

America At War

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This 44th report on the air war, beginning with the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japs, can record two of history's greatest events: Success of the long effort to release atomic energy in volume and under control for demolition, and the end of hostilities in the Second World War. (Also see special eight-page insert "The Atom, New Source of Energy"; our editorial, "Split Elements — And Human Elements"; and the feature article, "The Atomic Frame of Reference — Or Else.")

Added to these striking developments was the entrance of Russia into the war — to paralyze the Mikado's great army still remaining in Manchuria.

Fact remains that Japan surrendered without having been invaded, and most of the damage inflicted upon the former empire resulted from air attack. However, aviation had to be moved to within range of Japan by the Army and Navy which captured the island bases so necessary for air operations in Pacific.

These operations had progressed to a point where, at the war's end, the Japs would soon have been hit by forces of 1,000 B-29s, their loads of incendiaries and bombs doubled by short-haul basing, plus long range fighter and navy sweeps, totaling up to 2,000 sorties on a given day. This number was scheduled to be increased to 3,000 per day in a short time thereafter, and Gen George C Kenney, commander of Far East Air Forces, predicted that 5,000 tons of explosives would be put on a single target, as compared with about 3,600 tons loosed on Germany.

Mining of the enemy's harbors had established a virtual state of blockade, and the B-29s had started to drop leaflets on the enemy's cities, naming the cities that were to be hit next and warning the populace to leave beforehand.

The road back from Pearl Harbor was a difficult one, but it was a job well done by all, both abroad and at home.

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