

Minutes of Meeting held at the White House, June 18, 1945,
Miscellaneous Historical Documents Collection.

Minutes of Meeting held
at the White House
on Monday, 18 June 1945 at 1530

PRESENT

The President —

Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy —

General of the Army G. C. Marshall —

Fleet Admiral E. J. King —

Lieut. General I. C. Eaker —
(Representing General of the
Army H. H. Arnold)

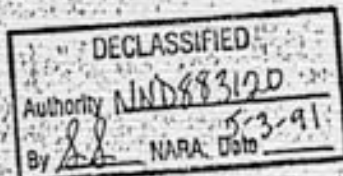
The Secretary of War, Mr. Stimson —

The Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Forrestal —

The Assistant Secretary of War, Mr. McCloy —

SECRETARY

Brig. General A. J. McFarland —



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JUN 20 1945



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General Marshall
Admiral King
General Arnold
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R&RA SECTION, ROOM 2-C-934
THE PENTAGON

C.C.S. FILE COPY

1. DETAILS OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST JAPAN

THE PRESIDENT stated that he had called the meeting for the purpose of informing himself with respect to the details of the campaign against Japan set out in Admiral Leahy's memorandum to the Joint Chiefs of Staff of 14 June. He asked General Marshall if he would express his opinion.

GENERAL MARSHALL pointed out that the present situation with respect to operations against Japan was practically identical with the situation which had existed in connection with the operations proposed against Normandy. He then read, as an expression of his views, the following digest of a memorandum prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for presentation to the President (J.C.S. 1388):

Our air and sea power has already greatly reduced movement of Jap shipping south of Korea and should in the next few months cut it to a trickle if not choke it off entirely. Hence, there is no need for seizing further positions in order to block Japanese communications south of Korea.

General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz are in agreement with the Chiefs of Staff in selecting 1 November as the target date to go into Kyushu because by that time:

- a. If we press preparations we can be ready.
- b. Our estimates are that our air action will have smashed practically every industrial target worth hitting in Japan as well as destroying huge areas in the Jap cities.
- c. The Japanese Navy, if any still exists, will be completely powerless.
- d. Our sea action and air power will have cut Jap reinforcement capabilities from the mainland to negligible proportions.

Important considerations bearing on the 1 November date rather than a later one are the weather and cutting to a minimum Jap time for preparation of defenses. If we delay much after the beginning of November the weather situation in the succeeding months may be such that the invasion of Japan, and hence the end of the war, will be delayed for up to 6 months.

An outstanding military point about attacking Korea is the difficult terrain and beach conditions which appear to make the only acceptable assault areas Fusan in the southeast corner and Keijo, well up the western side. To get to Fusan, which is a strongly fortified area, we must move large and vulnerable assault forces past heavily fortified Japanese areas. The operation appears more difficult and costly than assault on Kyushu. Keijo appears an equally difficult and costly operation. After we have undertaken either one of them we still will not be as far forward as going into Kyushu.

The Kyushu operation is essential to a strategy of strangulation and appears to be the least costly worth-while operation following Okinawa. The basic point is that a lodgement in Kyushu is essential, both to tightening our

strangle hold of blockade and bombardment on Japan, and to forcing capitulation by invasion of the Tokyo Plain.

We are bringing to bear against the Japanese every weapon and all the force we can employ and there is no reduction in our maximum possible application of bombardment and blockade, while at the same time we are pressing invasion preparations. It seems that if the Japanese are ever willing to capitulate short of complete military defeat in the field they will do it when faced by the completely hopeless prospect occasioned by (1) destruction already wrought by air bombardment and sea blockade, coupled with (2) a landing on Japan indicating the firmness of our resolution, and also perhaps coupled with (3) the entry or threat of entry of Russia into the war.

With reference to clean-up of the Asiatic mainland, our objective should be to get the Russians to deal with the Japs in Manchuria (and Korea if necessary) and to vitalize the Chinese to a point where, with assistance of American air power and some supplies, they can mop out their own country.

Casualties. Our experience in the Pacific war is so diverse as to casualties that it is considered wrong to give any estimate in numbers. Using various combinations of Pacific experience, the War Department staff reaches the conclusion that the cost of securing a worthwhile position in Korea would almost certainly be greater than the cost of the Kyushu operation. Points on the optimistic side of the Kyushu operation are that: General MacArthur has not yet accepted responsibility for going ashore where there would be disproportionate casualties. The nature of the objective area gives room for maneuver, both on the land and by sea. As to any discussion of specific operations, the following data are pertinent:

| Campaign | U.S. Casualties | Jap Casualties | Ratio |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------|
| | Killed, wounded, missing | Killed and Prisoners (Not including wounded) | U.S. to Jap |
| Leyte | 17,000 | 78,000 | 1:4.6 |
| Luzon | 31,000 | 156,000 | 1:5.0 |
| Iwo Jima | 20,000 | 25,000 | 1:1.25 |
| Okinawa | 34,000 (Ground) 7,700 (Navy) | 81,000 (not a complete count) | 1:2 |
| Normandy (1st 30 days) | 42,000 | - - - | - - - |

The record of General MacArthur's operations from 1 March 1944 through 1 May 1945 shows 13,742 U.S. killed compared to 310,165 Japanese killed, or a ratio of 22 to 1.

There is reason to believe that the first 30 days in Kyushu should not exceed the price we have paid for Luzon. It is a grim fact that there is not an easy, bloodless way to victory in war and it is the thankless task of the leaders to maintain their firm outward front which holds the resolution of their subordinates. Any irresolution in the leaders may result in costly weakening and indecision in the subordinates. It was this basic difficulty with the Primo

Minister which clouded and hampered all our preparations for the cross-channel operation now demonstrated as having been essential to victory in Europe.

An important point about Russian participation in the war is that the impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation at that time or shortly thereafter if we land in Japan.

