



**Timeline on the Acquisition and Use of the Japanese Imperial Navy Z Plan
Updated November 18, 2015
Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) Research Unit**

Sources of Data. JAVA Research Unit has compiled this Timeline, using US, Japanese and Filipino sources. It is based on Dr Greg Bradsher's *The Z Plan Story* (see last paragraph), which is in black font. Excerpts from COL Manuel F. Segura's *Tabunan: The Untold Stories of Cebu Guerillas in WW II* remarks are in red font. Segura, a senior officer US stay-behind guerrilla contingent led by LTC James Cushing, died in November 2014 at age 94. Nievo Namata, a Filipino American of Cebuano origin, verified and updated place names. Dr. Dirk Jan Barreveld, professor of economics and history at San Carlos University in Cebu, Philippines from 1987-2002, and author of *Cushing's Coup: The True story of how LTC James M. Cushing and his Filipino Guerillas captured Japan's Plan Z and Changed the Course of the Pacific War*, remarks are in green font. William R. Elsbury, librarian at the Library of Congress, and Dr. Michael Cullinane, Associate Director of the Center for Southeast Asian studies at University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, have provided invaluable research support. Dr. Shinzo Kitamura, a retired professor in information engineering at Kobe University, drew his remarks from Japanese sources, including the following three references and they are in blue font below:

Akira Yoshimura, *Kaigun Otsu Jiken* (Navy Otsu Incident), first published in *Bessatsu Bungei Shunju*, 1973, later published as a book by *Bungei Shunju* in 2007. Yoshimura interviewed 8 Japanese who served in the Philippines, including navy survivors, rescuers, and an employee at Onoda Cement Factory.

***Bouei Kenshusho* (now, The National Institute for Defense Studies) ed.,
Senshi Sosho (War History Series), Imperial Naval
Headquarters, and Combined Fleet No.5, (in Japanese),
Asagumo Shimbunsha 1974.**

**Motoharu Gotou, *Nichibei Kaisen wo Suku'pu sita Otoko* (A Man
who scooped the Outbreak of War between Japan and the US).
Shin Jinbutsu Ohrai Sha, 2009, first published as "*Kaigun Hodo
Senki: Rengo Kantai Shirei Chokan Nazo no Junshoku*" in 1975.**

[Dear reader. Contact Terry Shima [301-987-6746; ttshima@comcast.net] for
any factual matters or remarks.]

Summary. The exploitation of the Imperial Japanese Navy "Z Plan" [新Z号作戦] is claimed to be one of America's greatest intelligence victories during WW II in the Southwest Pacific War Area (SWPA). Written by Admiral Mineichi Koga, Commander in Chief of Japanese Combined Pacific Fleet, and refined by his staff on March 8, 1944, and entitled "Combined Fleet Secret Operations order Number 73", the Z Plan was designed to protect the Marianas area from enemy occupation. Koga viewed this area as the last line of defense of the Japan homeland. The Z Plan contained two features, i.e. the extensive use of land base aircraft and a diversion, or decoy, to trap the US Navy.

On March 31, 1944 Admiral Koga and Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome departed their Palau headquarters in separate aircrafts for their new headquarters in Davao, Philippines. Both planes encountered a huge tropical storm. Koga's plane disappeared and all personnel were declared dead. Fukudome's plane was ditched off the coast near Cebu City and he and 13 naval personnel survived. They were rescued by Filipino fishermen, who also retrieved the Z Plan that floated near the shore.

The acquisition of the Z Plan was achieved because a number of elements came together: (1) it was spotted and picked up on the shores of Cebu, Philippines, by patriotic Filipino villagers who sensed the importance of the documents, (2) there was effective Filipino guerrilla coordination with the American stay-behind contingent, (3) the successful clandestine submarine rendezvous at a pre-arranged location in southwest Negros Island and the 8-day submarine trip to Darwin, Australia despite experiencing depth charges, (4) the skills and professionalism of the 5 Military Intelligence Service (MIS) translators at the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS), located in Australia, (5) the timely delivery of the Z Plan to the naval commanders (the users) before the launch of the Philippine Sea invasion, (6) thanks to the Filipino guerrillas, the capture of the highest ranking Japanese officer, a vice admiral, and (7) a little luck.

The Z Plan contributed to US naval victory to control the sea around Marianas which contributed to the capture of Saipan, Guam and other islands in the Marianas and contributed to the invasion of the Philippines. American bombers now had the platform to bomb Japan and return. The fact that Admiral Soemu Toyoda, successor to Admiral Koga, used the Z Plan, with minor revisions, to construct his *Sho-Go* Plan suggests that Japanese Navy high command had accepted VADM Fukudome's statement that the Z Plan sank with his aircraft.

Following the war, now full Colonel Ohnishi was summoned by the military court and was expected to be given the death sentence. LTC Cushing testified that Ohnishi did not "violate his promise of cease fire during the negotiations for exchange of prisoners". Following the testimony Cushing approached Ohnishi and shook his hand. The court ruled Ohnishi was not guilty. It is an irony that in his message to Cushing to negotiate the POW exchange he ended his letter "we will meet on the battlefield one day".

Dr. Greg Bradsher, NARA's senior archivist, and RADM Edwin T. Layton, Chief of Intelligence at CINCPAC during WW II, had high praise for the intelligence value of the Z Plan. Bradsher said "historians acknowledge that the exploitation

of the Z Plan was one of the greatest single intelligence feats of the war in the Southwest Pacific area (SWPA).”

The key dates are:

April 1, 1944 - Vice Admiral Fukudome splashed down near Cebu Island, rescued by Filipino villagers and turned over to Filipino guerrillas, who, in turn, turned them over to LTC Cushing, commander of the US stay behind contingent.

April 3, 1944 - Filipino villager found the Z Plan, passed it to Filipino guerrillas, who delivered it to Cushing’s headquarters.

April 10, 1944 – LTC Cushing released VADM Fukudome and other Japanese naval personnel to Japanese Army. Fukudome did not have possession of the Z Plan when he crash landed or when he was released to Japanese forces.

May 11, 1944 – US submarine picked up Z Plan clandestinely in southwest Negros Island. Eight day trip to Darwin, Australia.

May 28, 1944 - Special officer courier hand carried translated Z Plan to CINCPAC headquarters, Hawaii

June 8, 1944 - Z Plan delivered to US naval commanders at Eniwetok, where they were planning the invasion of the Philippine Sea.

June 19 –20 , 1944 - Japanese Navy defeated in the Battle of Philippine Sea.

End Summary and Chronology

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Reminder:

Information from US source is in black font.

Information from Japanese source is in bold blue font followed by S. K.

Information from Filipino source is in bold red font followed by M. F. S.

Z-Plan Time Line. Key dates.

April 18, 1943. As the result of American interception of a Japanese naval message sent five days before from Rabaul that provided his travel itinerary, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's, Commander in Chief of Japanese combined Pacific Fleet, air convoy was demolished by P-38 fighter planes dispatched from Guadalcanal's Henderson Field. He was killed. President Roosevelt approved the shoot down.

April 21, 1943. Admiral Mineichi Koga succeeded Admiral Yamamoto as CINC of the Combined Japanese Pacific Fleet. Fukudome appointed as Chief of Staff in May. Koga considered the Marianas his last line of defense to protect the Japan homeland and the Japanese interests in southeast Pacific. He believed Japan's one chance of success was a decisive naval engagement to defeat the US Navy.

August 25, 1943. Koga wrote the Z-Plan. February 1944 Koga received General Staff approval. The Z-Plan was Admiral Koga's master plan that involved Japan's total naval and air power.

February 16 – 17, 1944, Americans attacked Truk, Japan Pacific Fleet headquarters.

February 23, 1944, Admiral Koga moved his headquarters from Truk to Palau.

