

1 Sep 08

Dear Mr. Cole,

I forwarded a submission to your Enquiry on 31st Jul. 08. In it I referred, in my question 5, to the views of one at the National Museum of Australia alleging that "There was in fact no real threat" of Japan planning to invade Australia. I questioned that view.

You may be aware of historian, Bob Wurth's new book indicating that Japanese archives reveal serious proposals for an invasion. I attach below copy of a piece in The Age of 29th Aug.

Yours Sincerely

W. K. Allen
(W. K. Allen)

Hon. Terence Cole, QC
HMAS Sydney Enquiry
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Japan planned full-scale invasion of Au

By **ROD MORAN**

IN September 1942, Japan's Prime Minister, General Hedeki Tojo, boasted that he would be able to occupy Perth by January the following year. He had every reason to be confident: Singapore, the lynch-pin of Australia's imperial defence, had fallen to the Japanese in a bloody campaign. Further afield, Australian island garrisons on Rabaul,

Ambon and Timor were overrun. Darwin had been attacked from the air, and New Guinea had been invaded, with the Japanese advancing over the Kokoda track to try and take Port Moresby, from which Australia's north was wide open. The nation appeared to be under threat of a full-scale invasion.

But was it? Some historians scoff at the suggestion, insisting Japan's only aim was to cut Aus-

tralia off from both Britain and the US — anything more serious was mere chatter from a few junior officers. But a new book, *1942: Australia's Greatest Peril*, by journalist and historian Bob Wurth, says the Japanese archives reveal that there was an a serious proposal for an invasion, with debate at the highest levels of the Japanese military. It will lend support to those who argue that there was a battle

for Australia, the official commemoration of which is next Wednesday.

The book states that, as early as January 1942, senior Japanese military personnel such as Captain Yoshitake Miwa were making plans. "We must think quickly about invading Australia," he noted in his journal on January 6. "The United States is now in the middle of reinforcing Australia, Fiji and Samoa."

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Wurth says there were many references in Japan's official war history to plans to invade Australia. There were more references in memoirs and minutes taken by General Hajime Sugijama, chief of the Army General Staff, General Hiromi Tanaka, and others, at meetings between the imperial navy and the army.

There were about seven admirals talking about an invasion in the first few months

of 1942, says Wurth.

There was also evidence that general Tomoyuki Yamashita, the so-called Tiger of Malaya, proposed invading. When interviewed by British journalist John Potter post-war, while awaiting trial as a war criminal, Yamashita said: "Why, there were hardly enough Australians to have organised an effective resistance to the Japanese Army. All they could ever hope to do was make

a guerilla resistance in the bush," Yamashita said. "With even Sydney and Brisbane in my hands it would have been comparatively simple to subdue Australia . . . We could have been safe there forever."

The invasion, of course, didn't happen. Disagreements between the Japanese navy and army, plus changes in the tide of the war by the end of 1942, saw the threat diminish and pass.