

L.T. - SUNOCO. MONDAY, DEC. 29, 1941
(Lake Placid)

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

A real war classic comes from Manila. Its hero is an American officer, Lieutenant William Porter. Alone, in advance of his men, he reached a bridge which the Japanese were about to cross.

Armed with nothing but a rifle, this Lieutenant Bill Porter wiped out an enemy machine gun nest, picking off every man of the crew, one by one. And he held the Japs off until his captain came to the rescue with a bagful of hand grenades. In that part of the army which is resisting the Japanese advance from the Linguayen Gulf, men and officers are talking of Lieutenant William Porter as a second Sergeant York.

But that isn't the only story of its kind coming from the Philippines today. A correspondent

gives us the narrative of a gallant company of Filipino soldiers. One of their American commanders, Lieutenant Spickard of Princeton, Kentucky, reported that the enemy had filtered between the regimental command post and the position of that Filipino company. Thus their supply train was cut off as well as the only line of retreat by which they could rejoin their division. So they were forced into the hills, and headed for the road to Baguio. Those Filipino soldiers made as orderly a withdrawal as any troops could. Meanwhile Lieutenant Porter, who comes from New Mexico, was standing off that Japanese advance across the bridge.

When the Filipino company reached Baguio they found the enemy holding a line between Baguio and the American positions. So they circled east into the mountains behind Baguio. For four days they had hardly any food, and it took them that long to reach the mountain pass where there was transportation waiting for them. Lieutenant Spickard reports that his men

marched seventy-five miles in thirty hours over difficult or mountain trails and went through all hardships without a grumble.

The report received from General MacArthur this morning was that the Japanese armies, both north and south of Manila, were pressing harder and harder. Nevertheless, the general adds, the American and Philippine forces have stood them off; there was no material change, he added, on any front.

In the north, American forces are holding some eighty-five miles from Manila; on the south they are holding the Tiong river, sixty-three miles from the capitol.

Army Communique number thirty-four is just in. It tells of a three hour air raid on Manila. A very large force of enemy aircraft, says the War Department, bombed the coast defenses of Manila Bay continuously by anti-aircraft batteries.

A late wire from Manila reports the Japanese

have started attacking the island fortress of Corregidor at Manila -- with vengeance. The military assumption is that this is the overture to the entrance of Japanese warships into Manila Bay. The maneuver, if successful, would result in the outflanking of our troops holding the Luzon battle lines north and southeast of Manila.

A news report from the southern Luzon front brought the information this morning that seasoned American and Filipino troops had driven back the Japanese army that was trying to break into the Province of Batangas. From the direction of Tayabas. That's about fifty miles to the south of Manila. They are confident they'll be able to keep the Japs away.

Bert Silen, the N.B.C. reporter in Manila, says that according to eye witnesses returning from the front, the Japanese are in full retreat in the Province of Pangasisnan, south of the Linguayen Gulf.

They claim that the Americans have recaptured four towns from the Japanese.

Some of our men at the front are pretty tired and no wonder. A Manila newspaper says one Filipino company has been standing off the enemy for at least forty-eight hours beginning Christmas morning. Their steadfast stand made it possible for the army command to reorganize the defense forces, and place them in more favorable positions.

A tank commander reported that the Filipinos were so anxious to get at the Japs that they rushed out in front of the tanks. Said that tank commander, "I wonder what they think our tanks are here for?"

One unofficial report has it that the whole fleet of Japanese transports that appeared in the Linguayen Gulf had been driven off by American guns, and retired without even trying a landing.

The Manila Herald carried a story today that our men on the North Luzon front have seen German officers and technicians with the Japanese, particularly

in the Mikado's tank divisions.

And here's word from the Navy:- A communique announces that our submarines have sunk a Japanese transport and a supply vessel in the Far East. This comes on top of the reassuring report from the Navy that the Pacific Fleet is not idle, but is following a well planned campaign, which will be of positive assistance to the defenders of the Philippines. A United States destroyer was attacked by Japanese planes and suffered slight damage and minor casualties. We are naturally not told where these engagements took place.

Army Communique Number Thirty-Three reports that General MacArthur has shortened his lines and concentrated the majority of his forces in the Province of Panpanga. On your map you will notice that is north of Manila.

Then here's another report from the Manila Herald, unconfirmed:- telling of the sinking of twelve Japanese transports by Dutch planes.

MALAYA

In Malaya, the word today is that the Mikado's armies are pushing steadily south. Singapore admits that Ipoh has fallen. That's the center of the famous tin mines of Malaya, where we get nearly all our tin. I filmed those mines some years ago and lived in Ipoh. So today's news brings back a flood of memories to me.

On top of that we learn that the Japanese have landed at the important port of Medan, in Sumatra, on the straits of Malacca. Medan is of great value, strategically. It could be a base for planes rushing to the relief of the British in Malays.

In the old days, Medan as well as Malacca across the way on the Malay Coast, were pirate strongholds. Piracy once was a major industry in those parts. In the hands of the Dutch, Medan became an important trading center.

Now there's a big airport there; which the Japanese bombed. It was at first reported that they had dropped parachute soldiers there. But the official

communique from Batavia today announces that the parachute troops were trapped some ten miles from Medan after a stiff fight with Netherland Colonial troops.

Medan is also important because if the Japs can establish themselves, there, they can prevent the sending of oil supplies from Sumatra to Singapore, and at the same time shut off the western opening of the Straits of Malacca through which you steam when you approach Malaya from Ceylon or India.

