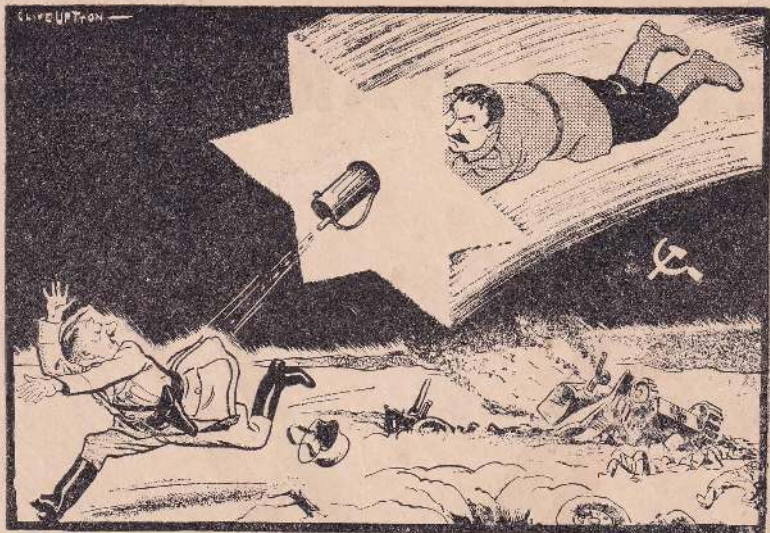


CEYLON WAR FRONT



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SHOOTING STAR.



DRIFTING

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THE WORK OF THE CEYLON R. N. V. R.

By A SUB-LIEUTENANT.

THE sixth anniversary of the Ceylon R. N. V. R. has recently passed. My memory takes me back to the early days of the Ceylon Naval Volunteer Force as it was called then. It consisted of a handful of officers and twenty-eight signalmen-gunners. Of these original twenty-eight, ten are today Commissioned Officers including myself, the rest are Petty Officers or Leading Rates.

Before the war we used to meet in the evenings after a hard day's work in office for signalling exercise, boat pulling and to learn how to make the various knots and splices and box the compass. Sunday morning used to be a great day as there was so much time for boat pulling and for wrestling with the intricacies of mine-sweeping. At times we put to sea at noon on Saturdays for an exercise sweep. Invariably everything went wrong. The seas were rough, the sweep would not run, the wires would part, the signal flags were not where they should have been and although everyone admitted it was good fun, they were happiest on the way back to harbour. We had an Officer Instructor and a Warrant Officer, both R. N. retired, to give us instruction and the necessary R. N. background. The Officer Instructor is no longer with us. Many a story is related

of him. One rating had the misfortune to be seen by him in plain clothes while on leave clad in grey flannels and a sports coat. "What the ruddy hell are you doing in these togs?" he asked. "You look like Harry Tate, third rate comedian". This rating among other things happened to be a first rate entertainer and was very hurt. He later went to his Divisional Officer and said, "Excuse me, Sir, but do I look like Harry Tate, third rate comedian?"

Peace-time manoeuvres at Trincomalee were also very interesting. I remember standing on the Town pier for six hours at night not daring to smoke a cigarette watching closely for enemy landings. We were playing at war. I didn't imagine that we would be really at war before the year was out.

On September 2, 1939, the whole Force was mobilized. All civil attachments were cast aside and we went bang into a job which we knew little about and did it. It was hard work at the start. We used to sail before daylight and sweep the channel inwards and outwards until late in the afternoons. The seas were at their worst. In harbour we were fully engaged in learning the ship, checking stores and trying to

master the use of the ships armament and other equipment. We were new to Naval customs and Naval jargon. At the start some thought that "streaming the log" meant throwing the log-book overboard and that an Azimuth mirror was a type of shaving mirror. A signalman once raced aft and shouted "let go forward".

