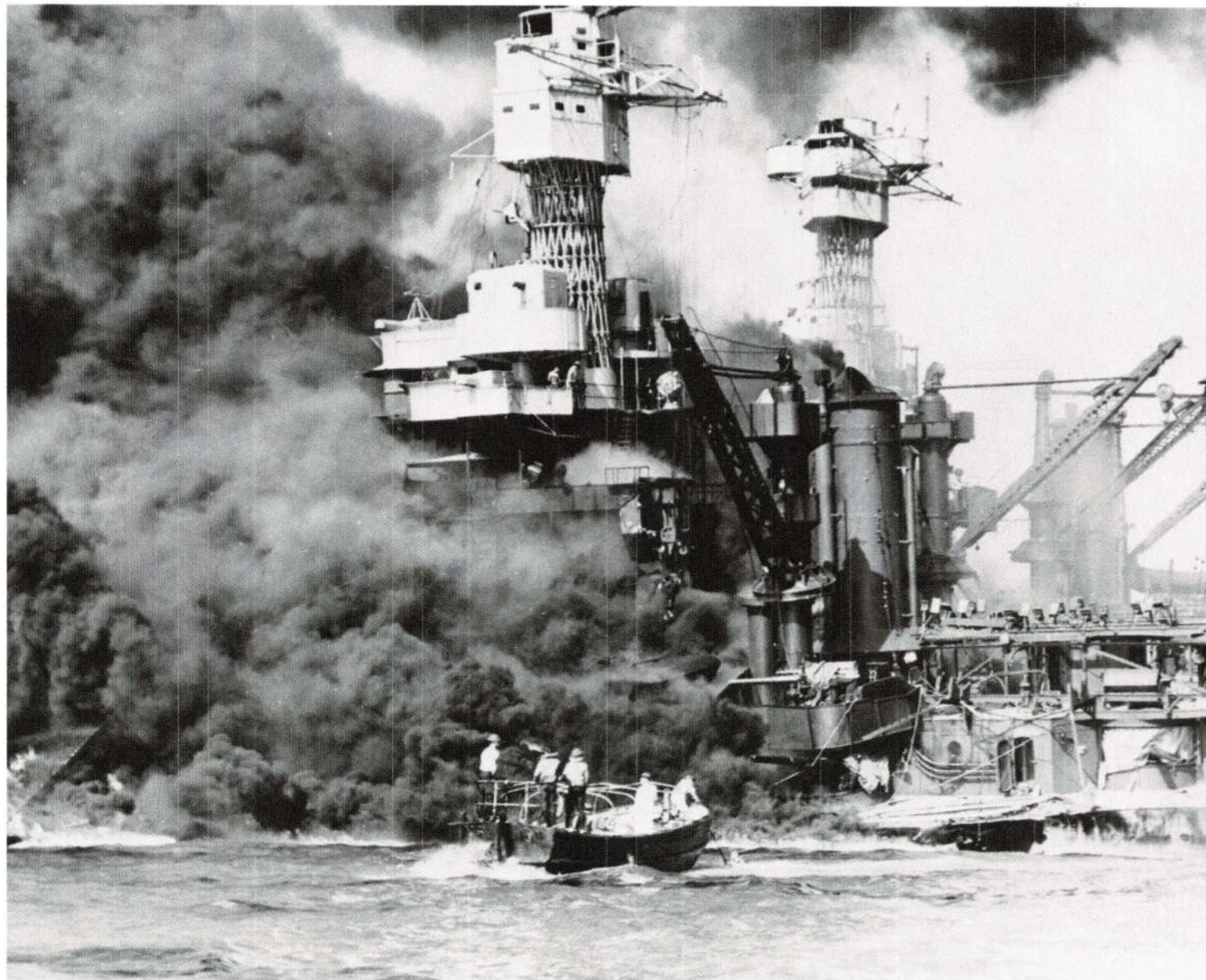


## Japan Goes to War

On the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1941 President Roosevelt issued an executive order freezing Japanese assets in America, and bringing in a full oil embargo on the export of all oil products to Japan. This meant that it became increasingly difficult to buy oil from Borneo and Sumatra, which were the only other practical source. The shutting off of oil made one of two things inevitable; war with Japan or an easy Japanese conquest of areas which would make that nation well-nigh invincible.

By this time the Japanese Army planners were busy drafting plans for major strikes against the Malay Peninsula, the Philippines and Pearl Harbour, as well as minor ones against Hong Kong, North Borneo, Guam and Wake. On the 10<sup>th</sup> November 1941 General Terauchi, commanding the Southern Army, and Admiral Yamamoto concluded a “Central Agreement” which outlined a detailed scheme of conquest, as follows <sup>[1]</sup> :-

- 1] Simultaneous landing of amphibious forces in Luzon, Guam, the Malay Peninsula, Hong Kong and Miri, British North Borneo.  
All except the last to be preceded by air attacks.
- 2] Carrier air attack on the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour.
- 3] Rapid exploitation of initial successes by the seizure of Manilla, Mindanao, Wake Island, the Bismarcks, Bangkok and Singapore.
- 4] Occupation of the Dutch East Indies and continuation of the war in China.



Pearl Harbour December 1941: USS West Virginia sunk and on fire; USS Tennessee in the background.

1] The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931 – April 1942, Samuel Eliot Morison, Castle Books, 2001.

