

Pacific Theatre

Part 11: Operation Forager “In which despite foraging, we find nothing”

By Lestrade aka Unpopular Opinion



Ah, a cute goat, someone we can finally believe in!

First published October 13, 2022 *There's no freedom of speech in the UK but I'll say my opinion anyway*

As [Wikipedia tells us](#),

“The Mariana and Palau Islands campaign, also known as **Operation Forager**, was an offensive launched by United States forces against Imperial Japanese forces in the **Mariana Islands and Palau in the Pacific Ocean between June and November 1944** during the Pacific War. The United States offensive, under the overall command of Chester W. Nimitz, followed the Gilbert and Marshall Islands campaign and was intended to neutralize Japanese bases in the central Pacific, support the Allied drive to retake the Philippines, and provide bases for a strategic bombing campaign against Japan.

The United States invasion force was supported by a massive combat force. The Fifth Fleet was commanded by Admiral Raymond A. Spruance. Task Force 58, commanded by Vice Admiral Marc Mitscher, consisted of 15 carriers, 7 battleships, 11 cruisers, 86 destroyers and over 900 planes. The invasion force, commanded by Vice Admiral Richmond K. Turner, consisted of 56 attack transports, 84 landing craft and over 127,000 troops.”

So a fair amount of firepower then.

*“Beginning the offensive, United States Marine Corps and United States Army forces, with support from the United States Navy, executed landings on **Saipan in June 1944**. In response, the Imperial*

*Japanese Navy's Combined Fleet sortied to attack the U.S. Navy fleet supporting the landings. In the resulting aircraft carrier **Battle of the Philippine Sea (the so-called "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot") on 19–20 June, the Japanese naval forces were decisively defeated with heavy and irreplaceable losses to their carrier-borne and land-based aircraft.***

*U.S. forces executed landings on **Saipan in June 1944 and Guam and Tinian in July 1944.** After heavy fighting, **Saipan was secured in July and Guam and Tinian in August 1944.** The U.S. then constructed **airfields on Saipan and Tinian where B-29s were based to conduct strategic bombing missions against the Japanese home islands until the end of World War II, including the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.***

*In the meantime, in order to secure the flank for U.S. forces preparing to attack Japanese forces in the **Philippines, in September 1944, U.S. Marine and Army forces landed on the islands of Peleliu and Angaur in Palau.** After heavy and intense combat on **Peleliu and Angaur, both islands were finally secured by U.S. forces in November 1944, while the main Japanese garrison in the Palaus on Koror was passed by altogether, only to surrender in August 1945 with the Empire's capitulation.***

Deep breath: Saipan, the Battle of the Philippine Sea, Guam, Tinian, Peleliu, Angaur. Buckle up cupcake, I'm doing the lot!

[The Battle of Saipan](#), as per Wikipedia:

*“**The Battle of Saipan** was a battle of the Pacific campaign of World War II, fought on the island of Saipan in the Mariana Islands from **15 June to 9 July 1944** as part of Operation Forager. **It has been referred to as the "Pacific D-Day" with the invasion fleet departing Pearl Harbor on 5 June 1944, the day before Operation Overlord in Europe was launched, and launching nine days after.**”*

24 days to clear an island just under 46 square miles (119km²) in size. What are the numbers? Are we talking small numbers of troops hiding from each other, guerilla warfare style?

Strength	
71,000	32,000 ^{[1]: 583}
Casualties and losses	
13,790 casualties:	29,000 casualties: ^[4]
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3,426 killed and missing^{[2]: 379}• 10,364 wounded^[3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 24,000 KIA• 5,000 suicides
7,000 Japanese civilians (many of which were suicides) ^[4]	
22,000 civilians dead ^[5]	

Nope – we've got over 100,000 troops battling it out on this small tropical island leading to 42,790 dead. Plus another 20,000-30,000 civilians dead on top!? What a massacre!

Or is it just more nonsense? Well, let's talk about the civilian deaths to start with. 29,000 civilians dead or killing themselves (due to those crazy Japanese being insane fanatics who would rather die than be captured blah blah blah) on one small island seems a bit much. [According to the CIA](#) the

Northern Marianas only had 51,475 people living across the entire island chain by 2020, so presumably this would have been an absolute decimation of the population back in 1944.

If we check the [Worldometers](#) site it gives us population over time (again for **the entire Northern Mariana chain**, not just Saipan island itself) and if we go back to 1955 we have a population of less than 8,000 people. If we check [this site](#) it claims the population of the Northern Marianas was only around 2,500 people back in 1900. So in terms of natives on the island it seems to track that you have less than 3,000 people in 1900 and less than 8,000 people about 50 years later, i.e. a gradual upward curve of human population. So again, as with the Corpse Math for Japan that I did at the end of the last chapter, the Marianas population was somehow not negatively impacted by World War 2. **Despite losing ten times as many people as actually lived there. How does that work?**

The proper historians then chuckle smugly and say “Oh no Lestrade, it wasn’t the NATIVE population that died, it was the JAPANESE SETTLERS that died”. The idea here is that the Japanese brought a bunch of settlers across in the 1930s. These were employees of the South Seas Development Company, aka [Nan'yō Kōhatsu](#). [This dude](#) founded it, after inventing the sugar cube(!). The idea was he’d get a bunch of Japanese shipped over to the Marianas and use them for farming sugar to export back to the homeland. Fair enough, so these are corporate workers bulking out the numbers. However, if we read his article page:

*“By 1925 Matsue had built an alcohol factory and ice plant on Saipan, planted over 3000 hectares of sugar, and **extended his operations to Saipan's neighbouring islands**. By the end of the decade, he had brought more than **5,000** workers to the Marianas. The company quickly grew to become the largest private company in the Japanese Mandate, and **at its height employed over 40,000 people**. Matsue also built numerous recreational facilities for his workers on Saipan and other islands.”*

Whoops! So he had a company spanning various sites across the Pacific (not just the Marianas) employing over 40,000 people in total... but in the Marianas specifically it was around **5,000**. Again, where are we getting the 29,000 from? You’re looking at a rough estimate of, say, only around 10 or 11,000 people across the Marianas in 1944. Saipan may have had the bulk of that but that’s still going to be way less than 10,000 people. Are we telling pork pies again, ONI? Surely not.

Which brings me to The Saipan Suicides. The pitch is: as the Americans took Saipan, the Japanese (being crazy) decided to jump to their deaths from two locations – a mountaintop called Laderan Banadero and a sea cliff known as Marpi Point, both in the north of Saipan.

We have limited footage of the mass suicides: one clip with a guy and one with a woman. They’re very short and designed for maximum shock value (at the time). In each clip the individual runs and jumps off a cliff out of sight. This is what you see in the news reels from the time. If there are mass suicides, why do we only see these two people? If the cameraman is on the clifftop, this means there is an American presence on the north coast clifftops, which means this is after the civvies have all rushed up there to jump to their deaths. Also, why is there no evidence of any of the jumps other than these short clips? Why do we not have any footage of the Americans sailing around the northern point and yelling at them to stop from loudspeakers?

If the Japanese are leaping off these cliffs, you’d have a large bone pile at the foot of the mountain or corpses being washed up against the cliffs and so on. Also bodies floating in the surf. Any images of this? Nope.

[This blog page](#) has some photos / footage of the “mass suicide”:



One guy runs at the cliff...



He jumps (I'm saying "he" based on the short hair), falling in the vertical, arms tucked in, controlled manner like when people go cliff jumping into the sea aka [Tombstoning](#) as it's known in the UK.



The angle of the shot means they go out of sight (the white froth in the foreground here is foliage/grass on the cliff edge where the cameraman is standing). We never see an actual death. There is no follow-up shot to see a body or bodies dashed on the rocks below – nor any floating corpses from having drowned.

This is a photograph of the modern day “Suicide Cliff” tourist attraction:



Unless you land on that pointy rock or can't swim, you can't commit suicide that way. The fall is too short.

Please bear that shot in mind when you see any footage of the suicide cliff stuff from the war. It looks quite different to where people are jumping in the water. For example this:



“People jumped to their deaths on Marpi Point renamed “Suicide Cliff” (Time & Life Getty Images)” – original [here](#). **Play spot the bunny.**

We also have the “Japanese woman jumps to her death” footage, link [here](#) (skip to 0:41):



Excuse the watermark of the star the YouTuber left. This cliff is obviously not as high up as Marpi Point so I assume it’s another coastal cliff... it can’t be [Suicide Cliff](#) either as that’s a much higher clifftop overlooking the airfield inland.

It’s very quick (only 1 or 2 frames) but if you watch the YouTube clip 0:41-0:43 you’ll see someone run and dive off the clifftop, arms spread rather like when people skydive. They drop away out of sight so we have no idea if they a) land in a net, b) land in deep water in a swan dive or c) are dashed to pieces on rocks. **Odds are very high they just land feet first and swim to shore. Jumps like this are now very common and you can watch them on youtube.**

At 0:43 we now see this lady. Please note: 1. She is limbering up to jump, swinging her arms and getting her muscles warmed up like actors/athletes do before a stunt. You do not limber up before committing suicide. 2. She is looking straight at the camera, as the camera crew are giving her a signal to begin the stunt. This is not a random civilian fleeing in terror, she is waiting for the director to yell action.



Again you should just watch the clip a couple of times (it's literally 5 seconds of actual footage but rewatching it lets you start to see what it is properly). We're looking at what are essentially stuntmen (and stuntwoman) from the 1940s doing a cliff jump into either deep water (tombstoning). What we are not seeing:

- Large numbers of people, dressed in civilian clothing, grouped up running like lemmings off a cliff.
- Anyone in a state of emotional distress (both jumpers we've seen look perfectly composed).
- No indication of any battle/war going on in the background/distance despite the whole point being the island was being invaded and people were supposedly running for their lives.
- We never see any actual dead bodies from the mass suicides, let alone "hundreds" or "thousands" of corpses.
- There is no footage of the mass drownings that would have occurred off of Marpi Point (aka Banzai Cliff), with bodies bobbing around in the waves.
- We don't really see any evidence of "Banzai Cliff" (i.e. the inland clifftop known as Laderan Banadero) being used at all by suicidal civilians. We literally only have a few seconds of footage of one or two people jumping off a coastal cliff, which doesn't even resemble Marpi Point in present day photographs.
- Nor do we see any footage from the ships that the Americans allegedly had sailing off from Marpi Point, shouting via loudspeaker system to not jump [as per American testimony](#).

It's also pretty stupid that ([as per Wikipedia](#)) we have no idea how many people killed themselves at either location - *"One eyewitness said he saw "hundreds of bodies" below the cliff, while elsewhere, numbers in the thousands have been cited"*.

[This testimony](#) was quite interesting as the chap speaking about the suicides describes it being difficult to "drive around" the bodies (which would make us think initially he's talking about the Suicide Cliff, inland, that you could perhaps drive past). He then essentially flips to say he's talking about the Banzai Cliff (Marpi Point coastal clifftop) and says how the sea was so thick with corpses that "gunners mates" had to shoot at the corpses to "make them sink" so the ships could sail around the point safely. Later on he describes how he was on a battleship that used its sixteen inch guns to blast away at the cliff-face, thus... - checks notes - ...thus destroying the cliff so people couldn't jump off of the cliff. **How does shooting corpses make them sink? Your physics problem for the day.**

This veteran's testimony is him talking about shooting a cliff face with battleship guns until it crumbles into the sea so then you can't jump off the cliff any more. Because the original cliff is gone.

(Lestrade takes a deep breath and walks away from the computer)

(He goes outside to pet his cat sat on the garden wall)

(He returns, more Zen)

Yeah.

OK so we've established this is another load of gibberish. What does that leave us with? Well, you can watch an entire [50 minutes of footage of Saipan here on Youtube](#). This is the "proper" war footage of Marines battling those pesky Japanese soldiers. I'll save you some time: it's exactly what you've seen already, where we have a camera crew filming Marines in a way that is completely indistinguishable from a training exercise. You'll see them shoot into the bush, or throw a grenade and run away, or investigate a dugout, but at no time do we see any actual warfare.

For example at 12:10 where we see someone practising firing a heavy machine gun. There are no Japanese being shot at here, nor is anyone in any danger (as the other people are standing around casually in full view with their hands on their hips).

We do see a corpse next to a dead pig at 14:41, but I will allow the Hollywood production crew the wit to bring the odd mannequin or possibly a body from cold storage to pop down on the ground as a practical effect.

At 14:48 we see Marines standing around holding babies with some locals. These ones aren't afraid of the Americans then? No running to jump off cliffs in this case.

Nice bit of moulage at 17:37:



You then get twenty minutes of general shots of the Marines walking around, shooting at trees, the odd bush set on fire and so on. A grenade is thrown into a cave. Tanks fire into smoke. Somebody uses a flamethrower on a hedge at 36:56. Two Marines walk away slowly, guns lowered.



A bomb is dropped on some forest at 43:35.



We see our second corpse at 43:38, this one sufficiently gruesome what with decomposition of the body having started and the corpse being bloated:



Again as we've found before, we get one corpse for the gore hounds in the theatre and/or to scare grandma (despite the supposedly apocalyptic battle conditions with over 24,000 casualties), no blood on the ground no blood gore or dismemberment (despite everyone loving to use explosives), no dropped rifle, no insignia to indicate this is either a Japanese or Marine infantryman. From the helmet and olive boiler suit I assume Marine but then why have they left the chap out to rot?

The face/head is photoshop or paint. That whole area is unnatural and plastic-looking. Nothing there looks gory or scary to me, just fake.

There's an interesting shot at 48:58 when we see Marines on the beach flipping corpses with shovels:



So this would be how the bodies get on the beach, right?

