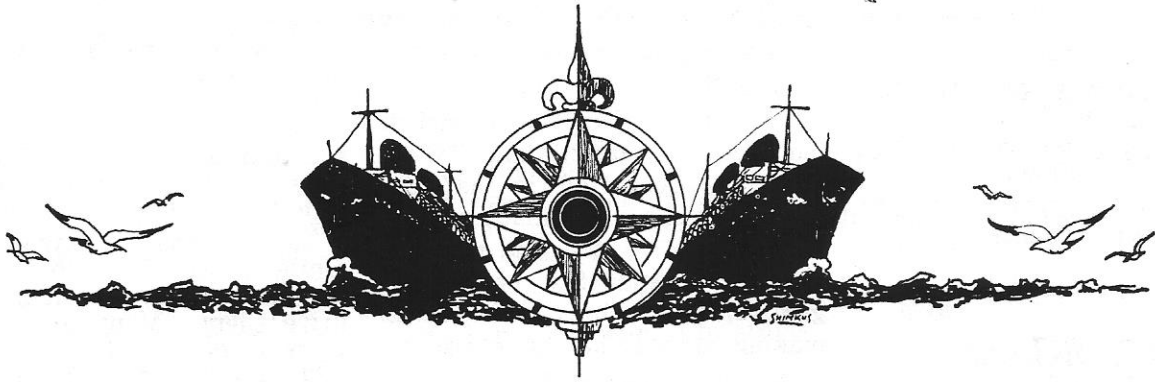


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United States At War With Japanese In Pacific

Surprise Attacks Are Made On Listening Posts And Well Fortified Island Of Oahu

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All of us in the Navy feel ourselves more or less qualified to be "Monday-morning quarterbacks" on the present war situation in the Pacific. Any viewpoint we have can be no more than the purest conjectures, inasmuch as we are far removed from the principal theatre of war. The true picture can only be obtained from those who are actively involved.

The Japanese attack on our Pacific bases was hardly a surprise, even though the exact details of the manner in which it was consummated could hardly have been foreseen. The economic blockade which had been forced upon the Japanese left them the two alternatives of fighting or losing "face", which is all important to Orientals.

Contradictory Strategy

We felt certain that our outlying bases of Guam, Wake, and Midway Islands would bear the initial brunt of any war in the Pacific. A concentrated attack on these listening posts would have found almost certain success. It was agreed also that the Philippines, while representing a much greater obstacle, would succumb to a well-organized offensive.

The Japanese, with their innate ability to plan a strategy in direct contradiction to that most expected, chose the well-fortified island of Oahu as their initial major objective. Calculating their attack for the first time most likely to surprise, they launched

aircraft at dawn on Sunday, December 7. It was thought at first that the entire Japanese Fleet had been concentrated there, but apparently only a few of their fastest ships had been selected as a striking force against our naval Maginot Line of the Pacific. This is borne out by the short-livedness of the attack.

Subsequent attacks came as expected on the Philippines, Guam, Wake, and Midway, but apparently they have not met with the success expected.

Not Complete Surprise

There is a great deal of conjecture on the question of our losses and successes to date. Inasmuch as there is no information available, it is hardly wise to presume that our forces were completely surprised. Had the Japanese been eminently successful in the Hawaiian Islands, it seems logical that the attacks would be continuing.

It also seems mandatory that a determined effort be made against the Panama Canal to prevent our Atlantic Fleet from joining forces

with the Pacific Fleet, and the natural conclusion is either that the planned attack has gone awry, or that it has not yet been executed. In the latter case the element of surprise has been lost, and the attack stands much less chance of being successful.

Japanese Ships Sunk

It is known that at least one Japanese battleship has been sunk near the Philippine Islands. It is also known that one troop transport was sunk, one likely sunk, and at least three others damaged in attempted landings on Luzon. The Japanese efforts there are continuing, and the full story will not be available for some time to come.

In an attack against Wake Island, the Japanese have lost at least one cruiser and one destroyer which were destroyed by naval aircraft. In an attack against Guam, the Japanese admit the loss of two troop transports, but state that all troops had been landed before their sinking. In that event, the invading forces have been more or less isolated from a base of supplies, and recapture of the island area is made easier.

Await Counter Offensive

Summarizing the scanty knowledge at present available, it seems to this observer that the Japanese have spread themselves surprisingly thin in the entire Pacific area. A counter offensive is certain to be started in the near future, but results will not become

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