

THE ART OF STRATEGY

OWEN HUGHES

JOHN CURTIN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC POLICY

The book cover features a high-angle photograph of a rugged coastline. On the left, a vast, flat, brownish landscape stretches towards the sea. On the right, a rocky cliffside meets the ocean, with waves crashing against the shore. The sky is clear and blue.

THE ART OF STRATEGY

LEARNING CREATIVE PRACTICES FROM
THE GREAT STRATEGISTS OF THE PAST

OWEN E. HUGHES

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Strategy

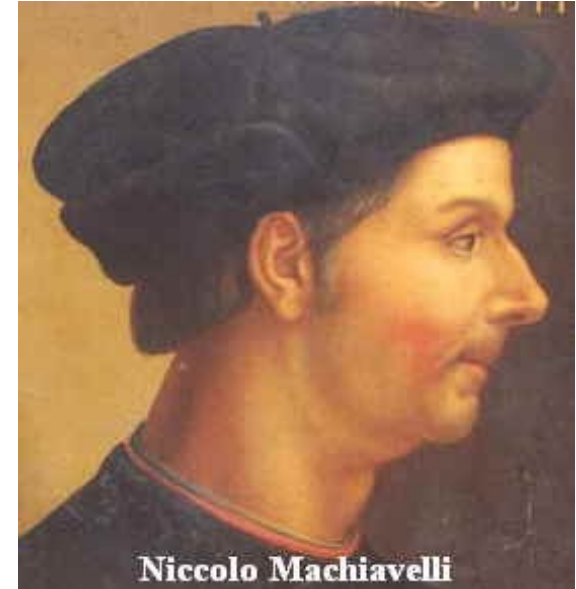
- 'Strategy' is a term deriving from the military, where it refers to the objective of winning the war, as opposed to 'tactics' - the lower-level objective of winning a particular battle.
- Any organization needs to reassess the fundamental reason it exists, what it is trying to do, where it is going.
- Without strategy an organisation is without direction. Day-to-day activities do not add up to any coherent goal. Ideally, all activities undertaken help to further specified objectives and beyond them the overall purpose

Illustrating strategy

- Three main theorists I have borrowed from
 - ▣ Sun Tzu
 - ▣ Clausewitz
 - ▣ Machiavelli

Machiavelli

- The beginnings of secularism
- A real understanding of people and their motivations
- Perhaps though a better understanding of the weaknesses of people than their strengths
- A realist above all else. The inspiration of Machiavelli is that the world needs to be looked at as it is, as a matter of logic, science and not as a fantasy.



Strategy often seen as analogous to war

- ❑ Business often uses military analogies – capturing market share, the maneuvers carried out to meet the goals of a firm.
- ❑ ‘Drawing on military analogies, businesses were encouraged to develop an advance plan, resources to implement the plan, and warning devices that signal when plan modification is required’ (Nutt and Backoff)
- ❑ Examples of strategy can be taken from anywhere including from history and from war

Deriving the five-factor framework

- ▣ Purpose
- ▣ Capability
- ▣ Will
- ▣ Terrain
- ▣ Tactics

1. PURPOSE



Purpose

- the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists
- The fundamental reason for existence, the 'raison d'être'
- More serious than 'mission,' or 'vision' etc. These are lower order phenomena

PEARL HARBOUR AND MIDWAY



Japanese naval strategy in WWII

- Commander in Chief – Admiral Yamamoto
- Was personally against war with the U.S.
- But demanded Pearl Harbor Attack to destroy U.S. Pacific Fleet
- Southern drive into Indochina
- Dutch East Indies for oil
- Strike at Philippines and Singapore to knock out local American and British Forces

September 1940: *“If I am told to fight regardless of the consequences, I shall run wild for the first six months or a year, but I have utterly no confidence for the second or third year.”*



