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ARMY AIR FORCES HISTORICAL STUDIES: NO. 45

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AIR ROUTE

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FOREWORD

This study, which has been prepared by Miss Kathleen Williams of the Combat Operational History Division, AAF Historical Office, has the purpose of discussing the plans made and the actions taken during the period extending through January 1942 for the development of an air route from the West Coast of the United States to the Philippines by way of the Leeward Islands and South Pacific bases. Although this route was not completed in time to aid in post-Pearl Harbor reinforcement of the Philippines after the cutting of the Central Pacific air route by the Japanese, it took on great strategic significance as a line of communication and reinforcement to the South Pacific and South-west Pacific theaters.

Like other AAF Historical Studies, the present narrative is subject to revision as additional materials become available. Readers are requested to submit information or corrections on the perforated sheets incorporated at the end of the study.

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Development of the South Pacific Air Route

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

When Japan initiated hostilities with the United States on 7 December 1941, a number of American military and naval defense projects in the Pacific had not been completed. One of the less publicized but more important of these was the development of a South Pacific route suitable for ferrying land-based bombers to the Philippine Islands. While the project had been initiated by the United States and was being directed by American military commanders in Hawaii and the Philippines, it was essentially a cooperative enterprise among the several governments in whose territory the bases were located. Because of the sudden outbreak of war and the rapid enemy conquest of the Philippines, the route could not fulfill its original purpose. But as the sole aerial route from the United States to Australia, it provided a means for the augmentation of air strength in the Southwest Pacific which proved to be a dominant factor in Allied defense of that area.

During the two years preceding the outbreak of war the air arm had made repeated attempts to secure War Department approval for air bases on some of the mid-Pacific islands. These efforts led to consideration of issues which were fundamental to formation of a clear-cut policy for military air defense in the Pacific. Two of the focal points for these negotiations were the problem of Army and Navy responsibilities for Pacific defense and the use of the heavy bomber in that defense. The

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question was raised, for example, as to whether over-water operations were exclusively a naval air function, or whether Army planes should share in the task. In the light of operations by heavy and very heavy bombers during the later prosecution of the war against Japan, this question seems almost naive, yet in some official quarters prior to the outbreak of war there was a definite tendency to regard over-water aerial operations as exclusively a naval task.

It is true, responsibilities had been defined as early as 1935 in "Joint Action of the Army and Navy." But among the War Department General Staff, the Navy Department, and the AAF there were many interpretations of these functions and many opinions as to the types of aircraft to be used in performing the required tasks. The AAF seemed to be interested primarily in making full use of the capabilities of the heavy bomber. In the B-17 and B-24 the AAF possessed weapons which combined long range with striking power, and the theory was that these qualities made the heavy bomber especially suitable for use in active defense.¹ The AAF first had to win War Department approval of plans for mid-Pacific air bases, and then there remained the problem of coordination with Navy plans. Both tasks were accompanied by difficulties, but the increasingly aggressive attitude of Japan in its policy of expansion helped to bring about a change in American policy in the Pacific and the new policy incorporated some of the AAF ideas on defense.

Early in 1941 there were indications that the United States intended to reinforce its Pacific outposts, the possibility of offending Japan notwithstanding. On 14 February 1941 President Roosevelt issued four

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executive orders which stipulated that after 15 May 1941 no unauthorized vessels or aircraft would be permitted within three miles of Kiska and Unalaska islands (Alaska), Kaneohe Bay (Oahu), Rose and Tutuila islands (Samoa), Guam, Kingman Reef, and Midway, Wake, Johnston, and Palmyra islands.² For purposes of national defense these regions were designated as "air space reservations" and "naval defensive sea areas." Following this executive action the Senate on 10 March passed two House appropriation bills which authorized expansion of air and naval facilities in nine of the restricted areas.³ A decision to reinforce the Philippines was made shortly afterward, and the way was cleared for establishment of an air route to the Western Pacific.

As early as 1934 Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, had suggested the possible necessity for flying aircraft to Hawaii and the Philippines. Explaining to the House Military Affairs Committee the development of the GHQ Air Force plan and the proposed use of the force, General MacArthur stated that the planes were to be concentrated in the United States but that he contemplated use of them in any emergency wherever it might be necessary. In fact, he stated, "I am not even so sure you could not get them over to the Philippines. You might have to do it in jumps--to Hawaii, Guam, and Luzon. But I would throw them to any place where necessity arose."⁴ Military airmen, of course, had long visualized the flight of land-based aircraft across the Pacific, but realization of this feat had to await development of the heavy bomber and an international situation which was grave enough to demand the provision of air bases on American islands in the Pacific.

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In the meantime, commercial aviation was making rapid strides in the Pacific, and developments in this respect added to the feasibility of AAF recommendations for military air participation in Pacific defense. Many of the mid-Pacific islands which the United States had acquired prior to World War I were "accepted in Washington with indifference" until March 1935 when Pan American Airways announced its plans for trans-Pacific aviation. The strategic value of the islands then became more obvious, and the Department of Commerce promptly sent three parties, each consisting of four Hawaiian-Americans, to "colonize" Jarvis, Baker, and Howland islands. Similar colonies were established on Canton and Enderbury in March 1938.⁵

Pan American Airways in 1935 opened its 8,000-mile clipper route from San Francisco to Manila, via Honolulu, Midway, Wake, and Guam. Fortnightly service over a South Pacific route from San Francisco to Auckland, New Zealand, was inaugurated in July 1940. Stops along the route originally included only Honolulu, Canton, and Noumea (New Caledonia), but in October 1941 a stop was added at Suva, in the Fiji Islands.⁶ The existence of this route for seaplanes proved to be especially valuable when the United States began to prepare a South Pacific route for land-based aircraft; PAA experience and facilities in the area were utilized to the fullest extent compatible with military security.

Other commercial airline companies, many of them subsidized by their governments, had developed land and sea air-base facilities in the Southwest Pacific. By September 1939, the route from London to Singapore, operated by British Overseas Airways, Ltd., had been extended

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by Qantas Empire Airways, Ltd., to Sydney, Australia, via Batavia, Soerabaja, Darwin, and Brisbane. The great Netherlands line, KLM (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij), operated a service from Amsterdam to Singapore and Batavia. From the latter point a subsidiary line, KNILM (Koninklijke Nederlandsch-Indische Luchtvaart Maatschappij), continued the service to Sydney.⁷

Japanese airlines maintained regular service from Tokyo to Taiwan (Formosa) and to Saipan in the Marianas Islands. Shortly before September 1939 the length of the latter route was almost doubled by an extension to Palau in the Caroline Islands. Other routes were rapidly developed as Japanese military and political influence expanded southward. In July 1940 air service was opened between Tokyo and Bangkok. An announcement which occasioned apprehensive comment in the American press was made on 15 October 1941, when the Japanese revealed that the Portuguese government had agreed to grant them landing rights at Dilli, the capital of Portuguese Timor, located only 448 statute miles from Darwin, Australia. The announcement further revealed that as soon as test flights had been completed a regular service would be established from Palau to Dilli.⁸ Potentialities for military use of such a route by the Japanese were, of course, obvious to the Dutch, Australians, and Americans in the Western Pacific, and--perhaps most of all--to the Japanese themselves.

By this time the AAF had begun to ferry B-17's from the United States to the Philippines by way of Oahu, Midway, Wake, and Australian territory. But the proximity of Japanese-mandated territory and the consequent vulnerability of this Central Pacific route led to approval of an AAF

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project for a South Pacific ferry route. Upon the outbreak of war no more planes could be sent through the Central Pacific, and completion of the project to the South became imperative. The period covering the construction of the southern route is an important part of the history of American defenses in the Pacific. But equally important is the series of negotiations which preceded approval of the route. A summary knowledge of the latter is essential to a full appreciation of American military policy in the Pacific and, more particularly, of plans for air participation in Pacific defense.

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Chapter II

EARLY EFFORTS TO PROVIDE ARMY AIR FACILITIES
ON MID-PACIFIC ISLANDS

One of the earliest attempts by the Air Corps to acquire landplane facilities on mid-Pacific islands had its origin, not in a desire to ferry heavy bombers to the Philippines, but rather in a move to assist the Navy in defending the Hawaiian area. Negotiations toward this end were undertaken at a time when both the Army and the Navy were seeking to clarify the responsibilities of their respective air arms. In the ensuing exchange of views the Air Corps revealed that it had "active," as well as "passive," defensive purposes in mind. Over a two-year period, beginning late in 1939, the War Department gradually relaxed its original stand of opposition to Air Corps plans for additional air base facilities, and the issue culminated in approval of an ambitious project for a South Pacific ferry route which was to be used as an alternate route for moving heavy bombers to the Philippines.

Writing to the War Department on 5 October 1939, Maj. Gen. Charles D. Herron, commanding general of the Hawaiian Department, raised the question of Army air assistance to the Navy in defense of the Hawaiian area. In conversations with naval officers General Herron had found an apparent acceptance of the idea that the Navy might sometime call on the air component of his command for assistance. If Army planes would be useful to the Navy in areas other than Hawaii, but within flying range of Hawaii, General Herron felt that "no time should be lost in providing some Army

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facilities on certain islands in this vicinity and involved in Hemisphere Defense." He therefore recommended that the Navy be approached on the matter of placing limited landplane facilities on islands of strategic importance to the Navy and within the range of Army bombers in Hawaii.¹

Maj. Gen. Henry H. Arnold, Chief of the Air Corps, concurred in the recommendation, having previously discussed the matter with General Herron and naval officials while on a visit to Hawaii. In this connection the Air Corps on 16 October 1939 initiated action to obtain air bases on Midway and Christmas islands, sites which were considered necessary for "defense of the Pacific."² This proposal and the recommendation from the Hawaiian Department commander received almost identical receptions in War Plans Division of the General Staff.

To WPD, the letter of General Herron was "extremely nebulous, and in some respects ambiguous."³ It was not clear, for example, whether the idea of assistance by Army aircraft to the Navy originated with Army officers, with Navy officers in Hawaii, with the Commander in Chief of the U. S. Fleet, or with the Navy Department. Similarly, it was not clear whether the assistance desired by the Navy was to be the supplementing of naval air and surface reconnaissance over water areas, or the attack of hostile naval units by Army aircraft, either alone or in conjunction with elements of the Fleet. WPD was likewise uncertain as to whether the contemplated theater for Army aircraft was limited by the tactical operating radius from Hawaiian airfields, or whether it also included areas within tactical operating radius of the outlying island bases. Finally, it was not clear as to what facilities would be included

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in General Herron's recommendation for "limited Army facilities"-- would this mean accommodations for a defense garrison of ground troops, or merely for Air Corps operations? In the latter case, there was no indication of the extent to which storage for fuel and bombs, shop equipment, and housing were contemplated. General Herron's omission of recommendations for specific sites was, of course, balanced by the Air Corps proposals for bases on Midway and Christmas.

Summarizing its views for the Chief of Staff on 2 January 1940, WPD seemed to be wary of the whole matter. It considered the indefiniteness of General Herron's proposal "in itself a warrant for careful examination as to the national and War Department policies involved" before making any official approach to the Navy Department. The immediate purpose of the proposal, according to WPD, obviously was to secure the cooperation of the Navy Department in providing facilities for Army aircraft on islands within flying range of the Hawaiian archipelago.⁴

Informal conference with the Navy War Plans Division had revealed three major tenets which WPD reported to the Chief of Staff. It was learned, in the first place, that the Navy did not contemplate the need for assistance from Army aviation in the conduct of distant reconnaissance over waters surrounding Hawaii. On the contrary, the Navy felt that upon completion of its aircraft procurement program, it would be able "to carry out unassisted all necessary air reconnaissance in the entire Pacific area." In the second place, the Navy Department naturally expected that Army aircraft in Hawaii, performing the normal function of direct coastal defense as prescribed in "Joint Action of the Army and Navy," would strike

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hard and continuously at any hostile force approaching Hawaii by sea. Such attacks, to be initiated at the greatest practicable flying ranges, would be of positive assistance to the Navy in carrying out its own mission. In the third place, Navy War Plans Division disclosed the intention of the Navy to build runways on certain Pacific islands, in the event that the United States decided to operate in the Western Pacific and to hold Guam. This matter was entirely distinct from the problems of "Hemisphere Defense" and the local defense of Hawaii. If such a change in U. S. policy occurred, however, the Navy planned to prepare runways on Midway, Wake, and Guam suitable for heavy bombers of the Army. Such runways would provide steppingstones for the transfer of heavy bombers to islands in the Western Pacific.

In view of this information obtained from the Navy Department, WPD was inclined to dismiss the matter entirely. But to make the case still stronger, other reasons were advanced for not approving the recommendations of the Hawaiian Department and Air Corps commanders. The simultaneous development of large quantities of aircraft by both the Army and the Navy was regarded by WPD as justifiable only if the aircraft provided for each service were designed and used for distinctive purposes ancillary to the appropriate functions of that service. The Navy was basing its plane program on types appropriate for the complement of combat vessels, for carriers, and for long-range reconnaissance over oceanic areas. Likewise, the Army was basing its plane program on types for Army functions. If the Army were to assume responsibility for part of the Navy's function of strategic reconnaissance of oceanic areas, WPD argued, the only planes

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usable for that purpose, would be long-range bombers. Such use of Army bombers would diminish the available strength of the striking force to repel a hostile attack. It would likewise represent a dispersion of effort, for the Army bombers were intended to operate, not individually, but "in masses as a concentrated striking force."

The 2 January memorandum for the Chief of Staff revealed that informal discussion with the Chief of the Air Corps had brought out further ideas to which WPD objected. According to General Arnold, the desirability of providing facilities for Army planes on outlying Pacific islands stemmed, not from the intention of taking over naval patrol functions, but instead from the advantage of affording means for the Air Corps striking force stationed in Hawaii to extend the range of its offensive operations. For several reasons, WPD found this idea to be unsound. It was pointed out to the Chief of Staff that the primary mission of Army forces in Hawaii was the protection of Pearl Harbor naval base. An enemy force afloat on the Pacific was therefore not intrinsically an objective for attack by the Army air component unless that enemy force either attacked or threatened to attack the Hawaiian Islands. In such an event, WPD argued, the enemy force would be within reach of attack by Army planes, "operating from airfields in the Hawaiian Islands, long before the enemy force [could] inflict any injury on the naval base." Consequently, there seemed to be no necessity for extending the range of the Hawaiian air force by operating from island bases 1,300 to 1,800 miles distant from Oahu.

It was also noted by WPD that not one of the mid-Pacific islands under U. S. jurisdiction had sufficient room to permit operations by the full concentration of Army bombers stationed at Oahu. Attacks launched from these bases would therefore lack both "striking power and mutual self-protection incident to operations from present bases." Full advantage could not be taken of the extension of range, according to the WPD memorandum, unless a bombardment force, ready to strike, were maintained at each of the widely separated islands such as Midway, Howland, and Jarvis. In order to carry out such a policy, the Army would be forced to adopt as alternatives, either the dangerous dispersion of the existing strength between Oahu and the outlying islands, or the unprecedented expansion of the Hawaiian air component. The first alternative was regarded as tactically unsound, and the second as unnecessary and undesirable. As a result of its investigation of the matter, WPD concluded that the provision of facilities for Army planes on small islands in the mid-Pacific was "neither necessary nor desirable for the accomplishment of Army missions," and that it would be unwise to reopen the question of the respective functions of Army and Navy aviation by approaching the Navy Department at that time.⁵

With this first conclusion, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 disagreed strongly. Brig. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, who in 1939 had become the first Air Corps officer to head a General Staff division, recorded his non-concurrence with the WPD study on 12 January 1940, expressing his belief that the first conclusion was not sufficiently substantiated. He felt that WPD had not given proper consideration to Army responsibilities

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as defined in "Joint Action of the Army and Navy." Especially open to question was the information obtained from the Navy War Plans Division that the Navy expected to carry out unassisted all the necessary air reconnaissance in the Pacific area. If this statement did not presuppose the presence of the Fleet in the Pacific area, then such a plan was believed by General Andrews to violate the function of the naval air component as set forth in "Joint Action," the primary function being "to operate as an arm of the Fleet."⁶

In the absence of the Fleet, air reconnaissance became a function of the Army. According to "Joint Action," the Army was to provide and operate or maintain aircraft "operating in support of harbor defenses; in general coastal frontier defense; in support of or in lieu of naval forces." Under such circumstances, General Andrews felt, the value of even extremely limited air base facilities on mid-Pacific islands would be inestimable to Army aircraft carrying out long-range reconnaissance.

