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ARMY AIR FORCES HISTORICAL STUDIES:

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# ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE

*and the*  
JAPANESE INVASION  
OF THE ALEUTIANS

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The Commanding General  
Army Air Forces  
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ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE  
AND  
THE JAPANESE INVASION OF THE ALUTSIANS

Prepared by  
 Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Intelligence  
 Historical Division  
 April 1944

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# ALASKA

INSTALLATIONS & FACILITIES, MARCH 3, 1942



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FORWORD

This "first narrative" has been prepared by the  
Historical Division, AC/AS, Intelligence, as a contribution  
to the history of the Army Air Forces in the current war.  
It is one of a series of such studies, and for the present  
is bound only in manuscript form. The original is on file  
in the Archives of the Historical Division. Suggestions  
and criticism are invited.

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CONFIDENTIAL

**C O N T E N T S**

**I THE PROBLEM OF ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE, 1934 to 1941 . . . . . 1**

The necessity for systematic air defense in Alaska....  
Establishment of the Alaskan Air Base, 1940....  
Expanded program of airfield construction, 1940 to  
1941....The question of whether advanced bases in the  
Aleutians were essential to the defense of Alaska and  
in particular of the naval base at Dutch Harbor....  
Decision to establish base at Unalakleet, 26 November 1941....  
Difficulties encountered in the building program

**II THE PROBLEM OF ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE, 1941 TO JUNE 1942 . . . . 22**

The problem of providing aircraft, air warning service,  
etc. for advanced bases....Shortage of materiel and  
question of commitments in Aleutians....Organization  
of the Eleventh Air Force....Problems of supply,  
transportation, organization, and command

**III THE JAPANESE INVASION OF THE ALEUTIANS . . . . . 47**

The strategical problem....State of Alaskan air  
defense on eve of the attack....The attack on Dutch  
Harbor, 3 June 1942, and ensuing action....The  
role of Aleutian airfields....The enemy's retirement  
to Attu and Kiska....Conclusions regarding the broad  
issues of Alaskan defense

**NOTES . . . . . 66**

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT . . . . . 79**

**GLOSSARY . . . . . 81**

**APPENDIX**

**A - Record of Activation, Strength, and Key Personnel . . . . 82**

**B - Alaskan Defense: Supporting Plan, Eleventh Air  
Force . . . . . 90**

**C - Airfields . . . . . 97**

**D - Station Lists . . . . . 103**

**E - Aircraft Status . . . . . 107**

**F - Combat Summaries . . . . . 109**

**INDEX . . . . . 113**

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE, 1934 to 1941

On 3 June 1942 the Japanese attacked Dutch Harbor. It was the first blow struck by them in the North Pacific, and it was a logical enough move on the part of an enemy interested both in protecting its own shores and in carrying the attack as close as possible to the home territory of its adversary. That it did not come simultaneously with the attacks on Pearl Harbor and Manila was largely the work of Alaskan weather, famous as the worst in the world. An apocryphal story current in Alaska at the time had a high-ranking officer remarking on hearing of the dismissal of General. Short and Admiral Kimmel, "There, but for the grace of fog, go I." Be that as it may, when the attack finally came it found the American defenses still barely strong enough to cope with it, if indeed they could be considered adequate at all. Yet it appears also to be true that the Japanese found Alaskan defenses considerably stronger than they had anticipated. The spring of 1942 had witnessed much belated activity in the nearer Aleutian Islands. New airfields had been rushed to a state of partial usability. The joint Army-Navy forces defending Alaska had received warning of an impending Japanese attack far enough in advance to allow all available combat units to be concentrated

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against the enemy. The result was that the Japanese, if not defeated, were at least stopped; and the Alaskan situation, after years of confusion, began to take on something like a distinct outline.

The Dutch Harbor engagement, therefore, is a significant action, historically speaking, for two reasons: it constituted the crucial first blow in Japanese North Pacific strategy; it also crystallized many of the problems of hemisphere defense and of allied strategy which had hitherto remained in the realm of the nebulous and the controversial. Alaska and the Aleutian Islands presented problems that were at once novel, potentially serious, yet of lesser importance in relation to the more pressing issues of the world war. Much thought and material had to be expended on this theater, but priorities existed in Washington which necessarily limited the quantities of either available for Alaska. It is this preliminary controversy, this honest confusion regarding the issues of Alaskan air operations, that provides the major topic for the present study. Its investigation should throw some light on the future operational problems in the Alaskan theater.

To begin with there was the basic problem, settled quite early, concerning the necessity for systematic air defense for Alaska. Then there was the problem, not so easily settled, involving the part to be played by Army air forces in the total system of Alaskan defense. It was one not easily clarified

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because of the competing claims of the ground forces and the Navy. Finally it became a question whether defense, either in the air or elsewhere, was a concept which adequately covered the situation actually existing in the Alaskan area. Passive defense seemed at first enough. But with the outbreak of hostilities and the imminent danger of attack in the north, defensive measures of a more aggressive sort were envisaged. Finally the potentialities existing in the Aleutian Islands for offensive operations introduced another factor into planning for the theater. The Aleutians formed stepping stones which, after all, could lead both ways, a fact which occurred more rapidly to the lay public than it did to those on whose shoulders lay the complex responsibility of developing highly expensive plans. In each case, however, these problems were complicated by the fact that scarcity of men, munitions, and facilities prevented any simple and logical solution. Air operations in the Alaskan area had to be weighed not only intrinsically but estimated in relation to air operations in Western Europe, in the South Pacific, in the Middle East and (later) in Africa.

The first step in the story of the Alaskan air forces goes back as far as 1934 when Anthony J. Dimond, delegate from Alaska, began to ask for military development of the territory. From the beginning, any discussion of military development in Alaska meant, in large part, air development. To the general military authorities,

- 3 -

CONFIDENTIAL




  
CONFIDENTIAL

even to the relatively air-minded American public accustomed to thinking of garrisons in terms of ground troops supported by an air arm, this proposition may not have seemed as clear as it did to Mr. Diamond--witness the fact that his bill (H.R. 9524, 2d session of 73d Congress), providing among other things for an adequately manned airfield, was rejected by the House and adversely considered by the War Department.<sup>1</sup> To Alaskans, dependent upon aviation as a virtual necessity in their lives, it appeared axiomatic.

Though Diamond's proposal failed to bring in any immediate results, it did serve to stimulate a discussion of the issue of air power in Alaska which eventually produced something tangible. The War Department could not consider favorably a bill which "provided for the permanent station of a composite group," but it did undertake to explore the possibilities of training Air Corps units for operations in Alaskan weather.<sup>2</sup> One composite squadron, it was felt, could profitably be given "the opportunity for frequent training in Alaska in all-year weather." This modest thought was entrusted to a General Staff committee which proposed (27 August 1934) that no action should be taken until a report had been received from the Chief of the Air Corps on the recently completed Alaskan flight. Colonel (now General) Arnold, leader of the flight, recommended:

- 4 -

  
CONFIDENTIAL

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That an Air Base be established as soon as practicable at Fairbanks, Alaska. This base should be primarily an Advance Supply Depot upon which such tactical units as may be determined upon as being essential to the air defense of Alaska may be based. The initial station of the tactical unit sent to Alaska should be at this Base. As the technique of operations in extreme temperatures is developed, other tactical stations should be developed at strategic points, such as Juneau, Anchorage, Nome, Pt. Barrow, etc. . . . That, due to the hazards of the route to Alaska, units should not be sent up there annually. Rather a Base should be installed and the proper units stationed there . . . permanently."

Roughly speaking, this report formed the basis for subsequent planning.

On 11 July 1935 Major B. C. Lockwood, G.S., 9th Corps Area, reported on Air Corps developments in Alaska, recommending that an Infantry-Air Corps team should be formed, the principal function of the air element being to look after the transportation of the ground troops to threatened positions. On this the Chief of the Air Corps commented that the initial need in Alaska was for an Air Corps base station and that an Infantry-Air Corps combination, and coordination with the Navy, could be deferred until the base had been established. Here again was the germ of later controversy: were the air units in Alaska to fulfill a function of primary or merely of secondary importance? In 1935, the amended Wilcox Bill (H.R. 7022), providing for an Alaskan air base, became law and the problem of the base fell into the hands of a War Department special committee.<sup>4</sup>

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As for the location of the Alaskan Air Base, most indications pointed originally to Fairbanks. That area suffered less from heavy snow and thick weather than any other feasible locality, at least on the seaward side of the coastal range. Temperatures, it is true, ran lower at Fairbanks than further west, but were less variable—a fact of subsequent decisive importance in the establishment of cold-weather testing in Alaska. Furthermore, Fairbanks possessed a good military road (one of the few in Alaska) connecting it both with coastal ports and the Yukon River. It was also the inland terminus for the Alaskan railroad. Finally, a municipal landing field was already in operation there, making pioneering unnecessary.<sup>5</sup> Other considerations pointed to the development of the Anchorage area as the main operational base. Though not located, like Fairbanks, in the center of the main land mass, Anchorage was more centrally placed with reference to possible operations in the coastal and Aleutian territories.

As the project developed it became increasingly evident that one of the more immediate jobs for the Air Corps in Alaska would be to operate an arctic proving ground for the testing, under steadily severe cold weather conditions, of all sorts of aircraft and equipment. For this work, Fairbanks was ideally suited. The logical solution in this instance became the one actually worked out. The Alaskan air base was to be located in "the Anchorage-

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Fairbanks area" with the main operating base and facilities in the vicinity of Anchorage and a cold-weather experimental station in the neighborhood of Fairbanks.<sup>6</sup>

It was, however, one thing to plan the Alaskan air base, and quite another to secure funds for its construction. The Navy began work in 1938 on a base at Sitka, and, in view of current plans which required the Army Air Corps to furnish aerial defense for Navy bases, the Air Corps authorities believed an Alaskan air base necessary in order to fulfill its obligations. Other items took precedence in the 1938 and 1939 budgets and the Air Corps was advised not to submit the project again except on ground of urgent necessity.<sup>7</sup> The question of necessity was raised in the 1939 Congress by Representative Joe Starnes of Alabama who declared that he would oppose the installation of an air base in Alaska until data was submitted making clear, among other things, the military urgency of such a project. The question was a basic one, and reflected a prevalent inability to visualize the problem of hemisphere defense in its totality. It also led to an official statement on Alaskan air defense, the first made outside the War Department itself.

In a memo prepared in reply, General Arnold pointed out that Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands constituted the defensive outposts of continental United States.<sup>8</sup> Strategically the importance of

- 7 -

 CONFIDENTIAL

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the Alaskan-Aleutian area lay in the fact that it flanked on the north the Great Circle Route between Seattle and the Orient, and formed the apex of the Panama-Hawaii-Alaska triangle. Specifically, that area would provide bases for air reconnaissance patrols and light naval patrols in the North Pacific. Prompt seizure of undefended sites in the Alaska area might be expected in event of war. Successful defense and retention of projected naval or air bases at Sitka, Kodiak, Unalaska, and Anchorage would render hostile operation in the area impracticable. Such defensive action would involve operations as far west as Kiska and as far south as Ketchikan. Thus the primary duty of United States air power in this area would be to assist in the defense of military and naval establishments and to support the Navy in the timely discovery and destruction of hostile forces. In the fulfillment of this obligation the Anchorage-Fairbanks Air Base would become a prime necessity. Certain additional factors combined to emphasize this necessity. Though commercial flying had established itself as a vital element in Alaskan life, existing fields were not usable for military purposes. Civilian Aeronautics Administration authorities estimated that two years were needed to train a good Alaskan pilot. Consequently air forces could not be thrown into the Territory on short notice, nor could military aircraft be operated without base facilities.

- 8 -


CONFIDENTIAL

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The outbreak of World War II cut short further deliberations. Funds were appropriated and temporary facilities planned which were made available by the fall of 1940.<sup>9</sup>

The year 1940 brought a new phase in the growth of Alaskan air power. From the beginning it had been considered inevitable that the Anchorage-Fairbanks base development would have to be supported by an extensive program of construction at various strategic points including the Aleutian Islands.<sup>10</sup> It was still, however, a matter of debate just to what extent this construction was advisable and where it should be projected. It was also an open question what relationship should exist between Army air units in Alaska and naval and ground forces. The time had come when debate on these issues could not afford to last too long. The American public had become belatedly defense-conscious, and it did not take long for this newly conditioned public opinion to discover the strategic potentialities existing in the Aleutians. As relations between the United States and Japan deteriorated, it began to find expression in numerous articles in the public press, and its force began to be felt in legislation. In 1940 Congress became liberal in its appropriation of funds for the development of the northern defenses. It was then up to the War Department, to which the idea of Alaska's strategic importance had scarcely come as a discovery, to make up its mind on the extent and function

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of air installations in the Territory.

In September of 1940, Maj. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner inaugurated a long discussion of these issues.<sup>11</sup> As Commanding General of the Alaska Defense Command, he was the logical man to do so, and it was owing in large part to his offices that the Air Corps was adjusted to meet unique circumstances and given a job somewhat commensurate with its abilities. Reviewing the chief dangers of enemy attack he concluded that, however it might come (and it could come either from the northwestern portion of Alaska through Fairbanks toward Anchorage, or from the Aleutian causeway) it would be essentially an air attack. Indeed, the terrain of Alaska being what it was and the highways so limited, transportation by air he felt to be the only effective means of rapid advance. Anticipating a coordinated air attack, he warned against half-way measures, against the building of landing fields without proper garrison. As in Norway and Holland, inadequately defended airfields could be a distinct liability rather than otherwise. Adequate operating fields adequately garrisoned was, then, Buckner's formula for Alaskan defense. Without minimizing the need for normally strong ground forces, he was impressed by the unique nature of Alaskan military operations: "With the present and possible future development of air attack and the use of parachute troops, the defense of Alaska assumes an aspect differing materially from our

former concepts of defensive tactics. We now have three flanks, one overhead."

In addition to the main supply base already projected at Anchorage and Fairbanks, Buckner proposed a series of advanced bases, a group of strategically located intermediate landing fields, and a chain of protected fields connecting Anchorage with the continental United States. In this way a cordon of fields would be created from which bombardment aircraft could be maintained as a constant threat to any hostile action in the Alaskan or Aleutian areas. Construction would naturally have to be coordinated with the CAA, already much more firmly established in Alaska than the Air Corps. But some adjustment in priorities would have to be made before existing CAA construction plans could fit those most desirable in the interests of defense.

After consultation with Marshall Hoppin, Alaskan Superintendent of Airways for the CAA, General Buckner emerged with a clear-cut proposal.<sup>12</sup> For first priority, a series of advanced bases would be required from which "defensive and aggressive" bombing operations could be conducted. These need not be elaborately planned, provided a good runway into the prevailing wind be built for each as rapidly as possible. Nome, Bethel, Kodiak and Unalaska were the bases selected. Since Unalaska lay too far from other bases and since the habits of weather in those parts were generally deplorable,



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an intermediate field in the region of Chignik would be needed. In second priority came the intermediate bases connecting the advanced bases with the main ones at Anchorage and Fairbanks. These would serve as relay points for fuel and bombs, as bad weather emergency fields, and as stopping places for short range pursuit ships. For this purpose Ruby and McGrath were selected. Also in this general priority came one or more chains of fields which would allow planes to reinforce the Alaskan units from bases in the United States. Boundary and Big Delta were important locations on the inland route via Whitehorse; Cordova would complete the coast route from Yakutat to Anchorage; Gakona would act as a connecting link between the two routes. Another base at Naknek, on the routes to Unalaska and Kodiak also came under second priority. Third priority was assigned to such locations as would improve the necessary skeletal system after the latter had been established.

This was essentially the program finally implemented. But considerable difference of opinion existed on one or two crucial points. Theoretically the program presented little that was controversial, provided the appropriations and garrisons were available. Air defense of Alaska could not be interpreted in many other ways as far as the mere location of bases was concerned. The case of the proposed advanced base on Unalaska Island proved the only

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real bone of contention--it and the intermediate fields whose projected existence depended on it. The mission of the Air Corps in Alaska was, according to the general plans at the time, "to defend U.S. military and naval installations in Alaska, including Unalaska, against sea, land and air attacks, and against sabotage; to deny use by the enemy of sea and land bases in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands; to support the Navy.<sup>13</sup> Protection of the naval Base at Dutch Harbor became therefore a prime consideration in the fulfillment of this mission. But the Navy had grave doubts about any Army establishment under circumstances such as those surrounding the island of Unalaska.

It was a highly debatable issue,<sup>14</sup> involving principles of strategic planning important out of all proportion to the extent of the activities projected. At first it looked very much as though the accidents of geography would obviate any further discussion of the matter, for preliminary surveys of Unalaska proved the island unsuitable for landing field construction. At Umnak, however, some 65 miles from Dutch Harbor, surveys indicated that such construction would be feasible.<sup>15</sup> To naval authorities it appeared that an Army air base at Umnak would merely put increased strain on sea communication, both for construction and protection, at a time when every ton of shipping was at a premium and when the Navy could afford to expend its strength on none but the most essential convoy

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missions. The cost of construction, which would be high, it was felt would more profitably be expended on the installations already existing on Unalaska. Unak itself had no adequate harbor development, a fact which would increase the difficulties of sea communication. Furthermore, Unak seemed to naval critics too far from Dutch Harbor to offer enough air protection to warrant the expense.<sup>16</sup> In short, air surveillance along the Aleutians was and should remain a Navy function, to be carried on by tender-based planes. So cogent was their argument that the Navy authorities had just about persuaded the War Department on this point.<sup>17</sup>

To the Army Air Corps and to those in charge of the Army's mission in Alaska, the picture had another side. If the air forces in Alaska were to fulfill their mission of protecting the naval installations it seemed clear that the Unak base would be essential; otherwise the Navy would have to protect its own installations at the expense of its primary mission.<sup>18</sup> But considerations over and above immediate protection of Dutch Harbor also dictated air development of Unak. A base in the Aleutians would allow the army bombers to command a radius 400 miles greater than would be possible from such an inland point as Chignik, "a factor which might well prove decisive in the defense of Alaska."<sup>19</sup> Equally important, in a negative way, was the fact that a site existed on Unak which could easily be exploited as an advanced base by hostile parachute troops, armed only with such tools as might be

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dropped for their use from aircraft. To Gen. John L. DeWitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command, this fact quite outweighed the reverse argument that installations prepared by United States forces at Unak and insufficiently garrisoned would also become a liability.<sup>20</sup> It was the Army's job, in this instance specifically an Air Corps job, to prevent enemy seizure of operating bases and useful operating sites, and it must be considered an essential objective to do so.