WATCH THE USSR

WIN THE WAR IN CHINA

ISOLATE CHINA

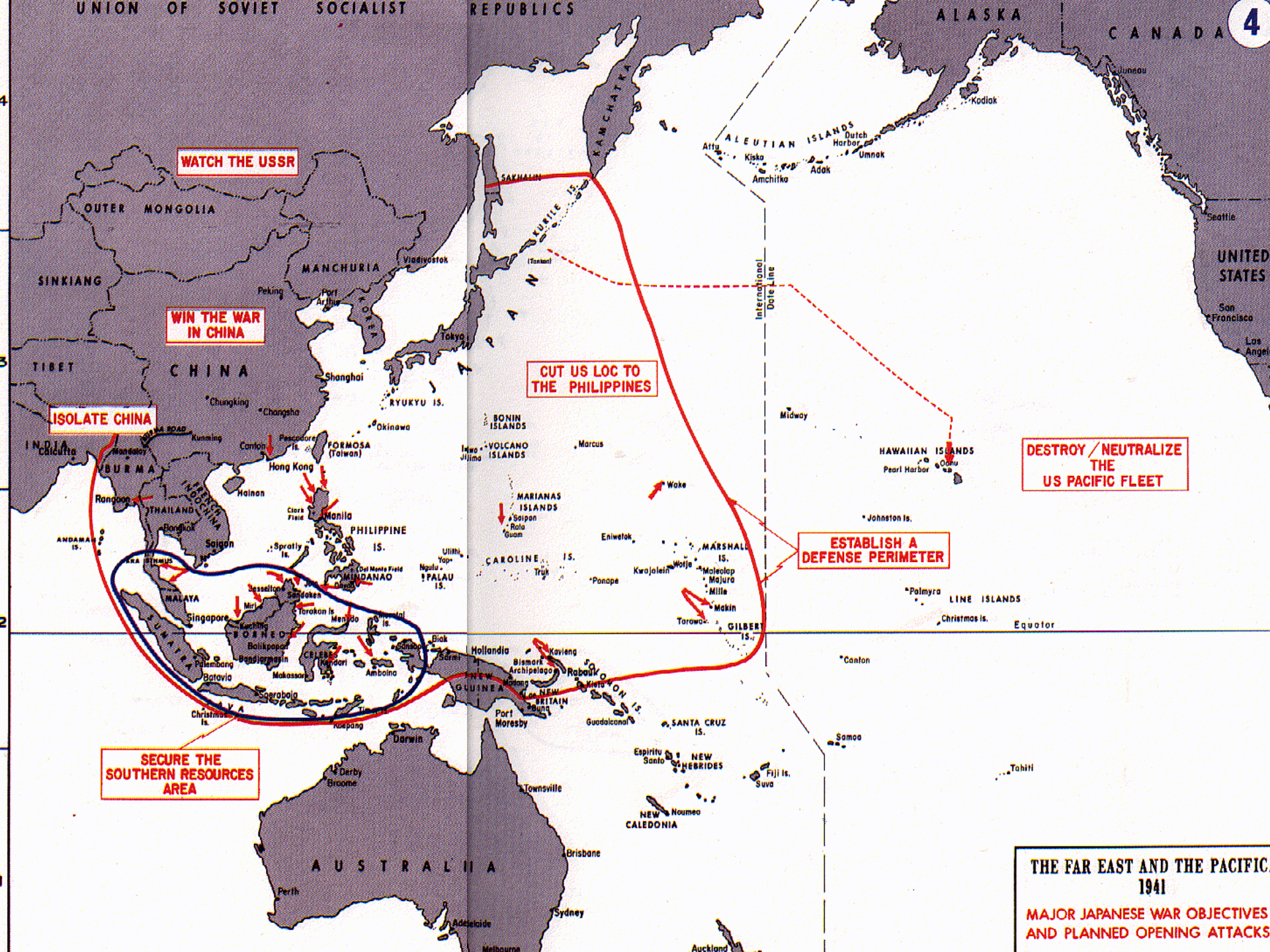
CUT US LOC TO THE PHILIPPINES

DESTROY/NEUTRALIZE THE US PACIFIC FLEET

ESTABLISH A DEFENSE PERIMETER

SECURE THE SOUTHERN RESOURCES AREA

THE FAR EAST AND THE PACIFIC 1941
MAJOR JAPANESE WAR OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED OPENING ATTACKS