The Marines dump them straight off the LVTs so we can have photographs like this:



“Dead Japanese soldiers litter Tanapag Plain (credit: Dept. of Defense USMC photo)” – original [here](#). **Fake.**

Why are the corpses on the beach? They fought exclusively inland. The Japanese always attack AFTER the Marines disembark and walk up the beach. The only time we've supposedly had anything like beach combat is at Alligator Creek in Guadalcanal (which I've shown was fake).



More spooky corpses at 49:15. I'm unclear if these are actual corpses (the head especially looks more like a model than a real body). The one draped over the train tracks(?) is partially melted. Again, perhaps these are real. Perhaps these are corpses dumped on site. Perhaps this is why there's a set of train tracks in the middle with the bodies sprawled out on the side – because they chucked them off the side of the cart to set the scene.



This whole “field of corpses” section in the video shows a few dozen bodies scattered over the small area, some heavily decomposed and others looking like they're asleep:



50:04 – I like how this is supposed to be one of the suicide victims who leapt into the sea:



That's not the ocean at Marpi Point. That's a shallow river or inland lake.

The 50 minute mash-up of Saipan footage ends there. As we've seen several times now, their own videos are great at exposing the fraud of it all.

We can also read this article – "[Battle Relics of Saipan](#)". Mr. Pike the author is obviously going with the normal narrative here so we get photographs of what is an obvious war memorabilia display area presented as some sort of ancient battleground. We have seen many Pikes involved in these shenanigans over the years, think Albert Pike, Robert Pike (Salem), John Pike, Christa Pike, etc. Also see Sir Thomas Pike, RAF Senior Art Staff and OBE in 1944, later Chief of the Air Staff.

The Pikes in the peerage link us to the Dundases, Marquesses of Zetland, who link us to the Lumleys, Manners, Drummonds, Murrays, and **Stanleys**.



What starts out as a slight embellishment quickly transitions into something more risible:

*“While tromping through the jungle, we came across one of the many nearly-untouched **coral bunkers** that Japanese defenders took shelter in. Inside were numerous fired .30 cal and .30-06 bullets as well as **unfired Japanese Arisaka rifle cartridges**, and piles of empty shell casings. We found **sake and beer bottles**, Japanese “jika tabi” (the shoe with the distinct toe) along with canned food and broken dinner wear. **Also quite unexpected and chilling – we found spent high explosive fuses, US type grenade fragments, and human remains** (not shown). We left **the bones we found in a pile** (as we were instructed to do) for the next visit by Japanese officials so the soldiers may eventually be repatriated.”*

So we're supposed to understand that over 75 years after the war there are still piles of skeletons sitting in old bunker systems which you can freely walk into – that nobody bothered to clean up?

I like the idea these Japanese soldiers were just sat around drinking beer and doing sake shots, then leave their special ninja shoes on the floor before their immediate death. What happened, the Marines snuck in and murdered them during a drinking session? They're supposed to have bulldozed the bunker entrances shut. Pillboxes in the field were destroyed by a combination of flamethrowers and satchel charges planted by demo teams. You're not going to have a lot of stuff left standing is my point. It's crazy that the skeletons just left lying around – why on earth wouldn't the Japanese or the Americans or the local authorities have repatriated the bodies by now?

We get a couple photos of inside the “coral bunkers”, which appears to be a cave with some bottles. Have a look for yourself, see what I mean. He then shows us more photographs of bunkers -



"A Marine talks a Chamorro woman and her children into abandoning their refuge." - original [here](#).

You can see the problem, right? The natives are cropped in. The Marine appears to be largely painted/drawn in – look at his shoulder, his leg and his left arm, that’s a sketch not a photo. Look at the way his face is turning to mist, or the weird flat nature of the helmet. You can see the sharp line with the “black glow” down his back where the layer of soldier has been added to the background image. The whole thing is a collage.

Who were the Japanese commanders on Saipan?

[Yoshitsugu Saito](#) - “*Saitō, wounded by shrapnel, committed ritual suicide in a cave at dawn on 10 July, with his adjutant shooting him in the head after he had disembowelled himself. Saitō was given a funeral with military honours by his American counterpart Holland Smith*”

Kills himself in a cave, then the Marines give him a nice burial ceremony:



“*Funeral of Yoshitsugu Saitō by American military personnel, Saipan, 1944*” – original [here](#).

Awfully decent of them given you’d think he’d be a hated war criminal for encouraging needless loss of life (e.g. banzai charges, not surrendering despite being completely outnumbered, encouraging the civilian suicides etc.).

Also very kind of them to *excavate his remains* as - if you read various anecdotes / descriptions of the battle of Saipan – the Americans developed a tactic upon reaching the more mountainous sections of the island where the Japanese were holed up in their -checks notes- “coral” bunkers that they would seal the entrances with bulldozers rather than go into the tunnels/bunker systems

directly. Which would include sealing up the Japanese HQ, with everyone inside. So they would never find Saito, would they? You have to pick one narrative, ONI – and stick to it.

We also have our old buddy [Chūichi Nagumo](#) who we've seen in previous chapters. Involved in previous (fake) events like Pearl Harbour, the Battle of Midway and the Bombing of Darwin – so in other words, he's not done very much at all.

“On 6 July, Nagumo killed himself with a pistol to the temple rather than the traditional seppuku. His remains were recovered by U.S. Marines in the cave where he spent his last days as the Japanese commander of Saipan. He was posthumously promoted to admiral and awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Golden Kite.”

Interesting that he kills himself four days before Saito, also that he chooses not to commit seppuku and just blows his brains out instead. Does he lose points with that? Is that some kind of mark of cowardice? If seppuku is too much why not get his adjutant to shoot him like with Saito? Just wondering.

[Takeo Takagi](#):



This guy, among other things, was involved in both the Battle of the Coral Sea and Midway, so again fake events. Wonderfully, he vanishes and everyone assumed he was dead. No, really:

“Takagi was killed in action during the Battle of Saipan in 1944. Missing after the battle, it is not clear whether he committed suicide or died trying to escape in a submarine. He was posthumously promoted to full admiral.”

We don't actually know what happened to this Japanese Admiral but what the heck, he's gone, no point kicking up dust thinking about the past. Move along people nothing to see here.

Finally, we have [Baron Matsuji Ijuin](#).

*“Ijuin served as captain of several destroyers in the early 1930s, and **was also appointed as an aide-de-camp to Fleet Admiral Prince Fushimi Hiroyasu in 1932**. Promoted to full commander on 15 November 1934, Ijuin was subsequently executive officer on the Abukuma in 1935. He made full captain on 15 November 1938 and was given command of the Nachi in 1939, followed by the Atago in 1941, and **commanded her during the Battle of Midway in June 1942**. At the end of December 1942, he was given command of the Kongō.*

Ijuin saw no direct combat during the early months of World War II. However, on his promotion to rear admiral on 1 November 1943, he commanded DESRON-3, based at Rabaul, New Britain during the Solomon Islands campaign.”

So he doesn't get involved in much (again, Midway was fake and we've seen there was nothing happening at Rabaul).

“Ijuin was killed when his flagship, the patrol boat Iki, was torpedoed and sunk on 24 May 1944 north of Saipan. He was posthumously promoted to vice admiral.”

Fair enough that the Naval guy goes down with the ship, this is certainly plausible. However, as we're finding that every single battle of the Pacific campaign is in fact US Naval Intelligence fan-fiction, it is also possible this guy is either a) fictional himself or b) given an “out” by a fake ship sinking. No way to prove he's not dead, right?

Anyway. Enough about Saipan.

The [Battle of the Philippine Sea](#), aka the “Great Mariana's Turkey Shoot” was touched on back in [chapter 6](#) of this series but here I'll hit some other interesting things:

“This was the largest carrier-to-carrier battle in history, involving 24 aircraft carriers, deploying roughly 1,350 carrier-based aircraft.”

As you'd have guessed from the “turkey shoot” nickname, the Americans absolutely wipe the floor with the Japanese in this battle:

Units involved	
 U.S. 5th Fleet	 1st Mobile Fleet
Strength	
7 fleet carriers	3 fleet carriers
8 light carriers	6 light carriers
7 battleships	5 battleships
8 heavy cruisers	11 heavy cruisers
13 light cruisers	2 light cruisers
68 destroyers	31 destroyers
28 submarines	24 submarines
~900 carrier aircraft	6 oilers
	~450 carrier aircraft
	~300 land-based aircraft
Casualties and losses	
1 battleship damaged	2 fleet carriers sunk
123 aircraft destroyed ^[2]	1 light carrier sunk
109 dead	2 oilers sunk
	550–645 aircraft destroyed ^[2]
	6 other ships damaged
	2,987 dead (est.)

They only lose 123 aircraft and less than that in pilots! The Japanese lose at a rate of 6 to 1 in planes and nearly 3,000 of their Navy personnel are wiped out. There's some blustering about why this is involving proximity fuzes (i.e. shells/missiles that blow up when they get near the enemy plane so you don't need a perfect shot to score a hit) but then they admit they had a full intel breach of the Japanese defensive plans:

*“The aerial part of the battle was nicknamed the **Great Marianas Turkey Shoot** by American aviators for the **severely disproportional loss ratio** inflicted upon Japanese aircraft by American pilots and anti-aircraft gunners. During a debriefing after the first two air battles, a pilot from USS Lexington remarked “Why, hell, it was just like an old-time turkey shoot down home!” **The outcome is generally attributed to Japanese shortages of trained naval pilots, spare parts and fuel and American improvements in training, tactics, technology (including the top-secret anti-aircraft proximity fuze), and ship and aircraft design. Also, the Japanese defensive plans were directly obtained by the Allies from the plane wreckage of the commander-in-chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy's Combined Fleet, Admiral Mineichi Koga, in March 1944.”***

Yeah the latter is probably quite useful, right? Might have given you the edge there.

Japanese Marshal Admiral and commander-in-chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy's Combined Fleet [Mineichi Koga](#):



He was involved in the Battle of Hong Kong (but we'll get to that). As per Wikipedia:

*“Following the death of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto on April 18, 1943, Koga succeeded Yamamoto as Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet. His flagship was the battleship Musashi. Koga attempted to revitalize Japanese naval operations by reorganization of the Combined Fleet into task forces built around aircraft carriers in imitation of the United States Navy, and organized a land-based naval air fleet to work in coordination with the carriers. Operationally, he intended to mount an aggressive counteroffensive, **first in the Aleutians** to dilute American forces and eventually to lure the American fleet into a major naval engagement in late 1943. However, the losses of Japan's land and carrier based aircraft in the Southwest Pacific eventually forced a **Japanese withdrawal from the Solomons** to the aero-naval base complex at **Rabaul** in the Bismarcks by the end of the year, and the simultaneous defeat in the **Gilbert Islands** of the Central Pacific that same fall. Koga gradually adopted a more conservative stance, attempting to conserve his remaining forces for a decisive battle to inflict maximum damage on the Americans when they closed toward the 'Inner Defence Lines' of the **Marianas and Philippines** (code named “Z plan”).”*

I appreciate we haven't looked at the Philippines yet, but: the Aleutians, the Solomons, Rabaul, the Gilbert Islands and now the Marianas. All locations which I have picked over autistically, for months, with not a shred of evidence that the Japanese were involved there. The death of Yamamoto was staged and ridiculous as I've covered previously, so I'm deeply suspicious about his successor.

What happened to him?

*“Koga was killed when his plane, a Kawanishi H8K ("Emily") flying boat, **crashed during a typhoon between Palau and Davao** while overseeing the withdrawal of the Combined Fleet from its Palau headquarters on **March 31, 1944**. **His Chief of staff, Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome survived ditching in a second airplane off Cebu and was held captive by Filipino guerrillas, during which time Koga's battle plans found their way into Allied hands.** His death was not announced until May 1944 when he was formally replaced by Admiral Soemu Toyoda. Koga was promoted to Marshal Admiral posthumously and he was accorded a state funeral. His grave is at the Tama Cemetery, outside of Tokyo.”*

Amazing, so another plane crash (like with Yamamoto) and his Chief of Staff lives only to be captured by guerrillas and then he hands over absolutely vital war plans, these “Z Plan” documents to the Allies.

Get ready for the bullshit to go into overdrive. From [Wikipedia](#):

*“Throughout the spring of 1944, the aircraft losses for the Japanese continued to mount which was severely endangering the success of the operation; however the death knell occurred on March 31, 1944, when **Mineichi Koga and some of his staff were killed in two separate plane crashes, while the remainder were captured. Among those captured was Shigeru Fukudome, who was in the second plane (not Koga's).** After extricating himself from the wreckage, he was able to locate land and began to swim ashore. **After spending hours in the ocean, all the while approaching the coastline, he was spotted by some Filipino fishermen and taken prisoner.**”*

No mention of the typhoon. You might be wondering about the Z Plan documents. Absolutely top secret, obviously. Presumably encoded. On a microfilm or something? Carried in a secret compartment in your belt buckle? Or written on an ornate scroll bound in ribbon sat in a special airtight jade box that explodes if you don't ring some tiny golden bells in the right order before you open it? Something on a spectrum between the two examples. You'd want to destroy the war plans immediately if you thought you'd be captured of course, thousands of your countrymen's lives would be at stake if it was found. Read on:

*“**The (Z Plan) documents floated in the water just offshore and were picked up by a shopkeeper with the help of his neighbour.** They were **turned over to a guerilla** and sent to the American forces for analysis. **A clandestine high-priority submarine pickup was arranged, with a cover story of evacuating American refugees.** The USS Crevalle picked up the documents, along with 40 American men, women and children. Travelling mostly on the surface for speed, and diving only when needed, **the submarine survived depth charging twice, arriving near the American naval base in Darwin, Australia on May 19.** From there, the documents were flown to Brisbane”*

I love it. Floating in the ocean, post-typhoon, post-plane crash, bobbing along only to be spotted by a fisherman and a shopkeeper. The documents (it's never specified in what form they are in, I can only assume a literal A4 sheet of paper with “Toppe Sekret Plann” written on it in crayon and a photo of Hirohito glued into the corner with some little hearts) aren't even encoded. No, really:

“The Z Plan documents were in plain text, rather than code, and were translated on an urgent basis by the top five translators at the Military Intelligence Service attached to the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, it was first translated by Yoshikazu Yamada and George “Sankey” Yamashiro, two nisei translators. Copies of the translation were rushed to General Douglas MacArthur, who quickly forwarded them to Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet (and Admiral Koga's counterpart). Among other things, planned Japanese diversionary tactics were now anticipated by the Americans, leading to the lopsided American victory in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, the largest aircraft carrier battle in history, and one of the decisive battles of the Pacific war. After the loss of the plans, Admiral Soemu Toyoda, Koga's successor, rewrote the plans in a more aggressive manner and named it Operation A-Go.”