Such in brief was the discussion. If the Aleutian bases had been abandoned (and the War Department seemed willing at one point to do just that) plans would have been altered permanently and the Navy made completely responsible for the defense of the Aleutians. As it was, owing largely to the tenacity of Generals Buckner and DeWitt, the issue remained alive. On the insistence of the Navy Department the Unak project was laid before the Joint Board for Defense.<sup>21</sup> Finally, on 26 November 1941, it was approved—after something over a year of discussion.<sup>22</sup>

The rest of the program provoked little debate. The other advanced bases provided for defense of areas well beyond the range of Navy responsibility, the only exception being the landing fields at Kodiak and Sitka where the problem consisted merely of local jurisdiction.<sup>23</sup> The only serious factor conditioning the enterprise was that of the funds available. Neither War Department

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nor CAA allotments could possibly be made to extend as far as those observers in Alaska, impressed with the urgency of the situation, would have liked. War or Navy Department funds were forthcoming for construction at those places most suitable to the immediate needs of the armed forces. In addition to installations at Anchorage and Fairbanks, landing fields at Metlakatla and Yakutat were undertaken by the War Department.<sup>24</sup> These fields owed their importance to the fact that they provided the only feasible stopping places on the coastal air route from Ft. Lewis, Wash., to Anchorage. The CAA program for 1941, involving \$40,000,000 (Public No. 812, 76th Congress) contemplated work on 250 airports throughout the United States and Alaska. The problem of priorities accordingly became one of the greatest importance. For Alaska it was determined by the Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-United States, which favored the development of air routes from the United States to Fairbanks, Anchorage and Kodiak. This gave high priority to those locations lying southwest of the above mentioned places. But the need for emergency landing fields, coupled with the problem of cold weather testing in Alaska where weather conditions varied considerably, required a minimum of class 3 and 4 airports throughout the Territory.<sup>25</sup> On 4 January 1941 the Secretary of War recommended that the CAA develop the following airports as class 3 installations to meet military requirements, in the following

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priority: Boundary, Big Delta, Juneau, Cordova, Ruby, Nome, Bethel, Gulkana, McGrath, Naknek.<sup>26</sup>

Further construction work, over and above that originally planned for the 10 CAA fields came up for discussion in the spring of 1942. Brig. Gen. William O. Butler emphasized the immediate use of existing CAA intermediate landing fields rather than the building of new fields or the provision of additional runway surfacing. By that time the threat of actual invasion had increased to such an extent that emergency facilities must be given the closest attention. Immediate extension of runways to one mile where practicable with equipment already on hand and at a cost of \$2,220,000 constituted all the additional work required.<sup>27</sup>

The Alaskan air defense project necessarily extended beyond the Territory itself. Indeed, one of the basic problems underlying it was that of transportation and communication between Alaska and the United States. Until the herculean task of building a highway from the United States to Alaska could be completed the Territory was virtually isolated except for water and air routes. The water route up the west coast of Canada was discouragingly slow at a time when speed was indicated, and it presented serious problems to our merchant marine already taxed beyond its capacity by military requirements elsewhere. The obvious solution to the transportation problem, for the time at least, was to establish a feasible air

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route from the United States through Canada to Alaska. An air route had already been in operation along the coast. But that "outside" route, conceived in the days when the issues of military cooperation between the two countries were not yet clear, presented serious difficulties, especially with regard to weather. In the fall of 1940 the Permanent Joint Board on Defense recommended that staging facilities be provided at Grand Prairie, Ft. St. John, Ft. Nelson, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, Prince George, and Smithers which would form a highway for the rapid transit of military aircraft between the United States and Alaska.<sup>28</sup> Later, fields were added at Tolfino and Port Hardy. By the spring of 1942 all the fields mentioned above were reported in various stages of completion.<sup>29</sup>

As in most emergency projects, there existed in Alaska a considerable lag between the planning and the execution. Many obstacles confronted the planners, but they were more than equalled by the obstacles facing those whose task it was actually to construct facilities in arctic and sub-arctic conditions. These difficulties affected not only the work of construction but also the entire logistical situation in the north. To begin with, plans had to be made and supplies, personnel, etc. delivered on the ground many months ahead of the time they were actually to be used.

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The summer months were the working months and every minute of that time had to be utilized if valuable time, equipment, and personnel were not to be wasted.<sup>30</sup> For lesser jobs, or construction already well on its way, it was possible to work during temperatures sometimes as low as fifty degrees below zero, but only at the expense of thawing practically all tools and materials before using. Even then, the short hours of daylight frustrated any attempts at consistent work. Even in the summer months the Alaskan terrain and the Alaskan weather refused to cooperate fully. In some areas, particularly along the southern and western coastline and in the Aleutians, the rainfall reached at times unmanageable proportions, in places fully three times that of the eastern United States. And then there was the muskeg, a spongy mass of accumulated roots, moss, etc., often several feet deep and quite boggy unless frozen.<sup>31</sup> In many places it was impossible to construct the usual hard-surfaced field because often it was necessary to build on glacial frost which required peculiar handling and presented never-ending problems of maintenance.<sup>32</sup>

Above all there was the problem of transportation. Construction in the north required a tremendous volume of equipment and supply, a negligible proportion of which was on hand or could be procured in the Territory. The result was that a good deal more cargo had to be carried to Alaska than there was shipping or air

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transportation to carry it. Unless equipment could be flown in, there remained the prodigious job of transporting it from the ports to the inland airfields, work usually done by tractors and sleds in the winter and barges in the summer where locations happened to be open to river traffic.<sup>33</sup> This basic transportation problem remained in spite of efforts to construct usable highways, extend rail facilities, and increase air transport service.<sup>34</sup>

Another difficulty besetting the construction work lay in the confusion of agencies responsible for it. In December of 1940, General Buckner complained that, although a general policy existed to coordinate CAA construction with military requirements, and "in spite of every effort toward coordination here, it appears from the instructions and counterinstructions received from Washington by Mr. Hoppin . . . that there is a lack of proper coordination in Washington between the War Department and the CAA."<sup>35</sup> As for the construction undertaken directly by the War Department, there existed some confusion in the fact that only slowly, not until nearly the middle of 1942 in fact, was it placed under direct control of the military authorities in the area. Previously it had been carried on by an assistant District Engineer who reported to the Seattle District Engineer Office rather than to General Buckner. Aviation engineering battalions furthermore were not directly responsible to the Air Force commander, a situation

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unlike that pertaining to any other theater.<sup>36</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that progress in the building program was not so rapid as had been planned or could have been wished.<sup>37</sup> Col. D. V. Gaffney, Commanding Officer of Ladd Field, in a letter to the Air Inspector shortly after Pearl Harbor, referred to the development of service type landing fields in Alaska as a desperate problem, the solution to which might very well come too late.<sup>38</sup> In March 1942, Maj. A. C. McKinley remarked that the defense of Alaska depended upon an adequate air force for which suitable operating fields were at the time non-existent, only five being available for immediate use.<sup>39</sup>

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## CHAPTER II

## THE PROBLEM OF ALASKAN AIR DEFENSE, 1941 to JUNE 1942

By the fall of 1941, the broad lines of policy had been effectively established as far as the physical facilities for the air defense of Alaska were concerned. Owing largely to the rising menace of Japan, action for certain vital issues had been greatly accelerated. During the summer months of that year another fundamental issue arose, namely, how, in the face of increasing danger and inadequate aircraft production, the new bases were to be garrisoned and equipped. Here again the basic concept of air operations was profoundly affected. Conflicts arose which were only resolved by the Japanese themselves when they raided Dutch Harbor and occupied the outlying Aleutians in June of 1942.

In a sense the issue had existed all along. The Unak project in particular had rested on the assumption that an airfield in the vicinity of Dutch Harbor could be properly garrisoned. Some doubts had been raised on that point, but mainly they centered on the difficulties of supply and communication when both depended on an already over-taxed Navy and Merchant Marine. But it had also been taken for granted that, given the facilities and the emergency, the men and planes could somehow be produced. Certainly the first step in a program of air defense was to build airfields. Now,


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however, the emergency seemed closer than ever, the reserves of aircraft were still inadequate to meet the demand from all areas of defense, and it was seriously debated whether the danger of offering unprotected fields to an enemy who could wish for nothing better would outweigh the strategic advantages of having advanced operating bases.

Once again the Aleutians proved to be the principal storm center, confusion and divergence of opinion hovering over them like their own perennial overcast. The reason for this debate is clear enough. The old theory of Alaskan defense had been built up around the Seward-Anchorage areas, supplemented by the joint Army-Navy defense of Kodiak. Such a scheme had the virtue of emphasizing the defense of the Alaskan mainland, which was after all intrinsically the most valuable part of the northern possessions. Control of the North Pacific had naturally been considered a function of the Navy, operating from bases at Kodiak and Dutch Harbor; and the Aleutian Islands naturally came into this same category except for the ground and air support necessary for local protection from sabotage or surprise raids. If, then, limited aircraft production indicated that some areas would have to be left without protection from the Army Air Corps, it would be better to abandon the Aleutians than to risk hostile action on the mainland itself. There was, therefore, a tendency to consider

- 23 -

  
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the Aleutians as primarily a Navy sphere of operations with ground troops and air units—if necessary, ground troops alone—in a supporting role only. This view of the problem stemmed from the days when Alaskan defense was essentially a passive defense, a mere policing of territory which it would have been rash to leave unprotected. With active operations in the offing, consideration of offensive action had to be taken into account, and it was perfectly clear that any such aggressive defense would, under Alaskan conditions, have to depend mainly on the striking power of ground-based aviation. There was also the possibility, still very much in the distance, of full-scale offensive action against Japan via Alaska. These considerations made it of vital importance to keep control of the Aleutians, at least as far as Dutch Harbor, and preferably in their entirety. It was pointed out, for example, that if Dutch Harbor were lost the United States would virtually lose control of the entire northern part of Alaska. In this case the importance of the Seward Peninsula and any ferrying activity to be planned in that direction would effectively be neutralized, since operations in the north and west still depended mainly on supply delivered via the Pacific and Bering Sea route, which in turn depended on the ability of the United States Navy to operate freely in the Aleutian area.<sup>1</sup>

- 2 -

CONFIDENTIAL

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So a dilemma faced the War Department and air force planners. Dutch Harbor must be protected. To protect Dutch Harbor demanded airfields in the nearer Aleutian Islands. If such fields were established they must be adequately garrisoned. As things stood in December 1941, it appeared impossible to do so. If not adequately garrisoned they would be a liability and should be abandoned and destroyed. To abandon them would leave the naval base seriously unprotected. The problem seemed logically insoluble. But in wartime the Army cannot afford to follow an impasse to its logical conclusion. Therefore, action had to be taken either to concentrate the air garrison around the Anchorage-Kodiak area and leave the Aleutians to the Navy, the ground forces and the Japanese, or to complete work on Umanak, Cold Bay and Port Heiden, and stock them with whatever equipment could be taken from other projects. Which side was taken depended on whether the particular individual or agency believed Alaska and the Aleutians, under existing circumstances, to be a theater primarily of air operations, potentially offensive in strategical importance, and of consequent high priority in the allocation of aircraft, or an area mainly of passive defense, primarily dependent on the protection of naval and ground forces, and therefore of relatively low air priority. Naturally, there were few observers who would not have increased Alaska's air

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 CONFIDENTIAL

garrison to the utmost consonant with the requirements of other theaters. So in a sense the decision ultimately came to depend on the individual conviction regarding the relative importance of air power in Alaska as compared to air power in the other theaters. Given a dearth of planes, in other words, the answers given to the problem of the air garrison were conditioned by a number of very basic preconceptions—none of which was likely finally to be vindicated or disproved until the Japanese took the initiative.

The basic plans, laid before Pearl Harbor, made it clear that Alaskan defense was essentially a Navy function, with support from air and ground forces at those points where coastal installations had to be protected from raids of one sort or another.<sup>2</sup> This point of view differed sharply from the one adopted by the Air Corps War Plans Division which was that "In the defense of Alaska, the operations of Army Air Forces are likely to play the dominating role. Certainly the interception and destruction of enemy forces by Army Air Forces will be at least as important as naval operations."<sup>3</sup> In November 1941, the President ordered Air Corps commanders to coordinate their plans so as to support the Navy.<sup>4</sup> This emphasis on the position of the Navy in Alaskan defense seems to have gone hand in hand with an emphasis on the creation of ground force garrisons,<sup>5</sup> the assumption apparently being that with the Navy primarily responsible for patrolling the northern coastal

 CONFIDENTIAL

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water, the principal function of the Army was to guard the coastal installations from hostile landing and to provide fighter planes for short-range interception of bombing raids. In this way the air forces took second place not only to the Navy but to the ground forces. Such was not, however, the policy of General DeWitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command, who felt that "Our mere establishment of Army garrisons in Alaska with no means for them to know what may lie over the horizon, does not conform to any known principle of strategy, naval or military."<sup>6</sup> It was repeatedly pointed out that ground troops in Alaska, where transportation facilities were generally lacking, would be tied to one spot and could be used for local defenses only, except, of course, for large-scale sea-borne offensive action.<sup>7</sup>

Prior to 7 December 1941 such indecision as existed regarding the function of the Army Air Forces may have grown out of a natural unwillingness to make large commitments to an outlying area when enemy plans and capabilities had as yet been unexplored. On 27 October General DeWitt held serious invasion of Alaskan territory improbable. Yet, since the middle of the year, it had become apparent that the Alaskan area, and Dutch Harbor in particular, constituted a threat to Japan second only to Vladivostok.<sup>8</sup> Some attack in the north might therefore be expected and reports of unidentified and potentially hostile craft in the coastal waters

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confirmed that opinion. It was not until Pearl Harbor, however, that the timing or nature of such an attack could enter seriously into calculations.

After the enemy had given unmistakable evidence of his intentions and had demonstrated something of his methods, considerably more attention was given to providing adequate air defenses for Dutch Harbor and Kodiak. There was even reason to believe that Dutch Harbor had been included in the original plans for the general attack on 7 December.<sup>9</sup> From that date a destructive raid on the main defense installations became not a possibility but a virtual certainty. General Marshall wrote to the President on 21 January 1942 as follows:

We have been anticipating at any moment a "destructive raid" on this region, especially at Dutch Harbor where our state of preparations is far from complete. Also there is the hazard of the destruction of barracks, storehouses, etc., at both Kodiak Island and Anchorage, which would involve a difficult situation in the winter period. As most of the construction is frame and of a temporary nature, it presents a serious fire hazard. . . . As a later development, I consider it probable that if Japanese successes in other areas release ships and troops, a positive effort toward actual occupation of our Alaskan bases will be undertaken. . . .<sup>10</sup>

He then adds, significantly, "Our greatest difficulty has been to get sufficient number of bomber and pursuit planes into Alaska." This was to be the main factor conditioning the formation of plans in these early months of 1942. Most observers, including those

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CONFIDENTIAL

in command of Army activities on the Pacific Coast, considered Alaska to be in large part, if not principally, an air defense problem. General Buckner, on hearing that the Alaska Defense Command was to be reinforced by additional ground troops without any immediate complement of Air Corps units, remarked (24 July 1941): "Under present conditions, I would rather have an additional heavy bombardment squadron than a division of ground troops. The time to strike hostile expeditions is when their troops are crowded in transports and their planes on the decks of the carriers." He added that General DeWitt was of similar opinion.<sup>11</sup> Yet on the one hand planes were not available in sufficient quantities to guard even the mainland bases, and on the other hand ground forces had already been assigned to Alaskan defense in numbers great enough to place on them the main responsibility in many places. So, whereas ground garrisons were in most instances on the spot, providing essential coast artillery, anti-aircraft, and infantry protection, the air garrison remained a topic for spirited debate.

General Buckner led the "progressive party" in this debate. In January of 1942 he advocated the use of Alaska as a base for aggressive action against Japan, envisaging ultimate cooperation with Russia.<sup>12</sup> With this in mind he advocated not only the immediate reinforcement of the Alaskan air garrison, but the construction of temporary facilities for a larger air force than that considered necessary for immediate

CONFIDENTIAL

defense.<sup>13</sup> The first of these proposals he considered essential at once. "There is not at the present time," he wrote on 3 January 1942, "a single up-to-date fighting plane in the Alaska Defense Command." The largest air force that could be put into the air to meet an attack he estimated to consist of "seven obsolescent medium bombing planes and sixteen equally outdated pursuit planes."<sup>14</sup> Accordingly he recommended reinforcement to the extent of two squadrons, medium bombardment; two squadrons, heavy bombardment; two squadrons, pursuit interceptor; one squadron, heavy reconnaissance; one transport squadron; and appropriate service and administrative units. He further argued that, although the above force was the minimum required for "passive defense against air raids" and could be accommodated immediately, if only in tents, for Alaska the maximum needs should be taken into consideration because the problems of transportation and supply prevented easy reinforcement in time of emergency. And maximum needs depended on plans laid for the more distant future when, he hoped, the strategic possibilities in Alaska would be explored in an aggressive campaign against Japan. "To look on Alaska merely as a territory to be defended and to contemplate that air forces consigned to Alaska be used only for passive defense ignores the strategic position of this territory as a potential base for offensive expeditions." But it would be essential to any such plan that these fields be

CONFIDENTIAL

stocked prior to use. Such action, General Buckner felt, would lend flexibility to current air operations as well, without constituting a drain on combat units.<sup>15</sup> In both these proposals he was fully backed by General DeWitt.<sup>16</sup>

General DeWitt, in fact, had been engaged since 18 July 1941 in a dogged effort to present the air needs of Alaska to a War Department which at the time had other things on its mind.<sup>17</sup> He had been ordered to plan facilities for whatever reinforcing aviation in units and numbers he considered necessary in event of hostile action, but he had been cautioned at the same time that no additional combat aviation could be authorized for Alaska "for some time."<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, he believed that the difficulties of Alaskan flying made essential the designation of reinforcing units and their training, at least for considerable periods, under Alaskan conditions. He further considered that Alaska was an area so likely to be attacked and so dependent on aircraft for its defense that it should be given priority over other threatened areas. He stressed particularly the vulnerability of Umanak. The War Department had replied (16 September 1941) that nothing more could be done on that score until the necessary aircraft became available: at the time there were not enough to cover all areas where attack might be feared.<sup>19</sup> Now after Pearl Harbor, though less concerned than General Buckner with the strategic possibilities

CONFIDENTIAL

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for offensive action, DeWitt continued to urge the immediate reinforcing of Alaskan air forces even at the expense of other theaters.<sup>20</sup>

The War Department did not see the issue exactly from the above point of view. Taken by itself, the Alaskan situation seemed clear enough. "This is one helluva air force that you have up in Alaska," wrote a high-ranking officer in headquarters on 24 December 1941 to another in charge.<sup>21</sup> But compared, as the War Department had to compare it, with the situation in the other theaters, the situation in Alaska could hardly be given top priority, no matter how serious it was potentially.<sup>22</sup>