In considering the matter of command and control in the Pacific war which the British wish to raise at the next conference, we must bear in mind the point that anything smacking of combined command in the Pacific might increase the difficulties with Russia and perhaps with China. Furthermore the obvious inefficiencies of combined command may directly result in increased cost in resources and American lives.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that he had asked General MacArthur's opinion on the proposed operation and had received from him the following telegram, which General Marshall then read:

"I believe the operation presents less hazards of excessive loss than any other that has been suggested and that its decisive effect will eventually save lives by eliminating wasteful operations of nondecisive character. I regard the operation as the most economical one in effort and lives that is possible. In this respect it must be remembered that the several preceding months will involve practically no losses in ground troops and that sooner or later a decisive ground attack must be made. The hazard and loss will be greatly lessened if an attack is launched from Siberia sufficiently ahead of our target date to commit the enemy to major combat. I most earnestly recommend no change in OLYMPIC. Additional subsidiary attacks will simply build up our final total casualties."

GENERAL MARSHALL said that it was his personal view that the operation against Kyushu was the only course to pursue. He felt that air power alone was not sufficient to put the Japanese out of the war. It was unable alone to put the Germans out. General Eaker and General Eisenhower both agreed to this. Against the Japanese, scattered through mountainous country, the problem would be much more difficult than it had been in Germany. He felt that this plan offered the only way the Japanese could be forced into a feeling of utter helplessness. The operation would be difficult but not more so than the assault in Normandy. He was convinced that every individual moving to the Pacific should be indoctrinated with a firm determination to see it through.

ADMIRAL KING agreed with General Marshall's views and said that the more he studied the matter, the more he was impressed with the strategic location of Kyushu, which he considered the key to the success of any siege operations. He pointed out that within three months the effects of air power based on Okinawa will begin to be felt strongly in Japan. It seemed to him that Kyushu followed logically after Okinawa. It was a natural setup. It was his opinion that we should do Kyushu now, after which there would be time to judge the effect of possible operations by the Russians and the Chinese. The weather constituted quite a factor. So far as preparation was concerned, we must aim now for Tokyo Plain; otherwise we

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will never be able to accomplish it. If preparations do not go forward now, they cannot be arranged for later. Once started, however, they can always be stopped if desired.

GENERAL MARSHALL agreed that Kyushu was a necessity and pointed out that it constituted a landing in the Japanese homeland. Kyushu having been arranged for, the decision as to further action could be made later.

THE PRESIDENT inquired if a later decision would not depend on what the Russians agree to do. It was agreed that this would have considerable influence.

THE PRESIDENT then asked Admiral Leahy for his views of the situation.

ADMIRAL LEAHY recalled that the President had been interested in knowing what the price in casualties for Kyushu would be and whether or not that price could be paid. He pointed out that the troops on Okinawa had lost 35 percent in casualties. If this percentage were applied to the number of troops to be employed in Kyushu, he thought from the similarity of the fighting to be expected that this would give a good estimate of the casualties to be expected. He was interested therefore in finding out how many troops are to be used in Kyushu.

ADMIRAL KING called attention to what he considered an important difference in Okinawa and Kyushu. There had been only one way to go on Okinawa. This meant a straight frontal attack against a highly fortified position. On Kyushu, however, landings would be made on three fronts simultaneously and there would be much more room for maneuver. It was his opinion that a realistic casualty figure for Kyushu would lie somewhere between the number experienced by General MacArthur in the operations on Luzon and the Okinawa casualties.

GENERAL MARSHALL pointed out that the total assault troops for the Kyushu campaign were shown in the memorandum prepared for the President as 766,700. He said, in answer to the President's question as to what opposition could be expected on Kyushu, that it was estimated at eight Japanese divisions or about 350,000 troops. He said that divisions were still being raised in Japan and that reinforcement from other areas was possible but it was becoming increasingly difficult and painful.

THE PRESIDENT asked about the possibility of reinforcements for Kyushu moving south from the other Japanese islands.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that it was expected that all communications with Kyushu would be destroyed.

ADMIRAL KING described in some detail the land communications between the other Japanese islands and Kyushu and stated that as a result of operations already planned, the Japanese would have to depend on sea shipping for any reinforcement.

ADMIRAL LEAHY stressed the fact that Kyushu was an island. It was crossed by a mountain range, which would be difficult for either the Japanese or the Americans to cross. The Kyushu operation, in effect, contemplated the taking of another island from which to bring increased air power against Japan.

THE PRESIDENT expressed the view that it was practically creating another Okinawa closer to Japan, to which the Chiefs of Staff agreed.

THE PRESIDENT then asked General Eaker for his opinion of the operation as an air man.

GENERAL EAKER said that he agreed completely with the statements made by General Marshall in his digest of the memorandum prepared for the President. He had just received a cable in which General Arnold also expressed complete agreement. He stated that any blockade of Honshu was dependent upon airdromes on Kyushu; that the air plan contemplated employment of 40 groups of heavy bombers against Japan and that these could not be deployed without the use of airfields on Kyushu. He said that those who advocated the use against Japan of air power alone overlooked the very impressive fact that air casualties are always much heavier when the air faces the enemy alone and that these casualties never fail to drop as soon as the ground forces come in. Present air casualties are averaging 2 percent per mission, about 30 percent per month. He wished to point out and to emphasize that delay favored only the enemy and he urged that there be no delay.

THE PRESIDENT said that as he understood it the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after weighing all the possibilities of the situation and considering all possible alternative plans were still of the unanimous opinion that the Kyushu operation was the best solution under the circumstances.

The Chiefs of Staff agreed that this was so.

THE PRESIDENT then asked the Secretary of War for his opinion.

MR. STIMSON agreed with the Chiefs of Staff that there was no other choice. He felt that he was personally responsible to the President more for political than for military considerations. It was his opinion that there was a large submerged class in Japan who do not favor the present war and whose full opinion and influence had never yet been felt. He felt sure that this submerged class would fight and fight tenaciously if attacked on their own ground. He was concerned that something should be done to arouse them and to develop any possible influence they might have before it became necessary to come to grips with them.

THE PRESIDENT stated that this possibility was being worked on all the time. He asked if the invasion of Japan by white men would not have the effect of more closely uniting the Japanese.

MR. STIMSON thought there was every prospect of this. He agreed with the plan proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as being the best thing to do, but he still hoped for some fruitful accomplishment through other means.

THE PRESIDENT then asked for the views of the Secretary of the Navy.

MR. FORRESTAL pointed out that even if we wished to besiege Japan for a year or a year and a half, the capture of Kyushu would still be essential. Therefore, the sound decision is to proceed with the operation against Kyushu. There will still be time thereafter to consider the main decision in the light of subsequent events.

