

#53 D.B.A.

DECLASSIFIED

2

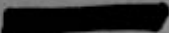
Box 43

✓
COPY NO. 24

To: B.A.D. Washington 587

From: Admiralty

Dated: 25th February, 1942.


MOST IMMEDIATE

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO. 1-17-79
BY *RHP* DATE NOV 13 1973

Following for Joint Staff Mission from
Chiefs of Staff Number (W) 85.

1. Your D.B.A. 23 and 28. Under whose command do you propose the Philippine Islands and Northern Australia should be? In C.C.O.S. 19 WAVELL recommended return of Philippine Islands to U.S. and Northern Australia to Australian Command.
2. We had thought that ABDA Area as such would now disappear.

T.O.O. 1206A/25

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

COPY NO. 27

To: Abdacom

Rptd: Chiefs of Staff London

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff

Dated: 25th February, 1942

MOST IMMEDIATE

D.B.A. 28.

It is not repeat not intention that Abda Area should disappear altogether at this time. But since it is now confined primarily to local defence of N.E.I., need for your large Headquarters has disappeared. Command therefore is being transferred to Dutch Headquarters. Philippines and that part of North Australia now under your command remain in Abda Area for the present. Inform Dutch Headquarters accordingly. Reports should be made through same channel as heretofore. Acknowledge.

T.O.C. 00170/25.

RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION

U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

26

To: ABDACON.
From: JOINT STAFF MISSION.

Date: 24.2.42

MOST IMMEDIATE.

D.B.A. 26.

Following just received from London cancelling concurrence in general line taken in D.B.A. 23 and 25 on subject of communique. Begins:

"0230 24th February. Prime Minister has just expressed view that there should be no repetition no public announcement of dissolution of Abdacom until it is an accomplished fact and General Wavell and Staff have reached their destination.

(ii) His reasons are that any announcement will not only give the enemy the impression that we are throwing up the sponge in Java but will also sensibly add to danger of journey of General Wavell and his Staff.

(iii) General Wavell should be informed accordingly unless of course the President does not agree."

Ends.

President's views will be obtained in about nine hours.

01530/24

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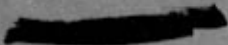
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JCS MEMO, 1-17-78
BY NLT, DATE NOV 13 1973

COPY NO. 27

To: ABDACOM
Reptd: Chiefs of Staff, London
From: Combined Chiefs of Staff
Dated: 24th February, 1942.

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JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974


MOST IMMEDIATE

D.B.A. 27.

Reference D.B.A. 26.

President concurs in view of Prime Minister.

T.O.O. 1333Q/24

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff

(53)

COPY NO. 26

To: AEDACOM.

Repeated Chiefs of Staff, London.

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff.

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JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date

MAY 1 1974

MOST IMMEDIATE.

D.B.A. No. 25.

Reference D.B.A. 23. Draft communique begins:-

1. The loss of Malaya and the entry of the Japanese into Sumatra have separated Burma from the Netherlands East Indies.
2. In these circumstances it has been decided that Command of land, sea and air forces of the United Nations in the Netherlands East Indies shall pass to the Dutch, who will continue to receive all assistance that can be made available by the United Nations.
3. General Wavell will resume his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, India, which will in future include responsibility for operations in Burma, and close co-operation with China.
4. There will be no change in the present arrangements for the general co-ordination of strategic policy in the war against Japan. Ends.
5. Repeat concurrence or amendments of Dutch to Viceroy India and London.

RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION

U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

T.O.O. 2245Q/23

COPY NO. 26

To: ARDACOM

Reptd: Chiefs of Staff, London
and Commander-in-Chief,
Eastern Fleet

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

IMMEDIATE

D.E.A. 24.

With the fall of Singapore and occupation of Sumatra, it is important that the north end of Malacca Strait be watched to give warning of movement of Japanese surface forces into the Bay of Bengal with consequent increased threat to Burma.

2. Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Fleet, who has now relieved you of responsibility for Malacca Strait, has no submarines in his command.

3. You should arrange for the transfer of the two British submarines at present under your command to the command of the Commander-in-Chief Eastern Fleet for this purpose.

T.O.O. 1945Q/23

RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION

U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

To: ABDACOM
Reptd: Chiefs of Staff, London
From: Combined Chiefs of Staff

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

MOST IMMEDIATE

D.B.A. No. 23.

