Paradise in Peril. Western colonial power and Japanese expansion in Sout-East Asia, 1905-1941

Bussemaker, H.Th.

Citation for published version (APA):
Chapter 1.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

1.1. Introduction.

Nearly thirty years after having been almost shredded into pieces by a bloody civil war, the young nation of the United States of America had sufficiently recuperated to join other Western nations in that favourite pastime of the late nineteenth century: Imperialism. Within a few years, the USA acquired an imperium in Latin America, the Pacific and South-East Asia. The consequences of this all were not foreseen at that time, but resulted in the inevitable involvement of the United States in world politics. Though unwilling at times, they had to face their responsibilities in the Far East as another young Asiatic power, Japan, flexed her muscles and started threatening American possessions and spheres of influence after the First World War.

The United States was a relative latecomer in South East Asia. Great-Britain, The Netherlands and France had already carved out sizeable possessions in that area. The United States took over the assets and liabilities of an old colonial power: Spain. It did so in competition with a second European upstart bent on acquiring a colonial imperium: Germany. All this resulted in an explosive mix, which required careful handling.

This chapter starts with a short introduction on the background of American imperialism and its subsequent consequences for U.S. foreign policy. The self-imposed policy of isolationism withdrew the U.S. as an active player in international power politics during the interbellum, a situation which became obviously untenable as "Grand Strategy" of a nation the size and importance of the United States. Gradually, the country and its leaders faced their responsibilities, and a more active foreign policy was embraced. It proved too late to protect the possessions of the other Western powers and of the United States itself from a Japanese take-over in S.E. Asia, but the immense inherent strength of the United States ultimately proved to be decisive also in S.E. Asia. This is the reason, why this dissertation starts with the United States, the ultimate victor in the ensuing Pacific War.

The ultimate American victory over Japan was partly due to the dedication of American military and naval leaders in developing a far sighted plan in the early decades of the twentieth century which was to defeat Japan in case of war. This was the famous War Plan ORANGE, which served as a framework for defence planning in the interwar period. In a subchapter the development of this plan is covered from conception to reality.

To the South of the Philippines there was situated the island empire of the Netherlands East Indies\(^{10}\), forming a bridge of islands between British possessions like Malaya and Singapore in one direction and Australia and New Zealand to the other. In South East Asia the Netherlands and the United States were close but unequal neighbours. In the last part of this chapter much space is therefore devoted to the evolving relationship between the

\(^{10}\) In subsequent text the expression Netherlands East Indies will be abbreviated to NEI.
two powers; a relationship which greatly influenced their foreign policy and in the case of The Netherlands at least also changed their rearmament policy. The United States played a crucial role in providing the NEI with modern weapons, and used that position to their own advantage; NEI cooperation was crucial in order to ensure the success of the American/British embargo on crude oil and oil products against Japan. In the last months of peace, an allied solidarity grew, belatedly, from this mutual dependency, which eventually more or less effectively confronted Japanese expansionism.

1.2. United States Foreign Policy.

In accordance with their size and geographical location, United States' foreign policy has always been one of "free trade", meaning free access to other markets of American capital and goods. This was in line with the open and dynamic internal market in the United States, which resulted in developing a number of companies to such a size, that they had to consider the whole world as their market. Companies like the Vacuum Standard Oil Company, General Electric, IBM and General Motors and Ford are good examples of this point, as they were active worldwide even before the First World War. The United Fruit Company even virtually ruled the Caribbean area. It is from this mercantile background, that Secretary of State John Hay addressed a note to the Governments of Great Britain, France, Russia and Japan on 6 September 1899 stating that China had to be taken into consideration as a market with free access for all trading partners. This policy became known as the open door. The "Open Door" policy with respect to China was one of the results of this "economic colonialism", and became a cornerstone for American foreign policy in the Far East in the four decades to follow.

In his famous farewell address to Congress, President Washington in 1796 warned his countrymen never again to get involved in European Power politics, which he considered base and beneath the dignity of the American citizen. In short, Washington was the first isolationist. From this background the Monroe doctrine evolved as another and far older foundation stone of American foreign policy. This doctrine was enunciated by President James Monroe on 2 December 1823 in his annual message to Congress. The declaration contained four points: 1) The United States would not interfere in the internal affairs of the European Powers 2) The United States recognized and would not interfere with existing colonies in the Western hemisphere. 3) The Western hemisphere was now closed to further colonization by European Powers, and 4) Any attempt by an European power to oppress or control any nation in the Western hemisphere would be viewed as a hostile act.

During the entire development of this doctrine the United States lacked the means to put it in to action. The doctrine however was fully supported by the British Government, which with the US Government feared Spain's return to the newly independent Latin American countries, and therefore the closing of an open door to these markets. Both nations feared the introduction of Metternich's conservative Holy Alliance in the Western hemisphere, which was especially threatening to the young nation's democracy. It was even a point of discussion between the two governments, whether the new policy would be announced in a joint statement. George Canning, British Foreign Minister, was deeply involved in the enunciation of the Monroe-doctrine, and the British Fleet guaranteed the Monroe Declarati-

---

on during most of the 19th century. It was only in the last two decades of that century, that the Royal Navy started worrying about the rapid expansion of the American blue water navy.

The Monroe doctrine neatly combined two recurring extremes in American foreign policy: "splendid isolation" and "benevolent hegemony". The United States distanced themselves from the warring European powers - and up to both world wars the tendency within the American populace to stay aloof from European events was very strong indeed. The second extreme had its heyday in Latin America and the Caribbean in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth centuries. In the Far East and Asia however, the extremes did not apply, and here American foreign policy was based on free access to Asian markets: the "Open Door".

In contrast to the situation in Britain, France, and The Netherlands, formulation of United States' foreign policy was and still is a presidential prerogative, in accordance with the Constitution. The Secretary of State is supposed to loyally implement the President's ideas and initiatives. As is shown in this chapter, reality is sometimes far different as it remains difficult to assess the State Department's influence in foreign policy formulation.

A case in point here is Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidency (1932 - 1945). In American historiography there are two schools of thought. One school maintains, that in his foreign policy Roosevelt was too opportunistic and too hesitant, resulting both in missed chances and in delayed re-armament. The second school maintains that both within Congress and in public opinion Roosevelt faced a strong isolationist front, which he could only gradually change towards a more active foreign policy by his masterly handling of public opinion. A protagonist of the first school of American historians is Frederick Marks 14 and, to a lesser degree, the revisionist historian Russett 15, whose views are strongly coloured by the Vietnam experience. Waldo Heinrichs 16 is the best-known defender of Roosevelt's foreign policy record. Barron 17 maintains a middle position, stating that, in the first two of his Presidential terms, Roosevelt was indeed vacillating, but that after Munich he became adept at turning public opinion in a more interventionist direction.

The isolationists controlled Congress from 1936 onward, and were very present in the press, which in its turn, influenced public opinion. During the thirties, public opinion, as

12 W. Stull Holt: "The United States and the defence of the Western hemisphere, 1815 - 1940" Pacific Historical Review, 10 (1941), 29 - 38.


represented by periodic polls held by polling institutes, was decidedly inward-looking. Influential people like Charles Lindbergh were strongly isolationist. The growing menace in Europe and the Far East resulted in sharp discussions both in public and in the press about whether the U.S. should remain aloof, or should aid the faltering Western democracies. In Chicago Robert McCormick's Chicago Tribune was strongly isolationist, in opposition to the Daily News. Schneider, when analysing the contents of these two newspapers, illustrated how Roosevelt succeeded in convincing people step by step to accept a more active foreign policy, although American public opinion remained sharply divided on the issue of war up to Pearl Harbor.

Another recurrent theme of American foreign policy is the habitual distrust of (Western) colonial powers. As the United States themselves were born out of colonial conflict, there was historically much sympathy for oppressed peoples in other countries' colonies. They, in turn of course pointed out the evident moral hypocrisy because of the miserable situation of the American negroes. In the case of the NEI, the American position towards the Dutch, as colonizers, was rather ambiguous, because of the enormous investments of American capital in the NEI due to the Dutch "Open Door" policy. When however in the thirties the Dutch colonial administration versus the Nationalists became very repressive, it lost much sympathy in American circles.

1.2.1. Personalities.

President Roosevelt came from an old and rich family of Dutch ancestry which had lived in the Hudson Valley for centuries. He himself was born at the family home "Hyde Park" outside New York in 1882. Franklin was a nephew of president Theodore Roosevelt, entering politics as Democratic Senator for New York. Between 1913 and 1920 he was Undersecretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration. He had polio in 1921, which crippled him for the rest of his life. He recovered sufficiently however to be elected Governor of New York in 1929. In 1932 he became the 31st President of the United States.

Like his uncle, Theodore Roosevelt, the President was very proud of his Dutch ancestry, and cultivated a good personal relationship with Queen Wilhelmina and her family. He was Godfather to Canadian-born Princess Margriet (1943), and he took his

---


oath of office at the inauguration of each of his four Presidential terms on the old Dutch family Bible. But he never let this relationship interfere with his foreign policy, and as is shown in this chapter, his treatment of the Dutch Government was at best non-preferential. Just before Holland was invaded by Germany on May 10, 1940, he offered the Queen and her family a passage to the United States on board of an American cruiser which was ready to depart from Lisbon, and could reach Holland in a day.24 In a personal letter to the Queen, Roosevelt guaranteed that he would take care of Princess Juliana and the two little princesses in case of dire trouble. In a personal note, passed to Roosevelt via Ambassador Joseph Kennedy in London, the Queen thanked him cordially for his offer on May 20, 1940.25

He first met the Queen at Hyde Park in July 1942 and established an excellent personal relationship with her. This was in contrast to his uncle, Theodore Roosevelt, who as ex-President had been invited by the Queen and her consort during his visit to The Netherlands in 1911, but found the Queen too haughty.26

Part of Roosevelt's approach to foreign policy was to send trusted friends to visit the policymakers of foreign powers in order to explore policy options. These personal assistants enjoyed direct channels of communications with him. The best-known of these assistants was Harry Hopkins, who became personal assistant early in 1941, and remained in that post till Roosevelt's death. Hopkins wielded enormous influence because he was fully trusted by the President.27

Next to the President in importance as for the making of foreign policy decisions is concerned is in theory the Secretary of State. During the Republican Hoover administration, this was Henry L. Stimson (1929 - 1933). At his inauguration, Roosevelt appointed as his Secretary of State Cordell Hull (1933 - 1944), a legally-minded, moralistic politician, who did not understand much about Japanese intentions.28 Hull had two Undersecretaries of State, Adolf A. Berle jr., and Benjamin Sumner Welles. The latter was trusted by Roosevelt, and had easy access to the President, to the embarrassment of Cordell Hull, who in 1943 forced the resignation of Sumner Welles. Hull's chief adviser in matters concerning the Far East was Dr. Stanley K. Hornbeck, Chief of the Far Eastern Section of the Department. Hornbeck had experience with China, far less so with Japan, which he continually underrated. Hornbeck advocated a hard line against Japan, and convinced not only Hull, but influential Secretaries like Morgenthau (Secretary of the Treasury), Stimson (Secretary of War since 1940) and Knox (Secretary of the Navy) that it was the only way to

24 Telegram Cordell Hull to American Minister in the Hague, May 8, 1940. Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers Department of State, USA, 1940 Volume I, Document 66, 187. This important source publication is subsequently referred to as FRUS.

25 FRUS, 1940-I, Document 1294, 203.

26 Schulle Nordholt, op. cit., 159.


contain Japan. Hornbeck was Japan's nemesis.29

American Foreign Policy in the Far East was executed by diplomats, of whom the most important were Nelson T. Johnson 30, ambassador to China from 1930 to 1941, and Joseph C. Grew, ambassador to Japan from 1932 - 1942. Grew recognized that Japan's dynamic efficiency would make it a world power, and strongly urged that Japan should be assisted in its economic expansion, rather than allowing it to be driven in its expansion by the military. He therefore consistently warned against escalating economic measures, but he became more and more isolated in his viewpoint.31

At the start of the war in Europe the American Minister in The Hague was Alexander J.D. Biddle. (1940 - 1944) He went into exile in London with the Dutch Government. In the NEI the American presence was embodied by the very able and pro-Dutch Consul-General in Batavia, Dr. Walter A. Foote. (1934 - 1938 and 1940 - 1942). From 1938 - 1940 Erle R. Dickover held this post.32 On the military side, a naval attaché was stationed at the American Legation in The Hague between 1930 - 1933 and between 1939 - 1941, and a Military Attaché between 1939 - 1941.33

The Dutch Minister (promoted to Ambassador in May 1942) in Washington was Dr. Alexander Loudon (1938 - 1946). Due to illness, he was represented a number of times by the Counsel of the Legation, Baron Boetzelaer van Oosterhout. Other important members of the Dutch Legation in Washington were the Naval Attaché Captain J.E. Meijer Ranneft KM (1938 - 1945) and the Military Attaché Colonel KNIL34 F.G.L. Weijerman (1940 - 1944).

1.2.2. The United States In South-East Asia, 1776 - 1935

Many historians are unaware of the fact, that American involvement in East Asia goes much further back than 1898, the year in which the United States acquired the Philippines


32 Their correspondence to the Secretary of State can be found at National Archives, Suitland, Maryland, Record Group 165 Records of the War Department, General and Special Staff, Military Intelligence Division, Regional Files 1922 - 1944, Netherlands East Indies, Box 2632, at the National Archives Washington D.C., Record Group 84, post Records of the US Consulate-General in Batavia, 1930 - 1939, and at the National Archives, Washington, Records of the Department of State, M-882, Records 1910 - 1929.

33 The names of the naval attaché's as from 1930 were Captain Arie A. Cormin USN, Lieut.Cdr John H. Magruder USN (1932), Captain Chester H.J. Keppler USN (1934), Captain Benjamin Dutton USN (1938), Captain Monroe Kelly USN (1939). Military attaché's were Major Edwin M. Watson USA (1930), Major Edwin R.C.F. Goetz USA (1932), Lieut.-Col. Jacob W.S.Wuest USA (1935), Major William H. Colburn USA (1939).

34 For the meaning of the Abbreviations KM and KNIL see List of Abbreviations.
from Spain. At the end of the eighteenth century, traders on the American Eastcoast had equipped ships for the profitable trade with China and the Moluccas. For example, from 1799 to 1846 Sumatran pepper was imported very profitably into Salem on board of 179 ships. This network of trade contacts grew during the nineteenth century. The West Sumatran port of Padang was frequented by many American ships from 1790 onward, taking coffee to the Eastern seaboard of the United States. In that century however China became the yet unknown real American "Far West". Boston trade families like the Cushings, Perkinses and Russell's earned sizable profits in the opium trade with China. It was also the lure of expanding trade, which made the U.S. Government send a squadron to Tokyo in 1853 under Commodore Matthew Perry specifically to force the opening of Japan to international trade.

Less well known is the American influence on the start of the bloodiest colonial war in the history of the Netherlands East Indies. A report from the Dutch Consul General in Singapore warned the government in Batavia, that the American consul in the Straits Settlements, Major W. Studer, had started talks with a delegation from the Sultanate of Aceh (Achin), situated in northern Sumatra. The intention was a trade agreement aiming at giving American traders special rights and privileges in Aceh. This information was instrumental in sending a Dutch expeditionary force to Aceh in April 1873, starting a colonial war which was to last for 40 years. The American Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish, later assured the Dutch Minister in Washington, that the United States had no colonial designs on Aceh.

Apart from trade, many American puritanical missionary societies became active in China, and laid the foundation for a growing interest for all things Chinese. Because they spoke the language, American missionaries played a crucial role in the communication between the Chinese authorities and American officials. They were also to play an

---


important role in U.S. Foreign Policy by awakening public opinion to the dangers of Japanese expansionism in China.

As early as 1832 the United States Navy actively fought against pirates who interfered with this profitable trade on Sumatra's West coast. When pirates plundered the U.S. freighter FRIENDSHIP there in 1831, the U.S. frigate POTOMAC was sent to Kuala Batu in what is now the province of Aceh in February 1832 to teach the pirates a lesson. This was repeated in 1839. Around that time a permanent American squadron was based in S.E. Asia. This Asiatic Squadron guarded American interests in the turmoil of the decaying Chinese Empire, and also came in action against pirates in the South Chinese Sea and in the Indies. The presence of this fleet even led to abortive steps by American diplomats to lease Formosa from the Chinese Government - in fierce competition with the French and the Japanese. It was the Asiatic Squadron commanded by Commodore George Dewey, which during the Spanish-American War destroyed the Spanish Fleet commanded by Rear-Admiral Patricio Montojo in the Bay of Manila on 1 May, 1898. The then undersecretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, had sent a secret message to Dewey, anchored at the time in the Bay of Nagasaki, to proceed to Hongkong and from there to Manila. After the American occupation of the Philippines, the Spanish Naval Base at Cavite in Manila Bay was to be the base for the U.S. Asiatic Fleet up to 1942.

Still international furor was caused, when the American delegation at the peace conference at Paris not only claimed the two Caribbean islands, Cuba and Puerto Rico, from Spain, but also the Philippine Islands and Guam in the Marianas, be it in exchange for a financial compensation of ten million dollars. The Spanish Government acquiesced, however, and the peace treaty was signed in Paris on 10 December 1898.

Why did the United States become an imperialist power, despite their Constitution? There were two main reasons for this: firstly the high expectations held in business circles about the enormous potential of China as a market for American products, and secondly the anxiety that Germany or Japan would otherwise take over the Philippines as port of entry to this Chinese market. German interest became evident after the Battle of Manila Bay, when the Germans sent a squadron to Manila which was far more powerful than Commodore Dewey's Asiatic Squadron. In 1899 they bought Spain's remaining Pacific possessions: the Carolinas, Marianas and Marshall Islands. In due course the Japanese were to acquire these islands under a Mandate of the League of Nations from Germany, thereby

---


43 On the genesis of the Asiatic Squadron see R. Albion Greenhalgh: "Distant Stations" in Proceedings U.S. Naval Institute, 80 (1954), 265 - 274.


46 For the Spanish-American War see David Trask: The War with Spain in 1898. MacMillan, NewYork/London 1981. This work is subsequently referred to as "Trask". On this war also F. Breidel: The Splendid Little War. Little, Brown, Boston 1958.

causing the Americans the enormous strategic problem of how to defend the Philippines.

A third reason is less known, but was the appearance of one of the most influential books on strategic thinking. It was the publication in 1890 of Alfred Thayer Mahan's book *The Influence of Seapower on History, 1660 - 1783*. The book reinforced the ideas held in influential government circles about the "Manifest Destiny" of the United States in the Far East, once the Indian Wars had pacified the interior of the continent. Important representatives of this "Mahan School" were in the first place Theodore Roosevelt and his influential friend Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, and also the Secretary of War Elihu Root, President McKinley himself, the future President W.H. Taft and John Hay, U.S. Ambassador in London.46 Their ideas were shared by Whitelaw Reid, publisher of the *New York Tribune*, and the press barons William Randolph Hearst and John Pulitzer, who used their newspapers to whip up public opinion in support of a war against Spain. (*Remember the MAINE!*).

McKinley himself was no outspoken imperialist, but he was influenced certainly by the so-called "Economic School" which maintained that American industry had become so efficient, that it needed export markets in order to sustain economic growth.47 The Chinese market was seen as having enormous potential, which in fact remained a hypothetic potential up to the eighties of the 20th century due to factors such as grinding poverty, lack of political stability, feudal social structures and corruption.51 It was McKinley indeed who formulated the U.S. Policy of the "Open Door to China", a policy which was to lead U.S. foreign policy in the Far East for the next four decades. According to that policy, all (western) nations were entitled to free access to the Chinese market, without tariff barriers being erected by anyone in power in China either or beyond.

With the conquest of the Philippines, the Americans became entangled in a hornet's nest. Just as in Cuba, there had already been an uprising against the decrepit Spanish colonial administration. It was, however an uprising by the colony's creole élite, the "ilustrados" (intellectuals) under José Rizal. When Rizal was executed by the Spaniards in 1896, the uprising was intensified under a new leader, Emilio Aguinaldo. At first, the nationalists accepted the Americans as liberators, but within a short time it became clear that the Americans had no intention of recognizing the Philippine Republic and the Constitution of Malolo. In February 1899 an uprising started against the American occupiers, which was, however, firmly suppressed in a bloody campaign which lasted two years and was directed by general Arthur MacArthur, Douglas MacArthur's father.52 However, parallel to this suppression, in 1900 the Philippines Commission recommended that the President should


establish a free and self-governing Philippines Commonwealth within a few decades. This was a farsighted recommendation, resulting in the founding of the Partido Federal by the Philippine elite in December 1900. The P.F. not only accepted American suzerainty, but actively supported Philippine Statehood within the American Union. This attitude resulted in very constructive cooperation between the Philippine establishment and the Americans during the entire period of their colonial tenure - admittedly a unique political constellation in South-East Asia.

The only American intervention in Asia after the occupation of the Philippines was the result of another insurrection: the Boxer rebellion of 1901. American troops from the Philippines under general Adnan Chaffee occupied Peking (Beijing), but good contacts were established with the local Chinese thanks to the assistance of U.S. missionaries and the restraint of the U.S. troops. The Americans earned lots of credit with the Chinese by not asking for reparation payments, in contrast to the other Western powers of the day.

After having "pacified" the Philippines, the Americans were confronted with the problem of the security of their new possession, which became painfully evident after Japan's victory over Russia. The rapidly deteriorating relations between the United States and Japan are discussed in a separate subchapter, but as a result serious consideration was given in American military circles to the possibility, that Japan would execute a sneak attack on the Asiatic Fleet and on Manila Harbour, and would thereafter declare war. It was only after the Root-Takahira Agreement of 30 November 1908, that the skies cleared.

President Theodore Roosevelt realised the vulnerability of the Philippines against determined Japanese aggression, and in the annual message to Congress in December 1908 he suggested for the first time that the Philippines should become independent within a short time. It was Democratic President Wilson however who gave the Philippines real self-government by passing in Congress the Philippines Autonomy Act of 29 August 1916. According to this act, the Philippines would have their own legislative Assembly with a House of Representatives and a Senate, with members chosen by universal suffrage. Defence and Foreign Policy, however, were to remain the responsibility of the U.S. government. The pre-amble of the Act also explicitly stated that the United States would "recognize the independency of the Philippines as soon as a stable government can be established." This Act is very important in colonial history, because for the first time in modern history, a colonial power declared that it would give independence to a colony in the not too distant future. This unique and progressive law resulted in the identification of the Filipino citizen with his American overlord, rejecting the Japanese as "liberators". The payoff came twenty-five years later when the only reasonably successful defence in the whole of South-East Asia against the Japanese aggressor took place in the Philippines, following Japanese occupation by a succesful guerilla against the Japanese. It also solved any potential internal security problem. When the United States withdrew most of its troops in

---


1917 from the Philippines because of the European war, there was not even an attempt at an uprising.

Instrumental in this U.S. policy of educating the Filipino’s to quick nationhood was the American educator David Barrows, Inspector of Education to the colony from 1903 to 1909. He recruited the assistance of the United States’ Army in both constructing over 4000 primary schools in 1909, and also in providing basic education by employing American non-commissioned officers. Barrows also recruited shiploads of American young female instructors on temporary assignments, who were to teach English and to organize a curriculum outside the traditional influence of the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, literacy rates rose within one generation from 20 percent to over fifty percent. This is in sharp contrast to the educational policies of the European powers towards their colonial subjects.

Two factors were responsible for a faster Philippines autonomy than could have been foreseen in 1916. The first was the Great depression, with the Labour Unions fulminating against the free admittance of cheap Filipino labour into the U.S. Moreover, both the American sugarbeet industry and the dairy industry complained about cheap Philippine imports. Secondly, the growing isolationism was translated politically into “abandonism” with respect to the Philippines. The generals and admirals considered the Philippines indefensible anyway due to the swift increase in Japanese military prowess. When the democrat Roosevelt became President in 1932, there was therefore sufficient political support for independence for the Philippines to be declared more rapidly. The Tydings-McDuffee Act of 24 March 1934 established a Philippine Commonwealth with an elected President and with a transitional ten year period towards full independence in 1946. In 1933 Roosevelt had appointed mr Frank Murphy as the last Governor of the Philippines. He assisted in the solemn installation of the old freedom fighter Manuel Quezon as the first elected President of the Philippines on 15 November 1935.

The impact of these political developments on the NEI was very strong, as is discussed in chapter 3, pages 271, 278, and 303. The Netherlands were one of the few countries, which did not congratulate the new Philippines Administration on its new status. The NEI Administration was obviously very concerned about the influence of Philippine independence on the Indonesian nationalists, and fear Japanese occupation of the independent Philippines, which would remove the protective shield of American presence.

---

56 In 1919 the number of American troops in the Philippines had decreased to 5,255. See Appendix on U.S. Army Manpower in Linn, op. cit., 253.


between Tokyo and Batavia.

1.2.3. The Washington Treaties of 1922.

Another issue of importance was the Anglo-Japanese Naval Agreement of 1902. This agreement was revised in both 1905 and 1911, and was thereafter renewable every ten years. This Agreement is covered in Chapter 2 (See pages 130 - 131).

Successive American Administrations disliked the Agreement because of its potential for an Anglo-Japanese alliance against the United States. The 1911 revision of the Alliance explicitly exempted application of it to any nation that had concluded an arbitration treaty with one of the signatories. The United States had indeed agreed on an arbitration agreement with England, but this had not been ratified. Distrust of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance persisted therefore among American diplomats, specifically with respect to its potential to close the "Open Door" on China. President Wilson's Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, consequently informed the British in 1919 that the United States opposed renewal of the Alliance in its then-present form. The Republican successors reiterated this point in private talks with British diplomats, stressing that if the Alliance were to be continued, it should have a limit in time (e.g. 5 years) and should not contain any (secret) anti-American clauses.

American diplomacy had not been very successful at Versailles, because of the Anglo-Japanese treaties. The problem lay in the future of the German colonies in the Pacific, and specifically in Micronesia. Based on those treaties, Great Britain had requested Japan at the start of the World War to search out and destroy German ships, and not to occupy the islands, which the Japanese systematically did. In a secret treaty in 1917 Great Britain and Russia promised Japan the ownership of these island groups after the war if Japanese destroyer squadrons assisted the Allies against German U-Boats in the Mediterranean, which they did. For the United States the consequence of those island groups in Japanese hands athwart the U.S. line of communication to the Philippines meant that the Philippines would become isolated. But the only result of long negotiations at Versailles was that Japan would become a Mandated Power over those island groups. It was a serious setback for U.S. diplomacy, which would be partly responsible for the vote in the Senate on not joining the League of Nations. It also resulted in aversion of British diplomacy with its secret treaties, and the determination of U.S. diplomats to end the Anglo-Japanese naval treaty.

In the 1920's the major problem of Republican diplomacy concerning the Far East was on

---

64 See also Yom Amm Kim: "Le Rapprochement Anglo-Japonais en Asie (1902 - 1911)" in Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire, 70 (1988), 131 - 152.
68 Ballendorf, ibid., 87.
the one hand preventing Japan from establishing either economic or political hegemony over any other region in the Far East, and on the other not antagonizing her too strongly, because the value of American trade with Japan far exceeded that with other regions in that area. In the early twenties, America provided Japan with about 75% of its automobiles, lumber and building materials, and 50% of its oil and machinery requirements. The U.S. purchased 40% of the total Japanese export, and took 90% of Japan's production of raw silk. Of the total foreign capital invested in Japan, the share of the U.S. was 40%. In comparison with Japan, China was an enormous potential market with its 500 million inhabitants and rich mineral resources, but it was politically weak and therefore too big a risk for long-term capital investments. American investments in China were about $120 million, which equalled about 40% of Japanese investments in China and 15% of British investments which were worth $700 million. China accounted for only around 3% of American exports. Japan was therefore important for the American economy, and had to be handled with care.

This point may be illustrated by the so-called Siberian Intervention, which lasted from September 1918 to November 1920. This intervention illustrates the use of military force in support of limited foreign policy goals. The official objective was to help Czecho-Slovakian forces stranded in the region, but in fact Wilson and the State Department wanted to restrain the Japanese military in the Far East in order to save the Open-Door Policy. This American Intervention compelled the Japanese to withdraw their troops from Siberia, and therefore this is one of the foremost examples in U.S. military history of achieving political and diplomatic goals by committing U.S. troops without military victory being the goal.

The political solution to the problem of dissolving the Anglo-Japanese Alliance proved to be the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference of 1921. This conference was in effect a political conference with enormous military and naval consequences, because, as was convincingly illustrated by Dingman, disarmament was at that time acceptable to the main powers due to the dynamics of their internal policies. There was a strong economic incentive, as U.S. agriculture was in a deep trough of depression, and President Harding reasoned that a Naval Disarmament Agreement would free sufficient funds to enable European countries to buy more American grain. Europe had traditionally always been an excellent market for US agricultural products.

For the time being, it is sufficient to bear in mind that one of the results of the Conference was the signing of two purely political documents: the Four-Power Treaty and the Nine-Power Treaty. The Four-Power Treaty signed by the United States, Great Britain, France

---


89 Luckett, op. cit. 62.


and Japan, agreed to respect each other's possessions in the Far East\textsuperscript{72}. It was this Treaty that formally ended the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, removed the Japanese threat towards the Philippines, and stabilized the Far East for a period of ten years. It also had important consequences for the Dutch colonial empire, which will be covered in subchapter 5.1.

Why did the English government agree to the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Treaties? According to Dayer \textsuperscript{73}, the English war debts to the United States were so enormous after the end of the First World War, that Premier Lloyd George hoped to improve the installment payments conditions by mollifying the American creditors by giving in on the Japanese alliance. She may have been right on that issue, but it is also known that the British Dominion governments, such as Australia and New-Zealand, were only lukewarm supporters of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, or like Canada opposed it fiercely.

The Nine-Power Treaty was signed by all nations attending the Conference, pledging their respect to the sovereignty, independence, and territorial and administrative integrity of China.\textsuperscript{74} The fourth paragraph of this Treaty was formulated by the American elder Statesman Elihu Root, and became known as Root's "security clause". It stated that the signatories would refrain from pursuing special rights or privileges in China that would imperil those of citizens of other states, nor to take any action "inimical to the security of such States". Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes and President Harding regarded this treaty as a success for the United States because the Open Door policy of the U.S. was now formally recognized.\textsuperscript{76}

The Japanese, however, thought otherwise. The Nine-Power Treaty did not spell out clearly enough that it also applied to China's northernmost regions Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. The Japanese interpretation was, that it did not, while the Americans believed that it applied to the whole of China. The lack of clarity on this point was to have grave consequences for the future because the treaty did also not provide any enforcement provision to be used should any power violate China's integrity.\textsuperscript{76}

\textbf{1.2.4. American - Japanese relations up to 1940}

\textbf{1.2.4.1. Early contacts.}

From 1637, Japan withdrew into itself - a case of extreme isolationism. For more than 200 years, trade with other countries was strongly restricted. It was a period of peace and stability, but also of the fossilization of a medieval feudal system, that was strongly to influence Japanese culture and minds. The appearance of an American fleet under

\textsuperscript{72} FRUS, 1922-II, p. 33.


\textsuperscript{74} The signatories were the U.S.A., Great Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Portugal and China.


\textsuperscript{76} Walter H. Mallory: "Security in the Pacific" Foreign Affairs, 13 (1934/35), 82 - 90.
Commodore Perry in the Bay of Tokyo in 1853 resulted in a rude awakening. The Japanese faced military inferiority and humiliation by Western powers just as had happened to their cultural master, China. We do not want to go into the turmoil which kept the whole of Japan in its grip in the decades thereafter, resulting in the emergence of a modern westernized Japan after 1890. It is sufficient to mention here the succesful muscle-flexing by Japan: in 1895 the Chinese were beaten, resulting in the first Japanese colonies: Formosa and the Ryu-Kyu Islands. In 1905 the Japanese won their war against Tsarist Russia, after having secured English support in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Japan had thus become a strong regional power in itself, exerting dominance over the whole of the Western Pacific and East-Asia.

The importance of the United States in the opening of Japan in 1853 has already been shown. Thereafter, commercial and diplomatic relations were established, which were beneficial to both nations. The Japanese Government did not protest against the American occupation of the Philippines; in fact the Japanese preferred the Americans to the Germans or the French in taking over the Spanish colonies. This was confirmed in the so-called Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905 in which the American Secretary of State William Howard Taft, during a visit to Japan, closed a deal with the Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Katsura, giving Japan a free hand in Korea in exchange for the Japanese recognition of American domination over the Philippines. The Americans in their turn respected Japanese sensibilities; for example when the U.S. Navy wanted bunkering facilities along the Chinese coast and specifically in the Samsah Bay north of Foochow, the Japanese Government was contacted. When it disagreed with a Chinese lease to the United States of this area the Americans did not pursue this any further.

1.2.4.2. The Racial Question.

It was, however, the Japanese immigration into the Western United States, especially California, which caused the emergence of strong anti-Japanese feelings in that State. The Trade Unions specifically resented cheap Japanese Labour. Most Japanese immigrants were farmers and rural labourers with very little formal education. In 1900 10.151 Japanese in California were registered, compared with 97.457 Japanese in 1930. They never, however, represented more than one percent of the total Californian population. The roughly 100,000 Issei (First-generation Japanese) on America's Westcoast had reached a certain wealth by about 1930 by their industriousness and thrift, and considered


80 Luther W. Spoehr: "Sambo and the Heathen Chinese: Californian racial stereotypes in the late 1870s" Pacific Historical Review, 42 (1973), 185 - 204.


themselves primarily Americans\textsuperscript{83}. Notwithstanding the fact, that after 1895 Japanese immigration actually decreased in absolute numbers, public opinion in California became more racist. In 1906, the State of California adopted a school segregation program, which was very discriminatory towards Japanese students. The Japanese Press fueled strongly anti-American demonstrations in the large Japanese cities, leading to a serious "war scare".

Despite his fearful imperialistic reputation, President Theodore Roosevelt pursued a very cautious policy with respect to Japan. In February 1907 his Secretary of State Elihu Root, signed an agreement with the Japanese Foreign Minister Tadasu Hayashi in order to alleviate racial tension in California and to counter the war scare. Japanese labourers were forbidden to move from Hawaii to the American mainland and Japan was to deny passports to Japanese labourers for emigration to either the Hawaii-islands or the United States mainland. After the success of the U.S. Battlefleets visit to Japanese ports (See page 52), this agreement was followed by the Root-Takahira Agreement of November 1908, signed by Secretary of State Elihu Root and Kogoro Takahira, Japanese Ambassador in Washington. The U.S. hereby accepted Japanese dominance in the Western Pacific, but obtained Japanese recognition of the territorial integrity of China and a further curbing of Japanese emigration to Hawaii and the U.S.\textsuperscript{84}

Meanwhile, the agitation in California against Japanese continued, resulting in the very discriminatory Californian Alien Land Law of April 1913, which prohibited any Japanese from owning land, whereas other (European) immigrants were not affected.\textsuperscript{85} President Wilson tried to have this so-called Webb Act revoked by the American Supreme Court. The attempt failed and the court supported the right of a State to enforce such legislation\textsuperscript{86}. The Law resulted in strong Japanese resentment towards the United States playing into the hands of the ultra-nationalists, and eventually proved to be one of the factors leading to Pearl Harbor\textsuperscript{87}.

It has to be remembered that the United States at that time was going through a phase of extreme racism as millions of white Americans joined the Ku Klux Klan and throughout the twenties blacks were lynched almost at will in the Southern States\textsuperscript{88}. According to historian Leon F. Litwack between 1882 and 1968, at least 4,742 African Americans were


\textsuperscript{84} Thomas A. Bailey: "The Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908". Pacific Historical Review, 9, (March 1940), 19 - 35.


\textsuperscript{88} Michael H. Hunt: Ideology and Foreign Policy, Ibid., 139.
murdered that way.**

In 1921, Roland S. Morris, American Ambassador in Japan, and his Japanese counterpart in Washington, Shidehara, agreed on a formula to solve racial discrimination by signing the so-called Morris - Shidehara Agreement**. It was rejected by the US Congress, however, and immigration was further limited in the Emergency Quota Act of 1921. This act assigned quota's to each non-hemispheric nation based on 3% of foreign-born residents of that nationality living in the U.S. according to the census of 1910. In 1922, the Supreme Court decided that Japanese aliens were ineligible for U.S. Citizenship. In the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe was further reduced to 2% on the basis of the 1890 census. Moreover, immigration from Japan was prohibited altogether, based on the Supreme Court ruling of 1922. This Act substantially worsened Japanese-American relations as the proud Japanese resented being considered even less valuable than Eastern and Southern Europeans. Coming soon after the refusal of the American delegation at the Versailles peace talks to support Japan's request for racial equality, these events resulted in deep Japanese resentment and in themselves constituted one of the structural causes for the outbreak of the War in the Pacific in 1941.

