

# Australia's War in the Pacific 1943





# Putin's Wars

- Putin came to power as President at the end of 1999. Since then he has fought 5 wars:
- Second Chechen War
- Russo-Georgian War
- Russo-Ukrainian War
- Russian military Intervention in the Syrian Civil War
- Central African Republic Civil War



Putin with President Boris Yeltsin on 31 December 1999, when Yeltsin announced his resignation.

# Second Chechen War

- Major combat phase:
  - 26 August 1999 – 31 May 2000
- Insurgency phase:
  - 1 June 2000 – 16 April 2009
- Location
  - North Caucasus, mainly Chechnya and Dagestan
  - Parts of Georgia
  - Suicide attacks across Russia
- Result
  - Russian victory
  - Russia regained control over Chechnya, which had achieved de facto independence in the first Chechen War
  - Low-level insurgency until 2017





# Second Chechen War

- In August 1999, Islamist fighters from Chechnya infiltrated Russia's Dagestan region, declaring it an independent state and calling for holy war.
- During the initial campaign, Russian military and pro-Russian Chechen paramilitary forces faced Chechen separatists in open combat and seized the Chechen capital Grozny after a winter siege that lasted from December 1999 until February 2000.
- Russia established direct rule over Chechnya in May 2000 although Chechen militant resistance throughout the North Caucasus region continued to inflict heavy Russian casualties and challenge Russian political control over Chechnya for several years. Both sides carried out attacks against civilians.
- Russian casualties are around 7,500 (official Russian casualty figures) or about 14,000 according to the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers. Unofficial sources estimate a range of 25,000 to 50,000 dead or missing, mostly Chechen civilians.



Grozny, the capital city of Chechnya, in March 1995 during the Second Russo-Chechen War

# Russo-Georgian War

- The Russo-Georgian War was a war between Georgia, Russia and the Russian-backed self-proclaimed republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The war took place in August 2008 following a period of worsening relations between Russia and Georgia, both formerly constituent republics of the Soviet Union.
- Following the election of Putin and a pro-Western change of power in Georgia in 2003, relations between Russia and Georgia began to deteriorate, reaching a full diplomatic crisis by April 2008. From 1 August 2008, South Ossetian separatists shelled Georgian villages, with a sporadic response from Georgian troops in the area.
- On the evening of 7 August 2008 a new wave of South Ossetian attacks on Georgian villages occurred. This triggered the Georgian government into "restoring the constitutional order", and sending the Georgian Army to the South Ossetian conflict zone. Georgian troops took control of most of Tskhinvali, a separatist stronghold, in hours.



# Russo-Georgian War

- Russia accused Georgia of "aggression against South Ossetia", and launched a full-scale land, air and sea invasion of Georgia on 8 August which Russia called a "peace enforcement" operation. Russian and South Ossetian forces fought Georgian forces in and around South Ossetia for several days, until Georgian forces retreated.
- Russian and Abkhaz forces opened a second front by attacking the Kodori Gorge held by Georgia. Russian naval forces blockaded part of the Georgian coast. The Russian air force attacked targets beyond the conflict zone, in undisputed parts of Georgia.
- The South Ossetians destroyed most ethnic Georgian villages in South Ossetia and were responsible for an ethnic cleansing of Georgians. Russia recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia on 26 August and the Georgian government severed diplomatic relations with Russia. Russia mostly completed its withdrawal of troops from undisputed parts of Georgia on 8 October.
- Russian international relations were largely unharmed.



# Russo-Georgian War

- The failure of the Western security organisations to react swiftly to Russia's attempt to violently revise the borders of Georgia, an OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) country, revealed its deficiencies.
- The division between Western European and Eastern European states also became apparent over the relationship with Russia.
- Ukraine and other ex-Soviet countries received a clear message from the Russian leadership that the possible accession to NATO would cause a foreign incursion and the break-up of the country.
- Effective takeover of Abkhazia was also one of Russia's geopolitical goals.
- The construction of the EU-sponsored Nabucco pipeline linking Europe with Central Asian reserves through Transcaucasia was averted.



BTC pipeline (green) and planned Nabucco gas pipeline (tangerine)



# Russo-Ukrainian War

- In November 2013, a wave of large-scale protests erupted in response to President Yanukovych's sudden decision not to sign a political association and free trade agreement with the European Union, instead choosing closer ties to Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union.
- The Ukrainian parliament had overwhelmingly approved of finalizing the agreement with the EU.
- Russia had put pressure on Ukraine to reject it. These protests continued for months and their scope widened, with calls for the resignation of Yanukovych and the Azarov Government. Protesters opposed what they saw as widespread government corruption and abuse of power, the influence of oligarchs, police brutality, and violation of human rights in Ukraine. Repressive anti-protest laws fuelled further anger.
- In early 2014, clashes in Kyiv between protesters and special riot police resulted in the deaths of 108 protesters and the wounding of many more.
- On 21 February, an agreement between President Yanukovych and the leaders of the parliamentary opposition was signed that called for early elections and the formation of an interim unity government. The following day, police withdrew from central Kyiv, which came under effective control of the protesters.
- Yanukovych fled the city and then the country. That day, the Ukrainian parliament voted to remove Yanukovych from office by 328 to 0. The ejection of Yanukovych is referred to as the Revolution of Dignity.



Pro-European Union protesters in Kyiv, December 2013.

# Russo-Ukrainian War

- Following the removal of Yanukovych on 22 February 2014, pro-Russian unrest erupted in parts of Ukraine.
- Russian soldiers without insignia took control of strategic positions and infrastructure in the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. (Russian forces particularly the Black Sea Fleet remained based in Crimea after the break up of the Soviet Union.)
- Unmarked Russian troops seized the Crimean Parliament and Russia organized a widely-criticised referendum, whose outcome was for Crimea to join Russia. It then annexed Crimea.



The blockade of military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine during the capture of Crimea by Russia in February–March 2014

# Russo-Ukrainian War

- In April 2014, demonstrations by pro-Russian groups in the Donbas region of Ukraine escalated into a war between the Ukrainian military and Russian-backed separatists of the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk republics.





# Russo-Ukrainian War

- In August 2014, unmarked Russian military vehicles crossed the border into the Donetsk republic.
- An undeclared war began between Ukrainian forces and separatists intermingled with Russian troops, although Russia denied the presence of its troops in the Donbas.
- The war settled into a stalemate, with repeated failed attempts at ceasefire. In 2015, a package of agreements called Minsk II were signed by Russia and Ukraine, but a number of disputes prevented them from being fully implemented.
- By 2019, 7% of Ukraine's territory was classified by the Ukrainian government as temporarily occupied territories, while the Russian government had indirectly acknowledged the presence of its troops in Ukraine.



A map of the line of control and buffer zone established by the Minsk Protocol on 5 September 2014



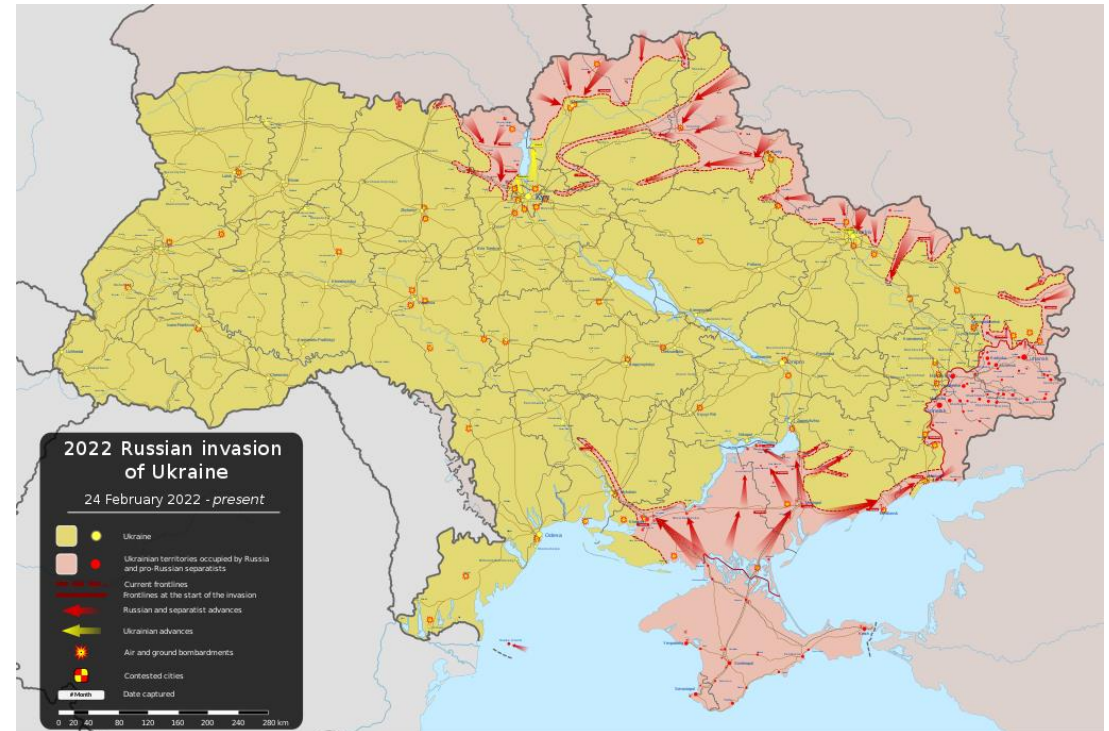
# Russo-Ukrainian War

- Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was a scheduled passenger flight from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur that was shot down on 17 July 2014 while flying over eastern Ukraine. All 283 passengers and 15 crew were killed. The shoot-down occurred during the War in Donbas in an area controlled by pro-Russian rebels
- On 28 September 2016, the Dutch led JIT (Joint Investigation Team) gave a press conference in which it concluded that the aircraft was shot down with a 9M38 Buk missile fired from a rebel-controlled field near Pervomaisky (Первомайський), a town 6 km (3.7 mi) south of Snizhne.
- It also found that the Buk missile system used had been transported from Russia into Ukraine on the day of the crash, and then back into Russia after the crash, with one missile less than it arrived with.



# Russo-Ukrainian War

- On 30 November 2021, President Putin stated that an expansion of NATO's presence in Ukraine, especially the deployment of any long-range missiles capable of striking Moscow or missile defence systems similar to those in Romania and Poland, would be a "red line" issue for the Kremlin.
- NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg stated: "It's only Ukraine and 30 NATO allies that decide when Ukraine is ready to join NATO. Russia has no veto, Russia has no say, and Russia has no right to establish a sphere of influence to try to control their neighbours."
- Having built up a large military presence on the border from late 2021, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, which is ongoing.



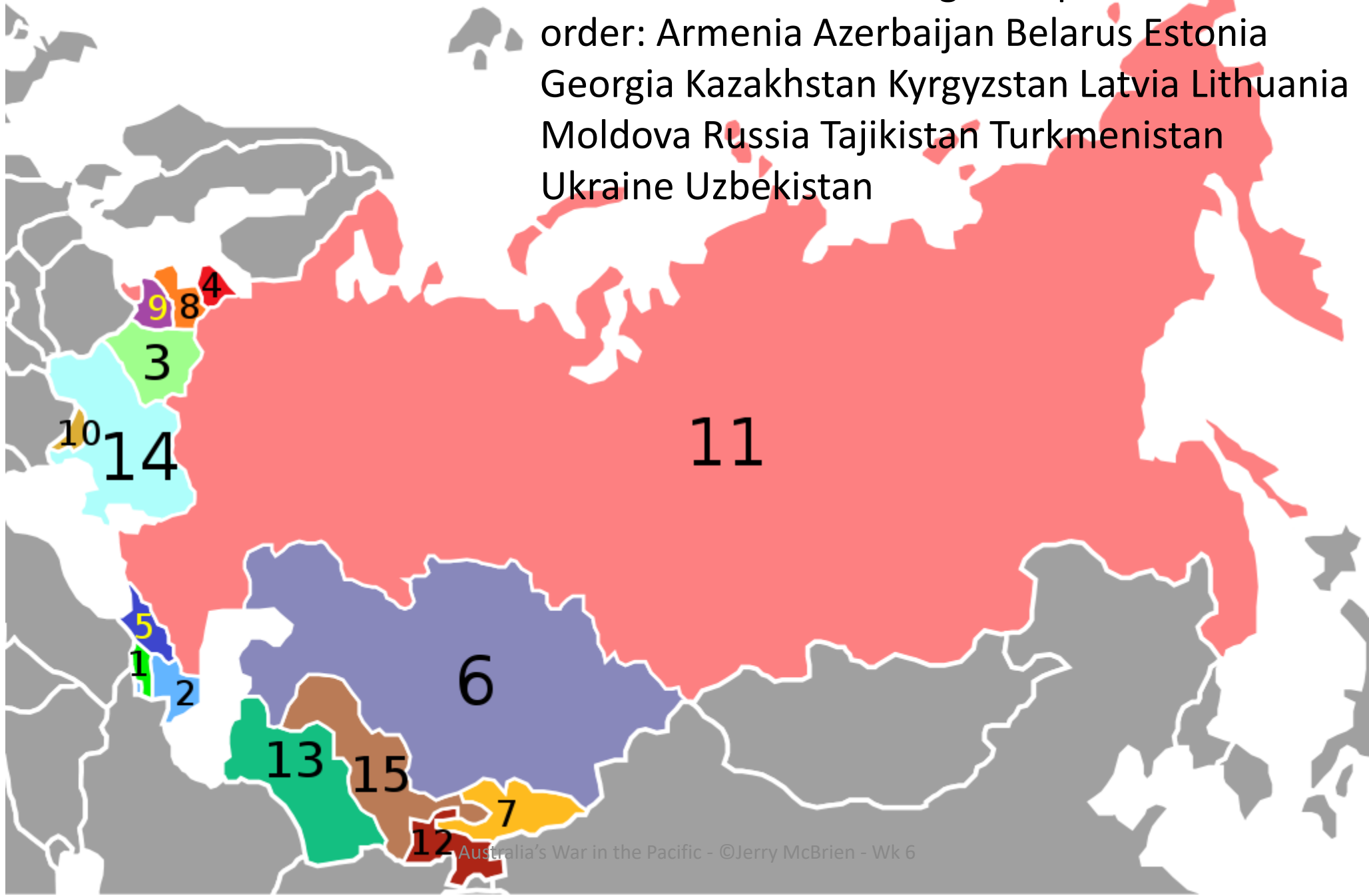
# Russian military Intervention in the Syrian Civil War

- The Russian military intervention in the Syrian civil war began in September 2015, after an official request by the Syrian government for military aid against rebel groups.
- The intervention initially involved air strikes by Russian aircraft against targets primarily in north-western Syria, and against Syrian opposition militant groups opposed to the Syrian government.
- In addition, Russian special operations forces and military advisors are deployed to Syria.
- Prior to the intervention, Russian involvement in the Syrian Civil War had mainly consisted of supplying the Syrian Army with arms and equipment.
- At the end of December 2017, the Russian government announced its troops would be deployed to Syria permanently.
- The war is ongoing. The Syrian government headed by Bashar al-Assad has been preserved. Syrian Armed Forces have recaptured more than 30,000 square kilometres of area, including Latakia, Aleppo and Palmyra.