March 31, 1944. Admiral Koga was forced to move his headquarters the second time in a year this time from Palau to Davao, Mindanao Island, Philippines. Koga and Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome, Koga's Chief of Staff, and 14 officers, left Palau about 10:00 PM via separate four engine Kawanishi HSK2 flying boats (patrol bombers), for Davao. Fukudome hand carried the Z Plan. [9:40 PM. Dr. Shinzo Kitamura (S. K.)]

April 1, 1944. Admiral Koga's plane vanished in the typhoon and all were presumed to have perished. At 2:30 AM [2:54 AM. S. K.] Fukudome's plane with 14 officers aboard encountered the same typhoon causing the pilot to ditch the plane two and one half miles from shore at Talisay, then known as Magtalisay, located about 10 miles south of Cebu City, Cebu Island, in southern Philippines. [VADM Fukudome's plane ditched between Talisay and Barrio Bas, 33 kilometers south of Cebu City. COL Manuel F. Segura's Tabunan: *The Untold Stories of Cebu Guerrillas in WW II*. M.F.S.] Fukudome was thrown from the aircraft and survived by grabbing a floatable seat cushion. [21 persons in aircraft, 11 sank with plane or drowned, one, Tanigawa, swam to Onoda Cement Naga Factory, leaving 9 survivors rescued by Filipino fishermen. S. K.] There are no indications Fukudome looked for the portfolio that contained the Z-Plan. Fukudome later told the Japanese Navy the Z Plan sank with the plane. Around 11:00 AM Ricardo Bolo, barrio chief of Talisay, his brother Edilberto and Valeriano Paradero paddled their banca (canoe) towards the survivors. The villagers pulled out of the water 11 survivors, including Fukudome, his aide, the pilot, co-pilot, warrant officer, and 6 petty officers. [Ricardo Bolo, procurement agent of food stuff for LTC Cushing's guerrilla, heard the unusual commotion in the sea during the early morning of April 1st. At dawn, he, brother Edilberto and friend Paradero at early dawn left shore in two bancas toward the Japanese survivors. Taking two survivors at a time they made several trips {to shore}. By 7:00 AM the survivors were all ashore. By this time 4 guerrilla lieutenants (volunteer guards) had arrived One Japanese sailor resisted, caused trouble, and was killed by Roque Bacla-an in a rage before anyone could stop him. . The other Japanese had their wrists tied. The Japanese brought to shore a dead comrade. Two strong survivors swam to Barrio Sangat, where they reported to Vicente Rabor, the puppet mayor of San Fernando. Rabor took them to the nearby Japanese garrison at Tina-an, Naga. Ricardo Bolo led the march inland towards LTC Cushing headquarters, supported by the volunteer guards. Fukudome, because of his disability, was carried by the VGs (volunteer guards) M.F.S.] Two Filipino villagers saw two survivors on a reef and paddled towards them, became afraid, abandoned their banca, and swam ashore. The Japanese

survivors jumped in the banca and paddled away from the scene. They met the Mayor of San Fernando, who was appointed by Japan and who took them to the Japanese Army garrison. Bolo directed that the Filipino rescue party escort the Japanese to Barrio Balud and into the mountains where they were turned over to Filipino guerrillas. Bolo supported the Filipino guerrillas. **[At about 10:00 AM a Japanese search plane, with pontoons, flew slowly overhead, Bolo had his men and the survivors travel along a dry creek under cover of trees. Sometime later, Bolo turned over the survivors to Teopisto Tangub of Barrio Sangat, commander of a company of VG (volunteer guards) of San Fernando which was under the supervision of Lt Juan Tirad. The Japanese conducted day and night search operations to locate the survivors. The villagers were arrested on suspicion of knowledge of the survivors' whereabouts. Old folks were tortured and infants were killed. In addition to inquiries about the survivors, the Japanese asked about documents and papers. All the while, the guerrillas and survivors made their way slowly to central Cebu island. The prisoners bare feet were getting sore from cuts by the rough and rocky trails, thus slowing down the group's progress considerably. M.F.S.]**

April 1, 1944. 5:00 AM. Tanigawa, a survivor, above came to Onoda Cement Naga Factory, located in the north of the crashed point, where he met Onoda employee J. Ozaki. At Tanigawa's request Ozaki arranged to have Tanigawa driven to the Naval base. The factory sent two search boats and the Navy sent two trucks south, however, they returned without any information about the Japanese survivors. The naval base sent two search planes and 12 search boats but they could not locate the survivors. A naval officer told Ozaki and his Onoda colleagues to keep this matter secret. The naval base cabled to the 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet in Manila. S. K.

April 1, 1944. Fukudome injured his leg when the plane crash landed and was carried on a make-shift stretcher. While the survivors were on their way from Barrio Balud to Barrio Basak a Japanese float plane buzzed the village apparently looking for the survivors. The Japanese launched a massive search for the survivors and the documents. Japanese threatened, killed Filipinos,

burned villages to get information about Fukudome and the documents. [From Barrio Basak the guerrilla escort headed for Barrio Nag-arco, guerrilla depot where Capt Jose Ponce joined the group. During the trip the guerrillas learned that the Japanese did not fear fire arms but feared the 20 inch Bolo knife, known as the *pinoti*. M.F.S.]

April 1, 1944. 0300 hrs. 3rd plane left Palau with clerical staff and communications equipment. Arrived at Davao safely. S. K.

April 2, 1944. Early morning, possibly before 3:00 AM, The 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet (Manila) sent a cable to the Ministry of Navy (Tokyo). In Davao, the commander of 32nd Special Base Force (*Tokubetsu Konkyochitai*) had been waiting for the arrival of Adm. Koga and his staffs. But they did not appear. They knew then some accident had occurred. They learned about the crash landing of Fukudome's plane. This was cabled to Tokyo before 3:05AM of April 2). Adm. Shiro Takasu of the South-West Area Fleet was appointed as the Acting Commander of the Combined Fleet. Members of the 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet were concerned about the secret documents and also cipher (or code) books which had been carried by Vice Adm. Fukudome and a staff officer, Commander Yuji Yamamoto. The Fleet sent a ship *Kourei-maru* and others, and planes for searching at dawn of April 2. Also they intercepted an American message from Mindanao to Australia and wondered if it were related to Fukudome. The Navy continued to keep this matter secret from the 31st Independent Mixed Brigade (Army) in Cebu. S. K.

[On the second day, the party passed through Balongag and Sak-sak. At Barrop Lantawan at about one PM Gregorio Tangub took over leadership of the group for the trip to LT Varga's headquarters where they arrived at nightfall. This was in the vicinity of Kadomgan, Carcar. They stopped here for the night. The following morning, after a hearty breakfast, Lt Salvador Varga led the group to the command post of Co A, 87th Inf Regt at Calapayan. They then proceeded to the headquarters of Capt Marcelino Eridiano at Binabug, Pinamunjagan. M.F.S.]

[On April 3, day 3, the party crossed the Talisay-Toledo road and at Calactogan, Sab-on the prisoners had a respite from the constant walking as their burns, sores, and lacerations were being treated by Maj Ramon S. Torralba at the aide station there. From there the trails became steeper and they wound their way ever upwards into the guerrillas mountain stronghold. M.F.S.]

