



German prisoners in Normandy stare as General Montgomery passes in a jeep.

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threatening the large forces in New Guinea with extinction. In the second half of November the Japs were blasted out of the Gilberts and early in the New Year an attack was made on the Marshalls, shortly followed by a naval assault on the Carolines and the naval base of Truk. By the end of May, 1944, the New Guinea campaign was virtually over and the days of Japanese domination in the Pacific could be safely said to be numbered.

Meanwhile in the west preparations were nearing completion for the invasion of France. Great American air forces were now co-operating with the R.A.F. During the first six months of 1944 the bombing of German industrial centres reached a staggering height: on Berlin, Brunswick, Magdeburg, Frankfurt, Leipzig, and other cities, 2000 tons of bombs at a time were being dropped. Already in January it was announced that half of Berlin had been destroyed; in March, daylight raids and 12,000lb. block-busters were completing the havoc. In May 132,000 tons were dropped on Germany and occupied countries.

By June the softening process was over and on the 6th the invasion began: preceded by an attack of 10,000 aircraft, the great Anglo-American group of armies moved towards the beaches of Normandy. Opposition at the landings was unexpectedly light. British troops held the main German force off on the eastern flank, while the landing was consolidated, and the Americans prepared for a great encircling movement towards Paris. Some weeks of hard slogging at Caen, where Rommel threw in the full weight of his tanks and was held, and then the rout began. Early in September the capital was liberated and the invading armies swept on towards Belgium and were in a few days drawing near to the borders of the Reich,

During these nine months the Anglo-American armies cross the Rhine, the Russians invade the Balkans and cross Poland, the Americans land in the Philippines, and the war in Europe rushes to its end.

(September, 1944 - May, 1945)

FOR a short time it looked as if the war in Europe would end before Christmas, but the hope soon faded. A spectacular landing of airborne troops in Holland on a large scale was held up at Arnhem and Nijmegen in September, and more orthodox methods of making the Rhine crossings had to be employed. While the Allies were building up for a big offensive, Rundstedt assembled his armour and made a daring and very alarming thrust towards Liege and Antwerp; but this was held, and the Allied advance was resumed. By the end of March, Cologne and the West bank was in our hands. The first crossing was made by the Americans at Remagen; not long afterwards the British crossed south of Cologne; preceded by bombing on an unheard-of scale, armoured columns were pushed across the river in great strength, pinched off the Ruhr, and swept over the great northern plain towards Bremen, Hamburg, and Berlin.

During this last period there was little advance on the Italian front, but in the East the Russians were making great progress; one group of armies swept down into the Balkans through Rumania; in September they had occupied Bulgaria, and in the following month they entered Yugoslavia and were battering at the gates of Belgrade. There was hard fighting in Hungary and on the borders of Austria; but nothing stopped the Russian armies and by April of the following year Vienna was in their hands. Another group of armies to the north pushed up through Finland, and by the end of the year

had entered Norway; another pushed back large German forces in the Baltic States to the edge of the sea; another drove towards Czechoslovakia; another penned down the Germans in Danzig and Königsberg; and another thrust straight ahead towards Berlin. In a great offensive at the beginning of the New Year Warsaw, Cracow, Lodz, and a steady succession of other cities fell into their hands, until the Red armies poured across the Oder into the Reich.

In the Pacific area the same sensational progress was being made. While Anglo-Indian forces were moving down towards Mandalay and the main strength of the British Fleet was moving towards the East, the Americans were moving from island to island towards the Philippines and Japan. Large forces landed at the end of October on the island of Leyte and the invasion of the Philippines had begun. One Japanese relief convoy after another was destroyed, Mindoro and Luzon were occupied, and then the Americans turned their forces northwards towards Japan itself.

In May the end came in Italy and Germany. There still remained much to do in the East, but the main battle was over. The German assault on civilisation had failed.



In Germany: Mr. Churchill, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, Major-General Alvin C. Gilliam, and "Monty" outside the entrance to the Citadel in Jülich

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, MAY 11