The deciding point was of course lack of aircraft even for those areas most urgently in need of them. As for stocking advanced bases in anticipation of their eventual use in aggressive action, this was unfavorably considered (26 March 1942). Any such project would have to wait until a basic decision was reached regarding the strategic role of Alaska. The ultimate strength of the Alaskan Air Force would depend on whether Alaska were to be used as a base for offensive action and, if defense only were contemplated, whether plans should be based on meeting a major or a minor attack. Plans current at the time placed the coastal frontier of Alaska in Category of Defense "C" (minor attack probable) except Unalaska to which Category "D" (may be subject to major attack) applied. Accordingly the immediate problem was "the organization of the

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ground forces to repel impending category 'D' attack without adequate air protection." The eventual development of the advanced bases for offensive action would have to wait until "air and sea forces are sufficiently augmented to justify such action."<sup>23</sup>

General Buckner continued to press his point, even to cooperating with the Commander, Alaskan Sector, 13th Naval District, in the formulation of suggested plans for joint Army-Navy action against Japan from Alaskan and Siberian bases.<sup>24</sup> Russia failed to respond to any overtures involving the use of Siberian bases,<sup>25</sup> and that, of course, effectively answered Buckner's proposal as far as immediate planning was concerned. To the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Fleet it seemed inadvisable in any case to expand the aviation facilities in Alaska because they were already "well in advance of the availability in the present situation of air forces to operate therefrom." Moreover, he felt, although Alaska was vulnerable to attack, a landing in Alaska would be "a costly undertaking, unproductive of immediate results." He looked for little enemy action "except for minor submarine or air raids." In short, he argued that until such time as Russia might be willing to permit the operation of United States aircraft from bases in Siberia, extensive development of aviation facilities without proper air garrison would be a liability to the United States.<sup>26</sup>

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Agencies within the Army Air Forces itself took a similarly conservative view of the role to be allotted to the air forces in Alaskan defense. The War Plans Division went even farther than the Commander in Chief of the fleet. To that agency the picture as of 15 February 1942 seemed something like this: Current plans were to concentrate air defense in the Anchorage-Kodiak areas, considered to be the most vital and most vulnerable targets in Alaska. The equipment then on hand was not even sufficient to defend these limited areas; the Commanding General of the Western Defense Command had allocated five squadrons to Alaska, to be on hand there by June of 1942 for use mainly in the defense of Kodiak and Anchorage, with possibly a few planes to be stationed at Ladd Field, Fairbanks. When the Umanak and Cold Bay projects were completed in the coming summer, it would be necessary to defend them. But without air force enough to protect the Anchorage-Kodiak area it would be foolish to try to defend Umanak and Cold Bay. Consequently, unless additional aircraft could be made available, work should cease on whatever construction work had not progressed very far, such as projected Air Corps installations at Dutch Harbor, and the nearly complete bases at Umanak and Cold Bay should be mined for immediate destruction in case of attack. For this purpose it was urged that demolition units should be present at all times. It was carefully pointed out that failure to recognize the value of the Alaskan and

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Alutian bases was not the reason for allocating only five squadrons to that territory. The cause was twofold: first, no other Air Corps units were available; second, available shipping could barely meet the requirements of the ground and air forces already in Alaska.<sup>27</sup>

This was the situation facing General DeWitt who nevertheless continued to ask for additional aircraft. He had narrowed his requests to a single pursuit squadron with which he believed he could defend Dutch Harbor. But commitments elsewhere, Hawaii, Panama, the Far East, the various task forces, the defense theaters in the United States, even the need for pursuit units in operational training units, prevented additional allocations to Alaska.<sup>28</sup> DeWitt finally was forced to send a squadron of P-38s which would release a squadron of P-40s for duty at Umanak. By May 18th, then, provision had been made for the use of one pursuit squadron at Umanak, though at the expense of units already scarce enough in the Western Defense Command.<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile Brig. Gen. William O. Butler had taken over command of the Army Air Forces in Alaska, had made a thorough study of the situation,<sup>30</sup> and on 22 March submitted a plan for reinforcing the Alaskan air units which provided a compromise solution to the problem. He recognized that the permanent garrison assigned to Alaska was inadequate to afford proper defense, that it was

CONFIDENTIAL



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impracticable at the time for the War Department to increase it, and that air installations in Alaska and the Aleutians must be held at any reasonable cost. Accordingly he requested that reinforcing combat squadrons be designated for emergency movement to Alaska as soon as facilities were ready to house them should the need arise. By 1 June 1942 he estimated that facilities would be available for a total of 22 squadrons, by 1 August, a total of 28—these totals including the 5 already assigned. As circumstances made it possible to increase the units permanently assigned, the number of reinforcing squadrons could be correspondingly reduced. Only the air echelons of combat units and the air and command echelons of headquarters squadrons would be provided for in the housing plan. Services at airdromes would be supplied by detachments from air base units already in Alaska. General Butler was even willing to accept units whose equipment was not fully winterized, for operations could be carried on at half the Alaskan fields at all times with unwinterized equipment and at the rest of the fields from 1 March to 1 November. The plan was an emergency measure only and represents an effort to meet a dangerous situation with such imperfect expedients as could be found in a short time. It also represents an admission that reinforcing combat units for the time being would have to be based in the United States as part

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CONFIDENTIAL

of the force defending the West Coast. Some controversy had taken place on that point. Clearly it was preferable to have units on the ground and trained in Alaskan conditions than to bring them in at a moment's notice.<sup>32</sup> Butler hoped to get around that difficulty by providing that the command and air echelons of designated units should make regular training trips to Alaska and become especially familiar with the particular installation to which they were to be sent in case of trouble. This plan received general approval, except that only two groups (the 42d Bombardment Group, Medium, and the 55th Pursuit Group, Interceptor) were earmarked for service in Alaska, both selected from the forces of the Western Defense Command.<sup>33</sup>

As a result of the efforts of Generals DeWitt and Butler, it was possible to meet the Japanese with at least one squadron of pursuit aircraft, and at least some preparations had been made to reinforce the Eleventh Air Force.

Parallel to the problem of securing aircraft ran that of establishing an adequate air warning service. Once again lack of the necessary equipment and commitments to areas and task forces of higher priority proved the deciding factors. Again the plans for Alaskan defense were radically affected, and in much the same way. Briefly the story is this. General Buckner had given considerable thought to supplementing the air defense of Alaska with radar installations, and had evolved on paper a comprehensive

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

not to say complicated, system of detector stations and filter centers constituting a "cordon" screen of radar equipment for the protection of the Aleutian Islands as well as of the Kodiak, Ceward and Anchorage areas.<sup>34</sup> This plan had been approved in substance and authority granted to sub-allot necessary funds for construction and equipment.<sup>35</sup> Like his plan for aggressive action in the Aleutians, this plan had the virtue of strategical vision, but it left out the factor of inadequate equipment, then chronically affecting all defense activity. The plan had received its approval on 3 December 1941; and in the course of time radar sets would probably have been made available. But the outbreak of war changed the entire picture and made it necessary to allot precious radar equipment to task forces more immediately in need of it than were the Alaskan defenses at that time. With drastic reduction in procurable radar sets went corresponding curtailment in plans. In January of 1942 General DeWitt expressed his alarm at the state of the Alaskan aircraft warning service, pointing to the fact that, of the projected 20 fixed detector stations, only three partial sets and only a small nucleus of personnel had been provided. He warned especially of the increased danger of surprise attacks created by this situation.<sup>36</sup>

The Director of Air Defense in March made it clear that the scheme of Alaskan aircraft warning would have to be based on the basis of 10 sets rather than the originally planned 20. This, it

  
CONFIDENTIAL

was stated, would involve specific alteration in the entire Alaskan defense plan, for without a proper early warning screen, it would be necessary to concentrate the combat aviation in certain central and vulnerable locations rather than to disperse them to more outlying fields where attacks might first be expected but which would not be of such strategic value.<sup>37</sup> So the same answer was given to the problem of inadequate radar equipment as to that of limited aircraft allocations. In order to make the best use of the equipment that could be secured, it should be concentrated at the strategic base areas near Anchorage and Kodiak. Some AMS coverage should be given to Fairbanks, though no combat aviation was to be stationed there. Only local ground defense should be provided for the other airdromes and staging fields, with special emphasis on antiaircraft artillery, and the landing facilities should be prepared for demolition in case of attack. This somewhat defeatist, if realistic, plan apparently anticipated the landing of enemy forces at one or more of the outlying fields, for it was pointed out that centrally located bombers could be prepared at any time to bomb any airdrome occupied by the enemy, and that dispersion could be effected by moving the bombers out to fields not occupied by the enemy.<sup>38</sup>

Securing personnel for the Alaskan bases and airfields fortunately did not present as great difficulties as procurement of

CONFIDENTIAL

- 39 -  


~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

material. Trained personnel could scarcely be described as a glut on the market in the early months of 1942. And General Butler did not receive as many as he thought the Alaskan situation required.<sup>39</sup> But a shortage of experienced officers and the training of personnel, especially those on flying status, for Alaskan services were the most serious problems facing those in charge of personnel.

To supply and service the air forces in Alaska required a great deal of planning. Prior to the establishment of an Air Service Command for Alaska (it was activated, 30 July 1942), Air Corps supply, as well as that common to both air and ground forces, had been requisitioned through normal Services of Supply channels and provided by the Seattle Port of Embarkation.<sup>40</sup> It had been customary to concentrate supply at a central point with the idea that it should be distributed to outlying fields whenever the need should arise. This plan had provoked considerable criticism on the ground that it treated Alaska as a defensive rather than as an offensive sector in which considerations of transportation, flexibility of defense, and dispersion of vital materiel all pointed toward a decentralized system.<sup>41</sup> Both General Buckner and General Butler hoped to stock the outlying bases well in advance of their use in an emergency.<sup>42</sup>

In order to set up an adequate and decentralized system of air supply, it was necessary for the Air Corps to provide its own

CONFIDENTIAL  
- 40 -

administrative machinery, and it was in recognition of this fact that General Butler, in February 1942 recommended that an Air Service Command be organized for Alaska with suitable headquarters, depot groups, and sub-depots to provide service facilities for the air forces.<sup>43</sup> In March he requested that an Alaskan Air Depot be established. "In view of the present shortage of supplies and increasing requirements," he wrote, "it is mandatory that some provision be made to meet these requirements."<sup>44</sup> The Air Service Command requested as equipment for its proposed Alaskan wing, two sub-depots at the two main fields (Elmendorf and Ladd), one depot group, and all the services to maintain an air force in Alaska and along the staging points and ferry stops through Canada, Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. It planned specifically to stock 18 fields with equipment which it calculated would be ready for shipment to Alaska at various dates during April and May 1942.<sup>45</sup> On 1 April, authority was granted to begin construction of a 1200 unit air depot at Anchorage, equipped to handle 3d and 4th echelon maintenance for three combat groups.<sup>46</sup>

Unfortunately, most of these plans could offer little comfort to those who were called upon to cope with the Japanese on 3 June. The XI Air Service Command was not activated until the end of July, and depot facilities begun late in the spring were naturally not ready to function by midsummer. The only air depot group (the 6th)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

available for Alaska could not be transferred immediately.<sup>47</sup> And it was found that no shipping could be provided before August for the supplies which the ASC had intended to send by 1 June to the 18 Alaskan fields.<sup>48</sup>

Transportation constituted the worst bottleneck in supply as in other factors affecting the Alaskan situation. In February of 1942, General Butler estimated that water transport available for carrying supplies from the United States consisted of 20 vessels, totalling 85,000 tons. The trip took a month. The garrison present in Alaska at the time required 90,000 ship tons per month. The answer was obvious.<sup>49</sup> Air transport would have to be expanded, and, if military transports were not available as requested, commercial airlines would have to be utilized. Contracts had been made by both the Air Service Command and the Ferrying Command with Pan-American, Northwestern, and United Airlines.<sup>50</sup> When the crisis finally materialized in June, the ADC pressed into service practically every transport plane that happened to enter its area of jurisdiction; and a great effort was made to increase the volume of regularly contracted transport service to the Territory.<sup>51</sup> Though neither the Air Service Command nor the Ferrying Command had been fully organized for work in Alaska by the middle of June, they had both done pioneering work in that direction and had worked out tentatively the boundaries of their respective responsibilities

- 42 -

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

with regard to transport activities. The former was to look after the transportation of technical supplies, the latter of aircraft and strategical supplies. They were to work in close relationship with each other and be of mutual assistance.<sup>52</sup> Yet even with additional air transport service, the problem remained. The increasing threat of invasion, and especially the actual outbreak of hostilities, necessitated an increase in the volume of supply required for Alaska which more than kept pace with the increased shipping available.<sup>53</sup>

Not far short of the transportation problem, as a hindrance to the orderly development of Alaskan air defenses, came the command situation into which the air units were placed. Prior to the establishment on 17 October 1941 of the Air Force, ADC, no central air commander existed in the Alaskan Defense Command, and so no agency was responsible for coordinating the activities of the air base and the combat air force. The base was under the direct control of the post commander at Fort Richardson; and the combat group came directly under the Commanding General, Alaska Defense Command. "The logistical plan was, therefore, always out of step with the tactical and, in fact, there was no logistical plan for air operations for the reason that the Post Commander had no responsibility for outlying posts or air operations throughout the territory."<sup>54</sup> Under Lt. Col. E. S. Davis, an extemporized Air Force Headquarters was created to head up the 28th Group and the Alaskan

CONFIDENTIAL



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Air Base.<sup>55</sup> Colonel Davis was, however, sadly handicapped by a lack of experienced officers. The only ones available had to be taken from the combat units, themselves short of key personnel.

Even with a headquarters of their own the Air Corps troops were in an anomalous position in relation to the ground forces under the ADC. The more the Alaskan military situation was studied, the more it became evident that the importance of the air forces was out of proportion to their strength, whether existing or planned. As a result of the very difficult transportation, ground troops were bound to their bases, committed to passive defense only. The air units, on the other hand, were capable of all the flexibility necessary for active defense in the Territory. But their relatively small numbers and scanty equipment led local commanders to overlook their requirements in favor of the much more numerous ground troops. One observer, writing early in December 1941 said that the impression he had received when visiting Army installations was that the defense of Alaska rested in the hands of the ground forces with the air forces playing a secondary role.<sup>56</sup> To some it seemed advisable to place an air general over the entire Alaskan Defense Command, and make him responsible directly to the Chief of the AAF.<sup>57</sup> To all—at least to all Air Corps observers—it was absolutely essential to have a capable air officer placed in charge of air activity in the Territory.<sup>58</sup>


- 44 -

CONFIDENTIAL

  
CONFIDENTIAL

General Butler (then Colonel Butler) was the man picked to head the new air force when on 5 February 1942 the Alaskan Air Force was designated the Eleventh Air Force (then 11th Air Force). General Butler, though personally in the closest cooperation with General Buckner, found himself in a general command system little if at all improved by the creation of a separate air force. The normal chain of command involved routing everything through the headquarters first of the ADC and then of the WDC, before it reached General Headquarters, Washington. In addition, coordination had to be affected on certain points between the Eleventh Air Force Headquarters and the Commander, U. S. Navy, Task Force #8, and also with the CAA. Then there was the peculiar position of Ladd Field. Originally established as a proving ground for equipment to be used in extreme cold weather conditions, some confusion had arisen as to its function, resulting in its being placed under the Alaska Defense Force and used in part as a tactical station and general depot. Many advocated that it be declared an exempted station.<sup>59</sup> Prior to May 1942, the Cold Weather Testing Station had been operating under the technical control of the Commanding General, AAF. As a result of the emergency which arose in that month, it was taken over by the ADC, and it was not until 25 October 1942 that Ladd Field was declared an exempted station under the jurisdiction and control of the Commanding General, AAF.<sup>60</sup>

- 45 -

  
CONFIDENTIAL

~~SECRET~~ CONFIDENTIAL

With all the good intentions in the world, no man in authority in Alaska could overcome both a complicated chain of command and a system of parallel jurisdictions. The result was that, at best, administration moved slowly, and, at worst, not at all, its wheels entangled in a system where no one had direct responsibility outside his own agency.<sup>61</sup> An example, quoted somewhat later than the period covered in this study, illustrates the problem existing through these earlier months. It was recommended that a bombing plane be sent to the United States for overhaul because local facilities were inadequate at the time. The recommendation was turned down on the ground that the Eleventh Air Force would have to request permission for the transfer through, first the ADC, second, the Commander of USN Task Force #8, third, the WDC, which in turn would possibly coordinate the recommendation with the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. This procedure, it was stated, would require fully a month.<sup>62</sup>

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CONFIDENTIAL  
CHAPTER III

## THE JAPANESE INVASION OF THE ALEUTIANS, JUNE 1942

On 18 May 1942 what had existed hitherto as a nebulous threat became suddenly definite. Naval intelligence had received word that the Japanese were preparing an amphibious expedition for the purpose of attacking Alaska. The date was set at 1 to 3 June.<sup>1</sup> Considering the strategic importance of Alaska and the Aleutians, and in view of the fact that Japan must act quickly if she intended to neutralize that importance, it seemed altogether likely that the information was correct. And, according to reports, it was a considerable force that the Japanese had assembled; estimates placed it roughly at 2 aircraft carriers, 2 to 3 seaplane tenders, 3 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers, 12 destroyers, 3 submarines, together with heavy bombers, train transports and cargo vessels.<sup>2</sup> Enemy capabilities could therefore be placed relatively high. What direction the task force would take remained a question, but a not too perplexing one when the strategic situation in the North Pacific was analyzed.

To Lt. Col. L. V. Castner, G-2 for the ADC, that situation pointed in the direction of combined air attacks and landing operations, with the Dutch Harbor area as the most likely initial target.<sup>3</sup> Other locations were vulnerable, especially the Seward Peninsula

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

and Kodiak; and the ultimate prize must always be considered the mainland of Alaska itself. But to an enemy force coming from Japan, the Aleutians were the key to Alaska. An invasion force heading in any other direction would have to depend for success on the establishment of naval and air supremacy in that area, because it could then, and then only, count on such needed protection for its flanks. The Aleutians, furthermore, were the obvious base for Japanese operations both against the United States and, should hostilities with Russia materialize, for a flanking action against the Maritime Provinces. Landing operations in a step-by-step progress from the outer Aleutians seemed indicated and were in keeping with the plan already demonstrated in Japanese activity in the South Pacific. Immediate action to neutralize the naval base at Dutch Harbor would be a prerequisite to action of this sort in order to provide the freedom from naval opposition necessary to any rapid campaign in the outer islands. Since the Army air bases at Umnak and Cold Bay formed with Dutch Harbor a mutually dependent trio, it was expected that any sudden destructive raid would include them also. It would appear that on this point our military authorities overestimated the extent of Japanese intelligence concerning the newer airfields; and, in view of what has gone before, it would not be surprising if their information compiled in the months prior to Pearl Harbor would fail to include an account of feverish preparations in the Aleutian Islands.

