

WOMEN'S CLUB SPEECH - CONTINUED

I said a few moments ago that unless production was increased there would be a shortage in a few months. People will say to you, perhaps, that the war may be over in a few months - that the war with Germany, at least, is fairly sure to be over in a few months. Perhaps it will - I don't know enough even to make a guess about it.

But let's not insist that something is sure to happen simply because we want it to happen. Let's remember that in September of 1940 Adolf Hitler was sure England would be beaten in a few months - and most of us here agreed with him. Let's remember that in the summer of 1941 most of us here were sure that Russia would be beaten and out of the war in a few months. And then let's ask ourselves if Germany is very much worse off now than Britain was in 1940 and Russia in 1941.

And even if Germany should be out of the war in a few months, there will still be Japan - and there will still be a need for great quantities of heavy gun ammunition, and for people to make it. Things are going well for us in the war with Japan now, but we still have a long way to go; our Army hasn't yet fought the great Japanese Army in China, an army made up of several million well-trained, cruel fanatics.

We are capturing islands and we have begun to bomb Japan itself - but on the mainland of Asia - and that's where most of the Japanese Army is - the Japs have built a great industrial empire. The fall of Hengyang a few weeks ago gave the Japanese land communications between the raw material areas in the South and their factories in the North; their Army will be near those great bases of supplies, but our Army will have to fight a good five thousand miles from its home bases.

Let's not allow ourselves to indulge in wishful thinking - let's not allow this war to last longer because we want so much to believe that it's almost over. I cannot think of anything worse than having some of the men from this community - our husbands, sons, or brothers - fail to come back because we had insisted that the war would be over in a few months.

Just what can we do? A great many things are being done, and will be done, and we can't all be on the committees that are doing them. But I believe that if the women of a community like ours really decide that they want something to be done it is done.

Our job, as I see it, is to make this community thoroughly and completely and everlastingly conscious of the importance of