

RUSSIA

P.J. - Sunoco. Wed., Feb. 18, 1942.

Another big battle in Russia! That's what Berlin says in a radio broadcast. <sup>that</sup> The Red armies have opened up a heavy attack, supported by great strength in both tanks and bombing planes on a vital sector of the northern front. <sup>TP</sup> Though the dispatch doesn't say so, this evidently is a sequel to the recapture of Novgorod, which the Soviets reported yesterday. The Nazis admit that the Russians have broken the German positions in some points. But the broadcast wound up with a claim that they had not broken through the <sup>main</sup> positions of Hitler's armies. <sup>TP</sup> The Reds, for their part, are not so specific, but they announce that they have compelled Hitler to bring up large numbers of his best reserves, troops he was holding back for the Spring offensive.

And here's another sign that the Spring offensive, when it does come, will be tremendous. It

has been no secret that Hitler has been standing on the defensive in Russia this winter in order to re-tool and ~~to~~ build fresh armament on a huge scale.

An official in London confirms this today, a spokesman for the Ministry of Economic Warfare. <sup>That</sup> The Nazis are now engaged in their greatest effort in ~~xx~~ war

production, the greatest ever known. One thing the

British have found out is that, among other things,

they are turning out large numbers of transport

<sup>Which surely</sup> gliders. ~~That~~ <sup>to be attempted</sup> indicates a formidable invasion somewhere.

Along with the stepping-up of munitions

production, there has been a feverish propaganda ~~xxxxxxx~~

campaign. The workingman in Hitler's Reich are being

told that it is now or never. <sup>That</sup> If they work to the

utmost, the Germans will triumph finally in the next

six months.

INDIES

The Dutch do not like the strategy that has been followed by the Allied high command in the Indies, they think it has been too negative. At least, an important official of the Netherlands today so expressed himself.

*That official —*

~~It was~~ Lieutenant-Governor Van Mook of the Netherlands

East Indies, who is visiting in Sydney. He and

*presumably*  
~~apparently~~

*Hollanders*  
~~Dutchmen~~

other ~~Dutchmen~~ believe that we should not go

on the defensive all the time. That, he said, is the

big mistake. *That* the democracies are always thinking in

terms of defense. The policy of constantly retiring to

prepared positions can lead to a position in which the

Allies might lose the war, says Van Mook.

This Lieutenant-Governor of the Netherlands

East Indies also reassured the Australians that help

was coming, that the United States "is dispatching

everything it can lay its hands on. They have transport

facilities enough, and there is no reason to fear that

*said he - and*

the material cannot be shipped," Then he added:-

"Now that the United States and President Roosevelt are convinced of the value of attack, they will go about things in a very American way. Once the United States gets heat up it really does a drastic job."

*TP* Those *were* *and they* *today,*  
Van Mook's words were made good to an extent,  
by the Dutch and American forces in the East Indies.

Air squadrons of both nations made attacks on the Japanese forces that are surging ~~relentlessly~~ relentlessly towards Java. *TP* The enemy, for their part, made two more raids on Soerabaja, but Batavia ~~reports that~~ *says* they lost twenty-five per cent of their bombers, too heavy a loss for any sustained attacks. This is taken to mean that the air strength of the Dutch and Americans in those waters has been formidably increased. But this is not definite, merely conjecture. *TP* Among the Allied aircraft that attacked the Japanese off Java, was a squadron of

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our flying fortresses, believed to have sunk two enemy transports and known to have sunk two Japanese barges.

WAR COMMUNIQUE

Here's tonight's contribution from the War Department. Nine American P-Forty pursuit planes were on their way to Sumatra today. When they got near Java, they intercepted six enemy machines. There was a dogfight, and four of the enemy were shot down.

The other two got away, but not a single one of the Americans was injured or damaged in the slightest.

*T* Our planes then flew on to the airfield at Palembang, in Sumatra, which the Japanese captured the other day. *There the Americans* ~~and~~ had a good look-see, and dropped such bombs as they had on the Japanese instalations in that great oilfield. Of course, pursuit planes only carry light bombs and can't do as much harm as one would like. The Army report ~~ex~~ says that the extent of the damage could not be determined, but *that* all of our planes returned safely to their base.

Tonight's communique says nothing about

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~~xxxxx~~ General MacArthur, but this morning's report described an attack of flying fortresses on Japanese ships off the island of Bangka, near the Sumatra coast. Direct hits were scored on a large enemy transport and a small transport, both believed to have been sunk.