Also meeting with the disapproval of G-3 was the tendency on the part of WPD to regard over-water operations as an exclusive naval air function. General Andrews pointed out that, within the limits of their base facilities, airplanes of any type could operate over land or water. Any attempt to define minutely the functions of Army and Navy aircraft would result, he felt, in an over-specialization of types. It was therefore concluded that "within reasonable limits, military aircraft should be designed and bases should be provided to insure interchangeable air support of Army or Navy operations as the paramount need of National Defense may at the moment require."⁷

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The position taken by G-3 had no visible effect on the WPD study. As noted by Brig. Gen. George V. Strong, Assistant Chief of Staff, WPD, the G-3 objection was based on the assumption that the Fleet might on occasion be absent from the Pacific. This assumption was regarded as incorrect, for the Navy had "repeatedly stated" that under any circumstances sufficient elements of the Fleet, including its long-range patrol planes, would be left in the Pacific to hold defensively against Japanese naval operations anywhere in the Eastern Pacific, including the Hawaiian area. WPD therefore adhered to its original view, and the study was forwarded to the Chief of Staff on 14 February 1940.⁸

No immediate decision was made on the matter.⁹ Eight months later a new element entered into the picture, with the possibility of air base construction on Pacific islands by the Civil Aeronautics Administration. General Marshall informed WPD in mid-October that he had directed Maj. Gen. R. C. Moore, Deputy Chief of Staff, to initiate consideration of the development of proposed landing fields in the Hawaiian area with funds which were available to the CAA. General Moore's action was to be taken after conference with the Navy Department, and if no objections were raised, the Army would proceed to negotiate with CAA for development of the fields.¹⁰

General Moore learned that CAA, as a result of informal discussion with the Navy and the Air Corps, had under consideration 10 locations for airfield construction. Five of the sites were in the Territory of Hawaii, and the remainder were on Wake, Midway, Howland, Jarvis, and Johnston islands. These locations were to be considered at the next meeting of

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the Joint Board.¹¹ In addition, the War Department had recommended to the Works Progress Administration that \$480,000 of additional non-labor funds be allocated for the improvement of airfields in the outlying Hawaiian Islands. It therefore appeared that the locations which might be regarded important as a result of the WPD study were either under improvement by WPA or would be considered by the Joint Board at its next session on priorities under the CAA construction program. Because of these developments, all papers relating to the development of landplane facilities on mid-Pacific islands were returned on 31 October 1940 to WPD for reconsideration of the original study.¹²

In the meantime, the subject had been reopened by the Hawaiian Department. On 18 September Brig. Gen. Walter H. Frank, commander of the 18th Wing, observed in a letter to the Hawaiian Department commander that the first Army action in defense of the Hawaiian Islands might be in support of naval operations. He noted that one of the possible lines of approach of a hostile fleet from the west was along the line of islands from Guam to Johnston, to Howland and Christmas, and thence to Oahu. Another possible route was by way of Midway. For supporting the Navy in operations against an enemy using either of these general lines of approach, Army aircraft would, according to General Frank, need air bases along those routes. He therefore recommended that runways suitable for use by Army aircraft be constructed on Midway, Johnston, Howland, Canton, and Christmas islands.¹³ The first three locations were, of course, already included in the CAA program, but General Frank had no information

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According to the Air Corps chief, the development of suitable air bases in this general area was of joint military-commercial interest, in view of "the probable future employment of long-range, multi-engine commercial aircraft over this route."¹⁶ Only a few months were to elapse before the Air Corps was pointing to the probable necessity of flying military aircraft across the Pacific, but to WPD such action was only a remote possibility.

On 29 November 1940 a second study was presented to the Chief of Staff by WPD, which had reconsidered its original recommendations on mid-Pacific air base facilities. Three major factors combined to bring about an alteration of the earlier negative report: the CAA program, Navy plans for garrisoning Pacific islands, and the increasingly tense international situation. As reported by General Moore, the War and Navy Departments had taken definite steps with CAA toward the provision of aviation facilities on Wake, Midway, Howland, Jarvis, and Johnston islands. WPD had learned in informal conference with the Navy War Plans Division that the Navy would garrison Midway in peace time and Wake in war time, and that the development of facilities on these two islands for the use of the Air Corps would have the full support of the Navy Department. The Navy did not plan to garrison Jarvis, Baker, or Howland at any time. The provision of airfields on these islands was therefore viewed by the Navy as a liability rather than an asset, and the CAA had already been informed of the Navy's objections to such construction. As for Johnston and Palmyra, the Navy did not consider these islands suitable for landing fields, although it admitted that a small field on Palmyra might become

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practicable after extensive dredging.

WPD adhered to its former opinion that (1) all distant reconnaissance over water should be performed by the Navy and that (2) the defense of Oahu alone did not require Air Corps use of the advanced bases under consideration. In view of the international situation, however, and the possibility that the United States might be committed to "either a limited or an unlimited war in the Pacific," WPD felt that advanced operating bases and staging fields should be provided at such localities as would not require additional Army ground forces. It was accordingly recommended that the War Department approve the establishment of limited air base facilities for use of the Air Corps on Midway and Wake islands. Both G-3 and G-4 concurred with the recommendation, and the Deputy Chief of Staff approved the study on 10 December.¹⁷ Christmas Island, one of the two sites first recommended by the Air Corps in October 1939, received no consideration, presumably because sovereignty over the island was a matter of dispute between the United States and Great Britain.

The Air Corps immediately began to draw up plans for air base facilities on Midway and Wake. But it was far from satisfied with the War Department decision to limit the development of mid-Pacific landplane facilities to these two locations.¹⁸ Maj. Gen. George H. Brett, Assistant Chief of the Air Corps, on 3 February 1941 communicated to the War Department the position of the Air Corps on the subject of Pacific air bases. By this time it was obvious that the Air Corps was thinking in terms of a route to the Western Pacific, whereas earlier

recommendations had been based on the desirability of providing landplane facilities on outlying islands for protection of Hawaii. In the words of General Brett, it was "not considered logical to assume that the necessity for sending a force of land-based bombardment aviation across the Pacific will not arise." He pointed out that long-range bombardment planes must fly to their destination, and that the presence of such planes in the Orient could conceivably become "as important to the United States as the urgent demands for such aircraft by the British are to that nation today."¹⁹ Clearly, the air war in Europe and the trend of events in the Orient were having an effect upon Air Corps policy for the Pacific.

General Brett noted that recommendations had been made to the CAA for the development of landplane facilities on Canton, Jarvis, and Johnston islands, with a view toward partial establishment of a long-range landplane route to Australia. This action, along with similar developments on Samoa, the Fiji Islands, and possibly New Caledonia, was regarded as valuable in meeting anticipated commercial requirements. The Air Corps suggested that limited care-taking detachments might be provided for the bases and equipped to destroy the usefulness of the airfields to any potential enemy in an unforeseen emergency. Unless air bases were established across the Pacific, the Air Corps did not believe that full advantage could be taken "of the potentialities and capabilities of long-range land-based aviation and that its value to the United States in the scheme of national defense would be commensurably curtailed."²⁰

This relatively strong statement of the Air Corps position had little immediate effect upon War Department policy for the Pacific. On

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21 February WPD summarized its views for the Chief of Staff, with specific reference to General Brett's letter. "Neither the War nor the Navy Department," commented WPD, "has any plan for operations that would require the movement of long-range Army bombardment aviation to the Orient, nor can the need for such a plan now be foreseen." It seemed to WPD that unless and until Great Britain emerged as victor in the war, the United States must maintain the strategic defensive in the Pacific. Pointing to the remoteness of the possibility that the United States might require bases for movement of heavy bombers across the Pacific, and to "the fact that any such facilities established might possibly fall into the hands of the enemy," WPD concluded that provision of facilities for this purpose was undesirable. It was therefore recommended that the War Department continue to abide by its previous decision to limit air base developments in the mid-Pacific to Wake and Midway.²¹

Despite the seemingly unshakable position taken by WPD, the Air Corps apparently succeeded in keeping the subject alive and in prolonging consideration of it. As a result of General Brett's letter, the War Department on 4 March 1941 asked for the views of the Hawaiian Department commander "on this whole question of the provision of landplane facilities on Pacific Islands." In particular, recommendations were desired on two questions: should landplane facilities be provided on any outlying islands for use by Army aircraft as operating bases in defense of the Hawaiian Islands, and should facilities be provided on Pacific islands for the purpose of permitting the movement of long-range Army aircraft across the Pacific?²²

This request thus distinguished between the two issues which had become

intermingled in the course of discussions on mid-Pacific air bases.

The reply of Lt. Gen. Walter C. Short, commanding general of the Hawaiian Department, on 10 May 1941 reflected the trend toward increased defenses in the Pacific. The detailed nature of his recommendations was also significant, in contrast to the somewhat general recommendations which heretofore had come from the Hawaiian Department on this subject. General Short stated that landplane facilities should be installed by the Navy Department on Midway, Wake, Johnston, Palmyra, and Canton islands in conjunction with the development of naval air bases at these locations.²³ He further stated that the bases should be constructed, maintained, and defended by the Navy, and that the defense "should be strong enough to prevent low-altitude bombing attacks and to delay capture of the base by any hostile force a sufficient length of time to permit withdrawal of all planes thereon and the destruction of all facilities and aids to navigation." General Short recommended the following specific facilities, in addition to those provided solely for naval use: suitable runways for heavy bombers, night landing facilities, instrument-approach radio facilities (if practicable), radio beam, bombproof gasoline and bomb storage areas with stocks sufficient for two weeks' sustained operation by one squadron of heavy bombers, bunkers for protection of individual aircraft, housing and utilities for one squadron, a stock of two weeks' supplies of all kinds for one squadron, and a weather reporting service.

General Short also expressed the opinion that if trans-Pacific movements of long-range bombers were contemplated, facilities for such movements should be established and maintained by the Navy Department. He noted the existence of two general routes: one from Hawaii via Midway,

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Wake, and Guam to the Philippine Islands, and the other from Hawaii via Palmyra, Canton, and Samoa to Australia, with possible alternate bases in the Fiji Islands and in New Caledonia. According to General Short, there was considerable danger of raids on these islands by hostile aircraft, surface ships, and submarines. Each island would present its own peculiar defense problems, but regardless of the extent of necessary measures, General Short felt that the defense should be provided entirely by the Navy "so as not to weaken the Army garrison of Oahu."²⁴

In one respect, General Short's attitude was closely akin to that of WPD as expressed in the recommendation of 29 November 1940. Both were in favor of increased defenses in the form of island air bases, provided such increases did not call for effort on the part of the Army. The Air Corps, on the other hand, was concerned more about the end than the means. Which service was to provide the facilities and which service was to defend them apparently were matters of little immediate consequence to the Air Corps; its major interest was in acquiring a safe route across the Pacific for its heavy bombers. Within a few months, success in the latter objective was achieved. And in view of General Short's tendency to place the burden on the Navy, it is interesting to note that not only did the Army provide for the construction and initial defense of the South Pacific bases, but General Short himself was charged with responsibility for the entire project.

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Chapter III

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AIR ROUTE
TO 7 DECEMBER 1941

A change in War Department policy regarding reinforcement of the Philippine Islands was the deciding factor in approval of a South Pacific air route. Early in August 1941 the Secretary of War sanctioned a program for sending modern aircraft to the Philippines. Four heavy bombardment groups, comprising 272 planes, were to be transferred to the islands as soon as the aircraft became available. The plan was daring, as well as ambitious, for no mass flight of heavy bombers had ever crossed the Pacific, and the only mass flight over any leg of the route had occurred as late as 13 May 1941, when personnel of the 19th Bombardment Group (H) ferried 21 B-17's from Hamilton Field, Calif., to Hickam Field, Oahu. By the end of July it had been decided that a provisional squadron of nine B-17's would be organized in Hawaii to blaze the air trail to the Philippines. Between 5 and 10 September the pioneer flight was made via Midway, Wake, and Australian territory by the 14th Bombardment Squadron (H) under the command of Maj. Emmett O'Donnell, Jr. During the next two months the 19th Bombardment Group flew 26 B-17's from the United States to the Philippines over the same route--in a permanent change of station for the group. But at the same time, work was being rushed on a southern route which would enable bombers to reach the Philippines without passing over Japanese-mandated territory.¹ No additional B-17's reached the Philippines and no planes flew over the unfinished South Pacific route prior to American

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entry into the war, but the construction efforts which were made during this period of preparation had a direct bearing upon the reinforcement of Allied defenders in the Southwest Pacific after the outbreak of war with Japan.

The story of the South Pacific air route during this period reflects the mounting tension between the United States and Japan and the urgency of bolstering Philippine defenses. It reveals also the complexity of airfield construction problems brought about by diplomatic considerations, shortages of men and shipping, and the great distances separating potential bases from sources of supply. Approval of the project was not given without a thorough investigation, but the process of inquiry was accomplished in a minimum of time. On 14 August 1941 the Chief of the Air Staff, Brig. Gen. Carl Spaatz, outlined for Air War Plans Division the steps to be taken in the "immediate investigation."² He pointed out that the route via Midway and Wake was "too exposed to attack" and that Wake was too difficult to defend. He directed that conferences be held immediately with the Navy War Plans Division and with the Army engineers in order to determine the status of air facilities on the following routes: Hawaii-Palmyra-New Hebrides-Australia-Philippines, Hawaii-Canton-New Hebrides-New Britain-Philippines, Hawaii-Canton-New Britain-Philippines, and Hawaii-Howland-New Britain-Philippines.

General Spaatz strongly emphasized the urgency of the project. The investigation was to be "accomplished as rapidly as possible, and concurrently plans made for the dispatch of an expedition in cooperation with the Navy to explore and determine . . . suitable sites for airdrome

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construction." The manufacture of metal interlocking panels was to be expedited so that sufficient amounts of the material would be available for rapid construction of runways. AWPB was assigned primary interest in the project and responsibility "for monitoring it through to all other Governmental agencies concerned, as rapidly as possible."³

On 16 August General Spaatz gave somewhat similar instructions to the Chief of the Air Corps. One significant difference between the two directives was in the routes listed for investigation. In addition to the four routes as named in the original directive of 14 August, the Chief of the Air Corps was instructed to consider "any other similar route in the same general area which you have reasons to believe is practicable and subject to quick development." Specifically mentioned were Jarvis, Fanning, Christmas, Johnston, Samoa, and the Fiji islands as prospective locations for air bases.⁴

Another difference between the two directives was in the degree of urgency attached to the project. The Chief of the Air Corps, who was to "consult freely and directly" with AWPB and A-3 on the matter, was authorized to take all necessary steps, provide space, employ additional expert personnel, request for special duty the most capable officers available, and use such funds as were available for making a thorough investigation; and if these proved insufficient, additional funds would be procured by the Chief of the AAF. "This matter," concluded General Spaatz, "is very urgent; it must be thought of in terms of weeks and not years; every possible expedient must be visualized and utilized in order to complete this project in the minimum time."⁵ From this date forward,

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the words "urgent" and "immediate" were used in almost every reference to the investigation and construction of the South Pacific air route.

