

in all the aeronautical organizations afloat. I realize of course the necessity for personnel ashore, particularly in the aeronautical organization, to train new personnel and to produce the material. But the balance should be maintained, and in any event the latest type planes should be supplied the Fleet. The forces afloat have repeatedly recommended the acquisition of two or more "seatrains" vessels to transport airplanes. I am not familiar with the technical difficulties involved, but if it is at all possible to do so—and Halsey is—[5] that it is—I think this work should be undertaken at once. The recent required use of carriers to transport Army planes to Okinawa illustrates the necessity for providing some means for airplane transport. Transporting planes and equipment by carrier is highly expensive, both in lost training of flyers and non-availability of carrier for other duty.

We are going ahead with Plan Dog and RAINBOW THREE. Prior to the receipt of the letters received in the mail yesterday we had given priority to Plan Dog, but as you state you wish priority to be given RAINBOW THREE, we will do so.

The necessity for additional store ships and transports is accentuated by placing Marines on the outlying islands and I hope nothing will stand in the way to promptly supply those now planned, and to further increase them as soon as practicable.

I shall decide upon the distribution of the explosives after consultation with Withers and Dracmel.

With kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

H. K. Kimmel.

Admiral H. H. Stark, U. S. Navy

Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

P. S. We received through radio and other intelligence rather reliable reports on the positions of Japanese merchant ships, but we have no definite information on the important Japanese trade routes. Can you send us the latest information you have on this? I am initiating separate correspondence on this topic.

I have recently been told by an officer fresh from Washington that ONI considers it the function of Operations to furnish the Commander-in-Chief with information of a secret nature. I have heard also that Operations considers the responsibility for furnishing the same type of information to be that of ONI. I do not know that we have advised anything, but if there is any doubt as to whose responsibility it is to keep the Commander-in-Chief fully informed with pertinent reports on subjects that should be of interest to the Fleet, will you kindly fix that responsibility so that there will be no misunderstanding?

# EXHIBIT No. 31

In reply refer to Initials and No.

Op-10 Hu

Secret

## NAVY DEPARTMENT

### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Washington, 25 February 1941.

Dear Kimmel: I suppose by this time your staff is working smoothly on the beach. It is most important, as I have indicated previously, that as soon as possible you get your Operating Plan for Rainbow III in the hands of Admiral Hart and your own subordinate commanders, including those in command of the Pacific and the Hawaiian Naval Coastal Frontiers. Then we can get ready the subordinate operating plans and the logistic requirements, the latter being of especial importance to you in your advanced position.

Particularly in connection with your logistic planning, some of us here have wondered as to whether or not you might also put the Commander Base Force and his staff ashore in a status more or less similar to your own. However, this is your job and I just mention it en passant.

Even if we fight this war according to "Plan Dog", we have so designed Rainbow III that a shift to "Dog" (see my despatch of January) will (at least at first) require only minor changes in the tasks of either the Basic Plan or your

Operating Plans. The force we would move to the Atlantic possibly would not go at once, and the force left with you will still be great enough to perform both the offensive and defensive tasks assigned you. Of course we all could wish for more.

In making your plans for the more important offensive raids, I hope that you will not fail to study very carefully the matter of making aircraft raids on the inflammable Japanese cities (ostensibly on military objectives), and the effect such raids might have on Japanese morale and on the diversion of their forces away from the Malay Barrier. Such adventures may seem to you unjustified from a profit and loss viewpoint—but, again, you may consider that they might prove very profitable. In either case (and this is strictly *SECRET*) *you and I may be ordered* to make them, so it is just as well for you to have considered plans for it.

I hesitated to take the chance of upsetting you with my despatch and letter concerning a *visit* of a detachment of surface forces to the Far East. I agree with you that it is unwise. But even since my last letter to you, the subject has twice come up in the White House. Each of the many times it has arisen, my view has prevailed, but the time *might* come when it will not. I gave you the information merely as a sort of advance notice.

