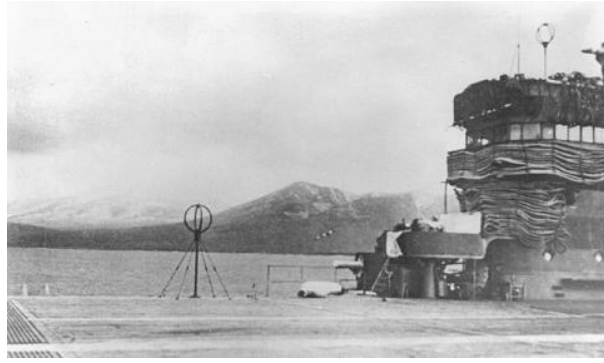




0. MINORU GENDA - Story Preface

1. FORMER FRIENDS AT ODDS

2. THE FLEET AT PEARL HARBOR

3. MINORU GENDA

4. RUMORS OF WAR

5. NEGOTIATIONS BREAK DOWN

6. WARNINGS FROM INTERCEPTED MESSAGES

7. RADAR STATION at OPANA POINT

8. ATTACK on PEARL HARBOR

9. USS ARIZONA

10. DORIE MILLER

11. DECLARATION of WAR

12. JIMMY DOOLITTLE

13. DOOLITTLE and the TOKYO RAIDERS

14. SURRENDER on the USS MISSOURI

15. PEARL HARBOR HEARINGS

16. SUCCESS of the MISSION

17. REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR

18. WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN...

The Imperial Japanese Navy practiced for the Pearl-Harbor attack in [Hitokappu Bay](#) during the month of November, 1941. This image depicts the aircraft carrier *Zuikaku* during one of those sessions, before leaving for Hawaii. This Japanese photo, included by Ron Werneth in *Beyond Pearl Harbor: The Untold Stories of Japan's Naval Airmen* (at page 66), is from *Maru* (a Japanese-language magazine).

Who was [Minoru Genda](#), the brilliant strategist who planned the Pearl Harbor attack? And how did he do it?

Surviving the war, Genda spent hours with Gordon Prange, General MacArthur's historian during the Allied Japanese Occupation. They met 72 times.

Genda prepared an affidavit explaining what he did - and why. He also wrote a detailed, two-part analysis of the Pearl Harbor attack. His first-hand account is now available to the world in *The Pearl Harbor Papers - Inside the Japanese Plans*.

Genda was called in to respond to a [written request from Vice Admiral Yamamoto](#), Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet. The Admiral had a novel idea, summarized by Genda in his [affidavit](#):

In the event of outbreak of war with the United States, there would be little prospect of our operations succeeding unless, at the very outset, we can deal a crushing blow to the main force of the American Fleet in Hawaiian waters by using the full strength of the 1st and 2nd air Squadrons against it, and thus to preclude the possibility of the American Fleet advancing to take the offensive in the Western Pacific for some time.

Proposing what he called a "drastic idea," Genda was in full agreement with the Admiral. While he was an officer-student at the Japanese Naval War College, in 1936, he'd written [a paper about that very concept](#):

The main strength of a decisive battle should be air arms, while its auxiliary should be built mostly by submarines. Cruisers and destroyers will be employed as screens of carrier groups, while battleships will be put out of commission and tied up. (Quoted by Stephen Budiansky in *Air Power: The Men, Machines, and Ideas That Revolutionized War, from Kitty Hawk to Iraq*, at [page 287](#).)

How would such a plan go over with the military establishment?

The basic concept to support this assertion was obviously a flat denial of the hitherto long-cherished concept of a sea battle, a concept which was built on an idea of waging once and for all a decisive gunfire engagement with battleships as the nucleus of strength. Instead, it aimed at launching a fatal series of aerial attacks upon enemy fleets from carrier groups operating a few hundred miles away from the enemy force, while land-based air forces and submarines were to support them.

What did Genda want to achieve with his plan of attack?

This attack must be a perfect surprise. And the result of this attack must be such that the main force of the American Fleet will not be able to advance to the western Pacific for a period of at least six months.

How would he keep the American Fleet out of the west Pacific?

The main target of the attack must be against the American aircraft carriers and land-based planes.

We must use the entire carrier strength that we have.

In order to continue the attack by carrier-based planes, we must have sufficient means of supplying the carriers.

What kind of military equipment would accomplish his goals?

An attack by torpedoes will be the best, but when it is not possible due to antisubmarine or antitorpedo obstructions in the deeper waters and near harbors, we must use dive bombers for the attack. In that case, we must change the type of planes on the carriers. Whether the torpedo attacks be in shallow or deep waters, plans for such attacks must be made.

What were the chances this audacious plan could succeed?

This attack will be difficult but not impossible. The success of this attack lies in the success of the initial attack, therefore, the planning of the attack must be done in strict secrecy.

When Genda's plan of attack was adopted, the men who would carry it out practiced at Hitokappu Bay. They had no idea why they were working such long hours.

About five men knew the real reason. Japan's Washington diplomats were not among them.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MINORU-GENDA-Pearl-Harbor>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/MINORU-GENDA-Pearl-Harbor>

Media Stream



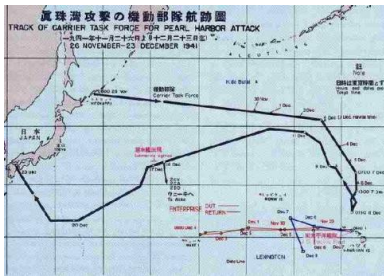
Commander Minoru Genda - Japanese Navy

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Commander-Minoru-Genda-Japanese-Navy>



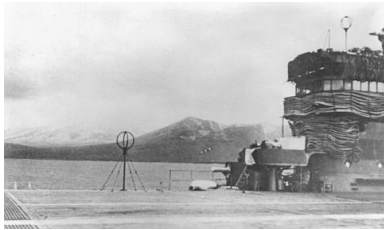
Route of Travel - From Japan to Pearl Harbor

Chart, courtesy U.S. National Park Service.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Route-of-Travel-From-Japan-to-Pearl-Harbor>



MINORU GENDA

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/MINORU-GENDA>