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COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF

ESTIMATE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION

(as of 6 July 1945)
Reference: C.C.S. 880

Note by the Secretaries

The enclosed report prepared by the Combined Intelligence Committee in reference to paragraph 1 (1) of C.C.S. 880 as directed by the Combined Chiefs of Staff is submitted for consideration.

A. J. McFARLAND,
A. T. CORNWALL-JONES,
Combined Secretariat.

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(as of 6 July 1945)

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ENCLOSUREESTIMATE OF THE ENEMY SITUATION
(as of 6 July 1945)Report by the Combined Intelligence CommitteeTHE PROBLEM

1. To estimate the Japanese situation and intentions.

SUMMARY

2. Over-All Situation. Recent advances in the western Pacific, culminating in the capture of Okinawa, provide the Allies with bases from which effective air attacks can be directed against all important areas under Japanese control. Furthermore, the Allies are now in possession of potential forward bases for an invasion of the Japanese Home Islands, Korea, or the central China coast. Air bases in the interior of China are being recaptured and may be more fully utilized. In addition, increasing Soviet forces in the Maritime Provinces and along the Amur River threaten Manchuria and the areas bordering the Japan Sea.

On the continent the Japanese are now forced to depend upon inadequate and vulnerable land communications. Japan's seaborne communications with all areas south of the Yangtze River have been practically severed. Sea traffic between Japan Proper and ports from Shanghai northward to southern Korea is limited to hazardous runs along the Korean and North China coasts. Even the relatively short shipping routes across the Sea of Japan and the Tsushima Straits are increasingly menaced by Allied mining, aerial, and submarine activities.

The Southern Areas are not only cut off from the Home Islands, but the Japanese find it increasingly difficult to maintain communications between the various territories in the south which are still in their possession.

Sea and air operations have virtually destroyed the capability of the Japanese naval and air forces for other than suicide operations against our forces. Blockade, and air attacks on productive capacity and concentrated reserves of materiel, are seriously impairing remaining Japanese defensive capabilities. The incendiary bombing attack of Japanese cities has had a profound psychological and economic effect on the Japanese. The complete destruction of major areas in all of the important war production centers is placing a tremendous strain upon residual economy, substituting appreciably for the lack of high combat expenditures and producing a chaotic condition in administration and control, which will greatly accelerate the effects of subsequent all-out attacks upon transportation. On the other hand, stocks of ammunition and ammunition production facilities still require intensive and extremely heavy attacks to produce any shortage significant to the interests of invasion and occupation.

3. Economic Situation. (Appendix "A"). The Japanese economic position has deteriorated greatly. The resources of the Outer Zone are no longer available. Transportation between the complementary parts of the Inner Zone* (food and raw materials from North China, Manchuria, and Korea in return for finished products of the Island of Japan) has been seriously curtailed during the last few months, owing to the shortage of shipping (now only 1,300,000 gross registered tons of operable ships over 1,000 tons), Allied submarine and mining activities, and aerial bombardment. Thus, heavy industry in Japan is currently able to produce only at rates far below the capacity of existing plant facilities. For example, although peak production of steel in the islands of Japan has never exceeded 6,000,000 metric tons, current production is only at the rate of 3,500,000 tons. Production of aluminum, chemicals, and fertilizers is also hampered by the transportation difficulties.

Increasingly heavy air attacks, supplementing continued and intensified blockade, are seriously reducing Japan's residual

* Japan Proper, Korea, Manchuria, North China, and Karafuto (Sakhalin).

production. The output of end-products has been substantially lowered. Recent aircraft production is estimated at 1,200-1,500 combat planes monthly, as compared with a peak production of 2,300 reached late in 1944. The Japanese are so short of aviation fuel that orthodox air operations of a sustained nature in any significant force are improbable, although sufficient gasoline will be available to meet their capabilities for all-out suicide attacks. The electronics industry is not able to provide the armed forces with adequate supplies of radar or of radio and sound equipment. On the other hand, reserves of ordnance, other than heavier types of equipment, are believed to be large.

Manpower is not in general a limiting factor on either Japanese production or the size of her army. Bombing of industrial facilities in urban areas has led to workers being released to agriculture.

