

JAVA

L.I. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Feb. 24, 1942

The great Dutch naval base in Java was heavily bombed today. Two waves of hostile planes came over, concentrating from different directions. They were promptly engaged by American and Dutch fighting planes and an air battle ensued. It was the most intensive of Jap air attacks on the Soerabaja naval base, ^{TP} But the Dutch authorities report that the damage was only slight.

They believe out there that the enemy ^{air} activity is preliminary to an attempted invasion of Java.

^{TP} On the next door island of Bali there are now three thousand Japanese troops - the force that was landed in spite of slashing defeat sustained by the ~~enemy~~ ships that brought them.

Today brings new details of how the Dutch and American bombers went at the enemy cruisers, destroyers

off Bali,

and transports, Our flying fortresses were in the
thick of it, and the slogan of the American pilots
as they flew over the Jap vessels was a ringing
cry of - "Let 'em have it!"

BURMA

In Burma, Rangoon is ready to stand siege. The Empire forces have retired to the Sittang River - the third river line that **they** have occupied since the Jap drive began. Chinese sources report that the enemy has captured Pegu in the Sittang area, and on the railway leading to the Burma Road.

Meanwhile, the British and American war aviators are continuing their savage campaign against the invaders, slashing at them with repeated and effective blows from the air. This - as the Japs advance on the ground - "pouring in manpower with prodigality," as tonight's dispatch from Burma phrases it.

PHILIPPINES

The War Department has just announced that there ^{will} ~~will~~ be no army communique tonight. The usual late bulletin ^{is} ~~will be~~ omitted. This adds point to today's earlier story from the Batan peninsula, which stated that there was a strange lull along General MacArthur's fighting front. Virtually - nothing doing. Yesterday too was quiet. The enemy almost completely inactive. - ^{TP} That strange lull. Washington is rather puzzled, and suggests two explanations. One - that the Japs are reorganizing their troops for the all-out assault which MacArthur has been expecting. The other - that the enemy has withdrawn numbers of troops from the Batan peninsula - shifting them for use against the Dutch East Indies. Maybe, having failed to crus^h _^ MacArthur, they pulled out forces for the expected attack on Java.

U.S. NAVY

There's no confirmation in Washington of an enemy claim that an American naval force made an attack on Japanese mandated islands last Friday - and ^{was} ~~were~~ repelled.

Berlin quotes a Tokyo dispatch as saying that our attacking sea ^{units} ~~forces~~ consisted of "cruisers and aircraft carriers." The Navy Department in Washington has made no announcement of any such repetition of the brilliant ^{assault} ~~attack~~ that we made some weeks ago against the Gilbert and Marshall Islands.

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AMMUNITION

A congressional committee heard testimony today concerning charges that anti-aircraft ammunition of an American warship in the Battle of the East Indies had proved to be only thirty per cent effective. The evidence was given to the committee by Rear Admiral Blandy, Chief of the Bureau of Naval Ordnance. ^{TR} The Admiral stated that the ammunition aboard the warship in question was old. It had been issued to the vessel from the Cavite naval base in Nineteen Thirty-Seven - ammunition that had been prepared in Nineteen Thirty and Nineteen Thirty-One. The Admiral said that some of the components may have been made as early as the World War period. He then explained that ammunition is not made ^{ineffective} ~~effective~~ by - mere age. He said that some World War products may be what he called - "as good now as then." ~~Some ammunition~~

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So Said Admiral Blandy, and he added that the vessel in question had had target practice four times -- and the commander never reported anything wrong with the shells he was shooting from his guns. The Admiral went on to say that one of our seaplane carriers used exactly the same kind of ammunition in a battle with Japanese planes -- and shot down a big enemy bomber and damaged another.

Such was today's testimony, and we are told that Vice-Admiral Glassford, our Commander in the Far East, will be queried on the report that the anti-aircraft shells of one of his warships were only thirty percent effective.

VON PAPAN

A late flash from Turkey tells that Hitler's Number One Ambassador was nearly killed by a bomb. Nazi Ambassafor Von Papen and his wife were walking along a street in Ankara, when a terrific explosion hurled them to the ground. No explanation of the bomb has come in as yet.

CHURCHILL

Prime Minister Churchill was received with cheers in the House of Commons today when he appeared with his revised Cabinet. At the Treasury bench sat Sir Stafford-Cripps, a member of the government for the first time. All eyes were on him, as a coming man.

