

AUSTRALIA

L.F. - Sunoco - Thursday, Jan. 23, 1942

The focus of war shifts across vast areas of oceans and islands -- to Australia. This is the immediate result of news from the remote bit of Pacific land called New Britain. Today the wireless on that island reported the appearance of Japanese warships and war planes, and shortly thereafter all communication with New Britain stopped suddenly. This leads to the supposition that British forces have evacuated their base at Rabaul in the face of enemy bombardment and invasion.

New Britain is the largest and most important island in the Bismarck archipelago. That name "Bismarck" indicates ^{it was} ~~that the archipelago was~~ once a German possession. It was, in fact, taken by the Australians in the previous World War; ^{an} ~~the~~ Australian mandate. The islands are just west of New Guinea, the huge mass of ^{immediately} savage land that lies ~~just~~ north of Australia. New

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New Britain has an area of ten thousand miles, ^{its} long and narrow, ~~It is~~ only twenty miles across, and yet

it was only in Nineteen Twenty-eight that a white man ^{first} made his way from one side to the other. The island

is that rugged and forbidding -- and, ~~it is~~ still

inhabited by cannibals -- Anthrōpōphagous Melanesians. ⁷
Blacks, fuzzy-headed man-eaters.
Yet the base at Rabaul is well developed, and is

regarded as a key to the northern approaches to Australia -- commanding narrow straits through

which shipping must pass. A glance at your ~~Sunoco~~ map will show this vividly.

New Britain is the first Australian ~~possession~~ possession to be invaded by the Japanese. It is in the area of Australian defense, and the ^{report} ~~report~~ of its capture by the enemy has caused immediate tension in the land Down Under. Dispatches from Melbourne

indicate the belief that a Japanese attempt to invade

^{proper} Australia may be the next move. ^{and} Full military emergency has been invoked. Complete blackouts in Australian cities have been ordered. ~~that~~ ^{they} hitherto have been partial. Full battle equipment has been issued to the home guard, and ^{these} ~~these~~ [^] soldiers for local defense are now considered as -- "troops in the field." TH Australian newspapers are making bitter remarks -- saying that the great Commonwealth of the Southern Hemisphere has sent its troops to fight in distant areas -- like ~~Lybia~~ Libya. ~~And this was~~ done on the official assurance from London that the Pacific ~~defense~~ areas were well defended, Singapore impregnable. And now, while Singapore has not fallen, things are in a crisis of war and attack, ^{and} the Japs moreover are striking down ~~the~~ Australia way -- making their first invasion of Australia-held ~~territory~~ territory today. — ^{New Britain.}

MALAYA

In Malaya the military situation appears to be static -- ^{though the} ~~so far~~ Japanese have made a further advance down the East coast -- the less important sector. The battle line at the western side of the peninsula is about sixty miles from Singapore, with the British holding strongly.

^{To the North,}
~~Furthermore,~~ in Burma, fierce fighting is going on, with the Japanese trying to force their way to the important British base of Moulmein, ~~that~~ ~~romantic place called Kipling's Pagoda.~~ Apparently ^{are} ~~they~~ ~~enemy~~ ~~is~~ not making much progress, because Rangoon reports that the British today stopped the enemy -- "wherever they met him," as the bulletin reads. ^{tr} However, Rangoon continues, "While this is most heartening, there is no ground for complacency."

^{tr} If the Japanese were to smash across to Moulmein they would cut off what is called the Tanassarin ^{panhandle,}

although most of us Americans associate panhandle with Texas. The Tanassarim^A panhandle is that narrow handle of Burmese land~~that~~^{ing} extends down into the Malay Peninsula. Moreover, getting to Moulmein ~~Pagoda~~ would put the Japs in a position to strike at Rangoon and cut that all-important Burma Road -- which gets its supplies via Rangoon.

INDIES

In the Dutch East Indies devastation reigns at the most important oil port on the East Coast of Borneo. The destroying has been done by the Dutch authorities. They have just wrecked all the equipment at Balikpapan, which apparently is about to fall to the Japanese. So the Dutch have applied the scorched earth policy to their biggest Borneo oil port.

PHILIPPINES

There is grave and solemn news from General MacArthur -- as he holds his defense lines. ~~with small forces.~~ The General reports that the Japanese have landed another entirely new army -- in addition to troops they already *had confronting him on* ~~have, along~~ the Bataan Peninsula battle field.

This new army was landed at Lingayen and Subic Bay and now brings the enemy force up to between two and three hundred thousand men. That's the estimate in Washington. *H*

The new Japanese army is commanded by General *Homma* ~~Homma~~ *Louima* and military circles in Washington describe him as an able

~~xxx~~ strategist. They know him well. He has had a long series of assignments in many parts of the world, and has come much into contact with western military men -- including Americans.

