

The British evacuated Penang, moved everybody out safely yesterday. This was because the city was quite untenable. It's on a small island just off the *mainland*, ~~coast~~ and the Japanese, in driving southward along the west coast of Malaya, had pushed past Penang. It couldn't be held. So the British gave it up. ~~#~~ But what about the meaning, so far as Singapore is concerned? A new British line has been established some miles south of Penang, along the Kriang River. (This means that the Japanese have advanced about a hundred miles, and are now about three hundred and twenty miles from the Singapore naval base, their supreme objective.)

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Little fighting was reported today, with the British explaining that the Japanese had slowed down because of exhaustion and heavy casualties. They ~~are~~ ^{are} ~~are~~ ^{are} now ^{now} mustering their forces for a new assault. Singapore today expressed optimism, with the belief that the Japs

in Malaya lack - the knockout punch.

The state of affairs at Hong Kong seems doubtful, the British denying that the enemy has taken ~~over~~ all of the island off the China coast. Today, in London, a military spokesman said the British garrison is still resisting in what he called - the area under their control. So it would seem as if the Japanese had occupied more or even most of the island - with the British waging a last ditch fight in areas that they can best defend. (The Crown Colony of Hong Kong utterly isolated, has put up a gallant defense. This seems now to have turned into one more last stand.

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The fall of Hong Kong would not mean so much to the British, who have discounted its loss all along. * Of vast commercial consequence in times of peace, the Crown Colony was completely isolated in the Japanese controlled area, and could hardly be defended for long.

As for the Philippines, today's army communique states the following:- "There was a marked increase in enemy air and ground activities during the past twenty-four hours." (We are given few details about the ground activity. Presumably it consists of a resumption of Japanese attacks in the three sectors where they have succeeded in establishing themselves.)

The air activity, we are told, consisted largely of violent bombing in the Manila sector today. Twenty-four enemy planes raided the United States naval base at Cavite. This followed a powerful bombing attack yesterday at a place that brings back memories. The town is called Iloilo - which doesn't bring back any memories ^{yes} at all. But Iloilo is on an island, and the island is Panay. ^{TR} Yes, we do remember the ship named after that island, the gunboat PANAY, the bombing and sinking of which was a Number One incident ~~xxxxxx~~

several years back. The sinking of the U.S.S. PANAY was the first headline attack the Japs ever made on an American naval unit - and now they've bombed the Island of Panay. A minor coincidence, perhaps, but it's an item to add to the score - the reasons we have to square our shoulders and strike.

A telling tribute to the quality of American Philippine defense was made today by President Roosevelt in an army promotion. He made ^{Lieut.} General Douglas MacArthur a ~~fixx~~ full general. And that's a rare distinction. As American Commander of the Philippines, he has hitherto had the rank of Lieutenant-General, but now he is stepped up to the highest possible military grade that the United States Army can provide.

Full generals have been rare indeed. Around here at N.B.C. we understand that the only ones in the past

Have been Washington, Grant, Sherman, and Pershing. The A.E.F. Commander in World War Number One is the only living full General who holds the rank permanently.

News from Wake Island, and it's the same, heroically the same. The tiny garrison of marines out there on the loneliest space of ocean, has sustained two more air attacks by the besieging Japanese. But they're still fighting ~~xx~~ back. The garrison, in the words of the Navy Department, "continues to counter these blows."

Today's Navy Bulletin made no mention of Midway Island, another tiny Pacific outpost which at last reports was holding out.

In the case of Timor, the Portuguese island just across from Australia -- Lisbon demands that the Allied forces withdraw. The Portuguese Premier today stated that the British and Dutch government had offered to help Portugal in protecting Timor, but the Lisbon government rejected this. Then the British

and Dutch proceeded to occupy the island without permission. So Lisbon is protesting. And the latest is a Dutch announcement saying that the Netherlands will not budge. They'll stay in Timor.