1.2.4.3. Problems in the Far East, 1922 - 1932.

During the twenties China remained politically and militarily weak and unstable but its continuing subjugation to the great Powers with their extra-territorial rights caused a nationalist fervour, which was exploited by General Chiang Kai-Shek and his Kuo-Min-Tang Party to defeat (with Soviet-Russian help) the tuchuns (warlords) which held sway in the countryside. This phase in Chinese history was closed when troops of the Kuo-Min-Tang occupied the imperial capital Peking on 3 July, 1928. The previous year, in April 1927, Chiang had turned loose on the Chinese communists, his erstwhile allies, an action which earned him considerable credit in Western eyes. His marriage to American-educated Soong Mei-ling, the daughter of a wealthy christian Shanghai businessman in December 1927, and his conversion to Christianity raised his status with the Western Powers. When his pleas to end extra-territoriality fell on deaf ears, Chiang started exerting control over Manchuria and ejecting the last remnants of Russian influence out there. This resulted in a border war with the Soviets in August 1929 and China appealed to the Kellogg-Briand Pact and Western arbitration. That was refused, after which, to the dismay of the Japanese, the Chinese government restored the Soviet Union's treaty rights in Manchuria.

Japan was of course another country with much at stake in Manchuria. Since the Treaty of Portsmouth of 1905 Japan had controlled the South Manchurian Railway and had maintained an Occupation Army around the port of Dairen (Dalny). Officers in this so-called Kwantung Army schemed to exert Japanese control over Manchuria by murdering Manchuria's ruler, Chang Tso-Lin, in June 1928. The governments in both Tokyo and Nanking however avoided further chaos although the Japanese Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka was forced to resign, because he wanted to prosecute the scheming officers. This did not bode well for Parliamentary Democracy in Japan, and on 18 September 1931 the


Kwantung Army forced the "Mukden-incident" against the Chinese², which resulted in Japanese military occupation of the whole of Manchuria.* This is covered in more depth in chapter 6 on Japan.

Although the Chinese government appealed to the League of Nations as early as 21 September 1931, the Western reaction to the Mukden-incident was only a tepid one. Manchuria was far away, and there were not many western investments in that part of China. The Depression caused social hardship everywhere and England decided to leave the gold standard in that same month, September 1931. At the same time in September 1931 the Royal Navy was hit by the Invergordon Mutiny.³ After much deliberation in the lame-duck League of Nations a commission to inquire into the conflict was set up with Lord Lytton in charge, and the commission was installed on 10 December 1931. The commission included French, German, Italian, Dutch and American representatives, even though the U.S. was not a member of the League of Nations.

Secretary of State Henry Stimson was initially quite sympathetic towards the Japanese as he saw the root cause of the troubles in China's insistence on ending extra-territorial rights. But when the Japanese armed forces pushed forward without delay to occupy the whole of Manchuria, a task completed by the fall of Chinchow on 2 January 1932, Stimson changed his mind. As a result, a note dated 7 January 1932 carrying President Hoover's approval was sent to the Chinese and Japanese governments⁴ stating that the United States refused to recognize any changes in territorial status brought about by force. This statement became known as the Stimson Doctrine⁵. The British however - as a member of the League of Nations - were not in favour of the American unilateral declaration. This logically soured considerably relations between the two powers⁶.

In October 1932 the Lytton Commission report divided the blame evenly: it not only accused the Chinese of stirring troubles in Manchuria, but also judged Japan's claim to have acted only in self-defense as untrue, and also recommended that an autonomous regime in Manchuria under Chinese sovereignty, with guarantees for Japanese interests.

To the amazement of the British, the Japanese reacted furiously and withdrew from the

---


⁴ The cause of the mutiny at the Invergordon naval base was a proposed one shilling a day deduction from wages. The authorities handled the mutiny skillfully, and it ended after a few days without bloodshed. See Alan Ereira: The Invergordon Mutiny - a narrative history of the last great mutiny in the Royal Navy and how it forced Britain off the Gold standard in 1931. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1981.


League of Nations in February 1933. They promptly occupied the Chinese province of Jehol and then marched into Hopei province, occupying a broad swath of territory between Peking and Tientsin. The Chinese government was forced to sign the Tangku Truce on 31 May 1933, as Chiang had his hands full trying to contain the Chinese Communists by military measures.

In retrospect, American policy had failed. The Stimson Doctrine had no teeth as Hoover firmly rejected any military or economic sanctions against Japan. But Japan was deeply offended by the Doctrine. The British did not join the Americans because in their view it was better to have Japan expand in Manchuria than to threaten British interests in Shanghai and in the South of China. It was a cynical view, shared by other Western powers, but more to the point than Stimson's moral stand on the issue. Moreover, as British Foreign Secretary Sir John Simon remarked during the Shanghai crisis, "From the point of view of the security of the Settlement, it appeared better that the Japanese succeed than the Chinese." So, nothing happened and the militarists both in the Japanese forces and in government saw their position strengthened by the vacillation of the Western Powers.

1.2.5. Roosevelt's Far Eastern Policy.

The change of guard as a result of the election of president Roosevelt did not change American Foreign Policy. Democratic leaders, like their Republican predecessors, were loath jeopardizing trade with Japan, which then constituted around 8.5% of total American exports in the depression years, three times higher than the export to China. **Roosevelt's maternal grandfather, Warren Delano, had made a fortune in the nineteenth century trade in tea, silk and opium and although Roosevelt was pro-Chinese, he recognized that a hundred years of Western exploitation had left the Chinese without control over their own financial and monetary matters, and therefore with no real sovereignty. Moreover, Big Business expected that trade contacts would have a restraining influence on the Japanese government. It was only early in 1941, that American business concluded that Japan was inherently antagonistic to all the Americans stood for.**

Then there was the deep distrust between Americans and British. Roosevelt tended to see most British leaders as old-fashioned Tory imperialists. American public opinion was deeply disturbed by the British repressive measures against Gandhi and his Indian nationalists. While reinforcing the U.S. Navy up to the Washington Treaty Limits, Roosevelt tried to avoid direct conflict with Japan at almost all expense, and avoided involvement in China's foreign and domestic problems. But Roosevelt understood, that he had to involve Great Britain in containing Japan. Roosevelt sent out secret feelers in the direction

---

97 Offner, Ibid., 103.


100 Peter C. Hoffer: "American businessmen and the Japan Trade, 1931 - 1941" Pacific Historical Review, 41, (1972), 189 - 205.

of the British Government suggesting sharing tank designs and other military development activities foundered, because the British distrusted American motives. The years of Roosevelt's first presidency were also the years when the English government pursued an appeasement with Japan (See pages 134, 142 - 143).

On April 17, Eiji Amau, Japanese Foreign Ministry's spokesman stated at a press conference that Japan supported the Open Door and wished to see China unified. This however could only be achieved by the Chinese themselves. Japan therefore rejected international loans and military assistance offered to the Chinese, and by proclaiming this "Amau Doctrine" Japan evidently wished the Chinese to remain in their current status of servility.

The Japanese used unusually strong language in stating their objectives. They were specifically irritated by weapons exports to China from Germany and the United States. The ninth paragraph of their Press Release stated therefore: Supplying China with war planes, building aerodromes and detailing military instructors or advisers to China or contracting a loan to provide funds for political uses, would obviously tend to separate Japan and other countries from China, and ultimately would prove prejudicial to the peace of East Asia. Japan will oppose such projects. The Amau doctrine therefore counteracted the Nine-Power treaty, and was firmly rejected in the American Press. Roosevelt and Cordell Hull however did not want to antagonize Japan, and in effect agreed to the Amau-doctrine, by blocking further loans to China. The Japanese themselves were amazed by the violent reactions in the Western press, and on 20 April 1934 Koki Hirota, their foreign minister, wrote the following message to Ambassador Grew: "Japan has no wish to infringe on the independence, interest or prosperity of China...Neither in Manchukuo nor in China have we any territorial ambitions... We have no intentions to interfere with the interests of third parties [in China]". Thus, everything went on as before.

While diplomatically the level of irritation between Japan and the U.S.A. increased, public opinion in America turned more and more inwards. The three Neutrality Acts, enacted by Congress between 1935 and 1937, illustrate this point. The Neutrality Act of August 1935 gave the President the power to identify belligerents, to suspend exports of war material to them and to create a National Munitions Control Board to regulate arms traffic. The act was provisional and expired on February 29, 1936. It was succeeded by the Neutrality Act of 29 February 1936 which further limited the President's capacity to allow arms shipments to western powers and prohibited all financial loans to belligerents. The Neutrality Act of 1 May 1937 was even more extreme because it automatically provided for an arms embargo should war break out, a loan prohibition, a ban on passenger travel on belligerent ships and a prohibition on arming U.S. merchant ships. Moreover, belligerents buying non-

---


103 FRUS, 1934-III, 112 ff.

104 Dallek, op. cit., p. 77.


106 Quoted in Letter of Dutch Minister in Washington to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1 May 1934, no 1360/319. As above.
contraband goods like food had to pay for them in cash and had to transport the goods on their own ships (the so-called "cash-and-carry" provision). This law effectively made it impossible for Western powers like England and France to accelerate their re-armament by obtaining American weapons. It is undeniable, that the growing isolationism in the United States in the interbellum period was one of the factors in Western impotence in the face of rising totalitarianism and militarism. It pervaded both public opinion and Congress, isolationism therefore becoming the "grand strategy" of the United States in the critical years between 1934 and 1939.

After the outbreak of war in Europe, the new (fourth) Neutrality Act of November 1939 lifted the impartial arms embargo and allowed Britain and France to buy weapons on a cash-and-carry basis. American merchant ships however were expressly forbidden to enter war zones and belligerent ports in Europe. The Lend-Lease Law of March 11, 1941 effectively ended the Neutrality Laws period.

On 31 December 1936 the Washington Disarmament treaty expired. President Roosevelt therefore proposed the neutralisation of the whole Western Pacific in order to save the existing status quo. The Japanese Government however was only interested in such a neutralisation if it could obtain total parity with the U.S.A. and Great Britain with respect to its battleships. For the Western powers, this was equal to having no treaty at all. Neville Chamberlain, British Finance Minister at that time, tried to appease Japan in order to face the Western European dictators and the English Government consequently proposed having a treaty signed, based on Article 19 of the old one. This would extend the ban on fortifications and bases in the Western Pacific including the Japanese Mandated islands. It would forbid the Americans to expand Guam as a Naval Base, which the Japanese feared would happen. The American Army and Navy departments were not against this proposal, as the Philippines were considered undefensible anyway. But the State Department was in disfavour as the Japanese had forbidden the type of inspections which had been informally agreed upon in Washington in 1922, therefore raising American suspicions that they had reinforced the Mandated islands anyway. The President's


110 The Japanese Government announced on 29 December 1934, that it would not extend the Five-Power Treaty of 1922. See FRUS, Foreign relations Japan 1931 - 1941, I, 274. The consequences of this announcement were analysed by Admiral William V. Pratt: "Pending Naval Questions" Foreign Affairs, April 1935.


113 Richard A. Harrison, op. cit., 56.

114 Richard Dean Burns: "Inspecting the Mandates, 1919 - 1941" Pacific Historical Review, 37 (1968), 450 - 455.
initiative came to naught, however, when it became clear to the British that the neutrality zone would include the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines, giving them the impression that the Americans were ducking their responsibility for the defence of that area, and leaving the British with the responsibility of Singapore.

At the Imperial Conference in London on 14 May 1937, J.A. Lyons, the Australian Prime Minister, made an almost identical proposal. The Australians distrusted British ability to act on behalf of their defense and preferred neutralisation instead. The Australians wanted a new Nine-Power treaty with Belgium and Italy being replaced by Thailand and the Soviet Union. The big question was whether Japan would join in the proposal. The Marco Polo Bridge incident South of Peking on 7 July 1937 which started the Chinese-Japanese war however, made the whole discussion about this plan very academic. After 27 July, there was widespread fighting between Chinese and Japanese forces on a broad front around Peking. Opening a second front, the Chinese attacked Japanese naval installations in Shanghai on 14 August 14 1937. Three months of confused fighting followed, with the Chinese giving a good account of themselves.

The Western democracies once more failed to get their act together. The Americans distrusted the British, who, in their turn, approached the Americans about considering sanctions against Japan while, at the same time, they had failed to reinforce the Far East militarily. This made the Americans think that they were expected to pull the British chestnuts out of the fire. The Americans, however, evacuated their civilians out of China and despatched warships with an extra contingent of 1200 Marines to Shanghai solely for the protection of American interests and people. Roosevelt refused to declare that Japan and China were at war, because in that case the Neutrality Acts would apply, bringing more hardship to the Chinese than to the Japanese. Japan would not receive American oil in American ships nor would China receive American weapons even if transported by non-American ships because Japan had mastery of the seas around China. For the same reason neither country could declare war on the other.

In the summer of 1937, Roosevelt had at last developed a long-term strategy for dealing with an aggressive Japan. It was based on a distant maritime blockade of Japan with the British and the American navies sharing the brunt of the actual blockade. He outlined his ideas about a trade embargo in his "Quarantine Speech" in Chicago on 5 November 1937, in which he noted that peace-loving countries had to make concerted efforts to uphold treaties. Challenged by the British, however, the Americans refused to consider economic sanctions against Japan, which did not endear him to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. The Quarantine Speech therefore suggested more than Roos-

---


117 Walter H. Mallory: "Japan attacks, China resists" Foreign Affairs, 16, October 1937, 129 - 142.


118 B. Sumner Welles: Seven decisions that shaped the world. New-York 1950, 71 - 75.

119 Dorothy Borg, op. cit. 380 - 381.

119 Dallek, op. cit., p. 147
event was able and willing to deliver both domestically as well as internationally. The only direct consequence was Roosevelt's willingness to send an American delegation, led by Norman Davis, to the Nine-Power Conference at Brussels. Roosevelt instructed Davis, however, not to involve the United States in any concerted action against Japan as there was obviously no public support at home for such a course of action. The Brussels Conference opened on 3 November 1937 with all the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty present with the exception of the Japanese. In the event, it proved to be a dismal failure.

On 12 December 1937, during their drive along the Yangtze river towards Nanking, the Japanese bombed three American river-tankers on the river, sinking two of them and their escort, the gunboat USS PANAY. Roosevelt and Hull were enraged and demanded full apologies and compensation which the equally surprised Japanese Government hastily offered. This took the fire out of eventual American countermeasures, such as economic sanctions, specific export embargoes or the freezing of Japanese assets. In the weeks thereafter it became clear from statements by American survivors that there was no possibility of there having been any "misunderstanding". Japanese officers had visited the PANAY the morning before the incident, and survivors in the river were even shot at by Japanese planes. The New York Times correspondent did some sleuthing in Shanghai and identified the Japanese commander responsible as being Colonel Kingoro Hashimoto, one of the firebrands of the Tokyo mutiny of 26 February 1936. (See Chapter 6, pages 624 and 647). The non-isolationist American Press even urged Roosevelt to initiate a joint maritime action together with the British.

This option had in fact been discussed between Roosevelt and the British Ambassador Ronald Lindsay on 16 December 1937. France and The Netherlands would also be asked to join in a distant cruiser blockade of Japanese shipping lanes. Lindsay was cautious, and proposed a "demonstration" whereby the British would expedite 6 battleships to Singapore. Captain Royal Ingersoll USN, Director of the War Plans Division of the US Naval Staff, was hastily sent to London for secret staff conversations. (See Chapter 2, page 162). It was agreed that the British would intercept Japanese trade on the line from Singapore via NEI, New Guinea and the New Hebrides to Fiji. The American Navy would be responsible from there to the American West Coast. At that time, however, Japanese Japanese apologies had taken all the steam out of the proposal. Roosevelt, as always


122 For a description of the events see Masatake Okumiya: "How the PANAY was sunk" Proceedings US Naval Institute, June 1953, p. 587 a.f.p.

123 These counter-measures had indeed already been discussed between Roosevelt and his advisers. See Dallek, op. cit., p. 154, and Letter chargé d'affaires Count W. van Rechteren Limpurg to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 14 December 1937, no 4331/1103 as above.

124 Letter Dutch Chargé d'affaires, 22 December 1937, no 4398/1119. As above.

125 See Washington Evening Star, 16 December 1937.


127 MacVickar Haight, op. cit., 211.

128 McVickar Haight, op. cit., 218.
very sensible to public opinion, had, however, concluded that there was no support within
the American populace for war against Japan and therefore forbade any public saber rattle-
ing. The only exception was the sending of three light cruisers under Rear-Admiral
Julius C. Townsend's command to visit Sydney and then Singapore, where "they would join
the British Navy in celebrating the virtual completion of the huge naval fortifications at Singapore".

The problem was that this visit was a little embarrassing to the Royal Navy, because,
in order to avoid sending an invitation to the Japanese Imperial Navy, only the Empire
Navies had been invited!

As is argued in the following Chapter, the failure of Great Britain, due to Chamberlain's
appeasement policy towards Japan, to join Roosevelt in this quarantine proposal was a
historical watershed. A quarantine at that time would have smothered Japanese aggressi-
on at hardly any risk to the Western Powers. The Japanese, however, were now allowed to
pursue their aggressive designs until they were confronted by a unified Western response
in July 1941, under far worse circumstances than had existed in 1938.

During the first six months of 1938, the Japanese Army campaigned in China with full
force, conquering major cities and their lines of communications. Everywhere, Japanese
troops acted with unrestrained savagery towards the Chinese population, the bloody
massacre at Nanking from 13 - 20 December 1937 killing more than 200,000 civilians,
being the dismally low point. The Chinese were not the only victims, however. Japanese
planes and troops showed an inexplicable preference for damaging U.S. property,
including mission stations. On 26 January 1938, Japanese soldiers even hit an American
embassy official at Nanking. Ambassador Grew lodged a protest, and was informed later
that an officer and 20 soldiers had been court-martialed.

Meanwhile Japan flouted the Open Door and proclaimed its own "East Asian Co-Prosperity
Sphere", in which there was no room for the West. This announcement resulted in a $25
million American loan to China, backed up by delivery of quantities of Chinese tung oil. It
really boosted Chinese morale. After the fall of Hankow, Chiang had made Chungking
in Szechuan province his capital rather than Kunming, which was closer to the supply
routes through French Indochina and Burma. The reason for this was that 80% of the
supplies China needed to go fighting were supplied by the Soviet-Union and China
distrusted the appeasement policy of the British towards Japan. In his Message to
Congress on 6 January 1939 President Roosevelt addressed the problem of free access to
Chinese markets (the Open-Door policy) by hinting on the possibility of economic measu-
res against Japan. He stated "There are many methods short of war, but stronger and more
effective than mere words, of bringing home to the aggressor governments the aggregate".
The application of economic sanctions as the cornerstone of American foreign policy

---


131 Letter of chargé d'affaires H.M. Haersma de With in Washington to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 14
February 1938, no 596/142, as above.

132 Dallek, op. cit., 193.

133 Letter Van Rechteren Limpurg to MinBuZa, 30 August 1938, no 3044/718. As above.

134 Letter Loudon to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 6 January 1939, no 81/12. As above.
versus Japan can be traced back to this public announcement.

**1.2.6. Economic versus Military Confrontation, 1940 - 1941**

Early in February 1939 the Dutch Minister in Washington was warned from all sides, including even Cordell Hull and Key Pittman, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that Japan was planning an attack on the NEI\(^{136}\). According to Pittman, not only the Dutch but all "white men in the Far East" were under serious threat. The British Chargé d'Affaires even told Loudon informally that a Japanese attack on NEI would be a *casus belli* for his Government. A Japanese fleet convoy was in fact *en route* to the South, not to the East Indies but to the island of Hainan. In February 1939, the Japanese occupied Hainan, thereby directly threatening Northern French Indochina and the Philippines. Nelson Johnson, U.S. Ambassador in Chungking, then on a visit to Washington, explained to Roosevelt, that this was no longer a question of saving British chestnuts, but that "our own chestnuts are involved"\(^{136}\). The U.S. government had to do something in order to stop the Japanese.

In June 1939, the Japanese forced the Tientsin Incident upon the British. (See Chapter 2, page 169). The U.S. Government was very worried, and the Press were once more clamoring for some kind of economic sanction\(^{137}\). A signal somehow had to be given to both the Chinese and British on the one hand, and the Japanese on the other. An opinion poll showed, however, that only 8% of the Americans were ready to fight Japan; 51% were in favor of an economic embargo\(^{138}\). When in addition to the Tientsin incident, American citizens were molested by Japanese soldiers in China, Hull informed the Japanese Government on 26 July 1939 that the United States were giving the required six-months' notice of abrogation of their 1911 Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, thus making economic sanctions legally possible after 26 January 1940\(^{139}\). The whole political establishment in America agreed on this decision. A Gallup-poll indicated that 81% of the Americans questioned agreed with the decision to end the Trade Treaty and that 82% agreed on an embargo of war materials to Japan\(^{140}\). The announcement, however, caused a rude shock in Japan however\(^{141}\), as it was followed by both the Russian victory over the Japanese Army at the Nomonhan border war in Manchuria, and the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 22 August 1939. After all these mishaps the Japanese Cabinet resigned.

Some statistics, taken from the *New York Times* of 27 July 1939, are required in order to understand the impact of eventual economic sanctions on Japan.

\(^{136}\) Letter Loudon to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 10 February 1939, no 634/128. As above.

\(^{137}\) Offner, page 157.

\(^{138}\) Letter Minister Loudon to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 19 June 1939, no 2739/540, as above.

\(^{139}\) Letter Minister Loudon to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 25 July 1939, no 14062/655, as above.


\(^{141}\) *Washington Post*, 29 August 1939.

\(^{141}\) Letter Dutch Minister Loudon to Minister of Foreign Affairs Van Kleffens, 28 July 1939, no 4118/672. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington Legation, inv. nr. 2833.
The value of American export to Japan in the period January 1938 - May 1939 was $239.6 million. The value of imports from Japan to America in the same period was $177 million. The largest export from Japan to the U.S.A. was raw silk ($32.1 million over the same period). The largest exports to Japan in terms of millions of dollars were the following:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Jan./May 1938</th>
<th>Jan./May 1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refined oil products</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw cotton</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalworking machinery</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron and Scrap Iron</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude Oil</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobiles, auto parts</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel (ingots, slabs, wire, sheet)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airplanes, airplane parts</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig iron</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin plate</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the above that the Japanese strategy was aimed at buying as many refined oil products as possible. The reason for this was the limited production capacity of their refineries to process crude oil, and the higher efficiency in the use of their limited tanker fleet to carry refined products.

The Tientsin incident was caused by increasing frustration experienced by the Japanese occupying forces due to their own inability to stop Chinese guerilla activity in Northern China. Japanese exploitation of the rich mineral resources of this region was sabotaged by the Chinese, as were also the means of transportation. After two years of low-intensive fighting the Japanese were still not in control of the Chinese countryside. Western observers therefore concluded that both economically and militarily, Japan was absolutely stuck in China. Diplomatically, however, the British gave in on the Tientsin Incident, which has sometimes been called the "Far Eastern Munich" as a result.

The British government was not the only government however, which wavered in the face of the Japanese threat. The State Department, too, decided to make a peace gesture. On October 19, 1939 Ambassador Joseph Grew made a carefully rehearsed speech before the Japan-America Society in Tokyo. His palm-waving, however, floundered on the China-issue, and reinforced the image of a wavering American foreign policy. Grew blamed the "the fire-eaters on both sides of the fence" for the failure to achieve a rapprochement.

142 Letter Minister in Washington to Minister Van Kleffens, 11 August 1939, no 4304/730, as above.
143 Letter of Dutch Chargé d'Affaires at Peking, Dr R. Flaes, to Minister of Foreign Affairs, attached to letter Minister of Foreign Affairs to Loudon of 14 August 1939, no 7437/349. As above.
144 FRUS, 1939, III, 587 - 589, and Japan 1931 - 1941, II, 19 - 29, Dallek, op. cit., p. 236. The speech of Grew was reported by the Dutch Minister to The Hague on 28 October 1939, no 5857/1018 as above.
145 Offner, opus cit., 162.
After the outbreak of war in Europe, Roosevelt was more successful in having Congress to amend the Neutrality Acts of 1935/1936 in such a way that belligerents were able to order weapons in the United States. See page 36). Directly after this amendment, England and France ordered weapons to the value of millions of dollars. It is of interest to note here, that, at that time, the British and French Governments had agreed to set up a combined purchasing organization in Washington to be able to coordinate their purchases in the U.S. This was seen by the American press, however, as the start of an European Economic Union which, at a later stadium, would also possibly include neutral European countries. Walter Lippmann, the well-known columnist, wrote a farsighted article about this in the New York Times.

During the "Phoney War" in Europe, the State Department was divided in two warring camps about the question of how to deal with Japan. Cordell Hull, the two Undersecretaries Sumner Welles and Berle, and Dr. Hornbeck advised a stronger policy, based on selective embargoes. The "doves" were afraid of a Japanese-Russian deal which would lead to the break-up of China in spheres of influence and an eventual conquest of S.E. Asia by Japan. The best-known protagonist of the doves was Ambassador Joseph Grew. According to the Dutch Minister, President Roosevelt wavered between the two extreme positions, unpredicatably choosing to support one side on the one occasion and the other side on another. The Dutch Minister in Washington reported to The Hague, that anyway American-Japanese relations were now in a state of "polite threats", which quite aptly described the actual situation.

On 15 December 1939, the State Department announced a "moral embargo" on the delivery of airplanes and airplane parts to Russia and Japan following the Press Conference on 2 December at which the President had lashed out at these countries because of their terror bombardments on the civilian population not only in China but also in Finland. Russia had just started the Winter War and was bombing Helsinki; the Japanese executed regular bombing attacks against unoccupied Chinese cities. The intention of the moral embargo was to cancel export orders placed by American business firms to the two aggressor countries, which indeed happened. On 14 December, the CEO's of the American oil companies and contractors were invited to a meeting at the State Department where another moral embargo on the design and erection of facilities to produce aviation gasoline was discussed with them. The CEO of the Universal Oil Company, the Shell company active in the U.S., wrote a report on this meeting which was...
personally handed to Van Kleffens\textsuperscript{151}, Minister of Foreign Affairs by the President of Shell Oil, squire J.H. Loudon\textsuperscript{152}. It was neither the only nor the last time, that mighty Shell Oil Company cooperated with the Dutch government who were consequently very well informed about what was going on at the State Department.

On 20 December 1939, the State Department announced this second "moral embargo", to which American business complied\textsuperscript{153}. The whole episode illustrates the creative way in which the State Department tried to extend foreign policy by introducing economic sanctions and it also illustrates the cooperative attitude of American Big Business to go along with the State Department\textsuperscript{154}.

The termination of the Trade Treaty with Japan resulted in neither a new treaty nor new embargoes. The possibility of embargoes was, however, closely studied by the State Department with specific regard to some kind of embargo on refined oil products. The reason the USA did not announce additional embargoes against the shipping of strategic materials to Japan was the anxiety they felt that it might result in Japanese actions against the NEI. America was still too dependent on the import of rubber and tin from the NEI. E. Dickover, American Consul-General in Batavia, gave this secret information to Mr. Lovink of the Dutch counterespionage office\textsuperscript{155}. According to Dickover, "appeasement" of Japan, however, was out of the question and he therefore expected Japanese-American relations to harden. The Dutch government was aware of American anxieties though, and this may explain the rigid position held by the Dutch in the talks with the Japanese Economic Mission in Batavia at the end of 1940.

The German assault on Denmark and Norway heightened anxieties about Germany's next step. On 15 April 1940, Arita, Foreign Minister for Japan, warned against a change in the status quo of the NEI (meaning an American or British occupation). He declared that "the Japanese Government cannot but be deeply concerned over any development accompanying an aggravation of the war in Europe that may affect the status quo of the Netherlands East Indies".\textsuperscript{156} Cordell Hull sharply rebuked this declaration saying that any interference in the NEI would upset the balance of power in the Pacific. On 14 April 1940, Hull declared that: "Intervention in the domestic affairs of the Netherlands Indies or any alteration of their status quo by other than peaceful processes would be prejudicial to the course of stability, peace and security not only in the region of the Netherlands Indies but in the entire Pacific area.

This conclusion, based on a doctrine which has universal application and for which the United States unequivocally stands, is embodied in notes exchanged on November 30, 1908 between the U.S. and Japan in which each of the two Governments stated that this policy was directed to the maintenance of the existing status quo in the region of the Pacific Ocean. It is reaffirmed in the notes which the U.S., the British Empire, France and Japan - as parties to the treaty signed at Washington on December 13, 1921 relating to their insular possessions and their insular dominions

\textsuperscript{151} Letter Van Kleffens to Minister in Washington, 4 January 1940, no 346/5. As above, inv. nr. 2834.

\textsuperscript{152} He was the older brother of Alexander Loudon, the Dutch Minister in Washington.

\textsuperscript{153} FRUS, Japan 1931-41, II, 203.

\textsuperscript{154} FRUS, 1939, III, 549 - 550.

\textsuperscript{155} Letter Lovink to Loudon, personal/confidential, 16 March 1940, as above.

\textsuperscript{156} FRUS, Japan 1931-41, II, 281.
in the region of the Pacific Ocean - sent to the Netherlands Government on February 4, 1922, in which each of those Governments declared that "it is firmly resolved to respect the rights of the Netherlands in relation to their insular possessions in the region of the Pacific Ocean". So the State Department confirmed the Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908 (See page 30) and the Washington Four Power Treaty of 1921. (See page 32).

When the Germans occupied Holland, the US Pacific Fleet were on manoeuvres in the Eastern Pacific, and thereafter Roosevelt decided to keep the battleships at Pearl Harbor, instead of on the Westcoast as a subtle warning to Japan. No further diplomatic or military steps were deemed necessary. Hornbeck was a proponent of a "laissez-faire" strategy towards Japan. He declared: "The most advisable course for this country to pursue with regard to the Far East and Pacific is to sit tight: make no new diplomatic move of major import, make no change in the disposal of the U.S. Battle Fleet, maintain the positions which we have taken, neither suggest nor assent to compromises, keep our hands free and our eyes and ears open". It was not a very imaginative or farsighted policy, but for the moment Hull and the President accepted it.

The result of the German invasion of Holland and Belgium and in particular the fall of France weakened the position of the isolationists. On 16 May 1940 Roosevelt addressed the Congress asking for additional funds for defence to the tune of 1 billion dollars. He also announced that airplane production was to be increased to 50,000 planes a year. The following statement in his speech on 16 May was very appropriate, namely: "For the permanent record I ask the Congress not to take any action which would in any way hamper or delay the delivery of American-made planes to foreign nations which have ordered them or seek to purchase more planes. That, from the point of view of our own national defence would be extremely shortsighted". That statement was aimed directly at the isolationist Senators and their Neutrality Acts. Support in Congress for arming the United States to the teeth was overwhelming, and resulted in the acceptance of the 'Two-Ocean Navy' Act and in the re-arming of the United States Army, which up to then existed in a state of limbo. (See below). The President also reshuffled his Cabinet, giving two important posts to the Republican Party in opposition thereby realizing a coalition government. Prominent Republican Henry L. Stimson became Secretary of War and another republican, Frank Knox, became Secretary of the Navy.

The next crisis came in June 1940 when Allied losses in Europe made it possible for the Japanese Government to make several requests: they asked the French in Indochina to close their borders with China, and they asked the Dutch to receive a Japanese Trade Mission to Batavia in order to discuss increased exports to Japan. Thirdly they asked the British to close the Burma Road which they did for three months. The British, however, suggested to the American government that all exports to Japan should be halted and that part of the U.S. Pacific Fleet should be sent to Singapore. Replying to American criticism about the Burma Road being closed, the British countered that the Americans were still

---


198 Offner, opus cit., 187. FRUS, 1940, IV, 16, note 35.

199 Marvin R. Zahnissen: "Rethinking the significance of disaster: the U.S. and the fall of France in 1940". The International History review. 14 (1992), 252 - 276.

200 Letter Louden to van Kleffens, 21 May 1940, no 3135/370, as above, inventory number 2838.
delivering sizable quantities of high-grade aviation gasoline to Japan, facilitating Japanese bomber attacks on Chinese cities. Supplies to Germany were possibly also being expedited via Russia. The Brits obviously had a point and so on 19 July 1940 Secretary Morgenthau put the suggestion to Roosevelt that a total embargo on oil exports to Japan should be effectuated.

Roosevelt was afraid of taking any drastic measures such as would endanger his success in the election towards a third term in November. He consequently decided (after a row on this issue between the State and Treasury departments) to sign an Executive Order on 26 July 1940, limiting exports to Japan of high-grade aviation gasoline, certain lubricants, and high-grade scrap iron. It proved to be only a warning signal to the Japanese as they were still able to get middle-grade aviation gasoline which was perfect for their bombers. Roosevelt was cognisant of this loophole but decided to ignore it, as he was afraid that otherwise the Japanese might get their oil from the NEI by force.

The main problem of specific embargoes was that Japan could always obtain the oil it needed from British and Dutch oil companies like Shell Oil. The Japanese for example tried to increase their imports from a Shell Company in Venezuela. In August 1940 therefore, the State Department informally sounded the British and Dutch Governments out regarding their willingness to intervene in their oil companies' business with Japan to reduce or delay the export of their crude oil but preferably also that of high-octane aviation gasoline. The Dutch Government at that time was unwilling to meddle in the Bataafse Petroleum Maatschappij BPM's affairs and pointed out that the American Standard Vacuum Oil was also delivering crude oil from Peru to Japan. This trade was also excluded from an embargo. The Dutch Minister warned his Minister of Foreign Affairs that it would be dangerous, however, not to comply to American wishes because the United States could easily delay the delivery of much-needed armaments already on order for the NEI. It turned out to be a prophetic warning.

Eventually it was up to Ambassador Grew to tell the Japanese that the United States had

---

161 Dallek, op. cit., p. 239.
162 FRUS, Japan 1931 - 41, II, 216 - 217.
163 Conversation with Morgenthau on August 15, 1940. See Dallek, op. cit., p. 241.
164 The Japanese envoy at Caracas asked the (Dutch) Director of the Caribbean Petroleum Company whether Japan could obtain more aviation gasoline from Venezuela, but was made to understand that the British Government had bought all the aviation gasoline production capacities of the Caribbean Oil Company's refineries. Letter B.Th.W. van Hasselt to mr. Kiyoshi Yamagata, Caracas 23 September 1940, in Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington Archives, inv. nr. 2756.
165 Dutch oil companies with exploration concessions and production facilities in the NEI were the Bataafse Petroleum Maatschappij BPM - a fully-owned daughter of the Royal Dutch Shell - and the Nederlandse Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij NKPM, fully owned by the American Standard Vacuum Oil Company (Esso).
166 Telegram Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Van Kleffens to Minister in Washington, 21 August 1940, no 729 A/B. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington legation, inv.nr. 2756.
167 Telegram Loudon to van Kleffens, 22 August 1940, no 172, as above. Not understanding the policy of his Government, the Minister again warned on 11 September 1940 that it would be politically dangerous to interfere with the American embargo policy. See DBPN, series C, Vol. I, doc. 359, p. 413.
a vital interest in the status quo in the NEI. On 11 July 1940, in a conversation with Foreign Minister Arita, Grew pointed out that in 1937 15.8% of the foreign trade of the NEI had been with the United States against only 11.6% with Japan. He also impressed on Arita the importance to the United States of the Open Door policy in China.