Japanese propaganda Postcards

Painting by Kemji Yoshika

**The attack on Pearl Harbour**

One of a series issued on the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary  
of the Pearl Harbour attack

Painting by Fujita Tsuguhara

**The attack on Pearl Harbour**

**USS Arizona exploding**



筆二堅岡吉 襲強灣珠具イワハ



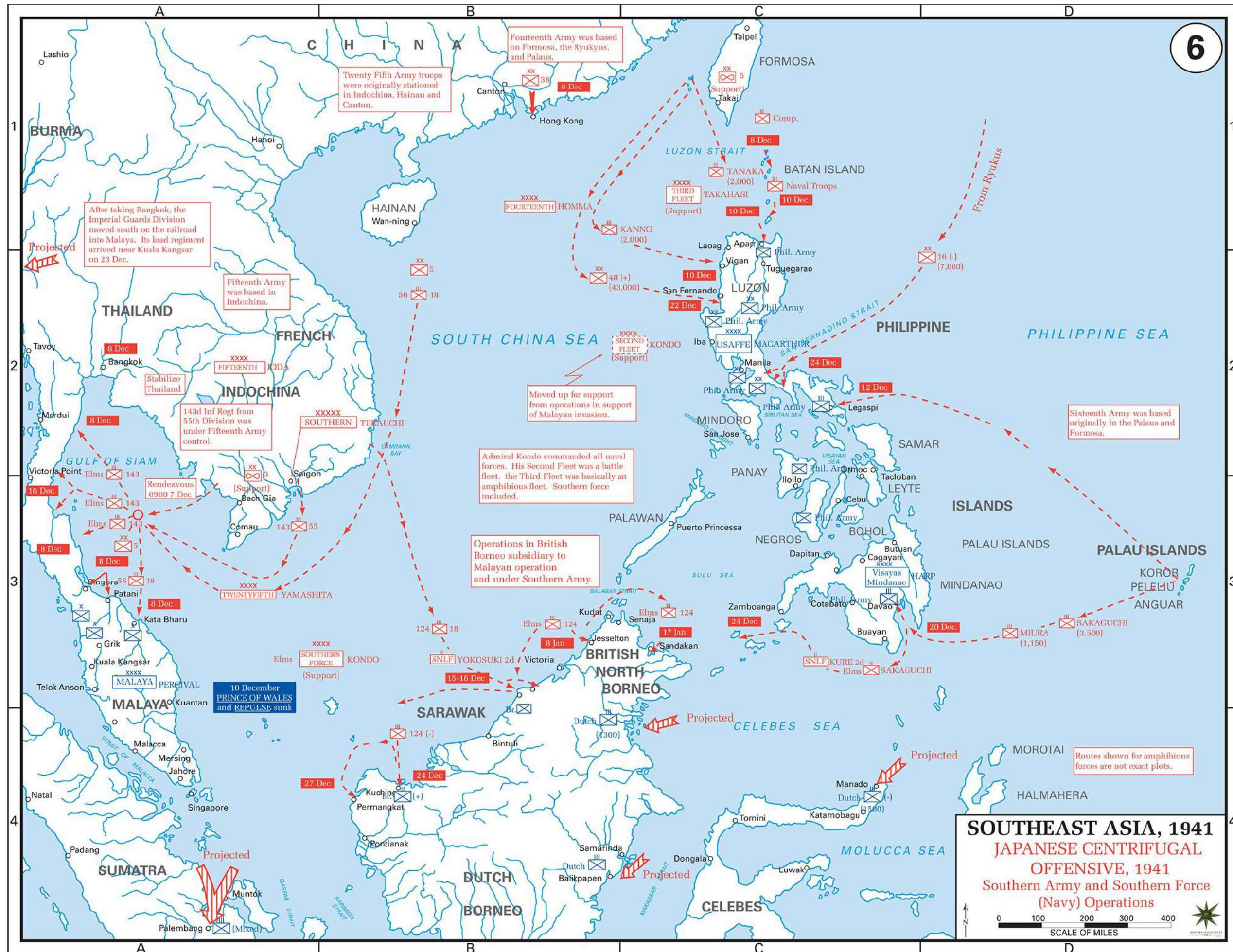
十二月八日ノ真珠灣 藤田 綱治 著 海軍省 賞下 朝日新聞社主催大東亞戦争美術展覽會

# Japan's Invasion Timetable


After Pearl Harbour on the 7<sup>th</sup> December simultaneous invasions were made on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941.

On The Philippines, Burma, Hong Kong, Thailand and Malaya.

The invasion of Borneo, at Miri and Seria was begun on the night of December 15<sup>th</sup> and was completed the next day.



**AVOID FLU**  
End every cold quickly. Just rub on -



**VICK**  
BRAND VAPOUR RUB

CLOSING PRICES

EVENING STANDARD December 8 1941

FINAL NIGHT EXTRA

# Evening Standard

Amusements ..... 6  
Radio ..... 6

BLACK-OUT 5.21 pm to 8.23 am.  
MOON Rises 9.28 pm; Sets 12.20 pm.

No. 36,585

LONDON, MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1941

ONE PENNY

Good Whisky



**JOHNNIE WALKER**

BORN 1820 - STILL GOING STRONG

*Parliament Told of Declaration of War on Japan*

# CHURCHILL TO CHIANG: FACE FOE TOGETHER

*SIAM "GIVING UP"*  
**JAPS ATTACK MALAY, HONGKONG, SARAWAK: SINGAPORE BOMBED**  
**Philippines Strafed**

War flared up all over the Far East to-day as Japan, throwing everything into her offensive by land, sea and air, attacked British, American and Dutch territories and also invaded Siam.