Japanese bombers have been pounding General MacArthur's lines on the Batan peninsula without cease. And that's all we learn from the Army today.



LEAD -

Tonight it's Burma that we have to worry about, and the accounts of the fighting there are not encouraging, So far the news of the Japanese advance on the Rangoon and The Burma Road has been distressingly similar to the early reports ~~of~~ from the Malay Peninsula. The British communique announces that the Imperial forces are holding their positions and fighting stubbornly. All of which recalls in ominous fashion those reports issued from Singapore while the Japanese were advancing at the rate of ten miles a day.

Unquestionably the advance is not so fast in Burma, and the picture there is lightened up a bit by the presence of the American volunteer pilots, the Flying Tigers, fighting side by side with the R.A.F.

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The battle is now raging on the Bilin River, which is about the same as an admission that the Japanese are in complete control of the Salween. The Bilin River is between the Salween and ~~Tak~~<sup>the</sup> River Sittang, running roughly parrallel to them both. If the British are forced back from the Bilin; they can retreat to the Sittang and hold that for a while.

A spokesman of the British in London denied the claim of the Tokyo radio that the Japanese had forced passange of the Bilin. The British admit however that small forces of the enemy have crossed but say that the line as a whole is standing fast.

The Bilin is only fifty miles from the railraod which constitutes the lower portion of the Burma Road to China.

About the only bright note in today's picture of that scene is that the Chinese are advancing through Siam. News that comes from the Japanese themselves.

*They.*

~~who~~ report that units of Chiang Kai-shek's armies have invaded Siam near the Indo-Chinese border and are fighting toward Chiengmai, an important railroad town.

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A later message from Rangoon dispels all hope that the Bilin River can be held. The Japanese are across, and across in strong numbers. There's no doubt tonight that an all-out battle is now being fought in that sector. The Allies are going to make their principal stand on the broad plains along the west side of the Bilin.

The Chinese in Thailand are trying to divert the attention of the Japanese from the Bilin Riverfront.

*Japs*

~~They~~ now have an army of a hundred thousand massed for that battle to seize the Burma Road and stop the flow of supplies to Chiang Kai-shek. All the supplies now

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on the Burma Road are being diverted for that crucial struggle. ~~And~~ <sup>and</sup> Crucial it is, ~~make~~ <sup>u</sup> no mistake. When and if the Japanese pierce that line, the problem of supplying Chiang Kai-shek's armies will be one for which nobody has yet even hinted a <sup>clear</sup> solution.

The British <sup>are already</sup> ~~have begun~~ evacuating women, children and civilians from Rangoon.

As for Generalissimo Chiang, he and Madame Chiang had two conferences today with <sup>Mahatma</sup> ~~Mohandas~~ Gandhi, at Calcutte. Though Gandhi has abdicated the nominal leadership of the Indian Nationalists, these conferences were obviously of the utmost importance. The party was joined by Jawaharlal Nehru, to whom Gandhi turned over the Number One position in the All-Indian Nationalist Congress when he resigned. <sup>Nehru</sup> ~~After the conference was over, Nehru told the~~

MADAGASCAR

The Ambassador from Vichy tells the United States that his government is positively not preparing to turn Madagascar over to the Japanese. He paid a visit to the State Department today and told it to Under-Secretary Sumner Wells. Just another rumor, he declared, the same campaign that has been build around everything connected with the Petain government. As a matter of fact, the Japanese have made no demands for the use of Madagascar as a base for their submarines in the Indian Ocean.

BIDDLE

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While government agents were trying to keep watch over the Japanese in Hawaii, they were not allowed to examine cable messages that were sent to Japan by Japanese agents. That's what a group of Congressmen learned today from Attorney General Biddle. It was all on account of confusion in the minds of the authorities over the ~~xxx~~ laws governing such a procedure.

J. Edgar Hoover, Chief of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, admitted that his men had tapped the telephone wires of Japanese agents in the islands but, he added, the spies of Nippon were aware of this, aware that the agents would obey the laws, and so <sup>the</sup> <sup>Japs</sup> did most of their communications with Tokyo by cable or wireless.

NORMANDIE

There will be not one, but two, congressional investigations of the burning of the NORMANDIE.

