

It's great news from the far Pacific - telling of the big sea and air action off the coast of Indo-China. But, apparently it's only a beginner - with more word of victory still to come. The latest tonight tells us that a radio black - out still covers the operations of Admiral Halsey's fleet off the coast of the mainland of Asia. The action is still going on, and it is believed that Halsey could right now report still more enemy ships sent to the bottom if it were not for that radio blackout which is necessarily maintained.

As things stand, we know that our warships and planes have sunk twenty-five Jap ships including light cruisers and several destroyer escorts. The victory occurred in attacks on Jap convoys off the coast of Indo-China, and at least thirty-nine enemy planes were destroyed in big sky battles, as American air power swept the coast of the Asiatic mainland north from Saigon, capital of French Indo-China.

That's the farthest penetration into Jap

territory the Navy has made thus far, striking all the way to the mainland of Asia -- Indo-China being straight across the south China Sea from the Philippines, a distance of eight hundred miles. That far-reaching blow means -- the cutting of the Jap lines of communications to the Dutch East Indies, Malaya and Singapore. In other words, American sea and air power stands tonight across the lifeline of the stolen Japanese empire.

~~(kill previous story)~~

FOLLOW PACIFIC

The bulletin from Admiral Nimitz tonight tells us also of the sinking of a Japanese superbattleship. This occurred weeks ago, in the second battle off the Philippines. The sea monster in question was the Musashi, newly built and of the largest class -- a forty-five thousand tonner armed with nine sixteen inch guns. The Musashi was one of the mystery battleships that the Japs were known to be building just before the outbreak of the war - sea giants of forty-five thousand tons.

The scene of the sinking was in the area of Leyte, and occurred when the Japs made their attempt to surprise the American fleet and smash MacArthur's invasion. We knew previously that two Japanese battleships were sunk in that operation -- vessels of the Yamashiro class, twenty-nine-thousand-tonners, and now Admiral Nimitz tells us that there is conclusive evidence that the Musashi was also destroyed. The Jap superbattleship blew up and sank.

TYPHOON

Late news tonight brings some details about the typhoon in which several American destroyers floundered. It is described as a record-breaker. The wind blew at one hundred and fifteen miles an hour and the barometer sank to just about the lowest pressure ever recorded -- in the tropical tempest that caused the loss of American destroyers.

concentration.

These advanced forces have crossed the Agno River. The main invasion force has pushed inland for up to ten miles, but forward patrols have thrust ahead still farther -- across the Agno. That's the stream where the Japs were expected to make a strong stand. The belief is that a big push in that sector could be made right away -- except for the fact that the American drive must protect its flanks. We'll have to wait until the sides are covered before hurrying the drive forward.

Let's listen to the Japs for a minute, etc.

The latest word from the invasion front on the island of Luzon is that Japanese resistance is stiffening. More enemy opposition is being encountered true at the left ~~fr~~ flank of the beachhead. Where the Japs are putting up a strong fight. And, we hear that the forward American units are entering what the news dispatch calls "The Japanese zone of concentration".

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Now Let's listen to the Japs for a minute: ~~etc.~~

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the enemy radio announcing some things that may well be true. Tokyo says that we have landed three divisions on Luzon, two infantry and one armored. Also - that another big convoy has arrived in Lingayen Gulf, bringing heavy reinforcements to General Krueger's invading forces.

And the Japs expect still more trouble. They say there are signs of new American amphibious blows, new landings, to be made on Luzon. The Japs think that the next invasion stroke may break on ~~the~~ Batangas, which is south of Manila, or maybe the new landings will be made on Lamon Bay, which is across Luzon from Manila - straight across and on the east coast of Luzon. The Jap uncertainty about two such widely separated places has a pleasing sound - MacArthur apparently being up to his old strategy - of keeping the Jap guessing.

PHILIPPINE DESTROYERS

A dispatch from Admiral Kincaid's flagship operating off Luzon gives us the name of the Commander of one of the American Destroyers in the Philippine invasion. And where have we heard that name before - Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt? The skipper in question is Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., third son of the President! Those Roosevelts are versatile -- Elliott winning distinction for photographic ~~observation~~ *reconnaissance* in the war of the air, and now Franklin commanding a destroyer in the reconquest of the Philippines. And, as for father - we seem to have heard that he, too, has something to do with the war.

The dispatch from the flagship out there tells us, likewise, that still another destroyer is commanded by Charles Francis Adams, son of the former Secretary of the Navy, who served under President Hoover.

Your Stan. of Cal. message H —
and then news from Europe — and
from here at home too.

WESTERN FRONT

On the western front in Europe Allied forces today closed rapidly in on what was left of the Belgian salient. Everywhere at the western end of the remnant of the bulge, British and American troops pushed forward for speedy gains - the Germans in full flight.