There is increasing evidence of Japanese concern with regard to the food situation in Japan Proper. Only slight decreases in overall food supplies are, however, anticipated during 1945, although urban dwellers may be seriously affected by disturbances in distribution and losses of stocks resulting from air attacks. More acute is the shortage of consumer goods, the supply of which has been inadequate and which has been aggravated by the current bombings. Partly with an eye to an impending disruption of transport, the Japanese have set up eight regional administrations, each possessing sweeping powers to perform as well as possible in case of emergency.

4. Armed Forces.. (Appendix "B")

a. Ground. The ground component of the Japanese armed forces remains Japan's greatest military asset. There are at present some 110 infantry and 4 armored divisions in the Japanese Army with a total strength of about 4,600,000 men. They are disposed as shown in the map attached to Appendix "B". This force will probably be increased by about 30 divisions by the end of the year; some of these new units may be in existence at present. About 1,000,000 men, however, are now for all practical purposes isolated from the Japanese Inner Zone,

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c. Naval. The Japanese navy has been reduced in size to about the equivalent of one small and unbalanced task force. With the exception of two damaged cruisers, one destroyer, and some submarines in the Singapore area, remaining battleships, carriers, and cruisers appear to be immobilized in home waters. Their main capability and probable employment hereafter will be in suicide attacks by a small task force, and harassing and suicide operations by small surface craft and submarine attacks. Extensive minefields probably exist in the vicinity of important harbors and other strategic areas around the homeland.

5. Defense of Japan. (Appendix "C"). The defense of the main islands of Japan is receiving and will continue to receive the primary attention of the Japanese.

We estimate that by late 1945 there will be available in the Japanese Home Islands and their outposts in the Ryukyus, Izu-Bonins, and Kuriles more than 35 active divisions and 14 depot divisions, which, plus army troops, will total over 2,000,000 men. The Japanese also will continue development of the "National Volunteer Army" and may form combat home defense units to supplement their regular armed forces. Fanatical resistance will be offered in the defense of any of the Home Islands. The Japanese would commit all ground forces they could sustain in action in the defense of Kyushu and that part of Honshu which includes the Kanto Plain, Nagoya, and Osaka areas, while considerably weaker defense would be expected in other parts of Honshu, Shikoku, and Hokkaido for both logistical and strategical reasons.

We believe that in the defense of any one of the main Japanese islands, except possibly Hokkaido, the Japanese would commit against us, primarily in suicide operations, all available aircraft, either in tactical or training units. Such attacks would be continued to the limit of their capability without regard for conservation of air strength for any possible later need.

S. P. A. Authority: NR0294304
By: PH-NARA Date: 07-27-05

The remainder, some 95 divisions (over 4,000,000 men), will be disposed in the main Japanese islands, Korea, Manchuria, and in China north of the Yangtze.

In addition to their regular ground forces, the Japanese have some 300,000 Manchurian and 900,000 Chinese puppet troops of questionable combat value, but capable of guarding lines of communications and performing service duties. Some defections among the Chinese puppets will occur as operations progress. There will probably be a considerable reduction in their strength by the end of 1945.

b. Air. Until September 1944, the Japanese Air Forces steadily increased in size. Since that time they have suffered a substantial reduction in strength. The total strength of combat aircraft assigned to both tactical and training units has been reduced from 8200 as of 1 September 1944 to about 5,000 as of late June 1945. Thus the availability of combat aircraft has been already lowered during this period by about 40%. As result of the greatly expanded Allied air action against Japan, the Japanese aircraft industry, as well as airfield installations, supplies, and repair facilities will suffer greatly during the next few months.

The Japanese believe their maximum air capability to be in the employment of suicide tactics, directed primarily against ships. Currently the Japanese High Command is doing everything possible to improve the training, planning, and accomplishment of suicide air missions. Apparently they have decided to sacrifice future air potential in favor of maximum employment of all available aircraft and pilots to meet any actual invasion. Great numbers of trainer type aircraft are being equipped for suicide missions and pilot trainees are being assigned to suicide units.

The current trend of deployment, which we expect will continue, indicates that the Japanese will in the near future have over 90 percent of their entire air strength concentrated in the main Japanese islands, Korea, Manchuria, and North China.

