

Mitscher Flagship Is Made Inferno By Attack Of Two Japanese Suicide Bombers

By James A. MacLean
United Press Correspondent
Seattle, June 28—(U.P.)—Two Japanese suicide planes on the morning of May 11 almost converted the U.S.S. Bunker Hill into a flaming tomb off Okinawa for Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher, whose flagship she was.

But the hard-hitting and hard-to-kill commander of task force 58 escaped—without a scratch or blister. He escaped, and the Bunker Hill survived, but many members of Mitscher's staff and hundreds of the big ship's crew did not.

After a six-hour ordeal of blasting bombs, exploding ammunition, and blazing gasoline, the carrier counted 651 casualties, including 373 killed, 19 missing, and 264 wounded.

But thanks to her crew's heroism and to a daring maneuver under enemy noses, the 27,500-ton Bunker Hill lived to join the Franklin, her Essex class sister, and the mighty Saratoga in the proud company of U. S. carriers which refused to sink.

Planes Crash Decks
Because she will fight again, the Bunker Hill's story may now be told. "Out of nowhere," as the survivors told it, came two suicide planes which crashed with their 500-pound bombs into the carrier's decks.

Lives were snuffed out in a space of seconds a few feet from where the doughty, weather-beaten, 58-year-old admiral was standing.

According to Commodore Arleigh A. ("31 Knots") Burke, his chief of staff, three officers and 11 men of Mitscher's staff were killed and 20 were wounded or overcome by smoke.

Every man on the port side of the flag bridge outside the "flag plot" where Mitscher stood was killed. But he survived to transfer his flag to another craft and carry on.

Thus far in this war, Mitscher has been bombed off two flagships. The name of the other one may not be revealed.

Being Repaired
The Bunker Hill, her decks and island and gun galleries a shambles, is being repaired at the Puget Sound navy yard, Bremerton, Wash., where the Saratoga recently was made whole again.

The Saratoga suffered greatly when seven enemy planes scored hits on her off Iwo Jima. But only the Brooklyn (N. Y.) navy yard, has taken more punishment than the Bunker Hill and survived.

Few U. S. naval craft of any kind have as fine a war record as the Bunker Hill. Since her arrival in the Pacific in the fall of 1943, she has sunk 162,000 tons of enemy shipping and shot down 475 Japanese planes. In addition she has probably sunk 253,975 tons of enemy vessels and damaged 454,075 tons.

In 58 consecutive days and nights with task force 58 before she was hit, her planes had struck at Iwo Jima, the inland sea, Kyushu, and Okinawa. From March 14 to the day her career was interrupted, the Bunker Hill shot down 169 Japanese planes.

In just two big days off Okinawa her fighters downed 67 enemy aircraft, and in the same area her anti-aircraft guns blasted 14 Japanese planes out of the sky.

Hell of Fire
But in a space of 30 seconds on the morning of May 11, two Japanese suicide planes got through, catching 34 of the Bunker Hill's craft ready to take off, and transformed the mighty ship into a hell of fire and explosions which riddled her decks and bulkheads and blasted her sides.

Of the carrier's planes only 10 that were in the air survived. Seventy were reduced to molten puddles.

In the six hours that followed the two suicide hits, Mitscher and his surviving staff members were removed by breeches buoy to the destroyer English while the Bunker Hill's still-living officers and men braved death to fight fires, jettison ammunition and gasoline, and rescue the wounded and trapped.

So many erstwhile ordinary human beings were transformed into heroes that the ship's skipper, Capt. George A. Seitz of Coronado, Calif., has recommended 280 of his crew for awards, including three navy crosses.

Brave Men Die
"There were so many acts of outstanding heroism," he said, "that it would be impossible to praise any one over another."

And of the men who died at their posts to keep the boilers going and the pressure in the fire mains, he added:

"They died as only brave men can."

Helping the Bunker Hill in her need were the cruiser Wilkes Barre and the destroyers English, Stembel, and Charles S. Sperry. The Wilkes Barre pushed her bow against the carrier's starboard quarter and kept her hoses aboard.

So great a volume of water was pumped into the stricken craft that she began to list and settle. The tons of water pouring upon the seas of flaming gasoline and oil were forcing fire fighters back against the bulkhead.

Before leaving the ship, Mitscher tersely inquired about the organization of fire control. His only comment on what had happened to his flagship was, "It's too bad."

That night the destroyer English, in honor of its distinguished guest, showed motion pictures. They depicted the burning of the U.S.S. Franklin.

GRID GREAT DIES
Middlesboro, Ky., June 28—(U.P.)—James B. "Red" Roberts, one of the gridiron greats of Centre college's famous praying colons, died at Middlesboro hospital from burns received early today when fire broke out in his suite at the Cumberland hotel.

SUPPLY OF CARS WILL BE SKIMPY

Washington, June 28—(U.P.)—It will be at least three years before many millions of Americans will be able to buy new cars, Col. J. Monroe Johnson, director of the office of defense transportation, said today. Johnson made the assertion in

appealing to passenger car owners to conserve their cars. Johnson said the 240,000 cars to be built this year will replace less than one per cent of the nation's autos.