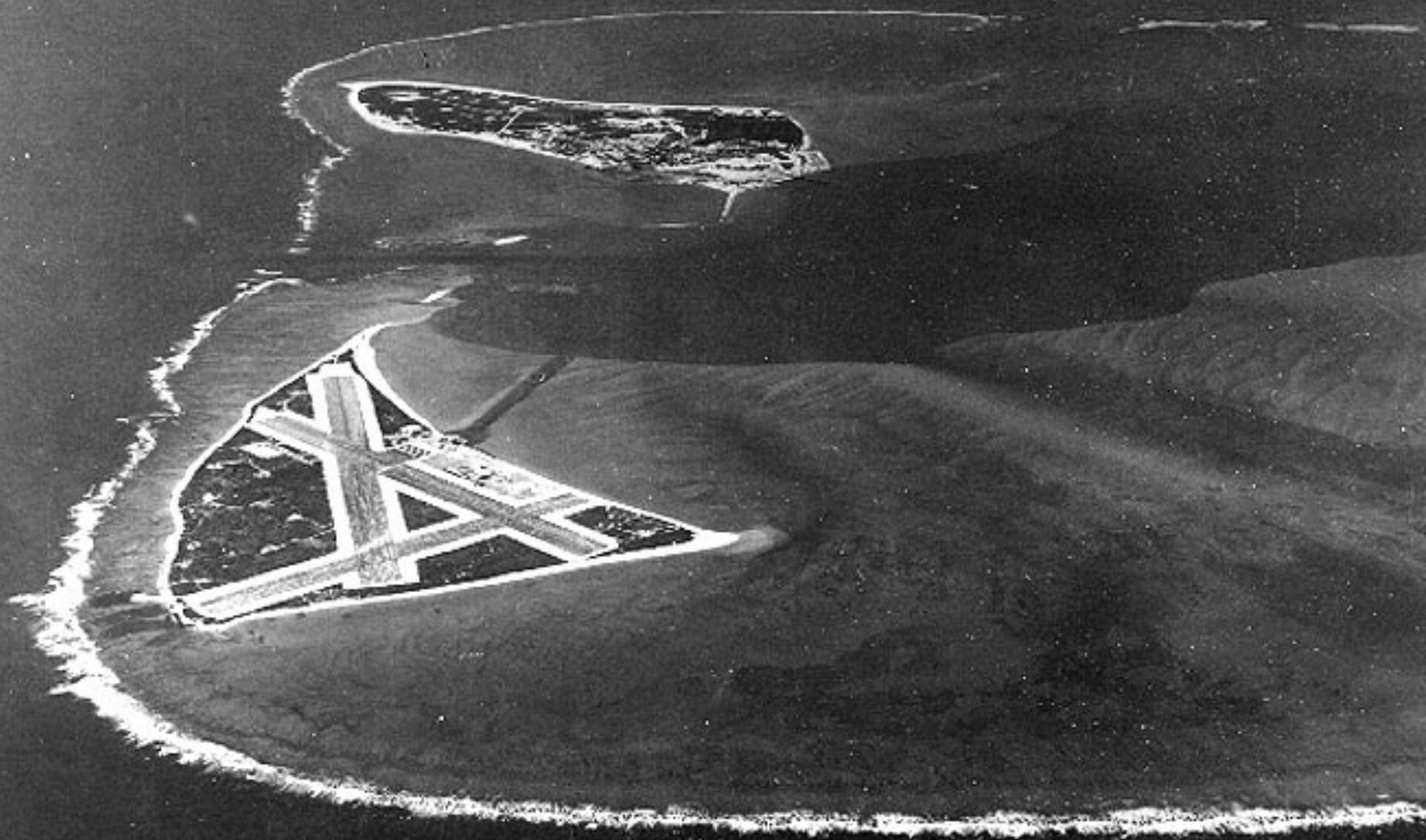
U.S. Pacific Fleet - Pearl Harbor

- No clear warning from Washington
 - ▣ Intercepts did not identify Pearl Harbor as a target
 - ▣ Slow communications between Washington and Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet
- Battleships in berths at Pearl for weekend liberty
 - ▣ “Carriers *Lexington* and *Enterprise* delivering aircraft to Midway and Wake Islands

Aftermath of Pearl Harbor

- Battleship fleet effectively destroyed
- Result generally not anticipated by American naval planners before Pearl Harbor
- U.S. declares war on Japan
 - ▣ “Day of Infamy” - Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- Hitler declares war on the U.S
- American public opinion changes in favor of war
- ‘Remember Pearl Harbor’

Battle of Midway, 3-6 June 1942



Battle of Midway

- Bombs, exposed ordnance & fuel quickly turned **three** Japanese carriers into wrecks
- 4th carrier, *Hiryu* survived to launch an attack against USS *Yorktown* but then sunk
- *Yorktown* was disabled and abandoned two days later when hit by a Japanese submarine while under tow to Pearl Harbor



But what was the strategy?

- The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor with the specific aim of buying themselves 12-24 months of freedom to act in the Pacific without US interference – no real strategy beyond that
- The way that the war started meant that achieving any kind of outcome was simply not possible
- Strategic lessons
 - 'Island chain' strategy a failure
 - Unclear and unrealistic purpose
 - Overly dependent on assumption of US failure of will

2. CAPABILITY



Capability includes:

- Money
- Human resources
- Potential as well as actual resources
- Strategic materials
- Weapons but much more than that in terms of capability – transport, food supply, communications, infrastructure, fortresses
- Organization generally
 - ▣ Logistics, intelligence

Sun Tzu - when making a comparative evaluation

Which ruler has the Tao?

Which general has greater ability?

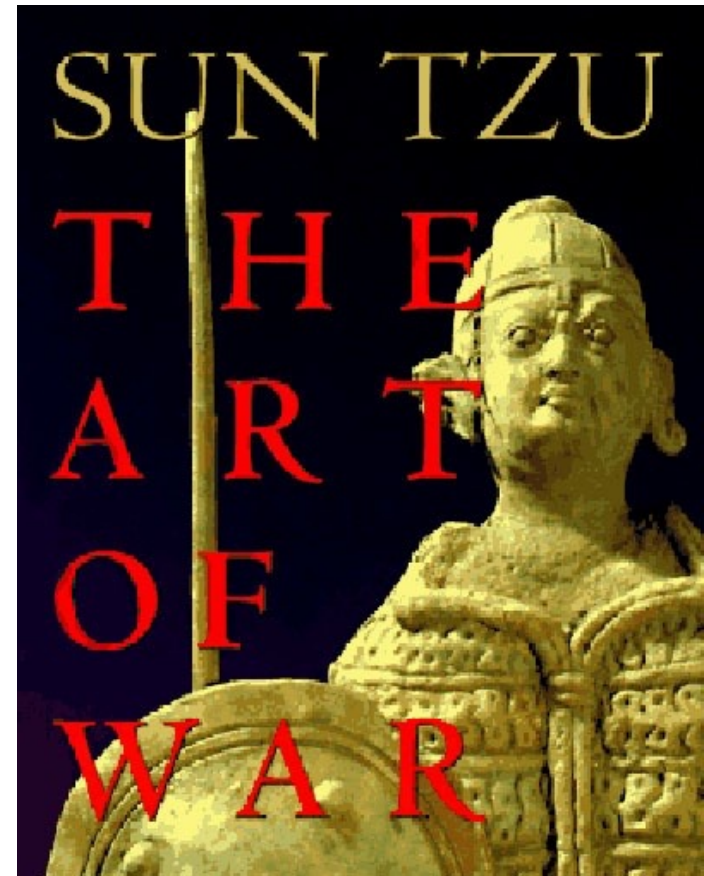
Who has gained [the advantages of]
Heaven and Earth?

Whose laws and orders are more
thoroughly implemented?

Whose forces are stronger?

Whose officers and troops are more
thoroughly trained?

Whose rewards and punishments are
clearer?



US industrial production WWII



- US production of aircraft, ships far in excess of Japan
- One new aeroplane every 5 minutes
- Pilot training far in excess of Japanese
- Japanese GDP 10% that of the US

American Civil War

- a great disparity in resources. The North had four times the population of the South with close to half of the Southern population slaves. The northern states could mobilize 4 million fighting men to the Confederacy's 1, 100, 000
- The North had most of the industry, most of the railways and its navy was able to effectively blockade the Southern ports and halt its cotton trade.
- But resources do not win by themselves. They need to be directed and led

3. WILL

Ideas here about 'will'

- Beyond capability and purpose
- A willingness to act, ready to commit
- Someone could wish for something to occur, someone could be capable of doing it but still not act
- Will and leadership

