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U.S. Defense Outposts in the Pacific

BY A. RANDLE ELLIOTT

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U. S. Defense Outposts in the Pacific

BY A. RANDLE ELLIOTT

This is one in a series of reports on the military defenses of the United States. Others have been: "U.S. Strategic Bases in the Atlantic," and "The United States Army in Transition." Subsequent issues will deal with the United States Navy.

THE prolonged crisis in the Far East has given new impetus to United States defense preparations in the Pacific. President Roosevelt revealed the urgency of current work on this country's Pacific island outposts when, in four executive orders on February 14, he announced that after May 15, 1941 no unauthorized vessels or airships would be permitted within three miles of Kiska and Unalaska Islands (Alaska); Kaneohe Bay (Island of Oahu, Hawaii); Midway, Wake, Johnston and Palmyra Islands, and Kingman Reef; Rose and Tutuila Islands (Samoa); and Guam.¹ These regions were designated as "naval defensive sea areas" and "air-space reservations for purposes of national defense." The Administration's unprecedented restrictions were underscored on March 10, when the Senate passed two House appropriation bills authorizing expansion of naval and air base facilities at nine of the eleven restricted areas. These recent measures emphasize the importance which the Administration and Congress attribute to Far Eastern developments, and give added significance to American collaboration with Great Britain and the British Dominions.²

American and British interests in the Far East were challenged by the Axis-Japanese military alliance of September 27, 1940, in which Germany and Italy agreed to "stand by and cooperate with . . . Japan in the establishment of a new order in Greater East Asia." This pact, moreover, definitely warned the United States against military aid to Britain or active interference with Japan's expan-

sionist ambitions. The contracting powers undertook "to assist one another with all political, economic and military means when one of the three . . . is attacked by a power at present not involved in the European war or in the Chinese-Japanese conflict."³ The possibility that American involvement in the European conflict might precipitate war with Japan, far from discouraging American military preparations in the Far East, has hastened the reinforcement of United States defenses throughout the Pacific Ocean.

There are two controlling factors in the strategy of any Pacific war: distance and bases. It is more than 6,000 miles from the United States to the Philippine Islands, and over 4,000 miles from Alaska to Samoa. A sharp distinction should be drawn between operations in different parts of so vast an ocean. In the eastern Pacific, the United States occupies an excellent defensive position, since it would be virtually impossible for an Asiatic enemy, with no bases near America, to maintain supply lines and conduct a major campaign at a distance of over 4,000 miles. American defense in the Pacific, therefore, is chiefly a problem of preventing Japan—the only other great naval power in that area—from acquiring bases on the eastern side of the ocean. The United States dominates or controls all of the islands suitable for military bases in this half of the North Pacific, and from these positions American naval forces could set out to engage any attacking foe at the time and place most favorable for an American counterattack. With no bases on this side of the Pacific, enemy ships would have to conserve their fuel and ammunition; they could, at most, bombard the West Coast only briefly, and probably under constant attack from shore-based bombers and fire from coastal batteries.

Despite the strategic advantages of the United States in the eastern Pacific, this country, before it could win a war with Japan, would have to take the offensive in Asiatic waters, where the element of distance would favor the Japanese. In the western Pacific, American naval communications would be vulnerable to disruption by the Japanese fleet. Japan's defensive position against the United States,

3. For text, cf. *Christian Science Monitor*, September 27, 1940.

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moreover, would be strengthened by any submarine and air bases that may exist in the Japanese-mandated Caroline, Marshall and Marianas Islands. Since Tokyo has barred visitors from those islands and preserved complete secrecy about activities there in recent years, American naval opinion tends to accept reports of Japanese bases in the mandates. The comparative lack of United States bases in the western Pacific would place further limitations on the offensive strategy employed by American forces. Except for an inadequate naval station in the Philippines and a very minor establishment at Guam, the United States fleet has no bases in the Far East, and the use of British, Australian and Dutch facilities would be essential for successful naval operations against Japan.⁴

The mechanical reliability and increased range of modern aircraft, which during the past five years have made extensive air patrols possible in the Pacific, considerably strengthen this country's western defense position. The United States "inner defense line" extends from Panama westward to Hawaii and northward to the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. Within this area American naval forces predominate; but, to exercise their predominance in so great an expanse of open water, they must first detect the presence of an enemy. Through regular scouting operations between the string of small islands from Alaska to Samoa, patrol planes could in many cases sight a hostile fleet before it entered the inner zone of American naval security. Alaska, on the northern border of this zone, is being opened for development by rapid improvements in aviation; and, during the past two years, the erection of five major military establishments there has transformed that Territory into a leading outpost of United States defense.

ALASKA

The airplane has made Alaska increasingly vulnerable to attack from Asia, but also increasingly valuable as a strategic base for United States military operations. The Great Circle route between Japan and the western coast of the United States passes just south of the Aleutian Islands, and consequently the air distance between Seattle and Tokyo is about 1,500 miles shorter via the Aleutians than by way of Hawaii, Midway and Wake Islands. The Alaska-Aleutians route, moreover, entails no single flight of more than 800 miles, while the alternate Hawaiian route—used commercially by Pan American Clippers—necessitates an initial dash of 2,091 miles.⁵ Prevailing meteorological disturbances in the Aleutians make the longer south-

ern route preferable for transpacific flying at present, but technological advances in airplane engines and design are constantly reducing the hazards of Arctic flying. In any war between the United States and Japan or the Soviet Union, the army and navy would find it imperative to prevent the enemy from establishing bases in Alaska, while adequate United States bases in the Aleutian Islands would be extremely valuable for naval and air operations against Asiatic forces.

Alaska is still an insular territory so far as communications with the United States are concerned, but supplies and military reinforcements could be transported there much more rapidly from this country than from Asia.⁶ Seward, Alaska's main seaport and point of entry for shipments to the interior, is 1,232 miles from Seattle, but 3,300 from Yokohama and 3,400 from Vladivostok. The problem of military supply, moreover, would be greatly reduced by construction of the proposed highway across Canada to Alaska. Plans for this project have gained increasing support ever since 1929, and the strategic value of an overland connection with Alaska may now lead to construction of the road under the auspices of the new Permanent Joint Board for Canadian-United States Defense.⁷⁻¹⁰

A complete network of emergency landing fields is an essential part of the army's scheme for air defense in Alaska, and during the past year the Civil Aeronautics Authority has begun an extensive program of improving Alaska's commercial airports.¹¹ Boulders, stumps and surrounding timber have been cleared away, while short runways are being extended to as much as 3,000 feet and widened to 300 feet. In accordance with army plans, the C.A.A. has also started work on a series of staging fields which will enable small pursuit planes to move from Seattle to Nome, Alaska, in short, easy flights. These and other fields will be strategically placed throughout the southern half of the Territory, as focal points for Alaskan defense.¹² The army has also asked the C.A.A.