Remaining Japanese naval units would be also sacrificed to the limit of their capability in the all-out effort to repel our invasion of any one of the main Japanese islands.

6. Korea, Manchuria, and North China. (Appendix "D"). The Japanese ground forces in this area now total over 1,200,000 men (24 active divisions and 5 depot divisions). In anticipation of a possible Soviet entry into the war, these forces will be further increased by withdrawals from Central and South China, and we believe they might have about 1,500,000 men, including more than 40 divisions, in this area by the end of the year. In so far as they are able to do so, the Japanese are preparing for an independent defense of Manchuria, Korea, and North China, and it is unlikely that any substantial reinforcements or supplies will be sent hereafter to this area from Japan proper. We believe that in the event of war with the U.S.S.R., opposition to the Soviets would be left primarily to the Japanese ground forces and that Japan would continue to commit the great bulk of its air strength against us in defense of the Home Islands.

7. Central and South China and Formosa. (Appendix "E"). The Japanese now have about 650,000 men (20 divisions) in Central and South China and another 190,000 men (5 divisions) in Formosa. However, the rapid advance of Allied forces in the Pacific, the interdiction of Japan's shipping routes, apprehension regarding the entry of the U.S.S.R. into the war, and the growing threat of Allied invasion of the east China Coast are forcing the Japanese to shift strength in China northward. We believe that the Japanese are prepared, if circumstances necessitate, to abandon all holdings in China south of the Yellow River, leaving a force of about 125,000, including 4 divisions in the Canton-Hongkong area, and a force of 160,000, including 6 divisions in the Shanghai-Nanking area to deny them to the Allies. Japanese forces in Formosa are cut off and will remain substantially unchanged in numbers.

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8. Southern Areas. (Appendix "F"). The Japanese in the Southern Areas (over 600,000 men) have been cut off from the Home Islands and will receive no further reinforcement or supply. We believe that they will form a perimeter of defense running generally through Southeast Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and French Indochina. Island areas outside this perimeter will be defended by local garrisons. Redistribution of forces within the area will be difficult owing to Allied action and to the very limited transportation facilities. No offensive capability exists, but defense will be determined on the part of local ground forces, using the resources initially available to them.

9. Pacific Islands. (Appendix "G"). Japanese ground forces cut off in the Pacific islands (the Mandates, Solomons, Bismarcks, New Guinea, and the Philippines), amounting to about 300,000 men, have no offensive capabilities, but will hold out to the maximum extent of their ability.

10. Political Situation. (Appendix "H"). The political situation in Japan is dominated by the progressive deterioration of the military situation. The Japanese Diet has now practically legislated itself out of existence and the government has assumed sweeping powers that enable it to rule by decree. The government thus hopes to be in a position to act without fear of major opposition, whether it should determine to continue the war to the bitter end or to seek peace.

The Japanese still find unconditional surrender unacceptable, but they are becoming increasingly desirous of a compromise. Fully aware of the growing weakness of Japan's position, her leaders will make desperate attempts to keep the Soviet Union at least neutral, to sow civil strife in China, and to win the support of conquered peoples. In their present dilemma they are playing for time in the hope that Allied war weariness, jealousies, and conflicts of aims, or some "miracle", will present a method of extricating them from their admitted critical situation.

CONCLUSIONS

11. Probable Military Strategy. The primary preoccupation of the Japanese High Command at present is the defense of the Home Islands, especially Kyushu and Honshu. For this defense they may dispose by the end of 1945 more than 35 active divisions plus 14 depot divisions, which with army troops will total over 2,000,000 men. Except possibly in the case of Hokkaido, all available aircraft will be employed in the defense of the Home Islands, mainly in suicide operations. Their air effort might amount initially to 400 - 500 sorties of combat type aircraft and 200-300 sorties of trainer type aircraft during any 24 hour period; this effort will, however, decline rapidly. Similarly all remaining naval units will be employed in suicide operations in defense of the homeland.