Most of us took the sea well I must say. There was however one difficult case of marine prostration. When the Captain sent for him he groaned, "Go away. Even if God calls me I'm not going".

We were also called upon very often to tow a Battle practice target for H. M. ships to fire at. The target was as big as our tug if not bigger, and with a high wind and sea this was a tricky business. More than once shells dropped uncomfortably close to us. It was a great pride to work for H. M. ships or with H. M. ships as we sometimes did.

At the start of the war we manned an H. M. trawler and a Port Commission tug. In 1940 the Ceylon Government purchased a converted armed trawler from the United Kingdom. The C. N. V. F. officers and crew to man this vessel travelled to Port Said in order to take delivery of her and brought the vessel from there to Colombo in April, 1940. In 1941 the Admiralty lent us two converted whalers and we were entrusted with patrol duties.

Day and night we were on patrol searching hard for enemy submarines. Our ships were equipped to fight submarines and though we looked forward to meeting them we were not lucky. Towards the end of 1942 C. N. V. F. vessels began to undertake escort duties. Occasionally we get the opportunity of making ocean voyages to light-houses in the Indian Ocean taking relief lightkeepers and provisions. This pleasant deviation from our normal duties is welcomed.

Recently one of our ships had occasion to cross the line, that is to say, the equator. Now there is an old Naval custom that is observed when this happens. Father Neptune and all his satellities come aboard **Miranda.** and any of the crew who have not crossed the line before are placed in a chair, shaved with a large wooden razor and tipped into a canvas bath of sea water. Father Neptune then gives them certificates to say that they have had the christening. The ceremony was observed on board our ship with one slight deviation or shall I say improvement. Father Neptune was attended by Carmen Miranda and two boats that happened to be on board painted in red and green. I cannot describe how Carmen was clad. All I can say was that her contours were slightly exaggerated,



A Rating in Ceylon's Navy.

and that she looked "deadly" as our C. R. N. V. R. ratings would say.

The Easter air raid of 1942 was the time we received our baptism of fire. I was at sea at that time in one of our small vessels on patrol. I had done the middle watch and came up on deck in the morning. The bright sunshine hurt my eyes. In a flash the sky was full of roaring planes. It was hard to tell which was which and I went scampering up to the bridge for orders to open fire. A Jap plane swooped down on us and bullets were whistling all over. We blazed away with whatever armament we had. The second time we were ready for him. Luckily there were no casualties but we later found bullet holes in the ventilators, bulk-heads and even on the bridge. The whole crew displayed great calm and presence of mind.

Another of our vessels at the time of the air raid went along-side a burning vessel in the harbour while bombs were falling. Parties were placed on board the burning ship and were successful in removing ammunition from her gun platforms to places of safety. During the raid on Trincomalee C. N. V. F. personnel were fully occupied in passing signals throughout the raid. The conduct of the Signalmen at this exposed position was most commendable. One officer and one rating were slightly injured by a bomb which

fell in the dockyard area. Other bombs fell near the C. N. V. F. barracks there without however causing casualties or damage.

In several cases we were first on the scene after hostile action against Merchant shipping. Here is the version of the Commanding Officer of one of our ships of one such incident. "At midnight received orders to sail forthwith. Awful night. Black as pitch and pelting rain. I went on board the Depot ship for detailed orders and returned at once to get under way. Cleared the harbour. All obstacles missed by the grace of God. We had embarked a Surgeon-Lieutenant and a Sick Bay Petty Officer. Outside we hit a packet. The visitors were most awe-inspired. Anyhow, we battled on against head-wind and sea for the remainder of the night, and all the following day until 22.30 when we reached the estimated position. Decided to turn East. Four minutes afterwards sighted and recovered what proved to be the copper tank of a large lifeboat. We were on the correct trail. Between one and two in the morning the keen eye of the Officer of the Watch spotted a faint flashing light to the South. Went to "action stations" and increased to full speed. I made a very watchful approach, and half an hour later switched on an Aldis light and saw a lifeboat. We took on board the second mate, fourth Engineer and eleven men. They

had been bailing continuously. The boat splintered by shrapnel half filled with water even while the men were being disembarked. One of them had a broken leg. In the evening received orders to return and set course for home. Made a good land-fall at dawn and was I pleased or was I ? ”