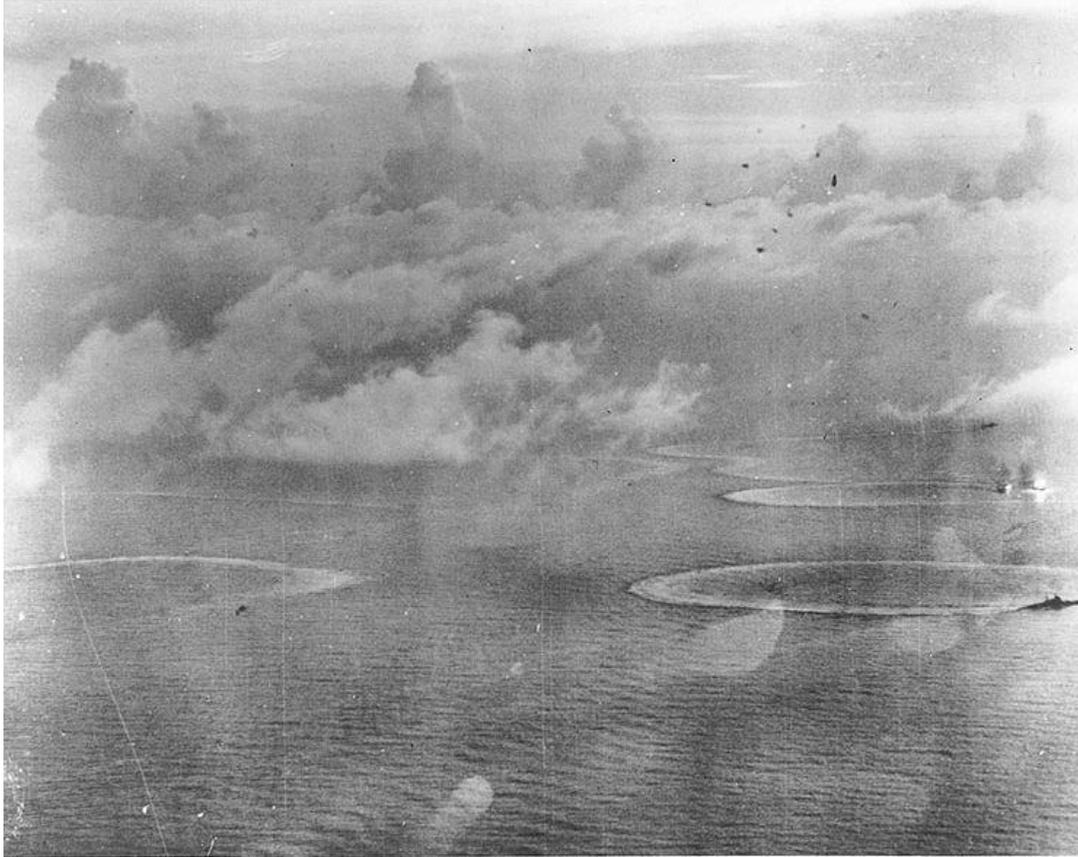
To make this even more ridiculous, this Fukudome guy was then SENT BACK TO JAPAN UNHARMED AND WAS PROMOTED! No really, if you look at [his Wiki page](#):

“On March 31, 1944, while travelling by air from Palau to deliver plans for the Japanese counterattack in defence of the Marianas Islands (code named “Z plan”) to Japanese headquarters at Davao near British North Borneo, Fukudome became the first flag officer in Japanese history to be captured by the enemy (Filipino guerrillas commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James M. Cushing) after his plane crash landed in a typhoon near Cebu. (Admiral Mineichi Koga, who had been travelling in a separate plane, was killed the same night). He was released by the Americans to prevent retaliation on civilians by Japanese forces, but the battle plans fell into American hands.

After Koga's death in March 1944, Fukudome became commander-in-chief of the 6th Air Base and 2nd Air Fleet, based in the Kyūshū-Okinawa-Formosa district. He later noted that this appointment was out of convenience, arguing that since he had no experience with naval aviation, his assignment to a newly formed air unit must be because of the immediate need for an officer of flag rank.”

Incredible. So we never find Koga, he’s just gone into the ocean, we learn that Fukudome was apprehended by guerrillas being run by British special forces – a Cushing no less, so think Peter Cushing from the old 60’s Hammer Horror films – then the Americans release him “to prevent retaliation” and then he gets to go home and becomes CIC of an Air Fleet!

Meanwhile if you look at the photos of the battle itself you get stuff like this:



“Japanese Carrier Division Three under attack by United States Navy aircraft from Task Force 58, late afternoon, June 20, 1944. The heavy cruiser circling at right, nearest to the camera, is either Maya or Chōkai. Beyond that is the small aircraft carrier Chiyoda.” - original [here](#).

Four ships sail in tight circles while up above in the clouds we have a dozen black blobs signifying planes dogfighting. Or something.

Have a look at the galleries of photos from the battle online, for example from [this site](#). You will see:

- Americans firing flak and shells [at the sea and sky](#).
- [Tiny black blobs](#) (maybe less than a dozen each time) up in the clouds
- Americans [standing around](#) on deck, [drinking beer](#) or looking at “how many did we shoot down” [flag score charts](#) on the wall.

What you won't see:

- An actual giant naval battle involving dozens of ships and 1,600-odd aircraft.

Or you can watch [this video clip](#) about the battle which for some reason presents a small training exercise where about five planes take off, shoot a target hulk on the surface and one target plane in the sky before landing as a giant naval battle. I think I'm supposed to get confused because they cut between the very small scale training exercise shooting at a single target and panning shots of a giant fleet sailing around with stirring music. I'm supposed to think a giant battle is occurring because I don't understand basic editing techniques.

Whether it's the background plot-lines about the Z Plan recovery or the actual photo/video evidence, this naval battle seems pretty fake to be honest. On to [The Battle of Guam...](#)



“Marines planting the US flag” - original [here](#).

Zoom in on that guy’s face. The one on the right. Tell me this isn’t a ridiculous photo, staged, with the men supposedly in a war zone goofing around for the camera. They might as well have had the Marx brothers holding up the flag on a tropical beach while pulling silly faces.

I’m tempted to leave it there but the Muses demand this web of lies gets an absolute shoeing so I shall press on. The Second Battle of Guam is not to be confused with the [First Battle of Guam](#) – that was back on 8th December, 1941. At this time, Guam was regarded as unimportant – a minor coal-refuelling station for ships. The Americans:

“...captured Guam from the Kingdom of Spain on 21 June 1898 during the Spanish–American War. The next year Spain sold the other islands in the Marianas chain to Germany. The United States Navy established a facility near the village of Piti on Guam in 1899, and the United States Marine Corps (USMC) opened a barracks at Sumay in 1901. A naval coaling station was established on the island in 1905, and a battery of six 6-inch (15 cm) guns was emplaced to strengthen Guam's defences in 1909. A U.S. Navy captain served as both the Governor and commander of the naval base from 1899 onwards, though there were some elements of a civilian government on the island.”

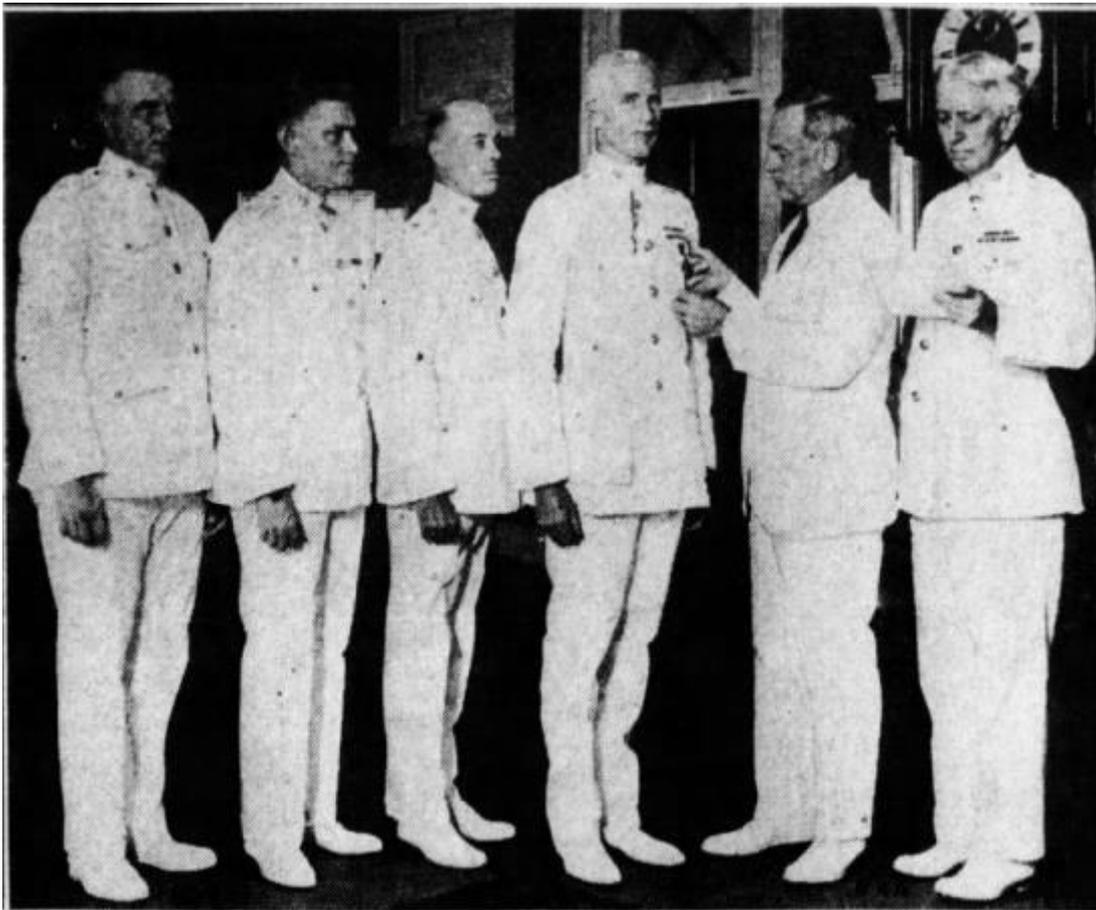
You know I never knew how about the Americans stealing Pacific islands and converting them into these weird martial law / naval dictatorships until I started this series. They stole an island via conquest from the Spanish... then ruled over the natives exactly like in the old Imperial colonial days. Bizarre. How is this in keeping with the idea of the Republic/Constitution? Surely it would be released from Spanish rule, go back to being an independent island and you’d then trade with them? Or you’d offer to incorporate them as a new State? Nah, you can have a Navy Captain run the place.

“The United States government did not believe that it would be possible or practical to defend Guam if it was attacked. The island was not seen as being useful in efforts to reinforce the Philippines, though it served as a refuelling point for Pan Am flying boats and was one of the

relay points for the Pacific Cable Company's telegraph cable which linked the Philippines to the US west coast. In 1941, the island was given a "Category F" defence rating; this ruled out the construction of new defences and meant that, when war broke out, Guam's defenders were to destroy all facilities of military value and withdraw. Despite this and with only small arms available to them for their defence, the U.S. Marines stationed on the island under the command of Lt. Col., later, U.S. Marine Corps Brigadier General William K. MacNulty, fortified their positions and put up a defence against the subsequent Japanese aerial assault of the island, while suffering losses and other casualties of nearly one-third of their complement."

Make sense of that if you will. The island is irrelevant, one of several relay points for telegraph cables going to California. They strip out all the coastal artillery batteries by 1930 and tell the Marines based on Guam to retreat if anyone attacks. Not worth it lads, just get out of there. Instead you have the Marines dig in and get a bunch of guys killed as a predictable, pointless, result. Isn't that literally disobeying orders? I'm not military, but I'm pretty sure you're meant to follow the procedure set. If the Pentagon tells you to run away, you run away. You know you're not going to get rescued, you know you can't possibly win. Why fight? Wouldn't MacNulty get chewed out for risking his men's lives? They only held out for about two hours anyway, it wasn't worth it.

This is the only photo we have of MacNulty by the way:



*"In 1930, Capt. William K. MacNulty (second from far left) and three other U.S. Marine Corps officers are awarded the Navy Cross for their service in the **Banana Wars** by Ass. Secretary of Navy Ernest Lee Jahncke (second from far right). At far right is Maj. Gen. Ben H. Fuller, Commandant of the Marine Corps." - original [here](#).*

How many died in the defence of Guam you ask?

“U.S. Marines' losses were five killed and 13 wounded (including the prior Japanese air assault of the island, the marines' losses were 13 dead and 37 wounded). The U.S. Navy lost eight killed while four of the Guam Insular Force Guards were killed and 22 others wounded. One Japanese naval soldier was killed and six wounded. PFC Kauffman was killed by the Japanese after the surrender.”

