

# The Short but Brilliant Life of the British Pacific Fleet

By NICHOLAS E. SARANTAKES



British warships with U.S. Third Fleet off coast of Japan preparing for Japanese surrender

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In the long and proud history of the Royal Navy, the largest formation ever to see combat fought under the operational command not of Drake, Nelson, Jellicoe, or Cunningham, but rather of Americans Raymond Spruance and William Halsey. The British Pacific Fleet was massive and today would be the largest navy on the planet, but in 1945 it fought the Imperial Japanese Navy as a component of the U.S. Fifth and Third Fleets. Present-day warfighters, quartermasters, strategists, and commanders should keep this case study in coalition operations in mind when dealing with allies, since the operational distribution of power is similar. Even though the U.S. Navy had the immediate resources to defeat the

enemy on its own, and although there were drawbacks to engaging with allies, the British presence provided diplomatic, political, and operational advantages that far outweighed ensuing complications.

## The Political Issues

In 1944, the British Chiefs of Staff Committee under the leadership of Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, forcefully argued that the United Kingdom should take part in the final operations against Japan in order to preserve its close relationship with the United States. Brooke explained that an operation designed to retake colonies would have been the “easiest to stage but limited itself to the recapture of British possessions without any direct participation with American and Australian

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HMS Indomitable



HMS Formidable

forces in the defeat of Japan. I felt that at this stage of the war it was vital that British forces should participate in direct action against Japan in the Pacific." The British Ambassador in Washington, the Earl of Halifax, noted, "Even if British participation were of necessity small or comparatively so, there would be an overwhelming difference between this and total absence."<sup>1</sup>

A related issue requiring explanation is why the Americans accepted this detachment. Diplomatic considerations, rather than enhancement of operational performance, were clearly the main factor behind American interest in having the British join the effort in the waters off Japan. At the second Quebec conference codenamed *Octagon*, Winston Churchill broached the subject of a British contribution. He explicitly offered the services of the Royal Navy to the ongoing crusade against Japan, noting that there were factions in the United States hostile to Great Britain and that the British wanted to take part in the defeat of their Japanese enemy. Once the matter was out in the open, President Franklin Roosevelt could hardly say no. The American public was likely to be outraged if it discovered that only Americans would have the privilege of dying in Japan and that the President was responsible for increasing their numbers while he kept allies out of the fight. Even before the conference, John Winant, the U.S. Ambassador in London, argued:

*If we allow the British to limit their active participation to recapture areas that are to their selfish interests alone and not participate in smashing the war machine of Japan, if British soldiers don't cross the Atlantic to our ports and entrain for our Pacific ports, and if we shuck the British air force in order to*

*prove our own dominance in the air, we will create in the United States a hatred for Great Britain that will make for schisms in the postwar years that will defeat everything that men have died for in this war.*

As the U.S. minutes of this meeting state, "The President said that the offer was accepted on the largest scale."<sup>2</sup>

### The Burden of Logistics

The commander of the new fleet, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, served British interests well. Fraser realized that his fleet had an important operational mission. In his report to the Admiralty after the war, he declared, "On purely strategic grounds it is clearly the best policy to employ the largest forces possible against the centre of the enemy's power, and it would be uneconomical to dissipate one's total forces in areas away from the centre."<sup>3</sup>

The Admiral also realized that the deployment of the fleet served British diplomatic interests:

*From a point of view of national prestige, it has been of the utmost importance that our Dominions should see the British navy engaged, if not in equal numbers, at least on an equal footing, with the American forces in the Pacific, and it would have been disastrous from this point of view if the British Pacific Fleet, after being sent to the Pacific, had been relegated, as the Australians consider their own forces to have been relegated, to a "back area."<sup>4</sup>*