**Very Heavy U.S. Naval**  
BRITISH AND JAPANESE LAND AND AIR FORCES ARE BATTLING AT A NUMBER OF POINTS, WHILE JAPANESE DIVE-BOMBERS FOR THE SECOND SUCCESSIVE DAY ARE MERCILESSLY STRAFING THE

**Phone Talk to Roosevelt**

*"Some of Our Finest Ships Are There"*

Mr. Churchill announced to the House of Commons this afternoon that the Cabinet, which met at noon, was authorised to make a declaration of war on Japan.

"I SPOKE TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON THE ATLANTIC TELEPHONE LAST NIGHT, WITH A VIEW TO ARRANGING

**LIBYA**  
*and other war news*  
**PAGE FIVE**

**GEN. WINTER DECLARES WAR**

"The continuation of operations and the nature of the fighting in the East are now determined by the beginning of the Russian winter," says to-day's German communiqué quoted by Reuter.

"On wide areas of the Eastern Front only local actions are taking place. The communiqué also says the

# THE JAPANESE INVASION OF BORNEO

The forces available to defend Sarawak and northern Borneo against a Japanese invasion were wholly inadequate. Despite the vulnerability of the oil wells and refineries in the region, there were no maritime or air forces to protect these.

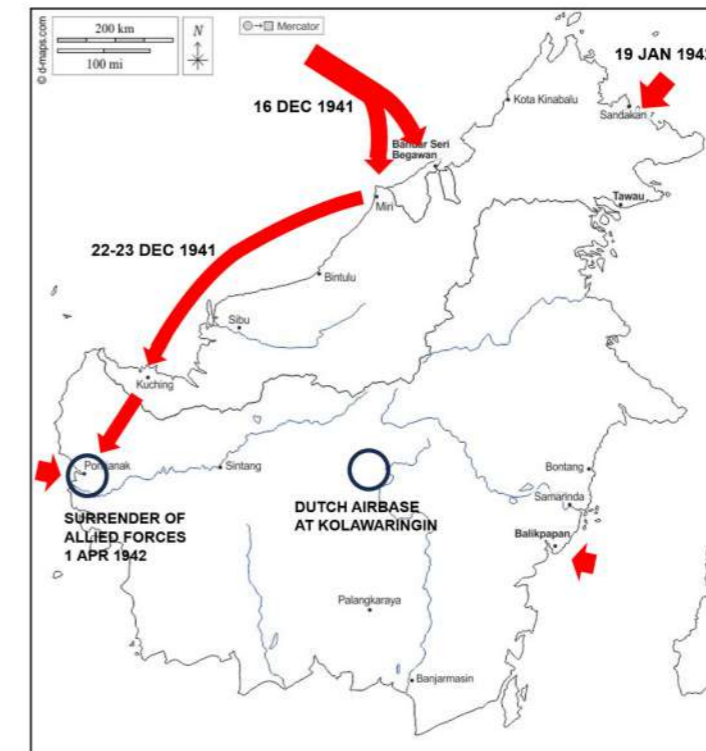
After the fall of France in May 1941 and the signing of the Tripartite Agreement between Germany, Italy and Japan, the Japanese made quick work of occupying French Indo-China. This gave them a seaboard facing northern Borneo across the China Sea. For Japan, Borneo was a strategic target. Besides controlling the sea-routes between Sumatra, Malaya, and the Philippines, securing an assured supply of oil was fundamental to Japan's ambition to become the major power in the Pacific. Meanwhile having heard of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the Brooke Government quickly ordered the destruction of the Sarawak oil rigs and refinery at Lutong.

On 13 December 1941, a Japanese invasion force sailed for Borneo from Cam Ranh Bay, in today's Vietnam, escorted by the cruiser "Yura". The force comprised a flotilla of destroyers, naval landing units, and transport ships carrying an infantry brigade with engineer and medical support. The convoy escaped detection and at dawn on 16 December two landing units secured Miri and Seria having encountered very little resistance followed by the capture of Lutong by a third force.

From their airbase at Singkawang in north-west Kalimantan, the Dutch air detachment carried out a series of sorties on 18 and 19 December against the landing force at Miri but with little success. That was except for one Dornier flying boat which scored a direct hit on the Japanese destroyer "Shinonome". The ensuing explosion was so great that it caused the hull to rupture and the ship to sink within a few minutes.

On 22 December, a convoy that had set sail from Miri for Kuching, was spotted by a Dutch air patrol. On receiving the report of this contact, the Dutch submarine HNLMS *K XIV* infiltrated the Japanese convoy and in the afternoon of 23 December sank two Army transports with the loss of many hundreds of troops and badly damaged a further two. Then on the night of 23/24 December, the *K XIV* sank a Japanese destroyer, being the first Allied submarine in the Pacific to do so. The next day the *K XIV* was lost with all hands to a torpedo attack from a Japanese submarine.

Despite the loss of the transport ships and troops, the Japanese still outnumbered the defenders of Kuching and by nightfall of 23 December they had occupied the capital. On 25 December they captured the Kuching airfield. Meanwhile a smaller force moved northward to occupy Brunei, Labuan and North Borneo. With only an armed constabulary of 650 men, North Borneo quickly fell and on 19 January 1942 the Governor, Charles Robert Smith, surrendered the colony.



