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# ADMIRAL ERNEST J. KING

## AND

### THE STRATEGY FOR VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

*Even though he was often described as being ruthless and abrasive to both subordinates and contemporaries, Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King was eminently successful as both Chief of Naval Operations and Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, during World War II. His skill, forcefulness, and self-confidence were essential elements to his success. In his effort to insure victory in the Pacific, he encountered several obstacles, some of which resulted more from conflicting personalities than from differences in strategic concepts. Clark G. Reynolds examines some of those obstacles and describes how they were overcome.*

by

Professor Clark G. Reynolds

American naval policy and doctrine from 1900 to World War II was oriented almost exclusively to the Pacific and Japan (save for World War I), an orientation thoroughly adhered to by Ernest J. King at least from the time he earned his aviator's wings in 1926. Unlike his interwar contemporaries in the Army who were either apathetic or pessimistic about a war in the Pacific,<sup>1</sup> King and the Navy in fleet maneuvers and theoretical studies fashioned a naval strategy designed to defeat Japan, the ORANGE enemy. King himself therefore developed a consistency of thought and singlemindedness of purpose which during World War II his peers and detractors alike found maddening.

In the fleet problems of 1931 and 1932, as captain of the aircraft carrier *Lexington*, King fought mock naval battles in the waters of the Galapagos

and Hawaiian islands, respectively. In 1932-1933 he was gamed a cross-ocean offensive against Japan as a senior student at the Naval War College. While Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, 1933-1936, as a rear admiral, King was Fleet Commander Adm. Joseph Mason Reeves' choice to command the U.S. Fleet in the Pacific should war come. In the rank of vice admiral, first as Patrol Plane Commander then Carrier Commander in the Pacific during 1937-1939, King toured American island bases, participated in two fleet problems involving attacks on Pearl Harbor, and devised carrier tactics. And while a member of the General Board, 1939-1941, Admiral

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<sup>1</sup> Paper delivered to joint meeting, American Historical Association and the American Committee on the History of the Second World War, Atlanta, Ga., 30 December 1975.

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King studied Philippine defenses among many other Pacific-related problems.<sup>2</sup>

It is no wonder then that, as wartime Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, King should finally apply his—and the Navy's—vast preparations for war in the Pacific. As Michael Howard has observed,

That Pacific operations should occupy the principal place in his mind and heart was inevitable. On his shoulders rested the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of a war unprecedented in complexity and scope against an adversary whose skill and ferocity had astounded the world . . . ; a war, moreover, to which America's allies could make only a marginal contribution.<sup>3</sup>

As a global maritime strategist and naval leader, Admiral King had no equal in the United States, British, or any other navy during World War II, which helps to explain his supreme self-confidence and dogged personality. Indeed, no admiral in American history had ever been faced with such Herculean tasks before King, forcing the historian to look elsewhere for a comparable figure, namely to Britain's Admiral Lord John Fisher. As First Sea Lord, 1904-1910, Fisher fashioned the modern Royal Navy and returned to lead it early in World War I, all with experience, genius, and determination. Arthur Marder's description of "Jackie" Fisher could equally befit "Ernie" King:

. . . too assertive in his likes and dislikes of others and [who] could brook no opposition to his plans. In his zeal for the efficiency of the Navy he was no respecter of persons. . . . [He was] indiscreet, harsh, abusive, revengeful and increasingly autocratic. In a word, he was a very hard person to get along with, if one did not happen to agree with him.<sup>4</sup>

The British, in fact, appreciated both sides of King's disposition, the profes-

sional and the rugged. Said Field-Marshal Sir John Dill early in 1944, "King does not get any easier as time goes on. I am ashamed of a rather sneaking regard for him. . . ." <sup>5</sup> Admiral Cunningham, King's British counterpart as First Sea Lord, saw King as

the right man in the right place, though one could hardly call him a good cooperator. . . . A man of immense capacity and ability, quite ruthless in his methods. . . . He was tough and liked to be considered tough, and at times became rude and overbearing. . . . Not content with fighting the enemy, he was usually fighting someone on his own side as well.<sup>6</sup>

As "the forceful and unchallenged professional head of the navy," John Ehrman has observed, the difficult King "brought to the Joint Chiefs of Staff a clarity and sharpness in argument which would otherwise have been lacking" and which thus complemented the more patient and calm General Marshall, his opposite number in the Army.<sup>7</sup>