The difficulty is that the entire country is in a dozen minds about the war—to stay out altogether, to go in against Germany in the Atlantic, to concentrate against Japan in the Pacific and the Far East—I simply can not predict the outcome. Gallup polls, editorials, talk on the Hill (*and I might add, all of which is irresponsible*)<sup>1</sup> constitute a rising tide for action in the Far East if the Japanese go into Singapore or the Netherlands East Indies. This can not be ignored and we must have in the back of our heads the possibility of having to swing to that tide. If it should prevail against Navy Department recommendations, you would have to implement Rainbow III, and forget my later despatch concerning "Plan Dog". This would mean that any reinforcement to the Atlantic might become impossible, and, in any case, would be reduced by just so much as we would send to the Asiatic. And that might be a very serious matter for Britain.

I am perfectly delighted over getting some modern Army airplanes in the Hawaiian area and jumped at the opportunity to transport them. I wish they would make me a similar offer for the Philippines, in which case I would also make available a carrier, properly escorted, for the duty.

I know little of further interest to bring up for the moment. Our staff conversations (and thank the Good Lord there has been *little* no public leak that they are taking place) are nearing their conclusion and we hope will be finished in about ten days. Of course we will make you acquainted with all decisions reached just as soon as we can.

I am sending copy of this letter to Tommy Hart, whose mind you now know pretty well with reference to his job in the Far East. I have been out of the office for a few days and I haven't seen Hart's "Estimate of the Situation", but I do know that War Plans is delighted with what he has sent, and of course I always have been because of his grasp of the entire picture.

I am enclosing copy of a memo which is self-explanatory showing you our best estimate of the Far Eastern present situation. Please note the covering sentences where it is stated that a reestimate may have to be necessary at any time, but it still looks to us as though this estimate, at least for the moment, were sound.

Keep cheerful.

All good wishes and Good Luck.

BETTY.

Admiral H. E. KIMMEL, USN  
Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet,  
USS PENNSYLVANIA.

<sup>1</sup> The underlined matter is privileged—It must NOT be released without specific authority SECNAV.

[1] [Pencil Notation:] Sent to W. H. by Capt Callaghan

## DRAFT

11 FEBRUARY 1941.

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Since your thought yesterday morning of the possibility of sending a detachment to the Philippines via the southern route consisting of approximately 4 cruisers, a squadron (9) of destroyers and carriers and perhaps to permit a leak that they were going out there just for a temporary visit and then to return, I confess to having pondered a good deal on it last night during the wee small hours because, as you know, I have previously opposed this and you have concurred as to its unwisdom. Particularly do I recall your remark in a previous conference when Mr. Hull suggested this and the question arose as to getting them out and your 100% reply, from my standpoint, was that you might not mind losing one or two cruisers (we have 2 out there now), but that you did not want to take a chance on losing 5 or 6. Frankly, I breathed a great sigh of relief and thought the issue pretty definitely closed.

You also called it a "bluff" and questioned it from that standpoint. Obviously, if we permitted a leak about their coming back, there would be even less, if any, bluff, and again if we did not permit a leak with regard to their coming back, we would then certainly look like turning tail and running if something happened and we did come back. I believe it pretty thoroughly agreed that we do not want that force in the Philippines in case of sudden attack, and that even were we to consider in emergency increasing our forces in the Far East, we would not send them to Manila Bay but rather to the southward or into the Dutch East Indies where they would be better supported and not so open to attack.

[2] As I reported yesterday, recent letters from Hart state he is simply up against it for facilities to care for what he has and only recently have we acquired a vessel to make available to him later on to help take care of his submarines which are in urgent and immediate need of a Mother Ship. Likewise he is taxed to take care of his Air Force but we are improving these facilities. Sometime after July I want to send him another squadron of bombers. We expect to send four minesweepers (bird class) out in March.

Specifically:—

Sending a small force would probably be no deterrent to Japan and would not increase Japanese difficulties in advancing southward. I feel we would be exposing our force without compensating results.

There is a chance that further moves against Japan will precipitate hostilities rather than prevent them. We want to give Japan no excuse for coming in in case we are forced into hostilities with Germany whom we all consider our major problem.