On 12 September 1940, Grew sent his "Green Light" despatch to the State Department from Tokyo. He had come to the conclusion that the Japanese Government had sided with the more extremist elements in both the Army and Navy, and was now moving to a confrontation with the Western Powers in S.E. Asia. Grew stated emphatically that it was America's interest to maintain the status quo in the Pacific until the European war was either won or lost. Ten days later the Japanese Army moved into Northern French Indochina. Roosevelt imposed a total embargo on export to Japan of all grades of iron and scrap steel on 26 September 1940. The next day, Japan, Germany and Italy signed the Tripartite Pact. (See Chapter 6, page 665 afp) This effectively ended any illusions they might have had about the course Japanese foreign diplomacy was taking. Roosevelt and his advisers knew, however, that U.S. Industry was still not ready and that the general level of rearmament was distinctly insufficient. After his re-election his wife, Eleanor, passed her husband a note about the matter of the oil embargo. The President replied that that if an embargo were put into force then the Japanese might attack the Dutch East Indies. Roosevelt therefore proceeded very carefully, but his famous "arsenal of democracy" speech on 29 December 1940, in which he publicly backed Great Britain, gave not only the embattled forces of the British Empire new hope, but also all other potential allies.

Public opinion however was still not on his side. Around Christmas 1940, the Australian Embassy in Washington had paid the Gallup Institute to conduct an opinion poll. Only 39% of the Americans questioned at that time thought it was necessary to fight Japan in order to prevent them seizing the Indies and Singapore. The Australians communicated the results of the poll to Loudon, the Dutch Minister. He, in his turn, informed his government accordingly.

1.2.6.1. Oil as a weapon.

Japan was indeed very vulnerable to further oil embargoes. If the British and the Dutch were to join a total oil embargo by the U.S., the only oil exporting country not restricted by American/British/Dutch regulations would be Mexico, which operated a Government-owned oil company called Pemex (Petroleos Mexicanos). The Japanese tanker fleet, however,
only had a carrying capacity for 425,000 tons, barely enough to transport 2 million tons of crude oil from Mexico to Japan annually. Based on civil requirements and those of the military in China, the Japanese crude reserves would be exhausted within one to two years, depending on the ferocity of the war in China. The simple withdrawal of all non-Japanese tankers leased by Japan for carrying crude to Japan would create a serious transportation bottleneck. In June 1941 90 U.S. tankers were still on lease to Japanese firms, taking oil products from California to Japan.

In the early months of 1941, a new communication channel was opened by a group of private people known as the "John Doe Associates". This group consisted of Bishop James Walsh and Father James Drought of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society at Maryknoll, New-York, Tadao Paul Ikawa, a Christian, English-speaking banker with an American wife employed by the Gaimusho, (the Japanese Foreign Ministry), and Colonel Hideo Iwakuro, special adviser from the Japanese War Ministry to the new Japanese Ambassador Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura. The two priests understood from Ikawa, that Japan would be willing to annul the Tripartite Pact and to withdraw from China whereas, in reality, the Japanese government entertained no such plans. This false intelligence induced Hull in upping the ante in November 1941 (See next paragraph). Alas, the untimely interference of these two amateur politicians only increased the amount of misunderstanding between the two countries and vividly illustrated the dangers that can be caused by amateur diplomats.

The Americans also gradually reduced the export to Japan of other materials which they deemed of strategic value to Japan. A case in point is the exportation of scrap rubber to Japan. These exports were reduced from 4,162,000 pounds in January 1941 to 1,922,700 pounds in April 1941.

MAGIC informed the American Government that Japan was not going to join the German attack on the Soviet Union, but would march southward instead. Grew had forewarned Japan about the consequences of such a move, and when the Japanese started the occupation of the southern part of French Indochina on 24 July 1941, Roosevelt acted accordingly. On 26 July, Japanese assets in the U.S. were frozen and cash payments were required to pay for the transportation to Japan of American oil, with the exception of high-octane gasoline, the export of which was then completely forbidden. The American Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral H.R. Stark, was much against a total embargo as the US Navy was still not ready for war and moreover, he feared Japanese interference in the

---

173 Letter of Secretary-general Van Bylandt to Minister in Washington, 28 February 1941, with an undated secret English Memorandum on Japan's oil position. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington legation archives, inv. nr. 2756.

174 Letter Loudon to Van Kleffens, 26 June 1941. Archives MinBuZa, Washington Legation Archives, inv. nr. 2756.


177 FRUS, Japan 1931 - 1941, II, 266 - 267.

NEI, but he had to operate carefully in order not to lose his job. Richardson, his predecessor as CNO, had been fired by Roosevelt due to his objection to Roosevelt's decision to base the Pacific Fleet permanently at Pearl Harbor following the German invasion of the Netherlands. In order to save the NEI from Japanese invasion, the President refrained from announcing a complete oil embargo, but bureaucratic misinterpretation of the complex payment rules made the embargo effective anyway. The British and Dutch also froze Japanese assets and abrogated their own trade agreements which had the same effect as the American measures.

Roosevelt still did not want a full embargo because he feared that Japan would then go for the NEI. He wanted to regulate the export of oil back to the 1935/1936 level by using the license system which had been a Presidential prerogative since the "National Defense Act" of 2 July 1940. An Export Controls Agency under Brigade-General Russell L. Maxwell had been set up at the State Department for that purpose.

As early as 26 July 1940, a system of export licenses had been introduced for all kinds of aviation gasolines (abbreviated to avgas) and also light crude oils from which avgas could easily be distilled. That made the licensing system too complex for the oil companies, however, and so on 6 August 1940 it was decided that exports of avgas with an Octane Number (ON) lower than 87 would not be licensed. The Japanese consequently ordered large quantities of these avgases. The State Department allowed this as Hull did not want a confrontation with Japan over the NEI. From April 1941 onwards, the export quantities of these avgases were gradually reduced. Roosevelt wanted to license crude exports in the same way as the avgas. In reality, however, the Japanese were unable to fill the holds of their tankers without having an export licence first and secondly, also evidence of payment from the Ministry of Finance. As the Japanese assets were frozen, and contacts between the Finance Department and Maxwell's Agency at State lacked cordiality, it were these bureaucratic rules that, de facto, caused an oil embargo.

The fast reaction by the American Government on Japan's move into Southern Indo China resulted in a greater willingness by the the American public to face Japan. According to an opinion poll of early August, 51% of the Americans was prepared to fight Japan compared to 40% in March. In fact, even the isolationists preferred to take on Japan rather than the European Axis. The famous aviator and isolationist Nazi supporter, Colonel Charles

---


181 Irvine H. Anderson jr.: "The 1941 de facto embargo on oil to Japan: a bureaucratic reflex" Pacific Historical Review, 44 (1975), 201 - 231.

182 Anderson, opus cit., 209.


184 Anderson, op. cit., 222.

185 Letter Loudon to Van Kleffens, 7 August 1941, no 4189/888. See above, inv. nr. 2833.
Lindbergh, who attracted a large following, was rather anti-Japanese. As a whole, the Press however, were surprised by the completeness of the embargo, as they had expected a more gradual approach. They were also surprised by the immediate decision of the Netherlands to join the embargo and they speculated that the Dutch must have received some kind of guarantee from the American government. The Washington Evening Star stated for example: *It may be doubted whether the Batavia government would have taken so defiant a position unless it anticipated adequate support by both Britain and America in case Tokyo carries out its past threats and grab for Dutch oil. The Batavia press assures its readers that this is the case, and public opinion in the Dutch East Indies is calmly prepared to face up to Japan, be the consequences what they may."

The American oil embargo proved to be very effective. Japanese assets in the U.S. were frozen and they consequently lacked the dollars to pay for the oil in cash. The only oil delivered in an American port after 28 July 1941 was fuel oil for the passenger ship TATSUTA MARU bringing American evacuees from the Far East to San Francisco. It had not enough fuel to return to Japan! This fact, and other related occurrences made the Americans think that Japan would be amenable to a compromise. The Chief of the Far Eastern section of the MID, War department, even guessed that Japan might have to leave the Tripartite Pact and join the Allies against the Nazis.

In order to understand the effect of the American oil embargo, we have to take trade statistics with respect to Japanese oil imports into consideration. One such an authoritative source is an article written by V.R. Garfias in the trade journal *The Oil and Gas Journal* dated 31 August 1939, a copy of which was forwarded to the Dutch Minister by the author himself within a week on 5 September 1939.

According to Garfias, Japanese oil consumption was roughly 40 million barrels annually, 40% of which was for military and naval purposes. Japan itself produced only 2.5 million barrels of synthetic fuel a year plus 0.5 million barrels from South-Sakhalin oilfields. Japan therefore, had to import around 37 million barrels of oil annually. It obtained a larger amount, though, in order to build up strategic stocks of oil. In 1938 Japan therefore imported 43 million barrels, 30 million of which came from California, 10 from the NEI and 3 million from other sources (Mexico, Peru, British Borneo). In 1938, the NEI and British Borneo produced 54 and 7 million barrels respectively. Of this total, about 51 million barrels were used locally or exported to Australia (14.5), New Zealand (4.5) and Malaya, Thailand and the Philippines. A surplus of 10 million barrels was exported to Japan in

---


188 Telegram van Boetzelaeer in Washington to Van Kleffens, 8 October 1941. As above.


190 Letter Loudon to Van Kleffens, 8 september 1939, no 4798/822. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Archives Washington Legation, inv. nr. 2833.
1938. Production capacity could have increased by a few percentage points but it was unconceivable that, should Californian exports have been halted, the NEI could have taken their place. Alternatively, exports to the countries mentioned would have had to be stopped. Japan specifically would have been severely hurt by an American oil embargo because that would have meant a reduction of its imports by 70%! Of course the situation worsened when Britain and the NEI joined the American embargo.

Less well-known but all the more interesting, was Japan's shipping problem. Japan did not possess enough tankers to transport all the oil and oil products it needed from abroad. Great Britain had the largest tanker fleet (484), followed by the U.S. (420), Norway (271), the Netherlands (110), Panama (48), France (43), Japan (38) and Germany (33). The carrying capacity of the Dutch tanker fleet was more than double that of the Japanese (7.125.000 barrels versus 3.124.000 barrels). It is the carrying capacity in combination with distance which determines a fleet's transport capacity. Assuming an average loading and unloading period of six days and a mean speed of 12 knots, the annual carrying capacity of Japan's tanker fleet was 53 million barrels if all oil could be obtained from Miri (British Borneo), 47 million barrels for Balikpapan, 44 million barrels for Palangbang and 31 million barrels for San Francisco. The Japanese tanker fleet could in total, only satisfy Japanese imports by just transporting oil from Borneo; their capacity was insufficient to carry imports from California, South America or the Middle East. This explains the strategic importance of Japan conquering Borneo as quick as possible. It also explains Japan's extensive use of tankers leased from other nations by the Japanese, and furthermore illustrates the major shipping bottleneck. This bottleneck was well-known in the U.S. Navy War Plans Divisiony, and its Director, Rear-Admiral R.K. Turner, consequently recommended that tanker leasing should be gradually reduced. The effect on the Japanese would be a a gradual and informal embargo, which Turner obviously preferred as it decreased the risk of Japan attacking the NEI. The unrestricted submarine warfare by the Allies during World War II not only against Japanese shipping but especially against tankers, meant that the Japanese Empire was doomed, despite the fact that they had the NEI oil wells at their disposal.

1.2.6.2. Japanese - American negotiations.

At the Argentia-conference in Canadian waters at the beginning of August 1941, President Roosevelt met Churchill personally for the first time. Churchill had travelled to Placentia Bay on board the battleship HMS PRINCE OF WALES. It was a unique occasion: the heads of government, one already at war but the other still officially neutral, met to discuss common goals. Roosevelt had initiated the Conference for exactly that reason. Churchill was pressing for an American guarantee should Japan attack British and Dutch possessions. Roosevelt was unwilling to agree to this, because he feared Congressional opposition by the Isolationists but he did consent to a warning being issued to the Japanese. The core of American policy towards Japan was to win time. Time was on

---

191 Anderson, opus cit., 212.

192 Letter CNO Adm. Stark to Cordell Hull, 22 July 1941, with WPD Study on Oil Embargo. FRUS, 1940-IV, 835 - 839.


194 Dallek, op. cit., 300.
America's side: Japan was growing weaker due to the oil embargo, and the U.S.A. were increasing their capacity for weapon production by the day. Moreover, The Philippines were to be reinforced with the new B-17 strategic bombers. It was expected that this would serve to deter Japan.\(^{106}\) The warning Roosevelt gave to Ambassador Nomura in a personal conversation on 17 August 1941 was, however, much weaker than the one promised to Churchill. This was on Hull’s advice. Hull was playing as cautiously as ever and could not ignore the inescapable fact that Congress was isolationist.\(^{106}\) During the conversation Nomura also presented the idea of a personal meeting to be held around mid-October between Prime Minister Konoye and the American President.

The Japanese Government under Prince Konoye realised that time was not on their side and tried to hammer out a bargaining position which could be discussed at greater length at a conference to be held in either Hawaii or Alaska (Juneau) between Roosevelt and Konoye personally. It is possible that by that time, the Japanese were already aware that their diplomatic code had been broken, because after mid-September both the quality and the volume of information sent to Nomura in Washington dropped sharply. It is debatable, however, whether negotiations differed as a result of this.\(^{107}\) As Hull distrusted all Japanese intentions, the idea of the summit conference was dropped. Konoye consequently resigned on 15 October 1941, and General Hideki Tojo was appointed Prime Minister.

As, during the Washington discussions, the Japanese Government had proved amenable to the evacuation of Indochina, the future of that country was discussed by the State Department. The Americans were not interested in handing Indochina back to France (i.e. the Gaullists), but an International regime was being considered which would include the native Indochinese.\(^{108}\) This illustrates what the State Department thought about the future of the colonies in S.E.Asia, and the Dutch government was informed to that effect. The Dutch were, however, unaware of the eventual consequences to the Dutch position in S.E.Asia.

Early in November a number of proposals for a “modus vivendi” were discussed both at Cabinet level and by the State Department. Actually, on 17 November, a modus vivendi was drafted by Roosevelt himself and discussed internally.\(^{109}\) It was to consist of three clauses: the first was the partial lifting of the embargo for a period of six months, the second was about no further Japanese troop reinforcements into Indochina or South East Asia, and thirdly an agreement was included that the U.S. Government would induce the Chinese to start peace talks with the Japanese. The U.S. would thereby be given the chance to further reinforce The Philippines, and the British and the Dutch would be able to


\(^{107}\) For the text of the warning to Nomura, see FRUS, Japan, 1931 - 1941, II, 554 - 560 and also William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason: The Undeclared War, 1940 - 1941, New-York, Harper & Row, 1953, 650.


\(^{109}\) FRUS, 1941, IV, Morgenthau Memorandum of Nov. 17, 1941 on Indochina, Chapter III, point 4, page 609. Also Dutch Minister in Washington to Dutch Foreign Minister, 10 October 1941, nr QT 869/QW 872. This important telegram also in DBPN, series C, Vol. III, doc. 326, page 439.

\(^{109}\) FRUS, 1941, IV, 626.
improve their defences. Convoys carrying troops, heavy weapons and planes were already en route to Manila. The Army had worked out that Philippine defences would be ready on about March 1, 1942. The Royal Navy was sending battleships to the Far East but up to that time there had been no British Eastern Fleet at all (See Chapter on Britain). The Dutch were also rearming furiously with weaponry ordered in the U.S. There was obviously a strong military need for the modus vivendi to be accepted by the Japanese. The modus vivendi would also postpone for six months the problem the administration feared most: namely a Japanese attack on only British or Dutch territory. If that happened the US Government would be left unable to respond constitutionally and militarily. On 25 November Roosevelt said during a meeting with his top advisers: "The question was how we should manoeuvre them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves." The modus vivendi was discussed with the War Plans divisions of both the Army and the Navy, and also with the Australians, the Dutch, the Chinese and the British, before presenting it to the Japanese. The Army and Navy and also the Dutch accepted the proposed modus vivendi. The Chinese violently opposed it and acted as if someone had betrayed them; the Australians and the British thought it would be better to ask Japan to withdraw all of its troops from Indochina in order to give China a better bargaining position. Thereupon Hull, unfortunately, made the fateful decision not to discuss the modus vivendi with the Japanese envoys.

The modus vivendi was replaced by Hull's Ten-Point Note dated 26 November, in which the additional requirement was included stating that Japan should withdraw its troops not only from Indochina, but also from China itself. The latter subject had been meticulously avoided in the preceding talks. It is still not clear, why Hull upped the ante. It may have been because, according to Stimson, the President "fairly blew up" when he gave him information about Japanese troop transports being south of Formosa. The President considered this an act of bad faith by the Japanese. Both Roosevelt and Hull shared a deep distrust and even contempt of the Japanese, and may have acted on the presumption that Orientals would give way in the face of force. As early as 18 November, however, the Dutch Minister informed his Government that Hull had actually asked the Japanese to evacuate China as well. The Japanese may, therefore, already have known of this additional condition before Hull presented his Ten-Point Note to Nomura.

201 FRUS, 1940-IV, 630 - 632.
203 FRUS, 1941, IV, 646 - 647, 655 - 656. Also Offner, opus cit., 237.
204 FRUS, Japan 1931 - 1941, II, 769. Point 3 of the Note stated: "The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina".
205 Dallek, op. cit., 308. According to this source, Stimson talked to Roosevelt about the Japanese transports on the morning of 26 November 1941.
206 Michael H. Hunt, op. cit., 145.
207 Telegram Loudon to MinBuZa, TX-983/UB-987, 18 November 1941. See also DBPN, C, III, 443, 589. The point of Japan's withdrawal from China had been raised in the Morgenthau Memorandum of 17 November, see FRUS 1941, IV, 610.
Hull's "tentative" note did not explicitly amount to an ultimatum as no deadlines were proposed for the withdrawals mentioned, nor were actions threatened should Japan decide not to comply with the conditions stated. The impact on the Japanese was, however, similar to that of a bombshell. As Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo stated: "Japan was asked not only to abandon all the gains of her years of sacrifice, but to surrender her international position as a power in the Far East as well." This was tantamount to national suicide. The Ten Point Note might, in retrospect, be considered to have been a mistake made by American diplomacy. Alternatively, it might have been an outright blunder.

Brune argued that Hull was sticking to American diplomatic tradition by not being bothered about military necessities. The fact that Hull had close contacts with both the Army and the Navy departments, however, makes this unlikely. Pratt maintains that Hull had become "a tired and angry man", which is too simple a conclusion. Churchill accepted the *modus vivendi* with barely lukewarm enthusiasm. China opposed it violently and Roosevelt was nothing less than irate about Japanese troop transports being in the South China Sea. The reasons mentioned here justified in his eyes the *modus vivendi* being dropped. The consequences of a war, which came too early for American, Dutch and British defences which were still not ready in S.E. Asia, proved to be catastrophic, however.

An Imperial Conference, held on 1 December, at which the Emperor was present - although he said nothing - decided to go to war. The next day, on 2 December, the appropriate commands were given including those ordering the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Japanese were convinced, that war could not be limited to the British and the Dutch, and therefore the threat which the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor formed, had to be eliminated. Although as far as we know, this conviction was wholly based on inference, it was nevertheless a correct analysis and a firm and solid conviction. It cannot be ruled out that the Japanese were cognisant of the results of the Singapore Staff Conferences (See Chapter on Britain ) and had, therefore, concluded that the United States would even have entered the war if just the British and/or Dutch positions had come under attack. Japanese assets were frozen by the U.S., Great Britain and the Netherlands all on the same day - 26 July 1941 - a fact that was also seen as the sign of very close cooperation between the three nations. In line with these expectations, the Japanese Embassy in Washington even cabled Tokyo on 3 December 1941 stating that, should Japan invade and occupy Thailand, then Great Britain and the U.S. would go to war with or without a an

---


210 Brune, ibid., 390.


212 Langer & Gleason have discussed in depth the reasons why Hull did not consult the military before dropping the *modus vivendi* on 26 November, but give no unequivocal answer. See Langer & Gleason, *Undeclared War*, op. cit., 898 - 900.

official war declaration.\textsuperscript{214}

Strongly influenced by the obvious risk the Japanese troop transports posed not only for Malaya, but also for the Netherlands East Indies and even the Philippines, the President informed the British Ambassador on 1 December that he was willing to extend a guarantee towards both the Dutch and the British even if the latter moved into the Kra Peninsula as a precautionary measure in order to cover prospective Japanese landing beaches on the Thai side of the Malay Peninsula. Furthermore, during subsequent conversations, the President informed Lord Halifax that he had meant armed support should the Japanese attack Thailand, Malaya, or the Dutch East Indies.\textsuperscript{215} He added that the United States, Great Britain and The Netherlands should issue independent warnings to Japan insisting that the American warning should come first to avoid any impression that the U.S. were just copying British initiative.

During that last week of peace, reports poured in about Japanese shipping movements in the South China Sea. MAGIC provided the information that Japanese diplomatic posts were having to burn their secret files and code books and that Japanese diplomats had to be prepared to leave within a few days. Roosevelt decided to make a direct appeal to the Emperor, proposing a ninety-day truce. By doing so, he hoped to strengthen his case regarding public opinion at home if there was going to be a war anyway. The message was dispatched to Grew at 2100 hours (all times are Washington EST times) on 6 December 1941. It had to be delivered to the Emperor with utmost speed.\textsuperscript{216} Thirty minutes later a naval aide brought Roosevelt part of a message sent from Tokyo to Nomura, which had already been decoded and in which Nomura and Kurusu were instructed to deliver it to Hull at 1300 hours on the following day, December 7, 1941. By 1000 hours next morning, Roosevelt had also received the final part of the message: a break in diplomatic relations. Due to decoding problems (See Chapter 6, page) the Japanese diplomats were not ready at the time of the appointment, and they requested that the appointment with Hull be postponed. Meanwhile, at about 1350 hours, word had come from the Navy Department about the attack on Pearl Harbor. Hull thereupon received the Japanese emissaries who were entirely unaware of the attack on Pearl Harbor. He sent them away in shame after addressing them sternly.\textsuperscript{217} The long-expected war with Japan was on.

For Roosevelt, the Japanese attack must have come as a godsend. Congress was still very isolationist, as is illustrated in the revision of the infamous Neutrality Acts of 1935 and 1936. This revision passed the House vote on 13 November 1941 by a very small majority: 212 to 194. The closeness of the vote convinced Roosevelt that it would take substantial provocation from abroad to induce Congress to declare war.\textsuperscript{218} That provocation had conveniently been provided by the Japanese.


\textsuperscript{215} Raymond A. Esthus: "President Roosevelt's commitment to Britain to intervene in a Pacific War" Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 50 (1963), 34, Dallek, op. cit., p. 309.

\textsuperscript{216} FRUS, Japan, 1931 - 1941, II, 784 - 786.

\textsuperscript{217} FRUS, Ibid., 786 - 792.

\textsuperscript{218} Dallek, op. cit., p. 291 - 292.
1.3. United States Defence Policy.

Between the two world wars, there had virtually been no integrated U.S. defence policy at all. The War Department and the Navy department, each with their own Air Force complements, pursued separate though parallel courses regarding the development of defence policies. The one unifying and integrative element was, however, the Joint (Army and Navy) Board, which had been established in 1903. It was a consultative body which consisted of the Army's and Navy's Commander-in-Chief, their Chiefs of Staff and the Directors of both the Army War Plans Division and the Naval General Board and their deputies - eight officers in total.

The Joint Board held no executive powers, and reported to both the War and the Navy Secretaries. In 1919 a Joint Planning Committee (JPC) was established to act as staff for the Joint Board, which was then reduced to six members (the Service Chiefs, their deputies, and the two chiefs of the War Plans Divisions). The JPC was to be responsible for maintaining and updating the colour-coded War Plans such as War Plan ORANGE.

As a result of the ARCADIA Conference with the British Prime Minister and his Chiefs of Staff in August 1941, the Joint Board gradually changed into a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Committee, just like the British had. In November 1941, the JCS consisted of Admiral Stark, CNO, General Marshall Army Chief-of-Staff, Admiral King (Cdr US Atlantic Fleet) and General Arnold (Cdr Army Air Force). Admiral Kimmel of the Pacific Fleet was not a member! General Arnold was not even a service chief, but his membership was considered necessary in order to have a balanced representation with respect to the British COS Committee. On 12 March 1942, the Joint Board was dissolved and replaced by the JCS, which, with its British counterpart was to form the so-called Combined Chiefs of Staff CCS. The CCS were to oversee the course of the Second World War from the side of the Allies right up to the end.

1.3.1. Naval Defence Policy.

The United States have been labelled a thalassocracy - meaning that its history has been strongly determined by the sea. Thanks to its global seapower, the United States is able to project its influence worldwide. This was not always the case. During the whole of the 19th century, it had only a coast defence navy, but even at that time, it had established a small fleet in S.E. Asia to protect American trade from piracy. Under the influence of men like Mahan and secretary Elihu Root, the navy rapidly expanded into a blue-water navy during the last decade of the 19th century, which was just in time to beat the Spanish navy in Manila Bay and near Guantanamo, Cuba.

Presidents MacKinley and Theodore Roosevelt provided a real ocean-going navy, as was

---

21 Louis Morton: Strategy and Command. Ibid., 22
22 For a biography of this strong personality, see Eric Larrabee: Commander in Chief: F.D. Roosevelt, His Lieutenants and their War. Harper & Row, New York 1987, 153 - 205.
23 Louis Morton, Ibid., 226.
demonstrated by the "Great White Fleet", which crossed the Pacific and circumnavigated the globe from 1907 to 1908. This impressive feat's unspoken goal was to issue a warning to the Japanese, following the "war scare" of 1906. The Fleet departed from the Atlantic, visiting a number of South American harbours on their way as there was no Panama-canal at that time. Afterwards it visited the West coast, Hawaii, New-Zealand, Eastern Australia, Manila, and, from 18 to 25 October 1908, even Yokohama. The fleet returned to the East coast via the Suez-canal. Contrary to all expectations, the visits resulted in strongly improved relations with the countries concerned, including Japan. The Root-Takahira Agreement, signed on 30 November 1908, normalized Japanese-American relations on the basis of the "Open Door" policy, and was a direct result of the Fleet's visit.

The Americans dispatched sixteen of their twenty battleships with the "Great White Fleet", leaving the remaining four on the East Coast. The Japanese fleet at that time numbered only nine battleships, ensuring a high safety factor on the American side should the Imperial Japanese Navy engage in an unfriendly encounter. At that time the U.S. Navy was the most powerful Navy in the world except for Great-Britain. The French, Russian, German, Japanese and Austro-Hungarian Navies came below Great Britain and the U.S. in that order.

In 1911 the Hearst Group of newspapers discovered that a Japanese businessman named Abiko had bought land near Magdalena Bay in Baja California from the Mexican government. The newspapers announced this as if the Japanese government were planning to build a naval base at Magdalena Bay. The idea caused considerable panic not only in California but also in Congress. On 2 August 1911, Congress even passed a resolution in which it was stated that "the government of the United States could not see without grave concern the possession of such harbor or other place by any Corporation of association which has such a relation with another government, not American." The expansion of the original Monroe-doctrine illustrated, in this way, the unease with which the Japanese were viewed not only by the American government but also by the American people at that time.

The completion of the Panama Canal in 1914 immeasurably helped to solve the problem of defending the coastal shores of the United States, separated by a distance of 5000 kilometers due to the North-American continent in between. From 1908, the greater part of the battlefleet was based on the West coast, whereas the scouting force consisting of cruisers and destroyers and a training squadron of a few old battleships protected the Atlantic seaboard and the Caribbean. The submarine force and the fleet train were divided almost equally divided between the two oceans.

During the years between the wars, the U.S. Asiatic Fleet comprised a cruiser squadron based at Cavite (Manila Bay), a destroyer squadron based at Chefoo on the Shantung

---


peninsula, and the Yangtze River Gunboat Flotilla, based at Shanghai, which patrolled the Yangtze river. The C-in-C of the Asiatic Fleet, who held the rank of a full Admiral, commanded not only the 4th Regiment U.S. Marines at Shanghai but also a Marine Brigade in Peking (Beijing).

American military and naval presence in China was the result of the so-called Boxer protocol of 1901 and was, as such, a visible symbol of American presence in China. Morton\(^\text{227}\) has illustrated how the garrison in China became a pawn in U.S. foreign diplomacy. In the twenties this force was oriented towards protecting American interests in a chaotic China. In the early thirties, American presence became more and more of a liability in the face of the far stronger Japanese presence in China. The last time the US Asiatic Fleet was able to influence Japanese foreign policy was during the Shanghai incident of January 1932, when U.S. Admiral M.M. Taylor together with British Vice-Adm. Kelly, worked out a cease-fire with Japanese Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura.\(^\text{228}\)

Each year the battlefleet joined the scouting force or vice-versa on combined manoeuvres, called the Fleet Problem. Sometimes this was in the Eastern Pacific, sometimes in the Caribbean. In 1940 the Fleet Problem took place in the Eastern Pacific around the Hawaiian islands and following the Blitzkrieg in the West, Roosevelt decided to keep the battlefleet at Pearl Harbor as a signal to Japan not to encroach upon the Netherlands East Indies. The battleships did not return to their normal stations at San Pedro, San Diego or San Francisco.

Once the Washington Treaties were signed, the U.S. Navy quickly dropped below the tonnage level allowed for the various categories of ships. In a neat table, Allard gives the actual tonnage of each ship category in relation to tonnage authorised by the Washington Treaties at four moments in time from 1 July 1930 to 1 July 1941.\(^\text{229}\) When President Roosevelt assumed office, the strength of the U.S. Fleet was about 65% of what had been authorized by the Washington Treaties.

Re-armament of the U.S. Navy started earlier than that of the U.S. Army because, amongst other factors, President Roosevelt had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy under Wilson, and looked with favor upon the navy.\(^\text{230}\) Moreover, building new warships to replace aging ones alleviated industrial unemployment.\(^\text{231}\) The Vinson-Trammell Act\(^\text{232}\) of March 1934 allowed for this replacement and the U.S. Navy gradually expanded


\(^{229}\) Dean C. Allard: "Naval Rearmament, 1930 - 1941: An American Perspective." Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire, 73 (1991), page 36, Table 1.


\(^{231}\) George Ber, op. cit., 130.

\(^{232}\) Named after Carl Vinson, Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, and Park Trammell, chairman of the Senate's Naval Affairs Committee.
up to the Washington Treaty limit; a limit which was not met until 1944, however.\textsuperscript{233} This Law authorised the building of 141 warships, including 7 battleships, 1 aircraft carrier, 7 cruisers, 89 destroyers and 37 submarines.\textsuperscript{234}

There was one area in which the US Fleet was weak: it lacked enough bases in the Pacific.\textsuperscript{235} Cavite in Manila Bay could not handle battleships nor were there any other naval bases between the Philippines and Pearl Harbor, as Guam had been demilitarized by the Four-Power treaty. The number of air bases was also insufficient. The problem of the bases was studied by a commission named after its chairman, Rear-Admiral A.J. Hepburn. On 27 December 1938, the Hepburn Commission came up with a number of recommendations, the most important of which was the development of Guam to become a reinforced forward base for the US Pacific Fleet. The Washington Treaties meanwhile had expired, and after 1938 reinforcements and base building became possible. An isolationist Congress, however, rejected plans for a base at Guam, but accepted the other recommendations, such as constructing air strips at Wake and at Midway. The Philippines consequently remained a strategically isolated outpost, 9,000 kilometers west of the Hawaii-islands. As Morison notes, Congress, in order to avoid rousing Japan, refrained from protecting their own possessions in the Far East.\textsuperscript{236}

Between the two World Wars, the U.S. Navy formed a remarkably close-knit community. It was considered an honour to serve in the Navy; re-enlistment rates were higher than 90%. All the important positions were filled by graduates from the Annapolis Naval Academy,\textsuperscript{237} which tried to mould character rather than just improve intellect.\textsuperscript{238} The Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, was the intellectual center of Navy life, with Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan being one of its first directors. It was Mahan's school of thought which permeated naval thinking in the interwar years, stressing that one great battle between opposing battle-lines could decide war at sea. It was an offensive-minded naval strategy, which originated from this school, and making the interwar U.S. Navy predominantly a battleship navy. Illustrating this point, Vlahos\textsuperscript{239} stated that the battle of Jutland was re-fought more than fifty times in war games at the interwar Naval War College.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{allard} Dean C. Allard, op. cit. 41.
\bibitem{morison} S.E. Morison, op. cit., 34.
\end{thebibliography}
On 28 January 1938, the President asked Congress to agree to an additional expansion of the Navy. Admiral William D. Leahy, the CNO, explained to the Naval Affairs Committee that the fleet needed 3 more battleships of the SOUTH-DAKOTA Class, 2 light carriers (the HORNET and WASP), 9 light cruisers, 23 destroyers, 9 submarines and 950 naval aircraft. Leahy's request highlights the orientation towards battleships which the Naval Staff still propounded. On 7 May 1938, the President signed the so-called Second Vinson Act, increasing fighting ship tonnage with roughly 20%. It was a fortuitous and timely act, as it provided for 3 battleships, 2 carriers, 8 cruisers, 18 destroyers and 10 submarines.240

The research and development effort by the U.S. Navy in the interbellum was better funded than that by the Army, but its successes were uneven. In 1940 the navy possessed the best submarines in the world, but the worst torpedoes.241 It pioneered the development of the dive-bomber but failed to develop an effective anti-aircraft gun against this menace from the air.242 It practised surprise air attacks from aircraft carriers but failed to develop these tactics into coherent doctrines. Torpedoes and aircraft remained at best secondary weapons, compared to the allmighty naval gun.

In the interwar naval doctrine airplanes were to be used for long-range reconnaissance and for the protection of the battleship line with carrier fighters against attacks by enemy bombers. A limited strike capability was developed, based on both dive-bombers and torpedo-bombers, and directed at near-shore enemy shipping.243 Based on these doctrines, both the long-range Catalina seaplane and the Dauntless dive-bomber were developed. The latter proved to become America's saviour at Midway.244 Dive-bombing was a new tactic pioneered by the U.S. Marine Corps which, between the wars, was a very innovative institution. It was, however, the unforeseen submarine threat in the Atlantic rather than any basic change in naval thinking which caused the next round of naval appropriations. Stark requested a 20% increase in tonnage. Congress however, still being isolationist, allowed tonnage to expand by only 11% and the Third Vinson Act, signed by President Roosevelt, became law on 14 June 1940.245

About a week later France sued for an armistice with Germany. Both the establishment of German hegemony in Europe, and the loss of the sizable French Fleet, were real disasters. Consequently, later in June, CNO Admiral Harold Stark approached Congress again petitioning for a 4.3 billion dollar "Two Ocean-Navy" Bill. Stark requested 257 additional warships; a 70% increase in fighting tonnage. There would be 6 additional battleships of the new 45,000 tons IOWA Class, (comparable to the German BISMARCK)

240 Dean C. Allard, op. cit., 46.
243 Baer, op. cit., 140 - 144.
245 Dean C. Allard, op. cit. 47.
and 6 of the even larger 58,000 tons MONTANA-Class battleships.\textsuperscript{246} Moreover, he asked for 11 ESSEX-Class Fleet aircraft carriers, the ships which were to bring victory to the country victory in the Pacific.\textsuperscript{247} Congress rose to the challenge: representative Vinson steered the request through the House of Representatives in less than a week! The Senate also acted with commendable speed and President Roosevelt signed the Fourth Vinson Act on 19 July 1940. It was called the 1940 Two-Ocean Naval Expansion Act and it authorized the building of 326 warships, including 13 battleships, 11 carriers, 32 cruisers, 218 destroyers and 70 submarines. A Naval Air Force of 15,000 planes was also provided for.\textsuperscript{248} The existing 1,250,000 ton fleet was more than doubled. Construction started immediately and would provide the U.S. Navy with enough warships to dwarf both the English and Japanese Navies combined by the end of 1943.\textsuperscript{249} It should be noticed, however, that even the Two-Ocean Navy Bill was preponderant in battleships.\textsuperscript{250} The reign of the aircraft carrier was established in the desperate carrier battles of the Coral Sea and Midway in early 1942, and only thereafter did the building program reflect the importance of the aircraft carrier.

Both the 1940 Naval Expansion Act and the known ability of American industry to deliver all these vessels on time caused panic in Japanese naval circles. It was realised not only that Japanese domination of even the Western part of the Pacific would pass towards the end of 1943 but also that time was running out for Japanese imperialist goals. The Act passed was even more instrumental in the Japanese decision to go to war in December 1941 than the oil embargo itself.

