

on their way to the camp hospital for their physical.

"Let's go, Hank, before the crowd gets there."

They left with a great clatter and loud shouting. Father, Mother, Sumi, and I sank to our cots feeling as if we had come out of a turbulent storm which had been raging steadily in our minds since Pearl Harbor. The birth of the Nisei combat team was the climax to our evacuee life, and the turning point. It was the road back to our rightful places.

### READING REVIEW

1. What was life like in a relocation camp?
2. Give two reasons why Japanese Americans were sent to relocation camps.
3. (a) Why did the government establish a separate Nisei combat unit? (b) Do you think it was fair to segregate Nisei soldiers? Why or why not?
4. (a) If you had been a Japanese American during the war, how would you have felt about being placed in a relocation camp? (b) Would you have volunteered to serve in the armed forces? Explain.

## 224 Bravery at the Bulge

During World War II the United States armed forces continued their traditional policy of separate units for black Americans. Moreover, a large number of black Americans were put in service units—doing work in supply depots, driving trucks, doing repair and maintenance jobs. But some black units were assigned to combat. And for a brief period, late in the war, the barriers of racial segregation were broken down.

When the Germans broke through the Allied lines in December 1944, in their counterattack at the Battle of the Bulge, the Allies desperately needed fighting units. As a result, black units and white units fought together to stop the German advance. In this selection Walter White, who was secretary of the NAACP, told of this history-making event of black and white Americans fighting together.

### READING FOCUS

1. Why were black soldiers asked to volunteer?
2. How did white and black soldiers react to fighting alongside each other?

One of the most dramatic examples of the abandonment of interracial antagonisms in combat by troops themselves—and a tragic reversal by the army high command—occurred during and after the Battle of the Bulge.

The Germans' sudden, effective breakthrough threatened disaster. The tide of war might have been changed at that point. At the very least, the war would have been longer if this daring maneuver had succeeded, even though more men and war materials would probably have brought Allied victory. Many Americans now alive would have died in the meantime.

Every available man was thrown into the fight to stop the German advance. But even then there were not enough. Desperate appeals were sent to the United States to rush more combat troops as quickly as possible. Many were sent by plane, but even these were not enough. It was at this point, during some of the fiercest fighting, that General John C. H. Lee issued an appeal to colored Service of Supply troops to volunteer for combat.

"It is planned to assign you without regard to color or race to units where assistance is most needed," General Lee promised. He made no effort to minimize the desperate nature of the fighting nor the great number of casualties caused by the German breakthrough. He pointed out that all noncommissioned officers would have to give up their ratings to qualify for service as combat troops.

Great numbers of volunteers answered General Lee's appeal. In some units 80 percent of the soldiers offered their services. In one engineer unit, 171 out of 186 men volunteered. One private in an ordnance company declared: "We've been giving a lot of sweat. Now I think we'll mix some blood with it!"

Negroes were delighted at this first opportunity to function as "real" soldiers. The response was so great that the army had to set up a quota to prevent complete disorganization of its service units.

Generals George Patton, Omar Bradley, and Courtney Hodges gave their approval to the use of Negro soldiers in completely unsegregated combat units. General Eisenhower

*Adapted from A Man Called White by Walter White.*

was enthusiastic. But Eisenhower's chief of staff, W. Bedell Smith, insisted that the plan be submitted to General George C. Marshall, army chief of staff.

Washington was alarmed at the idea of an unsegregated, genuinely democratic army. It ordered the plan abandoned. But the need for combat troops was so critical that the high command in Washington was forced to agree to a compromise—the use of all-Negro platoons in white regiments, instead of a mixture of whites and Negroes throughout the regiments. Although Negro soldiers felt that they had been let down, they were still enthusiastic. The Negro platoons were distributed among eleven combat divisions of the First and Seventh Armies. They fought in the crucial stages of the Battle of the Bulge and through the later Allied drive across Germany.

Several of the Negro volunteers won the Distinguished Service Cross or Silver Star. Others were cited for bravery beyond the call of duty.

The army took a poll among the white officers and soldiers who had fought with Negro troops. The results are to me a striking example of the fact that race prejudice is not as stubborn as some people imagine. The army poll showed that after having served in the same unit with black combat soldiers, 77 percent of the officers favored integration, as contrasted with 33 percent before the experience. The figures among enlisted men were 77 percent and 35 percent, after and before serving with Negroes.

A white South Carolina sergeant was quoted by the army as saying, "When I heard about it, I said I wouldn't wear the same shoulder patch they did. After that first day, when we saw how they fought, I changed my mind. They are just like any of the other men to us."