Admiral King's strategic genius lay in his general appreciation of the global dimensions of World War II, namely, the need to speed up the war in Europe in order to enhance operations in the Pacific, and in particular the nature of Pacific geography and how a strategy of concentration would defeat Japan. This historical policy—in which the enemy would be defeated piecemeal—had been practiced or theorized by the maritime British from Pitt the Elder in the Seven Years' War to Corbett's classic book of 1911 and Liddell Hart's "indirect approach" of the 1920's. First, the navy would isolate the enemy's homeland by commerce warfare and blockade to wreck the economy, would fight naval engagements to destroy the enemy's fleet, and would seize or neutralize the enemy's overseas possessions and strongholds. Second, the maritime nation would support, supply, and encourage a major continental ally for its great

manpower reservoir by which its armies could then directly defeat the enemy on land.<sup>8</sup>

For the first part of his strategy of concentration against Japan, King envisioned and then masterminded a Navy-led drive into the Japanese mandated islands, forcing the Japanese to battle and destruction and culminating in the area of the Luzon Strait from which the blockade of Japan could begin. He had foreseen such a drive, focused on the Central Pacific from Hawaii to the Philippines via the Marianas, in his 1932 Naval War College analysis, a position in complete accord with the Army-Navy War Plans ORANGE and later RAINBOW FIVE.<sup>9</sup> In March 1942 he projected the initial basic strategy over the next 2 years as the establishment of "strongpoints" to protect Allied communications to Australia and to attack those of Japan via the New Hebrides, Solomon, and Bismarck island groups.<sup>10</sup> At the Allied strategic conferences between January and August 1943, he directed Allied Pacific strategic policy in establishing the Central Pacific route of the Gilberts, Marshalls, Carolines, and Marianas to the Philippines and the Chinese coast. King also favored the concurrent South-Southwest Pacific drive against Rabaul and New Guinea, and his preference to bypass Rabaul eventually prevailed; but this theater remained secondary in his thinking and in fact. In March 1944, Part One of King's strategy of concentration became JCS policy: the "first major objective in the war against Japan will be the vital Luzon-Formosa-China coast area."<sup>11</sup>

When this was achieved, King believed that Formosa first rather than the Philippines should be taken as a necessary prelude to landing in China, but this possibility was scuttled in September 1944 by the lack of available troops for such an operation (and probably also because of General MacArthur's pro-Philippines stance).<sup>12</sup> In any case,

King believed that an invasion of Japan proper would be unnecessary and that the blockade (and aerial bombing) would suffice, strengthened by bases along the Chinese coast.<sup>13</sup> By this strategy, King's navy and attached ground and air forces destroyed Japan's defenses in the Pacific and thus isolated the homeland by the summer of 1945.

The other part of King's strategy of concentration, the defeat of Japan's major ground forces by Allied manpower, emerged in the form of China. Throughout the war King argued that the key to a successful attack upon the Japanese homeland was the geographical position and the manpower of China. . . . Just as Russia warranted support to drain off German strength, China had to be kept in the war so as to occupy on the mainland of Asia heavy Japanese land forces and some Japanese air forces. . . . Chinese manpower [was] the ultimate land force in defeating the Japanese on the continent of Asia. . . .<sup>14</sup>

To keep China in the war, King placed great emphasis on the projected but unfulfilled British operations into Burma (ANAKIM), even to the point of offering amphibious craft and aircraft from the Central Pacific during 1943.<sup>15</sup> When this failed to mature for lack of British interest and resources, King shifted his attention to projected American operations against Japan from bases to be seized along the Chinese coast, which would also complement his blockade program and underscore America's political commitment to China.<sup>16</sup>

King welcomed the projected Russian entry into the war in the Pacific, especially when the Chinese armies retreated late in 1944, but he continued to base his hopes on China.<sup>17</sup> In any case, this aspect of King's strategy of concentration succeeded, though only partly due to his indirect influence, as

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the Nationalist Chinese Army tied down the Japanese forces in southern China, the Chinese Communist Army neutralized those Japanese troops in the north, and the Russian Army rolled over Japanese forces in Manchuria in August 1945.

In realizing this strategy for victory in the Pacific, however, King faced five major obstacles throughout the war which consumed a great deal of his time and energy and against which he therefore exhibited great impatience.