In October, 1943, the Force was accepted by the Admiralty and became the Ceylon Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. It is said that the Royal Indian

Twenty-fold. Navy has increased tenfold. The C. N. V. R. has increased twenty-fold. Every single officer and rating who joined the Force since its inception has volunteered for General Service with the R. N. anywhere in the world. The Force is expanding daily. We are commissioning bigger and better ships and more men are wanted. A number of sentry posts all over

Colombo are manned by our ratings. For the more ambitious and intelligent ratings openings are available for specialization in Signals, Wireless Telegraphy, Gunnery, Submarine detection and a variety of harbour defence duties. We have also a Coders branch for those who prefer this. Both officers and men are frequently sent to Bombay for courses. Seamen Lascars and Stokers with experience are also required. I saw recently the results of the S. S. C. and Matriculation examinations published in the papers. Some of the successful candidates will no doubt be continuing their education which it will not be desirable to interrupt, but others may be looking for employment and the Ceylon R. N. V. R. offers a fine opening. Well educated young men are needed for this service although we consider every case.

PRICE CONTROL (FOOD)

THE general public knows control from one end, the Customer's end. In this article an attempt is made to give some insight into the matter from the other end—the Controller's.

Price Control in Ceylon is administered by what is known as

the direct method. The Controller of Prices—and this term includes both Price Controllers and all their Deputies and Assistants is empowered by law to fix a maximum price for the sale of any commodity which in his opinion is or is likely to be in short supply, or in respect of which he considers

there has been an unreasonable increase in price. In deciding whether or not a commodity should be price controlled he must not however lose sight of the fact that increase of production of certain foodstuffs is all important in wartime, and by far the greatest inducement to increase production is the possibility of making large profits. In such cases he may not decide a price is unreasonable until it is very considerably higher than in pre-war times. This particularly applies in the case of such locally-produced foodstuffs as eggs, milk, fruit and vegetables. With imported foodstuffs the ruling factor—but by no means, as I shall explain later, the only factor—must obviously be the landed cost in Ceylon. Prices can be fixed to operate in one area only (*e.g.*, Colombo) or for the whole of Ceylon; though in the former case the Controller at once sends details to his deputies in the provinces and requests them to fix prices for their areas based on the Colombo prices.

How is the fixed price determined? This is no simple matter.

The public must be adequately protected, but on the other hand full consideration must be given to the very great difficulties experienced by merchants in wartime who are trying to make a living in difficult circumstances with a very much reduced turnover

of goods which are only obtained or produced with difficulty and at considerable expense. The Controller must study and reconcile the interests of both parties; from experience he has a good working knowledge of market conditions; his inspectors interview merchants in their shops and offices, officials at the Customs and other public offices, and furnish reports; conferences of those particularly interested are frequently called and different view points brought up for discussion. The Controller has, of course, the power to call for and examine any trade documents relating to food, but in practice he finds that most of the principal merchants are anxious to supply him with the information he requires.

I can personally say how much I appreciate their assistance, and I consider that the ready offer of expert advice and technical information to Government authorities is one of the most useful ways in which merchants can perform public service in wartime.

Price Orders have to be drafted with particular care to ensure that

they are as comprehensive as possible, allowing for every contingency and leave no doubt in the minds of traders and customers alike as to what are their legal rights and obligations. A misplaced comma in a Price Order

has caused an otherwise cast iron prosecution to fail. In some cases a retail price only is fixed: at other times it is necessary to fix an importer's or producer's price, a wholesale price and a retail price allowing a reasonable profit for each transaction. Forms of obligatory receipts are also laid down together with conditions of sale such as non-adulteration, conditional sales, separate stalls and conspicuous display of public notices.

