

PACIFIC

P.I. - Sumoto Friday, June 5, 1942.

Tonight on the distant spaces of the Pacific, events are occurring that are likely to make the largest of headlines when they are revealed. Today's word from our naval command in Hawaii related that a mighty sea and air battle ^{was} ~~is~~ developing - this as a sequence to yesterday's Japanese raid against Midway Island.

The Japs are attacking Midway heavily. The magnitude of their forces out there may be surmised from the losses that our Midway defenders have inflicted. They damaged a battleship and an aircraft carrier - indicating that the Japs have major fleet units off Midway. And our men ^{there} ~~at Midway~~ have destroyed a large number of enemy planes - evidence that the Japs are hitting with large air squadrons. Those losses inflicted and Jap attacks beaten off, constitute an initial success for our side - with a major naval and air battle developing.

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The Navy Department today denied rumors of air attacks on Pearl Harbor. Reports were going around that the Japs were striking, not only at the distant Midway outpost, but also at our great naval base - which they assaulted on that day of the sneak punch, December Seventh. This afternoon a Navy spokesman stated officially, "We have had direct communication with Honolulu. All is quiet there. This," he added, "is a flat denial of air raids on Pearl Harbor."

Inevitably rumors will fly, on a day like this - with intimations of mighty events out there in the Pacific. Gossippy reports keep ~~drifting around~~ drifting around - without sense or foundation. We will have the facts when the Navy finds it proper to make them public. Meanwhile, rumors are futile.

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What the enemy has in mind is a matter of mere guessing. There was some surmise today that the raids on

Dutch Harbor in the Aleutians were a diversion, a blind -
a far northern feint to cover a naval and air drive
against us in the middle Pacific. Or perhaps the Japs
are making motions in one direction ^{and} ~~or~~ another to cover
an assault against our sea communications with
Australia. Nothing of this is clear. We only have the
word from Hawaii that the great sea and air battle is

reported out toward Midway Island. *And it may
be that the Japanese fleet
is "moving east for a show-
down with the United States
Navy, near Hawaii."*

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INDIA

From India we have word of a record-breaking convoy - the biggest wartime fleet of cargo vessels ever to put into Indian ports. It navigated from England under the heaviest kind of convoy guard, scores of ships loaded with troops and munitions for the defense of India. The convoy was so big that no single port out there could accommodate it. So the cargo fleet had to be broken up, with parts of it putting into a number of harbors all along the coast of India.

This biggest of convoys has hugely strengthened Indian defenses against a possible Jap invasion - an invasion which, by the way, the British out there do not expect in the near future. ~~There are reports that~~ The Japs in Burma are now only twenty miles from the frontier of India, but they are not in large enough force to suggest invasion. ~~Moreover, the monsoon season of~~ ~~torrential rains is turning the country into mud and~~

CHINA

A late dispatch from the Far East states:-
"China has passed her most dangerous crisis." These heartening words are from the Chinese Generalissimo himself, Chiang-Kai-shek.

With this optimistic statement from Chiang Kai-shek, comes word from authoritative Chinese sources that the United States is believed to be planning to send huge air reinforcements to China -- great squadrons of bombers and fighters. They say that Chinese and American officials have drawn up that kind of program -- in accordance with President Roosevelt's pledge to send more air assistance to the Far Eastern Republic.

The military news tells of a continued Japanese failure to capture the key airport city of Chuhsien in eastern China. The Japs have the place virtually surrounded, under siege, and they are making storming attacks. But these have been beaten off by the Chinese defenders.

POISON GAS

The ominous question of poison gas in this war becomes more acute. President Roosevelt today told a White House press conference that the government has authoritative reports of the employment of lethal vapors in China, the Japs using what the President called -- "poisonous or noxious gases." To this he added the inevitable consequence -- that if the Japs continue their gas attacks against the Chinese, we will retaliate with chemical warfare of our own. "We shall be prepared to enforce complete retribution," declares the official statement the President gave to the newsmen.

RAIDS

The British Air Force raided the Nazis again today in a daylight sweep. They struck at the Germans in occupied France. They encountered little resistance. A few German fighter planes took off to give battle to the squadrons operating in the broad light of day. London says that the R.A.F. planes today were, in London's words - "practically ignored." And the same thing went for yesterday. So little Nazi resistance was encountered, that out of hundreds of warplanes that swept over German-occupied France, only three fighting planes were lost.

The lack of German opposition might possibly suggest that the Nazis have concentrated nearly all of their air power on the eastern front - for the long awaited all-out offensive against the Soviets.

PAY

Today a compromise was agreed upon in the matter of the pay boost for soldiers and sailors - a compromise putting ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the basic rate at forty-six dollars a month. ^RThe lower House of Congress had previously voted a bill to increase the minimum Army and Navy pay to fifty dollars a month. The Senate thought that forty-two a month would be enough. A joint committee of the two Houses thereupon tried to agree on a version that both would support. Today the Senate members of the Committee said - "Let us split the difference." They suggested a middle figure between forty-two and fifty. In other words, forty-six. And this proposal was accepted - the joint committee voting its okay this afternoon.

And they agreed upon another thing - to make the pay increases retroactive. The soldiers and sailors will get their boost in pay as of June First, the boost that makes the basic pay forty-six dollars a month.

C.C.C.

The House of Representatives today took action on those two much debated New Deal Agencies, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration. The lawmakers voted against the former and in favor of the latter.

The two decisions occurred in the consideration of a bill to put up labor security funds. The measure originally included money to keep both the C.C.C. and the N.Y.A. going. A congressional committee turned thumbs down on the Conservation Corps, and eliminated its share of the funds from the bill.

