

L.T. - SUNOCO. WEDNESDAY, DEC. 24, 1941

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

In all the world there are few places where Christmas is so tragic this year as in the city of Manila, on the Island of Luzon, the only Christian capitol in the Orient. As we come to the feast of the Nativity, traditionally a bringer of joy, the horror of war rises to full fury in the Philippines. Manila, during the four centuries since the Spaniards founded the city, has had many a troubled and perilous time. But never in all its checkered history, has Manila had so sombre a Christmas as this.

The Japs bombed <sup>Manila</sup> ~~the city~~ violently today, and they were air-raiding indiscriminately far and wide -- striking at unprotected Philippine towns and villages. The Jap air action has grown so intense that there is a suggestion that Manila be declared an open town -- to save it from further bombing.

On land, the Japs are now launching their

supreme attack. They are making a three way attempt to conquer Luzon and seize Manila.

Tonight they are striking in major force at three points -- a triple threat to Manila.

The most important area is Lingayen, a hundred and fifty miles north of Manila, where the Japs have been launching assaults for the past several days. They have eighty or a hundred thousand men there, and are attacking with great power -- trying to drive through the broad level valley and along the good roads that lead southward to Manila. The War Department today speaks of -- heavy pressure, and we are told repeatedly --perhaps preparing us for bad news -- that the American Philippine forces are greatly outnumbered.

The two other places of Japanese attack are southeast and ~~xx~~ southwest of Manila, on the opposite sides of the Island of Luzon. The enemy put forces ashore at Atimonan, a fishing village on the Luzon East Coast. Forty transports were engaged ~~xx~~ in the landing operation, and the Japs there are estimated to number

probably forty thousand. They are trying to drive in the direction of Manila.

The third place is Batangas, on the West Coast. There, a Jap attempt to land was beaten off, repelled, but it is believed that they are renewing the effort to get their troops ashore.

Both Atimonan and Batangas are regarded as secondary, the Japanese plan ~~xxxx~~ being to create new battlefronts and draw American-Philippine forces away from the main scene of action at Lingayen.

The battle of the Philippines is now being fought on a full scale. The ~~major~~ engagement has been joined. This is vividly illustrated by the fact that General MacArthur, the American Philippine commander, has gone to the front to take personal command --  
"transferring his headquarters to the arena of fighting with all courage and resolution against the heavy enemy pressure" -- reverting to the phraseology used by the War Department.

ADD LEAD

Here's the latest -- a War Department bulletin announcing that the Japanese have made two more landings near Manila. One fifty miles southwest of the city. The other is forty-two miles southeast of Manila. The Japs have now landed at at least seven places and two hundred thousand yellow shock troops are said to be swarming to the attack from all sides.

MALAYA

Heavy fighting is going on in Malaya, but we are not told much about it. The British report the Japanese are attacking violently, and are being mowed down in waves. They're launching new assaults constantly, trying to drive southward toward Singapore

In nearby Burma, Rangoon was bombed savagely today. High explosive blasted the great port near the mouth of the Irrawagly. It isn't pleasant to think of bombs and their shattering violence among the legended Buddhist Pagodas of Rangoon -- especially the golden Schwe Dagon which is one of the wonders of the world.

In Hong King the isolated British garrison is still holding out -- defending strong positions in the mountainous part of the island. They have even succeeded in improving their positions, although the enemy has made an advance at one point.

DUTCH

The forces of the Dutch East Indies are still giving a magnificent account of themselves.

Batavia reports that Dutch Army bombers attacked a concentration of the Japanese ships off Borneo and

left a big transport in a sinking condition. (The Dutch

Command announces that their submarines and ships have sunk thirteen Japanese transports and tankers altogether and have seriously damaged others.

## WAKE ISLAND

The latest bit of striking news tonight is a disclosure by the War Department in Washington -- telling the size of the American garrison at Wake Island. The Japanese have finally taken <sup>Wake Island</sup> ~~that remote~~ outpost in the Pacific -- have overcome the forces of the United States Marines, after more than two weeks of constant attack.

Day after day in telling of the heroic epic of Wake Island, we constantly used the word "tiny" to describe the Marine garrison. But we didn't know how small it really was. That was a military secret. Tonight the Navy reveals that the number of Americans at Wake was only four hundred. Three hundred and sixty-five marines commanded by thirteen officers. So the adjective "tiny" was only too well justified.

Yet they fought off fourteen Japanese attacks. And they sank four enemy warships. Days ago we heard how the defenders of Wake Island had put an end to a Japanese light cruiser and a destroyer, and today the Japs admitted that in ~~xxx~~ the final attack on the

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island they lost two more destroyers.

The Marine Commander at Wake Island was Major James Patrick Sinott Devereaux, who now goes on the record as another American war hero. He seems to be something of an international character. The Major was born in Havana, went to school in Switzerland and joined the Marine Corps as a private. We had not heard a word about him previously -- because of the military secrecy surrounding Wake Island. But now mark that name down on the honor roll --- Major James Patrick Sinott Devereaux.



## DECORATIONS

Three months ago, an extraordinary thing happened, an amazing exploit was performed -- and we knew nothing about it. This was revealed in Washington today in the form of a recommendation that distinguished flying crosses be awarded to a number of officers and soldiers in the army air corps.

What was the peace time exploit that now claims such notable attention in these days of battle? It was something of the largest meaning with reference to the war in the Philippines right now. The course of the fighting in Luxon is vastly affected by the American Air forces out there -- the sky power that we have in the Philippines. And that sky power in the Philippines was determined to a considerable extent by the Army Air Corps exploit three months ago - September.