Double 13 and an 8? [That's a Bingo!](#)

Regarding PFC Kauffman, please refer to [this site](#) which shows in multiple source comparison that nobody can give a consistent answer as to how he died or why. So that's more fiction. I like the one where the Japanese build a large bonfire and cook him to death, that's suitably grim. There's another plot line on Guam involving Naval radioman [George Ray Tweed](#) who hides out on Guam for over two and a half years despite being constantly hunted by Japanese. He befriends natives, runs an underground newspaper and ends up signalling American ships to give them vital intel prior to the invasion:

“Based on the radio broadcasts, Tweed published an underground newspaper, the Guam Eagle, for four months using a typewriter and carbon paper... Tweed managed to hide in the middle portion of the island, aided by many locals in 11 different locations, until October 1942. Then, Tweed was sheltered on Antonio Artero's ranch on the north-west portion of the island. In total, Tweed managed to elude the Japanese for two years and seven months, until just before the start of the Second Battle of Guam in 1944. During that time, he studied algebra and made shoes for the family watching over him. On July 10, 1944, he was able to signal two destroyers, involved in preparations for the impending US invasion, with a mirror and semaphore. Tweed conveyed information about Japanese defences that he had gathered from his vantage point overlooking the west coast of the island. He was rescued by a whaleboat from the USS McCall.”

Truly a heroic underground newspaper vendor, shoemaker, algebra student and radio operator. An inspiration to all men. If you believe that paragraph was truthful, please contact me at your earliest convenience as I have an exciting investment opportunity for you: it's called LestradeCoin™. It's a bit like Bitcoin, but it won't ever drop in value, guaranteed, so better that you buy into it now while it's cheap. As a bonus offer I will also securely hold onto any of your gold coins/bars for free, just post it over to me and I'll keep it safe for you, long term.

Anyway, I'm getting distracted by earlier sedimentary layers of fiction. I'm meant to be looking at the [Second Battle of Guam](#) (21st July – 10th August 1944), which is surely legit and sensible.

The 22,554(?) - some sites say 22,000, others say 18,000 or 18,500 or other figures – Japanese troops on Guam were commanded by [Takeshi Takashina](#), who was “killed in action” on the 28th of July. The internet fails to educate me on a) how he died, b) how his death was confirmed and c) where his body is. We just get multiple websites telling me the same blurb that he was KIA and then [Hideyoshi Obata](#) took over command. I assume hit by American shelling? Normally the Japanese commanders are in some luxury underground bunker away from the frontline so I doubt he got a rifle bullet to the gut. Ah wait, according to [this website](#), he was mown down by machine gun fire mounted on an American tank. Hell of a way to go out.



“Prior to the anticipated American landing on 21 July 1944, LtGen Takeshi Takashina, right, commanding general of the 29th Infantry Division, inspects defenses on Agat Beach, with Col Tsunetaro Suenaga, who commanded the 38th Infantry.” - original [here](#).

*“The loss of Takashina's infantry officers, including General Shigematsu, who had commanded the 48th Independent Mixed Brigade, was held to be as high as 96 percent. **Takashina himself fell to the fire from a machine gun on an American tank as he was urging survivors out of the Fonte position and on to the north to fight again.** With Takashina's death, tactical command of all Japanese forces remaining on Guam was assumed by General Obata.”*
- from [this site](#), transcribing a historical pamphlet from the Marine Corp., History and Museums Division, from the Department of Defence.

Where is his body? Did they cremate it? Is he in an unmarked grave on Guam? No idea. Nobody cares. Presumably left to rot where he fell. More like gone in a puff of smoke.

For Obata, the replacement, we see on his Wikipedia page:

“From April 1923, Obata was assigned as a military attaché to the United Kingdom and from November 1927 to August 1934 as military attaché to British India. In August 1934, he was promoted to colonel in the cavalry and recalled to Japan for staff postings within the Imperial Japanese Army General Staff.”

Of course he was.

*“Obata **committed seppuku** on 11 August 1944 in Yigo, Guam, ending Japanese attempts to hold the island. Obata was **promoted posthumously** to the rank of general.”*

Dies of shame according to rigid honour system, but gets promoted. And:

“His wife was a daughter of Field Marshal Kawamura Kageaki.”

This jumped out at me because [Kawamura Kageaki](#) was a Satsuma Clan samurai. He fought in the [Boshin War](#), which as per part 2 of this series is (in my theory) a major point in Japanese history because it marked where the Western Elites, (or more accurately the Phoenician Empire), took over Japan using the Satsuma/Choshu/Tosa clans as proxies. This is why Miles has observed Imperial Japanese medals looking like Phoenician military symbols, it's because they got flipped in the 19th century and are now part of the club.

Obata's... well, not grave... but a *plaque* in his honour can be found at [Findagrave](#), where we read:

*“...after giving the order that his forces should fight to the death, he **committed suicide and his body was never recovered.** He was promoted posthumously to the rank of general.”*

So that's 2 for 2 on Guam where both Japanese commanders are never recovered. We know they committed suicide, honest, scout's honour, but we just never found the body and there's no grave.

Not a great start for Guam, eh? It already stinks. Let's look at the Order of Battle. I predict: massive overkill from the Americans where they bomb the hell out of the place and some Magic Numbers.

“Before landing, US forces sought to ensure both air and naval superiority. A total of 274 ships, which fired 44,978 shots from 2-inch and 5-inch guns supported the landing. In addition, a total of 13 aircraft carriers participated in the air raid and a total of 4,283 bombs (weighing a total of 1,310 tons) were dropped from 18 to 20 July, the day before disembarkation. The heavy bombardment burned all the palm trees on the beach and destroyed every building that could be seen. Experience gained by the Japanese from the invasion of Saipan was used to try to mitigate the effects of the bombardment. Despite this, the bombardment far exceeded the expectations of the defending forces which were dug in along the coast as they were on Saipan. Many of the bases and guard towers were also destroyed.”

You don't say. Yes I'd imagine that thousands of tons of high explosive might dent the defences somewhat. Incredible coincidence as always that it's the magic numbers coming up again.

“However, artillery pieces entrenched in dense forests, caves, trenches and locations four kilometres or more from the coast were able to escape destruction and became a source of heavy Japanese resistance. Guam, ringed by reefs, cliffs, and heavy surf, presents a formidable challenge for any attacker.”

This is a rather Eeyore-ish way of explaining that the Americans incinerated everything inland for four kilometres. That's prior to sending in -checks notes- 59,000 Marines to fight 22,000 Japanese. Or taking a minute to reload and drop another 1,300 tons of explosive further inland. They had these things called planes you see, which meant that if the Japanese start causing trouble somewhere, they can just... bomb them there as well. But no, do go on how the Japanese were able to keep fighting by using magic caves.

(This is leaving aside the point that if you have an artillery cannon, you need to obviously be able to fire it at your enemy. This means it needs to be at least partially exposed to the sky so you can fire a shell. Therefore someone else can spot you and bomb you.)

We then have the usual back and forth “Marines advance slowly, Japanese resist fiercely” stuff I've read again and again until the eventual (mathematically inevitable) US victory. We have an interesting beat about Death Camps:

*“Guam's native Chamorro population had **suffered considerably during Japanese occupation, and the Japanese soldiers began to commit atrocities during the preparation for the invasion. In what became known as the Manenggon March, the Japanese soldiers forced most of the island's population to march into six concentration camps in southern Guam. The sick and starving were left for dead along the way, and Japanese troops massacred about 600 civilians out of Guam's population of roughly 20,000. As many as 2,000 may have been killed during the occupation. Liberation Day continues to be celebrated on Guam every 21 July.**”*

So... they killed 600 people out of 20,000 at six separate concentration camps. Why so many camps? It's not that big an island/population. What did they do, shoot 100 guys at each site? If the Japanese wanted to massacre the natives why did they only kill 600? The word “may” is pretty crucial in that penultimate sentence. What's the proof of this happening?

I will make a suggestion that will get me stink-eye from American vets: given the American's track record in the Pacific of using overwhelming force – as in for an example with Saipan where (allegedly) 20-30,000 civilians are killed as collateral damage – is it not possible that the Japanese were simply funnelling all the civilians on Guam into containment centres for their safety? I mean, if you were defending an island and the US Marines were about to arrive you would know that any villages or towns visible from the air would get firebombed. You would also know there would be massive loss of life to anyone caught in the path of the invasion. Would it not be prudent to simply relocate everyone (perhaps even if this meant using force) to keep them safe and away from the front lines? If time was limited and you had the very sick and elderly falling dead on the journey to the camps would it again not be brutal but practical to keep moving and get as many people to safety as possible? Just something to consider.

From [this site](#) about the march:

*“Manenggon is a valley area located between the villages of Yona and Talo'fo'fo. **On 10 July, General Takashina, the Japanese commander, ordered all Chamorus throughout the island to be evacuated from their villages and marched to campsites in the southern interior of the island. Thousands of people, from infants to the elderly, were forced to march to the Manenggon camp, with very little possessions, from as far north as Yigo and as far west as Hågat. Southern villagers were collected mostly at inland campsites near Malojloj and Malessó'. People from the central part of the island stayed at a camp along the Pago River called Asinan, though many of them were later marched to Manenggon.**”*

A few things. Firstly: based on where Manenggon is located, if you were a native anywhere in southern or central Guam you'd need to walk less than 10 miles (16km) to get to the camp. If you were up by Yigo in the north-east that's more like 16 miles (26km). So, firstly, this isn't a horrendous excursion. You're walking for a couple of hours. The march starts on July 10th and the Americans don't arrive for another 11 days so it's not like they had to walk the whole route in one go. Again, the context is you're trying to avoid being killed by the Americans. People died during this? OK. How many?

Secondly, the Guamanians talk about Manenggon and have their little statue memorial for it:



(Courtesy of a Google Maps photo upload by Ms. Gina Byars, July 2019) Sorry, but that is really a shit memorial. What did it cost? \$50?

So why is Wikipedia talking about six concentration camps? Where are the other five? Where are the shrines/memorials for those sites?

Third: where are the photographs of these camps? The US would have liked some “evil Jap camp liberation” photos for the audiences back home, surely? Can you find anything online?

We [read on](#):

*“Once the CHamorus arrived at Manenggon, there were about 18,000 or so of them camped out in different spots along the Manenggon river. They built temporary huts using tangantangan sticks and coconut leaves. **No buildings, latrines, food, or medicine were provided at the campsites.** The CHamorus used water from the river and foraged for anything edible in the area.”*

And:

*“**No records exist** of how many people died at or en route to Manenggon or the other camps in the south.”*

So... there wasn't a camp? They just stopped by a random river and built temporary huts. OK. So why that location then? Why not send them to an actual camp? How did 18,000 people get shelter and water and food, surely they would have quickly overpopulated that area and starved/become sick? There's no way that river valley would have enough forage-able food for 18,000 humans. Is this “temporary shelters we built ourselves” narrative why there aren't any photographs of any kind

of actual camp? Or any other camps on Guam at the time? We also have no records of the number of deaths. So the whole “may have killed” is complete speculation. This whole thing doesn’t make any sense! So let’s recap: there’s a lot of atrocity propaganda rumours about death marches and concentration camps on Guam but it’s literal hot air from the ONI, yet again, with no evidence.

For video footage of the second Battle of Guam you could load up [this](#). It’s only a short clip but we see the usual training exercise footage of Marines running around the fields of Guam. No Japanese or signs of actual battle, just troops test-firing flamethrowers on bushes and throwing grenades over hills and so on.



Or you could take 20 minutes to watch the hilarious US Navy film “[Return to Guam](#)” which features:

- The dramatisation-presented-as-real-time-documentary recovery of radioman George Tweed. For God’s sake, don’t look at the camera Steve! We’re rolling!
- Ethnic Chamorro US Navy crewmen unironically reminiscing about how much they longed for a return to the good old days under US military occupation instead of that awful Japanese military occupation.
- An American doing an impression of a Japanese radio operator, sounding like a Saturday morning cartoon villain.



From the 8 minute mark you get the usual footage of Americans shooting at cliff faces, farmer's fields and stationary aircraft parked on otherwise empty runways.



Around the 9 minute mark you get some footage of the Americans landing on Guam with a badly dubbed audio track of voice actors shouting to each other in the recording studio. You'll note from the visuals of the landing there are no LVT's being sunk (the historical canon is that the Japanese blew up dozens of LVT's from clifftop artillery positions). Instead we just get shots like this, showing everyone landing peacefully on a beach front that rather conspicuously has not been hit by 1,300 tons of explosive:



Sturdy palm trees on Guam.

Or this:



We get a couple minutes of more bad dubbing with footage of training exercises where Marines fire mortars/field artillery at empty moorland. At 10:26 we get a reveal shot that they're attacking a prop settlement like something out of the intro of [Thunderbirds](#).



Then more of the usual “fire machine gun off screen” and “shoot flamethrower into small cave”:



The narrator mentions the cost of retaking Guam was high. Given the Americans had just shy of 60,000 men attack Guam, they only lost 1,783 troops according to Wikipedia. Must be that Iron Man armour again. The Japanese meanwhile lose 18,337 troops. Of course it would be those numbers. For injuries on the American side 6,010 are listed. Wikipedia normally combines combat injury stats with general sickness/injury (so for example malaria, dysentery or general accidents) to bulk up the numbers. I reckon a couple weeks romping around Pacific islands doing field training could easily lead to that... if the numbers are even accurate to begin with. Amusingly, Wikipedia states that only 600 civilians are killed in the entire conflict so that would have to be the 600 Chamorro's killed at those six notorious spectral concentration camps. This means the Americans captured Guam without killing a single native – an incredible feat for them! Well done lads.

At 11:50 the narrator tells us 1,226 Americans died, which is a bit different to the modern tally. Strange.