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Plans for reinforcing the Alaskan air forces had been laid with the idea in mind of waiting until news of an actual enemy movement toward Alaska was received.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, on 18 May a phase of hasty preparations began which made it possible for the Eleventh Air Force to place some kind of solid opposition in the path of the Japanese on 3 June. General DeWitt on the 18th had made arrangements for dispatching a squadron of P-40's and four heavy bombers (B-17) to Alaska from his own West Coast defenses.<sup>5</sup> Airplanes, combat crews, ordnance supplies, transportation, and personnel were moved as fast and in as large numbers as possible to Fort Glenn (Umanak), Fort Randall (Cold Bay) and Fort Greely (Kodiak). The forward echelon of the Eleventh Air Force headquarters was set up at Fort Greely, leaving the rear echelon of supply and administrative units at Fort Richardson.<sup>6</sup>


According to the plans for Alaskan defense, General Butler reported to Admiral Theobald, Commander of Task Force #8, at Kodiak, on 27 May. Admiral Theobald, in turn, was to work by mutual cooperation with General Buckner. A "state of fleet opposed invasion" had been declared, and command, as far as active operations were concerned, was vested in the Navy.<sup>7</sup> But from the beginning it was evident that as large forces of Army aircraft as could be mustered would have to be ready to operate at Umanak and Cold Bay. The Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet believed this essential

CONFIDENTIAL

  
CONFIDENTIAL

since, with the exception of some 11 PBV's, they were the only air units available to protect surface vessels in the Dutch Harbor area. Later, additional PBV's were arranged for on the theory that patrol by naval aircraft should compensate to some extent for lack of an adequate air warning service.<sup>8</sup>

It was not easy either to prepare the fields at Unak and Cold Bay or to provide the planes and equipment. Both fields had been pronounced ready for use early in April.<sup>9</sup> But it was one thing to be able to land a heavy plane on a field and quite another to conduct consistent combat operations from that field. General Butler has left us a clear picture of the situation.<sup>10</sup> When the Eleventh Air Force units first arrived at Unak only a small landing strip was available and there were no parking facilities to amount to anything. The B-17's had to be parked on the edge of a runway only 150 feet wide. Other ships landed and took off on the opposite edge. "In landing they were forced to land one after another like carrier planes do on the deck of a carrier and then taxi back so that their wheels were just on the edge of the runway to make way for other ships." At Cold Bay the situation was similar, except that the runway was wider. Steps were taken at once to provide whatever dispersion parking was possible in the time allowed, yet General Butler was forced to admit as late as 16 June that a dive-bombing attack would probably still destroy most of the planes based at these two fields. Add to this the complete absence

  
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of radar sets, the extreme paucity of antiaircraft, and the fact that the fighters on hand could not fly alerts constantly with large enough formations to offer good protection, and the result was a situation precarious in the extreme.

Nor were these the only troubles besetting the advanced units of the Eleventh Air Force, for it also appears that practically none of the equipment required for these fields, and requested long before the immediate crisis, had arrived.<sup>11</sup> Radio sets and coding machines, both essential to rapid secret communication, were lacking. Base troops, though promised for almost a year, were present in insufficient numbers. In fact, about the only items on hand as requested were gasoline and bombs.<sup>12</sup>

Another serious shortage was transport planes. Virtually all transportation to the westward bases had to be done by air yet only a handful of planes were available. As the situation developed, the ADC commandeered practically every aircraft that crossed the border into Alaska to work on the Aleutian project; and from California to Chicago passengers were taken from their seats in order that the planes could be sent to Edmonton to await orders for Alaska. At one time it appears that nearly 50 of these commercial transports were at various points between Edmonton, Fairbanks and Anchorage. Some had gone as far as Umanak, and at least one of them was on the field at the time of the attack. These transport pilots worked over time, under the most trying



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circumstances, and are in no small measure responsible for the fact that the Japanese failed to establish themselves closer to our Alaskan defenses than Kiska.<sup>13</sup> Yet in those days of feverish preparation before the attack only seven DC-3 type aircraft were actually on hand to supply the Aleutian bases over a distance (Anchorage to Unak) equivalent to that from St. Louis to New York.<sup>14</sup>

A great deal had to be done in a very short time and with such equipment as was available. So little having been done to stock the advanced bases prior to the emergency, General Butler had to pack up and transport servicing equipment, ordnance supplies, and everything else necessary for operations. Fortunately, a small freighter was in dock at Anchorage at the time and it was pressed immediately into service to carry personnel and equipment to Cold Bay and Unak. As soon as reinforcements arrived from the United States, the 11th and 18th squadrons were moved to the Aleutians; but at the time of the attack only four flights had actually got into position. This left two flights of pursuit to protect Kodiak and none at all at Anchorage. Admiral Theobald wanted to move the entire Eleventh Air Force to Unak and Cold Bay, but General Butler believed the parking facilities to be sufficient for at most one medium bombardment squadron and two pursuit squadrons as initial force.<sup>15</sup> By 2 June 1942, the air striking force was



CONFIDENTIAL

disposed as follows:

Fort Glen (Umanak)	17 P-40's
	6 B-26's
Fort Randall (Cold Bay)	16 P-40's
	6 B-26's

The above-listed pursuit planes were taken from the 11th and 18th squadrons and the medium bombers from the 77th. In addition to these units, a squadron of 15 Bolingbrokes from the RCAF were stationed at Amette Island, and the Eleventh Air Force radar-equipped aircraft (one B-17E, two LB-30's) were assigned to the Navy for patrol duty. One additional B-17, without radar, had been assigned to the Navy for the purpose of searching the Aleutians. A medium bombardment squadron (the 77th) was at Anchorage ready to move out as soon as enemy contact was made; and a squadron of B-17's (the 36th) was on its way from the United States to Elmendorf.<sup>16</sup>

A large part of this force, one pursuit squadron and almost all the heavy bombardment planes, had been recently sent from the United States in accordance with the prevailing theory that Alaskan defense forces could be kept in the continental limits and sent north only when trouble arose. Few of the pilots or crews were familiar enough with the problems of Alaskan flying to be either efficient or at home in the area.<sup>17</sup> On account of their hasty departure for the westward bases, none of the organizations were



CONFIDENTIAL

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provided with administrative or maintenance personnel.<sup>18</sup> As things stood on 2 June, therefore, the Eleventh Air Force striking force may be said to have been only more or less in position, quite inadequately supplied, insufficiently trained, and completely lacking in routine administrative machinery. That it had done as much as it had, in as short a time, and under such adverse circumstances, not all of which could be blamed on any particular agency, represents nevertheless an undertaking little short of miraculous.

The second phase of operations began on 2 June when the naval patrol reported the first signs of enemy activity, other than submarine reconnaissance. The report indicated the presence of an enemy carrier about 400 miles south of Kiska. No contact with the enemy was made, however, until 0655,<sup>19</sup> 3 June, when four unidentified heavy bombers were reported over Dutch Harbor. Both Ft. Glenn and Ft. Randall were warned of impending attack.<sup>20</sup>


Although enemy action was expected at any time, the precise moment of the attack was something of a surprise. The Japanese task force seems to have maneuvered cleverly under cover of bad weather--so cleverly that it indicated rather intimate knowledge of the vagaries of Aleutian fogs. An atmospheric disturbance was moving eastward at the time, and the Japanese force followed in the concealment of its westward edge. It attacked Dutch Harbor during the first clear weather after the storm, probably knowing that air assistance from the east would have difficulty getting



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through.<sup>21</sup> After a preliminary sweep by a flight of fighting planes which strafed installations near the air station, four flights of bombers, each three or four planes strong, bombed the Fort Mears area. The principal targets were apparently Fort Mears, the radio station, and the wooden oil tanks. The last two targets were probably well known to the enemy, since they had been in existence for years. Considerable damage was done, mainly in the form of burned buildings, before the enemy withdrew to its carrier which seems to have been waiting southwest of Unalaska Island.<sup>22</sup>

So far the enemy's plans had worked precisely with reasonable effect and apparently without loss of aircraft, despite energetic antiaircraft fire from Fort Mears. No more action took place that morning until about 1110 when two enemy cruiser-type planes were engaged over Otter Point, Unalak, by P-40's stationed there. One was shot down; the other escaped. This may very well have been the first intimation the Japanese had received of the existence of Fort Glenn and the new airfield there. At noon enemy fighters appeared over Unalak, but were driven off by Army fighters. This attack may have been directed at Dutch Harbor and diverted to Fort Glenn when the Army Air Forces installations there were discovered.<sup>23</sup> No further contact was made with the enemy on 3 June, although Captain Meals took off twice from Fort Glenn with a flight of B-26's. The only serious casualty of the

  
CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

day, as far as the Army aircraft were concerned, occurred when one B-26 crashed in the snow on returning to the base. The plane was wrecked, but no lives were lost.

Meanwhile, things had been taking place to the east of the Dutch Harbor-Umnak area. Six B-17's arrived at Elmendorf Field from the United States, and were ordered to Fort Greely. Ten Canadian Bolingbrokes from the RCAF units stationed at Annette Island arrived at Yakutat to protect that area.

At 0845, 4 June, Naval Patrol Wing Four reported contact with three enemy vessels, including one, and possibly two, carriers, about 160 miles southwest of Umnak.<sup>24</sup> The Commander of Task Force #8 had ordered all available aircraft concentrated at Fort Glenn and Fort Randall as soon as important Japanese forces were located. Accordingly, the 36th Squadron (B-17) was ordered to attack from Kodiak, refuelling and picking up such information about the enemy as they could find at Cold Bay. The 73d Squadron (B-26) which had been waiting for orders at Elmendorf received orders to proceed to the target by way of Fort Randall and Umnak. The 77th Squadron (B-26), already split between Cold Bay and Umnak, had standing orders to attack when the target was located.

According to this plan of action, Captain Meals took off from Fort Glenn with 5 B-26's as soon as the report of Japanese vessels came through from the Navy patrol (0900). But the weather

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had again deteriorated, bringing low ceiling and fog, so Captain Meals had to return (1355) without locating the target. On receipt of additional and accurate information from "Patwing four," Colonel Eareckson led 5 B-26's from Cold Bay to attack at 1220. During the flight the elements of the squadron became separated and only a few ships actually found the target, owing to the extremely poor visibility and a ceiling of not more than 200 feet. Captain Thornbrough was the first to locate the Japanese vessels. In his excitement he dropped his torpedo on the deck of a carrier, doing very little damage. He went back to Cold Bay, reloaded and returned to the attack by himself. That night he was heard calling over Cold Bay, saying that he was "on top" with 15 minutes gas left. That was the last ever heard of him. Lieutenant Taylor also found the enemy and succeeded in breaking through antiaircraft fire to launch his torpedo. He was forced to proceed to Umanak without observing results.

At 1540 Captain Dunlap, with 5 B-17's and one LB-30 equipped with radar, took off from Cold Bay on a search-attack mission southwest of Umanak. No results were obtained and the squadron (less one, left behind on account of engine trouble) landed at Umanak at 2100. The B-17 left at Cold Bay was taken up by Captain Mansfield when Captain Thornbrough brought back word of the enemy carrier's location. He was joined by Captain Marks in the B-17

which had been on duty with the Navy patrol. Both succeeded in locating the target. Captain Marks reported that Mansfield went under the overcast at about 200 feet. Marks himself went in higher and dropped his bombs by guess. Mansfield was never heard from again, but Marks succeeded in obtaining a direct hit on one enemy ship, according to observations made by his crew.

Captain Heals again took off on an attack mission from Umnak at 2040 with 5 B-26's. Three of the planes located the enemy and launched two torpedoes at an enemy cruiser. One torpedo struck the port bow and was seen to explode. The other was believed also to have been effective, but to what extent it was impossible to determine.

Meanwhile, at 1855, an enemy force of 10 ~~Yankee~~ bombers and 16 fighters made an attack on Dutch Harbor. The attack, the second major one made, resulted in the destruction of a few warehouses and some oil tanks.<sup>25</sup> Part of the Japanese force, numbering four dive bombers and four Zero fighters, passed over Umnak on their return trip from Dutch Harbor. Their objective appears to have been reconnaissance of the runway at Fort Glenn. The dive bombers had dropped their bombs at Dutch Harbor and were relatively vulnerable to fighter attack, yet they stayed over the airfield until the runway had been located.<sup>26</sup> They were engaged by eight P-40's from the 11th Fighter Squadron. Lieutenants White, Chancellor and Dale each shot down a dive bomber. Lieutenant Cape shot down a

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Zero and was in turn shot down. Lieutenant McIntyre, with a crippled plane, survived a crash landing at 200 miles an hour with wheels up and motor dead. Counting the destruction of a Japanese cruiser scout plane at Unnak the previous day, the score stood at 5 to 2 in favor of the U. S. fighters.<sup>27</sup>

After the attacks of 3 and 4 June, the enemy withdrew, his preliminary work done, though not altogether to his liking. There seems little doubt that the presence of Army aircraft at Unnak and Cold Bay disrupted what was probably a more ambitious plan for action in the nearer Aleutian Islands. After the 4th, the Japanese were forced to fall back on an alternative plan which turned out to be to occupy the outer Aleutians where they could safely dig in, and from which they could still accomplish two of their major objectives: to guard against American action against Japan in the North Pacific and to maintain enough of an active threat in that sector to occupy a considerable American force and keep it from reinforcing the hard pressed forces in the South Pacific.

Between the bombing of Dutch Harbor and the occupation of Kiska and Attu, a game of hide-and-seek took place during which the American patrols sought without success to locate the Japanese fleet. The hectic action of the 3d and 4th had left the Americans, few of whom were seasoned Alaskan fliers, and still fewer seasoned fighters, with a thriving case of nerves. Certain incidents

CONFIDENTIAL



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arising out of this overwrought state provided just about all there was to report in the days immediately following the Japanese attack. The pilot of a search plane had the entire available striking force out to attack a rock which he had reported as an enemy carrier. A flight of P-38's enroute from the United States paused long enough to attack a Russian freighter that happened by. These men, new to the Alaskan scene, were, as General Butler put it, "pretty wild for a couple of days," chasing friend and foe alike. One even landed at Unak with all his guns going.<sup>28</sup> As the air units settled down to a less frantic sort of campaigning, most of these difficulties disappeared. In general, especially during these early days of the fighting, morale was high and each pilot hoped for little better than to be given a good chance at the enemy.<sup>29</sup>

Not much more remains to be recorded from 5 to 11 June, when the Navy patrol reported the Japanese presence on Niska and Attu. These islands, barely within the extreme range of a B-17 based at Unak, provided the enemy with bases where, in spite of continued long-range bombing attacks by Army planes, they could settle for a time, collect their forces, and prepare to fortify their position. With the retirement of the Japanese to the outer islands, the first critical phase of the Aleutian campaign may be considered ended.<sup>30</sup>

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

The fighting in the Aleutians taught several lessons, some of lesser, some of major importance. On the tactical side, the Japanese demonstrated, in addition to a certain inflexible adherence to plan which was more or less expected, a mastery of action under Aleutian conditions which our airmen could profitably study. Not only did they advance in force under cover of weather, but used cloud formations as effective protection in serial combat.<sup>31</sup> Their Zero fighters appeared to be more speedy and more maneuverable than our P-40's,<sup>32</sup> a fact which suggested the use of the P-39 or the P-38 in preference. Their antiaircraft was very effective at low altitudes. One method of defense in the cloud cover seems to have depended on bunching of the anti-aircraft fire. A few instances were reported of the Japanese using U. S. frequencies and broadcasting in English. An unverified report also had it that they adopted American identification marks on their planes.<sup>33</sup>

This latter report may well have come from those American flyers who saw their first combat flying over Unnak and who admitted to difficulty in identifying the enemy until he was out of range. Though effective enough in dog-fights, our fighters also left something to be desired in their use of radio, and in their approach to their targets. Owing partly to the low altitude necessary in Alaskan weather, and partly to the lack of an air

CONFIDENTIAL

warning system, their attacks were usually too quick.<sup>34</sup> The B-26 proved to be of minimum value in Alaskan conditions. Its limited range prevented its effective use over the long distances that needed to be covered, and its tricycle landing gear made landing exceedingly hazardous on the still rugged fields at Unak and Cold Bay.<sup>35</sup> As had been anticipated by General Butler,<sup>36</sup> torpedoes proved to be more useful weapons than bombs where low ceilings prevented bombing at normal altitudes. Although requested repeatedly, no torpedoes had been provided, and such as were used had to be borrowed from the Navy.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to these tactical lessons, the opening blows of the Aleutian campaign taught certain things of much more far-reaching importance, involving the entire principle of Alaskan air defense. Almost all those issues upon which so much debate had taken place emerged from the fighting of June 1942 in much more distinct outline. First of all, there was the question of the strategic value of airfields in the Aleutians. On this point there could be little doubt after the event. Despite a manifest and unavoidable lack of preparation, the Army air units based at the new Aleutian bases were instrumental in preventing a more serious attack, and they may well have been the immediate cause of the change in the enemy's plans according to which he retired to Kiska and Attu and prepared to fight a defensive campaign

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

for the time being rather than to press the advantage he had undoubtedly gained at Dutch Harbor. It became more than ever apparent that Umanak, Cold Bay and Dutch Harbor were mutually dependent, and that to abandon one would mean abandoning the other two; and to abandon Dutch Harbor would be equivalent to relinquishing naval as well as air control of the North Pacific area.

Events had demonstrated that it was easier to move units into these fields and operate them effectively under adverse conditions than most observers in headquarters had thought. The entire air strength in Alaska, though dangerously low, had been concentrated with fair speed and with no small effect. Nevertheless, it became very clear that advanced bases should be stocked well in advance of operations, and in sufficient quantities to supply a maximum rather than a minimum force. General Butler stated that the governing factor in the early fighting was not the number of available planes so much as the facilities available for parking, servicing, and supplying at Umanak and Cold Bay.<sup>38</sup> Reinforcing units had been moved forward as fast as the fields, still incomplete and inadequately stocked, could be made ready to receive them. All of which pointed to two things: first, a shift of strategic policy for Alaska from one of passive defense to one envisaging aggressive action against the enemy; and, second, the

CONFIDENTIAL

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provision of an air service system which could be depended on to provide for this offensive phase of operations. Some steps had been taken prior to June 1942 to secure a separate Air Service Command for Alaska, and to provide depot facilities. It now became imperative that these plans be carried out as rapidly as possible.

