

“The Emperor as a means of surrender” The Takenaga Incident and the plan for accepting Japan’s surrender



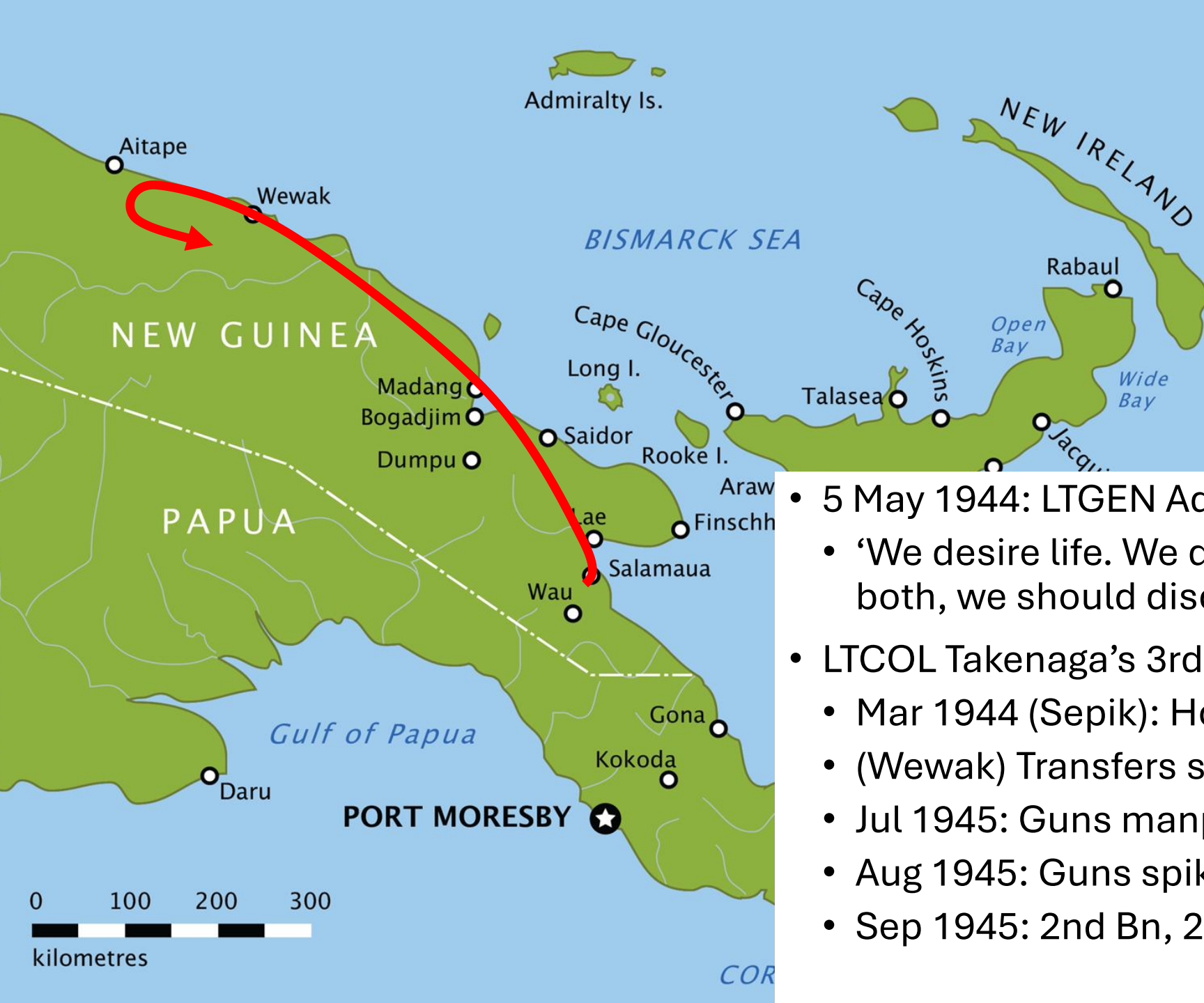
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Tim Gellel

Embracing Defeat

- 6 Aug – Hiroshima
- 9 Aug – Nagasaki
- 15 Aug - Emperor's surrender broadcast
- 17 Aug – Emperor's broadcast to “the imperial forces”
- 28 Aug – US advance party arrives Atsugi
- 30 Aug – GEN MacArthur arrives Atsugi
- 2 Sep – USS *Missouri* surrender ceremony





18th Army

- 5 May 1944: LTGEN Adachi's order of the day:
 - 'We desire life. We desire honour. If we cannot have both, we should discard life and cling to honour.'
- LTCOL Takenaga's 3rd Bn, 41st Mountain Arty Regt
 - Mar 1944 (Sepik): Horses destroyed,
 - (Wewak) Transfers six guns to 51st Div
 - Jul 1945: Guns manpacked 35km to Danmap River.
 - Aug 1945: Guns spiked
 - Sep 1945: 2nd Bn, 239th Inf Regt (120-strong)

Far East Liaison Office Psychological Operations

- FELO detachments broadcast propaganda by loudspeaker—here probably being used by WO2 Albert Klestadt.
- Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) Officers, Papuan New Guinean police, local villagers distribute leaflets.