The US Navy shared one facet with its Japanese counterpart which the British Royal Navy did not possess, namely an integrated Air Service. The naval aviators resented the dominance shown by the big gun-admirals, but under the capable leadership of Rear-Admiral William A. Moffett, the brilliant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics between 1921 and 1933, the naval air arm was recognized as being important to the navy both for scouting ahead of the battleline, and for protection against air attacks.\textsuperscript{251} He made sure that, within the Washington Treaty regulations, two "scraped battleships" were converted into giant aircraft carriers, commanded by officers who were trained aviators. During the 1929 Fleet exercises, a carrier Task Force around the aircraft carrier SARATOGA launched a successful surprise air attack against the Panama locks, illustrating that weapon's deadly potential.\textsuperscript{252} Experience was gained with a small aircraft carrier, the RANGER, and with medium carriers (the YORKTOWN and ENTERPRISE of WW II fame).


\textsuperscript{247} Lawrence Sowinski: "The ESSEX Class Carriers" \textit{Warship}, 5 (1978) 28 - 37, no 6, 96 - 103, no 7, 206 - 211.


\textsuperscript{249} E.S. Land: \textit{Winning the War with ships}, New-York 1958.

\textsuperscript{250} W. Donko: "Battleship Fever" \textit{Warship no 43} (1986), 173 - 181.


Admiral John Towers, Moffet's successor, continued the expansion of the Naval Air Force.253 A sound theoretical and managerial basis was therefore laid for the enormous expansion of the U.S. carrier fleet after Pearl Harbor.254

The carrier doctrine developed in the *interbellum* proved the basis for victory, but up to Pearl Harbor the "big-gun" admirals dominated naval strategy and operational planning, as is illustrated by the U.S. Pacific Fleet Plan WPPac-46.(See Page 91).

During the interwar years, the Navy was noticeably better funded than the Army. The tonnage limits imposed by the Washington and London Treaties were not, however, reached. There was enough money nevertheless to develop the concept of a "balanced fleet" : a fleet consisting of battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and submarines and an adequate fleet train for operations in the enormous waste of the Pacific Ocean.255 All the ships built in the interwar years had been adapted for a war in the Pacific, and could consequently operate at enormous range. Due to the tonnage restrictions on battleships and cruisers, tough decisions had to be made between armament, armour and speed, but the American light and heavy cruiser designed at that time proved to be excellent.256

Less well endowed were the US Marines. The Marine Corps had neither clear tasks nor specific doctrines.257 Marine detachments on board the ships maintained discipline, fired the guns and composed landing parties. In the Caribbean and Central American "banana republics", they were used as colonial infantry, ensuring the Pax Americana in such backwaters. The Marines had gained considerable publicity mileage from their excellent performance on the Western Front in France in 1918. The Hoover Administration, however, proposed eliminating the Corps and it took all the publicity they had earned in the past to defeat this proposal in Congress in 1931.

It was yet another brilliant officer who grasped that the Marine Corps needed a mission. Major General John A. Lejeune USMC, who happened to be the commander of the Marine Corps and his small staff at Marine HQ in Quantico, Va., developed that mission.258 It was the amphibious assault: a landing by seaborne troops on hostile shores in the face of

---


active enemy opposition. It was, as such, unknown by other armies or navies, as amphibious landings had been discredited after the Gallipoli fiasco of 1915. Amphibious warfare was clearly a niche in which neither the Navy nor the Army was particularly interested but which held potential for a future war against Japan. In 1934, Quantico HQ produced a "Tentative Manual for Landing Operations", which was really more like a summing up of all the problems which had to be solved concerning amphibious warfare than that it provided any solutions.

In the late thirties during a series of amphibious exercises on the shores of the small island of La Culebra near Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, the Marine Corps routinely solved each problem as it came up. Landing boats were developed for different kinds of beaches, experiments were done using amphibious vehicles and tanks, problems of close fire support by ships and aircraft were worked out and the phasing of landing operations was tested including the logistics involved. On the eve of Pearl Harbor, the small but very professional Marine Corps held the key to victory in the Pacific and they were aware of the fact.

1.3.2. Army Defence policy.

The determining factor of interwar American Army Defence Policy was one of pure survival. After the First World War, the U.S. had almost completely and unilaterally disarmed its Army; its budgets had shrunk to unbelievably low levels, its personnel dwindled to third-class Power size, and its officers had been reduced to a state of demoralization. While the Navy - notwithstanding the Washington and London Naval disarmament conferences - remained a power which was recognised internationally, the Army bled white and sank almost into oblivion. At the time of the German Blitzkrieg in Poland, the U.S. Army possessed only 4 active infantry divisions: 2 in the Hawaii-Islands, and 2 in the U.S.A. Its resurrection had barely started at the time of Pearl Harbor, and its lack of teeth was one of the determining factors of naval and foreign policy in the late thirties and early forties up to 1943.

This observation can be illustrated by a few statistics. In 1919 the U.S. Army had been reduced to 847,000 officers and men, in 1920 this number dropped to 202,000, whereas

---


the National Defense Act of 1920 authorized a peacetime force of 280,000 enlisted men. The erosion went even further: in 1922 the Army totalled only about 147,000 men. This number remained at about 135,000 for the period thereafter up till 1936, climbing very gradually to 268,000 in 1940 and 1,461,000 in 1941. (All figures are dated at June 30 of each year). Promotion was glacially slow; most of the non-commissioned officers had served for more than twenty years. Boredom resulted in heavy alcohol consumption. Much time was spent on sports, one of the few aspects in which ambitious officers and non-coms could distinguish themselves.

The lack of modern equipment was however more insidious. It is almost an unwritten law that every western defence organisation, when faced with shrinking budgets, gradually reduces its headcount, using up existing equipment without investing in anything new. By the late 1930's, the U.S. Army's weapons and equipment were in an advanced state of decay. The standard infantry piece was the 75 mm gun which was of French pre-Worl d War design. Even in 1939, the simple repair of existing (and obsolescent) weapons plus the maintenance of equipment in use consumed 11% of the total budget, allowing only about 1% for the research and development of new weapons. In 1933, therefore, the Army was at its lowest effectiveness since the First World War, taking seventeenth place amongst the armies of the world! At that time it possessed only 12 modern tanks.

Tanks had been developed by the British and French during the First World War. The theorists of tank warfare were all British: Major-General J.F.C.Ful l er and Captain Basil H. Liddell Hart. The Mark I Vickers medium tank of 1923, the first real modern tank equipped with a revolving turret, was the direct predecessor of today's modern tank. In 1926, the U.S. Army set up an experimental armoured force built around the tank at Camp Meade. Under the charismatic leadership of Major Adna R. Chaffee the Tank Corps experimented with small armoured formations including motorized infantry and artillery built on a tank chassis. From the time of the Civil War and its campaigns against the Indians in the Far West, the U.S. Army had held a strong tradition of emphasizing cavalry operations. It was Chaffee, who laid the foundation for the American Armoured Division between the wars. However, although the revolutionary Christie wheel chassis was an American development, they concentrated mainly on developing a light tank, the M-3 Stuart tank, which, at the beginning of the war, proved to be under-gunned and under-armoured. The Sherman medium tank was then hastily designed but it too still proved to be under-gunned. During the entire Second World War, the Americans possessed no heavy tanks.

---


266 Watson, Op. cit., Table on page 16.

267 Specter, op. cit., 11.

268 Watson, opus cit., 24.


which could be compared to the German and Russian ones.271

U.S. Army doctrines had been developed in the First World War using British tactics and firing French artillery.272 Interwar doctrines stressed firepower and mobility, which did, indeed become important characteristics in the U.S. Army during the Second World War,273 although the U.S. Armoured division never managed to achieve the degree of combined arms integration such as was reached by the German Panzer Division.

Rearmament started on 14 November 1938, when - after Munich - the President himself as Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, summoned his principal military and civilian advisers to the White House. Impressed by the alarming reports about the Luftwaffe’s air strength,274 Roosevelt abruptly changed the Army GHQ plans for gradual expansion into plans for all-out growth of the Army Air Force. Its total strength at that time was around 1,600 planes, and production capacity involving all airplane manufacturers stood at 88 planes per month.275 In contrast to the Army leaders, the President held considerable influence on Congress which under the U.S. Constitution has the right to determine budgets. Although the President in fact pressed not only for Air Force expansion but also for increased aircraft production in particular in order to assist countries like Great Britain and France in fending off the Luftwaffe, the opportunity was too great to miss, and the Army Chief of Staff directed GHQ to come up with a “balanced-force” proposal. This would put the emphasis on the Air Force, but would also expand the Army enabling it to defend the whole Western Hemisphere, and not only the territory of the continental United States. It was inconceivable, according to a study produced by one of the War Plans Divisions at about that time, that the U.S. would be able to face Germany with its ninety divisions, Italy with its forty-five and Japan with its fifty divisions in China alone, without having even a single U.S. combat division at the ready. This shameful state of affairs resulted in a request which the President supported, being made to Congress on 12 January 1939. Investments were called for the tune of $110 million in new equipment, which was granted by Congress on 2 May, 1939, nearly five months later.276 It was just in time!

The War Plans Division at Army GHQ noticed with mounting alarm the continuing penetration of the fascist states of Germany and Italy into South America, where large immigrant colonies from those two countries had settled. It became clear to the WPD, that an eventual take-over of Argentina, Brazil, and/or Chile by fascists friendly to the European fascist powers was a distinct possibility. The expanding yet still minuscule U.S. Army had to take this into account. The problem was, however, that there were barely enough staff


274 The American Ambassador to France, William C. Bullitt, who was a personal friend of the President and had personal access to him, warned him on 13 October 1938 about the growing threat of the Luftwaffe. See Watson, opus cit., 131.

275 Watson, op. cit. 127.

276 Watson, op. cit., 144, Weigley, op. cit. 418.
available to train and equip the Army as it increased appreciably in strength. When the President, therefore, authorized so much manpower equal to that approved under the National Defense Act of 1920, which meant an increase in the Army by only 17,000 men, there was not too much grumbling in Army circles. It was the President's answer to the German invasion of Poland but early in 1940 the U.S. Army was still not an appropriate instrument to prove its country's claims to world power.

Congress, still being very isolationist, was really shaken by the results of the Blitzkrieg in Western Europe in May and June, 1940. The public, the President, and Congress itself were now in unison demanding a powerful army. Supplementary estimates amounted to $732 million to enlarge the aircraft and munitions production facilities. The Army's manpower strength still stood at 280,000 men only. In order to expand at short notice, conscription had to be re-introduced. The international situation called for great haste. The Selective Service Act of 1939 had been passed already on 16 September 1939, aiming at a 2,000,000 man strong army by 1942. Because of the urgency, however, many necessary facilities for receiving and training large numbers of recruits were not yet ready in the fall of 1940.

The summer manoeuvres of 1940 had exposed many weaknesses, especially as far as modern equipment was concerned. Cannon were simulated by iron pipes, "tanks" were commercial trucks with cardboard armour. Horses for the Cavalry Units had to be rented. Comments in the press were unfavourable. All lessons learned, however, were put to good use and training programs were adjusted accordingly. This also influenced the Military Appropriations Act of June 1941, requesting an unprecedented $8.8 billion dollar budget. The Bill was passed early in August 1941. It was followed by the September manoeuvres in Louisiana and Texas, when experience was gained not only in the deployment of complete divisions but also in manoeuvring with more than one Army Corps at a time. This was repeated during the Carolina manoeuvres in November 1941. In total, more than 400,000 men got first-hand experience at using combined arms and General Patton rose to the forefront as a tank general. The Carolina manoeuvres similarly brought into the limelight leaders such as Eisenhower, Bradley and Simpson. Both the quality and quantity of equipment had improved considerably over the previous year, but American readers were still shocked by photographs they saw of tank mock-ups during the manoeuvres, showing that the greatest automotive industry in the world was unable to provide enough tanks for the Army whereas the showrooms were full of the 1942 car models. The three incomplete infantry divisions of 1939 had, however, become thirty divisions, albeit under-equipped ones, backed up by six armoured divisions.

---

27 Watson, op. cit., 158.
27a Russell Weigley, op. cit., Parameters, 14.
27b Russell Weigley, ibid., Parameters, 13.
28 Watson, opus cit., 209.
28a J.L. Romjue, op. cit., 438.
28c Weigley, op. cit., 432.
at the end of 1941. That was an impressive accomplishment indeed, which according to Field Marshal E. Rommel had surpassed anything the world had ever seen in army expansion up to that time.

In 1941 the US Infantry Division had been triangulated (three regiments instead of four). The standard triangular division amounted to 15,514 officers and men. According to its Tables of Equipment this standard Infantry Division had an armament of 6518 rifles, 243 automatic rifles, 157 light machine-guns, 236 heavy machine-guns, 90 mortars of 60 mm and 54 mortars of 81 mm, 557 bazookas, 57 anti-tank guns of 57 mm and 54 howitzers of 105 mm and 12 howitzers of 155 mm. This was a formidable firepower, specifically in artillery. Moreover, the standard US Infantry Division was completely motorised.

The weapons were of uneven quality. The US Army's Garand .30 calibre M-1 semi-automatic rifle was the best Infantry rifle in the world. The standard medium artillery weapon, the 105 mm howitzer, was excellent and so were American doctrines for fire direction, counter-battery fire, observation, and fire coordination. It was, however, only by continuous pressure from President and Congress that in June 1940 the 105 mm howitzer was standardized, as the Army Command under Marshall did not want to scrap around 3,000 old and obsolete 75 mm guns of WW I vintage. At that time, only fourteen 105 mm howitzers were available!

The American anti-tank gun was outclassed by German anti-tank guns and the same sad story goes for the US tanks including the Sherman tank. Even the uniquely American self-propelled tank destroyer proved to be a failure. The 2.36 inch bazookas proved inferior to the German Panzerfaust. Compared to Japanese Army weapons however the US weapons came off very well indeed.

1.3.3. Airforce Defence policy

Aircraft had revealed their military potential in the First World War. The four principal types of operations (reconnaissance, bombing, ground attack and air interdiction/pursuit) had been tested and employed. Their power was clearly recognizable but in defence establishments all over the world a discussion raged on the direction this awesome weapon would take in the future. For the established services, the Army and the Navy, the airplane was simply another new weapon, like the tank or the submarine. To airmen, according to Craven & Cate, "the plane was genus, not species - a new and unique instrument of destruction". They were going to battle for an independent air service, meaning one operating separately from the Army and the Navy. Each defence establishment developed its own

---

284 Watson, op. cit., 236.
286 Russell F. Weigley, Ibid., Parameters, 19.
organizational model to solve these conflicting ideas.

The spectacular interwar technical developments in aviation made the Army Air Corps the darling both of the public and of the press, but they also resulted in a lot of special government boards and committees to arrive at sound conclusions about the future role of the air weapon. Between 1928 and 1936, there were fourteen such investigative committees. A flamboyant personality such as Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell, former commander of the American Air Force in France, drew a lot of attention with his preaching about the overriding importance of air-power in any future conflict. He earned the enmity of the Admirals by publishing widely the results of bombing tests against former German and obsolescent American battleships. These tests proved that even heavy armoured battleships could be sunk from the air. He was court-martialed and silenced in 1925, but he had made his point and remained influential through his books and articles.

In the interwar years, the Air Force remained a part of the Army, as had been stipulated by the Army Reorganization Act of 4 June 1920. The Air Corps Act of 2 July 1926 authorized a five-year program to take the Army Air Corps strength up to 1,518 officers, 2,500 flying cadets, 16,000 enlisted men and 1,800 serviceable aircraft.

On 9 January 1931, an agreement was reached between General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff US Army and Admiral William V. Pratt, Chief of Naval Operations which clearly outlined the respective responsibilities held by the Army Air Force and the Naval Aviation Arm. Under its provisions, naval Air Forces would be based on the fleet and move with it. The Army Air Forces would be land-based and would also be used for coastal defence. On March 1 1935, the Air Corps was reorganized in a GHQ Air Force, uniting the operational units of the airforce into one command and an Air Corps, the chief of which remained responsible for procurement, supply and training. On March 1 1939, both organisations were fused into a separate Air Corps, reporting directly to the Army Chief of Staff. But it was still a small force with fewer personnel than, for example, the Army Artillery.

Underlying these organisational changes was a search to define air doctrines. The Air Corps Tactical School ACTS played an important role in this search. Other doctrines were being developed by the War Department, the Army War College, the Command and General Staff School and last but not least the Joint Board. Craven & Cate have shown that while the ACTS was the guardian of Mitchell's ideas, the other organisations developed an Air Force doctrine which bound the latter to immediate support of both Army

---

290 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 22.
291 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 27.
292 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 29.
293 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 62. Linn, op. cit., 207.
294 Specter, op. cit., 17.
ground forces and the Navy in the execution of their primary missions.296

In deep silence, the theorists of the ACTS developed the doctrines, which were to influence the course of the coming World War. One of those concepts was that of “precision bombing” based on the new Norden bomb-sight and careful target selection of the enemy’s weak spots. They also developed the concept of the strategic bomber, treated by Mitchell in his publications.297 But Mitchell was no strategic bombing freak, despite how important he thought it was. His thinking is best summarized by the following statement: "Our doctrine of aviation, therefore, should be to find out where the hostile airforce is, to concentrate on that point with our Pursuit, Attack and Bombardment Aviation, to obtain a decision over the hostile airforce, and then to attack the enemy’s armies on the land or navies on the water and obtain a decision over them".298 In effect this was "Mahan in the air"! But this doctrine accentuated a balanced airforce of reconnaissance planes, bombers and pursuit planes, and tactical attack planes. Mitchell had, however, prophesied as early as 1920, that the evolution of air power would cause the disappearance of surface navies. The problem was, of course, that the US Navy was loath to “disappear”. Anyway, around 1935 the ACTS had evolved a cohesive air doctrine, which gave the strategic bomber an important place.

The Air Corps - in later years under the able command of Air Force Lieut. General Henry H. Arnold,299 had the foresight to conduct its own experimental program of research and development of new planes and equipment in close co-operation with the civil aircraft industry. In 1926, it established the procedure of asking for competitive bids for the development of new airplane prototypes, and it became policy to give the contractor the right to amortize experimental costs by income from later production orders,300 a policy followed up to this day. One of the results of this policy was in the early thirties the revolutionary all-metal, monoplane two-engine Glenn Martin B-10 bomber with retractable landing gear and a range of 1,000 km. The agreement with the Navy opened the way for a long-range bomber which would be able to combine long reconnaissance flights over open water with the ability to bomb ships.301 In 1933 competitive experimental bids were placed with a number of civilian air companies. Most companies came up with twin-engined planes, but Boeing won the bid with a four-engined bomber of revolutionary design. In July 1935, the XB-17 underwent its first flight tests. The machine was at least a generation ahead of contemporary bombers. The following month, it flew non-stop from Seattle to Dayton - a distance of 3,900 km., at an average speed of 440 km/hr. This was even faster than most pursuit planes at that time! The Air Corps thereupon ordered 13 of the production B-17s, which were delivered in 1936. The B-17 gave the Aircorps a plane which was unequalled anywhere in the world. It did not, however, expand the number of B-17s very quickly. By September 1939 and the war in Poland, only another 13 had been added.302

296 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 33.
297 Craven & Cate, op. cit., 35.
298 W. Mitchell, in “Our Airforce”, page 15, quoted in Craven & Cate, opus cit. 38.
299 For his biography, see Larrabee, op. cit., 206 - 255.
300 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 56.
302 Craven & Cate, opus cit., 70.
As the new B-17 bomber was so fast, this meant that the days of the fighter were over. It was Major Claire Lee Chennault, head of the Pursuit Section of the Tactical School, who disagreed with this conclusions by arguing that the existing pursuit planes were just obsolescent. Alas, this situation remained so until far into the Second World War, with the Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk being decidedly inferior to the best Japanese fighters such as the Zero, but also inferior to the British-built Spitfire and Hurricane. The really superior fighters, such as the P-39 Bell Airacobra and the P-47 Republic Thunderbolt, were to come into service much later. In bomber design, though, the Americans had a clear lead.

The Presidential message to Congress of 12 January 1939 initiated the mobilization of the Army Air Force. The President called for a 300 million dollar expansion plan. Within three months, Congress passed an emergency Army Air Act, establishing the Air Corps at 3,203 officers and 45,000 enlisted men, with 5,500 planes. The civil aircraft industry started expanding immediately, with factories working on a three-shift basis, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More challenges lay ahead, however, as, following the fall of The Netherlands, on 16 May 1940 the President called for an annual output of 50,000 aircraft a year. He had been shocked by the role of the Luftwaffe in the unexpectedly sudden Dutch capitulation due to the bombing of Rotterdam. In his Presidential address, he asked the American aircraft industry to expand from the production of some 2,000 planes a year to more than 4,000 a month. Aircraft production in 1940 showed an increase by 250% compared to 1939. In September 1940, the number of Army aircraft on order stood at 16,649. Summarizing, in the three years up to Pearl Harbor, the Air Corps had been authorized to expend about eight billion dollars and to procure about 37,500 planes.

All these planes needed both pilots and mechanics, and the Air Corps started a crash program for training these men in the same way as it expanded its number of planes: by using civilian flying schools and civilian mechanics schools. This proved to be an excellent decision, as the civilian schools were able to provide the numbers of pilots and mechanics needed by working on a 24 hour per day, seven days a week instruction basis. The number of military airfields also had to be rapidly increased all over the United States. The result of all this was, that at the time of Pearl Harbor American industry had already expanded its aircraft production capacity so well, that no other nation was able to out-produce the United States - a secure base for future victory.

1.3.4. Industrial Mobilisation.

It is one of the uncontested facts of modern history that the United States, although they were a very reluctant world power after the First World War, laid the foundation for future dominance long before that time, thanks to its enormous industrial potential. If we compare the shares of world output of manufactured goods by the major countries in percentage points, the United States was already outproducing everybody else even as early as 1885 with a share of 29% of world output. Great Britain - the undisputed superpower of that

---

Specter, op. cit., 16.

Craven & Cate, opus cit., 104.

Craven & Cate, opus cit., 108.

time - was then a close second with 27%. In the years just before the Wall Street crash the United States peaked at 42% of world output, compared to 9% for the United Kingdom and 3% for Japan. In 1938, just before industrial mobilization started, its share was reduced to 32%, which was still quite respectable compared to 11% for Germany, 9% for the U.K., 5% for France, 19% for the USSR, and Japan still remaining at 3%. Admiral Yamamoto was right in predicting an American victory within two years after the outbreak of war, as he knew what the enormous potential the still sleeping giant had.

As has been shown in sub-chapters 3.3. and 3.4., the rapid expansion of the Army and Army Air Force was constrained by the lack of modern equipment. The armaments factories had to increase capacity and to train workers and this inevitably took time. In addition, it was not only the American defence establishment that ordered more and more equipment but the Western democracies also needed modern American weapons, especially aircraft. American industry had achieved a comfortable lead over its British and French counterparts in this respect.

Under the shadow of the Luftwaffe after Munich, the British and the French started ordering great numbers of aircraft from American industry. Ammunition was also in short supply. President Roosevelt stimulated these foreign orders, which had been made possible after the Third Neutrality Act of November 1939 (See page 37), and when production became constrained, he charged Henry Morgenthau, the Secretary of the Treasury Department, who was very anti-Nazi, with sorting out the priorities between foreign arms purchasers and American manufacturers.307 The Secretary of the Army was sidetracked, and consequently the outflow of weapons could not be influenced by him. The only two drawbacks to foreign purchasers were firstly the "cash-and-carry" requirements of the 1937 Neutrality Act, requiring them to pay for their procurements in cash, and secondly, transportation by their own ships to Europe. That ceased to happen after November 1939.

The Army insisted on maintenance of secrecy particularly of aircraft exports. Its policy therefore was developed to sell foreign customers airplanes which were not of the latest design, and which were stripped of secret developments like the Norden bombsight.308 Moreover, in a number of cases the planes delivered were used as experimental Guinea pigs, such as happened to the first batches of B-17s which were delivered to the RAF under pressure of the President himself.309 Following the Dunkirk disaster the President even ordered that new planes leaving the factories be evenly distributed between the British and the Army Air Corps, to the latter's intense dislike. After his re-election, the President even announced that half the aircraft produced in the United States should go to Britain.310

In order to ensure that this equitable distribution of aircraft and engines was carried out, the President set up the Joint Aircraft Committee (JAC). The members were the British Purchasing Commission, the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics, and the Air Corps. In January

307 Watson, op. cit., 300.

308 Watson, op. cit., 304.

309 Watson, op. cit., 306.

310 Watson, op. cit., 368, Craven & Cate, op. cit., 134.
1941, all foreign contracts for aircraft were controlled by the JAC.

After the First World War, it became virtually impossible to maintain the six major manufacturing arsenals as well as the Aberdeen Weapons Proving Grounds near the capital. The Ordnance Department, which consisted of less than about 350 officers, however, prepared an Industrial Mobilization Plan for the whole country, which was indeed implemented as planned in 1940-1941. For procurement purposes, the country was divided into 13 Ordnance districts, with one regular officer and a small staff per district. Their task was to make a survey of the industries within the geographical boundaries of each district. Plants were visited and the various types of weapons which each manufacturing plant was supposed to be able to produce, were discussed with the plant management. In some instances tentative war orders were placed - to become effective if and when an emergency arose. This resulted in about 85% of the manufacturers contacted preparing themselves for war production of specific items.311

The so-called Educational Orders became very important activities in the framework of industrial mobilization. These orders were for complicated items of ordnance to be placed with selected manufacturers in order that they might learn how such equipment could be mass-produced. The IBM plants in the Hudson Valley which produced tabulating equipment, for example, obtained educational orders to assemble Norden bomb-sights for the Air Force. Before the outbreak of war in Europe a number of educational orders for such items as gun recuperators, recoil mechanisms, and shell forgings had been placed. The firms which had accepted these educational orders therefore had a considerable lead.312

Before and during the war, the Ordnance Department increased its research on all types of equipment. This resulted in important new weapons like the recoilless gun, the bazooka, the VT-fuse, the hollow-shaped charge and the aircraft rocket, all becoming available at the later stages of the war.313

During the First World War, one of the greatest problems in order to achieve standardised pieces of equipment was the lack of proper gauges.314 In the summer of 1938 a concentrated effort was therefore made to design gauges for all equipment items which were to go into mass production by manufacturers other than the arsenals. This resulted in a smooth and standardised production program when the emergency came.

Slowly, but relentlessly, US industry increased its weapons-producing capacity. Colonel Weijerman, the Dutch Military Attache in Washington, reported early in 1941, that in return for 13 billion dollars, the war industry was delivering 50,000 planes, 150,000 plane engines, 17,000 heavy guns, 33 million grenades, 9200 tanks, 300,000 machineguns, 380 warships and 200 freighters, plus the personal equipment for 1.200.000 men! Being quite impressed by all this, Weijerman reported that the war industry was on full production 7


314 Barnes, op. cit., 12.
days a week, 24 hours a day, with a minimum of strikes.\textsuperscript{315}

The Lend-Lease bill, signed by the President on March 11, 1941 made it possible for an almost bankrupt Great Britain to obtain the weapons it needed on credit. For the history of the free world this law has, therefore, has, without doubt become one of the most relevant documents in history.\textsuperscript{316} As the largest share of production, however, then went to the nations which did the actual fighting, getting the US armed forces re-equipped still took second place. In September 1941, production planning called for aircraft production up to June 1942 to be shared as follows: the US Air Force was to receive 4,189 tactical planes, Great Britain 6,634, Russia 1,835, China 407, and other nations (e.g. The Netherlands East Indies) 109.\textsuperscript{317} This priority scheme did not only apply to aircraft; virtually all medium tank production at that time was slated for Britain and the Soviet Union. Roosevelt at least seems to have thought almost up to Pearl Harbor, that with sufficient material help, Great Britain, Russia and China could defeat the axis powers without direct American involvement.

Another political decision which went against the wishes of General George C. Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff,\textsuperscript{318} was the sale of 1095 "surplus" World War I vintage 75 mm guns to the British. Moreover, there was a shortage of .30 inch small arms ammunition developed due to British demands\textsuperscript{319}. The amount of small arms ammunition used for training purposes, therefore, had to be reduced with 60%.

1.3.5. The defence of the Philippines.

The defence of The Philippines was the responsibility of the Army. After much experimentation with different organisational structures, the War Department established a Pacific Army in March 1912, which was responsible for the defence of Hawaii and The Philippines.\textsuperscript{320} This colonial Army had its own uniforms and an organisational structure quite different from that of the Continental U.S. Army. It also had a double mission: firstly, the internal protection against insurrection, and secondly the defence of The Philippines against an outside enemy.\textsuperscript{321} In this respect, it was no different from the other Colonial Armies: the British Indian Army and the Royal Netherlands Indies Army. There was one main contrast to those Armies and that was the proportion of indigenous troops in their total strength. Notwithstanding the incorporation of two regiments of Philippine Scouts, that percentage in The Philippines was never more than 60%. Moreover, the so-called Philippine Division consisted of two parts: the Pacific Army (mockingly called the Carabao

\textsuperscript{315} Report Weijerman to Welter, 4 January 1941, ARA Dept of Colonies, accession nr 2.10.45, inventory nr. 741.

\textsuperscript{316} A copy of the Proposal to Congress HR 1776, dated 8 March 1941, is in ARA Archives Dept of Colonies, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 736. See also FRUS, 1941, III, 1 - 52. For the effects of the Law see Warren F. Kimball: \textit{The most unsordid Act: Lend-Lease 1939 - 1941}, New York 1969.

\textsuperscript{317} Weigley, op. cit., 433, Craven & Cate, op. cit., 134.

\textsuperscript{318} For his biography, see Larrabee, op. cit., 96 - 152

\textsuperscript{319} Watson, opus cit., 312 - 313.

\textsuperscript{320} Linn, op. cit., 63.

\textsuperscript{321} Linn, op. cit. 249 - 250.
Army) which was predominantly white, and the Philippine Scouts, which, including the officers, consisted predominantly of Filipino's with just a sprinkling of American officers and non-coms.

After the Japanese war scare of 1907 it became clear that the Navy and Army held different views on the defense of the Philippines. The Army concentrated on defending Manila Bay, which the Navy considered inferior to Subic Bay. Subic Bay, however, was far more difficult to defend than Manila Bay and the Army thereupon proceeded to seal off the entrance to Manila Bay by using coastal artillery. The Navy, however, decided to abandon The Philippines altogether and to concentrate on Pearl Harbor, which had been appointed as a Naval base in 1908. The two services thus maintained separate visions on Pacific strategy: the Army's thoughts were based on the defense of a large harbour in order to prevent it being used by an enemy, whereas naval thoughts were more offensive and based on the Mahanian concept of the annihilation of the opposing fleet, using bases only as to support an attack. After 1908 the Army undertook the reinforcement of Manila by sealing off its entrance. Should the Japanese have landed at Lingayen Gulf, the Army would have been unable to defend Manila, but the entrance forts could be hold until the arrival of the US Battlefleet.

During the period from 1910 to 1914 a number of forts were built on the islands at the entrance to Manila Bay. In 1914, the defences were completed and able to withstand attack from the sea by even the heaviest battleships then known.

The largest and most northerly of the four islands in the entrance to Manila Bay is the tadpole-shaped island of Corregidor. It is the closest island to the Bataan Peninsula. The head of the tadpole is a steep plateau with 500 foot cliffs all around it. On it stands Fort Mills with its coastal batteries. Corregidor bristled with a total of 56 coastal guns and mortars, all of World War I vintage. There were eight 12 inch guns in five batteries with a horizontal range of up to 29,000 yards. Furthermore, there were ten 12 inch mortars in 2 batteries, two 10 inch guns, two 8 inch guns, five 6 inch guns, 19 modern 155 mm guns with a 17,000 yard range, and ten 3 inch guns. In addition there were twenty-eight 3 inch anti-aircraft guns and forty-eight .5 inch AA-machineguns.

Caballo Island is just South of Corregidor. It housed Fort Hughes, possessing two 14 inch-guns, four 12 inch mortars, two 6 inch guns, three 155 mm guns, and six 3 inch guns of which four were anti-aircraft guns. South of Caballo Island stood Fort Drum on El Fraile Island. This island had been cut away to the waterline, and on it a reinforced concrete battleship had been built, equipped with four 14 inch guns in armoured turrets, a secondary battery of four 6 inch guns and two 3 inch AA-guns. The fort, with its 200 man garrison, was even in 1941 considered impregnable to attack.
Very close to the southern shore of the Manila Bay entrance lay Carabao Island, on which Fort Frank had been built. Its armament consisted of two 14 inch guns, eight 12 inch mortars, four 155 mm guns, and three 75 mm guns. Altogether, this harbour defence outclassed the one at Singapore and made Manila the real Gibraltar of the East. The problem was, however, that due to the Washington Treaties, hardly any modernization was allowed; the installation of A.A. guns and the construction of the Malinta tunnel complex intended for storage purposes at Corregidor, formed two exceptions. Although the forts were still impressive in 1941, they were vulnerable to either direct air attacks or a long siege, or both.

After the signing of the Washington Treaties, the further reinforcement of The Philippines was prohibited. Coupled to the dramatic reduction in Army strength and budgets during the interwar years, the defence of The Philippines was almost non-existent during that period. The Army did little more than basic maintenance on the considerable coastal defences at the entrance to the Bay of Manila, which had been built prior to the First World War. When the Washington Treaty expired in 1936, there was no enthusiasm at all in an increasingly isolationist Congress to spend money on Philippine defence. As early as 1933, Brig.Gen. Stanley D. Embick, commander of the Manila Harbour Defences, had declared in a strongly-worded Memo: "...the Philippine Islands have become a military liability of a constantly increasing gravity. To carry out the present ORANGE Plan - with its provisions for the early dispatch of our fleet to Philippine waters - would be literally an act of madness." Embick in effect wanted to abandon The Philippines and to retire to the line Alaska - Hawaii - Panama. He was supported in this by the C-in-C of the Asiatic Fleet, Admiral M.M. Taylor, who pointed out to the CNO that the state of the army was such, that the naval base of Cavite would not last for more than 15 days after a Japanese declaration of war and that the result would mean that the Asiatic Fleet would withdraw from The Philippines. This conclusion was shared by the CNO. The Navy had clearly abandoned The Philippines!

The problem was that this military liability was brought about by politics: no politician who was in his right mind, dared to declare The Philippines an outpost which had no military value and was therefore not worth defending. President Roosevelt was certainly not willing to be that honest with his fellow countrymen. Even in 1940, the American military presence over there was negligible: 4,800 U.S. troops, 6,400 Philippine Scouts, and 37 planes in all. The Philippine Scouts mentioned were Filipino troops in U.S. Army service, and were, therefore, part of the U.S. military establishment. The two highly trained regiments of Scouts were later to provide the backbone for the tenacious defence of Bataan. They could rightly be considered crack troops. Against the overwhelming Japanese superiority in ships, planes and troops, however, there was no hope of defeating the Japanese and the only prospect for the Carabao Army was to sell itself dearly.

---

327 Watson, op. cit., 415, Linn, op. cit., 227.


329 Letter CNO to CinC Asiatic Fleet, 18 March 1933. Nat. Archives, as above.

330 Watson, opus cit., 416.

A potential way out of this problem came in 1934, when the Tydings-McDuffey Act established a Philippine Commonwealth, which was to lead to complete independence in 1945. Manuel Quezon, President of the Commonwealth, arranged for General Douglas MacArthur to be transferred to become his personal military assistant, charged with the build-up of a Commonwealth (Filipino) Army.

MacArthur was no ordinary general. The son of General Arthur MacArthur, the conqueror of The Philippines, he made a fast career in the U.S. Army, commanding an infantry division in France in 1917 he was the youngest U.S. Army divisional commander ever. MacArthur was a very complex personality: he was not only brilliant, absolutely fearless and personally brave, but he was also a charismatic leader with a gift for selecting devoted and capable subordinates. On the other hand he was very ambitious, vainglorious, arrogant and strongly media-oriented, ruthlessly opportunistic and not very loyal to his subordinates. As Chief of Staff of the US Army (1931 - 1935) he made sure that all letters and reports from the Philippine Division arguing to abandon the Philippines were suppressed. Under his aegis plans were developed for a speedy reinforcement of The Philippines with two Army divisions via the Suez Canal, and raising a three-division Filippino force. Congress however blocked the appropriation of the requisite funds.

MacArthur, supported by Major General Lucius R. Holbrook, Philippine Division Commander, started to breathe new life into the Commonwealth Army on the assumption that The Philippines could be defended in their totality by sufficient numbers of conscript forces. Both Generals threw overboard the previous plan for a strategic retreat by American forces to Corregidor and developed a new one to defend the beaches from Japanese invasion. As Linn has pointed out, this plan went straight against the ORANGE plans developed by the War Planning Division (WPD) at Washington Headquarters. The answer Lieut.-Gen. Malin Craig, Army Chief of Staff gave, was not outright interference, but keeping the Generals in Manila at bay by refusing to honour their requests for more weapons, planes and men.