# Japan Promotes its Successes

Japanese propaganda postcards from WWII often depicted themes of military prowess and victories over their foes. Later postcards depicted Japanese defeats as victories over the odds, and disguised the progressive loss of territories as valiant withdrawals. These postcards served to bolster morale at home and promote the idea of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" to those in conquered regions



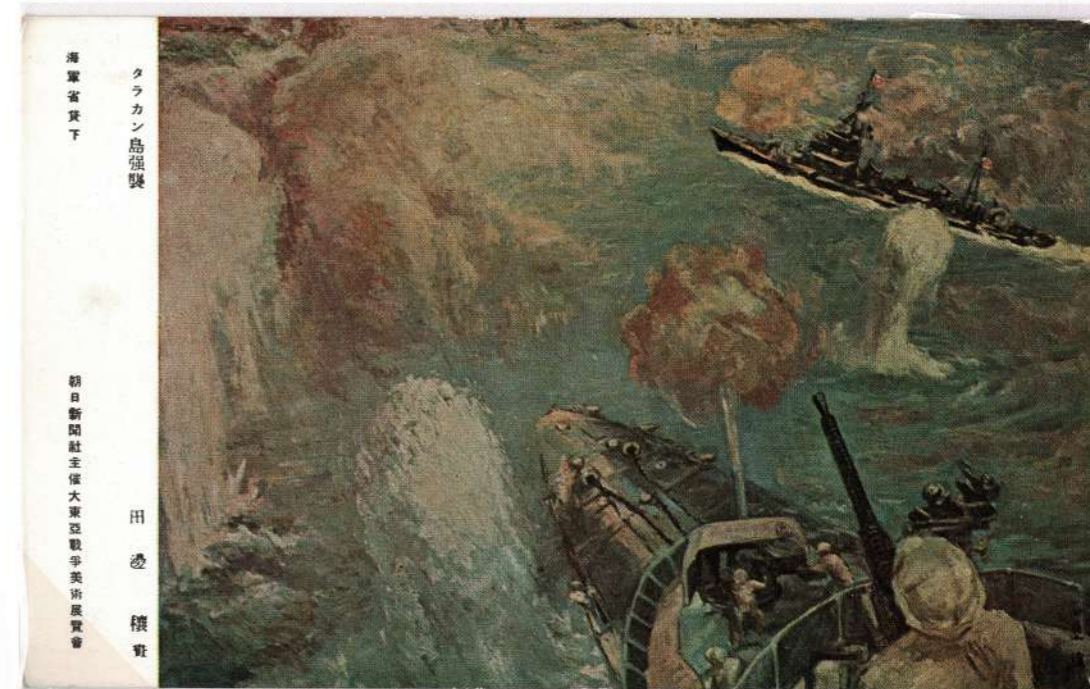
Paintings by Fuduka Toyoshiro

## The Attack on Miri

Loading the landing craft & Fighting in the oil fields



英領ボルネオを衝く  
(陸軍省許可済) ボルネオ方面陸軍



