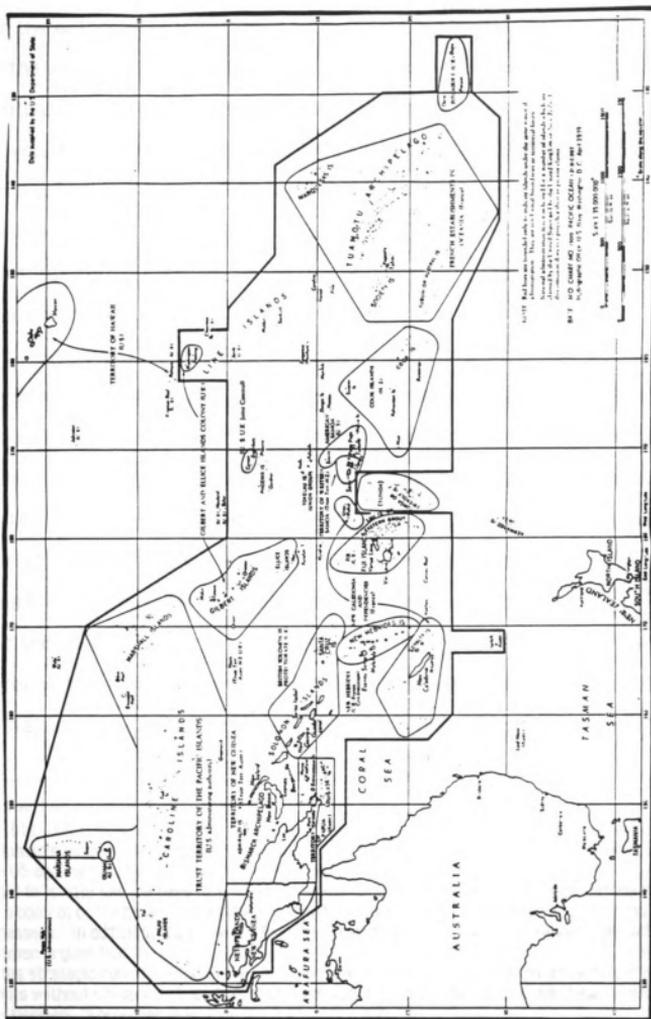


Figure 18. The South Pacific (Courtesy of the National Archives II, College Park, Maryland)

for the withdrawal of the other forces from the South Pacific bases as well as the ones at Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, Tarawa in the Gilberts, and Canton and Christmas Islands.⁷⁹ Interestingly enough, however, Hull perceived the need for one Army officer to remain on each island. According to his message, garrisoned forces represented US interests in the bases and installations and Hull wanted at least one officer to remain on each island to represent the US in asserting its "residual" base rights and facilities.⁸⁰ (See Figure 18)

Roger Bell writes that by the spring of 1946, American strategic policy toward the South Pacific underwent a dramatic revision. Arguing that the reorientation of policy from Japan to the Soviet Union and the focus on Europe meant that the South Pacific suddenly became an unimportant backwater, Bell asserts that American planners virtually ignored the South Pacific after May 1946, with the exception of a proposed base on Manus Island.⁸¹ I would agree with Bell about the major reorientation of policy and the withdrawal of the major portion of American forces. I would also agree with Bell that Japan, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, the Bonins, Micronesia, and Hawaii became the major bases sites sought in the Pacific. How-

⁷⁹ See Hull to Christiansen, August 10, 1946, *ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* John Dedman, a former Australian War Cabinet member during the wartime and immediate postwar periods, described "residual rights" as special bilateral agreements between the US and various British Commonwealth nations in the South Pacific by which the US had the right to jointly use the base facilities of the host nation. Moreover, the US also had the right to take control of the bases at any time it deemed necessary and for whatever length of time it thought necessary. In addition, the US would have the right to deny the same privilege to any other nation. Dedman argues that the US began to "back away" from these bilateral agreements in 1946 because of the strategic reorientation to the north, an unwillingness to conclude so many bilateral agreements without UN sanction, and Congressional funding limitations on postwar base development. See Dedman, "Encounter over Manus," 145, 148, and 149-150.

⁸¹ See Roger Bell, "Australian-American Discord: Negotiations For Post-War Bases And Security Arrangements In The Pacific, 1944-1946," *Australian Outlook* 27 (April 1973): 21-22 and 27-28; and *idem.*, *Unequal Allies: Australian-American Relations And The Pacific War* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 144-172.

ever, I would disagree that American planners completely ignored the South Pacific in 1946 and 1947. While refraining from planning for any large deployments in the area outside of Manus, American Army officers continued to see the South Pacific playing a role in American Pacific policy after the summer of 1946.

A War Department plan of August 1946 partially explains where the South Pacific fit into planners' ideas after the spring of 1946 and further suggests that American officials wanted some sort of presence in the South Pacific long after the Soviet Union became the perceived threat in the Pacific and East Asia. Entitled "War Department Plan For Overseas Bases" and dated August 6, 1946, the plan provided a breakdown of bases by island chain, desired force structure, civilian personnel strength, and strategic priority.⁸² There was a predominance of bases north of the Equator. Army ground, air, and service units, for example, were located primarily in Hawaii, the Philippines, the Marianas, and the Ryukyus.⁸³ Most of these forces, in turn, were concentrated in Hawaii and the Philippines with the Ryukyus and the Marianas appearing to be a second tier and the Marshalls, Bonins, Marcus, and Wake comprising a third tier of very small, low strength outposts.⁸⁴ Hawaii, the Philippines, the Marianas, and the Ryukyus were all termed by the Army as "Primary Operational Bases," which meant they were considered vital to the American overseas base system. The Bonins and Volcanoes were considered "Secondary Operational Bases" while Marcus, Kwajalein, Wake, Midway, Johnston, and Canton were all categorized as "Reserve

⁸² See "War Department Plans For Overseas Bases (Post Occupation Period)," August 6, 1946, General Files, RG 5: Records of General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), 1945-1951, MacArthur Memorial Archives (hereafter cited as RG 5: SCAP, General Files).

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 10-12.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-37, 48-54, and 55-56.

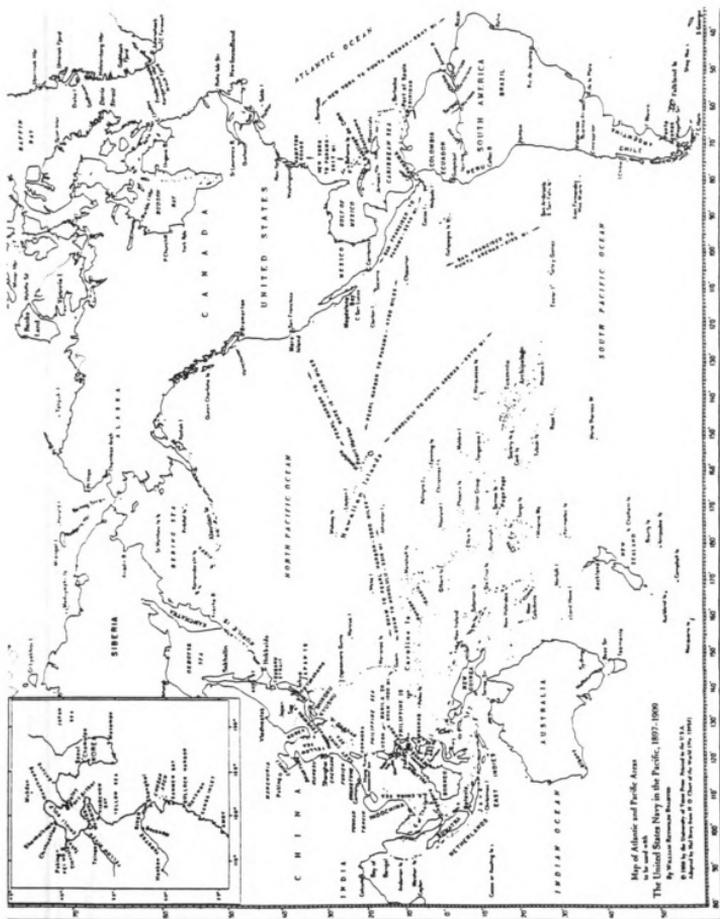


Figure 19. Map of Atlantic And Pacific Areas (From William Braisted's *The United States Navy In The Pacific, 1897-1909*, Copyright (c) 1958 by the University of Texas Press. Adapted by Hal M. Story from H.O. Charts Of The World (no. 1262 d)

Operational." These designations meant that the sites were important for the protection of the primary bases and important for power projection as well. Other bases in Micronesia, though deemed "non-operational," were still categorized as "Secondary Bases." Majuro and Eniwetok in the Marshalls, Truk and Yap-Ulithi in the Carolines, and Peleliu in Belau all met these criteria.⁸⁵ (See Figure 19)

Numerous South Pacific bases, however, had a role to play in the War Department plan. Manus, American Samoa, Tarawa, and Funa Futi in the Ellice Islands were considered either "Secondary" or "Subsidiary" bases, the latter meaning a facility which increased flexibility of operations in the primary and secondary areas. In addition, Christmas Island, Morotai, Biak-Woendi, Guadalcanal-Tulagi, Espiritu Santo, New Caledonia, Fiji, and British Samoa were all deemed "Minor Non-Operational" bases. This designation meant that they were desired for transit rights and "varying military rights" to make the Pacific Basin base system more "flexible."⁸⁶ (See Figure 20)

This continued perceived need for base rights in the South Pacific goes far in explaining War Department hesitation about completely withdrawing American garrisons in the winter of 1946-1947 and largely explains Hull's order to keep at least one officer on each island to represent continuing American interest in "residual" base rights. Nevertheless, as the fall of 1946 approached, there continued to be uncertainties and disagreements about limiting American base rights and facilities in the various areas of the Pacific. In September 1946, for instance, Admiral Towers, CINCPAC, argued for a limited American presence in the area by stating to

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1 and 3.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-4 and 1.

President Truman and Secretary Forrestal that the Guam-Saipan-Tinian complex, in addition to the Philippines and Okinawa, were the basic necessities for postwar American security in the Pacific and that any additional scarce resources should be applied to maintaining a mobile carrier fleet rather than fixed bases and forces. No mention was made by Towers of the South Pacific.⁸⁷

Some officers in the War Department had other ideas about the South Pacific as late as the fall of 1946. In September 1946, MacArthur ordered Hull to reduce the garrisons in question to "token size" but that final withdrawal could only come with permission from the War Department itself. Moreover, although Bora Bora, Aitutaki, and Penryhn had been stricken by the JCS from the list of desired bases, the other locations in the South Pacific mentioned above had apparently not been.⁸⁸ Later in the same month, MacArthur's headquarters and his subordinate commands seemed to come to the conclusion that the forces remaining in the South Pacific were needed primarily for the upcoming aerial mapping survey, but they were concerned that complete withdrawal of American ground forces would make temporary reentry for this survey difficult.⁸⁹ In spite of this concern, there were orders from Hull to his garrisons to be prepared to withdraw completely from Guadalcanal, Espiritu Santo, Fiji, and New Calendonia by the middle of

⁸⁷ For Tower's statement to Truman, see "The President-Bases," September 30, 1946, *Forrestal Diaries*; see also Reynolds, *Admiral John H. Towers*, 521-522; and "Extract From Secret Information Bulletin No. 17, Battle Experience Supporting Operations For The Occupation Of The Marshall Islands Including The Westernmost Atoll Eniwetok," Comments by CINCPAC-CINCPAC, "Mobile Forces Versus Bases," file "Joint Operations," February 1946-October 1946, box 198, series 12, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

⁸⁸ See MacArthur to Hull, September 5, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Outgoing Radios (XTS), MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁸⁹ See MacArthur to Hull, September 11, 1946, *ibid.*; see also Hull to MacArthur, October 16, 1946; October 27, 1946; and October 28, 1946; all in RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

December 1946. Yet by that time, there were still nearly 500 US military personnel in these locations, as well as personnel on Tarawa, Canton, and Christmas Island.⁹⁰

An interesting sidelight on the stringency of the budgetary situation may provide some insight to the difficulty faced in withdrawing the garrisons. In September 1946, Hull had requested the War Department to allow the garrisons to stay in the South Pacific because of a lack of surface transportation, lack of funding for such transportation, and the expense of airlifting the troops out by American Airways.⁹¹ Budgetary considerations, as well as the aerial mapping survey, thus partially explain why some American forces stayed in the South Pacific until the first months of 1947. But the numerous references in the documents to "residual" base rights and interests suggests that some commanders on the spot still had a desire for bases and base rights at various points in the South Pacific for purposes of strategic contingency planning.

This idea is evidenced by radio traffic between Hull and Major General Lauris Norstad, chief of the War Department's Operations and Plans Division (OPD), in November 1946. The subject of the message was an American lieutenant colonel by the name of Thomas who was stationed in Sydney, Australia, and was reluctant to turn surplus American equipment and base facilities at Guadalcanal, Nanadi, Fiji, and Espirito Santo over to any foreign power until he was certain that the War and State Departments approved the action.⁹² Colonel Thomas' confusion stemmed from his uncertainty about

⁹⁰ See Hull to Commanding Officer, US Army Forces, New Caledonia (CO USAFNC), November 11, 1946; and Hull to Eisenhower, December 13, 1946; both found in RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁹¹ See Hull to the Chief of Special Purposes Garrison, United States Army (C SPGAR USA), September 21, 1946, *ibid.*

⁹² See Hull to Norstad, November 21, 1946, *ibid.*

whether or not Guadalcanal was on the list of "national interest airways" or civil air facilities which were to be developed after the war for joint US military-civilian use. Apparently, the final provisions for the transfer of equipment stated that any transfer should in no way jeopardize future rights or negotiations by the United States government.⁹³

A few days later, a message from Hull to Brigadier General Robert Nowland, Commanding General of the Pacific Division of the Army's Air Transport Command (PAC DIV ATC), seemed to clear up the confusion about Guadalcanal's future status in the War Department plan since it explicitly stated that garrisons could be withdrawn from Fiji, Guadalcanal, Espiritu Santo, Tarawa, and New Caledonia, but that token garrisons had to be maintained at Canton and Christmas Islands because of sovereignty disputes with the British over the use of those islands. The report made it clear that ground forces were no longer necessary at these locations but that Canton at least was an important site on the list of "national interest airways" and that some presence should be maintained.⁹⁴

That the War Department continued to have ideas about the South Pacific as late as the winter of 1946-1947 was also apparent. For example, a War Department "Master Plan" was referred to by Hull in early December 1946 and by Whitehead in April 1947 in contexts which still assumed some level of base construction at South Pacific locations in the Line Islands, the Admiralties, the Solomons, the Gilberts, the New Hebrides, Samoa, New Caledonia, Fiji, and the Ellice Islands.⁹⁵ Still, by the first months of 1947,

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ See Hull to Nowland, November 24, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁹⁵ See Hull to MacArthur, December 4, 1946, *ibid.*, and Whitehead to MacArthur and Major General Francis Griswold, Commanding General of the US 20th Air Force (COMAF 20), April 17, 1947, RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, *ibid.* Whitehead's change in billet title reflected a change in

strategic and budgetary considerations seem to have caught up with the War Department's base configurations, which were now very limited in extent. For example, in February 1947, Major General Francis Griswold, Commanding General of the Marianas-Bonins Command (MARBO), recommended putting the bulk of the aviation forces on Guam, Tinian, and Iwo Jima and limiting ground forces in the area to one division on Saipan.⁹⁶ By May of 1947, most of the ground and service forces had not only been withdrawn from the South Pacific, but from the more vital northern areas as well.⁹⁷

Moreover, numerous documents from March to June 1947 suggest that base prioritization and budget cuts may have even forced limited cooperation between the War and Navy Departments over the use of facilities on Okinawa. Whitehead specifically cited considerations of "economy" in terms of acreage, base construction, aviation supplies, air operation facilities, and storage facilities to Major General Albert Hegenberger, Commanding General of 1st Air Division on Okinawa (COMAIRDIV 1), when discussing the two services' decision to combine the Naval Air Facility at Naha Air Base

postwar overseas command organization within the War and Navy Departments after January 1, 1947. Under pressure from the President, Congress, and the American public to eliminate waste and duplication between the services and to move toward quasi-unification of the military, the War and Navy Departments established "unified" commands throughout the world, including in the Pacific. For example, where previously commanders had authority only over their respective services' units in a geographic region, now American commanders had authority over all naval, air, and ground forces in certain demarcated geographic areas. In the Pacific, General MacArthur ceased to be in command of all US Army Forces in the Basin and became commander of all US forces, with some exceptions, in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, the Ryukyus, and the Marianas-Bonins. Admiral Towers lost control of all naval forces in the areas under MacArthur's command, but was placed in command of all forces in the Pacific except where MacArthur commanded. See Herman Wolk, *Planning and Organizing the Postwar Air Force, 1943-1947* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1984), 158-160 for a complete description of the unified commands in 1947.

⁹⁶ See Griswold to MacArthur, February 8, 1947; and February 14, 1947; both found in RG 9: Radiograms, MARBO, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁹⁷ See Griswold to MacArthur, May 24, 1947, *ibid.*

with that of AAF operations on the Island in order to reduce redundancy and duplication.⁹⁸

Still, the question remains as to why certain circles in the War Department would have wanted to retain any base rights in the South Pacific after 1946? It seems ridiculous to assume that the interest in South Pacific base rights was in any way directed against a European colonial power in the region. Disagreements between the United States, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Australia, and New Zealand over the postwar Pacific were many and varied during and after the war, but never to the degree of maintaining a postwar military presence in the area directed against one of those powers.⁹⁹

More likely, the desire for base rights south of the Equator was connected to continued perceptions of Japan as a postwar menace and to growing perceptions that the Soviet Union was the new "enemy" in the Pacific. American military planners could not forget how seriously Australia, New Zealand, and the lines of communication and supply from Hawaii and the American West Coast to the South Pacific had been threatened by Japan in 1941-1942, how costly the campaign of 1942-45 in the Southwest Pacific had been, or how difficult it had been to obtain base rights from the colonial powers in the area. Accordingly, if Japan was a future enemy which could rebuild and threaten the US again, then secure bases in the South Pacific were probably perceived as the next line of defense if the bases in Micronesia and the Ryukyus were threatened or taken.

⁹⁸ See exchange of radio messages between Whitehead and Hegenberger, March 15, 1947; March 17, 1947; March 29, 1947; April 13, 1947; and June 13, 1947; all found in RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁹⁹ See Bell, "Australian-American Discord," 12-33; Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, passim; and Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War against Japan, 1941-1945* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1978).

If the Soviet Union was the new enemy in the postwar Pacific and if Soviet power and patterns of aggression were equated with those of prewar Japan, then the ability to occupy the South Pacific Islands quickly and use them to secure the central and western Pacific would be just as important to military planners in 1946 as they had been in 1942. In addition, if War Department planners in 1946 held the same low opinion of the European colonial powers and their ability to defend the South Pacific as naval planners had in 1944, the House Naval Affairs Committee had in 1945, and Ambassador Austin had in 1947, then retaining base rights and a few troops in the South Pacific does not seem so peculiar.

Thus, in the world of worst-case scenario planning, it is not all that strange that as the JCS in the fall of 1946 was marking out "minimum" base requirements and even emphasizing strategic denial over base development,¹⁰⁰ it was also still composing long lists of base sites and transit stops which were almost identical to the areas identified in the planning documents from 1943 and 1944. By mid- to late 1946, most of the island groups which fell under foreign sovereignty were labelled "desirable" if obtained, but not "absolutely necessary." Still, the length of the lists alone denotes a continued attitude to control as many points in the postwar Pacific as possible.¹⁰¹

Even as late as January 1947, the House Naval Affairs Committee recommended that the US have at least "dominating control" over the Japanese Mandates, "substantial rights" to sites where US bases had been construc-

¹⁰⁰ See "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific," JCS 1619/19, September 19, 1946, file 12-9-42, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

¹⁰¹ See "Memorandum from the JCS to the Secretary of State," November 7, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:1116-1117; and "Memorandum from the JCS to SWNCC," June 5, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:1174-1177.

ted on the territory of allied nations, and "full title" to bases in Manus in the Admiralty Islands, Nomeau in New Calendonia, Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides, Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, and any other bases on islands mandated to or claimed by other nations.¹⁰² The attitude that the entire Pacific Basin should become an occupied American lake does not seem to have died completely.¹⁰³

Base planning for the postwar Pacific, however, seems to have taken one final twist as late as June 1947. In that month, the "Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas" issued its report and aired its ideas about base development in that strategic island group. The report is most interesting because it provides some evidence, though not entirely conclusive, that the shift in the strategic front line from Micronesia to East Asia may not have occurred in some officers' minds even as late as the summer of 1947.

For example, the Joint Board continued to refer to the Marianas as a "Primary Base Area" and continued to see it as the major operational, training, and staging area for naval, air, and ground forces to defend the western and central Pacific and to project US offensive power toward East Asia.¹⁰⁴ While the members of the Joint Board were not entirely satisfied with concentrating so much of the US' Pacific strategic power on Guam in an age of atomic airpower, they nevertheless were so impressed with its location and potential development and they were so pressed by budgetary considerations that they were willing to centralize strategic forces on Guam and merely

¹⁰² See Press Release # 142, January 2, 1947, file 39-1-37, box 72, RG 80, NA.

¹⁰³ For these various controversies and attitudes, see Foltos, "New Pacific Barrier," 317-342; and Dower, "American Lake," 146-206.

¹⁰⁴ See "Report of the Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas," June 1, 1947, 178.2917-1, 5, AFSHRC.

prepare Saipan and Tinian for expansion in case of war.¹⁰⁵ No mention was made of bases in Japan, the Ryukyus, Taiwan, or South Korea, which may seem strange except for the fact that many US military officers did not perceive a long-term US military commitment to those East Asian positions in the spring and summer of 1947. As Burton Kaufman has demonstrated, the JCS in 1947 advocated withdrawing all US military forces from South Korea¹⁰⁶ and two members of the JCS, Eisenhower and Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, Chief of Naval Operations, exchanged memoranda in March 1947 which indicated a front line of Pacific defense which began in the Marianas.

On March 11th, for example, Nimitz wrote Eisenhower about his dissatisfaction over leaving Saipan without an Army garrison for defense. He consistently discussed, however, American military positions in the Marianas in terms of a "post-occupation matter" after South Korea and Japan had been evacuated by US forces. Eisenhower returned to Nimitz three days later, asserting that the Army garrison forces would not be available until after Japan and Korea were evacuated and that these forces should then be located on Guam.¹⁰⁷ The tactical disagreement aside, such a nonchalant assumption about evacuating positions in East Asia at least suggests that high-ranking military officers continued to perceive a contracted strategic perimeter which was centered in the western Pacific, not mainland East Asia.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 9 and 14.

¹⁰⁶ See Burton Kaufman, *The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility, and Command* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 17-18.

¹⁰⁷ See Eisenhower to Nimitz, attached memorandum, March 11, 1947; and Nimitz to Eisenhower, March 14, 1947; both found in Tab "A-5" of Appendix "A" to "The Report by the Joint Marianas Board," 178.2917-1, 75-76, AFSHRC.

Conclusion

To summarize briefly, the significant strategic "lesson" of the Pacific War for the United States was to provide for future American security in the region by literally blanketing the area with American-controlled bases and highly alert military forces. In numerous documents, cabinet officials, the JCS, military planners, State and Interior Department officials, and even some members of Congress all subscribed to the idea that the Pacific should be perceived as a single strategic physical entity over which the US should wield dominating, if not complete, control. While officials were willing to discuss "minimal" base requirements in terms of the islands taken from Japan, most planning documents continued to imply as late as early and mid-1947 that the US should have *carte blanche* over the entire Pacific in order to prevent the aggression of a resurgent Japan or an expansionist Soviet Union.

As Braisted and Brune have argued, these ideas were not entirely new. There were prewar continuities to postwar strategic thought about defense in the Pacific. In fact, most American naval officers in the prewar period believed the United States should have taken control of Micronesia, as well as other areas, as a way to deny them to Japan and other potential naval rivals. American naval officers only reluctantly settled for limited base development at a few select points because of the policies of civilian political leaders and their perceptions about public pressure for disarmament.¹⁰⁸ By 1945, however, neither military nor civilian planners were prepared to settle for what they considered to be a second-best solution to se-

¹⁰⁸ See Braisted, *US Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, passim.

curity threats from East Asia and all parties were advocating occupation for strategic denial at a minimum.

Yet the focus on Japan as the enemy changed after 1944. After that date, planning documents began to mention Japan or "any other power" as the threat to American security in the postwar world. To be sure, post-1945 references to "any other power" meant the Soviet Union. In effect, the Soviet Union began to be perceived as the major threat to postwar American hegemony in the Pacific and the USSR quickly replaced Japan as the most probable obstacle to the US' solution to its postwar regional security dilemmas.

Chapter Three

The "Bear" in the Pacific?: The American Intelligence Picture, the Soviet Union, and the Pacific Basin

In the latter stages of the Second World War, American strategic planners and intelligence officers began to think about the Soviet Union as the US' next probable enemy. According to Melvyn Leffler, policymakers and planners in the late 1940s saw the Soviets primarily as a global, but long-term, threat to US interests. Documents cited below support Leffler's contention. In most of the reports, the Soviet Union was considered to be too badly damaged from the Second World War to undertake military operations any time in the near future. Moreover, many officers who believed a Soviet-American war was probable in the near future thought it might occur more as the result of accidental or unintentional conflict rather than Soviet design.¹

US intelligence reports, however, confirm that between 1945 and 1947 Japan indeed was replaced by the USSR as the perceived strategic threat to US security in the Pacific and East Asia. By the summer of 1947, American military officials and officers saw definite Soviet air, ground,

¹ See Melvyn P. Leffler, "The American Conception of National Security and the Beginning of the Cold War, 1945-1948," *American Historical Review* 89 (April 1984): 346-400; and Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 3-10 and 106-114.

and naval threats to American positions in South Korea, Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines. Given American strategic power in the Pacific and East Asia after 1945, it seems implausible that American planners would reconsider a wartime scenario in which East Asian and western Pacific positions were threatened with capture or neutralization. Still, the worst-case scenarios about Soviet military capabilities in East Asia and the Pacific Basin suggest that American officers were sincerely concerned about having to rely on Micronesia as a major strategic complex of bases if China, South Korea, Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines were conquered or "neutralized" by Soviet actions.

The Context

American opposition to Soviet actions in eastern Europe after 1944 and the power vacuum accompanying the destruction of Axis military power sparked interest in war plans which perceived the Soviet Union as the next probable "enemy" of the United States. Because of Pearl Harbor, the defeats suffered in the winter of 1941-1942, and the uncertainty of the future, worst-case scenarios were part and parcel of this strategic planning.² For example, although American officers knew the Soviet Union did not possess a substantial surface navy or strategic air force in 1945, they knew it possessed a large submarine force and thought it might have the industrial capability to create strategic forces in the Pacific at a future date. The slightest possibility that the Soviet Union could create such forces and use

² For general accounts of the Cold War from US and Soviet perspectives, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972); and Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Strategy, and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), respectively. For an excellent analysis of American military planning and the role it played in the origins of the Cold War, see Leffler, "American Conception," 346-400.

them against the United States automatically meant the USSR would be considered a threat, especially to a generation of officers reared on the "failure" of the Washington System, the "lessons" of the Munich Syndrome, and the trauma of Pearl Harbor. In effect, these officials and officers were suspicious of any other power with military capabilities which might potentially pose a threat to the United States at any time in the future. Not surprisingly, the planning and analysis emphasized what might occur in the future rather than what was likely to occur given current Soviet capabilities and intentions.³

In addition, documents concerned with the American position in the Pacific and East Asia were consistent with worst-case scenarios for Europe and the Middle East. The documents concerning the Pacific, in fact, are interesting case studies of the global viewpoint held by American strategic planners during the 1945-1947 period. Communism was seen as a monolithic and seemingly invincible force, the Allied position was repeatedly seen as weak and largely untenable, and "lessons learned" from interwar and wartime experiences were enunciated clearly and repeatedly. In effect, the Soviet Union was seen as an expansionist power with similar capabilities and intentions to those of Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, and Fascist Italy.⁴

³ See Leffler, "American Conception," *passim*. See also Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy*, 7-27; and Marc S. Gallicchio, "The Kuriles Controversy: U.S. Diplomacy in the Soviet-Japan Border Dispute, 1941-1956," *Pacific Historical Review* 60 (February 1991): 69-101. For a similar phenomenon occurring in regard to American strategic planning for the postwar Middle East, see Miller, *Search For Security*, 163-203. Miller finds that the same kind of planning, at times, reached alarming and even hysterical levels as military and civilian strategic planners equated Soviet capabilities and intentions in the Mediterranean and the Middle East with German intentions during the early 1940s and simply assumed the worst from an American strategic perspective.

⁴ For an account of this mental construct among American strategic planners and the general public, see Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, "Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930s-1950s," *American Historical Review* 75 (April 1970): 1046-1064; reprinted in Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman To Reagan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3-17. In addition, for

The "Bear" in the Pacific?

Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union over East Asian affairs began in the fall of 1945 when the two nations proceeded to assist "proxy" forces in the Chinese civil war, disagreed about the future government of a reunified Korea, and began to argue over the postwar disposition and status of Japan. A number of incidents near the Soviet naval base at Port Arthur demonstrates how tense conditions could be in the region and how deeply suspicions ran between the two nations as early as the fall of 1945.

According to War Department records, in November 1945 General MacArthur briefly outlined flight instructions to Far Eastern Air Force (FEAF) and United States Navy aircraft, ordering them not to fly over Soviet-controlled territory in the Kurile Islands and placing "restrictions" on US flights over "foreign-owned" territory in the area.⁵ Apparently, the restrictions were not clear enough, since later that month a Navy patrol plane was fired on by a Soviet fighter plane within one mile of the Port Arthur base. (See Figure 21) According to the American naval *attache* in Moscow, the Soviets fired on the plane because it did not have permission from the local military command to enter the twelve-mile coastal limit which the Soviets were enforcing around the naval base.⁶ The United States Navy was not satisfied with the Soviet reply, Admiral Nimitz asserting that notice of a twelve-mile limit should have been made by the Soviet authorities at an

perspectives on how worst-case scenario thinking affected the American military's view of the Soviet Union as the major postwar threat to American interests, see Leffler, "American Conception," *passim*; Miller, *Search For Security*, 163-203; Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 91-107; and Matthew A. Evangelista, "Stalin's Postwar Army Reappraised," *International Security* 7 (Winter 1982/1983): 110-138.

⁵ See 0900 Report, November 1, 1945, box 5, OPD Diary, DDEL.

⁶ 0900 Report, December 15, 1945, *ibid*.

earlier date. Nimitz also claimed that the plane had already withdrawn twenty-five miles when it was attacked.⁷

Regardless of Nimitz' claim, MacArthur was instructed by the War Department to ensure US aircraft did not violate the Soviets' twelve-mile limit.⁸ Later events will demonstrate that even MacArthur's subsequent instructions were violated by US aircraft flying over Soviet-controlled territory in northeast Asia. What is most interesting about these incidents, however, are the suspicions they must have confirmed for both American and Soviet officers in the Pacific and East Asia. To Soviet officers, American violations of airspace could only have meant intelligence operations of some sort. Though there is no direct evidence in primary sources that these 1945 incidents were intelligence operations, American violations of Soviet airspace for intelligence purposes quite frequently became the cause of hostile activity between the military forces of the two nations as early as the late 1940s.⁹ It is not unreasonable to assume that American air operations in East Asia between 1945 and 1947 entailed similar kinds of strategic activity. Yet to American officers, Soviet willingness to fire live rounds could only have confirmed their worst suspicions about "aggressive" Soviet intentions in East Asia. Unwilling to admit that the Soviets might be justified about their suspicions of foreign military activity on their peri-

⁷ 0900 Report, February 25, 1946, *ibid.*

⁸ 0900 Report, March 23, 1946, *ibid.*

⁹ See James Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on America's Most Secret Agency* (Harrisonburg, Virginia: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, 1982), 232-241; Seymour M. Hersh, *"The Target Is Destroyed": What Really Happened to Flight 007 and What America Knew About It* (New York: Random House, 1986), 16-22 and 35-43; and Jeffrey Richelson, *American Espionage And The Soviet Target* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1987), 100-152.

pheral zones, American officers instead read "evil" intentions into the incidents.¹⁰

A fascinating source for this growing mindset are the periodic intelligence summaries from MacArthur's chief intelligence officer, Major General Charles Willoughby, and his staff. As early as the winter and spring of 1946, Willoughby, and presumably MacArthur, were very concerned with Soviet forces in northern Korea, northern China, and the Soviet Maritime Provinces.¹¹ The reports reflect this concern and are interesting not only for their intrinsic information but because of their shortcomings in analyzing Soviet military capabilities and intentions.

One report on the Soviet Far Eastern air order of battle in the winter and spring of 1946 seems to typify the intelligence from MacArthur's headquarters in 1946 and 1947. In all fairness, the report in question began with a significant qualification about the meager amounts of data on which to base the Soviet order of battle and the "questionable" quality of information from North Korean defectors, who were allegedly prone to exaggerate Soviet strength because of their hatred for the USSR.¹² Still, the report was typical for the time period in that it emphasized numbers of aircraft

¹⁰ I would argue that the Soviets were justified in their suspicions of other great powers in the region considering that the USSR had fought two wars defending their Korean and Mongolian borders against Japanese intrusions in the late 1930s. Given these previous incidents, it is difficult to see how the Soviets could have ignored American military deployments in the region, even if those deployments were benign. For an account of the border wars between Japan and the Soviet Union, see Alvin Coax, *The Anatomy of a Small War: The Soviet-Japanese Struggle for Changkufeng/Khasan, 1938* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977); and idem., *Nomonhan: Japan Against Russia, 1939* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1985) for accounts of border wars between Japan and the Soviet Union before the 1941 Soviet-Japanese Non-Aggression Pact.

¹¹ See "Appendix III: Soviet Air Order Of Battle," file "Intelligence," Special Intelligence Bulletin, January-April 1946, Record Group 4, Records of General Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, 1942-1947 (hereafter cited as RG 4: Intelligence, USAFPAC), MacArthur Memorial Archives.

¹² *Ibid.*, 15.



Figure 22. Airfields-North China (Courtesy of the Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia)

without analyzing possible intentions for the use of such aircraft. Moreover, the report insufficiently discussed military aspects such as the training level of personnel, the serviceability of the equipment, and the logistical limitations of the Soviet Air Force.¹³

The report continually emphasized that the Soviets "may" have had some 400 aircraft stationed in North Korea at the time and "possibly" up to 2000 aircraft at their disposal for operations in East Asia.¹⁴ (See Figure 22) Yet without being able to substantiate these numbers, the types of aircraft, or their serviceability and reliability, the report went on to claim that Soviet airpower in the Far East was "considerable" and far in excess of occupation needs.¹⁵ The report did not entertain the possibility that Soviet aviation forces, while large in numbers from an American perspective for mere occupation purposes, may have been necessary given the vast distances of the Soviet Far East. The report also failed to discuss the large numbers of aircraft in the context of the Soviet Union as a nation still recovering from the effects of a devastating war and still insecure about its East Asian strategic position.

Numbers were also emphasized in regard to Soviet air force personnel. Probably anquishing over a similar rapid demobilization within the United States armed forces, MacArthur's intelligence officers focused on the fact that the Soviet Air Force would reduce its active personnel from 1.5 million in July 1945, but would still retain about 800,000 personnel on active service in July 1946. Failing to analyze any evidence for these figures or the quality of the forces in question, the report concluded with a

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

claim that Soviet intentions were to maintain a high level of air strength in the Far East in excess of occupation duties in northern China and northern Korea. Again, the analysts did not consider factors from the Soviet point of view such as the vastness of the area to be policed or Soviet strategic perceptions of US military strength in the area.¹⁶

Most importantly for American bases in the Pacific and East Asia, the authors had definite ideas about how the Soviets would use their Far Eastern air force in the event of hostilities with the United States. The report did not take war entirely for granted, but it certainly gave significant capabilities to the Soviet Air Force and believed the very existence of those capabilities made war more probable. It was believed, for instance, that 100-200 medium bombers could conduct attacks against the Japanese home islands during daylight or nighttime hours. In addition, the report assumed that with a Soviet occupation of southern Korea, Soviet aircraft, including fighter escorts, could reach targets in the Ryukyus. The report even included numerous maps of East Asia outlining estimated ranges of Soviet aircraft based at Vladivostok, southern Korea, and Manchuria and estimating their ability to reach American bases throughout the region.¹⁷ (See Figure 23)

In addition, American anxieties about military dispositions in East Asia were probably increased by a lack of US military strength in the area. For example, a May 1946 Fifth Air Force operational summary for General Eisenhower demonstrated with maps of East Asia that there was no early radar warning over the Korean Peninsula and that due to a lack of equipment and personnel, air traffic control and early warning of air attacks from the

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

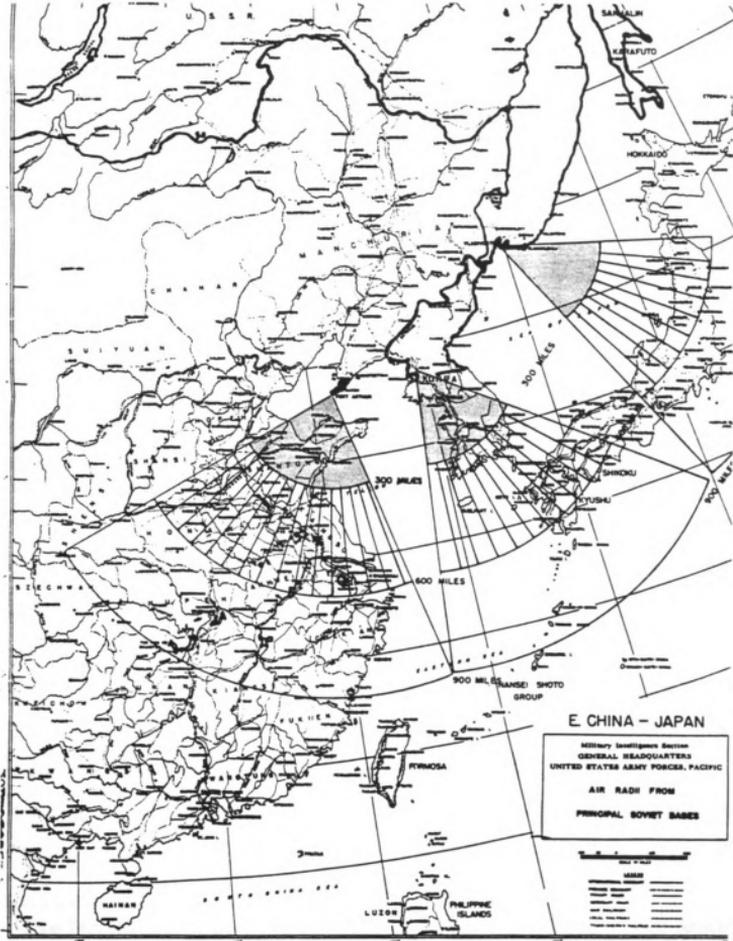


Figure 23. Air Radii From Principal Soviet Bases (Courtesy of the Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia)

Soviet Far East would be limited to Japanese airspace. With the mindset that the Soviets were preparing to attack US positions anyway, this real time weakness in air defense could have only intensified insecurity among US planning and intelligence officers.¹⁸

Unfortunately, the previously mentioned intelligence summary from MacArthur's command did not analyze the effectiveness or even the various types of aircraft which the Soviets were supposedly deploying. Moreover, this summary lent very little analysis to the notoriously inefficient Soviet combat supply system and its possible effects on operations. Most importantly, the report also ignored the vulnerability of Soviet bases to American sea- and land-based airstrikes.¹⁹ Although the report was qualified in claiming that war was not imminent, the authors' diction was contrary to the report's conclusions, which conceded significant capabilities to the Soviet military and seemed to equate capabilities with sinister intentions. For example, the words and phrases "may," "possibly," and "could have" repeatedly appeared in the report where Soviet military intentions were being described, yet the document ultimately conveyed that Soviet intentions were probabilities, not just long-range possibilities.²⁰ It is possible, since the report was a mere summary of information which had been gathered and analyzed over the past few months, that these themes had been more fully explored in the day-to-day intelligence sheets. Nevertheless, summaries are supposed to contain the most vital information about military capabilities and intentions so commanding officers can digest that information and

¹⁸ See "Operational Summary Of The Situation," subj: Fifth Air Force Presentation for General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, May 8, 1946, 730.04-4A, AFSHRC.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ See Appendix III, "Soviet Air Order of Battle," file "Intelligence," Special Intelligence Bulletin, January-April 1946, RG 4: USAFPAC, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

use it as the basis for decisions. This report was sadly lacking in all of these categories.