Fraser was determined to integrate his command into the U.S. Pacific Fleet with as few complications as possible. Since the two English-speaking navies had very different

ways of maintaining contact with their ships, he realized early on that the British would have to adopt American methods. "They won't accept us unless we use their signal books; it won't work," Fraser's communication officer told him. The Admiral concurred, and in an agreement he negotiated in Hawaii with Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, he committed his fleet to the American system. Nimitz distributed codebooks to the British and provided a liaison team to each of His Majesty's ships.<sup>5</sup>

**Churchill offered the services of the Royal Navy to the crusade against Japan, noting that the British wanted to take part**

At Quebec, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Ernest King, accepted the British Pacific Fleet only under the provision that it be self-sufficient in supply. Although a recent study shows that King had legitimate reasons for imposing this requirement, many American naval officers in the Pacific did their best to ignore it. In fact, a good number of admirals had problems with this stipulation as well. "Undisturbed by any logistic responsibilities, they have frequently denounced the rule of self sufficiency as uneconomical in overall effort, as it most certainly is, and quite unworkable, which in fact it has not proved to be," Fraser recorded. The requirement had to be heeded, though, at least on paper. The Americans were quite willing to provide the British with surplus items. Commanders and supply officers, however, had to turn down requests that

would go to Washington, at least officially. American officers told Rear Admiral Douglas Fisher, commander of the British Fleet Train, that he could have anything and everything “that could be given without Admiral King’s knowledge.”<sup>6</sup>

Another area in which the allies worked together was sea rescue. The Americans had developed a system of submarines, flying-boats, and destroyers designed to rescue the crews of downed planes. The British contributed resources to this network as well, but the operation was primarily American. Admiral Sir Philip Vian, the British carrier commander, observed, “The knowledge that there was every chance of being picked up if they were forced down in the sea was a vital element in the upkeep of the aircrews’ morale.”<sup>7</sup>

Despite American assistance, the British still faced a huge problem. Naval architects had designed British ships for duty in the confined waters around Britain, not in the vastness of the Pacific. “The distances were staggering to those of us accustomed to the conditions of the European War,” Vian stated. The Royal Navy also had little experience in resupplying ships under way. The British transferred fuel at sea using hoses that trailed astern of the tankers since they lacked catamarans to keep ships apart and the appropriate block and tackles to sail side by side while fueling. Vian called this method “an awkward, unseaman-like business.”<sup>8</sup>

Only the assistance of the U.S. Navy prevented these problems from affecting the combat performance of the British Pacific Fleet. “I have found that the American logistical authorities in the Pacific have interpreted self sufficiency in a very liberal sense,” Fraser commented. Vian agreed: “Indeed, the Australian base never was able to supply and maintain us properly. Without the generous help of United States bases, fueling facilities, and spare parts, the fleet would have been hard set to keep going.”<sup>9</sup>

In his report, Fraser asserted that his command did a good job in responding to these logistic problems. The U.S. Navy had taken years to build up to its current level, whereas the Royal Navy had to change quickly after doing battle against the U-boats. “The entry of a British Fleet into the Pacific operations has been an exacting test which the Navy can reasonably congratulate itself on having passed satisfactorily,” he concluded.<sup>10</sup>

## The Divine Wind

Despite the many supply problems, the British Pacific Fleet did see combat in Japanese waters in three different periods. The first was from March 26 to April 20, during Operation *Iceberg*, the invasion of Okinawa. The fleet steamed out of Sydney on February 28 under the seagoing command of Vice Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings. To avoid command complications with the Americans, Fraser decided he would be a shore-based commander.<sup>11</sup>

The British ships became Task Force 57 and operated as part of the U.S. Fifth Fleet under Spruance. The Americans assigned the British to the southwestern flank of the fleet. Their mission was to neutralize Japanese airfields in the Sakishima islands, which were between Okinawa and Formosa, but they faced a serious threat from the kamikaze onslaught. These suicide attacks turned Okinawa into the bloodiest battle in the history of the U.S. Navy. Nimitz later explained, “This was not a battle by vast opposing forces, but an unending series of small fights.”<sup>12</sup>