The Allied armies are still driving to trap the Nazis, encircle what German forces are left at the western tip of the salient. Enemy units have been ~~xxx~~ surrounded, and others are being surrounded.

But it would appear that Field Marshal Von Rundstedt has succeeded in getting the bulk of his armor and infantry out of the trap.

Once again the Germans were aided by the weather - the battlefields of the ~~xxx~~ salient being swept by snow and blanketed by fog. This again has tied down Allied air power and under the cover of the blinding weather, Von Rundstedt is getting out most of his forces - the Germans executing what today's dispatch calls: "A rapid but orderly retreat".

To the south, the Nazis are continuing their "junior offensive". And today's news tells of ~~fxm~~ further enemy gains. One German thrust against French troops made progress in the direction of Strasbourg, which city is threatened.

On the other hand, American armored forces are counterattacking and all accounts indicate that the "junior offensive" though making advances is being kept under control.

GREECE

At one o'clock on Monday, the Greek Civil War will come to an official end - at least temporarily. A truce was concluded today - to take effect at one A.M, Monday. The signing was done by the British Commander in Greece, Lieutenant General Scobie, on one hand, and by a representative of the Left wing Elias on the other. The terms are a compromise, with the British conceding one point about which they were greatly concerned.

This is a question of hostages. The Left Wingers are holding a large number of Greeks who belong to conservative parties, that is -- leading personalities who are in favor of the Government in Athens, which the British support. They are hostages - and one of the barbarities in recent times has been the killing of hostages. The Nazis did it, and earned the odium of the world. And ~~Red~~ ~~the~~ revolutionaries have been known to shoot hostages.

So the British wanted to procure the release

of their Greek supporters held with the Elás.

And we are told that nine-tenths of the long and stubborn negotiations between General Scobie and the Left Wingers concerned the question of the hostages. In the end, the British yielded the point, and the Elás had its way. They are holding the hostages, while the negotiations for a permanent political settlement in Greece go on.

How badly the British take the concession they had to make is indicated by an announcement in London -- a statement issued from number Ten Downing Street, the residence of Prime Minister Churchill. The declaration says: "The taking and holding of hostages is a barbarous custom condemned by International Law. His Majesty's Government must make clear, therefore, that no truce can be endured or ripen into peace unless or until the hostages taken by the Elás have been effectively safeguarded and released."

~~London does not like the hostage business,~~

but is nevertheless relieved by the truce, ~~of the Allies~~

which will help Churchill plenty when he faces the House of Commons for a debate on the subject of Greece.

On the other hand, [†] the British ran into some new Balkan ~~Ex~~ embarrassment today -- with King Peter of Jugoslavia refusing to agree to a Regency. Without consulting either the British Government or the Ministers of his own exiled ~~Regime~~, the young Monarch issued a declaration saying - nothing doing. And this threatens some new ~~tangles of the~~ Jugoslav political ^{*tangles - all of*} ~~situation~~ which is sufficiently tangled already.

The actual power in the Balkan country is Communist Marshal Tito, who is backed by Moscow. Tito made an agreement with the Prime Minister of the exiled Jugo-Slav Government, one condition of which was that King Peter should give up his royal

prerogative, and declare a regency. The British okayed this, and so informed the Monarch in downright terms.

But the one time boy King ~~now~~ defies Great Britain, and also Soviet Russia and his own Ministers, which is some defiance.

One of his Ministers said today: "He is acting like a Medieval Monarch. We cannot tell what he will do next." to which the echo would seem to respond - it's a dickens of a time to be acting like a Medieval Monarch.

B-29's

~~We are turning out a lot of B-29's~~
~~considering the giant size and complex machinery~~
~~of those monsters of the air.~~ A vast amount of work goes
into the production of a superfortress, but we are
manufacturing them at the rate of more than a hundred
and thirty-five a month.

Hitherto, the B-29 production figure has
been kept a secret, but today it was disclosed by
J.A. Krug, Chairman of the War Production Board.
He stated that one plant alone ~~was~~ building a hundred
a month, and another plant thirty-five, and two other
plants had ~~the~~ gone into ~~the~~ B-29 production, with figures
for them not given.

~~So the minimum is a hundred and thirty-five~~
~~B-29's a month, which comes to sixteen hundred and~~
~~twenty a year. We may recall that the Pilgrim~~
~~Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock in year of sixteen~~
~~hundred and twenty, which makes it a significant~~
~~coincidence - or don't you believe in numerology?~~

MANPOWER

Today brought a lot of pressure against one feature of the work-or-fight law now before Congress. The bill, as drawn up by Congressman May of Kentucky, provides that men who refuse to take war jobs, or stay on war jobs, shall be drafted into the Army for labor service. This is opposed by the Army, with Lieutenant General Knudsen, Army Production Director, making the following statement to the Military Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. Speaking of men who refuse war jobs, he said "It would be bad to put them into the Army."

