

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

News this past week brought to a climax that one factor which has been a dizzy surprise in the war of the Pacific -- the factor of distances. During the week that is now closing we find the Japanese reaching eastward across the line of islands north of Australia. Enemy landings in New Guinea and on New Britain and New Ireland in the Bixmarck Archipelago. And an invasion of the Solomon Islands, with rumors that they are striking still further on, in the Fiji group. All the way across Melanesia. On the west, Malaya. On the east, the Fijis. That is a military distance to stagger the imagination. And yet it's one coherent battle front along which the Japanese enemy is attacking the United Nations. At the Western end, Malay -- they look out over the Indian Ocean. And the Fiji Islands look out upon Polynesia.

DISTANCES - 2

Then, in this present war a marvel of distance came when Hitler assailed Stalin, and the Russian Front was established for more than a thousand miles. For months on my daily Sunoco News program I mentioned that mileage in tones of awe -- a thousand miles of battlefront.

Now the Pacific War, with all previous standards of distance becoming - well, trifling. And this week just past has given to the world an ocean and island war front of four thousand miles, four times the length of the line in Russia.

If the Hitler-Stalin theater of battle were extended that far, it would reach from Leningrad to Central Africa. If it were projected northward, it would reach to the North Pole. Putting it in other terms, the four thousand mile battle line in the War of the Pacific is equal to about one-sixth the circumference of the globe at the equator.

The battle line of islands from Malaya to

the Fijis is a consecutive series of stepping stones separated by narrow straits. The land masses are great and small, varying from huge Borneo and New Guinea to tiny coral atols. The islands are so dense, that from the shores of one you are seldom far out of sight of the coast of another. And this brings us to another element of numerical magnitude, huge numbers.

How many islands are there in the Malay Archipelago, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, Melanesia? Well, there are more than seven thousand islands in the Philippines alone. And perhaps the complet figure for the islands on the whole war front is unknown -- if we count all the coral reefs -- maybe twenty thousand or thirty thousand.

A much more pertinent question would be how many islands there are of a sort useful for air bases? That's a question of <sup>a most</sup> ultra-modern sort of geography. I doubt if there's any military or map man who could give you even approximately the answer.

FOLLOW DISTANCES

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What is the meaning of this factor of exaggerated space? What conclusions may we draw from the characteristic of vast extension? For a possible answer we may refer to another prominent element in the week's news -- a Holland element, the doings of the Dutch in the East Indies. <sup>TP</sup> One surprise in the war of the Pacific ~~xxx~~ all along has been the great showing made by the tiny navy and air force that the Netherlands have maintained in their <sup>immensely</sup> ~~xxxxxxx~~ wealthy possessions south of Asia. With few ships and few planes they've been scoring a disproportionate amount of success against Japanese naval vessels, transports and supply ships. <sup>TP</sup> And in this they reached a ~~highly~~ high point during the week -- culminating with yesterday's news of a Dutch air attack that blasted eight enemy warships. <sup>TP</sup> ~~This was followed by an odd news item today -- something characteristic of the~~

The significance of those successful ship attacks would seem to be large indeed. They may well point to the ultimate way of victory -- smashing through the air at Japanese communications.

What those communications are like is shown plainly by the factor of distances -- long communications, intricate, stretched over vast spaces, an immense and complicated network. And nearly all by sea, from island to island -- and there are so many islands -- so many thousands of islands. The Japanese must send their invasion forces by ship, and must keep them supplied in the same way. Every point where they land creates a new line of communications for them, a line of ships. To hold their battle front solidly they must occupy island after island - establishing air bases.

How much of that interminable sea communication can they accomplish and for how long? Especially -- under bombing? Suppose that we and the British Empire had air forces in that area as large



in proportion as the Dutch have? The United States and Britain should have each ten or twenty times the amount of air power that tiny Holland can muster. How well could the Japanese make their ocean and island communications work; if mighty fleets of American and British bombers were blasting their ships -- as the Dutch are doing so well with their small forces? Every military expert recognizes that the Achilles Heel of the Japanese campaign is -- communications. And this week's news certainly indicates it more than ever.

So eventually the prospect may be this: With the future fleets of bombers of the Allied nations striking incessantly and over a long period at the oceanic war communications of the enemy, there will be a contest between the number of our planes and the ships of their merchant marine.

PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines General MacArthur has undoubtedly succeeded in delaying the Japanese much more than they thought he could ever do. The tremendous fight he is putting up must be having a good deal of effect on the time element of their schedule. This has been true for several weeks, and was emphasized during the past seven days -- with MacArthur's men still holding their lines in the Batan Peninsula against an overwhelming numerical superiority.

The fight he is making will go down in history as a classic. He has a tiny force of Americans and Filipinos, while the Japs are able to bring in everything they want. The week's news told of their landing a whole new army -- giving them two or three hundred thousand men against a probable twenty or thirty thousand for MacArthur. They can land supplies and equipment at will -- while MacArthur apparently is cut off from all reinforcement, and must depend upon what supplies he has, because Japan

has the naval and air superiority in the Western

Pacific. [ How long MacArthur will be able to continue  
that extraordinary battle is a mere guess. But he  
held his lines all this week, and shows no sign of  
caving in.



## BURMA

The Battle in Burma is closely tied with the Japanese drive on Malaya. And if it got far enough, would cut the Burma Road -- the artery of United Nations supplies to China. The Chinese are keenly aware of the danger of this, and are striking on their own to prevent it. Even sending troops into Burma, And the week's news showed the Chinese Air Force in smashing attacks against Japanese positions in Siam and French Indo-China.

During the week the enemy made some progress through mountains and jungle toward the important Burmese base -- Moulmein. But it isn't clear how formidable their assault may be.

The week brought striking victories for British and American pilots -- smashing Japanese sky attacks against Rangoon.

ADD BURMA

As Ben Grauer mentioned I once spent a good deal of time in <sup>o</sup>mst of these countries that are now in the news. Rangoon! What ~~xxx~~ memories! I had my own~~xxxx~~ steamer plying ~~xx~~ for a thousand miles up and down the Irawaddy River, at one time, from Rangoon to Prome, to Yen'enyang, and on to Mandalay and then far up to the Chinese frontier, at Bhamo. What changes this vast war of continents and oceans will bring to that colorful land along the Road to Mandalay!

ADD MALAYA

Now about the Battle of  
Singapore. The Japs are  
getting nearer that strategic island.

I am tempted to reminiscence a little

about Malaya. As I read the news from there these

days I can't help thinking of ~~xxx~~ some of the

experiences those Anzac and British soldiers and

the Japanese are having in the Malaya forest.

Years ago I lived for a time along the Pigmys

of the Malaya jungle, the little people known

as the Sakeis, and the still more primitive Semangs.

And, that jungle is full of loads of things besides

Pigmys -- huge pythons! The only animal in the

world that will hunt man, the giant seladangs.

The only reptile that will chase man, the

hammadryad or King Cobra.

And, I wonder what has become of my

old friend Tiger Manap, a leather-faced Malay

who had ~~xxxx~~ devoted his life to hunting tiget,

protecting the Malay villagers from maneaters.

I used to go hunting crocodiles with Tiger Manap

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For bait he would use a dead monkey, floating on a chunk of bamboo, with a long rope tied to it. Yes, those fellows who are ~~fix~~ fighting in the ~~xx~~ malay forest, fighting in the battle of Malaya and the battle of Singapore, what tales they'll have to tell-- those who live to tell the tales.

## LIBYA

The week's news from Libya simply serves to sharpen one of the most sorely debated questions since the Pacific war began. Should it have been Suez -- or Singapore? That is -- should the British have thrown their major available fighting equipment into an attack against the Nazi panzer divisions in North Africa? Essentially an angle of the defense of the Suez Canal and the Near East? Or should they, in anticipation of a war with Japan, have disposed their material with a view to the defense of Singapore, key to the Battle of the Pacific?

Australia, protesting bitterly -- 

stating that its own forces were sent to the North African battlefields on the assumption that Singapore was impregnable. <sup>TP</sup> One way of arguing is that both Great Britain and the United States knew that a war with Japan was likely to happen, and should have had that in mind in placing the great amounts of Lend-Lease equipment built in this country -- the planes, the tanks, the guns. Knowing that they were likely to fight Japan, they should have used the material to strengthen Singapore and the Philippines -- instead of sending so much of it to be used on the North African desert. <sup>TP</sup> This line of contention would place emphasis on Singapore, rather than on Suez as a dominating point of world strategy. Anyway, they add, the threat against Sué~~x~~ has not been eliminated -- the Nazis ~~x~~ in North Africa have not been annihilated.