Task Force 57 quickly proved itself a worthwhile commodity to the U.S. Pacific Fleet. British and American officers soon learned that the carriers of the Royal Navy stood up to the suicide attacks better than their American counterparts. Designed to take a beating from enemy aviation, the British carriers had more defensive plating. “The armoured decks of our C.V.s

have caused a great sensation among the Americans and have certainly proved their worth against suicide aircraft with their comparatively small penetrating power,” Fraser observed. The U.S. liaison officer on the *Indefatigable* was impressed at the resilience of the ship. “When a kamikaze hits a U.S. carrier it means 6 months of repair at Pearl. When a

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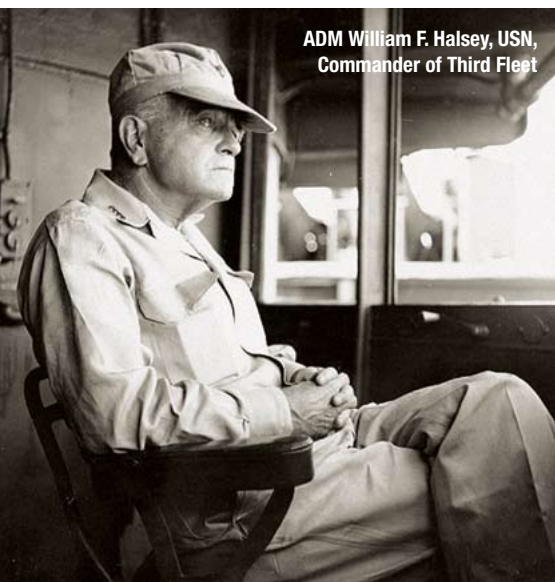
kamikaze hits a Limey carrier it’s just a case of “Sweepers, man your brooms.” In one of the worst attacks on a carrier, a Japanese strike turned the USS *Franklin* into a floating inferno. Fraser reported to the Admiralty, “The toll taken by the suicide bomber of the more lightly armoured American carriers led to an increase in the proportionate effort provided by our carriers, and the evidence of American eyes that we could support ourselves logistically relieved their anxieties on that score.”<sup>13</sup>

The second period of active combat duty for the British came from May 4 to 25. After refit work, the British ships sailed back to Okinawa only to come under renewed kamikaze attacks that were timed in conjunction with an offensive that the Japanese





32<sup>d</sup> Army launched on Okinawa. American admirals were glad to have the armored decks of the British carriers. Vian described what followed on that first day back as “the most serious kamikaze attack we had yet suffered.” The Japanese hit the British hard. Decoy planes drew off the combat air patrols and allowed some kamikazes to reach the carriers. Vian acknowledged that enemy pilots had bested his command: “The first knowledge we had of their presence was when one of them was seen diving from a height straight down on *Formidable*.” The carrier turned and forced the kamikaze to make a second run after flying over the full length of the flight deck at an elevation of 50 feet. The plane banked and returned to the starboard side, flying straight into the carrier’s island. The



ADM William F. Halsey, USN,  
Commander of Third Fleet

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explosion that followed punched a hole in the flight deck and started a series of fires among the planes on the deck with full fuel tanks.<sup>14</sup>

Three minutes later, another kamikaze attacked the *Indomitable*, Vian’s flagship. Despite taking numerous hits, the plane continued on its descent, but the angle of approach was low enough that it skidded across the flight deck before slipping into the sea. The damage was so light that Vian had no idea the carrier had been hit until someone told him. Gunfire tore apart a second plane that attacked minutes later, and it crashed into the sea 30 feet short of the ship.<sup>15</sup>

The British recovered quickly. The heavy armor minimized the structural damage. Using quick-drying cement and a steel plate, repair crews on the *Formidable* had the ship back in operation 6 hours later.