When this became law in 1936, the future Commonwealth Army was to consist of a regular core of 11,000 men taken from the Philippine Scouts and a reserve of 400,000 trained male citizens, organized into thirty small territorial divisions of 10,000 men each within ten military districts, covering the whole archipelago. MacArthur had on his staff two very capable young officers, the Majors Dwight D. Eisenhower and James B. Ord. His team developed plans for the territorial army, which was to be backed up by a small air corps of fighters and a naval corps consisting of 30 to 50 high-speed motor torpedo boats (MTB's). The straits between Luzon and the Visayas islands were to be closed by installing 12 inch

---


323 Linn, op. cit., 225 - 226.

324 Linn, op. cit., 231 - 232.

325 Linn, op. cit., 234 - 235.

326 Linn, op. cit., 236 - 237.
guns protecting minefields in those straits, in cooperation with the MTB's. In 1941, after the Japanese occupation of Indochina, the WPD even approved this master plan.

The build-up of this Commonwealth Army, however, proved to be a bootstrap operation. There were not enough instructors, barracks, and other physical facilities, or infantry weapons to train and arm the masses of semi-literate young peasants. The upper ranks were dominated by Quezon cronies of limited ability, who actually blocked progress. The U.S. Army, being in a period of rapid build-up itself, could hardly afford to ship more men and matériel to the Philippines. There were wellfounded fears at American headquarters that the Filipino Army would not be able to stand up to the Japanese. In 1940, the regular Filipino Army had 468 officers and 3,697 enlisted men with 105,000 reservists and conscripts in training. It had not yet attained the high degree of professionalism of the Philippine Scouts. Compared to the strength of this army at that time, the Netherlands East Indies were indeed armed to the teeth.

It was only after the arrival of Maj.Gen. George Grunert in Manila in June 1940, that the situation started to improve. He argued the need for both a strong Air Force and a strong submarine force - the traditional weapons of the weak, who had no battleships available. Political developments gave his urgent requests some weight, and both General MacArthur and President Manuel Quezon of The Philippines supported Grunert's requests. In October 1940 he was granted 75 American training officers and in December 1940, the headcount for the U.S. infantry regiment and the two coastal artillery regiments was increased, as were the numbers of Philippine Scouts, namely from 6,000 to 12,000. Moreover, the artillery was increased by ten 155 mm guns, twenty 3 inch anti-aircraft guns and fifty 75 mm guns, which gave the army much additional firepower. The size of the airforce however was not further increased and the number of airfields therefore remained small. This was going to prove a real bottleneck within a year.

1.3.6. The reinforcement of the Philippines.

The Japanese entry into Southern Indochina brought about a firm American response. In addition to the oil embargo, the President also called MacArthur back from retirement, and made him Commanding General of all U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (acronym USAFFE). Moreover, the Commonwealth Filipino Army was placed under U.S. Command. Those measures had been discussed with Roosevelt in May 1941. Moreover, the number of American training officers for the Commonwealth Army was increased to 500 and another batch of fifty 75 mm guns and a company of light tanks were promised. Immediately after his appointment as USAFFE Commander, MacArthur used his considerable influence to argue a further reinforcement of The Philippines, by increasing the number of air units specifically.

This neatly coincided with plans developed at the WPD to utilize the potential of the B-17,
the large four-engine strategic bomber, which had received much praise from RAF aircrews which flew the aircraft over Germany in early 1941. Its enormous range and heavy armament to American eyes made the plane an acceptable deterrent against Japanese expansion plans. It was believed that the Japanese would not dare send expeditionary forces into the South China Sea knowing that B-17s had been deployed in The Philippines. In August 1941 it was decided therefore to move nine B-17D’s to The Philippines and increase the fighter strength by thirty-one P-40B fighters followed by fifty P-40E Tomahawk interceptors. The nine flying fortresses landed at Manila on 12 September 1941 after a record-breaking flight from California via Oahu, Midway, Wake, Port Moresby and Darwin. Secretary of War Stimson was jubilant when he heard the news of their arrival. He firmly believed in the deterrent effect the B-17 would have to force the Japanese to reconsider their plans for aggression. Later that month, two more squadrons were to follow, depending on how fast additional existing airfields in the NEI and Australia could be expanded.

At the end of September, MacArthur was promised reinforcements which would arrive in the months to come, totalling 136 operational heavy bombers with 34 additional ones in reserve, 85 divebombers and 195 pursuit planes including reserves. Most of these reinforcements, however, never reached the Philippines. The problem was, that there were not enough planes available in the United States to carry out the plans. Those planes which were available, sometimes failed to reach their destination. Partly, this was due to plain bad luck, as was the case with the severe weather which delayed the flight of a number of B-17s until they flew into Pearl Harbor just after the Japanese attack. The saga of the divebombers is even more unbelievable. They were crated but in Honolulu the navy split the group in two, sending the personnel in fast troopships straight to Manila, whereas the crated planes were shipped with a slower convoy that was rerouted to Sydney after the Pearl Harbor attack. In Sydney the planes were hastily uncrated and the crating was thrown away. The solenoids necessary to fire the wing guns had however been attached to the crating panels and consequently disappeared with them. By the time new solenoids arrived, Japan had already conquered those airfields in Borneo and the Celebes which the planes needed in order to fly to the Philippines. The dive bombers specifically could have created havoc at the Japanese landing beaches.

The Americans really thought that the Japanese would have to reconsider their plans for the Far East. It was only after the war that it became clear, that the only effect the

342 Matloff & Snell, op. cit., 70.
344 Watson, op. cit., 441.
345 Harrington, op. cit., 226.
346 Telegram War Department to C-in-C, USAFFE, 30 September 1941, with detailed instructions and flight schedules, in FRUS, 1940-IV, 497 - 498.
347 Watson, op. cit., 443.
348 This horror story can be found in Watson, op. cit., 444.
American air reinforcement had was that the Japanese hastened their timetable for aggression. After the war, General Sugiyama, Japanese Army Minister, and Admiral Nagano, Navy Minister, both told their interrogators that they had dismissed the B-17 danger at the Imperial Conference of 1 December 1941, when the decision to go to war was made.\textsuperscript{360}

The spurt in re-arming The Philippines with large air units could not be matched by corresponding airfield construction, and enormous pressure was therefore put on the few airfields available around Manila which soon became crowded with parked planes. There were hardly any airstrips on the other islands with the exception of the new Delmonte Airfield on Mindanao, and so the dispersal of planes such as the British had done in Malaya and also the Dutch had done became impossible. This is one of the factors which explains the enormous airplane losses suffered by the Americans due to surprise Japanese air attacks on those few existing airfields.

In effect, other important bases in the United States, Panama and the Hawaiian Islands were denuded of airplanes and armaments in order to reinforce the Philippines. It was a remarkable reversal of penury and thrift at the end of a twenty year period. On 7 December 1941, there were 80,000 Filipino troops and 31,000 US Army personnel in The Philippines, augmented by 30 B-17s, 72 P-40s and 18 (obsolete) P-35s. En route to Manila were 2,700 troops with 64 P-40s and 52 A-24 divebombers. On hand were 109 M-4 tanks and fifty 75 mm guns, and forty 105 mm howitzers with 178 75 mm field guns were en route.\textsuperscript{361} This armament must be compared to the defence of Hawaii, where the Army possessed two fully-armed infantry divisions without tanks, only 6 heavy bombers and 80 operational fighters. At the outbreak of war there were 913 U.S. Army planes based outside the continental United States. These were 61 heavy bombers, 157 medium bombers and 59 light bombers and 638 fighters.\textsuperscript{362} More than half of the heavy bombers and one sixth of the fighters were already in The Philippines, and with the planes en route this would favor Manila even more.\textsuperscript{360} The Philippines were indeed rapidly becoming a bulwark to American Power in the Far East. The re-armament of the Philippines was also a clear reversal of the "Germany First"-strategy adopted in 1940 (See subchapter 1.4.3., page 89 - 92). Cook\textsuperscript{354} has argued convincingly that this was due to President Roosevelt, who considered the abandonment of The Philippines politically unpalatable to American public opinion, which was expertly exploited for his purposes by mediagenic General MacArthur.

However, the sudden influx of men and equipment could not overcome decades of neglect. Soldiers had to exercise with their tanks and guns, pilots with their planes, airfields and barracks had to be built and equipped and an early warning system set up. This all required a few extra months, which were lost in the diplomatic bargaining immediately prior to the war.


\textsuperscript{361} Watson, op. cit., 448 - 449.

\textsuperscript{362} The RAF employed 109 B-17s primarily for training. Harrington, op. cit., 221.

\textsuperscript{354} Ch. O. Cook Jr.: "The strange case of RAINBOW-5" Proceedings US Naval Institute, 104:8, August 1978, 71.
to Pearl Harbor. Therefore, The Philippines were lost, but there was one redeeming feature which did not occur in the other colonial regions of S.E. Asia. That was the Filipino conscript soldier's enduring loyalty both to his country and to the U.S. ally. This resulted in the longest armed resistance to Japanese aggression in the whole of S.E. Asia (Corregidor fell on 6 May, 1942) and a lively guerrilla against Japanese forces during the entire Pacific War. It was a prize the Americans earned for their farsighted colonial régime in the years prior to Pearl Harbor.

In summary it is obvious that in the thirties a rift developed between the Army and Naval Planning Offices. The Navy did not think it could protect The Philippines against a Japanese onslaught, and therefore the U.S. Navy up to 1942 prepared a strategic retreat of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet from The Philippines, leaving the Army holed up in Bataan and Corregidor until Manila could be freed in a naval counter-offensive. The Army General Staff did not want to retreat, but knowing the Navy's position, refused to reinforce the Philippine garrison in strength, up to September 1941. These are operational differences, which did not alter or subvert the U.S.' Grand Strategy in which an attack of Japan upon The Philippines would be a casus belli, even when as a result of such attack and Japanese local superiority The Philippines might fall.

1.3.7. US Intelligence.

Most historians are aware of the U.S. Navy's cryptographic activities before Pearl-Harbor, and in the running up to the Battle of Midway. However, it has only been during the past few years that more information has become available about the Service Organisation's Intelligence-gathering activities about the countries involved in the Pacific War. The Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) however had been established prior to the First World War and they were trying to glean as much information as possible about the IJN.

There was a Far East Section in the ONI which was strongly dependent on information from the U.S. Naval Attaché in Tokyo. This attaché had a staff of 2 to 6 assistants, one of whom was a naval aviator who was appointed as assistant naval attaché. Spies were not used; valuable information was, however, obtained from private persons on a voluntary basis. In the interwar period 11 U.S. naval attaché's were stationed in Tokyo. More than half of these were naval captains. More than 60 Navy and Marine Corps Officers received language training in Japan. Notwithstanding the reputed secretiveness of the IJN, the attachés obtained much valuable intelligence about the IJN not only from open sources but also by visiting ships, dockyards and airbases and more particularly from discussions with their foreign counterparts and also with Japanese naval officers. Captain Edward H. Watson, for example, received much information in the early twenties from Captain Kichisaburo Nomura (then Director of Japanese Naval Intelligence), Captain Osami Nagano and Captain Mitsumasa Yonai. All three were later to become Admirals.

Communications Intelligence was another fruitful source of information. The Navy's

---


308 Th. G. Mahnken, Ibid., 426.
communications intelligence group was known as Op-20-G and was a section of the Naval Communications Office. This section grew in strength from seven in 1925 to 147 in January 1940.\textsuperscript{358} The Navy operated interception stations based at Oahu, Guam and Luzon and at Bar Harbor (Maine), Astoria (Oregon) and Washington DC. in the U.S. The US Marine Corps operated stations in Peking and Shanghai. Decoding offices appeared in Manila in 1932 and at Pearl Harbor in 1936. For HF/DF purposes an arc of listening stations was strung out from The Philippines via Guam to Midway and from there to Hawaii and Dutch Harbor (Alaska). Due to the great distances, American HF/DF was claimed to be less accurate than the corresponding British service, which possessed listening stations between Singapore, Hongkong and Shanghai.

Accurate information was obtained from a Japanese informant about the Type 93 long lance torpedo. The naval attaché, Lt-Cdr Henri Smith-Hutton, sent the report to ONI's Far Eastern Section on 20 April 1940. Lt-Cdr McCollum, its director, passed this information to the Bureau of Ordnance. The technical experts over there concluded that making such a weapon was impossible. In the interwar years, neither Britain nor the U.S. had mastered oxygen propulsion, so how could Japan have done it?\textsuperscript{359} This line of reasoning is a fine example of ethnocentric thinking. The fleet therefore was not warned and the long-lances were used with deadly effect during the Battles of the Java Sea and of Savo Island (8/9 August, 1942).

In the late thirties the Japanese tightened up on information. It was the time when the construction of the YAMATO Super-battleships had started. No more visits were allowed. As no human intelligence was available, it was very hard for the ONI to find out about the development of new Japanese weapons or tactics and doctrines, for example with regard to Japanese carrier air force operations. Here the factor of "mirror-imaging" came into play, with the ONI assuming that Japan's navy would fight along the same lines as the U.S. fleet did\textsuperscript{360}. The Japanese doctrine of night fighting was therefore completely missed by the ONI, as was the use of the entire carrier fleet against such objectives as Pearl Harbor. Nevertheless, in comparison to the British Naval Intelligence organisation, ONI was better informed about Japanese capabilities and the U.S. Navy did not make the error of considering that the IJN was a second-rate navy.

Not much is known about the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Division MID, and their organisation. They gathered a lot of information about colonial armies though, by conducting interviews with (business) travellers from the colonies. The MID had a fairly accurate picture of the degree of disloyalty of the NEI indigenous people, but their conclusions were angrily rejected by the Dutch Army Attaché in Washington (see below). They were also quite suspicious about the influence of pro-Nazi people within the Dutch Government and Army in the NEI who held important positions - one of the reasons that US authorities were unwilling to deliver weapons to the NEI in 1940 (see pages 101 and 148).

\textsuperscript{358} Th.G. Mahnken, ibid., 427.

\textsuperscript{359} Th.G. Mahnken, ibid., 433.

\textsuperscript{360} Th.G. Mahnken, op. cit., 438.

Up to 1916, U.S. Naval strategy was a Risk Strategy. This strategy had been developed by Admiral Von Tirpitz in Germany and was based on the assumption that a weaker nation could deter a stronger one by increasing defensive power to such a level, that if war broke out it would greatly damage the stronger force, thus making that country more vulnerable to other rival powers. Before the First World War, both the United States and Germany had pursued such a strategy in the face of uncontested British supremacy at sea\textsuperscript{381}.

From 1916 onwards, the U.S. naval building program secured American domination of the seas. It was one of the underlying reasons for the Washington Disarmament Conference, at which the Royal Navy could at least stay on a par with the U.S. Navy, thereby blocking any U.S. naval expansion for about two decades. This expansion was resumed after the signing of the Naval Expansion Act of 1940. During the twenties however, many U.S. Naval officers considered Britain a potential threat second only to Japan, and they also contemplated the possibility that England would team up with Japan against the U.S. Navy, leading to a two-ocean war. The last Naval War Plan which contemplated Great Britain as an enemy, was issued in May 1930.\textsuperscript{382} However, after the 1935 London Naval Disarmament Conference failed, Anglo-American rapprochement increased mainly thanks to the warm personal relationships established during the conference between U.S. and British Naval Officers.\textsuperscript{383}

The real enemy as the U.S. Naval Staff saw it, was therefore not Great-Britain, but Japan. Just about all plans made in the interwar years, were for an eventual showdown with the Imperial Japanese Navy.

1.4.1. War Plan ORANGE.

After the active involvement of the United States in ending the hostilities of the Russo-Japanese War which resulted in the Peace of Portsmouth in 1905, American - Japanese relations soured. The main reason was the increasing discrimination of immigrant Japanese students, workers and farmers in California. The San Francisco earthquake of April 1906 resulted in race riots against the Japanese, which in its turn gave rise to heated debate in the Japanese Press. It looked as if Japan, after having defeated Russia, was prepared to face up to the Americans. This resulted in the so-called "War Scare" between October 1906 and May 1907. During that time, the fortifications around Manila and on Oahu were manned continuously in case a surprise attack occurred. When the US Asiatic Squadron, operating from Chefoo on the Shantung Peninsula, was shadowed by a Japanese squadron, the American Admiral kept his crews at maximum readiness day and night\textsuperscript{384}. President Theodore Roosevelt even ordered the transfer of the Atlantic Fleet's 16 battleships to the Westcoast. They had to go via Cape Horn, as there was no Panama-


\textsuperscript{383} Dean C. Allard, op. cit., 42.

\textsuperscript{384} Captain W.D. Puleston: The Armed Forces of the Pacific. Yale Univ. Press, New-haven, Conn. 1942, 12.
Because of the war scare, the Joint Board started discussing plans for a war against Japan. It was established practice\textsuperscript{368} in military circles to identify each prospective enemy by a certain colour code. The United States was always blue. Germany was assigned the colour black, Great Britain red, France gold, Russia purple, Mexico green and Japan orange. The colour code for a war against the Netherlands East Indies was tan. As the war plans for a war with one of these countries were identified by the colour code, the War Plan ORANGE was therefore the war plan for a conflict between America and Japan.

The first war plans ORANGE were conceived at the Naval War College at Newport, R.I. in 1897\textsuperscript{367}. After the Spanish - American War, under the influence of Dewey who never forgot the confrontation with the German Ost-Asienflotte (East Asian Fleet) in Manila Bay in May 1898, Germany became the principal adversary\textsuperscript{368}. The subsequent War Plans BLACK assumed that a coup de main would be carried out by the Hochseeflotte (German High Seas Fleet) against Dutch Curacao which possessed an excellent harbour. A struggle for both the Caribbean and for access to the Panama Canal, which was then still under construction\textsuperscript{369}, was bound to result. This anxiety about Curacao was later to reappear in 1940 after the fall of the Netherlands. When the 1907 war scare was over, the U.S. Battlefleet was again based on the East coast, with only one squadron of armored cruisers on the West coast, and another squadron of eight armoured and eight light cruisers making up the U.S. Asiatic Fleet\textsuperscript{370}.

War Plan ORANGE was originally drawn up in case Japan was to interfere with the "Open-Door" policy the United States maintained concerning China. It soon became obvious, however, that it would take a direct Japanese attack against the Philippines or Guam to make U.S. Congress accept a casus belli. The U.S. Congress was the only institution which had the constitutional right to declare war\textsuperscript{371}.

As early as 1906, American strategy to beat Japan was based on an economic strangulation of the island empire by a maritime blockade, taking into account Japan's lack of essential raw materials for its own industry. In this War Plan, ORANGE did not deviate from an identical strangulation strategy with regard to Great Britain in War Plan RED. The same strangulation strategy was used by the Germans too against Great Britain in both

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{369} The colour code was introduced by the then Chief of Staff Adnan Chaffee. See L. Morton, Strategy, opus cit., 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{367} Michael Vlahos: "The Naval War College and the origins of war-planning against Japan" Naval War College Review, 60:4, Autumn 1988, 24.
  \item \textsuperscript{366} George W. Baer: One Hundred Years of Seapower: the U.S. Navy, 1890 - 1990". Stanford U.P., Stanford 1994, 35.
  \item \textsuperscript{370} Baer, op. cit., 41.
\end{itemize}
World Wars! In both plans, it was clear that the Americans were confident of their ability to ultimately gain control of the seas against their adversaries. Mahan’s influence in this respect is easily discernible. The only factor the American strategists (including Mahan) feared was too lengthy a war, as it was estimated that American public opinion would not tolerate such. War Plan ORANGE therefore assumed a fast campaign. It was estimated that the only way public opinion would support a long war, was if the Japanese carried out a surprise attack on American territory. It was therefore assumed that the Japanese would not be that stupid.

War Plan ORANGE explicitly excluded a land war on the Asian continent as that would take up too much time. The strategy chosen was one proposing a maritime blockade. The war would evolve in three distinct phases. In phase 1 the Japanese would use both their short lines of communications and their local superiority to quickly overrun The Philippines and Guam. An attack on Hawaii or on the U.S. West coast, however, was considered very unlikely. In phase 2, the U.S. Battle Fleet would break through the Micronesian island barrier towards The Philippines, where an advanced base was to be located. The Japanese battlefleet would be met and defeated somewhere on the march to The Philippines. In phase 3 the U.S. Battlefleet would penetrate northwards into Japanese waters, destroying the remnants of the Japanese fleet, and forcing Japan to capitulate by means of a close maritime blockade.

The great dilemma though was phase 2, which would take most time. There were three serious options to phase 2:

1. The establishment of a strong and almost impregnable naval base in The Philippines or on Guam without a permanent fleet being stationed there. The battlefleet would if necessary hasten to steam to this base from the US West coast and use the base to gain control over the Western Pacific. The English Navy had chosen this option in the interbellum with their "Main Fleet to Singapore" strategy. (See Chapter 2 on Great Britain).

2. The relief of Manila as quickly as possible by sending the battlefleet directly from the U.S. West coast. The assumption was that the Army could hold on to Manila for at least three months. If Manila were to fall within 3 months, then there would be the risk of a repeat of the disastrous expedition by the Russian battlefleet from St. Petersburg to Tsushima in 1905. The U.S. Navy did not believe that Manila could be held and consequently preferred the establishment of an advanced base as soon as the Fleet arrived in the Dumanquillas Bay on Mindanao or in the Malampaya Sound on Palawan. The option of steaming to The Philippines with a Fleet train was nicknamed the "through ticket to Manila".

3. The third option was the methodical conquest of strategic "stepping stones" both in the Japanese Mandated Islands on the way to Formosa and the Riu-Kiu Islands, where airstrips and storage depots were to be built wherever necessary. This option had one main drawback: it would take a long time - a year at least.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, option 1 of phase 2 was strongly preferred, although American Congress had decided in 1908 that Pearl Harbor would be the Pacific

---

Miller, op. cit., 29.
Fleet base, and not Manila or Guam. This option was effectively ruled out, however, first by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 which gave Micronesia to Japan and thereafter by article 19 of the Washington Five-Power Treaty of 1922, which forbade the building of bases both in The Philippines and Guam up to 1936. As was discussed on page 59, the recommendation made in 1936 by the Hepburn Commission to reinforce Guam was rejected by the isolationist Congress in 1938.

In the Twenties, option 2 was popular with the planners but increasing power projection of the airplane made this scenario more and more unrealistic. From 1934 onward, option 3 was the preferred scenario and the US Navy consequently developed tactical and logistics procedures for replenishing the battlefleet on the open sea, making the fleet less dependent on bases. It also saw the birth of the Naval Construction Battalions (CB's, pronounced "Seabees") which were able to build airstrips and facilities immediately on the islands conquered. At the same time the U.S. Marines began perfecting their doctrines concerning amphibious warfare.

As a result of Option 3, it could only be concluded that The Philippines were indefensible. The U.S. Navy thereupon gave up any idea of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet attempting a last stand in order to defend The Philippines. Admiral Hart's rapid retreat from the islands in early 1942 therefore was a pre-ordained outcome of this naval line of thought. The Army accepted it, but not without heartache. Nevertheless, the War in the Pacific proceeded according to the three-phase plan, following option 3 of phase 2. The last version of the ORANGE War Plan was completed in 1938.

The Netherlands East Indies did not figure in War Plan ORANGE at all because it was assumed that war would be only between Japan and the United States. Before the Panama-Canal was opened in 1914, the idea was to send the U.S. Battlefleet to Manila. In that via Suez in which case bunkering facilities would be necessary in the Lampang Bay in Southern Sumatra.

As a consequence of War Plan ORANGE, the U.S. Naval Staff decided to try-out the

---


"Through ticket to Manila"- plan by sending the whole battlefleet to the South Pacific following the spring manoeuvres in 1925. This caused tremendous commotion both in Japan and at the State Department which had not been notified by the Navy at all! Between 21 July and 5 August, 57 ships including 11 battleships visited Melbourne and Sydney, and later Auckland and Wellington\textsuperscript{388}, to the joy of the Australian and New-Zealand peoples.

Tuleja\textsuperscript{389} claims that, due to Roosevelt and Hull's wavering foreign policies with respect to Japan, it was impossible for the Naval Staff to develop any consistent naval strategy. This may be correct with respect to the various plans for a blockade of Japanese sealanes in peacetime, whether the Royal Navy were involved or not, but as Miller has unequivocally illustrated, the subsequent ORANGE War Plans in the interwar years provided a consistent framework for naval strategy, which in the end proved to be excellent\textsuperscript{390}. Baer, however, concedes the effectiveness of ORANGE as a mental framework but maintains that, as there was a lack of political support for ORANGE, the U.S. Navy had no strategy at all, as "a war plan is not a strategy"\textsuperscript{391}. A strategy, however, is a framework of opinion and mind, and does not in itself need political concurrence in order to be viable. In the end, due to the tenacity of the U.S. Navy and its belief in the War Plan, it got the political support it needed.

1.4.2. The RAINBOW Plans.

The Munich Agreement averted war in Europe for the time being, but the threat remained and was exacerbated by Japanese penetration into China. On 12 November 1938 the Joint Board therefore directed the Joint Planning Committee to study "the various practicable courses of action open to the military and naval forces of the United States in the event of (a) violation of the Monroe doctrine by one or more of the Fascist powers, and (b) a simultaneous attempt to expand Japanese influence in the Philippines."\textsuperscript{392}

The JPC Study\textsuperscript{393} acknowledged sundry combinations in close relation with the "Democratic Powers" (i.e. the U.S., Great Britain and France) on the one hand, and with the Aggressor Powers (Germany, Italy, Japan) on the other hand. The Soviet Union was the great unknown. The study also explicitly mentioned the possibility of a surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor\textsuperscript{394}. There was no longer any chance of a conflict between the U.S. and one enemy only, as was assumed by the Colour War Plans, but plans for coalition warfare had to be made. This resulted in the so-called RAINBOW War Plans, aptly named because of the coalitions expected. The Plans were also the first in U.S.


\textsuperscript{389} Thaddeus V. Tuleja: United States Naval Policy in the Pacific, 1930 - 1941 Fordham University, 1961.

\textsuperscript{390} Also Baer, op. cit., 127.

\textsuperscript{391} Quote in Baer, op. cit., 128.

\textsuperscript{392} Matloff and Snell, op. cit., page 5.


\textsuperscript{394} Ibid., pag. III-2.
military history which envisaged warfare on an unprecedented global scale.

It must be accepted, that the RAINBOW War Plans were assumption-based scenarios, which had to be developed as events took place. Basic premises were the degree to which the U.S. Army and Naval Forces could be projected. In that respect, it must continually be remembered that when these plans were made the U.S. Army was in such a parlous state that its force projection beyond the United States' borders was almost nil.

On 30 June 1939, the Joint Board accepted 5 possible scenarios, numbered RAINBOW 1 to 5 as a basis for further planning. Briefly, the scenarios were as follows.\textsuperscript{367}

RAINBOW 1: In this scenario, the U.S. had no allies but were confronted with all 3 possible enemies. The basic assumption was to "prevent the violation of the letter or spirit of the Monroe doctrine by protecting that territory from the Western Hemisphere from which the vital interests of the United States can be threatened, while protecting the United States, its possessions and its seaborne trade." As the U.S. Army was not yet in a position to defend the whole of the Western hemisphere, only that part north of the latitude ten degrees south was taken into consideration. Argentina and Chili therefore were outside the protected zone, as were The Philippines because the Western border of the Western Hemisphere was seen to be the line running from the Aleutian Islands to Midway and on to Samoa. Even that part of the globe could not realistically be defended by the Army, although the Navy was thought to be strong enough to form a protective shield.

RAINBOW 2: It was assumed that the U.S.A would be allied to Great Britain and France in a war against a coalition of Germany, Italy and Japan and that the Western allies had decided to concentrate their major war effort in Western Europe, leaving it to the United States to protect their interests in the Far East. The United States would therefore concentrate its contribution to the allied cause in the Far East, primarily by putting the U.S. Navy into action. The U.S. Army had to protect the Western hemisphere as in RAINBOW 1. It was presumed, that the Western Powers had allocated sufficient military land forces to compensate the lack of U.S. Army Forces in the Far East.

RAINBOW 3: This plan was like the previous one, except that it was now assumed that the Western Powers had inadequate military forces in their colonies in S.E. Asia and that U.S. Forces would take over all responsibility for the protection of the region. The problem with RAINBOW 3 was the lack of adequate U.S. ground forces due both to the parlous state of the U.S. Army, and to the thorny political issue of U.S. ground forces fighting for the Western Powers' colonies.

RAINBOW 4: Whereas RAINBOW 1 surmised the integrity of French and British defence forces in both Europe and the Far East, RAINBOW 4 far-sightedly assumed that both countries had been defeated by Axis powers and that their colonial possessions had been taken over by Japan. In this worst-case scenario, the U.S. forces had to be withdrawn to defend the Western Hemisphere. That area included the whole of South America and such islands as it was

\textsuperscript{367} National Archives, J.B. 325, serial 624, 9 April 1940. Microfilm M1421, roll 11."War Plans".
deemed necessary to possess for hemisphere defence, namely the Azores, Iceland, Bermuda and the Cape Verde Islands.

RAINBOW 5: RAINBOW 5 was also similar to RAINBOW 1 but included the assumption that the U.S. armed forces had been sufficiently expanded to "project the armed forces of the United States to the Eastern Atlantic and to either or both of the African or European continents as rapidly as possible...in order to effect the decisive defeat of Germany, or Italy, or both. This plan will assume concerted action between the United States, Great Britain and France."  

In RAINBOW 5 the issue about which of the three potential enemies should be eliminated first was addressed. That plan saw the genesis of the "Germany-First" Strategy, which was presumed in advance to be inevitable. This idea was later presented to the British in the ABC-talks in Washington. In fact, the roots of this strategy went even deeper. In the twenties, the biggest calamity which could have befallen the United States was a war against both England and Japan (the War Plan RED/ORANGE). Should that have happened, it was decided to go into the defensive in the Pacific, but at the same time to go for an all-out attack on the Atlantic front. Once the British were defeated, full forces would be concentrated against Japan.

The five scenarios were not elaborated on simultaneously. If the international situation, which kept changing, called for one plan to be elaborated, then the others languished for the moment. During the period up to the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939, work was concentrated on RAINBOW-1. Owing to the poor state of U.S. Army readiness, the U.S. Navy expanded its Marine Corps and prepared for the battle of the Pacific in a defensive way. The Plan was signed-off by the Cabinet in August 1939, and by the President in October 1939. It was the only plan to be given political approval, which is quite significant because it stipulated the loss of The Philippines, about which the President himself turned out to be very hesitant.

Between September 1939 and May 1940, detailed planning work was done on RAINBOW 2, as it matched closely the existing situation: Britain and France were at war with Germany, yet were still in firm possession of Western European territory and were in control of (North) Africa and the Mediterranean. It is not surprising therefore, that every version of RAINBOW 2 emphasized the necessity of having staff conversations with British, Dutch and French officials as soon as possible in order to co-ordinate a common defence.

Appendix 2 to Annex "A" in the Joint Army and Navy Basic War Plan RAINBOW 2 gives an interesting estimate of the armed forces of Great Britain, France and The Netherlands then stationed in S.E. Asia. According to that list, the Dutch Navy consisted of one obsolete battleship for coast defence (HNMS SOERABAJA, formerly DE ZEVEN PROVIN-CIEN), 3 light cruisers, 8 destroyers, 15 submarines and 2 seagoing gunboats. The French

---

380 Matloff and Snell, op. cit., 8.
388 Miller, op. cit., 228.
Navy was fairly powerful, consisting of 1 heavy cruiser, 2 light cruisers, 1 submarine and 6 seagoing gunboats. It was, however, the Royal Navy in combination with the Australian and New Zealand squadrons which had the largest fleet numbering 5 heavy cruisers, 9 light cruisers, 14 destroyers, and 15 submarines. The U.S. Asiatic Fleet was made up of 1 heavy and 1 light cruiser, 13 destroyers and 12 submarines, all of which, according to its commanding Admiral, were "old enough to vote" 382.

According to U.S. estimates, the Dutch had the most powerful air forces. The KNIL-ML or Dutch Army Airforce possessed 9 bombersquadrons with 81 planes, 3 pursuit squadrons with 27 planes and 3 reconnaissance squadrons with 27 planes. Combined with the 50 flying boats of the MLD this made about 185 planes altogether. The French had 5 bomber and 2 transport squadrons, totalling 70 planes, and the British had 70 obsolete planes in Malaya.

In the opinion of U.S. Intelligence officers, France prevailed in the army forces. The French had the most powerful army of the whole of S.E. Asia: about 100,000 men. Then the Dutch followed with 60,000 men, Australia with 30,000 men, Malaya, British Borneo and Hongkong roughly 20,000 and The Philippines had about 15,000 men. The estimates were basically correct. They also give us an indication of the loss to the western world, caused by the "neutralisation" of French forces against Japan due to the French colonial administration's adherence to the Vichy-regime.

It must be remembered, that the comparisons given above only show one side of the complex equation of military potential; being specifically the fighting power. In addition to this physical component of military prowess, there are also the conceptual components such as military culture, the doctrines and procedures and the mental elements which control morale, motivation, effective leadership and adaptive and learning organisation. It was by no means the latter two features that the allied armed forces lacked when compared to their Japanese adversary.

RAINBOW 2 was, in effect, the American version of the British "Main Fleet to Singapore" strategy. At the end of November, 1939 Admiral J.O. Richardson, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, intervened in the planning because he didn't agree with the dislocation of his battlefleet in S.E. Asia, which could have left the Hawaiian Islands and the U.S. Westcoast vulnerable against marauding Japanese cruiser squadrons. Splitting up the battlefleet into two squadrons went against the Mahanian principle of concentration of force. As is seen in Chapter 2 on Great Britain, the British navalists despised such a split in the main battlefleet just as fervently. It was thereupon decided to keep the battlefleet intact on the U.S. Westcoast, but to have the troop convoys to the Far East escorted by fast Task Forces of cruisers and aircraft carriers. This kind of Task Forces had been tried out in a number of previous Fleet Problems.

The last version of RAINBOW 2, dated April 1940, consequently assumed that Surabaya was the "Main Forward Base", with a methodical counter-offensive to recapture the Borneo oilfields along the Macassar Strait. This would form the main axis for the liberation of The Philippines, leaving the British in Singapore to fend for themselves 383.

382 Baer, op. cit., 156, note 24.
383 Miller, op. cit., 260.
When the Germans overran the Low Countries, the bottom fell out of RAINBOW 2. So work started on RAINBOW 3, which assumed that the Western countries were unable to defend their colonies in S.E. Asia themselves. In RAINBOW 3 the defence of the Dutch oilfields in Borneo received high priority. It was assumed that both Singapore and Java would be able to keep the Japanese out for up to 90 days. During that time, only a small fraction of the U.S. Pacific Fleet would be sent to the NEI: the aircraft carrier USS YORKTOWN, 4 heavy cruisers and 9 destroyers. Admiral Hart\textsuperscript{394}, commander of the US Asiatic Fleet, was informed about this planned move\textsuperscript{395}. He replied that it would really be better to send this task force to Surabaya or Singapore but definitely not to Manila\textsuperscript{396}. In the opinion of the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, therefore, it would be impossible to defend the Philippines against a Japanese attack, even with the aid of this additional squadron. After 16 January, 1941 the whole plan was however shelved when Roosevelt vetoed all reinforcements of the US Asiatic Fleet. He knew this would run counter to the "Germany First"-strategy, which had been adopted in the meantime. (See next sub-chapter).

In November 1940, Admiral Hart stated in a very interesting appreciation\textsuperscript{397} of the military and naval situation in the Far East, that of all the prospective allies in that part of the world, the Dutch had the largest army and Air Forces, and that the French could no longer be considered prospective allies against Japan. Based on the Dutch refusal to join the British-Australian staff talks in Singapore in October 1940,(see Chapter 2), Hart doubted Dutch willingness to defend themselves, should the Japanese indeed attack. In the best case, they would destroy their oil sources. In his opinion, Dutch involvement in staff talks might even have amounted to a security risk. It is clear, that Admiral Hart held little regard for the whole Dutch defence establishment.