Russian Troops in Aleppo December 2016

Post Soviet States in English alphabetical  
order: Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Estonia  
Georgia Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Latvia Lithuania  
Moldova Russia Tajikistan Turkmenistan  
Ukraine Uzbekistan





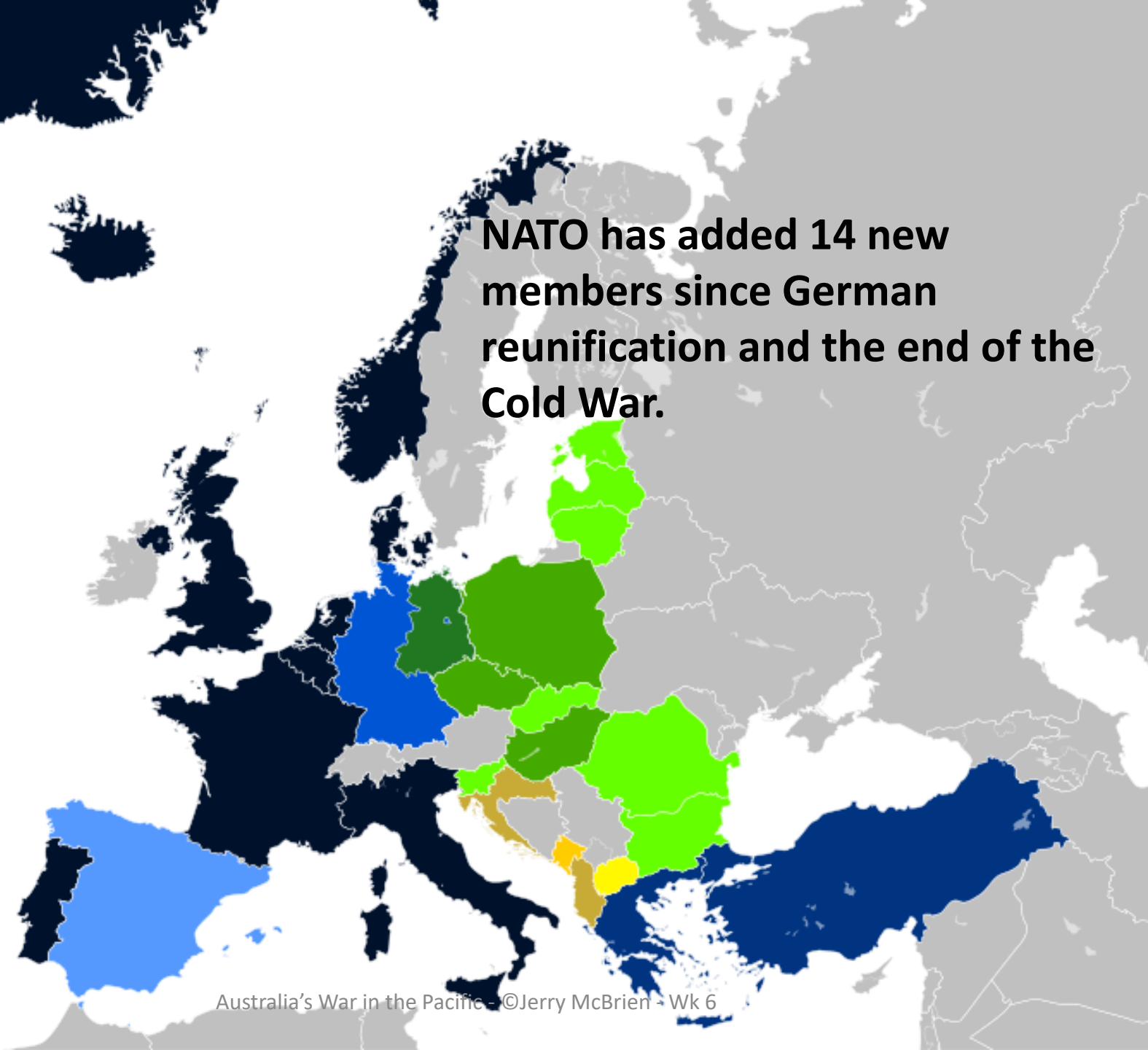
# Nato

- NATO constitutes a system of collective security, whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.
- Since its founding, the admission of new member states has increased the alliance from the original 12 countries to 30.
- The most recent member state to be added to NATO was North Macedonia on 27 March 2020.
- NATO currently recognizes Bosnia Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine as aspiring members.
- Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, President Vladimir Putin of non-member Russia had demanded that NATO promise to stop expanding east (to countries such as Ukraine, Georgia or Moldova), a condition that NATO refused.



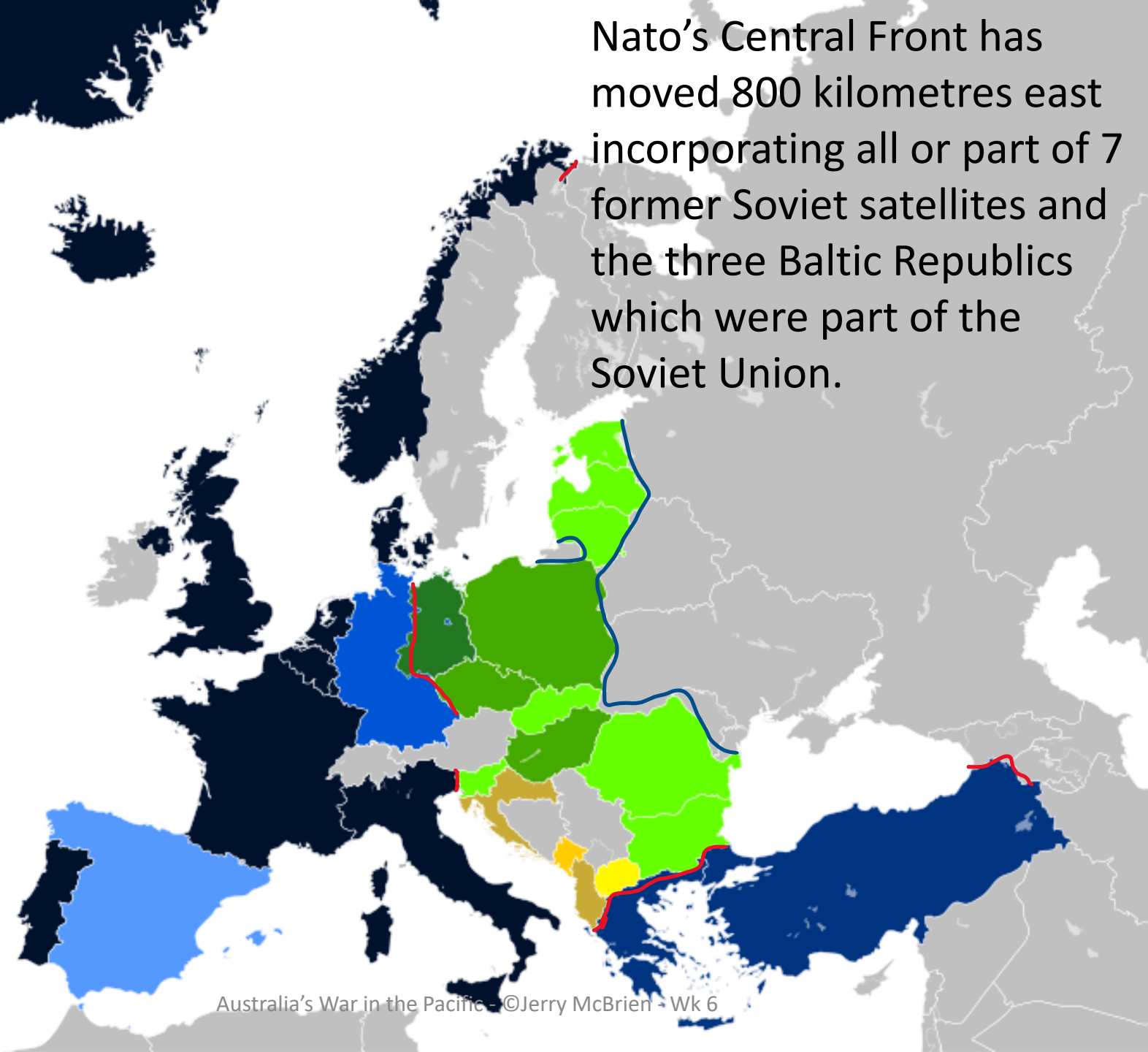
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2020

**NATO has added 14 new members since German reunification and the end of the Cold War.**



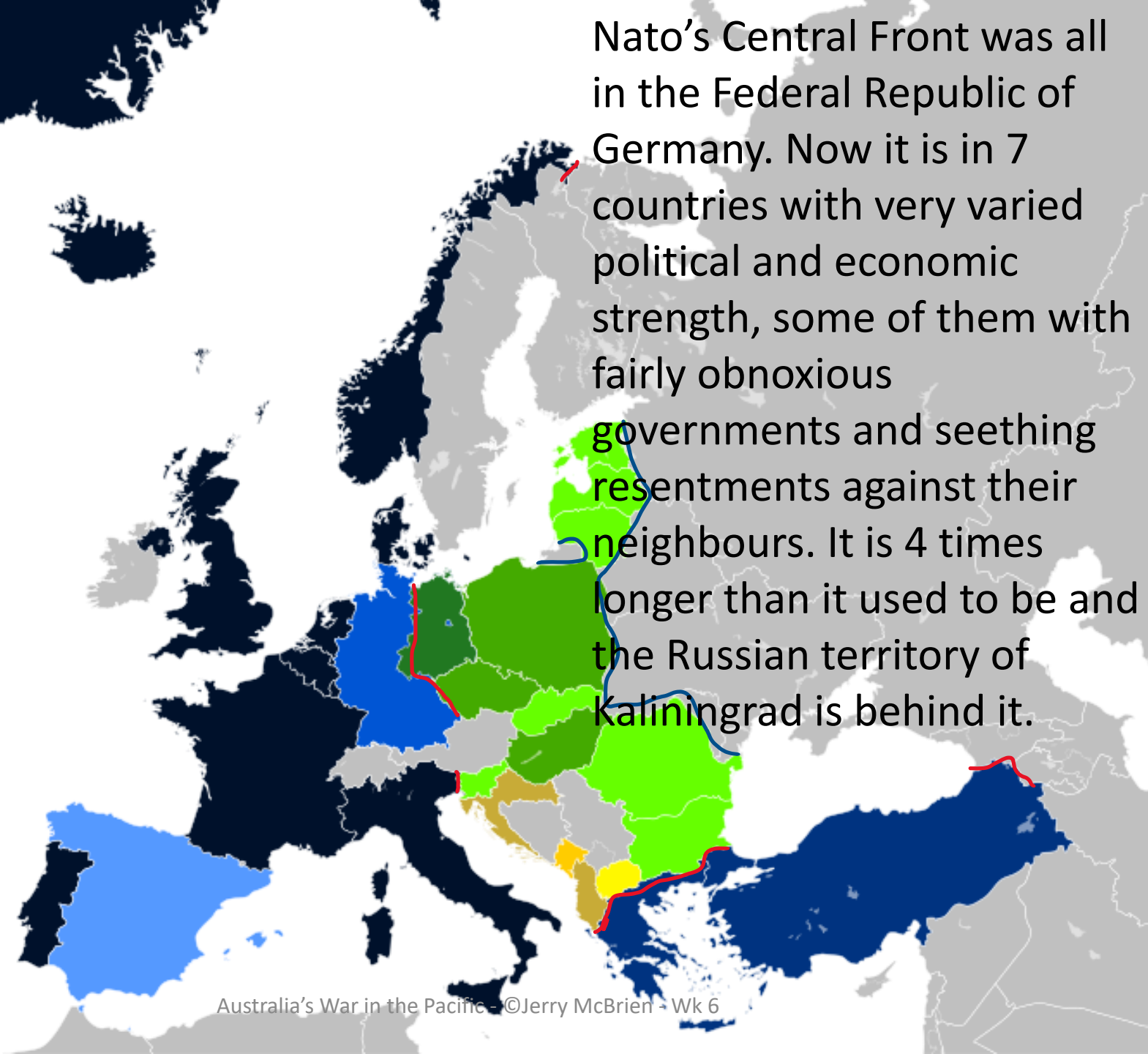
Nato's Central Front has moved 800 kilometres east incorporating all or part of 7 former Soviet satellites and the three Baltic Republics which were part of the Soviet Union.

1949  
1952  
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Nato's Central Front was all in the Federal Republic of Germany. Now it is in 7 countries with very varied political and economic strength, some of them with fairly obnoxious governments and seething resentments against their neighbours. It is 4 times longer than it used to be and the Russian territory of Kaliningrad is behind it.

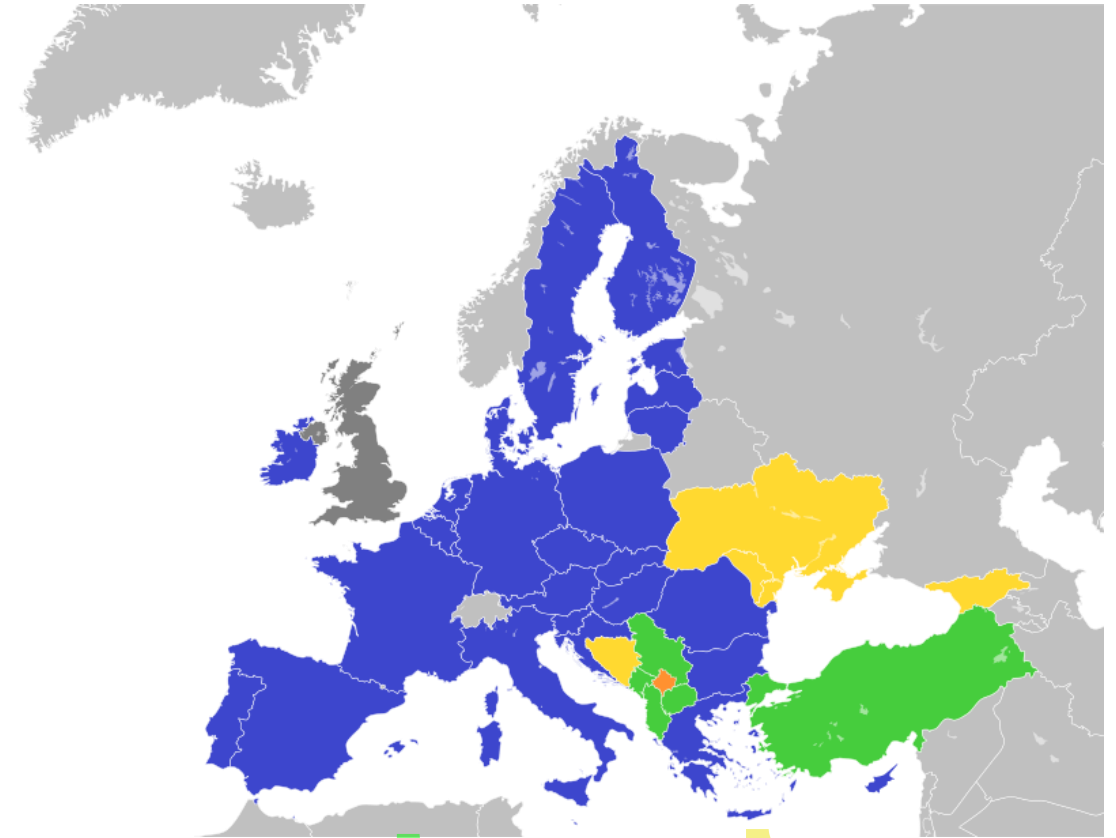
1949  
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# European Union

- Article 49 of the Maastricht Treaty says that any European state that respects the "principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law", may apply to join the Union.
- Turkey applied for membership in 1987. The Western Balkans have been prioritised for membership since emerging from war during the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia are all recognized as official candidates and in negotiation; negotiations with Turkey are frozen.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are recognized as potential candidates for membership by the EU.
- Amid the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia submitted applications for EU membership. The European Parliament subsequently voted to accept an emergency petition from the government of Ukraine for EU member state candidacy.