The leader

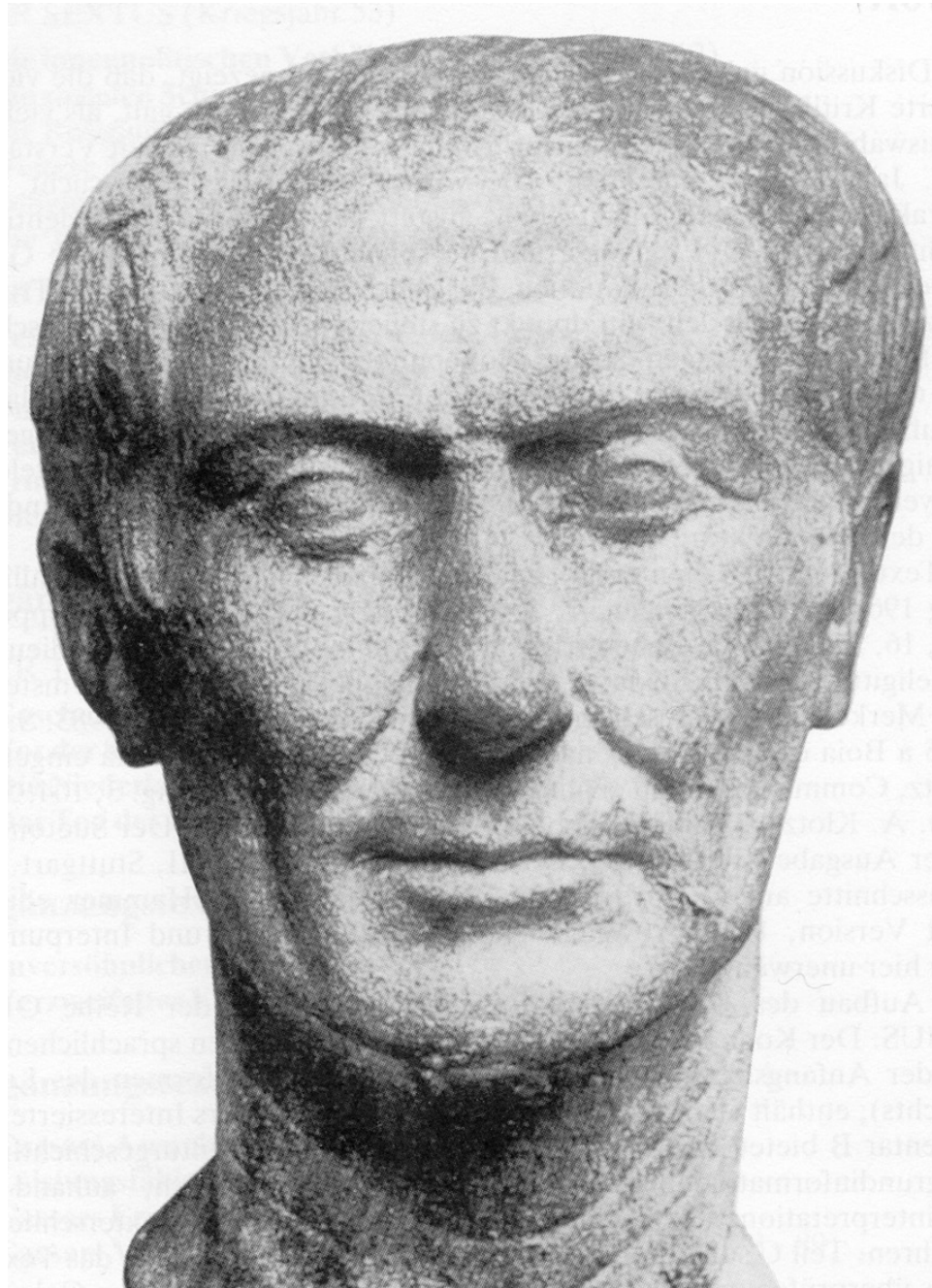
- ❑ ‘The Tao causes the people to be fully in accord with the ruler. [Thus] they will die with him; they will live with him and not fear danger.
The general encompasses wisdom, credibility, benevolence, courage, and strictness’.
- ❑ Leadership and will
- ❑ But leaders can fail

George McClellan

- Union general in Civil War
- Good credentials but too cautious
- Had capability – much greater resources but always believed he had less
- Purpose was clear enough but he simply did not act
- Lincoln: ‘If General McClellan does not want to use the army, I would like to borrow it for a time’
- Grant and Sherman



