

*See memo
over*

On its outcome hangs much of the future course of the war. The strategy of offensive is calculated to drive Italy out of the war as an active belligerent, and both the British First Army and the forces of the United States are doing their utmost to bring about his conclusion. In conjunction with the land operations in North Africa, and the sea battles in the central Mediterranean, the air offensive against the chief ports and industrial cities of Italy has been greatly intensified.

The campaign in Russia enters its second bitter winter with the defence of Stalingrad, commanding the approach to the rich Caucasus, still bravely maintained. The Red Army has indeed been able to take the offensive on this front, and to resume the offensive against Nazi forces elsewhere within the Soviet Union.

In another great area of conflict in this world-wide struggle - the Western Pacific - has seen combined air and sea combats which have exceeded anything ever experienced in warfare before. The battles of Midway Island, the Coral Sea, and, most recently, in the Solomon Islands, have caused heavy losses to the Japanese, and not inconsiderable losses to United States forces. But the aggressive taken so markedly by the latter last August has never been relinquished; and upon the maintaining of it rest the hopes of the United Nations for an eventual defeat of Japan in the Pacific area.