Another sergeant from Alabama, after telling how bitterly he had opposed serving with Negroes at first, confessed a total change of attitude. "I used to think they would be cowards in combat, but I saw them work."

Some 84 percent of white company officers and 81 percent of white platoon sergeants declared that Negro troops had fought superbly, and 17 percent of officers and 9 percent of enlisted men even went so far as to say that Negroes fought better than white troops.

General Patton highly praised the black volunteers. General Eisenhower declared: "All



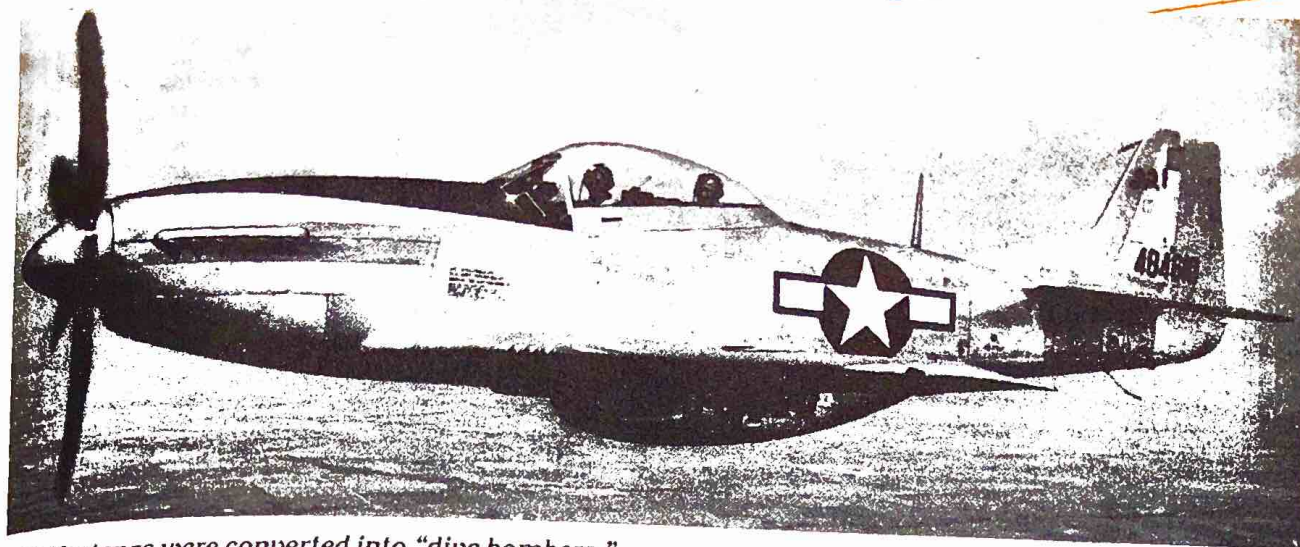
*Black soldiers in World War II*

my commanders reported that these volunteers did excellent work." General Charles Lanham of the 104th Division, presenting combat decorations to eleven Negroes, went even further to declare: "I have never seen any soldiers who have performed better in combat than you have."

But Eisenhower, to the dismay of many of us who had faith in him, testified before the Senate armed services committee in 1948 that he believed racial segregation in the army should continue at the platoon level. And in April 1948 the Secretary of War bluntly told a distinguished group of 15 Negro leaders that the army would continue segregation.

### **READING REVIEW**

1. Name two reasons why the army asked black soldiers to volunteer.
2. (a) How did black soldiers react to their recruitment for a fighting unit? (b) Why did black Americans respond as they did?
3. What was the attitude of white officers and soldiers who fought with black soldiers?



P52 Mustangs were converted into "dive bombers."

at a certain number of missions. Then it was suddenly increased by more than 20. When the order came, there were pilots who were within one mission of going home. So they had to stay and fly a few more months. Some of them never lived to finish the new allotment.

There is an odd psychological factor in the system of being sent home after a certain number of missions. When pilots got to within three or four missions of the finish, they became so nervous they almost jumped out of their skins. A good many were killed on their last mission. The squadron leaders wished there were some way they could surprise a man and send him home with six or eight missions still to go, thus sparing him the agony of those last few trips.

Nowhere in our fighting forces was cooperation closer or friendship greater than between Americans and British in the air. I never heard an American pilot make a critical remark about a British flier. Our pilots said the British were cooler under fire than we were. The British attitude and manner of speech amused them, but they were never scornful.

They liked to listen in on their radios as the British pilots talked to each other. For example, one day they heard one pilot call to another, "I say, old chap, there is a Jerry [the English nickname for Germans during the war] on your tail."

To which the pilot in danger answered, "Quite so, quite so, thanks very much, old man."