Julius Caesar

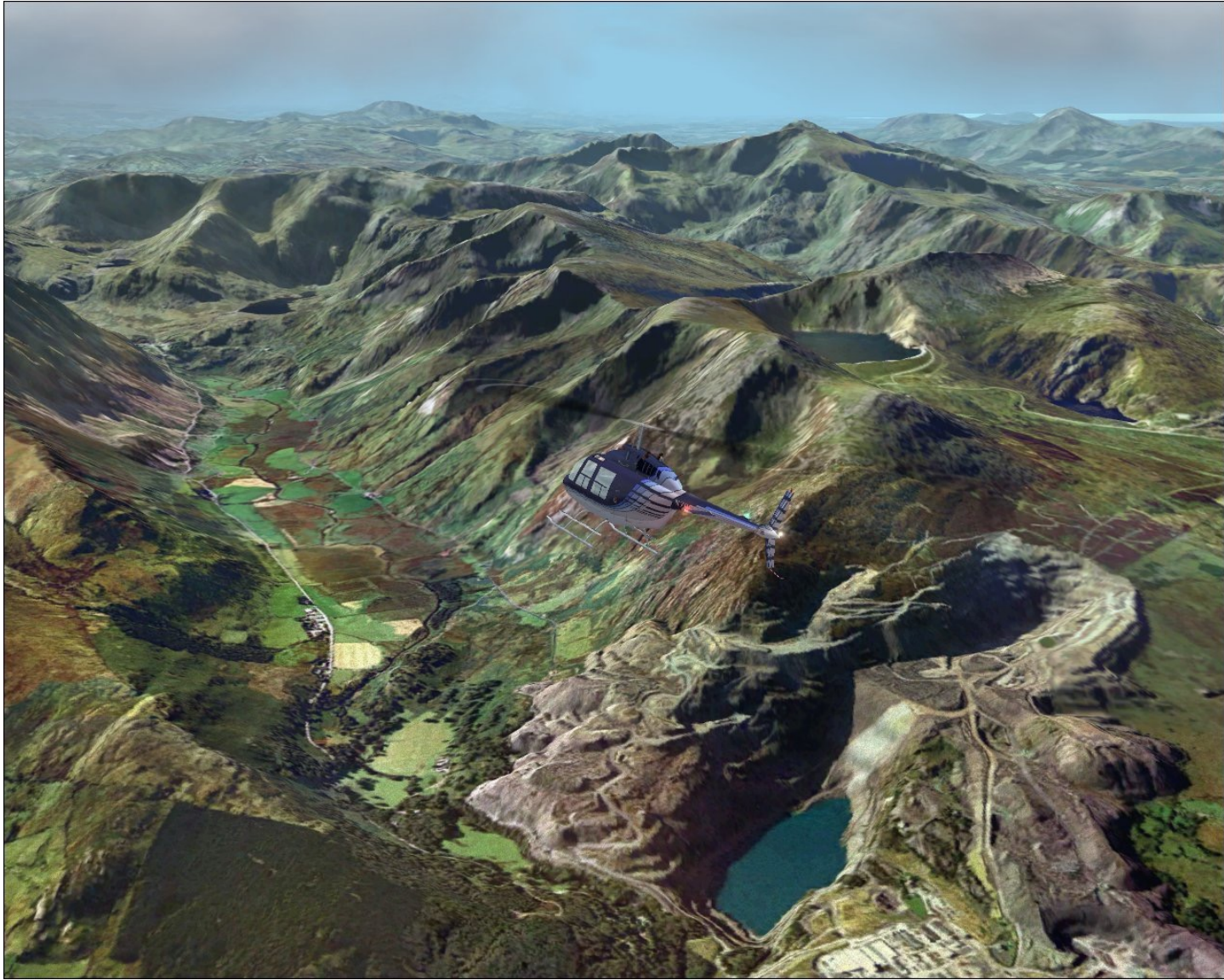


Strategic lessons from Caesar

- Strength of will and good leadership are crucial
- The importance of information and intelligence
- Logistics and communications
- Very personal but systematic
- Caesar a master politician in the brutal and deadly game of Roman domestic politics
- Effective conquest but then civil wars
- Ultimate political failure?
- Will cannot do everything

4. TERRAIN





Terrain

- The field on which a contest is to take place
- More specific than 'environment' in SWOT analysis
- Something about physical or geographical features
- Mountains, rivers, weather, seasons, night and day
- External features that affect the contest but cannot be directly influenced, although they can be used

Difficult country – Sun Tzu

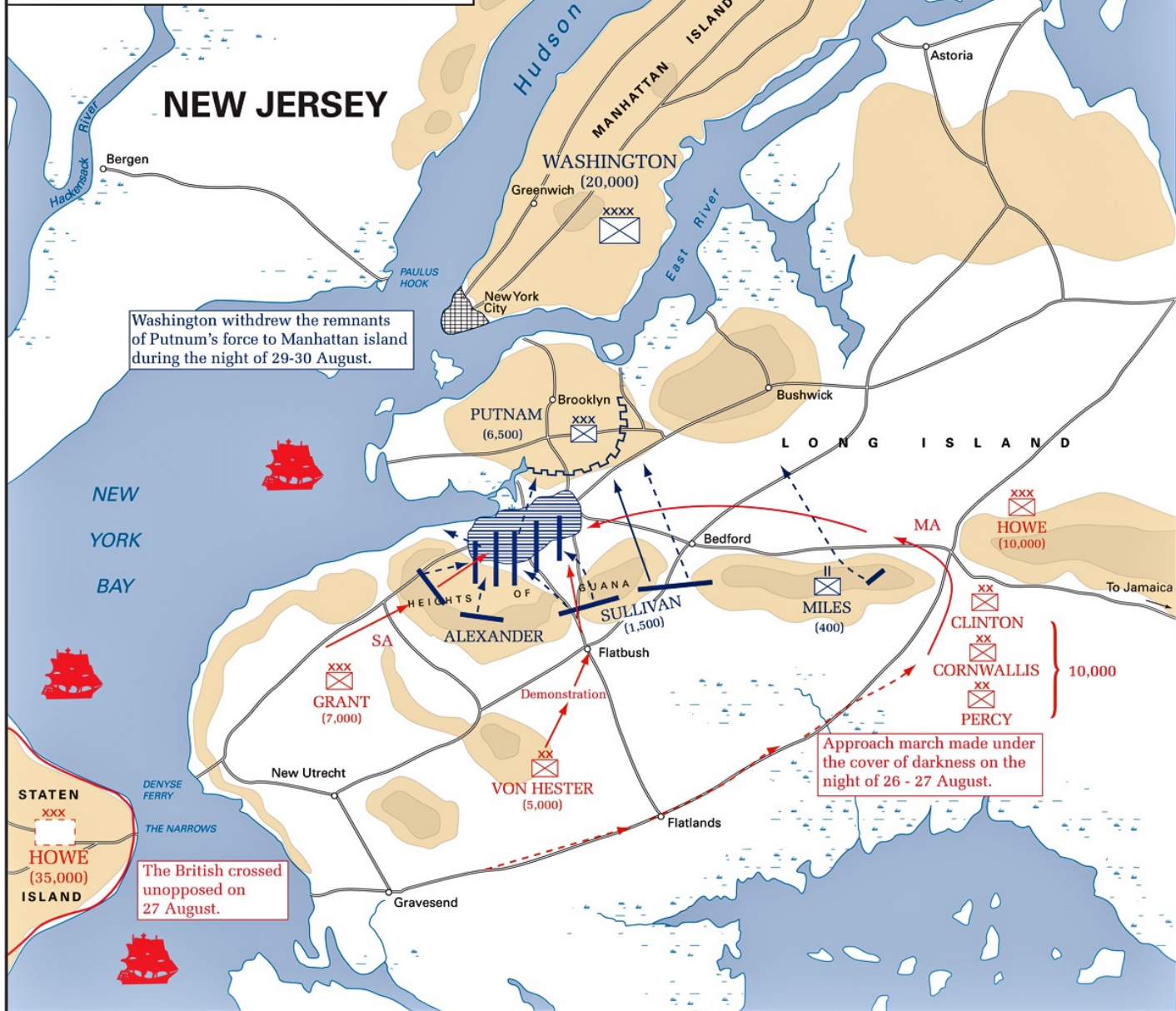
- When in difficult country, do not encamp. In country where high roads intersect, join hands with your allies. Do not linger in dangerously isolated positions. In hemmed-in situations, you must resort to stratagem. In desperate position, you must fight.
- There are roads which must not be followed, armies which must be not attacked, towns which must be besieged, positions which must not be contested, commands of the sovereign which must not be obeyed.