It is important to note that not every command in early 1946 perceived such an omnipotent Soviet juggernaut ready to conquer East Asia. One report by PACUSA intelligence officers specifically asserted that the Soviet Union had not expressed very aggressive intentions in Korea or East Asia and that it had stationed large numbers of forces in northern Korea either as defensive moves or in preparation for offensives in case of an accidental war with the US.²¹ The report did not discount the threatening nature of Soviet military deployments in East Asia and, similar to Willoughby's staff, credited Soviet strategic forces with being able to threaten Japan, the Ryukyus, and southern Korea. Nevertheless, this report saw a US-Soviet confrontation resulting more from an accident or a miscalculation and the authors subscribed to the idea that the Soviets were constructing their own version of the "Monroe Doctrine" in Eurasia by surrounding themselves "with a political border of Soviet-influenced nations." Similarly, Rear Admiral Thomas Inglis, Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence (DNI), subscribed to the idea of a "Soviet Monroe Doctrine" and argued that an attack by the Soviet Union on US positions was unlikely in the near future because the Soviets lacked a strategic air force and amphibious capability and because they had suffered so greatly from wartime devastation and population dislocation.²²

²¹ See PACUSA Report, subj: Situation Summary: Estimate of Soviet Offensive Capabilities in Korea and Vicinity, April 4, 1946, 720.609-7, AFSHRC.

²² Ibid. For the notion among American strategic planners during the early Cold War of a Soviet "Monroe Doctrine" in Eurasia, see Leffler, "American Conception of National Security," 359-362 and 365. See also Inglis to Forrestal, "Memorandum of Information," January 21, 1946, box 24, Forrestal Papers, Princeton University Library, as quoted in Barton J. Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cold War," found in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 40; and cited in Thomas G. Paterson, *On Every Front: The Making of the Cold War* (W.W. Norton & Company, 1979), 156.

PACUSA may have been a little more balanced in its estimates of Soviet "aggressiveness" and the onset of accidental war because of its own awareness of US violations of Soviet airspace under very peculiar conditions. In late April 1946, Whitehead and Major General Kenneth Wolfe, Commanding General of the 5th Air Force, exchanged a series of letters discussing the possible court-martial of one First Lieutenant Alex O'Connor, a 5th Air Force transport pilot who violated orders and flew over the Soviet-controlled Kuriles Islands. Apparently, O'Connor was transporting the public affairs officer of the 11th Airborne Division, one Lieutenant Reid, as well as a planeload of reporters on this excursion. Lieutenant Reid may have wanted to show off for the reporters or the tour may have been a not so subtle cover for an intelligence operation against the Soviet bases in the area. At any rate, Reid ordered O'Connor over the Kuriles and the bases themselves and O'Connor's violation of Soviet airspace was just the kind of unintentional mishap which PACUSA officers were afraid would result in a war with the Soviet Union in East Asia.²³

In spite of this kind of caution by some officers on the spot when it came to judging the Soviet Union, high-ranking officers in Washington usually perceived the worst when it came to Soviet intentions. In September 1946, for instance, Fleet Admiral William Leahy, Chief of Staff to the President and nominal Chairman of the JCS, argued to Truman that the Ryukyu Islands should not be placed under Japanese administration and "demilitarized" as the State Department had requested. (See Figure 24) Writing for the entire JCS and equating demilitarization with Soviet control, Leahy assert-

²³ See Whitehead to MacArthur, April 9, 1946; O'Connor's statement and cover letter from Wolfe to Whitehead, April 19, 1946; and Whitehead to Wolfe, April 20, 1946; all in 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

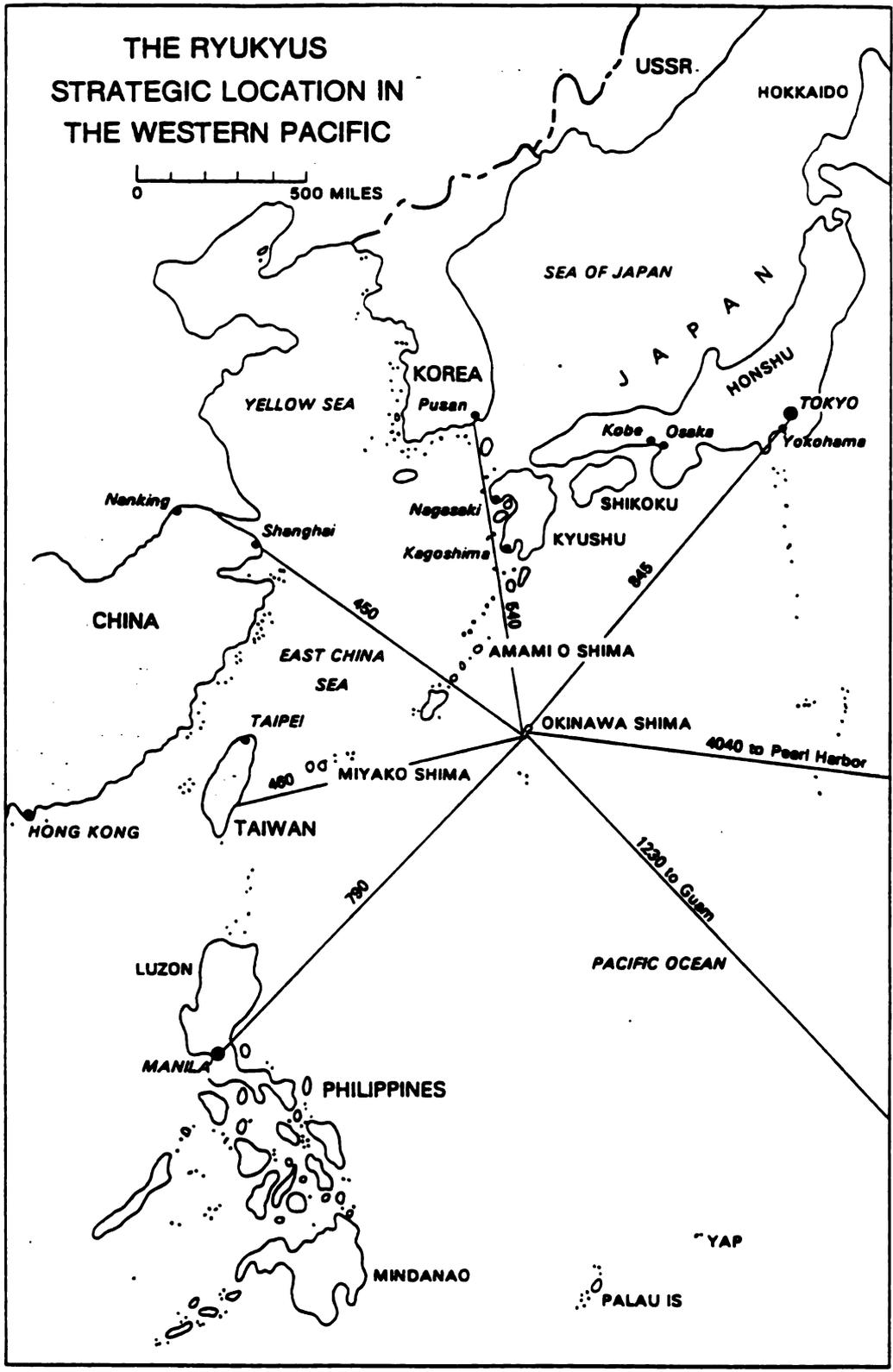


Figure 24. The Ryukyus: Strategic Location In The Western Pacific (From Arnold G. Fisch, Jr., *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands, 1945-1950*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, D.C.)

ed that Okinawa was a base of primary importance and that under the control of an "enemy" power it was an "open door" for challenging American power in the Pacific. More specifically, Leahy called for a strategic trusteeship over the islands because it would allow the US to project power toward northeast Asia in the event of a war with the Soviet Union, it would provide a "bastion" against alleged Soviet "southward progress" toward the "Malay barrier," and it would deny the Soviets the use of strategic facilities which could be employed to challenge American control of the northwestern Pacific.²⁴

To some high-ranking officers, the Soviet threat did not stop in East Asia or even the Pacific. In an exchange of radio messages in late August and early September of 1946, General Eisenhower made it clear to MacArthur that Alaska could also be threatened by the Soviet Union. In late August, for instance, Eisenhower sent MacArthur a compromise proposal for dividing command responsibilities in the Pacific between the Army and the Navy. MacArthur's responsibilities in time of war included defending Japan and South Korea and supporting US "military responsibilities" in China and the Philippines, while the Navy's responsibilities included supporting MacArthur, defending the Pacific approaches to the American West Coast, and supporting the Army's defense of Alaska.²⁵ (See Figure 25)

A few days later, Eisenhower sent a more detailed message in which he explained how Alaska fit into his strategic perceptions. Stating that the entire Pacific Basin was a "great outpost system" that should be oriented toward defending the US West Coast, Eisenhower went on to assert that the

²⁴ See Leahy to Truman, September 10, 1946, file "Pacific Islands," box 60, George M. Elsey Papers, HSTL.

²⁵ See Eisenhower to MacArthur, August 29, 1946, Plans and Operations File, Blue Binder Series, RG 4: General Headquarters, USAFPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

Navy should control the central Pacific so that it could offer naval and logistical support to the Army defense of Alaska. Failing to label what he meant by "enemy nations" but leaving little to the imagination, Eisenhower asserted that the entire Pacific should be considered a supporting area for the Alaska-Aleutians theater and for any operations conducted in Alaska, on the Asian mainland "... [where] the strategic situation may draw us into decisive conflict ...", and in "... whatever theater bordering on the water areas of the Pacific ... [where] we might become locked up with an enemy."²⁶ Eisenhower thought the Soviet threat to Alaska and the Aleutians so great that he was willing to concede command in the central Pacific to the Navy and his message intimated that the most immediate goal in the Pacific Basin was to defend the US West Coast and Alaska from the Soviet Union. East Asia and the western Pacific were secondary.²⁷

MacArthur, of course, had other ideas. Opposed to the idea of divided command in the Pacific, he believed the main mission of US forces in the Pacific Basin was to support the occupation of Japan and South Korea. Accordingly, he believed all US forces in the Pacific should be under his charge from Tokyo until the occupation forces were withdrawn from Japan and South Korea, at which time a new unified commander should be chosen to sit in Hawaii.²⁸ But MacArthur did not consider the Pacific a southern flank to support Alaska. Instead, he thought the entire Pacific should be used to support the "front line" in Japan and South Korea against the Soviet Union, or as he termed it, "... the source from which emanates the threat ...". MacArthur believed that if the Soviets attacked Japan and expanded into the

²⁶ See Eisenhower to MacArthur, September 5, 1946, *ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ See MacArthur to Eisenhower, September 8, 1946, *ibid.*

Pacific, the ocean area would be his "defense-in-depth." If the Soviets attacked Alaska, then MacArthur's control of the Pacific would be the "southern punch" at the Soviet "underbelly".²⁹

MacArthur eventually lost the fight for unified command from Tokyo, but neither officer seemed to doubt the Soviet ability to threaten US and occupied territory in the Pacific and East Asia, as well as sovereign US territory in North America. In spite of Navy operations in the Arctic in March 1946 and AAF deployments to the Arctic in the winter of 1946-1947 which illustrated that Arctic military operations were highly improbable at the time, both officers seemed to assume that northern operations were very viable. Of course, even after US deployments to the area demonstrated that Arctic operations were infeasible for US forces because of weather conditions, the level of personnel training, and the state of existing technology, most intelligence reports from this time period continued to assume that the Soviets had perfected cold weather operations.³⁰

Other military commands issued studies and warnings which similarly painted a foreboding picture for American interests in East Asia. Radio traffic from General Wolfe to General Whitehead in late October 1946, for instance, indicated alarm about repeated Soviet aerial intrusions into northern Japanese airspace. These activities were assumed to be some sort of strategic reconnaissance for future operations. This anxiety could not have been alleviated by the detection of a loaded Soviet troopship headed to Vladivostok in late October 1946 given that similar fleeting traces of mili-

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ See Appendix III, "Soviet Air Order Of Battle," RG 4: USAFPAC, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives; see also Borowski, *Hollow Threat*, 77-87.

tary deployments had preceded the Japanese attacks in East Asia in late 1941.³¹

In addition, officers on the spot in South Korea painted a particularly gloomy picture for the US military position there. Civil disorders, popular dissatisfaction with the South Korean government and the US Military Government, and border incidents with North Korean forces along the 38th Parallel were taken by Lieutenant General John Hodge, Commanding General of US Army Forces in Korea (USAFIK), to mean a coordinated effort by the Soviets, the North Koreans, and South Korean communists to destabilize the South Korean regime, force the US military off the peninsula, and prepare the south for a North Korean invasion. Hodge was so convinced of a coordinated effort that he called it the "Joint Soviet Communist Master Plan."³²

Not all American officers were so alarmed by Soviet activity in East Asia as a short-term threat, but most saw a long-term threat which would have to be dealt with sometime in the future. In October 1946, the JSSC wrote out a fairly elaborate postwar scenario for the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) in which it claimed it was thinking in terms of American security at least one hundred years or more into the future. The JSSC envisioned an East Asia with a significant military capacity resulting from "progressive industrialization" and the mobilization of half of the world's population. It believed this mobilization of human, industrial, and military resources would occur from the impetus of an "Asiatic-European

³¹ See Wolfe to Whitehead, Incoming Messages, October 28, 1946; and "Message for Commander Of Naval Activities In Japan," October 30, 1946; both in 720.1622, AFSHRC.

³² See Hodge to MacArthur, October 24, 1946; Colonel Leland Stranathan, commander of the 308th Bomb Wing to Wolfe, October 29, 1946; and Hodge to MacArthur, October 30, 1946; all in *ibid.*

coalition" in which the Soviet Union was the major catalyst for military industrialization and aggression in East Asia and the Pacific.³³

The JSSC further developed this scenario by imagining that China might become a communist nation and "... a satellite of Russia ...", with the Soviets pursuing "... their expansionist policies ..." and the United States facing a Sino-Soviet coalition much more dangerous than the Axis alliance of 1941. With most of Asia eventually "militarized and industrialized" under communist control, the JSSC saw Japan, the Philippines, and American lines of communication to East Asia endangered, especially since the committee also assumed that Japan and its outlying islands would be demilitarized and therefore susceptible to Soviet seizure at a later date.³⁴

This idea that American positions in East Asia were endangered and that Micronesia therefore represented the absolute final line of defense for the United States in the Pacific seemed to justify strong American control of the islands, especially since the JSSC envisioned Japan and the Ryukyus either being neutralized through American military withdrawal or becoming a major Soviet strategic complex which would allow the USSR to strike far into the Pacific.³⁵ The JCS asserted, however, that if the Soviet Union controlled mainland Asia, the United States could ensure its security in the Far East if it controlled certain regions in the Pacific, especially Micronesia, the Bonins, and the Volcanoes. It was argued, however, that if the United

³³ In 1946, references to a power with "significant" naval and air capabilities in East Asia could only have meant the Soviet Union because of the destruction of Japanese naval and air forces during the war and the seriously weakened postwar condition of Great Britain, France, China, and the Netherlands. See JSSC to JCS, "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific," JCS 1619/10, September 19, 1946, file 12-9-42, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

States did not take direct control of these islands it would probably have to repeat the "costly process" of 1942-45 at some future date.³⁶

Other reports at the time were inexact about the Soviet threat but conveyed the strategic importance of the Pacific bases for guaranteeing American security interests in East Asia. For example, in late October 1946, General Whitehead argued to MacArthur about the importance of the Philippines to future US security. MacArthur probably did not need the dissertation, but Whitehead was quick to remind him that the archipelago was the one area from which the US could stage, mount, and deploy "adequate" forces to forestall "aggression" and control the South China Sea and southeast Asia.³⁷ Whitehead's references to controlling aggression in the area could easily have meant controlling a future resurgent Japan, but additional documentation supports the contention that the Soviet Union had indeed become public enemy number one by this time.

In November 1946, for instance, MacArthur asserted to Eisenhower that the occupation forces in Japan could not be further reduced without endangering American political objectives in occupied Japan. Soviet-inspired communism was probably on MacArthur's mind when he urged a direct US policy of assuring Japan and South Korea that they would not be "abandoned" in the future to "hostile" elements and ideologies. More directly, MacArthur argued that the forces in the Pacific Islands were already cut to the bone, that additional troop reductions implied a future intent to abandon these strategic areas, and that withdrawal would be "disastrous" if war again

³⁶ Ibid. See also "U.S. Postwar Military Policy in the Far East," OPD Executive Files, Exec. 5, Item 21a, RG 165, MMRB, NA as found in Gallicchio, *Cold War Begins in Asia*, 35.

³⁷ See Whitehead to MacArthur, October 17, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

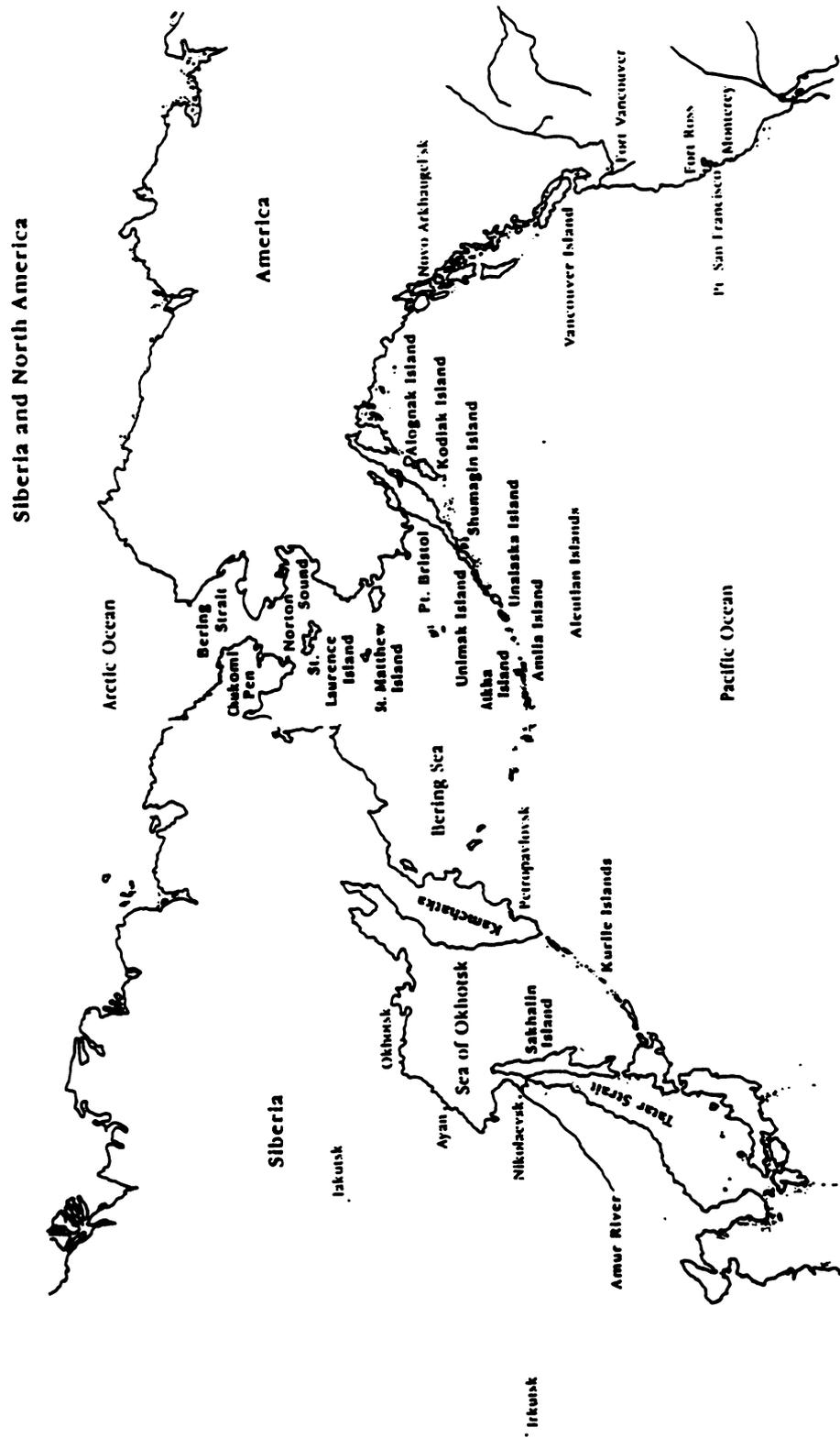


Figure 26. Siberia And Alaska (From S. Frederick Starr, *Russia's American Colony*, Duke University Press, 1987)

came to the Pacific. Considering the state of political relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in late 1946 and the weakened military conditions of China, Japan, Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands at the same time, the USSR was the only plausible strategic threat to American East Asian interests to which MacArthur could have been alluding.³⁸

Surprisingly, at least one commander on the spot in late 1946 did not seem very concerned about near-term Soviet activity in the Pacific. Major General Joseph Atkinson, Commanding General of the Alaskan Air Command, forwarded a report by his acting adjutant general, Major Ellis Craig, to General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, in mid-November 1946. The report documented Soviet aerial and maritime activity in the Alaskan Department and the Bering Sea area and noted nothing but the usual Soviet weather planes, freighters which were routinely escorted by US Navy warships, and the activities of Soviet weather observers in Siberia. Apparently, the report was written to dispell rumors in the Alaskan Command about the Soviet construction of bomber bases near Alaska and alleged encounters between Soviet fighters and American bombers in Siberian and Alaskan airspace. The report painted a portrait of a very quiet "frontline" in the Alaskan-Siberian area.³⁹ (See Figure 26)

In spite of this instance in which American officers did not inflate Soviet activity, there is further evidence of American officials making connections between a rising level of Soviet-American tensions in East Asia and a "precarious" American position in the Pacific. In a report to the JCS by the United States Military Staff Committee of the UN Security Council,

³⁸ See MacArthur to Eisenhower, November 25, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, *ibid.*

³⁹ See Atkinson to Spaatz, subj: Russian Activity in Siberia, November 15, 1946, 484.605-1, AFSHRC.

the Assistant Secretary of the Committee, a man named Norris, elaborated on the value of the islands to the United States during the UN negotiations over international trusteeships in 1946 and 1947.⁴⁰ Norris asserted that possession of the former Japanese Mandates by "... any other power ..." would provide that nation with bases from which to attack or intimidate the United States or to sever it from Pacific nations with which the United States had important commercial interests. Additionally, Norris claimed that even if the islands were neutralized, the threat of seizure by an aggressor nation was enough to force the United States to forfeit control of its strategic approaches. Ominously, he concluded that the US "... cannot permit those islands to fall into the hands of any power which might ever be hostile to the United States." Norris conveniently narrowed the possible options for the United States, denied the feasibility of neutralizing the islands, and called for direct American control and military fortification. Though he may have written the report with a possibly resurgent postwar Japan in mind, Norris' continual references to "any other power" strongly indicates he held the Soviet Union as the power in question.⁴¹

Documents from MacArthur's headquarters in the summer of 1947 also illustrate the degree to which American intelligence officers were exaggerating Soviet military capabilities and intentions. Yet these same reports are simultaneously convincing evidence that MacArthur, Willoughby, and the Army intelligence officers in the Far East Command (FECOM) sincerely believed the Soviet Union represented a significant threat to American interests in East Asia and the Pacific.⁴²

⁴⁰ See Norris to the JCS, February 22, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See MacArthur to Eisenhower, May 16, 1947, RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

In June 1947, Willoughby's office produced a periodic intelligence summary entitled "Situation: Korea-China-Manchuria." This report asserted that the United States, because of "... confused and uncertain public opinion..." and the Soviet Union, because of an "... aggressive, unilateral and expansionist policy... [,]" were the greatest obstacles to a United Nations solution for the civil war in China.⁴³ The authors seemed convinced that the Soviet Union would be able to "orient" Manchuria and all of its resources toward creating a Soviet military machine in East Asia which would be independent of tenuous communication links to European Russia. In a related fashion, the intelligence officers were concerned that China, bereft of Manchuria, would become a "political and economic vacuum" and would also remain "industrially backward." Combined with fears that Japan would remain a "third rate" power in the future, the report envisioned a worst-case scenario in which the Soviet Union held sway over large portions of continental East Asia and in which there was no "Asiatic counterpoint" to represent American interests on the continent.⁴⁴

Similar to earlier reports from Willoughby's office, the summary assumed a great many things about Soviet military capabilities in the Far East. For instance, MacArthur's intelligence officers now asserted that over 2200 aircraft were operational in the Soviet Far East, including over 400 aircraft in northern Korea, another 400 in the Liaotung Peninsula, and over 1500 aircraft in southern Siberia. (See Figure 27) The summary also claimed that over 1700 of these aircraft were immediately available to support

⁴³ See "Periodic Intelligence Summary: Situation Korea-China-Manchuria," June 22, 1947, 4-5 and 12, Record Group 6, Records of General Headquarters, Far East Command, 1947-1951 (hereafter cited as RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence), MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

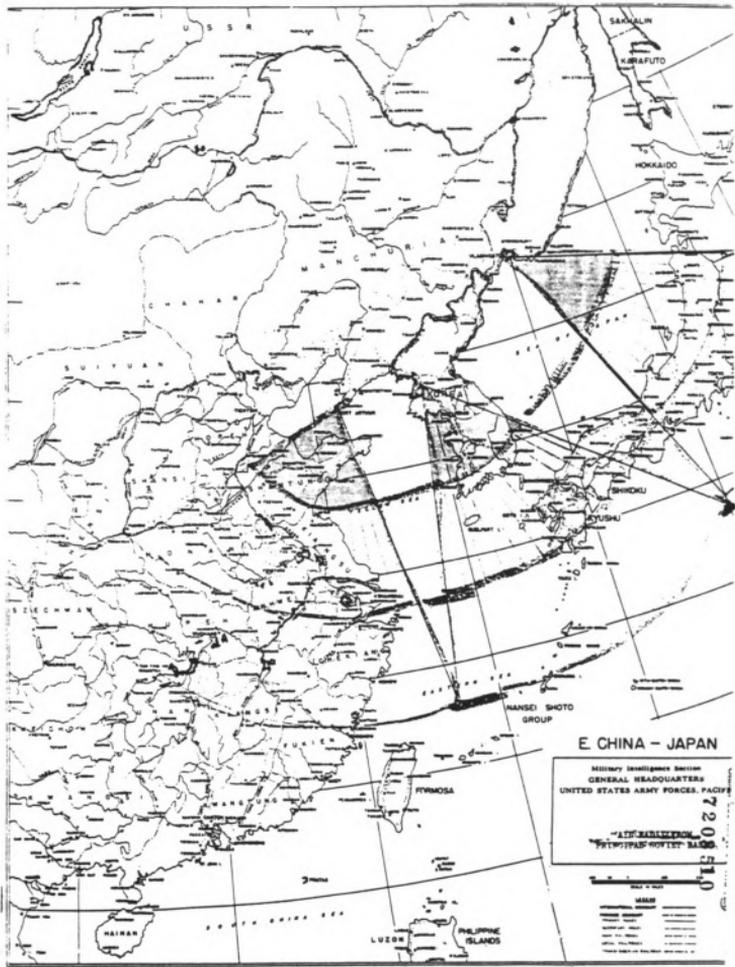


Figure 27. Air Radii From Principal Soviet Bases (Courtesy of the Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia)

any Soviet "maneuver" in Korea. Still, the report lacked an in-depth analysis of the serviceability of the aircraft, the reliability of the Soviet supply and logistical system, and the availability of staging areas for forward deployments.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, these analysts assumed that the Soviet Air Force, operating from bases in Vladivostok or Wonson, North Korea, could subject the Japanese home islands to daylight and nighttime attacks, inflict harassing attacks on American military installations in the Ryukyus, and even strike at the US Seventh fleet in Tsingtao, China and American naval units in Japanese harbors. Soviet capabilities were seemingly all-powerful since the effects of retaliatory strikes by the United States Navy and Army Air Force were not contemplated or analyzed.⁴⁶

Soviet ground units represented another threat to southern Korea. Willoughby's intelligence officers thought that the Soviet Far Eastern Army could conquer southern Korea in 10 to 15 days, which would have created an even greater security threat to American positions in Japan and the Ryukyus because of the availability of airfields astride the Sea of Japan. It was estimated that the Soviets had 165,000 troops facing the 45,000 American soldiers in southern Korea, another 75,000 soldiers in the Port Arthur area, and that a total of 872,000 ground troops would be available in the Far East thirty days after mobilization.⁴⁷ (See Figure 28) Interestingly enough, overall combat efficiency of these units was estimated to be low because of demobilization, but the report was confident that training exercises would make the less experienced soldiers "nearly comparable" to the veterans they were replacing. Why the report would assume this about the Soviet Army's

⁴⁵ Ibid., 4-5 and 12.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 13, 15-16, and 18.

⁴⁷ See "Periodic Intelligence Summary," June 22, 1947, 4 and 6, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

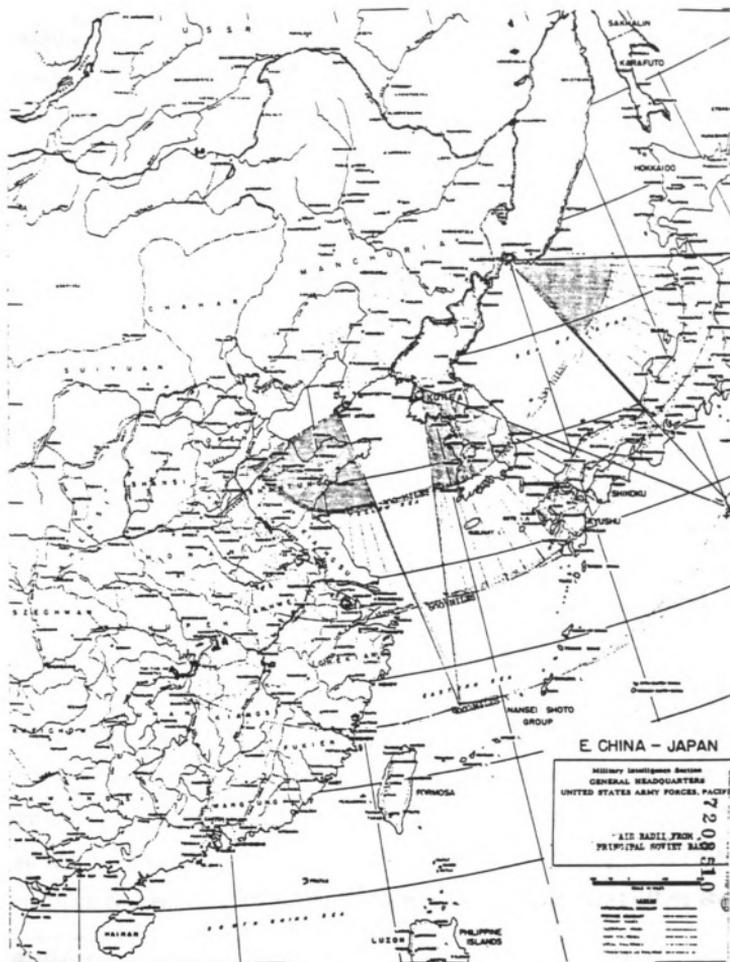


Figure 28. Air Radii From Principal Soviet Bases (Courtesy of the Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia)

readiness level is unclear, since the authors must have known that the same phenomenon of demobilization was simultaneously emasculating the effectiveness of the United States military.⁴⁸

MacArthur's intelligence officers also assumed that any Soviet offensive would be assisted by guerrilla and fifth column activities. They believed that a Soviet attack would coincide with riots in southern Korea, a situation which would find US troops dispersed in small groups to quell the riots instead of concentrated to repel a Soviet attack. In addition, these officers seemed convinced that previous riots in South Korea were Soviet-controlled, though they could not or chose not to produce or analyze any evidence for these assertions. This type of thinking in the summer of 1947 was also consistent with requests by General Hodge to use fighter aircraft in low-level strafing missions to quell civilian rioters in South Korea. Convinced that the rioters were either communist dupes, agents, or criminal elements, Hodge sought to impress the South Koreans with active demonstrations of US airpower in order to "stabilize" his rear area.⁴⁹

Soviet naval potential was not ignored by Willoughby's staff either. There were several qualifications in the summary about this topic, however. The report, for instance, was quick to point out that a lack of warm water ports meant a "natural" emphasis by the Soviets on the development of their air and ground forces at the expense of their navy. Accordingly, the report continually deemphasized Soviet surface and amphibious capabilities and

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 15. For Hodge's views about the rioters, see Hodge to MacArthur, Incoming Messages, October 24, 1946, 720.1622, AFSHRC. For the order to prepare combat aircraft for strafing missions, see Whitehead to MacArthur, Outgoing Messages, November 6, 1946, 720.1623, *ibid.* For Hodge's general ignorance and paranoia about South Korean politics and society, see Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945-1947* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); and *idem.*, *The Origins of the Korean War: The Roaring of the Cataract* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

asserted that minor operations in support of a ground invasion of South Korea were the only realistic scenarios for Soviet naval operations in the Far East.⁵⁰

Still, Soviet naval pretensions were analyzed. The report claimed that the Soviet emphasis on heavy industrialization in their current five-year plan, as well as rumors of naval base construction in Vladivostok, meant the sure intention of a powerful navy in the Far East. Moreover, Soviet submarine forces were considered the most effective part of the naval arm in the region. Placing the strength of these forces at 60 to 100 boats, the report continually referred to Soviet naval potential in East Asia as "limited," except for submarine operations. Unfortunately, the report did not analyze the serviceability, technological sophistication, logistical support, or level of training of these forces any more than it did for the ground and air forces in the area.⁵¹

American naval planners were equally concerned with the Soviet submarine force in the immediate postwar period. One reason suspicions may have existed is that the Soviets, with 212 boats, possessed one of the largest submarine forces in the world at the time. Though this force was tasked mainly with the defense of Soviet sea approaches and was neither the most technologically sophisticated nor the most combat experienced, Navy planners, fully engaged by 1946 and 1947 in preparing for war with the Soviet Union, thought that Soviet submarines and surface ships could deploy from the Kurile Islands and prey on allied shipping in the Pacific Ocean. Navy officers, like their Army counterparts, were also convinced that the

⁵⁰ See "Periodic Intelligence Summary," June 22, 1947, 5-6, 16, and 18, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

sea lanes around Japan were within easy striking range of Soviet airfields in the Kuriles and the Soviet Far Eastern Maritime Provinces.⁵²

More importantly, though, the American Navy, conditioned by the events of the Pacific War as well as the Battle of the Atlantic, was extremely concerned over the prospect of the Soviet submarine fleet patrolling the waters around Japan, the western Pacific Islands, and even the West Coast of the United States. In June 1947, for instance, officers of the Joint Marianas Board for the Military Development of the Marianas discussed Guam's vulnerability to submarine attacks, including submarines using underwater rocket weaponry for shore bombardment. Given the quickening pace of submarine technological development in the postwar era, it is not unreasonable to assume that American naval officers perceived a Soviet submarine threat in the Pacific similar to that which Japanese and German submarines had posed to the United States during World War Two.⁵³

General Whitehead's communication of the War Department's Overseas Base Plan for the Far East in June 1947 to his chief of staff, Major General

⁵² See Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy*, 31 and 37. Soviet naval strength in East Asian waters in 1946 and 1947 has not yet been determined by this author. Eric Morris asserts that in August 1945 the Soviet Pacific Fleet consisted of 2 heavy cruisers, about 20 destroyers, and about 60 submarines. See Morris, *The Russian Navy: Myth and Reality* (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), 25. Officers in the U.S. Pacific Command in August 1947 reported a similarly low surface strength of 2 heavy cruisers, 11-14 destroyers, and a number of smaller craft. However, they argued that the Soviets could reinforce their Pacific Fleet with battleships and heavy cruisers from their European forces by moving fleet units across the northern sea routes in the summer time. See CINCPAC Joint Staff Study "Triagnol", (Pacific War Plan), August 1, 1947, Post 1 January 1946 Plans File, OA, NHC.

⁵³ For an account of Japanese submarine operations on the American West Coast, see Clark G. Reynolds, "Submarine Attacks on the Pacific Coast, 1942," *Pacific Historical Review* 33 (May 1964): 183-193. For an equation of wartime German and Japanese submarine activity with a potential postwar Soviet submarine threat, see the testimony of Secretary of the Navy John Sullivan, December 2, 1947, Air Policy Commission Papers, "USSR Submarines," McDonald to Spaatz, December 30, 1947, box 23, Carl Spaatz Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., as found in Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 338. See also "Report of the Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas," June 1, 1947, 11, 178.2917-1, AFSHRC.

Thomas White, seemed to support the worst fears of American naval officers, as well as those of MacArthur's staff in Tokyo. Whitehead too feared attacks on American positions in the western Pacific, including Micronesia, by "enemy forces" in the future which might be able to mount airborne invasions of the islands, subject these positions to atomic air attack, and even attack the islands with submarine-launched atomic weapons.⁵⁴ In fact, Whitehead had consistently argued to his superiors since the summer of 1945 that the major threat to America's strategic position in East Asia and the western Pacific came from "strategic" airborne invasions or the transportation and resupply by air of entire enemy armies which could take and establish beachheads until relieved. Whitehead saw a Soviet strategic airborne capability as the primary threat to US positions in Japan, South Korea, and the Ryukyus. Contrary to most naval officers, however, Whitehead believed that the US position in East Asia and the western Pacific would be secure as long as the US retained its supremacy in land-based atomic airpower and dominated Pacific Basin sea and air lanes.⁵⁵

By July 1947, additional intelligence summaries from MacArthur's headquarters answered more specific questions about the Soviet threat but still continued to discuss Soviet capabilities as all-powerful and continued to intimate that there was very little that the United States military could do to counter the threat. For example, it was still assumed that the Soviets had over 2200 serviceable and useful military aircraft in the Far East and that the number in North Korea had increased to 700. Moreover, Soviet capa-

⁵⁴ See Whitehead to White, June 10, 1947, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

⁵⁵ Ibid.; and Whitehead to Colonel Clarence Irvine, PACUSA Assistant Chief of Staff, June 8, 1946, *ibid.* See also Whitehead to Kenney, subj: Airborne Forces in the United States Post-War Military Establishment, August 15, 1945, 730.161-3; and M.D. Burnside to Whitehead, February 22, 1947, 168.6008-4, both at the AFSHRC.

bilities were again stated in a context which denoted unquestioned certainty about future aggressive Soviet intentions.⁵⁶ It was still assumed, for example, that the Soviets could conquer South Korea in 10-15 days with five divisions, supported by North Korean troops and "fifth column activities" in the south. Moreover, Willoughby's intelligence officers believed that the Soviets would be able to carry out bombing attacks on the Seventh Fleet in Chinese waters, strike at American naval units in Japanese waters, and conduct daylight and nighttime attacks on American installations in the Ryukyus. In addition, these officers assumed that the 100 or so Soviet submarines in the Far East would prey on US shipping in the western Pacific while the 50 major and almost 500 minor Soviet surface combatants in the theater carried out offensive mining operations against US naval bases in Japan and tried to deny the Sea of Japan to the United States Navy.⁵⁷

Other capabilities became more apparent or were at least more fully explained in this later intelligence report. For instance, Willoughby's office now reported that the Soviets had an airlift capability which would allow them to drop 38,000 paratroopers from 3000 transports at distances of over 700 miles from Vladivostok. The report also claimed that this capability meant the Japanese home islands and all of northern China were not only susceptible to naval and air attack, but airborne invasion as well. In addition, in June 1947, Rear Admiral William Smith and Marine Corps Major General Pedro Del Valle wrote Vice Admiral Daniel Barbey, Commander-in-Chief, US Naval Forces, Far East Command (CINCNAVFE), and Senior Naval Member of the Joint Board for the Military Development of the Marianas,

⁵⁶ See "Strength and Disposition of Soviet Forces," July 31, 1947, *Periodic Intelligence Summary Supplement No. 3, Korea-China-Manchuria*, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

that they disagreed with the Army members' recommendation not to garrison Tinian with ground defense forces. Both officers argued that the island was a "ready-made" base for instant combat use and could be easily seized through a surprise airborne invasion launched by a capable enemy.⁵⁸ Since Japan had no air force in 1947 and since it was presumed that it would not have one for some time, the USSR had to have been the nation in question.