A sub-committee of the Naval Affairs Committee of the House, a sub-committee of six Congressmen, will come to New York to hold inquiries, probably public. As though that weren't enough, the Senate today unanimously adopted a resolution calling upon its

Naval Affairs Committee to probe into the matter; *and*

*they* appropriated ~~and~~ ~~and appropriate~~ five thousand dollars for expenses.



## HEADACHES

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The troubled dreams of Congress have been haunted by two spectres for several weeks. One of them was O.C.D., the Office of Civilian Defense. That one was embodied in the shapely person of Mrs. Roosevelt's dancer friend, Mayris Chaney, who was given a forty-six hundred dollar a year job as director of children's welfare. The problem of Miss Chaney was disposed of today by Miss Chaney herself. She quit. <sup>To be sure,</sup> ~~Though~~ there's a tiny string to her letter of resignation, saying that she was doing this for the sake of unity. She wrote to Director Landis of <sup>the</sup> O.C.D. that she wished to step aside if it is his will. She added that it had never been her purpose at any time to introduce fan dancing among innocent tots, and that for her part she was not familiar with the art.

Miss Chaney's letter to Landis evoked from

*some*  
congressional leaders a sight of relief, ~~that could~~  
~~almost be heard all over the land without telephone~~  
~~wires.~~ *Conjecture in* The ~~deduction of~~ the capital now is that this  
will lead Congress to hurry up and pass that hundred  
million dollar appropriation for O.C.D.

*58*  
The other spectre is that loudly ridiculed issue  
of pensions, which filled the mail bags of Congressmen  
with a heavier mass of abusive letters than they have  
seen in many a long time. I've been getting my share  
of it in the last few days for having relayed the  
information that some people believe it would be  
salutary and dignified for presidents who do not happen  
to be rich men to *be able to* lead dignified lives after their  
terms expire. I pointed out the tragedies of President  
Thomas Jefferson and of the last days of President Grant.  
And did I catch it in the mail for that!

As a matter of fact, there is <sup>quite</sup>~~real~~ serious misapprehension about the pension law which Congress passed. It did not propose to give every Congressman a handsome income regardless of how long he had served. Only a lawmaker with a thirty-five year record ~~xxx~~ would have been entitled to the maximum, five thousand a year. A man who had been in Congress five years would get six or eight hundred a year. That's what the shouting was really all about.

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It looks as though the argument would soon be only academic, anyway, for the "solons," as the copy-desk calls them, are getting all set to repeal the bill. The Senate today voted to allow the Committee on Civil Service to report a repeal measure tonight, and the upper Chamber will vote on it tomorrow.

In this issue, too, the desire for unity has been loudly mentioned as the motive.

LaGUARDIA

Another mutiny against LaGuardia in New York City. Petitions have been addressed to Congress, asking that the Mayor be removed as Director of Civil Defense in his own town. Those who signed that petition, are five hundred and thirty-two air raid wardens. Five of those are zone wardens, and two of those zone wardens are in command of eighteen hundred others. Forty-eight are sector wardens, and four hundred and seventy-nine seniors and post wardens. The wardens give reasons for the removal of LaGuardia. They say he caused numerous conflicting orders to be issued, accompanied by threats that if they were not obeyed at once, the wardens would be removed.

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And they say that LaGuardia signed one order forbidding any criticism of air raid warden service. They charge the Mayor further with confusion, and they

~~say~~ he has created a condition which may easily lead to catastrophe during hostilities by bombing planes.

The story was carried today by the NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM, and less than two hours after it appeared on the streets, a deputy police inspector 8/2 suspended one zone warden and ordered another to appear before him for questioning.

NELSON

Business men and factory managers have been grumbling at the ever-growing number of public holidays that afflict<sup>a</sup> the calendar in this country, so they ought to welcome a request made by War Production Chief Donald Nelson today, ~~he~~ <sup>ing</sup> asked the men working in war industries to put in a full production day next Monday instead of taking ~~the rest~~ <sup>time out</sup> for Washington's Birthday.

*TP* Nelson used pretty emphatic language, <sup>He</sup> said we ~~we~~ <sup>have</sup> already paid heavily for our complacency, our selfishness, our failure to peel off our shirts and do a job.

Then he used these words:- "The most effective way to honor George Washington's memory this year is to work full time so that the nation to which he gave independence can make that independence stick."

*TP* And then he reminded the country that our soldiers cannot stop planes and tanks with their bare hands.

*And what are your sentiments tonight, Hugh?*