NEW YORK CITY AND VICINITY, 1776

THE BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND, 27 August 1776



Cartographic Excellence
Historical Military Operations Series



NEW JERSEY

Washington withdrew the remnants of Putnam's force to Manhattan island during the night of 29-30 August.

Approach march made under the cover of darkness on the night of 26 - 27 August.

The British crossed unopposed on 27 August.

STATEN ISLAND
XXX
HOWE (35,000)

CLINTON
XX
CORNWALLIS
XX
PERCY
} 10,000

XXX
HOWE (10,000)

WASHINGTON (20,000)

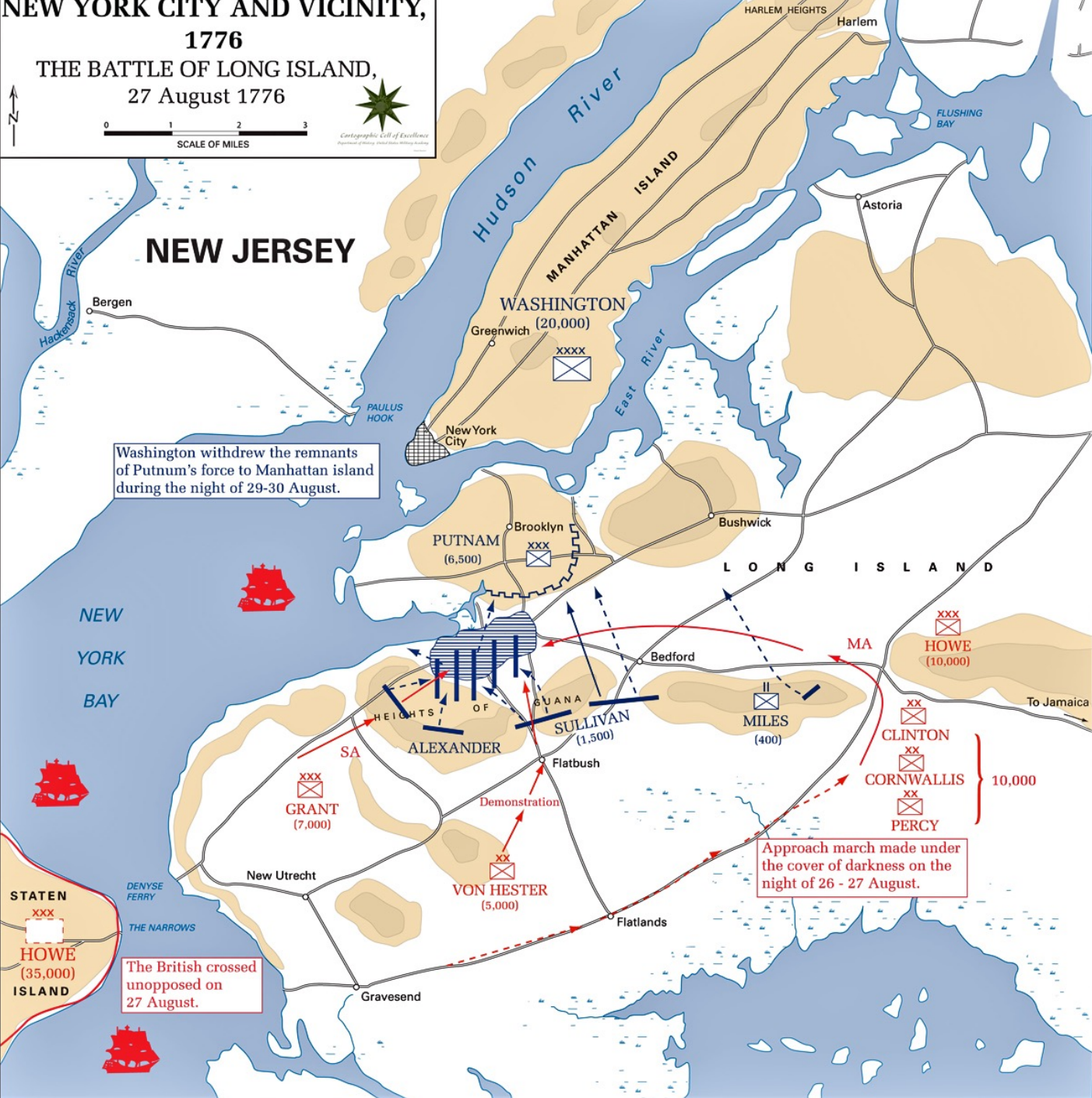
PUTNAM (6,500)

