

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
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Bad News and Good News

"All newspapers," remarks the San Francisco Chronicle, "receive letters every day criticizing them for printing the news—as if that were not exactly what they are for." Now that isn't exactly true. The Chronicle is a big newspaper and no doubt its editors were thinking only of big metropolitan newspapers. On little newspapers like The Statesman, sometimes several days go by between letters scolding us for printing some item of news. The Chronicle, it appears further, has been criticized for printing what some readers consider "war secrets" though the news in question was handed out by the war department. A weekly newspaper in Corvallis on the contrary criticizes the "daily press" for suppressing the real facts of the tragic temporary barracks fire in that city the other day—though the weekly's account adds no essential fact to those carried on the press wires.

Mostly, we think, newspapers have been criticized recently for carrying overly-optimistic headlines on the course of the Pacific war, due to emphasis on isolated successes. But the Chronicle was constrained to defend its news-presentation policy through receipt of a letter which charged that its front page "carries everything that the axis wants it to carry" and "would make good reading in Berlin today." Particular reference is to a story of racial discrimination in San Francisco, a story quoting a Dutch official to the effect that promised reinforcements were not sent to Java, another intimating that Turkey was leaning toward the axis and in general "tales of disunity and bungling, stupidity and conflict among ourselves." The writer thought a story about 10,000 steel workers donating a day's work to a good cause, and stories of Red Cross and air raid warden classes, ought instead to occupy the top columns on the front page.

What gets onto the front page and why, is too big a question to argue here. One might write a book. Or one might merely observe that "news is what people read." Actually the one question anybody cares to have answered, and expects a newspaper to answer these days, is "How are we doing?"

It may be that with the best of intentions, in carrying out routine procedures that ordinarily suffice, the newspapers have failed in part to answer that question. About the fighting, they have duly informed the public. Everyone knows that except in Russia, the fighting has been going badly. But, inadvertently we think, newspapers may have neglected to inform their readers clearly and in type so big and well-placed they can't miss it, that in the war of production the news is good; that on that front the United Nations have started to win.

But if they haven't there are two good reasons. We can't absolutely know from direct evidence of axis production. And we no longer can report exact figures on United Nations' production, lest valuable information be handed over to the enemy.

But by matching confidential information on United Nations' production up against the highest reasonable estimates of axis production, it is now safe and permissible to say that American, Canadian and British airplane production now exceeds that of Germany, occupied France, Italy and Japan; that our tank output quite probably is ahead; that we are clearly beating them in shipbuilding although in view of our necessarily long supply lines, ship shortage is one of our most serious bottlenecks; and that we are beating the enemy in production of that most basic of war materials, steel.

Thus there is bad news from the front lines, good news from the rear lines. In the long run the news from the rear lines is more important; thus the good news overbalances the bad. But unless you have the long view, you don't see it, no matter how big the type. If you can't see it, don't blame the front page.

Washingtonians don't trust themselves. Not only do they have a property tax millage limitation; they have a law requiring a total vote equaling 40 per cent of the most recent vote for governor within the tax levying unit, to validate any special millage. In Tacoma, small millages for civilian defense and to supplement school finances were on the ballot this week. Apparently they were meritorious measures, for each carried by more than two to one. But although Tacomans were balloting upon some city offices and school directors at the same time, the vote was far below the 40 per cent minimum and it seems that the special tax levies were not validated. Requiring a vote of some specified volume has its points but may lead in certain circumstances to paralysis of government. Where every voter has the opportunity to vote if he cares enough about the issues one way or the other, it is perfectly fair to rule that "silence gives consent."

Art Perry of Pearville, alias Medford, hadn't popped off about the state basketball tournament since his persistent efforts to remove it from Salem fizzled for another year. But you could just count on hearing from him when Salem lost in the first round. "In all sections of the state there will be basketball fans rejoicing," remarks Perry, "not because Salem was defeated, but because the 'host team' idea, sustained a long deferred deflation." Now if that isn't logic for you. What has been deflated is Perry's peevish claim, essentially a slap at the integrity of the state high school activities association, that the "host team" was always given a soft bracket so it could reach the finals.

"Japs 45 minutes from Australian mainland!" shrieked a headline the other morning. Australia's situation is not pleasant even if the exact moment to start counting those minutes is not indicated. At the very least, we trust that the Australians and our assisting forces will make the 45 minutes eventful.

Patriotism and Taxes

Donald Duck, in that much-controverted treasury department-sponsored movie, got a pleasurable thrill out of paying his income tax. Incidentally, as movie shorts go it wasn't bad. In fact it was so good, purely as entertainment, that the treasury department shouldn't have had to pay for it. Movie houses should have been and doubtless were willing to pay for it as they do for their other films.