April 3, 1944. Day 3, In the morning Pedro Gantuangoko, a shopkeeper at Perilos, a village further down the beach from Barrio Talisay, saw an object floating in the water. He had his neighbor, Opoy Wamer, fetched the box, about 50x40x20 CM in size that was covered with oil, opened it, and saw a red leather portfolio with large golden Japanese characters. The two hid the box in their banca until dark. [On the third day, April 3, 1944, a wing of the crashed plane, washed ashore at Barrio Valladolid, Carcar, and other parts of the wreckage washed ashore at Barrio Perilos. In that vicinity, near Sitio Tuyom, an innocent-looking leather portfolio was picked up by Pedro Gantuanko, who hastened to turn it over to Lt Varga of Carcar. With the Kempeitai questioning people about documents, Gantuangoko feared for his life. As soon as the portfolio was out of his hands he fled to Pangangan Island, one of the many islets of Bohol. [This is at variance with item in black font below.] When the Japanese showed up at Pangangan, Gantuangoko fled to the forested area of Martom, Catigbian, Bohol. Ten Japanese naval vessels were seen patrolling the area between Cebu and Bohol. M.F.S.] At noon the next day Japanese soldiers appeared on the beach looking for documents. They searched the neighborhood but did not search the banca. That night the two retrieved the box, opened it and saw about a half dozen packets, which were wet. They laid the documents on the split bamboo floor to dry. [The Navy decided the accident be called the "Otsu Jiken", or Otsu Incident. The Naval Ministry and the Naval General Staff (Tokyo) sent messages, classified TOP SECRET on Otsu Jiken to main naval subdivisions. S. K.]

April 4, 1944. Gantuangoko and Wamer took the documents to another house to dry for another day, then put them back in the box and buried it. [This is at variance with Segura who said Gantuangoko turned over documents

immediately to guerrilla.] The captives were taken deep into the hills above San Fernando heading towards Barrio Tabunan, the headquarters of Cebu Area Command of the Guerrilla movement, the American stay behind contingent comprised of a few Americans and several thousand Filipinos, commanded by LTC James Cushing (1908 – 1963), a former mining engineer in Manila. The chain of command was Cebu Area Command to GHQ SWPA (General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area, located at Brisbane, Australia). [On April 4, Adm. Osamu Toyoda was appointed unofficially as the successor of Koga. S. K.]

April 7, 1944. LTC Seiichi Ohnishi, Commanding Officer of the 173rd Battalion of the 31st Independent Mixed Brigade had its headquarters at the Onoda Cement Naga Factory. Ohnishi was not informed about the incident until April 8, when the Brigade headquarters, MG Tsuyoshi Kohno commanding, ordered him to mount a rescue operation with 2/3 of his battalion commencing on April 8. Ohnishi knew that LTC Cushing's headquarters was at Tupas Ridge of Mt. Mangabon. And that his young wife and a 4 year old son were with him. Ohnishi used his 2nd and 4th companies and 2 platoon from the 3rd company. Other elements of the battalion were deployed elsewhere. S. K.

April 7, 1944 (?). Japanese continued to conduct a campaign of terror, burned villages and killed civilians to uncover information about Fukudome and the missing documents. They searched Gantuangoko's village, combed the beaches and the village, went on a house to house search. They did not find any documents. The Japanese returned to the village again the following day. Japanese centered their search for documents at Perilos because each test box the Japanese ocean current experts floated in the water at the crash site ended at Perilos. Gantuangoko was becoming frightened by the Japanese pressure and brutality. He dug up the box and gave it to the Filipino guerrillas, who, in turn, delivered the document to Cushing. [Gantuangoko's motive for hiding the box (Z Plan) on his premises was not stated. Guerrilla couriers, carrying the documents began the trek to Cushing's headquarters.] [This is at variance with

Segura who said Gantuangoko turned over documents immediately to the guerrillas.]

April 8, 1944. The party reached a rest area near the guerrilla aid station near Caloctogan, near Barrio Tabunan. Fukudome was weak from his injury and had a fever of about 104 degrees. Cushing's doctor treated Fukudome and other injured survivors.

April 8, 1944. In the late afternoon an urgent message arrived at Cushing's headquarters. Two Japanese columns were rapidly approaching our areas and one was suspected to be heading for Tupas Ridge. A runner was dispatched to verify the information. And before our transmitter for Australia closed down (to maintain radio silence and prevent its disclosure our location to the enemy) we had gotten off a message to GEN MacArthur in Australia informing him of the prisoners and asking advice on what action to take. We also gave the precarious situation we were in, describing the Japanese penetration. The men guarding the prisoners were alerted to be ready to evacuate them to Kamunggayan across the ravine to the west. The base hospital was being evacuated. With the expected arrival of the advancing Japanese column, it was an uneasy night for the guerrillas and civilians alike. M.F.S.

April 9, 1944. Ohnishi's headquarters joined with the 4th company. Although there was a small fight with a guerilla group, they reached the prescribed position at dawn of April 10. S. K.

[Barrio Tabunan was the innermost barrio of Cebu City and site of LTC Cushing's GHQ. Reports were received of a massive 7-point offensive by the Japanese forces. Japanese planes had started to drop leaflets and the father of one of guerrilla nurses, who was being held prisoner of the Japanese in Cebu City, was released to deliver a letter to LTC Cushing, signed by the Japanese Army commander of Cebu, demanding the return of survivors, documents and papers. Reports identified the Japanese invading force as the Ohnesi Butai, a well-equipped, highly-trained, over-strength regiment, which garrisoned on the

island of Cebu. It was commanded by COL Seito Ohnesi. Most of its members were veterans from the battlefields of Manchuria. LTC Ohnesi personally led this punitive actions in which whole villages were brutalized along the way, and countless men, women and children were tortured and killed. Cebu Area Command headquarters normally stationed at Barrio Tabunan was made mobile and was located west and lower than Tupas Ridge. Cushing left with a party across the ravine to the east of Tupas Ridge to warn the Base hospital personnel to evacuate the area and to make arrangements for his wife, Feliza "Fritzi" Tabando Cushing who was living nearby, to proceed to a safer place. It was here on Tupas Ridge on the trail from Cantipla, after seven long and suspenseful days of dodging Japanese columns, that the prisoners' march was brought to a weary and now uncertain halt. The prisoners displayed discipline. When we entered the nipa hut, they realized that we were officers and they immediately formed a line on one side of the small room with the most ranking officers on the left. Two of the prisoners whose feet were in very bad condition and whose faces and arms showed unhealed burns presumably suffered during the burning of the seaplane when it crashed, crawled to their places in the line of prisoners who were on their knees. Every time we offered them cigarettes, they would first look towards their leader on the left for guidance and if accepted, they would accept one by one down the line. The leader was a big man by our standards, was also fairly fat. His face and figure reminded us of the statue of Buddha, commonly seen in the stores in downtown Cebu city. The next officer, who identified himself as Commander Yamamoto, was the one who spoke fairly good English and was apparently the second-in-command. The last two in the line were apparently enlisted personnel and were of the happy-go-lucky type. The Japanese officers observed some protocol for when we tried to talk to the leader, he would speak in Japanese through Yamamoto who then talked directly to us in English. But when COL Cushing came in and talked to the leader, he would answer directly in fluent English, commander to commander. To the lower ranking officers, he spoke through Yamamoto who acted as interpreter. Their leader identified himself as Admiral Twani Fuomei, commander of land and sea forces of Mukassar. M. F. S.]

On April 9, 1944, a follow up radio message in code was sent [M.F.S.]

TO: GENERAL MACARTHUR

FROM: CUSHING

MR. 8 9TH APRIL

REFERENCE TEN JAP PRISONERS -- THEY CAME FROM FOUR MOTORED PLANE WHICH CRASHED OFF SAN FERNANDO AT TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING THIS 1ST APRIL. THEIR NAMES

GENERAL TWANI FUROMEI, COMMANDING OFFICER OF LAND AND SEA FORCES IN MACASSAR

YOJI YAMAMOTO, MARINE OFFICER BOUND FOR MACASSAR

YASUKICHI YAMAGATA

MATSUTARE OKANURA, AVIATOR

USHIKISA INANISHI

KEIS OKUJESIMI, AERONAUTIAL ENGINEER

TOMIDO OLASOGI, OPERATOR

TUSHIDO OKADA, ENGINEER

NASATUSI YUSITO OPERATOR

TAKASHI TANIKAWA, ENGINEER

THEIR PERSONAL EFFECTS: A PAIR OF SHOULDER STRAPS FROM MARINE OFFICER YAMAMOTO, ONE MEMORANDUM NOTEBOOK WITH JAPANESE SCRIPTS, ONE WRAPPED PACKAGE OF JAPANESE RELICS. THREE HOSPITAL CASES, INCLUDING GENERAL FUROMEI AND MARINE OFFICER YAMAMOTO. RUMORS THAT PLANE SHOT DOWN BY ANTI AIRCRAFT FIRE FROM SUBMARINE. HOWEVER, WE ARE CHECKING. M.F.S.