The ponderous weight of Japanese forces are now being hurled against General McArthur's line across the Bataan Peninsula. McArthur reports that the pressure is greatest at his left and center. ^{and} Washington wonders how long he'll be able to hold out against such terrific odds. Ten to one is a moderate estimate.

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Meanwhile we hear a defense of the Philippine Mayor of Manilla who is holding office under Japanese control. The supposition has been expressed that he must be some sort of fifth columnist. This is denied today ~~by~~ by the Philippine Commissioner in Washington, who quotes a message he has received from President Manuel Quezon. Quezon is described as "being somewhere on Philippine soil". And now he sends the information that the present Mayor of Manilla was appointed

before the withdrawal of American troops, was put in office according to the wishes of Quezon himself and General McArthur. The Mayor is named Vargas. And he was formerly confidential secretary to Quezon. ("I feel certain" states the Philippine President "that he will not do anything contrary to his oath of allegiance to the United States".)

LIBYA

The Nazis are striking back in Libya.

British headquarters at Cairo report that General Rommel's panzer forces ^{today} made a reconnaissance ^{in force} ~~push~~ an advance of about ten miles. They came forward from the line which the Axis troops are holding, and light British forces retired -- maintaining contact with the enemy.

Cairo is still complaining about the weather saying that conditions are the worst in ten years. It's either torrential rain or sandstorms. ^{And} That paradox ^{ical} ~~of a~~ weather condition is badly handicapping the British Air Force.

RUSSIA

In Moscow -- the Communist Party today commemorated the Eighteenth Anniversary of the death of Lenin. Part of the commemoration took the form of new announcements of victory over the Nazis. The Red Army is reported to be closing a trap on the Germans retreating from their important stronghold at Moshaiak. The Nazis are retiring slowly, and the Soviets are trying to circle them with a pincer movement. The Red Army states that in the past four days it has recaptured one hundred and forty-four towns.

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London says that Hitler is facing a supreme crisis -- in trying to avert a break between the German General staff and the Nazi party.

Meanwhile in London today, there was something new in the way of newspapers. The first Soviet Journal ever to be published in Britain made its debut. It's a Weekly called SOVIET WAR NEWS, sells for three pence and is issued by Stalin's Embassy. It's a tabloid picture affair giving Moscow accounts of the war in Russia.

CANADA

The Governor*General of Canada, the Earl of Athlone formally confirmed the fact that the Canadian government is going to hold a plebescite on the subject of conscription. In an address from the throne he told the Ottawa Parliament that a vote will be held asking the people to release Prime Minister Mackenzie King from his election pledges not to invoke conscription. Canada hitherto has raised armies by voluntary enlistment, but they are making ready for a draft.

CONFERENCE

The late word from Rio tells of a last minute hitch in the Hemisphere Agreement to break diplomatic relations with the Axis powers. ^A ~~The~~ hitch ^{again} ~~was~~ injected by Argentina -- the one South American Republic that has held out the most against an ^A ~~Axis~~ action.

Argentina wants a change of wording -- one phrase to be altered. The phrase in question reads:- "cannot continue relations." Buenos Aires now wants to make it read:- "Can discontinue relations." That obviously is a phraseological horse of a very different grammati^{cal} color -- the difference between the thing ^{you cannot do} ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ and the thing you can ~~stop~~ doing. The change, of course would fundamentally weaken the pledge on the part of the Latin-American Republics to ^{break} ~~xxxxxxxx~~ with the Axis.

The explanation of the Argentine attitude is that the statesmen from Buenos Aires were annoyed by some remarks made by United States Senator Tom Conally of Texas, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He criticized ^d the Argentine attitude -- so

Argentina in resentment is changing its attitude, not for the better but for the worse^e.

Another source of disagreement is seen in ~~the~~^a Mexican proposal to grant^t non-belligerent status to Soviet Russia. That gesture of favor toward the Soviets is said not to appeal to the countries of South America -- which ~~is~~^{are} strongly anti-Communist. South American~~s~~ is so anti-Bolshevik that not one of its ~~countries~~^{governments} now maintain~~s~~ diplomatic relations with Soviet Moscow. They say a compromise may be reached whereby non-belligerent status will be granted to all the anti-Axis nations that have possessions in the Western Hemisphere. That would include Great Britain and Holland, for example -- but would exclude the Soviets.

TROOP MOVEMENTS

Huge military moves by the United States -- were revealed in Washington today. A high government official told how the defenses of ^{our} ~~the United States~~ West Coast and the fortress of Hawaii have been strengthened immensely. And this paves the way for American reinforcements to be sent to the battlefield of ocean and islands off Southern Asia.

