

*Anniversary Log*

of the

**U.S.S. SHANGRI-LA**

or

**“Norfolk to Tokyo”**



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**15 SEPTEMBER 1944--15 SEPTEMBER 1945**

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U.S.S. SHANGRI-LA

Commanding Officer.....Capt. R.F. Whitehead, USN.  
Executive Officer.....Comdr. J.F. Quilter, USN.  
Air Officer.....Comdr. F.E. Wigelius, USN.  
Communication Officer..Lt-Comdr. J.D. Rooney, (C) USNR.  
Damage Control Officer..Comdr. K.A. Ayers, (DE) USNR.  
Engineer Officer.....Lt. Comdr. P.G. Goebel, (E) USNR.  
Gunnery Officer.....Lt-Comdr. J.D. Reilly, USN.  
Medical Officer.....Comdr. P. Vaughan, (MC) USN.  
Navigating Officer.....Comdr. F.A. Nusom, USN.  
Supply Officer.....Comdr. A.A. Pabst, (SC) USNR.  
Senior Chaplain.....Comdr. P.L. Mitchell, (ChC) USNR.

## DEDICATION

To the Officers and Men of the U. S. S. SHANGRI-LA this Log of events in the life of a great carrier is dedicated. In this first year since she was commissioned you have seen her through the trying shakedown period, you have sailed her through the Panama Canal and half way around the world to the combat zone, you have launched her planes to strike the enemy's homeland and you have fought her through the heat of battle. To you should go the credit for transforming an inanimate ship to steel into a fighting aircraft carrier and you may take just pride in your contribution to the final triumph of freedom and justice.

R. F. Whitehead,  
Captain, U. S. Navy,  
Commanding Officer.

## INTRODUCTION

This brief log of the SHANGRI-LA is written and published to serve as a memory of days which will seem even more eventful as time goes by, and to give your mothers, wives, and sweethearts an account of your activities since you joined the ship.

Part One of the log is sketchy as no attempt is made to tell the full story of the ship. It is hoped that the dated remarks will be sufficient to recall to you your individual experiences.

Part Two contains mostly news excerpts, the news that we lived each moment for. Here again you will have to add your personal experiences to make the story complete.

15 Sept. 1945

Prepared by  
The Gunnery Officer

**PART ONE**

## Our First Year

Sept. 15, 1944 Commissioned at berth 42, Norfolk Navy Yard. Capt. James D. Barner, USN, assumed command.

Sept. 20 Began sending all hands to fire-fighting school.

Oct. 9 Moved into drydock #4 to scrape and paint bottom.

Oct. 15 Undocked and stood down channel into Chesapeake Bay for trial runs. Landed first plane. Anchored in Hampton Roads overnight.

Oct. 16 Returned to Norfolk Navy Yard.

Oct. 25 Building of ship completed.

Nov. 2 Underway for demagnetization station at Lambert Point.

Nov. 3 Moved to M.O.B. Hampton Roads.

Nov. 5 Underway on first part of shakedown cruise in Chesapeake Bay area.

Nov. 7 Visited U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis.

Nov. 17 Conducted experimental landings with P-51, F7F, and B-25.

Nov. 18 Returned to M.O.B. after two weeks of drills and training exercises in rather chilly weather.

Nov. 20 Underwent military inspection by ComFair-Norfolk.

Nov. 21 Underway for Trinidad, BWI, on second part of shakedown cruise.

Nov. 26 Anchored off Trinidad in Port-of-Spain Harbor.

Dec. 16 After three weeks of successful training operations in the Gulf of Paria, headed for Norfolk loaded with "Christmas spirit".

Dec. 18 Launched simulated "strike" on Culebra Island in the Virgin Islands group.

Dec. 23 Arrived at Norfolk Navy Yard for post-shakedown availability. First leave party over the side.