As in the case of all offences against the law, enforcement is mainly a matter for the police, and the Inspector-General is conducting a vigorous campaign against profiteers. A Price Control Bureau has been set up in Colombo Police Headquarters under an Assistant Superintendent who is an expert on enforcement problems and is responsible for the general organization of enforcement throughout the Provinces and advising on difficult cases. One of the most important duties of this officer is to register returns of stores and stocks of price-controlled articles (a legal requirement) and convey the information to the Price Control authorities immediately concerned. The bazaar areas of Pettah and Maradana, where the bulk of trade in the commoner foodstuffs is handled, are supervised by another Assistant Superintendent who has a special office with a staff trained in price control matters on the spot.

In addition to the work done by the police, the Controller of Prices (Food) has a staff of **Information.** nearly 100 inspectors employed in preventing food and price control offences and assisting traders and the general public with information on the subject. Most of these inspectors are posted throughout the Island working under Deputy Controllers of Prices in charge of Districts, but a dozen or so are always stationed in Colombo working from the Head Office or from the special P. C. Information Office situated next door to the Price Control Station in the bazaar area of the Pettah. As the name suggests, this office is mainly concerned with the collection and dissemination of information on food and price control matters. The movement of stocks of foodstuffs are followed, shops are constantly visited and books and stores inspected, arrivals of cargoes in the Port are noted, and frequent patrols are sent out to watch transactions and detect offences in the principal city markets. Traders and members of the public obtain useful information from this office and valuable reports are sent to the Head Office of the Controller.

The Controller and his Deputies and Assistants must devote a considerable portion of **Constant** their time in an examination of cases and review **Battle.** of the law. A constant battle is being waged between the

profiteers who are quick to detect and take advantage of loop holes in the law, and the Price Control authorities who must spot these loop holes and have them immediately closed by redrafting of Price Orders or amendment or additions to regulations. We obtain considerable assistance in these duties from an officer of the Attorney-General's Department who has been assigned the task of advising in matters of Food and Price Control law and conducting the more difficult cases in court.

One of the most important duties of the Controller is to make sure that the prices he fixes secure immediate and wide publicity. This is not a simple matter as in most cases different prices are fixed for separate districts and are frequently revised and varied.

The popular idea that printed lists of all fixed prices should at all times be readily available to any member of the public who wanted one would not I fear be practicable as such a document if comprehensive would be difficult to follow and would have to be printed in such large numbers and republished so frequently with up-to-date amendments that the capacity of our already overworked Press would not be equal to the task.

Publicity is achieved by the following methods. First, and most important, every Price Order must be published in full in the

Government Gazette which is subscribed to by most of the principal merchants who doubtless arrange to have all notices dealing with prices carefully noted by those of their employees concerned and filed for easy reference.

Once a week the Controller publishes in all the principal newspapers the maximum prices for Colombo or for the Island as a whole fixed by him in the course of the week. Once a month he publishes in similar manner a notice giving the current maximum prices of all important controlled foodstuffs. When a Deputy Price Controller fixes a price for his District he usually has leaflets giving details of the Order printed locally for distribution to traders and others concerned in the District.

The Price Control Bureau at Colombo Police Headquarters sends out details of Price Orders to police stations throughout the Island and each Price Control Inspector working in a chief headman's division receives direct from the Government Printer a copy of that part of the *Government Gazette* which deals with prices. So if a member of the public requires to know the fixed price of any commodity and has missed the newspaper notices, he can apply to the local police, the Price Control Inspector in his area, the local Kacheheri, or if in Colombo,

by telephone to the Price Control Information Office at Dam street.

Lord Woolton, the former British Food Minister, put the following very pertinent question to the British Public: "It takes two to make a Black Market—are you one?" I have so far attempted to show you something of what Government is doing to defeat one of these Black Market parties, but the history of Price Control from the time of the Roman Empire has shown that even the death penalty and the most rigorous action by Government authorities are inadequate to ensure a watertight and completely effective control.