The first obstacle was the insistence of British and U.S. Army leaders for more resources than King thought necessary to defeat Hitler first at the serious expense of the separate war against Japan. He urged a more vigorous prosecution of the war against Germany and Italy so he could maintain relentless pressure on Japan. But believing the Army had always expected to direct American strategy in wartime, King argued at length over most Army proposals and disputed such decisions as the Sicily landings as "merely doing something just for the sake of doing something."<sup>18</sup> When the British seemed indecisive on ETO plans for 1942, King and Marshall bluffed them with a proposal to shift idle American troops from Europe to the Pacific, a threat not lost on General Eisenhower who thus kept his offensive going in late 1942 lest he lose men and equipment to the hungry Pacific theater. But King's deep respect for and close working relationship with General Marshall overcame this obstacle, with Marshall concentrating most of his attention on the ETO and China-Burma-India (CBI) theater and King on the Pacific.<sup>19</sup>

King's second obstacle was Douglas MacArthur, who resented King's and thus the Navy's strategic leadership in the Pacific. MacArthur, in the words of his biographer, "never fully comprehended the principles of modern naval warfare,"<sup>20</sup> leading King to insist that MacArthur never have full operational

control over Navy vessels, from the summer of 1942 when the issue was carriers for air support to the spring of 1945 and amphibious shipping for the invasion of Japan. Again, thanks to Marshall's touch, King and MacArthur stayed at arm's length throughout the war; compromises were hammered out over command relationships; and King only lost out to MacArthur on the question of the Philippines over Formosa.<sup>21</sup>

King's third obstacle was internal, namely, the several factions and strong personalities within the Navy who influenced Pacific strategy. As Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, King exerted direct control over the Pacific element of this fleet and its commander, Admiral Nimitz, meeting with him frequently during the war to agree on strategy and policy and occasionally—because of his impatience—ordering Nimitz to handle the fleet in a certain way.<sup>22</sup> In strategy, King not only solicited Nimitz' views but those especially of two other Pacific admirals, Richmond Kelly Turner and Forrest Sherman.<sup>23</sup> In November 1944 King strengthened his direct participation by shifting his Atlantic Fleet Commander, Adm. Royal E. Ingersoll, to the Pacific as Commander Western Sea Frontier and Deputy Cominch-Deputy CNO-Deputy Cincpac.<sup>24</sup> Logistically, King personally set landing craft and aircraft production schedules for the Pacific as well as the ETO.<sup>25</sup> In the submarine war, King established submarine base areas and quotas as well as target priorities, and in fleet surface tactics he influenced carrier operating formations.<sup>26</sup>

In personnel, King established the policy of aviator chiefs of staff for nonaviator commanders and vice versa;<sup>27</sup> ordered reductions in the size of amphibious and submarine staffs;<sup>28</sup> "strenuously opposed" "spot" promotions;<sup>29</sup> and severely punished officers he disliked or otherwise opposed.

Among the more celebrated cases were Comdr. "Mort" Seligman, executive officer of the *Lexington*, who was summarily retired for inadvertently leaking vital code-breaking knowledge to the press after the Battle of the Coral Sea;<sup>30</sup> Capt. "Carl" Moore, Admiral Spruance's chief of staff, who was passed over for flag rank for apparently failing to measure up to King's standards;<sup>31</sup> and Admiral "Jack" Towers, Nimitz' deputy and air type commander, who King kept from going to sea out of resentment over Towers' ambitions to gain control of Pacific Fleet operations for himself and the air admirals.<sup>32</sup> King simply, for better or for worse, controlled flag personnel and their assignments, leading more than one unhappy admiral to utter Gilbert and Sullivan's line: "Just stay at your desk and never go to sea, and you will be ruler of the King's Navee"—Ernie's of course.<sup>33</sup>

The fourth obstacle to King's Pacific strategy was both internal and political—Britain's insistence on participating in the main naval operations against Japan late in the war. Since King regarded the Pacific war as America's show, he resented any British attempt to dictate strategy, much less to participate importantly in the fighting. King accepted the fact that Britain would reassert its hegemony in postwar Burma and Malaya, and he hoped the British would confine their wartime operations to the CBI theater and Indian Ocean, but he was suspicious of their possible postwar designs on the Dutch East Indies. Operationally, the British had inadequate logistical doctrines and facilities for the far-ranging operations of the Pacific theater, and King felt no compunction to allow the new British Pacific Fleet to use American bases and thus become a drain on them and possibly also on operations.<sup>34</sup> In this battle, however, Admiral King failed utterly, for in September 1944, at the second Quebec conference, President Roosevelt

informed Prime Minister Churchill that the British Fleet would participate in the final operations against Japan. In the words of General Ismay, "The British delegation heaved a sigh of relief, and the story went the rounds that Admiral King went into a swoon and had to be carried out. . . ."<sup>35</sup>

King's final obstacle, and the most important one, was, of course, the Imperial Japanese Navy, the defeat of which he superintended in his capacity as Cominch-CNO. The Central Pacific campaign, "in size and brilliance of execution," says Arthur Bryant, the "rival . . . of Trafalgar,"<sup>36</sup> had been developed for at least 10 years in King's mind before he first brought it to his peers on the JCS and Combined Chiefs of Staff. With single-minded determination, he persistently kept up the Allied pressure on Japan and never lost sight of the prime objectives of (1) destroying Japanese lines of communication for the

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## BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Professor Clark G. Reynolds received his undergraduate degree from the University of California and his master's and doctorate degrees from Duke University. He was an assistant professor of history at

the U.S. Naval Academy from 1964 until 1968 when he became an associate professor of history and later professor of history at the University of Maine where he is currently teaching. Professor Reynolds has written many articles and several books on naval and maritime history, among them *The Fast Carriers: The Forging of an Air Navy* (1968) which was recognized by the *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* as the naval book of the year 1969 and as one of the 10 best English-language naval books of the century 1873-1973. His most recent book is *Command of the Sea: The History and Strategy of Maritime Empires* (1974). He is the secretary-treasurer pro-tem of the North American Society for Oceanic History.

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eventual blockade and (2) attacking via the Marianas and Luzon bottleneck, both of which led to the battles that destroyed the Japanese Navy, naval air forces, and merchant marine—the key prerequisites for the defeat of Japan.

If his personality sometimes got in the way of others, what does it matter? No sane person has ever said that war is

humane, civil, or an arena for the mild of heart. Admiral King saw what had to be done, and he did it in the most forceful possible terms. He was the right man in the right place at the right time—and with the right ideas—to direct the maritime strategy of concentration for victory in the greatest naval war in history.

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### NOTES

1. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 246, 259; and Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall, Vol. I, Education of a General, 1880-1939* (New York: Viking, 1963), p. 347. For the U.S. Army's traditional lack of interest in the Pacific, see Richard D. Challener, *Admirals, Generals, and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 23-26; Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), pp. 80-82, 102-107, and 121ff; and Clark G. Reynolds, "American Strategic History and Doctrines: A Reconsideration," *Military Affairs*, December 1975, n. 40 and passim. Rear Adm. Raymond D. Tarbuck, USN, wartime naval liaison officer on General MacArthur's staff, succinctly summarized Army ignorance of naval operations thus: "It is surprising how little the Army officers at GHQ know about water. . . . They treat even the smallest stream as an obstacle, but naval minds think of it as a highway." Quoted in D. Clayton James, *The Years of MacArthur, Vol. II, 1941-1945* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1975), pp. 358-359.

2. E.J. King and W.M. Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King* (New York: Norton, 1952), pp. 220ff, 228ff, 234ff, 264-265, 274, 279ff, 286-287, 303, 437 and n.

3. Michael E. Howard, *Grand Strategy, Vol. IV: August 1942-September 1943* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1972), p. 243. King, alone among the top American and British wartime commanders so preoccupied with the Pacific, was amused by the "not strictly pertinent high-priced thought" of persons who concerned themselves with Pacific strategy only very late in the war. King and Whitehill, p. 598.

4. Arthur J. Marder, *The Anatomy of Sea Power: British Naval Policy, 1880-1905* (London: Putnam, 1941), p. 394. See also Richard Hough, *First Sea Lord: An Authorized Biography of Admiral Lord Fisher* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), pp. 76ff. King replaced Admiral Harold R. Stark as CNO early in 1942 because, in the words of Robert E. Sherwood, Stark "lacked the quickness and the ruthlessness of decision required in wartime," whereas King "lacked neither." *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper, 1948), p. 164.

5. "He has built up a great Navy but he does not trust us a yard. . . ." Dill to Field-Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, 4 February 1944, quoted in Arthur Bryant, *Triumph in the West: A History of the War Years Based on the Diaries of Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of Imperial General Staff* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959), p. 106.

6. "He was offensive, and I told him what I thought of his method of advancing allied unity and amity. We parted friends." Cunningham of Hyndhope, *A Sailor's Odyssey*, vol. II (London: Hutchinson, 1961), p. 134.

7. John Ehrman, *Grand Strategy, Vol. VI: October 1944-August 1945* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1956), p. 343. E.B. Potter has observed in a recent exchange on King in the *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*: "He really was a genius, respected for his ability, but genuinely loved by few." April 1975, pp. 75-77, for this and others opinions, notably Adm. J.R. Tate's denunciation of King. (One can only surmise the reaction of King, an inveterate ladies man himself, to then Captain Tate's impregnating of a famous Russian motion picture actress in 1945 in an incident recently publicized with the visit of the offspring, a Russian actress in her own right, with Tate in this country.) See also Harry Sanders, "King of the Oceans," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1974, pp. 52-59, and J.J. Clark, "Navy Sundowner Par Excellence," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, June 1971, pp. 54-59. Marshall's biographer describes King's "bleakness of manner and rudeness in debate" and that he was "extremely jealous of the interests of the Navy." Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall, Vol. II, Ordeal and Hope, 1939-1942* (New York: Viking, 1966), p. 373. Pogue also recounts other

British commanders' opinions of King in George C. Marshall, *Vol. III: Organizer of Victory, 1943-1945* (New York: Viking, 1973), p. 7. King opposed the appointment of a military adviser to the President as "detrimental to the interests of the Navy," meaning weakening King's direct access to the Commander in Chief, but the appointment of Admiral Leahy to that role made King change his mind. William D. Leahy, *I Was There* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1950), p. 96.

8. Sir Julian Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1911), pp. 61-73; B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2d ed. (New York: Praeger, 1967), pp. 18-19; and Clark G. Reynolds, *Command of the Sea: The History and Strategy of Maritime Empires* (New York: Morrow, 1974), pp. 235-242, 290-291, 304-307, 413-416, 447-450. King never tired of urging his colleagues on the Allied CCS and American JCS to consider the three Axis Powers "as a whole"; without such global strategic planning, he said at Quebec (QUADRANT conference) in August 1943, operations in the Pacific were being hampered. King and Whitehill, pp. 483-484.

9. King and Whitehill, pp. 236-239, 242.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 383, recounting King to Marshall, 2 March 1942. In November he tried to bypass the central and northern Solomons altogether in favor of the Admiralties, but his theater and area commanders Nimitz and Halsey would not agree to it. Louis Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of Military History, 1962), pp. 290-304, 370-371.

11. JCS to MacArthur and Nimitz, Serial 022941, 2 March 1944, quoted in George C. Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer: The Story of Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner*, 2 vols. (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Navy, 1972), vol. II, p. 857, also pp. 613, 855; Morton, pp. 382-384, 437-438, 443; Howard, IV, pp. 447-449; Ehrman, V, p. 432; Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1959), p. 191; Pogue, III, pp. 208, 251, 253, 255, 439; King and Whitehill, pp. 419, 438-439, 444, 481, 485, 532, 534. On King and the bypassing of the North Pacific, see Pogue, III, pp. 156-157; on his role in the decision to bypass Truk, see Clark G. Reynolds, *The Fast Carriers: The Forging of an Air Navy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 116-119, 141-143.

12. Robert R. Smith, "Luzon versus Formosa," in Kent Roberts Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of Military History, 1960), pp. 467-468, 473; Matloff, pp. 485-498.

13. King and Whitehill, pp. 575, 605n; Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 322-324, 351.

14. King and Whitehill, pp. 419-420, 362, and 541-542. Italics original. On 5 March 1942, King told President Roosevelt (quoted on pp. 384-385), "The chief sources of manpower for the United Nations are China, Russia, the U.S., and to less degree, the British Commonwealth." Also, pp. 436, 506, 534; and Matloff, p. 34. On his view of Russian manpower in Europe, see Howard, IV, pp. 253-255.

15. Pogue, III, p. 25; King and Whitehill, pp. 418-420, 430, 510.

16. King and Whitehill, pp. 432, 440, 524.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 430-431, 516, 524-525, 542, 562, 591, 606; Pogue, III, p. 158.

18. Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), p. 158, this being at Casablanca. "King's war is against the Japanese." Dill to Churchill, 15 July 1942, quoted in Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War, Vol. IV: The Hinge of Fate* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1950), p. 439.

19. Ambrose, p. 542; Pogue, II, pp. 340, 346, 372-373, 384, 387; King and Whitehill, pp. 367n, 390, 422, 442.

20. James, II, 359.

21. Pogue, II, pp. 255-256, 379-381; III, pp. 164-167, 169, 175, 206; Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of Military History, 1953), pp. 260-262; Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl, *The U.S. Marines and Amphibious War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 89-96; Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1943-1945* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of Military History, 1968), pp. 579, 581, 590, 592-593, 604-606. MacArthur spread gossip through his British liaison officer, Lieutenant-General Herbert Lumsden, early in 1944 "that King has finished serving his useful period, etc., etc." Brooke diary, 14 February 1944, quoted in Bryant, p. 106.