Little doubt was left on another point. Reinforcing air units could no longer be based mainly in the continental United States, to be sent to Alaska only when an emergency arose. The presence of the Japanese in the outer Aleutians created a situation of constant emergency, demanding a permanent garrison, and one which should be increased as fast as the supply of aircraft and crews could be provided. In March General Butler had also agitated for a reserve supply of replacement planes and crews to be kept in Alaska, trained and ready to become instantly effective when needed. Otherwise, he argued, the time taken to secure combat replacements would be about one month, to say nothing of the time lost in training on the ground and in administrative adjustment.<sup>39</sup> In the future as in the past, of course, the conditioning factor was to be the supply of men and equipment available. For the time being, as many aircraft had been operated from the Aleutian bases as those bases could accommodate. But as facilities were provided the problem of priorities in combat units would again govern the situation.

- 64 -  


CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ CONFIDENTIAL

Yet even on that point, the question of priorities, the situation had grown clearer. With the Japanese actually present on American soil and possessed of capabilities which remained alarming, the War Department began to build up the combat strength of the Alaskan garrison as rapidly as possible. Air force technical supplies sent to Alaska for June 1942 were almost double the quantity sent in May of that year; and the July figure more than doubled that for June.<sup>40</sup> The problem of transportation was in some degree met by a considerable increase in the number of transport planes provided for Alaska.<sup>41</sup> Six radar sets were added to the originally planned limit of ten, with appropriately increased personnel, to make up for the glaring lack of an early warning system demonstrated at Dutch Harbor.<sup>42</sup> General air force personnel were earmarked for Alaska in increasing numbers, though still not enough to suit General Butler.<sup>43</sup> The Eleventh Air Force, by the end of June, still lacked aircraft, crews, service personnel, experienced officers, and technical supplies in numbers and quantities appropriate to the activity of the theater. Other theaters still enjoyed, and rightly so, a higher priority status.<sup>44</sup> But at least Alaska no longer labored under the handicap of a priority established mainly on the assumption that it was a sector of passive defense.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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NOTES

CONFIDENTIAL

## Chapter I

1. Memo for C/AC from Chief of Plans Div., AC, 7 Dec. 1935, in AAG 686, Alaska.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.; ltr, C/AC to QMG, 22 Nov. 1935; memo for Chief, Building and Grounds Div. from AC/AC, 2 Mar. 1935, both in AAG 686, Alaska.
5. Report of Board of Officers convened by the CO of the Alaskan Flight for the purpose of making recommendations regarding the establishment of an air base in Alaska, 23 Aug. 1934, in AAG 686, Alaska.
6. Ltr., C/AC to Asst. SW, 14 Oct. 1938, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr., TAG to C/AC, 9 Sep. 1939, in AAG 686, Alaska.
7. Ltr., TAG to C/AC, 10 Mar. 1938, in AAG 686, Alaska.
8. Memo for C/S from C/AC, 13 Nov. 1939, in AAG 686, Alaska.
9. Memo for AC/S, G-3, G-4, etc., from C/S, 28 May 1940, in AAG 600.1, Alaska; ltr., TAG to QMG, 29 May 1940, same file; R&R, Chief, Material Div. to Plans Div., 7 June 1940, in AAG 381, Alaska.
10. Ltr., Hq. 3d Wing GHQ AF to CG, GHQ AF, 9 Nov. 1936, in AAG 686, Alaska; see ch. I, n. 8.
11. Ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940, in AAG 381, Alaska.
12. Ltr., Hq ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940, in AAG 381, Alaska.
13. 6th Ind. (ltr., Hq ADC to CG, 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940) TAG to C<sup>W</sup>, 4th Army, 29 Jan. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska.
14. 3d Ind. (ltr., Hq ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 16 Jan. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; 1st Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 12 Nov. 1940, same file; 5th Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940) C/AC to TAG, 15 Nov. 1940, same file; 2d Ind. (ltr. Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) TAG to CG, 4th Army

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 8 Jan. 1941, same file; 6th Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940) TAG to CG, 4th Army, 29 Jan. 1941, same file; rad., WD to Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt, CG, 4th Army, 26 Apr. 1941, same file; ltr., Hq. 4th Army to C/S, 2 June 1941, same file; extract from ltr., CG, 4th Army to C/S, 4 June 1941, same file; memo for AC/S, WPD from C/AC, 26 June 1941, same file; memo for Colonel Kimble, liaison officer, C/AC and CAA, from WD WPD, 19 July 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr. Chief of Naval Opns. to C/S, 23 July 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; memo for C/S from Chief of AAF, 30 July 1941, same file; ltr., WD G-4 to C/S, 16 Aug. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; R&R, AAF WPD to C/AC, 7 Oct. 1941, same file; memo for TAG from Chief of AAF, 29 Sep. 1941, same file.
15. Memo for C/S from Chief of AAF, 30 July 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska.
  16. Rad., WD to CG, 4th Army, 26 Apr. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; ltr., Chief of Naval Opns. to C/S, 23 July 1941, same file; R&R, AAF WPD to C/AS, 7 Oct. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska.
  17. 2d Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) TAG to CG, 4th Army, 8 Jan. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; rad., WD to CG, 4th Army, 26 Apr. 1941, same file.
  18. 3d Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 16 Jan. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; ltr., Hq. 4th Army to C/S, 2 June 1941, same file.
  19. 1st Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 12 Nov. 1940, in AAG 381, Alaska.
  20. Rad., WD to CG, 4th Army, 26 Apr. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; ltr., Hq. 4th Army to C/S, 2 June 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; extract from ltr., CG, 4th Army to C/S, 4 June 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska.
  21. Ltr., Chief of Naval Opns. to C/S, 23 July 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska; memo for TAG from Chief of AAF, 29 Sep. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska.
  22. Memo for Chief of AAF from WPD, 28 Nov. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr., TAG to Chief of Engr., 14 Dec. 1941, in AAG 600.1, Alaska. Meanwhile, construction had already been begun on two improved runways at Cold Bay, the principal staging field on the route from Anchorage to Umanak, under supervision of the CAA; memo for TAG from Chief of AAF, 29 Sep. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska.

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

23. See the following correspondence dealing with this topic: memo for AC/S, G-4 from C/AC, 3 June 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr., Hq. WDC to TAG, 5 Aug. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; memo for record, filed under date 13 Oct. 1941 in AAG 686, Alaska; R&R, AFAEP to AFRAD 2 Apr. 1942, in AAG 686, Alaska.
24. Ltr., Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 9 July 1940, and 2d Ind., C/AC to Chief of Engr., 18 July 1940, both in AAG 686, Alaska. Plans were laid in the following year for the War Department to cooperate with the Navy in establishing Army landing facilities at Kodiak. Ltr., Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 1 May 1941, and memo for WD G-4 from C/AC, 19 May 1941, both in AAG 686, Alaska.
25. Memo for C/S from Acting AC/S, 30 Nov. 1940, in AAG 686, Alaska; memo for AC/S WPD from AC/AC, 17 Dec. 1940, same file.
26. Ltr., SW to Secretary of Commerce, 4 Jan. 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska. 2d Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 4th Army, 24 Oct. 1940) TAG to CG, 4th Army, 8 Jan. 1941; 6th Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG, 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940) TAG to CG, 4th Army, 29 Jan. 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska.
27. Ltr., Secretary of Commerce to SW, 13 Apr. 1942, in AAG 686, Alaska. See also attached ltr., SW to Secy. of Commerce, 19 Apr. 1942. The fields approved by the SW for this project included: Aniak, Farewell, Homer, Lliamna, Kenai, Moses Point, Minchumina, Nenana, Seward, Summit, Tanana, Tanacross, Talkeetna, Yakataga.
28. 1st Ind. (ltr., C/AC to TAG, 6 Nov. 1940) TAG to C/AC, 28 Nov. 1940, in AAG 600.1, Alaska. See also ltr., Gen. Arnold to Col. D. H. Connolly, Administrator of Civil Aeronautics, Dept. of Commerce, 10 Oct. 1940, in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
29. For statements of the progress and status of these fields, see the following correspondence: memo, Permanent Joint Board on Defense to Chief of AAF, 1 Dec. 1941, in AAG 334.7, Permanent Joint Board on Defense; ltr., C/AS to Air Attache, Canadian Legation, 9 Dec. 1941, and Appendix "A," same file. See also correspondence filed under AAG 361, Air Routes, 1 Aug. 1941.
30. Memo from Maj. Neil W. Rice to Gen. Arnold, 11 June 1942, WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
31. "Alaskan Defenses Built at Fifty Below Zero," digest of article by Lt. Col. John R. Hardin from The Military Engineer, Jan. 1942, in Science News Letter, 24 Jan. 1942, 51-52.
32. See Ch. I, n. 30.

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

33. M. Davis, "I saw Alaska at War," in Saturday Evening Post, CXXIV (23 May 1942), 12-13.
34. See Ch. I, n. 30.
35. Ltr., CG, ADC to CG, 4th Army, 21 Dec. 1940, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr., Col. F. M. Kennedy and Lt. Col. H. L. Clark to Maj. Gen. H.H. Arnold, 8 Sep. 1941, in AAG 33.1, Alaska.
36. Ltr., Brig Gen. S. C. Godfrey to General Streett, 21 Oct. 1942, in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
37. For progress and status reports on the construction projects, see the following documents: memo from Maj. Rice to Gen. Arnold, 11 June 1942, in WP II-G-1 Alaska #2; Supplemental Request for Airport Development in Alaska, F.Y. 1942, in AAG 686, Alaska; periodic reports on progress of construction in file AAG 600.1, Alaska; Appendix C, present study.
38. Ltr., Col. D. V. Gaffney, CO, Ladd Field, to Col. E. W. Hill, the Air Inspector, 20 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska.
39. Memo report on Alaskan Air Force operation made by Maj. A. G. McKinley for Materiel Div., 18 Mar. 1942, in WP II-G-1 Alaska #1.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

## Chapter II

1. See Ch. I, n. 30.
2. Draft from Chief of Naval Opns. and C/S to Comdr. in Chief, Pacific Fleet, CG WDC and Comdr, Pacific Northern Naval Coastal Frontier, 14 Oct. 1941, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; memo for C/AS from AC/AS, A-WPD, 21 Oct. 1941, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; ltr., CG WDC to TAG, 27 Oct. 1941, same file; ltr., Chief of AAF to CG AFCC, 28 Nov. 1941, in AAG 381, War Plans. See also Appendix B, present study.
3. Memo for C/AS from AC/AS, A-WPD, 21 Oct, 1941, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
4. Ltr., Chief of AAF to CG AFCC, 28 Nov. 1941, in AAG 381, War Plans.
5. Ltr., CG WDC to TAG, 27 Oct. 1941, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; ltr., Col. Gaffney to Col. Hill, 20 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska.
6. Ltr., CG WDC to TAG, 27 Oct. 1941, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
7. Memo from Maj. McKinley for Materiel Div., 18 Mar. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; memo from Maj. Neil W. Rice to Gen. Arnold, 11 June 1942, same file.
8. See Ch. II, n. 6.
9. Ltr., CG ADC to CG WDC, 3 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
10. Memo for the President from Gen. Marshall, 21 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
11. Memo for Materiel Div. from Maj. McKinley, 18 Mar. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; memo for Chief of AAF from Col. W. O. Butler, presented in conference 10 Feb. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; ltr., Col. Gaffney to Col. Hill, 20 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska; ltr., CG ADC to CG WDC, 14 Jan. 1942, in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
12. Ltr., CG ADC to CG WDC, 3 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
13. Ltr., Hq. ADC to CG WDC, 14 Jan. 1942, in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
14. See Ch. II, n. 12.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

15. See Ch. II, n. 13. See also 5th Ind., CG ADC to CG WDC, 21 Apr. 1942, same file.
16. 6th Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADC to CG WDC, 14 Jan. 1942) CG WDC to TAG, 6 May 1942, in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
17. Ltr., Hq. WDC to TAG, 18 July 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska (see also attached indorsements, especially 3d, 5th, 7th, and 9th); ltr., Hq. WDC to CG FF, GHQ, 25 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; 3d Ind. (ltr., TAG to CG WDC, 3 Feb. 1942) CG WDC to CG FF, Army War College, 28 Feb. 1942, in AAG 452.1, Alaska.
18. Ltr., Hq. WDC to TAG, 18 July 1941, in AAG 381, Alaska.
19. Ibid., 5th Ind.
20. Ltr. (personal) Lt. Gen. DeKitt to Gen. Marshall, 3 May 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
21. R&R, Gen. Arnold to Gen. Spatts, 24 Dec. 1941, in AAG 321.9, Organization AAF. Refers to ltr., Gen. Buckner to Gen. Arnold, 8 Dec. 1941, not attached.
22. WPD, WD placed reinforcements for Alaska under 4th priority, especially with regard to the use of American shipping. Memo, Lt. Gen. D. D. Eisenhower to Lt. Gen. Brehon Somervell, 19 Feb. 1942, in AG 400 (1-17-42) MSC-D-M.
23. 2d Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADC to CG WDC, 14 Jan. 1942) GHQ to TAG, 17 Feb. 1942; also 3d ind. (same basic ltr.) TAG to CG WDC, 26 Mar. 1942, both in AAG 600.1, Alaska.
24. "Joint Army-Navy Plans for Alaska" prepared by CG ADC and Comdr, Alaskan Sector, 13th Naval District, 31 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
25. 4th Ind. (ltr., CG ADC to CG WDC, 3 Jan. 1942) Hq. AAF to TAG, 16 Feb. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
26. 2d Ind. ("Joint Army-Navy Plans for Alaska," see Ch. II, n. 24) Comdr in Chief, U. S. Fleet to Chief of Naval Opns., no date, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
27. R&R, 4th comment, A-WPD to AAF Dir. of Air Defense, 15 Feb. 1942, WP II-C-1 Alaska #1. See also memo for Chief of AAF from AC/AS ANPD, 2 Feb. 1942, WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.

CONFIDENTIAL

28. Ltr., Hq. WDC to CG FF, GHQ, 25 Jan. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; ltr. CG AAF to OPU, 24 Apr. 1942, in AAG 452.1, Alaska.
29. R&R, 2d comment, AF&EP to AF&CG, 22 May 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2; memo for the CG AAF from C/AS, 18 May 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska. Gen. DeWitt expressed considerable alarm over the lack of aircraft available in his command for the purpose of patrolling the vital west coast factory areas, especially the Los Angeles-San Diego area. Between the Army and the Navy, only 32 aircraft could be mustered on 15 Jan. 1942 to patrol the entire west coast of the United States; ltr., Gen. DeWitt to Gen. Marshall (personal), 16 Jan. 1942, in AG 452.1 (7-24-41) "Air Reinforcements for WDC and Alaska."
30. Memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Butler, 10 Feb. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
31. Ltr., CG 11th AF to CG AAF, 22 Mar. 1942, WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
32. 2d Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADF to CG 9th CA, 3 Sep. 1940) Hq. 4th Army to TAG, 27 Sep. 1940, in AAG 381, Alaska; 3d Ind. (ltr., TAG to CG WDC, 3 Feb. 1942) CG WDC and 4th Army to CG FF, 28 Feb. 1942, in AAG 452.1, Alaska; see also attached correspondence.
33. This plan is contained in ltr., CG 11th AF to CG AAF, 22 Mar. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
34. Ltr., Hq. ADC to CG, 4th Army, 21 July 1941, in AAG 676.9, Alaska (see also attached correspondence, especially 7th Ind.); 2d Ind. (rad., CG WDC to TAG, 12 Aug. 1941), Office of the Chief Signal Officer to TAG 26 Aug. 1941, in AAG 413.4, Alaska.
35. 7th Ind. (ltr., Hq. ADC to CG, 4th Army, 21 July 1941) TAG to Chief Signal Officer, 3 Dec. 1941, in AAG 676.9, Alaska.
36. Ltr., Hq. WDC to CG FF, GHQ, 27 Jan. 1942, in AAG 676.9, Alaska.
37. Memo for AC/S WPD from CG AAF, 24 Mar. 1942, in AAG 676.9, Alaska; memo for C/S from Dir. of Air Defense, 26 May 1942, in AAG 370.3, Alaska; R&R, Dir. of Air Defense to ANPD, no date, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1; memo for Dir. of Military Requirements from Dir. of Air Defense, 10 Mar. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
38. See correspondence in Ch. I, n. 74. See also 7th Ind. (basic ltr. not attached) TAG to CG WDC, 25 Mar. 1942, in AAG 413.4, Alaska.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

39. Ltr., AAG to CG WDC, 10 June 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
40. Interview, Lt. Col. P. W. Scheidecker, 17 Aug. 1943, in AAF A-2 Lib., US 9000, Interviews, K-30079.
41. Memo for Gen. Arnold from the Air Inspector, 28 Oct. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska; memo for Chief of AAF from Lt. Col. E. C. Kiel, 4 Dec. 1941, same file.
42. Ltr., Hq. ADC to CG WDC, 14 Jan. 1942, in AAG 600.1, Alaska; memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Butler, 10 Feb. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
43. Ibid.
44. Ltr., Hq. 11th AF to CG AAF, 12 Mar. 1942, in AAG 323.7, Alaska.
45. Ltr., CG ASC to CG AAF, 24 Mar. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
46. Ltr., CG AAF to Dir. of Military Requirements, 1 Apr. 1942, in AAG 686, Alaska; 1st Ind. (ltr., Hq. ASC to CG AAF, 27 May 1942) Hq. AAF to CG WDC, 19 June 1942, in AAG 323.7, Alaska.
47. R&R, AFDPV to AFRBS, 30 June 1942, in AAG 323.7, Alaska.
48. R&R, 2d comment, AFA&P to AFROM, 15 Apr. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
49. Memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Butler, 10 Feb. 1942, WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
50. Extract from memo for Gen. Arnold from AC/AS Plans, 30 Apr. 1942, in AAG 334.7, Canada-U.S. See also memo from AAF/ANPD to C/AS, 27 Dec. 1941, in WP I-S; memo from AAF/ANPD to C/S, 1 Jan. 1942, same file.
51. See pp. 51-2, present study. Memo from Col. W. F. Twining to Col. K. N. Walker, 17 June 1942 in AAG 452.1, Transports; ltr., Gen. Handy to CG AAF 16 July 1942, in AAG 373, Flights, and attached correspondence. See also correspondence attached to ltr., Gen. Echels to CG, Material Center, Wright Field, 2 June 1942, in AAG 452.1, Transport.
52. Ltr., Hq. Ferrying Command to Senior Army Member, Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-United States, 18 Apr. 1942, in files of ATC Historical Sec.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

53. The following figures cover Air Corps technical supplies loaded during the early months of the Alaskan campaign, 1942, and destined for Alaska.

