

Conclusion: The Results and the Costs

With the seizure of air-base sites in the Palaus and on Morotai, the Allied forces of the Pacific theaters completed the strategic and tactical steps of the approach to the Philippines; they were now poised to move on into those islands. Eleventh-hour changes in plans concerning the date and place for the invasion of the Philippines were consistent with the strategic concept upon which the approach had been based. The occupation of Morotai and the southern Palaus fulfilled the concept of two drives—one westward across the Central Pacific and the other northwestward up the north coast of New Guinea—toward the Philippine Islands. One phase of the war in the Pacific was ended. Another was soon to begin.¹

Since April 1944, forces of the Central Pacific Area, in their part of the drive, had moved 1,625 nautical miles westward from the Marshalls to the Palaus and were about 3,250 nautical miles southwest of Hawaii.² During the same time, the forces of the Southwest Pacific Area, in a rapid succes-

sion of seven major operations, had moved some 1,300 nautical miles³ from the Huon Peninsula of eastern New Guinea to Morotai Island.

The costs had not been low. The Allies had suffered more than 20,000 battle casualties, including over 3,600 killed. The Japanese had lost at least 43,000 men, including some 40,000 killed. Seven Japanese divisions and the combat equivalent of at least one more division had been destroyed or cut off—losses which the Japanese could not replace. A Japanese air army, the theoretical equivalent of a U. S. air force, had also been wiped out. The Japanese could ill afford this loss of trained pilots and first-line aircraft. Losses of Japanese naval land-based aircraft were such that Japanese surface-vessel action was seriously hampered. Few naval surface craft were sunk by either side,⁴ but the Japanese could not replace the vessels they lost.

The Allies had employed nine divisions—eight Army and one Marine, and the equivalent of another Army division in separate regimental combat teams. The entire U. S. Pacific Fleet, comprising the Third, Fifth, and Seventh Fleets, had been used, together

³ Approximately 1,500 statute miles.

⁴ Except during the Battle of the Philippine Sea, off the Marianas in June 1944. The major Japanese surface-vessel losses during the operations along the New Guinea coast and in the Palaus were a few destroyers.

¹ See M. Hamlin Cannon, *Leyte: The Return to the Philippines*, a forthcoming volume in the series U. S. ARMY IN WORLD WAR II.

² This, of course, excepts the seizure of the Marianas, an operation which was not, strictly speaking, strategically part of the approach to the Philippines. See Philip A. Crowl, *Campaign in the Marianas*, a forthcoming volume in the series U. S. ARMY IN WORLD WAR II. The distances given are, respectively, about 1,870 and 3,735 statute miles.

TABLE 1—AMERICAN CASUALTIES DURING THE APPROACH TO THE PHILIPPINES:
APRIL—DECEMBER 1944

| Operation | Killed in Action ^a | | | Wounded in Action | | | Total |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | U. S. Army ^b | U. S. Navy | U. S. Marines | U. S. Army ^b | U. S. Navy | U. S. Marines | |
| Hollandia..... | 155 | ^c 4 | ..... | 1,060 | ^c 7 | ..... | 1,226 |
| Aitape..... | 450 | ..... | ..... | 2,550 | ..... | ..... | 3,000 |
| Wakde-Sarmi..... | 415 | 3 | ..... | 1,500 | 10 | ..... | 1,928 |
| Biak..... | 435 | 36 | ..... | 2,360 | 83 | ..... | 2,914 |
| Noemfoor..... | 70 | 0 | ..... | 345 | 3 | ..... | 418 |
| Sansapor..... | 15 | 0 | ..... | 45 | 0 | ..... | 60 |
| Morotai..... | 30 | 15 | ..... | 85 | 18 | ..... | 148 |
| Palaus..... | 540 | ^c 158 | 1,250 | 2,735 | ^c 505 | 5,275 | 10,463 |
| Asia-Mapia ^d | 20 | 0 | ..... | 45 | 0 | ..... | 65 |
| Ulithi, etc. ^e | 5 | ..... | ..... | 10 | ..... | ..... | 15 |
| Total Killed..... | 2,135 | 216 | 1,250 | 10,735 | 626 | 5,275 | 16,636 |
| Total Wounded..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 20,237 |
| Total Casualties..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... |

^a Includes missing in action.

^b Army figures, because of conflicting sources, are deliberate approximations. The figures do not include AAF casualties except for engineer aviation battalions.

^c Navy figures for Hollandia and Aitape are combined, as are figures for the Palaus and Ulithi.

^d See Ch. XIX, n. 1.

^e Casualty figures for Ulithi and other western Caroline islands cover the period 22 September 1944-4 January 1945.