And another time, one of our dive bombers got shot up over the target. His engine was smoking and he was losing altitude. He made for the coast all alone, an easy target for any German fighter that might come along. He was

just barely staying in the air, and he was a sad and lonely boy indeed. Then suddenly he heard over his earphones a distinctly British voice saying, "Cheer up, chicken we have you."

He looked around and two Spitfires [British fighter planes], one on either side, were leading him back to his home field.

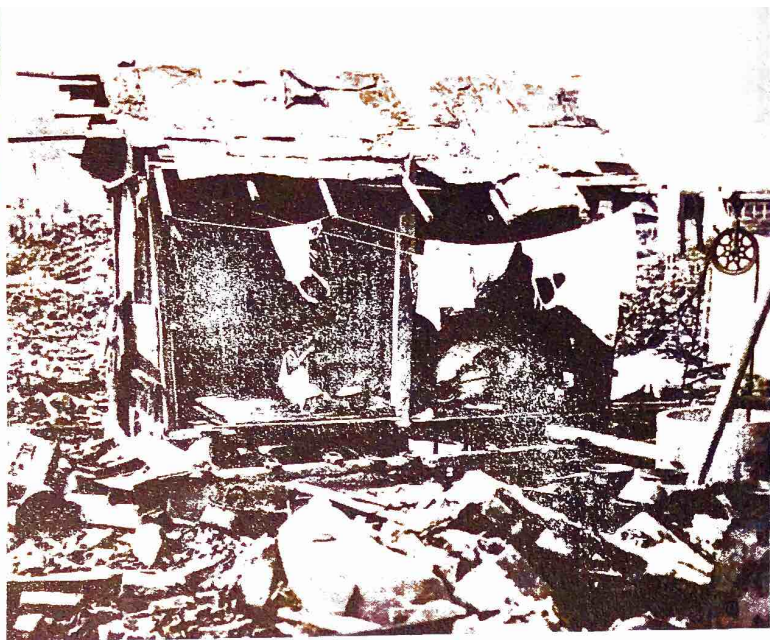
### READING REVIEW

1. How did the dive bomber groups support the army infantry?
2. List two striking features of dive bombing.
3. How did the British and American pilots assist each other?

## 226 Dropping the Atomic Bomb

When President Roosevelt died in 1945, Vice-President Harry Truman became President. The new President now faced the tremendous task of ending the war and planning for the peace.

After the war in Europe ended, Truman and the other Allied leaders met at Potsdam, Germany, in July 1945. At the meeting they agreed to demand that Japan surrender unconditionally. Japan refused. President Truman, who had been in office less than four months, now had to make the awesome decision of whether to drop an atomic bomb on Japan. Fearing that an attack on the Japanese mainland by American warships and planes would cost as many as a million American lives, Truman decided to approve the use of the atomic bomb. In this selection, taken from President Truman's memoirs, the President explained his decision to use the atomic bomb at Hiroshima.



*Nagasaki after the atomic bomb*

### READING FOCUS

1. Why did Truman decide to drop the atomic bomb on Japan?
2. How did Truman feel about his decision?

The idea of the atomic bomb had been suggested to President Roosevelt by the famous and brilliant Dr. Albert Einstein. Its development turned out to be a vast undertaking. It was the achievement of the combined efforts of science, industry, labor, and the military, and it had no parallel in history. The people in charge and their staffs worked under great pressure. The whole enormous task required the services of more than 100,000 people and immense quantities of material. It required over two and a half years and the spending of \$2.5 billion. Only a few of the thousands of people who worked in these plants knew what they were producing. So strict was the secrecy that even some of the highest-ranking officials in Washington did not have the slightest idea of what was going on. I did not.

Before 1939 it had been generally agreed among scientists that in theory it was possible to release energy from the atom. In 1940 we had begun to share with Great Britain all scientific knowledge useful to war, although Britain was at war at that time and we were not. Following this—in 1942—we learned that the

Germans were at work on a method to harness atomic energy for use as a weapon of war.

It was under the general policy of sharing knowledge between our nation and Great Britain that research on the atomic bomb started in such feverish secrecy. American and British scientists joined in the race against the Germans. Working together with the British, we thus made it possible to achieve a great scientific triumph in the field of atomic energy. Nevertheless, basic and historic as this event was, it had to be considered at the time as relatively unimportant to the far-flung war we were fighting in the Pacific at a terrible cost in American lives.

We could hope for a miracle, but the daily tragedy of a bitter war was always with us. We worked to construct a weapon of such overpowering force that the enemy could be forced to give in swiftly once we could use it. This was the primary aim of our secret and vast effort. But we also had to carry out the enormous effort of our basic and traditional military plans.