Jan. 14	Moved to N.O.B., loading stores and ammunition.
Jan. 16	Hoisted aboard 99 planes of Air Group 85.
Jan. 17	Departed N.O.B., Hampton Roads, Va. with U. S. S. GUAM for Panama Canal.
Jan. 23	Made practice attack on Panama Canal defenses. Moored to dock at Cristobal, Canal Zone. Liberty.
Jan. 24	Made transit through canal in eight hours, and moored to dock at Balboa. Liberty in Panama City.
Jan. 25	Departed Balboa enroute San Diego, Calif. Held sighting exercise with tame submarine.
Feb. 2	Arrived San Diego and moored to Naval Air Station dock.
Feb. 3	Got underway for two days of military inspection at sea by ComFairWestCoast to determine ship's fitness for combat duty.
Feb. 5-6	Moored to dock at San Diego loading stores, rockets, passengers and extra planes for ferrying to Pearl.
Feb. 7	Underway for Pearl. Rumors of going to Hunters Point for installation of additional 40mm quads fell flat, very flat.
Feb. 13	Arrived Pearl, and moored to Ford Island dock.
Feb. 15-21	Underway in vicinity of Pearl training air groups.
Feb. 22-Mar. 2	Moored in navy yard berth, Pearl.
Mar. 3-8	Underway in vicinity of Pearl training air groups.
Mar. 9-11	Docked at Ford Island, Pearl. Witnessed damaged U. S. S. SARATOGA.
Mar. 12-17	Underway in vicinity of Pearl training air groups.
Mar. 18-19	Docked at Ford Island, Pearl. Witnessed damaged U. S. S. WASP and U. S. S. FRANKLIN.
Mar. 20-24	Underway on special training exercise simulating an attack on Pearl harbor defenses.
Mar. 25-29	Moored in navy yard berth, Pearl.
Mar. 30-Apr. 2	Underway in vicinity of Pearl training air groups.
Apr. 2-9	Moored in navy yard berth, Pearl.

Apr. 10	Underway proceeding singly to Ulithi Atoll.
Apr. 12	News received of death of President Roosevelt. Crossed international date line.
Apr. 20	Anchored Ulithi and fueled from tanker.
Apr. 21	Underway with U. S. S. IOWA and two destroyers proceeding northward to join Task Force 58 in fueling area off Okinawa. "Moving up".
Apr. 24	Joined Task Force 58, and were assigned to Task Group 58.4.
Apr. 25	SHANGRI-LA air group made first strike against enemy held island, Okino Daito Jima.
Apr. 26-May 11 (16 days)	Operating in support of Okinawa campaign. Several enemy planes being shot down near force by fighters at night. Some drifting mines sighted. On 29 April enemy "kamikaze" headed for U. S. S. WISCONSIN shot down by AA gunfire. Destroyers HAZLEWOOD and HAGGARD in our picket stations hit by suiciders. On April 30 fired on first enemy plane during night. On May 8 received news of end of European war. On May 11 Bunker Hill seen hit.
May 12	Departed Okinawa area for Ulithi Atoll.
May 14-23 (9 days)	Anchored in Ulithi. Recreation parties to Mog-Mog Island. Vice-Admiral J.S. McCain hoisted flag aboard.
May 24	Underway, returning to Okinawa area.
May 28-June 9	Making attacks against southern Kyushu in support of Okinawa campaign. On 5 June maneuvered to avoid worst part of typhoon. Wind 49-54 knots, rain very heavy, ceiling 100-200 feet, visibility low, and seas from 12-18 feet high. Came no closer than 35 miles to center of storm. HORNET and BENNINGTON suffered serious storm damage.
June 10	Set course for Leyte, Philippine Islands.
June 13-30 (18 days)	Anchored in Leyte Gulf for refueling, replenishing, and recreation.
July 1	Underway for combat area, conducting training exercises enroute.



July 2	Held ceremony for swearing into office John L. Sullivan as Ass't Secretary of Navy for Air.
July 4	10,000 th landing made aboard SHANGRI-LA.
July 10	Resumed offensive operations in Tokyo area.
July 14	Made first strikes in virgin territory of northern Honshu and Hokkaido. Weather cold and foggy.
July 15	First battleship bombardment of Japanese homeland.
July 16	Capt. James D. Barner, USN, the commanding officer, relieved by Capt. Richard F. Whitehead, USN.
July 19	Sighted Jap balloon low on water.
July 28	Special strike by SHANGRI-LA planes against battleship HARUNA and cruiser OYODO.
Aug. 7-15	(See Part 2 of this pamphlet.) War over! SHANGRI-LA has operated continuously off coast of Japan now for 36 days. War has lasted 3 years and 8 months, and ends only 3 months after VE day.
Aug. 17	Removed flame-proof covers from all mattresses. Received Al Pac 139 describing point discharge system.
Aug. 19	Marine detachment left ship to land at Yokosuka.
Aug. 22	Conducted large scale air-parade over force with all the planes of Task Force 38.
Aug. 27	SHANGRI-LA planes parachute food and medicine to way prisoners in Tokyo area.
Sept. 2	Japs sign surrender terms aboard U. S. S. MISSOURI anchored in Sagami Bay. President Truman declares today to be VJ day. SHANGRI-LA is close enough today to sight Japanese coast for first time, with Mount Fujiyama in the background.
Sept. 3	Air Group 85 relieved by Air Group 2.
Sept. 6	End of censorship.
Sept. 8	Marine detachment returned aboard from Yokosuka.
Sept. 9	No longer Darken ship at night.
Sept. 15	SHANGRI-LA's first anniversary since commissioning. We are now 77 days at sea,