海軍省賞下  
タラカン島強襲  
朝日新聞社主催大東亞戦争美術展賞  
田邊 穰野



シンガポール英軍の降伏  
宮本三郎筆



ミリ油田地帯確保部隊の活躍 陸軍省許可済 ボルネオ方面陸軍派遣清水登之



香港黄泥涌高射砲陣地奪取  
小磯良平筆

## The Attack on Tarakan , Borneo

### Surrender of Singapore

By Myamoto Suburo

### Attack on Hong Kong

By Koiso Ryohei

## Invasion of the Dutch East Indies

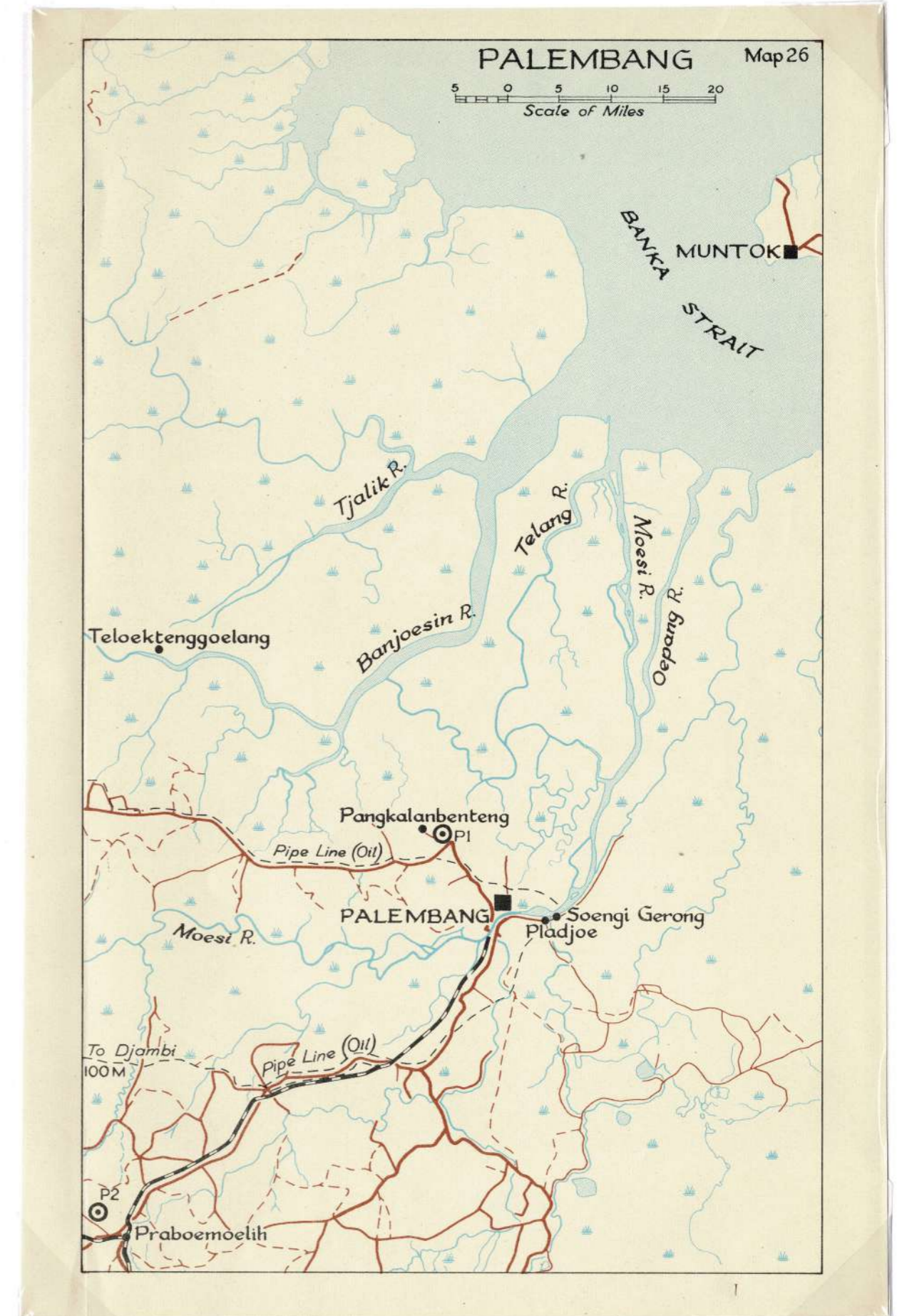
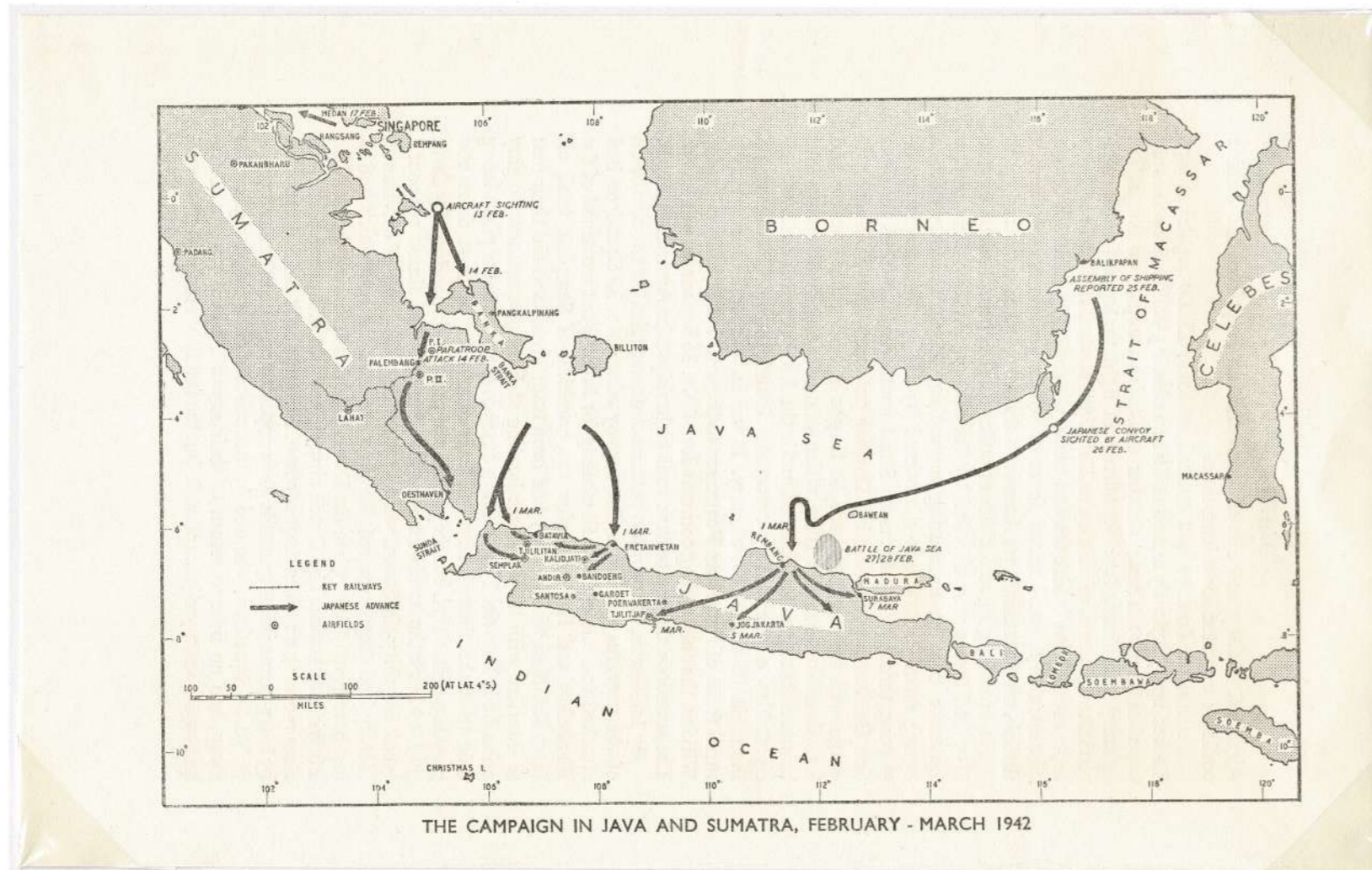
The Dutch East Indies was one of Japan's primary targets when it went to war because the colony possessed abundant valuable resources, the most important of which were its rubber plantations and oil fields. Both of these were essential materials for the military.

