

L.T. * SUNOCO. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1942

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Rangoon an inferno of flames tonight!
Huge fires blazing away in every section of the picturesque port, that was the capital of Burma and the home of some four hundred thousand people.

And it was the British themselves, we are told, who set fire to the city, to make sure that when the Japanese take it, they will find nothing but a heap of smoldering ashes. In so doing the British admit they have as good as lost the fight in that part of Burma.

The front line of the Imperial Army still is in the neighborhood of the Sittang River, but evidently it's only a matter of time before they repeat the history of the last three months, the history of retreat after retreat.

At one point the Japanese are ^{now} only ten miles
~~away~~ ^{the supply road} from the Burma Road, to China. ^{TP} The burning of
Rangoon accounts for our not having had any direct word
from there in the last few days. The news of the
conflagration comes from an American flyer, a Flying
Tiger, who brought the story to Dunning. He reported
that the British are dynamiting all important buildings
and particularly public ^{utilities.} ~~utilities.~~ The waterworks have been
destroyed and water is virtually unobtainable. ^{TP} When that
flyer left, fully one-third of Rangoon, a city with an
area of seventy-seven square miles, was covered by a
vast blanket of smoke. The airmen of the volunteer group
had not had any fresh food for days, just living on
"corned willie" and up against it for fresh drinking
water. ^{TP} He ^{ad} adds that he is quite certain the Japanese
have crossed the Sittang River and he believes they
dropped parachute troops north of Rangoon so as to cut
off the retreat of the British Imperial Army.

This American

airman ~~he~~ says further that the evacuation is not complete, that thousands of poor people are still leaving Rangoon, trudging on foot over roads where there is not a drop of water obtainable.

To add to the horror of the picture, looters ~~are busy~~ ^{are busy} ~~are~~ ^{glorious} ~~lose~~ in the once capital of Burma. Many of the shopkeepers before they left, turned over the key to their stores to the American flyers and said:- "Take what you want, take as much as possible, so there'll be nothing left for the Japs."

~~that~~ ^{we are told in tonight's news} there is no reason to doubt the story of ~~the~~ American flyer from Kunming, and ~~there is~~ ^{that} confirmation from India, ~~since~~ ^{that} the Calcutta Radio announces the appointment of an officer to control the ~~the~~ looting in Rangoon.

~~Actually, this~~ ^{will be} ~~was~~ the fourth time ~~that~~ ^{for} Rangoon ~~was~~ ^{to} being destroyed by flames. It happened in

Eighteen Fifty, again inEighteen Fifty-Three, and
again in EighteenFifty-Five.

A later addition to the story tells of clouds
of smoke swirling around the golden top, three hundred
and sixty-eight feet high, of the great Shwe Dagon
Pagoda. If that mass of gleaming ^{pinacle of} gold falls a victim
to the scorched earth policy, it will ^{mean the end of} ~~abolish~~ one of the
Seven Wonders of the World.

And here's news from Mandalay, that much sung city of poetry and fable and history. The Japanese are advancing toward it from a new direction, from the northeast, through the territory known as the northern Shan States. They ^{are} ~~are~~ not waiting to crack the British Imperial lines on the Sittang River. Strategically ~~we~~ ^{hear this is} ~~it's~~ an extraordinary and daring move. They are pushing through that north ^{ern} ~~ern~~ Shan country from northwestern Siam. There is a report that a strong army of Chinese is blocking the way, but that's not official. ~~Once the Japanese have Mandalay, they will be within striking distance of Calcutta.~~

^{next door to Burma,}
On the subject of India, [^] the new Lord Privy Seal, Sir Stafford-Cripps, made his first speech as leader of the House of Commons today. He told the members of Parliament that they ^{will} ~~will~~ soon hear something from the

government, an important announcement about India.

Presumably ~~this~~ means a promise of freedom ^{— at any rate of} and more
representation if India gives all-out help in the war
against Japan.

JAVA

That's tonight's portion of bad news from Burma.

And ~~now~~ for Java. A spokesman for the Dutch government at Allied headquarters ^{today} uttered the brutal truth that that island is now cut off, completely encircled. ^{that} With the occupation of both Bali and Timor, the Japanese have severed communications between Java and Australia.

~~The~~ ^{arms} ~~forces~~ of the United Nations ^{have} struck the enemy some ~~pretty~~ heavy blows, three more ^{Jap} ~~of their~~ transports ~~were~~ sunk today. But if the Dutch forces on ^{Java} ~~the island~~ are to resist the Japanese invasion that will come at any moment, they will need ~~considerable~~ reinforcements, ~~the same story we have been hearing day after day,~~ ~~after day.~~

So the all-out attack on Java ^{is} coming ^{es} ~~ing~~ closer and closer. The Japanese air army today redoubled its attacks all over the island with bombs and machineguns. The fiercest of them were directed at Batavia, with

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dive bombers and low flying ^{planes} ~~machineguns~~ ^{ground-} ~~xxxxffingx~~

strafing with machine guns.