SULLIVAN (1,500)

VON HESTER (5,000)

XXX
GRANT (7,000)

MILES (400)



Fall of New York – 1776

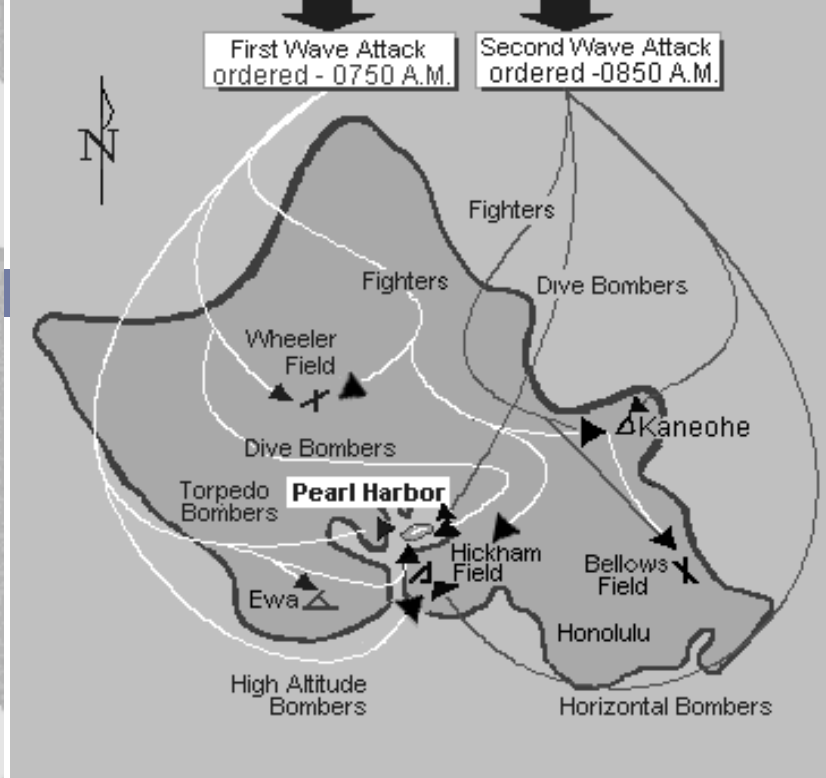
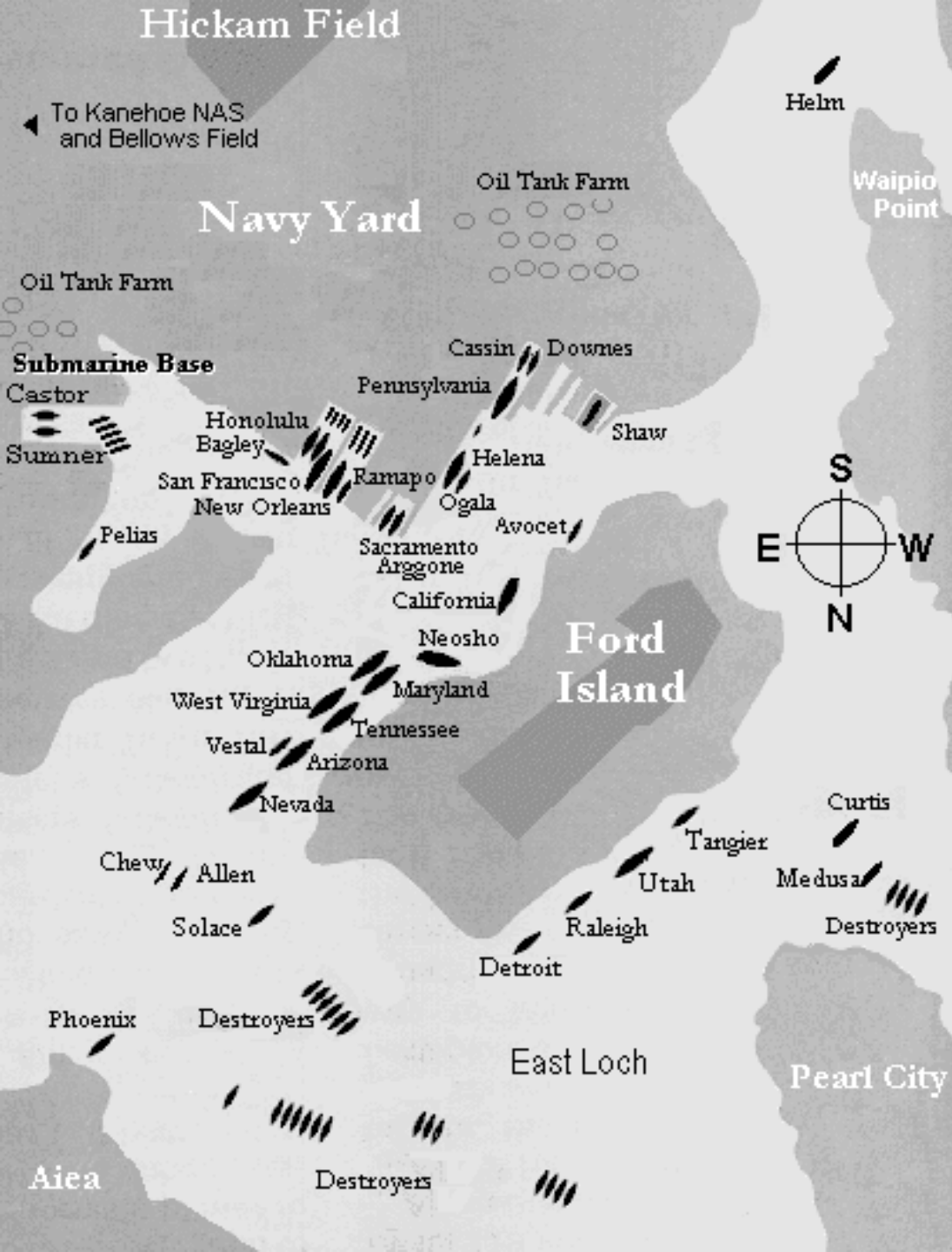
- Washington concluded that ‘on our side the war should be defensive’ ‘we should on all occasions avoid a general action or put anything to the risque unless compelled by necessity’. He resolved to keep his army in being, but it would be a ‘retreating army’, defending what it could, yielding when it must, keeping the field and watching for an opportunity when ‘a brilliant stroke could be made with any probability of success’
- This use of terrain was strategic genius