Still, thoughtful and critical analysis of these alleged strategic capabilities was largely nonexistent. Certainly limited kinds of airborne operations on the Korean peninsula made sense if Soviet intentions were to invade South Korea. But an airborne operation against the Japanese home islands seems rather far-fetched given the strength of US naval and air units in the area and the fact that Willoughby's office had previously claimed the Soviets lacked a significant amphibious lift capability to support any invasion of Japan. American officers should have known from Operation Market-Garden that unsupported airborne invasions make no strategic sense. Moreover, it is difficult to fathom that the Soviets had acquired a large-scale amphibious lift capability to support an invasion of Japan in the one month which had elapsed since the previous report denied such a capability.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid., 7 and 16. See Smith and Del Valle to Barbey, "Report of the Joint Marianas Board," June 1, 1947, 33 and 35, 178.2917-1, AFSHRC.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 7. For an analysis of weak Soviet amphibious capabilities, see "Periodic Intelligence Summary: Situation Korea-China-Manchuria," June 22, 1947, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives. In September 1944, the western Allies dropped 35,000 American, British, and Polish paratroopers into Holland in an attempt to capture strategic bridges over the Rhine River and allow Allied armored forces to invade northern Germany. Since the Allied armored units failed to relieve the paratroopers in the two to three days estimated for the operation and since the airborne divisions had been dropped amidst German SS panzer divisions, the airborne units took heavy casualties, with the British and Polish units taking 80% and 90% losses, respectively. It was a deadly lesson in the limitations of unsupported airborne forces, or at least it should have been to postwar American strategic planners! See Cornelius Ryan, *A Bridge Too Far* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974).

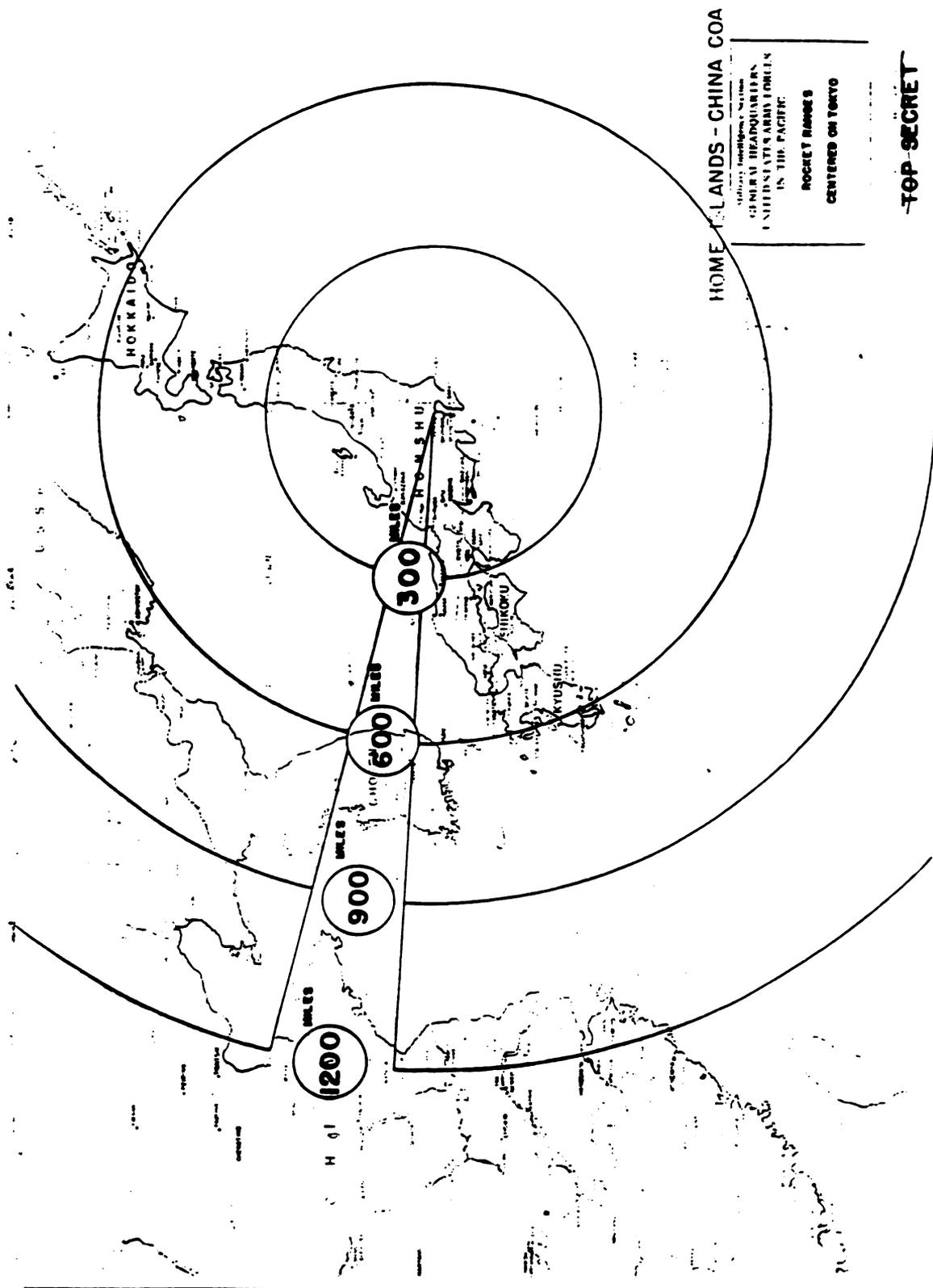


Figure 30. Rocket Ranges Centered On Tokyo (Courtesy of the Bureau of Archives, MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Virginia)

This latest summary does, however, offer an analysis of Soviet aircraft ranges which goes far in explaining why Micronesia still figured prominently in American war plans in 1946-1947 and why planners feared Soviet air and naval activity in the western and central Pacific if war broke out. MacArthur's intelligence officers were firmly convinced by the summer of 1947 that the Soviets had bombers capable of reaching targets in Japan and the Ryukyus. While Soviet fighter and ground attack planes were obviously more limited in range and capability, these also seemed to have the range to reach targets in southern Japan if launched from bases in southern Korea.⁶⁰ Moreover, American officers believed that the Soviets had even longer-ranged weapons under development, including jet aircraft, rockets, guided missiles, and atomic weapons.⁶¹ While the information on these weapons was superficial and the tone of this latest document was rather alarmist, the report still convinces this author that Far East Command intelligence officers honestly believed that South Korea, the Japanese home islands, and the Ryukyus were endangered by present and future Soviet military capabilities. (See Figures 29 and 30)

Overall, American intelligence reports seemed fairly consistent on the nature of the Soviet threat. There were, however, some significant disagreements between various agencies in Washington and those on the spot. For instance, the JSSC believed that China would be a "militarized and industrialized" communist satellite of the Soviet Union, while MacArthur's intelligence officers saw China more as a weak satrapy lacking industrial and military potential except that supplied to it by the USSR. In addition, civi-

⁶⁰ See "Strength and Disposition of Soviet Forces," July 31, 1947, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

lian political leaders and the JCS, with broader views of American global policy and the military requirements of meeting policy in Europe, the Mediterranean, and Japan, were more willing to withdraw American military forces from mainland East Asia than MacArthur and his key officers.⁶² For example, by the spring and summer of 1947, the JCS was calling for the withdrawal of the two Army divisions stationed in South Korea while MacArthur was continuing to warn of American military weaknesses in the area. As late as 1947, the JCS seemed to live up to its 1945 pronouncement that Japan, the Philippines, and other island groups taken from Japan needed to be occupied but that the mainland itself was expendable. This view would change after the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950, but it was consistent in the time period that this study is concerned with.⁶³

Another example of these differing opinions between officials in Washington and officers on the spot concerning the number, composition, and location of base sites can be seen in the varying emphases Eisenhower, MacArthur, and Whitehead gave to the defense of the Pacific. Eisenhower, just a few months after enunciating his ideas about Alaska to MacArthur, also suggested to Secretary of War Robert Paterson that the US withdraw its Army forces from the Philippines. Citing soured US-Philippine relations because of the basing of American troops in the Manila area, a need to concentrate scarce Army resources in Europe and East Asia, a general US unwillingness to ensure the security of the archipelago, and the Navy's willingness to retain a limited number of bases in the islands, Eisenhower as-

⁶² See JSSC to the JCS, "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific," JCS 1619/10, September 19, 1946, file 12-9-42, CCS 360, RG 218, NA; see also Forrestal to Marshall, September 26, 1947, *FRUS* 1947, 6:817.

⁶³ See Kaufman, *The Korean War*, 6-7 and 17; see also Gallicchio, *Cold War Begins in Asia*, 35-36.

serted that the Army should withdraw gradually from the Philippine Republic. Eisenhower, in other words, seemed to be arguing for a reorientation of US defenses in the Pacific and East Asia from the Philippines and Micronesia to Alaska and the Arctic Circle. MacArthur and Whitehead, however, continued to see the "frontline" of American interests in the area beginning in Japan and South Korea and then falling back to the Alaska-Micronesia-Philippines line, with the Ryukyus, Bonins, and Volcanoes as the "listening posts" of the defense line.⁶⁴ Still, it should be kept in mind by the reader that in spite of these disagreements over important details of what areas to defend in the postwar Pacific Basin, there was no disagreement about the threat to these areas. The Soviet Union was consistently seen by most parties as a nation bent on dominating mainland East Asia, excluding the United States from the continent, and threatening American lines of communication in the Pacific.

Regardless of the reality or unreality of this envisioned future, it is apparent that by 1946-47 the fear of Soviet naval and air power being projected from the Soviet Maritime Provinces, the Kuriles, and even a Soviet-dominated Japan-Ryukyus strategic complex toward Micronesia and the Philippines was a real one for American strategic planners. Interestingly, however, "defensive" American war plans for the Pacific and East Asia were

⁶⁴ For Eisenhower's thoughts on the Philippines, see JCS 1027/8, "War Department Requirements For Military Bases And Rights In The Philippine Islands," November 23, 1946, found in file "State Department Correspondence, 1946-1947," box 38, White House Central Files, HSTL. For the possibility that this idea may have originated with Major General Lauris Norstad, chief of the OPD, see Norstad to Brigadier General George Lincoln, head of OPD's Plans and Policy Group, November 7, 1946, file "Official-Classified, 1946-1947 (1)," box 22, Norstad Papers, DDEL. For MacArthur's and Whitehead's ideas, see O900 Report, box 5, OPD Diary, DDEL; MacArthur to Eisenhower, September 8, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Plans and Operations File, MacArthur Memorial Archives; and Whitehead to Kenney, February 27, 1946, 168.6008-3, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

just as aggressive as the alleged Soviet capabilities and intentions which planners' hoped to counter.

Given rapid weapons development during the war, perceptions that American geostrategic advantages of distance no longer existed, and the growing mindset that the Soviet Union represented a future potential threat, very few post-1945 American military planners were prepared to wait for a first strike on American territory without at least having modern, retaliatory forces on alert and in forward positions. To these officers, future military deployments were to take place as close to enemy territory as possible and should deliver crippling strikes at the beginning of hostilities. In the words of Lieutenant General Whitehead as late as October 1947, the Far East Command's air forces would engage in "... immediate decisive combat in event of war. The number of Americans evacuated from Korea and Hokkaido would depend entirely on FEAF's capability to smash Soviet air at the outset."⁶⁵

To meet this perceived Soviet threat, the Navy and the AAF each began to work out a strategy for the northern Pacific in early 1946. In March of that year, Forrestal ordered the Navy to conduct multiship exercises in the Arctic Ocean to learn how effectively carriers and their aircraft could operate in snowy weather, icy seas, and low visibility. Operation "Frost-bite", as the series of exercises was called, was not very successful, the Navy estimating that carrier operations in the Arctic were only "fifty percent" effective at that time. Yet the operation more clearly identified the Soviet Union as the new enemy of the United States Navy since the northern

⁶⁵ See Whitehead to Major General Kenneth Wolfe, COMAF 5, October 21, 1947, 168.6008-3, AFSHRC; see also Sherry, *Preparing For The Next War*, passim.

route was the shortest avenue of attack between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶⁶

In addition, the AAF in 1946 and 1947 rotated strategic bombing groups into the western Pacific, using bases in Micronesia and the Ryukyus to train their personnel in wartime operations against the Soviet Far East. Though AAF bases in Micronesia were quite far from their potential Soviet targets, complete American control over the islands allowed for secure training facilities, secure support facilities for more forward bases in areas like the Ryukyus, and eliminated the need for diplomatic permission from other nations for overflights.⁶⁷ The Pacific also offered the AAF the opportunity to continue attempts at Arctic operations which it had begun during the war. During 1946 and 1947, for example, B-29 units rotated into Alaska and used that territory for staging purposes because of the shorter route to the Soviet Union and because the Ryukyus were already perceived to be within striking range of Soviet aircraft.⁶⁸

Although Operation "Frostbite" and the AAF's Arctic deployments illustrated that operations in the northern Pacific were not yet militarily feasible because of weather conditions, the current state of technology, and the level of personnel training, they also reinforced the axiom that the best defense in the Pacific was a good forward offense. Civilian policymakers, the JCS, and their subordinate committees, in fact, differed significantly from the Far East Command's intelligence picture of "gloom and doom" when it came to analyzing US and Soviet strategic capabilities in East Asia. The

⁶⁶ See Commander, Carrier Division One, Operation Frostbite (March 1-28, 1946), April 13, 1946, Post 1 January 1946 Report File, OA, NHC, as found in Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy*, 32; see also "Arctic Battleground," *Time* 47 (March 25, 1946): 25; and Davis, *Postwar Defense Policy*, 222-223.

⁶⁷ See Borowski, *Hollow Threat*, 72-73 and 75-77.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 73 and 77-87.

JCS, for instance, believed that American bombers and warships based in Japan and the Ryukyus and supported from Micronesia and the Philippines could not only have repelled potential Soviet assaults from East Asia, but could also have struck deeply into the Soviet Maritime Provinces.⁶⁹

Similarly, Michael Schaller, Michael Palmer, and Marc Gallicchio have all illustrated that American "offensive-defensive" war plans in 1946 and 1947 did not merely call for a neutralization or occupation of Micronesia but saw Micronesia, the Philippines, the Ryukyus, and Japan as fully developed naval and air bases which could project offensive striking power toward the Soviet Union. All three authors cite documents in which a good offense is synonymous with defense in the Pacific and their concentration on JCS documents suggests that the JCS took American retaliatory capabilities more fully into account when analyzing the Soviet Pacific threat than MacArthur's intelligence staff seems to have done.⁷⁰

Moreover, some civilian policymakers placed great faith in American airpower as part of the calculus of strategic power in postwar East Asia. In September 1947, Secretary of Defense Forrestal sent a memo to Secretary of State George Marshall calling for an American military withdrawal from

⁶⁹ See also Schaller, *American Occupation of Japan*, 53-57.

⁷⁰ See Joint Intelligence Staff (JIS) 80/7, October 23, 1945, file 3-27-43, CCS 092, RG 218, NA; JIS 80/9, October 26, 1945, *ibid.*, JCS 570/40, October 25, 1945, file 12-9-42, CCS 360, *ibid.*; JPS 789/1 April 13, 1946, file 3-2-46, CCS 381, *ibid.*; Joint War Plans Committee (JWPC) 432/7, June 13, 1946, *ibid.*; JWPC 476/2, August 28, 1947, *ibid.*; and JCS to SWNCC, September 9, 1947, *FRUS* 1947, 1:366-367; all found in Schaller, *American Occupation of Japan*, 56. See also "Top Secret Presentation by Vice Admiral Forrest Sherman, DCNO for Operations, to the President, Senate, and House, January 14, 1947, no. 26, box 8, series 3, Forrest Sherman Papers, OA, NHC; and Joint Staff Study "Triagnol," October 31, 1947, CINCPAC Command File, Plans File, OA, NHC; both found in Palmer, *Maritime Strategy*, 31 and 37. Finally, see "Strategic Areas And Trusteeships In The Pacific, JCS 1619/1, May 24, 1946, SWNCC 59, SWNCC Papers, Records of the Interdepartmental and Intradepartmental Committees, RG 353, Memorandum of Record, George Elsey, January 29, 1946, George Elsey Papers, HSTL; Hans W. Weigert, "U.S. Strategic Bases and Collective Security," *Foreign Affairs* 35 (January 1947): 257; and Lester Foltos, "New Pacific Barrier," 317-342; all found in Gallicchio, "The Kuriles Controversy," 88.

South Korea because of its "low" strategic priority and because, Forrestal claimed, American airpower in East Asia could "neutralize" any strategic facilities the Soviets might be able to use in southern Korea. To be sure, the view from Washington was quite different than the one in Tokyo.⁷¹

Interestingly, the JCS, the JSSC, and officials like Forrestal still argued that the US only required "occupation rights" in Micronesia as the means by which to provide for future security in the region. Moreover, they continued to assert that funding limitations would probably preclude any significant postwar base development in the area.⁷² In spite of these pressures from demobilization and lower budgetary ceilings, however, Guam continued to be developed as a major American bomber base in the postwar Pacific. This fact suggests that Cold War tensions after 1945 caused American strategic planners to continue to place importance on Micronesia as the ultimate line of American defense in the postwar Pacific in case of a "Soviet-inspired" disaster on the East Asian mainland or the "neutralization" of Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines.⁷³

An Assessment

During the Second World War, both the Navy and the AAF had largely discounted the Soviet Union as an immediate postwar threat because of its lack of a blue water navy, its lack of a strategic air force, and military planners' assumption that the Soviet Union would quickly acquire these strategic forces because of the pressing demands of postwar reconstruction

⁷¹ See "Memorandum from the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State," September 26, 1947, *FRUS* 1947, 6:817.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ See Galliechio, "The Kuriles Controversy," 88.

and the military occupation of eastern Europe.⁷⁴ Similarly, none of the intelligence reports in 1946 and 1947 explicitly claimed that war was imminent in the near future and the reports usually placed Soviet aggression in the context of "unintentional war."⁷⁵ This fact supports Melvyn Leffler's thesis that American strategic planners and intelligence officers in the late 1940s acknowledged the Soviet Union's losses in World War Two and perceived the USSR primarily as a long-term threat to American interests.

In spite of this focus on the long-term threat, American strategic planners did not believe they had the luxury of preparing for a war sometime in the future. Most of the intelligence analysis was superficial and overly concerned with the numbers of Soviet units rather than their quality, but in intelligence analysis and strategic planning numbers were usually the means used to gauge military capabilities and intentions. Whether or not the Soviets intended to initiate a war with the United States at any time in the late 1940s was probably immaterial to American planners. The fact that the Soviets possessed a large submarine force at Vladivostok, a substantial ground force in northern Korea, and the potential for a Far Eastern strategic air force was enough to engender suspicion and fear among a generation of officers who had matured in the shadow of Pearl Harbor.

Most importantly, this "sudden appearance" of Soviet strategic forces in the Pacific in 1946 and 1947 was consistent with very alarmist worst-case scenario planning which became prevalent throughout the United States national security establishment in the late 1940s. It would appear that by

⁷⁴ See Davis, *Postwar Defense Policy*, 18; Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 52, 69, and 81-82; and Leffler, "American Conception," *passim*.

⁷⁵ See "Strength and Disposition of Soviet Forces," July 31, 1947, Periodic Intelligence Summary Supplement No. 3, Korea-China-Manchuria, 18, RG 6: FECOM, Intelligence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

1947 many American strategic planners thought the Soviets had indeed become "supermen" in the Pacific and East Asia as well as in Europe and the Middle East.⁷⁶ This alarmist mentality was illustrated in intense US efforts to consolidate American control over Micronesia and other key strategic islands. As the following chapters will suggest, American imperialism in the postwar Pacific had its roots in the history of pre-1941 American foreign relations, but the fears and uncertainties of the early Cold War were equally important in engendering an American desire for an exclusive strategic buffer zone in the Pacific Basin.

⁷⁶ See Borowski, *Hollow Threat*, 91-107; Leffler, "American Conception," passim; and Miller, *Search For Security*, 163-203.

Chapter Four

The Limitations of Collective Security: The United States, the Allied Powers, and the Pacific Basin

American imperialism in the postwar Pacific was expressed most clearly during the post-1945 diplomatic negotiations between the great powers over the future disposition of conquered and colonial territory. Between 1945 and 1947, American officials made it clear that the United States wanted a free hand to dictate the future strategic-political framework of the Pacific Basin. In addition, these negotiations illustrated a number of points about American attitudes toward the US' wartime allies and its wartime rhetoric about postwar great power cooperation and collective security.

One, postwar relations illustrated the very low level of confidence which many American policymakers and planners had in the United Nations. Conditioned by the perceived failures of the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations, and the Washington Treaty System, many American strategic planners saw UN trusteeships as a suspect and substandard way to guarantee that the Pacific became a postwar American lake. Historians have traditionally looked at the issue of international atomic energy control to

demonstrate the low level of American confidence in the UN. Trusteeship negotiations provide another early example of the same phenomenon.¹

Second, UN negotiations over international trusteeships became an arena for polarized relations between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as the scene for contentions between the western Allies over the future of the region. American fears about strategic security in the post-war Pacific were expressed in lobbying for a special "strategic trusteeship" over Micronesia which made a mockery of the trusteeship concept and fostered suspicions among other nations about American intentions in the post-war Pacific.²

Finally, postwar relations illustrate just how intertwined the Pacific Basin became with other areas of the world. The region has been considered an isolated and unimportant "backwater" by most Cold War historians.³ A closer look at postwar international relations over the disposition of the Pacific Islands, however, suggests that the fate of the region was of great importance to the United States, the Soviet Union, and a number of European

¹ See Martin Sherwin, "The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War: U.S. Atomic-Energy Policy and Diplomacy, 1941-1945," *American Historical Review* 78 (October 1973): 945-968; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Quest for Security: American Foreign Policy and International Control of Atomic Energy, 1942-1946," *Journal of American History* 60 (March 1974): 1003-1044; Larry G. Gerber, "The Baruch Plan and the Origins of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 6 (Winter 1982): 69-95; James L. Gormly, "The Washington Declaration and the 'Poor Relation': Anglo-American Atomic Diplomacy, 1945-1946," *Diplomatic History* 8 (Spring 1984): 125-143; and Joseph Preston Baratta, "Was the Baruch Plan a Proposal of World Government?" *International History Review* 7 (November 1985): 592-621.

² See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 461-573; and Inis Claude, Jr., *Swords Into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organizations* (New York: Random House, 1984), 349-377.

³ The literature on Cold War historiography is immense. Most historians of American foreign relations, however, have overlooked US policy toward the Pacific Basin as a case study or microcosm of US global policy during the early Cold War. Important exceptions to this rule are Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*; Mega, *Defending Paradise*; Foltos, "The New Pacific Barrier"; Gallicchio, "The Kuriles Controversy"; Nick Cullather, "The Limits of Multilateralism: Making Policy for the Philippines, 1945-1950," *International History Review* 13 (February 1991): 70-95; and Hal M. Friedman, "The Beast in Paradise: The United States Navy in Micronesia, 1943-1947," *Pacific Historical Review* 62 (May 1993): 173-195.

powers because of the global implications of the UN trusteeship system and the interdependence of regional issues.

The Context

As the following pages will demonstrate, US strategic policy toward the Pacific Basin was a "low fourth" on the list of global objectives in 1945. United States foreign policy during the origins of the Cold War held Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia to be more important regions when it came to policy attention, resource allocation, and strategic denial from the Soviet Union. Still, to ignore US concerns about future Pacific security would be a major error for any historian studying US strategic policy in the late 1940s. The region was a significant source of strategic insecurity to the United States because of interwar and wartime events and the participants involved in planning future policy for the region held the construction of a Pacific shield for the republic to be one of their primary postwar goals, even if it was not the highest goal on the priority list.

American plans for the postwar Pacific were dominated by fears of some hostile power acquiring control over the resources of the East Asian mainland and the strategic facilities of the Pacific Islands and using these assets for military purposes against the United States. Set in the context of Pearl Harbor and the origins of the Cold War, Japan and then the Soviet Union figured prominently in American strategic thinking as possible future enemies in the Pacific. To forestall the possibility of a future surprise attack on the United States from East Asia, American planners sought as firm a control over Micronesia and the other Pacific Island groups taken from

Japan as possible.⁴ As the following pages illustrate, however, American plans for the postwar Pacific not only provided for a postwar containment of Japan and the Soviet Union, but they were also oriented against America's western allies. Far from carrying out wartime pledges about postwar multilateral cooperation, American officials instead sought to limit the number of nations involved in the occupation of Japan and the negotiation of Pacific Island trusteeships.

Inter-Allied Disputes

Suspicion of allies after the Pacific War was an area of continuity with US Pacific policy after the First World War. William Braisted, for example, has demonstrated that as late as the 1919-1922 period the United States Navy's General Board was still formulating very serious war plans for possible use against Great Britain in the Pacific region.⁵ William Roger Louis and Christopher Thorne similarly illustrated that very strained relations existed between the United States and the United Kingdom during the Second World War over the postwar disposition of British colonies in the Pacific. In addition, both authors have demonstrated that Australia and New Zealand were concerned with the disposition of the former Japanese Mandates and with American assurances of military defense in the postwar Pacific.⁶

Louis and Thorne have also shown that several of the major European governments-in-exile, especially those of France, Belgium, and Holland,

⁴ See Foltos, "New Pacific Barrier," 317-342; and Friedman, "Beast in Paradise," 173-195.

⁵ See Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 343-688.

⁶ For tensions between the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand over the postwar disposition of the Pacific Basin, see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 289-308, 409-432; and Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 252-269, 364-370, 479-488, and 645-653.

were opposed to American demands for a strategic trusteeship over the Japanese Mandated Islands while the US was simultaneously calling for European decolonization throughout the rest of the world. At the least, the European powers saw this as a hypocritical stance considering US subscriptions to the Atlantic Charter of August 1941 and its claims that it did not desire territorial possessions from the war.⁷ While documents from the 1945-1947 period do not illustrate as divisive relations as those which Braisted, Louis, and Thorne have found for the respective 1919-1922 and 1941-1945 periods, several areas of disagreement between the United States and the western allies suggest that America's imperial designs for the postwar Pacific left little or no room for wartime allies. Areas of contention included disagreements over postwar territorial and defense arrangements, military policy toward occupied Japan, and even allied participation in postwar atomic research. Most significantly, however, these disagreements illustrated a general American impatience and arrogance with any other nation which hoped to wield any political influence in the postwar Pacific or hoped to place the US at any perceived position of strategic parity.

Much of the concern centered on anxiety over establishing diplomatic situations which might repeat disadvantageous interwar conditions for the United States. As early as March 1945, for example, Secretary of War Stimson expressed the conviction that postwar international trusteeships would mean the United States having to submit to UN inspections of Micronesia while British, French, and Dutch possessions in the Pacific would es-

⁷ *Ibid.*

cape supervision.⁸ Stimson's intimation more than hinted at American perceptions that the US had honestly abided by the Pacific demilitarization clauses of the Washington Conference while Japan had violated those agreements without interference from the League of Nations. His statement also seems to reiterate the point that the US was not going to tolerate any similar "behavior" from any other nation in the postwar period.

Suspicious allusions to an allied nation also occurred in early 1946 in reference to Australia. Secretary Forrestal asserted that Secretary of State James Byrnes' attempts to have President Truman offer the Japanese Mandates to the UN before a peace treaty was signed with Japan and before trusteeship provisions were completed by the UN would lead to a situation similar to 1919 when the islands north of the Equator were "handed over" to Japan and those south of the Equator went to Australia. (See Figure 31) To Forrestal, Byrnes' idea of placing Micronesia under UN control therefore meant a repetition of the interwar situation when the United States was "shut out" of critical strategic areas in the western Pacific Islands and denied the opportunity to prevent Japanese "militarization and aggression" in the Pacific Basin.⁹

Australia was suspect in other contexts as well. As Roger Bell has argued, Australian foreign policy from 1944 to 1946 attempted to walk a fine line between obtaining an American guarantee of defense against future aggression in the region and maintaining autonomy so Australia could become the South Pacific regional power after the end of the war. To Commonwealth countries such as Australia and New Zealand, postwar American

⁸ See Forrestal's record of Stimson's assertion in "Trusteeships," *The Forrestal Diaries*, March 30, 1945.

⁹ See "Trusteeships," *Forrestal Diaries*, January 21, 1946.

attempts to establish a unilateral strategic trusteeship in Micronesia before a Japanese peace treaty was signed carried serious connotations of a *fait accompli* in violation of the Australia-New Zealand (ANZAC) Pact of 1944.¹⁰ The United States had agreed with Australia and New Zealand in January 1944 to establish a mutual regional defense zone in the postwar Pacific and not to take individual action toward territories in the region before a full and comprehensive Pacific settlement was carried out. Australia and New Zealand now not only saw bad faith on the part of the United States in relation to its unilateral position on Micronesia, but they also perceived a possible American willingness to "go it alone" in the postwar Pacific by leaving Australia and New Zealand to defend themselves against any future regional aggression.¹¹

In addition, John Dedman argues that US-Australian relations soured when the US refused to turn Manus Island in the Admiralties back to Australian control, as he intimates had been agreed to during the war. In fact, Dedman asserts that the US did not turn Manus over to Australia until November 1948.¹² Unfortunately, Dedman, writing in 1966, was not able to substantiate his claims with documentary evidence, but the charge would be consistent with early postwar attempts by the US to blanket the Pacific with American bases and forces. Similarly, it would have also been consis-

¹⁰ See Bell, "Australian-American Discord," 12-33.

¹¹ See memorandum by Vice Admiral Richard Edwards and Rear Admiral Donald Duncan to Admiral King, November 20, 1944, attached study "Post-War Bases in the Pacific," file "Bases General, B-3," box 156, series 12, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC, as found in Converse, "United States Plans For A Postwar Overseas Military Base System," 91. See also note from the Australian Ambassador to the American Secretary of State, January 21, 1947, *FRUS* 1947, 1:260-261; Secretary of State to the British Ambassador to the United States, February 12, 1947, *ibid.*, 261-263; and "Statement To Be Made by the Australian Delegate to the Security Council at Its Next Meeting To Consider the United States Trusteeship Agreement for the Former Japanese Mandated Islands," March 21, 1947, *ibid.*, 272-273.

¹² See Dedman, "Encounter Over Manus," 135-153.

tent with institutional resistance from the United States military to retreat from its ubiquitous wartime plans for the postwar Pacific Basin. American-British Commonwealth relations over the Pacific Islands seem to have eventually improved after 1946 because the United States became so much more preoccupied with policy toward Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, and its Pacific bases north of the Equator. Still, Bell has demonstrated that relations with the ANZAC nations became quite heated in 1945 and 1946 over issues such as base sites, transit rights for American military forces in the South Pacific, sovereignty issues, and the costs of base development in the area.¹³

Suspicious also seemed to have existed between the United States and its allies in atomic energy matters. These suspicions became intertwined with Micronesia during the planning of Operation "Crossroads." A series of atomic bomb tests conducted on selected American, German, and Japanese naval vessels at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in 1946, the tests were primarily carried out in order to observe the effects of nuclear war at sea.¹⁴ Because of the nature of the technology and its obvious military implications, there was widespread interest in the tests and observers from numerous nations eventually attended the experiments. In January 1946, Great Britain requested that a scientific team be allowed to assist in the planning of the operations. Apparently, Vice Admiral William Blandy, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (DCNO) for Special Weapons and the commander of Opera-

¹³ See Bell, "Australian-American Discord," 12-33.

¹⁴ The main purpose of the tests was to investigate the power of the atom bomb against naval vessels and to analyze the weapon's probable influence on the future of naval warfare. Lloyd J. Graybar suggests, however, that the tests may also have been carried out as part of the postwar interservice rivalry between the War and Navy Departments over the assignment of future roles and missions in an atomic era. See Graybar, "Bikini Revisited: *Military Affairs* 44 (October 1980): 118-123; and idem., "The 1946 Atomic Bomb Tests: Atomic Diplomacy or Bureaucratic Infighting?" *Journal of American History* 72 (March 1986): 888-907.

tion Crossroads, had no objection and in February 1946 Blandy, along with Secretary of War Robert Paterson, Forrestal, and Byrnes, recommended that the British be allowed a team of ten officers and civilians, a substantially larger number of personnel than the team of two allowed for other nations observing the tests.¹⁵

Still, Forrestal had been concerned in January with "reconciling security" with the invitations to foreign observers, even those from Great Britain and Canada. While the United States continued to favor Great Britain and Canada in the number of allotted observers because of their wartime contributions to the development of the atomic bomb, by March 1946 SWNCC and the JCS informed the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington that earlier suggestions for British military officers being included in the planning of Operation Crossroads would no longer be possible. While SWNCC and the JCS provided the excuse that plans were too far in advance by March 1946 to include British planning officers, the exclusion of even close allies from any kind of atomic planning was consistent with American wartime and postwar suspicions of all foreign nations when it came to atomic matters.¹⁶

¹⁵ See "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President," *FRUS* 1946, 1:1203. For the recommendation, see Minutes of the Meeting of the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, February 5, 1946, *ibid.*, 1203-1204. See also "Memorandum By The Secretaries Of War And The Navy," Appendix "A" to SWNCC 248/3, February 4, 1946, SWNCC Papers, RG 353, NA.

¹⁶ For Forrestal's concern, see "Plan For Atomic Bomb Tests Against Naval Vessels," SWNCC 248, January 21, 1946, SWNCC Papers, NA. For the American commitment to a larger British observation team, see "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President," March 8, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:1217-1218. For SWNCC and JCS determination to exclude British planners, see "Memorandum For The British Joint Staff Mission," Appendix "B" to SWNCC 248/4, March 6, 1946, SWNCC Papers, RG 353, NA. Finally, for several views of American wartime and postwar suspicions of allied nations involved in atomic research, see Sherwin, "The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War," 945-968; and *idem.*, *A World Destroyed: Hiroshima And The Origins Of The Arms Race* (New York: Random House, 1987); Bernstein, "The Quest for Security," 1003-1044; Gregg Herken, *The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb In The Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); and Gormly, "The Washington Declaration and the 'Poor Relation'," 125-143.

Another area in which Allied disagreements were illustrated occurred between the United States and the British Commonwealth nations over the organization, command, and disposition of Commonwealth forces in occupied Japan. As John Dower has demonstrated, American policy toward Japan indicated that the United States preferred to go it alone in terms of occupying, demilitarizing, and "democratizing" the island empire and American control over Japan was the most important component in initiating the American lake effect in the postwar Pacific. Thus, any indication by other powers of an interest in obtaining a substantial occupation role in that country would logically have engendered suspicion on the part of the US.¹⁷

On the surface, it appears that the United States was willing to have allied forces take part in occupying Japan as long as they did not have an exclusive national zone or a very large contingent of forces. Documents from MacArthur's headquarters in the fall of 1945 even indicate that President Truman invited Josef Stalin to include Soviet troops in the occupation, though he did this primarily because the Potsdam Agreement of July 1945 obligated the United States to ask for Soviet participation. Stalin's suggestion that the USSR occupy northern Hokkaido as a national zone was quickly rejected by Truman, but the very fact that Soviet troops might have been tolerated is significant in itself.¹⁸ (See Figure 32)

In September 1945, General Marshall made US policy on the matter of allied occupation troops clearer to MacArthur. Marshall asserted that it was US policy to have the Allied Powers "share the burden" of occupying and

¹⁷ See Dower, "Occupied Japan and the American Lake," 146-206.

¹⁸ See General Marshall to General MacArthur, August 31, 1945, RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, MacArthur Memorial Archives. See also General Thomas Handy, Acting Army Chief of Staff, to MacArthur, November 20, 1945, *ibid.* Finally, see Handy to MacArthur, November 19, 1945; and Eisenhower to MacArthur, November 20, 1945 and January 20, 1946; all in file "CINAFPAC/COM17THFLEET", box 10, CNO Dispatches, Double Zero Files, OA, NHC.

demilitarizing Japan and that this diffusion of responsibility meant including the Soviet Union, China, Great Britain, France, Holland, and even the Philippines in occupation matters. MacArthur returned a few days later that he agreed with Marshall, but he argued that all foreign forces should be logistically and administratively self-sufficient while completely integrated and operationally subordinate to MacArthur in his capacity as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (SCAP).¹⁹

These requirements about national zones, self-sufficiency, and operational subordination suggest subtle American tactics to exclude other nations from the task at hand. The refusal to grant a separate zone of occupation to the Soviets discouraged the USSR from further participation in the operation by November 1945.²⁰ In addition, it was probably impossible for the Chinese, French, Dutch, and Filipinos to have maintained "logistical and administrative independence," if they could have even supplied troops in the first place. Even when it came to the British Commonwealth nations, the United States had very specific guidelines it wanted followed which clearly articulated to the other nations that the victory over Japan was perceived to be a solely American one and that the United States alone would set the agenda for postwar Japan and the Pacific Basin. Conflicting interests over these issues were particularly serious with Australia.

¹⁹ See Marshall to MacArthur, September 15, 1945; and MacArthur to Marshall, September 19, 1945; both in RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

²⁰ In November 1945, Stalin declined an offer by the United States to have a Soviet force participate in the occupation of Japan. Though the reason was not stated, it was probably his inability to convince Truman or Byrnes that the Soviets should have an exclusive occupation zone in Hokkaido which determined Stalin's decision. Byrnes, like Truman, felt obliged to invite the Soviets into the occupation because of provisions in the Potsdam Agreement, but there did not seem to be any sleep lost over the Soviet refusal. See Eisenhower to MacArthur, November 20, 1945; and January 20, 1946, *ibid.*

For instance, in late September 1945 Australia proposed that the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) in Japan be allowed to operate a separate channel of communication with the Australian Joint Chiefs of Staff which avoided SCAP. MacArthur told Marshall that such an arrangement was impossible because the same thing would have to be established for the Soviets, the Chinese, or any other Allied power which might want to become involved in the occupation at a later date. To MacArthur, sole communication with outside authorities had to be through SCAP.²¹ One month later, General Thomas Handy, Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, informed MacArthur that Australia had put forth another proposal in which it accepted the requirements about operational and policy direction from SCAP as well as the conditions of administrative and logistical self-sufficiency for the Commonwealth Force. Handy told MacArthur, however, that the Australians specifically wanted the Force assigned to the Tokyo Prefecture, with Commonwealth control over local port facilities. The Australians were confident that the United States would quickly accept these provisions as evidence to the rest of the world that the British Commonwealth nations and the Americans were still joined in common efforts in spite of the conclusion of the war.²²

American officials, however, were concerned about other matters than the political image of postwar Allied unity. The War Department was more concerned about the command arrangement in Japan and moved swiftly to dispell Australian notions of geographic autonomy. In late November, Handy, now Acting Chief of Staff, informed MacArthur that the BCOF would be participating in the occupation but that it would be completely subordi-

²¹ See MacArthur to Marshall, September 23, 1945, *ibid.*

²² See Handy to MacArthur, October 23, 1945, *ibid.*

nate to MacArthur for operational purposes and would be assigned to any location which SCAP determined. The report denied the Australian request for an exclusive area of control in any part of Japan.²³ One month later, General Eisenhower, Marshall's successor as Chief of Staff, informed MacArthur that the British forces would be assigned military control of the Hiroshima Prefecture, not Tokyo. "Military control," moreover, did not mean military government functions such as operation of the public infrastructure, the purging of Japanese military and government leaders, and other central administrative functions. BCOF functions were to be kept strictly limited to police patrols of the occupied zone. The delegation of Commonwealth forces to patrolling activity also extended to the operations of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force (RAF) in Japan.²⁴

Moreover, the War Department's concern about the proportion of troops each nation maintained in Japan was evidenced in the documents. Since War Department officials perceived the number of garrisoned troops in a given area to be proportionate to that nation's political interest in the area, the Army was concerned that the United States have the largest force in Japan in order to demonstrate American military dominance in Japan during the occupation and retain dominant leverage over that nation's future.²⁵ Eisenhower reaffirmed this strategic concern with the number and composition of Allied troops in Japan when he argued that the proposed Commonwealth Force was too preponderant in airpower and that the BCOF should not be allowed to have 43,000 of the 70,000 assigned billets.²⁶

²³ See Handy to MacArthur, November 28, 1945, *ibid.*

²⁴ See Eisenhower to MacArthur, December 19, 1945, *ibid.*

²⁵ See Handy to MacArthur, November 20, 1945, *ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.* In reality, the BCOF was never really logistically independent. Because of a lack of resources, it had to rely on the US for the logistical support of its forces in Japan, much to the

Eventually, the United States, Great Britain, and Australia did agree to terms by which the BCOF would be part of the occupation of Japan. MacArthur retained sole operational and policy control over the force and the only line of communication with higher US authorities. In addition, the RAF and the Royal Navy components of the force were reduced and were placed under the respective operational control of General Whitehead as Commanding General of PACUSA and Vice Admiral Robert Griffin as Commander of Naval Activities in Japan (COMNAVJAP). In return for these concessions, the BCOF agreed to maintain administrative and logistical independence and was able to retain a line of communication with the Australian Joint Chiefs of Staff for certain political, but not operational, purposes.²⁷

Primary sources also reveal a bone of contention between the United States and the United Kingdom about sovereignty issues over certain South Pacific islands. Though the documents are not entirely clear about the nature of the contest, in the summer of 1946 the US and Great Britain were debating their sovereignty rights over eighteen locations south of the Equator, including Christmas Island in the Line Islands. The source of the dispute was the US' desire to use Christmas Island as a future base for B-29 training flights. In July 1946, Whitehead wrote to the commander of the US 7th Air Force, Major General Thomas White, confirming for White that his report about Christmas demonstrated that the island was a "cheap place" to build runways and that the existing wartime airfield was sufficient for

disgust of officers such as General Whitehead. See Whitehead to MacArthur, February 5, 1946, 160.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

²⁷ Ibid. The result of Admiral Nimitz' idea to avoid interservice command friction between CINCPAC and General MacArthur during the occupation of Japan, COMNAVJAP was organized under CINCPAC direction for administrative purposes but was placed under MacArthur's direction for the operational purpose of assisting in the demobilization and demilitarization of Japan. See 0900 Reports, December 16, 1945 and December 21, 1945, OPD Diary, box 5, DDEL.

