"At 3:10 AM on April 18 the Enterprise's radar revealed two enemy surface craft 21,000 yards off, and two minutes later a light appeared on the same bearing."\textsuperscript{16} Since it was still dark and Japanese vessels were for the most part without radar, Halsey rightly assumed that the Japanese had not yet detected the task force. To avoid the enemy ships, he turned the task force due north until the two radar contacts disappeared. The westerly course towards Japan was then resumed.

Unbeknownst to Halsey and the rest of the navy, the Japanese were aware that an American task force of two or three carriers was steaming in the Pacific. Accordingly, they had set up a hundred-mile deep screen of small craft roughly 750 miles off the coast of Japan-and Task Force 16 had just run right into the middle of it. Though they had successfully avoided the first encounter, and barely avoided a second just before dawn, at around 6:00 AM, a message came back from one of Enterprise's scout planes.

"ENEMY SURFACE SHIP-LATITUDE 36-04N, LONG. 153-10E, BEARING 276 DEGREES TRUE-42 MILES. BELIEVED SEEN BY ENEMY."\textsuperscript{17}

The question of whether or not the bomber had been spotted became moot when the task force itself spotted the vessel. Since it was now light, and the Americans could see the Japanese, it was most likely that the Japanese could also see the Americans. American fears were confirmed when a burst of radio traffic suddenly filled the airwaves. The Japanese had spotted them while they were still over 600 miles from the coast of Japan, almost 200 miles short of the planned launch point.

Halsey recognized the screen for what it was, and though they were in no immediate danger, and surrounded by only smaller craft, he knew that a Japanese response that would pose a severe threat to his task force would be forthcoming. To avoid this threat, the Task Force had to either launch Doolittle and his planes or turn and run for friendly waters without launching the raid. In order to attempt to accomplish the mission, and to protect the men and ships of the Task Force, Halsey ordered the cruiser Nashville to sink the Japanese patrol ship, and also ordered Doolittle and his fliers into the air.

The entire plan for the raid was now irrelevant. Doolittle would now take off three minutes instead of three hours ahead of the rest of the raid, and it would be a daylight raid, instead of a safer night operation. More importantly, however, since they were still some 620 miles from the Japanese coast, and "there would not be enough fuel to get them to the Asian mainland [let alone through Japanese-occupied Manchuria to free China], so they would have to ditch in the East China Sea."\textsuperscript{18}

At approximately 8:20 in the morning (7:20 Tokyo time), Doolittle took to the air in his B-25. After circling the ship to get his bearings (the magnetic compasses in the planes had been skewed by prolonged proximity to the metal of the Hornet, and could only be adjusted imprecisely by this method), he proceeded westward toward Tokyo.\textsuperscript{19} All sixteen planes made safe takeoffs in the span of an hour behind Doolittle, and after making the adjustment to their compasses, set off individually towards Japan. Once the planes were off, the Hornet, the Enterprise, and the rest of the Task Force turned eastward and sailed full steam towards the destroyers and supply ships, and "Halsey managed to retire with little difficulty, and both carriers [complete with the rest of the Task Force] returned to Pearl Harbor on 25 April."\textsuperscript{20}

The planes, though all slightly off course due to the quirks in their on-board compasses, were all generally on course to hit their respective targets. Though many of the planes passed over Japanese ships, and even under Japanese planes, only a few were fired upon, but all escaped significant damage. The planes all flew low and slow to minimize fuel consumption, all the while concerned about the prospect of bailing out over the East China Sea, or even worse, Japan itself.

To make matters worse, the planes encountered a headwind that impeded their progress and made the fuel situation even graver. However, the wind did clear up the weather, which allowed the pilots of the planes to get accurate bearings for the first time. Many of them found themselves significantly off course, and had to adjust accordingly.