It is not possible to vanquish one party to the Black Market, unless the other party, that is the purchaser, is made an ally and to enable this alliance to be formed it is essential that the general public should appreciate the urgent need for a control, and resolve to give their whole-hearted co-operation to the authorities in making control effective.

As long as the average citizen is prepared to pay an exorbitant price provided he gets the goods he requires, there will always be found many traders who will only sell at exorbitant prices, no matter what laws are passed, what staff employed and what active enforcement measures are taken by the authorities. Propaganda and common sense have convinced most people of the need for Price

Control in wartime, but how few are the citizens who are sufficiently strong minded to play the part assigned to them in enforcing control.

In Price Control every member of the public should be a self-constituted Police-man. He should not only refuse to pay a cent more than the controlled price for any article, and persuade his friends and relations to do likewise, but he should refuse to tolerate illegal sales in his presence. Few tradesmen would have the moral courage to overcharge or make a conditional sale in public if every person in or near his shop at the time called him a rogue and told him to act honestly. Any customer has the legal right to insist on being given a written receipt if he thinks he is being swindled in the purchase of a price-controlled article, and he should also see that an accurate price list is exhibited for public inspection in a prominent position. He should at once report to the police or local Price Control authorities any cases of overcharging, refusal to give receipts, absence of price lists, &c., which he encounters, and should be prepared to give evidence in court if necessary. Much assistance in this way has already been given by the public, but it should be borne in mind that the success or failure of Price Control in Ceylon depends largely on the readiness of the general public to play their part.

HITLERISM AND HISTORY

THE verdict of the historian is not always right. His judgments are sometimes upset in later ages and reversed by the vast appeal court of the learned opinions of nations and peoples far removed from the times and personalities recorded.

Yet there are general conclusions that crystalize into proverb and slide into epigram. So that when a historian said that "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely", he made a statement that will outlive governments and dynasties.

Hitlerism is absolute power corrupting absolutely. It professes to speak for the German people but the German people have no free voice in the affairs of their country; they are like dumb driven cattle herded together and jostled around by sinister "cowboys" with machine guns at the ready. They have lost the chance to speak out, they can do so now only at the price of their lives.

If the German people cannot speak their opinions it follows naturally that the German Press cannot write as it pleases. In the democracies the Press occupies a privileged position. The strategy, the policy and the personalities of both Britain and America have been repeatedly criticized and sometimes with bitterness. This has been taken seriously but not with pique. No one has been sent to a

concentration camp for writing in an uncomplimentary manner about the leaders of the Government. On the contrary Pressmen are invited to conferences where they are at liberty to ask questions at will. If sometimes a few questions are not answered it is solely due to the fact that in time of war reasons of security do not permit the publication of information that will be of value to the enemy.

The Press in Hitler's Germany, however, has no such liberty. It cannot publish any opinions except specially prepared communiques emanating

Mental Black-out. from the Propaganda Bureau of the German Reich and statements which are approved by the Government. Here is an example of absolute power enjoyed by the dominant people who control the Government. Corruption not only follows but actually precedes such a position. Only a Government already corrupt can bring to bear on the Press and people the burden of a mental black-out so total as that which oppresses Germany.

Let us imagine for a moment the well-known under-world of great western cities so well portrayed for us in a certain type of film. If, for instance, a gang of these men accomplished a *coup d'état* and wrested the key positions of power in a democratic country

what would they have to do if they were to continue in power for any length of time?

Firstly they would "bump off" (in true gangster style) the guardians of liberty in that country, the police, military, and political chiefs who would be up in arms against them. Then they would start a reign of terror so as to break the spirit of those who might dare denounce them. They would justify in some way the killings they had ordered; and to do that they would invent some convincing, or at least plausible story about the activities of those who had been killed. The Press would be carefully censored to prevent a single adverse comment.