Your C.C.O.S. 19 and 20.

1. We concur in your recommendation that your own Headquarters should be dissolved and that command of the ABDA Area should be transferred to the Dutch. Make all arrangements accordingly.
2. You should leave sufficient personnel and materiel to enable the Dutch to exercise this command.
3. There must be no stoppage of all possible reinforcements in planes and other materiel now allocated to the ABDA Area.
4. Draft communique for issue in Washington follows shortly. Telegraph most immediate concurrence or amendments of N.E.I. Government, also hour of release Greenwich time which you desire.

T.O.O. 1941Q/23

Restricted Distribution

U.S. Chiefs of Staff

COPY NO. 8

TO: B.A.D. Washington 535

FROM: Admiralty

DATED: 23rd February, 1942.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

For Joint Staff Mission from Chiefs of Staff
No. (W) 76.

1. It seems to us that the general division of strategic responsibility should be a Pacific area under U.S.A. control and an Indian Ocean area under British control.
2. Proposal has not yet been put officially to Dutch, Australian or New Zealand Governments, but our preliminary views are as follows.
3. AEDA area was created and the Supreme Commander appointed to enable best use to be made of all available United Nation forces in south west Pacific Area.
4. With the fall of Singapore, the transfer of Burma to India and the probability of overwhelming Japanese attack on the Netherlands East Indies, the situation has entirely changed.
5. In the changed circumstances we think that the best method of strategic control is by a system of areas within each of which one power would be responsible.
6. The power exercising strategic control would be responsible for military policy within that area but in accordance with the general policy agreed between London and Washington for the conduct of the war as a whole.
7. As a general principle the governments of territories within each area would be responsible for their own local defence. The sending of additional military forces to the area would be primarily the responsibility of the power exercising strategic control.
- Proposed boundaries of strategic areas.
8. The limits of the strategic areas in the Far East must be related to the natural routes from the main sources of supply.
9. We therefore suggest that there should be two broad areas.
 - (a) United States Area - Pacific Ocean including Australia and New Zealand.
 - (b) British Area - Indian Ocean.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY AMP. DATE NOV 13 1973

10. It would be desirable to include all Dutch possessions in one area or the other as this would simplify co-operation. The islands are, however, so spread out that this is not possible. We therefore consider that the areas should be divided. Indian Ocean area to include Malaya, Sumatra, Java and the chain of islands as far east as, and including, Timor. Pacific Ocean area, Borneo, Celebes, New Guinea and the islands to the north and east. Thus the dividing line between the two areas should pass from Singapore through the Java Sea, the Flores Sea, the Banda Sea, as far east as meridian 1290, and thence due south to northern coast of Australia.

11. The boundary southward from Australia should be a continuation of the eastern boundary of Western Australia.

12. This division may require subsequent adjustment as the war against Japan proceeds.

13. We have not attempted to produce a final answer to all problems involved at this stage. Clearly question of naval, land and air command in and around Australia will present main difficulty, but this should be capable of solution.

14. Above proposals should be discussed with Combined Chiefs of Staff and whatever is agreed communicated.

T.C.O. 1347A/23

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO, 147-73
BY *PAH* DATE NOV 13 1973

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[REDACTED]

It has been ascertained from London
that:-

(1) The object of this signal was to
use General Wavell's special knowledge on the
defence of Burma, although Burma is no longer
under his command.

(2) The signal has been repeated to
India and Burma.

22ND FEBRUARY, 1942.

(Intld.) V.D.

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO, 1-17-73
BY *RHA* DATE NOV 13 1973

COPY NO. 27

TO: B.A.D. Washington, 490

FROM: Admiralty

DATED: 21st February, 1942.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

Following for Joint Staff Mission from
Chiefs of Staff Number (W) 69.

1. It is clear from a private telegram to
Chief Imperial General Staff that WAVELL does not
repeat not intend to move his HQ from JAVA until
he receives an order to do so.

2. We suggest Combined Chiefs of Staff should
at once issue instructions to WAVELL to the effect
that great importance is attached to timely with-
drawal from JAVA of Supreme Commander and his HQ,
but that it must be left to him to decide appropriate
moment to leave.

3. We suggest HQ ABDACOM should be ?* at
FREMANTLE pending further instructions; that
it should be left to DUTCH to decide which of
their representatives should move and which
should stay.