The Pacific Fleet is now weaker in total tonnage and aircraft than the Japanese Navy. It is, however, a very strong force and as long as it is in its present position it remains a constant serious and real threat to Japan's flank. If any considerable division is sent to Manila it might prove an invitation to Japan to attack us in detail and thus greatly lessen or remove our serious naval threat to her for a considerable period to come. I believe it would be a grave strategic error at this time to divide our Pacific Fleet. We would then have our Fleet divided in three parts, Atlantic, Mid-Pacific, and Western Pacific. It is true we only contemplate a visit out there but we might find recall of this additional detachment [3] exceedingly embarrassing or difficult.

If we are forced into the war our main effort as approved to date will be directed in the Atlantic against Germany. We should, if possible, not be drawn into a major war in the Far East. I believe the Pacific Fleet should at least at first remain strong until we see what Japan is going to do. If she remains quiet, or even if she moves strongly toward Malaysia, we could then vigorously attack the Mandates and Japanese communications in order to weaken Japan's attack on the British and Dutch. We would also then be able to support spare forces for the Atlantic.

Right now, Japan does not know what we intend. If we send part of the Fleet to the Asiatic now, we may show our hand and lose the value of any strategic surprise. We might encourage Japan to move, rather than deter her, and also we might very well compromise our own future operations.

I feel we should not indicate the slightest interest in the Gilbert or Solomon or Fiji Islands at this time. If we do, the Japanese might smell a rat and our future use of them, at least so far as surprise is concerned, might be compromised. The Japanese could take steps to occupy some of them before we could because she has had long training and is ready for amphibious operations; we are not. If we lose the element of surprise or begin to show interest, for example in the Gilberts, such previous warning may delay our later operations because Japan would well consider nullifying our efforts in this direction.

I just wanted to get this off my chest to you as I always do my thoughts and then will defer to your better judgment with a cheerful Aye, Aye, Sir, and go the limit as will all of us in what you decide. I do think the matter serious.

[4] The establishment of Marine Defense Battalions at Samoa, Palmyra, Johnston and Midway is now in progress. I have not authorized any leak on this because I have questioned such a procedure but if you feel it advisable we could of course, do so. If Japan occupies Saigon, I am considering recommending we plant our mines in Manila, assume a full posture of defense in the Philippines and send the Fleet Marine Force from San Diego to Hawaii.

Finally I want you to know I am notifying Kimmel to be prepared to send a force such as we talked about yesterday to the Philippines, in case your final decision should be to send them.

I have just read a paraphrase of a telegram of 7 Feb. from the American Embassy at Tokyo, which the State Department has furnished us. In it appears the following:

"Risk of war would be certain to follow increased concentration of American vessels in the Far East. As it is not possible to evaluate with certainty the inponderable factor which such risks constitute the risk should not be taken unless our country is ready to force hostilities."

You undoubtedly have seen the entire despatch and obviously I am picking out that portion which supports my view.

Op-12-CTB Secret

FEBRUARY 5, 1941.

#### *Memorandum for the President*

Subject: Analysis of the Situation in Indo-China.

1. The despatches from the Naval Attaché in London concerning prospects of an immediate crisis in Indo-China and Singapore seem to be a re-hash of the story by Douglas Robertson in the New York Times of February 2d. I have been watching this situation with extreme care and see no present reason for alarm. We knew in advance the Japanese were sending some ships to Thailand and Indo-China to enforce cessation of hostilities between those states. This has been accomplished. The transfer of peace negotiations on the NATORI to Tokyo indicates to me two things,

- (1) The demands by Japan will be far-reaching, and
- (2) The February 10th date is too soon for an attack, as the negotiations are likely to be rather long-drawn out in Tokyo.

2. A careful study, including an evaluation of information from many sources, leads me to believe that the following is the general plan of Japan:

(a) She has some fear that the British and the United States will intervene if she moves into southern Indo-China and Thailand. Therefore, she wishes first to obtain a full legal right to enter those countries, by getting the consent of the two governments to give her concessions in the ports and on shore.