Quick recognition of "appreciation" would follow and jobs in the public services would go to the converts to the new "message".

Regimented Horror.

Houses and individuals would be watched by secret police; high positions would go to the traitors of their country's freedom and the freedom of their fellows; life would become a regimented horror and the entire country a concentration camp.

It is only under these conditions that it would be possible for a gangster regime to continue in power. If free criticism and expressions of opinion were allowed no such hegemony would be possible. There would be agitation against the illegality of proceedings, the wisdom of policies and the

choice of leaders. There would be demands for a general election in which the new gang would find no favour.

This is not an amusing or a crazy analogy. These things actually happened in Germany. The National Socialists it is true, began as a political party, but all along it was planned and organized for a coup and seizure of power. Great craft and much guile were employed to bring about the necessary conditions for the final blow. Power passed into the hands of Hitler and his henchmen and power soon corrupted absolutely. The word "Democracy" became a cruel reminder of freedom once enjoyed but no longer real.

To appease the growing wrath of the common people Hitler found outlets for their energy and themes for their thoughts. He gave them the sadistic pleasure of baiting the Jews. And when that had, after a time, no attractions, he led them into war.

War is an old established way of leading a dissatisfied people up the garden path. Tyrants have used it throughout history. When a people complain about domestic policies, wise, heartless tyranny gives them WAR! When victories follow there may be temporary elation, but the price of war must be paid in human lives and human misery. The German people have paid dearly for this already and the purchase price is not yet fully paid.

Absolute power for Hitler and his gunmen will bring destruction on themselves and the German people they have misled. Nothing can stop this ; it is the logical historical end.

History will record another attempt to stamp out the will of a people and the democratic way of life, a way we have followed in the

British Commonwealth, a way of equal opportunity and equal rights. History will link Hitler with those who played with a nation's will and civilization's liberty. He will be also linked with the megalomania which has induced more than one adventurer to attempt the conquest of the world.

MESSAGE OF SAVING

LARGE numbers of people are now fully convinced of the need to save. The Savings Movement has progressed, and there are today 60 Savings Committees in the island, mostly under the Chairmanship of Government officials. These Committees work in their areas, advertising the movement and generally encouraging people to save all they can spare.

The schools have given great strength to the movement. There are 2,752 Savings Groups formed in schools.

323 Savings Groups have been formed in Government Departments, 54 in Mercantile Offices, and 70 in estates.

A little over 50 million rupees have now been invested by the Ceylon public in Government Loans and Savings Certificates.

There are still, however, many people who have not acquired the saving habit. It cannot be for lack of opportunity as Savings Certificates can be bought at any Post Office or Kachcheri and the purchase value of a Five rupee Certificate is only Rs. 4.25. The best course for the average person is to form Groups in their offices, and thus buy monthly Certificates. The Commissioner War Savings Movement, Colombo, will be pleased to supply any detailed information to anyone interested.

Buy Savings Certificates and Government War Loans.

FOOD FRONT



The onion harvest gathered at the Mawanella Rural School.

THIS photograph was taken at the Mawanella Rural School which had a bumper onion harvest recently.

Dr. W. R. C. Paul, the Divisional Agricultural Officer in charge of Food Production, states that from one pound of onions planted he obtained a yield of 40 pounds. But most of the schools obtained

only about 6 pounds. The gulf can be bridged by scientific methods. Strict adherence to the methods worked out by the Agricultural Department will bring welcome results.

There is to be an island-wide competition among the schools and awards of nearly 312 medals are to be made.

The first fifty schools which produce food to a value of Rs. 500 will be given these awards.

Medals are also to be given to pupils who assist in food cultivation who have the largest sums to their credit either in the Post Office Savings Bank or in War Savings Certificates.

Twelve medals are to be awarded to Inspectors of Schools who achieve the best results.

There are 6,000 Rural Schools, and if each school produced its

quota of food, *i.e.*, to the value of Rs. 500, there would be a total production to the value of Rs. 3 million for the year. Not only schools, but every individual household has a duty to the country. There should be hardly anyone who could honestly say he or she had no time to plant even one bed of onions, bandakka, or any other vegetable. If everyone played a part, however small, the total combined result would be mighty and would benefit the entire nation.

Grow more Food.

MODEL V. V. C.

THE Victory Volunteer Centres continue to do good work. But one Centre has been specially commended by an officer who inspected a number of them recently.

This Centre, he reports, is a model, and is situated in an ideal spot. The Convener has spent about Rs. 500 on this V. V. C. He gets several daily newspapers for the benefit of those who frequent the Centre. He has also gifted furniture and boards for putting up posters sent by the

Department. The report says that everything was neat and tidy at this Centre.

Apart from this much good work has been done. The Centre has fostered the food drive and the War Savings Movement in addition to disseminating correct news about the war. Publicity on matters concerning public health has also been given. The people in the area appreciate the keenness of the Convener and are readily co-operating with him.

THE BREACH IN THE JAPANESE FORTRESS

BY WALTER LUCAS.

NO two events have had a greater impact upon Japanese strategy in the Pacific war than the Russian victory at Stalingrad and the Allied triumph in North Africa. Whatever may be the degree of military co-operation between Berlin and Tokyo, there is one thing certain: the fortunes of war in Europe have a direct effect upon Japanese thinking and planning.

When the Japanese struck on December 7, 1941, the general war situation looked pretty good for the Axis. With the Germans deep in the Caucasus and the British standing precariously at bay in the Middle East, the Japanese must have calculated that the war in Europe was bound to end in a victory for the Nazis, or at worst in a stalemate. In either case the Pacific was more or less clear for unchecked Japanese depredations. As things then stood, Japan could acquire an empire at a minimum cost and would have ample time to consolidate and exploit it.

With first the German disaster at Stalingrad and then the final crushing defeat of the German armies in Tunisia, the whole aspect of the global war changed. Looked at from Tokyo, an Axis defeat became, for the first time, a probability. As far as the Pacific

was concerned, it meant that within a reasonable space of time the whole weight of the Allied military forces would be turned upon Japan. No longer was it possible to look at the future as a period of more or less leisurely expansion and consolidation.

It became immediately necessary to call a halt to conquest and throw a powerful fortified ring around the newly-acquired empire so that when the Allied assault came it might either fail or be so costly as to make negotiation a probability.

This defensive line was to run from the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean to Kiska in the Aleutians. It included the Netherlands Indies, Timor, New Guinea, New Britain, with a protective spur pushing south in the Solomons, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. On paper this was a formidable bastion and was supported at convenient intervals by important bases such as Singapore, Sourabaya, Rabaul, Truk, and a score of heavily-defended atolls in the Central Pacific. It was also protected by an interlocking system of airfields.

To attack this line the Allies would have had to launch

amphibious operations of great complexity, since there were no airfields within fighter range of the enemy positions and everywhere hundreds of miles of open sea had to be crossed before the Japs could be got at.

All this would have been very well if the Japanese had not allowed their defenses to be breached, almost by default, in New Guinea. The key to the whole of the Southwest Pacific area is the great natural harbour and potential airfield at Milne Bay on the south-eastern tip of Papua.

In May, 1942, the Japanese prepared a formidable amphibian force to capture Port Moresby and possibly strike at Australia's east coast. This fleet faint-heartedly turned back after suffering some casualties in contact with very much weaker allied naval units. Even so, Milne Bay and the strategically-placed Probiand and Woodlark Islands were still open to occupation.

When the enemy made an abortive attempt to seize Milne Bay in September, 1942, it was already two months too late.

From that point, which also marked the capture of Guadalcanal airfield, the Japanese defensive line in the Rabaul area was definitely dented.

Now 16 months later the whole of the enemy's position in the South-west Pacific has almost com-

pletely crumbled. With the elimination of the Japanese forces at Buna and Guadalcanal in the early part of 1943 the enemy was compelled to change over to a defensive strategy. Since then there have been few signs of any enemy counteroffensive reaction to our forward moves.

From time to time solemn warnings of a great massing of Japanese land, naval and air forces for offensive action have been issued from responsible Allied sources. But thus far there has been little to back them up.

Since the midsummer of 1943 the Japanese have been steadily in retreat in the South-west Pacific. Several thousand men were sacrificed at Munda and around Salamaua to delay our advance. A few thousand more were left to their doom at Finschhafen and Bougainville for the same purpose. Elsewhere at the Trobriand and Woodlark Islands, at Lae and Mono we have struck with massive force against thin air. At no time in six months has the weight of Japanese naval or air strength fallen upon our advancing columns.

The fact is that the Japanese do not mind how many men they condemn to die in the Pacific jungles, just so long as they can postpone the evil hour of decision, since at this stage of the war they cannot afford to risk a major defeat by air or sea.

The position in the European war and America's swift recovery from initial defeat, as well as local reverses, have upset the whole of Tokyo's planning and have made a new strategy essential. The writing on the wall is blackening both on the eastern and western horizons. With the losses in planes and ships which the Japanese have suffered since Pearl Harbour, they can no longer hold in sufficient strength the whole of the immense defensive perimeter which they tried to set around their conquests.

If Japan is still to challenge us successfully she must fall back upon a shorter line, in any case, when New Guinea is reconquered, which is now just a matter of time, her holdings in the Dutch islands north of Australia will be seriously outflanked and consequently will be difficult, if not impossible, to hold.

While the enemy is sacrificing a few more thousand troops to delay us in the Rabaul area, there seems every indication that they are now preparing for their last stand on a line north of the Equator, anchored at one end at Camranh Bay in Indo-China and at the other on the myriad highly fortified atolls in the Marshall Islands.

Allied Power Mounts.

Between these two points they will fight in North Borneo, the Philippines, in the Carolines, at Truk, 800 miles north of Rabaul.

This will involve the surrender after local resistance of Malaya, Burma, the N. E. I.; but then in the present circumstances there is not much else they can do.

This strategy has been forced upon the Japanese by the inexorable logic of war. There is one thing the enemy at this stage cannot afford to do and that is to split their reduced naval and air strength, thereby risking a piecemeal defeat, in an endeavour to hold all the swag they have grabbed.

They are now facing an immense accumulation of power under the command of Admiral Chester Nimitz and Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten. Their present line is already badly breached in New Guinea and the Aleutians and as it now stands it is too long for their existing resources. There is therefore no alternative but to contract, and behind a strategically placed and strongly fortified parapet of jungle and open sea try to beat back the mounting Allied attack or make it so expensive that there might be some reasonable hope for talk of negotiation.

(From "*The Christian Science Monitor*").

are **YOU** one?

"It takes two to make a Black-Market, are **YOU** one ?" these words of Lord Woolton, the former Minister for Food in Britain, are quoted by the writer of the article on Price Control in this issue.

That is a very pertinent question and the more often it is repeated and honestly answered by all of us the better for the country.

Of course the person who asks must be able to have a clear conscience in the matter, but the only way by which the Black-Market pest can be completely killed is for an ever-increasing number of conscientious citizens to determine that on no account will they buy anything at a price even one cent over the controlled, legal price.

Let us then resolve to sacrifice our personal comfort if at times we cannot buy an article except by succumbing to the whispered temptation.....
"It can be bought in the Black-Market."

Every time we buy something above the controlled price we put up the price for those that come after us, and also for ourselves.

Let each one tell himself or herself, "It takes two to make a Black-Market, but *I won't be one* . . ."