MR. McCLOY said he felt that the time was propitious now to study closely all possible means of bringing out the influence of the submerged group in Japan which had been referred to by Mr. Stimson.

THE PRESIDENT stated that one of his objectives in connection with the coming conference would be to get from Russia all the assistance in the war that was possible. To this end he wanted to know all the decisions that he would have to make in advance in order to occupy the strongest possible position in the discussions.

ADMIRAL LEAHY said that he could not agree with those who said to him that unless we obtain the unconditional surrender of the Japanese that we will have lost the war. He feared no menace from Japan in the foreseeable future, even if we were unsuccessful in forcing unconditional surrender. What he did fear was that our insistence on unconditional surrender would result only in making the Japanese desperate and thereby increase our casualty lists. He did not think that this was at all necessary. ✓

THE PRESIDENT stated that it was with that thought in mind that he had left the door open for Congress to take appropriate action with reference to unconditional surrender. However, he did not feel that he could take any action at this time to change public opinion on the matter.

THE PRESIDENT said he considered the Kyushu plan all right from the military standpoint and, so far as he was concerned, the Joint Chiefs of Staff could go ahead with it; that we can do this operation and then decide as to the final action later.

The conversation then turned on the situation in China.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated that General Wedemeyer's operations were pointing towards Canton. He thought it was already evident that the Japanese would hold fortress troops there and in other places. It might be necessary to go around these fortress troops as had been done in France or to take other courses with respect to them.

In reply to a question from the President, GENERAL MARSHALL outlined the present status of Chinese divisions as to completeness of personnel and equipment. He said the military ability of the Chinese generals was not very good. He had already asked General Wedemeyer whether it would be possible to use with the Chinese troops one or more of the U.S. Army commanders with their staffs, who were now returning from France. General Wedemeyer's reply, while not conclusive, had been, in general, favorable. General Marshall thought that if the Generalissimo would accept the use of these commanders for control of Chinese groups, it would be a very excellent thing.

THE PRESIDENT then inquired as to the possibility of getting an over-all commander in the Pacific.

GENERAL MARSHALL and ADMIRAL KING both agreed that under the circumstances existing in the Pacific there was little prospect of it. ADMIRAL KING pointed out that it was undesirable to accept divided command with the British and that we would lose more than we would gain if we brought about in the Pacific the situation that had existed in France.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated the American commander would always have to think of his government's policies. In connection with this, he recounted the difficulty experienced in Malta in obtaining British agreement to General Eisenhower's plan for the invasion of Germany. Their reluctance in the matter was due to their belief that General Eisenhower was influenced by the American commanders.

THE PRESIDENT said he was simply interested in finding out whether an over-all commander for the Pacific would be an advantage or a liability.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that from the large point of view there was no question about its being a liability.

In connection with British participation in the Pacific, General Marshall said that the President would find the Prime Minister very articulate. He is interested in showing that the British Government has played a full part in the defeat of Japan and that it had not been necessary for them to wait for the United States to recapture Singapore for them. The Americans, of course, were glad to have any real help or any assistance that would result in striking a real blow, but that British participation in some ways would constitute an embarrassment. However, the British were under American over-all command in the Pacific.

THE PRESIDENT referred to the Portuguese participation in the Southwest Pacific and stated that he wished to get the air program definitely settled with the Portuguese before we do anything more about Timor.

THE PRESIDENT reiterated that his main reason for this conference with the Chiefs of Staff was his desire to know definitely how far we could afford to go in the Japanese campaign. He had hoped that there was a possibility of preventing an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other. He was clear on the situation now and was quite sure that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should proceed with the Kyushu operation.

With reference to operations in China, GENERAL MARSHALL expressed the opinion that we should not seek an over-all commander in China. The present situation in which the Generalissimo was supporting General Wedemeyer, acting as his Chief of Staff, was entirely satisfactory. The suggestion of the appointment of an over-all commander might cause some difficulty.

ADMIRAL KING said he wished to emphasize the point that, regardless of the desirability of the Russians entering the war, they were not indispensable and he did not think we should go so far as to beg them to come in. While the cost of defeating Japan would be greater, there was no question in his mind but that we could handle it alone. He thought that the realization of this fact should greatly strengthen the President's hand in the forthcoming conference.

THE PRESIDENT and the Chiefs of Staff then discussed certain other matters.

2. REINSTATEMENT OF LEND-LEASE SUPPLIES TO THE FRENCH

ADMIRAL LEAHY read a telegram in which General McNarney recommended that Lend-Lease supplies to the French be reinstated after the French withdrawal from northern Italy had been completed. He asked the President's views.

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE PRESIDENT stated that he agreed with General McNarney's recommendations and felt that he should be supported.

THE PRESIDENT expressed his appreciation of the results of his conference with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He said it cleared up a great many points in his mind and that he now felt satisfied and reassured.

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Minutes of meeting held at 1530.
The White House on 18 June 1945 at 1530.

DECLASSIFIED PURSUANT
TO JCS 221/495-1-2-3

Date: 16 Nov 1970

PRESENT

The President

Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy
of Hawaii
General G. C. Marshall

Fleet Admiral E. J. King
Lieut General I. C. Eaker
(Acting for General Arnold)

The Secretary of War, Mr. ~~Henry H.~~ Stimson
The Secy of the Navy Mr. ~~James R.~~ Forrestal
The Asst Secy of War Mr. ~~J. J.~~ McCloy

Secretary

Brig. General A. J. McFarland

10/1/67

Details of The Campaign against Japan

THE PRESIDENT stated that he ~~was interested in informing~~ *had called the meeting* for the purpose of *informing himself with respect* ~~himself in connection with the proposed operations against Japan~~ *to the details of the Campaign against Japan*

Set out ~~on the points raised in the memorandum which he had given to~~ *Admiral Leahy* the Joint Chiefs of Staff of 14 June.

Admiral Leahy. He asked General Marshall if he would express his opinion.

GENERAL MARSHALL pointed out that the ^{*present*} ~~existing~~ situation

~~now~~ with respect to operations against Japan was practically

identical with the situation which had existed in connection with

the operations proposed against Normandy. He then read, ~~the~~ *as an* expression of his ^{*a*} ~~views~~ *the*

following digest of the memorandum prepared by the Joint Chiefs

of Staff for presentation to the President (JCS 1388):

~~Our~~ Our air and sea power has already greatly reduced movement of Jap shipping south of Korea and should in the next

few months cut it to a trickle if not choke it off entirely.