Names of 10 survivors are as follows in Japanese material." (There are some variances.) S. K.

by M.F.S. (10 persons rescued)

TWANI FUROMEI

YOJI YAMAMOTO

YASUKICHI YAMAGATA

MATSUTARE OKAMURA

by S.K. (9 persons rescued)

FURUMI (SHIGERU FUKUDOME)

YUJI YAMAMOTO

? YAMAGATA

MATSUTARO OKAMURA

USHIKISA INANISHI
KEIS OKUJESIMI
TOMIDO OLASOGI
TUSHIDO OKADA
NASATUSI YUSITO
TAKASHI TANIGAWA

YOSHIHISA IMANISHI
BUNZO OKUIZUMI
TOMEZO URASUGI
TOSHIRO OKADA
MASATOSHI YOSHIZU
? TANIGAWA (swam to Onoda Cement)

S. K.

April 9, 1944. At early dawn a runner came to Tupas Ridge and reported to Major Jesus “Susing” Ybanez that a Japanese column was just behind him along the trail from Tap-tap, the little hill at the north end of Tupas Ridge. No sooner had the runner jumped into the fox hole, Filipino commandos open fire, killing a Japanese. Fritz was in a cave between Tupas Ridge and Cantipla. A barely visible trail led past this hideout which was off another trail on a ledge 12 feet high. When the ladder used to climb the ledge was pulled up, it was next to impossible to locate or gain access to this hideaway. Mrs. Cushing was accompanied by T/Sgt Epifanio Loyola, the Colonel’s cook, Mrs Cushing’s maid, a few others, a fox terrier and a Great Dane. The commandos guarding the prisoners began to move them. Sgt Alfredo Marigomen and Sgt Melton were responsible to help the Admiral on a stretcher. Commando Pedro Gabriel carried Commander Yamamoto. The Japanese prisoners were hurried along the preselected trail to Kamunggayan and from there to the rendezvous point at Masurela. M.F.S, a member of the guerrillas, described the firefight in detail. M.F.S.

April 8 or 9, 1944. Not having received any reply from Australia, COL Cushing called his top officers to a conference. Among those who came were the commanding officers of the four infantry regiments: LTC Rogaciano Espiritu of the 85th; LTC Maximo Albinda of the 86th; LTC Abrel Trazo of the 87th; and LTC Almendras of the 88th. Also present were COL Baura, M.F.S., MAJ Fernando M Villamor (Asst COS for Operations G-3) Maj Ybanez; MAJ Daniel Iwy (ACOS for Personnel G-1), MAJ Bernard Hale (MP Battalion commander), Major Bonsukan

(Area Signal officer). MaJ Agaton Medina (ACOS for logistics G-4) was not at the meeting; he was out in the north procuring supplies. M.F.S.

Questions arose, was GEN MacArthur too busy to respond to our messages? Was this admiral of no importance to SWPA? By this time the prisoners were already evacuated from Tupas Ridge to Kamunggayan and were securely guarded in the nipa hut. Commando Sgt Alfredo Marigomen and Sgt Meliton Engagan had charge of Admiral Furumei and CDR Yamamoto was carried by Commando Eduardo Gabriel to the nearby forest of Cantipla amid the confusion of the pitched battle around the ridge. Were the lives of 8 Japanese prisoners worth the lives of over a hundred Cebuanos? M.F.S.

April 9, 1944. Cable. LTC Cushing to Brisbane (GEN MacArthur's headquarters in Australia) . Cushing says he has ten "prisoners" and documents at his headquarters at Tupas Ridge. Admitted the wounded to base hospital. Fukudome's aide, Commander Yamamoto, who spoke some English, gave evasive answers to questions. Said Fukudome was General Twani Furumei, commanding officer of land and sea forces in Macassar, Celebes. [Dr. Dirk Jan Barreveld said Fukudome was the only Japanese admiral taken prisoner. Also, he was the only chief of staff taken prisoner in the whole war.] [According to interrogation of Fukudome possibly in Tokyo on December 9-12, 1945, Fukudome said he was treated well by Cushing, met his wife and 10 year old daughter. [4 year old son. = S.K] [Barreveld said Cushing did not have children, the child Fukudome referred to was possibly one from the neighborhood.] [Segura (M.F.S.), in discussing Cushing's family did not mention children.] Fukudome said Cushing addressed him as "General" and Fukudome decided not to correct him. Fukudome said Mrs Cushing made coffee for him. Said Cushing visited Japan before the war on business and had friends in Japan. Said he was not interrogated by Cushing. From the outset when the fishermen rescued him, until he was turned over to Cushing, Fukudome thought he would be killed.]

Cushing received a report that Japanese had rounded up 100 Filipinos intending to use them as hostages for the return of the Japanese captives. Cushing's

personnel strength was down to 25 soldiers. The Japanese had a force of 2,000. Cushing was under severe pressure from Japanese army, which was getting closer to Cushing's base headquarters. Cushing waited for instructions from Brisbane which did not arrive.

April 9, 1944 Cushing's guerrilla General Staff recommended and LTC Cushing approved attempt to negotiate with LTC Seito Ohnesi that he exchange the Japanese naval prisoners for the stop of killing and destruction. Cushing sent for Admiral Furumei and had a long talk with him. As the result of this talk, it was decided to send a message to Ohnesi proposing that he refrain from further killings and destruction in return for the prisoners. It was decided to send two guerrillas to the Japanese troops at Tupas Ridge, who had now put up tents, a sign they were prepared to stay a long time. The two guerrillas were Cpl Herminio "Mening" Cerna and Cpl Numeriano "Numer" Padayao Teves. LTC Cushing drafted a message which he gave to M.F.S. to write clearly. This was then shown to the Japanese Admiral who had Yamamoto write the same message in Japanese. M.F.S.

April 9, 1944. Cushing to Brisbane . Situation intolerable. Decided to release Japanese captives to "LTC Ohnesi" after extracting agreement, endorsed by Furumei, that killing of Filipino civilians and destruction would stop.

At Tupas Ridge, the safety of Cushing's camp now compromised, he ordered the closure of the camp and moved across the ravine to near Kamungayan. M.F.S.

April 9, 1944. Since he could not wait any longer for instructions from Brisbane, LTC Cushing sent a message to Japanese LTC "Seiiti Ohnesi", Japanese commander of the Japanese rescue force, that Furumei and survivors will be released if their killing Filipino civilians and burning of villages stopped. Cushing got Furumei to agree to these terms. Commander Yamamoto translated Cushing's message and sent it by courier to Ohnesi.

These two messages, one in English and the other in Japanese, were fastened together and given to the two runners who were ordered to deliver them to LTC Ohnishi across the ravine on Tupas Ridge. With a white flag, the four messengers went as a group across to the seemingly overwhelming Japanese force. On this day there was a mutual truce. Scenes unparalleled in war to this time were witnessed: opposing patrols whose paths happened to meet bowed to each other instead of shooting it out! About 4:00 PM the team of four returned with 'Akibuno' cigarettes and an answer demanding immediate release of the survivors. In order to stall for time for a possible response from SWPA to arrive, Cushing made an offer to release four now and the next four in a week's time. A terse answer from Ohnishi said all or no one at all. So, after getting the assurance of the Admiral that no civilian would get hurt as a result of their capture Cushing decided reluctantly to release all the prisoners. M.F.S.