The next few days were uneventful. Then, on May 9, the carriers *Victorious* and *Formidable* came under kamikaze attack and suffered moderate damage. One kamikaze holed the flight deck of the *Victorious*. Another dove on the *Formidable* while it was readying planes for takeoff. The explosion killed many pilots trapped in their cockpits and started fires that penetrated one hangar, but within an hour the flames were under control.<sup>16</sup>

As it was, these kamikaze strikes were the last major tests of Task Force 57. When the British departed Okinawa on May 25, they and their American allies could take pride in the operational work of the task force and the harmony in which the coalition partners had functioned. As the British Pacific Fleet steamed to Australia, Spruance saluted his allies: “I would express to you, to your officers and to your men, after 2 months operating as a Fifth Fleet Task Force, my appreciation of your fine work and cooperative spirit.” Rawlings had similar feelings about the U.S. Navy: “It will not, however, be out of place to remark on the helpfulness of the American authorities at Manus and Ulithi; I trust we did not ask for their assistance until we were faced with problems which frankly seemed beyond us, but whenever we did so appeal it was responded to with the utmost vigour.” Every British carrier suffered kamikaze hits, but all of them had remained operational. Task Force 57 flew 5,335 sorties and dropped 958 tons of bombs. The Royal Navy had made a worthwhile contribution to the Okinawa campaign.<sup>17</sup>

### To the Shores of Japan

The British rendezvoused with the Third Fleet a month and a half later on July 16. Starting in mid-1944, Nimitz had adopted a practice of rotating command of U.S. ships

with them. The source of Halsey’s reservation was the issue of full operational control of the British fleet. Without that control, he realized that the inclusion of the British in his command would be a difficult matter. He tried to rectify the issue with a message to Nimitz proposing that he use the British Pacific Fleet on the flank of U.S. naval forces.<sup>18</sup>

Nimitz rejected this proposal. His agreement with Fraser and King that the British be self-sufficient made it impossible to accept Halsey’s idea: “Operate TF 37 separately from TF 38 in fact as well as in name.” Nimitz was being rather legalistic in his view of his agreement with Fraser. “I myself did not mean this to preclude the possibility of a British task group operating in an American force,” Fraser informed the Admiralty, “but the commander in chief Pacific appears to have taken it to mean that.”<sup>19</sup>

Halsey began a conference of naval leaders aboard his flagship by explaining that the strikes against the islands were designed to weaken enemy resources before the invasion started. Then he gave Rawlings three options. First, the British could operate as a component element of the fleet; Halsey would provide them with the orders he gave his U.S. detachments, which the British were strongly recommended to consider as “suggestions.” That would allow the Allies to concentrate their power against the Japanese and make the British ships for all practical purposes a task force under U.S. command. Second, Rawlings could operate as a semi-independent force separated by 60 to 70 miles of ocean from U.S. ships. Third, the Royal Navy could operate totally on its own. Halsey recalls that Rawlings never hesitated in his response: “Of course, I’ll accept number 1.”<sup>20</sup>

The British admiral impressed Halsey. A British liaison officer assigned to Halsey’s

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operating in the Central Pacific between Spruance and Halsey. When Spruance was in command, the ships were designated the Fifth Fleet, and when Halsey was in command, they were the Third Fleet. As a result, the British ships became Task Force 37 instead of 57. Halsey knew Rawlings and Vian only by their reputations, but he was reluctant to meet

ship observed, “The day’s conversation in the Third Fleet flagship could not have been more cordial and at their end the fleet commander sent for me to tell me how confident he felt about the prospects of cooperating with the British.” The Royal Navy officers he met with felt the same way. Vian stated later that Halsey “showed himself fully aware

of our difficulties, and from that moment onwards, by kindly word or deed, he availed himself of every possible opportunity to offer encouragement and to smooth our path.”<sup>21</sup>

