

~~During~~ The first six months of the Pacific War, following Japan's surprise attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbour, were characterised by Japan's ~~stea~~ rapid advance through South-East Asia & the Pacific; Hong Kong, Burma, Malaya & the Philippines all fell in half the time

envisaged by military planners, ensuring Japan maintained a dominant strategic position in 1942. ~~The~~ Japan's initial victories were a testament to its preparedness compared to the poorly trained & inexperienced Allied forces who at first underestimated the Japanese. However, by mid 1942 Japan began to suffer setbacks at

The hands of the Allied counter-offensive from which she could not recover.

Thus, Japan's defeat in 1945 was a combination of its over-extension of its occupied territories, ~~the~~ American's decision to drop the atomic bomb & the way in which the conflict became a war of attrition in which Japan's limited industrial capacity could not contend with that of the US juggernaut.

A difficulty which Japan faced on its prosecution of the war & which contributed to its defeat in 1945 was its finite industrial capacity; ~~it~~ it could not replace the number of ships & aircraft it was losing. Japanese shipyards

could not manufacture at the same rate as American shipyards, therefore the Allied forces could simply overwhelm the Japanese with the sheer amount of resources available to them especially considering that the industries of America's economic boom in the 1920s had all turned towards the war effort. As early as 1939, Roosevelt had been prescient enough to create the create for putting the US on a wartime footing for when the time came. Therefore whilst US industry developed into a juggernaut, Japan struggled ~~to replenish~~ with its inferior capacity to replenish & regenerate the ships &

aircraft it was losing; evidence of which is seen in the fact that at no point during the war ~~and~~ was Japan's GDP more than 10% of the US. Furthermore, whilst the US managed to manufacture 100,000 aircraft & 100 aircraft carriers during the war, Japan only managed to produce 7 aircraft carriers. Thus, it was with such an inferior industrial capacity that Japan lost its dominant strategic position in 1942.

Another difficulty Japan ~~face~~ faced was the administration of its over-extended acquired territories. As a result of Japan's unprecedented victories in ~~the~~ late 1941 & early

1942, her supply lines grew too long & became susceptible to Allied interference which broke down Japan's logistics, inflicting losses from which Japan could not recover. Furthermore, Allied submarine warfare directed not only against Japanese warships but also merchant fleets strangled Japan's imports of vital resources such as oil; disabling her capacity to produce the materials necessary for continuing the war, thereby contributing to her defeat in 1945. The extent of the damage inflicted by Allied submarine warfare is demonstrated in the fact that of all naval tonnage

Sunk during the war, S17 was a result of Allied submarine action.

The defeat of Japan in 1945 was also a result of progress in Allied military strategy & Japan's ~~so~~ zealous self-assuredness. Japan seriously ~~and~~ underestimated America's willingness to exact revenge for Pearl Harbour & believed that the first six months of steady defeats would compel America ~~into~~ to end the war ~~at peace~~. However, mid-1942 ~~was~~ was the extent of Japan's dominant strategic position in 1942 as Allied military plans developed further & all battles that followed concluded in either stalemate or

a decline in Japanese power in the Pacific, the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942 was the first engagement that saw the execution of ~~to~~ carrier-based attacks.

Though it was not an ~~overwhelming~~ ~~offensive~~ ~~over~~ victory & the result was indecisive, its significance lay in the fact that it was the first time in which Japan simply did not win. Furthermore, the battle proved to be a psychologically important boost for US troops.

Thus the Battle of the Coral Sea set the stage for the Battle of Midway one month later & represented the last full-scale attempt by Japan to expand her power to the

South by direct amphibious assault.

The Battle of Midway, though not an overwhelming ~~strategic~~ success for the US was crucial in Japan's defeat as the US Navy managed to irreparably cripple the Japanese fleet so that never again would it pose a threat to the US in the Pacific.

It was a defeat from which Japan never recovered because where the US could afford to base an aircraft carrier, Japan could not, recognition of which is evidenced in the fact that the Japanese government was compelled to hide the results of Midway, from the civilian population.

What had given the Allies an advantage at the Battle of Midway & continued to be of benefit to them ~~the~~ throughout the war, contributing to Japan's defeat, was the breaking of the Japanese diplomatic code by US ULTRA intelligence. Thus, the Battle of Midway levelled against the Japanese a series of deficits whose cumulative effect would become increasingly debilitating as she faced heavier commitments in the New Guinea campaign.

The New Guinea campaign proved significant in Japan's defeat in 1945 as it marked the first time Japan did not win on land, emphasising the ~~consequence~~

consequences of ~~her~~ ^{Japan's} overextension of its armed forces. By 1942, ~~the~~ it was becoming obvious that the war in Europe was almost over & the US could now focus on the war in the Pacific. Thus, under Douglas MacArthur, the Allies embarked on an "island-hopping" in which they circumvented Japanese strongholds in favour of islands that were of strategic importance. The purpose of island-hopping was that such islands would allow the US to launch more effective attacks on the ~~Japan~~ as it was believed that the defeat of Japan was inextricably bound up with the capture of the Japanese home islands.

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* such as Saipan, Tarawa, Okinawa & Iwojima

The Allies' successful capture of crucial* islands was a result of the fact that at this point in time Japan was in no position to retaliate due to non-existent manpower & the incapacity to replenish & replace ~~the~~ lost war materials. The extent to which the US was able to exacerbate Japan's inability to supply her armed forces, thereby leading to her defeat ^{was} ~~was~~ demonstrated in the 5 day saturation bombing of Saipan, after which it was found that Japan lost 25000 troops compared to America's 15000.

Finally, ~~now~~ by March 1945 America

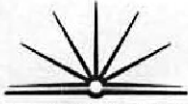
began to recognise that Japan was near ~~surrender~~ but defeat but not near surrender & looked upon the atomic bomb to make the crucial difference. At the same time, the Soviet Union harboured territorial objectives in Japan & believed that for its assistance in the defeat of Japan it would ~~see~~ share in the occupation. This at one time was a concession the US was willing to make however with the advent of the atomic bomb the US no longer required such assistance & ~~it~~ wished to prevent the Soviet Union from creating a sphere of influence in Northern Asia. Thus, as M. Sherman confirms, "with the

Atomic bomb the US was planning to compel Japan to surrender before the Soviet Union managed to consolidate its position after Germany's surrender in May 1945".

By now the Japanese were hoping to negotiate peace talks through the Soviet Union. ~~However, the impending Soviet invasion in~~ ^{However,} ~~Japan~~ in July 1945, the US presented Japan with an ~~poor~~ ultimatum requiring Japan to surrender unconditionally. The Potsdam Declaration however left Japan's main ~~of~~ surrender consideration, the retention of the Emperor's position, ambivalent. The Emperor however was at the very pinnacle ~~of~~ & the ~~foundator~~

foundation of Japan's society & the absence of any mention regarding his fate became Japan's chief objective to the Potsdam Declaration. Consequently Japanese officials intended to ignore the ultimatum and decided to wait for a response from the Soviet Union on whether they would mediate. They were still waiting for a response the day an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6th 1945.

In conclusion, Japan's defeat in 1945 was a culmination of its limited industrial strength, Allied military strategy and the ~~adv~~ over-extension of her territories



as well as diplomatic failures with the USA & the Soviet Union which ultimately resulted in two atomic bombs being dropped on Japan in pursuit of the end of the conflict.