April 9, 1944. Cable. LTC Cushing to Brisbane. Report of capture of VADM Furumei, who concealed his full name (Cushing took down the name as Furumei) his mission and from whence he came and played down his rank. [Furumi, not Furumei. S.K.]

April 9 or 10, 1944. Z Plan was delivered to LTC Cushing. It was a red leather portfolio embossed with an elaborate emblem with the letter Z on the cover. [Barreveld said the document was left at the corner of Cushing's office.] [The documents reached the Cebu Area Command's GHQ where COL James M.Cushing open the package containing two bound documents. One was voluminous and the other was perhaps two inches thick. M.F.S.]

Cushing had the document marked, rolled up tightly and placed inside two empty mortar shells. [Japanese army (LTC Ohnishi), apparently, was not aware, as of these dates, that the Z Plan was already in Cushing's hands. Had Ohnishi known that fact, he might have demanded the release of the document(s) as well, and, given the pressure Cushing was under, it is difficult to speculate what Cushing might have done. This bracketed item is JAVA analyst's opinion.]

April 10, 1944. Ohnishi reached a valley under the cliff of Mt. Mangabon, and over the valley was a gradual hill, and in front of it Tupas ridge. Using his binocular Ohnishi saw an elegant western-styled house which he assumed was Cushing's residence. Ohnishi was confident he could surround and annihilate the guerrillas in Tupas ridge. They took breakfast before attacking. At 9:00 AM, Ohnishi gave an attack order, and the fight began. The 4th company saw a man with a Japanese flag. Second Lieut. Kawamura called Ohnishi on wireless and said the man, a Japanese, wanted to see him. Looking tired and dirty, he identified himself as Lieutenant Junior Grade M. Okamura, the captain of the flying boat. He explained the accident and that 9 people had been captured by natives and were confined in Cushing's headquarters. Further he said they were with Vice Admiral Furumi, a false name, and with another false name Rear Adm. Hanazono. Okamura showed a letter from LTC Cushing to commander T. Kohno of the 31st Independent Mixed Brigade (Army) and to Maj Gen. Asama, the army liaison officer in Cebu. The letter was written by Cushing and translated into Japanese by Commander Y. Yamamoto. Ohnishi hesitantly opened the letter, which said: [S. K.]

To Honorable Maj. Gen. T. Kohno and Asama

1. I protect 9 people including Rear Adm. Hanazono rescued from the aircraft.
2. Japanese Army (and Navy, too) have attacked native people [the words of "ill-treat" or "abuse" in Japanese were used here]. Please give an order to take action against them. Signed. Commander of Guerrillas, James M. Cushing. S. K.

Okamura explained the "Navy accident, the rescue and the 10 days trek. He said also that the captives would be killed if Ohnishi attacked. Ohnishi sent a message to the 31st Independent Mixed Brigade, passing on Cushing's letter, and called his three company commanders. There was some discussion, but finally Ohnishi came to a conclusion first to rescue the naval party. Okamura also said "Vice Adm. Furumi and Commander Yamamoto wanted to commit suicide after being captured." Ohnishi, for the first time, became aware of the details of the

very serious accident of the Navy. He thought the Navy had been searching for an admiral called Furumi. S. K.

April 10, 1944. Since Ohnishi did not receive a response from the Brigade headquarters, he asked Lt (JG) Okamura to deliver his letter to LTC Cushing. Ohnishi's letter said "I saw your letter to the Commander of the Brigade and the liaison officer. The Battalion's mission is to rescue the naval party. Your forces are surrounded. If you release unconditionally the party including Rear Adm. Hanazono, we will stop our action and withdraw to our bases. Besides, although your letter protested that Japanese Army had ill-treated the natives in southern Cebu, my soldiers do not engage in such disgusting behaviors. On the other hand, some units under your command ill-treated Filipinos who have been in favor of Japan. Issue an order to stop these actions." The letter was translated by Second Lieutenant S. Hidaka. Ohnishi changed the appearance of his mission from destroying LTC Cushing's operation to rescue of the survivors. S. K.

LT (JG) Okamura told LTC Ohnishi "I want to come back again by 8:00PM with Cushing's reply. If I don't return, start the attack because something had happened to me." LT (JG) Okamura did not return by 8:00 PM, however, LTC Ohnishi had received a response from MG Kohno who ordered the attack continue, LTC Cushing be captured, and the survivors be rescued. This order bothered LTC Ohnishi because an attack could result in the survivors being killed and it violated his promise to withdraw if the survivors were released. LTC Ohnishi decided to ignore the order from the Brigade. When LT (JG) Okamura did not return by 8:00 PM, LTC Onishi was tempted to attack, however, he decided to wait. S. K.

April 10, 1944 (?).
James M. Cushing
Bvt. Colonel, C.e. USAFFE
To LT. Col Seiiti Ohnisi

In keeping with our agreement we are sending the Japanese Navy officers and sailors which crashed and are now in our hands. They will leave here at day light as it is too difficult for them to travel at night. Sincerely yours.

Cushing's signature M.F.S.

April 10, 1944. [Possibly April 11]. Accordingly, at about 11:00 AM the only POW exchange on Cebu took place. On our side, a guerrilla with a white flag acted as point for the exchange party and started down from Kamunggayan. From across the ravine, a group of about 50 Japanese, armed only with swords and bayonets, moved down from the ridge to take one of the trails leading to the bottom of the ravine until they reached the riverbed below. On our side, a platoon under Lt Pedcro Villareal acted as escort to the prisoners. Villareal was chosen because he spoke Japanese fairly well, having served in the Japanese-supervised Bureau of Constabulary. A chair was tied down to two strong bamboo poles. On the chair unsteadily sat the Admiral . The platoon moved down the winding trail until it reached a mango tree some distance above the river on our side. At the same time the larger Japanese group crossed the riverbed and started up the trail towards the same mango tree. The Admiral must have been a very important person for in his presence the Japanese soldiers bowed very low, practically touching their foreheads to the ground. During the course of the ceremony Villareal passed LTC Cushing's hand printed message on his personal stationary. M.F.S.

April 11, 1944. LT (JG) Okamura returned at dawn with LTC Cushing's message: S. K.

1. Time of release of Japanese : Today at 1100
2. Place : Under a Mango tree on the height in front of Ohnishi's battalion (in Tupas ridge).
3. Attendants and their conditions: Select the minimum members without weapons to receive the naval party. Prepare three stretchers for wounded.
4. Route of withdrawal of Ohnishi's battalion to Pitos.
5. "Don't attack native people from now on." S. K.

LTC Ohnishi told LT (JG) Okamura he agreed with first four conditions, but not the 5th. Ohnishi insisted the guerrillas should stop attacking pro-Japan Filipinos. Okamura said he understood and left. Ohnishi formed his rescue team: 1st Lt Matsumura, commander, 2nd LT Kamei, and 1st Lt Kawahara, Nakajima interpreter. The Japanese side did not have rifles but each had a knife and grenade. The some 80 guerrillas wore weapons and the leader was a Filipino first lieutenant of the military police who spoke fluent Japanese. The turnover of the 9 survivors followed protocol, conversation in Japanese and Visayan, presents of cigarettes from Japanese soldiers, and singing Japanese songs. The survivors were tired and exhausted and they were silent throughout the ceremony. VADM Furumi received LTC Ohnishi's salute but he nodded only. In response to LTC Ohnishi's question, CDR Yamamoto said "Cushing was afraid of the death of his son". The result of the exchange was reported to the Cebu Detachment of the 31st Garrison (*31 Keibitai Cebu Hakentai*) and forwarded also to the 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet in Manila. The Fleet replied : "At first, send the Admiral, after that, ask to return appropriately other members and documents. S. K.