Fraser thought the minor dispute reflected differences between the two cultures. While the first option that Rawlings had accepted met the letter of the Nimitz-Fraser agreement, for all practical purposes Halsey had made the British Pacific Fleet part of his command. “It is an interesting sidelight on the American way of thought, particularly on their rigid acceptance of the written word, that the Commander in Chief, Pacific, considered it necessary to enforce the small restriction,” the admiral stated. Fraser thought Halsey’s action was reflective of U.S. culture: “Provided he obeys the letter of the law, even if he completely disregards its spirit, every American is quite happy that the right and sensible action has been taken.”<sup>22</sup>

The missions of the U.S. Third and British Pacific Fleets were fourfold: to reduce enemy tactical air forces, attack strategic targets on the mainland, explore Japanese defenses in northern Honshu and Hokkaido, and destroy Japanese shipping. The British

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had a fifth mission that was political and diplomatic: to support the alliance with the United States. Merely taking part in military operations met this goal, according to Hanson Baldwin, a defense correspondent for *The New York Times*: “The participation of the British Fleet in the great naval blows against the Japanese homeland represents a psychological, as well as a military, blow to the enemy.”<sup>23</sup>

The third period of combat operations for the British Pacific Fleet started on July 17, the day after it joined up with the Third Fleet. While bad weather forced the Americans to cancel their attacks, Task Force 37 had better luck. Planes from the *Formidable* and *Implacable* bombed and strafed airfields and rail facilities on the east coast of Honshu, the biggest of the home islands. No fighters greeted these planes, but antiaircraft fire from the ground was heavy.<sup>24</sup>



HMS King George V with USS Missouri in background

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As always, logistics was a problem for the British, and nothing changed in and around the home islands. Halsey was glad to have allies in the fight and was more than willing to help when possible. In fact, he found that the redundancy of requiring two supply lines reduced the combat effectiveness of the fleet. If British ships fueled from U.S. tankers, they could deliver as many combat strikes as U.S. ships. “One of my most vivid war recollections is of a day when Bert’s flagship, the battleship *King George V*, fueled from the tanker *Sabine* at the same time as the *Missouri*,” Halsey stated in his memoirs. “I went across to ‘the Cagey Five,’ as we called her, on an aerial trolley, just to drink a toast.”<sup>25</sup>

One of the missions of the Third Fleet during the attacks on the home islands was to destroy what remained of the combined fleet, the seagoing element of the Imperial Navy. On July 18, U.S. planes attacked Yokosuka to sink HIJMS *Nagata*, one of the last Japanese battleships. The effort failed, the *Nagata* survived the war, and Halsey lost 12 planes. Then on July 24, 25, and 28, U.S. planes attacked the Kure naval base. Halsey enthusiastically declared in his memoirs, “Kure is the port where Jap warships went to die.” The Americans sank a carrier, three battleships, five cruisers, and a number of smaller ships.<sup>26</sup>

In an often-quoted passage from his memoirs, Halsey explained that his Chief of Staff, Rear Admiral Robert Carney, argued

that the British should be excluded from the Kure strikes:

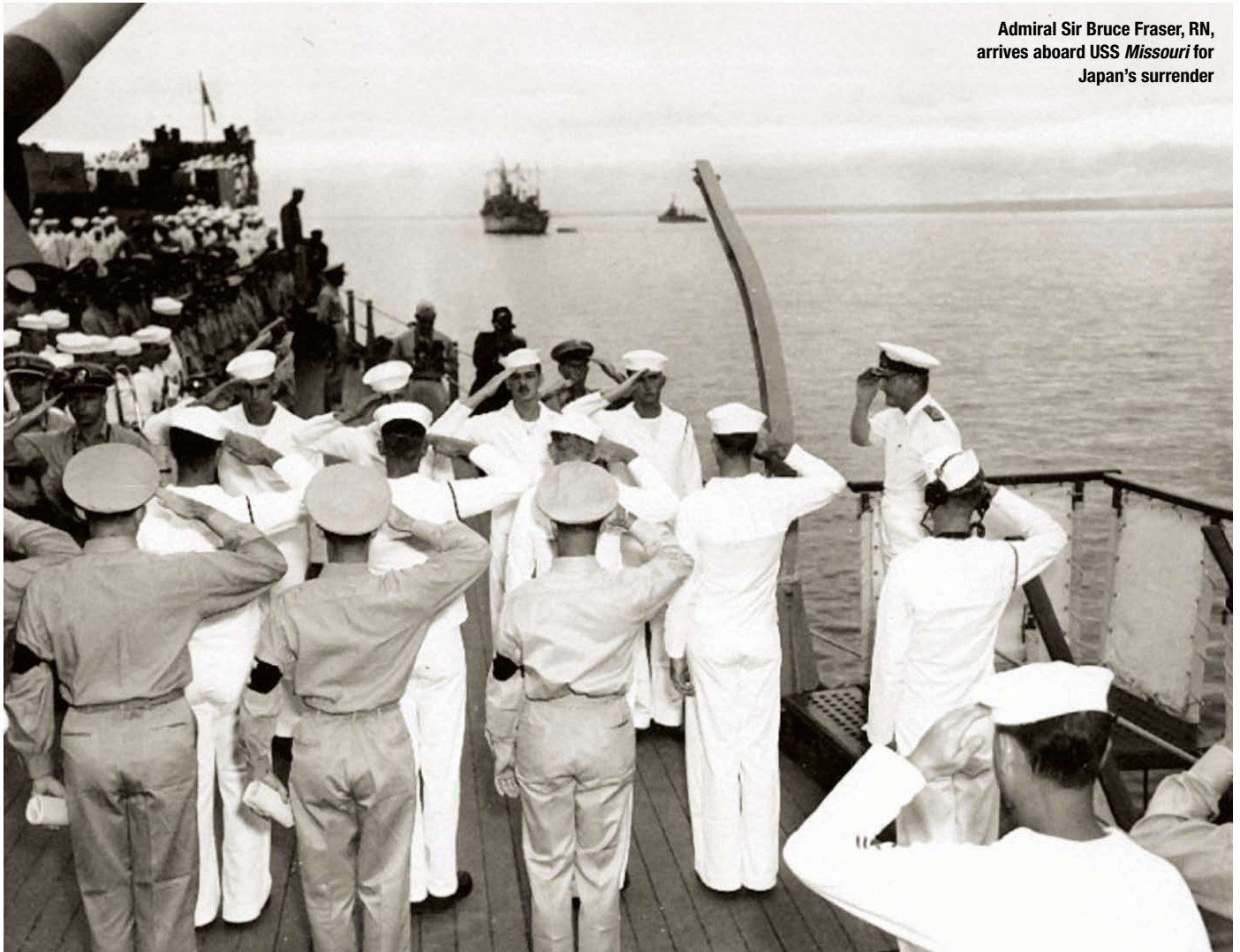
*Mick’s argument was that although this division of forces violated the principle of concentration and superiority, it was imperative that we forestall a possible postwar claim by Britain that she had delivered even a part of the final blow that demolished the Japanese fleet. I hated to admit a political factor into a military equation—my respect for Bert Rawlings and his fine men made me hate it doubly—but Mick forced me to recognize that statesman’s objectives sometimes differ widely from combat objectives, and an exclusively American attack was therefore in American interests.*

Vian wrote his memoirs after Halsey and, in fact, quotes the above passage. He thought the Japanese ships were not worth the effort; they were “immobilized for lack of fuel, heavily camouflaged, and no longer military units except as antiaircraft batteries.” Even with fuel, some of the ships sunk at Kure were targets of no real value. Two were built at the turn of the century and used only as training facilities.<sup>27</sup>

Halsey acted stupidly twice. First, in excluding the British, he clearly confused the institutional interests of the Navy with the national interests of his country. There might have been an exceptionally important reason to have the British involved in this operation.



Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, RN,  
arrives aboard USS *Missouri* for  
Japan's surrender



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More importantly, the operation itself was a mistake. What was left of the combined fleet no longer posed an offensive threat to U.S. forces. Its destruction was gratuitous. Halsey addressed this issue in his memoirs, saying he had four main reasons for rejecting Vian's advice: national morale demanded revenge for Pearl Harbor; the Navy had to have total control of the waters of the North Pacific if it was to have regular supply lines to the Soviet Union for invading Japan; and the Americans had to eliminate the fleet to prevent the Japanese from using it as a bargaining point at a peace conference as the Germans had after World War I. As for the fourth reason, "[Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet] had ordered the fleet destroyed. If the other reasons had been invalid, that one alone would have been enough for me." Perhaps, but as Halsey's actions in establishing command arrangements with Rawlings showed, there were orders, and there were *orders*.<sup>28</sup>

The British Pacific Fleet fought to the very end and suffered some of its heaviest losses on August 9, just days before Japan announced its surrender. The main targets were airfields. The British also came across a number of ships and attacked them as targets of opportunity. The results were good. Royal Navy planes sank three destroyers and damaged a number of others. The pilots showed exceptional skill and courage—none more than Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve, who posthumously received the last Victoria Cross awarded in the war for leading an attack that destroyed HIJMS *Amakusa*.<sup>29</sup>

Despite the problems the British faced in operating in the Pacific, they made a credible showing, increasing the number of sorties launched per fighter on each strike day. During operations near Okinawa, the Royal Navy averaged 1.08 in March and April, then 1.09 in May. In July and August,

the number jumped to 1.54. "Thus, fighter effort was some 40 percent greater in the British operations against Japan than in the operations against Sakishima Gunto," Fraser observed in his report to the Admiralty.<sup>30</sup>

### The Lessons of History

When the war ended, Admiral Fraser represented Britain on the deck of the USS *Missouri*. He and his command had earned the honor. The ships flying the White Ensign of the Royal Navy had operated successfully at the end of an exceptionally long supply line. King's concerns about logistic problems in matters of spare parts, refueling, and the speed of fleet movements were legitimate. British assets, however, outweighed liabilities in these areas. How this was accomplished lies in the fact that all forces have strengths and weaknesses, and the Japanese with their kamikaze attacks had stumbled onto a vulnerability; these suicide planes were

a deadly threat to U.S. carriers, but one to which the British were largely immune. This niche contribution would have grown in importance had the war continued. The British presence also increased the weight the allies could apply against the home islands. Moreover, the British were a morale booster to Americans serving in the Pacific. The presence of His Majesty's ships and sailors meant that the burden of combat in Japan would be shared, minimizing to some degree the losses the United States would suffer and helping sustain public sentiment on the home front. Put simply, friends are good to have in a fight. Finally, the British presence serviced the political interests of both nations. The leadership in each capital realized they were stronger with an ally than without one.

Personnel of both English-speaking navies worked well together and were fully aware that there were larger diplomatic implications to their actions. Halsey's decision to attack Kure without the British was the biggest exception. Putting the interests of the U.S. Navy before the national interest was wrong. His bigger mistake, though, was spending the lives of his pilots on targets of little value.

The experiences of the British and American Navies in the Pacific show that commanders must keep two considerations in mind. First and more obvious, they must make sure they accomplish the mission specific to their unit. Second and more complex,

the method that commanders use to reach their immediate goals can work against the larger objective. Sometimes you need to take one step back to take two forward, and that is the norm when operating with allies. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> David Fraser, *Alanbrooke* (New York: Atheneum, 1982), 414; Halifax to Foreign Office, July 5, 1945, FO 371 46440, British National Archives, Richmond, Surrey.

<sup>2</sup> Meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, September 13, 1944, and John Winant to Harry Hopkins, September 1, 1944, in *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conference at Quebec* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), 312–319, 255–256; John Ehrman, *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy, August 1943–September 1944* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), 518–519.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Humble, *Fraser of North Cape: The Life of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fraser (1888–1981)* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 248, 252, 266, 276; “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches—November 1944 to July 1945,” November 23, 1945, ADM 199/118, British National Archives.