Essentially every available source of information in Washington was consulted, while the Hawaiian Department commander, in cooperation with the Navy, obtained firsthand information on potential South Pacific bases. By 10 September the initial study had been completed.⁶ The following route was recommended for development: Honolulu, Palmyra, Canton, Samoa, Fiji, New Caledonia, Rockhampton (Australia), Darwin, Kendari, Ambon, and Davao. Alternate sites were suggested for Christmas Island, Ufate (New Hebrides), the Solomon Islands, and Port Moresby, New Guinea. The recommendations were promptly approved by the Chief of the Air Staff, and during the next two weeks a memorandum for the Chief of Staff, forwarding the recommendations, made the rounds of the General Staff divisions.⁷

having obtained the necessary concurrences, the paper was sent to the Chief of Staff on 30 September. General Arnold in the memorandum expressed the belief that--given the means and authority--the Hawaiian Department commander, with the assistance of local Navy Department agencies, could best expedite the desired air route development. It was therefore recommended that the Hawaiian Department commander be given the responsibility for construction of the route and that the Navy and State Departments be requested to cooperate in the undertaking. Approval of the recommendations on 3 October 1941 finally gave the green light to the project, but there were to be many time-consuming detours along the road to completion.⁸

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There was no delay, however, in securing the necessary initial funds. A letter from the President to the Secretary of War on 3 October authorized the use of funds which had been made available to the Air Corps Ferrying Command from appropriations contained in the Defense Aid Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1941. In two previous letters, written on 28 May and 30 June 1941, the President had authorized the Secretary of War "to take responsibility for delivering aircraft, other than PB1's, which are to be flown to England, to the point of ultimate take-off," and to establish within the Air Corps an organization to perform that task, including the staffing and operation of air traffic control points within the Western Hemisphere and the development in the United States of airfields necessary for that program.

The President's letter of 3 October extended such authority to empower the Secretary of War to "deliver aircraft to any territory subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to any territory within the Western Hemisphere, to the Netherlands East Indies and Australia," on behalf of any country to which the President had authorized the delivery of defense articles under the Lend-Lease Act. In executing this authority the Secretary of War was to proceed with the construction and maintenance of staging fields, weather and communications stations, and other necessary facilities.⁹ The projected South Pacific route thus acquired a dual purpose: it was to be used not only for the transfer of modern aircraft from the United States to the Philippines, but also for the delivery of lend-lease materiel to countries along the route. But from the outset

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the former purpose took on greater importance than the latter, and it is not unlikely that the President's action of 3 October was merely a means of facilitating initial arrangements for the project.

In a War Department directive to the commanding general of the Hawaiian Department, transmitted on 4 October, and in letters requesting the cooperation of the Navy and State Departments, major emphasis was placed on the urgency of the project and the necessity for the earliest possible completion of required construction. The Hawaiian Department commander was notified that \$5,000,000 would be made available to him from Defense Aid funds already allotted to the Ferrying Command.¹⁰ The Secretary of State was informed that the War Department considered the project "imperative to National Defense," and it was requested that the Hawaiian Department commander be authorized to contact local representatives of the interested governments "for the necessary authority to permit the entry of the survey or construction parties to the sites to be investigated or prepared." The War Department believed that such a procedure would permit action in the matter to be "profitably accelerated," but State Department officials favored a slightly different procedure.¹¹ They preferred to have American representatives in London present the matter directly to the British government and to colonial officials there rather than to representatives of those governments in Hawaii or in the United States. Should the governments of the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, and the Free French approve the principle of the scheme, the Hawaiian Department commander could then handle detailed

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adjustments with local consular officials, although the State Department officials admitted that in general they themselves "would like to handle all arrangements." Members of the Liaison Section of the department stated that on the whole they were favorably disposed toward the plan for a South Pacific route and that they would take immediate action on the matter.¹²

A similar response was made by the Navy Department on 10 October. The Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Harold R. Stark, agreed that completion of the alternate route was "urgently necessary for strategic reasons," and he assured the Chief of Staff that the Navy would "cooperate in every way practicable to complete it." On 15 September 1941 the Secretary of the Navy had requested the Administrator of Civil Aeronautics to give consideration to the construction of a Class 4 airport at Canton Island under the current CAA program, and the site had also been included in a list of projects submitted by the Navy to the CAA for its program of the next fiscal year. Construction of a landing field on the island had already been given oral approval by the President. Admiral Stark informed General Marshall on 10 October that the Navy Department was prepared to undertake for the CAA the actual construction of the airport, under contract to be let by the Bureau of Yards and Docks in accordance with the procedure used in its previous island base developments. But the Navy considered it essential that the Canton Island project not be allowed to delay completion of fields under construction at Palmyra and American Samoa.¹³

Among the War, State, and Navy Departments, then, there was general agreement both as to the necessity for a South Pacific air route and as

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to the need for prompt action. But between the War and Navy Departments there developed differences as to priority of construction. In this connection the War Department tended to accept General Short's recommendations rather than those of the Navy. Throughout the early part of the construction period, however, the Navy continued to hold out for its system of priorities. No serious delays were occasioned by these differences, simply because the pressure of time led the War Department to pursue its own course without long deliberation over the objections. This action, in turn, received the censure of the Navy Department, but otherwise there were no serious consequences.

Of primary importance was the manner in which War Department organizations were geared for speedy action on the project. Also notable was the attempt to obtain a high degree of coordination between the Hawaiian Department and the Air Corps. Various divisions and sections within the two agencies were delegated specific duties in carrying out the project and in both headquarters the undertaking received high priority. On 11 October, General Spaatz directed the Chief of the Air Corps to make certain that the necessary technical equipment, supplies, and trained personnel would be made available to the Hawaiian Department when needed. The Air Corps chief was also instructed to consult with the Chief of Engineers and the Chief Signal Officer regarding matters which came under their special jurisdiction. The determination of basic requirements for installations, equipment, and levels of supply was to be made by the Air Corps in collaboration with the commanding general of the Hawaiian Department. For expediting the project the Secretary of War authorized direct

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communication of the Air Corps with the Hawaiian Department commander and with other interested agencies of the War Department.¹⁴

Col. Oliver S. Ferson was designated to monitor the project for the Chief of the Air Corps. The several divisions were notified on 14 October that Colonel Ferson would coordinate all correspondence originating in any division of the Air Corps with regard to the undertaking, and, further, that all action and correspondence relating to the matter would "be expedited and given extra priority."¹⁵

While the commanding general of the Hawaiian Department was charged with responsibility for the entire project, under him the Honolulu District Engineer, Col. Theodore Wyman, Jr., was made responsible for actual construction of the route. He, in turn, discharged his duties under the technical supervision of the Division Engineer, South Pacific Division, who maintained headquarters in San Francisco.¹⁶ Maj. Gen. Frederick L. Martin, commander of the Hawaiian Air Force, and his staff offered assistance to General Short, as did other commands in the Hawaiian Department. Successful execution of the project also demanded the closest possible coordination between the Hawaiian Department and the 14th Naval District. There is every indication that the desired coordination, and even limited cooperation, was achieved. But local naval officials and the Navy Department initially were at some variance/among themselves regarding the subject of the South Pacific air route, and it was from this apparent lack of coordination that the problem of priorities arose.

Immediately upon receipt of the War Department directive of 4 October, General Short conferred with the Commandant of the 14th Naval District

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regarding the possibility of using fields under construction by the Navy at Palmyra and Samoa. Upon learning that the minimum necessary facilities could not be completed at Samoa prior to 1 May and at Palmyra prior to 1 August 1942, General Short decided to investigate the possibility of providing the minimum facilities on Christmas and Canton islands by 15 January 1943. While arrangements were being made for survey parties to visit these sites, as well as others in the Fiji Islands, New Caledonia, and Australia, General Short attempted to obtain a statement of priorities from the War Department. On 14 October he declared that the entire project must be assigned the "highest possible priority." He also informed the War Department that in view of the distant completion dates at Samoa and Palmyra, it would be necessary to undertake immediate construction of fields at Canton and Christmas and immediate improvement of fields in Fiji.¹⁷

The War Department replied on 17 October that the project had been given highest priority. As for the order of completing the individual fields, Canton was assigned first priority, with Christmas rating secondary consideration. Improvement of other fields listed in the basic plan was to proceed simultaneously with construction at Canton, if practicable, and priorities in this regard were to be determined by General Short. The War Department also promised to expedite procurement of all items of equipment necessary for the project.¹⁸

General Short, relying on the local Navy commandant's estimates as to completion dates of naval fields, was inclined to give equal priority to Christmas and to Canton. He recognized, at the same time, that the

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Army would have to provide all the construction, for Navy construction forces would not be available until completion of the fields at Palmyra and Samoa. In Washington, however, the Navy Department had supplied the War Department with completion dates which differed considerably from those given to General Short. Admiral Stark's letter of 10 October estimated that at Palmyra one runway would be usable by 1 January 1942 and would be completed about 1 March. It was expected that the two runways at Samoa would be usable by 1 July 1942 and that the field would be completed by approximately 1 December.¹⁹ The Navy's offer to assist in construction of an airfield on Canton was contingent, of course, upon the Army's willingness to wait for completion of the two projects already under way. The implied proposition was that in exchange for the delaying of Army plans, the Navy would cooperate after its own bases had been completed in the South Pacific.

Even if the fields on Samoa and Palmyra could be completed on the dates estimated by the Navy Department, the sites were not entirely suitable for the ferrying of heavy bombers. Air Corps officials agreed with General Short that "we cannot afford to be pinned down in this manner by the Navy when we can easily build badly needed bases upon which dispersion sites are available."²⁰ The Navy's attempt to persuade the Air Corps to delay action thus met with a cold reception. Another factor which undoubtedly contributed to this position of the Air Corps was the fear of Navy control and exploitation of Army air facilities. Lt. Col. James G. Taylor, chief of the Intelligence Division, expressed the opinion that the Air Corps should not be forced into accepting either a joint defense

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plan or a physical setup "in which we do not have such control as will insure the acquisition of the predominant role . . . required of Air Power in modern warfare." He urged AWPD to stand firm in the matter of priorities and not give control of the land airway to the Navy "by agreeing to complete their projects." He argued that the Navy was quite capable of finishing the work in Palmyra and Samoa and that "they should not be permitted to capitalize upon our immediate necessity."²¹ The Navy was to be heard from further on the matter, but General Short proceeded with the task of providing the Air Corps with a suitable South Pacific route in the minimum time, and this task involved immediate construction of facilities on both Canton and Christmas, as well as on other islands to the southwest.

A reconnaissance party, which included Maj. Roger H. Ramey, Air Corps, and Capt. Stanford McCasland, Engineers, left Oahu in two Navy seaplanes on the morning of 18 October destined for Palmyra, Canton, Samoa, the Fijis, New Caledonia, and Australia. The planes were scheduled to stop in Brisbane and Sydney in order to accomplish a Navy mission, but the flight was routed so that Army personnel could inspect air facilities at Townsville and Rockhampton.²² Also on 18 October an advance party sailed from Oahu for Christmas Island. The group, consisting of one officer and 14 civilians from the office of the District Engineer, two Air Corps officers, and a detachment of the 804th Engineer Battalion, was assigned the mission of surveying a proposed airfield site on the northeast corner of the island. The Hawaiian Department air officer had specified that the

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site should be suitable for three runways with a minimum length of 5,000 feet and a minimum width of 500 feet (200 paved), though it was not expected that the runways would be constructed simultaneously. While waiting for a report from the party at Christmas, General Short was assembling a larger party and equipment which would be dispatched to the island in order to undertake construction of the airfield. Heavy items of equipment, not available in the Hawaiian Islands, were being procured in the United States and were to be shipped from Los Angeles on or about 10 November.

Plans for Canton were even further advanced. A proposed airfield, on the northwest corner of the atoll, had already received the approval of CAA authorities and of the Hawaiian Department commander. Its specifications were the same as those for the Christmas airfield. Adequate surveys had been made earlier, but on 21 October one engineer officer left Oahu for Canton via commercial clipper for reconnaissance detail on the island. An advance party, including sufficient civilian personnel and equipment to establish a base camp and landing facilities, was preparing to sail from Honolulu about 28 October.²³

Results of these initial investigations showed that construction of at least one runway in the direction of the prevailing wind could be prepared by 15 January 1942 at each of the following: Christmas, Canton, one of the Fiji Islands, and Townsville. The Hawaiian Department commander was interested also in improvement of Morse Field, on the island of Hawaii, which was 200 miles nearer to Christmas Island than was Hickam Field. By 23 October the District Engineer was proceeding with the development of a suitable runway at Morse Field, but construction at some of the other

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sites was delayed by diplomatic negotiations.²⁴ The American Ambassador in London was informed by Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden on 22 October that the British government agreed in principle to the plan for a South Pacific air route, though no commitment was made as to details of the plan. The American Ambassador reported that he had pressed the matter three times, but the Foreign Office had not been able to get him clearance from the ministers involved.²⁵

More ready responses were found within those countries which lay in the path of possible Japanese aggression. On 22 October the Netherlands government approved the plan, subject to final approval of the governor-general at Batavia. Authorization was also granted for the commander of American Army forces in the Philippines to contact local NEI officials with regard to the establishment of suitable air bases in the Netherlands East Indies.²⁶ Direct negotiations with the Australian government brought an even more enthusiastic response. On 18 October the Prime Minister stated that his government shared American views as to the urgency of the matter and wished to cooperate to the greatest possible extent. Having communicated its approval in principle to the Dominions Office in London, the Australian government granted blanket authority to the War Department or its representatives "to deal with local officials in connection with the making of surveys separately or jointly with other authorities or for the entry of work parties into selected areas for the construction of such air bases as may be jointly deemed suitable."²⁷

The reconnaissance party which had left Oahu on 18 October for Australia inspected airfields at Rockhampton and Townsville, and selected

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the latter as the more desirable site. The engineer officer, acting for the District Engineer, entered into a contract with the Australian government for the extension of runways essential to the operation of heavy bombers, and shipment of 2,000 tons of asphalt was started to Australia from the United States to replace local supplies. By this time, however, there had been a division of responsibility for the South Pacific air route, giving the commanding general of U. S. Army Forces in the Far East the task of developing that portion of the route west of New Caledonia. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, informed of the contract already negotiated with the Australian government, designated the District Engineer, Honolulu, as his representative for base work at Townsville.²⁸

The War Department decision to divide responsibility for the route between the Philippine and Hawaiian Department commanders resulted from a combination of circumstances. The most cogent reason for the division lay in the great distances involved in the project. General Short, with headquarters on Oahu, was obviously at a disadvantage in attempting to direct construction of facilities in the Netherlands East Indies. Moreover, General MacArthur had initiated surveys of that portion of the route between Australia and the Philippines, and had established contacts with the senior British and NEI authorities. Also by this time the organization and scope of American defense activities in the Philippines had become more clearly defined. The projected heavy bombardment groups would require further training upon arrival, necessitating extensive flights in the area of the Philippines, Singapore, Australia, and New Guinea. It was therefore

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considered desirable to place the construction, expansion, and maintenance of air route stations, training field detachments, and all the related matters of supply and personnel under General MacArthur's direct control in the whole area west of New Caledonia and the Solomons. As early as 17 October the War Department had under consideration a division of responsibility for the South Pacific route, and by 27 October a definite decision had been made. On this date General Short was informed that he was charged only with "the expeditious development of that portion of the ferry route east of, but including, the Solomon Islands and New Caledonia," and that the commanding general of U. S. Army Forces in the Far East would be responsible for development of the remainder of the route.²⁹

This modification of the original directive also resulted in a re-allocation of \$2,500,000 of the lend-lease funds to the Philippine Department. In order that no delay in construction would be occasioned by lack of funds, the War Department on 4 November requested General Short to submit an immediate estimate of additional funds which would be required for completion of that part of the project under his jurisdiction. Eight days later the District Engineer reported that his commitments to date on the South Pacific route amounted to approximately \$7,000,000. On the same day the Chief of the Air Corps requested more funds for the project. The Budget Officer of the War Department promptly withdrew \$7,500,000 from Air Corps credit under the appropriation "Defense Aid, Aircraft and Aeronautical Materiel (Allotment to War) 1941-1943" (Project 170, for United Kingdom), and the sum was apportioned to the Chief of Engineers for expenditure in accordance with instructions transmitted to the

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Hawaiian Department commander. This amount was sufficient to cover only commitments already made, but additional funds were shortly to be made available. A letter from the President to the Secretary of War on 24 November removed past restrictions on the use of Air Corps Ferrying Command funds outside the continental United States. Furthermore, Air Corps funds in the War Department Supplementary Appropriations Bill which was then before Congress were expected to be authorized soon, and the War Department was making plans for obtaining the \$40,000,000 which was estimated as the total cost for one year's supply, construction, and operation of the South Pacific route. Development of the route, then, was not delayed by a lack of attention to financial requirements.³⁰

Diplomatic negotiations with Great Britain seemed to require more time, and General Short was especially disturbed over the delay in securing permission for construction at Christmas. Since Great Britain did not acknowledge American claims to sovereignty over the island, it was necessary to obtain British approval of the contemplated action. General Short had regarded it "imperative that definite authority to enter and initiate construction at Christmas should be received not later than 26 October" since the matter was "being rushed with all possible speed from this end."³¹ The desired authority had not been received by 30 October, and General Short again urged that immediate action be taken. He also reported that because of a lack of suitable deep-water facilities at Christmas, the District Engineer wanted to use the British harbor at Fanning Island as a supply base for the Christmas project. Supplies could be quickly unloaded at Fanning and transported by barge and tug to

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Christmas. According to General Short, the use of the deep-water facilities at Fanning would avoid the long delays in unloading which were experienced by the Navy at Midway and Palmyra. He had contacted the British consul, but the necessary permission for this procedure could be secured only through the State Department.³²

A follow-up message was then dispatched to London by the State Department, requesting the additional permission. After a series of messages had been exchanged between the American Embassy in London and the State Department, between the Colonial Office and the New Zealand government, and between the American Consul General at Wellington and the State Department, it developed that the decision as to "starting immediate construction" at Christmas Island was primarily the concern of the New Zealand government.³³ On 3 November the War Department notified General Short that the British government concurred with the entire plan for the South Pacific route and authorized the entries and construction requested, subject to the agreement of New Zealand authorities. Officials of the New Zealand government had advised that they would be most happy to cooperate and would do everything possible to facilitate the program. General Short now had complete clearance for the project and also authority to deal directly with local officials, including the British High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, the Governor of Fiji, and the New Zealand Chief of Air Staff, Air Commodore Hal Saunders.³⁴

On 3 November General Short was advised by the War Department to proceed to Fanning and Christmas islands as planned and to notify New Zealand officials of detailed requirements. Major Faney and Captain

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McCasland had contacted Air Commodore Saunders on their survey flight to Australia and had discovered that the New Zealand government was ready to send a ship with equipment and personnel to assist in building runways on Christmas Island. At the request of the American officers, however, New Zealand authorities agreed on 3 November to divert the vessel to Suva, in the Fiji Islands, for improvement of a field at Nandi. On New Caledonia the Australian government was constructing an airdrome with two auxiliary fields near Noumea.³⁵ For improvement of these westernmost staging points on the route General Snort could depend largely on the cooperating governments. Canton and Christmas islands therefore received a large share of his attention.

