

Blockade. Total Loss Of Fleet Beat Japan

By SANDOR S. KLEIN

WASHINGTON (UP)—Japan was beaten by the destruction of its fleet, the mangling of its cities by air and a strangling blockade. It was out-thought, out-guessed and out-fought.

Surrender undoubtedly was hastened by the atomic bomb and Russia's entry into the Pacific war. Its doom, however, had already been sealed.

To reach the heart of the enemy empire, the United States leaped over vast sea distances, taking what it needed for bases and by-passing thousands of islands. It chopped down Japan's vaunted fleet from the air and from the sea. U. S. submarines and planes shattered Japan's merchant fleet.

Stab Deeply

When its march across the Pacific brought it at last to the very doorsteps of Japan proper, the United States sent its great air fleets stabbing deeper and deeper into the enemy homeland.

Defeat of Japan was accomplished with a minimum of ground troops. No great armies, such as those which fought in Europe, were engaged. But while the air fleets and the navy were heaping destruction on the enemy's homeland, preparations were being made for the army to invade Japan.

If Japan had not chosen sur-

render, it would have developed upon the U. S. army to beat the enemy's fanatic legions in the home islands. This would have involved tremendous armies.

Allies On Land

The task of beating the enemy's powerful forces on the mainland was left for the Russian and Chinese military machines.

In the final analysis it was the brilliance, the daring of American strategy and tactics, and the heroism of America's fighting men that turned the tide of war.

The military man will tell you Japan laid the foundations for its own defeat the day it attacked Pearl Harbor. This act set in motion the full force of America's great industrial potential.

Serious Mistake

The navy will tell you Japan made a serious strategic mistake. It might have driven the battered U. S. fleet off the seas had it followed up the Pearl Harbor victory.

But Japan set out instead on territorial conquest. It grabbed the Philippines, Netherlands Indies, Malaya, Burma—and gave the U. S. time to patch up its wounds.

It was a long, tough road to Tokyo. The United States had to travel it virtually alone. The British were occupied with beating Germany. Even the U. S. could turn against the Japs but a portion of its might.

One strategic factor stands out



SYMBOLIC OF THINGS TO COME IN GERMANY—Fate of the German people, outlined in terms of big three conference, is symbolized in recent European photo as modern war machine takes off to depart over land which peasant farmer, using age-old methods, tills in order to produce needed food for Germany. Denazified and demilitarized, Germany is to become an agrarian nation.

in Japan's defeat. For years before the war, military students preached that to beat Japan, it must be blockaded. Crowded in her tight group of islands, Japan was reliant on the outside world. The concept was never abandoned. In the end, Japan found itself cut off from its stolen empire.

The Pacific is an ocean of vast distances. It was obvious Dec. 7, 1941, the key to ultimate victory was control of the seas. The American naval command decided if the United States could not take command right away, the Japanese should not.

Couldn't Slug

The situation called for change in command. President Roosevelt called on Adm. Ernest J. King, who then headed the Atlantic fleet, to take over the combined jobs of commander-in-chief of the U. S. fleet and chief of naval operations. King in turn summoned Adm. Chester W. Nimitz.

Nimitz had a simple plan of action. He knew—then—he couldn't slug it out with the Japanese. So he decided to jab and feint until America's war-mobilized labor could restore and augment his fleet. He ordered the fleet organized into fast moving task forces.

Strikes Back

The victory-flushed Japanese received a shocking surprise—the first of many—when a task force under Admiral William F. Halsey, jr., struck at enemy naval and air bases in the Marshall and Gilbert islands Feb. 1, 1942—less than two months after Pearl Harbor.

Meanwhile, the Japanese continued their rampage through the

south Pacific. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, on President Roosevelt's orders, fled from the Philippines.

By early spring of 1942, the Japanese were in possession of virtually the entire southwest Pacific. On April 18 a daring band of 16ers electrified the world, stunned the Japanese, raised American hopes, and foreshadowed the greatest air-borne destruction ever brought on a people.

First Attack

They were "Doolittle's boys," the group of B-25 fliers who, flying from the old carrier Hornet, made history's first bombing attack on Tokyo.

Then on May 7 news was of the battle of the Coral Sea, the first great air-sea engagement between the U. S. and Japanese fleet. It saved Australia, wounded the Japanese navy, and, with the battle of Midway later, turned the tide of the war.

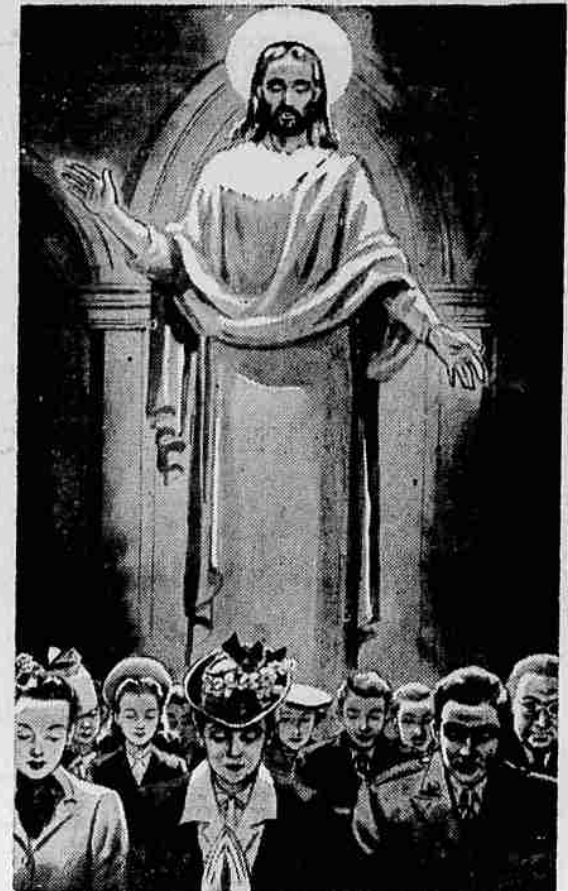
At great cost and only after vicious land battles and great sea fights, the United States kicked the Japanese out of Guadalcanal and began the long march back up the Pacific.

Strike at Will

MacArthur, commanding American and Australian troops, began to push the Japanese out of New Guinea.

Island after island in the southwest Pacific was wrested from Japanese hands. The U. S. fleet, meanwhile, was growing. It finally surpassed the enemy navy, and carrier forces moved about, hitting the Japanese at will.

The Gilberts and the Marshalls were invaded, and the United States moved on to the Marianas—Guam, Tinian and Saipan—and the western Carolines.



V-J Day, 1945

Upon this day, may we each go our respective ways to our places of worship and honor those who have carried on their collective shoulders a superhuman burden during this war. If we remember that the quest for peace does not end the day the last shot is fired, that we haven't achieved the glowing goal of PEACE, we shall have learned a masterful lesson. Let us resolve this day to take part in the peace plan of the future, to be aware of our governments attitudes and action.

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