T.O.C.1452A/21

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JCS MEMO, 1-17-78
BY RT. DATE NOV 13 1973

* corrupt queried

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

N
COPY NO. 27

CORRIGENDUM TO C.O.S. (W) 69
(T.O.O. 1452A/21)

Paragraph 3, line 1.

For "should be (corrupt group)"
read "should rendezvous".

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U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO, 147-72
BY RI, DATE NOV 13 1978

To: B.A.D. Washington 506

From: Admiralty

Dated: 21st February, 1942.

N

IMMEDIATE

Following for Joint Staff Mission from
Chiefs of Staff No. (W) 70.

1. In view of urgency and of impending transfer of Command of Burma, we have sent the following direct to ABDACOM. We are sure the U.S. Chiefs of Staff will agree that urgency justifies despatch of this exploratory telegram without reference to them. Every minute counts.

2. Begins.

(i) Our object is to maintain a front in Burma, with the particular object of keeping open a supply route to China, preferably through Rangoon, but failing that through Assam.

(ii) It is at best doubtful whether we shall be able for long to continue getting convoys to Rangoon in face of air threat and of naval threat which Japanese can develop through Malacca Strait.

(iii) Nevertheless, the holding of Rangoon is very important to us so long as our supplies can get through to Burma and China. Even afterwards its denial to Japanese as a port will be vital to achievement of object in paragraph (i), in so far as defence of northern-most route is concerned.

(iv) It therefore seems to us that the port should be held as long as its retention can contribute to the achievement of our main object; but that, rather than continue to hold it after this stage has

been passed, you should consider possibility of blocking the port preparatory to establishing all forces on front to the North. In short, we do not repetition not consider that delay which would be imposed on enemy by our attempting to hold Rangoon after it had been isolated would justify the loss of forces in Rangoon from fighting strength in Burma. ✓

(v) You are aware, if we lose the port of Rangoon, the capacity of overland supply route will limit the size of forces which can operate in Burma.

(vi) Assuming Australian Government agree to postponement of return of 7th Australian Division to Australia, do you, in view of considerations set out above, wish this Division to be directed to Rangoon. It could reach there by 27th February. Telegraph clearly the line yes or no.

(vii) Please also telegraph your comment on our above appreciation and send us your plan for defence of northern-most Burma in the event of withdrawal from Rangoon. Ends.

T.O.O. 2243A/21

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COPY NO. 29

TO: B.A.D. Washington 381

FROM: Admiralty

DATED: 18th February, 1942.

IMMEDIATE.

Following for Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington.

C.O.S. No. (W) 58.

Pacific War Council tonight considered General WAVELL's telegram No. 01288 with particular reference to defence of JAVA and destination of reinforcements now on the way to the Far East. The following resolutions were agreed:

- (a) JAVA should be defended with the utmost resolution by all forces at present in the Island. There should be no withdrawal of troops or Air Force of any nationality and no surrender. Every day gained is of importance.
- (b) General WAVELL should have discretion to augment the defence of JAVA with prospective naval reinforcements and with U.S. A/C now assembling in Australia.
- (c) The American Chiefs of Staff should be earnestly requested to consider possibility of:
 - (i) attacking industrial centres of JAPAN by carrier borne A/C at very early date;
 - (ii) concentrating greater naval strength, particularly submarines, in ABDA area.
- (d) Army reinforcements now on the way from the west should not repeat not proceed to JAVA but should augment the defence of points vital to the continuance of the struggle against JAPAN, namely BURMA, CEYLON, and AUSTRALIA.
- (e) The recommendation by British Chiefs of Staff that fighter A/C ex H.M.S. INDOMITABLE should proceed to TRINCOMALEE should receive further consideration in the light of situation at the time when the ship is approaching CEYLON, probably about 1st week in March.

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JCS MEMO. 147-28
BY RT. DATE NOV 13 1973

(f) The Council agreed to recommend that all Australian forces serving outside Japanese war area should be sent to that area at the earliest opportunity.

(g) In view of imminent threat to Rangoon and vital importance of keeping open the supply route to China the Australian Government should be asked to permit seventh Australian division the leading elements of which are now off Colombo and are the nearest fighting troops to Rangoon to proceed to Burma and assist in the defence of that country until they can be relieved by other forces.

(h) British 70th Division now in Syria and Egypt should be moved as rapidly as possibly to Burma, less one brigade detached to Ceylon.