but enter Tokyo Bay tomorrow. Captain states we may be in San Francisco for Navy Day.

### ANNIVERSARY STATISTICS

Miles steamed since commissioning	74,737
Fuel oil used (gallons)	12,950,456
Days at sea	231
Days in port	134
Longest period continuously at sea (days)	78
Miles steamed during 78 day period	28,292
Days in forward area	113
Target strikes and sweeps (sorties)	1,874
Total combat sorties flown	5,241
Tons of bombs dropped on enemy	731
Rockets fired at enemy	2,333
Enemy planes destroyed in air	50
Enemy planes damaged in air	14
Enemy planes destroyed on ground	134
Enemy planes damaged on ground	190
Enemy combatant ships sunk	7
Enemy merchant ships sunk	15
Enemy combatant ships damaged	22
Enemy merchant ships damaged	36
Own planes lost to enemy action	38
Number of plane landings aboard SHANGRI-LA	14,247
Average plane landings per day	40
Aviation gasoline expended (gallons)	6,683,190
5" ammunition expended (rounds)	7,852
40mm ammunition expended (rounds)	56,720
20mm ammunition expended (rounds)	223,520
Times fueled at sea	29
Number of destroyers fueled at sea	94

**PART TWO**

Tuesday-Aug. 7 The Most Eventful Week  
**OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)**

The improving weather suggested that Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet, which vanished into the ocean mists after raiding up and down the Japanese coast for three weeks, might strike again soon.

**SPECIAL EDITION** The United States released Monday the most terrible weapon in the history of war, an atomic bomb carrying the destructive power equal to 20,000 tons of TNT. President Truman, returning from the Potsdam conference aboard the cruiser AUGUSTA, announced that the first atomic bomb had been dropped on the Japanese army base of Hiroshima. He said that one bomb alone carried a more violent wallop than 2,000 B-29 superfortresses carrying the old type TNT bomb. He indicated that the scientists who made the bomb have created a monster which could wipe out civilization.

**SHIP'S ACTIVITY**

The ship is refueling today, but still no mail.

The information on the atomic bomb is stunning. Everyone is wondering how much the weapon is exaggerated if at all, how many of such bombs we might have. We are 38 days at sea and supposed to head for Eniwetok soon, but now everything is changed.

Wednesday-Aug. 8  
**JAP NEWS**

The use of the atomic bomb is so inhuman as to brand Americans for ages to come as destroyers of justice and mankind, labeling them public enemy number one of social justice.

By employing this diabolic weapon to massacre innocent civilians, the Americans unveiled to the eyes of the entire world their sadistic nature.

Thursday-Aug. 9  
**OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)**

Army Air Force headquarters at Guam announce that four and one tenths square miles, or sixty per-cent of Hiro-

shima, were wiped out by the devastating atomic bomb. Eye witnesses state that smoke rose 40,000 feet.

Doctor Jacobson says that any area struck by the bomb will remain saturated with death for any human being who enters for as long as seventy years.

## SHIP'S ACTIVITY

**STRIKE DAY ROUTINE** (0105) Reveille - (1925 Secure). Targets on northern Honshu and Hokkaido.

Information leaks through the ship that all allied planes must keep clear of Nagasaki at 1100. Evidently another atomic bomb is to be dropped.

Messages start coming in regarding organization of marine and bluejacket landing force as an emergency measure in case Japan suddenly surrenders.

## JAP NEWS

The production of high octane airplane gasoline from pine trees has been launched through the nation in preparation for the showdown battle of the Japanese mainland.

The Soviet Army suddenly launched an attack against Japanese forces on the eastern Soviet-Manchukuo border shortly after midnight last night.

Friday-Aug. 10

## OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)

Russia declares war on Japan. Russian army at Manchukuo border estimated at one million men.