B-29's.²⁸ Christmas and Canton Islands were also on the list of postwar "national interest air routes to the South Pacific," or areas that the War Department thought could be jointly developed as military and commercial air transit points. In fact, the US delayed completely withdrawing Army garrisons from those islands because of the airbase and transit issues.²⁹ (See Figure 33)

The controversy over South Pacific sovereignty continued in July 1946 when Lieutenant General Hull advised MacArthur that the British wanted to import "native" women from the Gilbert Islands to Christmas Island as companions for the male labor force constructing postwar bases there. The British work force was composed of about 60 Gilbert Islanders, but the British complained about low morale among the workers as well as a lagging copra production because of the small numbers of laborers and because of the difficulty of recruiting laborers who had to leave their families behind.³⁰ MacArthur, Hull, and the State Department were all concerned about the British being able to import Gilbert Island women to Christmas Island. To the American officials, this importation implied a permanent British presence and an attempt to change a purely labor force on a strategic island into a "colony".³¹

I have not yet discovered documentation which outlines how these issues were finally solved. Given the lower priority to the South Pacific bases by the United States military after the spring of 1946, however, it is

²⁸ See Dedman, "Encounter Over Manus," 141. See also Whitehead to White, 23 July 1946, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

²⁹ See Hull to Eisenhower, November 21, 1946; and Hull to Nowland, CG PAC DIV ATC, November 24, 1946; both in RG 9: Radiograms, Troop Deployments, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

³⁰ See Hull to MacArthur, July 23, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC; and Hull to MacArthur, August 18, 1946, *ibid*.

³¹ See Hull to MacArthur, July 23, 1946; and MacArthur to Hull, August 8, 1946 and August 28, 1946, *ibid*.

probable that the bases were either stricken from the JCS list of desired bases or simply withered as the remaining garrisons were withdrawn in 1947 and greater attention was paid to the bases in Hawaii, Micronesia, the Philippines, and the Ryukyus. The dispute, however, provides an additional piece of evidence that the United States wanted *carte blanche* in determining postwar Pacific affairs in every corner of the Basin and considered European colonial pretensions to be strategic inconveniences, if not threats to the postwar order.³²

The idea that the United States had sole rights determine the future framework of the Basin was another area of postwar allied disputes because of a particular arrogance on the part of some US officers when it came to other allied nations' contributions to the defeat of Japan. Admiral Harry Yarnell, for instance, argued during the war that the United States had the right to maintain a blanket of forces and bases in the postwar Pacific because it had paid the lion's share in "blood and treasure" for the victory over Japan. The efforts of the other Allied nations during the Pacific War were virtually ignored, as was any sensitivity to other nations' sovereignty, national pride, or postwar interests.³³

A postwar example of this American arrogance toward its wartime allies occurred in October 1946. At that time, General Whitehead sent information to General Spaatz on Dutch reluctance to allow American aircraft landing rights in New Guinea in connection with resupplying American forces on Manus and conducting a postwar aerial survey of the Pacific

³² See Bell, "Australian-American Discord," 12-33.

³³ See Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, "Memorandum on Post-War Far Eastern Situation," June 16, 1944, file "Intelligence, A-8," box 195, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

Ocean.³⁴ (See Figure 34) Whitehead argued that Hollandia, a major strategic air base in New Guinea, had been liberated from Japan by American forces without any assistance from the Dutch.³⁵ Because the US had expended significant amounts of blood and treasure building bases in the area and liberating the region from the Japanese, Whitehead believed that the Netherlands "owed" the US and that the US should have "blanket" authority and air transit rights in the area for the resupply missions and the survey.³⁶

While Dutch imperialism in New Guinea and Indonesia cannot be condoned any more than US imperialism in the western Pacific Islands, Whitehead's assumptions concerning US strategic prerogatives in the area appear to be particularly amiss considering that US policy was to recognize Dutch suzerainty over the Indonesian archipelago regardless of the Dutch war effort. Though Whitehead was correct about the facts of liberation, he was quick to forget that northern New Guinea was sovereign Dutch territory. He also failed to acknowledge that General MacArthur, as wartime Commander-in-Chief of the Southwest Pacific Ocean Area (CINCSWPA), had made agreements with the Dutch to restore their administration over the area as soon after liberation as possible and that the Dutch were now simply exercising that control.³⁷ Nor did Whitehead admit that the United States liberated various areas of the Pacific because of its own wartime strategic decisions and postwar strategic designs, not out of benevolence toward its European allies.

³⁴ See Whitehead to Spaatz, October 9, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, MacArthur Memorial Archives. See also Whitehead to MacArthur, October 13, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, *ibid.*; and Whitehead, subj: Draft, January 10, 1947, 720.1623, AFSHRC.

³⁵ See Whitehead to Spaatz, October 9, 1946; and Whitehead to MacArthur, October 13, 1946; both in RG 9: Radiograms, Air Force, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ See Michael Schaller, *Douglas MacArthur: The Far Eastern General* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 90.

Still, Whitehead's assertions were not out of the ordinary. In fact, American suspicions of other western Allied powers continued during the entire timeframe of this study. As late as 1947, for example, the US Military Staff Committee to the United Nations continued to discuss the security of US possessions and base rights in the Pacific in terms of ubiquitous threats from "any other nation."³⁸ It is my contention that while all other powers in the region were not always considered to be strategic threats, they were at least perceived to be "nuisances" to the new American order in the postwar Pacific Basin.

In spite of the eventual resolution of these problems, these episodes go far in demonstrating the extent to which the United States expected a free hand in "remaking" Japan. These episodes also illustrate that relations with even the closest of allies did not preclude an arrogance on the part of the United States about its preponderant role in defeating Japan, an assumption that the lions' share of the victors' spoils should automatically ensue from that role, and a view of other nations with postwar pretensions in the region as potential security "obstacles" to the postwar American order.

In spite of the evidence of Allied contentions, however, the Soviet Union was perceived to be the most formidable barrier to America's position in the Pacific and primary documents reveal how intertwined Cold War tensions became with American policy in the Pacific region. In fact, it can be said that the Pacific Islands became a microcosm of Cold War tensions between 1945 and 1947. Moreover, the disputes between the US and the USSR

³⁸ See memorandum by the Chairman of SWNCC to the Secretary of State, February 26, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:94; "International Trusteeships," February 26, 1945, SWNCC 27/1, Papers of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, *SWNCC Policy Files, 1944-1947* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1977); and Norris to the JCS, February 22, 1947, 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

offer a context in which to explore American attitudes toward postwar collective security, the UN as an international security organization, and the Soviet Union as a Pacific Basin great power.

The UN and Postwar American Security in the Pacific

Larry Gerber argues that Bernard Baruch's 1946 plan for the international control of atomic energy was an early example of American subversion of UN principles. In fact, as Inis Claude has asserted, the negotiations over trusteeships in 1946 provide historians with an earlier example of American national security goals clashing with postwar collective security ideals.³⁹ As the previous chapters demonstrated, American military planners sought US sovereignty over various areas of the Pacific and a very comprehensive base system in the region, hoping this security system would allow the US to deny the area to foreign powers. Because of pressure from the Roosevelt Administration, the Truman Administration, and the State and Interior Departments, the military services eventually and begrudgingly accepted the idea of strategic trusteeship over the islands taken from Japan, rather than US annexation.⁴⁰

How sincere the Roosevelt Administration was in its calls for international and then strategic trusteeship is a difficult question to answer. William Roger Louis asserts with considerable evidence that Undersecretary of the Interior Abe Fortas' first objective in introducing the idea of a strategic trusteeship was to find an acceptable middle ground between the mili-

³⁹ See Gerber, "The Baruch Plan and the Origins of the Cold War," 69-95; and Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 349-377.

⁴⁰ For examples of this pressure on the military services from civilian planners, see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 68-87, 159-197, 259-273, 366-377, 475-496, and 512-573; and Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 252-269, 371-375, 489-494, and 654-671. See also, Foltos, "New Pacific Barrier," 317-342

tary's demands for annexation and US wartime rhetoric against territorial aggrandizement. The bottom line, however, was still ensuring strategic security for the US in the region, though Fortas linked the issue to "international" security as a way to make US national security goals more "palatable" to American and global public opinion. In spite of these rather Machiavellian tactics on Fortas' part, Louis is convinced that officials like Roosevelt, Ickes, and Fortas nevertheless saw themselves as impartial and enlightened guardians of the Pacific Islanders' best interests.⁴¹

Indeed, it would be difficult not to classify Roosevelt, Ickes, and Fortas as the "liberals" or "progressives" in this situation, especially considering the stance which Stimson, Forrestal, and the JCS took on annexing the Pacific Islands taken from Japan. Still, this author finds strategic trusteeship to be a rather convenient political facade and an example of the US' unwillingness and inability to admit that it was indulging in a type of security imperialism for its own selfish national interests. To be sure, the US was not conducting itself very differently than other great powers in similar circumstances. It is significant, however, that US officials never openly discussed strategic trusteeship as a great power security device, but instead linked it to the maintenance of postwar international peace, the end of colonialism, and the "development" of the islanders.

In the end, the results were not very different from traditional colonialism. Though the UN would have the right to inspect the islands once a year and the US was required to pay lip service to clauses calling for the eventual independence of the islands, strategic trusteeship was just one step short of annexation and it defied the ideas of postwar multilateral co-

⁴¹ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 480-485.

operation and collective security which had been so clearly enunciated by the US during the war.⁴² With Micronesia, the Ryukyus, Japan, the Philippines, the Bonins, the Volcanoes, and Marcus Island under firm US control or influence and with the United States Navy and the Army Air Force deployed in strength in the region, the Pacific Basin truly became an American lake and the United States, for all intents and purposes, achieved a unilateral solution to its postwar security anxieties *vis-à-vis* East Asia.⁴³

Trusteeship for the Pacific, however, was still suspect to military officials who saw it as a repetition of the Washington Treaty System by which Japan allegedly used its League of Nations mandates to fortify Micronesia and prepare for an attack on the United States. As the following pages will suggest, many American officials charged with planning strategic policy for the region never fully accepted the trusteeship concept and never vested great confidence in the UN as a guarantor of American postwar security or international peace.⁴⁴

Neither was this lack of confidence in UN processes and the trusteeship concept limited to military officials and officers. In April 1945, two senior members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Republican Arthur Vandenburg of Michigan and Democrat Tom Connolly of Texas, had to be very specifically reassured by Vice Admiral Russell Willson of the JSSC

⁴² See Nufer, *Micronesia Under American Rule*, 26-35.

⁴³ See Friedman, "Beast in Paradise, 173-195.

⁴⁴ For the most recent of accounts dealing with Japan's alleged violations of the League of Nations Mandate Agreement, see Peattie, *Nanyo*, 230-256. Perry Smith asserts that AAF planning officers were ambivalent toward the entire idea of a postwar UN-led collective security effort. They planned for an American air force based on both the possibility of successful security cooperation among the "Big Four" and a failure of the UN because of divergent postwar interests between the Allies. However, even their most optimistic ideas about the UN consistently saw it as a mere agency to implement American foreign policy and security goals in the postwar world. The idea that the UN could ever acquire power and influence on its own or even be used by other nations against American interests apparently never occurred to these officers. See Smith, *The Air Plans For Peace, 1943-1945*, 39-53 and 73-74.

that the US would not offer the Japanese Mandates for trusteeship until complete arrangements for administering power authority over the respective trusteeships had been made with the Allied Powers and the UN.⁴⁵

Willson assured Vandenburg and Connally that the US would have full veto powers in the Security Council and that nothing he foresaw in the future would prevent the US from freely negotiating treaties, acquiring strategic territory, or providing for firm American security in the Pacific after the war.⁴⁶

Even the Interior Department under Harold Ickes, whose favorable views of international trusteeship were considered subversive by many military leaders, was in favor of international trusteeship for the islands taken from Japan only as a means by which to consolidate American control over the region. In the fall of 1945, Ickes called repeatedly for Micronesia and the other islands taken from Japan to be placed under Interior Department civil administration. Ickes, however, foresaw the need for limited "military reservations" under War and Navy Department control in peacetime and he acknowledged the requirement for entire island chains to come under military control in time of war or national emergency. Ickes couched his terms in humanitarian language, but he and other Interior Department officials also wielded very persuasive strategic arguments to assert their case.

Just a few days after the war ended, for example, Ickes wrote Truman to argue for civil administration in the islands in order to keep "... with the traditions of the American people ...", to assist in guaranteeing a permanent peace, and to forestall charges by foreign powers that the US was

⁴⁵ For this strange, but apparently early confidence on the part of the JSSC, see Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the United States Delegation (A) held at San Francisco, April 26, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:448-449.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

governing indigenous populations in the Pacific as part of a "militaristic empire." Ickes especially wanted the US to be able to go the peace table demonstrating its "... democratic, non-imperialistic attitude ... toward the island peoples."⁴⁷ Later in September 1945, Abe Fortas, as Acting Secretary of the Interior, elaborated to Truman on the problem of permanent military rule in the Pacific. Fortas asserted that the US would come under a significant amount of international criticism for violating the spirit of the UN Charter if it was to maintain military rule over civilians, especially after the other trusteeships reverted to civil administration. Fortas specifically put the matter in terms of preserving American wartime prestige and the political capital it had invested in the UN as world attention focused on the American administration of the Pacific Islands.⁴⁸

Truman responded to the Interior Department by establishing an interdepartmental committee consisting of the Secretaries of State, War, Navy, and the Interior to discuss the issues of strategic trusteeship versus annexation and the issue of civil versus military government. Apparently, the committee never met, but representatives of the four secretaries did.⁴⁹ Still, the Pacific Islands were not high on Truman's priority list in the fall of 1945 or even much of 1946. Faced with deteriorating relations with the Soviet Union, crises in Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia, and the domestic problems of demobilization, Truman probably had little time to spare for island administration issues.

⁴⁷ See Ickes to Truman, September 12, 1945; and December 29, 1945; both found in file OF 85-L, box 572, HSTL.

⁴⁸ See Fortas to Truman, *ibid.*

⁴⁹ See Secretary of the Interior Julius Krug to Secretary of State George Marshall, May 3, 1947, *ibid.*

This desire to shelve the problem is evidenced by Truman's endorsement of Byrnes' January 1946 views on establishing a definite status for the islands. Contrary to Forrestal's assertion that Byrnes was prepared to "hand" the islands over the UN in early 1946 before a peace treaty had been signed with Japan, Byrnes, in fact, reminded Truman that the Potsdam Agreement stated that enemy territory was not to be disposed of until peace treaties with the defeated powers were signed. Since a Japanese peace treaty had not been signed by the beginning of 1946, Byrnes argued that the islands taken from Japan should remain under military rule until a peace conference was convened, a treaty signed, and territorial dispositions determined. Byrnes took his cue from the divided occupation of Germany, where four Allied zones had been created to administer the defeated nation. Byrnes apparently did not want to see any similar kind of "divided authority" occur in Japan or the Pacific territories. Truman concurred four days later, stating that nothing could be done for some time but that plans should be made.⁵⁰ Not much was done, however, to clarify US policy on international trusteeship and internal disunity over the "wait and see" policy continued until the fall of 1946.

The lack of faith in a UN-led collective security system was again expressed in April 1946 when the JCS emphatically communicated to SWNCC that a comprehensive global base system, representing a blanketing of the Pacific with American forces, was "... an essential requirement for United States security in the event of a failure of the United Nations to preserve world peace ..."⁵¹ Interestingly enough, the JSSC in 1946 also belied its

⁵⁰ See Byrnes to Truman, January 5, 1946; and Truman to Byrnes, January 9, 1946, *ibid*; see also Forrestal to Truman, *Forrestal Diaries*, January 21, 1946.

⁵¹ See the JCS to SWNCC, April 11, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:1173.

April 1945 facade of confidence in the UN and strategic trusteeship to Senators Vandenburg and Connally by calling into question UN procedures and processes.

For example, in June 1946, the JSSC concurred with the Joint Planning Staff (JSP) and the Joint Post-War Committee (JPWC) that the UN Charter allowed the US exclusive control over certain strategic areas and that the veto power in the Security Council might guarantee the US this exclusive control. The JSSC, however, was concerned that the veto power of the other Security Council members might prevent the US from establishing control over these strategic areas in the first place or that veto powers for Security Council members might be curtailed in the future.⁵² Accordingly, the JSSC wanted to retain sovereign control over Micronesia and saw the move as a *quid pro quo* with the Soviet Union's retention of unilateral control over the Kurile Islands. The committee asserted that backing away from the altruistic stance of trusteeship might harm the UN process but that the precedent had already been set by the Soviet refusal to offer the Kuriles in any form of trusteeship.⁵³ Of course, what the JSSC did not mention is that the Soviets annexed the Kuriles by the terms of the Yalta Agreement, a document which did not stipulate trusteeship for the area. The US could not claim the same kind of diplomatic guarantee for Micronesia, but the JSSC apparently saw a very similar circumstance.

Later, in September 1946, Admiral John Towers, CINCPAC-CINCPAA, and Rear Admiral Charles Pownall, Commander, Naval Forces Marianas and

⁵² See "Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee" to the JCS, part of "Trusteeships For Japanese Mandated Islands," JCS 570/48, January 17, 1946, file 12-9-42 sec. 28, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

⁵³ Ibid. For the resistance by less powerful nations to the idea of great power prerogatives in the UN Security Council, see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 461-573; and Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 357-377.

Tower's Deputy Military Governor on Guam, suggested to Truman and Forrestal that bases in the Pacific be limited to the Guam-Saipan-Tinian complex, the Philippines, Alaska, and Hawaii because of funding limitations on base development. Truman and Forrestal concurred but Truman specifically mentioned the US retaining Okinawa and Micronesia on a sovereign basis "... until the United Nations was far enough along to give us [the United States] confidence in a trusteeship system ..." ⁵⁴ This mistrust of the UN at the highest levels of policymaking became more explicit in October 1946, by which time Byrnes sought to offer the islands to the UN for trusteeship even though a peace treaty had not been signed between the Allied powers and Japan. Byrnes was probably convinced by this time that there would be no early peace treaty between the US, the Soviet Union, and Japan. Accordingly, he may have wanted a US-led solution in the UN to the disposition of Japan's territories so as to allow for sanctioned US control over the Pacific Islands. Forrestal and Admiral Nimitz, however, were alarmed at Byrnes' idea and expressed a desire for the US to retain sovereignty over Micronesia until the terms of trusteeship were made more concrete. They were convinced that offering the islands too soon under any conditions would allow them to be "surrendered piecemeal" to the UN or to some foreign power by "... those responsible for the drafting."⁵⁵

Moreover, subordinate commanders in the Pacific continued to discuss American military dispositions and base construction in the region in a more unilateral context than even President Truman or the State Department were probably willing to entertain. In December 1946, by which time the US

⁵⁴ See Forrestal, Towers, and Pownall, "The President-Bases," *Forrestal Diaries*, September 30, 1946; see also Reynolds, *Admiral John H. Towers*, 521-522.

⁵⁵ See "Trusteeship," *Forrestal Diaries*, October 22, 1946.

had presented a plan for trusteeship over the islands to the UN Security Council, General Whitehead was continuing to inform his subordinate commanders that the former Japanese Mandates were to come under the "exclusive and permanent" control of the US as part of an American "overall base plan" for the postwar Pacific. Whitehead did not mention UN trusteeship, indicating disagreement or at least a communication gap with his superiors over the means by which he and his fellow officers were to defend and administer the new Pacific empire.⁵⁶

In the same month, John Foster Dulles, head of the US Delegation responsible for negotiating the trusteeships, conferred with Forrestal about the idea of demilitarizing the entire Pacific including Japan, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, Micronesia, and the Kurile-Sakhalin area. Dulles could have been referring to an idea enunciated by President Roosevelt in the mid-1930s. At that time, FDR attempted to obtain British cooperation in "neutralizing" the Pacific region, "quarantining" Japan with a united Anglo-American front based on naval power, and deterring Japanese aggression. Forrestal seemed to approve of the idea as long as it was not "... like the old days ... when it is all one-sided. We don't fortify the Philippines and they [Japan] did fortify the Mandates ..."⁵⁷ Clearly, these officials and offi-

⁵⁶ See Whitehead to the commanding generals of the 5th, 7th, 13th, and 20th Air Forces, the Pacific Air Service Command, the First Air Division, and the Japan, Hawaii, Philippines, and Guam Army Materiel Areas, subj: Notes on Air Defense Conference, December 12, 1946, 720.151-2, AFSHRC.

⁵⁷ See transcript of telephone conversation between Forrestal and Dulles, December 16, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA. According to Harold Ickes, prewar cooperation was also envisioned with France and Roosevelt thought the US Navy could blockade Japan from the Aleutians, Hawaii, Howland, Wake, and Guam while the Royal Navy took over the blockading line from Singapore. In addition, Ickes recorded that Japan had its own ideas about demilitarizing the Pacific in late 1940, plans which included the US agreeing not to fortify Guam or American Samoa and agreeing to demilitarize Hawaii! See December 18, 1937, *The Secret Diaries of Harold L. Ickes: Volume 2, The Inside Struggle, 1936-1939* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954); and October 7, 1940, *Volume 3: The Lowering Clouds, 1939-1941*, *ibid.* See also Richard Harrison,

cers were all making allusions to the allegedly "foolish diplomacy" of 1919 and 1922 when policymakers had agreed to Japanese administration over Micronesia and the non-fortification of Guam and the Philippines. To many military and civilian officials charged with strategic responsibilities in the 1940s, the UN was nothing but a more recent manifestation of the League of Nations and they believed that America's position in the Pacific could be undermined in a way reminiscent of the interwar period.

Maintaining a public facade about the efficacy of international cooperation, collective security, and trusteeship apparently continued to be important, however, even as officials privately asserted that the US should annex the Pacific Island groups and ward off all international attempts at administering the area. One example of this public-private disparity occurred in March 1947 when Secretary Forrestal responded to a letter from a distraught Virginia college history instructor.

Ms. Lysabeth Muney of Sweet Briar College was concerned that the 1946 atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands were being used to justify a large postwar navy, to make a mockery of the UN, and to damage the concept of collective security.⁵⁸ Forrestal assured the concerned historian that he was fully supportive of collective security and united action as the basis for peace and that he saw the United States Navy as an integral part of an international police force "enforcing the peace". Forrestal specifically claimed that his "... faith, in other words, is in the United Nations as the agency for universal peace dynamically perpetuated."⁵⁹ While Forrestal did not mention the trusteeship system in the letter, one

"A Neutralization Plan for the Pacific: Roosevelt and Anglo-American Cooperation, 1934-1937," *Pacific Historical Review* 57 (February 1988): 47-72.

⁵⁸ See letter from Muney to Forrestal, March 1, 1947, file 39-1-37, box 72, RG 80, NA.

⁵⁹ See letter from Forrestal to Muney, March 19, 1947, *ibid.*

would presume that his allegedly strong support for the UN would also have included support for the concept of international trusteeship.

In fact, Forrestal and many other policymakers and planners privately expressed serious reservations about the UN and believed that trusteeship was an inadequate way to provide for postwar American security in the Pacific or American security anywhere else in the world. Many in the military favored the outright annexation of Micronesia and Forrestal's thinking was consistent along these lines. Although he claimed as early as the spring of 1945 that he opposed the idea of annexation, his continued support of American sovereignty over Micronesia in 1946 because of a lack of confidence in the UN belied his claims of 1945 and those of the winter of 1947.⁶⁰

By 1947, Forrestal was publicly willing to accept strategic trusteeship over Micronesia, but he never thought of the arrangement in the context of international cooperation, collective security, or UN administration. Throughout the entire period of 1945-1947, he privately spoke of exclusive US control, veto power for the US on the UN Security and Trusteeship Councils, and complete American military, political, and economic rights over the area.⁶¹ Though Forrestal was eventually willing to endure the UN facade of strategic trusteeship, what he actually had in mind and what actually resulted in 1947 was a subtle subversion of UN principles in favor of American strategic security interests. Here Forrestal's thinking was again con-

⁶⁰ For Forrestal's alleged opposition to American annexation, see Secretary of State Edward Stettinius to the President, April 9, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:211-213; Memorandum by the Secretary of State, April 14, 1945, *ibid.*, 290; and Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Undersecretary of State, April 18, 1945, *ibid.*, 350. For an account from primary sources of Forrestal's actual opposition to trusteeship and his efforts to see the US annex the islands taken from Japan, see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 482-483.

⁶¹ See proposed speech by Forrestal, "The United States' Role in the Trusteeship System," February 22, 1947, file 86-5-45, box 134, RG 80, NA; see also attached memo for Forrestal from Vice Admiral Forrest Sherman, DCNO for Operations, February 25, 1947, *ibid.*

sistent with that of many officials who saw unilateral American security as a more important objective during the 1940s than proving the efficacy of UN concepts.

"States Directly Concerned"

This unilateralism was manifested in early efforts to limit the number of nations directly involved in trusteeship negotiations. In March 1945, Secretary Stimson argued that if the United States had to offer the islands in the context of international trusteeships, the negotiating powers should be limited to Security Council members because "... the smaller numbers of the Security Council would make negotiations much less complicated."⁶²

This attempt to make the process "less complicated" by limiting the number of nations involved focused on the phrase "states directly concerned." The term literally meant those nations which had direct concrete or perceived interests in the various trusteeships which were being organized throughout the world between 1945 and 1947. The meaning of the term, however, became the basis for a controversy between the United States and the Soviet Union as the Soviets attempted to acquire a voice in almost all trusteeship matters and the United States attempted to severely curtail the number of states directly involved in regional trusteeship negotiations.

This attitude surfaced before the UN was even established at San Francisco in April 1945. Stimson and Forrestal wrote Roosevelt just before he died to state their support for the trusteeships concept, but also to convey their desire to delay trusteeship proceedings until the end of the war. Both men claimed that negotiations in the UN might harm Allied cooperation

⁶² For Stimson's statement, see *The Forrestal Diaries*, March 30, 1945; see also Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 482-496.

against Germany and Japan during the final stages of the war because of the divergent postwar aims of the various nations.⁶³ While strained relations between the western Allies and the Soviet Union over events in post-1944 eastern Europe may have vindicated their viewpoints about the tenuous nature of wartime cooperation, neither official argued for delay in order to foster conditions more conducive to multilateral trusteeship negotiations. In fact, delay was suggested in order to give the US a chance to gain firm unilateral control over the Pacific and present the other nations with a *fait accompli*.

Primary documents reveal how interdependent the Pacific became with political issues in other areas of the world. Secretary Ickes, for instance, linked his wartime duties as US Petroleum Administrator with his efforts to have the Pacific Islands placed under UN trusteeship and Interior Department civil administration. Before and during the war, Ickes had been attempting to formulate a coherent US strategic oil policy that would guarantee the resources from the Middle East which were necessary for Allied victory, postwar European recovery, and American prosperity. Desiring some direct participation by the US government in the Middle East oil concessions, Ickes was constantly struggling against attempts by the British to exclude the US from the area. Writing Roosevelt just a few days before FDR died, Ickes linked Middle Eastern oil and the Pacific Islands by arguing against American unilateral annexations of the islands. He was particularly concerned that US claims of sovereignty over the Pacific Islands might provide an excuse for the British to claim the same status over their mandates

⁶³ See Stettinius to Roosevelt, April 9, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:212.

in the Middle East, annex the oil concessions, and exclude the US from access to strategic resources in the region.⁶⁴

Another example of regional linkage occurred in April 1946 when Forrestal told Byrnes that it would be unwise for the United States to label itself a "state directly concerned" in the negotiation of the four African trusteeships of the British Cameroons, Tanganyika, Togoland, and Ruanda-Urundi (now Cameroon, Tanzania, Togo, Rwanda, and Burundi, respectively). Claiming that the US had no strategic interests in those areas, Forrestal believed that US actions along these lines would defeat American efforts to have the number of states directly concerned kept to an absolute minimum when it came to the negotiations over the former Japanese Mandates.⁶⁵ Similarly, in May 1946, John Hickerson, the State Department's Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs, suggested to G.H. Middleton, First Secretary of the British Embassy, that if the British and French governments would not insist on being states directly concerned with the former Japanese Mandates then the US would likewise agree to abstain from being a state directly concerned with the British and French Mandates in Africa.⁶⁶

Again, however, the Soviet Union figured prominently as the adversarial power. A May 1946 SWNCC planning document suggests that American strategic plans for a reluctantly accepted trusteeship system in the post-

⁶⁴ See Ickes to Roosevelt, April 5, 1945, *FRUS* 1945, 1:198-199; and Section 8 from the Diary of Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, March 18, 1945-April 7, 1945, as found in *FRUS* 1945, 1:140-141. For Ickes' attempts to formulate US oil policy before and during the war, see Miller, *Search For Security*, 21-149; and David S. Painter, *Oil and the American Century: The Political Economy of US Foreign Oil Policy, 1941-1954* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 11-95.

⁶⁵ See Forrestal to Byrnes, April 4, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:565-566; and Staff Committee Document SC-192, "Policy and Procedures Concerning the Negotiation of Trusteeship Agreements," April 11, 1946, *ibid.*, 567-568.

⁶⁶ See Memorandum of Conversation by Hickerson, May 24, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:589. See also Hickerson to Byrnes, February 23, 1946, *ibid.*, 562.

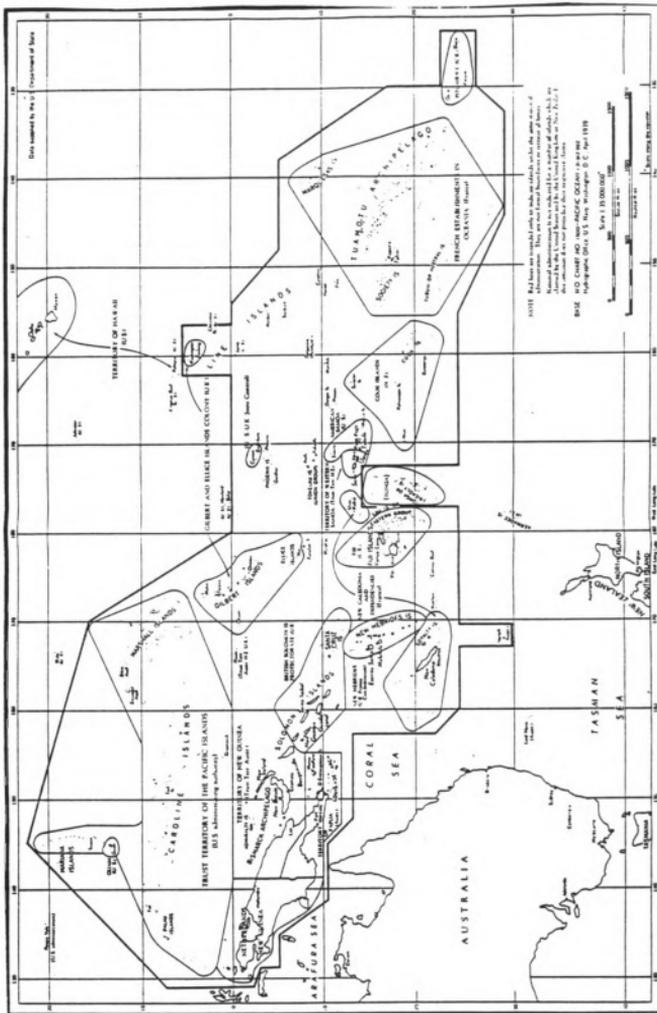


Figure 35. The South Pacific (Courtesy of the National Archives II, College Park, Maryland)

war Pacific assumed some cooperation between the western Allies in administering the area, but the authors completely excluded the Soviet Union from the administration of Pacific territory.⁶⁷ For example, in planning for trusteeships over Micronesia, the Ryukyus, the Bonins, the Australian Mandate (Northeastern New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago, the Admiralty Islands, Bougainville, and Buka), the New Zealand Mandate (Western Samoa), and the British Mandate (Nauru Island), SWNCC was willing to consider a number of nations as "states directly concerned," including China, the Philippines, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. However, the document continually strove to keep the number of states concerned as limited as possible and the Soviet Union was the obvious missing great power in the list of nations since it did not appear as a state directly concerned in any of the Pacific trusteeships.⁶⁸ (See Figure 35)

In fact, detailed instructions about limiting the number of states directly involved were delivered the next month from Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson to Benjamin Gerig, Chief of the Division of Dependent Area Affairs. Gerig was told that in any negotiations with other Allied powers over trusteeships, especially the British, the French, and the Belgians, the US desired to keep the number of states directly concerned to an absolute minimum.⁶⁹ In addition, Gerig was told that "geographic propinquity" should have nothing to do with this criterion, that the US merely wanted to be "consulted" about the other trusteeships, and that the US desired to

⁶⁷ See Annex to Appendix "A", part of "Strategic Areas and Trusteeships in the Pacific," May 24, 1946, JCS 1619/1, SWNCC 59, SWNCC Papers, RG 353, NA.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ See Acheson to Gerig, June 7, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:596-598.

stress "informal consultations" about trusteeships matters rather than official deliberations in the Security Council or General Assembly.⁷⁰

An example of Soviet-American friction over these matters occurred in June 1946 when Dulles asserted to Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko that the "states directly concerned" in the Micronesian trusteeship were the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, since those three nations were the remaining victorious Allied and Associated Powers from the Treaty of Versailles! Gromyko countered that the USSR was directly concerned in all trusteeship matters and, in fact, in any political, economic, or geographic problem in the world. Dulles, however, argued that the State Department did not consider a nation directly concerned merely because of geographic propinquity. While he was not prepared at the time to pursue these "technical details" further, the objective of excluding the USSR from any possible voice in the Micronesian negotiations was apparent and it would reappear repeatedly throughout the negotiation process.⁷¹ This attempted limitation of the "states directly concerned" as the basis for the US position in the Pacific reached an extreme in August 1946 when Acheson instructed John Minter, the US *Charge`* in Australia, to inform the Australian government that the US desired to be the sole state directly concerned with the former Japanese Mandates after "consultation" with other "interested states."⁷²

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ See Dulles' rendition of the conversation with Gromyko in "Minutes of the Informal Meeting of the United States Group on Trusteeship," June 17, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:555.

⁷² See Acheson to Minter, August 29, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:617.

The Pacific Islands and Soviet-American Relations

The Soviet Union was the primary target of limiting the "states directly concerned." In spite of these efforts to exclude the USSR from Pacific Islands affairs, however, Pacific Island trusteeships and Soviet-American relations became intertwined in a number of areas. As early as November 1944, the US position on postwar Micronesia became indirectly involved with the Soviet Union's interests in Europe. At that time, Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov informed the Norwegian government-in-exile's foreign minister that the USSR wanted an outright claim to Bear Island and a Soviet-Norwegian condominium over Spitsbergen Archipelago in order to guarantee postwar Soviet lines of communication north of Norway. When questioned about this request by the Norwegian minister, Molotov asserted there should be no problem with the request since the United States was doing the same sort of thing with the former Japanese Mandates in the Pacific.⁷³

Interestingly, some American planners during the war saw similar opportunities in linking American control over Micronesia with Soviet spheres of influence in eastern Europe. In particular, Army Lieutenant General Stanley Embick, wartime chairman of the JSSC, pointed out in 1944 the possibility of a *quid pro quo* between the United States and the Soviet Union over Micronesia and eastern Europe, respectively. The JSSC even urged American officials to agree to cross-channel operations into France and Soviet postwar control of eastern Europe in return for Soviet entry into the

⁷³ See conversation between Molotov and the Norwegian Foreign Minister in "Paraphrase of Top Secret Telegram No. 204," July 5, 1945, American Ambassador, Oslo, to the Secretary of State, as found in Appendix "A" of SWNCC 159/2, part of SWNCC 159, "Soviet Demands on Norway's Jan Mayen Island, Bear Island, and Spitzbergen Archipelago, July 1945-Feb. 1947, SWNCC Papers, *SWNCC Policy Files, 1944-1947*, 1977.

war against Japan and postwar American hegemony in the Pacific Basin.⁷⁴ It would appear, however, that Embick and the JSSC were an anomaly at this time. Most planners and policymakers would not have wanted US actions in the Pacific to be approximated to those of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe given the possibly disastrous consequences for domestic political opinion from such a linkage.

John Dower believes the Soviet Union, rather than the United States, expended considerable energy attempting to draw a parallel between Soviet control in eastern Europe and American control in Japan and the Pacific. Dower offers as evidence Soviet efforts to establish an Allied control commission in Japan which would have safeguarded American control over that country in return for American acquiescence to Soviet control of the commissions in eastern Europe.⁷⁵ Furthermore, Dower asserts that Byrnes and Molotov came to an understanding in December 1945 over Micronesia and the Kurile-Sakhalin area which complemented the Yalta Agreement made by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin the previous February. Dower thinks the United States and the Soviet Union were able to come to an agreement because of their indulgence in "security imperialism," a type of imperialism undertaken primarily for reasons of military security, not economic exploitation, which allowed the superpowers to realize their own geostrategic goals while continuing to criticize the European colonial powers for failing

⁷⁴ For the JSSC analysis, see "Fundamental Military Factors in Relation to Discussions Concerning Territorial Trusteeships and Settlement," JCS 973 and 973/1, July 28, 1944 and August 4, 1944, file 7-27-44, CCS 092, RG 218, NA, as found in Mark A. Stoler, "From Continentalism to Globalism: General Stanley D. Embick, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, and the Military View of American National Policy during the Second World War," *Diplomatic History* 6 (Summer 1982): 313.

⁷⁵ See Dower, "Occupied Japan," 148-164.

to grant independence to their subject areas.⁷⁶ The label of security imperialism may be apt, but there is evidence which contradicts Dower's claims about Soviet efforts at a *quid pro quo* or an understanding between Byrnes and Molotov as early as December 1945. Contradicting Dower's assertions, primary sources illustrate that US-Soviet relations clashed on several occasions when it came to the future of the Pacific Basin.

Marc Gallicchio has also done much of the groundbreaking work concerning Soviet-American relations in northeast Asia, especially the controversy over the Kurile-Sakhalin area. (See Figure 36) But Gallicchio's work does not focus on Micronesia and does not explore the possibilities that some sort of *quid pro quo* may have existed between the United States and the Soviet Union over the two areas.⁷⁷ The controversy over the control of the Kurile-Sakhalin area emphasizes the importance of the Pacific to the United States and suggests a new light in which to view American perceptions of Micronesia. This section will attempt to carry on Dower's and Gallicchio's work and analyze the way in which the two areas became interdependent in the minds of American strategic planners in the late 1940s.

By 1946, the JSSC, which had implied during the war that an opportunity for a *quid pro quo* existed between the United States and the Soviet Union over Micronesia and eastern Europe, claimed that sentiment in the country was no longer conducive to altruistic ideas about international trusteeship in the islands and that opinion was moving toward unilateral annexation. The JSSC left no doubts as to why this change had occurred when it stated that an example of unilateral annexation already existed in the So-

⁷⁶ Ibid. For the idea of "security imperialism," see Eleanor Lattimore, "Pacific Ocean or American Lake?" *Far Eastern Survey* 14 (November 7, 1945): 313-316.