22. For example, King issued the bold Guadalcanal directive to Nimitz only 35 days in advance of the landings. "Only a great leader like Admiral King with great knowledge and great faith in his organization and the subordinates who were to lead their parts in it, could have issued such a preparatory order." Dyer, I, p. 259. King sometimes pressed Nimitz and Halsey to act more aggressively, as in February 1942 throughout the Pacific, August 1943 in the South Pacific,



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in January 1944 in the Marshalls, and in July 1944 in the Marianas. Dyer, I, pp. 244-245; King to Halsey, 3 August 1943, personal correspondence file, Classified Operational Archives, Division of Naval History; Thomas B. Buell, *The Quiet Warrior: A Biography of Admiral Raymond A. Spruance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), p. 212; and Dyer, II, pp. 827, 932. One of King's strongest rebukes of Nimitz was his post-Gilberts demand for greater details to be furnished King on amphibious operations. Gen. Holland M. Smith and Percy Finch, *Coral and Brass* (New York: Scribner, 1949), pp. 138-139. King would not yield to Army pressure to split Nimitz' dual Cincpac-Cincpoa command for logistical reasons during 1943 partly because it would have violated King's direct control as Cominch over Cincpac. Morton, p. 478; Leighton and Coakley, pp. 444-448. Because of King's right to shift his flag as Cominch to sea, Under-Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal in January 1944 tried, unsuccessfully, to get King out of Washington by having him assume direct command in the Pacific. Robert G. Albion and Robert H. Connery, *Forrestal and the Navy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 125-126.

23. Dyer, II, p. 1143. In debates on strategy between King's and Nimitz' staffs in Washington, King "was pretty ruthless, but he listened to Forrest Sherman and he was inclined to follow his advice. It was my impression that King wasn't listening much of the time when others were talking. He always leaned forward attentively when Forrest Sherman was talking." Capt. G. Willing Pepper, USNR (Ret.) of the wartime Cincpac staff, to the writer, 16 August 1966.

24. King and Whitehill, p. 581; Samuel Eliot Morison, *Victory in the Pacific* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), p. 157.

25. Howard, IV, p. 430; Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 229, 324. The inability of Army Service Forces to accommodate the long-jump Navy offensive in the Pacific helped to frustrate King's plans for Formosa in 1944. Leighton and Coakley, pp. 407-408, 413-415; Morton, pp. 492-493.

26. Clay Blair, Jr., *Silent Victory: The U.S. Submarine War Against Japan* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Lippincott, 1975), pp. 201-203, 306, 361, 474-475, 577, in which King is criticized for basing subs in Australia in 1942, for his target priorities of carriers and battleships over merchantmen, and for his unimaginative use of the submarines. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 29-30, 228, 233, and *passim*.

27. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 120, 233-234.

28. Dyer, I, pp. 211, 216; Blair, p. 813.

29. Pepper to writer, 16 August 1966, recounting the bitter but victorious battle of Admiral Towers against King for Pepper's spot promotion to lieutenant commander on the ComAirPac staff.

30. Recounted in Blair, pp. 258-260.

31. Buell, pp. 220-251. King apparently criticized Spruance himself for being too cautious after the Battle of Midway, but King's respect for Spruance's overall ability no doubt saved the latter, p. 158.

32. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 68-69, 233; King to Nimitz, 12 August 1943, personal correspondence, Classified Operational Archives, Division of Naval History. Also, King failed to have some of his own cronies break into high command in the Pacific, like Adm. Alva D. Bernhard. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, p. 91. See p. 385 for my favorable conclusion over King's role in creating the air Navy.

33. A variation of W.S. Gilbert's famous act I statement from "H.M.S. Pinafore," quoted by Rear Adm. Joseph C. Cronin, USN (Ret.), in reference to Adm. J.F. Shafroth, to the writer, 8 September 1965.

34. Howard, IV, pp. 243-253, 278, 283, 563-564; Ehrman, V, pp. 432-433, 451, 522-523; Pogue, III, p. 28; King and Whitehill, pp. 511, 611; Matloff, p. 495; Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, p. 302. In 1941-1942, King also showed great distrust of the Dutch in the war against Japan. King and Whitehill, p. 368n; Blair, p. 175.

35. "But this was an exaggeration." [Ismay Hastings], *The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay* (New York: Viking, 1960), p. 374.

36. Bryant, p. 27.

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