KNOX

Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox made an important statement today, and he did it at a scene that had an emotional dramatic climax. The statement was - that right now the Japanese have a naval preponderance in the Pacific war area. The enemy has, what Secretary Knox called - "by far the largest naval force in the western Pacific." # He revealed that on the fateful day of December Seventh, there were three separate assaults on Pearl Harbor, but only two were effective - the first two. The third air/raid, in the Secretary's words - "never got home." It occurred only two hours after the first bomb fell in conditions of utter surprise, but by that time the defense ^swere so well organized and so effective that the hostile bombers were beaten off. In spite of the huge damage wrought by the first two raids that day, the remaining anti-aircraft equipment fired such a barrage from

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land and sea, that the enemy planes were forced to sheer off.

All of which, said the Secretary of the Navy, pointed to the importance of the Japanese treachery of surprise. Also, the disastrous effect of the American lack of vigilance. Half an hour's warning would have meant, what the Secretary called - "all the difference in the world." He ~~gave warning~~ ^{cautioned} that the Japanese were a powerful enemy, and must not be under-estimated. And to this he added the statement that the Japanese have now by far the largest naval force in the western Pacific.

The Secretary of the Navy was talking to the graduating class at Annapolis - the class graduating in advance because of the war. So the setting was dramatic, and the emotional climax came while Secretary

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Knox was presenting diplomas to the cadets. One midy stepped forward - Isaac Campbell Kidd of Long Beach, California. He was an honor student, one of the few graduating cadets cited for having what were called, "special officer-like qualities." The audience at the ceremony, nearly two thousand people, had been asked not to applaud, not to clap hands or cheer. But this instruction was violated, and there was a heartfelt outbreak, a roar of applause that signified deep emotion.

This occurred when Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox addressed graduating cadet Isaac Campbell Kidd, saying: "Remember - that you^r father did not lose his life. He gave it." ^{TP} The twenty-two year old lad is a son of Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, who was killed in the attack on Pearl Harbor twelve days ago. Admiral Kidd was the most prominent of the victims of the Jap

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sneak punch, and today his son ^W~~A~~ has graduated from Annapolis. The young ensign has requested that he be assigned to submarine duty - the undersea service which right now is the most active branch of the Navy in the war of the Pacific.

EUROPEAN WAR

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A late dispatch from the Soviets tells of the destruction of an entire German division, including the commanding general. This happened, apparently, in the vital city of Kharkov -- as the Soviets drive on.

In Libya, the British forces are nearing Benghazi -- so one report tells us, amid stories of increasing British victory in North Africa.

BULLETINS

Here are some late flash bulletins:-

Civilian Director LaGuardia says that Congress may soon be asked for funds to provide fifty million gas masks for civilians on the east, gulf and pacific coasts.

The Budget Bureau in Washington announces that twelve federal agencies or parts of agencies are being moved from the capital to other cities. Ten thousand employees will be transferred. This is part of the move to decentralize government offices.

The Congressional Committee investigating air transportation, reports that the Axis powers have honeycombed Latin-America for air bases, storage points for fuel and arms. Also - short wave radio stations.

President Roosevelt has just formally established the office of censorship, and appointed Byron Price, formerly of the Associated Press, as Censor.

COMMAND

President Roosevelt today confirmed accounts of negotiations for the formation of an Inter-Allied Command. He said that the discussions have been going on every day for weeks -- for the purpose of arranging a method of supreme war direction;

The general belief is that when the Inter-Allied Command is formed, it will be set up in Washington -- our own national capital the center of control for the world wide moves of war.

DRAFT

The age limits are to be twenty to forty-four -- for combat service. Congress today passed a bill that represents a compromise between the views of the Senate and the lower House. The Senate voted -- nineteen to forty-four, the House twenty-one to forty-four. Today a joint committee worked to harmonize the two bills, and compromised the point at issue - the lower age limit of selective service. They split the difference between nineteen and twenty-one, and the law goes through at - twenty.^{TP} Both Houses promptly accepted the compromise version, with only a scattering of votes in opposition. The bill extending selective service of course calls for the registration of all males between eighteen and sixty-four. There wasn't any dispute about the ages as applied merely to registration. The question was, combat service, the Army and Navy for actualy fighting; - and it's ^{to be} twenty to forty-four. ^

BASEBALL

A double barrel prophecy was made today by one of our leading sages - a venerable patriarch known for his sagacious wisdom. He's Connie Mack, ~~the~~ *Philosophic* ~~venerable~~ Nestor of baseball. Connie of the ~~Philadelphia~~ Philadelphia Athletics celebrated his eightieth birthday today and took the occasion to make a two-way prophecy. ~~Double meanings are often not altogether nice, but~~ ~~Connie was altogether noble in his prophetic double~~ ~~talk.~~ It had to do with baseball, a prognostication concerning next season in the American League. But it also had to do with something else.