Getting back to the point, we are among those possibly queer and rare individuals who find it not at all difficult to imagine Donald Duck enjoying the business of paying his income tax. And Donald Duck represents humanity.

"Taxes are unpopular." This unequivocal statement, as we have mentioned before, occurs in our own office encyclopedia. Generally speaking, it is true. But assuming that public money is wisely and fruitfully spent and that taxes are justly distributed, it shouldn't be true even in ordinary times. Government ought to be popular; supporting government a willingly-accepted duty.

But certainly now, when taxes pay soldiers \$21 a month or more, feed and arm them, build planes and tanks; now, when taxes stand between us and the enemy, we ought to pay them just as willingly and with as fine a glow of patriotic pride as did Donald Duck.

By the way, have you filed your federal income tax return? If not, better attend to it within the next two days.

News Behind The News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, March 12—Commentative moping about Far East results seems to hold that campaign up as the feeblest-witted of all—including Norway and Greece.

The British lost their entire Malayan army at Singapore (the Japs say it numbered 78,000 on surrender day).

The Dutch, British and our own navy seem to have lost much of the Far Eastern fleet. The Dutch are supposed to have surrendered one army in Java numbering 93,000, although only untrustworthy Jap figures again are available.

Noting this evidence, current popular reasoning seems running along the line that Gen. Wavell's defensive strategy was stupid and that of the Dutch nearly as bad.

"Too little, too late," they say. "If these scattered 171,000 troops had been put together with all the scattered naval forces for a drive against the China coast the results might have been different," they say. If . . . if . . . if . . .

You can get nearly any better result than the one that happened by reshuffling strategy and forces on paper now, but all this discussion overlooks the basic reason why the Far East is gone. The original error was the fatal one, the all inclusive one which never could be redeemed. It was simply that the British and Dutch were sitting out there for years upon the richest portion of the earth and failed to take modern precautions for its protection.

Specifically they had no air force worthy of the name. They had not even built air fields enough to house an air force if one came. If every allied plane in the world had been shipped out there last December 7 few could have gotten off the ground because no air fields for them had been built.

The British and Dutch had not provided sufficient anti-aircraft guns to defend any vital point. Their troops were not trained to the type of warfare they would encounter, while the Japs had spent years preparing for this special mission of conquest. They simply, madly under-estimated what they needed and what the Japs had.

These are fundamental mistakes which date back long before the fighting began. They could not be corrected in a few weeks or a few months. After them, nothing effective could have been done.

Dismissed British and Dutch statesmen are inclined, like the public now, to analyze events of the past three fighting months in search of the answer for their troubles, rather than these older and more important truths.

It can be seen now the Japs won the Far East before this war began when they took Indo-China, with the placid acquiescence of Vichy. Without it their campaign would not have been possible. The British depended on Thailand to fight, and particularly to offer air fields, but this error, too, proved disastrous. The Japs were halfway down the Malay peninsula before the British even knew where they would have to fight or how.

The Far Eastern correspondents talked of "reinforcements," and the Dutch and British echoed this call, but everyone can now see reinforcements within the necessary 30 to 60 days was wholly impossible from the start. From San Francisco to Batavia is 36 days by convoy. A jam-up occurred in our Pacific ports, due largely to a shortage of ships available on-the-spot, after the war began, but even if sufficient non-existent ships, planes, tanks, trained personnel had been waiting in port to go at the outbreak of war, they could not have altered the result in view of the original pre-war mistakes.

What could have broken the back of the Jap offensive is naval blows at the Jap lines of communications, establishment of a beach head on the China coast, maintenance there of a force of dive bombers to prey upon Jap shipping. After Pearl Harbor, we did not have the navy to do it.

These facts have been obscured by the deceptive and childish modes of allied publicity and censorship—such things as the Singapore censor suppressing CBS correspondent Cecil Brown for hinting that Singapore was in a bad way only a week or so before it fell.

They constantly held out hope to the public that Malays or Japs could be defended if only "reinforcements" could be sent, long after they knew reinforcements were impossible, and that the Far East had been doomed by faulty pre-war preparations. The responsibility was British and Dutch, not ours.

That is the plain story of the Far East as history will write it.



Longer Work Week—Or Louder Alarm Clock?

Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

2-13-42

You bet, Wendell Willkie enlisted the first day of the first World War, and a Salem soldier was with him:

The Portland Oregonian of Tuesday, March 3, under the headline "Amateur Strategist" had a leading editorial which read:

"General Johnson evidently belongs to that school of military thought which, when an outsider offers an opinion, looks down its nose and says, 'Why, he couldn't get a company across a puddle.' At least, he indicates such army viewpoint when he dismisses Mr. Willkie as an 'amateur strategist.'"