WANT TO BUY BUOY?
San Francisco, June 28—(U.P.)—Wanna buy a buoy? The U. S. Maritime commission announced today that 17,000 new and used steel buoys of 175 and 300-gallon capacity recently declared surplus by the navy are for sale at \$17 and \$26, respectively.

Spain Hits Back At French After Attack By Mob

Paris, June 28—(U.P.)—A French foreign office source said today that Spain has cancelled all imports, exports and transit licenses affecting France in reprisal for a French mob attack on Spaniards at Chambrey 10 days ago.

Spain also notified France that the time was "inopportune" to attempt to open commercial negotiations, the informant said.

A number of Spanish diplomats and laborers were killed or injured at Chambrey by a French mob who attacked their train in the belief they were members of the infamous Spanish Blue Legion which fought beside the Germans against Russia.

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The Spaniards were being repatriated from Germany.

SEA BONUS CUT
Washington, June 28—(U.P.)—The Maritime War Emergency board has ordered a 33 1/2 per cent reduction in bonuses paid seamen in the Atlantic service

effective July 15, the National Maritime union (CIO) disclosed today.

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Velveeta & American (6 pts.) 1/2-lb. pkg. **22c**
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- Best Foods Mustard**
With horseradish 9-oz. jar **10c**
- Cane Sugar**
Pure Cane (Use Stamp 36) 5 lbs. **33c**
- Salt**
Sno White Brand pkg. **7c**
- Salted Peanuts**
Planter's Fresh Roasted 5-oz. pkg. **15c**

Sparkling Water
PAR-T-PAK
32-oz. 13c
Plus Bottle Deposit

- Flavorade**
Makes refreshing drinks, 5c pk. **3 for 10c**
- Sun Valley Beverage**
Large variety of flavors 1/2-gal. **49c**
- Edwards Coffee** Reg. & Drip **28c**
Rich and full flavored 1-lb. jar
- Nob Hill Coffee** **23c**
Ground fresh for you 1-lb. bag
- Airway Coffee** **20c**
For Finer, Fresh Flavor. 1-lb. bag
- Cocoa** **11c**
Our Mother's Brand 1-lb. pkg.
- Canterbury Tea** **43c**
Orange Pekoe, Black 1/2-lb. pkg.
- Cherub Milk** **9c**
(2 cans, 3 pts.) Tall cans
- Sunbrite Cleanser** **5c**
(4 cans, 3 pts.) 3 baby cans Reg. can



Whether you celebrate your holidays with an outdoor picnic or plan more formal indoor meals you are sure to find what you want... priced extra low at Safeway.

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WRIGHT'S Cracked wheat 1-lb loaf **11c**
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- Swift's Prem** (6 Red Points) 12-oz. can **33c**
- Potted Meat** Libby's (1 point) No. 1/4 can **6c**
- Salad Dressing** Duchess 18-oz. **24c**
- Ritz Crackers** Tasty snack 1-lb. pkg. **21c**
- Kitchen Craft Flour** 25-lb. sack **\$1.15**
- Sperry Flour** Drifted Snow 25-lb. sack **\$1.19**
- Pancake Flour** Suzanna brand 3 1/2-lb. pkg. **19c**
- Cake Flour** Swansdown 2 3/4-lb. pkg. **26c**
- Kellogg Pep** Delicious with fruit 1/2-lb. pkg. **10c**
- Albers Corn Flakes** 11-oz. pkg. **8c**
- Morning Glory Oats** Regular or quick 3-lb. pkg. **26c**
- Bouillon Cubes** Herb Ox Brand 5 Cubes **9c**
- Jels-Rite, liquid pectin** 1/2-pint bottle **10c**
- Parowax** Favorite jelly sealer 1-lb. pkg. **13c**
- Jell Well** Fine summertime dish pkg. **5c**
- Walnut Meats** Fresh, no shells 1/2-lb. pkg. **58c**
- Seedless Raisins** Full of iron 2-lb. pkg. **24c**
- Cider Vinegar** Old Mill Brand quart bottle **16c**

- Ivory Soap** Medium bar **6c**
Personal bar 2 for **9c**
- Marmalade** S. & W. Brand 2-lb. jar **38c**
- Shredded Wheat** Nabisco Pkg. **11c**
- Dry Cereal** Instant Oatmeal Clapp's Brand 1/2-lb. pkg. **15c**

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 - Valencia Oranges** **1b. 11c**
 - Santa Rosa Plums** **1b. 18c**
 - Tomatoes** From California Farms **1b. 19c**
 - White Onions** Crystal Wax **3 lbs. 31c**
 - Green Onions, local** **bu. 9c**
 - Celery, green, crisp** **1b. 19c**
 - Apricots** Tiltons for Canning **25-lb. lug \$2.40**
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