



HISTORY

>> **Historical Information**

BATTLE FOR BOUGAINVILLE **October 27, 1943 - March 1944**

After the advance on New Georgia, the next major operation was the invasion of Bougainville, the largest island in the [Solomons](#). It was considered to be Japan's greatest overseas bastion. Victory at Bougainville would be key for the [Allied](#) Forces in their overall objective of isolating Rabaul on New Britain Island.

The [MIS linguists](#) and U.S. Marine Corps arrived in Bougainville on October 27, 1943. Throughout the month of November, the Marines fought hard to secure a beachhead at Empress Augustus Bay, located on the southwest coast of Bougainville. While interrogating POWs, the MIS was able to secure important information that turned out to be a key asset in defeating the Japanese in Bougainville. Language specialist Roy Uyehata learned of a Japanese attack planned for March 1944 while interrogating a POW. This knowledge aided the U.S. to victory in the second battle of Bougainville. Japan's scheduled counterattack was unsuccessful with more than 5,000 casualties while the U.S. suffered very little in comparison. Uyehata and Hiroshi Matsuda were awarded [Bronze Stars](#) for providing the warning.

Success at Bougainville isolated all Japanese forces left in the Solomon Islands, and heavy air and naval losses further crippled the Japanese Combined Fleet. The skirmishes at Bougainville ended all combat in the South Pacific.

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