The fall of France in June 1940 radically changed again the strategic picture. The JPC informed Roosevelt that England was lost\textsuperscript{398}, and the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) advised to assist the British in the evacuation of (part of) their population to Canada. General Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff, asked his planning staff whether it was time to halt all shipments of weapons and ammunition to Great Britain as these would fall into German hands and the US Army was starved of these goods\textsuperscript{399}. There was also great anxiety about the French Fleet falling into German hands, as France was reckoned to have the fourth largest navy in the world. This illustrates in particular the way the U.S. Navy was focussed on battleships. The Americans didn't resume the export of armaments to Great Britain until the British war leader had shown his mettle by ordering the destruction of the

\textsuperscript{394} For a biography of Admiral Hart, see James Leutze: \textit{A different kind of Victory - a biography of Admiral Thomas C. Hart}. US Naval Institute, Annapolis 1981.

\textsuperscript{395} Letter Admiral Richardson to Admiral Hart, 16 October 1940. File Bc-16/8 AMH The Hague.

\textsuperscript{396} Miller, op. cit., 263.

\textsuperscript{397} Letter Admiral Th. Hart to CNO Admiral H. Stark, 13 November 1940. FRUS, IV (1940), 208 - 211.

\textsuperscript{398} Miller, op. cit., 231.

\textsuperscript{399} L. Morton, \textit{Strategy}, op. cit., 76.
French Fleet at Mers-el-Khebir on 3 July 1940.400

In such a doomsday environment, War Plan RAINBOW 4 was hastily worked on. It was the "Fortress America" concept: the whole of the Eastern Hemisphere would be under the influence of the dictators and the Japanese; England and France would be prostrate. The Navy would defend a line from Unalaska via Midway through Samoa to French Polynesia and try to keep the East coast and the Caribbean free from German and/or Italian encroachment. It looked as if the entire Far East, including Australia and The Philippines, would have to be abandoned. Reluctantly, Roosevelt signed the plan in August 1940. The U.S. Navy expedited Rear-Admiral Robert L. Ghormley to London as a "Naval Observer" and also Raymond E. Lee, U.S. Army Major-General, to report on if and when the English were likely to be beaten by the Germans. Both were to become very impressed by England's sheer determination and by their victory in the Battle of Britain.401

When it became clear that Great Britain would survive the German onslaught right up to the beginning of 1941, the existing War Plan RAINBOW 2 was further elaborated upon. RAINBOW 2 was an important plan with regard to the Netherlands East Indies because the archipelago played a crucial role in it. One of the nightmares of the American planners was that Japan would occupy the Netherlands East Indies while simultaneously respecting Philippine integrity. According to Miller, "The Navy (Planning) Section under (Captain Charles M.) Cooke agreed, that the loss of the Indies would so endanger the Philippines, as to constitute a casus belli.402

Such a Japanese occupation would also neutralize Singapore because of the then well-established Japanese air supremacy. Cooke foresaw that in those circumstances, Singapore might have to be relieved by the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which in order to save time, had to be sent around the Japanese Mandated Islands from Hawaii to Palmyra and the Christmas-Islands, to Canton and Hull Islands, through Suva, Noumea, Darwin and at last Surabaya.403

Should all this happen, the Planners foresaw an impending problem which would be created due to the lack of existing bases which were spacious enough to accommodate battleships east of Singapore. According to Miller: "Cooke devoutly hoped it [the American battlefleet] would fetch up at Singapore, because the Dutch ports of Java were none too promising: Surabaya's dock-yard, though well-guarded, was so shallow that the capital ships would have to anchor at a bay a hundred miles away. Batavia was small and ill-defended, and other anchorages were virtually undeveloped.404 Just as in the case of War Plan ORANGE in The Philippines, the American Planners foresaw the necessity to develop an advance base, which was tentatively situated near Kendari in the Staring Bay in S.E. Celebes.


402 Miller, op. cit., 256.

403 Matloff & Snell, op. cit., 10.

404 Miller, op. cit., 257.
The Dutch were well aware of this American dilemma and started to deepen the so-called Westervaarwater, the western approach from the Java-sea to Surabaya. Two years after the RAINBOW 2 plan was drawn up, the Dutch Governor-General was able to inform his Government in London that the Westervaarwater was at least 8 metres deep, and therefore could accommodate battleships of the (British) REVENGE-Class. Bosscher even stated that at about that time (the end of 1941) Surabaya was the best-equipped naval base in the whole of S.E. Asia.

The Navy was becoming the most important player in RAINBOW 2, but the U.S. Army was also involved. Army plans foresaw the reinforcement of the Malay Barrier by 3 divisions in 20 days after M-day (Mobilisation Day), with an additional 3 Divisions at M+90 days. The troop convoys would sail from Hawaii via Suva (Fiji islands), through the Torres Straits to Darwin and thence from Java to Singapore. After the relief of Singapore, the next objectives would be Brunei Bay in Northern Borneo and Cam-Ranh bay in Indochina, after which the relief or re-conquest of Manila could commence. It was assumed, that in the face of a determined Japanese assault, the southern part of the Malay Barrier at least would be retained: this meant specifically the line from Sumatra via Southern Borneo and Southern Celebes to Java and the small Sunda Islands. Should the whole archipelago fall into Japanese hands, it would then, according to Cooke, take an additional two years to accomplish victory over Japan.

1.4.3. The "Germany-First" Strategy.

The autumn of 1940 saw a momentous change in American strategic thinking. For over thirty years, the American Navy had given plans to defeat Japan - the ORANGE War Plans - first priority. At the end of 1940, however, Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, changed his mind. Why he did so, remains a mystery. Morton suggests that he was influenced by Rear-Admiral Ghormley, Deputy Chief of Operations, after his return from London. Doyle points to the Tripartite Pact of September 1940, in which the Japanese linked their war in China to the European war scene. Baer maintains that Stark was sick of Roosevelt's political vacillation, and wanted clarity about which strategy Roosevelt really would approve. Miller, however, argues, that it was Rear-Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, the new Director of War Plans, who influenced Stark. "Terrible Turner" was a strong character who, immediately after his appointment, removed Captain Cooke, the architect of RAINBOW 3, who then became captain of the battleship USS PENNSYLVANIA. Whatever or whoever was the instigator of the above, on 12 November 1940, Admiral Stark presented a few war scenarios to the President in a

---

408 Miller, op. cit., 259.
409 L. Morton, Strategy, 81.
411 George W. Baer, article quoted., 18, book 154.
412 Miller, op. cit., 269 - 271
strategic memorandum about the coming war. Morton has called this Memorandum "perhaps the most important single document in the development of World War II Strategy". In his scenario-D (Plan-DOG in Navy parlance), the strategy was one of defeating the enemy with the highest potential for mischief first. This was clearly Germany - an appraisal not without racial undertones. It was the strategy of beating Germany first which Stark recommended to Roosevelt. This strategy's roots can, however, be found in the pre-war RED/ORANGE War Plans and in War Plan BLACK in the period 1903 - 1914. Once Plan-DOG got the approval of General Marshall and later of Roosevelt, Turner started to work it out in the context of War Plan RAINBOW 5.

RAINBOW 5 was the one War Plan which eventually became the cornerstone of U.S. war strategy in World War II but also the foundation of U.S. victory in that war. It is also the plan which condemned S.E. Asia to a far lower priority, resulting in an almost certain loss of this area to the Japanese in any future conflict. The threat of losing The Philippines as foreseen in RAINBOW 5 was a vexing political problem to the President, and reason enough for him not to sign off the Plan when it was ready in June 1941 but to ask the Joint Board to actualize it the moment war with Japan was imminent. Unknown to the Dutch, the shelving of the RAINBOW 2/3 War Plans had fatal consequences for their position in S.E. Asia. Those Plans included the defence of the Dutch oilfields or rather the denial of the use of these oilfields by the Japanese was very important, but in RAINBOW 5 even that priority was not recognized as such. To the British, it was to become obvious that the Americans had no further interest in Singapore.

RAINBOW 5 with respect to S.E. Asia was a strictly defensive plan. The first step was to beat the Germans before the Americans would turn to the Far East again. The flow of reinforcements to S.E. Asia was even temporarily halted as a result. On 17 December 1940, Stark cancelled the latest ORANGE War Plan and on 16 January 1941 President Roosevelt announced to his inner circle of decision-makers a total ban on any further U.S. Asiatic Fleet reinforcements. However, staff talks with British and Dutch naval and army representatives were still pursued by the Navy department, and started in earnest with the Dutch in January 1941. It was unfortunate that the Dutch participants at these conferences had not been informed of the momentous change in American strategy regarding the integrity of their island empire.

On 29 January 1941 a very important series of top secret staff meetings started in Washington between representatives of the Chiefs of Staff of the U.S.A., Great Britain and Canada. This became known as the ABC-Conference. The last meeting was on 26 March, 1941. Those very important talks took place under the guise of being political non-binding, informal exchanges of opinion between defence representatives of a belligerent and of a neutral nation. The same formula was later applied to the so-called Singapore Staff Conferences which took place between the USA, England, Australia and the Dutch. (See Chapter 2).

Under Rear-Admiral Turner the Americans presented their "Germany-First strategy" for the first time. The British were in full agreement, but objected to the American abandonment of the Far East, which would also mean the loss of Australia and New Zealand. The British

---


even offered Singapore to the Americans, and actually informed them that no main (British) fleet would come to Singapore. The Americans on the other hand were surprised by the way the British blatantly underestimated both the Japanese in general and Japanese air power in particular. According to Miller:

"The Royal Navy had no fear of Japanese aviation - it operated from Alexandria and other places within range of hostile airfields, and surely Japanese airmen were inferior to the Italians!"

The Americans disliked Singapore as a naval base because it could be easily neutralised from the air by Japan conquering the undefended airfields nearby it on Dutch territory in Sumatra and Borneo. American officers definitely did not underestimate Japanese air power. The real reason, however, was American reluctance to defend British colonial possessions. So, the British and Americans both agreed to disagree on the issue of Singapore's defence. It was decided though to reinforce the U.S. Atlantic Fleet with elements of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, making it possible for the British to send fleet reinforcements from the Mediterranean to the Far East.

In accordance with this agreement, the U.S. Navy ordered Pacific Fleet units to transfer to the Atlantic Ocean - resulting in a loss of about a quarter of its strength; a loss which was far greater than the losses inflicted by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor! The Japanese drew their own conclusions from the apparent weakening of the U.S. Pacific Fleet: quite unexpectedly in July 1941 they took over and occupied Southern Indo-China.

As implementation of the "Germany-First" strategy, 3 modern battleships, 1 aircraft carrier, 4 light cruisers and 36 modern destroyers were transferred from the Pacific to the Atlantic in May and June 1941. The destroyers were immediately engaged in convoy protection in the North Atlantic Ocean, and in line with the "Germany-First" strategy a very tense situation developed in the Western Atlantic once the U.S. had decided to occupy Iceland. The supposedly neutral U.S. warships chased German U-boats away from British and American freighter convoys, to the dismay of German High Command.

This resulted in undeclared war starting between the United States Navy and the German U-boats. The North-Atlantic battlefield has received very little attention from historians since Pearl Harbor, but most American naval officers at that time expected the Germans to declare war before the end of the year. In their view, there was a much smaller chance of Japan doing so. It was, however, Hitler, who constrained his U-boat commanders and avoided a show-down with the United States. The first large operational loss by the U.S. Navy, however, took place in the Atlantic when the destroyer REUBEN JAMES was torpedoed on 31 October 1941. In November, a German freighter was even intercepted by the American light cruiser OMAHA, causing a diplomatic incident.

Miller has rightly pointed out, that in the course of 1941, the U.S. Plans, including RAINBOW 5, became totally unrealistic. According to the ABC Conference, moving the American fleet to the Atlantic would free considerable elements of the British Mediterranean-

---

44 Miller, op. cit., 265.


an Fleet for the Far East. Churchill's decision to intervene in Greece and the consequent enormous losses the Royal Navy suffered in the Eastern Mediterranean in May and June 1941, however, made these plans completely illusory. This meant that one of the fundamental goals of the allied strategy, namely the denial of the Dutch oilfields to the Japanese, became unhinged.

1.4.4. The ultimate deterrent: the US Pacific Fleet.

With the rejection of Singapore as an operating base, combined with the lack of any well-equipped naval base either in The Philippines, in the Netherlands East Indies or in Guam, the U.S. Navy was left with hardly any chance of acting as a protector for S.E. Asia. Based in Hawaii though, it still acted as a deterrent for the Japanese Fleet, having just as many battleships in its Pacific Fleet as the Japanese Fleet had in theirs.

The reason for basing the Fleet in Hawaii was a political one. After the fall of The Netherlands in May 1940, President Roosevelt decided to keep the Fleet in Pearl Harbor once the Fleet Problem manoeuvres had been concluded. (see page 42) This was meant to be a clear signal to Japan to stay out of the Indies. For the time being, however, it worked, because the Japanese Government decided thereupon to send an "Economic Mission" to Batavia by a Japanese liner, instead of on board of one of their battleships (see Chapter 6 on Japan).

Admiral J.O. Richardson, Commander of the Pacific Fleet, was not at all happy about this decision for logistical reasons. He wrote a letter to his superior, the CNO Admiral Harold Stark, who replied that the decision had been based on political considerations. Stark posed the question in his letter418: "What to do when the Japs move into the Netherlands East Indies?" The revealing answer which he gave himself was: "I don't know and I think there is nobody on God's green earth who can tell you". It was this lack of political direction from the President, which may have driven him to his Plan-DOG later in the year.

Of course, at the ABC-Conference in Washington, the British enquired whether the American battleships would remain anchored at Pearl Harbor. Rear-Adm. Turner answered that "the Pacific Fleet was drawing properly ferocious plans"419. And indeed the RAINBOW 5 plan clearly stated: "the Pacific Fleet to act offensively in the manner best calculated to weaken Japanese economic power, and to support the defense of the Malay Barrier". The tactical planning necessary in order to execute this statement was, however, left to U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander and his Staff. On 1 February 1941 Richardson, who had fallen out of grace with Roosevelt, was replaced by Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, who then bore the responsibility for the employment of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Kimmel and his staff thought it was too dangerous to attack the Japanese homeland in force at the outbreak of war. They feared the superiority the Japanese had in the air near their islands. The last ORANGE Plan of 1939 was still based on a break-through into Micronesia, occupying the island of Truk in Micronesia on day M+360, about one year after the outbreak of war. The American planners understood that the Japanese Mandated Islands were heavily fortified, which in fact was quite untrue, as the Japanese belatedly

418 Letter Stark to Richardson, 27 May 1940, File Bc 16/10, AMH The Hague.

419 Miller, op. cit., 287.
started fortifying these islands at the end of 1940. One source suggests that the Office of Naval Intelligence ONI at least was aware of these belated reinforcement efforts.

In order to update their information on certain key Micronesian Islands such as Truk, Ponape and Jaluit, the Navy contacted the Army Airforce, which possessed the long-range bombers. The AAF committed two B-24 Liberators to carry out an armed overflight of these islands in late November 1941. However, due not only to the weather but also mechanical failures, the two 88th AAF Reconnaissance Squadron planes never left California.

To attract the Japanese battlefleet away from Japan proper, Kimmel decided to use the little island of Wake as a decoy. He suspected that the Japanese would occupy Guam soon after the outbreak of war and he thought it was probable that they would also direct a small landing detachment to go with part of the battlefleet to Wake. His own plan WPPac-46 (War Plan Pacific) was consequently to send a fast cruiser squadron out to the Ryukyu Islands in the hope of intercepting southbound Japanese convoys and to use his aircraft carriers to attack the Carolines. Meanwhile, the battlefleet with all nine battleships would depart to a point on the intersection of the lines from Wake to Hawaii and from Midway to the Marshall Islands. This "Point Tare" was within range of the Catalina reconnaissance flights from Wake, Midway and Johnston Island. The U.S. battlefleet was to stay there for 4 to 6 weeks to await the arrival of that part of the Japanese battlefleet which the Japanese would surely send as a reaction to the way the Americans had provoked them on the Ryukyu Islands and on the Carolina Islands. As part of the Japanese battlefleet was bound to be used against Singapore, Kimmel expected to gain local superiority near Wake.

Miller points out the similarity between this plan and the one Admiral Spruance made prior to the Battle of Midway. The Americans again used a small island, which the Japanese had planned to occupy, as a lure (in this case Midway), with their striking force ready near "Point Lucky" to the North-East of Midway. He also implies that after the disaster at Pearl Harbor nobody was interested in Plan WPPac-46 anymore. After the sinking of the PRINCE OF WALES and the REPULSE it had become clear, that the older American battleships at sea would not have stood a chance against the deadly Japanese Naval Air Arm which also happened to hold superiority in their number of aircraft carriers (10 against 31).

Rear-Admiral Ramsey's analysis of the situation is very sobering. He explored seven different scenarios based on the Japanese fleet which attacked Pearl Harbor being detected sooner or later. In each scenario in which the American battlefleet was to weigh anchor in order to interdict the Japanese fleet, more battleships were lost than were

---

423 Miller, op. cit. 305.
actually sunk at Pearl Harbor. The reason for this was Japanese superiority in number of aircraft carriers, and therefore also in number of planes. A battle near Wake would surely have meant that more U.S. battleships would have been lost than were actually sunk in the shallow waters of Pearl Harbor. Miller makes it plausible, however, for the U.S. Pacific Fleet to have steamed away in the direction of Wake within a few days after the outbreak of war. Admiral Kimmel would have been on the bridge of his flagship looking forward to totally destroying his adversary in a battle like Tsushima. Miller concludes: "Thirty-five years of ORANGE War Planning had indoctrinated the U.S. Navy to a mission of instantaneous attack."425

The Japanese did actually consider the U.S. Pacific Fleet a deterrent. They did not dare attack to the South without the latent danger at their flanks being removed. Admiral Yamamoto therefore decided to eliminate the deterrent by attacking it head-on.

The attack on Pearl Harbor resulted in the demise of War Plan RAINBOW 5. The hate and the vengeance it caused, made it impossible for Roosevelt and the military to pursue RAINBOW 5 any longer. It was inconceivable that the Japanese would be able to run amuck in the Far East until the Germans were beaten. The inspiring defence of Bataan and Corregidor, where the Americans capitulated as the last of the three Western Powers to do so (on 6 May 1942), made MacArthur a living legend. The re-armament programme and the U.S. industry's enormous production capacity made it unnecessary to concentrate on only one enemy at a time. While the Army was concentrating on the war in Europe, the Navy with its Marines and also elements from the Army and the Army Air Force fought their own war with the Japanese. As the European allies in the Far East disappeared so quickly, war war became more and more the war envisaged in the ORANGE War Plans: the U.S. Navy's titanic struggle against Japan.

1.5. Dutch - American Relations.

1.5.1. Introduction.

As noted in the previous pages, the future of the NEI was of particular interest to U.S. policy makers. It was both the weakness of the NEI defences and Japan's rising ambitions to include this region in their "Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere", that made the State Department manoeuvre so carefully. The fact that the U.S. also lacked the military and naval means to interfere directly in S.E. Asia also had to be taken into account. The late rearmament of the Philippines by the U.S. Army, coupled with the U.S. Navy's unwillingness to sacrifice the U.S. Asiatic Fleet in Philippine waters demonstrate the case in point. In this subchapter therefore the Dutch-American relations in the interwar period will be explored.

The Dutch of course played an important role in American history, once they had established a colony in the Hudson Valley in the 17th century, from which present-day New York has developed. Originally it was called New Amsterdam (Nieuw-Amsterdam). The Dutch, having always been keen traders, were also the first West European power to recognize

425 Miller, op. cit., 311.

Ever since the birth of the United States, trade has been very important in relations with the rich island empire in S.E. Asia under Dutch control. As was shown on page 24, American traders did brisk business with the islanders in the eighteenth century. Following trade liberalization in the NEI in 1870, American shares in exports and imports rose steadily. The relative importance of the area to U.S. trade can best be measured in terms of the value of exports and imports in millions of dollars in 1940.\footnote{Rupert Emerson: \textit{The Netherlands Indies and the United States} World Peace Foundation, Boston 1942, 42.}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
Country & Imports from USA & Exports to USA \\
\hline
Japan & 227,204 & 158,376 \\
Philippines & 93,335 & 89,670 \\
China & 77,956 & 93,001 \\
Netherlands indies & 53,761 & 169,080 \\
Hongkong & 17,837 & 3,193 \\
Malaya & 15,630 & 268,331 \\
French Indochina & 6,019 & 13,090 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Note the dominant place Malaya held, exporting rubber and tin specifically to the United States, explaining the importance of Malaya in the British war effort and enabling American weapons and food to be paid for. Actually the NEI also exported more to the United States than did either Japan or China. The NEI was also a net exporter to the United States, resulting in a positive trade balance in terms of dollar reserves, so that the NEI Government was able to pay cash for all its weapons purchases in the U.S.

For a large part, this positive balance for the NEI was also due to the export of rubber and tin. In 1940 the respective values of these exports were $112 million for rubber and $12,9 million for tin. These figures must, however, be corrected for the export of rubber and tin from the NEI to Singapore and thence to the United States, making the actual share far higher. More than 95% of America's imports of both rubber and tin imports in 1940 came from S.E. Asia.

1.5.2. The 1922 Washington Nine-Power Treaty.

An important diplomatic accomplishment for the Dutch was the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference between 11 November 1921 and 6 February 1922. The Dutch were not invited to this conference but after some pressure on their side, they received an invitation to the second part of the Conference, on the subject of "Pacific and Far Eastern Questions". The first part had dealt with naval disarmament and was only meant for countries with a sizeable battlefleet which the Dutch did not have. They did however
possess an important colony in the Netherlands East Indies, which gave them an entrance ticket.\footnote{N.A. Bootsma: “Nederland op de conferentie van Washington, 1921 - 1922”. Bijdragen en Mededelingen betr. Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, 93:1 (1978) 102 - 103, 106 - 107.}

The Dutch delegation was headed by H.A. Van Karnebeek, Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs. One of the secretaries of the Dutch delegation was squire Tjarda Van Starkenborgh Stachouwer, who later became Governor-General of the NEI. Van Karnebeek was an Eurasian from his mother’s side and a typical scion of the Dutch ruling elite: intelligent, hardworking, competent, but also pompous, self-satisfied, holding a provincial view of the outside world, as did almost all important Dutch politicians of the interbellum. However, he is considered to be one of the best 20th Century Dutch Foreign Ministers. For him, the confrontation with great power politics was therefore a sobering thought, as is made clear from his letters from Washington\footnote{Bootsma, op. cit., 116.}. It was not easy for the proud Dutch to have to realise that they were considered to be only a third-rate power, being excluded therefore from the important Four Power Treaty, as no one expected any aggressive behaviour from The Netherlands\footnote{Letter Van Karnebeek to De Marees van Swinderen, Minister in London, 14 February 1922, nr 2866/75, in Secret Archives MinBuZa, London Archives BK 1a(13), box 136.}.

For the Dutch, there was the clear danger, that the four powers had each agreed to guarantee the integrity of the other’s insular possessions but excluded those of The Netherlands. Moreover, because the Five Power Treaty forbade the fortification of The Philippines, its potential as a protective shield against Japanese aggression was considerably reduced. On the other hand, Article 2 of the Four Power Treaty said that an arbitration mechanism had to be set up in case one of the signatories went astray. This was incompatible with Dutch neutrality. A compromise was possible, however, when it was suggested that each of the Four Power Treaty signatories should guarantee the integrity of the Dutch possessions in separate but identical notes. England only agreed to this formula if the other three Powers agreed to guarantee Portuguese possessions in S.E. Asia. Once this hurdle was taken, the American, British, French and Japanese envoys in The Hague presented the Dutch Government with four identical notes on 6 February 1922.

The single sentence, which was most important for the Netherlands, was the following one in the Japanese note: “The Netherlands not being a signatory to the said treaty [e.g. the Four Power Treaty] and the Netherlands possessions in the region of the Pacific Ocean therefore not being included in the agreement referred to, the Japanese Government anxious to forestall any conclusion contrary to the spirit of the treaty, desires to declare that it is firmly resolved to respect the rights of The Netherlands in relation to their insular possessions in the region of the Pacific Ocean”.\footnote{Appendix to Letter of Van Karnebeek to De Marees van Swinderen, 14 February 1922, as above.} It was a sentence, which was to be recalled many times in the late thirties...

The Dutch received another windfall from their presence in Washington. During the discussions about naval disarmament, the English delegation introduced a proposal for a total ban of the submarine. As this was a cheap and defensive weapon suitable for small navies specifically, the Dutch disagreed even though they did not actually take part in the disarmament conference itself. The Dutch position on the need to retain submarines in
order to be able to defend the NEI was discussed with the English delegation who were headed by David Lloyd George, Prime Minister, and Arthur Lee of Fareham, First Lord of the Admiralty. It was repeated a few times in talks with members of the Dutch delegation several times that the NEI were of such importance to the English Empire that Great Britain would never allow another power to grab the Indies. The British Navy would then intervene, regardless even of the Dutch eventually consenting\textsuperscript{42}. It was this secret assurance which would result in the 1927 Dutch defence foundations, in which it was explicitly assumed that, should outside aggression occur, an outside power would interfere on behalf of The Netherlands.

However, as Bootsma\textsuperscript{43} has rightly pointed out, the Washington Treaties were in fact more positive towards Japan than they were to the colonial powers, including the United States. The Five Power Treaty in particular guaranteed Japan dominance over the Western Pacific by excluding naval bases in Hongkong, in The Philippines and in Guam. Singapore then became the only anchor to preserve Dutch and British security. As British seapower in the interwar years steadily crumbled, the Dutch became more and more vulnerable without realising this as such.

After returning from Washington, the Dutch delegation was able to claim victory. They had obtained a Four Power guarantee for the NEI, which was not limited in time (The Four Power Treaty had a ten-year limit). No Dutch obligations were included in this guarantee, yet it was to remain valid, even if the Four Power Treaty were to be rejected by the U.S. Senate (as it had done with the League of Nations legislative proposal). There was consequently reason for the Dutch to start rejoicing on a remarkable diplomatic feat.

1.5.3. Interwar contacts.

It seems that in the interbellum, relations between the two avowedly neutral states, namely the United States and The Netherlands, would have been be smooth. This however was not always the case. From the naval side there were some un-nerving incidents. In 1921 Vice-Admiral W.J.G. Umbgrove, the Dutch naval commander in the NEI, was approached by both the American Consul-General in Singapore and by Chas Hoover, the American Consul in Batavia, with questions about Dutch naval strength. The reason for these enquiries was the conviction both held, that, at some time in the future, war with Japan was inevitable, and the Dutch would then have to co-operate with the Americans anyway. Fock, the Governor-General, instructed Umbgrove not to pay any attention to this American approach, and informed his Government\textsuperscript{44}.

Leonard Wood, the American Governor of The Philippines, paid an official visit to Fock at the end of 1923. Governor-General Fock thereupon visited Wood at Manila in April 1924.\textsuperscript{45} Wood told Fock, that he was convinced that a war between Japan and the Western Colonial Powers was inevitable in the near future and urged on Fock to agree to

\textsuperscript{42} Letters Van Kamebeeck to Ruysch de Beerenbrouck, 21 and 22 November 1921, DBPN, Period A, Vol.III, doc. nrs 66 and 68A.

\textsuperscript{43} N.A. Bootsma, op. cit., 126.

\textsuperscript{44} ARA, archives of the Dutch Colonial department, box 231, file Y-16.

\textsuperscript{45} For Fock's official report on his visit, see DBPN, 1919 - 1930, Vol. IV, no 354.
regular consultations with all the Governors of Western colonies in S.E. Asia in order to prepare for such a war between the white and the yellow race.\textsuperscript{436}

The U.S. Navy paid little attention to relations with the Dutch Navy, in contrast to the Royal Navy. There were also only very few warship visits, during which, however, the Dutch naval officers concerned reported a fairly lukewarm reception by their American counterparts. In 1927, when the U.S. destroyer WHIPPET was visiting Amsterdam, she was inspected by First Lt. F. Bussemaker\textsuperscript{437}. The heavy cruiser USS HOUSTON sailed into Rotterdam in September 1930.\textsuperscript{438} In 1937 the U.S. destroyer WINSLOW called at Amsterdam and was inspected by two future flag officers, A.S. Pinke and J. van Foreest. They both reported that "it seemed the aim of the crew of the WINSLOW to show us nothing of any importance".\textsuperscript{439}

The same attitude was displayed by American naval officers when Dutch warships visited the United States. In 1937, when Cdr C.J. van Waning, commandant of a visiting Dutch submarine, the O-16, paid a visit to the Director of the ONI in Washington, he was told that, should Japan attack, the U.S. would not defend The Philippines, let alone the NEI. The information, which was correct, of course, was also quite a shock to the Dutch\textsuperscript{440}.

The increasingly threatening Japanese attitude resulted in some highly secret contacts between the small American military establishment in Manila and the larger Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL). Using the same formula as had been approved by the Governor General for high-level but secret contacts between KNIL GHQ and Malaya Command and the British-Indian Army, (See Chapter 2 on Great Britain) a secret contact was established between KNIL-HQ and Manila HQ. There are, however, only a few tantalizing traces of these contacts. One is a letter from General Berenschot, KNIL Commander in Chief, to Dr. W. Huender, Consul-General in Manila, cancelling the visit by a Dutch officer to U.S. Army Manila HQ due to the international situation\textsuperscript{441}.

Civil relations between the NEI Government and the U.S. were also not always harmonious. Reference is made to the Jambi affair in 1921 about alleged Dutch discrimination of an American oil company. Efforts by the Royal Netherlands Indies Airline Company, one of national airline Royal Dutch Airline (KLM), to obtain landing permits for an airline between Batavia and Manila, were blocked by the State Department, due to fears of losses for Pan-

\textsuperscript{436} J. Woltring: \textit{De onafhankelijkheid van de Filippijnen en de Nederlandse positie in de Pacific (1923 - 1924)}. Jaarboek Buitenlandse Zaken 1984 - 1985, 176.

\textsuperscript{437} Report of visit to US Destroyer WHIPPET, 7 October 1927. ARA Archives Department of the Navy, Chief of Naval Staff, inv. nr. 2.12.18, file nr 144.

\textsuperscript{438} Report of visit by unnamed Dutch officer on 25 September 1930. As above, nr 58/1/1.

\textsuperscript{439} Report visit US Destroyer WINSLOW, 31 May 1937. As above.


\textsuperscript{441} Letter Berenschot to Huender, 6 September 1939. ARA, archives Department of Colonies, Box 564, file 29/9/1939 A-40.
American Airlines and their profitable Clipper services from Manila. It would be March 1941, before the air service between Batavia and Manila was opened.

Another controversial chapter in trade relations between the two countries was the monopolization of rubber production by both the Dutch and the British Governments by means of the so-called International Rubber Restriction. As 80% of rubber production was in Dutch and British hands, they could set international prices, to the dislike of the U.S. For reasons of state (the British wanted to stay friends with the Americans) they withdrew from the International Rubber Restriction in April 1939, although the Dutch stuck to it until 1941. It did not help the Dutch Government in its efforts to obtain American weapons in 1940/41, and as such it was a self-defeating measure.

1.5.4. Shared Neutrality: May 1940 - July 1941.

1.5.4.1. The US Navy and Dutch Neutrality.

The rapid disintegration of Allied forces in Western Europe in May and June 1940 really shocked the Americans. In the meantime the War Plans Division of the U.S. Navy worked on the RAINBOW 3 War Plan. It is not surprising therefore, that early in June 1940 the U.S. Government contacted its Dutch counterpart to ask if it would be possible to assign a number of U.S. naval officers to the Batavia HQ of the Dutch Navy in order to learn the Dutch language. The initiative was taken by the U.S. Government, who were officially neutral, but it was clear that the U.S. Navy wanted some observers in place, in case the Japanese caused trouble. The Dutch Governor General (G.G.) however was intent on at least keeping the NEI administration aloof and strictly neutral, and he vetoed the suggestion, which could have resulted in much closer Dutch-American naval cooperation.

On almost the same date, as the Dutch in Europe capitulated to the Germans, the Japanese Minister in The Hague informed the remaining members of the Dutch Government that the Japanese wanted trade concessions. This request was again forced on the Government-in-exile in London in June 1940. The American Ambassador in London informed his Government about this, adding as a warning that if the Pacific Fleet were to leave for the Atlantic, the British Government was afraid that the Japanese would occupy the NEI forthwith.

In October 1940, the U.S. Navy increased pressure on the Dutch. The Dutch Naval attaché

---

44 For Dutch-U.S. correspondence on this matter see also Secret Archives MinBuZa, archives London Legation, inv.nr. 2807.


46 Letter Management Board KNILM to Department of Traffic, Batavia 4 November 1941. ARA Archives, Dept of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 110. For an overview of commercial airlines in the Pacific (with map) see Grayson Kirk: "Wings over the Pacific" Foreign Affairs, 20 (April 1942), 293 - 302.

47 For Dutch-U.S. correspondence on this matter see also Secret Archives MinBuZa, archives London Legation, inv.nr. 2807.
warned the Navy Minister that Admiral Stark, American CNO, wanted to assign a number of naval observers to Dutch and British harbours in S.E. Asia. The naval attaché had informed Stark that this might act as a precedent to Japan which might want to station naval observers in the NEI too, but Stark had answered that the time for setting precedents had definitely passed as Japan had occupied Northern Indo-China. Once more it was the G.G., who strongly disagreed with the American request, informing the Dutch Minister in Washington that "the assignment of American naval observers in Dutch harbours was of course unacceptable". The only concession the G.G. was willing to accede was to put sailing instructions and secret maps of the NEI and sailing instructions into sealed envelopes and deposit them in safes at the Dutch Consulate in Manila and at the Legation in Washington.

Another source of worry for the U.S. Government was the Kobayashi Mission which Japan had despatched to Batavia in order to obtain more oil from the NEI. The American Government distrusted the steadfastness of the Dutch Cabinet in London and was therefore unwilling to ship either weapons or airplanes to NEI in case they fell in Japanese hands, knowing that the U.S. Army needed every piece of equipment themselves. In a personal letter to Van Boetzelaer, the Legation's First Secretary, the Governor-General recognized "that the American Government is entertaining suspicions and therefore is intent on regulating the flow of weapons towards us on the judgment of our behaviour. The occupation of the motherland and the circumstance that our Government in London has been placed under the direct supervision of the British Government, have put us in a situation of dependency and helplessness. Thank God the Far Eastern part of the Kingdom is still free, and therefore our foreign policy can still have the character of independence. Let us keep to ourselves and reject all efforts to put us under guardianship." The G.G. therefore knew very well that his policy of aloofness could cause problems for his administration because the United States held the monopoly in the delivery of much-needed weapons for NEI defence.

Playing on American fears that the NEI Government would buckle under Japanese pressure, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs asked Loudon to enquire, whether the NEI could count on American support should Japan advance. The Dutch Government had to ascertain American policy in order to determine its line of conduct towards the Kobayashi-mission. Loudon, however, argued successfully that it did not make any sense to ask the American Government for such a guarantee until the elections took place and the President was re-elected.

In about October 1940, the U.S. Navy was working on RAINBOW 3. At that time, the Dutch Naval attaché in Washington was asked if his Government was willing to furnish

---

447 Telegram MAW to BDZ, 24 October 1940. As above.

448 Telegram G.G. to Loudon, 22 November 1940. As above.

449 Telegram Consul-General W. Foote to Cordell Hull, 18 October 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 186 - 187.


451 Letter G.G. to Van Boetzelaer, 1 October 1940. As above.

452 Van Kleffens to Loudon, 21 October 1940, no 859/860. As above. See also DBPN, series C, Vol. I, p. 526 - 527. Also in ARA, Archives Department of Colonies, London period, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 655.
navigational information and maps of the Indian archipelago. The Naval attaché strongly endorsed fulfilling the request, because, in his opinion, it would mean closer collaboration with the United States, which were still neutral, and it would facilitate the delivery of weapons ordered in the U.S.485 The delivery of such weapons had been halted a number of times. The naval attaché suggested a secret rendez-vous between American and Dutch seaplanes North of the Celebes to transfer the maps. The Colonial Minister, Welte, had no objections to such an exchange, but wanted to know what the G.G. thought, and suggested transferring the documents by courier486.