In response to a Hawaiian Department request for the services of a supply ship, the Navy Department made the U.S.S. Antares available. At the same time, the Navy stated that the vessel was available for only one trip and that future Navy assistance could not be granted. On 3 November the Antares departed Oahu for Canton Island, carrying a large quantity of supplies and 308 civilian and military personnel. The vessel also had in tow a 500-ton barge, loaded with construction equipment of the 804th Engineer Battalion, and three small barges which were intended to be used as lighters for unloading the Antares. On the trip to Canton two of the barges foundered and had to be blown up, but a sampan was purchased on Oahu and dispatched to Canton towing two small lighters to replace the lost barges. One officer and 45 enlisted men of the 804th Engineer Battalion were being made available for temporary use, pending the arrival of commercial construction crews which were

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expected by 1 December.³⁶ Upon their release from preliminary duties at Canton, the members of the 804th Battalion were to be moved to Christmas Island or returned to Oahu.³⁷

As soon as the expedition for Canton was under way, efforts were concentrated on sending construction materiel and personnel to Christmas. Since the Navy could not furnish supply ships, the Hawaiian Department commander decided to establish and operate a service which would move the initial construction parties to their destination as quickly as possible and would keep them supplied with additional equipment and necessities. The District Engineer arranged through charter and through short-term contracts to obtain all available tugs and barges in the vicinity of Oahu. On 13 November a 1,000-ton barge, loaded with gasoline, oil, and construction equipment, left Honolulu for Christmas Island, followed on the next day by the chartered S. S. Haleakala, carrying the main party. In addition, local engineer forces made up a derrick barge by mounting a railroad crane on a 1,000-ton barge, which was scheduled to leave for Christmas on 23 November. The main party, consisting of about 70 civilians and 4 officers and 145 enlisted men of the 804th Engineers, arrived at Christmas on 19 November, five days after the Antares had arrived at Canton, and construction was soon under way on both islands. The District Engineer created area offices on the two islands, and work at Canton proceeded under the immediate supervision of Capt. C. D. Baker, while Maj. John E. Shield directed the construction at Christmas.³⁸

For supervising the preparation of other airfields along the route Colonel Wyman secured the services of L. J. Sverdrup of the engineering

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firm of Sverdrup and Parcel, who had done consulting work for the Corps of Engineers. Sverdrup arrived in Honolulu on 6 November and left the following day via clipper for the Fijis.³⁹ He established headquarters at Suva, and from this point he was to direct the work being done under contract in the Fijis, New Caledonia, and at Townsville, and likewise any airfield construction which might be decided upon in the Solomons and New Hebrides islands. The New Zealanders, who had contracted to improve the field at Nandi, were making available all the equipment they could gather for the project, while additional equipment left Honolulu on the S. S. Mariposa on 20 November, destined for the Fijis as well as for Canton and New Caledonia.

An employee of Sverdrup's firm was on New Caledonia, where a contract had been negotiated with the Australian government for immediate improvement of a runway at the Tontouta airfield, about 25 miles northwest of Noumea, as an emergency landing field. The contract also provided for construction of a new airfield at Plaines des Gaiacs, about 100 miles northwest of Noumea.⁴⁰ The Australians had previously contracted with Free French officials for the work at Tontouta, and the War Department consequently felt that arrangements for additional work on New Caledonia could best be made through the Australians. Free French authorities, however, felt otherwise. Late in November the French High Commissioner at Noumea informed the local American representative that he was expecting notification of an agreement regarding the construction of air bases on New Caledonia to be reached in Washington between the United States and the Free French delegation. Pending such notification, the High Commissioner

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had been instructed not to permit either Americans or Australians to undertake any new work on bases.⁴¹

Development of an airfield in the Solomon Islands would obviate the use of New Caledonia along the air route, and the War Department was anxious to have the possibility of such an air base investigated. On 17 November General Short wrote Air Commodore Saunders that Sverdrup was being asked to arrange a personal investigation of likely sites in the Solomons. New Zealand authorities were requested to make available any reports which they had on the area and also to provide Sverdrup with air transportation to the islands.⁴² But the project for a Solomons airfield, along with a similar plan for Efate in the New Hebrides, did not materialize, and New Caledonia remained a vital link in the chain of island bases.⁴³

In his letter of 17 November to Air Commodore Saunders, General Short also disclosed other details of the air route project. Plans called for the installation of storage for 300,000 gallons of gasoline and 12,000 gallons of lubricating oil on Christmas, for 500,000 gallons of gasoline and 25,000 gallons of oil on Canton, and for 250,000 gallons of gasoline and 12,000 gallons of oil in the Fijis and New Caledonia. New Zealand officials had offered to maintain the stock at Nandi, but General Short felt that a decision on the matter could wait until there had been opportunity for discussion in greater detail. Tentative communications and meteorological plans included the establishment of detachments at each station along the route. The permanent garrisons necessary to operate the bases were estimated at 3 officers and 90 men for Christmas and Canton, 3 officers and 72 men for the Fijis, 2 officers and 55 men for New Caledonia, and 11 men each (weather detachments) for Efate and the

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Solomons. It would be necessary to construct housing for these garrisons at Christmas and Canton, and "to be on the safe side" General Short was assuming that such construction would also be required at the other locations. It would likewise be necessary to provide facilities for transient crews. Other facilities to be supplied at each base included an air depot warehouse for a small stock of spare parts, a machine shop, and airfield maintenance equipment such as tractors, rollers, portable cranes, and graders.⁴⁴

By 22 November an independent communications system for the route was well on its way to completion. It had become evident during the initial surveys that Army officials could not depend wholly on Navy communications or on commercial systems. The latter were restricted by the various governments and a rigid censorship delayed transmission of essential information. Messages between foreign governments and the 14th Naval District were transmitted in code and were sometimes garbled when received. Since prompt communications were necessary during the construction period, General Short decided to set up an Army network. Arrangements were made with the several governments and all available equipment in the Hawaiian Islands was purchased.⁴⁵ Stations were set up at Hickam Field, Christmas, and Canton, and equipment for two others was shipped, one to Suva and one to Noumea, via the Mariposa on 20 November. Also on the Mariposa were enlisted operators and an enlisted radio technician for Suva and Noumea. Enlisted operators had been sent to Christmas, while civilian operators were being used on Canton. For transporting

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passengers and lengthy messages between Canton, Suva, Noumea, New Zealand, and Australia, General Short had attempted to obtain the services of a seaplane from New Zealand and Australian authorities. But both governments had replied that all available planes operated by their air forces were engaged in patrol duty and that none could be spared for the job. A similar request was made of the Navy, but no reply had been received by 22 November. Since commercial transportation either by clipper or by surface ship was relatively infrequent, General Short felt that a message plane was essential to rapid prosecution of the project.⁴⁶

There were other problems which had developed in the course of construction. On Canton and Christmas the matter of fresh water supply required special attention. Both islands were dependent upon collected rain water, and no appreciable stocks were available. It was therefore necessary to ship large supplies of water from Honolulu. The expedition to Canton carried water in every gasoline drum of the Hawaiian Air Force which had not been used for gasoline, as well as in a number of new 500-gallon fuel tanks which had just been received by the Constructing Quartermaster. These containers provided a stock of 70,000 gallons of fresh water, all of which was carried on the Antares. A 43,000-gallon steel tank, formerly used for gasoline at Ft. Shafter on Oahu, was dismantled and sent to Canton as a water reservoir. In addition, all available stills in the territory were obtained from a bankrupt brewery and a bankrupt liquor distillery. Fewer containers were available for the Christmas expedition, but evaporators secured from the Navy were placed aboard the Haleakala and the vessel was to remain at Christmas long enough to fill redwood tanks and other

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containers which would be set up on the island. Since not all of the eighty 50,000-gallon gasoline tanks intended for airfields in the Hawaiian Islands had been installed, four were borrowed for Christmas Island. Two of these were mounted on the derrick barge which was scheduled to leave Honolulu on 22 November, and two had been strengthened internally and made into a floating caisson-type raft which would be towed by the derrick barge.⁴⁷

The problem of food supply and refrigeration likewise required an ingenious solution. From all the refrigeration machinery he could gather on Oahu the District Engineer constructed about 30 "reefer boxes," which were large refrigerators measuring from 12 to 15 feet on each side. The boxes were equipped with both direct and alternating current motors so that they might be operated either from the ship's direct current while on board or from motor generator sets on the islands.⁴⁸

Attention had to be given also to the matter of clearance for the supply vessels. By 12 November difficulties had arisen from the fact that barges and tugboats were sent to Canton without the clearance required by maritime regulations. Although the island was under the joint jurisdiction of Great Britain and the United States, it was apparently considered a foreign port under maritime regulations. General Short therefore requested that the War Department take up with the Department of Commerce the question of securing blanket clearance for supply vessels to go to outlying island bases. The necessary clearances could be obtained through local channels out, as General Short explained, this procedure resulted in delays.⁴⁹ This instance was typical of General

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Short's attitude toward the entire project of the South Pacific air route. He sought for every legitimate short-cut; he made use of local facilities to the greatest possible extent, and when these proved insufficient or time-consuming, he called upon the War Department to expedite matters. Yet all the while that General Short was carrying out plans for Christmas and Canton, the Navy Department continued to press for delay in construction at these two locations, and General Short was repeatedly called on to justify his selection of the island bases to be developed and the priorities assigned thereto.

On 3 November the Navy Department requested the Joint Board to establish priorities for development of the South Pacific air route. The board accordingly delegated the matter to the Joint Planning Committee. At the board meeting on 3 November Admiral Stark recommended that no airfield be constructed on Christmas Island at that time. He reasoned that there was little likelihood of completion of a field at Christmas before completion of the Palmyra field, and that Christmas would be useful primarily as an alternate to Palmyra. It was also argued that the project would demand shipping which was needed for the work at Palmyra and Samoa. The Navy Department recommended that completion of landing fields at Palmyra and Samoa be given the highest priority, followed in order by the projects on Canton, the Fiji Islands, and New Caledonia. A final recommendation of the Navy was that the War Department assume responsibility for the local defense and development of Canton, including preparation of an airdrome with a ramp and parking area suitable for the use of naval seaplanes, and that the Navy Department assist "as necessary

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and practicable" in the work at Canton and at other points along the route to Australia.⁵⁰

The Army half of the Joint Planning Committee supported the previously adopted route, which included Christmas, Canton, the Fijis, New Caledonia, and Townsville. Existing naval facilities were considered supplementary to this route. In the opinion of the Army, Christmas was a better site for development than Palmyra since it was easier to protect and since it would allow for dispersion of aircraft. The field at Samoa was not considered entirely satisfactory because of a 1,500-foot hill on the prevailing approach not far from the end of the runway. In view of these conditions, as well as the relatively late date of estimated completion of Palmyra and Samoa and the commitments already made, the Army delegation recommended the continued development of Christmas Island and the designation of Christmas, Canton, the Fijis, New Caledonia, and Townsville as the primary route for ferrying Army aircraft.⁵¹

No immediate decision was made, and on 11 November the War Department informed General Short of the Navy's proposals. The War Department's desire was for "completion of a route in the shortest possible time." The Navy Department had advised that Palmyra was approaching completion, 3,000 feet being available for emergency operations as of 1 November, and an additional 110 feet becoming available each succeeding week. General Short was requested to submit a report on the status of work at Palmyra, Christmas, Canton, and the Fijis, along with recommendations as to priorities.⁵²

In his reply on 15 November General Short outlined the developments which had taken place with respect to each site. He was emphatic in his

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statement that Palmyra could not be made usable in time to meet the ferrying project requirements. On 13 October he had conferred with the Commandant of the 14th Naval District and had been told that even with Army assistance the minimum facilities at Palmyra could not be made available before 1 August 1942. In conference a few days prior to 15 November the Commandant again informed General Short that Palmyra could not be completed in sufficient time to satisfy War Department requirements. It was only after ascertaining this fact from local Navy officials that General Short had decided to develop Christmas, and in mid-November he still felt that at least one 5,000-foot runway would be usable by 15 January, even with liberal allowance being made for unforeseen delays.⁵³

As for Samoa, local Navy authorities had stated that a 5,000-foot runway would be available by 1 May, but General Short reported that because of obstructed approaches the field would never be suitable for heavy bombardment operations. General Short noted also that all points which were now being raised by the Navy Department had been thoroughly covered in his conferences with the Commandant of the 14th Naval District before the decision was made to develop Christmas. In General Short's opinion, work at Christmas would not delay Navy construction at Samoa or Palmyra since the Navy was not furnishing supply ships for the Army's project. Moreover, the work at Christmas was not being allowed to delay completion of the Canton airfield. General Short therefore strongly recommended that no change be made in existing plans for the South Pacific air route. Any change in the status of Christmas, he argued, would result not only in a waste of funds but also in irretrievable loss of all time which had

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been spent in organizing expeditions.

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By 21 November the Joint Board still had not acted on the matter of priorities, and the Navy Department continued to press for top billing of its own projects. On this date the Chief of Naval Operations wrote to the Chief of Staff, summarizing the position taken by the Navy. No new arguments were advanced, although Admiral Stark was evidently attempting to make a more forceful statement than had been made in the Joint Board meeting of 3 November. By this time the Navy Department was aware of the fact that Army expeditions had been sent to Christmas Island and that contractual commitments had been made in connection with the project. This state of affairs did not modify the Navy's stand, for Admiral Stark reiterated his request that, except for Canton, Army development of island air bases between Hawaii and Australia be held in abeyance until the Joint Board had reached a decision as to priorities. The Chief of Naval Operations also noted that the report of the Joint Planning Committee had been delayed by three changes in the Army representative on the working committee, and had been rendered difficult to prepare "because of the extent to which the Army has taken action without waiting for the decisions of the Joint Board."⁵⁵ The latter observation cannot be considered a reflection on General Short, for before the Navy Department submitted the problem to the Joint Board the War Department had instructed General Short to proceed with preparation of the route which he had recommended. And at no time thereafter did the War Department order him to hold the matter in abeyance pending a decision of the Joint Board.