“Jappan soldier no fighting!”

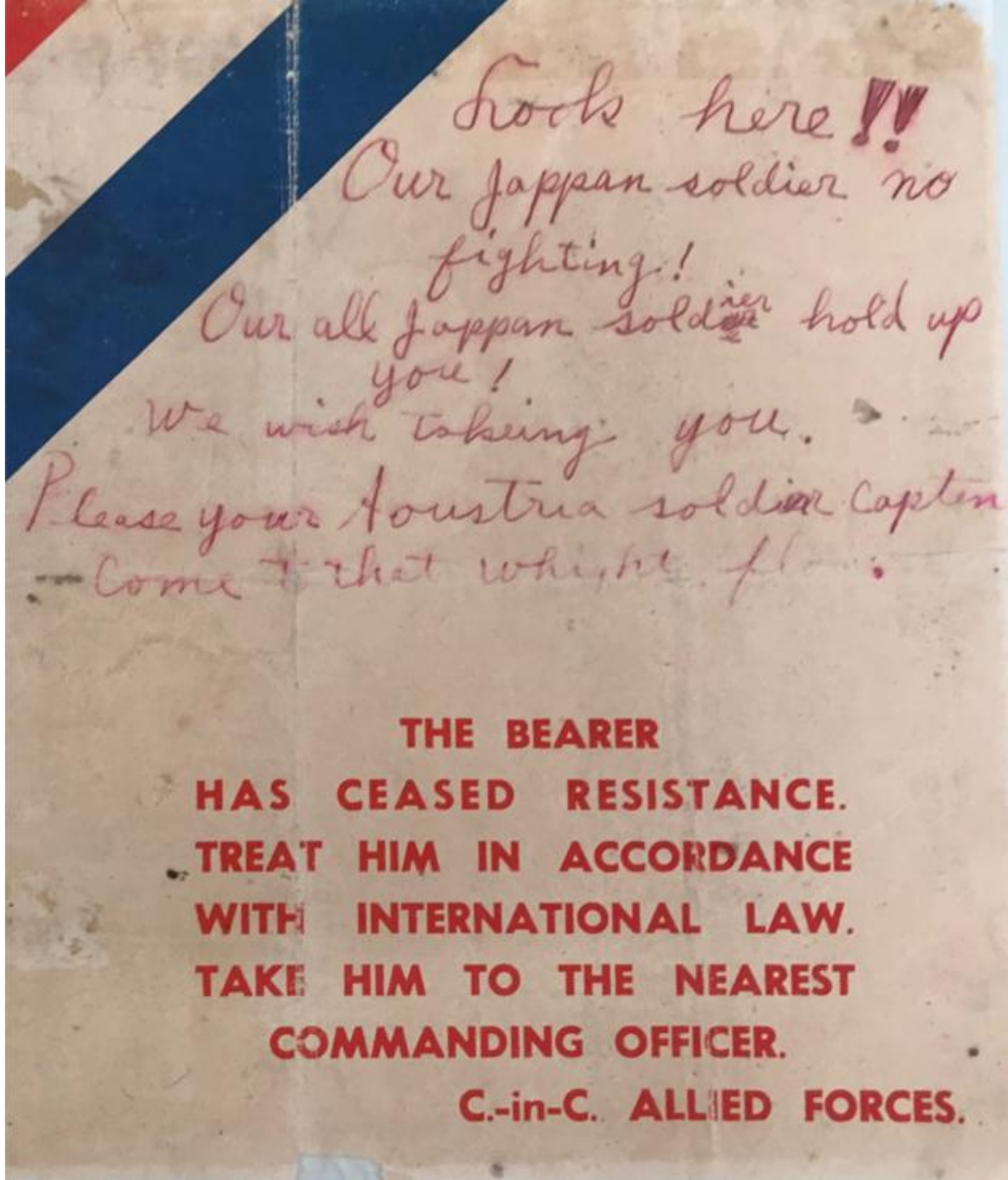
Mar 1945: Takenaga's 45-strong unit breaks contact with HQ 239 Inf Regt. ANGAU reports 50 Japanese moving towards Australian lines.