Shots of the island at 12:47 (for example) show Guam has not been affected by the alleged firebombing/bombardment that would have burned the foliage and left barren earth:



Most of the damage appears to have been contained to civilian habitation, as per the rapid cuts after the 13 minute mark:



The film wraps up with radioman/semi-pro shoemaker George Tweed himself(?) addressing Naval brass. It's cute how at roughly the 14:38 mark you can literally see him reading left-to-right with his eye movements:



Honestly, imagine being a US Navy spook in the 1940s. You get paid well, you get to go home to your hot Stepford wife **and five cabana boys** and white picket fence. Mortgage is paid off. Job security, decent pension, dental. No crisis acting needed, no 10 month fake court trials livestreamed. Just make a laughably badly acted student film with your Hollywood buddies and call it a day. Good times.

You could also watch this 1944 War Dept film about the [Liberation of Guam](#) which is pretty similar in terms of footage of training exercises. I like how it specifically mentions at the 3 minute mark that during the landing the Japanese use mortars to attack, they damage some amphibian tanks but not a single troop carrier. This directly contradicts the later canon history of Guam (i.e. 30+ LVTs and infantry getting messed up as a result). The footage shows a fairly peaceful landing with the incoming LVT's bobbing along and the coastline being untouched from any obvious bombardment (again contradicting the whole "we bombed them for weeks, tons of explosive" narrative). Except now its "10,000 tons of bombs" not 1,300 as the narrator explains at 3:37. Why can they not keep the story straight? Later on (around 8:50) the narrator explains how in the north of Guam the Americans found corpses of natives who had been decapitated by hysterical Japanese for the crime of "looking to the sky for American planes". That would be problematic given all the Chamorro's had already been marched to the south to those invisible death camps.

I could go on but you get the point – the visual evidence doesn't reflect the plot, the Americans keep contradicting themselves and the whole thing is ridiculous as usual. You'll forgive me if I move on to Tinian.

The [Battle of Tinian](#) – 24th July to 1st August of 1944.

The opening image from [Wikipedia's article](#) is blatantly doctored:



“U.S. Marines wading ashore on Tinian” – original [here](#). We have seen that one before, I recognize the pasted guy front and center.

That is so laughably bad I can't believe nobody has spotted this before. Seriously, what's going on here? They gave the job to the intern and went home early that day.

Tinian was occupied by the Americans and [eventually turned into a giant 40,000 man airbase](#):

*“Tinian is located approximately 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometres) from mainland Japan, and was suitable as a staging base for continuous heavy bomber attacks on the Japanese Islands. Immediately after the island's seizure by the US, **construction began on the largest airbase of WWII, which covered the entire island (except its three highland areas). The Tinian Naval Base was a 40,000-personnel installation, and the Navy Seabees (110th NCB) laid out the base in a pattern of city streets resembling New York City's Manhattan Island, and named the streets accordingly.**”*

Not only was it a giant military facility, it was then used for the WW2 propaganda concept of the “atomic bomb”:

*“North Field was the departure point of the 509th Composite Group specialized Silverplate nuclear weapons delivery B-29 bombers **Enola Gay and Bockscar, which respectively carried the two atomic bombs named Little Boy and Fat Man, that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.**”*

The reality being that nuclear weapons are a psychological weapon, so nothing actually needed to be dropped on those two cities.

Funny numbers, as always:

Strength	
41,364 Marines ^{[1]:34}	8,039 ^{[1]:89}
Casualties and losses	
326 killed	5,542 killed
1,593 wounded ^{[1]:88}	252 captured
	Remainder (2,265) missing ^{[1]:88}
Up to 4,000 Japanese civilians killed (including many suicides) ^{[1]:89}	

Over 41,000 Marines to fight just over 8,000 Japanese! They lose 326 men (incredibly low numbers as always), meanwhile the Japanese lose over 5 and a half thousand men with 252 captured. More extraordinary is the pitch that over 2,000 Japanese troops simply vanish into mist.

We also learn that over 4,000 Japanese civilians are killed:

“By 10 August 1944, 13,000 Japanese civilians were interned, but up to 4,000 were dead through suicide, murdered by Japanese troops, or killed in combat. The garrison on Aguiguan Island off the south-west cape of Tinian, commanded by Lieutenant Kinichi Yamada, held out until the end of the war, surrendering on 4 September 1945. The last holdout on Tinian, Murata Susumu, was captured in 1953”

They invaded on July 24th 1944 – but a garrison on Aguiguan remained operational until September 1945! What about this Murata guy, hiding on Tinian until 1953? The latter is referencing [this page](#), which tells us:

*“Holdout Murata Susumu was captured in 1953. He was living in a small shack near a swamp since the war. For more information on his capture, read the account of Cristino S. Dela Cruz, who captured him in the book **Saipan Oral Histories of the Pacific War** by Bruce Petty, page 40.”*

So this is a *story* told by a Mr. C S Dela Cruz, to the author of [this book](#). I’m not paying \$14 for the epub copy so you’ll forgive my scepticism, but I suggest this is all simply hearsay like every other Japanese holdout story I’ve looked at.

Of the Japanese commanders running things on Tinian we have Kiyochi Ogata, Goichi Oie and Kakuji Kakuta.

[Kiyochi Ogata](#): he gets a stub article with no photo, we basically get told “was a bad guy on Tinian and committed seppuku”. No idea if his body was recovered, no grave.

[Goichi Oie](#) gets a (terrible) photo at least:



No photo in history ever looked like that, since old photos are analog, with high resolution. They are never pixelated like that. To get that you have to hit it with a program on purpose.

We learn:

*“...the US troops that landed broke through to Mt. Lasso, which endangered Japanese control of the island. **Kakuta, Ogata, and Oie committed suicide in the traditional fashion of seppuku, where they stabbed themselves with swords and disembowelled themselves.**”*

OK, so all the commanders kill themselves. And:

*“The knife that Goichi Oie used to commit seppuku was **retrieved by a US Marine named Fred Osgood** and sent home to the US in 1944.”*

What, so he robs the corpse? Really? No rules in war I guess. OK, so then what about the bodies? Are they burned? Buried in an unmarked grave? Returned to Japan?

Turning to look at [Kakuta](#), note we have already met this guy as he was involved in the (fake) Battle of Midway and the (fake) Raid on Dutch Harbour, Alaska. We learn:

*“Kakuta was the senior military officer on the island during the Battle of Tinian although he was not directly responsible for the defences. As the Americans closed in on Tinian, **Kakuta and his staff made repeated efforts to escape in rubber boats at prearranged rendezvous with a Japanese submarine.** After several failed attempts, **Kakuta and his staff withdrew to a cave on the east coast of Tinian and were never seen again.** It is **presumed** that Kakuta committed suicide soon after the Americans landed and **that his body was buried in a secret location by members of his staff.**”*

So hang on... the page on Oie talks about the 3 commanders getting together and killing themselves in a cave. Later on a Marine (Osgood) finds the bodies and steals Oie's knife as a trophy, implying his corpse is literally sprawled on a cave floor ready to be searched like a Skyrim loot drop. But the page on Kakuta talks about the command staff retreating to east Tinian and vanishing without a trace. The seppuku beat is speculation, as no body is found and no grave is ever uncovered. Once again these Japanese commanders vanish in a puff of smoke and are never seen again – just presumed dead.

For footage of the Battle of Tinian we could view this US Marine Corp video "[The Marianas Operation Phase 3: Tinian](#)".



I like how the Marine Corps symbol is the Phoenix cheerfully sat on the world.

The narrator informs us at 2:54 that 90% of Tinian is sugar cane plantation (i.e. it was cultivated farmland, not rugged inhospitable tropics like in Guadalcanal).

From the 18 minute mark the lengthy briefing about the invasion cuts to some actual footage of the landing operation. We see the Marine craft bobbing around unharmed, while the larger craft blast the hell out of the beaches with rockets/shells. As far as I'm aware the Japanese have no pillboxes or coastal defence emplacements at White Beach 1 + 2 so they're just shooting sand. There is allegedly enemy return fire (according to the narrator) but we need to take his word for it.

At 20:50 the troops wade to shore and we're told they have to "clear the beach of mines". It's unclear how they are expected to do this and there's no footage of mine removal. We're given a shot of a flipped LVT at 21:00 and told 2 vehicles were destroyed by Japanese mines. There's some talk about a feint off the coast of Tinian town (where some ships sail around in plain view of the Japanese, apparently they're shot at and damaged, but we have no sign of this). You would think the Japanese would be aware of the massive landing operation in the north west point of the island but the Marines are able to continuously offload troops and vehicles until 4pm that day (bearing in mind they first arrive at around 7:30am). This would seem extremely convenient for the Americans and a massive error on the part of the Japanese defenders.

At the 23 minute mark the Marines have now had the entire day (a nice sunny day with calm seas) to land, set up shop and have a quiet smoke. There's no sign of combat, no sign of the Japanese. The narrator then informs us that that very night not just one but multiple Japanese machine gun teams manage to (checks notes) sneak into the middle of the Marine encampments and start shooting at their artillery and rear units. What!?! How? How do you walk right past all the sentries and defensive systems the Marines would have set up? No idea. The Japanese then throw "many tanks" at the Marines but these are defeated immediately. No footage or photos of any of this.

By the following day the sugar cane fields have now been burned and hundreds of Japanese are killed. We get the obligatory shot of “a couple guys lying down on the ground”:



What do we think – mannequins? Actors lying down on the ground for a minute? We can’t see anything to confirm these are Japanese. Usual “no blood, no gore, no dismemberment, no insignia” rule applies as always.

We then have some more footage of ships shooting at nothing, planes flying over empty fields and so on. We have the Marines walking around the central Tinian sugar cane fields in broad daylight, meeting no enemy fire whatsoever:



No wonder they later made so many movies about WWII and Vietnam. They needed to replace all this fake footage with more convincing Hollywood footage. They then did the same thing with the Apollo missions. Now, when you think of historical proof, you think of Hollywood images. *Saving Private Ryan. Apocalypse Now. Tora! Tora! Tora! Apollo 13.*

At 24:00 we’re told that the Japanese are now hiding in caves (of course) on the southern slopes of Mt. Lasso. Man, these islands are just riddled with huge caves. That's convenient. I wonder: have

we ever gotten confirmation that these huge caves exist on these little Pacific islands? My guess is they don't. The few caves that you would expect to be there would only fit a few small animals.

At 24:15 we have a lovely panning shot from a plane that shows absolutely no Japanese or defensive structures whatsoever. Bear in mind this is meant to be at the main airfield in the north of Tinian:



We then have some waffle about the Marines enduring Japanese artillery fire (where is this artillery? Why are bombers not dispatched to destroy them? Why is there no evidence of any of this? Etc.)

The Marines continue to offload even more men and supplies – this is now 2 days worth of offloading troops, for such a small location. Even more marching across sugar cane fields occurs:



Exciting stuff. Some Marines get to have a lovely coastal walk in the sunshine, which must have been enjoyable:



After three days of this the Americans were very proud to announce they controlled a quarter of Tinian:



The master plan was now to head south and enjoy more of the Tinian countryside. This meant a road trip using some tanks:



I imagine they stopped off for a picnic or two along the way. Nice time of year for it. I bet you thought the Pacific campaign was all blood and grit and napalm, right? I had no idea being in the Marines was so relaxing. Don't worry reader, I'll let you know when we get to some action.

By 26:17 we learn that the Marines, heading south, met "little opposition" (you don't say) and made it to the beach.



Meanwhile back up in the north of the island the airfield that had supposedly been viciously contested is completely calm and operational with planes taking off and landing. There's no sign of any artillery / aerial bombardment damaging the runway either.



26:35 – more walking around in broad daylight without any opposition:



By the end of the 4th day on Tinian the Marines now controlled the entire northern half of the island:



I assume they've managed to get the Japanese out of all those pesky caves. Presumably around this time you had the Japanese commanders do their vanishing trick on the eastern shoreline given that the island is now almost entirely lost to them.

There's a bit more walking around, some action when a tank drives over a small tree to the amusement of a native and eventually a shot from a plane when the Americans fly over Tinian town.

Interestingly, the town has been obliterated:



I mean, I guess they didn't want any stinking locals messing up their future air base, right? Every structure in the town is clearly flattened in what I presume is a mix of aerial and artillery bombardment. The Japanese didn't do this and we've had no combat other than that weird beat on the first night involving machine gun ninjas.

The Marines now start to face "heavy resistance" so we get some shots of artillery cannon firing into distant fields and a Japanese man looking awkward being hauled out of a burrow like a mole:



The narrator explains that some bombers dropped a bunch of 1,000 pound bombs on Tinian town and this helped clear out the enemy forces. I'll bet. The climax of the film involves the Marines

allegedly corralling the Japanese on the southern tip of the island, then sending in dozens of bombers to drop explosives on them. Tanks are then sent in to shoot at empty hillsides:



We are advised the Japanese respond by hiding in cliff face caves and continue their evil reign there instead. This is why the Americans complete their conquest of Tinian by firing their remaining artillery shells at a large cliff. This was convenient for the Americans as the cliff did not move or protest while being targeted:



At 30:32 we have one of the last remaining Japanese soldiers surrender, for some reason with a sassy catwalk strut and no shirt:



All in all, pretty impressive stuff. Truly, Tinian was the most devastating of battles.

What else is there to say?



“A Water Buffalo vessel loaded with Marines and bound for Tinian Island makes its way through a churning sea in July 1944.” - original [here](#).

You can see this one has been doctored easily enough – the white glow, the weird silhouettes, the flat 2D troops on the landing craft by the 48 marker, etc.



“Marines in bombed ruins of Town on Tinian 1944” – original [here](#).