5. TACTICS



Strategy and tactics

- ‘Strategy’ is a term deriving from the military, where it refers to the objective of winning the war, as opposed to ‘tactics’ - the lower-level objective of winning a particular battle.
- Tactics constitute the theory of the use of armed forces in battle; strategy forms the theory of using battle for the purposes of the war (Clausewitz)
- The tactics used need to be in accordance with that overall strategy



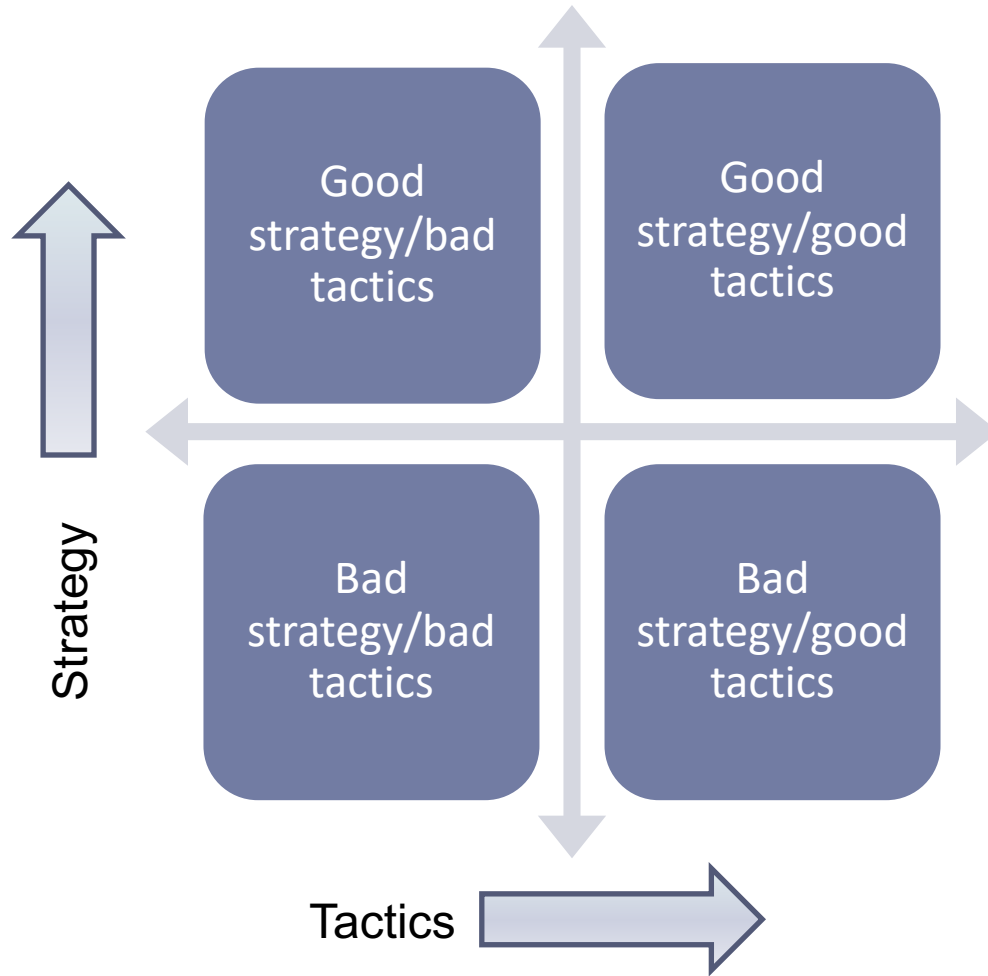
Pearl Harbor

7 December 1941

Pearl Harbor tactics

- Superficially clever but:
 - The battleships were targeted but were already obsolete
 - Except for one the battleships sunk into the shallow harbour and were able to be recovered and used later
 - The aircraft carriers were not in the harbour on the day
 - Oil tanks, submarine base, machine shops were not attacked





Concluding comments

- Strategy is about a simple question ‘What do we do next?’
- What choices need to be made? How is a choice to be made?
- Strategy is serious and needs to be looked seriously.

Caveats

- Winners write the history
- Strategy is based on reason. It is rational. But there are many examples of irrationality and lack of strategy.
- World War I – unclear why it started. Most participants were worse off – no winner
- And the Pearl Harbor case – should never have happened. The strategy was poor, the tactics were poor, but it took the deaths of some 22 million people to show it.

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