Hence, there is no need for seizing further positions in order to block Japanese communications south of Korea.

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a. If we press preparations we can be ready.

b. Our estimates are that our air action will have smashed practically every industrial target worth hitting in Japan as well as destroying huge areas in the Jap cities.

c. The Japanese Navy, if any still exists, will be completely powerless.

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⑥ An outstanding military point about attacking Korea is the difficult terrain and beach conditions which appear to make the only acceptable assault areas Fusan in the southeast corner and Keijo, well up the western side. To get to Fusan, which is a strongly fortified area, we must move large and vulnerable assault forces past heavily fortified Japanese areas. The operation appears more difficult and costly than assault on Kyushu. Keijo appears an equally difficult and costly operation. After we have undertaken either one of them we still will not be as far forward as going into Kyushu.

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operation following Okinawa. The basic point is that a lodge-
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hold of blockade and bombardment on Japan, and to forcing
capitulation by invasion of the Tokyo Plain.

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weapon and all the force we can employ and there is no reduction
in our maximum possible application of bombardment and blockade,
while at the same time we are pressing invasion preparations.

It seems that if the Japanese are ever willing to capitulate
short of complete military defeat in the field they will do it
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(1) destruction already wrought by air bombardment and sea
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⊗ With reference to clean-up of the Asiatic mainland, our
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to a point where, with assistance of American air power and
some supplies, they can mop out their own country.

⊗ Casualties. Our experience in the Pacific war is so
diverse as to casualties that it is considered wrong to give
any estimate in numbers. Using various combinations of

Pacific experience, the War Department staff reaches the conclusion that the cost of securing a worth-while position in Korea would almost certainly be greater than the cost of the Kyushu operation. Points on the optimistic side of the Kyushu operation are that: General MacArthur has not yet accepted responsibility for going ashore where there would be disproportionate casualties. The nature of the objective area gives room for maneuver, both on the land and by sea. As to any discussion of specific operations, the following data ^{are} ~~is~~ pertinent:

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wasteful operations of nondecisive character. I regard the operation as the most economical one in effort and lives that is possible. In this respect it must be remembered that the several preceding months will involve practically no losses in ground troops and that sooner or later a decisive ground attack must be made. The hazard and loss will be greatly lessened if an attack is launched from Siberia sufficiently ahead of our target date to commit the enemy to major combat. I most earnestly recommend no change in ^{OLYMPIC} ~~Olympic~~. Additional subsidiary attacks will simply build up our final total casualties."

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individual moving to the Pacific should be ^{indoctrinated} ~~placed~~ with ~~the~~ a firm

determination to see ^{it} ~~the plan~~ through.

ADMIRAL KING agreed with General Marshall's ^{views} remarks and

^{Said} stated that the more he studied the matter, the more he was impressed with the strategic location of Kyushu, which he considered the key to the success of any siege operations. He pointed out that within three months ~~more~~ the effects of air power based on Okinawa will begin to be felt strongly in Japan. It seemed to him that Kyushu followed logically after Okinawa. ^{It was a natural setup.} ~~Okinawa, then Kyushu, with the possible action to be expected from the Russians and from the Chinese seemed to be a natural~~

~~setup.~~ It was his opinion that we should ~~decide now~~ to do Kyushu ^{now}, after which there would be time to judge the effect of possible operations by the Russians and the Chinese. The weather constituted quite a factor. So far as preparation was concerned, we must ^{aim} ~~prepare~~ now for ~~the battle~~ for Tokyo Plain; otherwise we will never be able to accomplish it. ^{If} ~~Unless~~ ^{do not} ~~the~~ preparations go forward now, they cannot be arranged for later. Once started, ^{however} they can always be stopped if ^{desired.} ~~necessary.~~

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It was crossed by a mountain ~~range~~ *range*, which ~~was~~ *would be* difficult for either the
Japanese or ~~the~~ the Americans to cross. The Kyushu operation,
Contemplated the
~~constituted~~ in effect, taking ~~at~~ another island from which to bring
increased air power against Japan.

~~TOP SECRET~~
expressed the view that
THE PRESIDENT ~~said, as he understood it,~~ it was practically
creating another Okinawa closer to Japan *to which* The Chiefs of Staff
agreed, ~~that this was so.~~

THE PRESIDENT then asked General Eaker for his opinion of
the operation as an air man.

said
GENERAL EAKER ~~stated~~ that he agreed completely with the
statements made by General Marshall in his digest of the memorandum

prepared for the President. ~~He said that in addition~~ He had just

received ~~from General Arnold~~ a cable in which he ~~also gave his~~ *General Arnold*

also expressed complete
agreement. He stated that any blockade of Honshu was dependent

upon airdromes on Kyushu; that the air plan contemplated employment

of 40 groups of heavy bombers against Japan and that these could

not be deployed without the use of airfields on Kyushu. He said

that those who advocated the use of air power alone against Japan

overlooked the very impressive fact that air casualties are *always* ~~very~~

much heavier when the air ~~forces~~ faces the enemy alone and that

these casualties never fail to drop as soon as the ground forces

Come in. He ~~stated~~ *EP* the present air casualties *are* ~~were~~ averaging

about
2 percent per mission, ~~or~~ 30 percent per month. He wished to

point out and to emphasize that delay favored only the enemy and

he urged that there be no delay.

said
THE PRESIDENT ~~then stated~~ that as he understood it, the
Joint Chiefs of Staff *after weighing the* ~~had considered~~ all other possibilities *in of*

~~TOP SECRET~~

and considering
the situation, all ~~other~~ possible *alternative* plans, all contingencies, *were*
stee of
~~and as a result it had reached the unanimous conclusion~~ *opinion* that the

Kyushu operation was the best solution under the circumstances.

The Chiefs of Staff agreed that this was so.

THE PRESIDENT then asked the Secretary of War for his
opinion.

MR. STIMSON stated that he agreed with the Chiefs of Staff
that there was no other choice. He ~~said that he was personally~~
~~acquainted with the terrain between Tokyo and Osaka and it was~~
~~not, in his opinion, suited for a war of movement.~~ He felt that
he was personally more responsible to the President for political
considerations than military considerations. It was his opinion
that there was a large submerged class in Japan who do not favor
the present war and whose full opinion and influence had never
yet been felt. He felt sure that this submerged class would fight
and fight tenaciously if attacked on *their own* ~~the~~ ground. He was concerned
that something should be done to arouse them *and* ~~in order~~ to develop
any possible influence they might have before it ~~came to become~~
necessary to come to grips with them.
~~grips on the ground.~~

THE PRESIDENT stated that this possibility was being worked
on all the time. He ~~was interested to know the extent to which an~~
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Japan by white men would not have
~~invasion of Japanese homeland by the white man in uniting the~~
(to be reworded) The effect of move
closely uniting the Japanese.

~~TOP SECRET~~
MR. STIMSON thought there was a ~~very large chance~~. He

agreed with the plan proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ~~that as~~ *every prospect of this,*
being the best thing to do, but he still hoped for some ~~additional~~ *fruitful*
~~accomplishments through other means.~~
~~means to be found through efforts that could be made from the~~
~~outside.~~

The view of the Secretary of the Navy
THE PRESIDENT then asked for Mr. Forrestal's views. ~~Mr.~~

MR. FORRESTAL pointed out that even if ~~the decision were to~~ *we wished to*
~~be a siege~~ of Japan for a year or a year and a half, ~~that~~ the
capture of Kyushu would still be essential. Therefore, the sound
decision is to proceed with the operation against Kyushu. There
will still be ~~time~~ *to consider* time thereafter ~~for~~ the main decision, *in the* ~~which~~
~~can be made in the~~ light of subsequent events.

MR. McCLOY said he felt that the time was propitious now to
study closely ~~what efforts could be brought to bear in~~ *all possible means of* bringing
out the influence of the submerged group in Japan which had been
referred to by Mr. Stimson.

THE PRESIDENT stated that one of his objectives, in connection
with the *coming* conference would be to get all the assistance from
Russia in the war that was possible. To this end he wanted to know
all the decisions that he would have to make in advance in order
to occupy the strongest position possible in the discussions.

ADMIRAL LEAHY said that he could not agree with ~~the opinion~~ *those*

~~On~~ ^{obtain} who said to him that unless we ~~force~~ the Japanese into
unconditional surrender ^{of the Japanese} that we will have lost the war. He
feared no menace from Japan in the ^{foreseeable} ~~reasonable~~ future, even if we

were unsuccessful in forcing unconditional surrender. What he ~~did~~
feared was that our insistence on unconditional surrender would ~~not~~

^{only} result in making the Japanese desperate and thereby ^{increase} ~~result in~~

~~large casualties~~. He did not think that ^{there was at all} ~~such a result was~~

necessary. ~~The President~~

^{it was with}
THE PRESIDENT stated that ~~he had had~~ that thought in mind

^{that}
~~when~~ he had left the door open for Congress to take appropriate

action with reference to unconditional surrender. However, he

did not feel that ^{he could} ~~at this time it was possible for him to take~~

^{at this time to change} any action with ~~reference to~~ public opinion on ^{the} ~~this~~ matter. ^{TP The President} He

^{considered} ~~said with reference to~~ the Kyushu plan ~~that he considered it all~~

right from the military standpoint and, ^{so} ~~as~~ far as he was concerned,

the Joint Chiefs of Staff could go ahead with it; that we ~~could~~ ^{can}

do this operation and then ^{decide} ~~make decision~~ as to the final action

later.

The conversation then turned on the situation in China.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated that General Wedemeyer's operations
were pointing towards Canton. He thought it was already evident
that the Japanese would hold fortress troops there and in other
places. It might be necessary to go around these fortress

troops as had been done in France or to take other courses with ^{respect} reference to them.

In reply to a question from the President, GENERAL MARSHALL outlined the present status of Chinese divisions ^{as} with respect to completeness of personnel and equipment. He said ~~the prospect~~ with respect to the ^{military} ability of the Chinese generals ^{was} ~~were~~ not very good. He had already asked General Wedemeyer whether it would be possible to use with the Chinese troops one or more of the U.S. Army commanders with their staffs, who were now returning from France. General Wedemeyer's reply, while not conclusive, had been, in general, favorable. General Marshall thought that if the Generalissimo would ^{accept} ~~effect~~ the use of these commanders for control of Chinese groups, ~~that~~ it would be a very excellent thing.

THE PRESIDENT then inquired as to the ^{possibility} ~~prospects~~ of ^{getting} an over-all commander in the Pacific, which ~~he thought would be a good~~ thing.

^{under} ~~Both~~ GENERAL MARSHALL and ADMIRAL KING ^{both agreed that} ~~explained that under~~ the circumstances existing in the Pacific with the variety of troops to be operating there, with the number of nations involved, that they ~~thought~~ ^{was little} there ~~were~~ ^{of} no prospects ^{of} ~~for~~ it. ~~As~~ ^{Admiral King} ~~was~~ pointed out ^{that} it was undesirable to accept divided command with the British and that we would lose more than we would gain if we brought about

TOP SECRET
situation than
in the Pacific the ~~same condition as~~ had existed in France.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated the American commander would always have to think of his government's policies. In connection with this, he recounted the difficulty *experienced in MacTa in* obtaining British agreement ~~for~~ ~~MacTa~~ to General Eisenhower's plan for the invasion of Germany.

Their reluctance in the matter was due to their belief that General Eisenhower ~~was~~ *was* influenced by the American commanders.

he was simply interested in
THE PRESIDENT said ~~that it was simply his idea to find out~~ *finding* out whether an over-all commander for the Pacific would be an advantage or a liability.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that from the large point of view there was no question about ~~the~~ *its* being a liability. *TP* In connection with ~~the~~ British participation in the Pacific, General Marshall said that the President would find the Prime Minister very articulate. He is interested in showing that the British Government has played a full part in the defeat of Japan and that it had not been necessary for them to wait for the United States to recapture Singapore for them. The Americans, of course, were glad to have any real help or any assistance that would ~~help~~ *result*

in strike *ing* a real blow, but that British participation in some way would constitute an embarrassment. However, the British were under American over-all command in the Pacific. ~~He stated that the British wanted the Australians to take over as far as the Celebes. The Australians wanted to take over their own~~

Mandated Island/area (check with Planners). The Australian Deputy Prime Minister had recently conferred with the Joint Chiefs of Staff as to the Australian role in the war and that the British had suffered some embarrassment because they have not yet been able to agree definitely with the Australians. ~~The~~

X

~~Present~~

THE PRESIDENT referred to the Portuguese participation in the Southwest Pacific and stated that he wished to get the air program definitely settled with the Portuguese before we do anything more about Timor.