The secondary preoccupation of the Japanese is to build up their forces in Manchuria, Korea and North China against the Soviet threat. There they might dispose up to 40 divisions, totalling about 1,500,000 men, by December of this year. Reinforcements will come from Central and South China. They are unlikely to make a strong air effort in defense of Manchuria at the expense of the defense of Japan. If circumstances require it, the Japanese are prepared to abandon all of China south of the general line Tungkuan--Kaifeng--Nanking--Hangchow, except for the Canton--Hongkong pocket, which they will hold with a strong garrison.

All other areas will be regarded as of minor importance only. They will not be reinforced from the Inner Zone, but their garrisons will be ordered to resist to the last in order to contain Allied forces which might otherwise be used against Japan, and in order to deny to the Allies strategic materials and bases in their areas. Strategy in these outlying areas will, therefore, be designed to keep Japanese forces in being rather than to defend particular objectives to the last or to undertake more than, at the most, local counter-offensives.

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12. Probable Political Strategy. In general, Japan will use all political means for avoiding complete defeat or unconditional surrender. During the next few months the future political strategy of the government will exhibit the following aims: To

a. Continue and even increase its attempts to secure complete political unity within the Empire, possibly through personal rule, real or apparent, of the Emperor.

b. Attempt to foster a belief among Japan's enemies that the war will prove costly and long drawn out if the United Nations insist on fighting until the complete conquest of Japan.

c. Make desperate efforts to persuade the U.S.S.R. to continue her neutrality, if necessary by offering important territorial or other concessions, while at the same time making every effort to sow discord between the Americans and British on one side and the Russians on the other. As the situation deteriorates still further, Japan may even make a serious attempt to use the U.S.S.R. as a mediator in ending the war.

d. Put out intermittent peace feelers, in an effort to bring the war to an acceptable end, to weaken the determination of the United Nations to fight to the bitter end, or to create inter-Allied dissension.

e. Take all possible advantage of estranged relations between the Communists and Kuomintang factions in China.

13. Possibility of Surrender. The Japanese ruling groups are aware of the desperate military situation and are increasingly desirous of a compromise peace, but still find unconditional surrender unacceptable. The basic policy of the present government is to fight as long and as desperately as possible in the hope of avoiding complete defeat and of acquiring a better

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bargaining position in a negotiated peace. Japanese leaders are now playing for time in the hope that Allied war weariness, Allied disunity, or some "miracle" will present an opportunity to arrange a compromise peace.

We believe that a considerable portion of the Japanese population now consider absolute military defeat to be probable. The increasing effects of sea blockade and cumulative devastation wrought by strategic bombing, which has already rendered millions homeless and has destroyed from 25% to 50% of the built-up area of Japan's most important cities, should make this realization increasingly general. An entry of the Soviet Union into the war would finally convince the Japanese of the inevitability of complete defeat. Although individual Japanese willingly sacrifice themselves in the service of the nation, we doubt that the nation as a whole is predisposed toward national suicide. Rather, the Japanese as a nation have a strong concept of national survival, regardless of the fate of individuals. They would probably prefer national survival, even through surrender, to virtual extinction.

The Japanese believe, however, that unconditional surrender would be the equivalent of national extinction. There are as yet no indications that the Japanese are ready to accept such terms. The ideas of foreign occupation of the Japanese homeland, foreign custody of the person of the Emperor, and the loss of prestige entailed by the acceptance of "unconditional surrender" are most revolting to the Japanese. To avoid these conditions, if possible, and, in any event, to insure survival of the institution of the Emperor, the Japanese might well be willing to withdraw from all the territory they have seized on the Asiatic continent and in the southern Pacific, and even to agree to the independence of Korea and to the practical disarmament of their military forces.

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A conditional surrender by the Japanese Government along the lines stated above might be offered by them at any time from now until the time of the complete destruction of all Japanese power of resistance.

Since the Japanese Army is the principal repository of the Japanese military tradition it follows that the Army leaders must, with a sufficient degree of unanimity, acknowledge defeat before Japan can be induced to surrender. This might be brought about either by the defeat of the main Japanese Armies in the Inner Zone or through a desire on the part of the Army leaders to salvage something from the wreck with a view to maintaining military tradition. For a surrender to be acceptable to the Japanese Army, it would be necessary for the military leaders to believe that it would not entail discrediting warrior tradition and that it would permit the ultimate resurgence of a military Japan.