Then what should be done with them? ^{well,} General Knudsen speaking for the Army, proposes that penalties be provided -- heavy fines and imprisonment. ~~Under the work-or-fight law, slackers who stay out of war jobs, should be fined or sent to prison.~~

He stated that such penalties in a work-or-fight law would help to cure absenteeism, ^{of} which ~~the~~ ^{he} said ~~there is~~ ^{much too much.} Gen. Knudsen declared that

absenteeism is almost twice as bad as we should normally expect for wartime. ~~In times of peace, about~~

~~three per cent of manpower is lost because of workers staying away from the job. In wartime, you expect~~

~~the figure to be larger, said he, five per cent.~~

But absenteeism right now is about nine per cent, and a month ago it ran as high as eleven per cent in a big war plant at Dayton, Ohio.

RUSSIAN EMBASSY

In winter, one of the coldest places on earth is - Russia, famous in song and story for snow and ice. Another cold place, right now, is the Russian Embassy in Washington, where furnace heat ^{at the moment} ~~right now~~ is conspicuous by its absence. Which might lead you to think that the Soviet Diplomats on the banks of the Potomac were trying to reproduce the temperatures of their own frosty Moscow - a sort of shivery home sweet home.

But that's not the reason at all. The Soviet Embassy is cold, because the Russians have ^{already} used up all their fuel oil ration coupons for January. ~~Apparently, they are keeping the place so very snug and warm, that in less than two weeks they consumed a whole month's allotment of oil. Maybe they were trying to make the temperature as different from Moscow as possible.~~

~~It seems like something of a geographical paradox. Washington is in about the latitude of southern Spain or Sicily, while Moscow is on a line~~

~~with Northern Scotland and Labrador. And yet the
Moscow Diplomats in Washington used up their ration
coupons for fuel at such a rate that, now they are
freezing.~~

Today's news dispatch pictures Soviet
Ambassador Gromyko and his diplomatic staff as
shivering at their desks and working in overcoats.
And probably singing one of those sad Russian tunes
with the words - "Take me back ^{to cozy, sunny} ~~to hot old~~ Moscow."

WAC

~~Here is the story of a WAC serving overseas who, as things are, could only write a letter. But the time was when she could take action - direct and vigorous action.~~

Three years ago, two burglars broke into a house at Medford, Massachusetts, and were doing all right - until a young woman of the neighborhood intervened. Betty Lee Salash, twenty years old, nabbed the two robbers - capturing them and turning them over to the police.

Since then Betty has become a WAC, and is now serving in a war zone overseas. -- So what could she now do about burglars again breaking into a house at Medford, Massachusetts? It was the home of her parents this time; ~~and the robbers stole jewelry and five hundred dollars of the family savings. And~~ Somewhere overseas Betty of the WAC's, when she heard about it could only write a letter - a letter to the robbers. ~~This she sent to the newspapers in Boston, and~~ It was printed today.

Here's what she tells the crooks who robbed her parents' home: "We are giving our time, our strength and our lives over here for you, and behind our backs you rob our homes. Must you," she writes to the burglars, "Rob the kids who are fighting so their family and your family and everybody's family will have a better world to live in?" ~~"We are over here to help destroy our enemy - so that he can't get at people like you," Says Betty to the Robbers~~

And that ought to appeal to the better nature of the burglars - if they have a better nature. Maybe they'll be shamefaced and will return the jewelry *and the* five hundred dollars to Betty's parents. And maybe their better feelings might be touched by patriotism, *maybe now* and they'll decide to go straight, and lead an honest life hereafter. It will be nice to think that - but we do think of such funny things, don't we?

1/2
Hugh how about some appropriate weekend thoughts from you?

PHILIPPINES

Here's the latest just off the wire.

Two new landings on Mindoro Island. MacArthur's troops struck on Monday and Tuesday, landing on the east coast of Mindoro on Monday and on the West Tuesday. No opposition was encountered by American troops in these two latest invasion blows, which probably were indicated by stories that the Japs told several days ago of a big American invasion force passing through Philippine inland seas.

BRITISH CRITICISM

British criticism of American policy continues ~~xxxxxx~~ -- with the London Times today taking up the complaint that the United States has not made clear its position in world affairs. The London Times summons the Washington government to take, what it calls - "a bolder and more active lead". And states - that Europeans cannot be sure of the part that America will really play in a post-war organization.

The British newspaper, which often reflects the views of the London Foreign Office, declares that isolationism is still a force in the United States. "Isolationism in its manifold guises", says the London Times. And adds - that the new Congress in Washington should take a definite stand toward the problems that Europe has to face.