Current members   Candidate states   Applicant countries; Bosnia and Herzegovina is also recognised as a potential candidate   Potential candidate   Former member

# Nuclear Weapons

- After 5 decades of arms limitation and arms reduction negotiations the New START treaty was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague, and, after ratification, entered into force on 5 February 2011. It is expected to last until 5 February 2026, having been extended in 2021.
- It requires the USA and Russia each to reduce the number of their deployed warheads to 1,550, which would give a throw weight of the order of 1,500 megatons. That is equivalent to approximately 100,000 Hiroshima bombs.
- All these deployed war heads have delivery systems with intercontinental reach.
- The number of undeployed warheads is not restricted.

# European Gas Hostage

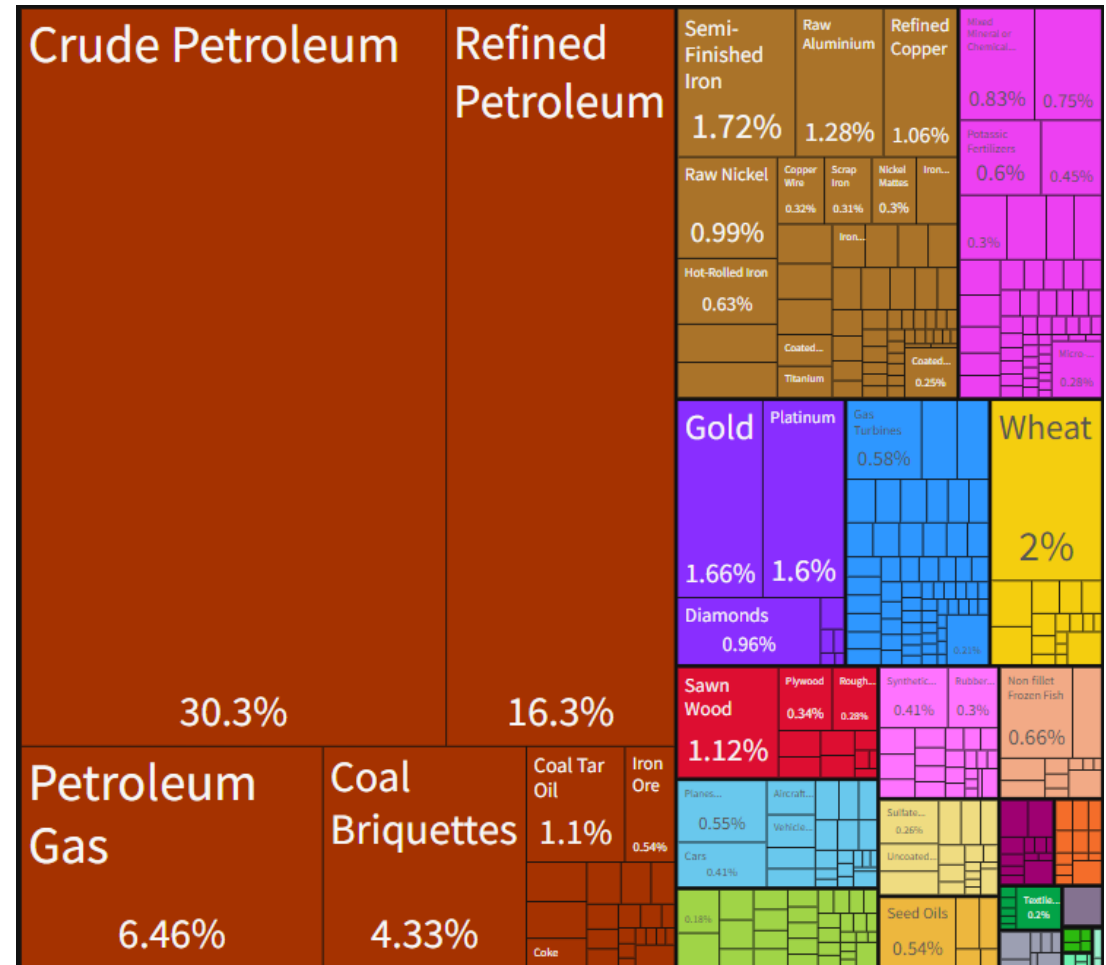
- Ukraine remains the main transit route for Russian natural gas sold to Europe, which earns Ukraine about \$3 billion a year in transit fees, making it the country's most lucrative export service.
- Following the launch of the Nord Stream pipeline, which bypasses Ukraine, gas transit volumes through Ukrain have been steadily decreasing.
- During the Ukrainian crisis, starting in February 2014 with the Russian annexation of Crimea, severe tensions extended to the gas sector. Eventually, the EU commissioner for energy Günther Oettinger was called in to broker a deal securing supplies to Ukraine and transit to the EU.
- European, particularly German, dependence on Russian gas supply restricts their ability to apply sanctions against Russia.
- Russia's significant oil export capacity also complicates sanctions.



Major Russian natural gas pipelines to Europe

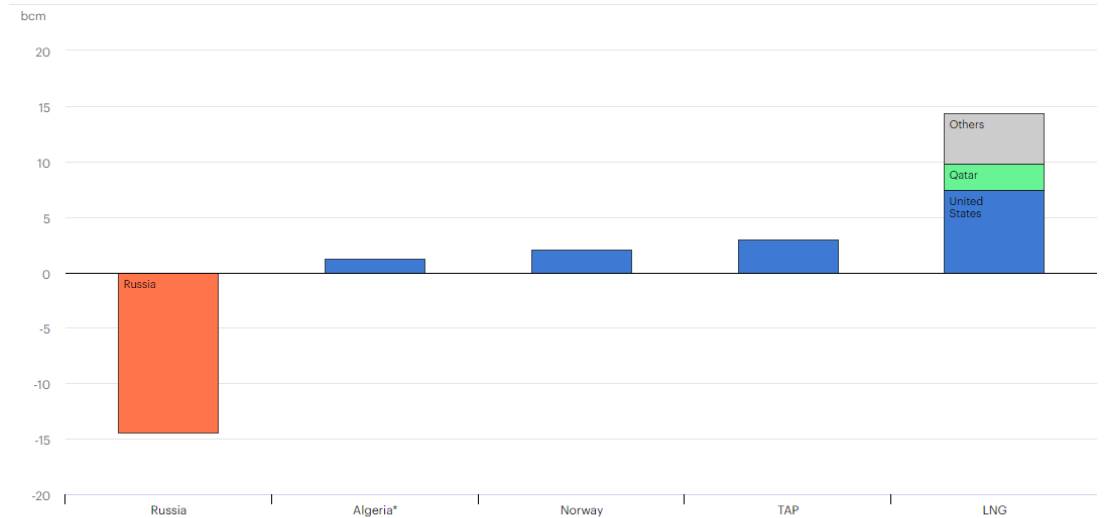
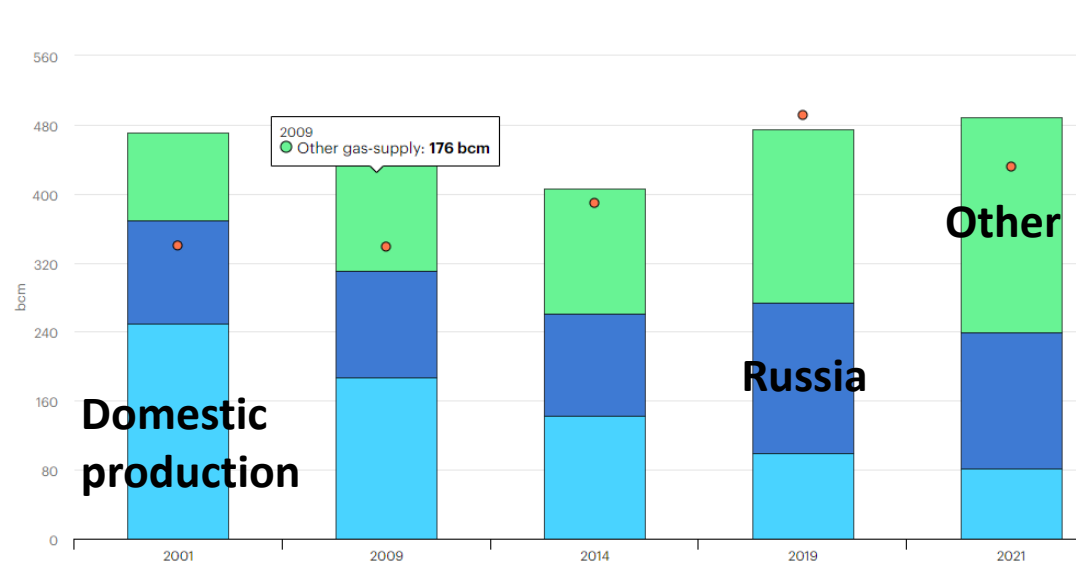
# Russian exports by value

- Russia produces 13% of global crude oil.
- Russia exports 5.5 million bbls/day of oil and oil products to members of the OECD.
  - That is 26% of OECD imports, but
  - 34% of OECD Europe imports, but
  - Only 7% of US imports, which
  - are only a small fraction of US consumption.
- Russia is a huge supplier of natural gas to Europe.
- These energy supply relationships restrict the options to apply sanctions to Russia.