(i) The 6th and 9th Australian Divisions should be moved to Australia as rapidly as possible. *Sign*

(j) The movement of an Indian division from Iraq to India should be considered by British Chiefs of Staff.

(k) Ceylon in view of its vital importance to prosecution of the war against Japan, should be provided with adequate defences, particularly Air Force anti-aircraft guns and increased R.D.F. at earliest possible moment.

2. The Council request Combined Chiefs of Staff should give the above resolutions the most earnest consideration, particularly with regard to provision of assistance by American naval forces to Java area.

3. Every effort is being made by Great Britain to expedite despatch of at least 4 divisions from U.K. to Middle and/or Far East. A separate telegram will be sent shortly on the shipping position.

4. This message is being repeated to AHDACOM.

T.O.C. 0245A/18

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U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF

Note: Reference Para. 4, London has been requested by most immediate signal to suspend repetition of this signal to AHDACOM.

COPY NO. 98

To: ABDACOM
From: Combined Chiefs of Staff
Rptd: C.O.S. London.
Dated: 17th February, 1942.

IMMEDIATE

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date

MAY 1 1974

D.B.A. No. 17.

With loss of Singapore and Sumatra, centre of gravity of your Command will be moving southward and drawing away from Burma.

2. In these circumstances Burma will inevitably become more closely linked to India, which is her natural base. We should like your views as to desirability of Burma reverting to complete control of India, as was your original recommendation.

T.O.O. 1927Q/17

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff

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COPY NO. 26

To: ABDACOM

Repeated Chiefs of Staff London.

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff, Washington.

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

D.B.A. 15.

Your 00945 not understood.

Our D.B.A. 9 specifically states no repeat
no U.S. carrier is available. Assume Admiralty
London will issue necessary orders for ATHENE.

T.O.O. 1721Q/12.

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

(53)

COPY NO.

27

To: AEDACOM

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff
Repeated Chiefs of
Staff, London.

Dated: 11th February, 1942.

IMPORTANT

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date

MAY 1 1974

D.B.A. 16.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff desire to express their appreciation of the highly efficient and courageous manner in which you have met the tremendous responsibilities and task of organising your command and directing the fighting over the broad expanse of the AEDA Area. Your actions and your reports and recommendations inspire us with great confidence in your leadership.

T.O.O. 1933Q/11

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff

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COPI NO. 25

To: ABDACOM, Batavia

Repeated: Chiefs of Staff, London.

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff,
Washington.

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date

MAY 1 1974

IMMEDIATE

DBA 14.

Owing to the present threat to the line of sea communications through the TORRES STRAIT, the U.S. will in the near future discontinue sending ships via this route to the ABDA Area. Were this Strait to fall freely into the hands of the enemy, the military position of the United Nations in the ANZAC Area would be adversely affected. For this reason we are considering proposal to block this Strait thoroughly with contact and magnetic mines at the earliest possible date employing your own forces and arranging direct with Australia for co-operative action by that Commonwealth. Inform us as soon as possible of your views on this proposal and what additional assistance may be required by you for it. Leary is being informed of proposal.

T.O.01701q/10

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Plus U. S. Chiefs of Staff.

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COPY NO. 27

To: AHDACOM

Repeated: Chiefs of Staff,
London.

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff.

Dated: 9th February, 1942.

IMMEDIATE

DECLASSIFIED

JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

D.B.A. No. 13.

Personal for General Wavell.

In view Hart's request to be relieved, the designation of Vice Admiral HELFRICH as Acting Commander of Combined Naval Forces in ABDA Area is directed. Press release will be issued simultaneously in London and Washington at 2 p.m. G.C.T. WEDNESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY.

T.O.O. 1931Q/9

Restricted Distribution.

U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

53

To: ABDACOM

Repeated: Chiefs of Staff, London

From: Combined Chiefs of Staff.

Dated: 8th February, 1942.

IMPORTANT.

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JCS memo, 1-4-74

By RHP, NLR, Date MAY 1 1974

D.B.A. 12.

Your C.C.O.S.2. Presume General Marshall's personal to you dated February 6th revising order of priority for allotment of pursuit squadrons to Australia contained in previous message from him 77 of February 5th meets your point.

2. For Chiefs of Staff, London, only. J.S.M. No. 33 refers.

T.O.O. 1445R/8.

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U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF.