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prisoners, including a handful of generals and Rommel's successor to the supreme command, were soon safe in the bag. In the great drive across the continent the New Zealand Division had played its part with great distinction and had taken its revenge for the defeats of Greece and Crete. By the end of May, the campaign was over. In the last stage the attitude of the French had been still rather uncertain, but at the end of November the French Navy scuttled most of the fleet, lying in Toulon, and a dangerous obstacle in the way of the invasion of the Continent was removed.

A little after the landings in Algiers and Morocco the situation in Russia began to improve. By the end of November, 1942, after a long and terrible siege, Stalingrad was relieved; and soon the whole of the German armies, except in the north, began their long retreat. By February Rostov had been retaken and in the following spring one by one in steady succession the key centres returned to Russian hands, beginning with Kharkov, Rjev, Viazma, and Orel. There was still a long way to go, but the Russians were now moving in the right direction: after two years of all-in warfare over a vast area, for the first time it began to look as if the Germans might be beaten.

In the Pacific also things had taken a turn for the better. There had been an uneasy pause after the Coral Sea battle of May, 1942—both sides had taken heavy punishment and were not in a position immediately to resume the fight. But Allied bases were being rapidly built up in Australia and New Zealand; in April, the Americans occupied New

Caledonia and in June the first wave of Marines had arrived in New Zealand; by August, 1942, they were ready to advance, a great fleet moved out from New Zealand waters, and the Marines were launched on their attack on Guadalcanal. It was tough going. A surprise attack at night destroyed a large part of their naval support and for a time they were in great danger, but they held on. The attack was taken very seriously by the Japanese high command and six full-scale attempts were made, between August and November, to bring reinforcements to the threatened Japanese forces. In the final naval encounter in mid-November, the Japanese suffered heavy losses and were forced to retire. In these engagements, according to American communiques, the Japs had lost 77 ships and the Americans no more than 15. By February, 1943, Guadalcanal was completely cleared of enemy troops; and in the following month the annihilation by Allied aircraft of a Japanese convoy of 12 transports and 10 warships off the coast of New Guinea prepared the way for a general offensive that opened in the following June. Australia and New Zealand were now able to regard themselves as fairly safe, and the Japanese hold on New Guinea (where the Australians had played a very important part) and the Solomons was about to be loosed. It was going to take time and trouble, but it was going to be well and truly done.

So ended another year, with North Africa cleared of the enemy, the Mediterranean once more wide open to Allied shipping, the great German retreat in

Russia begun, Japanese naval supremacy in the South Pacific vigorously challenged, if not ended, and American land forces firmly established in the Solomons. There was still in June, 1943, much to be done in the Pacific, but American strength was rapidly growing and big things could now be hoped for. In Europe, there was now a possibility of establishing the second front for which the Russians had long been asking.

PHASE 6— Beginning of the End

During these 14 months the air attack on Germany reaches its height, Italy is invaded, the Japanese retreat all over the South Pacific, the Germans are turned out of Russia and France.

(July, 1943 — September, 1944)

BY the middle of 1943 the outlook for Germany had very distinctly worsened. The submarine menace to Allied shipping was well under control—in the next three months no fewer than 90 U-boats were sunk—and the Allies were reported to be building up substantial reserves of shipping. An uninterrupted stream of supplies and men was pouring into the British Isles and North Africa and Russia. A vast force of far-ranging bombers and well-trained crews had been assembled and was ever increasing, and the systematic destruction of centres of German war-production had been begun. Nothing like it had ever been seen. For over a year now Germany had been familiar with 1000-plane raids, but now the scale

and number of raids had been increased; Cologne and Hamburg and the Ruhr were receiving special attention. In the third quarter of the year our planes were dropping 100 tons of bombs for every ton dropped by German planes on Britain. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were reported to be dead or missing. Berlin was now receiving special attention—5000 tons in a single week. In the second half of the year the weight of bombs dropped on Germany was more than 100,000 tons. All this was generally regarded as a preliminary to an invasion, and in fact the invasion of the Continent from the south had already begun.

The Italian Navy made no attempt to prevent the landings in Sicily that began on July 10, 1943, and the shore resistance at first was surprisingly light; hard fighting followed, but in a little over a month the island was in our hands. At the beginning of September the victorious 8th Army, followed by the 5th Army, crossed into Italy proper. Although the Italian Government at once capitulated, the Germans rushed reinforcements into the country and disarmed the Italian troops and put up a stiff fight just south of Rome. There was long and stiff resistance at Monte Cassino and an anxious moment after the landing at Anzio, but at last, 10 months after the landing in Sicily, the German line was broken and the 5th Army entered Rome. There was hard fighting ahead, but the situation in the whole Mediterranean area was now transformed. Good Italian airfields were now available for the bombing of Southern Germany and Austria and the Balkan countries, the guerilla forces of Greece and Yugoslavia could be easily supplied with arms, the Italian fleet had been handed over, and the Mediterranean was now an Allied sea.

During those same months the Russians had been going from victory to victory: in August they retook Taganrog, by the beginning of September the whole Donetz Basin had been cleared, at the end of the month they took Smolensk (which had been in German hands for two years), by the end of October they were rapidly advancing everywhere in the south, early in November Kiev was once again in their hands. All through the winter they harried the retreating Germans, inflicting terrible losses; at the beginning of January, 1944, they crossed the Polish border, two months later they entered Bessarabia and a few weeks later they were in Rumania. By the end of June it was clear that the Russians had the Nazis where they wanted them. It had taken three years, it had cost gigantic sacrifices, but it had been done.

All this time the herrenvolk of the Far East were meeting a heap of trouble. Beginning in June, 1943, the Allied offensive in New Guinea and the Solomons has been pushed on with determination. Great reserves of men and supplies had been built up, the Americans were superior on the sea and in the air, and now the advance began. By August they were clearing the Solomon Islands one by one and were



New Zealanders in the North African desert with weapons captured from the enemy.