The Royal Dutch Shell oil refineries at Pladjoe, close to Palembang, were a major objective for the Japanese.

In January, 1942, knowing that an invasion was imminent, the American-British-Dutch-Australian Command (ABDACOM) decided to concentrate Allied air forces in Sumatra at two airfields near Palembang: Pangkalan Benteng, also known as "P1" and a secret air base at Prabumulih (then Praboemoelih), or "P2".

The British Royal Air Force created No. 225 (Bomber) Group at Palembang. It included two Royal Australian Air Force squadrons and a large number of Australians serving with British squadrons. The group could only muster 40 Bristol Blenheim light bombers and 35 Lockheed Hudson light bombers.

No. 226 (Fighter) Group RAF also arrived at Palembang in early February: two squadrons of Hawker Hurricanes were joined by the remnants of British, Australian and Royal New Zealand Air Force Hurricane and Brewster Buffalo squadrons, from the Malayan and Singapore campaigns.



## Invasion of Palembang

The main Japanese invasion force, under Vice-Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), was on its way from Cam Ranh Bay in French Indochina. It was made up of the Imperial Japanese Army's 229th Infantry Regiment and one battalion from the 230th Infantry Regiment. A small advance party set out eight transports escorted by the light cruiser Sendai and four destroyers. The main force followed in 14 transports, escorted by the heavy cruiser Chokai and four destroyers. The covering force included the aircraft carrier Ryujo, four heavy cruisers, one light cruiser and three destroyers.



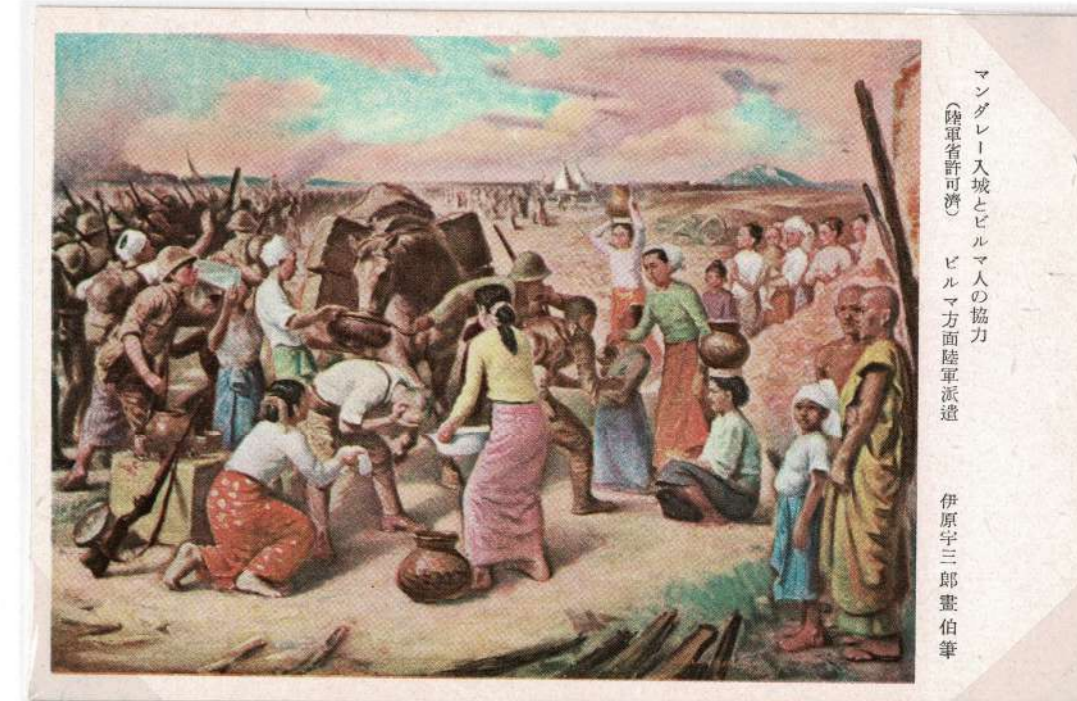
Artist Goro Tsuruka  
Para troops descending at Palembang

## Surprise Airborne attack

While Allied planes attacked the Japanese invasion ships on 13 February, Kawasaki Ki-56 transport planes of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Chutai, Imperial Japanese Army Air Force (IJAAF), dropped Teishin Shudan (Raiding Group) paratroopers over Pangkalan Benteng airfield. At the same time Mitsubishi Ki-21 bombers from the 98th Sentai dropped supplies for paratroopers..