At that time it was decided to reinforce the garrison in the Philippines by sending a squadron of bombers from Hawaii to Manila. That a considerable trip at best, via Wake and Midway. The army wanted

the reinforcements to be secret. Tension with Japan was growing, ~~the~~ the tension that finally led to war. So they didn't want the Japs to learn about the bomber flight, didn't want the planes to be spotted by Japanese patrols along the route.

So they were sent by a round-about course, making an elaborate series of detours away out in the Pacific. Over an uncharted course that had never before been used -- either by commercial or military aircraft. It led the squadron of bombers deep into the south Pacific, way down and around -- ending finally at Manila. The total distance flown about <sup>seven</sup> thousand miles. The operation took a whole week, from September Fifth to September Twelfth -- and was accomplished one hundred per cent, with neither accident nor injury. The mass flight was kept so secret that there was no intimation of it until today -- when distinguished flying crosses were recommended.

So that's why the American Air Force in the present battle of Luzon is stronger than it would

otherwise have been. And that also is why the Japanese lost their battleship Haruna. For one of the bomber pilots who made the trip was Captain Colin Kelly. He was a number one figure in that mass flight -- winging to the Philippines -- later to do the heroic deed that brought him fame and cost him his life.

His name is again on today's list of citations. A posthumous decoration had already been awarded to him for the sinking of the enemy battleship. And now another -- to the same Colin Kelly -- for his part in the mass bomber flight which the announcement of today describes in these words:- "One of the greatest in aviation history."

## SUBMARINES

The Japs have torpedoed another American ship off the California coast -- the freighter ABSORAKA. The attack occurred so near the shore that it was witnessed by people on the beach. The torpedo blast left the freighter in a sinking condition. Boats came to the rescue and saved the crew -- while United States warships and war planes searched the area for the lurking enemy. There's one report, unconfirmed, that a Jap submarine is lying on the surface of the water out there -- disabled.

## EUREOPEAN RUMORS

Among the innumerable Christmas messages issued today, there was one of vital news importance with reference to the war. Radio listeners in Europe heard and recognized a voice -- that of Marshal Petain. He was delivering a Christmas message to French prisoners of war in Germany, and was speaking as the head of state of the Vichy Government.

This followed insistent rumors that Petain was out, was being succeeded by Admiral Darlan. A report taken to mean that Hitler was taking control over the Vichy Regime. Petain has been standing as firm as he can against Nazi demands.

The rumor of the ousting of Petain tied in with suppositions that Hitler might push down through Spain and get control of the French north African Colonies -- and what's left of the French fleet. If this were to happen, it would be of serious implication in the affairs of the war.

So had Petain really resigned -- to be succeeded by Darlan? Today a Vichy spokesman made a denial -- said there was nothing to it. And shortly thereafter came that further evidence -- the radio Christmas message spoken by the aged marshal as head of the Vichy Government.

There seems to be very little to the other number one rumor that has been current -- that the Nazis have invaded Spain. Today in Washington Secretary Cordell Hull stated that so far as he knew there was no truth in the tale that the German Army was launching a push into Spain. And Madrid says it has no word of a Hitler invasion.

Meanwhile, <sup>R</sup>umors of difficulties inside Germany continue to come through. The British radio today said there were serious disturbances in Berlin last night, when a hospital train arrived. Wounded men were being brought back from the Russian front, and the British broadcaster said that throngs of people in Berlin broke through the police lines. And they

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were horrified when they saw the condition of the  
wounded coming in from the Russian winter war front.

POPE

The Christmas message that Pope Pius the Twelfth addressed to this war torn world today was a solemn exhortation. He laid down the principles for a just peace. "The only remedy," proclaims the Pontiff, "is to return to social and international principles capable of creating a barrier against the abuse of liberty and the abuse of power."



## EUROPE

In Russia and North Africa, the story continues as on previous days. The Red Army announces more and more gains, with the recapture of many villages. And, in the battle of the desert, the British, having pushed on to Benghazi, where they have the Axis forces in a trap that's closing in constantly.

Christmas at the White House this year is something new, because of the presence of so important a guest -- Winston Churchill. One can hardly imagine any other Yuletide season, during which the President of the United States entertained a visitor of so much consequence.

The President, the First Lady, and their guest, are celebrating the Feast of the Nativity in simple American style. The Christmas dinner will feature the traditional turkey. The festivity centers around the time-honored Christmas tree. The President and Prime Minister officiating at the tree. They both spoke a Christmas message -- addressed to their nations and the world.

## POSTMEN

It has been raining up in Massachusetts, a long drenching downpour. And out into the wet weather the special Christmas mailmen were sent to deliver the presents and Christmas cards and letters written to the folks at home. You'd think it would inspire them with a gentle and mellow feeling just to carry such mail. And maybe it would -- except for the rain. They've been drenched and soaked, half drowned, making the ~~the~~ Christmas rounds from house to house. And today they walked into the post office, tossed their mail sacks on the floor, and announced they were quitting -- too much rain.

That's bad enough, but earlier somebody found a package of fifty letters lying on a bank of the Merrimac River -- tossed there by some disgruntled waterlogged postman. And there are rumors of something still worse -- rumors that have started a search of the local sewers. They say that the washed out Christmas postmen tossed large quantities of Yuletide greetings into the most inappropriate place of all.

What a destination for a lot of fancy Christmas cards all decorated with pictures of Santa Claus, snow scenes, and cheery sentiments all twined with holly.

It seems impossible -- no matter how hard it may have been raining. You'd think that even if Noah had been sent out into the deluge to deliver Christmas mail, he wouldn't have been as cantankerous as that.

And now a cheery message from Hugh who never is cantankerous!