5. On the strategic position of Alaska, cf. W. M. Franklin, "Alaska, Outpost of American Defense," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1940, pp. 245 ff.; *Time*, September 30, 1940, pp. 39-42.

6. Although Alaska is only 56 miles across the Bering Strait from Siberia, and the westernmost island in the Aleutian chain less than 700 miles from the Russian submarine and air base at Petropavlovsk and the Japanese base on Paramushiro Island, the Territory is much closer to major industrial and military centers of the United States than to those of the Soviet Union or Japan.

7-10. For details on the projected United States-Alaska Highway, cf. W. A. Baker, *New York Herald Tribune*, February 16, 1941; also Franklin, "Alaska, Outpost of American Defense," cited, pp. 249-50.

11. Major General H. H. Arnold, "Our Air Frontier in Alaska," *The National Geographic Magazine*, October 1940, pp. 487 ff. By June 1939 Alaska had 129 air fields, but these are too small for the army's heavy bombers. Cf. *Annual Report of the Governor of Alaska for the Fiscal Year 1939* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1939), pp. 1-11.

4. For an extended discussion of strategic factors in a Japanese-American war, cf. G. F. Eliot, *The Ramparts We Watch* (New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1938), pp. 161-77.

for additional air navigation facilities at Kotzebue and Point Barrow, where they are needed immediately for aerial patrol operations to safeguard the vast Territory north of the Arctic Circle, while the navy has entered "urgent requests" for similar facilities at Chignik and Unalaska, in the Aleutian Islands.¹³

The army at present is developing two primary air bases in Alaska, at Fairbanks and Anchorage. The technical buildings, hangars, and 7,000-foot runways of Ladd Field at Fairbanks, started in the fall of 1939, are nearing completion. This base is a cold-weather flying station, where United States aviators are being trained for Arctic warfare under conditions similar to those which prevailed in the Soviet-Finnish conflict. Temperatures often drop to 60 degrees below zero in winter, and wholly new types of equipment and methods of warfare are being developed to cope with the rigorous climate. Anchorage is only 260 miles south of Fairbanks but, because of the Japan Current and warm ocean winds, its weather is comparatively mild. Situated between the mountains and the sea, it also enjoys more favorable atmospheric conditions for year-round flying. Elmendorf Field at Anchorage was not started until August 1940, but work is being rushed and it will be substantially ready for full-scale operation by the summer of 1941.¹⁴ This will be the largest air field in Alaska, and the army's major base in the Far North.

The navy is constructing three air bases in the Alaskan area, to serve as necessary links in the patrol of the eastern Pacific and for the defense of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. The increased dependability and operating range of modern patrol planes have greatly enhanced the value of Alaskan air bases for supporting the fleet. Such bases, the Hepburn Board pointed out, "will be essential in time of war."¹⁵ The Aleutian Islands, girding the North Pacific, are strategically best

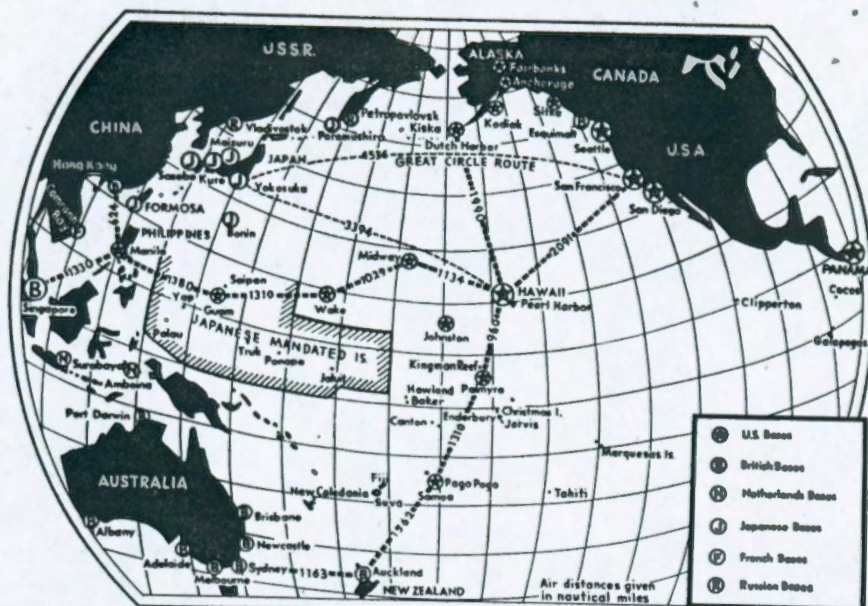
situated for the location of air and naval bases; but owing to adverse weather conditions in the Aleutians and the desirability of starting a chain of bases anchored in the United States, the navy began its series of Alaskan air stations at Sitka and Kodiak. On August 30, 1939 President Roosevelt approved contracts for the construction of naval aviation facilities at these two sites, and work on both bases was started immediately. The navy's primary air base in Alaska is at Women's Bay, Kodiak Island, where accommodations for three patrol squadrons are well under way, together with facilities for engine overhaul, plane repair, storage and supply adequate to serve the other bases. The third naval air station in Alaska is being built at Chernofski Bay on Unalaska Island, in the Aleutians. Unalaska is the farthest Alaskan outpost foreseen at present, and will serve as the primary observation point to detect any hostile advance against American territory across the North Pacific. The intermediate stations at Kodiak and Sitka connect it with the major naval air base at Sand Point, near Seattle, on which the navy's Alaskan forces are still dependent for essential supplies and extensive overhaul of planes.¹⁶

There is no adequate naval station in Alaska for surface vessels, but the navy has long used Dutch Harbor on Unalaska Island as a base of operations in this area. Unalaska Harbor, including Dutch Harbor, is the only site in all the Aleutian Islands which could serve as a base for surface craft and submarines without considerable development, and it is now being improved for both types of vessels. The immediate construction of a submarine base at Kodiak, moreover, was assured in March, 1941 when Congress appropriated \$4,002,000 for this purpose. With United States planes and submarines stationed at the best base sites, it would be difficult for any foe to obtain a foothold in Alaska in the short time that might elapse before the arrival of military reinforcements from the United States.