As many as 180 men from the Japanese Army 2nd Parachute Regiment, under Colonel Seiichi Kume, dropped between Palembang and Pangkalan Benteng, and more than 90 men came down west of the refineries at Pladjoe. Although the Japanese paratroopers failed to capture the Pangkalan Benteng airfield, they did manage to gain possession of the entire Pladjoe oil refinery complex undamaged. The planned demolition failed to do any serious damage to the refinery, but the oil stores were set ablaze. Two hours after the first drop, another 60 Japanese paratroopers were dropped near Pangkalan Benteng airfield.

On 8 March 1942 the Dutch surrendered to General Imamura in Kalijati, Subang, West Java.



Sumatran native welcoming the Japanese as liberators  
Later they grew to hate the invaders



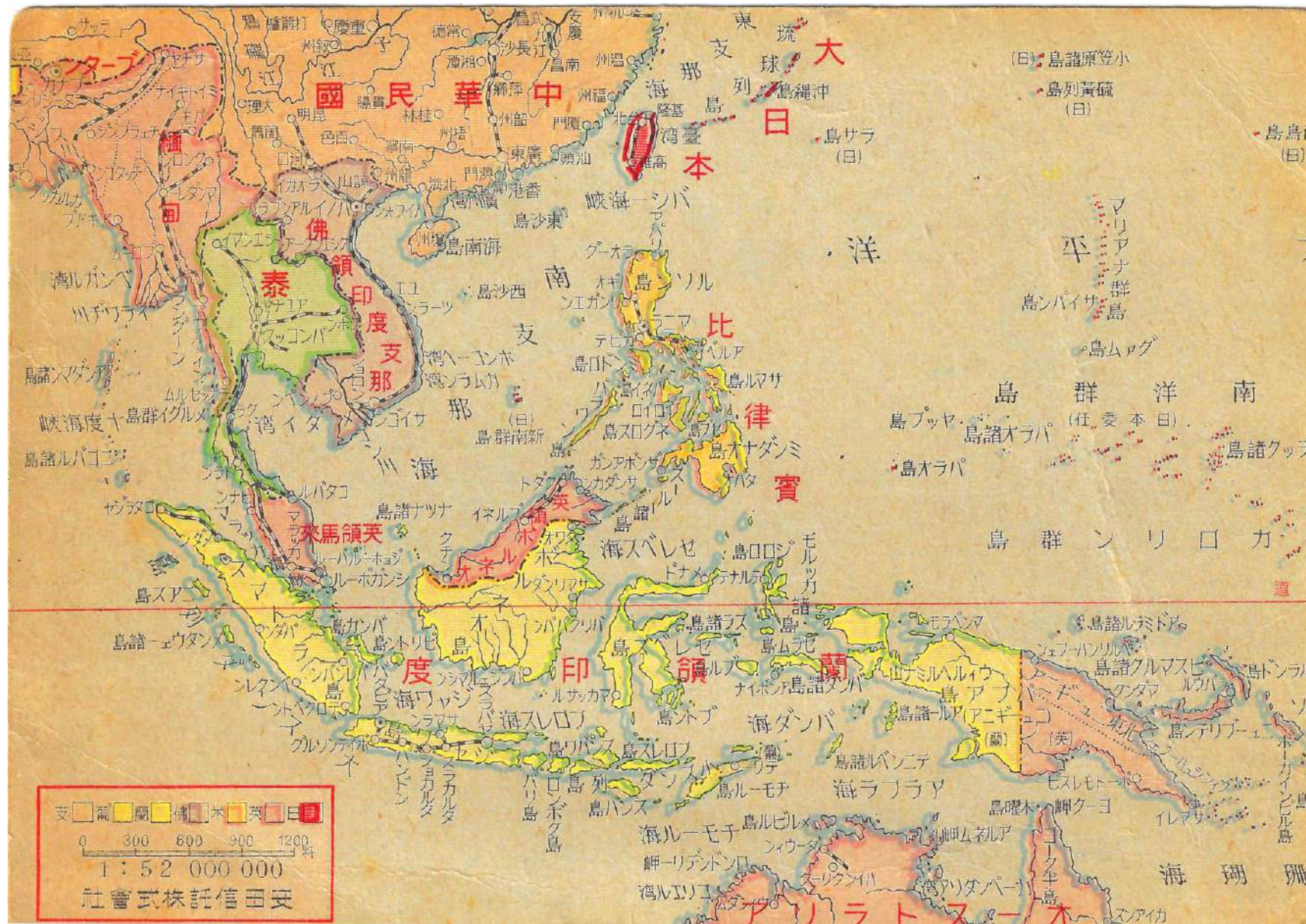
Artist Nakayama Takashi  
Japanese soldiers assaulting the oil refinery in Palembang



Artist Ryohei Koiso  
General Imamura accepting the Dutch Surrender at Kalijati, Java