THE PRESIDENT reiterated that his main reason for this conference with the Chiefs of Staff was his desire to know definitely how far we could afford to go into ~~this operation~~ *the Japanese Occupation*.

He had hoped that there was a possibility of preventing an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other. He was clear on the situation now and was quite sure that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should proceed with the Kyushu operation.

With reference to operations in China, GENERAL MARSHALL expressed the opinion that we should not seek an over-all commander in China. The present situation in which the Generalissimo was supporting General Wedemeyer, acting as his Chief of Staff, was entirely satisfactory. The suggestion of the appointment of an over-all commander might cause some difficulty.

ADMIRAL KING said he wished to emphasize the point

that, regardless of the desirability of the Russians entering the war,

~~that~~ ~~as~~ they were not indispensable and ~~that~~ he did not think we

should go to *so far as to beg* ~~any great lengths to beg~~ them to come in.

While the cost of defeating Japan would be greater, there was no

question in his mind but that we ~~x~~ could handle it alone. He

thought that the realization of this fact should greatly

strengthen the President's hand in *The forthcoming Conference* ~~discussing matters with the~~

~~Russians.~~

2. Reinstatement of Lend Lease Supplies to the Fr

ADMIRAL LEAHY read a telegram in which General McNarney

Lend Lease
~~had~~ recommended that ~~the reinstatement of~~ supplies to the French

be reinstated
~~take place~~ after the French withdrawal from northern Italy *had*

been completed. He asked the President's views.

~~THE PRESIDENT~~ THE PRESIDENT stated that he agreed with General

McNarney's recommendations and felt that he should be supported.

THE PRESIDENT expressed his appreciation of the results

of his conference with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He said ~~that~~ *it*

cleared up a great many points in his mind and that he now felt

satisfied and reassured.

*The President and the Chiefs
of Staff then discussed certain
other matters.*

DECLASSIFIED PURSUANT
TO JCS 927/495-1

Date: 16 Nov 1970

PRESENT

The President

Admiral William D. Leahy

General G. C. Marshall

Admiral E. J. King

General I. C. Eaker
(Acting for General Arnold)

Mr. Henry L. Stimson

Mr. James R. Forrestal

Mr. J. J. McCloy

Secretary

Brig. General A. J. McFarland

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THE PRESIDENT stated that he was interested in informing himself in connection with the proposed operations against Japan on the points raised in the memorandum which he had given to Admiral Leahy. He asked General Marshall if he would express his opinion.

GENERAL MARSHALL pointed out that the situation existing now with respect to operations against Japan was practically identical with the situation which had existed in connection with the operations proposed against Normandy. He then read the following digest of the memorandum prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for presentation to the President:

1. Our air and sea power has already greatly reduced movement of Jap shipping south of Korea and should in the next few months cut it to a trickle if not choke it off entirely. Hence, there is no need for seizing further positions in order to block Japanese communications south of Korea.

2. General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz are in agreement with the Chiefs of Staff in selecting 1 November as the target date to go into Kyushu because by that time:

- a. If we press preparations we can be ready.

- b. Our estimates are that our air action will have smashed practically every industrial target worth hitting in Japan as well as destroying huge areas in the Jap cities.

c. The Japanese Navy, if any still exists, will be completely powerless.

d. Our sea action and air power will have cut Jap reinforcement capabilities from the mainland to negligible proportions.

Important considerations bearing on the 1 November date rather than a later one are the weather and cutting to a minimum Jap time for preparation of defenses. If we delay much after the beginning of November the weather situation in the succeeding months may be such that the invasion of Japan, and hence the end of the war, will be delayed for up to 6 months.

3. An outstanding military point about attacking Korea is the difficult terrain and beach conditions which appear to make the only acceptable assault areas Fusan in the southeast corner and Keijo, well up the western side. To get to Fusan, which is a strongly fortified area, we must move large and vulnerable assault forces past heavily fortified Japanese areas. The operation appears more difficult and costly than assault on Kyushu. Keijo appears an equally difficult and costly operation. After we have undertaken either one of them we still will not be as far forward as going into Kyushu.

4. The Kyushu operation is essential to a strategy of strangulation and appears to be the least costly worth-while.

operation following Okinawa. The basic point is that a lodgement in Kyushu is essential, both to tightening our stranglehold of blockade and bombardment on Japan, and to forcing capitulation by invasion of the Tokyo Plain.

5. We are bringing to bear against the Japanese every weapon and all the force we can employ and there is no reduction in our maximum possible application of bombardment and blockade, while at the same time we are pressing invasion preparations.

It seems that if the Japanese are ever willing to capitulate short of complete military defeat in the field they will do it when faced by the completely hopeless prospect occasioned by (1) destruction already wrought by air bombardment and sea blockade, coupled with (2) a landing on Japan indicating the firmness of our resolution, and also perhaps coupled with (3) the entry or threat of entry of Russia into the war.

6. With reference to clean-up of the Asiatic mainland, our objective should be to get the Russians to deal with the Japs in Manchuria (and Korea if necessary) and to vitalize the Chinese to a point where, with assistance of American air power and some supplies, they can mop out their own country.

7. Casualties. Our experience in the Pacific war is so diverse as to casualties that it is considered wrong to give any estimate in numbers. Using various combinations of

Pacific experience, the War Department staff reaches the conclusion that the cost of securing a worth-while position in Korea would almost certainly be greater than the cost of the Kyushu operation. Points on the optimistic side of the Kyushu operation are that: General MacArthur has not yet accepted responsibility for going ashore where there would be disproportionate casualties. The nature of the objective area gives room for maneuver, both on the land and by sea. As to any discussion of specific operations, the following data is pertinent:

| Campaign | U.S. Casualties Killed, wounded missing | Jap Casualties Killed and prisoners (Not including wounded) | Ratio U.S. to |
|---------------------------|--|---|------------------|
| Leyte | 17,000 | 78,000 | 1:4.6 |
| Luzon | 31,000 | 156,000 | 1:5.0 |
| Iwo Jima | 20,000 | 25,000 | 1:1.25 |
| Okinawa | 34,000 (Ground) 7,700 (Navy) | 81,000 (not a complete count) | 1:2 |
| Normandy (1st 30 days) | 42,000 | - - - | - - - |

The record of General MacArthur's operations from 1 March 1944 through 1 May 1945 shows 13,742 U.S. killed compared to 310,165 Japanese killed, or a ratio of 22 to 1.