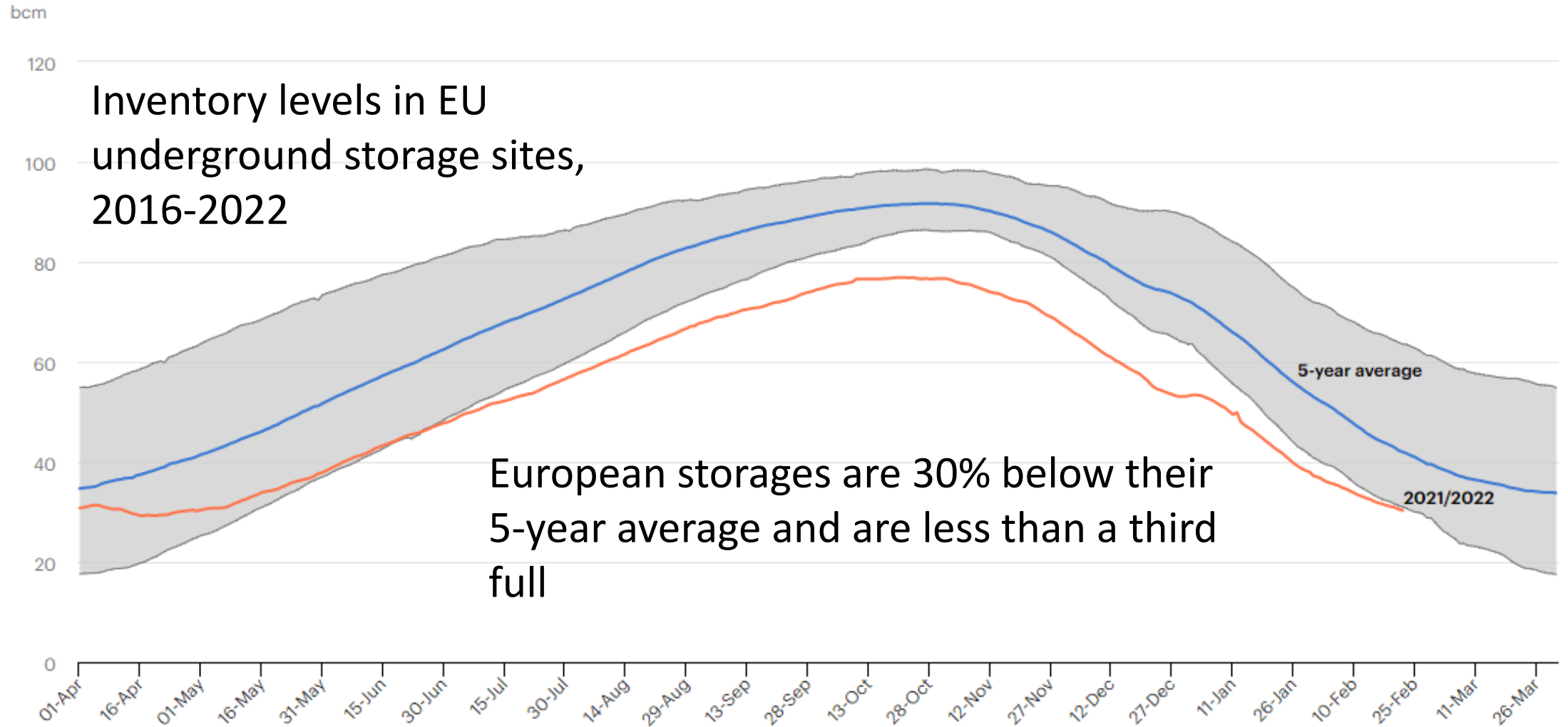


# European Gas Supply (EU + UK)



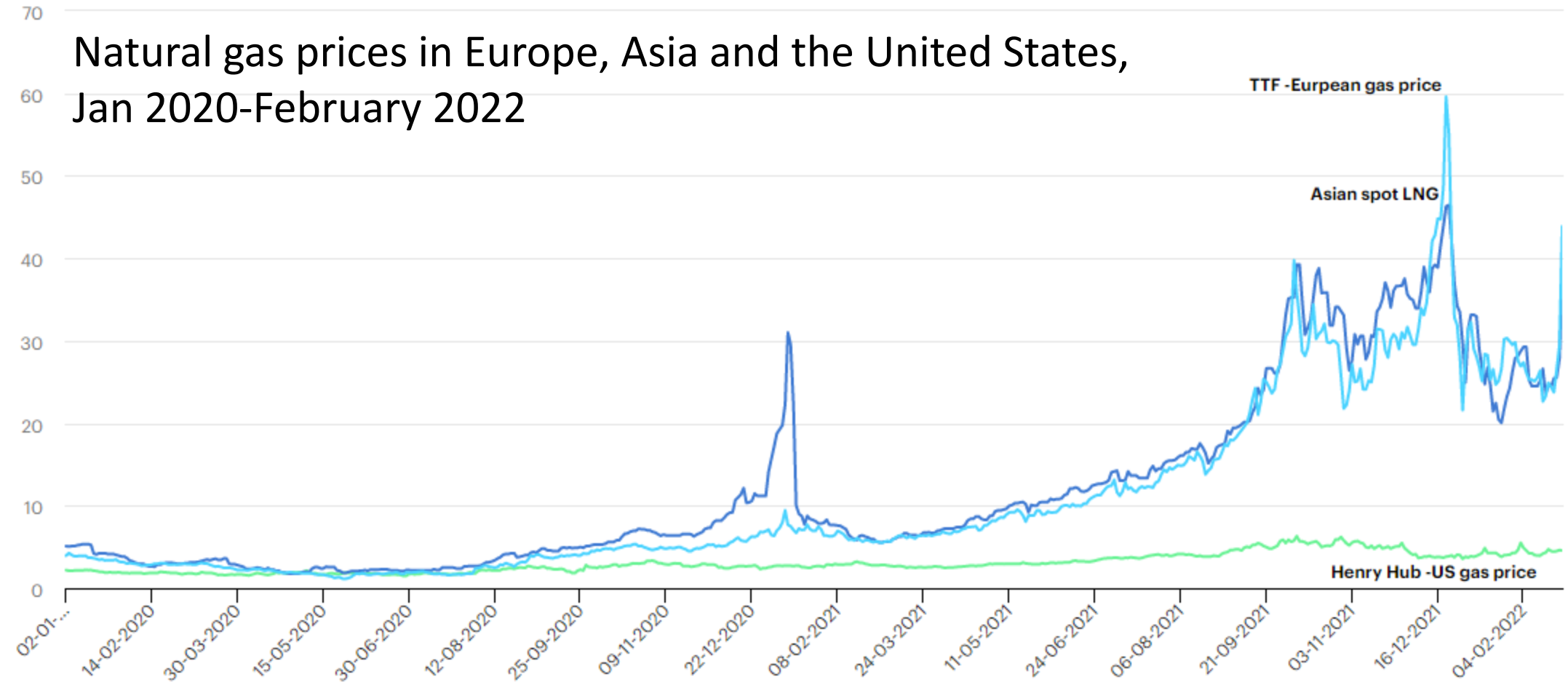
Russia reduced gas supplies to the EU and UK markets during the heating season. Year-on-year change in the European Union and United Kingdom natural gas imports by source, Oct 2021- Jan 2022.

# European Gas Supply (EU + UK)



# European Gas Supply (EU + UK)

\$ / mmbtu



# What will happen next?

- With Russia still a major nuclear power no external military intervention in Ukraine is a rational option.
- With the Europeans this energy dependent on Russia, serious coordinated sanctions sufficient to force Putin back out of the Ukraine will be impossible.
- If energy prices continue at these levels it will tip the world economy into recession.
- A retreat from “Globalisation” has been set off which will generate a significant impulse of inflation.



# What went Wrong? An analysis of the failures of intelligence before Pearl Harbor.

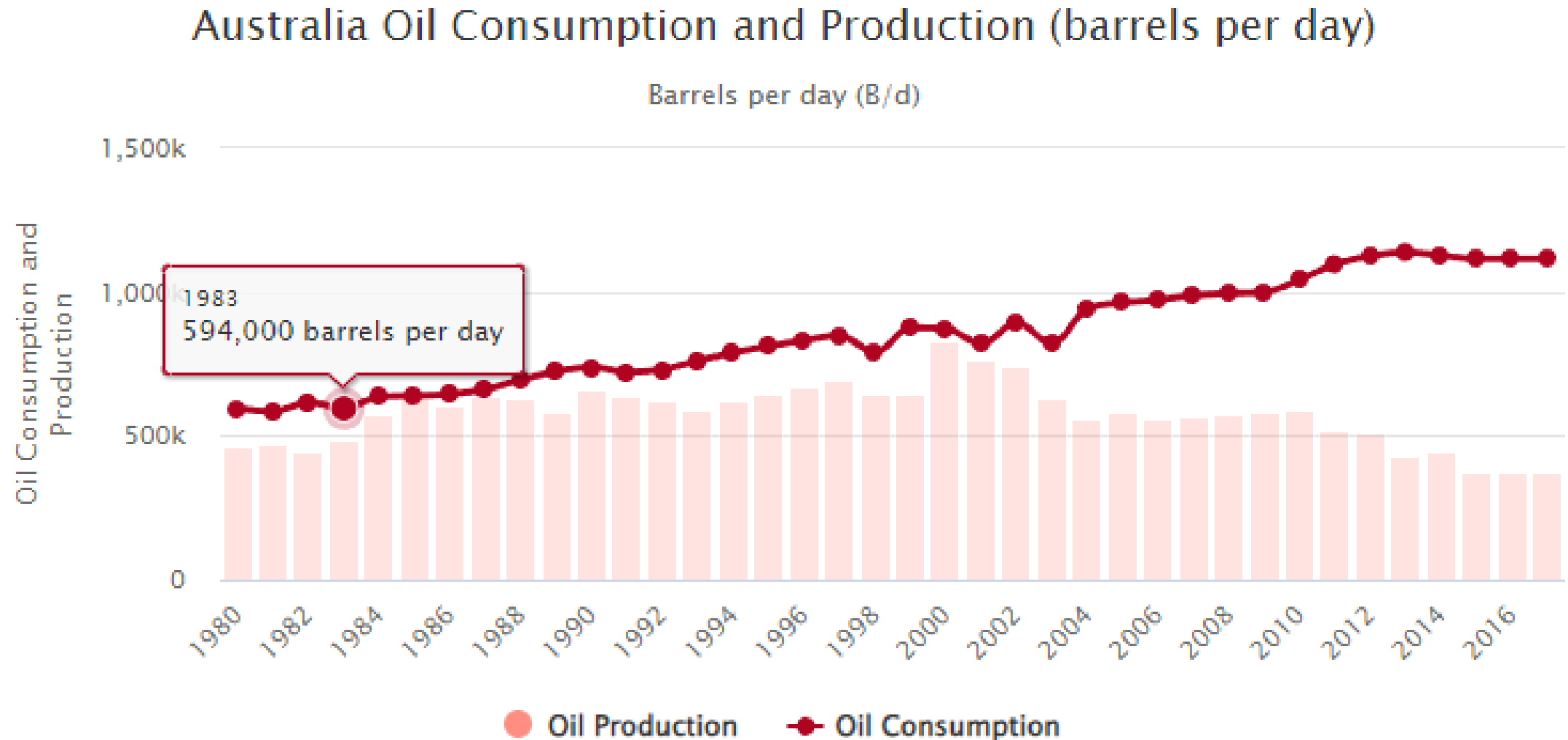
- Despite failings in intelligence analysis the Australian Government, the British Command in Malaya and the Americans in the Philippines knew war was imminent, deployed all their forces and made all the preparations in their power. Decision making was feeble and responses were slow but the root cause of the disasters was the lack of forces and equipment due to disastrous losses suffered for two years in Norway, France, Greece, North Africa and in the Atlantic.
- Hawaii was the only point where the Allies had been provided by government with the equipment and forces required to conduct an effective defence. Secretary Stimson and General Marshall ensured the installation of the equipment and the development of systems for its effective use. Admiral Stark and General Marshall, informed by deciphered intercepts, warned the commanders ten days before war broke out that war was coming. How come they were asleep when it did come?
- It seems to me the root causes were:
  - Failures of belief
  - Racism – Failure to believe how capable the Japanese Navy was but belief in the treasonous intent of Americans of Japanese descent.
  - Naivety - Failure to believe how bad the bad guys were.
  - Focus on what could be seen, the convoys going south, and not on the capability that could not be seen, the carriers. This is just a variant of the belief problem. What they could see was so big they could not believe there was more. They could not imagine the ambition required for the raid on Pearl Harbor.
  - Distraction. After building up and training forces on Hawaii the commanders were given urgent tasks to get aircraft through to the Philippines. It must be difficult to avoid the subconscious feeling that the Philippines must now be the point of danger.

# This is a view of a possible future.

- Chris Joye at Coolabah with the note (23/12/21):
- ... “Geo-politics, long neglected by markets, may also come into play. The machine learning models we developed to predict the probability of major power war using hundreds of years of data handicap the chance of a US-China conflict at almost 50 per cent. If I were President Xi, I would take Taiwan while the insipid President Biden is in power. If he delays, he may have to face a second Trump term, which would raise the stakes of a truly existential military crisis. And if I were President Putin, I would retake eastern Ukraine at the same time as Xi unifies Taiwan so as to splinter the Western allies.” ...
- Christopher Joye is a contributing editor (of the Financial Review) who has previously worked at Goldman Sachs and the RBA. He is a portfolio manager with Coolabah Capital, which invests in fixed-income securities including those discussed in his column.
- Coolabah Capital Investments (CCI) is a leading active credit alpha manager that is responsible for managing numerous institutional mandates, the Smarter Money Investments’ product suite, the Coolabah Active Composite Bond Fund (Hedge Fund) (CXA:FIXD) and the BetaShares Active Australian Hybrid ETF (ASX: HBRD). As at July 2021, CCI manages over \$7 billion.

- The reason I believe in talking about history is that I fear that the world has forgotten that bad things can happen and that leads to rash behaviour.
- Europe is and, despite their best efforts, must remain for some time dependent on Russia.
- Putin has fought wars in Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine and thus far I suspect is happy with the results achieved.
- Putin will be further emboldened.
- Putin's strength is Russia's nuclear deterrent, its self sufficiency in raw materials and military equipment and its exportable surplus of oil and gas.

# Contrast Australia's position.





- Thanks for your attention.

# 11 April Air

- Reconnaissance 1100/11 sighted 2 cargo vessels only in the Kavieng area. Full observations were not possible owing to interception by 10 Zeros of which two were destroyed, one possibly destroyed and three others damaged.
- Timor - Baucau (north coast Eastern Timor) was attacked — 1000/11 by 5 B25s.
- Babo, Kaimana and Timika (Kaukenau) were attacked during the early hours 11/4 by 4 Catalinas (photo at anchor) and a Hudson. At Kaimana 2 ships of 800 and 100 tons respectively were seen and strafed, also 4 floatplanes.



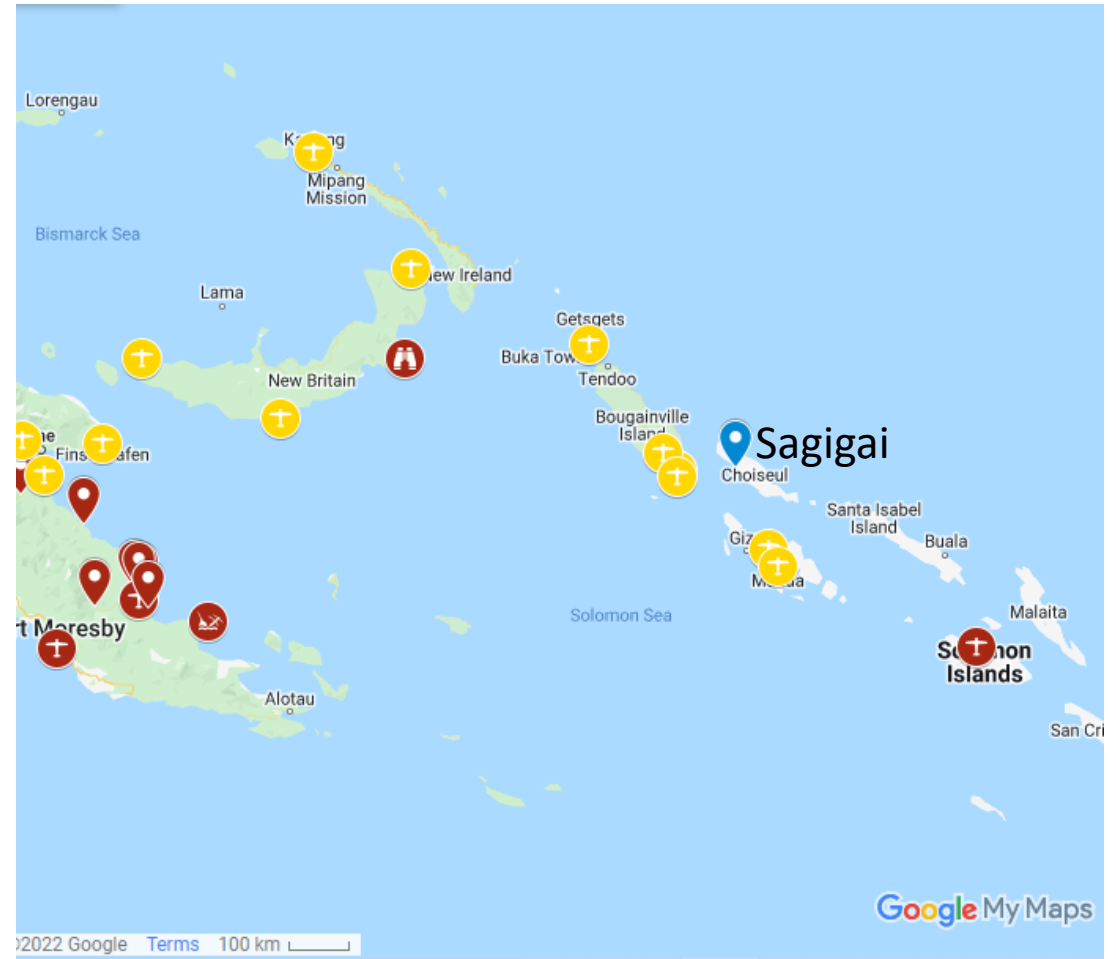
# 11 April - Air

- 12 Avengers attacked Munda a.m. 11/4 starting fires and explosions.
- 7 Lightnings 8 Corsairs (photo) at sunset 11/4 silenced four A.A. positions at Rekata Bay and on the same night,
- 6 Fortresses attacked Kahili and Ballale. Two Fortresses missing.
- Rekata Bay - The waterfront was attacked at sunset 11/4 by 7 Lightnings and 8 Corsairs.
- Shortlands - Before dawn 11/4 Liberators dropped 7 tons of bombs on Kahili.



# 12 April - Solomons

- Choiseul - At 1700/12 a small allied party sighted a Japanese barge anchored at Sagigai (about 5 miles up the coast from Bambatana on S.W, coast).
- They attacked and burned the barge capturing a 50 calibre gun, 4 rifles, ammunition, binoculars, food etc.
- Two Japs were killed and several wounded, others escaped into the bush and were being rounded-up. One of the attacking party was wounded by a bayonet.