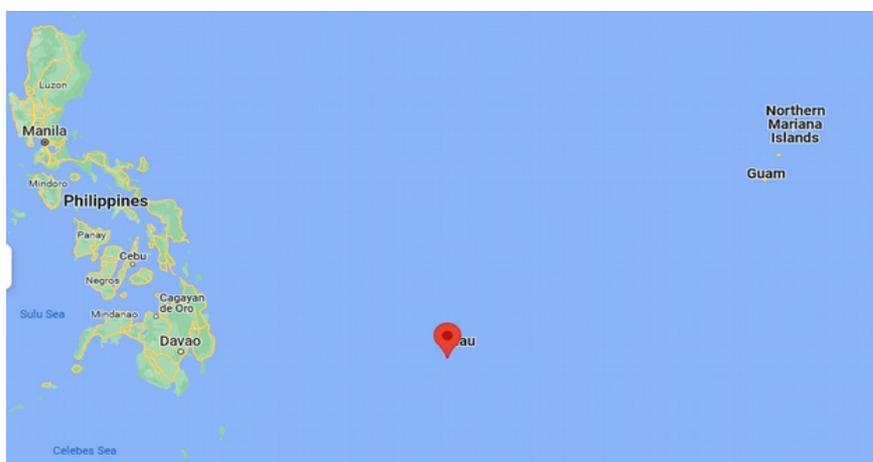
You can see what I mean about how bad the town got it, compared to the rest of the island.



“Bombed shelled ruins of town on Tinian Invasion 1944” – original [here](#). Looks real for a change, but what are we looking at? How do we know it isn't hurricane damage? Typhoons roll through pretty regularly: there was a Cat. 5 storm that famously hit the Northern Marianas in 2018, being the worst storm since 1935. More to the point, there was a huge and famous typhoon moving through that area in December 1944: Typhoon Cobra, which sank three of our destroyers. To me, that damage looks like typhoon damage rather than shelling.

I just wanted to show two examples of Tinian Town being pulped. Unpopular opinion: the objective here was actually to flatten Tinian Town, thus driving out all the locals and turned over the entire island to the American military so they could build their base. Were any Japanese even there? One does wonder.

The [Battle of Peleliu](#) ran from September 15 to November 27, 1944. A bit of geographical context is needed here, first of all. This is a map of the Pacific, with the Philippines on the left. You can see the The Republic of Palau where the red marker is (Peleliu is one island out of Palau's 340). In the upper right you can see tiny Guam and the Northern Mariana's.



If we zoom in on Palau we can see the island chain properly:



Now if I hadn't said anything, you would assume the Japanese would be on that main island in the top right, right? That's the biggest island on the chain. Logically, it would be where their main base would be constructed. You've got the most space to build on and the most available natural resources and so on.

But you'd be wrong. That, dear reader, is [Babeldaob](#) and the Americans couldn't give a hoot about it. Because it was unoccupied? No. According to Wikipedia:

*“During World War II a Japanese garrison on Babeldaob was composed of **21,449 Imperial Japanese Army men** under the command of Lieutenant-General Sadae Inoue and **8,286 Imperial Japanese Navy men** under the command of Vice-Admiral Kenmi Itoh. **Babeldaob was bypassed by the Allied forces during the war.**”*

They had a garrison of about 30,000 Japanese. That's not insignificant. Bearing in mind that Babeldaob being the largest island in the chain is still only 128 square miles in size (331km²). It makes up over 70% of the land mass of Palau. What do the Marines do? They ignore it. Instead, the focus of the fighting is on Peleliu and Angaur in the bottom left corner:



That is a story killer, by itself. You should really pause on that for a while and let it sink in. Try to explain it as a part of the overall story you have been told. Do not move on until you do.

OK, so how many Japanese were based on Peleliu?

Strength	
47,561 ^{[1]:38}	10,900 ^{[1]:37} 17 tanks ^[2]
Casualties and losses	
9,594 ^{[3]:285} –9,804 ^{[4]:573} (including losses in the surrounding islands) 1,792 ^{[4]:573} –1,794 ^{[3]:285} killed (1,252 Marines killed) (282 Soldiers killed)	14,000 ^{[4]:573} (including losses in the surrounding islands) 13,600 killed 400 captured ^{[5]:327}

Just shy of 11,000. So there's triple the forces on Babeldaob but we can ignore them and sail around them with no issue, but Peleliu absolutely needs to be captured because... because we say so. To do this, the Marines send in 5 times the number of men as the Japanese had stationed there and they duke it out on an island that is only 5 square miles (13km²) in size.

We can also see the numbers being shifty because they're not listing "how many Americans fought how many Japanese" properly, they're incorporating "losses in the surrounding islands". Hmm.

From Wikipedia:

"There was disagreement among the U.S. Joint Chiefs over two proposed strategies to defeat the Japanese Empire. The strategy proposed by General Douglas MacArthur called for the recapture of the Philippines, followed by the capture of Okinawa, then an attack on the Japanese home islands. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz favoured a more direct strategy of bypassing the Philippines, but seizing Okinawa and Taiwan as staging areas to an attack on the Japanese mainland, followed by the future invasion of Japan's southernmost islands. Both strategies included the invasion of Peleliu, but for different reasons."

I like how we're not even considering the strategy of simply sailing into Tokyo Bay and capturing the Emperor in the Imperial Palace. It's not like you're trying to get to Xi'an in central China. You've got a fleet, you've got amphibious landing craft, you can literally sail right to their capital and attack. Nah, better go the long way round and fight all over the map. We saw the same thing in the War in Europe. Don't try to liberate Paris, no, go fight fake battles in the middle of the desert in North Africa, where only the camels can see you.

Bear in mind this is in September of '44. They beat the Japanese in the Battle of the Philippine Sea back in June that year. The enemy fleet is smashed. The Americans have the upper hand. We're now in this strange position of the Japanese stacking thousands and thousands of infantry on various tiny islands with (seemingly) no anti-air ability, no air power and no naval power. This makes them a) sitting ducks to aerial bombardment and b) completely useless because unless they can go out onto the ocean to engage the Americans and physically push them back out of the Pacific waters, which they can't, then they are not a threat. Ironically, the only way you can make them a threat at this point is to physically sail up to their island and march inland so they can shoot at you, which is exactly what the Marines do.

On the one hand we have Babeldaob with 30,000 Japanese soldiers sitting around doing sake shots and reading manga comics who can be completely ignored with no consequences to the Americans; on the other hand we have these tiny islands like Peleliu which suddenly become vital staging grounds for... what? A runway to attack the Philippines? What about the aircraft carriers? This tiny island justifies roughly 25,000 men's lives being lost? I really don't want to be armchair general on

this, I'm just trying to point out the basic illogic of the plot. The war scholars, like the art critics, must be blind.

“By 1944, Peleliu Island was occupied by about 11,000 Japanese of the 14th Infantry Division with Korean and Okinawan labourers. Colonel Kunio Nakagawa, commander of the division's 2nd Regiment, led the preparations for the island's defence.”

This is [Kunio Nakagawa](#), who of course commits seppuku in a secret bunker. Or was speculated to have done, for about 50 years. After all, his body wasn't “found” until 1993 as per [this article](#):

“At battle's end, the Japanese senior officers—Colonel Nakagawa and Major General K. Murai (who was serving as an adviser to Nakagawa) - committed seppuku, ceremonial suicide, in their last command post, a large, well-shaped vertical cavity positioned naturally in the China Wall, a limestone-serrated ridge among the Umurbrogol Mountains. Japanese resistance officially ended there on 25 November 1944 with the code message, “Sakura, Sakura” - “Cherry, Cherry” - meaning, “it has ended here,” sent through the underwater telephone cable to military headquarters at Koror.”

This is interesting because it clarifies that the Japanese forces occupying Palau were stationed at... Koror city. To the north-east of Peleliu. If we look at [the Wiki page on Koror City](#) we learn:

“Koror was the administrative centre of the Japanese South Sea Mandate, and thousands of Japanese lived in the city. Parts of the city were destroyed by American aerial bombardment during World War II, and after the United States occupied the city they burnt or tore down the remainder of the city, leaving only a few buildings for the occupation forces.”

As with Tinian, you don't want to be living in one of these small Pacific towns when the Americans come along. You're getting bombed flat. Anyway, back to the article from USNI – the writer – along with a Colonel and a Major from the Vietnam war who specialised in “psychological operations” (nudge nudge wink wink) come along for the ride and what do you know, for the first time in decades the magic bunker is discovered with skeletons ready to be examined. The article doesn't actually confirm the corpses were ID'd as Nakagawa, it's just given a “yeah it's probably him” conclusion and left at that. How fortunate for everyone that these men can find a bunker 50 years later but no native islander, war historian or tourist did before that, nor did anyone bother to simply ask the Japanese military where they constructed their headquarters (obviously they would know and have maps of their own facilities). Also how strange that the Americans who found the secret bunker didn't care to take any photographs of it. You would think that would be the obvious move, right? You find a lost bunker and some special corpses, you'd take a snapshot of the bunker, some boomer in khaki's and sunglasses giving a sweaty thumbs up by the entrance. Nah, no photos, just take their word for it. Cameras were too good by then, they couldn't try to pass by you these grainy black and white pixellated frauds.

Back to the main [Wikipedia page](#) on Peleliu:

“After their losses in the Solomons, Gilberts, Marshalls, and Marianas, the Imperial Army assembled a research team to develop new island-defence tactics. They chose to abandon the old strategy of trying to stop the enemy on the beaches, where they would be exposed to naval gunfire. The new tactics would only disrupt the landings at the water's edge and depend on an in-depth defence further inland. Colonel Nakagawa used the rough terrain to his advantage, by constructing a system of heavily fortified bunkers, caves, and underground positions, all interlocked in a “honeycomb” system. The traditional “banzai charge” attack was also

discontinued as being both wasteful of men and ineffective. These changes would force the Americans into a war of attrition, requiring more resources.”

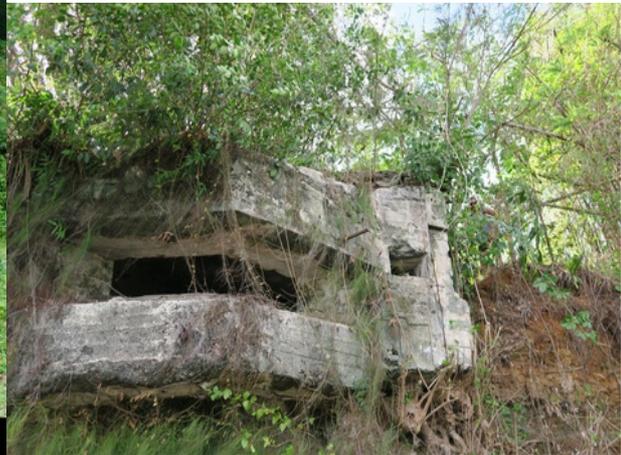
OK so let me stop you there. Number 1: the Japanese are always letting the Americans land and set up shop. They only attack once you're walking inland, this is their standard procedure in basically every battle we've seen (other than, what, some mines supposedly buried on the north west beach at Tinian). Number 2: it is also not new or innovative for the Japanese to build bunkers and tunnels, this is what they're supposed to be doing (as we've seen) as standard practice. What are they on about? The only new thing is the lack of Banzai charging but whatever, that just means the Japanese aren't sub-70 IQ morons prepared to lose by throwing away personnel to no benefit. I assume this paragraph is for people who haven't been following the Pacific campaign along from the off and are just given a surface hand-wave explanation of why it takes weeks and weeks and so many lives to conquer Peleliu. Also, it's irrelevant they have all these pillboxes as the Americans are about to bomb them for days on end.

*“Nakagawa's defences were centred on Peleliu's highest point, Umurbrogol Mountain, a collection of hills and steep ridges located at the centre of Peleliu overlooking a large portion of the island, including the crucial airfield. **The Umurbrogol contained some 500 limestone caves, connected by tunnels. Many of these were former mine shafts that were turned into defensive positions. Engineers added sliding armoured steel doors with multiple openings to serve both artillery and machine guns. Cave entrances were opened or altered to be slanted as a defence against grenade and flamethrower attacks. The caves and bunkers were connected to a vast tunnel and trench system throughout central Peleliu, which allowed the Japanese to evacuate or reoccupy positions as needed, and to take advantage of shrinking interior lines.**”*

This is the same load of old cobblers as what we'll find at Iwo Jima, where the Japanese are presented as villainous versions of the Dwarves from Tolkien or perhaps more accurately [the Skaven](#) from Warhammer Fantasy: evil subterranean tunnel dwellers who can build enormous facilities underground that are impenetrable to attack.

Simple thought experiment: a battle occurs between two armies. One side is based underground in an elaborate tunnel/bunker network. If the attacking force makes gains then this defending force would retreat to the safety of their underground lair. Logically, to defeat the defenders the attacking army would need to go underground to fight them. What would we expect from this conflict? Stuff about going underground. What evidence would we see after the battle? Photos/videos of people going into these tunnels and bunkers. Anecdotes about “that time I had to go down those damn tunnels and Johnny got shot by a Jap”. You'd have tourism as well – years later, some tour guide saying “Come visit the Great Labyrinth of Peleliu!”. Do we have this? Nope.

There are some photos of bunkers (in the sense of pillboxes, i.e. concrete firing points above-ground). Here are a couple examples pulled off generic Google Image searches:



Now this is all well and good but I'm not seeing a massive interlocking defence network. I'm not seeing a reinforced mineshaft complex built into a mountainside with space for 10,000 troops to live underground full time. That would be quite a thing to see. I'm also baffled how these pillboxes are still standing given that (as with Tinian, Saipan, etc.) the Marines had to clear them out one by one using either tanks, artillery or satchel charges and flamethrowers – therefore leaving the bunker in a state of significant structural damage unlike in the examples above.

So you google around some more and the internet goes “Ah, well, you see Lestrade, the tunnels were actually in the mountains”. Fine, so then you search for any images of these (obviously enormous and interconnected) tunnel networks. You get stuff like this:



“Discovered during a trip to Peleliu in 1994 was this 1,000-man cave, littered with empty sake bottles, deep in the tunnels in the Amiangal Mountain in north Peleliu. Caption and photo by Phillip D. Orr” – original [here](#).