My own knowledge of these developments had come only after I became President, when Secretary of War Henry Stimson had given me the full story. He had told me at the time that the project was nearing completion and that a bomb could be expected within another four months. It was at his suggestion, too, that I had then set up a committee of top people and had asked them to study with great care the possibilities the new weapon might have for us.

It was their recommendation that the bomb be used against the enemy as soon as it could be done. They recommended further that it should be used without warning and against a target that would clearly show its devastating strength. I had realized, of course, that an atomic bomb explosion would cause damage and casualties beyond imagination. On the other hand, the scientific advisers of the committee reported, "We can propose no technical demonstration likely to bring an end to the war; we see no acceptable alternative to direct military use." It was their conclusion that no technical demonstration they might propose, such as dropping the bomb on a deserted island, would be likely to bring the war to an end. It had to be used against an enemy target.

The final decision of where and when to use the atomic bomb was up to me. Let there be

*Adapted from Memoirs, Vol. I, Year of Decisions by Harry S Truman.*

no mistake about it. I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used. My top military advisers recommended its use. When I talked to Churchill, he told me that he favored the use of the atomic bomb if it might help end the war.

In deciding to use this bomb, I wanted to make sure that it would be used as a weapon of war in the manner set down by the laws of war. That meant that I wanted it dropped on a military target. I had told Stimson that the bomb should be dropped as nearly as possible upon a war production center of prime military importance.

Stimson's staff had prepared a list of cities in Japan that might serve as targets. Kyoto, though favored as a center of military activity, was eliminated when Secretary Stimson pointed out that it was a cultural and religious shrine of the Japanese.

Four cities were finally recommended as targets: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata, and Nagasaki. They were listed in that order as targets for the first attack. The order of selection was in accordance with the military importance of these cities. But allowance would be given for weather conditions at the time of the bombing. Before the selected targets were approved as proper for military purposes, I personally went over them in detail with Secretary Stimson, General Marshall, and General Arnold, and we discussed the matter of timing and the final choice of the first target.

General Spaatz, who commanded the Strategic Air Forces, which would drop the bomb, was given some independence as to when and on which of the four targets the bomb would be dropped. That was necessary because of weather and other operational considerations. In order to get preparations under way, the War Department instructed General Spaatz that the first bomb would be dropped as soon after August 3 as weather would permit.

A specialized B-29 unit had been selected for the task. Seven modified B-29's, with pilots and crews, were ready and waiting for orders. Meanwhile ships and planes were rushing the materials for the bomb and specialists to assemble them to the Pacific island of Tinian in the Marianas.

On July 28 Radio Tokyo announced that the Japanese government would continue to fight. There was no choice now. The bomb was

scheduled to be dropped after August 3 unless Japan surrendered before that day.

On August 6, the fourth day of my journey home from Potsdam, came the historic news that shook the world. I was eating lunch with members of the *Augusta's* crew when I was handed the following message:

#### TO THE PRESIDENT FROM THE SECRETARY OF WAR

BIG BOMB DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA AUGUST 5 AT 7:15 P.M. WASHINGTON TIME. FIRST REPORTS INDICATE COMPLETE SUCCESS WHICH WAS EVEN MORE CONSPICUOUS THAN EARLIER TEST.

I was greatly moved. I said to the group of sailors around me, "This is the greatest thing in history. It's time for us to get home."

A few minutes later a second message was handed to me. It read as follows:

FOLLOWING INFORMATION REGARDING MANHATTAN<sup>†</sup> RECEIVED. "HIROSHIMA BOMBED VISUALLY. THERE WAS NO FIGHTER OPPOSITION AND NO FLAK. PARSONS REPORTS 15 MINUTES AFTER DROP AS FOLLOWS: 'RESULTS CLEAR CUT SUCCESSFUL IN ALL RESPECTS. VISIBLE EFFECTS GREATER THAN IN ANY TEST. CONDITIONS NORMAL IN AIRPLANE FOLLOWING DELIVERY.' "

When I had read this I signaled to the crew in the mess hall that I wished to say something. I then told them of the dropping of a powerful new bomb which used an explosive twenty thousand times as powerful as a ton of TNT. I went to the wardroom, where I told the officers, who were at lunch, what had happened. I could not hide my expectation that the Pacific war might now be brought to a speedy end.

<sup>†</sup> The bomb's development was called the Manhattan Project.

#### READING REVIEW

1. Summarize the steps the President went through in making the final decision to drop the bomb.
2. What factors led to the decision on where to drop the first bomb?
3. What was President Truman's feeling about his decision to drop the bomb?
4. (a) Based on the evidence provided in the reading, do you think that President Truman made the right decision? (b) Why or why not?