# 12 April - Air

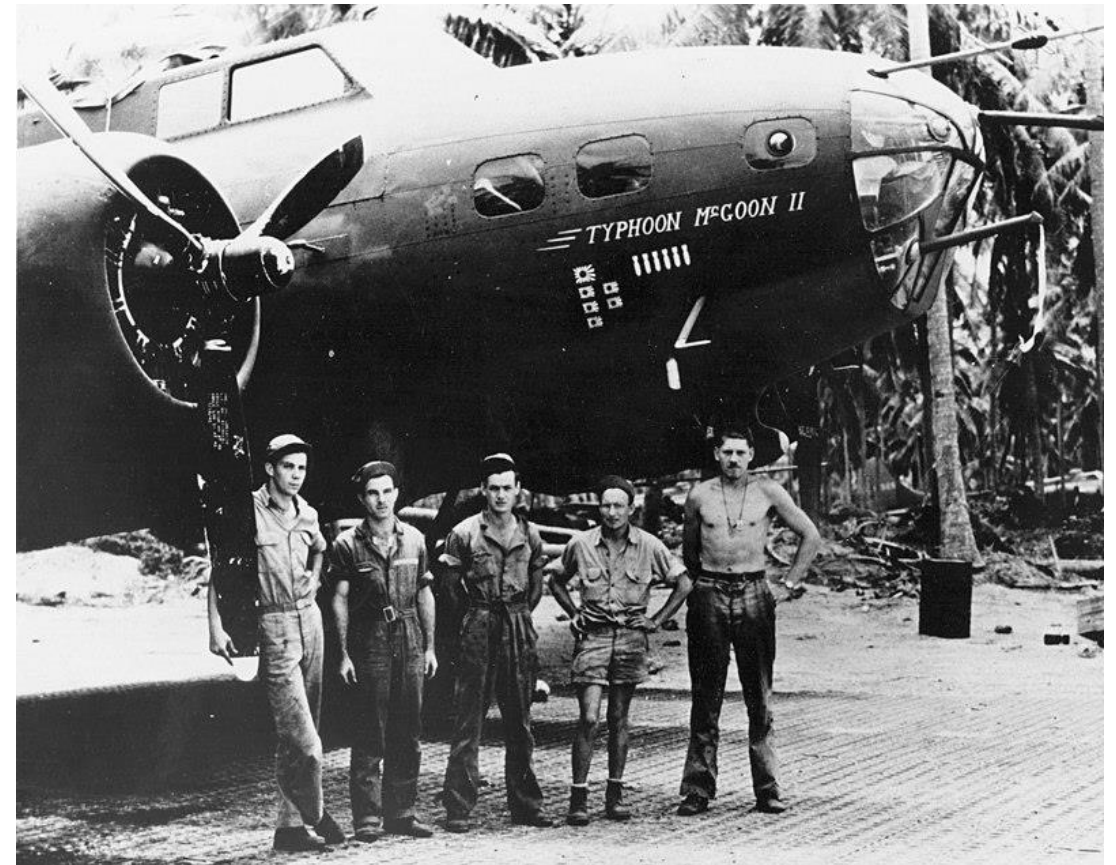
- The USAAF Heavy Bombers started to be relieved of their onerous reconnaissance tasks.
- These were increasingly taken over by PB4Y's (Navy B-24's) as they arrived in the theatre, and by photo-reconnaissance P-38s, which served as an excellent search plane for the daylight run over Rabaul.
- On 12/4 a P38 achieved the first complete photographic reconnaissance of Rabaul since 26/3.



F-4 Lightning #25 at the Stock Route airfield  
via ozatwar.com

# 12 April - Air

- 4 destroyers and 4 merchant vessels (6,000 tons) were sighted 94 miles north by east of Wewak on course 130 at 1130/11. At 1628/12 they were reported in Hansa Bay. The vessels were attacked at 1641/12 by B-17s and B-24s, and one direct hit was scored, and two vessels were observed to be smoking. The Japanese cargo ship, Sydney Maru, was bombed and sunk in Hansa Bay (03°18'N 143°38'E). 38 crewman and 5 gunners were killed.
- Rabaul - Three 1,000 ton merchant vessels with 20 small boats nearby, some of which were under tow, were sighted at approx 0900/12 69 miles NNW of Rabaul on course 105°. The convoy was attacked and one near miss was scored, and one small craft was set on fire by strafing.
- Kaimana Bay - One 3000 and two 2000 ton vessels were sighted in Kaimana Bay a.m. 12/4. The larger vessel was unsuccessfully attacked.
- Vila bivouac area was attacked a.m. 12/4 by 6 torpedo bombers covered by 23 Wildcats.
- Kahili airfield was attacked 2105-2155/12 by 3 Liberators which dropped 5 tons of bombs.



B-17E BO AAF S/N 41-9211 Typhoon McGoon II of the 11th BG / 98th BS, taken in January 1943 in New Caledonia: The antennae mounted upon the nose were used for radar tracking surface vessels.



# Heavy Bomber production



Installation of fixtures and assemblies on a tail fuselage section of a Boeing B-17 at the Douglas plant in Long Beach, California, October 1942



One of the assembly lines at Ford's Willow Run plant, where Consolidated B-24E (Liberator) bombers are being built.



# 12 April - Air

- On 12th April the enemy made their 106th air raid on Port Moresby. Forty-three twin engine bombers and approximately 60 fighters crossed the Owen Stanleys and concentrated their attacks on the Port Moresby airfields.
- With adequate radar warning 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Sector scrambled more than 60 defenders from Moresby and Dobodura to intercept, which cost the Japanese 15 bombers and at least 9 fighters claimed for the loss of only 2 American fighters.
- The Japanese bombers did considerable damage on the ground. Four aircraft (one Beaufighter and 3 Mitchells) were destroyed and 15 others were damaged, some of them severely.
- At Ward's, Berry and Schwimmer aerodromes the runways were damaged, and at Kila seven men working at a fuel dump were burned to death when enemy bombs destroyed 4,000 drums of fuel.

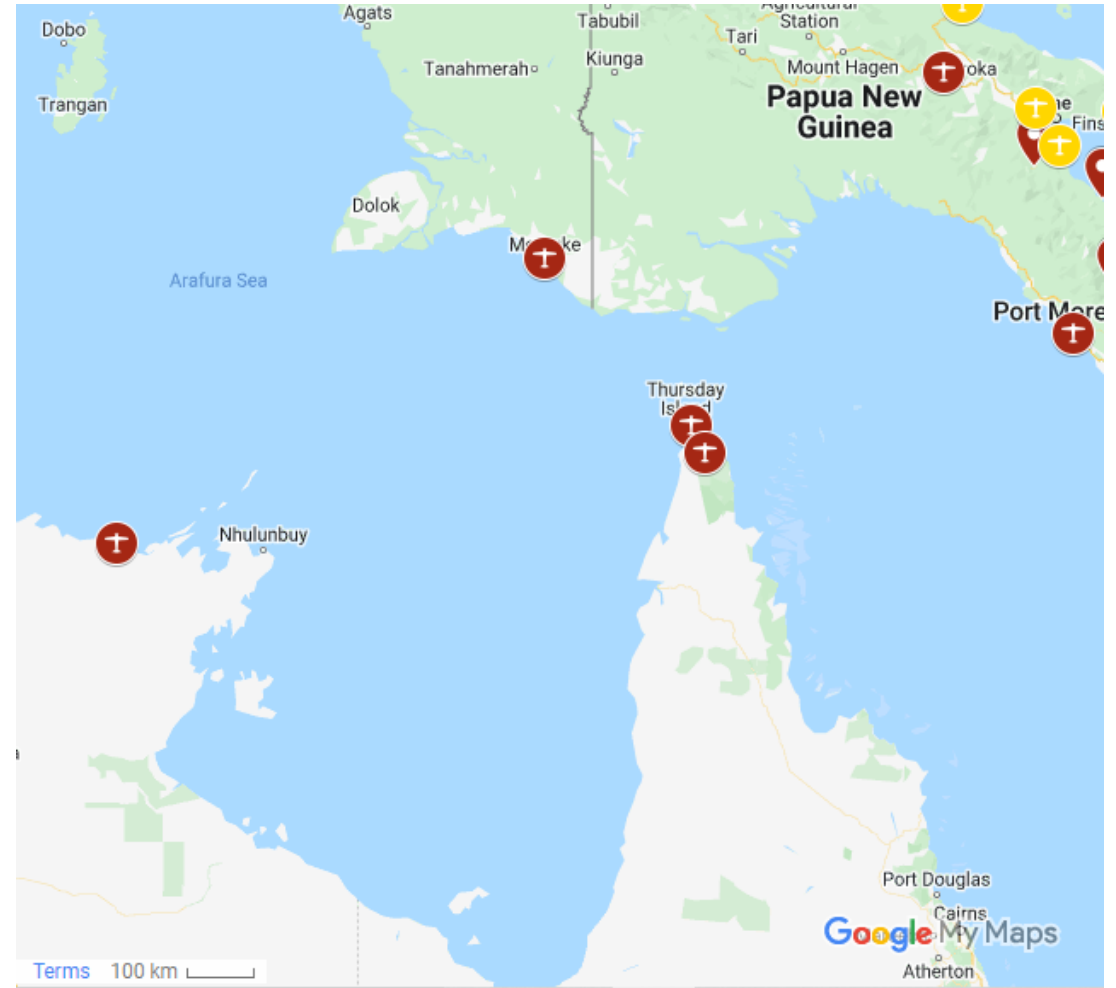


Wards (5 Mile) Drome 1943



# 12 April - Air

- An operation instruction of 12th April directed MacArthur's force commanders to "augment facilities and forces in and defend the Merauke-Horn Island-Thursday Island tip of Cape York Peninsula area to be known as the Torres Strait area".
- Kenney was directed to make immediate preparations for rapid grouping of squadrons in airfields of the Torres Strait area and at Millingimbi. He also had to be ready, at 12 hours' notice, to fly an Australian brigade, plus a battalion, to Merauke and his reconnaissance aircraft had to provide a 36-hour warning of hostile movements.
- Until a major attack threatened, it was only necessary for him to maintain enough squadrons in the area for reconnaissance, destruction of minor hostile forces, and protection of naval movements and shipping.
- No. 84 Squadron was ordered to proceed from Richmond to Horn Island where it was to provide patrols of Boomerang aircraft over Merauke.
- The R.A.A.F. Directorate of Works was to proceed as quickly as possible with the development of air bases at Merauke, Gave, Millingimbi, Horn Island and Jacky Jacky (Higgins Field), but again this work was to be done with existing means.



# 13 April -

- At 0815/13 Munda runway dispersal areas and bivouac area were attacked by 11 torpedo bombers covered by 21 fighters. One fighter is missing.
- The 8 ships in Hansa Bay which were attacked at 1630/12 were again attacked between 2100 & 2200/13.
- Enemy positions, in the Mubo area were attacked 1100/13 By 3 Bostons.



# 13 April - Australia

- Gulf of Carpentaria - Further to reports of suspicious activities and possible enemy landings at the Nassau River (W. coast Cape York Peninsula, south of Mitchell River) an investigation party has returned and reported (13/4) having found no trace or sight of enemy nor evidence of a landing.
- Sydney - A possible enemy submarine was reported in the eastern channel of Sydney Harbour at 1155/13.



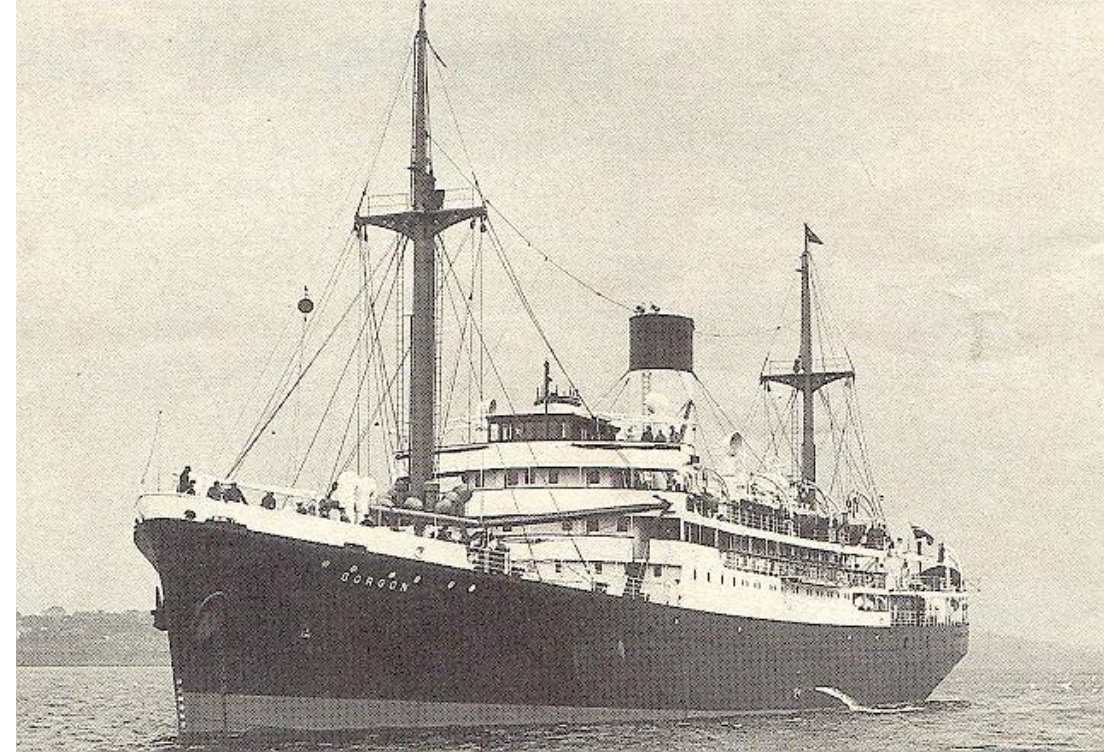
# 14 April – Milne Bay

- On 14th April in its twenty-fourth air raid, 40 to 50 bombers and about 60 fighters attacked Milne Bay 1216/14, and concentrated on ships in the bay.
- These included the British Gorgon, and Dutch Van Outhoorn, Van Heemskerk, and Balikpapan and three corvettes Kapunda, Whyalla and Wagga.
- Warning of the impending raid, and an intimation of its size, were given when the enemy aircraft were approaching over the Trobriands. The enemy arrived overhead about 12.15, 30 high-level bombers in close formation and 10 dive bombers, with an uncertain number of fighters.
- The high-level aircraft opened the attack by dropping a pattern of about 100 bombs right across the anchorage. This, however, had been cleared, so that no ships were lost in this attack.
- Van Outhoorn suffered damage from near misses by high level bombers, had eight killed and 20 wounded, and was succoured by Whyalla, who did a fine job with anti-aircraft fire.



# 14 April – Milne Bay

- Gorgon was hit a number of times by dive bombers, and set on fire, with her engines out of action. Dixon took Kapunda alongside, ran hoses on board and helped with the fire fighting.
- While Kapunda assisted with the fire fighting, Gorgon's chief officer, Mr James Bruce; Major Brew of the Docks Operating Company; and Able Seaman Larkin (one of the ship's D.E.M.S. gunners) removed an unexploded Japanese bomb from among the ship's cargo of ammunition in No. 5 lower hold.
- Six of her (Gorgon's) company were killed or died of wounds, and 28 were wounded.
- Gorgon was so severely damaged by fire that she had to be towed to Brisbane for repairs.
- Early in 1942 Gorgon had sailed from Melbourne with troops to reinforce the garrison at Singapore. During the Japanese attack on the colony she was continuously bombed but was not seriously damaged. On February 11th it was apparent that the remainder of her cargo was not going to be discharged. She sailed with many refugees on board. Attacked by aircraft, the captain reported that only the extreme manoeuvrability of Gorgon had saved her.