Tokyo says that Hiroshima, city of 343,000 is completely destroyed, that all living things both animal and human were killed, and the dead too numerous to be counted. Persons outdoors were burned to death while those indoors were killed by what the enemy calls "indescribable heat and pressure".

Enemy claims that use of atomic bomb is a violation of international law.

Headquarters at Guam reveal that Nagasaki struck by an atomic bomb, and that bomb is small enough to be carried by a fighter plane.

The War Dept. denies the report that an area hit by an atomic bomb continues for years to react with death dealing radio-activity.

## **JAP NEWS**

All metropolitan newspapers splashed under banner headlines the news of the Soviet Union's declaration of war on Japan.

The recent American attack on Hiroshima was an act of premeditated wholesale murder, the deliberate snuffing out of lives of tens of thousands of innocent civilians who had no chance of protecting themselves in the slightest degree. It is a matter which goes to the very heart of the fundamental concept of human morality. This is not war; this is not even murder; this is pure nihilism, this is a crime against God and humanity.

(Special night edition) Domei news reveals Japanese readiness to accept terms of Potsdam ultimatum provided that the declaration does not compromise the prerogatives of the Emperor as a sovereign ruler. The White House has as yet received no official information.

## **SHIP'S ACTIVITY**

**STRIKE DAY ROUTINE, Targets on northern Honshu and Hokkaido.**

At about 2100 the news of the Domei peace offer was received. Many celebrations throughout the ship; this is the news we have been waiting for. There is some question as to whether we will or should accept the conditional clause retaining the Emperor, but anyway the war is over! Apparently the war has ended as abruptly as it began.

Saturday-Aug. 11

## **OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)**

President Truman declares that only surrender will stop use of terrible new atomic bomb.

Soviet troops are driving into Manchuria along the entire front.

B-29's continue large scale attacks.

Three millions of pamphlets daily, featuring use of the atomic bomb and Russia's declaration of war, are being dropped on Japanese home islands.

Lt. Gen. Doolittle discloses that Okinawa based super-fortresses will be able to carry 15 tons of bombs.

### SHIP'S ACTIVITY

The ship has steamed away from the Japanese coast and is refueling today. Still no mail.

Holiday routine at 1300. Band concert and song festival on the flight deck in the evening.

No really sensational "dope" today. Everyone waiting for developments.

### JAP NEWS

Declaring that the new type of bomb is even worse than poison gas in inhuman destructive power, the Japanese government's protest yesterday charged the United States government with violating international law.

Pointing out that government measures have fallen short of solving the current food shortage, Nippon Sangyo Keizai, leading financial journal here, suggested that stress should be laid on transportation in meeting this major problem. War cannot be fought on an empty stomach. Many consumers in metropolitan areas are acquiring food-stuffs through methods other than the regular rationing system.

War is reality. All wishful thinking is nonsense in war. And amount of discussion on how the Soviet Union has come to declare war on Japan is of no use under the present circumstances.

Sunday-Aug. 12

## OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)

"Washington" receives official word of Japanese surrender proposal. Allied powers in communication to consider Nipponese offer, but show no inclination to accept. 62% of American people questioned in the streets favor only unconditional surrender.

B-29's continue mining Japanese waters.

Hard hitting U. S. Third Fleet remains in Japanese waters.

Red Army drives more than 100 miles through Japanese defenses in Manchuria.

General Spaatz announces that 30% of Nagasaki destroyed by second atomic bomb.

(Special edition) Allies agree to accept Japanese surrender offer provided authorith of Emperor shall be subject to the supreme commander of the allied powers.

## SHIP'S ACTIVITY

No strikes today, bad weather, expect typhoon.

Information circulates that allies are formulating a counter-proposal to enemy peace offer.

Holiday routine this afternoon with band concert on flight deck.

The captain announces that strike day routine will be in effect tomorrow. (Maybe the damned war isn't over?)

Message from CTF 38, "The war is not over yet. The Japanese may be playing their national game of judo waiting until we are close and unwary. Keep alert for Nipponese tricks and Banzai charges".

A loudspeaker announcement in the middle of the night says no strike day routine tomorrow. Everyone rolls over for those few extra winks. Maybe the war is over?



## JAP NEWS

Asahi Shimbun in a feature article this morning urged every Japanese to do his or her part as his Majesty's subject in fullest obedience of the august wish of his Majesty. The paper further urged the nation to maintain the firmest unity if worst came to worst.