"Watch the Yanks", said Connie Mack.

That's a familiar kind of phrase for picking a pennant winner, and Connie was referring to the team made illustrious by Joe DiMaggio, King Kong Keller, Red Ruffing, et al. But he was also referring to *— some other Yanks: —* another team, ~~consisting of~~ the Army, the Navy, and

the Air Corps.

Connie Mack doesn't think that war-time is going to interfere with the coming baseball season - although in World War Number One diamond activities were cut short. He believes that the Government will regard normal sports, including baseball, as a means of maintaining public morale. So there'll be pennant winning in baseball as well as in the war, says Connie, as he makes the ringing twofold prediction - "Watch the Yanks!"

STAR SPANGLED BANNER

I did penance night before last for the mistake I made in crediting "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" to the wrong author. And now perhaps it's time to consider the other side of my rather ill-starred defense of the "Star Spangled Banner." The radio audience has given me plenty of support in arguing ~~xxxx~~ against Composer and Critic Deems Taylor, who proposed that we adopt another national anthem. ^R I wish I could read all the letters and telegrams from Americans who speak up in defense of our national song - but that would take a whole broadcast. ~~So I'll recite only a few pertinent lines of argument that I have received.~~ ~~You'll note that~~ ^M Most of the communications are from women; ~~and that's typical. They are~~ sometimes called the weaker sex, and they are the fair sex, and they certainly are the patriotic sex.

In response to Deems Taylor's contention that

our national anthem is not singable, Theresa Heil of New York writes:- "People without voices will sing any other song just as badly."

Ethel Barstow of Englewood, New Jersey, has this to say:- "Suppose it is hard to sing - but when did we Americans ever give up anything because it was hard?" ~~she asks.~~

An anonymous lady tells me that years ago, in an old song book, she saw the "Star Spangled Banner" ~~written~~ in the Key of "A". So she wrote to band masters and asked them why they always played it in a higher key? They replied that the national anthem ^{sounded better in a} ~~in the~~ higher key - when played by bands and orchestras.

Along that line, a Daughter of the American Revolution tells me how her ⁺ ~~Chaper~~ Chapter of the D.A.R. at Johnstown, New York, has transposed the melody down to a lower and more singable key. "Our Chapter," she writes, "is now

able to sing it with perfect ease."

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As for Deems Taylor suggesting that we adopt "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" as a substitute, Ethel Bennett of Brooklyn gives us this pertinent point of refutation. She asks: "Does Mr. Taylor know that the Episcopal Hymnal will omit - "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" from its new edition - because of protests from the South?"

And here's a point made by Sophia Doughty of Mystic, Connecticut. "Is there a nation on earth," she asks, "which does not at once recognize the melody as our national anthem?"

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After the ladies have their say, here's a man's homage in the form of a neat little anecdote. L.R. Thomas of Philadelphia, ~~Pennsylvania~~, tells of some friends who had three little girls. Two ~~of them~~

STAR SPANGLED BANNER - 4

were Girl Scouts and had learned to stand up when the "Star Spangled Banner" was played. They in turn taught this patriotic custom to their smaller sister - a babe of two.

One night, shortly after the children were put to bed, the "Star Spangled Banner" sounded on the family radio. The two older girls slept together, and the mother heard them getting up in their beds. They were standing in the dark, like two Girl Scouts. And they called to their baby sister, who was in bed in the next room.

"Stand up," they told her, and then repeated - "stand up!!" Whereupon out of the dark room came a

tiny plaintive voice: "I is standing up," and then I suppose she fell out of her crib.

~~To which the echo resounds - Long May It Wave!~~

And now Hugh.

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