# 14 April – Milne Bay

- Van Heemskerk was hit by the dive bombers.
- Wagga put up a gallant fight to save the Dutch ship, going alongside and putting nine hoses and a fire party on board. But the fire had too great a hold.
- Van Heemskerk finally blew up about 5 p.m. and there she remained, beached, a total loss.
- The Van Heemskerk, was a rather old ( 1909 ), but sturdy steamer of 2996 tonnes gross weight. She had been damaged in an air attack in December 1942, but was repaired in Brisbane to return to her place in the supply line.
- She was the third of the KPM steamers to be sunk by enemy action in 1943.



Van Heemskerck hit by bombs. Picture was taken from the Australian corvette Wagga, which came to her aid.

# 14 April – Milne Bay

- In this raid, four Allied servicemen were killed, as were 12 of the merchant ships' crews. In all—servicemen, civilians of the Small Ships Section and ships' crews—68 were wounded. Wagga and Kapunda suffered superficial damage.
- Overhead, a significant air battle took place during which both Australian squadrons shot down five aircraft each. Forty-four Allied fighters intercepted and the enemy lost ten bombers and three fighters.

# 14 April - Air

- Air controller Cator directed 8 P38s from Dobodura to search for a large formation sighted over Goodenough island.
- 1st Lt Richard Bong was leading one of the four aircraft flights but all the other three had to turn back for mechanical faults and Bong became separated from the other flight.
- Bong sighted the Bettys just after they had bombed, positioned himself up sun and fired on the trailing bomber, hitting its cockpit and port engine. The wounded bomber fell away and was set on by RAAF Kittyhawks before it crashed in the sea.



# 14 April - Air

- Bong was then attacked by six diving Oscars but used his P38's superior diving speed to escape and go after the bombers again.
- Bong quickly overhauled the left hand bomber and fired from close range from the left rear quarter. The port left side of the bomber's fuselage erupted in flames and it suddenly began to descend steeply.
- Then he maneuvered for another pass but was attacked by two more Oscars.
- Bong was credited with a probable for the first and a victory for the second.



Bong's gun camera footage.

The victory was his tenth making Bong the first official double ace in the Pacific theatre.

# Navy Zero, Army Oscar



Navy A6M3 Model 22 (allied reporting name Zeke, colloquially Zero), over the Solomon Islands, 1943. 2 \* 20mm cannon and 2 \* .303 machine guns.

Speed, rate of climb and maneuverability of the two aircraft were very comparable.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01097.013

A captured Army Ki-43-Ib (allied reporting name Oscar) in flight over Brisbane, 1943. This version had 1 \* .5 and 1 \* .303 machine guns and no armour or self sealing tanks.

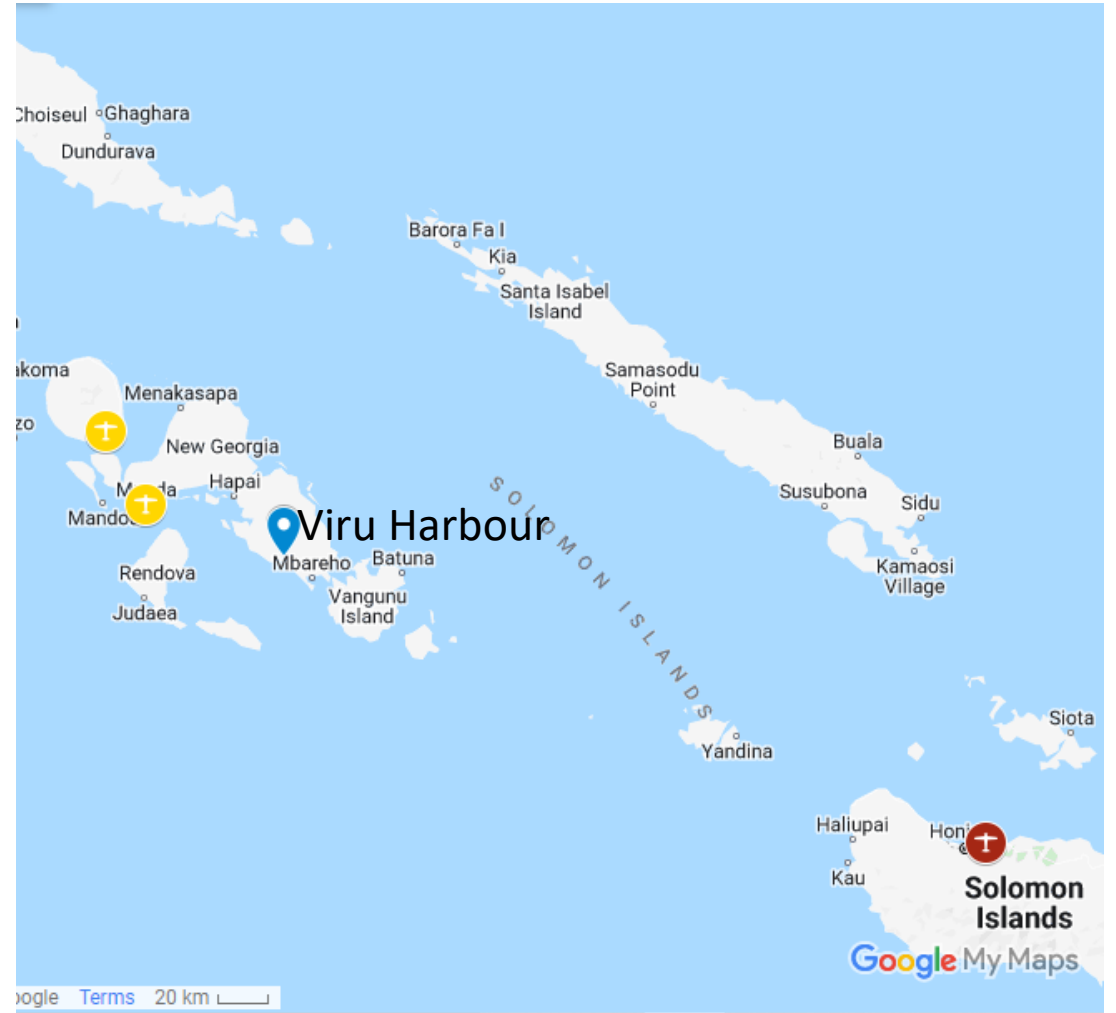


# US Military Aircraft Insignia

	19 August 1919	15 May 1942	Center red circle now inscribed within a regular pentagon formed by inner vertices of star, making red smaller than first version. Colors were <i>Flag Red</i> and <i>Flag Blue</i> until late 20s when current colors of <i>Insignia Red</i> and <i>Insignia Blue</i> were specified
	15 May 1942	28 June 1943	Insignia Red dot removed to avoid confusion with Japanese <a href="#">Hinomaru</a> roundel.
	28 June 1943	14 August 1943	Experiments showed that at a distance, shapes were more important than colors, so bars were added to the roundel with an Insignia Red outline.
	28 June 1943	August 1943	Several units in the Pacific refused to paint the red outline but added white bars pending new orders for a blue outline.
	14 August 1943	14 January 1947	The Insignia Red outline was replaced with an Insignia Blue outline through the amendment of Army-Navy aeronautical specification AN-I-9 on 14 August 1943. This was followed by an amendment to Technical Order 07-1-1, issued on 24 September 1943, for units in the field. On some US Navy aircraft in the Pacific the blue outline was lighter than the insignia blue.

# 14 April - Air

- New Georgia - Three camouflaged barges at Viru Harbour were attacked by 6 torpedo bombers and 16 Grummans at 1620/14.
- Gasmata - At 1430/14 a reconnaissance Hudson was unsuccessfully intercepted by 3 Zero's approximately 75 miles S.E. Gasmata.
- Hansa Bay - Reconnaissance 0920/14 saw one cargo vessel (about 4000 tons) and 2 barges only in Hansa Bay. Later during the morning 5 Fortresses and 3 Liberators attacked this ship, Nubia Strip and shore installations. The same reconnaissance aircraft returning at 1300/14 saw probably the same cargo ship still burning.
- Sydney - A channel patrol boat sighted a possible submarine at 2317/14 outside the boom in Sydney Harbour.



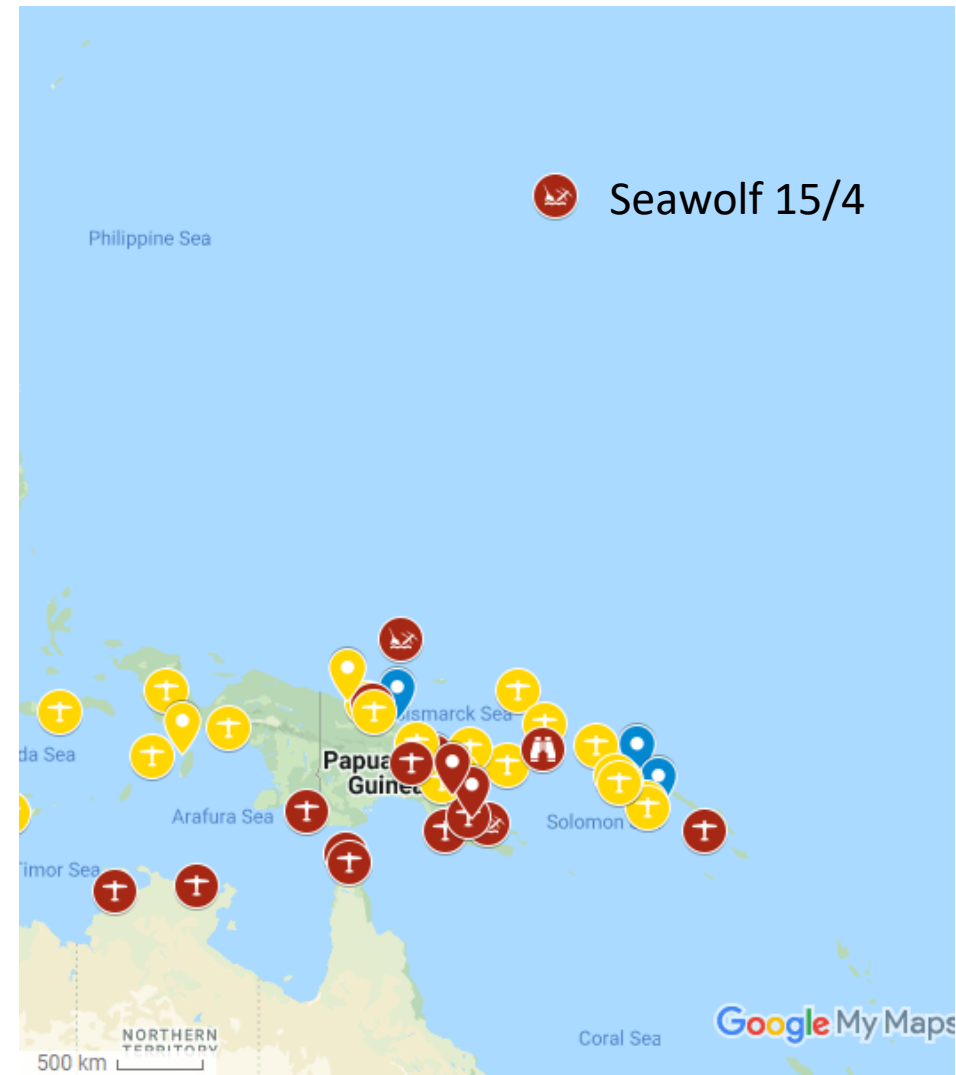
# 14 April – Pearl Harbor

- Cdr Layton (photo), Pacific Fleet Intelligence Officer, passed Nimitz an intercepted and almost completely deciphered Japanese signal from CinC Southeastern Air Fleet to an addressee believed to be the commander of the garrison at Ballale.
- “ON 16 APRIL CINC COMBINED FLEET WILL VISIT RYZ, R\_\_ AND RXP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE:
- DEPART RR AT 0600 IN A MEDIUM ATTACK PLANE ESCORTED BY 6 FIGHTERS ARRIVE RYZ AT 0800. PROCEED BY MINESWEEPER TO R\_\_ ARRIVING AT 0840
- AT EACH OF THE ABOVE PLACES THE CINC WILL MAKE A TOUR OF INSPECTION AND AT \_\_\_\_ HE WILL VISIT THE SICK AND WOUNDED BUT CURRENT OPERATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE.”
- Nimitz passed the Information on to Halsey with the order:
- IF FORCES YOU COMMAND HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO SHOOT DOWN YAMAMOTO AND STAFF YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO INITIATE PRELIMINARY PLANNING.



# 15 April - Sea

- The Japanese Army, Daifuku Maru No. 1-class transport, India Maru, was bombed and sunk near Kairiru Island (03°12'N 143°43'E) by Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress aircraft of the United States Fifth Air Force. Three gunners and seven crew were killed.
- The Japanese Navy cargo ship, Kaihei Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific off the Bonin Islands (21°13'N 152°24'E) by USS Seawolf. Four crewmen were killed.



# 15 April - Sea

- "Spring of 1943, found United States naval strength in the South Pacific greater than ever before, except in fast carriers."
- Six task forces supported the Guadalcanal line:
- two were built around carriers Saratoga and Enterprise respectively;
- One, of four new battleships, had Washington as flagship ;
- another was of Pearl Harbour survivors Maryland and Colorado, with three escort carriers;
- and two were each of cruiser-destroyer composition."