	General cargo	Gasoline	Oil	Total (in measurement)
May	2369	4249	550	7168 tons)
June	3670	8443	293	12406
July	8480	23658	2450	34588

Seattle Port of Embarkation, Office of the Port Air Officer, Air Office History, 6 Sep. 1942.

54. Memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Kiel, 4 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska.
55. See Appendix A.
56. Memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Kiel, 4 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska.
57. Ltr., Col. F. M. Kennedy and Lt. Col. H. L. Clark to Gen. Arnold, 8 Sep. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska; memo from Maj. Neil K. Rice to Gen. Arnold, 11 June 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
58. Ltr., Col. D. V. Gaffney to Col. E. W. Hill, 20 Dec. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska.
59. RRR, C/AC to Chief of AAF, 25 July 1941, in AAG 686, Alaska; ltr., Col. Kennedy and Col. Clark to Gen. Arnold, 8 Sep. 1941, in AAG 331, Alaska.
60. Authority was granted to the CG WDC by the C/S by radio dated 21 Apr. 1942 to place Ladd Field under control of the CG ADC who in turn placed its facilities and personnel at the disposal and under the immediate control of the CG, Eleventh Air Force. Rad., Hq. WDC and 4th Army to CG AAF, #475, 25 May 1942, CM-IN-7132 (5-25-42). The Cold Weather Testing Det. was established on exempted status according to ltr., TAG to CG AAF, 21 Aug. 1942, in AG 353 (8-21-42) "AAF Cold Weather Testing Detachment"; see also memo for C/S from Dir. of Military Requirements, 19 Aug. 1942, same file. Authority was issued placing Ladd Field, as well as the Cold Weather Testing Det., under the control and jurisdiction of CG AAF by AG ltr. to CG AAF and CG WDC, 25 Oct. 1942, in AG 320.2 (10-8-42) "Transfer of Jurisdiction of Ladd Field."

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61. Interesting comments on this subject may be found in the following documents: ltr., Col. Kennedy and Col. Clark to Gen. Arnold, 8 Sep. 1941, in AAG 333.1, Alaska; memo for Gen. Arnold from the Air Inspector, 28 Oct. 1941, same file; memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Kiel, 4 Dec. 1941, same file; ltr., Col. Gaffney to Col. E. W. Hill, 20 Dec. 1941, same file; memo from Maj. Rice to Gen. Arnold, 11 June 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2; summary of interview with Col. H. W. Sheluire, 28 Oct. 1942, in A-2 Lib., US 9000, Interviews, K-4367.
62. Memo from Dir. of Intelligence Service to AC/AS, A-2, 20 Oct. 1942, in AAG 000.71, Interviews.

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## Chapter III

1. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Periodic Reports, Alaska (1942) May-August, in AFIH, Archives; cf rad., CG, 11th AF to CG AAF, #242005, 24 May 1942, CM-IN-6868 (5-24-42).
2. G-2 Per. Report, ADC, 27 to 28 May 1942, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug.
3. Ibid.
4. Rad., WD WPD to CG WDC, 28 Apr. 1942, #WD 929, CM-OUT-5808 (4-29-42).
5. Memo for CG AAF from C/AS, 18 May 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
6. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug.
7. Rad., COMINCH to Adm. King, 21 May 1942, in AFIH, Archives, 11th AF, Misc. data filed chronologically.
8. Rad., OPD to Gen. DeWitt, 20 May 1942, in AFIH, Archives, 11th AF, Misc.
9. Rad., CG WDC and 4th Army to CG AAF, 4 Apr. 1942, #66, CM-IN-1153 (4-4-42).
10. Ltr., Gen. Butler to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ltr., Maj. Ben H. Pearse, Special Asst. to the CO, Wing Hq., ATC, GP I to Capt. Oliver La Farge, historical officer, Hq. ATC, 3 Sep. 1943, in files of ATC Historical Sec.
14. Seven crews, flying DC-3 type aircraft were recommended for the air medal for their work in opening, pioneering and maintaining an emergency supply service to Alaska at the time of the Dutch Harbor Attack. Ltr., CG ATC to CG AAF, 15 Nov. 1943, in files Alaskan Wing, ATC. Gen. Butler only speaks of six available transports. Ltr. to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
15. Ibid.

~~- 76~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

16. Ibid., cf. ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug. Authority had been granted to station one HCAF squadron of the Vultee Vengeance type bomber at Annette Island on 8 Apr. 1942; ltr., CG AAF to AG/S, G-2, 16 Apr. 1942, in AAG 334.7, Defense Board, Canada-U. S.
17. Incls. to ltr., Hq. 11th AF to CG AAF, 12 Nov. 1942, "1st Person Narratives," in AFPHI, Archives, 11th AF, Misc.
18. Extract from ltr., Maj. Ansley Watson to Maj. Gen. B. N. Giles, 8 Oct. 1942, in AFPHI, Archives, 11th AF, Misc.
19. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug. The hour is listed as "0555" in Report, CO, Naval Base, Dutch Harbor, to Comdr, Alaskan Sector, 6 July 1942, in AAG 385, Warfare.
20. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports.
21. Report, CO Naval Base, Dutch Harbor to Comdr., Alaskan Sector, 6 July 1942, in AAG 385, Warfare.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.; cf. Ch. III, n. 20. Unless otherwise specified, the account of the fighting will be taken from these two sources.
24. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports; cf. ltr., Gen. Butler to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
25. See Appendix F.
26. Incl. to G-2 Per. Report #23, 17 June 1942, from G-2 Intelligence Scouts, Port Glenn, Alaska, to G-2, ADC, Fort Richardson, Alaska, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug.
27. See Appendix F.
28. Ltr., Gen. Butler to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
29. Ibid.
30. See Appendix
31. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports. Cf. statement by 1st Lt. John B. Murphy for Air Office, ADC, 26 June 1942, in G-2 Per. Reports, Alaska, (1942) May-Aug.

- 77 - ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

32. Ibid.
33. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports.
34. Statement of Lt. Murphy (see Ch. III, n. 31).
35. Ltr., Gen. Butler to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
36. Memo for Chief of AAF from Col. Butler, 10 Feb. 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #1.
37. Ltr., Gen. Butler to Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1942, in AAG 381, Alaska.
38. Ltr., Gen. Butler to CG ADC, no date, in G-2 Per. Reports.
39. Ltr., CG 11th AF to CG AAF, 14 Mar. 1942, in AAG 452.1, Allocations; of. 2d Ind., CG WDC to CG AAF, 28 Mar. 1942, same basic letter, same file.
40. See Ch. II, n. 53.
41. See Ch. II, n. 51.
42. 1st Ind. to memo, Hq. AAF to G/S, 4 June 1942, in AAG 676.9, Alaska; memo for Dir. of Air Defense, 10 June 1942, in AAG 676.9, Alaska.
43. On 10 June 1942 the AAG stated that 52 pilots had been earmarked for Alaska. 92 officers and 1888 enlisted men were scheduled to depart by the first available transportation; ltr., AAG to CG WDC 10 June 1942, in WP II-C-1 Alaska #2.
44. Ibid.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Substantially, the foundation for this study was laid with material taken from two main sources: the Army Air Forces, Classified Files (cited AAG with decimal) and the files of AC/AS, Plans (cited as in the following example: WP II-C-1). Both of these repositories are classified in such a way that material on the Alaskan theater is readily accessible. The former, however, provides much of indirect value and incidental interest in its general decimal classifications. Several files from The Adjutant General's Central Files were found to be worth studying, though most of the pertinent material contained therein duplicated correspondence more readily available in the other two files. Almost without exception, where a decimal from any of the above files is referred to, the documents contained in the rest of the designated volume have been checked. A glance at the references in the notes should, therefore, provide a fair indication of the material covered in addition to that filed under "Alaska" in the two first mentioned files, all of which was carefully sifted.

Useful information is contained in the Archives of the Historical Division under the temporary heading "Eleventh Air Force, Miscellaneous Data." This collection includes several interviews of value, though mainly pertaining to the later period, some

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correspondence, some newspaper clippings, and a few combat narratives of incidental value. Important on several topics is the interview file in the library of the Collection Division, AC/AS, Intelligence. Essential for the story of the combat operations of June 1942 are the G-2 Periodic Reports, and related documents, now in the keeping of the Historical Division Archives. Generally speaking, material on the earlier operations is extremely sparse. The Cable Messages for the period have also been checked. For the early months of 1942 they provide some valuable clues to the development of policy. There is, of course, much material of a general nature, useful for orientation and often valuable as an indication of the direction of public opinion, in newspapers and periodicals. Though seldom referred to specifically, these have been canvassed by way of the New York Times Index and the various periodical indexes.

- 80 -

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AC	Air Corps
AC/AC	Assistant Chief of Air Corps
AC/AS	Assistant Chief of Air Staff
AC/S	Assistant Chief of Staff
ADC	Alaska Defense Command
ADF	Alaska Defense Force
AFACG	Commanding General, Army Air Forces
AFAEP	AC/AS, Operational Plans
AFCC	Air Force Combat Command
AFDPU	AC/AS, Progress Planning
AFRAD	Director of Air Defense
AFBBS	Director of Base Services
AFROM	Director of War Organization and Movement
ASC	Air Service Command
AWPD	Air War Plans Division
AWS	Air Warning Service
CA	Corps Area
CAA	Civilian Aeronautics Administration
C/AC	Chief of the Air Corps
C/AS	Chief of Air Staff
CG	Commanding General
CO	Commanding Officer
COMINCH	Commander in Chief
C/S	Chief of Staff
Dir.	Director
Engr.	Engineers
FF	Field Forces
OPD	Operations Division, War Department
ops.	operations
QMG	Quartermaster General
Per.	Periodic
rad.	radiogram
RCAP	Royal Canadian Air Force
SW	Secretary of War
TAG	The Adjutant General
USN	United States Navy
WDC	Western Defense Command
WPD	War Plans Division, War Department

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Appendix A - Record of Activation, Strength, and Key Personnel

E X T R A C T

FIELD HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH ARMY AIR FORCE  
Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff A-2  
A P O #980

An Outline History of the  
Eleventh Army Air Force  
15 JAN 42 to 31 DEC 42

To be used as the basis for the  
permanent historical record of Eleventh  
Army Air Force currently being compiled

\* \* \* \*

Colonel Everett S. Davis, O-12530, (then Major) and two enlisted men reported to Alaskan Department (then Alaska Defense Command) for duty on 12 AUG 40. This small detachment was the vanguard of the Eleventh Army Air Force. Army Air Force organizations began to assemble in the theater beginning 21 FEB 41 with the arrival of the 18th Fighter Squadron (then Pursuit Squadron - Interceptor). Eight additional AAF units arrived on 23 FEB 41. By 17 OCT 41 AAF organizations on duty in the theater had increased to such an extent that the Air Force - Alaska Defense Command was activated under the command of Colonel Everett S. Davis (refer to table of unit activation).

On 15 JAN 42 the Eleventh Army Air Force (then Alaskan Air Force) was born - commanded by Colonel Everett S. Davis. On 17 FEB 42 command was temporarily assumed (under AR 95-60) by Colonel Lionel H. Dunlap, O-10878. Major General William O. Butler, O-5245, (then Colonel) assumed command on 8 MAR 42. General Butler was promoted to Brigadier General on 17 MAR 42.

\* \* \* \*

On 1 JAN 42 the XI Fighter Command (then Provisional Interceptor Command) was activated under the command of Lt. Col. Norman D. Sillin, O-17889.

\* \* \* \*

The XI Army Air Force Service Command (then Provisional Service Command) was activated on 21 JUN 42 under the command of Colonel Lionel H. Dunlap and succeeded on 18 JUL 42 by Brigadier General Robert V. Ignico (then Colonel).

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TABLE OF UNIT ACTIVATIONS AND REORGANIZATIONS—PERSONNEL STRENGTH BY COMMANDS

Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strength					Total	
				Fghter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	A W S		
	<u>1940</u> Aug. 12	Maj Everett S Davis and 2 EM	arvd							
1	<u>1941</u> Feb. 21	18th Pursuit Sq (I)	arvd							
2	23	23rd Air Base Gp 31st Materiel Sq 32nd Materiel Sq 24th Air Base Sq 346th Ordnance Co 55th Signal Maintenance Co Avn 16th Signal Plat Air Base 257th Quartermaster Co Air Base	arvd arvd arvd arvd arvd arvd arvd arvd	162	209	905			1276	
3	24	28th Composite Gp Hq and Hq Sq	arvd							
4	28	699th Ordnance Co Avn Comp 748th Ordnance Co Avn Air Base 346th Ordnance Co	estab estab disband							
5	Mar. 1			162	209	930			1301	
	14	73rd Bombardment Sq (H) Signal Co Air Warning Serv Als	arvd Beat Echelon arvd							
	15			162	439	935		78	1614	

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Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strength					Total	
				Fighter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	AWS		
6	Mar. 30	73rd Bombardment Sq (H)	arvd Air Echelon							
7	31	329th Signal Co Avn 36th Bombardment Sq (H)	arvd arvd Boat Echelon	163	659	884		78	1784	
8	Apr. 1	3rd Quartermaster Co Truck 36th Quartermaster Co LM	arvd arvd	164	673	1115		78	2030	
	15									
	21	257th Quartermaster Co Air Base Det Quartermaster 9th C A Serv C	disband estab fr 257th QM Co AB	164	665	1116		78	2023	
	May 1			161	655	1157		78	2051	
	15									
10	26	36th Bombardment Sq (H)	arvd Air Echelon asgnd to 28th Comp Gp	168	658	1183		78	2087	
	June 1			159	644	1194		78	2075	
	15									
	July 1			157	644	1197		78	2076	

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Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strength					Total
				Fghter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrn	A W S	
11	July 15	Quartermaster Sect 8 C A D C	redes fr Det AM 9th CASC	157	645	1168		78	2048
	Aug. 1			158	645	1303		76	2184
	9			158	658	1373		78	2267
12	15	Quartermaster Sect 9 C A D C	trans to Ft Richardson	165	662	1367		78	2272
	Sept. 1			165	660	1355		78	2250
	15			170	666	1322		78	2236
13	17	Alf Peros Alaska Defense Comd	act Col E S Davis asnd comd	170	661	1323		78	2232
	Nov. 1			171	671	1322		78	2242
	13			167	661	1359		80	2267
14	15	Tow Target Det	arvd	167	664	1366		80	2277
	Dec. 1			167	664	1366		80	2277

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Personnel Strengths

Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strengths					Total
				Fghter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	A W S	
15	Dec. 15	77th Bombardment Sq (M)	arvd Bost Echelon	167	666	1373		85	2291
	29	11th Pursuit Sq (I) 442nd Ordnance Co Avn 1st Plat	arvd arvd						
16	30	687th Ordnance Co P 1st Plat	arvd						
	1942 Jan. 1			167	972	1478		85	2702
17		77th Bombardment Sq (M)	arvd Air Echelon						
		Prov Interceptor Comd Als	act						
18	2	18th Pursuit Sq (I)	stehd to Prov Inter Comd						
	15	77th Bombardment Sq (M)	assign to 28th Comp Gp	401	968	1469		85	2963
19		Alaskan Air Force Hq-Hq Sq	act fr Air Force A D C						
	Feb. 1			447	1021	1468		85	3205
20	5	Eleventh Air Force Hq-Hq Sq	Redes fr Alaskan A F						
	15	Sub Depot Elmendorf Field	act	439	1055	1466		85	3045

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Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strength				
				Fghter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	A W S Total
21	Feb. 15	Sub Depot Ladd Field	act					
22	17	Col L H Dunlap	asnd comd Alaskan A P					
	Mar. 1			435	1025	1481	10	116 3067
23	8	Col William O Butler	asnd comd Eleventh A P					
	15			432	1016	1461	34	117 3084
24		XI Interceptor Comd 28th Interceptor Control Sq	redes fr Prov Intercep Comd stnd to XI Intercep Comd					
25	17	Gen William O Butler	Promoted to Brig General					
26	23	691st Signal AN reptg Co Front	redes fr Signal Co ANS Als					
	Apr. 1			442	1018	1557	44	253 3312
27	15	Det Quartermaster Co Sup	Act					
	May 1			466	1018	1627	59	255 3423
28		42nd Transport Sq	act					
				472	1020	1705	71	343 3611

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Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Personnel Strength					Total
				Fghter C	Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	A W S	
29	May 15	11th Fighter Sq 18th Fighter Sq XI Fighter Comd	redes fr 11th Pursuit Sq (I) redes fr 18th Pursuit Sq (I) redes fr XI Inter-cep Comd	477	1015	1740	80	343	3655
30	19	365th QM Plat Dep Cl III Avn 360th QM Plat Dep Subs Avn 117th QM Plat Sup Base Avn 623rd QM Plat LM Avn 717th Chemical Plat AF Sup B 188th Chemical Plat Airdrome	act fr Det QM Co Sup act fr Det QM Co Sup redes fr 38th QM Co LM act act						
31	31	54th Pursuit Sq (F) 54th Fighter Sq	arvd redes fr 54th Pursuit Sq (F) atbd to XI Fighter Comd	559	1287	2165	95	383	4489
32	June 1	390th Chemical Co Air Bomb	act						
33	2	687th Ordnance Co P 3rd Plat	arvd						
34	3	42nd Fighter Sq	atbd to XI Fighter Comd						

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Event No.	Date	Organization	Action	Fighter C					TOTAL
				Bomb C	Serv C	Hdqtrs	AWS		
35	June 6	406th Bombardment Sq (H)	arvd asgd to 28th Composite Op						
36	7	11th Fighter Control Sq  11th Fighter Sq 15th Fighter Sq	redes fr 28th Intercept Con Sq atbd to XI Fighter Comd asgd to XI Fighter Comd asgd to XI Fighter Comd						
37	9	21st Bombardment Sq (H)	arvd Air Echelon asgd to 28th Composite Op						
	15			9%	2191	116	432		5128
38	19	55th Signal Maintn Co Avn 430th Signal Co Maintn Avn	disband act fr 55th Signal Maint Co A						
39	21	54th Fighter Op 56th Fighter Sq 57th Fighter Sq Prov XI A F Service Comd	atbd to XI Fighter Comd atbd to XI Fighter Comd atbd to XI Fighter Comd estab						
40	28	442nd Ordnance Co Avn B	arvd						
41	30	406th Signal Co Avn 329th Signal Co Avn	organ fr 329th Signal Co Avn disband						
	July 1			1234	2310	120	591		5028

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Appendix B - Alaskan Defense: Supporting Plan, Eleventh Air Force

APPENDIX NO. 5

TO

ANNEX NO. 5 - AIR

JOINT PACIFIC FRONTIER DEFENSE PLAN

SUPPORTING PLAN - 11TH AIR FORCE (ALASKA)

1. MISSION

a. GENERAL

- (1) Defense of Army and Naval bases and other vital installations against land, air and sea attack.
- (2) Denial of use by enemy of air, land and sea bases in Alaska and the Aleutians.

b. SPECIFIC

- (1) Conduct air offensive against hostile naval, air, and ground forces threatening the military and naval defenses of Alaska.
- (2) Conduct the general air defense of Alaska and the local air defense of vital areas and establishments.
- (3) Establish and maintain an aircraft warning service within the Alaska Defense Command.
- (4) Cooperate with Naval operating forces in accomplishment of joint missions.