PHILIPPINES

General MacArthur and his men are ~~obviously~~
as all the world knows,
gluttons for fighting. The Japanese have been letting
them alone for three days, and evidently the rest was
too much for them. So ~~they~~ *our lads* started a series of attacks
which, the General reports, were uniformly successful.
They were only local actions, no major engagement. ~~all~~
~~along the line.~~ Still, they insisted on continuing to
~~fight.~~ The purpose of these assaults ^{was} ~~XXXX~~ ₁ to find out
what ~~th~~e enemy is up to and why the let-up in fighting
that has been going on from Sunday until today.

PLANES

There was much excitement in the Los Angeles area today over the visit of two flights of airplanes believed to be Japanese. It isn't definitely stated that they were Japanese, the word used to describe them is "unidentified." But the inference is obvious. I should add that along with the excitement there was no terror or panic, although ^{anti-aircraft} ~~the archies~~ blazed away and bits of shrapnel fell in several places.

One of those places was a bed in a private home. Fifty bits of shrapnel fell there. A young woman and her niece had only just ^{gotten up from the bed} ~~got up~~ a few minutes before. ~~that shrapnel fell.~~ The visiting planes ^{merely} ~~didn't try to~~ ~~do anything, just~~ flew over, and vanished.

It all happened during a blackout. All the cities in the area were ^{darkened} ~~blacked out~~ at twenty-five minutes past two this morning, Pacific War Time ^{until} after seven a. m.

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The Fourth Interceptor Command had received reports that unidentified aircraft were approaching, whereupon the officers ordered the blackout. The strange planes were caught in the comb of light beams from the army searchlights. Although the archies promptly blazed away, they didn't bag anything, and the visiting planes dropped no bombs.

One incident of the episode was that a couple of Japanese were caught on a pier at a nearby seashore resort, signalling with a flashlight. They were promptly arrested, ~~of course~~ ^{It} The Observers, ^{by the way,} ~~at this moment~~ are not sure whether there were two flights of planes or just one ~~which~~ repeated its visit.

There's a later story from Los Angeles that army pursuit planes took off and went aloft to investigate the strangers, but ^{we are} ~~XXXX~~ not told what their investigation developed.

Los Angeles

The [^]blackout lasted five hours, long enough to cause a serious traffic confusion when it came time for workers in the airplane and other munitions factories to go to work. Thousands of them were late, as a result.

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There was not only confusion but collisions of motor cars. Four people were killed ~~altogether~~ during the

California
blackout.
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A report from Navy Secretary Knox. He tells us that throughout January and most of February one hundred and fourteen of the ships of the Allies were attacked in the Atlantic; that ~~means~~^{is} the Western half of the Atlantic. On the other hand, fifty-six Nazi submarines were attacked ^{by us,} three of them sunk, ^{and} four ^{more} ~~of~~ ~~them~~ believed ~~to have been~~ damaged. As for the forty-nine others we don't know, ~~what happened.~~ ~~The results were what the Navy called inconclusive.~~

Fifty-five of those Allied ships were attacked close to the eastern coast of the United States.

Sec. Knox ~~Mxxxk~~ also gives us a list, he calls it a "most conservative list" of what we have done to the Japanese from December Tenth last year up to yesterday. The United Nations have definitely sunk fifty-five Japanese vessels, that includes men-'o-war~~s~~ and merchant ships. In addition ~~to those~~^{them}, seven ~~of them~~^{more} are believed to have been sunk and five damaged. Of the fifty-three that were sunk, fifteen were men-'o-war.

The Secretary added that ~~this is not complete~~

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There is evidence that more Japanese warships have been destroyed; but that the Navy is not going to count them until the reports are certain.

Newspapermen asked Secretary Knox about that air raid alarm in Los Angeles, whether it would lead the government to move factories from the Pacific coast area. His reply was:- "Probably yes." That we may follow the British plan, move them inland, piece-meal. All of them can't be transported, but they can be ^{all} duplicated in other places.

And the Secretary said: "Of course we can't have all our eggs in one basket." He had already discussed that identical problem with British Lord Beaverbrook when he was over here and learned from the former British Minister of Supply about their experience.

BRITISH TROOPS

British troops on the soil of the United States!
Yes, in New York City, or at least the metropolitan area.
That's a thing that hasn't happened in something like
a hundred and twenty-five years, ^{when} ~~or at any rate after~~
the last of Wellington's Redcoats were evacuated at the
end of the War of Eighteen Twelve.

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It's a bit mysterious and puzzling. The
Public Relations Bureau of the War Department makes the
announcement today, but won't explain, won't say how
many of King George's Tommies are here, ^{or} ~~or~~ how long they
^{have} ~~had~~ been here, or how long they ^{are} ~~are~~ going to stay, or ^{Why.}
~~what the deuce they're doing here anyway.~~ At any rate,
they ^{are} ~~are~~ here, and we don't need any Andrew Jackson to
^{this time.} For they ^{of course} are
throw them out, ^{They're} ~~They're~~ here as friends, ~~and~~ allies; and
more power to them.

59/12 What do you say Hugh?