A bunch of beer bottles in a cave. OK.



Photo of some Japanese grenades, in a heap, in a random cave – original [here](#).

Seriously where are these tunnels? They had enough underground space to house thousands of men for weeks (supposedly the Japanese hid their forces completely underground for at least 4 days straight during the initial bombing of the island, so I’m serious when I say they need to have organised space for thousands of men) along with the necessary food, water, ammunition, dormitories etc. and apparently nobody ever goes into these tunnels or takes pictures. The odd journalist walks around Peleliu and looks at a single rusted artillery piece or a free-standing (undamaged) pillbox and goes “yep, that was a big battle”. I’m not seeing it lads. Where are the

mine shafts? The steel bunker doors? The troop canteens? The underground generators? Radio rooms? Medical bays? Barracks? Toilets? Armouries? Plumbing? Air ventilation? What, they just sat in a bare cave and drank 200 bottles of sake stacked like a tin of plastic army men? Come off it.

I wanted to say you might want to take a minute to watch the first ten minutes of this clip from the video game “Call of Duty World At War”. There’s a level set entirely around the invasion of Peleliu, with you playing as a Marine. Now bear with me here: I know this is a video game, but this is meant to be a “historically faithful” depiction of the Peleliu invasion that is on message with what the Pentagon/Marine Corps says happened. At least that is the intention of the game studio. As such it does try to stick to the official history of events and they take some pride in being faithful to that narrative. So my point is, what you are seeing here is the “approved” idea of the battle. Compare the level of resistance / Japanese defences to what you see in any of the actual newsreels / photos. It’s completely different. I thought older readers might find this interesting as an example of the evolving nature of the propaganda, for a younger generation, to be given the same messaging in a new way.

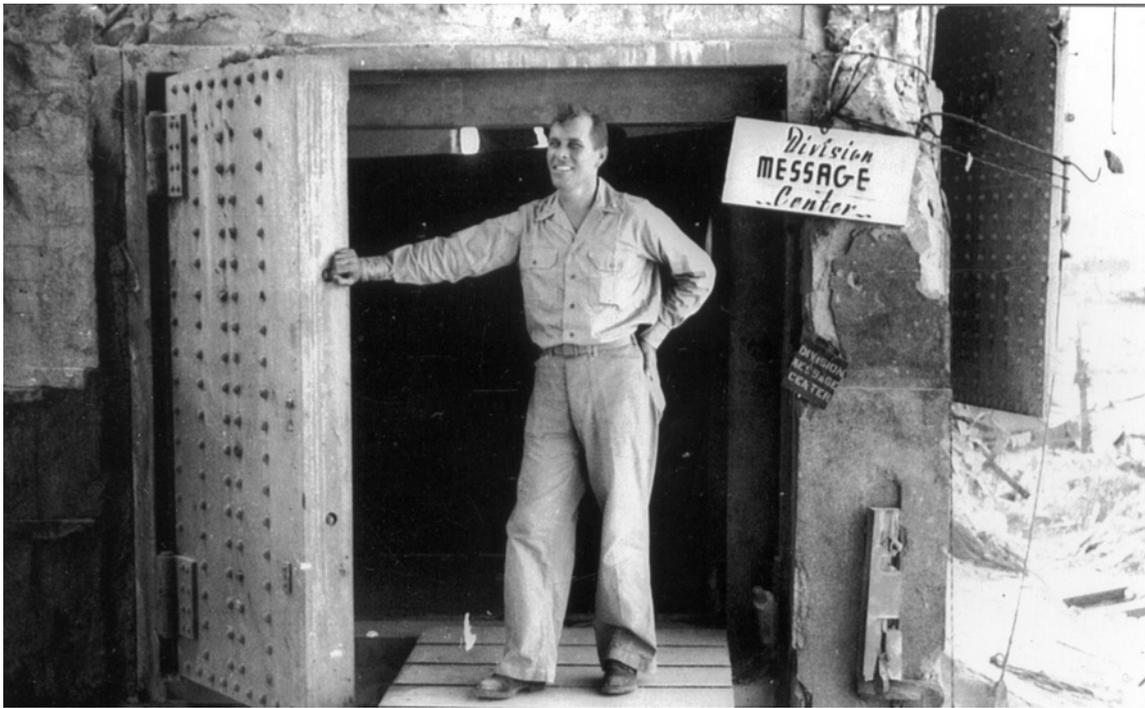
This website gives us two interesting photos. Firstly, a shot of an American camp looking at “Bloody Nose Ridge” (i.e. the “big” mountain of Peleliu):



“The view from the 2nd floor of the Headquarters Building towards the extreme south end of the Umurbrogal Ridge (Bloody Nose Ridge).” - original [here](#).

The first photo shows a) that Umurbrogal isn’t that big and b) that the Americans have (predictably) firebombed the hell out of the island.

This second photo is all I can find as evidence of a metal door on Peleliu, this being to the entrance of a Japanese communications centre (so they say). You can see the right hand door hanging up on the right. Was this... destroyed in the attack and the Americans are keeping it around? Or is this building actually being built by the Americans? Unclear.



“Day’s immediate boss, Lt. Col. Jeff Fields, in front of the iron door that lead to the 2nd floor Japanese Headquarters Communications Center.” - original [here](#).

Again, we should be seeing photos and records of Marines going into these mineshafts and caverns and fighting it out with the Japanese. We should have photos of the tunnels with steps down into the earth and the underground facilities the Japanese built. Instead we get a hand-waving of “they entombed the Japanese” using bulldozers and they sealed all the entrances. OK. Let’s run with that. If that happened, you’d still have all the tunnels and underground bases still around, right? After the war somebody, somewhere, would have uncorked an entrance. You’d find all sorts of interesting things down there – plus thousands of skeletons. There would be TV crews and amateur treasure hunters and tour guides and celebrities and all sorts picking it over, this is just predictable from human nature.

Further, do you not think the Japanese government post-war would perhaps want to recover these skeletons? Perhaps the families of the dead would want them properly buried? Do you think that might have been a logical plot beat where post-war the Japanese had to send ships or planes to the various island chains we’ve visited to dig up their war dead and bring them back to Japan? This would of course make the news and so on. We don’t get anything like that. Just a mountainside with “sealed entrances” and the odd pillbox. You might as well say the Japanese all skipped away into a fairy mound under a full moon and are off in another realm feasting to this day.

Video footage: well, we can watch [this newsreel clip](#) from the time. The coverage of Palau is at 2:22. Before that you’ve got some interesting footage of the Americans “taking” a town in France (American soldiers shooting at the sky and trees, no visible German presence or Nazi symbols other than a sign in a shopfront) and the Allies “taking” Athens which is completely untouched by war (including the Ancient Greek landmarks there). Athens was apparently completely abandoned by the Axis prior to the Allies arrival as they can literally sail into the harbour, calmly get out and do some parade marching around the city while the civvies cheer them on. There’s no-one to fight so they immediately win by default. Now, my focus here is on the Pacific Campaign so I’m not going to start tugging on that thread but you can see the obvious red flags here from a mile away. Maybe... after this series... we’ll get to that.

Anyway, 2:22 onwards:



Finally I get confirmation on how to pronounce it. Peh-leh-lee-ooo. Lovely. We see some footage of Marines using a flamethrower down a dirt slope:



Also at 2:47 we see lovely footage of Marines shooting a man in the back as he runs away:



“He won’t go far!”. Those jokers.

Around the 3 minute mark we see some “Japanese” surrendering. All of this footage is carefully shot so you can’t see their faces or anything to identify them as Japanese infantry (as they are all stripped to the waist and with backs to the camera). Please note also that we’re not getting any mention whatsoever of the alleged enormous mining / tunnel complex that traverses the island. You would think that would come up. The narrator would have some sort of line like “On Peleliu the Japanese have dug in like ticks and our boys need to flush ‘em out, one tunnel at a time!” with footage of Marines gingerly climbing down access stairwells or blowing open steel blast doors with TNT so they can shoot at the Japanese within.

Later on the video talks about the Americans bombing Romanian oil fields and the MacArthur naval invasion of the Philippines. Please observe the footage given at 5:20 onwards which is seemingly of the Leyte Gulf naval battle, but we can see clearly shows American warships blasting at... nothing... no return fire... no enemy aircraft observable... only this target barge (small black craft just above the waterline, lower left corner):



At 5:48 the narrator informs us that the Japanese air force AND navy are conspicuously absent. OK. So what are we shooting at? Also, what does this mean for the Philippine invasion if there's no resistance? Or the entire [Battle of Leyte Gulf](#)? I think we know by now.

For the remainder of the newsreel the hits keep coming as the narrator explains that the future Philippines President [Sergio Osmeña](#) and General MacArthur are able to simply walk ashore, along with troops being deployed en masse with (from what we see) zero resistance. The Philippines, it would seem, are empty. The Marines walk ashore and start claiming islands and airfields.

Anyway, I don't want to get distracted by the Philippines – that comes later.

We can also watch [“Fury in the Pacific”](#) on YouTube.

The narrator clarifies that “over 2.5 million pounds of bombs” are dropped on Peleliu. Heavy bombers then follow up with “another 2 million pounds” of bombs for good measure. Again, this is on Peleliu and Angaur. Seriously, what on earth would be left standing?



Not much by the look of it. At 2:13 you can see Peleliu now resembles the surface of the moon.

4:28 – They then spend “3 days and nights” firing “6,000 tons of hot steel” (naval artillery) on the islands. You might expect Peleliu was reduced to a churned up mass of sand and coral chunks with the odd severed limb poking out of the sand but apparently this obliteration would merely “soften up” the Japanese pillboxes. What are they made of? The metal of Wolverine’s claws?

We then have a glorious montage of the Americans absolutely blowing the hell out of an empty tropical island. No sign of the Japanese. Or fortifications. Or return fire. The Japanese of course are merely playing dead, those crafty devils.

From 6:00 the Marines get in their landing craft and sail in. Amusingly, they then show clear footage of the landing transports sail all the way in to land with absolutely no retaliatory fire. Bear this in mind [when you read the Wikipedia order of battle](#) about the Japanese shooting at them as they land or firing artillery to sink LVT's:

*“U.S. Marines landed on Peleliu at 08:32, on September 15, the 1st Marines to the north on White Beach 1 and 2 and the 5th and 7th Marines to the centre and south on Orange Beach 1, 2, and 3. As the other landing craft approached the beaches, **the Marines were caught in a crossfire when the Japanese opened the steel doors guarding their positions and fired artillery. The positions on the coral promontories guarding each flank fired on the Marines with 47 mm guns and 20 mm cannons. By 09:30, the Japanese had destroyed 60 LVTs and DUKWs.**”*

They love those steel doors. Shame that, like vampires, you just can't catch them on camera. So, bearing that above quote in mind, re-watch from 6:00 onwards and try and spot any of that.

At 6:40 – “20 landing vehicles are knocked out”. Yep. So not 60. Also we can only see one LVT with smoke coming off it. There are no disabled troop transports in the background or men floundering in the ocean or anything like what you'd expect. How strange.

Around 6:55 you can see the beach is clear of obstacles, by the way. It's just a normal sandy beach. Also here:



There's more debris on Bournemouth beach in summertime.

The Marines then have the usual fun running around and shooting at trees.



At the ten minute mark we get to see the same footage from the previous clip, now in better definition. That flamethrower guy is attacking... a hole in the ground. Not a pillbox. Not a reinforced mine shaft blast door. A sand pit.



Yep.

At 10:08 we see that “Marines shoot Japanese soldier in the back as he runs away” shot, but realise it’s just the lads goofing around. This is staged, obviously:



The way this part is filmed is meant to tell a story: first the flamethrower guy shoots into the sand pit. Then you have a Marine crouched down inspecting the entrance. This third step is of a “Japanese soldier” running out of back end of the pit to escape but gets shot. You can actually hear the (entirely dubbed) rifle shot noise several seconds before the guy turns to “run away” and falls over. Re-watch it to see what I mean. The shot audio effect is too early: the scene starts at 10:07, gunshot is 10:09 which would have knocked the guy back into the sand pit, but he then climbs out, stands, turns and then does his staged dive at 10:10. This is all theatre for the camera..

On reflection, given the amount of foliage visible in this video, it makes me reconsider the bombing claims. I’m sceptical of the sheer amount of explosive supposedly dropped on Peleliu – it should be a cinder but I’m seeing plenty of normal plant life. I think what they’re doing is making a big claim in terms of the amount of explosive - “2 million pounds!” – but it’s actually just enough material to do a couple of practice runs with the bombers for the news reels. Perhaps the Navy / Air Force gets to bill the treasury for thousands and thousands of tons more material than they actually use and keep the profit? See what I mean:



“U.S. Marine artillerymen prepare a 75mm pack howitzer after it has been wrestled into firing position across the inhospitable terrain of Peleliu. The heavy but versatile pack howitzer brought successive Japanese positions under heavy fire.” - original [here](#).

The robust foliage of the Pacific, as always.

Around 10:30 we get a montage of “the sad bit where the Americans mourn their dead”. Lots of shots of them walking around in broad daylight, shirtless, with no cover. Apparently at this stage the Japanese have no snipers or artillery fire whatsoever. I guess they are all back underground. Speaking of underground it must have been a wee bit hot. As per Wikipedia:

*“This area [Peleliu] was hotly contested by the Japanese, who still occupied numerous **pillboxes**. **Heat indices were around 115 °F (46 °C)**, and the Marines soon suffered high casualties from **heat exhaustion**.”*

Incredible the Japanese had air conditioning working back then, in those conditions. Because of course if they didn’t then they would have been cooked alive in their tunnels. Meanwhile the Marines (running around doing their training exercise on the beach) are dropping like flies from heat exhaustion.