The Japanese group then turned around and went back to the riverbed, re-crossed it, and started the long winding climb to Tupas Ridge. Villareal with his platoon also retraced the path he took and returned to report his mission accomplished to Cushing. Despite the momentary relief occasioned by this disengagement with the enemy, night settled uneasily on Kamunggayan and brought with it a radio message from SWPA. M.F.S.

[In Tokyo the Navy High Command was concerned about Admiral Koga and the documents. Messages reporting this concern was intercepted by American signal collectors and sent to US naval intelligence .]

April 11, 1944 (noon). Fukudome and survivors were turned over to LTC Ohnishi via Filipino guerrillas. Ohnishi sent a message to Cushing to express his

satisfaction and ending it “we’ll meet on the battle field one day”. VADM Fukudome also wrote a note of thanks.

April 11, 1944. SWPA message said ‘ENEMY PRISONERS MUST BE HELD AT ALL COSTS.’ The Japanese had just been released. When Cushing read that message he walked out of his headquarters, gazed at the stars, and wept shamelessly for violating MacArthur’s orders. M.F.S. That Cushing was not able to comply with those instructions, he felt he would be criticized by Brisbane. One reason for the delay in getting instructions from Brisbane was because of faulty communications , e.g. the number of relays of messages to get from Cushing to Brisbane and also Brisbane to Cushing. **Cushing and his staff prepared a long coded message to explain the release of Japanese survivors and the status of the documents (Z Plan) i.e. that they were being hand carried to the submarine pick up point. Lt Lucito Carniga was given charge of the documents with instructions to turn them over to Lt Irving Joseph upon arrival at the submarine rendezvous point. After the war M.F.S. met Lt Joseph in San Francisco, who said upon arrival in Australia they were taken to MG Charles P. Willoughby’s office who led them to the Nisei Section where American-born Japanese translated the document. [LT Joseph’s story is at variance with other reported events.] M.F.S.**

April 12, 1944. Late evening. Kamei’s platoon returned to Pitos, where they were received by LCDR Shigeichi Yamamoto. Yamamoto sent a message to the Naval General Staff (Tokyo) at 15:36 hours. S. K.

April 13, 1944. The survivors arrived at the *Suikousha* in Cebu City (Cebu Naval Club). LCDR Yamamoto asked VADM Fukudome about the secret documents. Fukudome said “the natives had no interest in the documents”. LTC Ohnishi met with General Kohno at the Brigade headquarters and explained why he did not execute Kohno’s orders to attack. Kohno replied only “The Navy was pleased”. LTC H. Watanabe, an Army staff officer, explained to Ohnishi that a man called Furumi or Hanazono was Vice Adm. S. Fukudome of the Combined Fleet, but asked him to keep the information secret. Therefore, none of his

battalion members knew the identity of the ranking person they had rescued until the end of war. The case was reported to the Naval Headquarters in Tokyo at 3:36 PM. S. K.

The release of the Fukudome pressure now over, Cushing was faced with the delivery of the Z Plan to Brisbane.

April 13, 1944. Cushing turned over the two mortar shells that contained the Z Plan to two former POWs, Russ Snell and Jimmy Dyer, instructing them to take them to "Andrews headquarters" (LTC Edwin D. Andrews, commander of guerrilla contingent) in southern Negros. Filipino guerrillas led the way and provided security.

April 14, 1944. SWPA top officials received Cushing's message of Fukudome's release to Japanese side.

April 15, 1944. Dyer and Snell, along with a bodyguard of soldiers, crossed Cebu and the Tanon Strait.

April 15, 1944. Fukudome was flown to Manila.

April 17, 1944. The Acting Commander in Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet reported to the Navy General Staff in Tokyo the search for Koga was ended and the case is closed and the "Otsu incident" (Japanese reference to VADM Fukudome's case) is also closed.

April 18, 1944. Cable: Brisbane to LTC Cushing. SWPA's belated message arrived citing importance of safe delivery of documents and Japanese prisoners (Admiral Fukudome) to southern Negros.

April 18, 1944. Fukudome and two staff officers arrived at Haneda (Tokyo) via Ohmura Base in Kyushu. At 3:00 PM, Sawamoto (Vice Minister), Ito and Tsukahara (both Vice Chiefs of the General Staff), Oka (Head of the Military

Affairs), Mito (Head of the Personnel Affairs) and Nakazawa (Head of the First Division of the General Staff) debriefed Fukudome and Yamamoto . Fukudome gave the same story as he made at Cebu Naval Club. He said also the guerrillas and LTC Cushing had been gentle and did not interrogate him. While the briefing team accepted Fukudome's remarks, they appeared to have problem that he allowed himself to be a captive "and to have returned alive was more serious as a Japanese officer". S. K.

Sawamoto and his colleagues decided to keep ADM Fukudome and CDR Yamamoto in rooms of the Ministry and to move them next day to the "Ikeda house" near Togo-Shrine. Two officers were in semi confinement. Ranking Navy officials were very confused how to treat them and they were preoccupied with this issue rather than the status of the documents they were transporting. In a vote, two of the 5 officers said "Fukudome was guilty, three said he was not guilty" of serving contrary to naval traditions A high ranking staff officer left a memorandum in the quarters that hinted they should take their own lives that night but that did not happen. S. K.

Jack Seward, *Strange but True Stories from Japan*, Tuttle Publishing 2004, page 153 said: "To avoid having to commit *harakiri*, Admiral Shigeru Fukudome told the Imperial Navy Board of Inquiry that his briefcase containing the master plan for Operation Z burned in the wreck of his four-engine Kawanishi flying boat when it crash landed in the sea after running out of fuel just short of Cebu in the Philippines. Also in question was the allegation that the Admiral had allowed himself to be captured by Philippine guerrillas in violation of the *Senjin-kun* (Combatants' Code). Perhaps in consideration of the dire shortage of high-ranking naval officers, the board of inquiry voted three to two not to press charges against the admiral (or his companion Commander Yamamoto). The board did, however, invite the pair to spend the night in a room in the Navy Ministry "without the presence of a guard". The hint that they commit suicide was offered, however, they decided not to accept the gesture.

April 20 – MAY 15, 1944. VADM Fukudome was housed in government house in Tokyo and out of public sight. Military high command did not want any publicity pertaining to the Fukudome case. This might explain why the Fukudome case was assigned a cryptonym: “the Otsu incident”. S. K.

Vice Admiral Nakazawa, who was a member at the meeting on April 18 at the Ministry, said in his memoirs, “ Vice Admiral Tasuku Nakazawa,” in 1979 that “in the meeting on April 18, they (Fukudome and Yamamoto) reported the details of the accident. But they said nothing about the documents. Thus, we could not know anything about it, and did nothing for them.” S. K.

April 19, 1944, the Naval Minister S. Shimada asked Fukudome about his capture, however, his reply was the same. One point that helped Fukudome was that the Japanese Navy did not view the Filipino guerillas as an official US Army thereby blurring the definition of a captive. S. K.

April 25, 1944. The Navy Department closed the Admiral Fukudome, or Otsu Incident. Vice Admiral R. Kusaka was appointed to succeed Fukudome and Adm. S. Toyoda succeeded Adm Koga. In his memoirs , published in 1971, entitled “40 Years Life in the Navy” Fukudome said “..... someone says the documents were left in the crashed flying boat and it was used by the US. That was absolutely impossible because the airplane crashed and it had burned during the night. The documents were burned, and no one could find anything there. Of course, we could not swim with such documents because we were picked up after drifting 10 hours.” That allegation was not correct. S. K.

April 28, 1944. Dyer and Snell arrived at Andrews’ headquarters in the hills behind the coastal village of Culipapa. Two mortar shells were turned over to COL Andrews. Meanwhile, Japanese were offering reward of 50,000 pesos (about \$25,000) for the missing documents. This convinced SWPA that document must be important and submarine pick-up was justified.