In view of the Navy Department's insistence that the Palmyra field

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was rapidly approaching completion, the War Department on 25 November requested confirmation of General Short's report that Palmyra would not be usable in time to meet ferrying requirements. Request was also made for a comprehensive statement as to why the Samoa field was not considered suitable for heavy bombers.⁵⁶ General Short's reply on 27 November revealed that local Navy officials now named 7 March as the estimated date of completion of a 5,000-foot runway at Palmyra. But General Short pointed out that on the basis of the original War Department directive that the project was extremely urgent and on receipt of subsequent information that ferrying flights were to begin not later than 1 February, he had set 15 January as the date when minimum facilities of a 5,000-foot runway had to be completed at all bases.⁵⁷ Palmyra, of course, did not meet this date. General Short again informed the War Department that the Christmas location was ideal and that the field could be completed much earlier than the Palmyra project.

New reasons were advanced by General Short in support of the earlier observation that the Samoa field was not suitable for heavy bombers. A Hawaiian Air Force officer who had made a survey of the island reported that local Navy officials had no adequate wind-measuring equipment and that apparently no instrument observations had been taken at the site of the airfield.⁵⁸ The runway which the Navy planned to build first was in the direction of the prevailing wind as recorded in Pago Pago Bay and as drawn from hydrographic charts of surface wind on the ocean. But the air officer had observed different wind conditions at the site of the field. It was believed by General Short that Navy officials on Samoa, at the

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recommendation of the air officer, were restudying the wind conditions and may have decided to construct a different runway first. If such were the case, the construction would require considerable time. If, on the other hand, the Navy's original wind analysis should prove to be correct and their plans remained unchanged, the steep hill 2,000 feet from the end of the runway would make the field unsuitable for use by heavy bombers. In other words, General Short was still convinced that Samoa and Palmyra did not meet War Department specifications.⁵⁹

This message from the Hawaiian Department commander arrived too late to be used by Army representatives on the Joint Board, for the board met on 26 November and took action on the subject of the South Pacific air route. An earlier message from General Short, however, was used to good effect in the meeting. During a discussion of the subject the Navy raised the question as to the extent of Army plans for the development of Christmas Island. In support of its contention that the contemplated developments by the Army should be made at Palmyra, the Navy advanced a new argument to the effect that Christmas Island would be claimed by the British after the war. General Arnold then explained the reasons for the selection of Christmas as an air base, pointing out that during early considerations of the route the Commandant of the 14th Naval District had informed General Short that the Palmyra construction could not be completed before 1 August 1942. In order that the Navy members of the Joint Board might have "the full picture of Army action," Brig. Gen. Leonard F. Gerow read a message sent to the War Department by General Short (presumably the message of 15 November). Following this explanation Admiral

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Stark stated that although the Navy considered Palmyra more desirable than Christmas, the Navy would offer no further objections to the development and completion of the Christmas Island project. On 20 November the War Department sent a message to General Short authorizing him to proceed in accordance with his present plans for the South Pacific route.⁶⁰

The Joint Board apparently did not act at this time on the Navy's recommendation that the Army assume responsibility for the defense of bases along the route, for this subject continued to be a matter of concern to General Short and naval officials in the Hawaiian Islands. On 23 November General Short wrote to the War Department regarding early solution of the defense problem, the need for which was emphasized by "the present status of international conditions in the Pacific."⁶¹ The Hawaiian Department commander had had informal discussions on the problem with both the Commandant of the 14th Naval District, Adm. C. C. Bloch, and the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Adm. Husband E. Kimmel. While there was agreement in principle on the necessity of immediate plans for defense, there was a difference of opinion as to whether the Army or the Navy should assume responsibility for the defense. Considerations of sovereignty over the islands necessitated individual treatment of the several bases. The New Zealand government theoretically was responsible for defense of Christmas; but because of the island's proximity to Oahu, General Short concluded that it was logical from a supply standpoint for American forces to undertake the defense. Joint U. S.-British sovereignty over Canton likewise argued for American assumption of defense responsibility on that island, and General Short felt that the

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responsibility in both was properly the Navy's rather than the Army's. ⁶²

Local Navy officials had tentatively agreed to undertake the defense of Canton. Subject to approval of the Navy Department, they were arranging to send a Marine detachment of two officers and 44 men with two five-inch guns to the island on the next trip of the Haleakala about 5 December. At the Navy's request Army authorities had agreed to subsist and quarter the detachment and to give the Marines all assistance possible in setting up their armament. The detachment of the 804th Engineer Battalion on Canton was armed with its organic weapons, and General Short was preparing to send eight .30-caliber machine guns on the Haleakala. The Marine detachment was also taking .50-caliber antiaircraft machine guns and was to instruct the engineers in their operation. ⁶³

General Short had discussed with local Navy officials the question of a similar defense force for Christmas. In these informal discussions it was obvious to General Short that the 14th Naval District was opposed to assuming the defense of the island and that the opposition was based on instructions from the Navy Department. The Hawaiian Department commander was entirely correct in this analysis of the Navy's position. On 14 November Admiral Bloch, Commandant of the 14th Naval District, wrote to Admiral Stark and acknowledged receipt of a letter giving "information and ideas about Pacific island bases to be operated by the Army." Admiral Bloch also stated: "Yesterday we received a telegram from OPIAV telling us what to support and what not to, so now we can formulate a very clear-cut policy." ⁶⁴

It was a part of this policy not to assist in the Christmas Island project, and General Short therefore temporarily assumed responsibility

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for defense of the island. At the same time, he recommended that the War Department take up the problem with the Navy Department and that the responsibility be transferred to the Navy as soon as possible. General Short wrote the War Department on 22 November that although the Army was then operating supply ships to both Christmas and Canton, there should be no obligation to continue operation of these vessels after completion of the construction. The Navy would be sending supply ships to its own bases and, as local Navy authorities had admitted, the task of protecting these supply ships was basically a Navy responsibility. To General Short, defense of the island bases was likewise basically a Navy responsibility. Pending a final decision on defense of Christmas, the detachment of the 804th Engineers, armed with its organic weapons and six .30-caliber machine guns, was protecting the island. To reinforce these small arms General Short had sent two 75-mm. guns with 800 rounds of high explosive ammunition. A field artillery instructor had also been sent to the island to train gun crews from the personnel of the engineer detachment. ⁶⁵

The Fiji Islands, comprising a crown colony of Great Britain, presented no problem to General Short in the matter of local defense. The responsibility rested with the New Zealand government and, inasmuch as the defense forces were "apparently very well organized," General Short recommended to the War Department that arrangements be made with New Zealand for defense of the Nandi airfield. ⁶⁶

The problem on New Caledonia was far more complex. The population on the island was overwhelmingly Free French, but there had been considerable intrigue among the local factions attempting to secure leadership.

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The population on the southern end of the island, near Noumea, was predominantly native. Defense forces were limited to a very small garrison of approximately 100 Australians, who were guarding airfield construction projects in the vicinity of Noumea. On the other end of the island, according to a hurried estimate given to General Short, approximately 90 per cent of the 20,000 people were Japanese. Since the new airfield at Plaines des Caiacs was located in this area, General Short sought to give careful consideration to defense of the field. If the United States should ask the Australians to assume the interior defense, a somewhat anomalous situation would develop in which an installation of one government would be defended by forces of another government in a territory in which both were aliens. General Short had made informal approach to the Commandant of the 14th Naval District in order to determine whether or not Marines could be sent to New Caledonia. The Commandant, reluctant to make any commitment, stated merely that any decision would require action by the Navy and State Departments. He did observe, however, that the provision of a Marine interior defense unit would impose difficult supply problems. Because of the multiplicity of factors involved, General Short did not believe that a definite recommendation as to interior defense of the New Caledonia installation could be made by the Hawaiian Department. He merely called attention to the circumstances and recommended that the War Department give "very careful consideration" to the matter before reaching a decision.⁶⁷

As relations between the United States and Japan grew more tense, Army and Navy commanders in the Pacific were called upon to think in

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terms of more immediate defense. Consideration was apparently being given in Washington to the dispatch of Army task forces to some of the Pacific islands, for General Short was asked for recommendations on this subject. His reply on 3 December dealt with the possibility of relieving Marine garrisons on Palmyra, Johnston, Wake, and Midway, as well as with the necessity for immediate and realistic defense measures for Canton and Christmas. He recommended that Army task forces not replace Marine defense garrisons at Palmyra, Johnston, Wake, and Midway until work on the airfields and harbors had been completed by the Navy and, further, that the Marines transfer to the Army task forces such machine guns and harbor defense guns as they were then using on the outlying bases. General Short also recommended that one squadron of dive bombers and one squadron of pursuit planes be sent to each of the four islands upon request of the Navy for relief of naval air units at these bases. The Hawaiian Department commander was strongly convinced that one group of heavy bombers should be available on Oahu for dispatch to advanced Pacific bases. There was a difference of opinion between General Short and Admiral Kimmel as to command of such island bases. General Short felt that the command, exclusive of naval installations, should be exercised by the Army task force commander whenever the Army assumed responsibility for defense of any island. He suggested that the relation of the Army and Navy at each jointly occupied island should be similar to that of the military and naval forces on Oahu. Admiral Kimmel did not concur in this opinion, believing instead that command of the islands should remain directly under Naval authorities. To General Short, there was no justification for this

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procedure; if the Army was to have responsibility for defense of the islands, it should also have the authority.

In the same message on 3 Decemoer General Short asserted that full responsibility for all work upon and defense of Canton and Christmas islands should be assumed by the Army at that time. He warned that because of inadequate water supplies the task force at Christmas should be limited to 200 officers and men and the task force at Canton limited to 300 officers and men. Preparing to leave Oahu about 9 Decemoer for Canton Island was the initial task force of 2 officers and 45 enlisted men. Another contingent sailing about 20 December would increase the garrison at Canton to 4 ofricers and 140 enlisted men. The initial Christmas Island garrison, totaling 4 officers and 140 enlisted men, was scheduled to leave Cahu about 26 December. These forces were to be composed entirely of coast artillerymen, and it was General Short's opinion that all the Army ground task forces for the island bases should be made up exclusively of coast artillery troops, with the exception of airways detachments. General Short also reminded the War Department that airways detachments should be placed at Canton and Christmas before 15 January 1942.⁶⁹

Plans for such detachments were seing made by the Air Corps. A tentative T/BA for a unit of four officers and 50 enlisted men had been drawn up by 19 Novemoer and procurement of the technical equipment had been initiated. General Short was requested on 19 November to make any additions or deletions which he desired and also to forward shipping instructions. His reply to tne Chief of the Air Corps on 5 December revealed that the tentative plans were almost identical with plans previously made

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in the Hawaiian Department. He pointed out, however, that in addition to these air troops it would be necessary to station engineer and medical detachments at all four fields on the route between Hawaii and Australia and also signal detachments at Canton and Christmas. The medical detachment at each field was to consist of one officer and 10 men, and the engineer detachment of five men. The combined garrisons at the bases would be as follows: Christmas and Canton, 5 officers, 85 men each; the Fijis and New Caledonia, 5 officers, 65 men each; and the Solomon Islands and Efate (weather detachments only), 11 men each.⁷⁰

As for shipping instructions, General Short advised the use of the supply service which had been organized on the West Coast for the project of the South Pacific ferry route. The Division Engineer at San Francisco was operating the service and was using not only the supply ships chartered by the Hawaiian Department but also all space which could be secured on commercial vessels and Army transports. Shipments were being made from both Los Angeles and San Francisco. It was General Short's opinion that the Division Engineer, because of his control over the chartered supply ships and close liaison with other shipping agencies, could expedite the delivery of all items of supply.⁷¹

By the first week in December General Short was being urged not only to complete the South Pacific route at the earliest possible date but also to provide a route suitable for use by medium bombers. General Arnold had written to General Short and had attempted "to bring home to him the necessity for figuring out some way whereby we can fly medium bombers from the United States to Australia."⁷² From Australia, of course, the

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bombers could fly in short hops to the Philippines. The emphasis on reinforcement of the Philippines which had been rapidly gathering momentum during the fall of 1941 was now reaching its apex.

In replying to General Arnold on 6 December, General Short expressed the opinion that the route which was planned for heavy bombers would be entirely satisfactory for medium bombers. From Hickam Field to Townsville, via Morse Field (Hawaii), Christmas, Canton, Mandi, and Plaines des Gaiacs, there was no hop greater than 1,250 statute miles. It was General Short's understanding that such a distance was safe for medium bombers. General Short also felt that there was "every advantage in keeping the number of fields established to the minimum as the difficulties of defense and supply will be serious in case of war."⁷³ He reported that the reconnaissance of Efeto and the Solomon Islands was being made as directed by the War Department, but that at the moment he did not believe there was any necessity for these fields. Unless the reconnaissance revealed something to make them appear more valuable, General Short thought that in all probability he would recommend against the establishment of the two fields. It was obvious that the farther away the sites were from the lines of communication, the more difficult the work became. Completion of the work on New Caledonia, for example, promised to be more difficult than that in the Fijis because of the fact that few of the commercial vessels regularly included stops at New Caledonia.

On the whole, however, General Short was optimistic about early completion of the South Pacific route. The inability of the Navy to assist in the project, the consequent task of procuring ships for an independent

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supply service, the problem of obtaining men and materials for construction of the several bases, the necessity of providing local defense forces, and diplomatic considerations had made the initial work extremely complex and at times discouraging. But the Hawaiian Department commander assured General Arnold that "we are striving very hard to make good our promise of having one runway at all fields so that we can use the route by January 15."⁷⁴ This was General Short's report as of 6 December 1941.

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Chapter IV

COMPLETION OF MINIMUM FACILITIES

After 7 December 1941 completion of the South Pacific route assumed an urgency even greater than it had prior to the outbreak of war. When the Japanese initiated hostilities with the United States on 7 December, they attacked not only the island of Oahu but also Midway and Wake. As a result, the northern aerial route to the Philippines could no longer be used. Since the South Pacific route was not yet completed, there was no way of sending aerial reinforcements to the Southwest Pacific except by means of a long and costly flight across the South Atlantic, Africa, India, and the Netherlands East Indies. And the swiftness of the Japanese advance southward indicated an early collapse of the terminus of this route. It was therefore imperative that the airfields on Christmas, Canton, the Fijis, and New Caledonia be completed at the earliest possible date. So great were enemy capabilities, however, that AAF Headquarters was at first uncertain as to whether or not the project should be continued.