*“Further complicating the situation, the Marines’ water was distributed in empty **oil drums**, **contaminating the water with the oil residue**.”*

OK that would also go some way to giving you casualties. I’ll give you my take: another empty island, another training exercise blowing up palm trees for the Hollywood film crews recording this. Then someone screws up the water distribution and a bunch of lads are killed or at least rendered incapacitated on a hospital ship. They’d have been puking up on the sand and blacked out from dehydration within a day in that climate.

As per Wikipedia:

“The reduction of the Japanese pocket around Umurbrogol mountain has been called the most difficult fight that the U.S. military encountered in the entire war. The 1st Marine Division was mauled and remained out of action until the invasion of Okinawa began on April 1, 1945. In total, the 1st Marine Division suffered over 6,500 casualties during its month on Peleliu, over one third of the entire division. The 81st Infantry Division also suffered heavy losses with 3,300 casualties during its tenure on the island.

Postwar statisticians calculated that it took U.S. forces over 1500 rounds of ammunition to kill each Japanese defender and that, during the course of the battle, the Americans expended 13.32 million rounds of .30-calibre, 1.52 million rounds of .45-calibre, 693,657 rounds of .50-calibre bullets, 118,262 hand grenades, and approximately 150,000 mortar rounds.”

So many millions of bullets. Funny numbers also.



“Marine artillery saturates the mouths of caves that the Japanese have fortified, while riflemen attack the positions, often resorting to explosive satchel charges to silence the enemy emplacements and then calling on bulldozers to seal the entrances, entombing the occupants.” - original [here](#).

Ah there we go. So that whole steampunk rat-men under-city the Japanese constructed was all for nothing: a couple bulldozers sealed “the entrances” (just imagine how many dozens and dozens of entrance holes and hidden escape routes you would build if you were the Japanese here) and then everyone inside just sits there and dies. The End.

Funny how right by the “underground mineshaft complex” entrances in the above shot there aren’t any defensive fortifications. You know, like pillboxes. Or tank traps. Machine gun nests. Perhaps some kind of exotic Japanese shrine shaped door with neon lights flashing? I jest. There aren’t even

mines on the approach – the Marines can just walk right up to the entrance and there’s no sign of life. Weird.

What else, what else? Oh, there was this:



“Marine F4U making a napalm run against Japanese defences 2” – original [here](#).

Click on the link and zoom in on the higher resolution original. Check out that plane. Or the bomb it’s supposed to be dropping. Drawn in. Heh.

This one is good too:



Click on [this link to the original](#) and zoom in – you can see a circular smudge on the photograph where they insert the plane to the image. There’s literally a finger print on the image where they had to stick in the plane.

Anyway, I'm a bit bored with Peleliu. Sorry, I appreciate there's supposedly 1,000's of Marines who died there but I'm not seeing it. I see another training exercise, ghost armies of Japanese and a fairly unpleasant mass poisoning involving contaminated water barrels in 46 degree heat.

Last but not least, we turn our attention to the [Battle of Angaur](#). It ran from 17th September – 22nd October 1944.

As per Wikipedia:

*“Angaur is a tiny limestone island, just 3 mi (4.8 km) long, separated from Peleliu by a 7 mi (11 km) strait, from which phosphate was mined. In mid-1944, **the Japanese had 1,400 troops on the island**, under the overall command of Palau Sector Group commander Lieutenant General Sadae Inoue and under the direct command of Major Goto who was stationed on the island.”*

Gotta get those 1,400 guys. Massive overkill plus Funny Numbers? You got it:

Strength	
10,000	1,400 ^{[1]:89}
Casualties and losses	
264 killed	1,350 killed
1,354 wounded ^{[1]:89}	50 captured ^{[1]:89}

Two 13's. Nice. Also nice round number of captives.

This is the second time I've mentioned [Lt. Gen Sadae Inoue](#) so let's look at this bad boy. Totally legit photo to start with:



Pencil sketch is not a photo – original [here](#).

The best part of his Wiki bio is this quote:

*“After the war, Inoue was arrested by the American occupation authorities and **deported to Guam**, where he was tried for Class B and Class C war crimes and **condemned to death in 1949** for*

*negligence of command responsibility in permitting subordinates to execute three downed American airmen captured in Palau. **His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 1951, and he was released in 1953. Inoue died in Japan in 1961.***”

Amazing. So... taken to Guam... check. Condemned in a US military court to death, check. But this judgement takes 4 years after the war ends... why would that take so long!? Then his sentence is commuted to life imprisonment... then they release him two years later! So he's "in prison" from '45 to '53... 8 years... allegedly. Incredible outcomes for the Japanese higher ranks as always.

The Americans are supposed to attack Angaur by bombing it for 6 days starting from September 11th. We then get the usual contradictory gibberish:

*“Major Goto selected the most attractive Beach (code named Green Beach by the Americans) for an amphibious landing to **build his beach defences. His defences consisted of a formidable array of pillboxes, blockhouses, trenches and antitank ditches.** Seeing the build-up around Green Beach, Maj. Gen. Mueller decided to land his troops at the more constricted but less defended beaches of Red and Blue Beach. The 322nd RCT received sporadic mortar and machine gun fire but **landed fairly unopposed and with light casualties.** The 321st landing at Blue Beach faced heavier machine gun and mortar fire, **but it too was able to get ashore with minimal casualties. Unbeknownst to the Wildcats, this was all part of the Japanese new "defence in depth strategy" that they and the 1st Marine Division would also face on nearby Peleliu. The Japanese strategy was to now allow the Americans to land rather unopposed and move inward, with "in depth" defensive lines further inland, and initiating nighttime counterattacks en masse while the Americans were still heavily congregated on the beach heads.**”*

So you have defences on the beach... but the strategy is to let them land unopposed... which the Japanese always do but I'm supposed to forget this and think it's innovative... then they shoot at the Americans anyway which spoils the plan... but the Americans land on a different beach because the Japanese only bother to build proper defences at Green Beach. Does that make sense to you?

This is after the Americans have the best part of a week to blow the hell out of this tiny island. Let me guess, the Japanese are completely unaffected by bombardment because of special underground bunkers?

“The Japanese defensive network on Romauldo Hill and the intense fighting that would take place there was in effect, a microcosm of the brutal fighting taking place in the Umurbrogol pocket on nearby Peleliu by the Marines, and later the 81st Infantry Division. The entire hill was honeycombed with interconnecting caves, pillboxes and bunkers built into the coral rock, forming an almost impregnable position where the hardened defenders were dug in, determined to fight to the death and take as many American lives with them. Near the top of the hill was a small bowl-like valley with a lake surrounded by coral ridges almost 100 feet tall, which became known as "the Bowl". To add to the defenders' advantage there was only one way into and out of the bowl, through a narrow gorge, later named "Bloody Gulch" by the Wildcats. As the Wildcats advanced on "the Bowl", near Lake Salome they were met with withering machine gun, mortar and sniper fire, being stymied in their tracks.”

Coral bunkers this time. Of course. Let me guess, entombed by bulldozers? You bet:

*“From 20 September, the 322nd RCT repeatedly attacked the Bowl, **but the dug in defenders repulsed them with artillery, mortars, grenades and machine guns, inflicting heavy losses.** Gradually, hunger, thirst and American shellfire and bombing took their toll on the Japanese, and*

*by 25 September, after 3 costly frontal attacks the Americans had penetrated the Bowl. **Rather than fight for possession of the caves, they used bulldozers to seal the entrances.***”

That didn't put a stop to the fighting though:

*By 30 September, the island was said to be secure although **the Japanese still had about 300 more soldiers in the Bowl and surrounding areas that held out for almost four more weeks.** Toward the end of the first week of October, the protracted conflict had **degenerated into patrol action with sniping, ambushing, and extensive booby-trapping employed by both sides.** The island's defence commander, Major Goto was killed on 19 October **fighting to keep possession of a cave.** The last day of fighting was 22 October with a total of 36 days of fighting and blasting the Japanese resistance **from their caves** with explosives, tanks, artillery and flamethrowers. The 81st Infantry Division had finally taken the whole of Angaur although at a high cost.”*

How on earth do you have 300 soldiers hanging around the area for 4 weeks? It's a tiny limestone island! Where did they hold out? Underground?

Funnily enough the airstrips on these islands weren't really needed:

*“**Airfields were being constructed as the battle was still being fought, but the delay in the start of the Palaus operation meant that the airfields were not ready in time for the start of the Philippines operations in October 1944.** Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. had argued before the invasion of the Palaus that the operation was unnecessary, and military historians have agreed with him, suggesting that the main benefit was the combat experience gained by the 81st Infantry Division.*”

*During the fighting, Seabees created an airstrip that would house B-24 Liberator bombers of the 494th Bombardment Group, 7th Air Force **which engaged in frequent bombings of the Philippines and other Palau Islands.***”

Well the bulk of the Japanese in Palau were ignored and we've seen from that earlier video clip that the Philippines were a literal walk up the beach so, yeah, not really worth it. They also completely ignore the Japanese on [Yap](#) which had a good 5,000 men on it and also could have been used as a jumping off point but whatever, nobody cares about Yap or Babeldaob.

If we return to [Fury in the Pacific](#) on YouTube and keep watching past the 11 minute mark we then turn to Angaur. This shows us:

- The Marines landing without opposition.
- A couple of mannequins bobbing up and down in the surf (Pro-tip: if you get shot by Japanese gunners then you bleed. Blood goes into water which turns red, you don't just get bodies floating in crystal clear water).
- The usual “fire your weapons into a tree” weapon exercises we've seen dozens of times before.

So again, nothing going on. I'm not even going to dignify the “meanwhile back on Peleliu we shot at some sunken barges which had (checks notes) Japanese snipers on board” at 14:10 with analysis.

You can also watch [this short clip](#) for “Japanese facilities” on Angaur, which demonstrates that it's mostly forest with some plantation/phosphate manufacture buildings here and there. No visible military facilities to speak of.

Or you could watch “[Action At Angaur](#)” instead. It’s the usual smoke and mirrors nonsense. Fighter planes shooting bullets at trees from high up in the sky. No sign of any Japanese. Marines standing around using flamethrowers on bushes and demonstrating what happens when you shoot a heavy machine gun at a hillside. No actual combat. The audio track is entirely dubbed and with cheap, obvious bullet ricochet sound effects. So you’ll have a shot of a bunch of Marines lying down on sand looking relaxed but they’ll play whizz bang noises to give the impression of combat.

At 13:48 the narrator goofs by claiming the Japanese “had no regular defence line”. What about the interlocking pillboxes and bunkers? The gun emplacements? They are conspicuously absent. Instead, the Japanese are all burrowed underground like moles.

At 17:00 the narrator explains that the Japanese are lurking in “caves 15 feet deep carved out of solid coral, with entrances blocked by coconut logs with firing slits only a couple of inches wide”.



The Marines on Angaur, about to blow up a Japanese molehill. This may look like a normal hill to civilian eyes, but it’s actually a Japanese base.

The Japanese are now digging pits vertically into the ground and fire upwards at the enemy when they walk overhead. The whole thing is absurd and relies on the audience being a bit ignorant about other parts of the world or other races not being aliens who don’t need to breathe or regulate temperature.

Anyway, it goes on like this for a half hour with the usual stuff we keep seeing. The Marines build an airstrip on this island mid-battle, then trudge up to the north-west corner to fight at “bloody gulch”. The Marines win here because they use tanks and radio, or something. I’m unclear how tanks got at the 15-foot deep coral bunkers. Or how anyone dug them in the first place.

Right, enough, that's my take on Operation Forager. Apologies for the delay in getting this out, I was poorly and there was a lot to read up on. At least now we have the template for these battles. Now you at home can generate your own Pacific fan fiction just like a real 1940s ONI intern!

Lestrade's Proper Historian Pacific Battle Template™

Swap out some names and numbers, create our very own battle! *Fun for Ages 5+*

- The remote atoll of Wiki-Waki-Woo is a vital location, several million miles from Japan.
- The island is three square miles in size and made out of solid granite. Nothing grows on it and there's no fresh water supply. It is 45 degrees C in the shade even in winter.
- The Japanese placed 50,000 cannibal fanatics on it, armed to the teeth.
- The American fleet turn up and drop 8 million tons of high explosive on the island, night and day, for six weeks.
- The Japanese are completely unharmed because they are cowards and hide in a five-storey underground base they carved out with chopsticks beforehand. The island is also untouched, somehow.
- 250,000 Marines land unopposed, shirtless, firing shotguns into the air wildly while smoking cigars.
- They set up camp on the beach and have a BBQ. The next day they stroll inland and meet fierce resistance. The Japanese have fiendishly cunning interlocking pillbox/tunnel/pit trap networks backed up by robot crows and laser guns.
- The Americans immediately win using flamethrowers and true grit. Final tally: 33 KIA; 880 Marines are sick with heat exhaustion and 1,333 are missing.
- Of the 50,000 Japanese troops: 44,500 Japanese are killed and immediately cremate themselves. 50 are captured revealing themselves to be Korean labourers temporarily hypnotised into fighting for Nippon and the remaining 5,000 vanish into mist.
- The underground base / robot crow production facility also vanishes into thin air.
- Coincidentally a full Hollywood film crew was present and able to capture the entire landing / invasion process and show the Marines standing around shirtless and not using any cover. We also have a modern colour photo of a single pillbox on a rock cliff, this is the solid evidence of the defence system the Japanese used. We also have a book referenced written by Saul Othschild von der Tyre who lists eyewitness statements of what they done did.

Enough of this. I've seen more realistic storylines on Sesame Street. I've seen better writing in Anime. I must drink gallons of quality rum until my consciousness fades into deep blue slurry and I drift under starlight on cool etheric waters. Until I am given respite from the red haired cosmic Muses prodding me with a bamboo stick. All these lies must be unravelled and uncorked they say. I'll do it in a minute love, put the kettle on, etc.

More to come...

[Outro Music](#)