Monday-Aug. 13

## OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)

Allied reply stating that Hirohito must take orders from allied supreme commander now in Japanese hands. No assurance that Emperor will remain indefinitely on throne.

Japanese papers preparing people for surrender. People not yet told that their leaders have asked for peace.

Admiral Halsey to get \$2,000 saddle which will be flown to him if he decides to ride Emperor's white horse.

## SHIP'S ACTIVITY

The plans are again changed, STRIKE DAY ROUTINE today. The targets are in the Tokyo area.

Morale is very low today as everyone thought the war was surely over. We have run out of K-rations, but the ham sandwiches are a welcome change. Anyone putting out any "bum dope" today on the end of hostilities is risking his life.

The enemy was especially active today. 21 planes were shot down by the CAP over the force. The WASP astern of us shot down a kamikaze just in time. (Guess the war isn't over).

A message from ComThirdFleet, "A well done to the fighting blue team on today's operations. Your pick up and go on short notice this morning as the situation developed left nothing to be desired....Halsey".

## JAP NEWS

The Soviet forces are presently attacking Hailar. The

Japanese garrison is putting up fierce resistance and exacting a heavy toll from the enemy.

Metropolitan papers today continued to emphasize that the Japanese people's unswerving loyalty to his Majesty the Emperor is the only factor which will save the nation from the worst crisis it has been confronted with in its history.

Tuesday-Aug. 14

### **OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)**

Allies still receive no reply from Japanese on surrender terms.

Japs continue urging people to follow Emperor's orders.

The war is still in progress. Third Fleet planes hit Tokyo area.

Soviet marines capture two Korean ports, Yuki and Rashin, and take the rail city of Hunchun.

Army troops continue arriving home from Europe.

False report of surrender sent out on AP wires is choked within two minutes.

### **SHIP'S ACTIVITY**

The ship is refueling today. Many destroyers coming alongside, but still no mail.

In the mid-afternoon a radio report was received that Domei news agency has broadcast the Japanese acceptance of our counter-proposal.

The ship's landing force of marines and bluejackets is selected and organized.

The captain announces over the loudspeaker that there is no official word on surrender, that hostilities have not ceased, and that we will strike again tomorrow.

### **JAP NEWS**

A new system for selection of government officials a-

cepted by the Suzuki cabinet recently promised to introduce some much needed changes in the spirit prevailing in the bureaucratic administration, the Nippon Times said today.

Tokyo Shimbun yesterday morning urged the nation to rally support of the throne in order to effectuate genuine national unity in tiding over the present national crisis. "Undoubtedly the worst has come to worst, etc.."

Wednesday-Aug. 15

### **OWI NEWS (Morning Paper)**

Domei news says that an Imperial message from the Emperor accepting the allied Potsdam surrender ultimatum will be forthcoming soon.

B-29's continue attacks.

**SPECIAL EDITION** War over! Japanese accept allied counter-proposal on surrender terms. President Truman announces that MacArthur will be the Allied Supreme Commander. Emperor Hirohito orders Japanese armed forces to cease military operations. American forces halt offensive operations. Japanese Emperor breaks news to people in radio address.

### **SHIP'S ACTIVITY**

#### **STRIKE DAY ROUTINE**

0650 All strikes recalled and offensive operations suspended. Message from Admiral Halsey, "All snoopers will be investigated and shot down, not vindictively, but in a friendly sort of way".

0830 President Truman announces cessation of offensive operations.

0944 Set condition 3. (This time the war must be over)

1125 "Torpedo defense". Set condition 1. Jan planes reported diving on task force.

Message from CinCPac, "Cease offensive operations against Japanese forces. Maintain defensive and internal security measures at highest level and beware of treachery or last moment attacks by enemy forces or individuals".

1300 Admiral Halsey speaks to task force over radio. One Judy and one Zeke are splashed by CAP during his speech. The war might be over, but the fighting isn't. 36 planes are splashed today.