There is reason to believe that the first 30 days in Kyushu should not exceed the price we have paid for Luzon. It is a grim fact that there is not an easy, bloodless way to victory in war and it is the thankless task of the leaders to maintain their firm outward front which holds the resolution of

their subordinates. Any irresolution in the leaders may result in costly weakening and indecision in the subordinates. It was this basic difficulty with the Prime Minister which clouded and hampered all our preparations for the cross-channel operation now demonstrated as having been essential to victory in Europe.

8. An important point about Russian participation in the war is that the impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation at that time or shortly thereafter if we land in Japan.

9. In considering the matter of command and control in the Pacific war which the British wish to raise at the next conference, we must bear in mind the point that anything smacking of combined command in the Pacific might increase the difficulties with Russia and perhaps with China. Furthermore the obvious inefficiencies of combined command may directly result in increased cost in resources and American lives.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that he had asked General MacArthur's opinion on the proposed operation and received from him a telegram, which General Marshall proceeded to read:

"I believe the operation presents less hazards of excessive loss than any other that has been suggested and that its decisive effect will eventually save lives by eliminating

wasteful operations of nondecisive character. I regard the operation as the most economical one in effort and lives that is possible. In this respect it must be remembered that the several preceding months will involve practically no losses in ground troops and that, sooner or later a decisive ground attack must be made. The hazard and loss will be greatly lessened if an attack is launched from Siberia sufficiently ahead of our target date to commit the enemy to major combat. I most earnestly recommend no change in Olympic. Additional subsidiary attacks will simply build up our final total casualties."

GENERAL MARSHALL said that it was his personal view that the operation against Kyushu was the only course to pursue. He felt that air power alone was not sufficient to put the Japanese out of the war. It was unable to do it in Germany. General Baker and General Eisenhower both agreed to this. In operations against the Japanese living in scattered mountainous country the problem would be much more difficult than it had been in Germany. He felt that this plan promised the only way in which the Japanese could be forced into that feeling of utter helplessness in the face of the might against them and which could result in surrender. The operation would be difficult but not more so than the assault in Normandy. He was convinced that every individual moving to the Pacific should be filled with the determination to see the plan through.

ADMIRAL KING agreed with General Marshall's remarks and stated that the more he studied the matter, the more he was impressed with the strategic location of Kyushu which he considered the key to the success of any siege operations. He pointed out that within three months more the effects of air based on Okinawa will begin to be felt strongly in Japan. It seemed to him that Kyushu followed logically after Okinawa. Okinawa, then Kyushu, with the possible action to be expected from the Russians and from the Chinese seemed to be a natural setup. It was his opinion that we should decide now to do Kyushu, after which there would be time to judge the effect of possible operations by the Russians and the Chinese. The weather constituted quite a factor. So far as preparation was concerned, we must prepare now for the battle for Tokyo Plain; otherwise we will never be able to accomplish it. Unless all preparations go forward now, they cannot be arranged for later. Once started they can always be stopped if necessary.

GENERAL MARSHALL agreed that Kyushu was a necessity and pointed out that it constituted a landing in the Japanese homeland. Kyushu having been arranged for, the decision as to further action could be made later.

THE PRESIDENT inquired if a later decision would not depend on what the Russians agree to do. There was consensus that this would have considerable influence.

THE PRESIDENT then asked Admiral Leahy for his views of the situation.

ADMIRAL LEAHY pointed out that the President had been interested in knowing what the price in casualties for Kyushu would be and whether or not that price could be paid. He, Admiral Leahy, was interested in finding out how many troops will be used in Kyushu with a view to determining therefrom the number of casualties which might be expected. He pointed out that the troops on Okinawa had lost 35 percent in casualties. If this percentage were applied to the number of troops to be employed in Kyushu, he thought from the similarity of the fighting to be expected that this would give a good estimate of expected casualties.

ADMIRAL KING pointed out what he considered an important difference in Okinawa and Kyushu. There had been only one way to go on Okinawa. This meant a straight frontal attack on a highly fortified position. On Kyushu, however, landings would be made on three fronts simultaneously and there would be much more room for maneuver. It was his opinion that a realistic casualty figure for Kyushu would lie somewhere between the number experienced by General MacArthur in the operations on Luzon and the Okinawa casualties.

GENERAL MARSHALL ~~maintained~~ called attention to the troops allotted to the Kyushu campaign as set out in the memorandum prepared for the President. The total combat troops was

766,000. In answer to the President's question as to what opposition could be expected on Kyushu, General Marshall said that there were eight Japanese divisions on Kyushu now or about 350,000 troops and 200 (?) aircraft. He said that reinforcement from other areas was possible but it was becoming increasingly difficult and painful. Divisions were still being raised in Japan.

THE PRESIDENT said he was interested in the possibility of any reinforcement of Kyushu south from the other Japanese islands.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated that it was expected that all of the communications with Kyushu would be destroyed.

ADMIRAL KING described in some detail the land communications existing between the Japanese islands and Kyushu and stated that as a result of operations already planned, that the Japanese would have to depend on sea shipping for any reinforcement.

ADMIRAL LEAHY stressed the fact that Kyushu was an island crossed by a mountain range, which was difficult for either the Japanese or for the Americans to cross. The Kyushu operation constituted in effect taking another island from which to bring increased air power against Japan.

THE PRESIDENT said, as he understood it, it was practically creating another Okinawa closer to Japan. The Chiefs of Staff agreed that this was so.

THE PRESIDENT then asked General Eaker for his opinion of the operation as an air man.