HAWAII

While Alaskan bases are designed chiefly for defense of the Territory itself, the powerful fleet base at Pearl Harbor, on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, serves primarily as a naval stronghold to discourage or defeat the operations of a hostile navy anywhere in the Pacific. Strategically, Hawaii

16. Congressional appropriations in March 1941 provided for the construction of seaplane hangars, ramps, barracks, storage facilities and bombproofed communication centers at all three sites. For details, cf. U.S., 77th Congress, 1st Session, *House Report No. 115*, pp. 6-9. Proposals have been advanced for another air station at Kiska, westernmost island in the Aleutian chain suitable for the purpose. No authorization for this project has yet been given, although Kiska is now a United States naval reservation and was included in President Roosevelt's February 14 orders restricting visits to outlying bases.



is perfectly situated to fulfill the offensive as well as the defensive functions of an outlying base.¹⁷ It is sufficiently advanced to serve as a constant menace to any naval force which might attempt transpacific raids on the United States or the Panama Canal, and no power would be likely to undertake a major attack on this country without first seizing Oahu. But Pearl Harbor—2,091 miles from San Francisco, and 3,394 from Yokohama—is much nearer domestic bases of the United States than those of any other power, and assistance from the West Coast would surely reach Hawaii before its existing defenses could be penetrated.¹⁸

Oahu is reputed to be the most intensively fortified area under the American flag—ranking even above the Panama Canal Zone in this respect—and is probably the strongest outlying base of any nation in the world. Heavy army artillery at Forts Weaver and Kamehameha guards the vital naval installations of Pearl Harbor.¹⁹ A few miles away are Fort Shafter, Hawaiian ordnance depot and

post for a regiment of mobile coast artillery, and Fort Barrette, which was completed only three years ago and mounts some of the biggest guns in the islands.²⁰ The army's munitions dump is tunneled out of lava stone on Red Hill, east of Pearl Harbor, and the navy has a huge ammunition dump west of the harbor at Lualualei. Honolulu is defended by Forts Ruger and DeRussy, under the jurisdiction of a Hawaiian separate coast artillery brigade. Fort Ruger is situated at Diamond Head, the extinct volcano whose guns command entrance into Honolulu harbor, and whose pinnacle shelters an elaborate observation post and fire-control station. For both observation and striking power, the islands depend to a great extent on several hundred army and navy planes stationed at Hickam, Wheeler and Luke Fields, and—across the island from Pearl Harbor—at the new \$13,000,000 Kaneohe Bay naval air station, opened for use on February 15, 1941, four months ahead of schedule.²¹ All the main fixed defenses of Oahu are united in a system of wide, hard-surfaced highways and a railway that extends three-fourths of

17. For a discussion of the rôle and natural requirements of outlying bases, cf. A. R. Elliott, "United States Strategic Bases in the Atlantic," *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 15, 1941, pp. 260-61.

18. For an analysis of additional factors in the strategic value of Hawaii, and its possible offensive use "in the unhappy event of a war with Japan," cf. G. F. Eliot, *The Ramparts We Watch*, cited, pp. 168-71; S. B. Jones and Klaus Mehnert, "Hawaii and the Pacific," *Geographical Review*, July 1940, pp. 372-74.

19. For a general description of Hawaiian defenses, cf. dispatch by Vern Hinkley, *The New York Times*, March 21, 1938; Joseph Barber, *Hawaii: Restless Rampart* (New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1941), pp. 194-210.

20. Unlike Fort Kamehameha, headquarters of the army defense units guarding Pearl Harbor, Forts Weaver and Barrette are not garrisoned in normal times. Cf. U.S. War Department, *Army Directory* (Washington, Government Printing Office, April 1940), p. 7.

21. Last summer the navy acquired land for another airport at Barber's Point, west of Pearl Harbor and Hickam Field, to serve as an auxiliary base for crowded Luke Field (on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor). Hickam Field, nearly completed, is the army's largest airport. The army and navy, together, now have title to, or control, about 35,000 acres in Hawaii.

12. The southeastern fields will be constructed first, to provide an immediate link with the army air bases being established at Anchorage and Fairbanks. The priority list on this program, which includes developments at Anchorage, is: Anchorage, Metlakatla, Yakutat, Boundary, Big Delta, Cordova, Gulkana, Juneau, Nome, Naknek, Ruby, McGrath, Bethel. Over a thousand men are now working on the Annette Island army air base project at Metlakatla, near Ketchikan.

13. Cf. testimony of Colonel Donald H. Connolly, Administrator of Civil Aeronautics, on September 20, 1940: U.S., 76th Congress, 3d Session, *Supplement to Hearings on the First Supplemental Civil Functions Appropriation Bill for 1941* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 65-66.

14. Cf. Major General H. H. Arnold and Lt. Colonel Ira C. Eaker, *Winged Warfare* (New York, Harper, 1941), p. 74.

15. For Alaska's importance in United States naval strategy, cf. report of the board of naval authorities headed by Rear Admiral Arthur J. Hepburn, appointed in 1938 to study the need for additional submarine, destroyer, mine, and naval air bases: U.S., 76th Congress, 1st Session, *House Document No. 63*, pp. 20 ff.

the way around the island; along this network the army's railway artillery, other mobile guns, tanks and infantry can move to any part of the island within two hours, and cover every practicable landing place. The possible points of enemy debarkation, moreover, are limited by the violent surf and the prevalence of coral reefs, which extend a half mile from shore in some sections.

The proximity of outlying islands in the Hawaiian group is a defensive weakness of Oahu, but the army and navy are now pushing work to protect the near-by islands against seizure by an enemy.²² Foremost in this program is the development of out-island airports.²³ In addition to helping intercept an enemy and thus guarding the islands against invasion, the new airports will provide auxiliary bases for United States use in case of congestion at existing fields on Oahu, or in case of successful attack on these fields by enemy bombers. Barracks and gasoline storage tanks are now under construction on Maui, while similar work has been started at South Cape Field, on the island of Hawaii, and at Burns Field, Kauai. Present plans call for the eventual concentration of 500 army planes in the archipelago; the air force personnel already numbers 6,000 officers and men. In all, at least 25,000 United States army troops are garrisoned in Hawaii, notably at Schofield Barracks, Oahu, home of a complete infantry division. In addition to these forces, the Hawaii National Guard—with units on all of the larger islands—numbers almost 2,000.²⁴

As the hub of United States naval operations in the Pacific, Hawaii is the home station for a fleet personnel of approximately 70,000. Pearl Harbor is deep and large enough to shelter, at the same time, most of the vessels in the United States navy.²⁵ In its protected waters the fleet can be supplied, and docked for repairs. Large oil-storage tanks assure the navy's fuel needs,²⁶ while the Pearl Harbor navy yard has repair facilities for all types of vessels. Its 1,000-foot dry dock accom-

22. *The New York Times*, August 20, 1940; *Christian Science Monitor*, February 20, 1941.

23. Since the establishment in 1929 of Inter-Island Airways, seven commercial airports for large passenger planes have been built on the islands of Kauai, Molokai, Maui, Hawaii and Lanai.

24. *The New York Times*, December 29, 1940, February 8, 1941; Hanson W. Baldwin, *ibid.*, February 16, 1941; *Annual Report of the Governor of Hawaii for the Fiscal Year 1940* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 50.