Immediately after the outbreak of war the Chief of the Air Staff directed that all matters pertaining to the South Pacific route be held in abeyance. But procurement of equipment was to continue, pending final decision on continuance of the project. It was further directed that the communications and weather personnel who were scheduled to sail for the South Pacific bases be held in San Francisco until a decision had been reached.¹

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One subject for General Snort's immediate concern was defense of the bases along the route, including of course the battered installations on Oahu. On 12 December he reported to the War Department on the status of the route and on measures which had been taken since 7 December. With the Japanese operating only 1,000 miles away from Canton, that island was "very much exposed to attack," and according to General Short and local Navy officials it could not be held against serious attack. Present on Canton were 300 civilians, 45 engineers, and 10 medical and communications men. On 11 December General Snort directed the diversion of food and water on the island and ordered the dredge and tugs operating at Canton to proceed at once to Christmas. In order to remove all civilians to Christmas Island, General Short dispatched a vessel from Honolulu to Canton on 12 December. The ship carried two 75-mm. guns, 12 machine guns, ammunition, and reinforcements of 10 field artillerymen for Canton. It was General Short's plan to leave all troops to defend the island and to continue such construction as they could. All engineering equipment, explosives, gasoline, oil, and other supplies were to be left on the island, unless orders to the contrary were received from the War Department. General Snort felt that the small garrison would probably succeed in holding Canton.²

Christmas Island, farther to the east, appeared to be in less danger. It was General Snort's belief that the island could be successfully defended and that he was justified in leaving all civilian laborers on Christmas. The armament of the Christmas garrison was to be reinforced by two 155-mm. guns, four 3-inch antiaircraft guns, and 12 machine guns

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being carried by the vessel which was en route to Canton to remove civilians. Information from New Zealand indicated that defensive forces in the Fiji Islands had been increased and were sufficient to hold the islands. In order to rush completion of the field at Nandi, General Short requested that the War Department direct the S. S. Ludington to join the first convoy proceeding toward Australia and to unload 1,500 tons of equipment at Suva. The equipment had been intended for Canton but the Ludington would be unable to stop there since the island had no port and only small boats drawing eight feet of water could enter the lagoon.³

In New Caledonia it appeared that the diplomatic difficulties which had been encountered with the Free French were rapidly being resolved and that airfield construction might proceed in accordance with General Short's original agreement with the Australians.⁴ This favorable turn of affairs resulted from prompt action on the part of the French National Committee in taking an open stand against the Japanese. On 8 December Gen. Charles De Gaulle informed the State Department that he had appointed Maj. Thierry d'Argenlieu as High Commissioner of the French National Committee in the Far East and the Pacific. General De Gaulle instructed the High Commissioner on 8 December that as soon as a state of war existed between the two English-speaking nations and Japan, he was to consider that a state of war likewise existed between Japan and Free France. The Free French civilian and military authorities in the Pacific were to be directed by the high Commissioner to assist in joint defense of the area in every way possible and to place at the disposal of the Allies all facilities which might be made available through bases in New Caledonia,

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Tahiti, and the New Hebrides.⁵ On 14 December General Short informed the War Department that settlement had been made of all official objections to airfield construction in New Caledonia.⁶

The issue of responsibility for defense of New Caledonian airfields was not settled so rapidly. On 9 December the Australian Legation in Washington requested U. S. authorities to explore the possibility of providing assistance in defense of the airfields. The legation was informed by the State Department that it was assumed Australia would take primary responsibility for the defense, because of the proximity of New Caledonia to Australia and the fact that any landing there by the Japanese would obviously constitute an immediate threat to Australia. The State Department assured the legation that the United States would "naturally do all that may be feasible in all the circumstances to contribute to the protection of New Caledonia," but it was emphasized that the immediate and primary responsibility rested with Australia and that American authorities did not know what assistance, if any, would be feasible. General Short likewise felt that the defense should be assumed by Australia, pending further discussion of the matter.⁷ This procedure, in essence, was followed by the two governments and the outcome of later negotiations was that the United States should send a task force to New Caledonia.⁸

Less than one year earlier, when the Air Corps had sought War Department approval for construction of airfields on some of the South Pacific islands, WPD had objected on the basis that such facilities might possibly fall into the hands of the enemy. The possibility of such action now was far from remote, but the necessity of reinforcing the Philippines

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demanding that risks be taken. After one week of hostilities between the United States and Japan, during which no attacks were made on the bases south of Oahu, the suspension placed on development of the route was removed at AAF Headquarters. On 15 December the Chief of the Air Staff directed the Chief of the Air Corps to resume action "with a view to expediting completion of this route as previously planned."⁹ Within the Air Corps the several divisions which had been accumulating equipment and supplies for the project ordered their release and shipment to San Francisco for transshipment to Hawaii. Communications and weather personnel destined for the South Pacific bases were ordered to be transferred by the first available transport in accordance with original instructions.¹⁰

The suspension, of course, had applied only to AAF Headquarters and to continental units involved in the project. Along the route itself, as far as Townsville inclusive, work had proceeded without interruption. The Division Engineer informed the Chief of Engineers on 15 December that Colonel Wyman had reported "wonderful progress" at Canton and Christmas and that construction would be advanced to permit the ferrying of aircraft to Australia prior to 15 January 1942. In the opinion of the Division Engineer all essential Air Corps supplies would not be available along the route but probably gasoline and oil would be. L. J. Sverdrup was still supervising construction in the Fijis and New Caledonia as well as at Townsville.¹¹

Diplomatic clearances now offered no problem, for the United States, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and the Free

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French were allied against a common enemy in the Pacific. The chief deterrent to completion of minimum facilities on the route came from the shortages of men, supplies, and shipping, which resulted from the increased demands accompanying the outbreak of war. The CAA had been able to procure radio equipment for shipment to Canton, but General Short sent word on 10 December that because of the shortage of shipping, immediate transportation could not be provided. He pointed out that this situation, which had existed to some extent before the opening of hostilities, was now considerably more acute. General Short was giving priority to tonnage which was essential to construction of the runway at Canton.¹²

The shortage of long-range seaplanes was also acute. The District Engineer had chartered a Pan American Airways clipper for transportation of personnel and air express between Honolulu and the island bases on the route. By 16 December the clipper was in New Zealand, and General Short had received word that PAA contemplated sending the plane westward via India for use in Atlantic service. As he had reported late in November, neither Australia nor New Zealand could provide a plane for messenger purposes along the route, and the need for the aircraft was vital. General Short strongly recommended that the PAA clipper be retained in the Pacific for use as chartered by the District Engineer. The War Department reply on 17 December revealed that the clipper was unarmed and for that reason was being placed on the South Atlantic run. First priority was to be given by the War Department to armed flying boats carrying ammunition to the Philippines. No plane was then available for assignment to the South Pacific project.¹³ Officials who were directing the project therefore

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had to rely on radio communications and necessarily slow water transportation in completing the several bases and in obtaining progress reports.

On 17 December announcement was made in Washington simultaneously by the War and Navy Departments that General Short, Admiral Kimmel, and General Martin were being relieved of their respective commands of the Hawaiian Department, the Pacific Fleet, and the Hawaiian Air Force. On 18 December Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons succeeded General Short, while Adm. Chester W. Nimitz took over command of the Pacific Fleet and Brig. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker became head of the Hawaiian Air Force.¹⁴ The appointment of General Emmons, who had previously headed the USMC Air Force and the Air Force Combat Command, was especially noteworthy, as the Hawaiian Department had traditionally been commanded by an officer of the ground forces.¹⁵

The change of commanders seems to have had little effect on the project of the South Pacific air route. There was no major revision of policy after General Emmons' arrival, and construction proceeded along the lines planned by General Short and the District Engineer. From this time forward, until completion of minimum facilities on the route, the communications on this subject between the Hawaiian Department and the War Department were resolved into a series of progress reports. Though replete with technical details, these reports reflect both the strategic necessity of immediate completion of the route and the concern of Hawaiian Department officials over defense of the bases.

On 18 December General Emmons summarized for the War Department the status of the route. He reiterated General Short's belief that American

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forces could hold Christmas and probably Canton.¹⁶ New Zealand authorities had been informed that the Hawaiian Department was proceeding with development of the route and they had been requested to strengthen their defense of the Fijis. The Navy had a defense force at Palmyra and was sending another to Samoa. No runway had been completed on Samoa, but at Palmyra 3,750 feet had been finished; at Canton, 2,000; at Christmas, 500; at Nandi, 3,000; and at Tontouta, 5,000. General Emmons had received no report on the status of the Townsville runway, but General MacArthur had informed the War Department on 2 December that Townsville facilities were satisfactory for use by short-range aircraft.¹⁷ Fuel supplies at the various bases were reported by General Emmons as follows: 100,000 gallons of aviation gasoline at Canton, 100,000 gallons on a barge en route to Christmas, 200,000 gallons at Noumea, 38,500 gallons of Navy fuel at Palmyra, 100,000 gallons of PAA fuel at Suva, and 20,000 gallons at Nandi. The Hawaiian Department commander pointed out that the supply problem was difficult but that if the Navy could convoy supply vessels, the Division Engineer in San Francisco was ready to ship materials, including gasoline and oil, for the South Pacific route. General Emmons assured the War Department that his forces, along with those of Australia and New Zealand, were "rushing completion of minimum facilities," and he estimated that the earliest date of completion would be 15 January.¹⁸

Upon receipt of this report the Air Corps Ferrying Command began to make plans for operations over the route beginning on or soon after 15 January. The command informed the Chief of the Air Staff on 22 December that communications and weather reporting facilities should be in operation

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and that not less than 250,000 gallons of aviation gasoline with proportionate amounts of oil should be stocked at each of the bases along the route prior to 15 January. The Office, Chief of Air Corps was "pushing first priority installation" of communications and weather reporting facilities. As for the fuel requirements, General Arnold issued terse instructions to A-4 to "take care of this at once."¹⁹ The question was immediately raised as to the necessity for such large stocks by the opening date of operations over the route. It was noted that 250,000 gallons of gasoline would be equal to the amount needed by 100 heavy bombers or 200 medium bombers. Aerial reinforcements for the Southwest Pacific were, of course, not available in such large numbers at that time. Furthermore, on 27 December A-4 observed that shipment of the requested amount of fuel was "impossible even if fastest boats were loaded today at San Francisco."²⁰ Nevertheless, 250,000 gallons of 100-octane gasoline was set as the minimum level of supply to be maintained at Morse Field, Palmyra, Christmas, Canton, the Mijis, and New Caledonia. In order to assist General Emmons in securing the required amount at New Caledonia, A-4 initiated a request for General MacArthur to release from stocks available to him 5,000 drums of 100-octane gasoline with a corresponding quantity of oil for shipment to Noumea.²¹

On 28 December, 10 days after General Emmons had made his first report on the status of the route, the District Engineer forwarded to the Chief of Engineers a report which indicated that only one link in the chain of bases remained to be completed. A 5,000-foot runway was usable at Canton, as well as at Montouta and Townsville, while the Nandi runway

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was completed to a length of 4,200 feet. It was estimated that a 5,000-foot runway would be ready at Christmas Island by 15 January, and Navy reports indicated that the Palmyra field might be ready even earlier. As soon as one of these two bases should be completed, a route suitable for use by heavy and medium bombers would exist between Hawaii and Australia. The District Engineer stated that he would make every effort to distribute airplane parts, hydraulic brake oil, breathing oxygen, and lubricating oil to the various bases as soon as shipments were received from the Division Engineer at San Francisco.²²

Airways detachments had not been sent to the island bases, supplies were limited to relatively low stocks of fuel, and aircraft warning systems were non-existent at most of the bases. But the runway at Palmyra having been completed, three B-17's left Hickam Field on 6 January 1942 and made the inaugural flight over the South Pacific route. The planes, piloted by Maj. Kenneth B. Hobson, Lt. Jack W. Hughes, and Lt. Clarence E. McFarson, were reinforcements for AAF units which had been gassed back from the Philippines to the Netherlands East Indies. Heavy bombers were still flying to the Southwest Pacific via the South Atlantic route, but in little more than a month the Japanese advance in the Netherlands East Indies was to halt this practice, and the South Pacific route remained as the sole aerial life line to Australia.²³

Both General Emons and AAF Headquarters were properly concerned over defense of the island bases. On 26 November the Hawaiian Department had requested aircraft warning service equipment for Canton and Christmas. General Emons on 6 January recommended that a minimum of two stations

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either fixed or mobile, depending on which could be sent earlier, together with the necessary operating personnel, be shipped to the Hawaiian Department at the earliest possible opportunity for use on Canton and Christmas. Four days later General Emons was informed of definite War Department plans in this regard. The 697th Signal Aircraft Warning and Reporting Company, consisting of one distant reporting platoon of 2 officers and 43 enlisted men and one plotting platoon of 3 officers and 30 enlisted men, was being prepared for shipment to Canton. The 696th Signal Aircraft Warning and Reporting Company, similarly manned and equipped, was earmarked for Christmas Island, and both units were scheduled to sail from San Francisco about 25 January.²⁴

Preparations were also being made for the dispatch of air task forces for defense of the route. Units for the island bases, along with forces for Australia, were given first priority at AAF Headquarters and were to depart as soon as they could be made ready and transports could be procured.²⁵ On 12 January General Emons recommended that communications personnel and equipment be sent directly to Christmas, Canton, and Suva on vessels taking the defense task forces to those islands. The recommended action had already been taken, and by this time at least one of the task forces was en route to its South Pacific destination. The 70th Pursuit Squadron, along with Army Airways Communications System radio personnel and equipment, sailed from the West Coast on 12 January for the Fiji Islands. On 20 January the 12th Pursuit Squadron and service units sailed for Christmas Island, and the 67th Pursuit Squadron was soon on its way to New Caledonia via Australia. No manning detachments were being sent, since the task forces could perform the necessary servicing

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functions for ferried aircraft. But at Canton, the only point along the route without a defending air unit, an airways detachment was needed, and on 20 January General Immons dispatched the necessary personnel and equipment.²⁶ The Navy, of course, was providing for the defense of Palmyra and Samoa.

Extensive use of Palmyra was not contemplated by AAF authorities, nor the completion of minimum facilities at Christmas obviated the use of the Navy airfield.²⁷ On 21 January a flight of two LB-30's en route to Australia landed at Christmas. Crew members found the runway, 5,000 feet long and 100 feet wide, to be in excellent condition, and the width was expected to be 200 feet by 23 January. It was estimated that after this date the time required for servicing one plane would be 45 minutes and for three planes, 90 minutes. From Noumea the engineer officer reported on 25 January that the Plaines des Galacs runway was usable to the extent of 3,600 feet in length and 75 feet in width. It was expected that the length of 5,000 feet and width of 100 feet would be completed by 31 January.²⁸ In the meantime, the field at Foutouta was being used for ferry flights, but completion of the Plaines des Galacs runway meant the fulfillment of all plans for the South Pacific route which had been made in November by General Snort and Colonel Wyman.

No explicit reason has been found for the omission of an air defense unit on Canton. The 68th Pursuit Squadron was originally scheduled for Canton, but by the middle of February its destination had been changed to Australia, then to New Caledonia; and finally the unit was sent to Fongatabu in the Tonga Islands, south of Samoa.²⁹ Crews of six heavy

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bombers of the Hawaiian Air Force, sent on a reconnaissance mission from Oahu to the Fijis via Palmyra and Canton between 16 and 30 January, brought back a number of recommendations for improvement of facilities at the bases; and the chief suggestion was for better protection of Canton. The commanding officer of the flight pointed out on 3 February that in its present state Canton might well be destroyed by a very small force of the enemy, yet the base was essential for ferrying operations.³⁰ As late as May 1942 ferry pilots continued to be amazed at the lack of protection on Canton. In the words of one pilot, "Canton has no defense forces yet [and] everyone going through wonders why."³¹

With the coming of spring 1942, Allied plans began to crystallize for operations in the South Pacific, and the problem of defense of the air route merged with strategic plans for the entire area. Improvement of facilities along the route evolved in accordance with a routine pattern which was reproduced in the development of operational air bases throughout the South Pacific. General Immons was originally charged with operation of the route, but on 14 April 1942 activation at Hamilton Field of the Pacific Sector, Foreign Wing, Air Corps Ferrying Command marked a first step toward relief of the Hawaiian Department commander in this respect.³² Study of later defense and operation of the route may reveal episodes of considerably more action and interest, but the first and perhaps the most significant chapter of aerial operations in the South Pacific ended in January 1942 with completion of minimum facilities along the South Pacific air route.

It cannot be concluded that if AAF demands for mid-Pacific air bases

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had been heeded early in 1941, a southern route to the Philippines would have been in operation by 7 December 1941. If such a route had been in existence, the Japanese might well have included attacks on Canton, Christmas, and other bases along with their attacks on Oahu, Midway, and Wake. It is simply a matter of record that late in 1939 the Air Corps began to work for War Department approval of air bases beyond the Hawaiian Islands, and that approval of a South Pacific route was not given until October 1941 after a decision had been made to send sizable reinforcements to the Philippines. It is likewise a matter of record that development of the route required much of the attention of the Hawaiian Department commander. That the route was completed within less than the originally scheduled time is a tribute not only to Army forces involved in the project but also to the cooperating governments which assumed the burden of construction in the Fijis and New Caledonia. Fortunately for the Allied cause in the South and Southwest Pacific, the first chapter in the story of the South Pacific air route proved to be not a matter of "too little and too late" but rather "the minimum just in time."