May 1, 1944. Cushing sent a message to Brisbane that he was sending more documents, e.g. maps showing air and naval bases, wireless stations, emergency landing fields in Philippines; maps of Palau, French Indo China, Hainan, south China; codebook.

May 5, 1944. Japan announced Admiral Koga's death and appointment of Admiral Soemu Toyoda as Japan Combined Fleet Commander. The announcement said Koga had been killed in action in March while directing naval operations from a plane. Admiral Kusaka succeeded VADM Fukudome. About a week later, Toyoda, who inherited the Z Plan, made some minor changes to the Z Plan and called it the "*Sho-Go*" plan. [JAVA analyst comment. Adm Toyoda and the Imperial Navy high command probably judged that the Z Plan was not compromised.]

May 6, 1944. Cable: LTC Cushing to Brisbane. Reports "large quantity of documents" recovered.

May 7, 1944. 11:30 PM. USS Crevalle, a submarine, patrolling off the coast of northern Borneo, received message to proceed north to the eastern part of the Sulu Sea to be prepared for a special mission on May 11.

May 7, 1944. Brisbane (SWPA) sent message to COL Salvador Abcede, commander of the 7th Military District of Negros, asking which pick up site should be used. SWPA followed up with precise instructions on how the transfer of the documents and the refugees was to take place. [Comment. LTC Andrews headquarters in Negros Island was one mile away from COL Abcede's. Each was in direct radio contact with MacArthur's headquarters.]

May 8, 1944. USS Crevalle ordered to proceed to a position just north of Basay, to Balatong Point, Negros.

May 10, 1944. USS Crevalle arrived at Balatong, submerged, and began intensive casing the area for potential enemy threat. Lt Commander Francis David Walker

Jr., the submarine commander, was concerned of walking into an enemy trap. His goal was to get the passengers and documents aboard safely and depart as quickly as possible. He planned and rehearsed meticulously the duties of his men, including security detail to counter any enemy attack. He saw no activity on the beach because Colonel Abcede was exercising his game plan of keeping the evacuees under cover and briefed of the scenario for the following day. However, LCDR Walker saw through the submarine's periscope the safety signal, two white squares on a coconut tree.

May 11, 1944. Rendezvous day. By late afternoon COL Abcede had the 41 evacuees loaded on three small vessels in a cove with tree cover and at the predesignated time moved the three vessels to the beach. At 4:30 PM LCDR Walker saw the boarding party on the beach. At the designated time, 5 PM, two large boats and some small outriggers headed for the predesignated pickup point. The evacuees wondered where they were being taken to until they saw the USS Crevalle surface in front of them. A small group of the evacuees quietly sang the Star Spangled Banner.

May 11, 1944. 5:57 PM. Abcede reached the Crevalle and asked for permission to board. Granted. After brief exchange of protocol, COL Abcede said there are 41 evacuees, not 25, would you accept them. LCDR Walker approved and the loading began in the order that was meticulously planned. The evacuees included including Snell and Dyer, who carried the Z Plan from Cushing's headquarters. Abcede gave LCDR Walker the two mortar shell casings and told him that "it contained extremely important documents captured from the Japanese in Cebu".

May 11, 1944. 6:37 PM. COL Abcede requested permission to depart. Granted. One other person departed with Abcede. Reverend Paul Lindholm, after seeing his family safely on the vessel, told Abcede he was returning to Negros. Lindholm told Abcede his job in Negros was not finished. A fellow evacuee who overheard the discussion observed, "here's a guy who has freedom in the palm of his hand and he walks away from it to carry on his

work". Abcede, who had earlier discussions with Lindholm, said "I have orders from MacArthur to send you to Australia". The Reverend quietly replied, "Sir, I have orders from headquarters higher than MacArthur to remain here with your people". Abcede shook his head and smiled. Turning to his adjutant, Abcede said "Ben, these are the kind of people worth fighting for." Abcede and Lindholm disembarked. USS Crevalle closed the hatches, submerged and headed for Darwin, Australia. LCDR Walker kept the submarine on surface as much as possible for speed. It submerged when the enemy was detected nearby and twice survived depth charges. All evacuees loved the chocolate candies, the older folks enjoyed the milk, American baked bread and coffee while the younger folks, who had lived in the Philippine countryside all their lives, endured these basic food but preferred buffalo milk and bread made of cassava. [For a detailed write-up of the submarine pick-up and journey to freedom, see Steven Trent Smith's *The Rescue: A true story of Courage and Survival in WW II*, Wiley and Sons, 2011.]

May 13, 1944. In Tokyo, Admiral Fukudome left the government house and returned home.

May 19, 1944. After 8 days, USS Crevalle arrived near Darwin, located on Australia's west coast. Two small Australian navy boats approached the Crevalle, boarded, one said he was CDR X.M. Smithy, head of the American base at Darwin. He said they were there to pick up the "mail" from Negros, signed a receipt, departed and the submarine headed to Darwin. A courier rushed CDR Smithy to the nearby airport and some 6 hours and 1,800 miles later the plane landed at Brisbane. By midday the box of Japanese secrets was in ATIS, the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service, comprised largely of Nisei linguists and commanded by COL Sidney F. Mashbir.

May 21, 1944. At ATIS headquarters at Indooroopilly, a Brisbane suburb, photostatic copies of the documents were made and given to Col Mashbir who assign the translation to his top five translators. LTC John Anderton, 1st Lt Fabion Bowers, LT Richard Bagnall, USN, S/Sgt George "Sankey" Yamashiro, and S/Sgt

Yoshikazu Yamada. It was fortunate the Z Plan was in plain text and not encoded. They quickly identified one document as copy six of 550 copies of Secret Combined Fleet Order No. 73." It had been issued on March 8, 1944, from the flagship *Musashi* at Palau and was signed by Koga, the commander in chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet. The preamble greatly excited the translators, as it stated: "The Combined Fleet is for the time being directing its main operations to the Pacific Area where, in the event of an attack by an enemy, Fleet Occupation Force will bring to bear the combined maximum strength of all our forces to meet and destroy the enemy, and to maintain our hold on vital areas. These operations will be called "Z Operations." The translators worked all night to translate the Z Plan and produced a 22-page translation. ATIS regulations banned Nisei from translating TOP SECRET documents because Nisei were not fully trusted. MG Charles A. Willoughby, G-2, who had responsibility for ATIS, waived the regulations to allow Yamada and Yamshiro, who had native fluency in Japanese, to serve on the translation team. Native fluency was the credential needed for the translation of this document as they could capture the nuances that others might not.

May 22, 1944. Cushing radioed Brisbane (SWPA) to report that Japanese knew his men had found more documents. Japanese naval commander in Cebu had an airplane drop leaflets addressed to Cushing instructing that all documents, bags, and clothing picked up from the airplane that had made a forced landing off San Fernando, Cebu on April 1, be returned unconditionally to the mayor of San Fernando or the Navy would resort to "drastically severe" methods against them.

May 22, 1944. MG Willoughby, chief of intelligence for General MacArthur was excited to receive the translated Z Plan, 22 pages

May 23, 1944. ATIS issued Limited Distribution Translation #4, "Z operations orders". The first copy was sent by officer courier to General George C. Marshall, Chief of staff of the US Army, and copy #2 was presented to GEN MacArthur.

May 25, 1944. After translating the Z Plan, the ATIS translation team completed a 29 page translation of another document, “A study of the main Features of Decisive Air Operations in the Central Pacific”. On May 28, 1944 ATIS issued this translation as Limited Distribution Translation #5.

May 25, 1944. Cushing advised SWPA that last batch of documents left for southern Negros for a submarine pick up.

May 28, 1944. Barreved said officer courier hand carried translated Z Plan (5,000 miles) to CINCPAC Honolulu and upon arrival 48 hours later (May 30) passed it to JICPOA. CAPT W.J. Holmes of JICPOA passed the translated Z Plan to then CAPT Edwin Layton USN, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz’s Fleet intelligence officer with the recommendation copies be disseminated to concerned naval commanders.