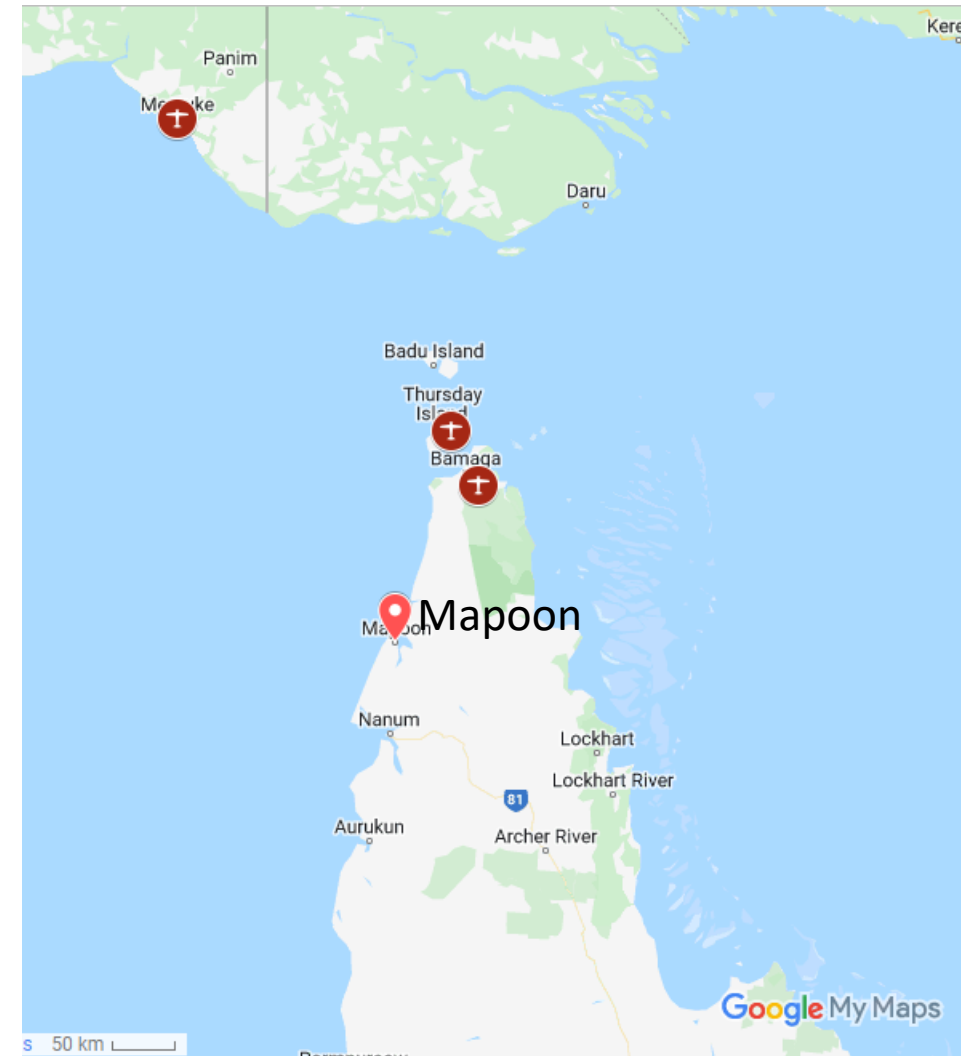


USS Washington



# 15 April - Air

- Rabaul - Lakunai aerodrome was attacked before dawn 15/4 by 3 Fortresses. Weather, however, was extremely bad.
- Mubo - Enemy installations in the Mubo area were attacked 1135- 1200/15 by 3 Bostons.
- Cape York Peninsula - N.O.I.C. Thursday Island reports 15/4 that a mine, similar to Japanese Type 88, has been washed ashore 30 miles south of Mapoon Mission (80 miles south of Thursday Is.).
- New Georgia - At 1130/15 Munda airfield was attacked by 6 torpedo bombers and 15 Grummans. The four fighters reported on the aerodrome at 0935/15 were not to be found.
- Vila airfield area was attacked 1608/15 by 5 dive bombers escorted by 14 Grummans. A building on the Vila River Bank, believed to be a power station, was destroyed.



# 15 April - Air

- Wewak - Nine ships, apparently newly arrived at Wewak 0905/15, were attacked during the night 15-16/4 by Fortresses. Four aircraft using skip-bombing tactics claimed hits as follows:-
  - A 6-8000 ton cargo vessel hit with two bombs at 2342/15. Seen to sink at 2356/15.
  - An 8,000 ton transport hit with 2 bombs and also near missed. Lifted high out of water by explosions. Left listing and in sinking condition. Considered possibly sunk.
  - A 6-8000 ton cargo vessel hit when moving out to sea. Stopped when hit and was left listing and in sinking condition. Considered possibly sunk.
  - An unidentified vessel, probably a gunboat, received direct hits or near misses and was violently rocked by explosions, ship turned 90 off her course and apparently beached. Considered probably destroyed.



# 15 April - Air

- After consulting Washington and getting approval Nimitz signalled Halsey the go ahead for Operation Vengeance.
- To avoid detection by radar and Japanese forces in the Solomons the planners plotted an over-water flight south and west of the Solomons.
- This roundabout approach measured 600 miles, with 400 miles back. The 1,000-mile flight, with extra fuel for combat, was beyond the range of the Wildcats and Corsairs in Navy and Marine squadrons.
- So the mission was assigned to the 339th Fighter Squadron's P-38G Lightning aircraft, equipped with drop tanks, which had the range to intercept and engage.



The P-38s were equipped to carry two 165-gallon drop tanks. A limited supply of 330-gallon tanks was flown up from New Guinea, sufficient to provide each Lightning with one big tank to replace one of the small tanks. The tanks were located close enough to the aircraft's center of gravity to avoid any performance problems.

# 15 April 1943

- At the beginning of 1943 the Government initiated a search for the third generation of military aircraft for construction in Australia.
- A mission was appointed to select aircraft of proven overseas design for local manufacture and to recommend the most suitable types of low and high altitude fighter aircraft and a long-range heavy bomber. The intention was to increase as far as possible self-sufficiency in the production of high - performance aircraft and to upgrade the R.A.A.F.'s strike capacity.
- the mission selected the Mustang P-51-D fitted with Rolls Royce Merlin 61 engines as the high altitude fighter.
- The War Cabinet accepted the mission's recommendation on 15 April 1943. An initial order for 350 aircraft was placed with Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Pty Ltd to equip one operational training unit and six squadrons by October 1945. Merlin engines were to be imported, however, for the time involved in developing capacity for the production of engines of this class would have added a year or more to the delivery schedule.



P-51Ds of 82 Squadron RAAF in Bofu, Japan, as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force, in 1947.

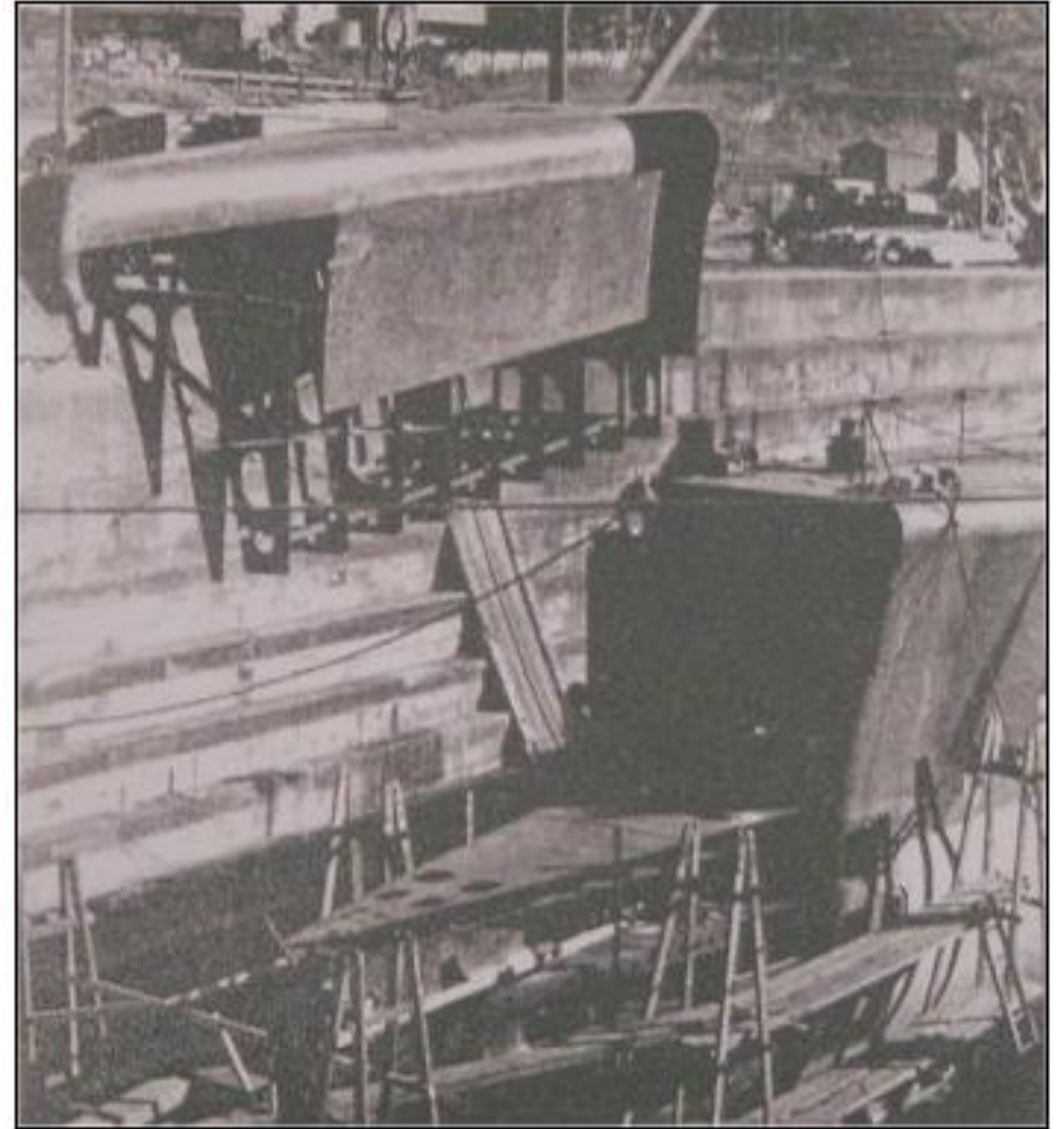


# 15 April - Press

- The Melbourne Herald of 15th April, in a leading article said :
- "The extent and severity of the Japanese air raid upon Milne Bay [on April 14] fully bears out the grave warnings of the Prime Minister, General MacArthur and General Sir Thomas Blamey of the seriousness of the new menace to Australia and to the Allies, of Japan's growing air strength in the north and of its concentration in the perimeter of island bases about our coasts.
- The tendency here to overrate our own recent successes has made it difficult for the public mind both in Australia and abroad to realise the real truth of the situation."

# 15 April - Sea

- After delays while the dock completed more urgent projects Growler entered the South Brisbane Dry Dock on 15 April and the new bow was welded on in two weeks.
- Following the refit, the submarine was nicknamed the *Kangaroo Express*, as the refabricated bow had two nickel kangaroos as decorations.



via ozatwar.com

# 16 April - Air

- Guadalcanal - Two enemy aircraft were over Guadalcanal during the night 16/4. Three men were wounded and a small fuel dump was fired. Anti-aircraft claimed one enemy aircraft shot down.
- Mubo - Enemy positions at Komiatum were raided during the night 15-16/4.
- Timor - Baucau was attacked 0800/16 by 3 B.25s.
- Kahili Area and Ballale were attacked 2000-2130/16 by 11 Torpedo Bombers, 5 Fortresses and 9 Liberators. Fires were started.
- A possible Tanker and Cargo Ship were attacked by 2 Torpedo Bombers which scored a possible hit on the Cargo Ship and a near miss on the Tanker.
- A Hospital Ship was seen illuminated, but the red crosses were not visible above 2,000 ft.

# 16 April -

- New Georgia - Two barges departed Viru Harbour 2359/15 while another arrived 1505/16, no doubt all in connection with supplies for the enemy O.P. The Jap Radio at Viru Harbour has been moved into the bush.
- A 9 ft. road has been constructed from Munda across to Baeroko (at the southern end of Kula Gulf), together with a telephone line.
  - Up to the middle of March no motor traffic had been seen on this road, but it is now reported, 16/4, that trucks and other motor transport are in the Munda Area for the first time.
  - This Indicates that supplies for Munda may in future be shipped from, Buin to Baeroko, thence by road to Munda.



# 17 April - Air

- Munda airfield was attacked 1415/17 by 12 Dive Bombers escorted by 14 Gruman Fighters. The runway and dispersal area were hit.



# 17 April - Command

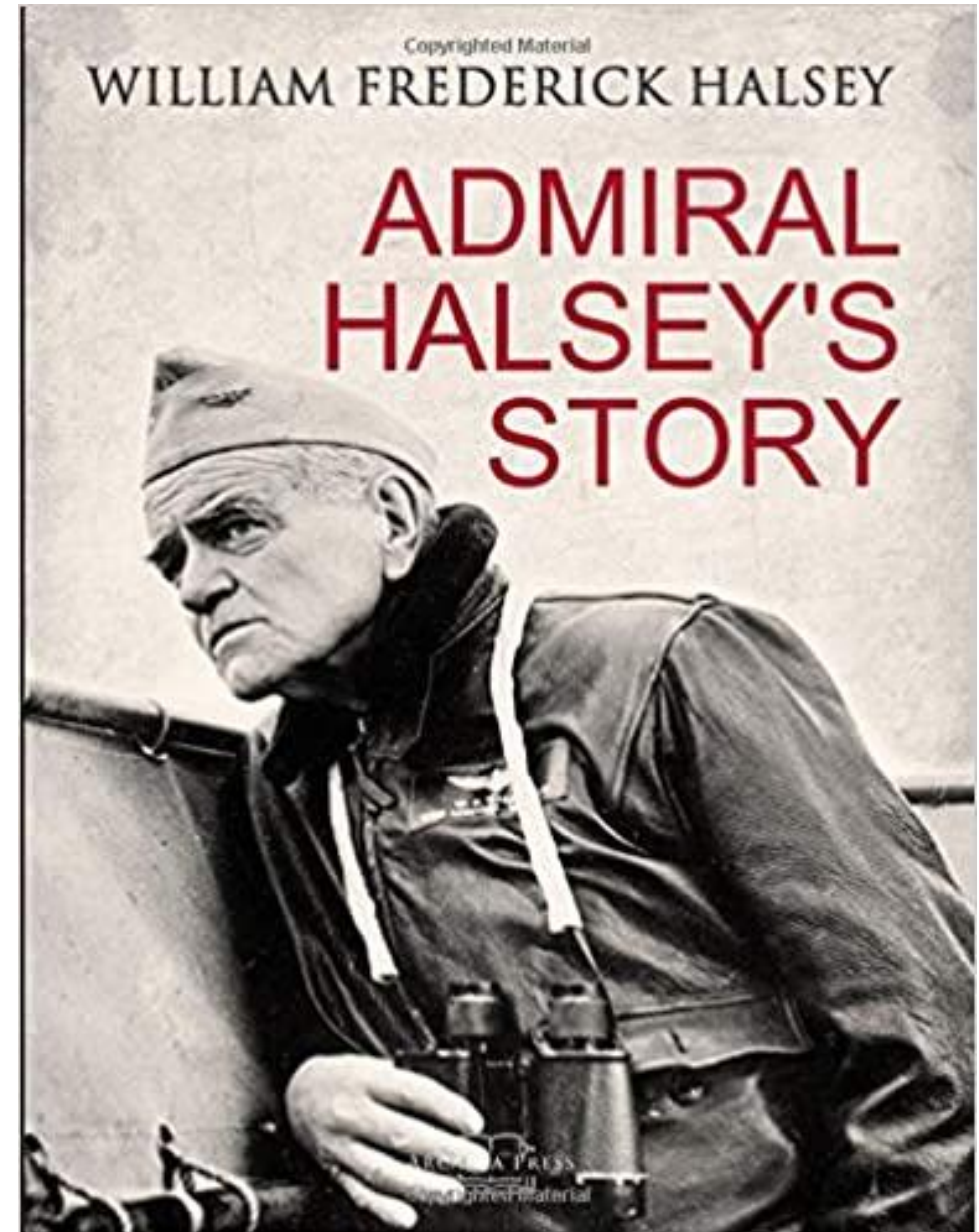
- Halsey flew from his headquarters in Noumea to Brisbane. On Thursday 15 April he met with General MacArthur and his Chief of Staff at 2:45pm in Brisbane at GHQ, SWPA in the AMP building.
- MacArthur then held a conference at 4.00 pm with Admirals Halsey, Carpenter and Jones and his Chief of Staff followed by dinner at 7.00 pm.
- On Friday, Halsey had a conference with MacArthur at 1630 in GHQ, SWPA.
- On Saturday, Halsey made a personal visit to see MacArthur at 5.00 pm.
- Halsey left Brisbane on 19 April and made brief courtesy calls to Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney before returning to Noumea on 25 April 1943.