25. Pearl Harbor is by far the best base site in the islands, and consequently has always been the concentration point of navy activities at Hawaii. In wartime, however, the navy plans to use Kaneohe Bay as the main air base for patrol-plane operations, to avoid unnecessary congestion in Pearl Harbor. Hilo Bay—on the eastern coast of the island of Hawaii—and Lahaina Roads—bounded by Maui, Lanai and Molokai—are regularly used naval anchorages. On September 30, 1940 the Navy Department announced the signing of contracts for dredging various channels and harbors in the islands.

modates capital ships, and in August 1940 a 6,500-ton floating dry dock arrived at the yard after being towed 6,125 miles from New Orleans.^{26a} In addition to naval installations for making the Pacific fleet virtually self-sufficient at Hawaii, detailed plans have been formed to rapidly increase local food production in case the islands should be cut off from customary imports.²⁷ Within a few months, excessive crops of sugar cane and pineapples could be replaced with legumes, potatoes, cabbage, carrots and peanuts. Preparations have also been taken for preventing sabotage, which might impair the effective operation of island defenses. During the fall and winter of 1940-41, 1,000 key citizens of Honolulu attended weekly anti-sabotage classes at the University of Hawaii, and the army is reported to have selected sites for prison camps to detain suspicious aliens in the event of war.²⁸

ADVANCE ISLAND OUTPOSTS

Pearl Harbor's strategic value is considerably increased because of more than a dozen American-owned islands and atolls, suitable for use as air patrol stations, to the west and south of Hawaii. The groundwork for United States claims to these, and many other islands in the Central Pacific, was laid in the period from 1790 to 1880. But prior to the World War, the United States acquired only six of the uninhabited mid-Pacific Isles,²⁹ and

26. In August 1940 Congress appropriated \$5,000,000 for preliminary work on an additional fuel storage project adjacent to the navy yard.

26a. One of two new graving docks now under construction at Pearl Harbor will be the deepest dry dock in the world when completed. It will be able to take badly damaged battleships drawing too much water to enter the present 1,000-foot dock. Cf. statement of Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, U.S., 77th Congress, 1st Session, *Hearings Before the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations on H.R. 8438* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 132-33.

27. *Christian Science Monitor*, December 6, 1940. Although the Territory normally imports about 63 per cent of its foodstuffs, the food problem in case of siege would not be so serious as has frequently been indicated. Cf. Jones and Mehnert, "Hawaii and the Pacific," cited, pp. 368-70; Lieutenant J. L. Denig, "Food—Hawaii's Vital Problem," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, October 1940, pp. 1454-63. For statistics on Hawaii's resources and trade, cf. E. L. Bacher and I. I. Denison, *Commerce and Economic Resources of Our Outlying Territories and Possessions* (Washington, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, revised edition, 1939), pp. 21-26.

28. *The New York Times*, August 29, 1940, March 21, 1938. Although the vast majority of Hawaii's alien population seems unquestionably loyal to the United States, the large proportion of foreign-born residents—and descendants of foreign born—is a constant source of anxiety. In the 1940 census the Japanese colony numbered 157,905, or 37.3 per cent of Hawaii's population (433,330). Cf. G. H. Blakeslee, "Hawaii: Racial Problem and Naval Base," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1938, pp. 90-99; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Racial Composition of the Population of Hawaii," *Press Release*, March 10, 1941.

29. Midway, Kure (or Ocean Island), Wake, Johnston (with Sand Island), Palmyra (administered as part of Hawaii, although 960 miles distant), and Kingman Reef. For a history of

these were accepted in Washington with indifference. A full appreciation of their strategic value came only after March 1935, when Pan American Airways announced its plans for transpacific aviation. Almost immediately the United States Department of Commerce sent three parties of four Hawaiian-Americans to "colonize" Jarvis, Baker and Howland islands,³⁰ and in March 1938 similar colonies were set up on Canton and Enderbury.³¹ Pan American Airways began construction of a commercial air base on Canton Island in April 1939, and United States naval air bases are now being constructed on Midway, Wake, Johnston and Palmyra islands.³² From these advance outposts United States planes can patrol a front of more than 4,000 miles west of Hawaii between Unalaska and Samoa, and in case of hostilities patrol planes could detect the approach of an enemy in time to give adequate warning to the main United States battle fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor.

When the Hepburn Board submitted its report in December 1938, it pointed out that, from a strategic point of view, "an air base at Midway Island is second in importance only to Pearl Harbor, . . . [and] Wake island is next." At that time Midway was used only for limited seaplane operations, and in addition served as a station for Pan American Airways and the Pacific Commercial Cable Company. The navy had no establishment at Wake, but presumably might have used Pan American facilities there if urgently needed. Midway and Wake are both coral islands, and by nature adapted to similar development. The Hepburn Board recommended that the necessary installations for permanently based patrol-plane squad-

the small island possessions in the Pacific, cf. S. W. Boggs, "American Contributions to Geographical Knowledge of the Central Pacific," *The Geographical Review*, April 1938, pp. 177-92; D. N. Left, *Uncle Sam's Pacific Islets* (Stanford University, Stanford University Press, 1940).

30. For details, cf. F. T. Kenner, "American Equatorial Islands," *The American Year Book*, 1939 (New York, Nelson, 1940), pp. 223-26.

31. On March 3, 1938 President Roosevelt claimed Canton and Enderbury islands on behalf of the United States, and six days later the British Ambassador in Washington formally reserved Great Britain's right to the islands. The controversy was not settled until April 6, 1939, when the British and United States governments, "without prejudice to their respective claims," agreed to a joint control over the two islands for a period of 50 years. Cf. J. S. Reeves, "Agreement over Canton and Enderbury Islands," *American Journal of International Law*, July 1939, pp. 521-26.

32. In order to expedite naval building and dredging projects at these four islands and in Alaska, the government has suspended the 8-hour working day limitation at the bases. Cf. *The New York Times*, January 4, 1941.