<sup>4</sup> “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches.”

<sup>5</sup> Humble, 249–250, 253; Edwyn Gray, *Operation Pacific: The Royal Navy’s War against Japan, 1941–1945* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990), 177.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Coles, “Ernest King and the British

Pacific Fleet: The Conference at Quebec, 1944 (“Octagon”),” *The Journal of Military History* 65 (2001), 105–129; Gray, 205; Richard Hough, *The Longest Battle: The War at Sea, 1939–1945* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 340; “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches.”

<sup>7</sup> Sir Philip Vian, *Action This Day: A War Memoir* (London: Frederick Muller Limited, 1960), 202.

<sup>8</sup> Peter C. Smith, *Task Force 57: The British Pacific Fleet, 1944–1945* (London: Kimber, 1969), 137; Gray, 243, 246; Vian, 170, 175; Sir Bruce Fraser, “The Contribution of the British Pacific Fleet to the Assault on Okinawa, 1945,” supplement to *The London Gazette*, June 2, 1948, Liddell 15/4/238, Papers of Sir Basil Liddell Hart, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King’s College London, The Strand, London.

<sup>9</sup> “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches”; Vian, 188.

<sup>10</sup> “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches.”

<sup>11</sup> Humble, 256; “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches.”

<sup>12</sup> Chester W. Nimitz, “Forward,” in Arnold S. Lott, *Brave Men, Brave Ship* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1964), x; Samuel Elliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II*, xiv, *Victory in the Pacific* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 211–214; Smith, 118, 125; Gray, 210; Vian, 177.

<sup>13</sup> Gray, 211; “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches”; Morison, 94–99, 138; Fraser; Vian, 178; H.P. Willmott, *Grave of a Dozen Schemes: British Naval Planning and the War Against Japan, 1943–1945* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1996), 144.

<sup>14</sup> Morison, 251–255; Vian, 185; Gray, 219; Smith, 138.

<sup>15</sup> Vian, 185; Gray, 220.

<sup>16</sup> Vian, 185; Smith, 138, 144–147.

<sup>17</sup> Vian, 187; Gray, 224; Rawlings report, May 9, 1945, and Spruance to Rawlings, May 25, 1945, in Fraser.

<sup>18</sup> COM3RDFLT to CINCPAC ADV, June 16, 1945, vol. 1 Command Summary, Book 6, vol. 3, page 3177, folder 3076–31944, Papers of Chester Nimitz, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC.

<sup>19</sup> CINCPAC ADV to COM3RDFLT, June 17, 1945, vol. 1 Command Summary, Book 6, vol. 3, page 3178, folder 3076–31944, Papers of Chester Nimitz, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC.

<sup>20</sup> Halsey, 261–262; Vian, 193.

<sup>21</sup> Halsey, 262; Vian, 193; John Winton, *The Forgotten Fleet* (London: Michael Joseph, 1969), 313.

<sup>22</sup> Fraser, quoted in Vian, 194

<sup>23</sup> Winton, 311; *The New York Times*, July 17, July 23, 1945.

<sup>24</sup> Winton, 316; Vian, 203; Ministry of Defence (Navy), *Advance to Japan*, 220–221.

<sup>25</sup> Halsey, 262; Winton, 282–283, note 1.

<sup>26</sup> Halsey, 264.

<sup>27</sup> Vian, 205; S.W. Roskill, *The War at Sea, 1939–1945*, iii, part 2, *The Offensive, 1st June 1944–14th August 1945* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1961), 375.

<sup>28</sup> Halsey, 265.

<sup>29</sup> Winton, 335–338; Gray, 250.

<sup>30</sup> “Commander-in-Chief’s Dispatches.”



Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, RN (far left), listens with Allied leaders as General Douglas MacArthur, USA, Supreme Allied Commander, conducts surrender ceremony aboard USS *Missouri*