The Dutch communique also says that a Japanese cruiser has been set afire by bombs dropped from an American-built bomber flown by an Australian crew from a Netherlands-Indies airdrome. The communique continues that other American bombers owned by the Netherlands East Indies air force made an attack on the Japanese where they are now established on the Sarawak coast of North Borneo. These bombers scored one direct hit on a large Japanese transport, and shot down twelve Japanese fighter planes.

RAID

Details have been coming in today regarding the latest British raid on Norway. When they landed on that formidable Norwegian Coast the raiders destroyed nine ships, annihilated two entire German garrisons, captured ninety-five Nazis and nine Quislings; and did an immense amount of general damage. The scene of this raid was the islands of -- I'll have to ask Rolf Monsen to pronounce them. How about it Rolf?

ROLF:- Vaagsoe and Maafoey.

Anyhow they islands are off the coast between Bergen and Christiansand. A British newspaperman, who accompanied the expedition, said the raid started with an attack by a squadron of Hampden Bombers. Then the so-called mystery fighters, of whom we've been hearing lately, the Commandoes, shoved off from the warships in motor barges, invasion barges as they are called. Immediately the men o'war with great broadsides blasted the German gun positions with a pulverizing fire of fifty huge shells a minute. Within half an hour the Commandoes had climbed the rocky slopes of the island

to the skirl of Scottish bagpipes. The Commandoes then deployed to advance on the town from east and west, one group sprinting down the street in the face of withering shell fire. Other detachments advancing on the German positions, burning munition dumps, a radio station, a Quisling industrial plant and a tank.

The Commandoes were ashore quite a while -- for six hours and ten minutes to be exact.

These islands had been made into important convoy bases by the Nazis. Today they are no longer that!

Oh yes, and here's an interesting P.S. to that story:--

A dispatch from London tells us this was a sort of full dress rehearsal for the eventual invasion of Europe, the Knockout blow on the Germans ^{that} will come later on.

ALIENS

Evidently there are quite a number of enemy aliens in Arizona. Attorney General Biddle today issued an order that all Germans, Italians, Japanese and Hungarians out there must turn in their radio transmitters, their short wave receiving sets, and their cameras.

The Attorney General has already issued this same order for enemy aliens on the West Coast; including the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Idaho, Utah and Nevada. They have until eleven o'clock tonight to obey the order, those in Arizona have until eleven o'clock tomorrow.

The order will probably be extended during this week, to the rest of the country, also Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

CHURCHILL

I am up near the Canadian Border tonight where the topic of the hour is the visit of the Prime Minister. Winston Churchill created such a sensation when he arrived at the station in Ottawa today that the crowd broke through the police lines and literally swept Britain's War Chief off his feet. Finally the Mounties had to charge the crowd to clear a path for Churchill and his party

Crossing the border with him were Prime Minister Mackenzie King and all the defense ministers of the Dominion.

There will be a special session of the Canadian Parliament tomorrow at which Churchill will speak. After which he is scheduled to return to Washington.

CENSORSHIP

A compliment from the President:- something that in recent years, most newspapers had never expected to hear from the White House.

But today Secretary Early informed the reporters that Mr. Roosevelt was delighted with the treatment of the news, the faithful observance of voluntary censorship by the press and radio. The President, said Steve Early, has commented several times on the fact that not a soul violated the confidence of the government about Prime Minister Churchill's visit to Washington. Not a word had leaked out to the public.

BROMFIELD KICKS

Louis Bromfield, the novelist, is doing some loud complaining. Bromfield owns a farm of some six hundred acres in Richland County, Ohio, not only owns it, but operates it. He complains that although the government has asked everybody with land to grow as much as possible, the government is also putting obstacles in the farmer's way. So he has made a kick to Claude Wickard, the Secretary of Agriculture. His kick is this, that right at the time when their farmers are asked to double their production, the government proposes to come along and take away from them by conscription, the very men who are needed on the farm. He adds that the type of labor supplied through the employment bureaus of the Department of Agriculture is practically useless. Bromfield calls it the worst sort of migratory white trash. So the novelist-farmer is much disturbed about it. And when a novelist is annoyed he at least has the vocabulary with which to express his anger.

PANGBORN

In the case of any large event, there's often some particular person who, you think, should have something to say. For example, take Clyde Pangborn. He's the only aviator who ever flew the Pacific non-stop. Ten years ago, winging around the world with Herndon, Clyde Pangborn flew his plane straight across from Tokyo to Seattle -- and beyond Seattle. So I thought it appropriate to ask Pang for some impression of that history-making flight in relation to the present oceanic war.

"There's one thing," he responded. "They talk about the vast emptiness of the Pacific."

"Did you find it so empty?" I asked.

"Listen," Pang responded, "we didn't see one ship all the way across from Japan to the United States. The ocean was completely empty. We didn't catch sight of a single boat."

Clyde Pangborn right now is engaged in the bomber ferry service across the Atlantic, flying the huge planes from Canada to Britain. In addition, he

told me, he's been doing some test flying in England - trying out a new design of plane. It's an American design, by the way. And recently it set a speed record -- flying non-stop from England to South Africa.

"But say, Lowell," exclaimed Pangborn, "you should know something about that particular kind of plane. It's the all wing type, which four or five years ago performed a spectacular experiment for your sponsors, The Sun Oil Company. Remember the big plane that took off and flew to high altitude with a full-sized automobile suspended by the wheels of the landing gear?"

Of course I remembered it. The plane was the all wing type designed by an American aircraft engineer, Vincent Burnelli. It was the first ever to fly with a standard automobile swung beneath it -- for a daring Sunoco experiment. And now Clyde Pangborn tells me this American designed plane, built in England, has just made a record-breaking non-stopper -- London to Cape Town. And now Hugh what have you got to say about Blue Sunoco?