Photo # NH 95552 Vice Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., circa 1941



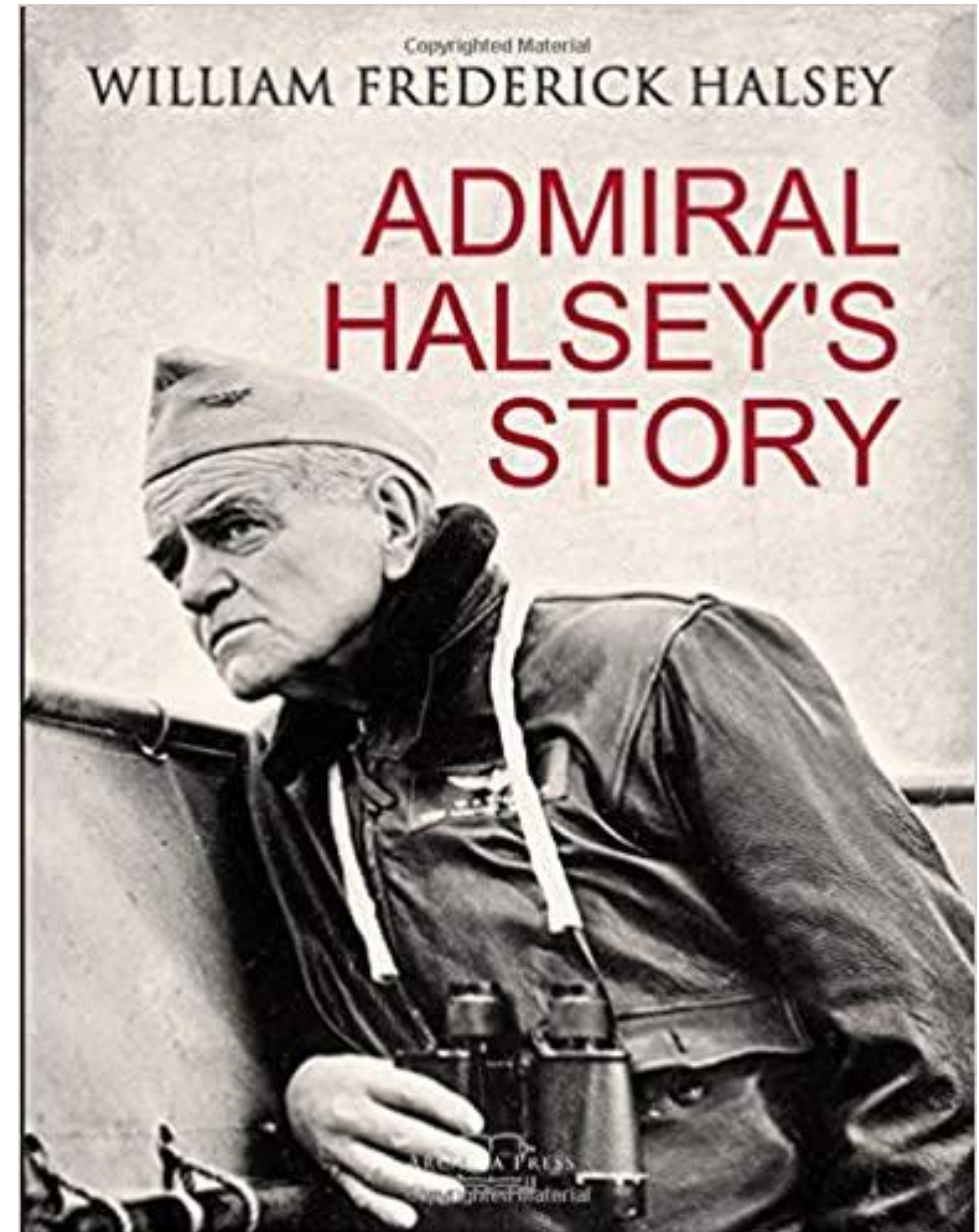
# 17 April - Command

- Later, Halsey described the meeting.
- I had never met the General . . . . Five minutes after I reported, I felt as if we were lifelong friends.
- I have seldom seen a man who makes a quicker, stronger, more favorable impression. ... If he had been wearing civilian clothes, I still would have known at once that he was a soldier.
- The respect that I conceived for him that afternoon grew steadily during the war. . . . We had arguments, but they always ended pleasantly. Not once did he, my superior officer, ever force his decisions upon me. On the few occasions when I disagreed with him, I told him so, and we discussed the issue until one of us changed his mind.



# 17 April - Command

- “My mental picture poses him against the background of these discussions; he is pacing his office, almost wearing a groove between his large, bare desk and the portrait of George Washington that faced it; his corncob pipe is in his hand (I rarely saw him smoke it), and he is making his points in a diction I have never heard surpassed.”
- At this meeting, timing and co-ordination of the advance in New Guinea with the invasion of New Georgia were discussed.
- Halsey carried some of his points with MacArthur;
- they agreed that the initial invasion of New Georgia would take place at the same time as the seizure of Woodlark and Kiriwina instead of after the establishment of Southwest Pacific forces on the Huon Peninsula, as the Southwest Pacific leaders had been advocating.
- ELKTON III specified that the New Georgia and Woodlark-Kiriwina operations would be simultaneous, but that major forces were not to be committed.



# 17 April - Sea

- The Japanese Navy cargo ship, Amaho Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean off Hokkaido (42°00'N 143°20'E) by USS Flying Fish with the loss of eight lives.
- The Japanese transport, Nisshin Maru No.2, was damaged, probably by a mine, in the East China Sea and was abandoned. She eventually drifts ashore on Formosa and is later scrapped.
- The Japanese cargo ship, Shinnan Maru, struck a mine and sank off Bougainville Island, Solomon Islands.



USS Flying Fish



# 17 April - Sea

- Shortlands - Shipping, at the Buin base was attacked from mast-head height by torpedo bombers at about 2000/17. Two Avengers scored five hits on a 10,000 ton cargo vessel S.E. of Bauvo Is. off west shore of Fauro Is. The ship was seen with decks awash and sinking during the last bombing pass.
- Another two Avengers scored two hits on a second cargo vessel in the anchorage N.W. of Pupukuna Point, and near misses on a third cargo ship nearby.
- Ambon was raided at about 1900/17 by 3 Liberators of No. 319 Squadron. 9 Vessels, varying from 1-5,000 tons, type unspecified, were seen in the Bay. The Liberators were intercepted by ten enemy fighters, but suffered only minor damage from enemy fire.



4 Liberators. The correct insignia for this period but taken in Europe.



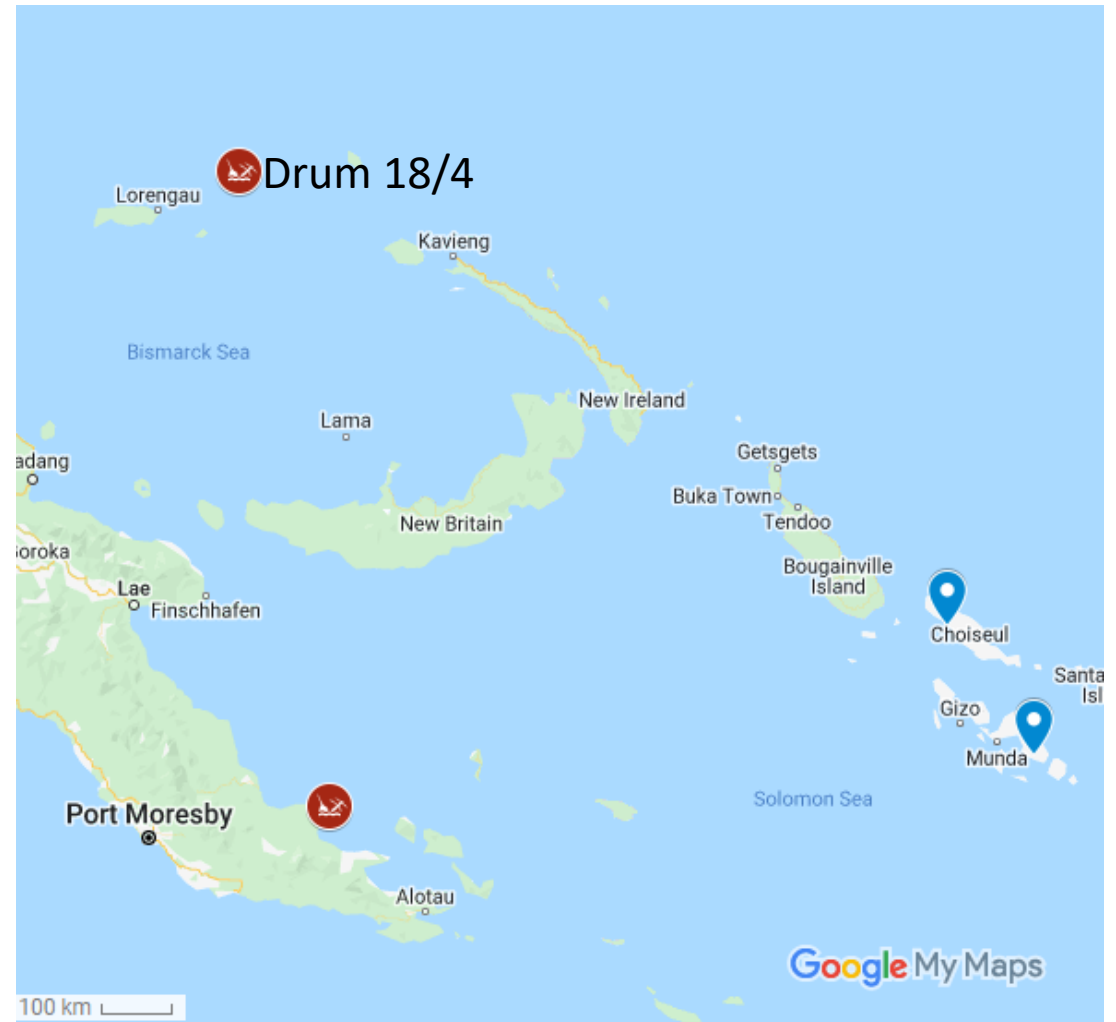
# 17 April - Air

- After dark during the evening 17/4, simultaneously with the strike on shipping in the area, Kahili strip and revetment area was bombed by 4 torpedo bombers followed shortly afterwards by 6 Fortresses and 7 Liberators which dropped 20 tons of bombs.
- Croker Is. - Two Japanese airmen were washed up on a raft 17/4 on Croker Is. where they were captured. These men may be from the enemy floatplane which attacked our convoy 9/4 approximately 65 miles NW Milimgimbi and was damaged by a Hudson which was escorting the convoy.



# 18 April - Air

- The ammunition transport, Nisshun Maru, was torpedoed and sunk 200 nautical miles (370 km) north north west of Mussau Island, Bismarck Archipelago (01°55'N 148°24'E) by USS Drum. 35 crewmen killed. Survivors rescued by CH-18 (IJN).



# 18 April - Air



"I am anxious to increase the garrison at Wau-Bulolo as soon as possible by flying in approximately 1,500 troops," wrote General Mackay (photo L) on 18th April to General Kenney (photo R), the commander of the Allied Air Forces in the South-West Pacific Area. "After these have arrived," he continued, "about 600 troops will be relieved and brought to Port Moresby, leaving the garrison of Wau-Bulolo approximately 6,500 . . . The total number of plane loads required to carry the above personnel with their weapons, ammunition and limited stores is 103."



# 18 April - Air

- Eighteen P-38s were assigned the mission. One flight of four was designated as the "killer" flight, while the remainder, which included two spares, would climb to 18,000 feet (5,500 m) to act as "top cover" for the expected reaction by Japanese fighters based at Kahili.
- The P-38s took off from Kukum Field on Guadalcanal at 07:25 on April 18. Two of the Lightnings assigned to the killer flight dropped out of the mission with mechanical problems.
- The remainder headed out over the Coral Sea "wave-hopping" all the way at altitudes no greater than 50 feet and maintaining radio silence.
- The P38s arrived at the intercept point one minute early, at 09:34, just as Yamamoto's aircraft descended into view in a light haze. The P-38s jettisoned the auxiliary tanks, turned to the right to parallel the bombers, and began a full power climb to intercept them.
- The tanks on Holmes's P-38 did not detach and his element turned back toward the sea.

# 18 April - Air

- Lanphier and Barber climbed toward the eight aircraft. The nearest escort fighters dropped their own tanks and dived toward the pair of P-38s. Lanphier turned head-on and climbed towards the escorts while Barber chased the diving bomber transports.
- Barber banked steeply to turn in behind the bombers and momentarily lost sight of them, but when he regained contact, he was immediately behind one and began firing into its right engine, rear fuselage, and empennage. When Barber hit its left engine, the bomber began to trail heavy black smoke. The Betty rolled violently to the left and Barber narrowly avoided a mid-air collision. Looking back, he saw a column of black smoke and assumed the Betty had crashed into the jungle.



# 18 April - Air

- Barber (photo) headed towards the coast at treetop level, searching for the second bomber.
- Barber spotted the second bomber low over the water off Moila Point, trying to evade an attack by Holmes, whose wing tanks had finally come off.
- Holmes damaged the right engine of the Betty, which emitted a white vapor trail, but his closure speed carried him and his wingman Hine past the damaged bomber.
- Barber attacked the crippled bomber and his bullet strikes caused it to shed metal debris that damaged his own aircraft. The bomber descended and crash-landed in the water.



# 18 April - Air

- Barber, Holmes and Hine were attacked by Zeros, Barber's P-38 receiving 104 hits. Holmes and Barber each claimed a Zero shot down during this melee.
- The top cover briefly engaged reacting Zeros without making any kills.
- Hine's P-38 had disappeared by this point, presumably crashed into the water.
- Running close to minimum fuel levels for return to base, the P-38s broke off contact, with Holmes so short of fuel that he was forced to land in the Russell Islands. Hine was the only pilot who did not return.



The last picture of Isoroku Yamamoto, taken shortly before his plane was shot down.

Yamamoto and all others in the first bomber were killed, Admiral Ugaki and two others survived the crash of the second and were later rescued.

- Thanks for your attention.