Noteworthy Facts about General Douglas MacArthur’s Operation Cartwheel

* Operation Cartwheel (1943-1944) was a major military strategy for the Allies in the Pacific theater of WWII.
* When first proposed, Operation Cartwheel was called “Elkton.”
* The Joints Chief of Staff approved MacArthur’s plan for Operation Cartwheel, and the advance on Rabaul, at the Pacific Military Conference in March 1943.
* Rabaul is a township in East New Britain province, on the island of New Britain, in the country of Papua New Guinea.
* Operation Cartwheel was a multi-pronged advance meant to make it difficult for the Japanese to focus their responses … by leapfrogging from air base to potential-next-airbase. MacArthur called this strategy “advancing the bomber line.”
* The goal of Cartwheel was to destroy the barrier formation Japan had created in the Bismarck Archipelago, a collection of islands east of New Guinea in the Solomon Sea.
* Some 13 different invasions or operations were included, but only 10 were actually undertaken.
* Rabaul was one of the ones eliminated, as being too costly and unnecessary, overruling MacArthur’s aim to capture it.
* Cartwheel’s final objectives shifted to the Admiralty Islands, bypassing Rabaul and setting the stage for the invasion of the Philippines.