At the same time, the U.S. Naval Staff enquired at the Dutch and British naval attaché’s in Washington whether there was any co-operation between the two naval staffs in the Far East487. The question was passed on to the Dutch Governor General who responded to the Minister of Colonies. This co-operation was very limited and in fact the Royal Navy had to request permission to enter Dutch waters. Maps and secret navigational information had meanwhile been deposited in safes at the consulates in both Singapore and Batavia. The Governor General urged his Government to maintain the pre-war policy of strict neutrality and aloofness which would also avoid possible Japanese intervention488. The G.G. consequently advised against giving the information requested by the U.S. Naval Staff, offering to send secret information in sealed envelopes to be stored in safes in consulates in Manila and Batavia and at the Dutch Legation in Washington, this by means of a compromise. Unknown to him however, the Dutch and British navies were co-operating with each other much more closely under the pretence of chasing German raiders together. (See Chapter 2 on Britain).

Van Kleffens, Dutch Foreign Minister, instructed Loudon to inform the Americans that the English Government was unwilling to guarantee Dutch integrity in S.E. Asia. The Netherlands East Indies would therefore not assist the British if the Japanese attacked Hongkong. The British-Dutch alliance in Western Europe against Germany therefore had only a limited relevance for the Far East, and this was the reason that Holland maintained its policy of of strict neutrality in that area. The Dutch Government could therefore only cut her coat according to its cloth, in anticipation of Japanese aggression. Van Kleffens in fact backed the foreign policy as the G.G. outlined489.

The offer the G.G. made with regard to secret maps was discussed with Benjamin Sumner Welles, American Undersecretary of State, who expressed his opinion saying that although the procedure of sealed envelopes at consulates and legations was so cumber-

---

485 Telegram no 1014/110 MAW to CZM, in Letter Van Kleffens to Loudon, 16 October 1940, no 1481 GA/873, MinBuZa Archives Legation London, inv. 1547. Also in ARA, Archives dept. of Colonies, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 657.

486 Telegram Welte to G.G., 16 October 1940, no BE/BG. ARA, as above.

487 Telegram Loudon to van Kleffens, 14 October 1940, no 274. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington legation, inv. nr.2756.

488 Telegram G.G. to Welte, 22 October 1940, no NNN/PPP; enclosure to Letter van Kleffens to Loudon, 25 October 1940, no 1535 GA/409. Archives MinBuZa, as above, ARA as above.

489 Telegram Van Kleffens to Loudon, 26 October 1940, no 881/883, ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr 2.10.45, inv. nr. 657.
some it was better than nothing⁴⁸. Sumner Welles also disagreed with the Dutch view on Hongkong. As a result of these talks, Van Kleffens informed the G.G. that the maps had to be exchanged⁴⁹. Later on, Loudon informed his Minister that the Americans had sent a set of maps and other secret information in sealed envelopes to their Consulate General in Batavia⁵⁰. The Dutch maps and secret materials were dispatched to Los Angeles on board of the m.s. POELAU BRAS from Tandjoeng Priok on 18 November 1940⁵¹. However, as early as 3 January 1941, Van Kleffens informed Loudon that the sealed envelopes could be opened and used by both nations, thereby removing one source of contention between the United States and The Netherlands.

The Governor General’s attitude was not only incomprehensible to the U.S. Government but also to the Minister in Washington⁵². This is very clear from his correspondence with Van Kleffens in this period. Loudon warned his superior that if The Netherlands continued to deliver strategic raw materials to Japan in case that country got involved in armed conflict with the U.S., then the U.S. Navy would intercept all shipping to Japan and might even occupy parts of the NEI. He pointed out that the G.G.’s attitude had caused the delay in the delivery of critical war material such as munitions and airplanes by American manufacturers and he strongly advised to emphasize British-Dutch solidarity in S.E. Asia⁵³. Groenman, the Dutch Minister in Ottawa, Canada, issued more or less the same warning on October 16⁵⁴. In his report to the Queen, Van Kleffens, however, supported the Dutch G.G., stating that the alliance with Great Britain was only of limited value in the Far East due to British weakness over there, and that it was important not to challenge Japan too openly⁵⁵. He obviously stated the views held in this respect by the whole of the Dutch Cabinet. In November 1940, he even informed Loudon that as long as the Americans had not started reinforcing The Philippines, it was not in Dutch interest to accommodate American wishes concerning oil deliveries to Japan⁵⁶.

The need for closer co-operation between The Netherlands and the U.S.A. was brought home by a number of alarms. In mid-October 1940, one alarm caused considerable concern. The Director of the ONI warned Admiral Stark that the Japanese Fleet was ready

---

⁴⁸ Telegram Loudon to Van Kleffens, 29 October 1940, as above. Also DBPN, C, I, 463, page 540.
⁴⁹ Telegram Van Kleffens to G.G., no 903, 2 November 1940. As above, inv. nr. 2756.
⁵⁰ Telegram Loudon to Van Kleffens, no P-318, 3 November 1940. As above.
⁵¹ Telegram G.G. to Welter, 18 November 1940. ARA. Archives Dept of Colonies, London Period, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 657.
⁵³ Telegrams nr s 39-42 from Loudon to Van Kleffens, 19 October 1940, Secret Archives MinBuZa, London Period, DZ/Al 6, box 34.
⁵⁴ Telegram F.E.H. Groenman to Van Kleffens, 16 October 1940. Secret Archives MinBuZa, Washington legation, inv.nr. 2756.
⁵⁵ Letter Van Kleffens to Queen Wilhelmina, 21 October 1940, as above.
to attack the NEI at short notice. The CNO alarmed the Dutch who thereupon took their own measures. Another alarm was sounded in February 1941, when the British Admiralty informed the ONI that the Japanese were planning a large scale offensive, presumably against Indo-China, Malaya or the NEI. The warning was passed on to the Dutch. The G.G. cancelled the planned visit by the Chief of Staff (Ter Poorten) to Australia (See Chapter 4, page 497) and took additional precautions too.

An influential American commander's opinion about the Dutch policy of aloofness is made clear by Admiral Thomas Hart, commander of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, in an appreciation he wrote to the CNO, Admiral Stark, on 13 November, 1940. I Quote: "The Dutch attitude, at least that indicated by their failure to send a representative to the recent conference [in Singapore, October 25 - 27] is understandable, but in the light of recent history hardly seems reasonable or wise. What they fear, of course, is that any consorting with the British would serve to end a Japanese indecision over the use of force against them and hasten a direct attack upon their islands. The Dutch know that British support would be only very meagre, and they may hope that by "maintaining the status quo" and showing no favorites they can escape disaster. Aside from the abundant proof of the weakness of this hypothesis to be found in recent European history, the best conclusion to be drawn from the record of the Japanese in the Far East would seem to be that the only thing that will deter them from an attempt to seize the Netherlands East Indies will be their fear that, from one source or another, sufficient opposing force will materialize to render the venture risky...Every addition to the defensive strength of the Netherlands East Indies adds something to the risks facing the Japanese; therefore it does not seem likely that the Dutch are doing themselves anything but harm in their refusal to confer with the British....The Dutch attitude may possibly be the result of political factors under Nazi- or Pro-Nazi influence, but whatever the cause, it does not appear to be the one that will be likely to enhance their security". Hart clearly understood, that the only viable basis for Dutch maritime action by the Royal Netherlands' Navy (Koninklijke Marine) was bound to be a risk strategy. The point, which Hart made in his appreciation about pro-Nazi sympathies within the Dutch colonial administration, was also frequently raised in American press comments at that time. For example, in TIME (Magazine) of 15 January 1940, Prime Minister De Geer was branded as being pro-German. It was widely known, that the children of Army Commander Berenschot were studying in Holland and might be used by Germany as pawns to influence the conduct of their father. Those comments were very annoying to the Dutch but even they had to admit that the Dutch Nazi party counted a considerable number of adherents in the NEI, even in high places in trade, commerce and the civil service before the War in Europe had started.

1.5.4.2. Results of the Kobayashi Mission.

The agreement which was reached with the Japanese Trade Mission on the subject of oil exports at the end of 1940, was received with mixed feelings in the United States. As it had been the NEI Government's tactics, the agreement was made between Royal Dutch Shell and Standard Oil Company on one side and the Rising Sun Petroleum Company, Shell's Japanese daughter, on the other. The existing export of 494,000 tons of oil and oil products to Japan would be gradually increased to 1,800,000 tons per year, of which

---

467 Telegram Director ONI to CNO, 16 October 1940, FRUS Vol. 1940-IV, 185 - 186.

468 Letter Capt. R.E. Schulmann, ONI, to Secretary of State, Washington 4 February 1941. FRUS, 1940-V, 55.

469 Letter Adm. Hart to Adm. H. Stark, Manila, 13 November 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 208 - 211.

470 Telegram W. Foote to Cordell Hull, 13 November 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 207 - 208.
480,000 tons were of crude oil and 446,000 tons of straight gasoline. As the *New York Times* dated 13 November 1940 exclaimed: this was an increase in oil sales of 400%.

Some corrective action was needed forthwith. The Ministry of Colonies in London consequently submitted a Memorandum to Van Kleffens about the Kobayashi Mission, to be discussed with the Americans471. The Memorandum gives a breakdown of the Japanese demands in oil products and the final results of the negotiations. With normal annual exports to Japan totalling 600,000 tons, the Japanese were then demanding an increase to 3,750,000 tons, of which they were only granted 1,936,000 tons. Knowing the American susceptibility towards the export of high-octane aviation gasoline, the Japanese would not receive more than 33,000 tons, whereas they had demanded 400,000 tons. According to the Memorandum in question, the oil companies did not need to increase their production as Japanese demands agreed on could be covered from the loss of markets in the Middle East. The Memorandum obviously mollified the American Government, especially as it turned out that the Japanese had to pay for their imported oil products in dollars and had to transport the oil in their own tankers472. According to an article in the *New York Times* of 27 December 1940, the Japanese Government was so strapped of cash, that one of their tankers trying to obtain oil in Pladjoie (Sumatra) twice had to return to Singapore to obtain dollars in cash from the Japanese Consulate over there. This measure resulted in the Japanese being even unable to collect all the oil they could legally obtain from the oil companies. Owing to the Americans freezing Japanese assets on July 26, 1941, no more oil shipments from the NEI could be paid for, resulting in a total halt of all oil exports from the NEI. This effect was certainly not at all the effect intended by the Dutch countermeasures!473

Loudon, the Dutch Minister in Washington, discussed the results of the Kobayashi Mission with Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles on 5 December 1940474. He stressed that "the Japanese had expressed the belief that the Dutch were acting under pressure of the British and U.S. Governments". The G.G. had categorically rejected that allegation and had enquired whether the Japanese were acting under pressure of their Axis-partners after having signed the Tripartite Pact. (See Chapter 6, pages 673 - 676). This remark left the Japanese in complete disarray. Accordingly, Loudon informed Sumner Welles that "the G.G. would object to any steps being taken by the Australian, British or U.S. Governments which could give rise to further claims on the part of the Japanese that some secret understanding or pact existed between the NEI and those Governments. For that reason the G.G. would not agree to the sending to the NEI of American Naval observers nor would he agree to any discussion of possible naval bases in the NEI. His policy in that regard was based solely on the fact that he had been unable to obtain any commitment of any character from the British and Australian Governments that they would assist the NEI in the event that Japan attacked. If such commitments were obtained and there was evidence of sufficient force in existence [in the Philippines]...he would be willing to consider the immediate adoption of another policy".

471 Letter Van Kleffens to Loudon with memorandum on Trade Negotiations, 18 November 1940, no 1719 GA/353. As above. The Memorandum was discussed between Van Boetzelaeer and Hornbeck, and handed over to Hornbeck.

472 Irvine H. Anderson: "The 1941 de facto Embargo on Oil to Japan: A bureaucratic reflex" Pacific Historical Review, 44 (1975), 212.


474 Memorandum by Sumner Welles, 5 December 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 230 - 231.
The message from the Governor-General was therefore clear: no co-operation with the Anglo-Saxon powers without guarantees. The Dutch, however, were hardly in a position to just stand by in glorious neutrality, as Hart's appreciation made abundantly clear that they were militarily too weak to resist a Japanese attack. In hindsight it must therefore be concluded that the G.G.'s policy of aloofness up to December 1940 actually harmed the Dutch position and that this policy was too formalistic and devoid of realism. A change was therefore to be expected.

1.5.4.3. A Change in Dutch Foreign Policy.

The Ministers in Washington and Ottawa were not the only ones, who opposed the G.G.'s policy of aloofness. The Commander-in-Chief of the Koninklijke Marine was not a member of the Cabinet at that time (He became Minister of the Navy in 1941), but he forcefully expressed his opinion although it was different from the one the G.G. held. On 6 November 1940, after the re-election of President Roosevelt, he urged the Dutch Prime Minister to be more accommodating towards the British and Americans in the Far East, quoting information received from American naval officers in the U.S. Asiatic Fleet who had expressed amazement at Dutch aloofness. Vice Admiral Furstner therefore supported Loudon and opposed the G.G.⁴⁷⁵. He met Rear-Admiral R. Ghormley USN in London on 20 November 1940 and Ghormley also accentuated the importance of secret staff discussions being held between the Dutch, the British and the Americans⁴⁷⁶. The idea for these staff talks originated in the U.S. Navy Department but were picked up by the Australian and British Ambassadors and discussed with the State Department⁴⁷⁷. Ghormley insisted on secret closer co-operation between the Dutch and U.S. Navies and hinted that this might lead to successful actions in Washington by which the Admiral, of course, meant the speeding up of American weapons deliveries to the Indies. His specific worry, however, was the Kaoe-Bay in Halmahera, where the Japanese might have established a seaplane reconnaissance base. In reply to this worry, the G.G. suggested to Minister Welter⁴⁷⁸ that the Americans themselves would be flying regular reconnaissance patrols over Halmahera from Mindanao, because the Dutch Naval Airforce MLD lacked enough planes to do it themselves. In that case he clearly had no qualms about the U.S. violating neutral Dutch territory.

On 3 December 1940 they met again. Ghormley was very open, giving Furstner a complete overview of the strength of the U.S. Navy in The Philippines and the Pacific⁴⁷⁹. The Americans had already started making reconnaissance flights over the South China Sea west of Luzon. Following that meeting, Furstner again argued that secret naval charts and maps must be sent to U.S. Navy HQ at Manila, and that an American naval liaison officer must be stationed in Batavia. The Dutch Naval Attaché in Washington, after talks

⁴⁷⁵ Letter Vice-Adm. Furstner to PM Gerbrandy, 6 November 1940, no 92. As above.
⁴⁷⁶ Minutes of meeting Furstner-Ghormley, 20 November 1940, as above. Also in ARA, Archives Dept of Colonies, London period, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 655.
⁴⁷⁷ Notes on conversation between H. Casey, Lord Lothian, and Cordell Hull, 5 October 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 167 - 168.
⁴⁷⁸ Telegram G.G. to Welter, 2 December 1940. ARA Archives Dept of Colonies, London period, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 655.
⁴⁷⁹ Letter Furstner to Gerbrandy, 3 December 1940, no 132 ZG. As above.
with two American Naval Observers from Singapore and British Borneo, pressed again for observers to be stationed there. The G.G. finally agreed to both demands but stressed that the American liaison officer 'should not be in uniform and inconspicuous!' This agreement alluded to a long-awaited change in Dutch foreign policy.

Meanwhile, in Washington the U.S. Navy Department increased its pressure on the Dutch Minister. Van Kieften informed the Premier and the Ministers of Colonies and War about the contacts between Loudon and the U.S. Naval Staff. The U.S. Navy informed the Minister that without Dutch support, the British would not be able to defend Singapore, the fall of which would automatically result in the loss of the Indies. Van Kieften concluded, that "self-interest of the Netherlands East Indies means solidarity with the British Empire" which was, of course, quite a different opinion from the one he had held in October as expressed in his letter to the Queen. Both letter and telegram are important as they prove that at the end of 1940 the Dutch Cabinet was quite well aware of the vulnerability of Singapore and consequently of the NEI.

In December 1940 the G.G. had rightly concluded that the American government would not deliver much weaponry to the NEI as long as the NEI Government stuck to its policy of aloofness and strict neutrality. Based on earlier complaints about the British Purchasing Commission's attitude which recognized a competitor for the same scarce resources in the Dutch Purchasing Commission, the Dutch Government had already formally asked the British Government on 3 January 1941 for "a reasonable share in armament now being made in the United States." This démarche of course accomplished nothing. The activities of the Dutch Purchasing Commission will be covered somewhat later in this Chapter.

The British, however, were very helpful in providing information about American deliveries to third countries, a fact that might have angered the Dutch Government. On 25 March 1941, the Dutch Minister in London informed Van Kieften, that according to information from Mr. Ronald of the British Foreign Office, the Americans had delivered 100 Tomahawk P-40 pursuit planes to the Chinese Air Force. Tongue in cheek, Ronald had suggested to Michiels that the Dutch Minister in Washington should enquire why the delivery of planes to the Chinese, who had fewer pilots and hardly any training facilities, was more urgent than the delivery of those planes to the NEI.

Anyway, the G.G. ended his opposition against cooperation with the British and Americans around Christmas 1940. This policy change will be covered in greater depth in the chapter.

---
460 Telegram MAW to BDZ 0114/1000, 4 November 1940, as above.
461 Telegram G.G. to Welte, 16 December 1940, ARA Archives Dept of Colonies, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 657.
462 Van Kieften to Gerbrandy, Dijxhoorn, Welte personally, 13 December 1940. As above. His letter is based on a telegram he received from Loudon of 11 December, 1940, no A.U. 393, in the same file.
464 Memorandum from Van Kieften to Sir Neville Bland, 3 January 1941. As above.
465 Letter Michiels van Verduven to Van Kieften, 25 March 1941, no 895/245. As above.
on The Netherlands. Abandoning a tradition in the NEI of a tradition of aloofness and neutrality going back to Napoleonic times was a remarkable step. Two factors were responsible for this change in policy: one was the steady pressure from the U.S. Navy, and the second was the threat of further delays in the delivery of weapons and munitions already ordered. On 1 November 1940, a Dutch military attaché was eventually appointed in Washington to be able to get a better grip on the delivery of weapons on order. Dutch The attaché was Colonel F.G.L. Weijerman of the KNIL General Staff, who had previously been assigned to Washington to assist the legation in the recruitment of young men of Dutch nationality living in the U.S. and willing to serve in the KNIL. His first report as a military attaché written on 4 January 1941 included some information about the Japanese Zero fighter which had appeared in Chinese skies in ever increasing numbers since the summer of 1940. Brigade General P.J. Mow, Chinese military attaché in Washington, informed Weijerman that this fighter was superior to anything the Chinese could send into the air and that it could only be beaten off by massive concentrations of anti-aircraft artillery. There is no indication, that this Report was not sent to KNIL Headquarters but the performance of the Zero fighter was still one of the great surprises of the Japanese offensive.

Weijerman kept in close touch with the U.S. Army Intelligence Service, who questioned him on a number of occasions about not only the strengths and weaknesses of the KNIL, but also the loyalty of the native soldiers and populace. (See below, subchapter 5.5.1.) He also reported on U.S. industrial mobilization. He visited a number of aircraft factories in California and, being greatly impressed by them, he wrote that they were working seven days a week, 24 hours a day, without any industrial disputes or strikes.

1.5.4.4. American Press Reports on the NEI.

The end of the American - Japanese Trade Treaty on January 26, 1940, brought the NEI back into the spotlight of American public opinion. The well-known and influential monthly publication LIFE dedicated a great part of its issue on 22 January 1940 to the Netherlands East Indies. It was very pro-Dutch, and its contents presented an interesting view on Dutch defense capabilities. Part of the article is quoted here: "The Indies, unaided, would have a hard time defending itself against a large-scale Japanese attack. Its first move would be to mine the shallow and treacherous straits that lead past the Philippines and Sumatra towards Java, lie in wait for the Japanese Navy with 15 submarines, 42 torpedo-boats, 8 destroyers, 3 cruisers. When the Japanese transports tried to land troops, they would be spotted by big german Domiers,"

---

486 Weijerman was appointed after firm pressure by the G.G. put on Welter, Minister of the Colonies. Welter at last acquiesced, passing the recommendation to Van Kleffens, but not to the Minister of War. This Minister, Dijkstra, thereupon wrote an angry letter to Welter on 3 March 1941 about this lack of communication. ARA Archives of the Dept. of Colonies, accession number 2.10.45, inv. nr. 738.

487 Letter Welter to Van Kleffens, 2 August 1940. ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 738. The recruitment was a complete failure, as only 14 men volunteered for the KNIL. Letter Weijermans to Welter, 14 November 1940, same reference.

488 Report Weijerman to Welter, 4 January 1941, ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 741.

489 Same Report as above.

490 Letter Loudon to Van Kleffens, 22 January 1940, no 377/57, with as an appendix the issue of LIFE of 22 January, 1940.
bombed by 150 Martins, which are the backbone of the Indies Airforce. When the Japanese bombers headed for Dutch airfields, they would be met by fire from a mass of such light automatic cannon as shown above [a photograph of a Bohler 20 mm anti-aircraft gun]. The Japanese, poor bombers, would have to fly low and that would be perfect for these guns. After the Japanese Army has landed, it will be met by the crack Indies Army of some 40,000 men, three quarters of whom are natives. The Dutch have less than a score of Vickers tanks, and one coast artillery battalion. Their planes include all kinds of Martins, Dornier Flying Boats, Dutch Fokker fighters, Koolhoven and Fokker reconnaissance planes. The Dutch KLM airline provides splendid repair shops. There are three big military airbases. The islands are dotted with small secret airfields in the jungle where single squadrons can base in case of an attack*.

The quotation gives a somewhat hilarious account of the contemporary view held by the American press on Dutch defence capabilities.

On 18 January 1941, the Yoshizawa Mission arrived in Batavia. Walter Foote, the American Consul-General, was in regular but confidential touch with Dutch authorities. On 21 January, Foote was already able to inform the State Department about the Japanese demands49†. Van Mook informed him personally, that it was his intention to extend the negotiations for as long as possible, "in order to give Great Britain more time to bring about a change in the situation in Europe".49‡ Foote did not know, that the codebreakers of the British Far Eastern Combined Bureau FECB had cracked the Japanese Diplomatic Code and that the British Government had permitted the intercepts of the telegrams between the mission and Tokyo to be handed over to Van Mook. (See Chapter 2, page 149).

The American Press was very impressed by the way the Dutch handled the Yoshizawa Mission in the first half of 1941, sending it back to Japan empty-handed. The New York Herald Tribune of 18 June 1941 in an article headed "Hats off to Batavia", even declared that: "Van Mook, backed by the desperate courage of every Dutchman in the islands, talked back to the Japanese negotiators as though he had the whole of the American battlefleet anchored in his harbors", finishing with: "There is so much spiritual waffling in this world today that Batavia rightly deserves the spotlight; the least we can do for these Hollanders without a country, until we are prepared to do more, is to raise our hats to them". Other press comments were also of similar vein.

1.5.5. The Netherlands Purchasing Commission.

Before the war, the Dutch had the potential for a sizeable armaments industry. Dutch wharves could build any type of warship, up to and including battlecruisers, but they lacked the ability to forge large guns. Propulsion equipment for ships of any size was made in Holland. The Dutch electronics industry was very advanced. The Dutch Arsenal at Hembrug near Amsterdam, called AI for Artillerie-Inrichtingen (Artillery Workshops) manufactured not only small arms weapons and ammunition but also artillery grenades and guns. The Dutch Fokker Aircraft Company was able to build any type of aircraft, but was dependent on airplane engines from elsewhere. Moreover, its headstrong founder, Anthony Fokker, had fallen out with the military decision-makers, who did not like most of his designs. Dutch perfectionism in the military bureaucracy was another source of delayed

---

49‡ Telegram W. Foote to Cordell Hull, Batavia 22 January 1941. FRUS, 1940-V, 27 - 28.
orders but was very much evident in the ordering of aircraft. Vehicles and tanks, anti-aircraft artillery and heavy artillery could however not be made locally and had to be ordered from abroad.

In 1936 the KNIL-ML ordered 13 Glenn Martin B-10 bombers model 139 WH-1 from the Martin Aircraft Company in Baltimore, Md., followed by 26 model 139 WH-2 and 39 Martin B-10 bombers model 166 WH-3 in 1937. Deliveries started that same year. In order to inspect the planes at the factory, the KNIL-ML sent Captain E.J.G. Te Roller to Baltimore. He arrived in the U.S.A. on 27 August 1938. In May 1940, Te Roller was also involved in the delivery of 20 Curtiss 75A-7 Hawk interceptors which were assembled at the Curtiss plant in Buffalo, N.Y. Four Lockheed L-212 twin-engine training planes made in Burbank, California followed in June 1940. In addition, he was also charged with the inspection of detonators for air bombs, which came from the United States too. Te Roller was to be involved with the other KNIL-ML orders for planes at Curtiss in Buffalo, Douglas in Santa Monica and Lockheed at Las Vegas in the months to follow. Both Te Roller and his assistant, First Lieutenant H.A. Maurenbrecher obtained American flying licences during their stay in the United States.

Germany's occupation of the Netherlands and France, and the isolation of Sweden and Switzerland in the spring of 1940 robbed the KNIL of a number of weapons suppliers located in those countries. Therefore already on 12 May KNIL GHQ in Bandoeng tried to re-allocate orders from those countries to the United States. Most urgently needed were 3 batteries of 4 guns of 15 cm each of coastal artillery, 16 Howitzers 105 mm and 100 (Bofors) anti-aircraft guns 40 mm, which had all been ordered in Sweden and could not be delivered. Moreover, 34 anti-aircraft guns 20 mm (Bohler), had been ordered in Switzerland at the same time with 52 anti-aircraft guns 80 or 90 mm, and 30 infantry guns 47 mm. On 20 May, the KNIL placed additional orders in the U.S. for 230 machine-guns 7.7 mm Colt, 1625 machineguns 6.5 mm Colt, and 13,600 carbines 7.7 mm. Before the war, the KNIL had obtained most of its small-arms ammunition from the German armaments factory Rheinmetall Borsig. Therefore, the KNIL also wanted to order in the U.S.A. 75 million bullets 7.7 mm, 60 million bullets 6.5 mm and 2.5 million bullets 9 mm. The supposed shortage of small-arms munition in the NEI was to remain a recurring theme in American-Dutch relations in the following year.

When war broke out in Europe, the KNIL decided to form a commission which would coordinate all their orders in the U.S. On 16 May 1940, Lieut.-Gen. Berenschot, the Com-

---


49 For a list of all orders for airplanes for the KNIL-ML, see C.R. Patist: "De Lucht-oorlog bij en boven Ned. Indië" Stabelan, Vol. 7, no 4, 18 February 1981, page 22. This series will be subsequently referred to as Patist.

50 Letter Loudon to Sec of State Cordell Hull, 23 August 1938, no 2984. As above, inventory nr 2811.

51 Telegram van Kleffens to Loudon, 12 May 1940, ARA as above, inventory nr 737.

52 Letter Colonel H.L. Maurer to Ornstein, no 417/0408/Ill-T of 20 May 1940. ARA, as above, inv. nr. 737.
mander-in-Chief of the KNIL, asked the G.G. for such a commission⁴⁸⁸. This KNIL Purchasing Commission consisted of a number of officers who were already present in the U.S., like Te Roller and Maurenbrecher. Lieut.-Colonel A. Fischer of the KNIL Artillery became chairman of the Commission⁴⁸⁹. The commission reported to the Minister of Colonies, Welter. There was no co-ordination at all with the Minister of War who needed weapons for a Dutch Legion to be equipped in Canada and Great Britain for the war in Europe. Loudon warned Van Kleffens that this lack of co-ordination irritated the U.S. authorities and that anyway practically all available production capacity of the U.S. armaments industry had been bought by the British Purchasing Commission (BPC)⁴⁹⁰. The entire production of the Wright-Cyclone GR-2600 airplane engine, for example, had been bought by the BPC. When the Dutch authorities asked for 128 of these engines to be transferred in order to equip planes they had ordered, both the BPC initially and later on the British Government refused to help them out of their predicament⁴⁹¹. Fischer told the Dutch military attaché, Weijerman, that the American authorities were afraid that their weapons might end up in Japanese hands, concluding that, in his view, the Americans held no high regard for the fighting capabilities of the KNIL⁵⁰². Fischer, moreover, had already informed his superiors in July 1940 that the Americans were blocking all deliveries of modern weapons to the NE⁵⁰³. (See Chapter 3, pages 407 - 408).

It was not only modern weapons that were refused to the Dutch. On 18 May 1940, the Dutch Government had received an offer for 7000 Vickers machineguns of First World War vintage from a U.S. weapons dealer. This offer was rescinded on 12 June 1940, when the Americans made all these machineguns available to the British. The Dutch Government had to ask the British Government for permission to be considered for 500 of these old machine-guns!⁵⁰⁴

One of the weapons of which the U.S. Armories possessed a large stock, was the World War I vintage 75 mm field gun. On 1 June 1940, when the decision had been made to replace the 75 mm gun by the 105 mm howitzer as Regimental Artillery, a total surplus of this type existed numbering 4,236 guns⁵⁰⁵. About 120 of these guns would have increa-

⁴⁸⁸ Letter Berenschot to G.G., 63/3/V of 16 May 1940. ARA, Archives Dept. of Colonies, London period, inv. nr. 2.10.45. In the same file is a letter of Berenschot to the G.G., dated 20 May 1940, no 823/XII-3, asking for permission to order 388 fighters, divebombers, medium bombers and transport planes, to be ordered forthwith in the U.S.A.


⁴⁹¹ Telegram Loudon to Van Kleffens, 18 July 1940, no 95. As above, File DZ/F.2(9), box 72.

⁴⁹² Letter Maj.-Gen. H.J.W. Verniers van der Loeff to Lord Beaverbrook, 24 July 1940. ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, access. nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 744.

⁴⁹³ Report Weijerman to Welter, 4 January 1941, Ibid., page 8.

⁴⁹⁴ Telegram Fischer to Welter, 13 July 1940. ARA, Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 744.

⁴⁹⁵ Correspondence between Colonel Verniers van der Loeff of Dept. of Colonies and Brigadier D. Fisher of the British War Office, June 1940, in ARA, as above, inv. nr. 738.

sed the KNIL's firepower dramatically against a foe, who was also underequipped with 75 mm field guns. No indication has been found, however, to prove that KNIL HQ ever asked for such a delivery, probably because the Netherlands' Purchasing Commission NPC were unaware of the existence of the American surplus.

Anyway, Fischer had to inform his superiors on 17 October 1940, that due to the lack of Wright Cyclone engines, the American Government refused an export licence for 72 Brewster Buffalo fighters, 54 Brewster Bermuda divebombers, 28 Curtiss Interceptors and 10 Lockheed model 212 bomber/trainer planes. Based on his report, Welte informed the G.G. of another year's delay in delivering these planes, which had been paid for already 506. The BPC, however, absolutely refused to release these aircraft engines. Fischer thereafter tried to secure 40 secondhand but reconditioned engines mark F-202A from American Airlines, so that they could be used to equip the Lockheed model 212 plane frames, but again the "President's Liaison Committee" refused to release even the reconditioned engines. Due to the lack of aircraft engines available, 45 of the 162 Brewster Bermuda model 340 divebombers could not be delivered nor could 5 of the 20 Lockheed Lodestar transport planes on order. Moreover, requests for an additional 45 Brewster Buffalo fighters and 108 Lockheed Hudson bombers, model 37, could not be accepted for the same reason 507. Because of the delivery problems with the Lockheed bombers, the KNIL-ML placed an order for 162 North American Mitchell B-25C medium bombers in stead of the Lockheeds but the first delivery could only be scheduled for October 1942.

Apart from the KNIL-Mission, four other Dutch Purchasing Commissions were also active in the United States. The KNIL Purchasing Commission was the oldest one in existence, but in October 1939 the Dutch Arsenal Al (Artillerie-Inrichtingen) had opened an office in New York to coordinate materials and weapons purchases in the U.S. on behalf of the Dutch Army in the Netherlands 508. When the Dutch forces capitulated to the Germans on 15 May 1940, a lot of equipment on order had not yet been delivered. Mr. Leonard Omstein, the Director of the Al American Office, discussed with the Dutch Minister in Washington the probability of transferring this material to the KNIL Purchasing Commission. The outcome was the recommendation to amalgate the five different Dutch purchasing commissions into one "Netherlands Purchasing Commission" (NPC) along the lines of the very successful British Purchasing Commission (BPC) 509. Alexander Loudon, the Dutch Minister in Washington, thereupon appointed Omstein to accomplish the task of coordinating the five different Dutch Purchasing Commissions into one new one 510.

The Dutch Navy at that time had its own Purchasing Office in Washington. It was headed by Lt.Cdr W. van Haeften who reported to Meijer Ranneft, the naval attaché. It had originated from a mission by the Dutch Navy and the Army Air Force, which had been headed by Vice-Adm. M. H. Van Dulm (retired). From 16 February to 18 March 1939, the

506 Telegram Welte to G.G., 25 October 1940, no 805. ARA, Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, Inventory nr. 744.

507 Letter Fischer to Verniers van der Loeff, 11 January 1941. As above.


509 Report of Omstein to Loudon, 20 May 1940. As above.

510 Letter Omstein to Minister of War Dijxhoorn, 12 June 1940, ARA as above, inv. nr. 738.
mission visited factories in the United States, and placed a tentative order with the Douglas Aircraft Company for torpedobombers, which order had not yet been executed\(^{811}\). In addition, there was a small active group of NEI civil servants from the Department of Economy in Batavia, headed by E.C. Zimmermann and G.J. Schimmel who were stationed in New York. They were the official NEI Trade Commissioners with a direct reporting line to H.J. Van Mook, Director of the Department of Economy in Batavia and they were charged with the buying of non-military goods in the U.S. They told Van Mook that the KNIL Mission consisted of officers who were technically very competent, but who however had no inkling about American business practices. This not only caused a row in the U.S. between Fischer and Zimmermann, but also in Batavia between Van Mook and Lieut.-Gen. Berenschot. To complete the picture, in addition there was also a small purchasing office which had been established by the Government Navy, which was normally charged with the control of smuggling. That fifth purchasing office, led by T. Veerman reported to the Department of Finance in Batavia.

The five Dutch Purchasing Commissions caused total chaos and resulted in the refusal of American authorities to deal with any of them. This refusal was communicated to the Dutch Minister in Washington on 19 September 1940\(^{812}\). Van Kleffens, Minister of Foreign Affairs thereupon initiated a number of meetings with his colleagues, Welter from the Colonial Department, and Dijxhoorn from Defence to sort things out. They produced a draft ordinance on 15 October 1940 which drew all five commissions into an overall Netherlands Purchasing Commission NPC, responsible to the Minister in Washington. Mr J. Van den Broek, who was one of the directors of the Dutch Billiton Company and who resided in the United States, was approached to become the new NPC Director. At the start the NPC had a combined staff of 40 persons, which was to increase to 371 by the time the Dutch capitulated to the Japanese in March 1942\(^{813}\). In concordance with the British Purchasing Commission, the NPC also appointed a reputed American business leader as a member. This was how James Herbert Case, former chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank in New-York who had many valuable connections in business circles, joined the NPC. New difficulties arose, when Mr. Van den Broek, the NPC Chairman-to be, not only disapproved about agents for American aircraft companies based in the NEI being involved in the purchasing process but also about the NEI departmental divisions being retained as members within the NPC\(^{814}\). Eventually, however, these difficulties were hammered out.

The Dutch mobilized their American contacts in Batavia, including in particular Walter Foote, the very pro-Dutch Consul-General there. Foote complained about the way the U.S. treated Dutch requests for weapons and more specifically small arms ammunitions\(^{815}\). This caused an angry retort from State Secretary Cordell Hull saying that the Dutch had

---


812 Memorandum Secretary-General Van Bylandt to Van Kleffens, 5 October 1940. ARA, Archives Dept of Colonies, access. nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr.736.