Meanwhile, under an "amazing coincidence," Tokyo was in the midst of a three-hour full-dress air-raid drill.\textsuperscript{21} Fighters flew combat air patrols over the city, anti-aircraft crews were on full alert; every possible
obstacle that could negatively affect Doolittle's mission was not only present, but active. Strangely enough, however, this wound up greatly aiding the American aviators in their mission, for they arrived just on the tail end of the drill. The fact that the planes arrived individually, from differing directions, and in the waning moments of the air-raid drill led many Japanese to the conclusion that the planes were part of the drill.

Certainly, a few of the Japanese anti-aircraft crews and fighter pilots saw the attack for what it was, and took action to stop it, but these occurrences were rare. Only two planes were attacked by Japanese fighters—one was beset by two Japanese Zeros, one of which it promptly shot down, causing the other Zero to flee. The second plane was harangued by fighters for miles but eventually escaped. So much extra fuel had been consumed, though, that they were forced to ditch in the sea near the Japanese coast and were captured.22

For the most part, however, due to the air-raid drill, the myriad of approaches the different planes took to their targets, and other factors, most planes made their runs successfully. "An utterly bizarre and circumstantial pattern, contrived by faulty instruments, hard weather and human error, it turned miraculously into what seemed a stroke of genius."23 Four of the planes hit their primary targets, and of those that did not hit primary targets, only two could not find their secondary targets. One of those did manage to find a substitute military target, but the other was forced to jettison its bombs over the ocean and run for China due to severe engine problems.

All told, steel works, gas works, a chemical plant, a hospital, fuel dumps, an aircraft factory, a tank factory, an electric company, a shipyard, and an oil refinery were bombed to varying degrees of effectiveness. The most unquestionable success came at the shipyard, which was set ablaze, and where an aircraft carrier hull was struck amidships by an demolition bomb, causing a great deal of damage. The tank factory also suffered a great deal of damage, but otherwise, the damage to the other targets ranged from slight to moderate.

After bombing their targets, the planes continued westward towards China. The headwind that had impeded their progress luckily turned into a twenty-five mile per hour tailwind that allowed all of the planes but two to reach the mainland. The one crew that was forced down into the sea was only a quarter mile off the Chinese coast, and they survived only to be picked up by a Japanese patrol craft. The other plane that did not reach China managed to reach the Soviet Union, where the crew was interred for a number of months before being released.

For the planes that made landfall, the weather over China was, in keeping with the rest of the mission, so poor that none of the planes were able to land at Chinese airfields as planned. Instead, they were all forced to bail out (many over Japanese occupied territory), leading to three deaths (on bailout or crash landing), one severely mangled leg which had to be amputated, and an assortment of minor injuries. Only one crew was unable to avoid capture in China—the rest found their way to Chinese bases, eventually to India, and then back to the United States.

Of the eight men captured by the Japanese, three were executed for "war crimes," one died in prison, and the rest sat out the war in a prisoner of war camp. In military terms, eight casualties and the loss of sixteen medium bombers were well worth the effect that the Doolittle Raid achieved. Though actual physical damage was slight, the raid ended the five-century old myth that a "divine wind," or kamikaze, protected Japan. "The Japanese people had been told they were invulnerable. Their leaders had told them that Japan could never be invaded."24

On the day of the Doolittle Raid, this belief was shattered. Not shaken, but utterly and completely destroyed.

At 1:30 PM, in the midst of an English propaganda broadcast from Japan in which a woman (presumably 'Tokyo Rose') was telling how safe Japan was from bombing, the broadcast was cut off and another broadcast made giving information that fast, low-flying bombers were at that time bombing Japan.25

The humor of this statement was most certainly lost on the average Japanese citizen, though its cruel irony was readily apparent. Conversely, the news that "DOOLITTLE DID IT!" screamed on newspaper headlines across the nation boosted American morale in a time of dire need.26 The raid indeed "had little impact on the military power of the Japanese, but for its effects on the psychology of America and her enemy in the Pacific, the Tokyo raid was a master stroke of offensive action."27