21 Apr: LT Cyril Miles' platoon (2/5th Bn) arrives Dreikir.

24 Apr: “Miles Force” heads to Kubriwat. Encounters ‘40 well-dug in enemy’.

2 May: Japanese place white flag at Womgrer, ANGAU police return with surrender leaflet.

3 May: After a tense battlefield parley, Miles accepts Takenaga's surrender.





Adachi's orders

- Japanese NCOs broadcast PsyOps surrender messages
 - “no immediate result.”
- Leaflet for “Officers of the 18th Army”
- 18th Army surrenders increase:
 - 62 surrender to 17 Bde in 14 days
 - 75 across New Guinea in prev 6 months
 - ‘no knowledge’ of anticipated Japanese surrender.

OFFICERS OF THE 18 ARMY

We call upon the officers of the forces under Lieut.-General Adachi's command, to put an end to this useless bloodshed and to accept terms of honourable surrender.

As officers you are fully aware of the ultimate hopelessness of your position. There is no need to dwell on that. You also must know that your resistance up here in no way retards the onslaught now proceeding in the general area of the Japanese homeland.

Fortunately, there are signs that some of your brother officers are taking a more realistic attitude. Early in May, for instance, a certain Japanese force of nine officers and thirty-three O.R.'s surrendered to Australian troops in an area W. of Maprik. They were accorded by us every protection and courtesy prescribed by international conventions concerning the treatment of prisoners of war.

Shortly after the surrender, the Australian Commander in the area invited the Commanding Officer of the surrendered Japanese Unit to an interview. The Japanese C.O., a professional soldier holding the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, complied. We cannot disclose his name, but even we, the enemy, were impressed by his dignified behaviour and by the affection with which his troops regarded him.

The Lieutenant-Colonel made the following statement to our Commander to justify his action:

“My unit was 120 men strong last year (showa 19). During the ensuing 8 months this strength was reduced to 42 at time of surrender. Casualties through sickness and malnutrition were even higher than those sustained in defensive actions. Our supplies of food, ammunition and medicines were running low, and we knew of course, that there could not be many replacements.

“Under these circumstances I considered it my duty to avoid further useless wasting of the lives of the men entrusted to my care. These young lives will be needed sorely to reconstruct the world after the war. I surrendered therefore with my unit to Australian troops, recognising this to be the true meaning of surrender.

“I did not believe the stories of maltreatment of prisoners and my experiences since capture have justified this belief. We have been treated well and honourably and I express to you, the Australian Commander, my gratitude for taking such good care of my wounded.

“I am satisfied in my conscience that my honour as an officer remains untarnished. I sincerely wish that others may follow my example. It is best for my country to cease resistance quickly and to save what can be saved for the peaceful future of Japan.”

This ends the statement of the Japanese Lieutenant-Colonel. He withdrew after an exchange of courtesies with the Australian Commander, which are customary between opponents who have fought each other bravely.

TARGET: Japanese Troops, AITAPE Area.

LATEST DATE OF

DISTRIBUTION: One month after receipt.

Operation BLACKLIST: “Preparing for the improbable”

‘While Radio Tokyo was destroying B-29s faster than we could manufacture them and Radio San Francisco was preparing everybody for a last-ditch Japanese stand in the homeland, the planning gears throughout headquarters went into motion. Eighth Army was preparing for the improbable, for nothing is impossible in war. They were going to be ready to move fast at short notice if Japan gave up.’



Less than 12,000 of 18th Army's 140,000 soldiers returned to Japan. Of the 41st Arty Regt's 2,400 gunners, 41 – including Takenaga and his Adjutant – returned.

LTCOL **Takenaga Masaharu** (竹永正治, 1901-1966) returned to live in Japan in obscurity. Japanese histories make few, anonymous mentions of his surrender.

Sentenced to life imprisonment, LTGEN **Adachi Hatazō** (安達 二十三, 1890-1947) suicided while in Australian custody on 10 Sep 1947 to atone for the 18th Army's losses.

WO2 **Albert Klestadt** (1913-2006) interpreted at Adachi's 13 Sep surrender at Wewak. Mentioned in Despatches, he served in Japan with No.2 War Crimes Section.

LT **Eric Thompson's** (1922-2000) account of Takenaga's interrogation is testament to the objectivity required from both an interrogator and interpreter.

LT **Cyril Miles'** (1919-2009) MC and Takenaga's sword are on display at the Sherwood-Indooroopilly RSL Sub-branch.



Image courtesy of Sherwood Indooroopilly RSL Sub-branch