Source: Table is based on sources and figures given in the text, except for U. S. Navy figures, which were provided by the Statistics Branch, Bureau of Naval Personnel.

with available combat vessels of Allied nations. Three U. S. Army air forces—the Fifth, Seventh, and Thirteenth—and at least the equivalent of another air force in U. S. naval land-based aircraft, U. S. Marine planes, and aircraft of Allied countries had also participated in the approach to the Philippines. Allied naval and air losses were replaceable, and at the close of this part of the Pacific war, Allied naval and air strength in the Pacific theaters was growing rapidly. While some of the U. S. divisions and separate regimental combat teams had suffered heavy casualties, all of them were still intact and could be brought back up to strength. They had received invaluable combat ex-

perience which was to serve them well in later operations.⁵ They were ready to move on to the Philippines or other combat areas.

Allied forces in the Pacific had successfully completed one phase of the Pacific war. They were prepared to push on toward the ultimate defeat of Japan.

⁵ All the divisions and regimental combat teams that participated in the drive up the New Guinea coast later served in the Philippines. The 1st Marine Division re-entered combat on Okinawa in April 1945. Only the 81st Infantry Division did not participate in another major operation, but even elements of that unit engaged in minor mopping-up operations in northwestern Leyte while retraining for the proposed invasion of the Japanese home islands.

TABLE 2—JAPANESE CASUALTIES,^a DEFENDING THE APPROACHES TO THE PHILIPPINES:
APRIL–DECEMBER 1944

| Operation | Killed in Action ^b | Japanese Prisoners of War | Korean Prisoners of War | Formosan Prisoners of War | Total |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| Hollandia | 4,475 | 655 | 0 | 15 | 5,145 |
| Aitape | 8,825 | 100 | 6 | 25 | 8,956 |
| Wakde-Sarmi | 3,960 | 55 | 2 | 35 | 4,052 |
| Biak | 6,125 | 460 | 0 | 305 | 6,890 |
| Noemfoor | 1,960 | 245 | 2 | 625 | 2,832 |
| Sansapor | 695 | 95 | 7 | 160 | 957 |
| Morotai | 305 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 320 |
| Palau | 13,600 | ^c 400 | ? | ? | 14,000 |
| Asia-Mapia | 170 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 170 |
| Ulithi, etc. | 20 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| Total Killed | 40,135 | | | | 40,135 |
| Total Prisoners | | 2,030 | 17 | 1,165 | 3,212 |
| Total Casualties | | | | | 43,347 |

^a All figures are deliberate approximations except for Korean prisoners of war. Figures for Japanese wounded are not available.

^b Figures cover the latest dates for which they are available. In the case of New Guinea and Morotai they extend to early October 1944; in the Palau, to the end of November. "Killed in Action" includes those found dead of starvation or disease.

^c Includes non-Japanese prisoners, since no breakdown by nationality is available for the Palau operation. The reports state that most of the prisoners were Korean or Okinawan labor troops.

Source: Table is based on sources cited in the text.

Bibliographical Note

Official Records

This volume is based principally upon official records of the United States and Allied armed forces. These records comprise six major categories: records of the United States-British Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS); the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and subordinate committees, such as the Joint Staff Planners (JPS); the U. S. Army; the U. S. Navy; the U. S. Marine Corps; the Allied armed services. Since the U. S. Air Force was part of the U. S. Army during the war, its records are here classed as Army records.

Records of the Combined Chiefs of Staff

Information concerning decisions at the highest Allied level is in the records of the CCS, copies of which are in the files of the wartime Operations Division, General Staff, U. S. Army (OPD), in the custody of the Historical Records Section, Departmental Records Branch, Adjutant General's Office, U. S. Army (HRS DRB AGO). The principal body of the CCS records relating to this volume are in bound volumes containing the papers and minutes of the following CCS meetings:

- SYMBOL (Casablanca, January 1943)
- TRIDENT (Washington, May 1943)
- QUADRANT (Quebec, August 1943)
- SEXTANT (Cairo-Tehran, November-December 1943)

Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Since, under the CCS, the JCS were responsible for the direction of the war in the Pacific, the background material for the major strategic decisions relating to that war is in the records of the JCS and their subordinate committees, filed in the same place as those of the CCS. The JCS records consulted included minutes of JCS and JPS meetings and the numbered JCS and JPS papers containing material relevant to the approach to the Philippines.

Records of the U. S. Army

General Staff, U. S. Army

a. The Chief of Staff's Log, 1942-1944. This log, filed in the Staff Communications Branch, Office of the Chief of Staff, U. S. Army, contains communications between General Marshall and ranking Army commanders in overseas theaters, such as General MacArthur in the Southwest Pacific and General Richardson in the Central Pacific. Since General Marshall acted as the JCS executive for the Southwest Pacific, the log also contains copies of many messages originated by the JCS. Also included are records of radio-telephone conversations between General Sutherland (General MacArthur's Chief of Staff), who attended many JCS conferences in Washington, and General R. J. Marshall (General MacArthur's Deputy Chief of Staff), at the overseas end in the Southwest Pacific. The log