On the floor of Congress today motion was made to store the cash for the C.C.C. This went to a vote, and was defeated -- congress voting to abolish the C.C.C. after its present funds run out, July First.

The committee that had previously considered the appropriations bill had decided in favor of the National Youth Administration, had ~~let~~ let the N.Y.A.

funds remain in the bill. Today on the floor of
congress a motion was made to knock this item out, ^{too.}
A vote was taken and the motion was defeated --
Congress deciding to continue the N.Y.A.

FOOD

A committee to control the nation's food supplies has been formed. This was announced today by Donald Nelson, head of the War Production Board. The new agency will have complete control of the production and distribution of the food supplies of this nation. It is to be called the Food Requirements Committee, and will be headed by Secretary of Agriculture Wickard.

The decisions made by this new agency will affect the dinner table of every man, woman and child in this country. The Wartime Board to control the festive board touches directly upon that sensitive spot of the human anatomy - the stomach. All of which is a good deal like the World War Food Administration, which was headed by Herbert Hoover.

Production Board Chairman Donald Nelson. So all the verbal fireworks, rhetorical cannon crackers and skyrocketes were being fired at the wrong target.

Later on, on the floor of the House, Representative Johnson of Oklahoma introduced a formal resolution to put Congress in opposition to any nationwide rationing of gasoline.

Meanwhile, the President was holding a big time conference on the rationing subject -- talking the matter over with top men in the administration. Upon emerging from the White House, Archibald MacLeish, Director of the Office of Facts and Figures, had this to say:- "A statement will follow in the nearish future."

He was asked what was meant by that expression "nearish future." How near is nearish?

He responded, "It's a matter of days."

So we will have to wait to get even a "nearish" decision on a question that is raising more than a "nearish" rumpus in Congress.

EXPLOSION

There was an explosion disaster today at Elwood, Illinois. The blast was so violent that it rocked the earth throughout a radius of one hundred miles. Elwood is forty miles south of Chicago, and windows were shattered in the outskirts of the Windy City. The blast occurred at a munitions plant, when one building blew up - a structure where artillery shells were being handled. There is a tragic death list - fifty-seven workers announced dead or missing.

The F.B.I. began an immediate investigation, but a military officer states - "There is no indication of sabotage." Nevertheless, the War Department has named a board of inquiry to seek the cause of the explosion. ~~of the building where shells were being handled.~~

C.I.O.

Today the C.I.O. took the first step toward expelling the United Mine Workers. This, of course, is a result of the quarrel between the two labor organizations and the bitter feud between their respective leaders -- Philip Murray of the C.I.O. and John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers. However, the C.I.O. action is taken on a technical question of payments that the mine workers are supposed to contribute, to the C.I.O.

SONG

There is nothing like a sprightly jingle to put life into the shuffling gait of ordinary prose. So let's have a bit of snappy rhyme - patriotic too, right to the point in these wartime days.

The Treasury Department staged a contest for a War Bond song. And today the prize was awarded. It goes to Private Richard Littleton of the Fourth Motorized Division, Camp Gordon, Georgia. The first verse of his bond selling song goes like this:

"We have got the men and we have got the brains
But we need more guns and we need more planes.
It's all for one and one for all,
America's calling, so answer the call."

~~That is~~ Followed by a chorus, which ends with a lilting couplet on the subject of saving. ^(That chorus ending) It goes this

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way:

"So save tomorrow by saving today
And save -- the American way."

COCKATOO

Out in Australia, a most unseemly event is reported, a shocking breach of discipline - which touched off roars of laughter. (~~A squadron commander in an American outfit was held up to ridicule, and I suppose there ought to be a court martial.~~)

In the crew of a big bomber there is a private soldier named Henry Colvin - ~~he is~~ of St. Joseph, Missouri. Henry owns a pet, and it's a bird! Decidedly a bird, a cockatoo - a handsome white fowl with a loud and raucous voice. This ^{Aussie} cockatoo, "Cocky" by name, has become famous in Australian air circles. ~~Cocky~~ ^{He} goes along on bombing flights, and is a veteran of a score of air raids. Cocky is a full fledged birdman, or maybe you would say -- bird-bird. The first time Private Henry Colvin took Cocky along, the roar of the motors made the bird mighty nervous, jittery and jumpy. And Colvin kept saying - "What's the matter, boy?"

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This happened time after time, and then Cocky became hardened to battle. When the machine guns were rattling and anti-aircraft shells were bursting nearby, Cocky would flap his wings and screech - "What's the matter, boy?"

During time off between bombing raids, Cocky is allowed the freedom of the airfield. He is ^{permitted} ~~allowed~~ to go flying around with his own wings. And this brought the bird to ^{his} ~~its~~ big moment. ^{On the} ~~On the flying~~ field, the squadron commander was telling a few things to a bomber crew. He was blistering their ears. They had been up to some kind of misbehavior, and were getting a thorough balling out. Cocky was flapping around nearby, and the squadron commander must have had a loud voice. ~~He must~~ ^{8 1/2 Maybe} ~~have~~ ^{ed} sounded like a combination of airplane motors, machine guns and bursting anti-aircraft shell. Because Cocky flew over, perched on the shoulder of the stately

squadron commander, and shrieked in his ear -- "What's the matter, boy?"

Whereupon the bomber crew that was being balled out, roared with laughter, -- and gave their squadron commander the bird.

Hugh, What's the matter, boy? What's the matter boy?"