^e
This [^] great Army activity began immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack. The spokesman in Washington today stated that the first news from Pearl Harbor seemed to indicate that our Hawaii for ^{these} ~~cos~~ had been terribly crippled, that the United States [^] had lost control of the seas, and that our entire Pacific Coast had been left without defense. All this, fortunately, was exaggerated. But the alarming supposition put the Army into swift action, and a vast operation was begun to strengthen our West Coast and Hawaii. Six hundred thousand troops were moved ^{within} [^] to the boundaries of ^{the} [^] continental ^{U.S.A.} [^] ~~United States~~ ^{and} [^] that was only part of the burst of military activity

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Which was carried out with a minimum of confusion and delay. As a result, the defense operation is now complete -- necessary preparation for hurling the power of the United States into the Battle of the Pacific.

DIES

Congressman Dies of the Dies Committee stated today that his investigating group was going to look into the nationalist organizations in this country, all of them, one after another. The Congressman defined the meaning of -- "nationalist organizations." He said they were, in his words -- "nearly all aimed at the Jews."

The Dies Committee is making an inquiry into enemy propoganda in this country -- and most of this is anti-Semitic, said the Congressman.

Congressman Dies was asked about reports



that his committee has questioned Joseph P. Lash, a New York youth leader. ^{Lash has} ~~from~~ ~~He has, ~~xxxx~~ time to time,~~ been accused ^{of being a} ~~of having~~ Communist, ~~sympathies,~~ but has always denied that he was a member of the Communist party. Lash has been a guest at the White House at one time or another, and the Washington rumor is that the Dies Committee questioned him at the request of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt -- the idea being for the youth leader to clear himself of the Communist charge, so that he can ~~be~~ get a commission as a Naval Intelligence officer.

When Congressman Dies was asked about this he said that hearings of his committee during the past few days have been secret, and that he would not disclose anything that may have transpired. In other words -- no comment.

PROFITS

Proceedings in the Senate today witnessed a bitter attack on wartime profiteering. Senator Walsh of Massachusetts referred to the instances of gain revealed by recent Senate and House Committee investigations, the Truman and Vinson reports.

Senator Walsh pointed out that on several occasions the Naval Affairs Committee has recommended that margins of gain be limited to between seven and twelve percent, and added that every time the profit limitation was under consideration, the committee was bombarded by big business interests, airplane manufacturers and the Office of Production Management -- the agency that was abolished yesterday. Walsh of Massachusetts stated that present profits are what he called "unchecked."

Then he went on to excoriate the attitude of some war industry workers, who are making large wages. He told of an instance on Long Island -- paydat at n airplane factory. A lot of soldiers were passing the plant, as the workers came out of the

buildings. The workers waved their pay checks in the soldiers' faces and jeered -- "you poor suckers."

The Senator didn't say what the soldiers replied, but it would be easy to suggest a few apt remarks.

LABOR

There's word from Washington that President Roosevelt and Philip Murray, head of the C.I.O. have agreed to oppose the plan for Labor unity propounded by John L. Lewis.

This move by Lewis was launched without the knowledge of Philip Murray, President of the C.I.O. and Murray is understood to be annoyed aboutt the sudden and thoroughly unexpected project. And now the word from Washington is that Murray was in secret conference with the President at the White House yesterday. They are reported to have agreed that the Lewis peace proposal was not a good thing right now. They think that peace between the two Labor organizations might hinder the war production drive -- because the merger would lead to internal competition among the Union heads, each of these fighting for hifh post in the new combined organization.

We hear further that the President and Philip Murray believe that the recent Lewis Labor unity move is in large part a one-man campaign

inspired by opposition to the President and to Murray. John L. Lewis resigned the Presidency of the C.I.O., after coming out strongly against the President in the Nineteen Forty campaign. And the supposition has been expressed that he's now maneuvering to get command of the C.I.O. again -- possibly the combination of both labor factions.

SHIP

Another ship was sunk today -- but not by Nazi submarines. The Freighter S. S. Brazos was in a collision off Cape Hatteras. It had a smash up with another vessel, which ~~was~~ is unidentified, and the Brazos sank. No lives were lost.

DRAFT

Today's news tells of a selective service inquiry received at the White House. It's from a fellow down in Tennessee who has been deferred because of having a dependent wife. Here is the selective service problem that he presents.

He writes, "Dear Mr. President:
Confidentially, I am married and in Class Three-A. My wife is some twelve years older than me," he explains, and then goes on to propound the thrilling question. "What I want to know from you is -- if I divorce my wife and marry Miss So-and-So, who is several years younger, and loves me very much, will you still keep me in Class Three-A?"

The White House has sent the letter to the local Nashville Draft Board where the ambitious husband is registered. Let them figure out the puzzle of the wife, the girl and Class Three-A. Or maybe the wife could figure it out for them.

And now Hugh how do you figure things?