(b) The size of Japanese land forces in Formosa and Hainan is insufficient for occupying Indo-China and Thailand, for attacking Singapore, and for keeping an expeditionary force ready to use against the Philippines. So far as I can tell, an insufficient number of transports is assembled for a major move. [2] Upon a successful conclusion of the peace negotiations she will assuredly occupy Thailand and southern Indo-China, establish defended naval, land, and air bases, and get ready for further eventualities. She may build up her land forces in Indo-China in readiness for action against Malaya and British North Borneo, or may retain them in Formosa and Hainan. I question her readiness to attack the British before June, but this belief is subject to revision.

(c) Japan desires to move against the British, the Dutch and the United States in succession, and not to take on more than one at a time. At present, she desires not to go to war with the United States at all, in order that she can con-

tinue her imports of materials useful for war and for her general economy. If Japan gets a favorable opportunity, and believes the United States has then definitely decided to remain out of war altogether, she will move first against Malaya and possibly Burma, hoping the Dutch will not participate. Her present economic conversations with the Dutch indicate she may be playing for time, and even may intend to conquer the Dutch primarily by economic and political penetration.

(d) Japan is unlikely to undertake hostilities against Britain until she sees the results of Germany's next attack on the British Isles, and of Germany's success in the Balkans. If the Germans succeed in conquering the British Isles, Japan will at once move into Malaya, and possibly into the Netherlands East Indies. If the German attack against the British Isles fails, I believe Japan may await a more favorable opportunity before advancing beyond Indo-China.

3. The above are my present views. They will change if we get information that will warrant change. So far, everything leads me to believe that Japan is playing for a secure advance without too great an expenditure of military energy. The recent reinforcement of her defense in the Mandates indicates the seriousness with which she views the threat by the Pacific Fleet, so long as it remains strong and apparently ready to move against her eastern flank.

H. R. STARK.

The interested party, Admiral Harold R. Stark, U. S. N., respectfully directs the attention of the Court to *Exhibit 31* which is a personal letter dated 25 February 1941, from Admiral Harold R. Stark, U. S. Navy, to Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, U. S. Navy. The interested party considers that this letter contains certain matters coming within the purview of Section 261 (a) of Naval Courts and Boards, which provides that a witness may be privileged with respect to certain testimony, among the principal cases of privilege being:

"(a) *State secrets*.—This class of privilege covers all the departments of the Government, and its immunity rests upon the belief that the public interests would suffer by a disclosure of state affairs. The scope of this class is very extended, and the question of the inclusion of a given matter therein is decided by a consideration of the requirements of public policy with reference to such matter."

If the interested party had been asked to read this letter into his testimony, he would have declined to answer as a matter of personal privilege involving the disclosure of state secrets:

*The words in parenthesis in the second sentence in the first paragraph on page 2.*

The interested party respectfully requests that this statement be conspicuously attached to the copy of Exhibit 31, which the Judge Advocate Proposes to place in the secret files of the Navy Department.

The interested party considers that the disclosure of the parts of this letter mentioned above would be detrimental to the interests of the United States and contrary to public policy.

[1]

Letter No. 22

SECRET

In reply refer to initials and No. Op-10/Dy.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS,  
Washington, March 22, 1941.

DEAR KIMMEL: Your letter of February 18th was handed to me upon my return from an inspection of N. O. 14, Norfolk, Pajardo, Vieques anchorage, Pillsbury Sound, St. Thomas, San Juan, Guantánamo, various Bahama Islands, Key West, Miami, Jacksonville, Pensacola, Charleston, and Parris Island; literally, a flying trip.

Igerhart wrote you to acknowledge receipt of your letter. We have now received answers from the interested individuals here in the Department to the questions you asked. I will take up your letter, paragraph, by paragraph, here goes:

The checks for the Navy Medal and Red Cross have been received. You must have had acknowledgments by this time.

Chester Nimitz in his letter to you of March 3—a copy of which I have—seems to have answered all your questions on personnel so that I need not comment.