⁷⁷ See Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 3, 5, 9, 10, 71, 78, 80-82, and 86-88; see also Gallicchio, "The Kuriles Controversy," 69-101.

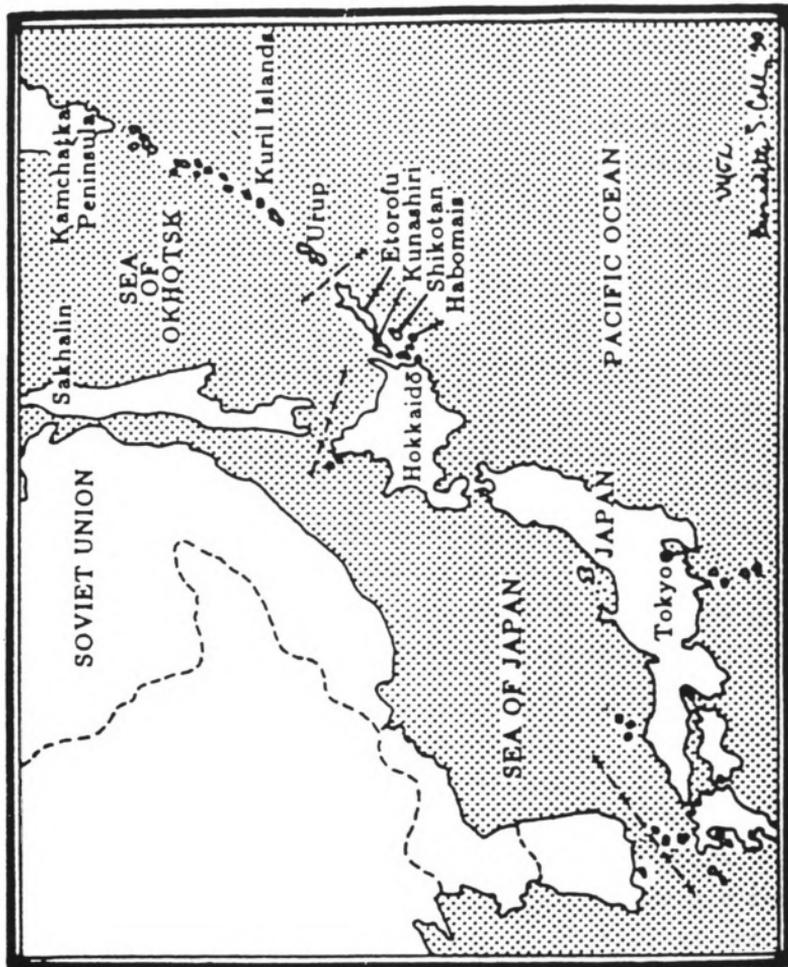


Figure 36. The Japanese Home Islands And The Kuriles (Courtesy of Marc S. Gallicchio)

viet acquisition of the Kurile Islands.⁷⁸ The JCS, long opposed to a trusteeship in Micronesia, also used Soviet control over the Kuriles to argue against offering Micronesia as an international trusteeship. They asserted that American moral leadership in the United Nations would suffer if the United States cynically offered the islands for a trusteeship in which virtual American control was assured anyway. The Joint Chiefs claimed that if the United States simply took control on the grounds that the islands were of vital strategic importance, much as the Soviet Union had done in the Kuriles, then American prestige in the UN would not be damaged.⁷⁹

In reality, the Joint Chiefs were hardly concerned with America's position *vis-à-vis* the United Nations, as is apparent from their attacks on the trusteeship concept and the UN's alleged inability to protect American interests in the Pacific. They were interested in ensuring long-term American security in the Pacific and they were willing to violate previous agreements and rhetoric about internationalism to achieve this goal. Nevertheless, their argument indicates the frustration they must have felt at having to witness the United States being subjected to international controls in Micronesia while the Soviet Union received a free hand in the Kurile-Sakhalin area.

More importantly, these officers saw Micronesia in the context of rising tensions with the Soviet Union. They perceived strategic threats from the Soviet submarine fleet and land-based air force in the Far East, threats facilitated by unilateral Soviet control of the Kurile-Sakhalin area. In addition, they warned that the Soviet Union might be able to complement

⁷⁸ See "Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee," JCS 570/48, January 17, 1946, file 12-9-42 sec. 28, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

⁷⁹ See Annex to Appendix "A", "Strategic Areas and Trusteeships in the Pacific," May 24, 1946, JCS 1619/1, SWNCC 59, SWNCC Papers, RG 353, NA.

these assets by utilizing strategic facilities in northern China and southern Korea. To American military officers, the best way to contain the Soviet threat in East Asia was to take direct control of Micronesia, use the islands as part of a deterrence system in time of peace, and develop the islands as a strategic basing system for deep strikes into Soviet territory in the event of war.

As 1946 wore on, Soviet unilateral control of the Kurile-Sakhalin area and protests over American fortification rights in Micronesia created an even more determined call in the United States for the direct annexation of Micronesia. Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, for instance, said " . . . It would be 'absurd' to talk about placing Pacific bases under trusteeship when the Soviet Union was gaining complete control of the Kuriles."⁸⁰ In spite of these American insinuations of bad faith, the Soviets successfully deflected all efforts by the United States to obtain occupation or base rights in the Kurile-Sakhalin area, prevented the Kuriles from being established as a UN trusteeship, and continued to "intrude" into Micronesian affairs.

Soviet actions seemed particularly threatening when the USSR tried to establish itself as a "state directly concerned" with the negotiations over the strategic trust territory of Micronesia and attempted to "interfere" in the clauses granting the United States unilateral military fortification rights in the Pacific Islands.⁸¹ Not only were these actions completely contrary to American wishes but to American officials they seemed particularly threatening. The United States complained that too many restrictions

⁸⁰ For Byrd's statement, see "The Report of the Special Senate (Mead) Committee Investigating the National Defense Program," August 31, 1946, quoted by Captain Lorenzo Sabin, January 22, 1946, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 16; see also Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, 59.

⁸¹ See Memorandum by Dulles, November 30, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:690-692.

were being placed on its administration in the Pacific, that the Soviets had a free hand in the Kuriles, and that the United States should have similar rights for itself in Micronesia.⁸² A December 1946 conversation between Byrnes and Molotov indicates the intensity of the stimulus-response mentality which poisoned Soviet-American relations over the two areas. The conversation should also dispel any notion that efforts at accommodation were taking place at this time.

Molotov told Byrnes that the Soviet Union had to be consulted about any US plans to fortify the Pacific Islands. Byrnes responded that he wanted to know what the Soviets proposed to do with the Kuriles and Sakhalin. Molotov said these islands were not open to discussion because they were part of a former agreement between Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta. Byrnes retorted that he regarded nothing as being subjected to previous agreements. Each time Molotov brought up the subject of fortifications in Micronesia, Byrnes inquired into Soviet intentions in the Kuriles and Sakhalin.⁸³ Byrnes later recounted this conversation to Forrestal and said that he was in no great hurry to see a trusteeship agreement consummated. His words imply that he was content to let the Soviet Union and the UN deal with a unilateral American consolidation in Micronesia. Subsequent to Byrnes' assertion, Forrestal expressed the view that "... any negotiations with Russia had to be predicated upon a thorough awareness of the unbending determination of the Russians to accomplish world Communization."⁸⁴

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ For the Byrnes-Molotov dialogue, see *The Forrestal Diaries*, December 16, 1946. See also Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 28-29. Byrnes' determination not to be "rushed" into any trusteeship agreement with the Soviet Union can also be found in *The Forrestal Diaries*, December 16, 1946.

⁸⁴ For Forrestal's linkage of the debate over the Kurile-Sakhalin area to alleged Soviet global pretensions, see *The Forrestal Diaries*, January 21, 1947.

Other geographic areas became similarly linked with the American position on Micronesia and negotiations suggest Soviet-American connections between the Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. For example, the Soviet Union proposed in May 1946 that it be given a unilateral trusteeship over Tripolitania (now Libya), one of the conquered territories taken from Italy at the end of the war. The JCS believed that, at most, the Soviets might be granted partial participation, but not sole administration, and so they might use this rebuff to oppose sole American trusteeship over the Japanese Mandates. Given this probability, the JCS argued that the US would be justified in annexing Micronesia in order to guarantee its Pacific position and that the US should use the precedent set by the USSR in refusing to offer the Kuriles for trusteeship as a means of defending itself against any international criticism.⁸⁵

Later, the Soviet position was modified during a conversation between Dulles and Gromyko. Gromyko offered that the Soviet Union be considered a "state directly concerned" over the disposition of the former Italian colonies and Japan's Pacific territories in return for relinquishing similar status over British, French, and Belgian mandates in Africa. In addition, Gromyko intimated that the USSR would be willing to relinquish this status over the mandates in New Guinea, but that they were very concerned with unilateral American fortification rights in Micronesia. Dulles linked unilateral Soviet fortification rights in the Kuriles to a similar position for the US in Micronesia but apparently no agreement was reached on this impasse.⁸⁶ The incident, however, represents how central trusteeship matters

⁸⁵ Ibid. See also Edward J. Sheehy, *The United States Navy, the Mediterranean, and the Cold War, 1945-1947* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992), 21, 26, and 28.

⁸⁶ See Memorandum by Dulles, November 30, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:690-692.

could become to Soviet-American relations. To the Soviet leadership, the American position was probably an attempt to build bases in the USSR's "backyard" under a UN facade. To the Americans, the Soviet proposals were probably attempts to "interfere" in areas which the USSR had not helped to liberate from the Japanese and which were of obvious strategic value to the US.

Other issues became prevalent during the winter of 1946-1947. By the fall of 1946, Truman, though still uncertain about the efficacy of trusteeship, was unwilling to annex Micronesia and he wanted the trusteeship issues solved quickly.⁸⁷ Public opinion may have accounted for this change in attitude. Numerous letters and endorsements throughout 1946 from major American personalities and organizations, including the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Lions International, the National League of Women Voters, the Rotary International, and Supreme Court Justice Owen Roberts in his capacity as President of the United Nations Council of Philadelphia, are filed in Truman's papers, all calling for the US to place the Japanese islands under UN trusteeship. It is possible that the lack of a unified policy between the executive departments and the apparent discrepancy between wartime rhetoric and postwar reality was beginning to catch up with Truman in the fall of 1946.⁸⁸

Yet it is difficult to believe that American public opinion alone could have forced Truman to opt for strategic trusteeship. Lester Foltos argues that Truman had always had a predilection for a UN solution to American security anxieties in the Pacific and that he found the idea of unilateral terri-

⁸⁷ See "Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the United States Delegation," October 25, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:661.

⁸⁸ For an example of these letters and the lists of endorsements, see file OF 85-L, box 572, White House Official Files, HSTL.

torial annexation to be "repugnant". Unfortunately, the sources which Foltos cites are actually JCS documents which do not indicate Truman's opinions about the UN. Forrestal's and John Towers' September 1946 diary entries, if accurate, would tend to cast doubt on Foltos' conclusion about Truman's predilection for a UN solution. In addition, Truman's endorsement of Byrnes' "wait and see" policy concerning Japan and its territories and Truman's own answers to critics of military rule in the Pacific Islands suggest that he had little trouble "handling" public opinion which was critical of his policy.⁸⁹

There are three other possible explanations for Truman's behavior. First, it could be that Truman had so many higher priority items to deal with that the Pacific Islands took the proverbial back seat for most of 1946. After all, the islands were securely in American military hands and nothing would have changed that fact. The US could simply wait for developments which would help or hinder its position in the Pacific and East Asia and then decide on a course of action. Second, Truman may have shifted from his "wait and see" policy in the fall of 1946 because negotiations were stalemating in the UN due to the lack of a coherent American policy. While certainly concerned with American public opinion, he may have been more concerned with the US' emerging global image as an imperial power stalling the UN process. Finally, by the fall of 1946, Truman had waited to see what the postwar disposition over the European Axis territories would be. Instead of a rapid settlement over the disposition of Germany, the western Allies and

⁸⁹ See Truman's responses to critical inquiries by Anna Lord Strauss, President of the National League of Women Voters and W.L. White, editor and owner of the *Emporia Gazette* of Emporia, Kansas, both dated February 2, 1946 and both found in file OF 85-L, box 572, White House Official Files, HSTL. See also, Foltos, "The New Pacific Barrier," 328. Finally, see the Towers Diary, September 30, 1946, folder 1, box 2, Papers of John Towers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

the Soviet Union had taken to haggling over reparations, postwar boundaries, and other issues related to a divided Germany. It is not difficult to envision Truman suspecting Soviet plans for dividing postwar Japan and its Pacific territories in a similar manner. Fully suspicious of Soviet intentions by the fall of 1946, Truman probably decided that there would be no early multilateral peace treaty with Japan and that therefore the status of its territories would have to be established first.

This last possibility would explain why in October 1946 American planners suddenly created and published a "Draft Trusteeship Agreement" for the former Japanese Mandates and presented it to the Security Council for approval. The Soviets were quite disturbed by this unilateral action and communicated to Dulles their dissatisfaction with what they considered to be an American *fait accompli*. The Soviets also stated that they did not wish to see the US carry out similar actions in regard to other Pacific Islands being considered for trusteeship, such as Okinawa.⁹⁰

Still, similar attempts at unilateral or near unilateral solutions to trusteeship matters continued on the part of the US. Dulles assured the British government in the same month, for example, that the US would not conduct private agreements or even prior consultations with the Soviets concerning the former Japanese Mandates or the Italian colonies. Apparently, the British were concerned with what they considered Soviet and Chinese "interference" in the negotiations of the Italian trusteeships and Dulles was concerned with similar "intrusions" into the disposition of the Ryukyu Is-

⁹⁰ See the memorandum by Alger Hiss, Director of the State Department's Office of Special Political Affairs, to Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, December 6, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:701. See also Captain Robert Dennison, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (ACNO) for Politico-Military Affairs, to Forrestal, January 22, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA.

lands.⁹¹ The document suggests, therefore, that in spite of Soviet protests some American officials were prepared to submit a similar kind of draft trusteeship agreement for Okinawa without prior Security Council consultations.

By February 1947, the Soviets acquiesced to US demands for trusteeship over the Japanese Mandates and agreed that it would not have to await the signing of a comprehensive Japanese Peace Treaty. Inis Claude believes the USSR agreed to the unilateral American draft because the probable result of continued protest would have been American annexation anyway, a situation in which the Soviets would have had absolutely no voice.⁹² Though speculation, it may also be that Soviet knowledge of US support in the General Assembly or fear of "unilateral" trusteeship agreements over other areas considered more important may have given the Soviets the incentive to recognize the American a *fait accompli*.

Most likely, however, the Soviets ceased to resist the idea of a pre-peace treaty trusteeship agreement because they were able to suggest changes to the draft which, if rebuffed, could lead to renewed charges of American imperialism in the Pacific. The US draft had counted on the islands being considered "... an integral part of the United States." The Draft Trusteeship Agreement also stated the goal of assisting the islands in "self-government" and asserted that the US would be the sole administering power over Micronesia with authority to veto changes to the terms of the

⁹¹ See Memorandum of Conversation between Dulles, Gerig, and Ivor Thomas of the United Kingdom, December 7, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:703-704.

⁹² For the Soviet note to the United States government which agreed to the American conditions, see Soviet Ambassador to the United States N.V. Novikum to the Secretary of State, February 29, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA; see also Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares*, 373-374.

trusteeship.⁹³ The Soviets proposed deleting the phrase "as an integral part of the United States," sought to replace "self government" as the goal with that of "independence," and wanted to vest authority to change trusteeship agreements in the Security Council, not the administering authority.⁹⁴ Since the JCS and other military planning bodies were still voicing concerns about the trusteeship system because of the US' potential future loss of veto powers and since military planners never believed the islands would be independent anyway, the US was at first only willing to consider the first Soviet proposal on Micronesia's exclusion as an integral part of the US.⁹⁵

By the time the Micronesian trusteeship agreement was signed in April 1947 and established in July 1947, however, the US had agreed to eliminate the phrase "as an integral part of the United States" and the agreement was amended to include "independence" as an eventual political goal. In all likelihood, the US agreed to these changes because the nature of the strategic trusteeship agreement was basically synonymous with annexation anyway. However, American reservations about the concept of trusteeship and concerns about its future position in the UN never fully subsided, as evidenced by the fact that the US retained sole rights over changes to the trusteeship agreement until the 1990s.⁹⁶

⁹³ For the complete "Draft Trusteeship Agreement" and the accompanying articles, see Press Release # 142, February 25, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA.

⁹⁴ For the Soviet amendments, see "United States Position On Soviet Proposals For Amendment Of Draft Trusteeship Agreement," JCS 1619/20, March 3, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ See Nufer, *Micronesia Under American Rule*, passim; and John Dorrance, *The United States and the Pacific Islands* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 89-90.

"Territorial Aggrandizement"

American concerns over being labelled an imperial power by the Soviet Union provide a final fascinating window through which to view to Soviet-American relations in the Pacific region. The possibility of accusations was considered important by American planners, but official thoughts on the subject again illustrate the low priority international cooperation and UN processes had for many American officials. Primary documents show that the United States was fully determined to gain control over the western Pacific and exercise a regional hegemony over the Pacific Basin no matter the objectives of other nations in the region. While trusteeship was being used to deflect charges of imperialism from other nations, sources illustrate that acquiring control over the area was the primary objective. However, Soviet charges of imperialism were taken seriously by American officials because of the perceived damage which could have been done to the US' international prestige if its adherence to UN principles appeared Janus-faced in any way.

For example, US concerns over being branded an imperial power seemed confirmed in March 1946 when the *Soviet Journal of World Economics and World Politics* insinuated that whatever power controlled Micronesia would have aggressive intentions in the Pacific. Though the article admitted that Germany was not able to use the islands for aggressive purposes in the Pacific, linking the perceived villain of the First World War with control of the islands seemed to set the stage for accusing the US of imperial intent in its future control of Micronesia.⁹⁷ In addition, the article linked Japan's possession of Micronesia to the disruption of world peace. Though this was a

⁹⁷ For Forrestal's copy of the article and the naval *attache's* analysis of it, see "Russia-Pacific Islands," *Forrestal Diaries*, March 27, 1946.

point most American strategic planners would have agreed with, the article then intimated that future prospects for world peace would be endangered by American control of the strategic islands. The American naval *attache*' in Moscow reported that the article was probably the prelude to a propaganda offensive against the US in which the Soviets would demand military withdrawal by the US.⁹⁸ Likewise, in November 1946, the US Ambassador and *charge*' in Moscow both reported to Byrnes that Soviet charges by *Pravda* of imperialism in the Pacific were geared toward branding the US as a militant power planning for aggrandizement in East Asia, not merely making the Pacific into a defensive buffer zone.⁹⁹

Succinctly summing up American attitudes toward the whole issue, John Foster Dulles claimed in the same month that the really important matter at stake in the Pacific was not the establishment of successful trusteeships but the guarantee of American strategic security while avoiding the charges of "colonialism" by the Soviets. In fact, Dulles had stated that the US was fully determined to take control of Micronesia for strategic purposes with or without UN approval.¹⁰⁰ Apparently, the primary objective from the perspective of American policymakers and planners was not avoiding the practice of imperialism but avoiding the indictment by other nations.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ See the *Charge*' to the Secretary of State, November 12, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:679-680. See also the Ambassador to the Secretary of State, November 21, 1946, *ibid.*, 681-682.

¹⁰⁰ For Dulles' assessment of the political situation, see "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between Dulles and Hiss," November 1, 1946, *ibid.*, 669. For Dulles' statement about American unilateral control over Micronesia, see James H. Webb, Jr., *Micronesia and U.S. Pacific Strategy: A Blueprint for the 1980s* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), 79.

¹⁰¹ For intimations that the American people would not favor "lining up" with the "imperial powers" in the UN, see "Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the United States Delegation," November 21, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:684-685.

Conclusion

Between 1945 and 1947, the United States attempted and largely succeeded in establishing a unilateral sphere of strategic influence in the Pacific Islands. Though strategic trusteeship through the United Nations was a second best solution to many military planners and officials, the US nevertheless succeeded in obtaining international recognition of an essentially imperial solution to its anxieties about postwar strategic security.

The international relations which the Pacific Islands became part of between 1945 and 1947 illustrated that American concerns for postwar security focused primary on Japan and then the Soviet Union as the future "enemy" in the region. Just as significantly, however, American officials demonstrated that no other nation, not even the closest of wartime allies, was above suspicion when it came to the US having a free hand to reconstruct the Pacific for its own purposes.

Moreover, to most officials, American security meant not having to rely on the United Nations, great power cooperation, or collective security to uphold the postwar order. By opting for strategic trusteeship, US policymakers on numerous occasions violated the spirit, if not the letter, of wartime Wilsonian and Rooseveltian rhetoric about national self-determination, the efficacy of international law, and multilateral solutions to future security dilemmas. Of course, all nations involved in these processes exhibit a Janus-faced quality to their foreign policies. In addition, it is easy to explain American actions once they are set in the context of interwar and wartime events. But there was little, if any, recognition on the part of American officials that strategic trusteeship, because it came so close to unilateral annexation, was itself a subtle subversion of the American-created United Nations Organization.

Chapter Five

An "Open Door" in the Pacific?:

American Strategic Security and Economic Policy toward the Pacific Islands

The US' imperial consolidation of the postwar Pacific also included a significant economic dimension since economic control over the region was seen an inseparable strand of a broad, multidimensional national security policy. There are three aspects of this economic dimension to American policy which are important for historians who are attempting to decipher US actions in the area during the origins of the Cold War.

First, American perceptions of strategic security did not just entail military control over the Pacific Basin. Physical military control over the strategic islands was not divorced in policymakers' and planners' minds from economic penetration of the region and control over its resources, harbors, and airfields. Even military officers, strategic thinkers, and members of Congress who believed the islands held more exploitative potential than high level planners did recognized that policymakers sought to penetrate the regional economy first and foremost for reasons of physical control and security, not economic exploitation *per se*.

Second, American policymakers and planners sought to define the meaning of the word "imperialism" along very narrow economic lines in

order to repel charges by other nations that the US was indulging in "territorial aggrandizement." These individuals also sought to deny charges of imperialism by claiming that international motives of global postwar peace and prosperity, rather than national sources of strategic insecurity, spurred the US to take control of the islands.

Third, American economic policy in the postwar Pacific Islands was an exception to postwar American protestations of free trade and "Open Doorism." The Pacific Basin represented one area of the world in which the US did not attempt a free trade approach to postwar reconstruction.¹ While some State Department personnel argued for open areas of trade in parts of

¹ Many historians agree that the Truman Administration's foreign economic policies were oriented toward "globalizing" the Open Door. Historians disagree, however, on motive, intent, and result. Most New Left historians, such as William Appleman Williams, Lloyd Gardner, Gabriel Kolko, Walter LaFaber, and Thomas McCormick, see American economic policy in very conspiratorial terms and perceive policy as a response to capitalistic greed, the interests of the American business elite, and a desire for global economic hegemony. See Williams, *The Tragedy Of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972); Gardner, *The Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); Kolko, *The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968); LaFaber, *The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989); and McCormick, *America's Half-Century*. Moderate revisionists, such as Thomas Paterson, and corporatists, such as Michael Hogan, argue that while American foreign economic policy was intellectually grounded in liberal trade doctrine, this doctrine was more a means to the goal of a strategically secure and prosperous postwar America. See Paterson, *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); and Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Finally, post-revisionists, such as William Roger Louis, Emily Rosenberg, Robert Pollard, and Melvyn Leffler, assert that postwar American policy was free trade in nature but that economic power was just one of several "national security tools" available to American policymakers in their attempt to "remake" the world in the late 1940s. See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*; Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*; Pollard, *Economic Security And The Origins Of The Cold War*; and Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*. In spite of their disagreements over intent and emphasis, none of these historians questions the idea of an American promotion of free trade on a global basis after 1945. When it comes to most regions of the world, this author agrees with their syntheses. However, American policy toward the Pacific Basin was the exception to this Open Door rule. One part of this exception was Philippine policy, which was an attempt at a unilateral economic integration rather than free trade multilateralism; see Nick Cullather, "The Limits of Multilateralism: Making Policy for the Philippines, 1945-1950," *International History Review* 13 (February 1991): 70-95.

Micronesia, most American policymakers and planners had no intention of leaving the Pacific Islands "open" to foreign merchants of any nationality because of their perception that foreign economic penetration could be a forerunner to the subversion of an American administration.

The Historiographical Context

For the most part, historians trying to explain American economic policy in the 1940s have either determined that the US supported a global free trade doctrine as a natural and devious capitalistic attempt to gain economic hegemony over the world² or that American policymakers tried to use American economic power and the principles of the Open Door to secure various international strategic goals and to support domestic postwar prosperity.³ With but one exception,⁴ historians have not explored unilateral American policy toward the Pacific Basin as an anomaly to the rule of a global, multilateral free trade policy. Most policymakers and planners, however, were advocating the construction of a closed economic zone in the Pacific and American policy within this vein represents another exception to the historiographical rule that post-1945 American global policy was consistently based on principles of collective security, free trade, and national self-determination.

Similarly, most of the historiographical literature dealing with the postwar American occupation of the western Pacific has narrowly concentrated on military security matters.⁵ In a major historiographical depar-

² See Williams, *Tragedy of American Diplomacy*; Gardner, *Economic Aspects*; Kolko, *World Politics*; LaFaber, *The American Age*; and McCormick, *America's Half-Century*.

³ See Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*; Pollard, *Economic Security*; and Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*.

⁴ See Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 70-95.

⁵ For just example of this literature, see Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*, passim.

ture, William Roger Louis has suggested that the islands were not viewed by American officials in a strict military sense, but that American policymakers and planners during the Pacific War sought postwar control of the islands as a means to guarantee a comprehensive, widespread, and multidimensional strategic security over the lines of communication to East Asia.⁶ The islands themselves were not seen as an economic boon but were perceived as a strategic link between North America and East Asia.⁷

American Exceptionalism and the Postwar Pacific

US policymakers' attempts to cast great power imperialism with as narrow a definition as possible demonstrated that post-1945 expansion into the Pacific Basin represented both changes and continuities with earlier periods of American westward expansion. Similar to continental expansion in the 1800s, Americans in the mid-1940s argued that US actions were exceptional and did not entail imperialism or "territorial aggrandizement." Expansionists in the nineteenth century, however, asserted that the US' colonial roots and republican political system prevented it from becoming an imperialistic nation.⁸ American policymakers and planners in the 1940s instead linked imperialism to economic exploitation rather than the nature of a nation's political system.

The American assumption of complete economic control over Micronesia in 1944-45 and the repatriation of all East Asians by the end of 1947 was taken as a logical step toward ensuring American strategic security in the region. Given the degree of control which the Japanese had exercised

⁶ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 68-69.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 173-214.

over the Micronesian economy,⁹ economic control and repatriation were seen as a necessary means by which to eradicate Japanese influence from the islands. Moreover, Commander Dorothy Richard cites the JCS' repatriation order as evidence that security and not exploitation were paramount in American priorities. By removing all Japanese, Taiwanese, Okinawans, and Koreans from the islands, the Navy effectively removed the professional and skilled classes of interwar Japanese Micronesia,¹⁰ making it impossible to recreate the "artificial, capitalistic type of prewar economy" after 1946.¹¹

The idea that American motivation was based on military security and not economic exploitation, in fact, became the main argument for American policymakers and planners who asserted that America's sphere in the post-war Pacific was inherently different from the European and Japanese imperialism of the past or the perceived Soviet imperialism of the present. Still, the fact of the matter was that US acquisition of the islands made charges of "territorial aggrandizement" by other nations very likely. This possibility prompted numerous officials to make interesting justifications about American control. These justifications reveal distinct attitudes toward the definition of imperialism, the role which economic exploitation plays in that phenomenon, and the recurring idea of American exceptionalism in international relations. There was a widespread attitude among American officials that since the islands had a small population, were sparse in resources, and were commercially "primitive," US control did not

⁹ For an excellent discussion of this phenomenon, see Peattie, *Nanyo*, 118-152.

¹⁰ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 406. See also Dirk A. Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans: Contrasting Historical Periods Of Economic And Social Development In Palau," *Journal of the Pacific Society* (October 1988): 11; and idem., "An Historical Perspective on Economic Development in Micronesia, 1783 to 1945," *Asian Culture (Asian-Pacific Culture) Quarterly* 19 (Summer 1991): 54.

¹¹ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 406.

constitute "imperialism" in the traditional European sense of the term because the economic exploitation of a significant indigenous population was not taking place. This mindset was enunciated by numerous officials at many levels of the policymaking bureaucracy.

For example, as early as June 1944 Admiral Harry Yarnell, Head of the OPNAV Special Planning Office for Postwar Demobilization, argued that the American acquisition of the Japanese Mandated Islands should not be considered a violation of the August 1941 Atlantic Charter and should not set a precedent for unilateral territorial annexations by other nations since the islands "... have little commercial value and their maintenance would be a continuous source of expense."¹² The idea that the United States was not indulging in traditional imperialism because of a lack of apparent economic motive in Micronesia was asserted more clearly by Secretary of War Stimson in January 1945. Stimson added to Yarnell's argument by claiming that US actions were not self-serving but were meant to provide stability and security for all nations in the Pacific Basin. Arguing to then-Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Stimson stated that the islands should not be regarded as colonies but rather as "defense posts" necessary to the nation responsible for security in the area. Stimson then suggested that the United States was merely keeping the islands "in trust" for the world and not for any national advantage.¹⁴

Stimson and Forrestal again used this narrow notion of imperialism to argue to President Truman in April 1945 that US actions in Micronesia would not constitute imperialism by any standard of measurement. Like

¹² See Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, "Memorandum on Post-War Far Eastern Situation," June 16, 1944, file "Intelligence, A8," box 195, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

¹⁴ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 62; and "Trusteeships," March 30, 1945, *The Forrestal Diaries*.

Yarnell, both men stated that the islands held no commercial value and would be a burden on the United States treasury. Both men also used this argument to conclude that there was a "fundamental difference" between the American trusteeship in Micronesia and the trusteeships being established in other nations' colonies throughout the world. The secretaries subsequently suggested to Truman that this difference should be emphasized to the UN as a way to lobby for comprehensive American control over the region.⁸ Later, during the House hearings on Navy appropriations for Fiscal Year 1946, Forrestal expounded on the idea that imperialism required economic motives and that American control over Micronesia did not constitute that type of situation. He claimed that the islands were nothing but "... sandspits in the Pacific ...", that they represented no great economic asset, and therefore were "... quite different from the acquisition of territory in the old imperial sense."¹⁵

In August 1946, Forrestal even convinced Truman to keep the United States Commercial Company (USCC) under Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) auspices, rather than Navy control, in order to repel charges of economic aggrandizement. Charles Henderson, Chairman of the Board of the RFC, wanted the USCC transferred back to the Navy Department since the USCC, the postwar heir to the Foreign Economic Administration (FEA) and

⁸ See "Memorandum for the President," April 13, 1945, *The Forrestal Diaries*. Truman may have been convinced by these arguments since he stated in July 1945 that the US was not fighting for territory or anything of a "monetary nature." While he refused to countenance the idea of annexing Micronesia in the end, he nevertheless supported the idea of retaining the islands on a sovereign basis until the United Nations was "fully established." In addition, he completely supported the idea of "strategic trusteeship," which was virtually annexation in all but name. See Tom Ireland, "Will We Claim Pacific Islands?," file 48-1-24, box 90, RG 80, NA. See also Foltos, "The New Pacific Barrier," 317-342; and "The President-Bases," September 30, 1946, *The Forrestal Diaries*.

¹⁵ See US Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Navy Department Appropriation Bill for 1946: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Appropriations*, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, 25.

the agency primarily responsible for the postwar economic welfare and rehabilitation of the islands, had originally been created, supplied, and administered by the Navy. Henderson argued that RFC personnel and administration created an additional layer of bureaucracy at a time of fiscal retrenchment and that the Navy had the means to carry on the economic administration of the islands itself. Forrestal countered that keeping Micronesian economic administration in the hands of a federal civilian agency would prevent the economic administration of Micronesia from appearing to the world to be an economic exploitation for the good of the United States. Truman concurred and, though reluctant to turn the political administration of the islands over to the Interior Department in 1946, kept the USCC in charge of Micronesia's economic administration until 1947.¹⁶

The JCS and the JSSC continued the line of thought that the acquisition of territory without apparent economic motive dispelled the notion of imperialism. Writing in January 1946, the two bodies stated that the United States had historically been an "anti-imperialistic" nation and that the acquisition of territory with no commercial value "... is not believed a substantial departure from this position."¹⁷ The JCS even used the sparse population of Micronesia and the "... low state of political and economic development ..." to justify arguing for an annexation of the islands because it was concerned about the efficacy of UN trusteeship arrangements.¹⁸ In addition, it tried to use the same arguments about population, resources,

¹⁶ See Henderson to Truman, August 18, 1946, file OF 210-B, "United States Commercial Company," box 798, HSTL. See also Forrestal to Truman, August 28, 1946, *ibid.*

¹⁷ See "Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee," part of "Trusteeships For Japanese Mandated Islands," JCS 570/48, January 17, 1946, file 12-9-42 sec. 13, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

¹⁸ See Annex to Appendix "A", part of "Strategic Areas and Trusteeship in the Pacific," JCS 1619/1, May 24, 1946, SWNCC 59, SWNCC Papers, RG 353, NA.

and an "underdeveloped" central government to deflect Soviet proposals to have "independence," rather than "self government," established as the eventual political goal of the Micronesian trusteeship.¹⁹

Individual members of the JCS also separately subscribed to the view that branding a nation as an imperialistic one first required some degree of economic motive or exploitative intent. Admiral Nimitz, CNO, reiterated the lack of economic advantage for the United States in Micronesia and stated that the US sought security, not "riches", in the Pacific. Nimitz then used this justification to argue that trusteeship should not be applied to the American administration over Micronesia because the islands did not represent a "colonial problem."²⁰ Similarly, General Eisenhower, Army Chief of Staff, denied any economic motive on the part of the United States during July 1947 hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and placed American motives strictly in terms of military security.²¹

Cabinet officers, the JCS, and high-level planners did perceive an economic dimension to American national security policy for the postwar Pacific, but they consistently denied that this dimension entailed traditional imperialism. Seeing economic penetration strictly in terms of physical military control, officials linked interwar and wartime events to the concept of American exceptionalism and asserted that territorial control for strictly military purposes was not imperialism as long as the economic exploitation of a large indigenous population was not taking place. Officials

¹⁹ See "United States Position On Soviet Proposals For Amendment Of Draft Trusteeship Agreement," JCS 1619/20, March 3, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

²⁰ See "Trusteeships," October 22, 1946, *The Forrestal Diaries*; and Nimitz, "The Future Employment of Naval Forces"; as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 170.

²¹ See US Congress, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory of the Pacific Islands: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, 18.

who were opposed to the idea of strategic trusteeship even linked this narrow interpretation of great power imperialism to the concept of American exceptionalism in order to assert that the United States was justified in annexing the Pacific Islands since its motives were allegedly so pure.²²

It can be easily argued that these officials were merely cynical and too knowledgeable about world affairs to believe their interpretation of imperialism. Obviously, some sort of justification had to be produced to explain to the American public and to the world the wide gulf existing between wartime rhetoric and postwar reality when it came to the territorial dispositions in the Pacific Islands. Yet as numerous historians of US international relations have demonstrated, American exceptionalism has been a widespread and sincerely believed concept in American history, however hypocritical it appeared to foreign nationals or later generations of historians.²³ The tone of the reports and diary entries and the repeated concerns of these officials have convinced me that these officers believed they were administering the Pacific "in trust" for other nations. Linking postwar international security and stability to American exceptionalism was probably a sincere and, to them, honest portrayal of the US as a sacrificial great power, rather than a selfish imperialistic one.

Economic Security and the Postwar Pacific

Regardless of their denials of US economic aggrandizement, military officials were apprehensive about economic activity in the islands. To

²² See also Smith, *Air Force Plans for Peace*, 75-83; and Converse, "United States Plans For A Postwar Overseas Military Base System," 261.

²³ See for example, Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), *passim*; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 173-214; and Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 229-234.

these officials, any economic activity by a foreign national could potentially support espionage activities by foreign governments, something both the United States and Japan had been troubled over during the interwar period.²⁴ This concern manifested itself in a disagreement between the State and Navy Departments over the transit and trade rights which foreign nationals were to have in postwar Micronesia. On the one hand, the disagreement was part and parcel of a rift between the two departments over the efficacy of annexation versus strategic trusteeship as the best form of American administration in the postwar Pacific. More importantly, however, the conflict suggests the degree to which the American planners from both departments perceived economic control as merely another form of physical security.

In September 1946, as the US was negotiating in the UN over the establishment and conditions of international trusteeships in former colonial areas, the Navy and the State Department found themselves in disagreement about the inclusion of a "most favored nation" clause in the US' proposed Draft Trusteeship Agreement. Apparently, the State Department believed "most favored nation" status should apply to all nationals of all UN member nations. State Department officials argued that any limitations on economic status would bring about an "unfavorable" reaction against American citizens in other nations' trusteeships if those nations' citizens were not allowed full economic rights in Micronesia. To State Department officials, "full economic rights" for foreign nationals meant the same freedom of

²⁴ See Ballendorf, "Secrets Without Substance," 83-99.

transit rights by land, air, and sea which American citizens in Micronesia were to enjoy.²⁵

The Navy Department's attitudes toward comprehensive security in the islands came out quite clearly in their response to the State Department. Navy officials argued that the sparseness of the population and resources made provisions for "free-for-all" social, economic, and commercial exploitation unnecessary and that allegedly "subversive" activities could be undertaken under the guise of commercial development, inter-island traffic, and "welfare" activities. Accordingly, the Navy wanted a special status for American citizens in the islands which would clearly set them apart from nationals of other UN member nations. This security-conscious attitude on the part of the Navy was also made clear to John Foster Dulles as he negotiated the UN trusteeship agreements in 1946-1947. Dulles informed the US delegation in late October 1946 that the Navy wanted a trade monopoly over Micronesia in order to prevent any foreign nationals from photographing the islands or the American bases established there.²⁶ Apparently, the Navy got its way, since the Draft Trusteeship Agreement submitted to the UN in October 1946 included special economic and transit rights for American citizens in the trust territory.²⁷

²⁵ See "Memorandum by the Ad Hoc Committee to SWNCC," part of "Draft Trusteeship Agreement," September 10, 1946, SWNCC 59/4, SWNCC Papers, file 12-9-42 sec. 27, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

²⁶ See Dulles to the United States Delegation for United Nations Trusteeship Negotiations, Tenth Meeting, October 25, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:661.

²⁷ See Press Release #142, February 25, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA. Nick Cullather's research indicates that the Navy-State rift over Micronesia was similar to disagreements between the State and Interior Departments over the economic future of the Philippines. The State Department wanted that newly independent nation to have an economy which was oriented toward a global free trade system, while Interior Department officials wanted the archipelago to have a political economy which was essentially an adjunct of the US' so that the United States could prevent the island nation from "collapsing" in a turbulent postwar world. Like the Navy in Micronesia, the Interior Department won the dispute over the Philippines, evidenced by the Philippine Trade Act of 1946 which gave American citizens special economic status in the new

In addition to physical security, the economic administration of Micronesia was linked at various times with larger strategic goals. For example, in October 1946 General MacArthur ordered Lieutenant General John Hull to provide assistance to fisheries experts from the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service who were carrying out an economic survey of Micronesia that was requested by the Navy in 1946.²⁸ The report by the Interior Department supposedly emphasized Micronesian marine production for "Asiatic" markets and MacArthur was interested in having his subordinate commander assist the USCC in the survey since he believed it was possible that the Caroline Islands could export dried bones and shells for sale in Japan and Korea. MacArthur apparently believed this kind of economic interaction would assist in the "ultimate economic rehabilitation" of both Japan and Micronesia.²⁹

nation, provided the President with veto power over Philippine monetary policy, and established a preferential trading system for the US in the islands. Interestingly, Cullather finds that while the State Department put up a fight in 1945 and 1946 over Philippine policy and adherence to free trade doctrine, it later simply used that rhetoric more as a convenient tactic to secure American strategic advantages in other parts of the world than as a sincere belief in unfettered international economic intercourse. This author's research coincides with Cullather's findings. Though the State Department opposed the Navy on the issue of trade rights for foreign nationals and desired some open areas in Micronesia, State Department officials never questioned the policy of treating all of Micronesia as an essentially closed strategic area. Department officers even assisted the Interior Department in developing the concept of strategic trusteeship in order to provide the US with a secure buffer zone in the Pacific Basin while maintaining the US' facade of anti-colonialism in the UN. In short, while the State Department may have opposed certain unilateralist tactics between 1945 and 1947, it never seriously questioned the goal of creating an American lake in the postwar Pacific. See Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 70-95.