2. ORGANIZATION

a. FORCES

- (1) See Table "A", Disposition of Units, 11th Air Force.

b. COMMAND

- (1) Units of the 11th Air Force will engage in offensive and defensive operations as directed by The Commanding General, Alaska Defense Command, under orders issued by the Commander, 11th Air Force.

3. EMPLOYMENT

- a. Efficient operation by air force units from rapidly changing bases will be a prime factor in the air defense of Alaska. Great areas, extended coast lines and difficulties of cold weather operation make it necessary that air units move with the seasons and the situation.

- b. Tactical units will be assigned general missions, suitable to their equipment, supplemented as required by definite tasks.

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**4. DEFENSIVE PRIORITIES OF VITAL AREAS AND INSTALLATIONS**

- a. Anchorage - Cook Inlet - Kenai Peninsula - Prince William Sound Area.
- b. Kodiak - Naknek - Cold Bay Area.
- c. Dutch Harbor - Umnak Area.
- d. Yakutat - Sitka - Annette Area.
- e. Bering Sea Coast Area.
- f. Central Alaskan Area.
- g. Defense priorities within each area:
  - (1) Oil storage and loading facilities for the fleet.
  - (2) Permanent fortifications and naval establishments.
  - (3) Important airdromes and other military establishments.
- h. The above priorities are subject to change with varying situation.

**5. AIR FORCE FACILITIES**

- a. Air Force Bases, Operating Airdromes, and Staging Fields, Existing and Planned. (See Table "B").
- b. Present plans are to provide a series of operating airdromes that will permit a flexible employment of Air Force Units. The following table depicts the availability, by squadrons, of supply and housing facilities at the various airdromes when the plans are carried out. This table does not mean that the units will necessarily be so disposed, but that they may be if the situation so demands.

	<u>Bomb Sq (H)</u>	<u>Bomb Sq (M)</u>	<u>Pur Sq (Int)</u>	<u>Pur Sq (F)</u>
Elmendorf Field	... 2	..... 2	..... 2	.....
Kodiak	.....	..... 1	..... 1	..... 1
Umnak	... 1	..... 1	..... 1	.....
Cold Bay	... 1	.....	..... 1	.....
Cordova	.....	..... 1	.....	..... 1
Yakutat	.....	..... 1	.....	..... 1
Naknek	.....	..... 1	..... 1	.....
Annette	... 1	.....	..... 1	.....
Bethel	.....	..... 1	.....	.....
Juneau	.....	..... 1	.....	.....
McGrath	... 1	.....	.....	.....
Ladd Field	.....	..... 1	.....	.....
None	.....	..... 1	.....	.....

- c. Sites for long range Aircraft Warning Service Detector Stations in Alaska, with dates when each will be ready for occupancy

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by Signal Corps for installation of technical equipment:  
 (1) Existing facilities.

<u>SITE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>STATUS OF EQUIPMENT</u>
Anchorage (Mobile)	Temporary site now occupied	Now in operation.

(2) Planned facilities, with approximate dates of activation.

<u>SITE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>STATUS OF EQUIPMENT</u>
Chiniak (Kodiak Island)	Now occupied	On hand being installed (a)
Sitka	Feb. 28, 1942	Set in in San Francisco Depot (b)
Fairbanks (Mobile)	Now	Not yet supplied or released.
Wislow	April 15, 1942	Not yet released
Lazy Bay	April 1, 1942	Not yet released (c)
Minchinbrook	April 1, 1942	Not yet released (d)
Forrester Island	June 1, 1942	Not yet released
Nikolski (Umnak Island)	Undeterminable	Not yet released
Yakutat	April 1, 1942	Not yet released
Nushagak (vicinity of Igushik)	September 1, 1942	Not yet released
Kwiguk (vicinity of Hamilton)	September 1, 1942	Not yet released
Taketna	Undeterminable	Not yet released (e)
Wales (Cape Prince of Wales)	September 1, 1942	Not yet released
Tigalda Island	Undeterminable	Not yet released (e)
Simonsf Island	Undeterminable	Not yet released (f)
Lagoon Point (near Port Moller)	Undeterminable	Not yet released (f)
Cape Avinof	Undeterminable	Not yet released (e)
Point Hope	Undeterminable	Not yet released (e)
Point Barrow	Undeterminable	Not yet released (e)

- (a) Expect full operation prior to March 15th.
- (b) Date of occupancy by Signal Corps retarded by winter weather conditions. Information is that some technical equipment has been shipped to Sitka.
- (c) Preliminary construction work has been started.
- (d) Will make recommendations that site be moved to Cape Clear on Montague Island to secure the better coverage available there.
- (e) Final survey not yet completed.
- (f) Survey completed, report and estimate being written and topographical map being drawn.

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TABLE "A"

DISPOSITION OF UNITS, 11TH AIR FORCE

March 1, 1942

1. Elmendorf Field, Fort Richardson, Alaska.

Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, 11th Air Force

Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, 28th Composite Group  
73rd Bombardment Squadron (Medium)  
77th Bombardment Squadron (Medium)

Provisional Interceptor Command  
18th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) (less 1 flight)  
11th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)  
Signal Company, Aircraft Warning, Alaska

Alaskan Air Base  
Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, 23rd Air Base Group (Reinf)  
24th Air Base Squadron, 23rd Air Base Group (Reinforced)  
31st Material Squadron, 23rd Air Base Group (Reinforced)  
32nd Material Squadron, 23rd Air Base Group (Reinforced)

802nd Engineer Battalion (Aviation) (Separate)

699th Ordnance Company (Aviation) (Composite)

748th Ordnance Company (Aviation) (Air Base)

687th Ordnance Company (Aviation) (Pursuit)

442nd Ordnance Company (Aviation) (Bombardment)

3rd Quartermaster Company (Truck)

38th Quartermaster Company (Light Maintenance)

18th Signal Platoon (Air Base)

408th Signal Company (Aviation)

430th Signal Maintenance Company (Aviation)

Tow Target Detachment

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Air Corps Detachment, Communication

Air Corps Detachment, Weather

Decontamination Detachment, Chemical Warfare Service

Medical Detachment, Alaskan Air Base

2. Naval Air Station (Port Freezy), Kodiak, Alaska.

36th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy)

Flight, 18th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)

DP Detachment, Alaskan Air Base

3. Annette Island Landing Field, Alaska.

DP Detachment, Alaskan Air Base

Air Corps Weather Detachment

Army Airways Communications System Detachment

4. Yakutat Landing Field, Alaska.

DP Detachment, Alaskan Air Base

Air Corps Weather Detachment

Army Airways Communications System Detachment

5. Other Air Corps Weather Detachments at:

Ladd Field, Fairbanks, Alaska

Otter Point, Alaska

Nome, Alaska

Northway, Alaska

Cold Bay, Alaska

6. Other Army Airways Communications System Detachments at:

Ladd Field, Fairbanks, Alaska

Naknek, Alaska

Cold Bay, Alaska

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TABLE "B"

AIR FORCE BASES, OPERATING AIRDROMES AND STAGING FIELDS,  
EXISTING AND PLANNED.

March 1, 1942

1. Advanced operating airdromes, now under construction, and dates when limited operations therefrom may be possible:

- a. Yakutat - - - - - March 1, 1942
- b. Annette - - - - - March 1, 1942
- c. Cold Bay - - - - - April 1, 1942
- d. Cordova - - - - - April 1, 1942
- e. Umanak - - - - - May 1, 1942
- f. Naknek - - - - - July 1, 1942
- g. Bethel - - - - - July 1, 1942
- h. Juneau - - - - - July 1, 1942
- i. Nome - - - - - August 1, 1942

2. Airdromes which now are or which will be available for use:

- a. Ladd Field, Fairbanks - Air Corps Cold Weather Test. Potentially an Air Corps Depot, Replacement Center or Air Base. Available now for one (1) Squadron, any type combat aviation.
- b. Galena - Staging and Emergency - Ready now.
- c. Big Delta - Staging and Emergency - Ready now.
- d. Northway - Staging and Emergency - Ready now.
- e. McGrath - Operating airdrome - August 1, 1942.
- f. Port Heiden - Staging and Emergency - July 1, 1942.
- g. Gulkana - Proposed Operating Airdrome but availability indeterminate due to unforeseen construction difficulties involving suitable soil texture.

TABLE B. GEOGRAPHIC FACILITIES

STATION PROPOSED USE 1 - AIR BASE 2 - OPERATING AIRFIELD 3 - STATION FIELD	LOCATION		ELEVATION	RUNWAYS			RUNWAY SURFACE		AIRCRAFT FUEL (GALLONS)		RUNWAY (FEET)		LIGHTING CAPACITY (PERCENT)		OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS	
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		COMPLETED	UNDER CONSTRUCTION	PROPOSED (INCLUDING EXISTING OR BEING CONSTRUCTED)	PRESBIT	PROPOSED	ON HAND	PROPOSED	ON HAND	PROPOSED	PRESBIT	PRESBIT	PROPOSED	PRESBIT
1 0 - AIRFIELD	33° 03'	131° 55'	110	1-5000	1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	50,000	1,000,000	123	773	0	2	1/2	2
2 0 - AIRFIELD	00° 47'	101° 41'	30		1-5000	1-5000	SAND	GRAVEL	40,000	1,400,000		500	0	1	0	1
3 0 - AIRFIELD	09° 29'	145° 43'	120	1-5000			GRAVEL	GRAVEL	25,000	400,000			0	1/2	0	0
4 0 - AIRFIELD	09° 11'	162° 48'	80		2-5000		SOIL	GRAVEL	53,000	1,550,000	100	773	0	2	0	2
5 0 - AIRFIELD	09° 29'	145° 30'	20		1-5000	2-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	55,000	1,200,000		1,000	0	2	0	2
6 0 - AIRFIELD	61° 15'	149° 31'	150	1-5000			CONCRETE	CONCRETE	450,000	0,000,000	2,698	5,000	0	6	4	0
7 0 - AIRFIELD	69° 43'	157° 54'	130	1-5000	1-5000		GRAVEL	GRAVEL	5,000	600,000			0	1/2	0	0
8 0 - AIRFIELD	62° 07'	142° 45'	1240		1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	19,000	800,000			0	1	0	1
9 0 - AIRFIELD	58° 27'	124° 53'	23		1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	16,000	600,000	200	200	0	1	0	1
10 0 - AIRFIELD	57° 40'	152° 23'	23	1-5000	1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	140,000	1,000,000	806	1,100	1	3	2	3
11 0 - AIRFIELD	65° 50'	147° 37'	430	1-5000			CONCRETE	CONCRETE	2,500,000			500		1	1	1
12 0 - AIRFIELD	66° 53'	152° 37'	330	1-5000			GRAVEL	GRAVEL	0,000	1,000,000		750	0	1	0	1
13 0 - AIRFIELD	53° 46'	135° 40'	120	1-5000	1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	800	1,400,000		1,500	0	2	0	2
14 0 - AIRFIELD	65° 32'	145° 25'	120	1-5000	1-5000	2-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	220,200	1,550,000		1,000	0	1	1/2	1
15 0 - AIRFIELD	62° 58'	141° 59'	1300	1-5000			GRAVEL	GRAVEL	100,000				0	1/2	0	0
16 0 - AIRFIELD	56° 55'	158° 30'	50			2-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	150,000				0	1/2	0	0
17 0 - AIRFIELD	53° 29'	147° 59'	50		1-5000	1-5000	GRAVEL	GRAVEL	4,500,000			2,000	0	3	0	3
18 0 - AIRFIELD	59° 32'	137° 56'	30	1-5000		2-5000	CONCRETE	CONCRETE	450,000	1,050,000	400	525	0	2	1	2

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Appendix C - Airfields

EXTRACT from letter, Hq. WDC to TAG, 18 July 1941, subject, "Defense of Alaska, Air Combat Units," signed Lt. Gen. DeWitt, in AAG 361, Alaska.

\* \* \* \*

2. g. The present status of airfield construction will permit the use of air units as follows:

- Elmendorf Field - 6 squadrons
- Ladd Field - 1 sq.
- Kodiak - 2 sqs. about Sept. 15
- Yakutat - 1 sq. about Aug. 15
- Nome - 1 sq. about Sept. 15

Additional CAA airfields have been authorized and are in varying degrees of construction:

Bethel	indefinite	no award	Percentages refer to contracted natural surface runways with no paving of fields. Suitable for limited operation only and not for full load.
Big Delta	20%	60 days	
Boundary	20%	60 days	
Cordova	10%	90 days	
Gulkana	indefinite	no award	
Juneau	5%	90 days	
McGrath	indefinite	no award	
Naknek	0	120 days	
Nome	60%	30 days 1 runway 60 days remaining runways	
Ruby	2%	75 days	

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EXTRACT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY AIR FORCES:

Dec. 4 - 1941

Subject: Report of Inspection of Alaskan Activities

\* \* \* \*

3. Discussion of Conditions and Problems of Each of the Activities Mentioned in Paragraph 2 above.

a. Juneau.

This landing field is being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. The Northwest-Southeast landing strip is estimated to be 70% complete. The estimated date of completion, including the North-South taxi strip is December 15. When completed, operations can be conducted from this field under favorable weather conditions. The field is surrounded by high hills which would make operating therefrom extremely difficult and dangerous in bad weather. A let-down through an overcast would be a dangerous procedure. When this field is completed it will have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Alaska Defense plans call for its use as an operating base.

There is no housing available at this time for service personnel.

b. Seward.

This field is being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. The grading has been completed on the 300 by 2600 landing strip. Additional work on surfacing with shale and gravel is anticipated. This field is too small to be used as an operating field. An extension of the runway would be extremely difficult and costly. This field is not being considered in any capacity in the Alaska Defense Plan.

c. Kodiak.

This field is being constructed under Navy supervision. One 5400 foot runway, one 3880 foot runway and one 2400 foot runway have been completed. The extension of the 2400 foot runway to 7500 feet has been recommended by the ADC and concurred in by the Western Defense Command. Landings at Kodiak under adverse weather conditions must be made from the south or shore side of the field. When completed, if the extension of one runway to 7500 feet is authorized, the field will consist of two runways 5000 by 150 feet and one runway 7500 by 150 feet. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as an

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operating base. Landings from the north, northeast or northwest would be impossible under low ceiling conditions due to the mountainous terrain in these directions. The extension of the 2400 foot runway to 7500 would make landings under the above conditions of weather relatively safe from the south regardless of wind conditions.

Housing for ground troops now there is approximately 80% complete. No housing for Air Corps personnel has been started.

\* \* \* \*

d. Dutch Harbor.

There is no landing field at Dutch Harbor. Plans have been completed for construction of a field at Otter Point on Umnak Island. The Joint Board has approved the construction of this field, as well as the staging fields at Cold Bay and Port Heiden. Under the present plans, Otter Point is the most western field to be established along the Aleutian Chain. This field should be built and shelter provided for operations of pursuit, as well as heavy bombardment airplanes. Construction of shelters for airplanes should proceed simultaneously with that of the runways. Wind conditions in this locality registering gusts up to 100 miles an hour would make operations impracticable without some kind of airplane shelters. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as an operating base. It is believed that for the purpose of long-range planning and a possible extension of fields westward, that a preliminary survey should be made of the Aleutian Islands out as far as Attu Island.

\* \* \* \*

e. Boundary (Moose Creek).

This field is being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. The one Northeast-Southwest landing strip has been completed. The entire length of runway is available for landing. No paving is contemplated at this time as sufficient funds are not available. When completed this field will have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Its use as a staging field is contemplated in Alaska Defense Plans.

No shelter is available for service personnel.

f. Big Delta.

Being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. Both landing strips are complete and available for landing. Asphalt surfacing will be accomplished in the spring. When completed this field will

- 99 -

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have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as a staging field.

No housing is available for service personnel.

g. McGrath.

Being constructed under the supervision of CAA. The East-West runway is completed except for hard surfacing. This runway is 250 feet wide by 3,200 feet long. The North-South runway has been cleared, grubbed and stripped with the surface smooth. Grading has not been completed. Landings can be made on the East-West runway. Asphalt surfacing will be accomplished in the Spring of 1942. When completed this field will have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Its use as a sub-base is contemplated.

No housing is available for service personnel.

h. Galena (West Ruby).

Being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. A runway 6000 feet long and 500 feet wide has been cleared and brought to a rough grade. A graveled runway 4000 feet long is available for landing. Asphaltic concrete paving is planned for this runway during the summer of 1942. When completed this field will have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as a staging field.

No housing has been built for service personnel.

i. Nome.

Being constructed under supervision of CAA. Both runways 5000 by 300 feet have been completed except for hard-surfacing. Both runways are available for landing. The present contract includes the asphalt surfacing of runway on the North-South landing strip. This will be accomplished in the summer of 1942. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as an operating field.

Housing is approximately 85% complete for the ground garrison. No housing is available for Air Corps troops.

1. Bethel.

Being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. The Northeast-Southwest runway has been stripped, grubbed and graded to a rough grade. A 200 foot strip, 4500 feet long has been smoothed

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and is available for landings when the ground is frozen. No funds are available for paving but both runways will be treated with a semi-road mix of bunker fuel. The field with above surfacing will be completed in the spring of 1942. When completed this field will have two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Alaska Defense Plans call for its use as an operating field.

No housing is available for service troops.

k. Maknek.

Being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. Rough grading has been completed on the North-South runway, clearing and grubbing is being done on the East-West runway. Landings can be made on the North-South runway. It is planned to stabilize the entire width of the North-South runway during the summer of 1942. Stabilization will consist of asphalt emulsion, sand mixture. When completed this field will consist of two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Its use as an operating field is contemplated.

No housing is available for service personnel.

l. Cordova.

