

L.T. - P&G. TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1950

(From The Crown Room,  
Hotel Del Coronado,  
Coronado Beach, Calif.)

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Today was the Fiftieth Birthday of the undersea part of our Navy. On April 11th, Nineteen Hundred, the American fleet acquired its first submarine. They called it a submersable torpedo boat and named it the Holland, after its inventor, John Philip Holland.

Of course the idea was old, there was a crude attempt at a submarine during the American Revolution. Robert Fulton, who began the steam navigation, offered his submarine boat scheme to Napoleon. But the real beginning of our U.S. undersea navy was fifty years ago today.

For me, and for this program, this is a sort of private Navy Day. At this moment I'm a lone civilian surrounded by one hundred and twenty Admirals and Marine Corps Generals. The most bewildering, dazzling array of rank I have ever faced.

It came about like this. I was told that here in the Coronado area there were more Admirals than any place on earth, including Marine Corps Generals, for they ~~may~~ too have "Navy flag rank." Most of them are officers of the Navy and Marines who served for years at stations all over the world and found this tip of southern California the place they preferred for their homes upon retirement. To these you can add active service admirals at the great San Diego-Coronado Naval Base.

Actually this dinner is my penance for inadvertently insulting one of these gentlemen. On the air one evening last week, in telling about an experience on Admiral Cal Durgin's flagship during a kami kazi episode off Okinawa, I thoughtlessly called his aircraft carrier a "boat." Whereupon I was told in no uncertain terms, by my friend Cal, that to call any naval vessel a boat -- to say nothing of an Admiral's flagship -- is the greatest of all insults -- a mistake that only a land-lubber could make.

So, I replied to Admiral Durgin that I would be glad to give a little dinner party for him and any other admirals in this neighborhood, and at the dinner make a formal apology, to him and to the Navy! He allowed as how we might stir up perhaps twenty admirals. The next day, through his flag-lieutenant we sent out invitations for all admirals to join me here at the Del Coronado, for dinner, tonight.

I was told that they had never had a complete get-together. They had never had a full reunion. We wondered how many there were - and how many would accept. Little did we dream what a party it would turn out to be. The result is almost perfect. A hundred and twenty are sitting here with me! Which makes this quite a Navy Day celebration, also quite an unusual background for this broadcast of news. Rather portentous news, alas.

## RUSSIA

Today's angrily worded protest from Soviet Russia sounds as if it might be that old trick, the guilty party shouting an accusation before the other side has a chance to say anything. With an appearance of righteous wrath, a Moscow note states that an American plane violated Soviet territory and exchanged gun fire with Red fighters. But what American plane was it? That's the question, with ominous implications. The Soviet note describes the American aircraft as a four-motored plane of the B-29 type, a superfortress - which last Saturday was spotted thirteen miles inside Russian controlled Latvia.

Right fighters went up, signalling the American plane to land at an airport just below. Whereupon, according to the story, that B-29 type plane opened fire on the Russian planes. Which replied by shooting back; then the American craft turned toward the sea and disappeared over the Baltic.

The Moscow note does not say whether or not any plane

was hit in the shooting. But this is immediately followed by a statement from American Air Force headquarters in Germany which declares that at the time, Saturday afternoon, there was no American plane in the Baltic area, except a Navy Privateer, which is a B-24 bomber used as a patrol plane. It might be mistaken for a B-29.

The significant part is this. A Navy Privateer with a crew of ten has been missing since Saturday, and a search has been on. It might have got lost of course, radio out of gear. This is indicated by the timing. The shooting occurred five and a half hours after the Privateer was last heard from. American air officers declare that any gunfire from the Privateer could only have been shots from a pistol. The machine guns had all been dismantled.

These are the facts from which the immediate inference is drawn, that Soviet fighters shot down an unarmed American patrol plane with a crew of ten which happened to stray accidentally over Red territory. So, Moscow tries to get in

first with a furious accusation. We being at the disadvantage of not knowing what really happened in the first shooting of the cold war, between the United States and Soviet Russia.

## ATLANTIC PACT

Late news tells of the first shipment of American armament to arrive in Italy under the Atlantic Security Pact.

Important, because of loud threats the Communists have been making in both Italy and France.

The freighter, crammed with American weapons and munitions, put into harbor at Naples tonight, and the cargo was unloaded without any trouble at all. It seemed to be mere routine. Communist disturbances failed to materialize, although a strike was called - a walkout which was ignored by the anti-Communist labor organizations. A complete failure.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In Prague, a former employee of the American Information Service today charged the U.S. with slandering and maligning and putting out false libelous stories about the Red regime. This former employee is a Czech, and everything is made clear by the fact that he was one of seven clerks arrested by the Communist police last month. So he is doing the usual thing so familiar in those Red confessions, telling the kind of stories the Reds want.