RUSSIA

In Russia, the Soviet armies in the north are now within a hundred miles of the frontiers of Latvia and Esthonia. That means a considerable advance. To get there they smashed the Nazi army at Lake Ilmen, which lies directly south of Novgorod. It was last week, ~~you may recall,~~ that the Reds recaptured Novgorod.

The battle to drive the Nazis away from Lake Ilmen lasted ten days and in the first phase of it, three divisions of the Germans were destroyed. ^{Such is} ~~That's~~ the Soviet report. Twelve thousand Nazis left dead on the field, leaving the others to be surrounded at a railway town called Staráyarússa, south of Lake Ilmen. The recapture of that town is a victory of ~~no mean~~ importance, because three railroads meet there and seven highways.

VIERECK

Some more odd facts came to light in the trial of George Sylvester Viereck, the Nazi propagandist.

One of these oddities was that the manuscript of a book by former Senator Rush Holt of West Virginia, was mailed to Berlin before it was published. The name of the book was "Who's Who Among the War Mongers."

The^{re} information came from a woman employed in the office of the British censorship in Bermuda.

She told the court and jury that the manuscript was accompanied by some papers signed "Sylvester", ~~and that~~
~~all along~~ along with a named followed by the drawing of a square. "Square" is the literal Nazi translation of Viereck's name.

Still another oddity was told by George Hill, former Secretary to Congressman ~~Ham~~ Fish of New York, the same Hill who has been sentenced to prison for telling a grand jury that he did not know Viereck. Hill today told the court that he had been advised to

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conceal his acquaintance with Viereck, ~~and his advice by~~ ^{so advised by} his former attorney, former Congressman John Jay O'Connor of New York. Hill had told O'Connor, he said, that he was going to the F.B.I. and tell them all. Whereupon, ^{so} he swore today, O'Connor replied to him:- "You're going nuts."

The prosecutor then asked Hill how many times he had been advised not to tell the truth. Hill ^{answered} ~~replied~~ on every occasion when he had made up his mind to tell it, ^{in other words} ~~and that means~~ quite a few times.

FARM

There was ^{a bit of a} ~~quite a~~ sensation on the floor of the Senate today when an unexpected letter arrived from the President. It was addressed to Vice-President Wallace and received just as the Senators were about to talk over a new law affecting the farmers. ~~It was~~ ^a law to prohibit the Commodity Credit Corporation from selling stocks of surplus farm products at prices less than parity. ^H One of the purposes of that Commodity Credit Corporation, the C.C.C., was to regulate farm prices ^{also to} and afford a staple market for farmers. ~~It's~~ ^A an effort to achieve the "ever-normal ^{granary} ~~granary~~" that Utopia of ~~farmers and~~ economists. The Farm Bloc in Congress is willing that the C.C.C. shall buy all surplus farm products, but it ~~ix~~ doesn't want anything done to prevent the prices of farm stuff from going up beyond the means ^s of the consumer.

Hence the letter from the President to the

Vice-President. Mr. Roosevelt used these words:-

"I believe irreparable damage to the war effort and to the farmers of the country would result in the enactment of this legislation." Food, he ~~pointed~~ pointed out, is as essential to victory as guns. And he added:- "The good-will of the public should not be alienated by grasping for a few additional dollars. Farmers have had substantial help in the past and will probably get it again in the future." Those/surplus commodity stocks were bought to be held for a time of emergency. That emergency, says the President, is now upon us.

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The letter aroused the ire of the Senators belonging to the Farm Bloc, the lawmakers who profess to ~~speak~~ speak for the men in the fields. Senator Guy Gillette of Iowa says it was a questionable procedure for the President of the United States to send a message not to Congress but to the Vice-President, in order to influence votes.

Whether the President was right ~~or~~ or wrong in writing that letter, it did not ring the bell. The Farm Bloc Senate has defeated him, passed that bill, fifty to twenty-three, a formidable majority. ^Q ~~It was the~~ second time ~~that~~ he has had _^ to take a beating from the Farm Bloc in Congress.

LOUIS

58 1/2 Another heavyweight championship bout. Yes,

Joe Louis is going to defend his title again, and that next month at Madison Square Garden on March Twenty-Seventh. This, of course, with the consent and approval of his commanding officers, Major-General ~~Irving~~ Phillipson and Colonel Supplee.

The news ^{came as a} ~~was quite a bit of a~~ surprise. When Champion Joe became Private Joseph Louis Barrow last month, it was hinted that he might fight while in the army, but there was no intimation that it would be so soon.

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The champion ^{this time} will donate his entire share of the purse to the Army Relief Fund, holding out only enough for training expenses. It will be a fifteen-round affair; and, the twenty-first fight that Louis will have fought in defense of his title.

Oh yes,

~~Oh yes,~~ His opponent? I almost forgot to

mention ^{him.} ~~it.~~

Abe Simon of New York. Only the real

fight fans will remember that ^{Simon} ~~he~~ went thirteen rounds

with the champion last March, and then was ~~only~~ put

away by a technical kay-o. ~~Simon's last fight was~~

~~in October, when he was knocked out at Cleveland.~~

Now H - what he

29 1/2