"The fact is that we need a lot more amateur strategists. It was the failure of the public to think militarily that caused us to neglect our defenses and get into this pickle. If the average American had not been so indifferent and so misled, our army and navy would have been in shape."

Today's Garden

By LILLIE L. MADSEN

W. T. writes that she has tried three times to grow a pink dogwood in the same location and each time failed. Now she wants advice on whether or not to try it again. She says she really would like to make one grow there and hates the thought "that she is licked by a piece of ground and a shrub."

Ans.: Frequently, no matter how we try, we cannot "lick" nature. Perhaps her conditions are all wrong. She writes nothing of what the conditions are or how the tree died. Seldom is it wise to replace a failure with the same variety of plant in the same location unless some investigation as to its cause of failure is made. If she is sure she purchased good stock each time, it would be very foolish to go out and plant another tree of the same variety in the same location without first finding out if the soil is right, if the drainage is good, and so on.

Perseverance is a good trait to have in gardening, but like in all else, perseverance just for the sake of perseverance isn't wise. If one doesn't want to be bested, get to the cause of the thing that results in the loss. If the cause cannot be conquered, then the effort is really wasted—and that gets us no place.

Those who, like General Johnson, claim special knowledge through special training. Of course they have it. And we are very dependent upon them just now. But when they deny the right of the civilian to think militarily they are defying history and endangering themselves along with the nation. So far as that is concerned, actual military practice has literally walked out from under a lot of these old generals. They command tanks they do not understand."

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'Hutch' of the R.A.F.

By PETER MUIR

Chapter 20 Continued

"No," Pierre whispered, speaking very fast. "As he is alone he makes no sound. He is afraid to turn his back on the other rooms along the corridor. He does not move unless he suspects something, and then, I warn you, he comes in stocking feet like a cat. I know. I have seen him. Listen. You and your friend stand at the door while Henri lets me down. If the dirty Boche comes kill him, but without noise. It is too late to act gently. Alloys!"

Hutch and Rusty could hear the gurgling of the stream below as Henri, using his great strength, swung upon the stone. They stood by the door, waiting with bated breath and thumping hearts. Waiting and waiting. Minutes seemed like hours, and the only sound was the music from the running brook.

There was no telling how long they waited, standing silent in the inky blackness, ready to pounce on the soldier if he interrupted them. It must have been hours, weeks, Hutch thought, from the moment when they had heard Pierre splash into the water until a low whistle came to their ears from somewhere beneath the stone. It was Pierre signaling for Henri to pull him out.

"One cannot possibly go up stream," he whispered, at the same time wringing water from his tunic. "The water comes in through a round pipe, and the current is too strong to pass. Down stream—" although Hutch could not see the Frenchman he was sure that he hesitated here to shrug his shoulders—"that is another matter. The current will help us pass. It also exits by a round pipe. The water practice-

France, landing together at a well known port in Normandy. They were in the Lincoln Division, the 84th, called the "Rail-splitters" Division," made up largely of men from Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Kentucky; known to many as a replacement division; that is, men out of this (84th) Division were used to fill in the ranks of active divisions which had had some losses. Some of the 84th Division men went to the 91st, frequently called the Pine Tree Division, having gone from Camp Lewis, Washington.

Will and Willkie, under some noisy or stormy conditions, sounded much alike, so they became well acquainted in the army's service, and have kept up the familiar relationship in the years since. Mr. Will would be glad to certify to the complimentary words of the Oregonian writer concerning the ability and character of Wendell Willkie.

(Concluded tomorrow.)

ally fills this pipe, and once inside there is no return. What is at the other end, or how long it is, I do not know. For one, I shall take the chance."

"And I?"

"And I?"

Pierre chuckled. "The 'eyes' have it. In which case, hold your breath and pray. I shall go first. If there is no exit I shall come back and warn you—perhaps. If I am not back by the time you count a hundred, do not wait. I shall have gotten through—or choked." He attached a blanket around the open stone so that each man could slide down in turn. "And now, my friends, I shall meet you under the open stars—maybe!"

There was the muffled sound of a splash as Pierre hit the water. "Au revoir," he called up in a low tone, after which only the sound of the stream came to those listening above.

Hutch counted, neither slowly nor hurriedly, to one hundred. "Go ahead, Martin," he said. Henri demurred, explaining that as he was the strongest he should be the last, to protect, as he explained it, the flank. This was good military tactic, but Hutch was now the superior officer and insisted. The Frenchman had been in prison for months, had discovered the means of getting away, and it was his privilege to go first. This passed through his mind, but he did not lose time with lengthy explanations. "I am now in command," he said. "Go ahead. We will count to fifty instead of one hundred. Hurry!" Another splash was heard.