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GLOSSARY

AESAO	AAF Historical Office
AESSO	Air Force Service Command
AWPD	Air War Plans Division
B&G Div.	Buildings and Grounds Division
CAA	Civil Aeronautics Administration
C/AC	Chief of the Air Corps
C/AS	Chief of the Air Staff
C/Engrs.	Chief of Engineers
C/NO	Chief of Naval Operations
C/S	Chief of Staff
HAF	Hawaiian Air Force
OCAC	Office, Chief of Air Corps
OCSigO	Office, Chief Signal Officer
OPNAV	Office, Naval Operations
PAA	Pan American Airways, Inc.
S/AS	Secretary of Air Staff
S/State	Secretary of State
S/W	Secretary of War
TAG	The Adjutant General
USAFPE	United States Army Forces in the Far East
WPD	War Plans Division

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NOTES

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Chapter I

1. From the documents used in preparation of this study it is impossible to make a reliable statement on the extent to which the AAF was thinking in terms of Pacific defense at the time the heavy bombers were developed.
2. Guam, Kiska, and Pearl Harbor had been closed military reservations since 1912, but in the other islands the new orders were without precedent. A. Randle Elliott, "U. S. Defense Outposts in the Pacific," Foreign Policy Reports, 15 March 41, pp. 1-2.
3. Ibid.
4. Frank C. Waldrop, MacArthur on War, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1942, p. 410.
5. President Roosevelt on 3 March 1938 claimed Canton and Enderbury in behalf of the United States. On 9 March, Great Britain's right to the islands was formally reserved by the British Ambassador in Washington. Settlement of the issue was made on 6 April 1939, with the two governments agreeing, "without prejudice to their respective claims," to a joint control over the islands for 50 years. A. Randle Elliott, "U. S. Defense Outposts in the Pacific," Foreign Policy Reports, 15 March 41, pp. 6-7.
6. Grayson Kirk, "Wings over the Pacific," Foreign Affairs, Jan. 42, pp. 293-302.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

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Chapter II

1. Ltr., Maj. Gen. C. D. Herron to TAG, 5 Oct. 39, in AG 580 (10-5-39), Hemisphere Defense, Christmas and Midway Islands.
2. 2d ind. to above letter, C/AG to TAG, 7 Nov. 39; RecR, OAC to Plans Div., 10 Oct. 39; ltr., C/AG to TAG, 16 Oct. 39, in AAG 600. Misc., East Indies.
3. Memo for C/S from WPD, 14 Feb. 40 (written 2 Jan. 40), in AG 580 (10-5-39), Hemisphere Defense, Christmas and Midway Islands.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Memo for WPD from G-3, 16 Jan. 40, ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Memo for C/S by Brig. Gen. G. V. Strong, 14 Feb. 40, ibid.
9. The delay in action on the WPD study might indicate that the matter was being given a thorough consideration. General Marshall left the papers with Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt, at headquarters of the Fourth Army in San Francisco, and General DeWitt returned them to the Deputy Chief of Staff on 4 March 1940, noting that he had read the papers carefully and was familiar with the contents. The papers were then held in WPD pending General Marshall's return to Washington. On 23 March the notation was made that General Marshall would not render a decision until a report had been received "on the present joint exercise." Ltr., Lt. Gen. J. L. DeWitt to Deputy C/S, 4 March 40, ibid.
10. Memo for file by Lt. Col. J. W. Anderson, Acting AG/S, WPD, 15 Oct. 40, ibid.
11. The list of airfield locations reported on 30 October to be under consideration by CAA was as follows:

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Present Class</u>	<u>Requested Class</u>
45	J. Rodgers, Oahu, T.H.	2	4
46	Maui, Maui, T.H.	1	4
47	Wake Island	0	4
48	Midway, Eastern	0	4
187	Molokai, Molokai, T.H.	2	3
188	Upolu Pt., Hawaii, T.H.	2	3
189	Kilo, Hawaii, T.H.	2	3
190	Howland Island, South Pacific	2	3
191	Jarvis Island, South Pacific	0	3
192	Johnston Island, South Pacific	0	3

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- Memo for Gen. R. C. Moore by Lt. Col. B. V. Harlee, G-4, 30 Oct. 40, ibid.
12. Disposition slip, by Lt. Col. Orlando Ward, 31 Oct. 40, ibid.
 13. Ltr., Brig. Gen. W. A. Frank to CG, Haw. Dept., 18 Sep. 40, in AAG Bulk 381, Plans, Haw. Dept.
 14. 1st ind. to above letter, CG, Haw. Dept. to TAG, 19 Oct. 40.
 15. Ibid.
 16. 3d ind. to above letter, CCAC to TAG, 6 Nov. 40.
 17. Memo for C/S from WPD, 29 Nov. 40, in AG 580 (10-5-39), Hemisphere Defense, Christmas and Midway Islands.
 18. The CAA informed General Arnold on 21 January 1941 that approximately \$750,000 could be made available for the work on Wake and Midway. The Air Corps desired facilities for the accommodation of one heavy bombardment group at each location. Memo for G-4 from WPD, 16 Dec. 40; ltr., Acting Administrator, CAA to Arnold, 21 Jan. 41, ibid.; memo for Col. F. H. Kennedy by Col. Robert Olds, 5 Feb. 41; 4th ind. (ltr., C/AG to TAG, 26 Oct. 39), SAC Div. to C/Engrs., 10 Feb. 41, in AAG 600, Misc., East Indies.
 19. 3d ind. (ltr., TAG to C/AG, 12 Dec. 40), CCAC to TAG, 3 Feb. 41, ibid.
 20. Ibid.
 21. Memo for C/S from WPD, 21 Feb. 41, ibid.
 22. 4th ind. (ltr., TAG to C/AG, 12 Dec. 40), AGO to CG, Haw. Dept., 4 March 41, in AG 580 (10-5-39), Hemisphere Defense, Christmas and Midway Islands.
 23. Again there is no mention of Christmas Island, which the Air Corps favored as a site provided that the United States and Great Britain could come to an agreement as to sovereignty over the island. On 1 May 1941 the Division of European Affairs, State Department, learned from the British Embassy that in London documents were being prepared regarding the ownership of certain Pacific islands. In the meantime, however, the British government felt that it would be desirable to build a concrete causeway on Christmas for the landing of planes. Mr. Hayter of the British Embassy informed the State Department that this step was considered advisable because "the Japanese are becoming tiresome" and the British government thought that this precaution should be taken. There is no indication that the British took any action toward carrying out the plan, but this information was forwarded to the War Department on 17 May 1941, where it was circulated among

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the divisions of the General Staff and the Air Corps. Comment from G-2 was as follows: "A better plan would seem to be for the British to build a field at Fiji, and the U. S. one at Canton. We would then have a route south of the Japanese Mandates over which our 21 B-17's now in Hawaii could be flown to Singapore or Manila." Ltr., S/State to S/W, 17 May 41; disposition slip from G-2, 4 June 41, in AG 658 (E-17-41), Christmas Island.

- 24. 5th ind. (ltr., TAG to C/AG, 12 Dec. 40), CG, Haw. Deot. to TAG, 10 May 41, in AAG 600, Misc., East Indies.

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Chapter III

1. Army Air Forces in the War Against Japan. AAF Historical Narratives, Hq. AAF, Aug. 1945, pp. 4-7.
2. Memo for AWPD by Spaatz, 14 Aug. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
3. This directive was in contrast to a paper which had been prepared by A-4 and sent to AWPD less than a month earlier. The paper was a proposed memo for the Chief of Staff, but it was never forwarded, obviously because its recommendations ran counter to General Arnold's ideas on a southern air route to the Philippines. The memo, in brief, favored the preparation of an airdrome on Guam for improving the northern route to the Philippines. It was admitted that surface vessels might be forced to detour far to the south, but such action was not believed to be necessary in the case of aircraft. The memo recommended that no further consideration be given at that time to development of a ferry route via Australia, "in view of the absence of suitable airdromes, doubt as to sovereignty over the islands and other difficulties." This suggestion completely ignored the possibility of enemy attack on Wake and Midway and the consequent disruption of the northern route. The unrealistic approach to the problem undoubtedly resulted in the paper's stopping in the office of AWPD. Proposed memo for C/S (unsigned), incl. 1, R&A, A-4 to AWPD, 16 July 41, in AAG 600, Misc., East Indies.
4. R&A, C/AS to C/AC, 16 Aug. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
5. Nothing has been found to account for the differences between the two directives. It is logical to assume, however, that with every passing day the project became more urgent and that even an interim of two days could reflect the increasing concern of the Chief of Air Staff and the desire to investigate every possible site for staging fields in the South Pacific.
6. So rapidly had the data been assembled that the Chief of the AAF commended the Chief of the Air Corps and the officers and civilian personnel who assisted in preparation of the study, which was completed "with speed and efficiency far above the average performance of duty." Memo for C/AC by C/AAF, n.d., in AAG 361, Air Routes.
7. Memo for WPD by C/AS 22 Sep. 41, ibid.
8. The memo for the Chief of Staff was submitted by General Arnold as Chief of the AAF and approved on 3 October by General Arnold as Deputy Chief of Staff for Air. General Marshall's formal approval of the project seems to have been given on 24 October. Memo for C/S by C/AAF, 30 Sep. 41, in AG 560.82 (8-28-41), Survey of Islands in the South Pacific [AG 560.32, Survey of Islands/; memo for Surgeon General, et al., by S/AS, 1 Dec. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.

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9. Ltr., The President to S/W, 3 Oct. 41, in Project Book of Col. Charles A. Horn [Horn Book], in AFSHO files.
10. Ltr., TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 4 Oct. 41, ibid.
11. Ltr., S/W to S/State, 3 Oct. 41, ibid.
12. Memo for C/AS by Lt. Col. J. G. Taylor, 10 Oct. 41, ibid.
13. Memo for C/NO by Arnold, 3 Oct. 41; memo for C/S by C/NO, 10 Oct. 41, ibid.
14. Ltr., C/AS to C/AG, 11 Oct. 41, ibid.
15. R&R, Exec., CGAC to Mat. Div. (et al.), 14 Oct. 41; ltr., Maint. Sec., CGAC to Maint. Comd., 10 Oct. 41, ibid.
16. Memo for C/AAF from G-4, 25 Sep. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes; ltr., Col. Warren T. Hannum, Div. Engr., S. Pacific Div., to C/Engrs., 17 Oct. 41, in AAG 580.82, Survey of Islands; ltr., CG, Haw. Dept. to Dist. Engr., Honolulu, 4 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
17. Radg. #517, Short to TAG, 13 Oct. 41, ibid.; radg. #520, Short to TAG, 14 Oct. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes; ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
18. Radg. #346, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 17 Oct. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
19. Memo for C/S by C/NO, 10 Oct. 41, in Horn Book.
20. Memo for AMPD by Lt. Col. J. G. Taylor, 24 Oct. 41, in AAG 600, Misc., East Indies.
21. Ibid.
22. Radg. #537, Short to TAG, 23 Oct. 41, in Horn Book.
23. Radg. #600, Wyman to C/Engrs., 23 Oct. 41, ibid.
24. Ltr., Short to Dist. Engr., Honolulu, 4 Nov. 41, ibid.
25. R&R, Intell. Div. to Col. Horn, 8 Nov. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
26. Ibid.
27. Telg. #60, American Minister, Canberra, to S/State, 18 Oct. 41; ltr., Nelson I. Johnson, American Minister, Canberra, to S/State, 21 Oct. 41, in Horn Book.

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28. Ltr., Div. Engr., S. Pacific Div., to C/Engrs., 29 Nov. 41, in AAG Bulk 261, Air Routes, 12/4/41.
29. Radg. #9, TAG to CG, USAFED, 17 Oct. 41; ltr., TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 27 Oct. 41, in Horn Book; R&R, Intell. Div. to A&D, 18 Oct. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes; memo for C/S by C/AS, 21 Oct. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
30. Radg. #268, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 4 Nov. 41; ltr., WD Budget Officer to C/AC, 22 Nov. 41; E&R, Ferrying Comd. to Exec., COAG, 2 Dec. 41; radg. #1014, Short to TAG, 3 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.
31. Radg. #507, Short to TAG, 12 Oct. 41; radg. (unnumbered), TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 16 Oct. 41; radg. #537, Short to TAG, 16 Oct. 41; radg. #253, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 17 Oct. 41; memo for TAG by AAG, 22 Oct. 41; radg. #584, Short to TAG, 22 Oct. 41; supplemental diary, Intell. Div., by Lt. Col. J. G. Taylor, 23 Oct. 41, *ibid.*
32. Radg. #631, Short to TAG, 30 Oct. 41; radg. #682, Short to TAG, 30 Oct. 41, *ibid.*
33. The difficulty of obtaining approval of U. S. plans for the Christmas airfield suggests that the procedure of dealing primarily with representatives in London did not work too well. On 30 October 1941 the American Ambassador in London wired the Secretary of State that the Colonial Office had cabled the New Zealand government requesting them to instruct their Consul General in Washington to approach the State Department directly on the question. The American Embassy in London felt that unnecessary delay would result from dealing with New Zealand through the British Foreign Office and Colonial Office and then relaying the information to Washington.
- After sending this message, the Embassy received a communication from Foreign Secretary Eden suggesting a different procedure. The New Zealand government by 30 October had informed the American Consul General at Wellington that it would cooperate in the establishment of air bases along the route. Eden therefore suggested that the U. S. government communicate further with the New Zealand government through the Consul General at Wellington.
- The American Minister at Canberra, meanwhile, had been informed by the Consul General that New Zealand would cooperate, and that the Chief of the Air Staff at Wellington should be contacted by U. S. Army officers. This information was forwarded to the Secretary of State on 30 October. Thus, through several channels the State Department learned of New Zealand's attitude. But the information had to be further transmitted to the War Department and thence to the commander of the Hawaiian Department, and this process was necessarily time-consuming. Telg. #66, American Minister, Canberra, to S/State, 30 Oct. 41; telg. #5175, American Embassy, London, to S/State, 30 Oct. 41; telg. #5180, American Embassy, London, to S/State, 31 Oct. 41; radg. #334, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 1 Nov. 41, *ibid.*

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34. Telg. #5115, London to S/State, 26 Oct. 41; radg. #250, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 3 Nov. 41, ibid.
 35. Telg. #22, Noumea to S/State, 22 Oct. 41; memo for TAG by AAG, 24 Oct. 41; radg. #296, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 25 Oct. 41; telg. (unnumbered), Wellington to S/State, 3 Nov. 41; ltr., Short to Saunders, 17 Nov. 41, ibid.
 36. The unit history of the 804th Engineer Battalion (Aviation) names Lt. William R. Ellis as the officer who commanded a detachment of 46 enlisted men sent to Canton on 3 November. History, 804th Engr. Bn. (Avn.), VII AFSC.
 37. The Navy also released the dredge Holland from work in Pearl Harbor. It was boxed for ocean travel and left Honolulu on 20 November in tow of a commercial tug. Ltr., Short to Dist. Engr., 4 Nov. 41; ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Additional Air Routes, Hawaii to Philippines," in Horn Book.
 38. Again, the unit history of the 804th Engineer Battalion gives figures which are slightly different from those reported by General Short for the number of men included in the detachment sent to Christmas Island. According to the history, the detachment was composed of five officers and 140 enlisted men under the command of Maj. James A. Ostrand, Jr. Ibid.; history, 804th Engr. Bn. (Avn.), VII AFSC.
 39. Sverdrup was accompanied by Major Robinson, the Assistant District Engineer, who was to visit New Caledonia and New Zealand in order to establish the necessary liaison on engineering matters with the local governments. Ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Additional Air Routes, Hawaii to Philippines," in Horn Book.
 40. Ibid.
 41. It was not until 5 December that the War Department requested information from General Short as to the nature of the agreements between the Australian government and the High Commissioner and between the Australian government and American Army officials for airfield work on New Caledonia. The U. S. Consul at Noumea had informed the State Department on 1 December of the High Commissioner's attitude. State Department officials were preparing to discuss the matter with Free French representatives in Washington immediately upon receipt of General Short's reply to the inquiry of 5 December. Memo for TAG by AAG, 24 Oct. 41; telg. #22, Noumea to S/State, 22 Oct. 41, in Horn Book; radg. #521, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 5 Dec. 41, in AG 580.82 Survey of Islands.
 42. Ltr., Short to Saunders, 17 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.

