3 August 1944

CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR DEPARTMENT

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY STRONGEST NONCONCURRENCE IN THE PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS CONTAINED IN JOINT STAFF PLANNERS MESSAGE WARX SEVEN ONE FOUR EIGHT THREE SIGNED BY ROBERTS PD FIRST THAT THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF INITIAL ESTABLISHMENT IN PHILIPPINES IS TO INSTALL AIR FORCES TO NEUTRALIZE ENEMY AIR IN LUZON WITH A VIEW TO ITS BYPASSING THROUGH AN ATTACK ON FORMOSA PD SECOND THAT SOUTHWEST PACIFIC FORCES ARE TO BE DRAINED AWAY TO AUGMENT FORMOSA FORCES LEAVING THE REMAINDER TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE CMA CONTINUE ATTRITION AND EXTEND HOLDINGS TO THE LIMIT OF SUCH RESOURCES AS MAY BE LEFT PARA THE INITIAL MAJOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE IN THE FAR EAST IS THE PHILIPPINES AND LUZON IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT THEREOF PD THIS OBJECTIVE IS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY STRATEGICALLY BUT FROM THE HIGHER VIEWPOINT OF NATIONAL POLICY PD (C/5689)

STRATEGICALLY THE OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES WILL DENY THE ENEMY ACCESS TO MALAYA CMA THE NAM EASY ITEM CMA BORNEO AND SOUTH CHINA PD FOR THIS PURPOSE THE CAPTURE OF FORMOSA IS NOT RPT NOT NECESSARY PD ON THE OTHER HAND THE OCCUPATION OF FORMOSA WITHOUT THE PHILIPPINES WOULD NOT RPT NOT ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSE PD THE OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BASES IS AN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE TO ANY CAMPAIGN IN THE FAR EAST THAT WILL EMPLOY LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS PD THE FORMOSA CAMPAIGN ITSELF CAN NOT RPT NOT BE SUPPORTED LOGISTICALLY WITHOUT ADEQUATE BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES PD ITEM CONSIDER THAT FROM THE STRATEGICAL STANDPOINT ALONE THE

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Occupation of the Philippines is essential and it is my opinion that after that has been accomplished and bases have been established CMA an assault upon Formosa will not RPT not be necessary PD with Luzon properly organized it will be possible to bypass Formosa and strike deeper into enemy territory against objectives that can be attained with less bloodshed and which would be of greater value CMA thus accelerating the time schedule of the campaign PD it is presumed that the objects of the planning being undertaken are to shorten the war and to reduce losses PD an attempt to execute a great campaign in the far reaches of the Pacific without the establishment of adequate bases would be fraught with the gravest danger of disaster CMA which CMA if incurred CMA would greatly lengthen the war and multiply losses PD such a line of action is not RPT not justified PD we have fought thus far in the hostile outpost and delaying position and are now about to effect a penetration in the center of his main defenses PD the lodgment must be effected and solid preparation CMA tactical and logistical CMA must be completed before continuing the strategical maneuver that will exploit the initial victory fara from the highest point of view of national policy the liberation of the Philippines is essential PD the Philippine archipelago is American territory which we failed adequately to defend CMA with its resultant loss and untold suffering of its loyal people and the death of many thousands of its soldiers and civilians PD it is a national obligation to recover the Philippines at the earliest possible date PD the President of the United States has acknowledged that obligation and has stated that the Philippines would be redeemed as soon as possible PD the enemy has stated repeatedly to all races of the Far East that the United States would not RPT not shed the blood of its soldiers in redemption of the Filipinos PD to adopt a course of action that would tend to support the correctness of the Japanese
ASSERTION

Area is not RPT not contemplated PD the supply of major air bases over the existing road from the south would not RPT not be practicable and the establishment of a line of water communications through the Mindanao Sea would require an extensive campaign in the Visayan Islands in order to secure sufficient depth to protect the movement of ships for these reasons the occupation of Northern Mindanao is contemplated as a subsequent operation that will be executed as soon as possible CMA primarily for the relief of the civil population PD the liberation of Visayan areas that are not RPT not essential to the Luzon campaign fall within the same category.

MacArthur

Official:

R. K. Sutherland,
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army,
Chief of Staff.