GENERAL EAKER stated that he agreed completely with the statements made by General Marshall in his digest of the memorandum prepared for the President. He said that in addition he had just received from General Arnold a cable in which he also gave his agreement. He stated that any blockade of Honshu was dependent upon airdromes on Kyushu; that the air plan contemplated employment of 40 groups of heavy bombers against Japan and that these could not be deployed without the use of airfields on Kyushu. He said that those who advocated the use of air power alone against Japan overlooked the very impressive fact that air casualties are very much heavier when the air forces face the enemy alone and that these casualties never fail to drop as soon as the ground forces came in. He stated the present air casualties were averaging 2 percent per mission, or 30 percent per month. He wished to point out and to emphasize that delay favored only the enemy and he urged that there be no delay.

THE PRESIDENT then stated that as he understood it the Joint Chiefs of Staff had considered all other possibilities in

the situation, all other possible plans, all contingencies, and as a result had reached the unanimous conclusion that the Kyushu operation was the best solution under the circumstances.

The Chiefs of Staff agreed that this was so.

THE PRESIDENT then asked the Secretary of War for his opinion.

MR. STIMSON stated that he agreed with the Chiefs of Staff that there was no other choice. He said that he was personally acquainted with the terrain between Tokyo and Osaka and it was not, in his opinion, suited for a war of movement. He felt that he was personally more responsible to the President for political considerations than military considerations. It was his opinion that there was a large submerged class in Japan who do not favor the present war and whose full opinion and influence had never yet been felt. He felt sure that this submerged class would fight and fight tenaciously if attacked on the ground. He was concerned that something should be done to arouse them in order to develop any possible influence they might have before it came to grips on the ground.

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MR. STIMSON thought there was a very large chance. He agreed with the plan proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that being the best thing to do, but he still hoped for some additional means to be found through efforts that could be made from the outside.

THE PRESIDENT then asked for Mr. Forrestal's views. Mr.

MR. FORRESTAL pointed out that even if the decision were to be a siege of Japan for a year or a year and a half, that the capture of Kyushu would still be essential. Therefore, the sound decision is to proceed with the operation against Kyushu. There will still be left time thereafter for the main decision, which can be made in the light of subsequent events.

MR. McCLOY said he felt that the time was propitious now to study closely what efforts could be brought to bear in bringing out the influence of the submerged group in Japan which had been referred to by Mr. Stimson.

THE PRESIDENT stated that one of his objectives in connection with the conference would be to get all the assistance from Russia in the war that was possible. To this end he wanted to know all the decisions that he would have to make in advance in order to occupy the strongest position possible in the discussions.

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THE PRESIDENT stated that he had had that thought in mind when he had left the door open for Congress to take appropriate action with reference to unconditional surrender. However, he did not feel that at this time it was possible for him to take any action with reference to public opinion on this matter. He said with reference to the Kyushu plan that he considered it all right from the military standpoint and, as far as he was concerned, the Joint Chiefs of Staff could go ahead with it; that we could do this operation and then make decision as to the final action later.

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GENERAL MARSHALL stated that General Wedemeyer's operations were pointing towards Canton. He thought it was already evident that the Japanese would hold fortress troops there and in other places. It might be necessary to go around these fortress

troops as had been done in France or to take other courses with reference to them.

In reply to a question from the President, GENERAL MARSHALL outlined the present status of Chinese divisions with respect to completeness of personnel and equipment. He said the prospect with respect to the ability of the Chinese generals were not very good. He had already asked General Wedemeyer whether it would be possible to use with the Chinese troops one or more of the U.S. Army commanders with their staffs who were now returning from France. General Wedemeyer's reply, while not conclusive, had been, in general, favorable. General Marshall thought that if the Generalissimo would effect the use of these commanders for control of Chinese groups, that it would be a very excellent thing.

THE PRESIDENT then inquired as to the prospects of an overall commander in the Pacific, which he thought would be a good thing.

Both GENERAL MARSHALL and ADMIRAL KING explained that under the circumstances existing in the Pacific with the variety of troop to be operating there, with the number of nations involved, that they thought there were no prospects for it. As was pointed out, it was undesirable to accept divided command with the British and that we would lose more than we would gain if we brought about

in the Pacific the same condition as had existed in France.

GENERAL MARSHALL stated the American commander would always have to think of his government's policies. In connection with this, he recounted the difficulty obtaining British agreement in Malta to General Eisenhower's plan for the invasion of Germany. Their reluctance in the matter was due to their belief that General Eisenhower must be influenced by the American commanders.

THE PRESIDENT said that it was simply his idea to find out whether an over-all commander for the Pacific would be an advantage or a liability.

GENERAL MARSHALL said that from the large point of view there was no question about this being a liability. In connection with the British participation in the Pacific, General Marshall said that the President would find the Prime Minister very articulate. He is interested in showing that the British Government has played a full part in the defeat of Japan and that it had not been necessary for them to wait for the United States to recapture Singapore for them. The Americans, of course, were glad to have any real help or any assistance that would help strike a real blow but that British participation in some way would constitute an embarrassment. However, the British were under American over-all command in the Pacific. He stated that the British wanted the Australians to take over as far as the Celebes. The Australians wanted to take over their own

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X
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THE PRESIDENT referred to the Portuguese participation in the Southwest Pacific and stated that he wished to get the air program definitely settled with the Portuguese before we do anything more about Timor.

THE PRESIDENT reiterated that his main reason for this conference with the Chiefs of Staff was his desire to know definitely how far we could afford to go into this operation. He had hoped that there was a possibility of preventing an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other. He was clear on the situation now and was quite sure that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should proceed with the Kyushu operation.

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ADMIRAL KING said he wished to emphasize the point that regardless of the desirability of the Russians entering the war, that ~~xx~~ they were not indispensable and that he did not think we should go to any great lengths in begging them to come in. While the cost of defeating Japan would be greater, there was no question in his mind but that we ~~x~~ could handle it alone. He thought that the realization of this fact should greatly strengthen the President's hand in discussing matters with the Russians.

ADMIRAL LEAHY read a telegram in which General McNarney had recommended that the reinstatement of supplies to the French take place after the French withdrawal from northern Italy.

~~The President~~ THE PRESIDENT stated that he agreed with General McNarney's recommendations and felt that he should be supported.

THE PRESIDENT expressed his appreciation of the results of his conference with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He said this cleared up a great many points in his mind and that he now felt satisfied and reassured.