

YANK

SEPTEMBER 7, 1945



HONOLULU In Honolulu, where the war began for the U. S.,

the first news of its ending reached a sleepy-eyed Chinese-American radio technician shortly after 1200 hours when he had just finished making his regular weekly check on KGU's station transmitter and was ready to leave for home.

When technician Harry Chu received the U. P. flash that the Japs had offered to accept the Allied peace terms, he put the transmitter back on the air, telephoned the assistant station manager and marked time until an announcer could arrive by playing records interspersed with the following announcement: "Stand by for important news about the Potsdam ultimatum."

The assistant station manager and two announcers arrived at the studio at about 0245 hours. Ten minutes later the first real broadcast of the news went on the air, and reaction from the late-listening radio audience was immediate.

One of the most spontaneous celebrations was at Hickam Field, where hangars, planes and barracks were strafed by the Japs December 7. Crewmen, technicians and passenger-terminal personnel, working on a 24-hour shift to keep bombers and supplies flowing to the battle lines, heard the first news flash and quickly spread the word. GIs in jeeps and command cars and trucks raced up and down the roads with their horns held down. A soldier woke up six members of the AAF band and their noise soon woke up others. When the first parade started down Fox Avenue there were 40 assorted musicians playing "Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here."

Flight nurses, Wacs and GIs all streamed from their barracks and joined the howling procession. Forty vehicles, lined up three abreast in back of the paraders, loaded with shouting men, women and children, must have looked pretty puny compared with a Times Square celebration, but nothing ever surpassed them in enthusiasm.

Waikiki Beach, where the Army has its rest camp, Fort DeRussy, and the Navy has the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, at first took the news quietly simply because nearly everyone was asleep. But soldiers and sailors who heard the flash went from door to door pounding and shouting, and within 15 minutes all lights were on and groups had gathered to talk over the historic news.

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In the replacement training command depot where men are assigned to combat units in the forward areas, jubilation was high. Even though men realized that Jap capitulation would not necessarily cancel their trip west, they knew now it would be for occupation duty and not for actual combat.

By 0600 hours thousands of civilian workers, many of them of Japanese descent, began to arrive at the base. They talked excitedly as they went about their jobs, but now it was beginning to look like just another routine day, as busy as ever with nothing slowed down.

Downtown Honolulu didn't seem to be hanged much by the news either. Soldiers and sailors filed along Hotel Street doing the same old things they'd always done on pass days—staring at traffic, shopping in curio stores, having their pictures taken with hula girls. But there was a broad grin on the face of Pfc. Nobuichi Masatsugo, a Japanese-American soldier, as he read the headlines.

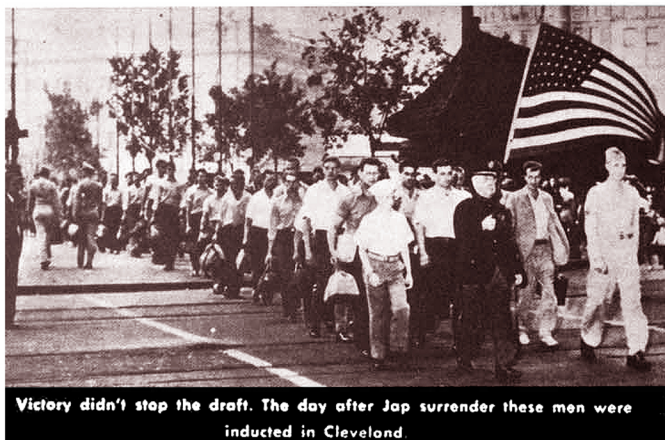
"I always knew we had them licked, but I never thought the end would come this soon," he said. He wore a Purple Heart won in Italy, where he had fought with the 34th Division.

"I guess my 76 points will be good after all," commented T-4 Cyril D. Robinson of Klamath Falls, Ore., another soldier on pass in town.

Pvt. Mitchell Rosen, a New York City marine who saw action at Iwo Jima, was taking the news soberly.

"You can credit the Marines, the atomic bomb and the Russians for bringing the Japs to their knees," he said, and he emphasized the word "Marines."

—Cpl. TOM O'BRIEN



Victory didn't stop the draft. The day after Jap surrender these men were inducted in Cleveland.

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