Winston Churchill revealed that the British garrison at Singapore consisted of more than seventy-five thousand men - a larger force than had been previously supposed. "Some seventy-three ^{thousand} of them," said Winston Churchill, "are stated by the enemies to be prisoners of war." And he added that his government had done everything possible to reinforce the great naval base. "A total of more than forty thousand men, in addition to many anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, that were needed elsewhere, were rushed to Singapore - ^{said he.} in not less than nine convoys." By "needed elsewhere"

he apparently meant Libya.

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And Churchill spoke of ^a~~the~~ bad turn of the
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war at sea. He said there had been a large increase
of shipping losses because of enemy submarine activity.

Churchill, in his customary vein of not
yielding to easy optimism, spoke of greater ordeals
to come for the United Nations, ordeals that he
described as - "tormenting and protracted."

TANKER

Another torpedoing of a tanker ^{Off our East coast ---} - but not a sinking. It happened on Saturday night, and was revealed today. The oil ship was struck by two torpedoes, and yet the twenty-two year old craft is still afloat.

Five lives were lost, and there are thrilling tales of lives that were saved. One is narrated by a Puerto Rican fireman. When the torpedo blast occurred - he tried to dive out of a port hole - but couldn't make it. That Puerto Rican was too fat around the middle; at least, he was with his trousers on. He pulled himself back into the ship, and jumped out of his trousers. This time he got through the port hole, and into the sea - leaving his pants behind. And in one pocket was seventy-two dollars. He saved his life, but lost the seventy-two bucks - which is a lot of dough in Puerto Rico.

JAP SUB

The War Department announces a widespread hunt for the Japanese submarine that shelled the California coast last night. At the same time, the Army reveals what a "small-time" thing the bombardment was. The Jap fired twenty-five shots, at an oil refinery ^{at} ~~near~~ Elwood, California, ^{near Santa Barbara,} There was only slight damage, and the ~~main~~ main thing of interest is that the shells were from five inch guns. This indicates that the Japs ^{were} ~~xxx~~ using one of their huge submarines. The enemy is known to have nineteen of these big ones, ^{of} up to twenty-five hundred tons. ^{with} ~~They have~~ a cruising range of at least ~~xix~~ fifteen thousand miles, ~~and~~ each is armed with two 5-inch guns.

The attack was staged at twenty minutes past ten last night - Eastern War Time. And Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles pointed out today

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that this timing is clear proof that the whole thing was a Japanese bluff - ~~as~~ a gesture ^{while} ~~that~~ President Roosevelt was on the air.

~~And the~~ President ~~Roosevelt~~ gives us his opinion. In a late story from the White House he describes the Japanese shelling of the California coast as an excellent example of political warfare. But, said the President, the cannonading may react in a way that the enemy doesn't anticipate. It may ~~just~~ annoy us Americans, and give a little more impetus to the war effort.

INTRO TO BRUCE HUTCHISON

In Canada the Ottawa parliament was in secret session today -- an important war session. And, as it happens I have a distinguished visitor ~~from~~ ~~Canada~~ sitting with me in the studio tonight, ^{who is} one of the Dominion's leading journalists, Bruce Hutchison. He covers the affairs of the Ottawa parliament for newspapers across the continent from Halifax to Victoria. Now he comes to our country with the fervor of a crusader.

His new book is just out, "THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY." Yes, you have guessed it, he thinks that we Americans know almost nothing about Canada, and that we ought to know more, because Canada includes more than half of the continent of North America.

There are some other reasons too. He and many other Canadians believe that Japan's next drive will be at Alaska, Canada, and the United States. And he thinks it may come within a few weeks. Those are startling words, Bruce Hutchison. How do you happen to figure it that way?

BRUCE HUTCHISON

B.H.:- Canada is indeed the unknown country to most Americans. This is curious because Canada is closer to the United States physically and spiritually, and fundamentally more important to it, than any other country in the world. Both countries can have distant relations with other countries, but with each other they must perpetually have the most intimate concerns. The defense of one is the defense of the other, the poverty or prosperity of one is the poverty or prosperity of the other. They will survive or go down together.

In war we cooperate, but not too intelligently. Canada has assumed that the war would be fought out in western Europe, and has sent its major strength there. The whole plan must be overhauled and at the secret session of Parliament at Ottawa, today, I don't doubt the overhaul was indicated, We must move new strength to the Pacific coast since Japan, above all else, must prevent

American use of the Alaskan and Aleutian bridge to the heart of its empire. Japan must strike at this bridge this Spring.