33. U.S. Navy Department, *Press Memorandum*, September 17, 1940. For details on all the coral-island bases, cf. testimonies in U.S., 76th Congress, 1st Session, *Hearings before the House Committee on Naval Affairs on H.R. 2880* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1939), pp. 133-62, 196-97.

rons be established at the two islands, and that at each a pier be constructed and a channel of adequate size (30 feet deep and 300 feet wide) be cut into the central lagoon for large seaplane tenders (8,000-12,000 tons) and submarines. Owing to insufficient funds, however, the projects as subsequently initiated at Wake included merely the minimum necessities for tender-based patrol planes, and a channel (22 feet deep and 200 feet wide) which takes only small seaplane tenders (3,000-5,000 tons) and the very smallest submarines. Minor repair and maintenance shop facilities for planes are provided at Midway, but neither island has permanent shore facilities for submarines.³³ Under March 1941 appropriations, the channel at Wake Island is to be improved in accordance with the original specifications for large tenders, while funds totaling \$9,707,000 were voted for landing fields, improved airplane repair facilities, and a fully equipped submarine base on Midway.³⁴

Channels are being cut through the reefs at Johnston and Palmyra islands in almost exactly the same manner as at Wake, and coral heads within the lagoons have been taken out to give sufficient turning space for small tenders and take-off area for fully loaded planes. These outposts now serve as emergency landing fields and fueling bases for seaplanes operating from Hawaii.³⁵ Kingman Reef—proclaimed an "airspace reservation" by President Roosevelt on February 14, and projected as a Pan American Airways station prior to the improvement of Canton Island in 1938—may soon be developed along similar lines. Palmyra, almost half-way from Hawaii to Samoa, is an important intermediate station for air patrols operating between these bases, which are too far apart for the uninterrupted flight of a plane carrying heavy bomb loads. Canton Island was rejected as a naval air base because the question of its ownership has never been settled by Britain and the United States, but the Pan American station affords useful intermediate facilities not far east of the Palmyra-Samoa route.³⁶

34. For further discussion of these two islands, cf. H. C. Votaw, "Midway—The North Pacific's Tiny Pet," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, November 1940, pp. 1601-07; *idem*, "Wake Island," *ibid.*, January 1941, pp. 52-55.

35. Funds voted in March, totaling \$6,935,500 almost evenly divided between Palmyra and Johnston, authorize the installation of carrier landplane runways and "additional aviation facilities, including buildings and accessories and equipment," at both bases. U.S., 77th Congress, 1st Session, *House Report No. 115*, pp. 1-2, 5, 7.

36. Enderbury, Jarvis, Baker and Howland islands are not atolls, and lack enclosed lagoons such as make the other mid-Pacific islets useful for seaplanes. Whenever more practicable landplanes are put into service on long overseas naval patrol flights—following the lead of Pan American Airways—these flat-surfaced islands will be extremely useful. Airplane runways, built in 1937 for the ill-fated Pacific flight of Amelia Earhart,

SAMOA AND GUAM

Congressional approval, in March 1941, of funds totaling \$12,800,000 for defense aviation facilities at Samoa and harbor improvements at Guam marked a significant reversal of past policy with regard to these island possessions. Although there has been a minor naval station at Pago Pago harbor (Tutuila Island, Samoa) ever since 1900, Samoa now has no defense or aircraft facilities.³⁷ Guam, site of an obsolete naval station established shortly after the Spanish-American War, is also virtually defenseless at present. The Hepburn Board recommended an air base (tender status) in the lagoon of Rose Island, Samoa, similar to those at Palmyra and Johnston, and a larger base (permanent status) for planes and submarines at Guam, similar to the development at Midway. The Navy Department dropped the Rose Island proposal, however, in order to allocate for more urgent projects the scant funds available; and Congress refused to approve the plans for Guam, on the ground that fortification of Guam would offend Japan and would extend the American line of defense too far toward the Orient at a time when the United States was withdrawing from the Philippines. The first indication of a change in Congressional attitude came in June 1940, when Congress voted \$277,000 for the establishment of an "aviation and submarine listening post" at Guam.³⁸

Samoa has become an important factor in aviation only with the perfection of the most recent types of long-range planes, but its strategic value as a South Pacific crossroads has been recognized for three-quarters of a century. In addition to its usefulness as a southern terminus for United States patrol squadrons, Samoa is conveniently situated on the direct air route from Hawaii to New Zealand. It would be particularly useful to the fleet and its air force if active defense cooperation with Britain, Australia and New Zealand should become desirable in the Pacific. Pago Pago would also provide a base for the operation of surface craft to protect American lines of communication with Southeast Asia, and a haven for American merchant vessels if raiders should become active against United States shipping in those waters. Although the harbor is not large enough for fully satisfactory operations by heavy patrol planes, seaplane as well

are already prepared for use on Howland Island. For a description of Pan American's landplane program, cf. *The New York Times*, November 10, 1940.

37. U.S., 77th Congress, 1st Session, *House Report No. 85* (February 17, 1941), p. 3.

38. Cf. *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1940; M. B., "United States Defences in the Pacific," *Bulletin of International News*, October 3, 1940, p. 1280.

U.S. DEFENSE OUTPOSTS IN THE PACIFIC

as landplane facilities are to be constructed there with the current funds.³⁹

Guam's potentialities were first emphasized during the World War, and in December 1919 the Joint Army and Navy Board recommended that the island be "fortified and garrisoned adequate to its defense against any force that could be brought against it," and that a first-class military base be built at Apra harbor.⁴⁰ These plans were abandoned in 1922 when, in the Washington Treaty on limitation of naval armament, the United States agreed to construct no new fortifications or naval bases in the Aleutian Islands, the small mid-Pacific islands (excluding Hawaii), Samoa, Guam or the Philippines.⁴¹ The expiration of this treaty on December 31, 1936 removed restrictions on the military development of United States island possessions in the Pacific, and reopened the question of Guam. Port Apra is almost exactly half-way between Wake Island and Manila, and is a regular station on the Pan American air route to the Orient. If improved as a major air and submarine base, Guam would provide an essential link in air communication by military planes between Hawaii and the Philippines, and would greatly impede any hostile naval operations in the western Pacific. In case of war between the United States and Japan, naval units based at Guam would be active in blockading the Japanese coasts, less than 1,300 miles away. Guam's potential danger to Japan has made Tokyo apprehensive of United States plans for developing the island, and on February 24 the influential Japanese newspaper *Nichi Nichi* warned that "if Japan answered the unjust war challenge, . . . Guam, less than one-third the distance from Japan to the United States [Hawaii], would be destroyed by a single blow."⁴² Although the authorized dredging, removal of coral heads, and construction of a breakwater at Apra harbor would expedite its military use by seaplanes, these limited projects

39. Construction and equipment of a field for landplanes in Tutuila will absorb the chief expenditures. In addition, the naval station at Pago Pago is to be expanded, gun emplacements erected, and magazines for munitions installed. The current Act does not provide for the seaplane base at Rose Island, although both Rose and Tutuila were included in President Roosevelt's executive orders of February 14.

40. U.S., 76th Congress, 1st Session, *House Document No. 63*, cited, p. 28; Captain F. L. Oliver, "Guam Holds Key to Defenses of the United States in Pacific," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 19, 1940.

41. Article XIX of the Five-Power Treaty; for text, cf. *Conference on the Limitation of Armament* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1922), pp. 1581-82. As a result of this agreement, by 1932 all of the armament which had been mounted at Guam in 1917 and 1918, as well as a small aviation unit, had been removed. Cf. Lieutenant Commander F. J. Nelson, "Guam—Our Western Outpost," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 1940, p. 84.

42. *The New York Times*, February 25, 1941.