Though the raid was intended mainly as a vengeance attack, and a tool of psychological warfare, it did result in numerous military dividends as well. First of all, the Japanese, wary of similar attacks on the
Home Islands, scrambled for more and better protection against similar air attacks. Squadrons of fighters and anti-aircraft batteries began flooding into Japan, and Tokyo in particular. Though these did increase Japan's air defenses greatly, the weapons and men were drawn off from the front lines elsewhere in the Pacific, "a move that Japan could ill afford to make."\(^{28}\)

Though the whittling of front-line forces to protect Japan itself harmed the Japanese war effort, there was another result of the raid that "alone was worth the effort put into this operation by . . . [those] . . . who had volunteered to help even the score."\(^{29}\) The Japanese at first had no real clue as to where the sixteen planes had come from. They could not believe that the Americans had launched Army bombers off of an aircraft carrier, and the imprisoned pilots gave them wildly differing stories about the origin of the raid, ranging from the Aleutians to Mongolia.

Further bewildering the Japanese attempts to discover the origin of the raid, the complete secrecy surrounding the operation ensured that the Japanese would not easily discover how the Americans had carried out the raid. President Roosevelt's statement that the planes had come from "Shangri-La" delighted the American public, and confounded the Japanese even further. A short time later, of course, the Japanese recognized the carrier attack for what it was.

This recognition, however, led to disaster for the Imperial Navy and for Japan as well. All those formerly opposed to Yamamoto's plan for the invasion of Midway, which the Japanese deduced had figured prominently in the attack, quietly acquiesced to his wishes. Many in the Navy who had once opposed the operation in fact suddenly "saw the need" for the neutralization of Midway.

If this kind of enemy attempt is to be neutralized, there would be no other way but to make a landing on Hawaii. This makes landing on Midway a prerequisite. This is the very reason why the Combined Fleet urges a Midway operation.\(^{30}\)

In direct response to the Doolittle Raid, the invasion of Midway was launched on June 4, 1942. In two days of fighting, the Japanese lost four aircraft carriers, a heavy cruiser, two hundred and fifty planes, and more than two thousand men. It was not only Japan's first naval defeat since the sixteenth century and one of the most decisive naval battles in history, it was the turning point of the war in the Pacific. The battle, and the losses induced by it, "took place because [the Doolittle] raid induced the Japanese to extend their forces beyond capability."\(^{31}\)

The Doolittle Raid stands even today as one of the most "audacious and unorthodox" military operations in history.\(^{32}\) It also stands as one of the most successful, both from a psychological and military standpoint. The shock and disbelief it cause in Japan when it was realized that Japan was far from invulnerable, and the incredible boost in morale for the Americans in their darkest hour were invaluable contributions to the war effort. Though the initial military effect caused by the bombers themselves was negligible, the overwhelming loss of life and materiel suffered by the Japanese at Midway was an immeasurable contribution to the defeat of Japan. The great psychological and military repercussions caused by the Doolittle Raid make it clear that it was one of the most daring and effective operations in World War II, and in all of history.

Endnotes


4 Ibid., p. 233

5 Ibid., p. 229

6 Ibid., p. 229

Lest we forget definition is - it should not be forgotten. How to use lest we forget in a sentence: it should not be forgotten. She's a talented singer and, lest we forget, a fine musician as well. Learn More about lest we forget. Share lest we forget. Resources for lest we forget.

Time Traveler! Explore the year a word first appeared. “Lest we forget” is a phrase that is commonly used in remembrance of the millions of men who died in the Great War. It is difficult to describe exactly what it means, but it is a warning of sorts. A warning that we should not forget the soldiers who fought in WWI, and what they endured. Person 1: “The 100th year anniversary of the end of WWI is on 11/11/2018.” Person 2: “Lest we forget...” by A solid cube of tungsten October 24, 2018. 4. 1. Get a Lest we forget mug for your mate Bob. 2. Lest We Forget music. Translations in context of "lest we forget" in English-Russian from Reverso Context: Our watchword must forever be, lest we forget. These examples may contain rude words based on your search. These examples may contain colloquial words based on your search. Translation of "lest we forget" in Russian. Search lest we forget in: Web. Images.