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43. Some consideration apparently was given to by-passing New Caledonia on the South Pacific route. In an airmail letter to General Arnold received on 21 November, General Martin stated: "It is planned to hop from the landing field at Suva direct to Townsville which is about 1,900 miles with a large target at the destination to shoot at." But in all of the correspondence of General Short and the District Engineer relative to development of the route, there is no indication that a base was not desired between the Fijis and Australia; and considerable emphasis was placed on the preparation of a large field on New Caledonia, once diplomatic clearance had been received. Memo for Marshall by Arnold, 21 Nov. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
44. Ltr., Short to Saunders, 17 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
45. Equipment purchased in the Hawaiian Islands was to be supplemented by equipment sent from the United States. On 14 November the Secretary of War directed that eight complete radio sets (SCR-197) and other items be diverted from AAF tactical units and be made available at San Francisco not later than 1 December 1941, for shipment by water transportation to Nandi, Noumea, Townsville, Darwin, Ambon, Lae (in lieu of Port Moresby), Rabaul and Sandoeng. R&A, Oper. Div. to Mat. Div., 14 Nov. 41, in AAG 400, Hawaii.
46. Ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Additional Air Routes, Hawaii to Philippines," in Horn Book.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Radg. #811, Short to TAG, 12 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
50. Proposed memo for Arnold by Col. O. S. Ferson, 14 Nov. 41, ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Radg. #378, TAG to CW, Haw. Dept., 11 Nov. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
53. Radg. #849, Short to TAG, 15 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
54. Ibid.
55. Ltr., C/10 to C/S, 21 Nov. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
56. Radg. #439, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 25 Nov. 41, in Horn Book.
57. No copy of the second directive has been found in AAF files, nor has any reference to it been found other than in this message from General Short.

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58. The officer who made this survey of American Samoa had also paid a visit to British Samoa, accompanied by a party of naval officers from Futuila, American Samoa. Without making proper diplomatic arrangements in advance, the group landed at British Samoa for the purpose of making visual surveys for a possible airfield. Permission was then granted by the acting administrator of the island. But New Zealand authorities promptly complained to the State Department that the landing without permission had been incorrect and had embarrassed the government of New Zealand. General Short acknowledged on 21 November that the complaint was "undoubtedly correct." The Hawaiian Air Force officer had radioed General Short from American Samoa requesting permission to visit British Samoa in company with Navy officers. In granting the request General Short assumed that satisfactory arrangements had been made with authorities on British Samoa. He informed the War Department on 21 November that he was notifying Air Commodore Saunders of the oversight and, further, that he was strictly complying with War Department instructions on diplomatic procedure. Telg. (unnumbered), Wellington to S/State, 7 Nov. 41; radg. #854, Short to TAG, 21 Nov. 41, in Horn Book; memo for Stewart, State Dept., by Lt. Col. J. G. Taylor, 10 Nov. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
59. Radg. #960, Short to TAG, 27 Nov. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
60. P&R, AAFD to A-4, 26 Nov. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes; radg. #444, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 26 Nov. 41; memo for Sec., General Staff, from WPD, 8 Dec. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
61. Ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Defense Problems on Outlying Air Bases," in Horn Book.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.; ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Additional Air Routes, Hawaii to Philippines," in Horn Book.
64. Admiral Bloch further remarked that in his conversations with Army officials in Hawaii he found that "they have rather expansive ideas about these bases" and he felt that it was "all due to the fact that they haven't taken the beating that we have in getting men to go and work on these places and in getting harbors where we can land our stuff, etc." Ltr., Adm. C. C. Bloch to "Betty" [Adm. H. O. Stark], 14 Nov. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
65. In regard to claims on Christmas Island, General Short expressed an opinion which differed from that expressed by the Navy in the Joint Board meeting of 28 November. Contrary to believing that the British would push their claim to the island after the war, General Short felt that with the existence of the prior joint claim on Christmas and with the construction of an airfield on the island,

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The American claim became paramount. Ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Defense Problems on Outlying Bases," in Horn Book.

66. Ibid.

67. Ltr., Short to TAG, 22 Nov. 41, "Aerodrome on New Caledonia," in Horn Book.

68. This message was read by Admiral Kimrel before General Short sent it to the War Department. Encl. #1018, Short to TAG, 3 Dec. 41, ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. A medical detachment of one officer and 10 enlisted men with necessary supplies had already been sent from Oahu to Canton and Christmas. Ltr., Exec., CCAG, to CG, Haw. Dept., 19 Nov. 41; 1st ind., CG, Haw. Dept. to C/AC, 5 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.

71. Ibid.

72. Only a reference to this letter, not the letter itself, was found in AAF files. The date of dispatch was not included in the reference. RSR, Arnold to Olds, 17 Dec. 41, in EAG Bulk 361, Air Routes, 12/9/41.

73. Ltr., Short to Arnold, 6 Dec. 41, ibid.

74. Ibid.

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1. R&R, Oper. Div. to Comd. Div., 13 Dec. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes; R&R, Oper. Div. to AWPD, 13 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.
2. Radg. #1114, Short to TAG, 13 Dec. 41, ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. In reply to the War Department inquiry of 5 December, General Short reported on 10 December that his agreement with the Australians included their supervision of immediate improvement at Tontouta and work at Plaines des Gaiacs, using Australian and American skilled labor and native unskilled labor. Payment of native labor and other local costs were to be met by the Australians, who would be reimbursed by the United States. Radg. #1131, Short to TAG, 10 Dec. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
5. On 9 December the State Department took up the matter with Adrian Tixier, Free French Commissioner in Washington, and expressed the view that "the urgency of the situation" could best be served if the High Commissioner in Noumea were requested to permit the Australians and Americans to proceed with airfield construction on New Caledonia. Tixier agreed to communicate immediately with the High Commissioner in this regard. Incl. 1 (memo, S/State to S/W, 11 Dec. 41), R&R, Intell. Div. to Oper. Div., 16 Dec. 41, in AAG 600, East Indies.
6. Radg. #1179, Short to TAG, 14 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.
7. Incl. 1, R&R, Intell. Div. to Oper. Div., 16 Dec. 41, in AAG 600, East Indies; radg. #1131, Short to TAG, 10 Dec. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands; R&R, Intell. Div. to Oper. Div., 15 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.
8. This task force, under the command of Brig. Gen. Alexander H. Patch, arrived in New Caledonia in March 1942. AAF Historical Studies: No. 9, The AAF in Australia to the Summer of 1942, pp. 28, 45, 107.
9. R&R, C/AS to OGAO, 15 Dec. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
10. R&R, Oper. Div. to Mil. Pers. Div., 23 Dec. 41; R&R, Oper. Div. to C/AS, 24 Dec. 41; ltr., OGAO to COSigO, 24 Dec. 41; memo for Communications files by Maj. Lloyd K. Watnee, 24 Dec. 41, in Horn Book.
11. The Division Engineer observed that Sverdrup had performed an outstanding service and had secured "cordial and extremely helpful cooperation from the governments concerned." Ltr., C/Engrs. to C/AAF, 26 Dec. 41, ibid.

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12. The radio equipment weighed 900 tons. General Short promised to furnish shipping space for the equipment and assistance in erection as soon as practicable. Radg. #1123, Short to TAG, 10 Dec. 41, in AAG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
13. Radg. #1196, Short to TAG, 16 Dec. 41; radg. #698, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 17 Dec. 41, *ibid.*; ltr., C/Engrs. to C/AAF, 26 Dec. 41, in Horn book.
14. General Tinker came to the Hawaiian Department from a position as commander of the 111 Interceptor Command of the Third Air Force, with headquarters at Drew Field, Fla. N. Y. Times, 18 Dec. 41.
15. This action followed a new precedent set in September 1941 when Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, an Air Corps officer, had become the first airman to head Army defense forces in the Cariboean area. *Ibid.*
16. General Emmons made no mention of the probability of enemy attack on Canton. The Intelligence Division of the Air Corps, however, noted on 17 December that the island would probably soon be placed under attack from the Gilbert Islands, where the Japanese were reported to have seized two islands for bases. Memo for Gen. Scanlon, A-2, from Intell. Div., 17 Dec. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
17. General MacArthur also reported at this time that relatively short-range fighter aircraft could be ferried from Townsville to Darwin, thence to Koepong, Makassar, Balikpapan, Tarakan, Zamboanga, and thence to Manila. *Ibid.*
18. Radg. #1237, Emmons to TAG, 18 Dec. 41; radg. #1257, Emmons to TAG, 19 Dec. 41, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
19. R&R, AOFIC to C/AS, 22 Dec. 41, in AAG 361, Air Routes.
20. *Ibid.*, penciled notations.
21. R&R, A-4 to AAG, 2 Jan. 42, in Horn Book.
22. Radg. #1425, Ft. Snafter to C/Engrs., 28 Dec. 41; R&R, Oper. Div. to AOFIC, 30 Dec. 41, *ibid.*
23. AAF Historical Studies: Co. 9, The AAF in Australia to the Summer of 1942, p. 8.
24. Radg. #1566, Emmons to TAG, 6 Jan. 42; radg. #964, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 10 Jan. 42, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands.
25. R&R, A-3 to A-1, 2 Jan. 42, in Horn Book.

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26. Radg. #1659, Memos to TAG, 12 Jan. 42; radg. #1083, TAG to CG, Haw. Dept., 22 Jan. 42, in AG 580.82, Survey of Islands; R&R, AWPD to Oper. Div., 11 Feb. 42; "Information obtained informally from Lt. Col. Anderson, AWPD," 14 Feb. 42, in Horn Book.
27. Ltr., Lt. Col. Walter C. Sweeney, Jr., to CG, 11th Bomb. Gp., 3 Feb. 42; 3d ind., Hq. MAF to CG, Haw. Dept., 13 Feb. 42; AF-7-SU-OP, in AFSDO files.
28. Radg. #693, Div. Engr. to C/Engrs., 24 Jan. 42; radg. #712, Div. Engr. to C/Engrs., 26 Jan. 42, in AAG 600, East Indies; interview by Lt. Col. W. F. Craven with Maj. J. C. Minahan, AC/AS-2, Hq. AAF, 8 Jan. 46.
29. "Information obtained informally from Lt. Col. Anderson, AWPD," 14 Feb. 42, in Horn Book.
30. Ltr., Lt. Col. Walter C. Sweeney, Jr., to CG, 11th Bomb. Gp., 3 Feb. 42, AF-7-SU-OP, in AFSDO files.
31. R&R, AFAPC to AFABI, 13 June 42, in AAG 000-800, Misc., East Indies.
32. On 12 June 1942 the Pacific Sector was redesignated the 25th AAF Ferrying Wing, which in turn was redesignated the South Pacific Wing when the Ferrying Command became the Air Transport Command on 1 July 1942. In December 1942 control of the Pacific routes was divided: a new wing was established with headquarters at Hickam Field and was designated the Pacific Wing, while the South Pacific Wing was redesignated the West Coast Wing, its headquarters remaining at Hamilton Field. For further administrative history of the ATC in the Pacific, see the history of the Pacific Division, ATC, "The Flight Plan," in AFSDO files.
- For a detailed report on facilities along the South Pacific route as of late March 1942, see letter, Brig. Gen. G. L. Tinker to the commanding general of the Hawaiian Department, 5 April 1942, AF-7-SU, 20 July 1939, item #10, in AFSDO files.

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This study is based primarily on correspondence and other materials found in the Classified Records Section of Headquarters, AAF (cited AAG with decimal) and in the files of The Adjutant General (cited AG with decimal). The latter provided material which was especially useful for the early period of the study.

The largest single collection of documents on the subject is the material gathered by Col. Charles A. Horn while a member of the staff of AC/AS, Operations, Commitments, and Requirements. This material, which is on file in the AAF Historical Office, covers the period of actual construction of the South Pacific route. The nature and period of the subject has precluded extensive use of unit histories, but a few miscellaneous records forwarded by historical officers of the Seventh Air Force have proved helpful. These records are filed in the AAF Historical Office.

Perhaps the most unsatisfactory aspect of the writing of this study has been the absence of any complete collection of radio and cable messages. Such messages have been found scattered throughout the AAF and AGO files, and it is certain that many pertinent communications have not been located.

Files in several other offices of AAF Headquarters were consulted: the Secretary of the Air Staff, the Library Branch of AC/AS-2, and the Office Services Branch of AC/AS-5; but these files were found to contain no additional material on the subject.

No attempt has been made to provide a thorough coverage of published sources.

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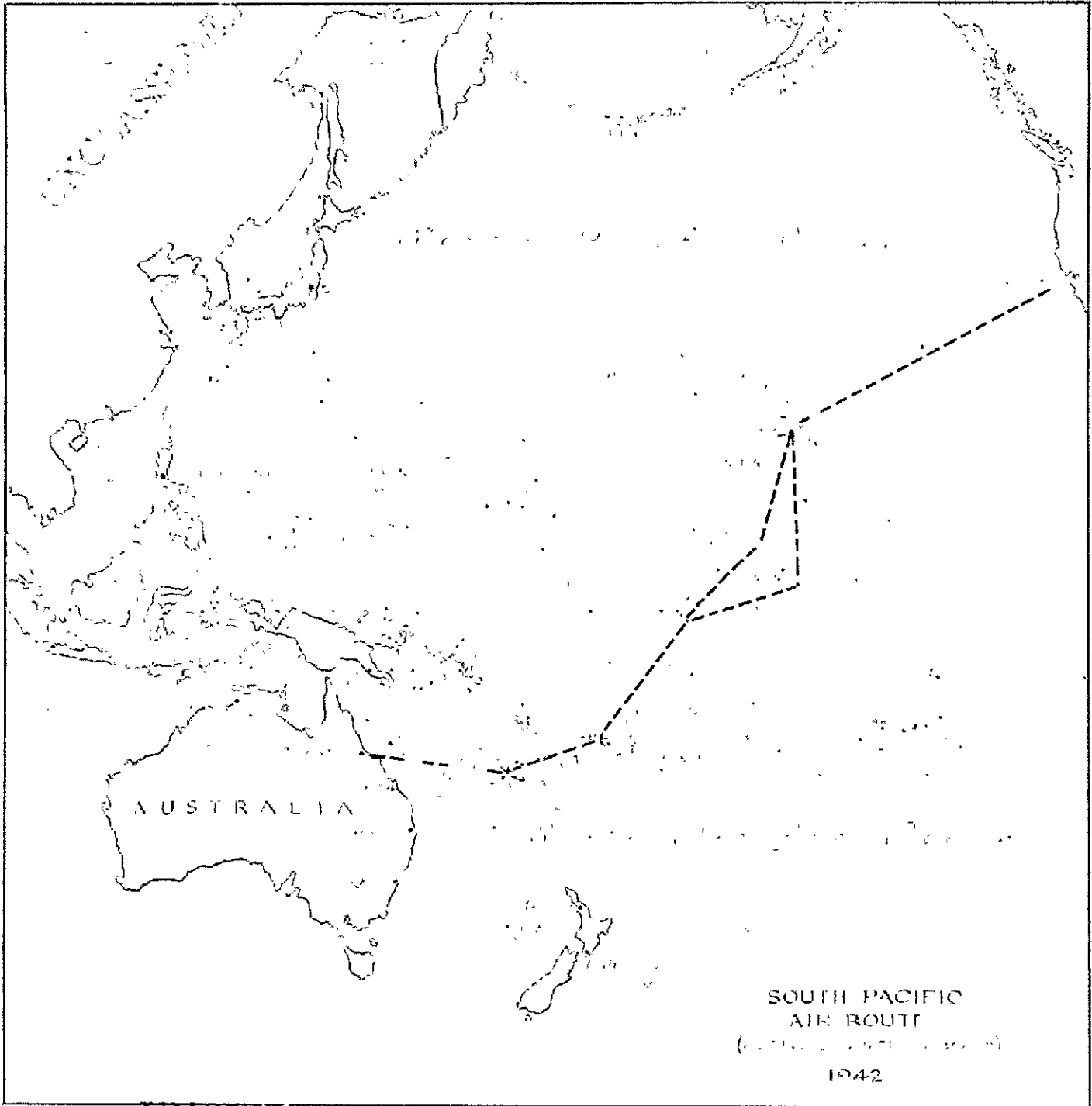
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