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scarcely constitute a danger to Japan. Similar Japanese developments have been completed on the mandated island of Saipan, only 120 miles from Apra harbor; and other Japanese islands—presumably with bases on them—entirely surround Guam.⁴³ Owing to Guam's exposed position, military authorities have repeatedly stressed the need for large-scale fortifications which would enable the island garrison to resist a major attack until assistance might arrive from Hawaii. A fortified fleet base at Guam, however, would cost at least \$200,000,000 and require two or three years to build. In the event of war between Japan and the United States prior to the completion of first-class defenses at Guam, the Japanese might seize whatever installations had been completed, and use them against American forces in the Far East.^{43a}

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

The Philippine Islands, which the United States is committed to defend until their independence in 1946, are potentially the strongest American base for operations in the western Pacific. Many places in the Philippines are suitable for adequate development as bases, and could be made virtually impregnable to attack.⁴⁴ Actually, the navy has no facilities there for the maintenance of capital ships, and the only really powerful army establishment is the defense system at Manila Bay—commanded by the strong island fortress of Corregidor.⁴⁵ Manila Bay is an ideal base site, and a naval station with fuel and ammunition depots is located at Cavite, inside the bay. The United States Asiatic Fleet is based there, although the navy yard at Cavite is not equipped to undertake major repairs on large ships. The naval repair station at Olongapo, about 60 miles north of Manila by sea, has a floating dry dock, the *Dewey*, which will dock cruisers up to 10,000 tons. Olongapo is situated on a good harbor, in Subic Bay, but it is not very strongly fortified. Olongapo's permanent harbor defenses consist entirely of the guns of Fort Wint, at the entrance to Subic Bay, while Manila

43. For a brief description of improvements in the Japanese islands, cf. Nelson, "Guam—Our Western Outpost," cited, pp. 86-88.

43a. Cf. testimony of Major G. F. Eliot, U.S., 76th Congress, 3d Session, *Hearings before the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs on H.R. 8026* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 206-07.

44. Testimony of Rear Admiral J. K. Tausig, in U.S., 76th Congress, 3rd Session, *Hearings before the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs on H.R. 8026* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 193.

45. In 1907 the army drew up a plan for heavy fortification of the islands, but it was never carried out. Interrupted by the World War, intentions to build a strong military establishment throughout the archipelago were ended in 1922 with restrictions imposed by the Washington Treaties, and were not resumed after 1936 because of impending Philippine independence.

Bay is heavily guarded by Fort Mills (Corregidor Island), Fort Hughes (Pulo Caballo Island), Fort Frank (Carabao Island), and Fort Drum (Island of El Fraile). Most of the United States troops in the Philippines are stationed at Fort William McKinley, headquarters of the Philippine Division, located 9 miles southeast of Manila, and at Fort Stotsenburg, 57 miles from Manila.⁴⁶

As a matter of policy, the Administration at Washington has hesitated to build permanent military establishments in the Philippines because, under the Tydings-McDuffie Act,⁴⁷ all United States army reservations in the islands must be relinquished on July 4, 1946, while the retention of naval stations will be subject to the outcome of discussions to be held within two years after Philippine independence is achieved. Mobile defenses, however, have been considerably strengthened since the outbreak of war in Europe; and, as in the case of other Pacific outposts, the most notable advance has been in the field of air defense. Until September 1939 the navy had no airplanes in the islands, and the army only a limited quantity of out-dated types. During the last 18 months, however, each of the services has been adding to its Philippine air arm. The army air force of pursuit, bombardment and observation planes is concentrated chiefly at Nichols Field, 6 miles south of Manila, and at Clark Field, a sub-post of Fort Stotsenburg. Seven auxiliary army flying fields are situated in the islands, including two on the southern island of Mindanao, and one each on Panay and Sulu. The navy now has aviation facilities at Cavite, and more than 25 large bombers and an aircraft tender are assigned to the Asiatic Fleet.⁴⁸

In view of their extreme distance from the United States (Manila-San Francisco, 6,221 miles), the Philippines could be defended against a determined Japanese attack only at great cost. It is also true, however, that conquest of the Philippines would require so great an expenditure of money and men as to make any power hesitate long before undertaking such an expedition. The constant reinforcement of United States troops in the archipelago, which now number almost 6,000 regulars, indicates that Washington does not intend to be ousted from the Far East without a struggle. In defending the Philippines, American forces would re-

46. *Army Directory*, cited, pp. 7, 25-33.

47. The Philippine Independence Act of March 24, 1934. For text, cf. U.S., 73d Congress, *Statutes at Large*, vol. 48, part 1, Public Law No. 127.

48. The navy has also been sending additional submarines to the Far East. Cf. *New York Herald Tribune*, September 4, December 6, 25, 1940; *The New York Times*, December 1, 1939, December 14, 16, 1940, February 28, 1941; *Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, U.S. Navy, for the Fiscal Year 1940* (Washington, mimeographed, December 5, 1940), p. 15.

ceive support from the Philippine Scouts, who form a part of the United States Army, and from the native Philippine army being trained by Major General Douglas MacArthur, former Chief of Staff of the United States Army. At present there are over 6,000 Philippine Scouts, and an increase in their number to 12,000 was authorized on February 1.⁴⁹ The Philippine army now includes about 20,000 regular troops and over 100,000 reserves, each of whom has been trained for 5½ months. All of these armed forces are still deficient in modern equipment, but legislation now before Congress would help eliminate this weakness by authorizing the sale of equipment and supplies to the Philippine government.⁵⁰

United States policy with regard to the Philippines is consistent with the government's apparent determination to avoid appeasement in the Far East. While there is no reason to assume that Japan has contemplated an attack on the Commonwealth—particularly not while the Japanese army is still deeply involved in China—the islands are apparently included in Tokyo's plans for a "new order in East Asia."⁵¹ American defense preparations in the Philippines, however, and Congressional sanction of initial moves to improve the defenses of Guam, indicate that the Administration has decided to protect the Filipinos for as long, at least, as they remain under the American flag.

NEW FRONTS IN THE PACIFIC

Most authorities agree that the Philippines, as an isolated American base in the Far East, might prove strategically more of a liability than an asset, particularly in view of the present undeveloped state of their defenses. The islands would, however, considerably strengthen the position of American forces in the southwestern Pacific if the United States had access to the bases of other powers which are also threatened by Japanese ambitions in Southeast Asia. The possible American use of British, Dutch, Australian and New Zealand bases in any Far Eastern conflict, moreover, might be taken for granted if the United States should become involved in war with Japan through the operation of the Axis-Japanese military pact of September 27.

