

SUN-SETTERS' SAGA

THE LIGHTNINGS OF THE 339th FS TACKLE THE ENEMY OVER RABAU

CONCLUSION

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During the 339th Fighter Squadron's recent absence from the combat zone, the Northern Solomons campaign was successfully concluded. Although Japanese resistance in the interior of Bougainville Island would continue for many weeks, the Allies were in possession of Empress Augusta Bay and had established the nearby Torokina and Piva Airfields. Now that the Solomon Islands had been

secured, COMAIRSOLS (Commander, Aircraft, Solomon Islands) could turn its attention to Rabaul,

which lay less than 300 miles northwest of Bougainville, on the eastern tip of New Britain Island.

It was Rabaul's strategic location—between New Guinea



P-38H-1-LO 42-66683 of the 12th FS displays a colorful image of the popular Disney cartoon character Pluto the dog. It was assigned to the 12th in early 1944, while it was converting from Bell P-39 Airacobras to Lightnings, and had served previously with the 339th FS.