814 Letters Van den Broek to G.G., 25 November 1940, and van den Broek to Welter, 17 December 1940. ARA, as above.

815 Telegram Consul-General Foote to Cordell Hull, 26 September 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 154 - 155.
been the 4th largest purchaser of American weapons in the last few months of 1940\textsuperscript{516}. That observation was true, but the Dutch were interested in quicker deliveries of the weapons ordered, and Hull obviously missed that point. Ambassador Grew too reported from Tokyo, that the Dutch Minister, Pabst, was continually urging him to press his compatriots to deliver weapons much more speedily\textsuperscript{517}. The Dutch lobby was therefore in full swing at the end of 1940. Both Foote and Grew received answers from Hull, in which he stated that the Presidential Liaison Committee "was not able to approve a few relatively unimportant purchases which the NEI desired to make. These were not approved because they would have interfered with our own defense program\textsuperscript{518}. The contradictions in this one sentence are apparent: if these Dutch orders could have harmed U.S. rearmament, then they could not have been relatively minor orders. The scale of rearmament between the two countries was too different for such interference. Those orders were not approved because political Dutch intransigence about neutrality interfered with U.S. foreign policy aims.

On 27 January 1941 the Netherlands Purchasing Commission was formally instituted in a letter signed by the three Dutch Cabinet Ministers involved (Foreign Affairs, Colonies and Defence) being sent to Dutch Minister Loudon\textsuperscript{519}. Mr. J. Van den Broek was appointed director and its headquarters remained at the Rockefeller Center in New-York in the Dutch Ai old offices. Zimmermann became Deputy Director and had to move over to Washington to co-ordinate activities with the State Department (for export licences) and with the Treasury, where the President's Liaison Committee decided on priorities in the placement of orders.

The newly constituted NPC immediately ran into problems about the delivery of aircraft engines. An order had been placed in Canada for 100 Hurricane model II interceptors, equipped with the Rolls Royce Merlin V-1650 engine, which was being produced under licence by Packard. The Packard factory's total production, however, had been contracted by the BPC and the American Army Air Force. The Americans were willing to transfer 50% of the engines needed for the Dutch Hurricanes, on condition that the British would do the same\textsuperscript{520}, but the British refused and as a result the KNIL-ML was bereft of the only fighter, which (with the Spitfire) could have battled it out against the Zero.

The Lend-Lease Bill, signed by President Roosevelt on 11 March 1941, removed all financial constraints on prospective U.S. allies by granting them full access to American credit. This was very important to the United Kingdom, which was financially bankrupt at the time the Law went into effect. The Dutch, however, didn't have any financial problems due to the high profits earned on exports of rubber and tin from the NEI to the United States. There was one condition, though, about obtaining Lend-Lease goods which did not bother the English at all, but which raised objections by the Governor-General. According to this Act, and as part of the Lend-Lease Agreement the U.S. could insist on all relevant

\textsuperscript{516} Letter Cordell Hull to Walter Foote, 5 October 1940, FRUS, 1940-IV, 167.
\textsuperscript{517} Telegram J. Grew to Cordell Hull, Tokyo, 10 October 1940. FRUS, 1940-IV, 177.
\textsuperscript{518} Telegram Hull to Grew, 14 October 1940, FRUS 1940-IV, 183 - 184.
\textsuperscript{520} Telegram Van Oyen to Verniers van der Loeff, 16 October 1941. ARA, As above.
defence information from the co-signatory being made available to them for their own use. After some pressure by Welter, however, the G.G. gave in, and the final Lend-Lease Agreement between the U.S.A. and The Netherlands was signed by Loudon and Secretary of State Cordell Hull in Washington on 9 August 1941. This in effect removed the major obstacles preventing U.S. weapons and equipment ordered in the United States being delivered to the NEI.

Two paragraphs in this particular Agreement are of specific interest:

In the pre-ambule of the agreement the statement is made: "And whereas the President of the USA has determined, pursuant to the Act of Congress of March 11, 1941, that the defence of the Kingdom of the Netherlands against further aggression is vital to the defence of the USA". So, at last, the U.S. Government recognized the importance of the NEI being well-defended.

Article V of the Agreement reads: "In the event that circumstances arise in which the USA in its own defense or in the defense of the America's shall require defense articles or defense information which the Kingdom of the Netherlands is in a position to supply, the Kingdom of the Netherlands will make such defense articles or defense information available to the USA in terms similar to the terms expressed above in this Agreement". This was the famous paragraph on Defence information, like the maps and secret sailing instructions, which had caused the ire of the G.G.

In June Mr. Van den Broek saw presidential adviser Harry Hopkins to urge higher priority for planes and weapons deliveries for the NEI. He also asked for a delegation of U.S. Air Force officers to visit the NEI in order to report on the lack of planes essential for adequate defence. From July 1941 onwards, the delivery of airplanes was slightly adjusted in favour of the Dutch, possibly as a result of Van den Broek's visit. The list of planned deliveries as communicated to the Dutch Government in July 1941 was as follows:

162 Brewster Bermuda divebombers, October 1941 to July 1942.
25 Curtiss Falcon interceptors, October and November 1941.
25 Ryan trainers, January and February 1942.
20 Lockheed Model 12 trainer/bombers, October 1941 to February 1942.
100 Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk interceptors, October 1941 to March 1942.

In total, the delivery of 332 planes was scheduled but, to the dismay of the Dutch, the 162 B-25 medium bombers which had been ordered in 1940 and were scheduled for delivery at the end of 1942 were not on the list. Moreover, the planes on the list were not all delivered on time. Between February 1940 and March 1942, in total 246 airplanes were shipped from the United States to the NEI. The number of planes ordered through the NPC for the NEI Government had initially been as many as 664 planes, including the Mitchells and 72 Catalina flying boats for the Dutch Navy.

An official U.S. Army Air Force commission visited Java from 2 to 15 August 1941. Members were Brig.Gen. H.B. Clagett, Lt.Col. L. Maitland, and Captain A.W. Ind., all three

---

521 Letter Van Bijlandt to Welter, 27 August 1941, ARA as above.
522 Letter Van den Broek to CZM Furstner, 21 July 1941. ARA Archives Dept of Colonies, accession nr 2.10.45, inv. nr. 738.
523 Table with monthly shipments of planes in Patist, Ibidem, Stabelan, 8:3, 15 December 1941, 20.
officers from Philippines Command. They also visited the RAF in Malaya before arriving in Java, where they called at the Andir, Kalijdjati, Tjillilitan, and Semplak airfields, and at the Naval Base at Surabaya. They had discussions with the C-in-C KNIL, the Commander of the KNIL-ML and the Chief Inspector KNIL-Artillery. Their final report was most favourable for the Dutch Air Forces.

The problems the NPC encountered in obtaining orders in the U.S. were also reported in the American press, but only at a later date. John Thompson, Foreign Editor, gave his comments on this matter in the San Francisco News of 15 November 1941, pointing out that the Dutch had half a billion dollars in cash but that they were unable to place orders for airplanes because the U.S. and England had first priority. He observed that "They [the Dutch] have an abundance of Dutch pilots, considered by many to rate amongst the best in the world. As a matter of fact, they have more pilots than they have machines for them. According to trustworthy Dutch sources the Japanese would not match the Dutch either in pilots or machines. A great number of excellent airports have been scattered all over the islands, and any invading force trying to get a toehold there would have a tough time of it. The Dutch are ready but they would feel a lot better if they could get more of our planes for their defense".

One of the ways to circumvent the strict controls the American Government lay down was to buy materials on the black market against much higher prices. This happened, for example, with the purchase of Muntz metal, needed in the assembling of sea-mines, which had to happen in the NEI. A complaint to the NPC by one of the Dutch technicians about Lt.Cdr van Haeften was the result. The file of this case makes interesting reading.

In 1942, Zimmermann, the new Chief of the NPC, confirmed that "many times we had to trade on the black market, and we [the NPC] even hired a specific expert for that purpose. We had to comply to the order that, whatever the cost, armaments must be procured!"

On 31 May 1942, the NPC had received deliveries from the American armaments industry to a total value of $124.3 million, of which the KNIL Air Force received planes worth $52.9 million and the MLD for $12.4 million. After the fall of Java, the most important cancellations after the fall of Java were orders for 200 Marmo-Herrington tanks and for 150 tank-guns 37 mm. Total orders processed by the NPC amounted to $262 million dollars, of which $202 million had already been paid. By that date less than half the equipment ordered had been delivered and only about half that equipment reached Java before it fell.

---

586 Letter Van Haeften to Van den Broek, 23 June 1942. As above, inv. nr. 737.
587 Letter Zimmermann to Minister of Colonies, 10 September 1942. As above, inv. nr. 737.
588 Report on the disposition and status of NPC Stocks and Contracts as of per 31 December 1942. ARA as above.
589 The total order for tanks consisted of 243 Marmo-Herrington tanks model OTLS-4 TA for a crew of 2, 194 tanks model CTIMS-ITBI for a crew of 3, and 200 tanks model MTLSA-IG14 for a crew of 4. See Letter Zimmermann to Van Mook, 28 December 1942, in ARA, as above, inv. nr. 738.
1.5.6. Co-operation and Controversy, 1941.

1.5.6.1. Military Co-operation.

Admiral Thomas Hart USN, commander of the US Asiatic Fleet, sent his chief of staff to Java on specific instruction from the CNO to discuss defence plans with Vice-Admiral Helfrich, the Dutch Navy Commandant. Captain W.R. Purnell USN met the Dutch in Batavia between 10 to 14 January 1941. Dutch discussions with the British at Singapore had already taken place before that date, and Purnell had had talks with them in December 1940. According to Purnell, the Dutch provided ample data about their own sea and air strength, facilities, airfields and ports. At that time, he could not commit any U.S. armed support in case the Japanese would attack the Dutch, but no reciprocity was asked by the Dutch.

The Governor General reported the gist of those discussions to his Government. He had agreed to American liaison officers being stationed in Batavia and to Dutch officers going to Manila; secret lines of communications had been prepared and all kinds of secret information including maps and sailing instructions had been exchanged. The G.G. thought that co-operation with the Americans might be more fruitful than with the British because the material support from Manila was now noticeably greater. An American naval liaison officer was thereupon assigned to the Dutch naval HQ. He was Cdr Paul S. Slawson USN. Grudgingly the G.G. approved the assignment of a second American naval observer at Belawan, the port of Medan, Sumatra. This was Lt.Cdr Percy W. Rairde, USNR.

How touchy the G.G. remained on this subject, is clear from his violent reaction to an American press release on 19 February 1941 which announced that an American military observer was being sent to the NEI. The G.G. demanded a forceful denuciation from the Minister in Washington to the press, as Japan might easily ask for the same favour. Van Kleffens supported the G.G., and on 21 February 1941 the War Department publicly acknowledged that the previous press release had been an error. Colonel Alexander H. Campbell, US Coastal Artillery at Manila, was however, in deepest secrecy ordered to visit Java and to report on Dutch defense measures. There was still great doubt in American Army circles about the loyalty of the natives should war break out.

On the other hand, the Army Military Intelligence Department (MID) had concluded from a number of interviews with Dutch and American shipmasters and other personnel returning from the NEI that "the natives and half-casts will fight loyally for the Netherlands East Indies."
Some of those interviewed, however, were not so sure about native and half-cast loyalty. Weijerman disagreed with them and notified his American interlocutors that in his view "The whole population [of the NEI] backs the Government."

1.5.6.2. Diplomatic contacts.

On 19 March 1941 Van Kleffens, on his way to the NEI, visited Roosevelt in Washington. He discussed with the President the problems encountered in getting equipment delivered even though it was already paid for. The President was well-briefed and told Van Kleffens that warplanes would go to countries which were already at war. The priority scheme was: Great Britain - Greece - China. For countries not yet at war, like the NEI, the allotment responsibility was with the State Department. Van Kleffens could have concluded from this remark that the NEI were not very high on the U.S. priority list but in his report on the meeting he failed to mention this important conclusion. On 24 March, Van Kleffens talked to Frank Knox, the American Secretary of the Navy. Again, Van Kleffens stressed the importance of speedy deliveries of small-calibre ammunition, planes and rifles to the NEI. The Secretary remained non-committal but expressed his admiration for the way the Dutch handled the Yoshizawa Mission. The visit the two ministers paid to the United States made them painfully aware of how powerless and hence unimportant the NEI were in the eyes of Washington officials. After the visit, Van Kleffens reported to his colleagues: "There were even misgivings in the United States whether the East Indies would defend itself in case of a Japanese attack. It followed that assistance to its defence might prove useless and would only result in the capture of valuable armaments by the hands of the enemy."

In April 1941 Van Kleffens and his colleague Welter, Minister of Colonies both visited Manila, where they had talks with the American High Commissioner Francis Sayre and the British Supreme Commander Far East Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, who had travelled specially to Manila to meet Van Kleffens and Welter. The most important result of those secret talks was the American willingness to work together closely and in secret with the NEI administration and defence establishment, but according to Van Kleffens any kind of a guarantee was still out of the question.

During his stay in Manila, Van Kleffens was approached by the organization of Indonesian students at the University of The Philippines. Due to their nationalistic fervour, he refused a meeting with student representatives of this body, which caused further student radicalisation. In an article entitled "Four hundred years of slavery" in the official Student Publication of the University of The Philippines dated September 1941, the Governor-General was

1941, no 174/C. ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 741.


Report Weijerman to Welter, 26 March 1941, 127/C. ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 741.


even described as "the Hitler of the Netherlands East Indies, with total dictatorial powers."\footnote{540}

In June 1941 Welter visited Washington. On 16 June 1941 he met Admiral Stark, the CNO, at the U.S. Navy Department. Welter discussed three subjects with the CNO, one of which was the problem of inadequate deliveries of weapons by the U.S. Stark remarked, that the United States could not even provide for their own re-armament, let alone supply all the Allies. In a handwritten note about the meeting, sent to Minister Loudon, the Dutch naval attaché stated that in his view, all the subjects discussed by Welter should have been discussed with other American authorities, as none were specifically naval in nature. Welter, however, did not consider it necessary to have any preliminary meetings either with the naval attaché or with other officials at the Dutch Legation before seeing Stark\footnote{541}. It was therefore a missed opportunity, and it serves to illustrate Welter's self-satisfaction.

In the same month, Van Kleffens met Sumner Welles. Van Kleffens informed him that both civilian and military morale in the NEI was high and that both the Army and Navy artillery were adequate and well-stocked, although one real problem remained, that of small-arms ammunition and planes deliveries. The supply of bomber planes was the most worrying\footnote{542}. These statements, however, painted too rosy a picture and did not help much in getting the NEI a higher priority in the delivery of equipment. The calls made by the two Ministers during their stay in Washington cannot therefore really be qualified as successful.

1.5.6.3. The Dutch Oil Embargo.

The Dutch oil embargo against Japan was of quite a different nature, compared to the American oil embargo. In the months after announcing the embargoes, this was the cause of much irritation and controversy on both sides.

In fact, the Dutch had planned some kind of retaliation as a result of the Japanese had announcement on 7 July 1941, that trade measures would be taken. These consisted of export licenses being demanded for the export of Japanese goods to the NEI even when those goods had already been paid for\footnote{543}. This retaliation was because of the abrogation of the talks with the Yoshizawa Mission on 17 June 1941, which resulted in export goods accumulating in Japanese warehouses. The G.G. informed the Minister of Colonies that this retaliation should have to take the form of crude and oil products bought by Japan to become subject to export licensing. Due to the evident security risk to the NEI, the G.G. emphasized to his Government that such a measure should be accompanied by a public or diplomatic statement that a Japanese attack on either Britain, the U.S. or the NEI would be considered to be an attack on all three\footnote{544}. The Dutch counter-measures were announ-


\footnote{542} Record of conversation between Dr. E. van Kleffens and Sumner Welles, Washington, 3 June 1941. FRUS, 1940-IV, pages 248 - 251.

\footnote{543} Letter Van kleffens to Loudon, 25 July 1941. DBPN, C, III, 126.

\footnote{544} Telegram G.G. to Welter, cypher QM/QR, 24 July 1941, DBPN C, III, 130-A, 174 - 175.
ced on 28 July 1941 and consisted of freezing of valutas, of export licences being required for exporting goods to the Yen-bloc countries, and of freezing of Japanese assets in the NEI, which were put under the control of Van Mook's Economics Department. There was no mentioning at all of an oil embargo but the export of oil was made very difficult by the export licenses not being issued.

The sudden and obviously total nature of the American oil embargo caused wide concern in Dutch circles. The Dutch lamented the fact that the U.S. Government had not deemed it necessary to consult them beforehand, knowing full well that the embargo could have had severe repercussions for the NEI. In fact, the Dutch had been forewarned about that by the British Foreign Office on 23 July 1941. Welter had only informed the G.G. about it on 25 July 1941 - one day before the U.S. announcement came. Loudon advised his Government that it would be better for the Dutch administration in the NEI to keep in close touch with the U.S. Government about the execution of their export licensing system in order to avoid clashing with America and obstructing the aims of their embargo.

On 28 July 1941, the G.G. informed Loudon about the nature of the Dutch embargo. Export licences would be needed for crude oil and oil products, manganese ore, palm oil, bauxite, rubber, tin, kapok, nickel ore, ilmenite (Titanium-iron), salt and scrap iron. No license would be required for sugar, cotton, coffee, cassava, wood and maize. Export of oil and oil products would be reduced by means of export licences to the 1935/1936 export level with the exception of high-octane gasoline and light crude, on which there would be a total ban. In subsequent telegrams the G.G. complained that he had no clear picture of the American and British embargoes.

The reason for that complaint was the divergence in Dutch and American/British embargo policies. The Dutch aimed for clearly established export quota; the Americans and the British wanted to leave the Japanese in the dark about the amounts of oil they could still expect. On August 7, Loudon received a list of classified oil products from the Americans, and also a very secret list of maximum export quantities measured in barrels, which fell within the limits allowed on 1935/1936 mean export quantities for non-strategic oil products. For each crude classification there were different export ceilings, which caused much confusion, such as, for example the Tarakan crude which was a C-crude and therefore exportable.

The American Government in its turn was rather upset about the possibilities the Japanese

---

546 Economisch Weekblad, 1 August 1941, no 31, page 1527 ff. Telegram GG to Welter, 28 July 1941. DBPN, as above, 134, 179.

549 Letter Van Kleffens to Loudon, 28 July 1941, no 775, as above, inv. nr. 2835.

547 Memorandum Texeira de Mattos to Van Kleffens, 23 July 1941. Archives MinBuZa, GA/DZ, A I 14a, accession nr 429.

548 Telegram Loudon to Van Kleffens, 30 July 1941, no 672, as above.

549 Letter G.G. to Loudon, 3 August 1941, no 111/119, as above, inv. nr. 2835. DBPN, as above, 153, 207.


551 Letter Loudon to Van Kleffens, 7 August 1941, no 4207/897. Archives MinBuZa, London Archives GA/DZ, A I 14a, acc. nr. 429, with list of oil products.
possessed had to continue obtaining oil from the NEI and Loudon had to explain why the export of certain oil products to Japan was still allowed. The U.S. Government would have liked to have seen the same embargo as it had imposed also implemented in the NEI. The G.G. however rejected that suggestion as being unsuitable for NEI conditions. The American Under-Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, in a meeting on 5 September urged the Dutch Minister to follow the example of the American oil embargo. He told Loudon that the U.S. Government was willing to thaw Japanese dollar assets at U.S. Banks for those oil exports which were covered by Dutch export licences. The reason for this was U.S. hesitancy to guarantee the integrity of the NEI and therefore the obvious worry of not giving the Japanese any excuses to attack the NEI. Van Kleffens supported the G.G. on that score, however. As the Dutch did not deliver any export licences for oil orders which could not be paid for in dollars, and as American bureaucracy did not decide on unfreezing of certain Japanese assets in U.S. bank accounts, the oil embargo, in effect, became a total one.

1.5.6.4. Trade or Embargo?

The result of the Dutch measures was that it was still possible to trade between Japan and the NEI even after the embargoes had been announced. Japan paid for imports from the NEI in guilders earned by the export of Japanese products to the NEI. The list of NEI export products not affected by the Dutch embargo was fairly long. According to that list, Japan was to receive 570,000 tons of "non-strategic" oil products, in addition to agricultural products such as coffee, timber, sugar, maize and tapioca. Notwithstanding American criticism, the Dutch did not change their licence system in that direction, except for oil.

Once the embargo had been announced, three Japanese tankers appeared in NEI waters: two at Soengeigerong and Pladjoe on Sumatra respectively and one at Tarakan on Borneo. The Sumatra crude had been classified by the Americans as an "A-type" crude as lots of aviation gasoline could be distilled from it. The Dutch authorities therefore sent those two tankers back empty. The Tarakan crude, however, had a "C-type" classification and so could be exported. When the Americans refused to unfreeze Japanese dollar-assets to pay for that crude, that tanker was also sent back empty.

---

552 Telegram Loudon to van kleffens, 6 August 1941. DBPN, as above, 164.
553 Telegram Loudo aan G.G., 18 August 1941, no 157/158, as above.
554 Telegram G.G. to Welter, 4 September 1941, no 149/152, as above. Also in DBPN, C, III, 237, 293/294.
555 Anderson, op. cit., 225.
556 Telegram Van Kleffens to Loudon, 14 September 1941, no 920/925. Also in DBPN, C, III, 260-c, 351/352.
558 See list in letter Welter to Van Kleffens, 13 September 1941, no 1840/EA/9.1301, MinBuZa Archives, Archives London Period, GA/DZ, A 114a, access. nr. 429, also in DBPN, C, III, 266-a, 341 - 345.
The Dutch complained bitterly that they were not invited in the talks held between the Japanese Ambassador in Washington and the U.S. Government on the future of the Pacific. The G.G. in particular was afraid, that the Japanese might interprete the Dutch embargo as having been dictated by the Americans and British, thereby robbing the Dutch of any freedom of action towards the Japanese and also towards the protective allies Great-Britain and the U.S.A. Early in November the G.G. again approached Welter about the lack of information from the Americans regarding the talks between Nomura and Hull. He bemoaned the apparent disappearance of the NEI as a diplomatic factor in the Japanese equation, which in itself was serious enough already. As the NEI's highest interests were at stake at those talks, the G.G. argued that the Dutch Government at least ought to be consulted by the American Government and he sent a strongly worded message to Loudon in Washington to that effect. The G.G. still considered the Dutch Empire to be a first-class Power to be reckoned with.

September saw the visit of a representative of Roosevelt, Dr H. Grady, to the Governor-General. The G.G. reported that "Grady very explicitly stated that the U.S.A. would be involved if Japan attacked Malaya or the East Indies, but that there was a general desire to avoid conflict for the time being". It gave the G.G. the feeling that the U.S. would indeed intervene if Japan attacked. Grady himself visited the Surabaya Naval Base, Andir airforce base, and KNIL GHQ in Bandoenig personally, and reported his findings in a most positive way. His report about his meetings with the G.G. and with Van Mook shows excellent insight into Dutch policy with regard to the oil embargo against Japan.

1.5.6.5. The American air bridge to The Philippines.

On 19 September 1941, U.S. Envoy Biddle formally presented Van Kleffens with his Government's request to give American planes a "blanket permit" to fly over Dutch territory. The reasons for this request were the plans to ferry as many planes as possible from Australia to The Philippines. The Americans proposed that the Flight Commander would inform local Dutch authorities about his schedule, without having to ask the Dutch government for flight permission. The Americans also offered U.S. funds and personnel to assist in the construction of additional airstrips. The G.G. rejected this proposal but instead suggested that a direct link could be used between the Dutch Consulate-General in Manila and KNIL GHQ in Bandoenig in order to speed up flight confirmations.

In Washington, the Dutch military attaché reported on a meeting he had had with the Head

---

560 Telegram G.G. to Welter, 2 October 1941, no 194/199, as above, inv. nr. 2835. Also in DBPN, C, III, 312, 414. Also in ARA, Archives Dept. of Colonies, acc. nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 123.


562 Telegram G.G. to Minister of Colonies, 13 September 1941, no 555/U, ARA Cabinet Archives Department of Foreign Affairs, Archives Consulate-General Sydney, accession nr 2.05.48.14, inv. nr. 78.

563 Telegram Grady to Cordell Hull, 12 September 1941, no 134. ARA, as above, inv. nr. 737. See also Chapter 3, par. 3.5.7, page 311.

564 Report dr H. Grady to Cordell Hull about visit to NEI, 15 September 1941, FRUS, 1940-IV, 878 - 880.


566 Ibid., document 381 of 31 October 1941, 514.
of the Far Eastern Section of the MID, who had given him an extensive account of all the major Japanese units and ships. Japan had 3,743 planes operational, of which 500 were located in Southern Indo-China, where they also had 4 Infantry Divisions and an Infantry Brigade. The information was in fact completely correct.

From 10 to 13 October 1941, Hein Ter Poorten, the Dutch Army Chief of Staff, visited Manila to co-ordinate the use of Dutch airfields for the purpose of ferrying American bombers and fighters from Australia to The Philippines. He also informed the Americans that the Kendari airbase in S.E. Celebes was the only field large enough to accommodate the big B-17s. His visit was widely publicized but had to be broken off because of an airplane accident in which Lieut.-Gen. Berenschot, the KNIL Commander, was killed. Ter Poorten became the new KNIL Commander. His visit to Manila was preceded by a visit to the NEI by Dr. Carlos Romulo, who was a close friend of Filipino President Manuel Quezon. Romulo had been quite impressed by Dutch defence measures, declaring them to be at least five times better than those at The Philippines.

On 17 October 1941 once again Biddle approached Van Kleffens. He had received a telegram from Washington, directing him to take up with the Dutch Government the question of landing bases at Celebes, Ceram and Tarakan urgently. The War Department had concluded from investigations that the immediate establishment of an air route between Hawaii and the Philippine Islands, was imperative to national defence. The War Department also desired blanket permission to communicate with local officials for the purpose of making surveys and for the arrival of necessary construction parties. The Americans were clearly in a hurry!

Early in December the Dutch Minister in Washington informed his Government, that "a positive order for full co-operation has been received by Admiral Hart on 2 December. I will check at the War department about general MacArthur". Within a few days, the neutrality of both countries was be a thing of the past, and they would be allied against the furor the Japanese unleashed upon them.

1.6. Analysis and Conclusions

1.6.1. Foreign Policy.

Looking back to the period from 1920 to 1942, the main question to be answered in the context of this chapter is whether U.S. foreign policy had been effective in the Far East. The challenge of course came from that upstart in the Far East, Japan. Could U.S. foreign policy have averted war, first between China and Japan and later on between Japan and the Western Powers?

---

567 Letter Weijerman to Welter, 12 September 1941, no 369/C. ARA Archives Dept. of Colonies, accession nr. 2.10.45, inv. nr. 741.


569 Memorandum US Envoy Biddle to Van kleffens, 17 October 1941. DBPN, Ibid., document 348.

As the United States were not directly under threat of war because of the immense distances across Pacific, their foreign policy was entirely concentrated on maintaining the "Open Door"-policy in the Far East, specifically towards China, but also including Manchuria. In that sense, the Washington Nine-Power Treaty in 1922 was an unqualified success for American diplomacy. The fact that in Washington, Great Britain had lost an ally (Japan) without acquiring a new one (the United States) was to prove in the future, however, to be a failure of both British and American diplomacy, at least in hindsight.

When Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, the Stimson doctrine of non-recognition of Japanese conquests failed, both because the United States was not represented in the League of Nations, and was unable to reach a consensus with other powers, specifically Great Britain, as an outsider. The naval conferences at Geneva (1927) and London (1930 and 1935) only increased suspicions between the English and the Americans to the detriment of both parties. No international measures were taken against Japanese aggression. The First Roosevelt administration (1932 - 1936) had to get its own house into order first before starting any active foreign policy. It was early in 1937 before that really started in earnest. At that time, however, Japan had left the League of Nations, making collective sanctions even more difficult internationally.

During his second term, President Roosevelt experimented with different approaches towards Japan. The weakness of the U.S. Army specifically made it difficult to play the right military card; the President therefore resorted to all kinds of foreign policy initiatives, most of which failed because he could not attain international consensus. The British failure early in 1938 to support the American proposal for a distant blockade of Japan was a real disaster. It was a lost opportunity which drove the two potential allies into different directions politically, and which consequently weakened further possible collective actions against Japan fatally. The fact that the Nine-Power Conference at Brussels in November 1938 failed, added to the gloom. The whole period from 1931 to 1941 can therefore be characterized by American powerlessness on the one hand, and by a "Grand Strategy" of aloofness and isolationism, which was reinforced by the unwise decision in 1921 not to join the League of Nations on the other hand.

At home the isolationists increased in political strength, public opinion would not support a war against Japan, nor even allow strong measures to be taken and a potential ally (Great Britain) even pursued appeasement. The spectacular re-birth of German military prowess in Western Europe shifted political attention away from the Pacific towards Europe and also resulted militarily in the abandonment of the thirty-year old War Plan ORANGE for a "Germany First"-strategy.

The most serious U.S. foreign policy failure, however, happened just before Pearl Harbor, namely the failure to postpone the outbreak of war in the Pacific. Both the U.S. Navy and the Army wanted a few more months of peace in which to reinforce the Far East. That would have resulted in the U.S. oil embargo being moderated. A postponement of the outbreak of war until April 1942 would have allowed all three prospective allies in S.E. Asia to have become much stronger. The dropping of a "modus vivendi" in November 1941 led to serious consequences, not only to the United States, but even more so to its prospective Allies.

Of course it is debatable, whether the Japanese would have waited until then to attack. The Two Ocean Navy Bill of July 1940 made them a strategically inferior power as from early 1944. Time was running in favour of the Americans rather than the Japanese and
they knew it. They chose to fight therefore on the earliest possible date which happened to be around December 1941. Premier Tojo, as an active general, was the only man within the Japanese Government who could have reined in the military extremists and he was certainly prepared to do so (See Chapter 6, p. 684). The Ten Points Note, which included a Japanese withdrawal from China, gave him no other choice than to go to war.

From the viewpoint of power politics, it is important to note that after the Tientsin crisis of 1939 Great Britain gave up its status as a first-class Power in Asia, and tried to have the U.S. taking over that position. It offered the U.S. Navy Singapore as a naval base, and tried in vain to obtain U.S. guarantees for the security of its colonies and those of the Dutch. The peaceful transfer of power from Great Britain to the U.S. which was so evident in Western Europe in 1944 was therefore preceded by a full three years in S.E. Asia. It spelled the end for the Western Colonial Powers in that region. The occupation by Japan of those colonies contributed also, but in a lesser degree as Japanese propaganda would like us to make believe.

1.6.2. Defence Policy.

The United States could well afford a speedy demobilization of their impressive Army after the First World War. The U.S. Navy, however, still formed a formidable first line of defence, and was outperforming other countries in new construction. This naval arms race ended in 1922 with the Washington Naval Disarmament Treaties, due to growing public pressure. This resulted in a ten-year battleship building holiday. Efforts to extend this building holiday to other ships failed in Geneva in 1927, but succeeded for cruisers at least in London in 1930. The failure due to Japanese intransigence of the Second London Naval Disarmament Conference in 1935 ended the period of naval arms limitations, and the U.S. began to reinforce its still formidable fleet up to the Washington Treaty limits. Mahan's influence remained strong, however, and the modernized Navy was still primarily a battleship navy.

At the same period a fierce discussion raged in all countries in West and East about the role of aircraft in future conflict. Great-Britain was the only nation in which the airmen succeeded in establishing their own service Ministry, but in the U.S. the Naval and Army Air Corps remained under the wings of their parental service organizations. With men like Moffett and Towers in charge of Naval Air, and Mitchell, Arnold and Chennault in charge of Army Air, a solid foundation was laid for the oncoming fight. When in the shadow of alleged German bomber superiority, the Munich conference brought appeasement, it was such a shock that an increased cash flow to the Army Air Force was the result, so that it could be strongly expanded immediately. The Naval Air Corps profited from the Two Ocean Navy Bill with its allotment of eleven big and fast Fleet Aircraft Carriers.

In the interbellum, the U.S. Army had been reduced to a skeleton Army, and had been allowed to reach a degree of obsolescence which had made it unfit to be an instrument of international diplomacy. Its shabby state reduced the power projection capabilities outside America's borders to about nil, a fact which was carefully kept from foreign observers. Moreover, its rapid modernization was further hampered because Roosevelt ordered a large share of newly produced equipment to go to the countries doing the actual fighting, namely the British Empire, China, Greece and later on Russia. Until late in 1941, Roosevelt evidently believed that re-arming the opponents of the Axis might actually prevent the U.S. getting involved in the war. But it did not keep him from risking a conflict with Germany in order to make sure that all the weapons and equipment reached their destinations.
Without a strong Army contingent over there, the U.S. Navy considered that the defence of The Philippines was a losing proposition, in contrast to the Army. The loss of The Philippines was foreseen in all Navy War Plans ORANGE. The U.S. Army, however, disagreed with the Navy plan, stressing the possibility of retaining Manila with sufficient forces at hand. However, in those plans, the U.S. Army played a secondary role, and when, at the end of the thirties, the rebirth of the Army proceeded too slowly, the Navy increased the strengths of its Marine Corps. Moreover, the U.S. Navy had developed the logistical capacity to operate on the high seas for months on end without requiring of base facilities, and therefore of Army guard troops.

However, the rapid rise of Germany, and its military successes against France and Great Britain in 1940, meant that an adjustment was necessary. It came in the form of Admiral Stark's Plan Dog, and shifted the strategic naval focus from the Pacific to the Atlantic. As with The Philippines, the powerlessness of the U.S. Army made it impossible to protect Great Britain other than by ships and planes. The time had arrived for the RAINBOW Plans, which emphasized the Defence of the Western Hemisphere as first priority. RAINBOW V saw the incorporation of the "Germany-First" strategy, which was to result in the undeclared war between the U.S. Navy and German U-boats in the Atlantic from September to November 1941.

Meanwhile, the Army lacked both sufficient numbers of troops and firepower to reinforce The Philippines, so an attempt was made using an untested weapon: the B-17 strategic bomber. The Japanese called that bluff and as we now know, The Philippines were consequently lost, as was the rest of S.E. Asia.

In retrospect, the slow awakening of the U.S. Army from its interwar slumber was a major American failure. The situation would have been even far worse for the free nations if the U.S. Navy had not been so lucky to possess a rearmament lead of some 6 years ahead of the U.S. Army.

1.6.3. Dutch-American relations.

In the twenties, the Dutch colonial administration of the NEI was considered by foreign observers - and by the Dutch themselves - to be a model of enlightened administration of indigenous people. This appreciation changed considerably under the influence of the "Philippine model" of U.S. colonial administration, and also by the way the Dutch turned towards a repressive, paternalistic government in the NEI, based on the maintenance of "law and order". This resulted in a far more critical attitude being taken by senior American civil servants regarding the Dutch colony. Generally speaking, the Dutch were unaware of the way opinions were changing.

When the Dutch lost their native country to the Germans in May 1940, they had to find equipment suppliers in non-belligerent countries and turned therefore to the U.S.A. Not hampered by a lack of cash, the Dutch military forces placed large orders with U.S. firms - and were very surprised when they discovered that the American government did not give their re-armament top priority. The wavering attitude of the Dutch Government-in-exile towards their British hosts and allies and the lack of an adequate defence in the NEI made

export of modern military equipment, aircraft in particular, a very risky business as seen through American eyes. The aloofness, and lack of willingness to co-operate with both the British and the Americans, which the Governor-General displayed during the whole of 1940 only reinforced this opinion. The result was a reduction in the export of weapons to the NEI, which forced the Dutch Government and the G.G., aided by the strongly pro-British Dutch Navy and the equally pro-American Minister in Washington, to reconsider its position. The outcome was a gradual re-orientation of the Dutch colonial administration in the direction of the United States, hastened by the oil embargo and its implied dangers to the Dutch situation. A year of critical importance had however been lost as far as rearmament of the NEI was concerned.

Dutch foreign policy was not very successful in those last few years of peace. Due to a lack of inside information, both diplomatically and militarily, the Dutch Government had an incomplete or even false picture of its own international position, and it therefore cherished pretensions about its international importance which were far too inflated. The problem lay with the Dutch Cabinet and the Dutch colonial administration; the Dutch diplomats in Washington were exceptionally capable, and warned the Dutch Government about unpleasant developments just in time.

It is clear from the diplomatic correspondence that President Roosevelt was proud of his Dutch ancestry and avidly cultivated friendly relations with the Dutch monarchy. It is also evident, however, that the Dutch were not allowed to play any role of importance in American foreign policy, the President's responsibility. They were also not given any preferential treatment concerning re-armament. On the contrary, I must therefore disagree with Homan's statement that "Roosevelt was pro-Dutch."572 This was of course partly due to Dutch bumbling in the organisation of an efficient Purchase Commission, but one cannot escape the impression that American diplomats and officers had a far more realistic view of Dutch strengths and weaknesses than the Dutch had themselves.