## INDONESIA

The new state of Indonesia has quickly suppressed a revolt, an insurrection at Macassar on the island of Celebes. A rebel leader, Abdul Azzis, seized control with a force of native troops who once were a part of the Dutch Colonial army. The demand was local autonomy instead of centralized government under the new Indonesian regime in Java. But President Sukarno acted with decision. He landed troops on Celebes, and sent a warship to bombard at the capital city of Macassar. So today Captain Abdul Azzis and his insurgents gave up, surrendered.

In Washington that mysterious witness turns out to be Louis Budenz after all. His identity was disclosed today, the former managing editor of New York's Communist Daily Worker who renounced the cause of the Reds, joined the Catholic Church and is now a professor at Fordham University.

According to Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin, Budenz will swear that Far Eastern Expert Owen Lattimore was a Communist Party member, under Communist Party discipline. Testimony is to be given at a public hearing on Monday.

Lattimore makes an immediate reply. He says that he doesn't know Budenz, never met him. Budenz on his side says that he doesn't know Senator McCarthy, never met him. He says he is surprised to be subpoenaed. Not pleased, either, says the former Communist Editor:- "My hope has been not to testify in any further cases." He adds that he doesn't want any part of any investigation with a political slant. But he says he is willing to tell what he knows on a non-partisan basis.

Here's the latest on it: Senator McCarthy admits that

he heard about the Budenz information through a third party.

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The United States government today asked a federal court to revoke the citizenship of Harry Bridges convicted of perjury in getting his nationalization papers. The lawyers for the boss of the West Coast Longshore Union made an immediate contest, arguing that the question of citizenship should be held in abeyance while the case of Bridges is being appealed to our Higher Court. The Judge responds by delaying a further continuance of the case until May Ninth.

## ADMIRALS

Such are the tidings the news wire brings into this room, this room full of Admirals and Marine Generals. To give you just a faint idea of the grandeur of rank surrounding me let me mention, at random, a few names:- Admiral Standley, who graduated from Annapolis back in Eighteen Ninety-five. Not long ago he was our highest ranking naval officer; Chief of Naval Operations, and of course you all remember him as Ambassador to Russia. He is the senior of all these one hundred and twenty including both active and inactive.

Admiral Jonas Ingram, legendary football star; likewise commander of our Atlantic Fleet in World War One. Admiral R. H. Jackson, oldest living graduate of Annapolis, who finished the Naval Academy in Eighteen Eighty-seven. General Harry Schmidt who commanded the U.S. Marines when they took Tinian and Iwo Jima -- Iwo, where there was the highest concentration of military forces per square yard in the whole history of the world.

Admiral Oldendorf, commander of our naval forces in

one of the greatest, if not the greatest naval action of all times, at Surigao, sits here beside me. Surigao was where that impossible naval maneuver was accomplished, "The Crossing of the T." And sitting with us, too, is Vice Admiral Whaler who commanded the battleline at that Crossing of the T.

Remember General Howland Smith, "Howling" Smith, commander of the famous First Marine Division that fought everywhere. And of course there was the famous "Battle of the Smiths." And here's Admiral Horn, who was on active duty in the Navy for over fifty years. Lieutenant General Dutch Hermley, who is, I believe, the most decorated of our top officers. Over there sits Major General Harris who ran the Marine and Naval end of the air in the South Pacific. Major General Clement, one of the last men off Bataan, and now in command of the great Marine base here. Vice Admiral Buckmaster, in command of the famous aircraft carrier Yorktown in the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway. Rear Admiral Johnny Hoskins who lost a leg when The Princeton went down. He's still on active duty,

on one leg. Can you imagine a one-legged admiral, on deck in a storm? You could if you knew Johnny Hoskins!

I wish I could tell you a little about each of these Admirals and Marine Corps Generals. At any rate, here they sit, one hundred and twenty of them. The fact that they have come to dinner with me gives me a rather memorable opportunity to apologize for calling an Admiral's flagship a boat, and at the same time pay a tribute through these gentlemen to the greatest Navy of all time, in which we Americans have boundless faith.

## FISHING

This nautical gathering will be a good time to give a report on the Pacific Ocean, here off the coast of Southern California. In other words, several of our party went out fishing; out all day - until darkness, off some islands that belong to Mexico. They didn't even get a bite. But one, an Air Force Lieutenant Dave Crump, caught -- a seagull. Surprised bird -- surprised Air Force lieutenant, as he reeled in the reluctant gull, like a fish of the sky. They took the fish-hook out of his beak, and let him go.

Whereupon, the Air Force officer went on fishing, and next -- he caught a seal. This time, the bait was taken by a big old seal, prowling near some rocks. You should have seen that flyer's face as he reeled in what he thought was the biggest fish in the ocean, and then saw a seal bobbing up on the end of his line.

This time, he got the critter half way in, and then the seal took a deep dive. Away went fish-hook, line and all. The skipper of the boat said that would be O.K., the

seal would simply digest the hook.

Which shows what can happen when the Air Force fools  
around with the Navy's ocean, Nelson.