²⁸ See MacArthur to Hull, October 5, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

²⁹ Ibid. Dirk Ballendorf asserts that certain items found in Micronesia, such as sea-cucumbers called *trepang*, were popular in nineteenth century Japan. It is highly doubtful if MacArthur or his advisers were aware of this trade or made the connection to a possible postwar market for the Micronesian economy when discussing the economic survey and the problems of reconstructing a Pacific Basin political economy. Still, there may have been a connection and the fact is important enough to note in the context of this primary document. See Ballendorf, "An Historical Perspective On Economic Development," 49 for the Micronesian link to Japan's nineteenth century economy and 54-55 for the economic survey by the Interior Department and the US Commercial Company.

Forrestal succinctly placed the economic control of the Pacific in an even more general strategic context, however, in February 1947 when he argued in support of the US Draft Trusteeship Agreement. In a speech supposedly delivered to foster support for the concept of trusteeship itself, he instead concentrated on the provisions of the agreement which were designed to guarantee unilateral American strategic control over the region. By concentrating on these provisions, he also enunciated Navy Department fears over foreign penetration of the region.³⁰ Fearing foreign economic activity of any kind, Forrestal conceded that the draft agreement provided for significant participation of the islands in the international economy, but he spelled out that this participation had to be fully consistent with the "... requirements of security." To Forrestal, these requirements meant fairly wide-ranging "... restrictions on the commercial and other activities of foreigners." To Forrestal, the US "... could not allow a national of a potential aggressor to set up even a peanut stand in the shadow of an American base."³¹

Forrestal's attitude was entirely consistent with immediate postwar knowledge of pre-1941 Japanese expansionism. It was common knowledge by 1945 that Japanese economic penetration of Micronesia had begun long before Japan took military control of the islands from Germany in 1914. Moreover, it was known by this time that Japan had had a significant economic stake in East Asia before attempting to gain physical control over that region.³² Though paranoid in nature, Forrestal's concern about foreign eco-

³⁰ See proposed speech by Forrestal, "The United States' Role in the Trusteeship System," February 22, 1947, file 86-5-45, box 134, RG 80, NA; see also attached memo for Forrestal from Vice Admiral Forrest Sherman, DCNO for Operations, February 25, 1947, *ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² See Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search For Economic Security, 1919-1941* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1987); and Peattie, *Nanyo*, 1-61.

conomic ventures in Micronesia was also consistent with fears that American control over the Pacific Basin might be less than complete in later years and that incomplete control might "pave the way" for foreign penetration, subversion, control of the islands by another nation, and international aggression similar to the events of 1941-1942.³³ The best solution to Forrestal, as well as to most high-level policymakers, was to ensure other nationals did not gain any kind of political, economic, or cultural inroad to island life.³⁴ There is no direct or indirect evidence, however, that James Forrestal had visions of dollar signs dancing in his head when it came to the economic administration of the Pacific Islands.

An Open Door in the Postwar Pacific?

At the same time, however, there were some important officials in Washington and the Pacific who hinted at a more substantial economic role for Micronesia. In addition, there were people in semi-official and unofficial capacities who seemed to have an "economic vision" for Micronesia and, to some extent, for the entire Pacific Basin. These people were mostly, though not exclusively, members of the House Naval Affairs Committee and professional naval officers and the accuracy of their ideas about the economic potential of the region is questionable. The accuracy of their ideas, however, is less important than the existence of their viewpoints and the attitudes that these viewpoints indicate about American perceptions of the US' "appropriate" postwar role in the area. These individuals not only saw American economic development of the Pacific Basin as a way to eradicate

³³ See Forrestal, "United States' Role in the Trusteeship System," February 22, 1947, file 86-5-45, box 134, RG 80, NA.

³⁴ Ibid.

foreign influence from the area, but they also saw it as a way to subsidize American administrative costs in the region. Some naval officers and members of Congress even suggested that Micronesia and other areas of the Pacific could be made into a profitable source of raw materials and a market for American capital and manufactures in the 1940s.

William Roger Louis and Elliot Converse have both shown that President Roosevelt at times believed that military and commercial air routes could be combined at various locations throughout the Pacific Basin in order to support American economic links to the magical markets of the Orient. (See Figure 37) Roosevelt felt so strongly about using the Pacific Islands as monopolized commercial transit points to East Asia for US civil airlines and shipping companies that he sent Rear Admiral Richard Byrd and a team of area experts on a tour of the South Pacific in the fall of 1943 to stake out postwar sites.³⁵ No doubt because of his audience, Byrd waxed enthusiastic about the potential development of joint military and commercial aviation assets in the postwar Pacific. While Byrd's report is suspect because of his apparent desire to score points with Roosevelt, Roosevelt definitely saw a strategic interdependence between base development in the postwar Pacific, commercial transit routes to East Asia, the American exploitation of that potential market, and a healthy postwar American political economy.³⁶

Even after the war was over, the idea of neatly blending postwar American military and economic goals in the Pacific was enunciated by Lieutenant General Whitehead. As commanding general of PACUSA,

³⁵ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 269-271; and Converse, "Postwar Overseas Military Base System," 24-25, 50, and 101-102.

³⁶ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 269-271.

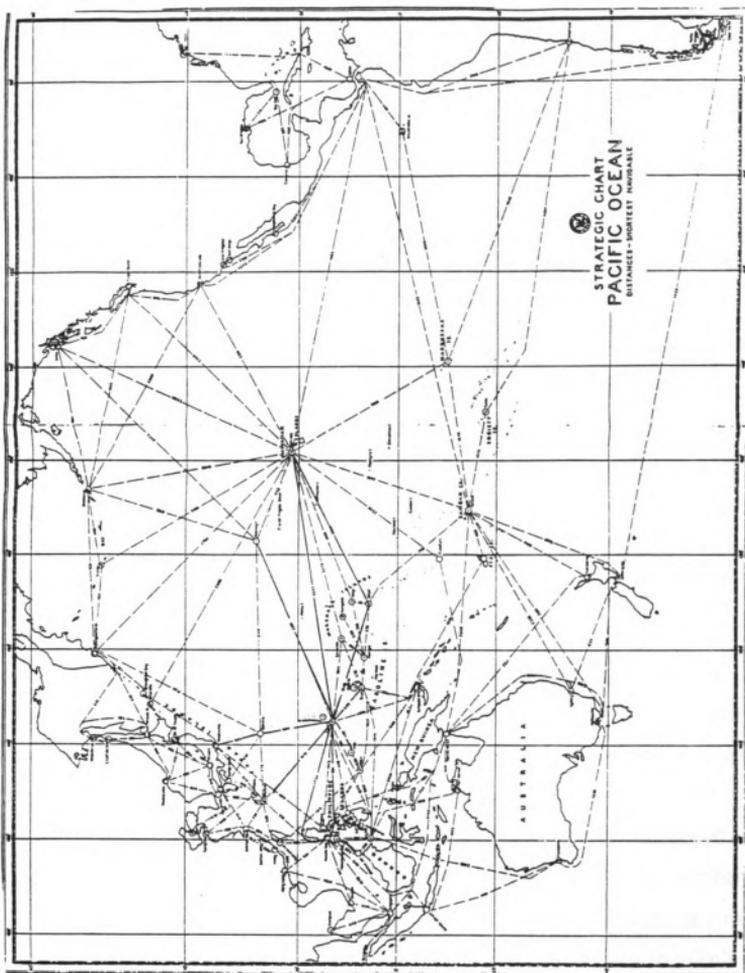


Figure 37. Strategic Chart, Pacific Ocean (Courtesy of the Navy Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.)

Whitehead suggested to General MacArthur that the US should award an American commercial airline a contract to provide internal civil air transportation in occupied southern Korea. Moreover, Whitehead suggested that the Army could supply that airline with surplus military aircraft to make the contract more attractive and could accommodate the airline with routes which used existing military airdromes.³⁷

Whitehead argued that the South Korean republic did not have an adequate infrastructure of trained crews, maintenance personnel, management skills, or radio communications infrastructure to service the Korean market. Therefore, citing precedents in Latin American where the US had used private individuals or firms to carry out public functions in support of American foreign policy goals, Whitehead thought it perfectly reasonable for the US to employ this practice in East Asia. Whitehead, in other words, wanted the US to employ what Emily Rosenberg called "chosen instruments," or private citizens and corporations, to help implement official US policy in a timely and, presumably, cheaper fashion.³⁸

In spite of Roosevelt's, Byrd's, and Whitehead's enthusiasm for the Pacific as a commercial carpet to East Asia, self-sufficiency and the reduction of administrative costs, rather than outright commercial exploitation, was the foremost objective for the majority of concerned officials once physical control over the region was established and assured. Nor would a search for administrative and fiscal austerity have been out of the ordinary at this time. Between 1945 and 1947, the Navy's budgetary appropriations dropped from over 31 billion dollars in Fiscal Year 1945 to 24 billion dol-

³⁷ See Whitehead to MacArthur, subj: Korean Airlines, June 12, 1946, 720.963-2, AFSHRC.

³⁸ Ibid. For the idea of "chosen instruments", see Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 59-62.

lars in Fiscal Year 1946 and then again to 5 billion dollars in Fiscal Year 1947. Of that last amount, Captain W.F. Jennings, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (ACNO) for Island Governments, told the Senate Appropriations Committee that the Navy spent five million dollars on civil and public administration in the Pacific Islands in 1947, not including the cost of constructing or maintaining base facilities in Micronesia.³⁹

Given Jennings' figures, island administration was about one percent of the Navy's budget. Though this may not seem to have been a significant amount, any costs which could have been subsidized by Pacific Basin economic activity probably would have been welcomed by the Navy Department.⁴⁰ After all, the more the Navy trimmed from its island governments' budget, the more funds it would have to divert to the construction and improvement of Pacific base facilities and the maintenance of the Pacific Fleet.

Self-sufficiency as an economic objective was suggested by Admiral Raymond Spruance in early 1945. As US Fifth Fleet commander during the war, Spruance had become familiar with the islands. In February 1945, he stated that the larger islands of Micronesia, such as Ponape and Kusaie, would need some sort of commercial activity developed " . . . if only to take care of the population."⁴¹ In December 1945, as CINCPAC-CINCPOA, Spruance ordered the islands closed to all private enterprise, American and foreign, as part of a policy to promote "native" ownership, industry, and economic self-sufficiency. Spruance believed it was the US' responsibility to ensure that the Micronesians attained the " . . . the highest possible level

³⁹ See Jennings to the Senate Appropriations Committee, US Senate, *Navy Department Appropriation Bill for 1948: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Appropriations*, 80th Congress, 1st sess., 1947, 119-120.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ See Spruance to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV), February 14, 1945, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 78.

of economic independence . . . " as soon as possible and he wanted to avoid "indiscriminate exploitation" of the islands' natural resources and of the islanders' themselves as cheap labor for American or foreign investment ventures.⁴² If providing an "economic windfall" to American commercial interests had been official policy, Spruance's order to close the islands to private enterprise was the wrong way to go about operations. Most likely, closing the islands to all private enterprise was a military security measure and promoting "native" self-sufficiency was an attempt at reducing administrative costs.⁴³

This goal of achieving administrative and fiscal self-sufficiency in order to subsidize costs was also the major focus of at least one Congressional report. An August 1945 report by the House Committee on Naval Affairs' Subcommittee on Pacific Bases, entitled "Study of Pacific Bases," offers some insights into American economic ambitions in Micronesia. (See Figure 38) The subcommittee's ideas revolved around the notion of reducing costs first and then creating profitable opportunities wherever they presented themselves.⁴⁴ For example, the subcommittee was primarily concerned with developing the island's economy toward " . . . maximum self-sufficiency . . ." Given this emphasis, the subcommittee called for research and development of the island resources, especially in the area of vegetables, fish, minerals, "native" handicraft, and the development of commercial

⁴² For Spruance's order, see CINCPAC letter, December 15, 1945, as found in Richard, *ibid.*, 408. For the official economic policy of the United States Naval Military Government in Micronesia, see "Pacific Charter," December 12, 1945, part of CINCPAC letter 52855, as found in *ibid.*, 406. See also Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 8; and *idem.*, "An Historical Perspective," 37.

⁴³ See CINCPAC letter, December 15, 1945, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 408.

⁴⁴ See US Congress, *Study of Pacific Bases*, *passim*.

air and shipping centers.⁴⁵ In fact, the subcommittee took the time and trouble to offer fairly detailed analyses of each major island group in Micronesia and it focused on what it believed was each island's specific economic potential.

For instance, the members were particularly impressed by what it believed was Japan's "proven" ability to make the Marianas self-sufficient in food production and even to create a "2 to 1" profit of economic output *v/s*-
a-v/s administrative costs. The subcommittee felt that because of this economic past, the indigenous population should be able to maintain self-sufficiency in the future, raise their own standard of living, and not be forced onto the "dole" by the United States.⁴⁶ Additionally, the subcommittee suggested that there was room for productive ventures in the Marianas when it discussed rudimentary industrial ventures such as copra production, native crafts, fishing, and even commercial shipping production, the last with a significant amount of assistance from the United States government and private American capital. It also envisioned Saipan being developed into some sort of vegetable, tropical fruit, and dairy production center.⁴⁷ Even when the subcommittee estimated areas such as the Marshall and Palau Islands to be of minimal economic potential, it nevertheless explored as many possibilities in terms of agricultural, fishing, native handicraft, and commercial shipping development so that these areas were developed in the direction of self-sufficiency and subsidized American administration to the utmost degree possible.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1012.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1020, 1022.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1022-1023.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1107, 1110-1111, 1115, 1116, 1118, and 1123.

Secretary Forrestal also reiterated this need for self-sufficiency in a letter to President Truman in August 1946. Forrestal, arguing to Truman to retain the USCC under the RFC, also outlined the USCC's plans to set up agricultural training stations on major islands such as Saipan, Guam, Tinian, Truk, and Ponape. Apparently with strong support from the Navy, the USCC's stations would teach the Micronesians to be "modern" agriculturalists using "sound", i.e., American, methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, marketing, and product exportation. To Forrestal, the "average native" lacked "... the initiative, self-confidence and business acumen to carry on an enterprise wholly on his own..." and therefore needed the guidance of the Navy and the USCC to avoid exploitation by continental American and foreign enterprises. Forrestal's ultimate goal, however, was to develop the Micronesian economy to the point that the Micronesians could "... contribute an ever-increasing share toward the costs of their own government..."⁴⁹

Articles published in professional and scholarly journals also conveyed ideas about the economic potential in Micronesia, but these individuals went one step further than the officers on the spot and the officials in Washington by suggesting that an actual profit could be turned in the islands. In a February 1945 article in the United States Naval Institute's *Proceedings*, the Navy's semi-official forum for debate, Marine Major Guy Richards argued that the Micronesians would be easily attracted to American suzerainty because of a superior technological and economic prowess which had been demonstrated during the war.⁵⁰ Richards strongly implied an economic element to the American strategic role in Micronesia by suggest-

⁴⁹ See Forrestal to Truman, August 28, 1946, file OF 210-B, "United State Commercial Company," box 798, HSTL.

⁵⁰ See Major Guy Richards, USMCR, "Pacific Briefing," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* (hereafter cited as *USNIP*) 71 (February 1945): 170.

ing that a preponderance of US consumer goods would not only socialize the Micronesians to American control but would also provide a market for American manufactures. Still, it must be realized that although Richards perceived Micronesia as an outlet for the American economy, he saw economic exploitation as a means, not an end, to ensuring American strategic control over the area.⁵¹

Rear Admiral G.J. Rowcliff was more immediately concerned with the economic problems that the continental United States would experience after the war. Rowcliff summarized these economic problems as diminished natural resources, unemployment, high tariffs, a search for markets, and large public debts. To Rowcliff, the postwar US would need "trade and commerce" to alleviate these problems and he proceeded to explain how American trade with the "lucrative western Pacific" would help the conversion to a postwar economy as American manufactured goods were exchanged for Micronesian raw materials such as copra, vegetables, rubber, oil, and silk.⁵² Rowcliff believed that economic development in Micronesia would illustrate to the world that the United States "... can do something else besides wage war." He believed that markets could be built in the western Pacific because they had been "... well primed with American equipment, public works, and development ...", "... subsidized with American dollars and fertilized by American flesh and blood ...", statements which were reflective of the prevailing attitude that the US had the right to enjoy any benefits from administering the region because it had paid for the islands in "blood and treasure."⁵³

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² See Rear Admiral G.J. Rowcliff, USN, "Guam," *USNIP* 71 (July 1945): 793. See also Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 78 and 84.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

Navy Captain K.C. McIntosh went one step further than Admiral Rowcliff by suggesting the construction of some sort of economic satrapy in Micronesia. Stating that the islands were needed for national security, he advised the United States to advance loans to the islands as well as to construct public works and develop markets of saleable goods in order to establish self-supporting economies. McIntosh thought such goods were represented by products like copra, sugar, coffee, and peppers, products which he claimed could be easily cultivated in Micronesia. He further believed it would be more cost-effective for the United States to provide funds to the Micronesians for the development of self-supporting market economies than to continue to subsidize the islanders with annual appropriations.⁵⁴

McKintosh's ideas are interesting from another perspective. Using Japan's economic exploitation of Taiwan as an example of how the United States should not treat Micronesia, McKintosh insisted that the island governments should not be exploitative but must develop the island economies in a "benign" way toward self-sufficiency and an American form of capitalism. Not surprisingly, McKintosh did not perceive imposing an American form of capitalism on the Micronesians as imperialism or exploitation. Instead, he saw it merely as assisting the islanders in taking up their "proper" role in the American sphere. Emily Rosenberg asserts that Americans simply assumed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that their particular brand of capitalism and their general lifestyle were valued by

⁵⁴ See Captain K.C. McIntosh, "The Road Ahead," *USNIP* 71 (November 1945): 1285. See also Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 82 and 84.

people all around the globe. McKintosh's view is a convincing bit of evidence for that assertion.⁵⁵

The assumption that all foreigners desired a replica of American society to be stamped on them was also delineated by Yale Professor of Government Rupert Emerson. Emerson, writing about American policy toward its Pacific "dependencies", saw one American goal as securing a more "adequate" standard of living for the indigenous population. However, he also perceived economic advantages for the United States. Emerson believed that the islands could be productive centers of cheap raw materials for the United States as well as markets to partially absorb a postwar American domestic surplus.⁵⁶ For this reason, he favored a closed and centrally managed economy in the islands in order to prevent other nations from partaking in these alleged benefits.⁵⁷ Similar to what Rosenberg discovered in her study about American cultural and economic expansion in the first half of the twentieth century, Emerson's ideas reflected an attitude held by many Americans that US expansion could solve domestic problems, "uplift" foreigners, and be benign all at the same time.⁵⁸

Finally, a fascinating insight into attitudes about the economic exploitation of the Pacific Basin is available in an unofficial document entitled "The American Plan For Veterans," authored by one Michael J. Brennan of New York City. Brennan's past is unclear from the correspondence, but he submitted his work to Truman's office in June of 1946. There is no evidence

⁵⁵ See McIntosh, "The Road Ahead," 1285. See also Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 229-234. For a view of similar American attempts to impose a form of US political economy on postwar western Europe, see Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 1-26 and 427-445.

⁵⁶ See Rupert Emerson, "American Policy Toward Pacific Dependencies," *Pacific Affairs* 20 (September 1947): 270; and Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 70-89.

⁵⁷ See Emerson, "American Policy," 270.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*; and Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, *passim*.

that his ideas ever became policy, but they are nevertheless a concrete example of Americans assuming that their national interests harmonized with larger global interests.

Virulently anti-British, Brennan's tract reads like an American editorial during one of the many nineteenth century Anglo-American diplomatic crises. Brennan began by arguing that "civilization", which was supposedly inherently Western and Christian, had been moving inevitably westward for some time, epitomized by the US' westward expansion in North America.⁵⁹ Brennan went on to discuss the fountain of America's newfound global power, which he saw emanating from its republican principles and domestic political institutions, as well as its wartime military and economic power. Comparing the exceptional American nation to the "empires" of Europe and Japan, Brennan then began to explain how central providing for America's veterans was to the nation's honor and postwar economic health.⁶⁰

Brennan asserted that the national debt and the "onerous" taxes levied by the government might continue after the war since the US needed to maintain a global military base system and forces in readiness to deter future aggression and to "bounce" the European imperialists out of their colonial territories. Combined with the growing unemployment problems in the United States from demobilization, Brennan feared a situation in which large numbers of Americans, especially veterans, might become destitute and the nation might sink into a depressed state as it had done in the 1930s.⁶¹

⁵⁹ See Brennan, "The American Plan For Veterans," 1-10, file OF 18-V, box 125, White House Central File, HSTL. For an analysis of the argument that "civilization" followed the setting sun, see Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981), 25-42.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 11-23.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 24-38.

Fully subscribing to American exceptionalist thought about the US' past, Brennan explained America's "colonial experiment" in the Pacific in terms of "justice" and asserted that the US should work out a regional security arrangement with Pacific nations such as Indonesia and set up a "Board of Trustees," headed by General MacArthur, to administer the regional agreement. Though this board would contain Indonesians, other peoples from the Pacific territories, and representatives of the Allied Powers, Brennan would have had the Americans dominate the body as the nation which had the "highest" number of forces engaged and losses incurred against the Japanese in the Pacific War.⁶²

Finding that the interests of unemployed American veterans and newly liberated Pacific peoples were somehow interwoven, Brennan then argued that the newly developing nations would need supervisory and technical advisers to develop their "virgin" territories. American veterans would make the perfect advisers because of their wartime technical skills. Moreover, their overseas employment would ease the competition for jobs in the United States, get veterans off the "dole", ease domestic taxation by decreasing government expenditures, and "certainly" benefit the Pacific Islanders, who would be the object of American benevolence and guidance. In addition, both the US and the Pacific territories would supposedly benefit from the inevitable exchange of raw materials and manufactured goods which would follow the injection of American advisers into the territories and the development of the Pacific Basin as part of the postwar American economic sphere.⁶³

⁶² *Ibid.*, 39-43.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 45-48.

A conclusion about these arguments for economic development is difficult to arrive at. Clearly, the individuals cited could have been discussing Pacific Basin economic development in grandiose and profitable terms as a clever marketing tactic to sway doubtful members of the administration, Congress, or the public about the advantages of annexing or integrating the islands into American domestic life. It is impossible, however, to read the authors' minds and decide in a definitive way what their exact motivations were for the arguments. Nor is an analysis made easier by the fact that historians of the region differ about the economic potential of the area.

Mark Peattie, for instance, has demonstrated that although Japanese economic development of the islands did pay for administrative costs in Micronesia and even created a financial surplus by the late 1930s, total production never surpassed one half of one percent of production throughout the entire prewar Japanese Empire. Whatever the economic stakes in Micronesia might have been, they were not very substantial in Peattie's view.⁶⁴ Conversely, Dirk Ballendorf argues that the Japanese period illustrated to American policymakers and planners that Micronesia could be self-sufficient in agriculture and could export raw materials such as phosphate, cash crops such as copra, and consumer goods such as shells on a profitable basis. Certainly, the scale of such activities could not have been large but to officials trying to trim budgets in the mid- to late 1940s, any development would have been welcomed, encouraged, and possibly exaggerated.⁶⁵

Nor were ideas about economic development in the postwar Pacific limited to Micronesia. Nick Cullather has demonstrated that Interior Department officials, charged with planning for the Philippine's postwar inde-

⁶⁴ See Peattie, *Nanyo*, 150 and 152.

⁶⁵ See Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 7-13.

pendence, sought to create an American-oriented economy in the archipelago which would develop from American capital, supply raw materials to the US, and provide markets for American industry.⁶⁶ Granted, the Philippines was of a completely different character from Micronesia in terms of population, land area, and economic development. In addition, ideas and plans for both areas appear with hindsight to be equally fantastic and unrealistic. Neither the majority of Filipinos nor most Micronesians had the financial wherewithal to represent any significant return on American investment for some time to come, if ever. Yet while Interior Department plans to substitute annual appropriations to the Philippines with private capital investment and similar Navy Department suggestions for Micronesia appear equally unsound, they were probably honestly subscribed to by their authors. Both parties seemed to have a strong and unrealistic faith in the reconstructive and rejuvenating powers of private American capital and business expertise.⁶⁷ This author finds little direct evidence to refute their sincere belief in the almost magical quality of mixing private American capital with "good intentions."

Moreover, historians such as Rosenberg and Robert Pollard have thoroughly demonstrated that American subscriptions to the international problem-solving potential of free trade, the principles of the Open Door, and American-style liberal capitalism were very widespread and sincerely believed myths in American society during the 1940s. Although the protected economy proposed for the Pacific Islands was not liberal capitalism, there was nothing inconsistent about the beliefs enunciated in the articles concerning Micronesia or the plans concerning the Philippines. Both sets of

⁶⁶ See Cullather, "Limits of Multilateralism," 70-89.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 77-78 and 84.

works were intellectually grounded in assumptions of superior American economic performance and were identical to the postulations upon which postwar free trade doctrine was based.⁶⁸

In addition, there is some evidence for the Navy seeking economic advantages in Micronesia which suggests thoughts of exploitation beyond self-sufficiency and the subsidization of administrative costs. The trade monopoly which Dulles discussed in the fall of 1946 was definitely an aspect of American security in the Pacific. Yet the references to excluding foreign nationals and the provisions for privileged status for American citizens which were incorporated into the Draft Trusteeship Agreement denotes something beyond basic security measures.⁶⁹

Although the USCC was basically a subsistence welfare agency which was not meant to create a profit in the islands, it was meant, as Forrestal's letter to Truman indicates, to engender an "enterprising" ethos in the Micronesians and it was followed in 1947 by the establishment of the Island Trading Company (ITC), which took control of the export-import trade in Micronesia following the establishment of the UN trusteeship in July 1947 and was even more specifically geared toward instilling a capitalistic, profit-oriented ethos into the Micronesians. In addition, the final trusteeship agreement with the UN, which was largely derived from the Draft Trusteeship Agreement, granted the US special trade privileges such as most-favored-nation status and the right to integrate the islands into a customs zone with the United States.⁷⁰ Significantly, the US was the only

⁶⁸ See Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 3-13 and 229-234; see also Pollard, *Economic Security*, 1-9 and 243-253.

⁶⁹ See Dulles, "Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the United States Delegation to the United Nations," October 25, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, 1:661.

⁷⁰ See Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, 63-64. See also Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 12; and *idem.*, "An Historical Perspective On Economic Development," 54.

administering authority of a trusteeship to receive such sweeping powers.⁷¹ The granting of this authority could have simply been testimony to American influence in the UN, strong convictions and lobbying on the part of American policymakers for comprehensive strategic control of the islands, and a willingness to maintain that control by any means necessary.

Yet the possibility of economic exploitation cannot be completely ruled out. In May 1947, for instance, Admiral Louis Denfield, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Command and Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC-CINCPACFLT), suggested to Rear Admiral Pownall, Commander, US Forces, Marianas (ComMarianas) and Governor of Guam, that the United States retain for its own benefit any economic advantages resulting from commerce and industry in Micronesia. While Denfield failed to elaborate on just what those advantages might be, he specifically recommended prohibiting the importation of any commodity mined, manufactured, or produced from "foreign areas" which could be acquired from the United States.⁷²

The idea that Micronesia might be able to yield something in economic terms was even hinted at by Admiral Nimitz before the July 1947 Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearings on the UN trusteeship agreement. Though Secretary Forrestal continued to assert that economic benefits from the agreement would be "nil" and that there was nothing to exploit in the islands, Nimitz seemed to contradict him when he told the committee that there was potential for the islands as transit points for American commercial aviation routes to East Asia. Of course, Nimitz could very well have been telling the Senators what he believed they wanted to hear, since in Oc-

⁷¹ See Gale, *Americanization of Micronesia*, 63-64.

⁷² See Denfield, May 8, 1947, serial 3209 to Pownall, May 15, 1947, serial 12172, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 414.

tober 1946 he had told the same committee that American interest in the islands was strictly military.⁷³

In the end, however, American ideas for the economic development of Micronesia seem to be largely disingenuous. The ideas enunciated by the naval officers and the House Subcommittee on Pacific Bases about turning the islands into sources of raw materials and production centers of light industrial goods are particularly nonsensical when "The Report by the Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas" is taken into account. The idea that the islands could be agriculturally or industrially developed seems ridiculous in light of the report, since its accompanying maps indicate that the US military was planning to take control of huge tracts of land on Guam, Saipan, and Tinian.⁷⁴

For example, so many American military units and personnel were stationed on Guam that anti-aircraft practice firing had to be conducted seaward so as not to interfere with aircraft approaches. Moreover, while the Board members made repeated references to the need to accommodate the Micronesians on the best arable land and minimize the economic damage done to them by the US' strategic presence and while they were also sensitive to charges by Congress and the press of "land grabbing," the Board was still determined to acquire over 70,000 acres of land on Guam alone and it was not willing to subordinate military interests to any economic deve-

⁷³ See Nimitz to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory of the Pacific Islands*, 20. See also Nimitz to Forrestal, "Trusteeship," October 22, 1946, *The Forrestal Diaries*

⁷⁴ See "The Report of the Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas," June 1, 1947, 178.2917-1, AFSHRC. Unfortunately, the maps accompanying the report were too large to be xeroxed and the microfilm which the author purchased from the Simpson Agency was too poorly produced to allow for copies of the maps to be made. However, the maps are found in Tabs A-4, B-1, B-2, C-1, C-2, C-3, F-4, I-1, I-2, O-1, O-2, O-3, P-2, P-4, Q-1, Q-2, and Q-3 of the cited report.

lopment of the island.⁷⁵ Given how much land the military wanted on the major islands of the Marianas, the only significant economic development of the islands which might have resembled the development of the continental American political economy would have entailed transforming the Micronesian economy into a service-based economy in support of the huge American military establishment, a pattern which was undertaken in the Ryukyus after 1945.⁷⁶

Conclusion

To defend American control over Micronesia against charges of imperialism from foreign nations, policymakers enunciated fascinating ideas about the allegedly exceptional character of US actions in order to deflect the charges of "territorial aggrandizement." These views directly support assertions made by Emily Rosenberg that Americans did not see themselves as imperialistic in the 1940s and that American economic expansion was assumed to be a positive phenomenon for anyone experiencing it.

Suggestions for an economic development policy toward the Pacific Islands depended upon whom one was talking to at any given time. The opinions of cabinet officers, the JCS, officers on the spot, members of Congress, and individual strategic thinkers ranged widely from denying any economic motive for the islands to arguing that the economic development of Micronesia could be a great boon for the US. None of the evidence cited, however, dispells the fact that American policy toward the islands represented an anomaly to global US free trade policy in the late 1940s since none of the individuals or organizations cited, with the exception of some State Depart-

⁷⁵ Ibid., 10, 22-23, 32, 34, 75, and 76.

⁷⁶ See Fisch, *Military Government In The Ryukyus Islands*, 122-152.

ment officials in the fall of 1946, argued for anything but an economic zone which was closed to foreign trade.

Cabinet officials, the JCS, and their subordinate planning bodies were the strongest subscribers to the theory that economic penetration was an element of strategic control, not economic exploitation or commercial gain. While members of these organs did at times intimate about the economic exploitation of the islands, the tone of their reports and statements suggests marketing tactics to garner support from the President, Congress, and the American public rather than sincerity about economic development.

Officers on the spot such as MacArthur and Denfield, some members of Congress, and unofficial writers were more willing to discuss the economic development of the islands than policymakers and planners in Washington. While it can easily be argued that these politicians and officers were also creating arguments for political support from various constituencies, the continued American belief in the efficacy of the China Market and the Open Door in the 1940s leads this author to conclude that their arguments were also sincere, though intellectually barren and unrealistic.

Still, while opinions differed widely over the tactics of self-sufficiency versus aggressive economic development, all of these individuals were writing in a context of a closed system which was created to support American strategic goals of postwar reconstruction in the Pacific and East Asia. Even the most ardent advocate of economic exploitation in the islands does not seem to have lost sight of the fact that the economic administration of Micronesia was not about making money or creating a global showcase for American-style free trade. It was about ensuring postwar American strategic security in the Pacific Basin.

Chapter Six

"Races Undesirable from a Military Point of View": American Strategic Thinking, Cultural Security, and the Pacific Islands

American strategic control in the postwar Pacific also entailed "cultural security." Evidence exists which suggests that the Pacific Islanders' racial composition, language, perceived cultural values, and political-ideological orientation were central to strategic officials' considerations while planning for a secure American administration in the postwar Pacific. Because of the pervasive Japanese influence which thirty years of occupation had produced in Micronesia,¹ some strategic policymakers and planners saw the need for completely eradicating Japanese influence before the islands could be declared "secure" in a military sense. Thus, there was a perception among officials that assimilating the Pacific population to American rule would ease the burden of American administration and help consolidate US control over these vital security outposts. In significant contrast to wartime Rooseveltian rhetoric about national self-determination for non-whites, American policymakers and planners denied that the Pacific Islanders were capable of self-rule in any aspect and sought to complement American security in the area by linking the islanders' future loyalty to the US

¹ For this perspective, see Peattie, *Nanyo*, passim.

through the importation and imposition of white, Anglo-American cultural values and lifestyles.²

In addition to providing an elaboration on the multidimensional aspects of strategic policy, American cultural perceptions of Pacific Islanders can also be seen as a chapter in the history of mid-twentieth century American racism. Much of the language used in planning documents and public statements was permeated with racist and cultural assumptions about the alleged superiority of white, Anglo-American values and lifestyles. In this vein, American officials perceived the Pacific Islanders as helpless children who needed paternalistic guidance from the US in their every thought and action. Racism endemic to American society in the 1940s was also evident by American officials' resistance to the presence of all but white US military personnel in the islands after 1945.

Finally, primary sources, especially unofficial ones, indicate a continuing belief in a "manifest destiny" of American expansion in the postwar Pacific. At least one American naval officer discussed completing the American lake effect in the Pacific by populating the islands with white settlers in a manner highly reminiscent of both nineteenth century American expansionism in North America and early twentieth century Japanese expansionism in Micronesia. While one officer's unofficial position does not indicate anything approaching a policy, it does suggest that the historical and cultural myths which grew out of earlier periods of territorial expansion

² For a sample of this literature, see Price, *Japan's Islands Of Mystery*; Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost*; and Herold J. Wiens, *Pacific Island Bastions of the United States* (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962). For an exception to this rule, see Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*. For a view of American postwar policy toward the Philippines which perceives political, economic, and cultural dimensions to an overarching strategic policy, see Cullather, "The Limits of Multilateralism," 70-95.

continued to exercise some influence on American exceptionalist outlooks in the middle part of the twentieth century.

By focusing on American cultural attitudes toward Pacific Islanders and East Asians, this chapter will also elaborate on the work of Emily Rosenberg and Michael Hunt. When it came to the tiny islands of the post-war Pacific, Americans assumed a "hierarchy of race" based on tone of skin color and they assumed that their cultural values were the most enlightened, the most benign, and the most sought after by other peoples. In a classic imperial manner, Americans never questioned whether or not the indigenous populations ever desired an "American way of life." It was simply assumed that to be "civilized," the people of the Pacific Basin would have to adopt the ways of white America.³

"Cultural Security" in the Postwar Pacific

Between 1945 and 1947, American strategic planners were seriously interested about the future racial composition and cultural orientation of the Pacific Islands, especially Micronesia. At first, it appeared to be unclear whether this concern over cultural "control" of the islands was motivated by fears of trying to govern a hostile, indigenous population in a strategically vital area or whether "appropriate" racial quotas in areas like Micronesia was a desired prelude to building some sort of American colony in the postwar Pacific.

Of course, the imposition of American cultural values on the Micronesians as a colonial preparation for long-term rule should not be considered mutually exclusive from providing for future American strategic secu-

³ See Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*; and Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*.

rity in the Pacific Basin. Policymakers believed that if key island groups such as Micronesia could be made into American colonies, then strategic security in the postwar Pacific could be guaranteed in a number of military and non-military contexts. In general, however, it appears that when strategic planners discussed the racial composition and cultural orientation of Micronesia, it was usually within a strategic military context. Creating an American colony in the Pacific as some sort of showcase of American civilization seemed to be a secondary endeavor to them. Nevertheless, American planners hoped to couple Pacific Islanders' loyalty to the United States through the use of religion, language, and culture.

Concern over physical military control was present in early planning documents in which the cultural orientation of the population was taken into account when planning for postwar base sites. In fact, it was difficult to separate the two aspects of postwar control. As early as March 1943, the Navy's General Board not only used "natural defensibility" as a criterion for choosing postwar bases in the Pacific, but it also asserted that the attitudes of the inhabitants toward the United States and the degree to which they had been "exposed" to "foreign" ideologies and cultures was important as well.⁴

Actually, American planners probably had little to worry about when it came to Micronesian loyalty toward the United States. Most Micronesians probably felt genuine gratitude for the US because of their liberation from the Japanese. An example of this gratitude was a January 1946 request by

⁴ See "Sites for Bases," March 20, 1943, Annex A to General Board No. 450, file "Post-War Bases, P-1," box 170, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC.