The hub of Anglo-Dutch defenses in the waters of Southeast Asia is the island of SINGAPORE, situated just

off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. There the British, at a cost of almost \$150,000,000,⁵² have constructed the only non-Japanese first-class naval base in the Far East. The Strait of Johore between the island and the mainland has been converted into a basin capable of holding any fleet in existence, and extensive repair facilities include a large graving dock 1,000 feet long, 130 feet wide and 40 feet deep, suitable for any battleship, and a floating dock almost as large. Singapore Island, 27 miles long and 14 miles wide, is heavily fortified against attack—first by long-range rifles of calibers up to 18-inch; second by beach defenses in depth, consisting of mines, wire entanglements, machine-gun nests and pill-boxes; and third by new anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns of modern design, recently installed.⁵³ Airdromes are dispersed over the island and the peninsula to the north for the support of a considerable defending air force.⁵⁴

During 1940 and early 1941 men and matériel were steadily dispatched to Singapore in order to increase its defensive power against the advance of the Japanese. Newspaper reports tell of large Australian troop contingents which landed in February 1941 as reinforcements for the garrison of British, Indian and native units. The army is not concentrated at the base alone but is scattered along the peninsula where, in conjunction with the Burma military establishment, it could hamper a southward advance by land, which would in any case be difficult owing to the tropical climate and swampy terrain.⁵⁵ It is believed that the total number of men under arms in the region is now in excess of 50,000. More than 1,000 planes of British, Australian and American manufacture are also said to be stationed at airdromes dotting the territory from the Thailand border on the north to the four major fields in Singapore.⁵⁶

Although the British are prepared for a stout defense of Malaya itself, the offensive potentialities of Singapore cannot be utilized without adequate naval forces. With a fleet comprising five or more capital ships and accompanying light craft, it would be possible to make the waters to the north and east highly hazardous for the Japanese transports and supply ships necessary to carry out a military expedition against the Dutch East Indies and the Straits. It would also be possible to retain command of the focal points of maritime commerce in this area, by meeting on at least equal terms any Japanese fleet which ventured sufficiently far south from its own distant bases to

permit a naval engagement. For this important task no British naval strength is now available, apart from the minor units still stationed in Far Eastern seas.⁵⁷ Only the Pacific Fleet of the United States could provide a suitable nucleus for offensive strength at Singapore; and, by the same token, use of the base under certain circumstances would give this country the necessary foothold for a campaign against the Japanese.

The advisability of sending the United States fleet to Singapore has long been under consideration in London and Washington,⁵⁸ yet it would not be lightly undertaken by American naval authorities. Such a move would be foolhardy unless prior provision had been made for transporting and storing large reserves of specialized American equipment at the base—situated half-way around the world from the United States. Except in case of extraordinary emergency, moreover, no fleet commander would be inclined to move his ships to a point where his lines of communication would be subject to interception by enemy forces—as American communications with Singapore might be intercepted by the Japanese.⁵⁹ Any plan to divide the battleships of the fleet and send some to the Far East would also meet with the strong resistance of naval personnel, particularly while conditions remain unsettled in the Atlantic. Although the detachment of long-range cruisers and submarines for operations at Singapore would eliminate some of these difficulties, the effectiveness of lighter vessels would be considerably less than that of a complete battle fleet.

In addition to the main Far Eastern base at Singapore, American submarines and destroyers might find the British naval base at HONGKONG extremely useful in the early stages of a war with Japan. The island of Hongkong, 631 miles from Manila, is in an excellent strategic position to support operations against Japan from the Philippines. The dry docks there can accommodate light cruisers, and are now equipped for practically every type of repairs on American submarines.⁶⁰ Warships based at Hongkong could seriously harry Japan's maritime communications in the South China Sea, and interrupt the reinforcement of Japanese troops in southern China and French Indo-China.⁶¹ At present, however, Hongkong is chiefly a defensive position, with little air or naval strength. It would presumably be the initial military objective of Japan, which has already occupied Canton—only 80 miles

away—and barred access to the immediate mainland surrounding the British base. But reduction of the island fortress would be no simple operation for the Japanese, despite their favored position. It is heavily fortified with anti-aircraft and coastal batteries, and has adequate supplies of food and munitions stored to resist siege for several months.⁶² The British, moreover, by evacuating about 5,000 women and children in July 1940, and by maintaining a garrison of over 6,000 regular and 3,000 volunteer troops, have clearly indicated their intention to defend the island.⁶³ While it is doubtful whether Hongkong could hold out indefinitely against a concentrated air attack from the mainland, the base would serve a useful purpose by delaying Japan's southward drive for perhaps three or four months, thus reducing the strategic value of any surprise Japanese action and enabling American, British and Netherland naval forces to assume favorable positions.

SURABAYA, on the island of Java, is the leading naval and air base in the Netherlands East Indies, and home station of the Netherlands Indies fleet.⁶⁴ It is centrally located between Singapore and the leading Australian base at Port Darwin.⁶⁵ Ships and planes based at Java command passage between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and can protect British supply lines from Australia to Singapore. Surabaya has fully equipped repair shops, and dry docks suitable for the largest cruisers.⁶⁶ Heavy defenses on the coast and on Madura Island, in the harbor, make the direct seizure of this base by a hostile fleet practically impossible, and numerous obstacles have been erected along the Java coast to prevent surprise landings elsewhere. Not far from Surabaya is a powerful auxiliary naval air base at Morokrenbang, and over 50 small seaplane stations and fuel depots are located at vantage points along the 3,000-mile chain of islands. About 1,100 miles east of Surabaya and 600 miles north of Port Darwin is the Dutch naval air base at AMBOINA.⁶⁷

All of these Netherland bases would be advantageous for United States warships or naval aircraft defending the Philippines, or enforcing a blockade of Japan. The large Netherlands Indies oil refineries, and vast stores of fuel oil and aviation gasoline, would

62. R. A. Smith, *Our Future in Asia* (New York, Viking, 1940), p. 280; *Christian Science Monitor*, November 23, 1940.

63. *The New York Times*, September 6, October 21, 1940, February 20, 1941.

64. In normal times, Netherland naval forces in the East Indies include 3 cruisers, 9 destroyers, 14 large submarines, 8 minelayers and escort vessels, 8 minesweepers and 6 auxiliary coast defense vessels. Recently a fleet of torpedo boats has been added. Cf. *ibid.*, January 15, 1941.

65. Singapore-Surabaya, 763 miles; Surabaya-Darwin, 1,304 miles.

66. In November 1940 the Commander-in-Chief of the Netherlands Indies navy announced that these works were being greatly expanded, and when completed would be large enough to service capital ships. *The New York Times*, November 11, 1940.

67. On naval bases in the Netherlands East Indies, cf. A. E. Talbert, *New York Herald Tribune*, August 28, 1940; Alexander Kiralfy, "Can Japan Take the Indies?" *Asia*, February 1940, pp. 97-99; *idem*, "For the Defense of Java," *Asia*, July 1940, pp. 350-52.