## JAP NEWS

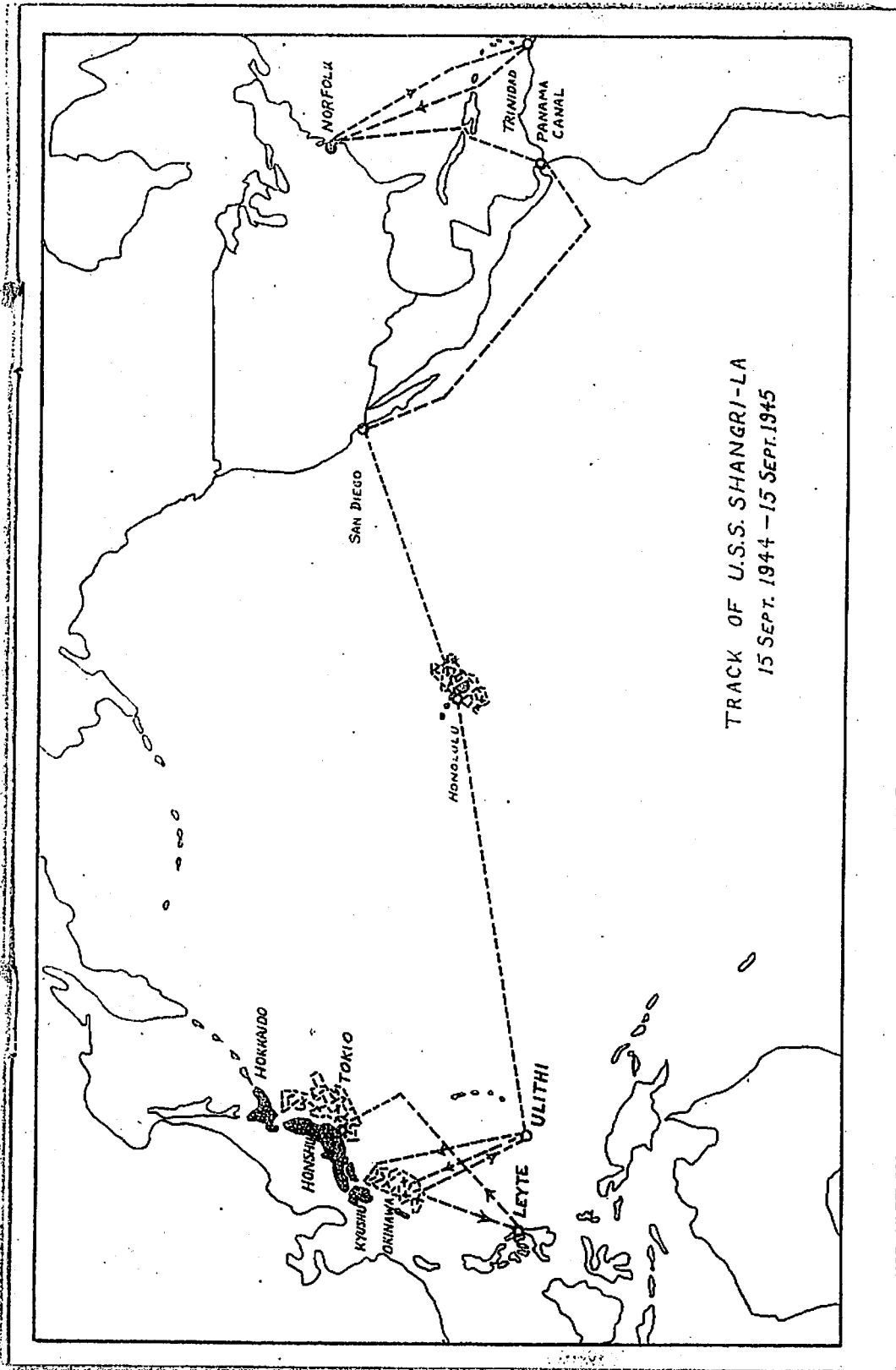
His Imperial Majesty the Emperor was graciously pleased to personally read the Imperial rescript accepting the Potsdam declaration in a nationwide broadcast at noon today. It is the first time in Japan's history that the Emperor spoke to the nation over the radio.

"...The war has lasted for nearly four years. Despite the best that has been done by everyone... the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world have all turned against her interest....Moreover, the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which is indeed incalculable. This is the reason we have ordered the acceptance of the provisions of the declaration."

One Tokyo broadcaster said; "We have bowed to the enemy's material and scientific power. However, in spiritual power we have not lost yet. We do not think the way we have thought is wrong. Let us unite together and work once again to bring our nation up to stand as a strong and admirable nation. We have lost, but this is temporary."

War Minister Korechika Anami committed suicide at his official residence yesterday night to atone for his failure in accomplishing his duties as his Majesty's minister.

P. S. No general quarters an hour before sunrise tomorrow.



TRACK OF U.S.S. SHANGRI-LA  
15 SEPT. 1944 - 15 SEPT. 1945