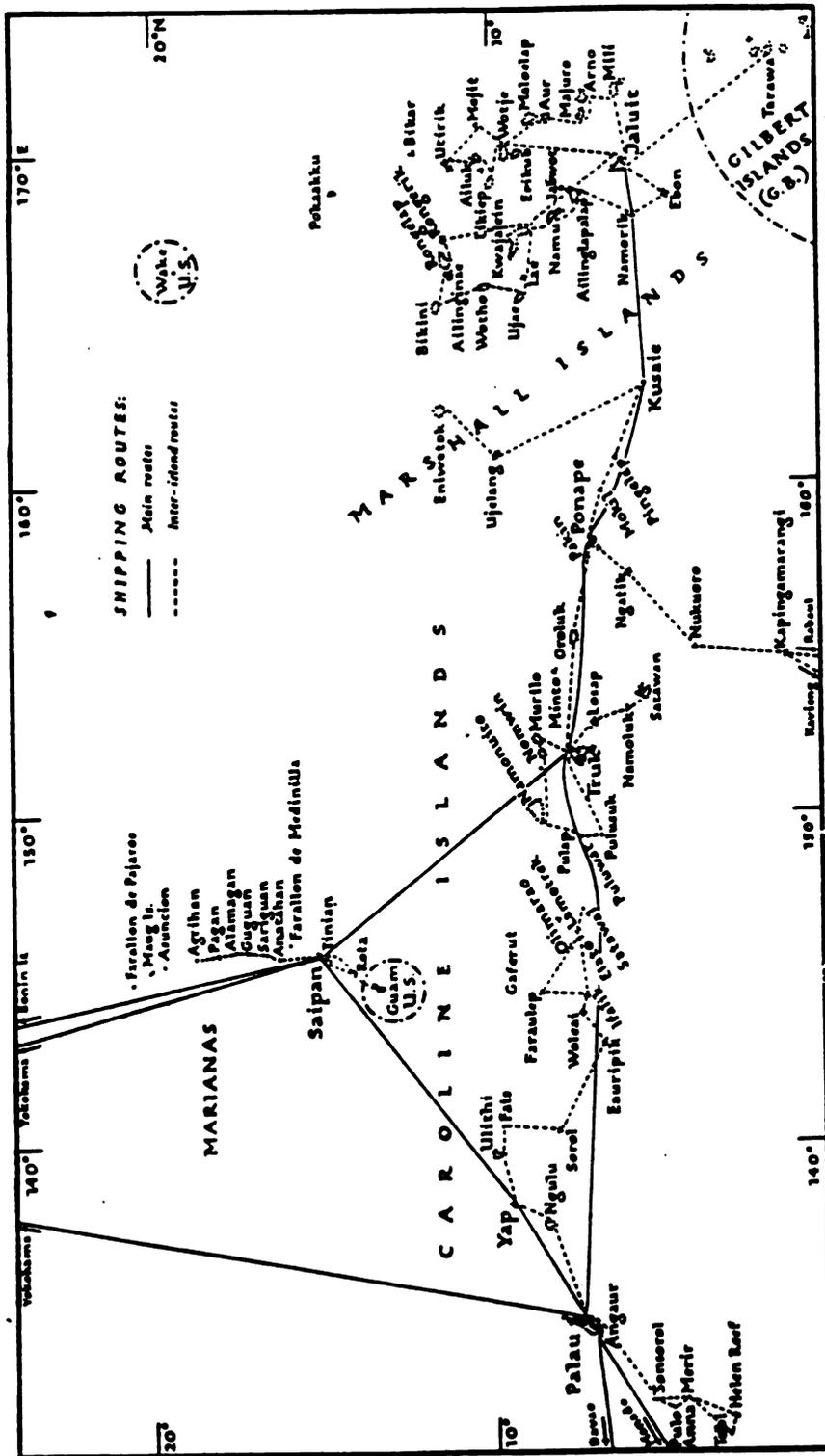
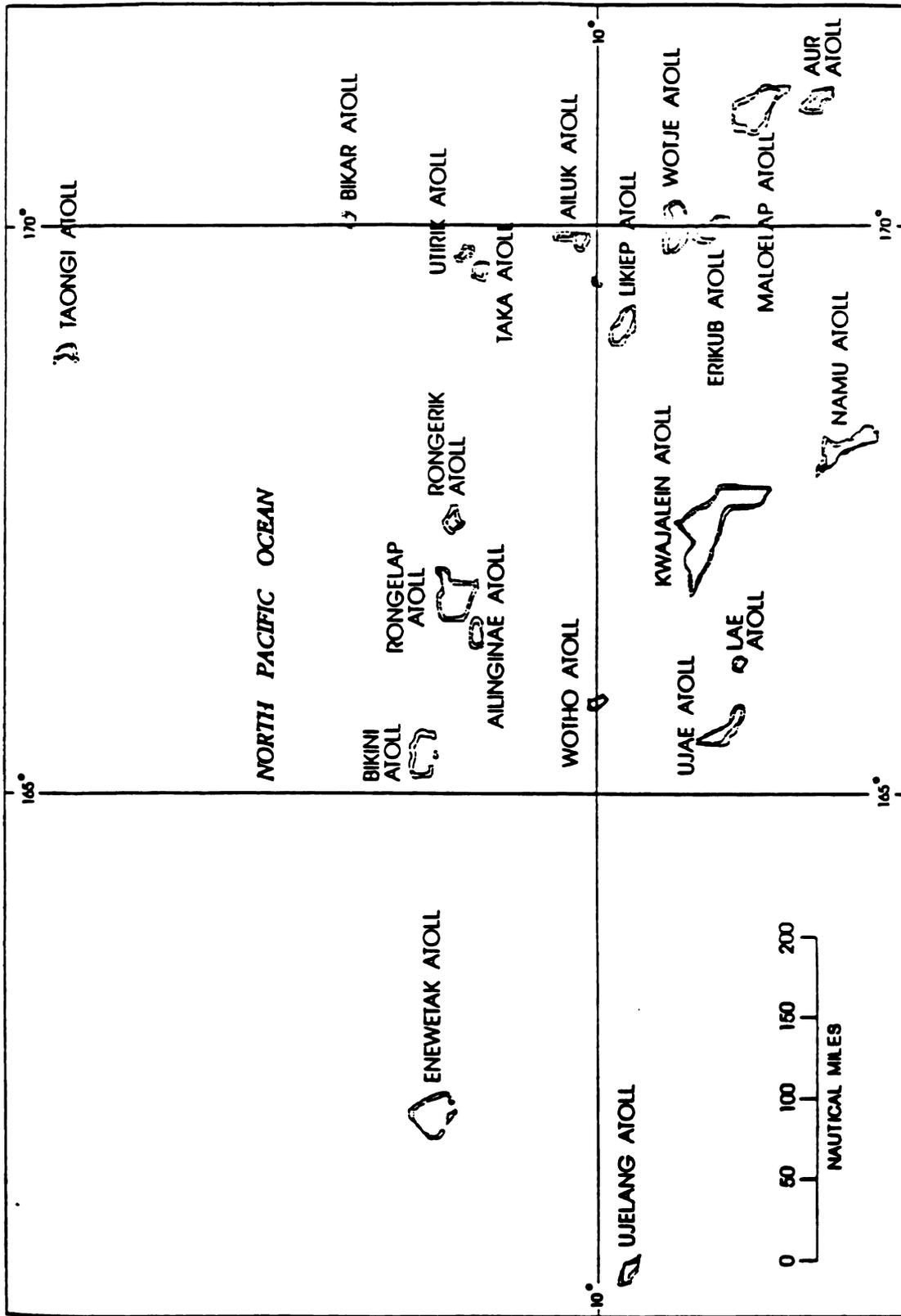


Fig re 4. Shipping Routes, Japanese Mandated Islands. (UK Naval Intelligence Division 1945, 306; British Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Britannic Majesty's Stationery Office)

Figure 39. Shipping Routes, Japanese Mandated Islands (UK Naval Intelligence Division 1945, 306; British Crown Copyright, Controller, Her Britannic Majesty's Stationery Office, UK)

the chiefs of Kusaie Island in the Carolines (See Figure 39) to President Truman to make Kusaie a "permanent possession" of the United States and "forever" place the island under the flag and protection of the US. The request from King John of Kusaie to Truman was witnessed by Lieutenant James Baird, Senior Naval Military Government Officer at Kusaie, and Lieutenant, Junior Grade, R.C. Lindgren, Commanding Officer of the local Naval Military Government Ship, USS APc 95. While the document and the signatures could have been forged or coerced and while the copy sent to Forrestal was an English translation, this author has found no evidence that the request was anything but sincere and the request was not outlandish considering the trauma the islanders had endured under Japanese administration. Moreover, interviews conducted by Dirk Ballendorf in the 1980s with Belauan survivors of the war indicate that Micronesians were sincerely impressed with the American war machine which had so efficiently destroyed and conquered Japanese Micronesia in only two and a half years. As one survivor told Dirk Ballendorf, "What do you call these Americans who destroy all that the Japanese built, and bring the Japanese to their knees in such a short period of time? You call them 'sir'."⁵

⁵ Of course, the US did not annex Kusaie but the matter was first referred to Forrestal and Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson, then to Truman. Forrestal noted the English translation of the original message and the apparent lack of "solicitation" on the part of American officers. He then asserted that the chiefs' wishes could be assumed to represent the majority of the people of the island, though he stated that the last point had to be confirmed. Acheson merely commented that the request was part of the larger issue of determining the postwar status of the islands and Truman ordered Forrestal to inform the chiefs on Kusaie that their request had been brought to his attention, that he was happy to learn of their confidence in the US, and that the request would receive "due consideration." See King John to Truman, no date given; Forrestal to Truman, December 19, 1945; Acheson to Truman, January 8, 1946; and Truman to Forrestal, January 9, 1946; all in file "State Department Correspondence, 1945-1946," box 37, White House Central Files, HSTL. See Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 8. See also Peattie, *Nanyu*, 62-229 and 300-303 for examples of the Japanese exploitation of the Micronesians.



The northern Marshall Islands.

Figure 40. The Northern Marshall Islands (From Jonathan Weisgall, *Operation Crossroads*, Naval Institute Press, 1994)

In addition, American influence in Micronesia was significant and could be traced back to the early nineteenth century when American whaling ships, missionaries, and consuls visited and lived on the islands. The missionaries established stations on the islands and proceeded to convert the inhabitants with success. In fact, Protestant churches became established in the islands and Christian culture was fairly widespread among the Micronesians.⁶ The strength of this Christian culture was evident in 1946 when the Navy sent Commodore Benjamin Wyatt, Chief Military Government Officer of the Marshall Islands, to inform the people of Bikini Atoll (See Figure 40) that their island would have to be evacuated because of the impending atomic bomb tests. The team unwittingly interrupted a Sunday morning, American-style, Congregational church service. After the service, Commodore Wyatt even used a biblical analogy to convince the islanders to leave, comparing them to the "Children of Israel" whom the United States was going to lead to the "land of salvation" much as God had done for the Jews!⁷

Given this setting, Christianity and the English language were two familiar aspects of mainstream white, Anglo-American culture which were considered to be important elements in assimilating the Micronesians to US control. As early as January 1945, Admiral Raymond Spruance, commander of the US Fifth Fleet, remarked that Christianizing the "natives" would assist the United States in swaying the Micronesians away from Japanese in-

⁶ See Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, 22 and 25. See also Dirk Ballendorf and William Wuerch, "Captain Samuel J. Masters, US Consul to Guam, 1854-56: Harbinger of American Pacific Expansion," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 2 (November 1991): 306-326 and especially 308-309.

⁷ See Gale, *Americanization of Micronesia*, 22 and 25. See also interview of Commodore Benjamin Wyatt, USN (RET) by Commander Richard, May 2, 1952, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 509-510.

fluence.⁸ Spruance also advocated teaching English to the indigenous population, but he wanted it understood that he was not " . . . trying to put undershirts on any native belles who are not accustomed to wearing them."⁹ While Spruance's paternalistic remark hints at an "Americanization" of Micronesia through some form of social engineering, his concern over preventing any Japanese influence over the Micronesians more clearly implies thoughts about the postwar military security of the islands.

Moreover, his ideas about the political management of Micronesia, like those of his successor, John Towers, need to be put in proper context. Spruance and Towers both come off as the "liberal" voices of the US naval officer corps when it came to assimilating the Micronesians to US rule. Neither particularly wanted to stifle Pacific Island life by blanketing the Pacific with active bases and both sought to take measures which ensured that the economic welfare of the Micronesians and their future political loyalty was not endangered by American heavy-handedness. Spruance's concern that the Micronesians not be economically exploited by either American or foreign merchants caused him to close the islands to all outside commerce until reconstruction and some order had been restored. Towers wanted to grant citizenship to the Guamanians in 1946 and 1947 as a way of silencing their criticism of naval rule and coupling them to the domestic US political system. Although both officers' reasons for such measures had very practical roots, they appear quite "enlightened" when compared to officials such Forrester, MacArthur, and Whitehead.¹⁰

⁸ See the letter from Spruance to OPNAV, February 14, 1945, as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 2, 78.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See letter by Spruance, CINCPAC-CINCPQA, December 15, 1945, as found in *ibid*; see also the September 25, 1946, December 23, 1946, and February 5, 1947 entries in folder 1, box 2 of

Cultural security as an adjunct to physical control was also the focus when it came to discussing the islanders' political and material culture. The House Naval Affairs Subcommittee on Pacific Bases, for instance, concurred about security being forged through various cultural links between the United States and the Pacific Islands. Stating that the Micronesians should enjoy "maximum self-rule" under American encouragement as soon as possible, the subcommittee also supported the idea of teaching English as a means of linking the Micronesians to the US.¹¹ Asserting that it was a "well established" fact that friendly relations existed between people who spoke the same language, the subcommittee members also wanted the "natives" indoctrinated to the "American way of life" as soon as possible. Interestingly enough, while not elaborating on what that "way of life" entailed, the subcommittee naively suggested that this conversion should be done in a way which did not destroy the traditional customs and institutions of the indigenous population!¹² Moreover, the subcommittee was convinced that the "natives" would prefer American control and the American way of life because of their liberation from the Japanese and an alleged American sense of "justice" and "fair treatment." This American sense of exceptionalism told the subcommittee members that the United States could never be perceived as imperialists by the Micronesians or the rest of the world because American administration would be benign and mutually beneficial.

Of course, as Timothy Maga has illustrated with the Guamanian struggle for American citizenship between 1945 and 1950, the American sense of justice and fair treatment was seriously lacking in many respects when it

the Towers Diary, John Towers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; and Reynolds, *Admiral John H. Towers*, 522-523.

¹¹ See US Congress, *Study of Pacific Bases*, 1012-1013.

¹² *Ibid.*

came to according equal political treatment to non-whites on a strategically located island base. Measures taken by the naval military government on Guam support the conclusion that military control took precedence over "Americanizing" the Guamanians. From August 1944 through May 1946, Navy authorities on the island denied such basic civil rights as the right of assembly, the holding of public meetings (except for religious purposes), and even the right to assemble the Guam Congress.¹³ Moreover, regarding land policy, the Navy had final say in all cases of land appropriation and wartime claims to damages. It could literally dictate "... who goes back where, how they go back, how fast they go, and on what lots they go back ..."¹⁴

According to Maga, this absolutist behavior by the naval leadership on the island continued after Rear Admiral Charles Pownall became Naval Governor in May 1946. Pownall in particular felt it necessary to keep a tight rein on island affairs, not in order to prepare the island for integration into American political life on the basis of citizenship rights and equality before the law, but to forestall "internal Communist subversion." In fact, Maga demonstrates that Pownall never believed that the Guamanians were capable of independent political thought and action and he thought Guamanian calls for US citizenship rights and land claims had to be the result of Communist

¹³ See Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 186-216; and Roy E. James, "The Guam Congress," *Pacific Affairs* 19 (December 1946): 411.

¹⁴ See statement by Commander A.L. O'Bannon of the Land and Claims Commission on Guam, O'Bannon Statements, Land Policy Debates, December 1946, Guam Congress Transcripts, Records of the United States Naval Administration, 1946-1949, Guam (hereafter cited as NR), Micronesia Area Research Center (hereafter cited as MARC), as quoted in Timothy P. Maga, "The Citizenship Movement in Guam, 1945-1950," *Pacific Historical Review* 53 (February 1984): 69. See also Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 186-216. According to Gavan Daws, a similar kind of "extended" martial law and abuse of civil liberties was exercised by the United States Army over the Hawaiian Islands between December 1941 and October 1944. Long after any potential Japanese threat to the islands came to an end in the summer of 1942, senior Army officers in the islands felt the need to ensure their absolute control over almost all matters in the territory. See Daws, *School of Time: A History Of The Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1968), 352-357.

fifth column activities on the island. The result of Pownall's actions was not to speed an Americanization of the island but to sow mistrust among the indigenous population because of the Navy's paranoia and land grabbing.¹⁵

Concern over the physical control of the islands also provided the impetus to remove foreign nationals residing in Micronesia who might be "threats" to American strategic interests in the region. In a series of letters between President Truman and Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, it became clear that US citizenship was the desired nationality for missionaries working in Micronesia. In January 1946, Spellman wrote Truman to protest the evacuation of missionaries of German, Italian, and Spanish nationality. Spellman asserted that these people were not a strategic threat, that the Catholic missions would be hard-pressed to complete their tasks without the European missionaries, and that "... all the good done in the interest of Christianity will be lost and the natives will then have only one path open to them - the return to their former pagan and savage lives."¹⁶

A few days later, Truman returned a short note to Spellman, indicating that he was referring the situation for study to the State, War, and Navy Departments.¹⁷ SWNCC produced a study by early February which was

¹⁵ See Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 186-216. Again, there is a parallel between postwar American behavior in Guam and postwar US administration of the Hawaiian Islands. Daws demonstrates that civilian territorial officials such as Governor Ingram Stainback, who had spearheaded the legal challenge to the Army's heavy-handed behavior during the war, quickly indulged in paranoid thinking about the internal security of the islands during the early Cold War. Stainback and others were extremely concerned about an internal Communist threat to the islands during the late 1940s and early 1950s and they cooperated both with the House Un-American Affairs Committee's (HUAC) investigation into the possibility that Hawaii was an "outpost" of the Kremlin and into HUAC's investigations of alleged Communist sympathizers in the islands. See Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 368-381 and 387.

¹⁶ See Spellman to Truman, January 15, 1946, file "State Department Correspondence, 1946-1947," box 38, White House Central Files, HSTL.

¹⁷ See Truman to Spellman, January 21, 1946, *ibid*.

the result of compromise between the three departments. Apparently, soon after the war ended the JCS had not only wanted to repatriate all East Asians from Micronesia but all non-native civilians as well. More specifically, the JCS wanted Spanish priests and nuns replaced by American priests and nuns. The State Department expressed the view that all matters should be judged on an individual basis and SWNCC came to the agreement that German, Italian, and Spanish missionaries would not be removed unless they had been members of "objectionable" organizations such as the Nazi Party. Still, SWNCC agreed that it would be "inadvisable" to allow other people of German, Italian, or Spanish nationality into the islands and that because of American strategic interests in the area, American missionaries should "... be utilized to the maximum extent possible, both for reasons of security and to further the development of native culture in accordance with U.S. standards." Truman endorsed SWNCC's recommendation a few days later and Spellman seemed to accept the policy without further protest.¹⁸

Concerns about the postwar physical control over the islands were also expressed in cultural terms in at least one Navy planning document during the summer of 1946. Officers in the Navy's Strategic Plans Division, the CNO's major policy planning body, discussed the future security of the Mariana Islands in blatant ethnocentric and racist terms which coincided with much of Michael Hunt's evidence that white Americans perceived non-whites in a "hierarchy" of racial value according to their tone of skin color.¹⁹

¹⁸ See SWNCC 254/1 (Revised), February 5, 1946, "Evacuation Of Catholic Missionaries, Priests, Sisters, And Brothers From the Mission Fields Because Of Their German, Spanish Or Italian Nationality," *ibid.* See also Truman to Spellman, February 15, 1946; and Spellman to Truman, March 9, 1946; both in "State Department Correspondence, 1946-1947," box 38, White House Central Files, HSTL.

¹⁹ See Philipps to Gardner, Enclosure (B) to OP-30-P Memorandum, June 27, 1946, file "B-7," box 156, Strategic Plans, OA, NHC. For a complete description and analysis of how white

In June 1946, Captain Richard Philipps, head of the Pacific Sub-section of Strategic Plans, sent a memo to Rear Admiral Matthias Gardner, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Strategic Plans, in which Philipps detailed the shortage of military personnel available for base construction in the Marianas because of rapid demobilization and then suggested that potential sources of labor could be imported from East Asia and used to replace demobilized American military laborers. Philipps was primarily concerned however, that the "... future population of the Marianas contains the least number of persons of races undesirable from a military point of view."²⁰ To Philipps, the ideal arrangement for base construction and maintenance "... would be to import U.S. laborers belonging to the White race, thereby establishing firmly a Caucasian colony of the United States." However, he argued that lower standards of living in Micronesia would probably prevent large scale recruitment of white American laborers from the mainland to the islands.²¹

Concerning people from East Asia, Philipps thought that Chinese would be "undesirable" as base construction laborers, supposedly because of their ability to permanently establish themselves in the Islands and later bring political pressure against the United States for various kinds of concessions. Philipps also wanted to avoid a situation he thought was similar to the immigration histories of Hawaii and California, where "polygot" Asian communities had supposedly been allowed to settle and "interfere" in American foreign policy issues. Though Philipps did not detail these alleged his-

Americans have historically categorized people hierarchically by tone of skin color, see Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 46-91.

²⁰ See Philipps to Gardner, *ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

torical events, the clear implication was that Chinese were potential security risks for any American administration of the islands.²²

If white laborers could not be found for the islands, Japanese were preferred as temporary laborers. While the planners were concerned that the use of prisoners of war for base construction might bring Soviet charges of a "slave labor" policy upon the United States, it was nevertheless argued that Japanese prisoners would be easy to control without arousing negative public opinion in the United States and that they were ideal for the heavy physical labor entailed in base construction.²³ Filipinos, on the other hand, were seen as totally undesirable as base construction laborers because they were "... by comparison [with the Japanese], as far as physical labor is concerned, ... lazy."²⁴

When it came to permanent settlers, as opposed to temporary laborers, the order of race preference changed, with whites again being the most "preferred" group, then Micronesians or Filipinos, and finally East Asians. "... [M]embers of the Brown race would be preferable next to members of the White race ... Filipinos ... would be preferable to members of the Yellow race as permanent settlers."²⁵ Filipinos seemed to better fit the "requirements" for permanent settlers, probably because Japanese were considered security risks and possibly because the American colonial experience in the Philippines bred some sort of "familiarity" with Filipinos.

What is fascinating is that Phillips used the words "colonizing" and "colonization" so freely. While numerous public officials were denying that the United States was indulging in anything approaching "territorial aggran-

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

dizement” and while most internal planning documents even avoided the use of imperial labels to describe US actions, Captain Philipps and his staff fully admitted that American military bases, their support facilities, and the “laboring class” which built them constituted “colonization.” He did not appear overly concerned with this discrepancy between wartime rhetoric and postwar realities. He was more concerned with ensuring that the future population of the Marianas contain a “. . . minimum of less desirable races.”²⁶ Although this document mentions establishing a Caucasian colony in Micronesia as a way to assimilate the indigenous population and consolidate American control, the ideas of white colonization and Micronesian assimilation were decidedly secondary to the immediate security requirements of American naval bases. The essence of the document was that any racial group except white Americans would be security risks, imparting “subversive” ideas to the Micronesians and frustrating American administration and base construction.²⁷

The possibility of settling white Americans in Micronesia in order to transform the racial composition of the islands’ population was apparent in at least one semi-official source as well. One Naval Reserve officer, Lieutenant Commander T.O. Clark, writing in the United States Naval Institute’s *Proceedings*, suggested just such a policy.²⁸ While the unofficial opinion of one officer is certainly not a policy, his ideas and suggestions convey cultural attitudes which seemed to be fairly widespread in both official and unofficial primary sources.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ See Lieutenant Commander T.O. Clark, USNR, “The Administration of the Former Japanese Mandated Islands,” *USNIP* 72 (April 1946): 511.

Without acknowledging the fact, Commander Clark argued that the United States should adopt an emigration policy which was surprisingly similar to Japanese interwar policy in Micronesia. At that time, Japan flooded the islands with settlers in an attempt to absorb the indigenous population and couple the islands to Japan in an even more comprehensive manner.²⁹ Clark believed it similarly desirable to have white American families move to Micronesia after the bases and housing facilities had been completed. Clark's idea to motivate white Americans to settle in Micronesia suggests an absorption of the Micronesians into a mainland American population, something that would not have been difficult for the US to carry out given the relatively small number of Micronesians at the time (about 150,000 people including the population of Guam).

Clark also knew how to use the history of American continental expansionism to stir emotional support for his idea.³⁰ Reminding the reader of America's more "rustic" days, Clark thought that "... only ... those who are kindred spirits to the settlers of our one-time ever advancing western frontiers ..." could be lured away from the high standard of living in the United States.³¹ Accordingly, Clark envisioned a "Naval Colonizing Section" moving into the islands to establish "colonizing" units for naval personnel and their families, whom he labelled "typical" American families "ideal" for creating a colony in the Pacific.³² Clark also perceived an opportunity to develop the resources and commerce of the islands while simultaneously coupling their sovereignty and culture to that of the United States. Thus, he

²⁹ Ibid. See also Peattie, *Navy*, 153-197. Finally, see Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 8-9; and idem., "A Historical Perspective," 37.

³⁰ See Clark, "Administration of the Former Japanese Mandated Islands," 511.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 512.

hoped that these naval families would elect to remain permanently, supporting themselves by farming, trade, or Navy pensions.³³ In addition, he believed the "natives" would gladly "elevate" themselves to become "useful" citizens of the United States and that the US would return the loyalty by policing the Pacific and accepting the "manifest destiny" it had supposedly avoided for nearly half a century.³⁴

The bottom line in Clark's argument, however, was that "... the native populations are in effect children and should be treated as such ..." Clark therefore believed that the United States should take its cue in colonial administration from the Dutch in Indonesia and that the foundation of American policy should be to bring "... the natives of these islands eventually to our own standard of living."³⁵ Of course, Clark's idea of modelling the "American colony" on Dutch Indonesia is horrifying to anyone who is aware that the Dutch had one of the worst reputations for the exploitation of subject peoples in the history of European imperialism.³⁶ More importantly from a strategic point of view, Clark was indulging in ideas about social engineering with an eye to providing for the military security of the American outposts. To Clark, Micronesia would have been much more militarily secure if it was populated by white Americans rather than "natives" with "limited" political, economic, and social "mentality and maturity" or East Asians with "dangerous and subversive" ideas.³⁷

³³ Ibid., 512-513.

³⁴ Ibid., 513.

³⁵ Ibid., 515.

³⁶ See Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: The United States And The Struggle For Indonesian Independence, 1945-1949* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), 19-42.

³⁷ See Clark, "Administration of the Former Japanese Mandated Islands," 511-513.

Not all American officers reacted negatively to the temporary presence of East Asians in the islands. Army officers on the spot, faced with constructing and maintaining the Army's postwar Pacific bases, reacted somewhat differently from Phillips and Clark when it came to using Chinese and Filipino laborers, though none of these officers seemed very keen on the idea of a large East Asian population in the islands either.

The Army's duties in the Philippines, the Marianas, and the Ryukyus fell into three categories: construction projects for postwar bases and base facilities, depot operations and technical services for processing war surplus equipment to America's allies, and housekeeping and general maintenance duties. To carry out these duties after the loss of so many American military personnel to demobilization, Lieutenant General Hull, AFMIDPAC, and Major General James Christiansen, Acting Commanding General of US Army Forces, Western Pacific (AFWESPAC) both sought to use the indigenous population for the tasks at hand.³⁸

Hull especially, however, argued that there were too few "qualified natives", especially on Guam, to train or exploit as a significant labor pool. Though some attempt was apparently made by Hull to recruit and train Guamanians for these tasks, both generals either argued for the continued use of Japanese prisoners of war or for finding another labor source by recruiting East Asian civilian workers.³⁹ For example, in late August 1946, Hull, faced with the imminent removal of Japanese POWs, suggested using

³⁸ See Christiansen to MacArthur, July 30, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFWESPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives. See also Hull to MacArthur, August 11, 1946, RG 9, Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, *ibid*.

³⁹ See Christiansen to MacArthur, July 19, 1946, and July 27, 1946, AFWESPAC, *ibid*. See also Hull to MacArthur, July 23, 1946; and August 11, 1946, AFMIDPAC, *ibid*. For the continuing need for Japanese POWs as manual laborers, see Whitehead to MacArthur, July 11, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, PACUSA, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

Chinese laborers or even contracted Japanese civilians to carry out the physical labor in the Marianas. In complete contrast to the naval planners quoted above, Hull was ready to import over 2000 Chinese carpenters, masons, electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and truck drivers to the islands in order to complete base construction projects.⁴⁰

For reasons not entirely explained, MacArthur informed Hull that Chinese laborers could only be used in the Marianas to process the over one billion dollars worth of war surplus equipment and supplies which the US was providing to the Chinese Nationalists in 1946.⁴¹ MacArthur refused, of course, to consider using Japanese POWs or civilians for fairly obvious security reasons and because he claimed that US retention of POWs would have created "political complications" in negotiations with the Soviet Union over POW releases.⁴² However, MacArthur and the JCS, in complete contrast to the views of the Navy planners noted above, were willing to consider Filipino laborers for the Marianas. In addition, MacArthur's headquarters was willing to use Filipino laborers for various activities on Iwo Jima in 1947 when Major General Francis Griswold, Commanding General of the Marianas-Bonins Command (MARBO), asked for Japanese POWs to warehouse supplies, repair typhoon damage, and prepare equipment for shipment to Japan and South Korea and was told he could employ Filipinos instead.⁴³

It must be emphasized that the ideas suggested by officers such as Philipps and Clark did not constitute an official policy toward Pacific Is-

⁴⁰ See Hull to MacArthur, August 22, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, *ibid.*

⁴¹ See MacArthur to Hull, August 24, 1946, *ibid.*; and Pollard, *Economic Security and the Origins of the Cold War*, 172.

⁴² See MacArthur to Hull, November 12, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁴³ *Ibid.* See also Griswold to MacArthur, May 13, 1947; and June 24, 1947; as well as Whitehead to Griswold, July 12, 1947; all in RG 9: Radiograms, MARBO, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

landers in the late 1940s. The author has not encountered any evidence which indicates there was ever an official policy to change the racial composition of the islands or to settle large numbers of white Americans in Micronesia. While the consolidation of American control has been attempted since 1945 by teaching English to the Micronesians, importing American material goods, and implementing American-style welfare and social services,⁴⁴ an official cultural policy *per se* does not seem to have been at work since the end of the Pacific War. Still, even if the opinions of these officials and officers did not constitute a policy, an examination of their writings reveals thoughts which were antiethical to Rooseveltian national self-determination rhetoric embodied in the Atlantic Charter. Just as the world was beginning to turn toward decolonization and national self-determination for non-white peoples, some American officers were willing to forego the realization of this higher ideal in order to satisfy the perceived requirements of American strategic security in the postwar Pacific.

Mexicans, Filipinos, and African-Americans in the Postwar Pacific Basin

The desire to lessen the numbers of non-whites in the postwar Pacific Islands did not stop with East Asians. In fact, documents from General MacArthur's headquarters in 1946 and 1947 indicate that high-ranking Army officers wanted to decrease the percentage of African-American troops serving in the postwar Pacific and replace them with white soldiers. This desire to limit non-white military participation in the region also extended to Filipinos serving in the United States Army, Filipinos serving in an ad-

⁴⁴ See Robert J. Kiste, "Termination of the U.S. Trusteeship in Micronesia," *Journal of Pacific History* 21 (October 1986): 128.

junct Army organization known as the Philippine Scouts (PS), and members of the 201st Mexican Fighter Squadron, a military unit on loan from the government of Mexico which served with the AAF during the final stages of the Pacific War.

During the final months of the Pacific War, General George Kenney, then Commanding General of the US' Far Eastern Air Forces (FEAF), made repeated requests to General of the Army Air Forces Henry Arnold to have the 201st Mexican Fighter Squadron relieved of its duties and sent back to North America. Kenney cited the change in the tactical situation in the Pacific as one reason for the lack of need for the squadron's services, but he also claimed that the squadron was below par in its operational and safety standards and that it had experienced undue losses in training accidents. In short, Kenney did not believe the squadron would ever be anything more than "mediocre" in combat.⁴⁵

Kenney's reasoning and that of his subordinate commanders was interesting from a cultural perspective. Kenney blamed the squadron's poor performance on "language differences" which allegedly made training the squadron's personnel difficult and resulted in a lower standard of efficiency. One month later, Brigadier General Frederick Smith, Commanding General of the 5th Fighter Command, elaborated on Kenney's assessment. Writing to the commanding general of the Fifth Air Force, Smith claimed that the squadron's deficiencies stemmed from more than just "language problems." According to Smith, the real problems were differences in experience levels, "speech difficulties," and "mental temperament."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ See Kenney to Arnold, subj: Request for Release of Unit from Southwest Pacific Ocean Area, June 24, 1945, 720.151-2, AFSHRC.

⁴⁶ See *Ibid.*; and Smith to CG 5th Air Force, July 24, 1945, *Ibid.*

This cultural insensitivity and subtle racism toward Mexicans should not be surprising given the context of the time. The United States of the 1940s was an extremely racist society and the practically all-white officer corps of the American military cannot have been expected to understand or be sympathetic to the needs of non-white military personnel under their charge. Nevertheless, primary documents on this subject provide a fascinating window for historians to view institutional racism and cultural stereotyping by white American military officers of non-white troops.

The War Department Operations and Plans Division Diary is one source for investigating this phenomenon and it contains one example of Douglas MacArthur's racism *vis-à-vis* African-American soldiers. In October 1945, MacArthur suggested that former Philippine Scouts who had joined the Army of the United States (AUS) during the Pacific War be retained as part of the proposed 400,000 man postwar strength of the United States Army in the Pacific in lieu of "colored", i.e., African-American, Army personnel. In other words, MacArthur was suggesting that demobilized African-American military personnel from the Pacific Basin be replaced with Filipinos.⁴⁷

A second indication of postwar racism against African-American troops serving in the Pacific occurred in March 1946. At that time, General Whitehead reported to Undersecretary of War Kenneth Royall that PACUSA had experienced a sudden increase in venereal disease among its units. Without providing any documentary evidence, Whitehead asserted that the

⁴⁷ See 0900 Reports for October 15, 1945; October 29, 1945; November 10, 1945; December 17, 1945; February 27, 1946; March 21, 1946; April 4, 1946; and March 22, 1946; all in 0900 Reports, box 5, OPD Diary, DDEL. Filipino troops were considered "second class" citizens in the United States Army, evidenced by MacArthur's request that 3000 white US Army officers be assigned to officer the higher ranks of these forces. Filipino officers were to be limited to the company-grade ranks of second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain.

increase was particularly acute in "colored" troops.⁴⁸ Whitehead's allusion to African-American soldiers' sexual promiscuity fits a pattern of institutional racism against non-white soldiers in the postwar Pacific Basin commands. Arnold Fisch, for instance, has documented that on Okinawa, African-American troops were blamed out of all proportion to their numbers for violent crimes against the Ryukyans. Fisch documented that some white officers at times even admitted that African-American soldiers were victims of institutional racism and the Army's segregationist policies more than anything else, but these officers still consistently strove to reduce the number of African-American soldiers in the Ryukyus as a "solution" to incidents between US military personnel and the Ryukyans. Moreover, Fisch has shown that the same style of blame without evidence emerged after Philippine Scouts relieved the African-American units on Okinawa in 1946-1947 and the friction between US military personnel and indigenous civilians continued.⁴⁹

What Fisch's work demonstrates is the complexity of racial relations in the Pacific Islands at this time. Though African-American troops were not the only US military offenders against the Filipinos and Ryukyans, these indigenous peoples exhibited an extreme hostility to the presence of African-American soldiers. Moreover, the Filipinos and Ryukyans did not coexist very well either because of Filipino perceptions of the Ryukyans as Japanese conquerors and oppressors. Timothy Maga similarly reports a xenophobic reaction among Guamanians to the presence of African-American troops, a racist reaction of white soldiers *vis-à-vis* the Chamorros, and a

⁴⁸ See Whitehead to Royall, subj: Information On The Pacific Air Command, U.S. Army For The Undersecretary Of War, March 15, 1946, 720.04-3, AFSHRC.

⁴⁹ See Fisch, *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands*, 81-87.

mutual Chamorro contempt for whites, whom they derisively called "haoles".⁵⁰

Examples of how extreme these racist stereotypes could become when combined with concerns for the cultural security of the postwar Pacific are replete in the primary documents. For instance, in early July 1946, Lieutenant General Wilhelm Styer, Commanding General of AFWESPAC, and Major General Christiansen submitted a list of all-white Army units in the Philippines and the Ryukyus which were to be deleted and replaced by the Philippine Scouts because of postwar demobilization. Both generals were particularly concerned about taking this action, however, claiming that Philippine Scouts who met certain criteria could reenlist in the Regular Army (RA) after a brief naturalization period, resulting in a situation in which the majority of the Army forces in the Pacific would soon be Filipino. Christiansen's staff had mistakenly typed 8% of the Philippine Scouts enlisting in the Regular Army under these conditions instead of his intended estimate of 80%. Once this correction was made, he assumed that very few white troops would remain in the western Pacific given the temptations of demobilization. Accordingly, he urged General MacArthur to "... avert the undesirable situation which can occur if the opportunity to enlist in RA remains open to substantial numbers of naturalized ex Philippine Scouts."⁵¹ Even though MacArthur's headquarters assured Christiansen that ex-Philippine Scouts could not legally enlist in the Regular Army under the alleged

⁵⁰ Ibid.; see also telephone interview with Dr. Timothy Maga, Senior Professor of Modern Diplomatic History at Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts, formerly Chancellor of the University of Maryland Overseas Four Campus Program on Guam, and founding president of the University of Maryland–Republic of the Marshall Islands Campus, November 23, 1993.

⁵¹ See Styer to MacArthur, July 6, 1946; and Christiansen to MacArthur, July 8, 1946, both found in RG 9: Radiograms, AFWESPAC, MacArthur Memorial. See also Christiansen to MacArthur, July 8, 1946; and July 15, 1946, *ibid.*

conditions, Christiansen continued to assert that large numbers of Filipinos would comprise the Western Pacific Base Command (WPBC) and that white troop quotas would not be filled to the maximum.⁵²

Concern with keeping soldiers of different racial compositions compartmentalized in certain areas of the Pacific continued to be evidenced in Army documents throughout the summer of 1946. In late July 1946, MacArthur reminded Styer and Christiansen about Army recruiting procedures which allowed African-Americans and Puerto Ricans to be enlisted or reenlisted only in units which had traditionally been composed of "colored" soldiers.⁵³ The recruiting regulations also directed that Filipinos could only be reenlisted into the Regular Army if they had prior service in that organization. All newly enlisting Filipinos, therefore, could only be enlisted in the Philippine Scouts for service exclusively in the Philippine Islands and that force could not exceed 12,000 men. All other enlistments for the Regular Army had to be by white male US citizens between the ages of 18 and 34.⁵⁴

Once the Army determined that Filipino soldiers would be limited to service in the Philippine Scouts or in selected Regular Army units, the emphasis in the documents focused on the number of African-American soldiers in the Pacific Islands. MacArthur and the War Department must have ultimately agreed with Christiansen's concerns about an "appropriate" racial balance in the islands since on July 30, 1946 MacArthur agreed to reduce the

⁵² See MacArthur to Christiansen, July 10, 1946; and Christiansen to MacArthur, July 15, 1946; *ibid.*

⁵³ In this time period, the Army considered both African-Americans and Puerto Ricans to be "colored". While there were separate units for each ethnic group, both types of Army units were labelled "colored" in their official designations. See Dale Wilson, "Recipe for Failure: Major General Edward M. Almond and Preparation of the U.S. 92nd Infantry Division for combat in World War II," *Journal of Military History* 56 (July 1992): 473-488.

⁵⁴ See MacArthur to Christiansen, July 28, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFWESPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

number of African-American soldiers in AFWESPAC.⁵⁵ Christiansen, however, was apparently not satisfied with the numbers suggested since he radioed MacArthur several weeks later claiming that the number of African-American soldiers remaining was still about 40% of the American troops in the Philippines and that this figure needed further downward revision.⁵⁶ Arguing that the War Department, his command, and Ambassador Paul McNutt had assured Philippine President Manuel Roxas that the number of African-American soldiers would be reduced to 10% of the US soldiers in the Philippines (the national percentage of African-Americans upon which the Army was basing its troop quotas), Christiansen asserted that the number of African-American soldiers had to be further reduced in order to maintain "amicable relations" with the Philippine Republic.⁵⁷ In effect, Christiansen was blaming soured US-Philippine relations over disagreements concerning postwar US base rights in the islands on the presence of African-American troops in the new republic.