"... forty five, forty six, forty seven, forty eight, forty nine—OK Rusty, your turn." Without speaking Rusty took his friend's hand and shook it.

"... fourteen, fifteen, sixteen," the American counted, standing there alone in the dark. He was counting to the end of his heartbeats, which was fast. "Seventeen, eight—"

Like an angry leopard Hutch turned and leaped on the guard, standing in the open door. It was a mighty spring, the violence of which sent the German's automatic clattering across the floor.

The man's throat! His throat! was Hutch's single thought. The guard must not be allowed to cry out for help at any cost. Like lightning the consequences of recapture now ran through the American's mind even as he left. Solitary confinement, perhaps the firing squad for his friends and himself. Yes, indeed, he was like a savage animal applying the law of the jungle—the survival of the fittest.

(To be continued)

Radio Programs

KSLM—FRIDAY—1230 Kc.

6:30—Rise 'N' Shine.

7:00—Rise 'N' Shine.

7:30—Rise 'N' Shine.

8:00—Sunrise Salute.

8:30—Whispering Strings.

9:00—Newspaper.

9:30—Morning Pick-up.

10:00—Pastor's Call.

10:30—War Time Women.

11:00—Air Flo.

11:30—Defense Today.

12:00—Classical Orchestra.

12:30—Manny Strand Orch.

1:00—News.

1:30—Memory Timekeeper.

2:00—Rise 'N' Shine.

2:30—Memory Timekeeper.

3:00—Breakfast Club.

3:30—As the Twig Is Bent.

4:00—John B. Hughes.

4:30—Woman's Point of View.

5:00—This and That.

5:30—News.

6:00—Helen Holden.

6:30—Front Page Farrell.

7:00—Joe Francisco Orchestra.

7:30—Burt's Parade.

8:00—Jerry Sears Presents.

8:30—Concert Gema.

9:00—Luncheon Concert.

9:30—News.

10:00—You Too Like Music.

10:30—Johansen Family.

11:00—Boake Carter.

11:30—PTA.

12:00—Take It Easy.

12:30—News.

1:00—The Bookworm.

1:30—John B. Hughes Orchestra.

2:00—Hello Again.

2:30—Little Concert.

3:00—News.

3:30—Salvation Army Program.

4:00—Music Depreciation.

4:30—Young Men's Brown.

5:00—Orphan Annie.

5:30—Captain Midnight.

6:00—Jack Aron's Music.

6:30—Gabriel's.

7:00—News.

7:30—Movie Parade.

8:00—Calvin W. Webb.

8:30—Shumaker's.

9:00—News.

9:30—Speaking of Sports.

10:00—Fulton Lewis Jr.

10:30—Dick Jurgens.

11:00—Shirley Ennis Orchestra.

11:30—Jack Teagarden Orchestra.

12:00—Al Donahue Orchestra.

12:30—News.

1:00—Sunrise Serenade.

1:30—National Farm and Home.

2:00—Western Agriculture.

2:30—Floyd Wright.

3:00—Breakfast Club.

3:30—Harvey's.

4:00—Prescott Presents.

4:30—Keep Fit with Patty Jean.

5:00—Breakfast Club.

5:30—Woman's Point of View.

6:00—Keep Fit with Patty Jean.

6:30—New Showy.

7:00—School.

7:30—Breakfast at Sardi's.

8:00—Charmingly We Live.

8:30—Music Appreciation Hour.

9:00—Orphan of Divorce.

9:30—Annals of Honeymoon Hill.

10:00—John's Other Wife.

10:30—Just Plain Bill.

11:00—Your Livestock Reporter.

11:30—News Headlines and High Lights.

12:00—Market Reports.

12:30—Rose City Calendar.

1:00—News.

1:30—The Quiet Hour.

2:00—A House in the Country.

2:30—Stars of Today.

3:00—Between the Bookends.

3:30—News.

4:00—Stringing.

4:30—Stars of Today.

5:00—Archery Tracy.

5:30—Jack Owens.

6:00—News.

6:30—Helen's Piano Orchestra.

7:00—Adventure Stories.

7:30—Flying Patrol.

8:00—News of the World.

8:30—Tom Mix Straight Shooter.

9:00—Secret City.

6:15—Rollie Truitt Time.

6:30—Quack of Dawn.

6:45—Early Birds.

7:00—News Headlines and Highlights.

7:15—Music of Vienna.

7:30—Reveille Roundup.

7:45—Sam Hayes.

8:00—Stars of Today.

8:15—Symphonic Swing.