May 30 or 31, 1944. Layton briefed Nimitz. Layton said the document is the Japanese Combined Fleet’s operational plans for “concentrating its total sea and air strength against the next American advance”, in other words “hurl everything they had against the American fleet.” Layton saw the need to get the translated Z Plan ASAP to naval commanders, who were holding their pre invasion planning conference at Eniwetok. Layton also noted the Z-Plan was translated “by a person unfamiliar with Japanese naval terminology and that it needed editing” to get the language in Navy-ese. However, he first needed to get from COL Mashbir: (1) approval from General MacArthur to use the document as required by MacArthur and (2) a photocopy of the original Japanese document.

May 30, 1944. Japanese in the Cebu area continued intensive bombing. Dropped leaflets on guerrillas indicating Japanese had “decided to resort to firm and drastic measures against you. Our offensive, from now on, will increase extremely in its vigor and fierceness”

May 30, 1944. Japanese ultimatum to Cushing to turn in all documents, clothing, and anything taken from the April 1st emergency landing.

End of May. Japanese Army continues to look for documents in Cebu area. [It is not known if the Japanese found any documents. They could not have located the original of the Z Plan because that copy was in the hands of American intelligence.]

(Date not known, possibly ca June 1, 1944, Layton received the photostat copies from COL Mashbir. Layton and a “small group of JICPOA translators (there is no indication any Nisei participated in this translation) re-translated the document. Layton later said ATIS “had gotten it mostly right”. [The reference to full translation conflicts with another report which said Layton, a Japanese linguist, had tinkered with the ATIS translation here and there.]

June 3, 1944. Cushing radioed Brisbane (SWPA) that the Japanese had taken his headquarters by surprise on May 30, his forces suffered several casualties in their escape. He said Japanese were using 9 planes and were burning many homes in Cebu.

June 8, 1944. The air courier carrying the Z-Plan arrived at Eniwetok, where the fleet commanders had assembled, completed their meeting, and had begun moving out for the invasion of the sea around Marianas.” The Navy’s re-translated Z Plan was delivered to Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, who commanded the 5th Fleet, on his flagship, the Indianapolis, as he was preparing to move his fleet for the Saipan area. Layton later said the Z Plan “undoubtedly influenced Spruance’s tactics in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. It also reached Admiral Halsey’s staff. It arrived too late to reach Task Force 58 under VADM Marc A. Mitscher before it left Majuro in the Marshall Islands but copies were air dropped to his flagship, Lexington, on the high seas.

May 29 – June 13, 1944. The Japanese action was designed to recover the naval secret documents. LTC Ohnishi’s battalion surrounded the guerrillas, however,

they could not seize the guerrilla camp because they did not have heavy weapons. S. K.

June 15, 1944. The Japanese Navy had not announced the survival of Fukudome. Rumors were widespread. To quell the rumors, Fukudome was appointed as Commander of the 2nd Air Fleet on June 15. CDR Yamamoto was appointed to Fukudome's staff in August 1944. (Yamamoto died later with the Battle ship Yamato in Okinawa). S. K.

The 3rd Southern Expeditionary Fleet (Manila) was convinced the documents were in the hands of the Filipino guerrillas. They made a serious effort to recover them by bombing guerrilla areas, distributing leaflets, and issuing ultimatums to return the documents. By May 30, 1944, however, the documents were not returned. S. K.

June 16, 1944. Cushing to Brisbane (SWPA). Bombing and strafing continued to June 12. Following that there was day and night plane activity over Cebu. Japan had not given up on retrieving the documents.

June 19-20, 1944. Japanese combined fleet and the US Navy met in the western Pacific between the Marianas and the Philippines. When the Japanese implemented their diversionary plan, Admiral Spruance, armed with knowledge from the Z-plan, did not bite at the bait. US Navy strength was 535 ships (including 15 carriers with 900 planes) and 130,000 troops for Operation Forager, the largest amphibious assault yet mounted in the Pacific.

Result. 476 (one report said 600) Japanese aircraft were destroyed. Japan also lost half of its carrier force. Without its carrier air power, destruction of land base air capability, and lacking the wherewithal to sustain itself for long range sea going operations, the Combined Pacific Fleet would no longer be a serious threat to American naval power. [Side note: Having no connection with the Z Plan, the following is to illustrate other Nisei in action under combat condition. During the assault phase of Saipan, Nisei found documents in a newly

abandoned school house. Translators spent all night translating the document using flashlight. The translation produced enemy battle plans, including precise locations of their batteries and tanks. Thanks, in part, to advance knowledge of these battle plans, the enemy was defeated when it attacked that evening.] The battle of Saipan would last three more weeks resulting in reportedly 3,000 Americans and 45,000 enemy soldiers killed.

1945. LTC Cushing was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest medal for valor.

Spring 1945. Cushing was summoned to Leyte. Heavy with thought that he may be facing at least a serious reprimand for releasing the prisoners, Cushing plodded on "to face the music". Not too clear at this time was whether, as later reports suggested, Cushing had already been reduced in rank to private as a result of his release of the Japanese prisoners. He made the trip in very low spirit. Upon his return from the trip he still had on his colonel's insignia and his grin was a little wider. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest medal for valor. In addition, what he got in Leyte was possibly the greatest surprise of his life -- a terse but clear statement: "Had the Cebu Area Command done nothing else but turn in the documents, that would have been more than enough reason for its existence". This one line epilogue, carried by word of mouth, soon swept across the bloodied hills of Cebu into the hearts and souls of every Cebu guerrilla and became transfixed there like a gold medal. The guerrillas learned that Admiral Twani Furomei, Commander of Japanese Land and Sea Forces at Makassar, was actually Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome, Chief of Staff of the Imperial Combined Fleet of Japan. M.F.S.

Spring 1945, US Army landed in Cebu Island. LTC Ohnishi and his battalion retreated to Mangabon ridge. After the war, LTC, then Colonel, Ohnishi was summoned by the military court. For the crimes he had committed a death sentence was expected. LTC Cushing appeared in court and, contrary to expectation, Cushing testified that LTC Ohnishi "did not violate his promise of cease fire during the negotiations to turn over the survivors to LTC Ohnishi".

Following the testimony Cushing approached LTC Ohnishi and shook his hand. The court ruled COL Ohnishi was not guilty; he returned to the city of Yonago, Tottori Prefecture. S. K.

[Comment: On April 11, 1944, see above, LTC Ohnishi ended his letter to Cushing “we’ll meet on the battlefield one day”. It is ironic that they would instead meet in a court room.]

December 9-12, 1945. *Interrogation of VADM Fukudome by RADM R.A. Ofstie, USN. NAV No. 115, USSBS 503. The Naval War in the Pacific.* VADM Fukudome discussed in detail the war, his splashdown, captive of Filipino guerrillas, return to Japan, however, no remarks were found in the interrogation report about the loss of the Z Plan. [JAVA Analyst Comment. For an interrogation of this length, days and days, and so professionally conducted, that there was no discussions about the Z Plan is difficult to believe. Since the interrogation was so thorough, it is presumed the Z Plan discussion was expurgated from the official text.]

February 1, 1945. ATIS informed Willoughby that the Z Plan story had been released to the press and that the plan was “probably one of the most important documents captured in SWPA to date.”

RADM Edwin T. Layton, CINCPAC intelligence chief, said “our biggest break came not from our reconnaissance flights or enemy radio transmissions, but from another batch of captured documents.”

Dr. Greg Bradsher, senior archivist at NARA, concluded his article as follows “historians acknowledge that the exploitation of the Z Plan was one of the greatest single intelligence feat of the war in the southwest Pacific area.” Dr Bradshder’s *The Z Plan Story*, published in *Prologue Magazine*, Fall 2005, Vol 37, No. 3, can be read on the internet. End