Being constructed under the supervision of the CAA. The East-West runway has been rough graded and a strip 200 feet by 3500 feet is available for landing. Work is progressing on grubbing of the North-South runway. Grading of this runway will probably be completed with the funds now available. Plans have been drawn for a concrete landing strip on the center of the East-West runway, but funds are not available. When completed this field will consist of two runways 5000 by 300 feet. Defense Plans call for its use as an operating field.

No housing is available for service personnel.

m. Yakutat.

Being constructed by Army engineers. One concrete runway 7500 feet long and 150 feet wide (S-45° W Runway) has been completed. A strip 5000 feet by 150 feet has been completed on the S-45° E runway. An additional 1270 feet was being worked on and was due for completion by December 1, 1941. An additional strip 1230 feet long will be completed next spring. Work is progressing on the hangar and apron areas. The engineer informed me that nothing

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was being done on the East-West runway as no funds were available. It is believed that the two runways . . . are sufficient for operations from this field. However, an East-West taxi strip would facilitate operations. Defense Plans call for its use as an operating field.

Housing has been completed for the permanent Ground personnel. No construction has been started for Air Corps personnel. . . .

n. Motlekatla (Annette Island).

Being constructed by Army engineers. The Northwest-Southeast runway has been graded. A temporary macadam surface 100 feet wide by 4,400 feet long has been completed and this strip is available for landings. Clearing on the Northeast-Southwest runway is approximately 90% completed. Work has been started on the hangar and apron area. The estimated date of completion is October, 1942. When completed the field will consist of two runways 5000 by 150 feet. Its use as an operating base is contemplated in the Alaska Defense Plan.

The housing has been completed for the Ground personnel now there. No housing is available for Air Corps troops.

\* \* \* \*

(Sgd)

Earl C. Kiel  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps.

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Appendix D - Station Lists

EXTRACT

AIR CORPS STATION LIST

\* \* \*

2nd Revision, Feb. 10, 1941

\* \* \*

ALASKA

Anchorage

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Unit</u>		<u>Officers</u>		<u>Enlisted Men</u>	
	<u>Old</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>Other Branch</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>Other Branch</u>
<u>Air Corps</u>						
28th Composite Op Hq & Hq Sq	x		18		232	
18th Fur Sq (I)	x		33		157	
36th Bomb Sq (M)	x		37		206	
73rd Bomb Sq (M)	x		51		217	
23rd Air Base Gp Hq & Hq Sq (Reinf)	x		11		131	
24th Air Base Sq (R)	x		8		145	
31st Materiel Sq	x		5		203	
32nd Materiel Sq	x		5		203	
Weather Det		x	1		12	
Communications Det		x	1		14	
Tow Target Flight (Sep)		x	9		42	
<b>Total</b>			<b>176</b>		<b>1562</b>	

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Fairbanks

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Unit</u>		<u>Officers</u>		<u>Enlisted Men</u>	
	<u>Old</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>Other Branch</u>	<u>A.C.</u>	<u>Other Branch</u>
Detachments from units at Anchorage						
Weather Det		x	1		10	
Communications Det		x	<u>1</u>		<u>10</u>	
Total			2		20	

Yakutat

Weather Det			0		8	
Communications Det			<u>0</u>		<u>8</u>	
Total			0		16	

Metlakatla

Weather Det			0		8	
Communications Det			<u>0</u>		<u>8</u>	
Total			0		16	

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EXTRACT

1st Ind. (ltr., Asst. Ch., ASC to CG AAF, 24 March 1942) Hq. AAF to CG ASC, 30 April 1942, in AAG 400.345, Alaska.

Subject: Strength and composition of air garrison for Alaska.

\* \* \*

[data furnished by Operations Div., WD, GS under date of 23 April 1942]

a. Present

Ft. Greely, Kodiak	36th Bomb Sq (H)	37 Officers	229 EM
	Det 18th Pur. Sq (I)	8	32
Ft. Glenn, Umanak	Det A.C. Det Weather (Alaska)	0	2
Ladd Field, Fairbanks	A.C. Det GWT	36	170
	Base Det (Avn)	6	70
	Det A.C. Det Communications (Alaska)	0	10
	Det A.C. Det Weather	1	10
Ft. Richardson, Anchorage	A.C. Det Communications (Alaska)	1	75
	A.C. Det Weather (Alaska)	4	120
	23rd A B Gp		
	Hq & Hq Sq	12	107
	24th A B Sq	8	111
	31st Mat Sq	10	176
	32nd Mat Sq	10	176
	28th Comp Gp		
	Hq & Hq Sq	18	232
	Hq & Hq Sq 11th	15	158
	73rd Bomb Sq (M)	51	246
	77th Bomb Sq (M)	51	246
	Med Det	1	8
	11th Pur Sq (I)	41	210
	18th Pur Sq (I) (-)	33	178
	Med Det	1	8
	Med Det (A B) (Avn)	1	4
	Tow Target Det	9	42
Yakutat Landing Field	Det A.C. Weather (Alaska)	0	5
	Det A.C. Det Communications (Als)	0	2

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b. Authorized but not yet present

Ft. Glenn

Pur. Sq.

Not yet designated

c. 813th Engr. Bn. (Avn) (Sp)

At present with 2nd AF

d. Transport Sq (16th Transp Sq recommended but not moved)

\* \* \*



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Appendix E - Aircraft Status

SC-SP-503

AAF AIRPLANES ON HAND IN ALASKAN THEATER (11TH AIR FORCE)

	<u>1 Dec 1941</u>	<u>1 Apr 1942</u>	<u>3 Jun 1942</u>	<u>30 Jun 1942</u>
B-17	-	1	6	8
B-24	-	-	-	9
LB-30	-	-	2	1
B-10	1	1	-	-
B-18	12	11	9	11
B-25	-	-	-	1
B-26	-	7	21	29
A-29	-	-	7	8
P-36	20	15	11	12
P-37	1	-	-	-
P-38	-	-	20	24
P-39	-	-	15	52
P-40	-	24	49	51
P-43	-	-	-	1
C-39	-	-	1	1
C-40	-	-	-	1
C-47	-	1	1	6
C-49	-	-	1	-
C-53	-	6	6	6
UC-64	-	-	1	3
C-67	-	-	1	0
C-73	-	-	1	0
AT-7	-	-	4	5
L-1	-	-	-	2
L-4	-	-	-	2
O-49	2	-	-	-
OA-5	1	-	-	-

Statistical Control Division  
Office of Management Control  
28 March 1944

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EXTRACT from radiogram, Hq. WDC & 4th Army to Ch. of Staff, Op. Div., #545, 3 June 1942, CM-IN-0959 (6-4-42), signed DeWitt.

As of 2 June 1942 this is the physical location of airplanes in Alaska:\*

At Ladd Field	4 P-36A
At Fort Randall	12 B-26 21 P-40 2 B-18
At Elmendorf	7 B-17E 15 P-39F 4 P-36A 5 B-18A 1 LB-30 8 B-26 20 P-38
At Fort Glenn	12 P-40
At Fort Greely	16 P-40 3 P-36A 2 B-18

\*Compare this report with the data given on p. 45 of the text, present study. Apparent discrepancies are due to the splitting up, on or near the date given, of the squadrons of P-40's and B-26's stationed in the Aleutians. Compare also with the report for 3 June 1942 given in this appendix. No attempt is made to account for certain minor discrepancies between these two documents.

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Appendix F - Combat Summaries

EXTRACT

6 July 1942

NA50

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: The Commander, Alaskan Sector

Subject: Bombing at Dutch Harbor - report on.

\* \* \* \*

23. Summary:

FIRST RAID (June 3)

SECOND RAID (June 4)

Enemy Forces

15 Fighters  
13 Horizontal Bombers

28

Enemy Forces

10 Fighters  
11 Dive Bombers  
8 Horizontal Bombers

29

The type of aircraft used by the enemy has been variously identified. All were wheel-type, single-engined monoplanes; it is believed that all had retractable landing gear.

Bombs Dropped

FIRST RAID

SECOND RAID

16 200 (?) lb bombs  
18 500 (?) lbs bombs

27 500 (?) lb bombs

TOTAL: 16-200 lb and 45-500 (?) lb bombs.

Personnel Casualties:

NAVY

8 Navy Dead  
1 Marine Corps Dead  
1 Sioux Drake Puget Sound Dead

TOTAL

10

ARMY

33 Dead

33

Material Casualties:

The only serious material casualties were the loss of four 6666 barrel fuel oil tanks, 22,000 barrels fuel oil, 625,000 gallons diesel oil, the burning of the Northwestern upperworks and interior, and the burning of the issue warehouse. Efficient fire fighting supervised by Major G. P. Groves, U.S.M.C. and Fire Chief, Harold Joe Davis prevented the spreading of fire from the warehouse to the wooden oil tanks.

t/W. N. UPDEGRAFF

X201-0

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Hq Eleventh Air Force  
Air Striking Group (T.G. 8.3)  
KODIAK, ALASKA

SUBJECT: Summary of Operations to June 10th.

TO : Commanding General, Alaska Defense Command, Fort Richardson,  
Alaska.

\* \* \*

The close of the day found: [the following report is for the 4th of  
June.]

- 1 LB-30 washed out at Kodiak returning from Elmendorf Field.
- 1 B-26 Lt. Thornbrough missing over Cold Bay.
- 1 B-17 Lt. Mansfield missing in action.
- 1 B-26 Lt. Taylor - shot in action - out of commission.
- 2 P-40's shot down in action.

The Air Striking Force had been shifted considerably as the situation developed and combat airplanes in commission were now disposed as follows:

Ft. Glenn

7 P-40's  
8 B-26's

Ft. Randall

25 P-40's  
12 B-26's  
5 B-17's  
1 LB-30

Assigned to Navy Control

2 B-17's  
1 LB-30

Summary of enemy contacts on June 4th:

- 1. Two torpedo hits on a cruiser by Capt. Meals and Lt. Northamer.
- 2. One torpedo on a carrier deck by Lt. Thornbrough resulting in AA damage to Lt. Taylor's B-26.

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- 3. Capt. Marks assumed hit on "something" with a 1000 pound bomb.
- 4. Aerial combat resulting in 4 enemy planes shot down and 2 P-40's downed but one Pilot escaped.

CREWS MISSING IN ACTION

1 B-26 #40-1408

1 B-17 #41-9084

P. Capt. Thornbrough  
 CP Lt. Nysteen  
 B Lt. Lee  
 M Lt. Smart  
 S/Sgt. J. L. Wiseman  
 E. Sgt. Jaycox  
 G. Sgt. Jordan

P. Capt. Mansfield

Injured in action and evacuated to Ft. Richardson - 2nd Lt.

V. F. Peterson.

No targets were reported on June 5th. Search-attack missions were conducted as follows:

Major Donohew with 6 B-26's and 0600 to 1020; Capt. Pickard with 6 B-26's time not determined and Capt. Gallagher with 6 B-26's. Capt. Dunlap took his 5 B-17's and 1 LB-30 out twice, once from 730 to 1245 and once from 1705 to 1950 when he returned them to Ft. Randall. There were no contacts made and when the day closed the Air Striking Group was disposed as follows:

Ft. Randall

Ft. Glenn

21 B-26's  
 5 B-17's  
 1 LB-30  
 24 P-40's  
 8 P-38's (enroute)

18 P-40's

\* \* \*

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On the evening of the 7th, combat ships in commission of the Air Striking Force had been disposed as follows:

Ft. Randall

26 P-40's  
8 B-17's  
1 LB-30  
22 B-26's

Ft. Glenn

18 P-40's  
6 P-38's

\* \* \*

[On the evening of the 9th, disposition was as follows:]

Ft. Glenn

18 P-40's  
7 P-38's  
7 B-26's

Ft. Randall

24 P-40's  
7 Heavy bombers  
16 B-26's

\* \* \*

WILLIAM O. BUTLER,  
Brigadier General, Army Air Forces,  
Commanding.

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A

Air Inspector, 21  
 Air Service Command, 40-43, 64  
 Air warning service, 37-39, 50-51,  
 62, 65  
 Alaskan Air Base, 6, 44  
 Alaskan Defense Command, 10, 29,  
 42-47, 51  
 Alaskan Flight, 1934, 4-5  
 Anchorage, 5-12, 16, 23, 25, 28,  
 34, 38-39, 41, 51-53  
 Annette Island, 53, 56  
 Antiaircraft, 29, 39, 51, 55;  
 enemy use of, 57, 61  
 Arnold, Gen. H. H., 4-5  
 Attu, 59-60, 62

B

B-17, 49-50, 53, 56-57, 60  
 B-26, 53, 55-58, 62  
 Bering Sea, 24  
 Bethel, 11, 17  
 Big Delta, 12, 17  
 Boundary, 12, 17  
 Buckner, Lt. Gen. S. B., 10-11,  
 15, 20, 29-31, 33, 37, 41, 45, 49  
 Butler, Maj. Gen. W. O., 17, 35-37,  
 40-42, 45, 49-50, 52, 60, 62-65

C

Canada, 17-18, 41. See also Royal  
 Canadian Air Force.  
 Cape, Lt., 58  
 Castner, L. V., 47  
 Category of Defense, 32-33  
 Chancellor, Lt., 58  
 Chignik, 12, 14  
 Civilian Aeronautics Administration,  
 8, 11, 16-17, 20, 45  
 Coast artillery, 29  
 Cold Bay, 25, 34, 48-50, 52-54,  
 56-57, 59, 62-63  
 Cold-weather testing, 6-7, 16,  
 45

Communications, 13-14, 17, 22, 51.  
See also Transportation.  
 Cordova, 12, 17

D

Dale, Lt., 58  
 Davis, Lt. Col. E. S., 43-44  
 DC-3, 52  
 DeWitt, Lt. Gen. J. L., 15, 27,  
 29, 31-32, 35, 37-38, 49  
 Diamond, Anthony J., 3-4  
 Director of Air Defense, 38  
 Dunlap, Capt., 57  
 Dutch Harbor, 1-2, 13-14, 22-25,  
 27-28, 34-35, 47-48, 50, 54-56,  
 58-59, 63, 65

E

Eareckson, Col., 57  
 Edmonton, 51  
 18th Pursuit Squadron, 52-53  
 Eleventh Air Force organization,  
 43, 45, 53-54  
 11th Pursuit Squadron, 52-53, 58  
 Elmendorf Field, 41, 53, 56  
 Engineering, 20

F

Fairbanks, 5-12, 16, 34, 39, 51  
 Ferrying Command, 42-43  
 55th Pursuit Group, 37  
 Fort Glenn, 49, 53-56, 58. See  
also Umanak.  
 Fort Greely, 49, 56. See also  
Kodiak.  
 Fort Lewis, Wash., 16  
 Fort Mears, 55. See also Dutch  
 Harbor.  
 Fort Nelson, 18  
 Fort Randall, 49, 53-54, 56. See  
also Cold Bay.  
 Fort Richardson, 43, 49. See also  
 Anchorage.

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Fort St. John, 18  
42d Bombardment Group, 37  
Funds, 16. See also Legislation.

LB-30, 53, 57  
Legislation, 4-5, 7, 9, 16  
Lockwood, B. C., 5

G

Gaffney, D. V., 21  
Gakona, 12  
Grand Prairie, 18  
Great Circle Route, 8  
Ground forces, 3, 5, 9-10, 24-27,  
29, 33-34, 40, 44. See also  
Infantry, Coast Artillery, Anti-  
aircraft.  
Gulkana, 17

M

McGrath, 12, 17  
McIntyre, Lt., 59  
McKinley, A. C., 21  
Maintenance, 3d and 4th  
echelon, 41  
Mansfield, Capt., 57-58  
Marks, Capt., 57-58  
Marshall, Gen. George C., 28  
Meals, Capt., 55-58  
Merchant Marine, 22  
Metlakatla, 16  
Morale, 60

H

Hawaii, 7-8  
Hoppin, Marshall, 11, 20

N

Naknek, 12, 17  
Navy, U. S., 1, 7-9, 13-16,  
22-27, 33, 45-50, 53-54,  
56-58, 60, 62-63  
Nome, 5, 11, 17  
Northwestern Airlines, 42

I

Identification, enemy aircraft, 61  
Infantry, 5, 29

J

Joint Board for Defense, 15  
Juneau, 5, 17

O

Otter Point, 55. See also Umnak.

K

Ketchikan, 8  
Kiska, 8, 52, 54, 59-60, 62  
Kodiak Island, 8, 11-12, 15-16,  
23, 25, 28, 34, 38-39, 48-49,  
52, 56

P

P-38, 35, 60-61  
P-39, 61  
P-40, 35, 53, 55, 58, 61  
Pan-American Airlines, 42  
Parachute troops, 10, 14  
PBX, 50  
Permanent Joint Board on Defense,  
Canada-United States, 16, 18  
Personnel, 39-40, 44, 49, 54, 59,  
61, 64-65. See also Training.  
Point Barrow, 5  
Port Hardy, 18

L

Ladd Field, 21, 34, 41, 45. See  
also Fairbanks.

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Port Heiden, 25  
Prince George, 18

R

Radio, enemy use of, 61  
Royal Canadian Air Force, 53, 56  
Ruby, 12, 17  
Russia, 27, 29, 33, 48, 60

S

Seattle Port of Embarkation, 40  
Services of Supply, 40  
77th Bombardment Squadron (M),  
53, 56  
73d Bombardment Squadron (M), 56  
Seward Peninsula, 23-24, 36, 47  
Siberian bases, 33  
Sitka, 7-8, 15  
6th Air Depot Group, 41  
Smithers, 18  
Starnes, Rep. Joe, 7  
Supply, 18-19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 32,  
34-35, 37-40, 43-44, 49-52, 54,  
63-65

T

Tactical lessons, 61-62  
Taylor, Lt., 57  
Theobald, Adm. R. A., 45-46, 49,  
52, 56  
36th Bombardment Squadron (H),  
53, 56

Thornbrough, Capt., 57  
Tolfino, 18  
Training, 4, 31, 37, 40, 54, 61,  
64  
Transportation, 10, 17-20, 24,  
27, 30, 40, 42-44, 49, 51, 65.  
See also Communications.  
Transport pilots, 51-52  
28th Composite Group, 43

U

Unalaska Island, 8, 11-14, 32, 55  
United Airlines, 42  
Umnak, 13-15, 22, 25, 31, 34-35,  
48-63

W

War Plans Division, Air Corps,  
26, 34  
Watson Lake, 18  
Weather, 1, 4, 6, 11-12, 16, 18-19,  
36, 54, 61. See also Cold-  
weather testing.  
Western Defense Command, 15, 27,  
34-35, 37, 45-46  
White, Lt., 58  
Whitehorse, 12, 18  
Wilcox bill, 5

Y

Yakutat, 12, 16, 56  
Yukon River, 6

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