This question of postwar bases caught the attention of other officers concerned with the defense of the Pacific Basin as it became a major diplomatic issue between the two nations in 1946 and 1947. In late October 1946, General Whitehead wrote to Major General Otto Wayland, Assistant Commandant of the Army's Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, about his concerns for American bases in the Philip-

⁵⁵ See MacArthur to Christiansen, July 30, 1946, *ibid.*

⁵⁶ See Christiansen to MacArthur, September 17, 1946, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* OPD indicated in February 1946 that "colored" soldiers would continue to be inducted into the Army at the ratio of 10%, but that overseas commanders would be required to utilize a 15% ratio of "Negro" troops. As subsequent documents indicate, however, Christiansen, Whitehead, and other officers in the postwar Pacific continued to discuss matters in terms of the 10% quota and continued to attempt a reduction of African-American military personnel in their areas well below that ratio. For the OPD directive, see O900 Report, February 11, 1946, box 5, OPD Diary, DDEL.

piners and to charge the Philippine government with bad faith on a wartime promise for air base rights at Nichols Field and Fort McKinley on Luzon. Whitehead asserted that the Philippines had promised the US the use of these facilities in August 1945 but was now trying to "force" the US out. Whitehead also cited the low morale of US troops stationed there because of temporary living quarters and argued that the US should either obtain the base rights or get out of the Philippines all together. He reiterated the same points to Major General Eugene Eubank, Commanding General of the 13th US Air Force, in a letter written about two weeks later.⁵⁸

Christiansen also later referred to Philippine charges of the "lawlessness" of American soldiers in the Philippines as a reason for tense US-Philippine relations. While he did not elaborate on what that behavior entailed, he claimed that the Filipinos largely blamed African-American soldiers for "misbehavior". In fact, the behavior of US military forces in the Philippines in general seems to have been atrocious. Numerous documents in General Whitehead's papers refer to American soldiers who acted autocratically and arrogantly toward Filipinos, including ransacking houses, driving at unsafe speeds in crowded cities such as Manila, and commonly exhibiting drunk and disorderly conduct. One example occurred in November 1946, when the officer commanding an Army truck company denied that one of his drivers was responsible for injuring Filipinos in downtown Manila. The crux of the matter, however, was that even if the driver was guilty, the company commander thought the life of a Filipino to be "worth" the driver saving twenty minutes on a delivery run! Moreover, the situation was not helped by US soldiers deserting from their posts in the Philippines, a situation which

⁵⁸ See Whitehead to Wayland, October 24, 1946, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC. See also Whitehead to Eubank, November 7, 1946, 168.6008-1, *ibid*.

eventually had to be controlled by placing a curfew on US military personnel in the islands after late 1946.⁵⁹

More central to the theme of American cultural perceptions, the disagreement over base rights can be taken as a representative case study of the Army's racial policies in the 1940s and the attitudes of white officers toward African-American troops in the postwar period. In spite of this documentary evidence that American forces in general could be capable of callous and unprofessional behavior, high-ranking officers in the Pacific specifically focused their attention on the competence and professionalism of African-American soldiers. In addition, African-American units continued to be blamed for endangering future American base rights in the Philippines, evidenced by Christiansen's argument that stable Philippine-American relations depended on further reducing the number of African-American soldiers in the archipelago and replacing them with white troops.⁶⁰

Whitehead's attitudes seemed to epitomize these racist attitudes toward African-American soldiers. For example, he told Major General Albert Hegenberger, Commanding General of the AAF's First Air Division on Okinawa, that low morale among African-American soldiers on Okinawa was due to poor leadership and he implied that African-American soldiers especially had to be provided with strong and paternalist behavior and had to be "... drilled and disciplined until they are respectable and respected units." He also saw problems resulting from the activities of a few "trouble-mak-

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, September 21, 1946. See also Major General Francis Griswold, COMAF 20, to Whitehead, Outgoing Messages, November 11, 1946, 720.1623, AFSHRC; Major General Eugene Eubank, COMAF 13, to Whitehead, *ibid.*; and Whitehead to Eubank, October 10, 1946, *ibid.*; in addition, see Whitehead to Eubank, November 7, 1946, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC; and Eubank to Whitehead, Incoming Messages, December 20, 1946, 720.1622, *ibid.*

⁶⁰ See Christiansen to MacArthur, September 21, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFWESPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

ers" within the enlisted ranks, not from the Army's segregationist policies or the lack of recreational facilities for non-white soldiers on the island. In the end, Whitehead fatalistically told Hegenberger that the AAF was "stuck" with a 10% "colored" troop quota and that the service had to get "... useful service out of them."⁶¹

The number of African-American soldiers in the postwar Pacific Islands continued to be discussed in an impersonal, yet not very surprising, context of racial quotas. In late October 1946, MacArthur disapproved Christiansen's request to retrain "colored" soldiers as antiaircraft artillery (AAA) troops because African-Americans were not enlisted into such units by the War Department and because MacArthur wanted current African-American units to count in future drawdowns mandated by Washington.⁶² Later in the same month, MacArthur radioed General Hull that his command had an "excess quota" of African-American troops, that white troops only numbered 75% of the forces in the AFMIDPAC area, and that the "problem" was going to get worse since additional "colored" troops would have to be moved from the Philippines to Hull's command if they were not demobilized. Frightfully, MacArthur's headquarters continually referred to the proposed transfers of African-American soldiers as "shipments of Negroes."⁶³

The desire by the War Department and MacArthur to get African-American troops out of the Philippines by transferring them to AFMIDPAC raised objections from Hull, as well as from other subordinate commanders.

⁶¹ See Whitehead to Hegenberger, *Outgoing Messages*, October 10, 1946, 720.1623; see also Whitehead to Hegenberger, November 4, 1946, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection; both documents found in the AFSHRC.

⁶² See MacArthur to Christiansen, October 19, 1946, RG 9: Radiograms, AFWESPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁶³ See MacArthur to Hull, October 20, 1946; and October 28, 1946; both in RG 9: Radiograms, AFMIDPAC, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

In late November 1946, Hull informed MacArthur that AFMIDPAC's "colored" troop strength would exceed the 10% quota when African-American soldiers from the Philippines were transferred into his charge.⁶⁴ In January 1947, Major General Griswold, Commanding General of MARBO, radioed Major General George Moore, Commanding General of the Philippines-Ryukyus Command (PHILRYCOM), that the Marianas, like the Philippines, would not be a suitable location to place a large number of African-American units. Claiming that there were no recreational facilities for "colored" troops and "... no civilian outlets ... for them ...", Griswold placed the major blame for African-American troops not being welcomed in the Marianas on the indigenous population.⁶⁵ Citing conditions of alleged civilian resistance to the presence of African-American soldiers, Griswold radioed Moore two days later that a large number of "Negroes" could not be accepted because it might swell the "colored" military population in the Marianas to more than 10%. Griswold also argued that "colored" troop strength in the Marianas should be kept well below 10%, that Philippine Scouts should not be used to replace demobilized white troops, and that there were "too many" African-American and Filipino soldiers in the Marianas.⁶⁶

Subsequently, Griswold radioed MacArthur and requested that the Far Eastern Command decrease the number of African-American soldiers below the national 10% quota. Although action on the request seems to have taken about two months, by April 1947 MacArthur was asking Griswold for a list

⁶⁴ Ibid., November 30, 1946; and December 14, 1946.

⁶⁵ See Griswold to Moore, January 26, 1947, RG 9: Radiograms, MARBO, MacArthur Memorial Archives. PHILRYCOM had been the AFWESPAC command until January 1, 1947, whereas MARBO had been the AFMIDPAC command until the same date. See Christiansen to MacArthur, May 19, 1947, box 14, RG 5: Correspondence, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

⁶⁶ See Griswold to Moore, January 28, 1947, RG 9: Radiograms, MARBO, MacArthur Memorial Archives.

of additional "colored" units which could be redesignated as "white" as a way of further reducing the number of African-American units serving in the Marianas-Bonins Command.⁶⁷ Griswold quickly returned with a list which eliminated over 200 African-American troop billets, replaced them temporarily with Philippine Scouts, and then replaced the Philippine Scouts with more than 200 white soldiers. Griswold claimed that after all of the personnel transfers were completed only two African-American enlisted men and two enlisted Philippine Scouts would remain in Griswold's operating reserve.⁶⁸

In spite of the widespread attempt to get African-American soldiers out of the postwar Pacific, there were certain tasks for which African-American troops were desired. "Colored" soldiers were apparently assigned in large numbers to ammunition handling, bomb disposal, and heavy construction units. Accordingly, their services were at times highly desired by American commanders in the postwar Pacific who were charged with building bases, clearing debris, and repairing damage in the islands. For example, in a series of radio messages in February 1947, Whitehead ordered his chief of staff, Major General Thomas White, to have an overstrength unit of 300 African-American soldiers brought to the Marianas to begin bomb disposal assignments. Whitehead told White that it was "... essential if we are to get any work done in the Marianas that every possible action be taken to expedite the shipment ..." of "colored" soldiers from the Philippines to Guam, implying that until African-American soldiers were on hand to carry

⁶⁷ See Griswold to MacArthur, January 30, 1947, *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, April 24, 1947; and April 26, 1947.

out the most dangerous and physically arduous tasks, postwar base construction in the Marianas could not commence.⁶⁹

How are historians to interpret these documents? Are they examples of American Army officers concerned more with maintaining amiable relations with the Philippine Republic and the Micronesians than with defending the rights of African-American soldiers? Or were the officers merely trying to place blame on the indigenous populations for the results of Army segregation policies which they either supported or could do nothing about? In the end, a definitive answer to these questions is impossible because of the complexity of racial relations noted above. A number of possible answers, however, are conceivable.

First, it is slightly possible, though not very realistic, to suppose that these officers were not necessarily racists but perceived Filipino and especially African-American soldiers merely as "administrative inconveniences" which they wanted to be rid of as soon as possible. Not being able to do anything about the Army's segregationist policies, removing African-American soldiers and replacing them with white units may have been perceived as the route of fewest obstacles for these officers and for the United States government.

In addition, indigenous racism to the presence of non-white troops was a reality. Of course, while the racism of white officers and the island populations was not mutually exclusive, William Christopher Hamel and Timothy Maga, specialists on US-Philippine and US-Guamanian relations respectively, have both informed this author that the Filipinos and Guamanians

⁶⁹ See Whitehead to White, *Outgoing Messages*, February 13, 1947; and February 14, 1947, 720.1623; see also "The Report of the Joint Marianas Board on the Military Development of the Marianas," June 1, 1947, 178.2917-1, 34; both documents found in the AFSHRC.

in particular exhibited a strong xenophobia and chauvinism toward African-American and white troops in the Philippines and Guam in the 1940s. There was also concern over friction between Filipinos and Micronesians, since American officers planning for the military development of the Marianas talked about a "serious racial problem" ensuing from the importation of Filipino workers into the Marianas.⁷⁰

However, given how thoroughly racism was woven into the fabric of American society in the 1940s, and especially how endemic racism was at all levels of the United States military during the Second World War,⁷¹ it is next to impossible not to label these incidents as blatant examples of mid-twentieth century American racism and institutional racism by high-ranking American military officers in the postwar Pacific. As Allan Millett, Roy Talbert, and Dale Wilson have all demonstrated with internal documents from the Army and the Marine Corps, the US military throughout the twentieth century considered African-Americans as "lazy", "undependable" in combat situations, and even "disloyal" because of past treatment by American society and alleged "susceptibility" to "left-leaning" ideologies.⁷²

Moreover, it ought to be remembered that MacArthur and his immediate commanders viewed non-white soldiers, even those in US uniforms, to

⁷⁰ See telephone interview with William Christopher Hamel, a specialist in US-Philippine relations and Assistant Professor of History, St. Anselm College, Manchester, New Hampshire, November 16, 1993; see also November 23, 1993 telephone interview with Timothy Maga.

⁷¹ For an example of these institutional attitudes, see Wilson, "Recipe for Failure," 473-488. Also, members of the Joint Marianas Board exhibited this racist thinking in no uncertain terms in June 1947 when they argued that "significant" morale problems existed among white military personnel in the Marianas and that the low morale was inherent whenever "... large numbers of young men are by circumstances denied in the main ... their wonted social contacts with women of their race ..."; see "Report of the Joint Marianas Board," June 1, 1947, 178.2917-20, AFSHRC.

⁷² See Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 375; Roy Talbert, Jr., *Negative Intelligence: The Army and the American Left, 1917-1941* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 113-114, 243-244, 264-265, and 267-268; and Wilson, "Recipe for Failure," 473-488.

be security risks to the US' postwar strategic position in the islands. American planners in general were highly concerned with excluding East Asians from permanent residence in the islands and populating Micronesia with white Americans from the mainland. These Army officers, fully imbued with American society's distrust of non-whites, unfortunately perceived African-Americans in the Pacific as similar detractors from, rather than contributors to, postwar American national security in the region. There was no conspiracy at work, however, in these matters. Because of inherent racial prejudices already in place, there did not have to be.

Pacific Islanders as Children

At the same time that American officers were concerned about the exclusion of East Asians and African-Americans from the postwar Pacific Islands, another interesting pattern is noticeable in regard to American cultural perceptions of the Micronesians themselves. If Filipinos were considered lazy, Chinese were considered troublesome, Japanese were considered dangerous, and African-Americans were considered inconvenient, then Pacific Islanders were viewed primarily as children who needed guidance and American-style reform in their lives.

There is some evidence that not all Americans viewed the islanders in such innocent terms. Former Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, writing in *Collier's* magazine in August 1946 to oppose the Navy's administration of the Micronesian Islands, quoted a naval officer labelling the Micronesians as "gooks" and portraying them as "... the dumbest, most worthless, lazy, filthy, no-good, no-account people I have ever seen." This officer, however, also alleged that the Micronesians lie, cheat, steal, have "no morals", and would cut American throats if they were not "... afraid of American



planes."⁷³ Unfortunately, Ickes did not or could not provide more information or documentation on the officer. In addition, Ickes' motives are questionable because of his political agenda to abolish the naval administration in Micronesia in favor of Interior Department civil administration.⁷⁴ Moreover, this is the only piece of evidence this author has encountered in which Micronesians were portrayed by Americans as dangerous or conniving. While Timothy Maga has informed me that the perception of Micronesians as "lazy" welfare recipients was more widespread in the 1940s than is commonly known,⁷⁵ it seems that, for the most part, Americans viewed the indigenous population as innocent children in need of Uncle Sam's guidance.

Robert Kiste has suggested that since the earliest days of naval control in Micronesia, elements of social engineering, such as Western style education, universal medical care, and a preponderance of American material goods, were introduced into the islands which had more to do with the imposition of American values than with the well-being and best interests of the Micronesians.⁷⁶ But as Emily Rosenberg asserts, imposing American cultural values and lifestyles was not seen as an imposition by many Americans but as the best way to "civilize" "premodern" or "savage" peoples.⁷⁷ Primary sources are heavily laden with these paternalistic cultural terms and assumptions. Perceptions of Pacific Islanders as helpless children who had to be guided in every action and decision permeates these sources and tells us a great deal about American cultural arrogance in the mid-1940s.

⁷³ See Ickes, "Navy at Its Worst," 22-23 and 67.

⁷⁴ See Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 461-573.

⁷⁵ See telephone conversation with Timothy Maga, November 23, 1993.

⁷⁶ See Kiste, "Termination of U.S. Trusteeship," 128. See also Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 8.

⁷⁷ See Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 3-13 and 229-234.

Reflective of this style of cultural paternalism and racial prejudice was Captain Harry Pence. Pence, a retired naval officer recalled to active duty because of his alleged expertise in administering conquered territory and people, expressed his paternalistic attitudes toward Pacific Islanders in April 1943 while planning for the postwar naval control over Micronesia. Assigned in December 1942 as Officer-in-Charge (OinC) of OP-11X, the Navy's Office for Occupied Areas, Pence cited allegedly "limited" political maturity among the Micronesians as a reason for maintaining strong naval government in the islands after the Pacific War.⁷⁸

Pence further asserted that the "native" population possessed a "very primitive" social organization and political tradition and that the development of the island populations along "feudalistic" family, clan, and village lines supposedly made it impossible to create any type of "republican" form of government in the future. According to Pence, "... the islanders seldom comprehend or respond rationally to federations or to other features of the American-European political patterns..." and any sudden attempt to introduce "republican" forms of government would destroy whatever "democracy" already existed. Therefore, it was thought that the interests of the inhabitants would best be served "... by establishing in most of the islands a strong but benevolent government--a government paternalistic in character ..."⁷⁹

⁷⁸ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 1, 16; and OinC, OP-11X Memorandum, April 22, 1943 as found in *ibid.*, 18-20. Pence was assigned to this duty because he had been involved with American occupation duties in Trieste after the First World War. The Office of Occupied Areas was subsequently redesignated the Occupied Areas Section (OP-50E) and then the Military Government Section (OP-13-2) in August 1944. See Fisch, *Military Government In The Ryukyu Islands*, 13.

⁷⁹ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 1, 19.

One example of this paternalism is highly reminiscent of the Japanese interwar administration of Micronesia from which American administration was presumed to be so different. A Navy planning document stated that "natives" on postwar Guam would fill all of the lesser positions such as police, clerks, stenographers, teachers, nurse's aids, domestics, and chauffeurs.⁸⁰ In addition, the document outlined how the naval military government's educational program throughout the rest of Micronesia would "educate" the islanders to fill similar positions while being supervised by American naval officers and civilian specialists. While the authors of the document saw this occupational training as a means to self-government, they also emphasized fiscal economy since it was assumed that Micronesians could be paid less than white Americans brought from the continental United States to perform the same tasks.⁸¹

Apparently, most American planners during the war simply took it for granted that strong naval government would produce "happy natives" if the Micronesians were governed by Western political and cultural standards, as the Guamanians had been since 1898.⁸² Of course, this last assumption ig-

⁸⁰ See "Proposed Plan for Civil Government by the Navy of Certain Pacific Islands Under United States Control," September 24, 1945, box 13, series 4, Politico-Military Affairs Records, OA, NHC. See also Ballendorf, "The Japanese And The Americans," 10. Though his assertions were motivated by his political agenda of obtaining Interior Department administrative control over the trust territory, Ickes points out that when indigenous labor was used in Micronesia, laborers were paid a lower wage than white laborers from the continental US. For example, a Guamanian carpenter would be paid about 43 cents an hour while a white American from the US would be paid \$1.66 an hour. Again according to Ickes, white laborers received more compensation in the form of benefits, paid leave, and commissary privileges as well. Nothing this author had encountered in his research or in American labor historiography would refute Ickes' charges of monetary preference by race and ethnicity. See Ickes, "Navy at Its Worst," 23. This racist mindset about Pacific Islanders' capabilities was not limited to the Micronesians. General Whitehead stated in June 1947 that he believed it would take an entire generation to train Okinawans to do skilled labor in areas such as technical supply and aircraft maintenance! See Whitehead to Major General Thomas White, June 10, 1947, 168.6008-1, Whitehead Collection, AFSHRC.

⁸¹ See "Proposed Plan for Civil Government," September 24, 1945, box 13, series 4, Politico-Military Affairs Records, OA, NHC.

⁸² See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 1, 22.

nored the dissatisfaction which the Guamanians themselves had expressed over American naval rule both before and after the Pacific War. More importantly, Pence's value judgements about "republican" forms of government and his definition of "primitive" ignored the sophistication with which many Micronesians, especially the Guamanians, pursued their political and economic interests within post-1945 American administrative guidelines. As Maga has illustrated, Guamanians were very adept at using sophisticated political logic to argue for American citizenship rights both before 1941 and after 1945. In addition, Jonathan Weisgall has demonstrated that the people of Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands never lost sight of their primary interest in returning home after the atomic bomb tests, in spite of allegedly "primitive" and "irrational" societal norms which supposedly caused them to lose sight of the "larger issues."⁸³

Additional evidence that the Micronesians were perceived as children who only needed to be minimally consulted about their future was evident in subsequent primary sources dealing with the Bikini atomic bomb tests. This 1946 test against selected American, German, and Japanese naval vessels was meant to determine the effects of atomic war at sea.⁸⁴ The fact that Bikini Atoll was chosen illustrates to what degree Micronesia was seen as a security network to be used for American strategic purposes. What is even more interesting, however, is how little the interests of the inhabitants and how greatly the lack of foresight on the part of Navy officials figured in the planning of the operation.

⁸³ See Timothy Maga, "Democracy and Defense" The Case of Guam, U.S.A., 1918-1941," *Journal of Pacific History* 20 (July 1985): 156-172; and *Defending Paradise*, 113-149 and 186-216; see also Jonathan M. Weisgall, "Micronesia And The Nuclear Pacific Since Hiroshima," *School of Advanced International Studies Review* 5 (Summer-Fall 1985): 41-55.

⁸⁴ See Graybar, "Bikini Revisited," 118-123; and *idem.*, "The 1946 Atomic Bomb Tests," 888-907.

According to Vice Admiral William Blandy, DCNO for Special Weapons and commander of Operation Crossroads, Bikini was chosen as the test site because it had a large anchorage, was free from violent storms, was close to American air bases in Kwajalein, Eniwetok, and Roi, and had predictable winds. He did not mention that the tests took place in Micronesia because they were far enough away from the United States to dispell American public concern about the effects of the bomb's blasts or radiation. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, he also did not mention the population of Bikini at all in his evaluation of the chosen site.⁸⁵

William Shurcliff, writing the official history of the operation in 1947, also cited nearby air bases, preditable winds and water currents, a protected anchorage, physical control by the United States, and the "near absence" of people as factors in choosing the islands. Shurcliff asserts that Bikini won out because it met all of the criteria and its population of 162 could be moved "readily."⁸⁶ Shurcliff may have been correct about easy transfer, but Dorothy Richard and Jonathan Weisgall have shown that the solution to finding a new home for the Bikinians would plague the United States in an embarrassing way for many years to come.⁸⁷

Moreover, the Navy's evacuation of the island and its attempts to find the Bikinians a new home is an interesting case study in cultural imperialism and undue assumptions. Richard herself accepted in 1957 that the island was chosen not only because of the criteria listed above but also be-

⁸⁵ See Vice Admiral William H.P. Blandy, USN, "Operation Crossroads: The Story of the Air and Underwater Tests of the Atomic Bomb at Bikini," *Army Ordnance* 31 (January-February 1947): 341-343.

⁸⁶ See William A. Shurcliff, *Bombs at Bikini: The Official Report of Operation Crossroads* (New York: W.H. Wise, 1947), 17.

⁸⁷ See Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 507-555; and Weisgall, "Nuclear Pacific," 41-55.

cause of the assumption that the Bikinians enjoyed only a "marginal existence" on the islands.⁸⁸ Richard's point, of course, seems to have been that the islanders would be able to enjoy a much more "modern" and "fulfilled" existence on another island with an American infrastructure, material goods, and administrative guidance.⁸⁹ Richard also accepted that the Bikinian reluctance to leave the island was due to their being "... the least cosmopolitan of the Marshallese." Citing a report about infrequent contact with the rest of the world, a peculiar accent, and the fact that they were the last Marshallese to be converted by missionaries, Richard subscribed to the notion that the Bikinians were "oceanic backwoodsmen" with a highly integrated society, tight kinship, and a "united front" against the world.⁹⁰

Likewise, Richard cited and seemed to accept the findings of a Board of Investigation in 1946 which blamed centuries of European, Japanese, and chieftain dominance for the Bikinians' alleged "vacillation", lack of decision making ability, and "lack of foresight." Richard would not or could not take into account the fact that the United States had promised the Bikinians an island on which life would be easier, that the United States was not able to deliver on that promise, and that the Bikinians were accordingly very decisive about returning to the atoll. If there was any "ignorance" on the part of the Bikinians, it was ignorance shared by American officials about the disastrous long-term effects of nuclear radiation on the bombed atoll.⁹¹

⁸⁸ See P. Drucker, "The Ex-Bikini Occupants of Kili," enclosure (1) to FieldTerPacIs, serial 580 as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 507-508.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 507-555.

⁹⁰ See Drucker, "Ex-Bikini Occupants," 507-508, *ibid.*

⁹¹ For an example of this ignorance, see the report by Howard G. McMillan, USCC Agricultural Production Specialist, Pacific Ocean Area, entitled "Rehabilitation for the Marshallese Natives of Rongerik," Exhibit 4 to Records of Proceedings of a Board... to Investigate the Proposed Resettlement of the Bikini-Rongerik Natives," encl (A) to GovMarshalls letter, September 26, 1947 as found in Richard, *United States Naval Administration*, Vol. 3, 522, 524; see also Weisgall, "Nuclear Pacific," 41-55.

The perception of innocent children in island paradises who craved for the "benefits" of American civilization continued to be enunciated after the war in other contexts and by other officials. In December 1945, Secretary of the Interior Ickes wrote Secretary of State Byrnes that civil administration of the islands by the Interior Department would "... assist the natives of the islands toward a better way of life within the limits of their capabilities and the potentialities of their environment."⁹² Ickes' August 1946 *Colliers* article also fully subscribed to perceptions of the Micronesians which confirm a great deal of Rosenberg's assertions that Americans have constantly viewed the world in terms which mirror their own domestic culture. For example, Ickes' denunciation of naval military government and naval civil administration for the Micronesians was based on his perception that the Micronesians were "just like" Americans in that they "... are born, grow up, play baseball, get married, raise families and die, just as we do here in America. In short, they are people."⁹³ Ickes' choice of words is interesting. They imply that "people" or "human beings" are those populations whose cultures and lifestyles resemble or equate with continental American tastes and values. Moreover, he criticized naval administration on the grounds that most Americans in the United States would not want to live under a similar system. Since Micronesians supposedly had similar values, or would so after US attempts at assimilation, a military system would be just as obnoxious to them.

Ickes then summed up his argument for civilian rule of the islands by explicitly comparing autocratic naval rule on Guam and American Samoa

⁹² See Ickes to Byrnes, December 29, 1945, file OF 85-L, "Trusteeship Of The Pacific Islands, May 1945 to 1950," box 572, White House Official Files, HSTL.

⁹³ See Ickes, "Navy at Its Worst," 22.

from 1898 to 1946 with allegedly enlightened rule by US civil authorities in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, and the Virgin Islands, as well as among American Indian tribes in the continental US.⁹⁴ Completely ignoring the complex histories of American military and civil administration of these areas and their indigenous populations, Ickes left the impression that American military rule over civilian populations was "bad" because it was "un-American" but that civil administration would be benign and enlightened. What Ickes failed to realize or refused to admit is that American civil administration of non-white peoples could be just as negative and insensitive as direct military rule.

The most interesting perspective about the article, however, is that Ickes did not oppose the idea of the UN strategic trusteeships in the Pacific Basin in 1946. At various points in this article, he described UN trusteeships as devices to guarantee US security, Micronesian human rights, and international confidence in the UN process.⁹⁵ Of course, this fact should not be surprising considering that the Interior Department under Ickes' leadership joined with the State Department in the last months of the war to devise the strategic trusteeship concept as a means to alleviate military opposition to a minimal UN role in the postwar Pacific. Still, for all of his opposition to naval civil administration in postwar Micronesia, Ickes was really not that far from the Navy's position. His disagreements with naval officials had more to do with differences over means to an end rather than goals themselves. It appears from this evidence that both Ickes and American naval officials believed American security in the postwar Pacific could

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22-23 and 67.

be buttressed by inculcating the indigenous population with American cultural values.

The perception of the islanders as children who had to be guided by Uncle Sam continued to be cited as the trusteeship negotiations came to an end in the fall of 1946 and the winter of 1947. Senator Warren Austin, in his speech to the UN Security Council in support of the US Draft Trusteeship Agreement of October 1946, stressed high-minded ideals such as maximum self-government, economic self-sufficiency, and "social progress" as a way to market the agreement to the Security Council. Austin, however, asserted that these goals could not be undertaken within the context of an "undeveloped" central government. The lack of a centralized government, similar to that of "modern" nations, seemed to make the Micronesians unfit to rule themselves in any manner.⁹⁶

American policymakers continued to play upon this theme of political "immaturity" and asserted that they were ruling in the best interests of the Pacific Islanders. In 1947, for example, Secretary of the Navy Forrestal testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the best interests of the Micronesians were in mind when the Navy asked for Senate approval of the UN Trust Territory Agreement. In contrast to his private emphasis on the security aspects of the UN agreement and his private misgivings about strategic trusteeship, Forrestal wrote and spoke publicly about the American presence in the islands in terms of political and social obligations to the UN and the Micronesians rather than the national interests of the United States.⁹⁷ Not denying the islands' paramount importance to

⁹⁶ See Austin to the UN Security Council, February 26, 1947, file 2-1-7, box 14, RG 80, NA; see also "United States Position On Soviet Proposal For Amendment Of Draft Trusteeship Agreement," JCS 1619/20, March 3, 1947, file 12-9-42 sec. 29, CCS 360, RG 218, NA.

⁹⁷ See US Senate, *Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory of the Pacific Islands*, 15.

the United States as security outposts, he now suggested that the major administrative goal would be to guarantee the Micronesians maximum self-government, basic civil rights and freedoms, and American citizenship. In effect, Forrestal made it sound as if the United States was undertaking strategic trusteeship in the Pacific for altruistic missionary, not military, reasons. Again, however, most Americans may not have considered the two aspects to be separate or exclusive.⁹⁸

Julius Krug, Ickes' successor as Secretary of the Interior, visited many of the islands in February and March of 1947 and his report is also replete with cultural assumptions, value judgements, and prejudices about the islanders and their role in an American sphere. Not surprisingly, Krug's conclusions were that the islanders hoped to achieve something akin to a domestic American lifestyle. Krug began his report with the assertion that military rule should be curtailed immediately and replaced by civil administration so that the US did not appear hypocritical and so that the islands could be held out as an international showcase displaying the "American way of life." Krug went on to explain that civil administration should stress educational programs designed to "... assist these island peoples in raising themselves to a reasonably modern social and cultural level." Though Krug admitted that some aspects of "native culture" should be preserved, he felt the US had a responsibility to do more than "... preserve them as an exhibit of bygone or 'primitive' culture."⁹⁹ Concerning the people of Guam, for instance, Krug asserted that naval administration had taught the Guamanians

⁹⁸ See proposed speech by Forrestal, "The United States' Role in the Trusteeship System," February 22, 1947, file 86-5-45, box 134, RG 80, NA; see also memo for Forrestal from Vice Admiral Forrest Sherman, DCNO for Operations, February 25, 1947, *ibid*.

⁹⁹ See "Report To The President: Pacific Island Inspection Tour Of J.A. Krug, Secretary Of The Interior, February-March 1947," file OF 85-L, box 572, HSTL.

the general principles of the American way of life and that the Guamanians were ready for autonomy since they " . . . speak our language with facility; they understand our political philosophy and have the same social organization and institutions that we have on the mainland. They have been devout Christians for generations and their loyalty to the United States is attested to in suffering and bloodshed."¹⁰⁰

Krug then discussed the people of American Samoa by dividing them into two groups. "Those who live in and around Pago Pago and have worked and associated with the American naval and civilian colony speak our language, practice our religions and social forms, and have a good understanding of our political philosophy." Samoans of the "back country," however, still lived in a "native" society and economy, retained their tribal customs and language, and retained what Krug considered a crude form of political governance called the "fono". An annual meeting of chiefs and officials employed as advisers by the naval government, Krug did not believe the "fono" was anything more than a "semblance" of a "truly democratic" legislative body. Apparently, the "fono" was too prone to be dominated by chiefs and family heads, but Krug was certain that with " . . . experience in the use of the franchise, American Samoans would soon adapt themselves to democratic institutions."¹⁰¹

Krug's views on the intimate relationship between Interior Department civil administration, the creation of American showcase societies in the Pacific, and postwar American security in the region were also quite evident in the report. Remarking about Micronesia itself, Krug argued that

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

"... a local society of self-respecting human beings, imbued with the love for democracy which comes to those who enjoy its benefits and who themselves perpetuate its existence, can be the greatest asset to our own security and [a] forward bulwark of the American way of life." Moreover, Krug thought it particularly important that civil administration be instituted on Okinawa, which was fast becoming one of the forwardmost American strategic bases. He believed that the "form" and "words" of "our way of life" had to be established on Okinawa as "... proof to the peoples of the Far East that democracy is suited to oriental peoples living in an oriental economy. A truly democratic Okinawa and Japan, lying as they do off the mainland of Asia, can serve as a spearhead of our way of life."¹⁰²

Because of the seeming mix of cynical strategic interest and missionary concern evident throughout these sources, it is appropriate to close with evidence which combines a highly paternalistic cultural arrogance with a simultaneous and awkward attempt to pay a compliment to the Pacific Islanders. Retired naval officer Vice Admiral Carleton Wright, Deputy Commander of US forces in the Marianas, wrote to *Proceedings* about the administrative problems the Navy encountered in the islands. Wright ended his article on a positive note, summing up his argument that no matter what the adversity, anyone who knew the "... intelligent and competent brown skinned folk of Micronesia admire the way that they have adapted themselves to their surroundings."¹⁰³ Given the cultural attitudes expressed by American officials toward Pacific Islanders and East Asians, it is not surprising to find that racial overtones were evident in "compliments" such

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ See Vice Admiral Carleton H. Wright, USN (RET), "Trust Territory Of The Pacific Islands," *USNIP* 74 (November 1948): 1341.

as these. Still, the incident reveals to what extent a cultural arrogance permeated planning documents and unofficial sources in the 1940s and how these cultural assumptions effected strategic thinking about the postwar Pacific Islands.

Conclusion

American cultural attitudes and assumptions in the 1940s were not only directed toward the Japanese in a vindictive manner, but also toward Pacific Islanders, other East Asians, and African-Americans in especially arrogant and paternalistic manners. Though there seemed to be a more positive attitude toward Pacific Islanders than toward Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, or African-Americans, the islanders were still perceived as a primitive, childish, and immature people who were unfit to rule themselves.

At first glance, the motivations of American strategic officials concerning "cultural security" may appear to be very ambiguous. On the one hand, both official and unofficial sources advocated a specific cultural orientation for the indigenous population as a way to couple the islands to the United States and secure them from covert "foreign subversion." At the same time, the idea of using white settlement, American-style Protestantism, and the English language might have been one method for creating an international cultural showcase for postwar American development. While military security and a showcase environment for the postwar world were probably not entirely mutually exclusive to their advocates, it is this author's opinion that the former objective was the primary one of importance to strategic policymakers and planners in the late 1940s.

If motivations were not crystal clear, however, the cultural perceptions of American strategic planners toward Pacific Islanders at least illu-

strate a number of concerns and patterns. Clearly, ideas about culturally converting the Pacific into an American lake suggests how prevalent fears were about guaranteeing the future territorial security of the region. In addition, the effects which the interwar, Pacific War, and early Cold War periods had on American strategic thinking are quite evident given that a cultural dimension to national security policy was so seriously and so often discussed by policymakers, planners, and strategic thinkers.

Conclusion

From the Old to the New: Continuities and Changes in American Pacific Policy

American strategic policy toward the Pacific Basin between 1945 and 1947 constituted an imperial solution to the US' anxieties about postwar security in the region as well as the most recent example of American westward expansionism. In addition, as Micronesia and other areas of the Pacific became entangled in Cold War international relations during the final months of the Roosevelt Administration and the first two years of the Truman Administration, American policy witnessed a number of continuities and changes from the pre-1941 period.

Similar to earlier periods of American diplomacy, US perceptions of national security were broad and multidimensional in nature. American policy toward the postwar Pacific was a microcosm of American expansion as Samuel Flagg Bemis, Emily Rosenberg, William Roger Louis, and other historians have depicted it.¹ To be absolutely sure about postwar security, American officials sought not only physical control in the region through military means, but they also wanted to buttress that physical control with

¹ See Bemis, *Latin American Policy of the United States*, 73-97; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 6; Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 3-13; Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*, 9-10 and 15-16; and Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 68-69.

the economic penetration of the Basin and the importation of American cultural values to the Pacific Islanders.

Also similar to earlier periods of US international relations, American strategy toward the postwar Pacific demonstrated a significant gap between rhetoric and reality. While Rooseveltian rhetoric about collective security, free trade, and national self-determination cannot be taken too seriously, the Pacific was the one area of the world where American policymakers and planners first and consistently disregarded even superficial adherence to internationalist thinking and great power cooperation. In effect, American officials during both the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations made it clear to other nations that the Pacific Basin was to be considered the US' strategic preserve by ensuring that the US had unilateral control over the occupation of Japan, the administration of Japan's Pacific possessions, and the fortification of the Pacific Islands north of the Equator.

There were, however, significant changes in the postwar period. Unlike the interwar period when the Navy and State Departments disagreed over the terms of the Washington Treaty System, a consensus about strategic security in the postwar Pacific was evident in the United States government. The dispute over annexation, trusteeship, and civil administration between the War and Navy Departments on the one hand and the State and Interior Departments on the other was not about questioning the right of the United States to dominate the postwar Pacific. To my knowledge, no official in the State or Interior Departments questioned the need for the US to create an American lake as a means of guaranteeing future strategic security. Indeed, the situation had changed greatly since the 1920s when naval

officers were alone in arguing for unilateral US control in Micronesia and abstention from the Washington System.²

Similarly, while the Army and Navy squabbled over the means of occupying, defending, and administering the region, their respective strategic ideas for the area were quite similar and had more to do with arguing over means than ends. Whether control was maintained by carrier fleets or strategic bombers, military officers were convinced that the Pacific Basin should become an "American lake." Although interservice rivalry was serious and divisive in the late 1940s, its affect on the formulation of US Pacific policy should not be exaggerated. When it came to postwar dispositions in the Pacific, officers from the two departments merely disagreed over tactics, not strategy.

This short time period also witnessed a recognition by American policymakers and planners that the prewar military doctrine based on a concentrated Pacific fleet and control over a number of individual islands strewn across the Pacific Basin was only partially sufficient as a means by which to dominate the Pacific and influence events in East Asia. The Japanese offensives of 1941-1942 and the subsequent American offensives of 1942-1945 reaffirmed the Mahanian faith in mobile forces among US naval officers and spread that gospel to officials throughout the executive and legislative branches of the US government. While the war also convinced American officials that the military development of entire island groups which could act as mutually supporting "strategic physical complexes" was also a necessary part of the national security equation, mobile forces remained paramount. When budgetary restrictions forced reductions across

² See Braisted, *United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922*, 580-688.

the board, key officers such as John Towers were able to assert that military base development was of secondary importance to mobile force procurement and the "strategic denial" of islands to "any other power."

The emphasis on the location of bases also changed. There were no plans made between 1945 and 1947 for resurrecting the prewar idea of Alaska-Hawaii-Panama as a defensive line for the Western Hemisphere. By 1947, Micronesia and the other Pacific Island groups taken from Japan were no longer considered the first line of defense in the Pacific nor even a second line of defense in case of a disaster in East Asia. Instead, Micronesia, the Bonins, the Volcanoes, Marcus Island, and the Aleutians became the "ultimate" or "final" line of American defense in the Pacific behind which there was to be no peacetime "retreat" on the order of 1898, 1919, or 1922.

Base configurations also steadily progressed westward toward the shores of East Asia as the United States became more involved in mainland affairs by 1947. The role of Micronesia is indicative of this westward progression. Between 1942 and 1945, strategic planners looked on Micronesia as the first line of territorial defense for the United States against a potentially resurgent postwar Japan. Yet between 1945 and 1947 the transformation of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union from wartime cooperation to postwar rivalry meant a transformation of American strategic plans. Sometime after 1944 and definitely by 1946, Japan ceased being the potential enemy of primary concern in the Pacific while the Soviet Union took on that role. The documents simultaneously indicate the formation of a rough strategic perimeter in the Pacific and East Asia

based on the defense of Japan, the Philippines, and China, rather than the western Pacific Islands.³

By 1947, China seems to have been replaced by French Indochina and South Korea as the American outposts on the East Asian mainland.⁴ The increasing failure of the Nationalist cause meant a shift north and south in American attention toward the mainland, with the Pacific Islands taking on a new support role for US forces in East Asia. Still, the evidence is not entirely conclusive that the strategic perimeter shifted altogether to mainland East Asia by 1947. Assertions by Generals Eisenhower, MacArthur, and Whitehead, as well as Admiral Nimitz and the Joint Board on the Military Development of the Marianas, suggests that high-ranking officers were planning on an evacuation of South Korea and Japan and the construction of a constricted strategic defense perimeter based on Alaska, Micronesia, and the Philippines as late as the summer of 1947.

To be sure, the Pacific was also a case study of interwar "strategic lessons" applied to the postwar period. The fact that American planners were still placing importance on Micronesia and even wartime bases in the South Pacific suggests the power of worst-case scenario thinking on American officials in the late 1940s and the trauma wrought on them by Pearl Harbor and the defeats of early 1942. Melvyn Leffler has found that American intelligence estimates of Soviet power in Europe and the Middle East at

³ Michael Schaller and John Lewis Gaddis both perceive a strategic perimeter forming after 1947. Schaller sees the perimeter forming in East Asia after the "reverse course" in Japan, while Gaddis argues that the perimeter originated in the Pacific and moved west toward the East Asian mainland as the US became more involved in that region. Conversely, I have asserted from War and Navy Department documents that strategic planners perceived a defense perimeter for the Pacific Basin long before 1947 and long before the East Asian mainland began to take on "frontline" importance. See Schaller, *American Occupation of Japan*, passim; and Gaddis, "The Strategic Perspective," 61-118.

⁴ See Robert Blum, *Drawing the Line: The Origin of American Containment Policy in East Asia* (New York: Norton Publishers, 1982).

this time began to equate Soviet power with prewar German capabilities and intentions.⁵ In a similar fashion, Soviet forces in East Asia were equated with prewar Japanese capabilities and intentions and some planners in Washington and Tokyo envisioned having to repeat a Pacific War-like retreat to Micronesia or even the South Pacific in the face of a future Soviet onslaught into the Pacific Basin. While these reports now appear to be fantastic, to officers who witnessed the "disarmament" of the 1920s, the "appeasement" of the 1930s, and the trauma of Pearl Harbor, Soviet power was a very sincerely feared future prospect.

The ultimate value of studying US Pacific policy in the late 1940s, however, rests upon the fact that these sources of American strategic insecurity eventually equated to regional hegemony and great power imperialism. Given that "imperialism" has had such a negative connotation in American thought and given that the region was both a microcosm and an anomaly of American foreign policy, the Pacific Basin is still a window through which to view very characteristic and mainstream currents of thought in the histories of US international relations, American expansionism, and the exportation of American values.

⁵ In "American Conception of National Security," Leffler argued that the Cold War began in the American mind sometime between 1945 and 1948. In *Preponderance of Power*, he asserted that the Cold War began very specifically in 1946. Though Leffler's thinking on the timing of Cold War's origins has changed over time, he still sees American intelligence analysis in the late 1940s as alarmist and largely inaccurate when it comes to investigating aggressive Soviet military intentions. See Leffler, "American Conception of National Security," 346-400; and *idem.*, *Preponderance of Power*, 100-140.

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President's Secretary's Files
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