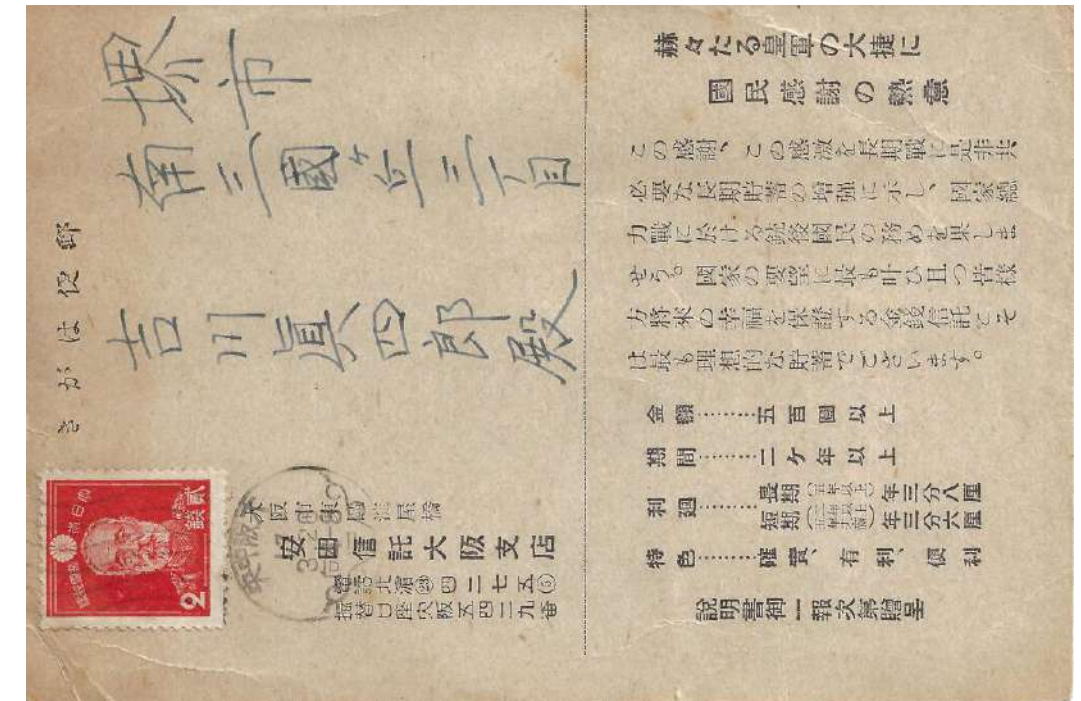
# Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was a concept promoted by Japan during World War II that aimed to create a bloc of Asian nations led by Japan, and free from Western influence. This idea was presented as a mutual economic and cultural partnership among Asian countries, but it primarily served Japan's imperial ambitions and justified its military conquests across East and Southeast Asia.

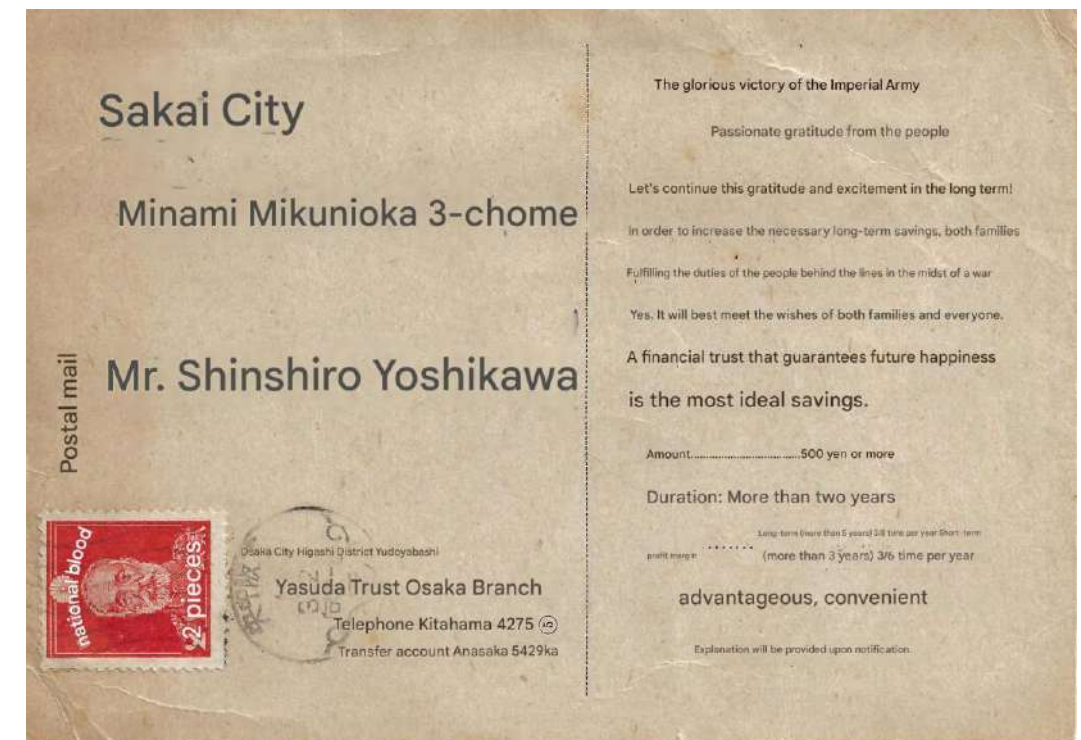


## Enlarged scan of the reverse:

The key at the bottom left of the map shows, in small boxes, the colours applied to each country, with Japan in dark red. The lettering for most of the countries is in red – which would seem to indicate that they were already in Japanese hands – though the colours of former ruling powers are retained. Australia's Japanese name in red seems to be jumping the gun, but it might be assumed the map would have been prepared some time before March 1942, in anticipation of various territories falling into Japanese hands.



This Japanese card was sent by the Yasuda Trust Bank, in Osaka, encouraging the growth of savings with them to match the achievements of the Imperial Army. Postmarked 20<sup>th</sup> March 1942.



Translated version of the front