Canada has one hundred and thirty thousand trained men all over the Dominion. Most of them can be used for Pacific defense and in preparation for the final offensive against Japan. We must move now or it will be too late.

Economically our countries are cooperating in this war, using their resources jointly, and are now indispensable to each other, but when the war is over, are we going back to our economic insanity, to the dreary sequence of high American tariffs, high Canadian tariffs, high British Empire tariffs, stagnation -- and, war again? Together we can be the greatest force for good in the world if we only learn to know each other.

SHIPWRECKS

The dark extent of the sea tragedy on the coast of Newfoundland is to be explained largely by the topography of the forbidding northern shore.

A hundred and eighty-nine officers and men lost in the double shipwreck of the United States destroyer TRUXTON and the naval cargo vessel POLLUX.

A wild North Atlantic gale was lashing the sea, and it beat with a 'swirling fury on a shoreline studded with jagged^{ed}~~ing~~ rocks. A narrow beach, a high cliff - and you can vision the terrible scene for shipwreck and the greatest difficulty of rescue.

The destroyer and the cargo vessel were swept by the violent breakers onto the rocks. The destroyer, an old one, quickly broke in two, and only a few of the crews of the two ships were able to get to the tiny beach, backed by the high cliff.

PRESIDENT

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How many people listened to the President last night? Get ready for a large answer - approximately sixty-one million, three hundred and sixty-five thousand - according to the way they estimate listeners to a radio program. Yet it wasn't the largest F.D.R. audience on record - it was Number Two. Last night seventy-one and one-tenth per cent of the American radio listening audience heard the President give his survey of the war situation. On December Ninth, however, the percentage was ^{that was} seventy-nine per cent. - two days after Pearl Harbor, when we listened to Franklin D. Roosevelt's first war address to the nation.

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The White House reports a heavy reaction to last night's fireside chat - large, also enthusiastic.

DUEL

As if there were not enough war in the world, two political personalities down the Argentine staged a private war of their own today. They fought a duel - a slashing affair which may have important repercussions in Argentine politics.

Senor Röttjer and Senor Taborda are candidates for the Chamber of Deputies in the forthcoming elections - one ^{is} Conservative, the other ^a Radical. They're running in different districts, and each is regarded as certain to be elected. Conservative Senor Röttjer is a former lieutenant-colonel of the Argentine Army. He retired as a result of a scandal, in which he was charged with cruelty toward his wife. Radical Senor Taborda has long been a prominent political figure - he's the head of the Argentine equivalent of the Die^s Committee. The two politicians

quarreled because of some things that Senor Taborda said about Senor Rottjer in a political speech.

So, they fought today -- with sabres. That was remarkable in a way. Because Senor Rottjer trained as an officer, is a practiced fencer -- while Senor Taborda, a mere politician, had never before had a sword in his hand. So public sympathy was with the head of the Argentine Dies Committee -- as it nearly always is when a civilian fights a duel with a military man.

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The affair of honor was held in the garden of the home of the father-in-law of Senor Taborda. Twenty spectators were present, a selected party which included political leaders of the conservative and radical factions. Duelling is against the law in the Argentine, but then -- what is a mere law compared with honor? In fact, one of the spectators was a city detective. He is said to be an ardent duelling fan.

In the garden, the two politicians clashed

with double-edged sabres, and it was to be expected that the former lieutenant-colonel would promptly ~~lay~~ ^{decapitate} ~~low~~ the head of the Argentine Dies Committee. However, to the amazement of everybody in the first exchange of ~~slashing~~ ^{slashing} strokes, Senor Taborda, who had never had a sword in his hand before, wounded Senor Rottjer, the practiced duelist -- ~~slashed~~ ^{gashed} his hand. ^{TP} The blow by blow description from Buenos Aires explains that what the amateur lacked in skill, he made up with energy -- the way he tore in, swinging the sabre. So he won the first exchange.

Then came the second exchange. This time Senor Taborda, in the course of his wild swinging, left too big an opening, and was wounded with a slash in the shoulder. Both duelists, in fact, sustained other cuts and scratches -- and they were covered with blood.

The doctors now found that both were too badly injured to continue, and called the affair of honor a draw. Actually, it was a moral victory for the amateur -- a political victory too, as they are saying down in

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Buenos Aires. The head of the Argentine Dies

Committee gains in prestige, as the elections approach.

59 1/2 And now like those Argentine
elections Hugh James approaches.