THE WAR - WEEK — Commentary on Current Events

Cracks In Japan's Armor Seen In Weaker Defense Against Allies

The critical weaknesses of Japan's once smooth-running military machine have become glaringly apparent in the wake of the recent raids from Allied carriers in the Central Pacific, writes Gordon Walker, in Christian Science Monitor. As pointed out by military authorities here they are:

1. That the Japanese fleet is now so unbalanced by the loss of medium and light warships that it won't be thrown into battle unless it is a last-ditch defence of the Empire.

2. That Japan's air forces have suffered such staggering losses that there are no longer enough planes— and skilled pilots — to go around.

3. That the enemy's submarine warfare—never a strong threat —is now virtually non-existent.

Wider Gaps to Come

These are the broad cracks in Japan's armor which will widen as the present push against Japan's outer perimeter gains momentum.

For several months the existence of these cracks in the Japanese armor has been the subject of conjecture. Now on the eve of new blows against Nippon, these weaknesses of the enemy are held to be a certainty.

In the past six weeks the fleet under Admiral Chester P. Nimitz has made these daring incursions into the Central Pacific without meeting opposition.

The first the raid on Marcus Island on September 1, might conceivably have been too great a surprise to permit the bringing up of enemy fleet units.

But on the following strikes against the Gilbert Islands and Wake the Japanese naval chieftains had ample opportunity to contest the bold move had they wanted a fleet engagement.

Fleet Tests Avoided

The feeling then began to grow that Japan's navy was suffering a greater handicap than formerly reckoned when it failed to make any large-scale effort to oppose the recent New Georgia drive by the Allies. It is well-known that the naval battles of the past 18 months have cut into the strength of the Japanese fleet, particularly cruisers and destroyers, by nearly a half.

And it was pointed out that Japan's naval shipbuilding program, though it was supposed to reach its peak this fall, is still not powerful enough to replace anything but a minor portion of these losses.

For this reason, and considering the surprising absence of the enemy's fleet recently in the Central Pacific, it is believed that Japan will continue to ignore any challenge and avoid heavy fleet engagements until such times as the United States Fleet tries to penetrate to the heart of the Empire.

Air Strength Depleted

In the air heavy Japanese losses have been even more noticeable. Over Marcus and the Gilberts there was no trace of air opposition, though these islands are major air bases.

At Wake some 30 Zeros managed to get into the air but not one got back to tell the story of vastly superior American naval aircraft and personnel which apparently was able to wipe out all opposition.

Allied pilots in all the Pacific theatres of war concur in bringing back reports of inexperienced Japanese pilots, who, they say, are indecisive and unfamiliar with air combat tactics, and extremely poor in the highly skilled art of air gunnery.

Like Japan's naval construction its air replacement program has been unable to keep up with the heavy losses.

More than 2,000 Japanese planes were shot down in the Solomons campaign which began last year and the rate of loss has been steadily mounting.

Submarine Action Slight

Deterioration of the enemy submarine warfare has not been so noticeable because Japan never has been very successful in an underwater campaign.

Whether this is because Japan has experimented too much with submarines instead of concentrating on the mass production of standard types, or whether it is that the Japanese are not physically suited for underwater pressures, the fact remains that the United States has suffered hardly at all from this threat.

Japan has used submarines with some degree of success in conjunction with its surface fleet in naval battles.

Opportunities for raiding on the long Pacific shipping lanes have been practically ignored. Occasionally a submarine will operate for a few days to some shipping terminal point, sinking or damaging one or two ships, but uncharted reefs probably have claimed as many of the Allied merchant ships as have torpedoes.

What is far more significant is the fact that during the course of thousands of miles of cruising through enemy waters in recent weeks not a single torpedo is known to have been fired at the powerful United States naval task forces.

All these weaknesses, it is pointed out here, do not mean that Japan is incapable of hitting back.

They do point to the fact that Japan realizes that in order to defend its inner holdings it must shortly give up many of its advanced bases.

Income tax and super tax on the largest incomes in Great Britain take 97½ per cent of the gross income. Only 80 people in Great Britain now have an income, after taxes are paid, of more than £6,000 (about $26,000).

An Old Story

Some recent campaign speeches by C.C.F. candidates for election call to mind a rhyme entitled "The Socialist," which appeared in an English journal many years ago. It runs:

Oh, he preached it from the housetop,
And he whispered it by stealth;
He wrote all kinds of stuff about
The awful curse of wealth.

Yes, he spouted it and shouted it
And made the rich man wince!
But an uncle left him money—
And he hasn't shouted since.
—The Printed Word.

Campaign In Africa Costly To Enemy

The campaign that began in North Africa last November 11 has cost the Axis more than 6,000 planes up to October 1, Allied Air Force Headquarters said recently.

Of that number, 3,411 were destroyed in the air. Nearly 2,600, mostly wrecked by bombing, were found on captured Axis airfields.

The Northwest African Air Force also reported sinking of 85 ships totalling 173,000 tons.

VOICE OF THE PRESS

GO TO THE WOODPECKER!

The woodpecker is a realist. With it every knock is a boost. If it looks under a fold of bark it is for due cause. In the spring, it excavates a tidy nest, but only in a softened tree. Even then it will hide the chips just in case predatory eyes were watching. Mostly, it says nothing—and saws wood.—Victoria Colonist.

CONSISTENT

Civilization is that state of affairs in which money is collected from women who make up their faces and tint their nails, in order to send missionaries abroad to teach the savages not to do the same.—Montreal Star.

—o—

MAROONED AT DOCTOR'S

State medicine is again proposed. The fellow who has lost his coupon when he goes to the doctor will be out of luck.
—Port Arthur News-Chronicle.

—o—

WARMER HERE

There is to be no heat this winter in any public building in Germany except hospitals. That should make most of us feel a lot better about the relatively painless fuel restrictions that are being imposed in this country.
—Brockville Recorder and Times.

—o—

STILL THREE FOES

We still have three enemies to overcome — Germany, Japan and Over-Confidence.
—Stratford Beacon-Herald.

—o—

"HENVERSATION"

It is claimed by a poultry expert that talking to hens will make them lay more eggs. We deem it wise to open the henversation with a pleasant cackle, followed by a crow about the work of the flock—and some reference to the dumb clucks in the yard next door
—Ottawa Citizen.

In Great Britain, the allowance per person fo shell eggs over the year averages approximately ½ egg per week.

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Fine Cut
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Are *YOU* going to be a kangaroo?

A kangaroo's life is pretty soft.

At an early age he gets a free ride everywhere.

When he grows up, he uses his long legs and small brain to take him hoppity-hop, hoppity-hop, anywhere he wants to go.

And he isn't going anywhere, anyway.

No true Canadian wants to be a kangaroo. In the first place, he isn't interested in getting a free ride at the expense of others. In the second, he knows that the war isn't going to be won by hoppity-hop. Thirdly, the average Canadian is going somewhere.

True Canadians are sharing in the cost of this war by buying Victory Bonds. They're helping themselves buy more Victory Bonds by cutting down hoppity-hop buying of needless luxuries. They're holding onto the Victory Bonds they do buy against that bright new world of tomorrow towards which we are all headed.

NOW — are you going to be a kangaroo?

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Buy a Victory Bond and Speed the Victory