And, meanwhile, the Japs are rampaging far and wide --  
<sup>with</sup> the fate of Singapore in the balance. <sup>#</sup> An opposite  
contention is that if ~~the~~ British and Bend-Lease  
equipment had not gone to North Africa, General

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Rommel's panzer divisions might now be striking at Suez -- instead of being so greatly reduced in strength that they can't hope to do much.

The pros and cons make a lively argument -- especially with the new element added late this week. Rommel's panzer forces taking the offensive. After long and heavy fighting during which they were driven far back from the border of Egypt, they stopped, and made a stand -- and are now thrusting forward, <sup>again,</sup> They ~~made~~ a drive of ninety miles during the past several days. They've been reinforced -- but how much? We don't know, and we can't tell whether the present swift advance of the Nazi North African Corps represent <sup>S</sup> ~~ing~~ a mere reconnaissance, something tentative, or whether it's a full-fledged offensive. In either case, it provides new suppositions to be added to the argument -- Suez versus Singapore.

## RUSSIA

The week's news from Soviet Russia presented few novelties. It was about the same as the week before -- the Red Army advancing. The picture continues to be one of bitter Russian cold - cold as cruel as war itself.

As the week ends there are Moscow claims that the Red forces, in the frightful severity of Russian winter are driving as fast as the Nazi blitzkrieg did in its early lightning thrusts that came so near to Moscow. With all of this the major question still remains -- how far does the Nazi retirement represent a disastrous defeat? The news of the week did not answer that.

## PEARL HARBOR

The news of this week ends with the promise of a major headline to begin next week. A bulletin from Washington today tells us that the official report on Pearl Harbor has just been submitted to President Roosevelt -- the report made by the investigating board headed by Supreme Court Justice Roberts. What have they decided about the surprise Japanese attack that began the war? Was anybody asleep at Pearl Harbor? Who was to blame? We'll know that tomorrow. The report of the investigating board will be released for publication and broadcast after nine p.m. tonight.

ROMAN

I've ~~just~~ received from the War Department a document of classical learning. To be sure, the army has something more to do these days than ~~to~~ dig into ancient scholarship -- but this erudite release from Washington is much to the point nowadays. And especially <sup>at</sup> ~~right now~~ this moment, -- when we are having a discussion of the war events of the ~~past~~ week.

~~Today's bit of War Department classical~~  
<sup>Something</sup> ~~learning is~~ from Roman history -- something <sup>that</sup> ~~is~~ that happened two thousand <sup>one hundred</sup> ~~and nine~~ years ago. It's a quotation from the Historian Livy, and tells of the war with the Macedonians in the year One Hundred and Sixty-eight B.C. The Consul Lucius Aemilius Paulus was named Commander of the Roman army campaigning in Macedonia. Upon being appointed by the Roman Senate, the Consul went out into the Forum and addressed the assembly of people. <sup>The</sup> Historian, Livy, quotes him as follows:-

"In every circle, and truly, at every table," said the Consul, "there are people who lead armies into Macedonia; who know where the camp ought to be placed, when it is proper to engage the enemy, <sup>and</sup> when to lie quiet. ~~and~~ They not only determine what is best to be done, but, if anything is done ~~xx~~ in any other manner, they arraign the consul, as if he were on trial before them."

Consul Lucius Aemilius Paulus then went on to admit that a military commander ought to accept advice. But what kind of advice? He answered as follows:-

*he told the Romans,*  
"Commanders <sup>,"</sup> should be counselled, chiefly, by persons of known talent; by those who have made the art of war their particular study; from those who are present at the scene of action, who see the country, who see the enemy; who see the advantages that occasions *offer.*

"If therefore, anyone thinks himself qualified to give advice respecting the war which I am to conduct," said the Consul to the people, "let him come with me into Macedonia. He shall be furnished with a ship, a horse, a tent; even his travelling charges shall be defrayed. But if he thinks this too much trouble, and prefers the repose of a city life to the toils of war, the city, in itself, furnishes abundance of topics for conversation. We shall pay no attention to any counsels, but such as shall be framed within our camp."

Yes, it is ancient history -- but oh so modern! The thoughts of the Consul Lucius Aemilius Paulus One Hundred and Sixty-eight years before Christ might be those of our Air-General Arnold or Admiral King, or General MacArthur. I can imagine that they'd say about the same thing if they were here at the microphone. Here beside Ben Grauer.