49. *Army and Navy Journal*, February 12, 1941, October 12, 1940; *The New York Times*, October 23, 1940.

50. H.R. 2107, 77th Congress. This bill passed the House of Representatives on March 3. For an official analysis of Philippine defense plans, cf. Major General Douglas MacArthur, *Report on National Defense in the Philippines* (Manila, Bureau of Printing, 1936).

51. Following his February 24 demand for cession of islands in Oceania, Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka asserted that his statement excluded Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. No such explanation for the Philippines was reported. Cf. *The New York Times*, February 25, 1941; *Newsweek*, March 3, 1941, p. 15.

52. In January 1939 Rear Admiral A. J. Hepburn testified that the British had spent "thirty million pounds [on Singapore], and they are not quite through." *Hearings before the House Committee on Naval Affairs on H.R. 2880*, cited, p. 110.

53. A. E. Talbert, *New York Herald Tribune*, September 29, 1940; Robert Neville, *PM*, February 18, 1941.

54. Cf. Alexander Kiralfy, "The Defenses of Singapore," *Asia*, January 1941, pp. 20-22.

55. *The New York Times*, February 19, 20, 22, 1941.

56. *New York Herald Tribune*, September 29, 1940. On February 20, 1941 a British Embassy official in Washington confirmed reports that additional bombers manufactured in the United States had been flown across the Pacific to Singapore. *The New York Times*, February 21, 1941.

57. Before the European war started, the British naval flotilla at Singapore consisted of 3 cruisers, one aircraft carrier, 9 destroyers, 15 submarines, and a number of smaller craft. Cf. *Time*, September 16, 1940, p. 48.

58. *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, January 21, 1938, p. 31; Captain F. L. Oliver and J. G. Harrison, "Why the Fleet Should Go to Singapore," *Christian Science Monitor*, *Weekly Magazine Section*, November 2, 1940, pp. 3, 15.

59. Cf. testimony of Admiral H. R. Stark, U.S., 76th Congress, 3d Session, *Hearings before the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs on H.R. 8026*, cited, pp. 130-31.

60. In October 1940 it was reported that a shipment of specialized parts, essential for the operation of American submarines, had been stored at Hongkong. Cf. Hongkong dispatch of Hallett Abend, *The New York Times*, October 21, 1940.

61. Alexander Kiralfy, "Japan's Strategic Problem," *Far Eastern Survey*, February 12, 1941, p. 18.

be particularly valuable in eliminating the need for constant shipments of fuel supplies across the broad Pacific. The islands, moreover, would not be such a defense liability as has frequently been imagined. They are dotted with fine flying fields for landplanes, and the Netherlands Indies defense forces have about 500 planes ready for immediate use. Preparations against invasion of the Indies have been greatly intensified since the Nazi conquest of Holland in May 1940, and the colony's 1941 budget includes defense expenditures of \$220,000,000 for additional planes, guns, munitions and military equipment.⁶⁸

Any American forces operating out of the Philippines, Singapore, or the Netherlands Indies would find the new Australian base at Port Darwin a most valuable center for replacement of supplies and personnel. In its large defended harbor, ships and seaplanes can safely make repairs. Newcastle, on the eastern coast of Australia, has a floating dock which can take cruisers up to 10,000 tons. The main Australian naval base at Sydney also offers docking and other repair facilities for cruisers; and a new battleship-size dry dock—now under construction—is scheduled for completion in 1941-42. Defended fuel stations are located at Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Albany, spaced conveniently for sending reinforcements to Singapore and Surabaya via the southern route around Australia.⁶⁹ New Zealand, moreover, maintains a naval base and dockyard at Auckland, 1,280 miles east of Sydney and 1,565 miles southwest of American Samoa. These bases might all prove useful for United States naval operations in the South Pacific—particularly in case of a long war in which American forces undertook the slow strangulation of Japan through long-distance blockade, rather than a quick but more costly offensive against the Japanese in the north.

Consideration of a possible war with Japan also raises the question of alternate air routes to the Far East, for use in case the Japanese should seize Guam at the outset of hostilities and bar American planes from direct flight to the Philippines and Singapore. Way stations for air routes in the South Pacific might be obtained through the cooperation of French Oceania colonies which have declared their allegiance to the Free France of General Charles de Gaulle. One of these colonies, New Caledonia, is already a regular stop on the Pan American Clipper route via Hawaii and Canton Island to New Zealand and Australia; another, Tahiti, has been considered in connection with a possible transpacific route south of the Equator.⁷⁰ The availability of such mid-Pacific islands

68. On local defenses in the Netherlands Indies, cf. W. H. Chamberlain, *Christian Science Monitor*, January 17, 1941; *The New York Times*, August 28, December 15, 1940, March 1, 1941; *New York Herald Tribune*, January 10, 1941.

69. Cf. Harold Callender, *The New York Times*, September 23, 1940; for a description of Australian naval forces and defense preparations, cf. J. F. Green, "Australia in the World Conflict," cited, pp. 211-12.

—possessing good, even though small, harbors—would also aid the movement of light, fast naval vessels with short cruising radii.

UNITED STATES SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

An appraisal of the United States western defense position leads to the conclusion that this country is extremely well placed both for home defense and for the offensive operations which would be necessary to win a war against Japan. Current army and navy building projects are fully utilizing the natural strategic advantages of outlying American bases in the Pacific. For the first time the United States is erecting strong military establishments in Alaska, and constructing air and naval stations on the small islands to the west and south of Hawaii. Hawaii itself, as the country's foremost outlying base, is rapidly becoming even more formidable, and patrols stationed at the new islet outposts will increase Pearl Harbor's usefulness as a base of operations for the fleet.

Within the "inner defense zone" of Alaska-Hawaii-Panama the United States is already secure against any form of large-scale attack which can be foreseen under existing conditions of warfare. New military preparations beyond that zone, however, at Samoa, Guam and the Philippines, reveal a desire to protect more than the domestic territory of the United States. Congress has apparently reconsidered its previous policy favoring American withdrawal from the Far East. But the protection of extensive American interests in Southeast Asia, in case of further Japanese expansion in that region, would depend primarily on United States access to British and Netherlands bases in the Malay Archipelago and Australasia. To keep Washington better informed of possible military developments in those areas, the War Department dispatched American army observers to Singapore and Bangkok (Thailand) on February 10. United States naval observers and attachés are already stationed at Singapore, Bangkok, Port Darwin, Canberra and Auckland. While there is little doubt that the United States would be offered the use of British and Dutch bases in a Far Eastern war, it is by no means certain—despite current defense measures at those bases—that American forces could arrive in time to use them. As American aid to Britain and its allies is speeded under the lease-lend Act, the question of sending United States naval forces to the Far East may yet become a major issue.

70. "Pacific Airways," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1939, pp. 63, 69.

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