

# The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"  
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CHARLES A. SPRAGUE, Editor and Publisher

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## The Bulldozer

When monuments are erected following world war II, at least one of major prominence should be devoted to the faithful bulldozer. It has carved a line across the wastes of North America in the building of the Alaska highway. It has leveled landing strips on Pacific atolls. It has, in its modified tank-dozen style, gouged paths through the hedgerows of Normandy to speed the break-through. It has followed jeeps to clear streets of French towns of rubble so trucks could rumble on with supplies to advancing units. It has even dug graves for the enemy dead and then covered them with soft earth. Once on Saipan it was itself a weapon, as it pushed earth and rocks to seal the entrance of a Jap-held cave.

Foreigners, from South sea island natives to French citizens and German infantrymen, stare in amazement not unmixed with fear as young Yankee drivers (sometimes negro) manipulate 'dozer controls and show how versatile a tool it is. Major Eric Linklater, with the British forces in Italy pays the following tribute to the 'dozers for the part they are playing in the battle for Italy. He said in a recent broadcast released by the British information service:

Bulldozers led the advance on the Gothic line, and bulldozers and Bailey Bridges made it possible for the infantry and the guns to reach it and breach it and go through.

The Germans have always been clever in destruction—a man easily grows expert in what gives him pleasure. And throughout the length of Italy there are grim memorials to their talent for demolition. But whatever the obstacles, whatever the enormity of the gaps that yawned in front, the troops went through with a speed that took the Germans utterly by surprise. And the impregnable Gothic line lasted no longer than the Maginot.

And the bulldozers led the advance. Three months ago, on the Sangro, there were three of them, called Gert and Daisy and Tiger Lil, that became a winter legend and were said to be the reincarnation of three of Hannibal's elephants who, many centuries before, had victoriously flattened their way through Italy.

A bulldozer in bronze, life-size, with a tank soldier, his shirt open, his face aglow at the controls—what a stirring war memorial that would make; and how appropriate! Or perhaps some yet undiscovered Kipling can do for the 'dozer and its driver what RK did for Gunga Din.

## Child Safety

With the children back from summer work and camps more of them will be on city streets. And as the days grow shorter, and, with cloudy weather, darker, the hazards from auto accidents will increase. Motorists will do well to drive more cautiously, and pedestrians, old and young, should walk more carefully for their own safety.

In days before war campaigns for paper and blood plasma and tin cans and contributions it was possible of work up much public interest in safety campaigns (you remember—white slickers and everything). Special safety campaigns would suffer from too much war competition now, yet the need remains. At least, The Statesman has done its duty in posting this "Public Warning."

## Editorial Comment

### "STOP, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ANYTHING?"

It has been noted in recent days, both in this column and in the news, that President Roosevelt is in Quebec holding a war conference with Prime Minister Winston Churchill. It is not at all unusual that this should be. Since war days came to America, the president has apparently been seized by an irresistible urge to travel. The seizures have come more frequently as election time approached. Now the novelty is wearing off and the people are becoming used to Mr. Roosevelt popping up here, there or elsewhere (ordinarily elsewhere) to put on a turn in his election role of "commander-in-chief."

These disappearances and appearances have been coming often enough of late so that we had almost lost sight of the fact that the president was in Quebec doing much the same sort of thing that he is doing now only slightly more than a year ago. But he was, there, sure enough. We are reminded of it rather joltingly by the story of Sgt. Maj. Emilie Couture.

It seems that the sergeant, who was in charge of issuance of stationery for the Quebec conference last year, found some papers in one of the hotel conference rooms after the conferees had gone home. They were memoranda on the forces which could be brought to bear in invading France and gave the tip-off that the invasion would be in June, 1944. The sergeant picked up the papers and turned them in at headquarters, then was hustled away to Washington in company with a commissioned officer to be sworn to secrecy. For keeping the secret he and the officer were awarded special citations.

More power to Sgt. Couture. He did what we would expect of a good soldier. In doing so it is not unlikely that he saved the lives of thousands of other good soldiers, American, British and Canadian. He may even have prevented a shocking defeat of our forces when D-day did come in June, 1944. What the sergeant did was important enough so that there will be no one to grudge him his citation, even though his act was in no sense beyond what was reasonably to have been expected of him. But how about the one who left such documents lying about? We will assume that it was not intentional; we will also insist that it was criminally careless. Documents of such import that the finder must be sworn to secrecy in the capital of the American government, documents which could imperil the lives of our men and the success of a major phase of our war—these were left for the first who entered the room to find, as one might find the work sheets which a school child leaves after completing tomorrow's arithmetic assignments.

## "Ein Kleiner Mann"

Sunday Maj. Gen. Enrich Elster surrendered his motley command of some 20,000 German marines and soldiers to the American 83rd division at the Loire river in France. The Germans had refused to surrender to the French maquis for fear of vengeance, preferring the security of American prison camps. The German general himself, after his surrender said he wanted to go to America "as quickly as possible."

Fear of retribution haunts the minds not only of generals but of privates in the German armies. Undoubtedly they have a sense of guilt over their own excesses and expect swift and harsh vengeance from their captors. Their hope of mercy seems to lie with the Americans.

In reoccupied cities of Russia and Poland where some of the worst atrocities were uncovered German soldiers blamed the cruelties on the SS, Hitler's vaunted storm troopers, or pleaded their own lack of responsibility because of orders of their superiors.

Sgt. Stefan Heym, writing in the New York Times magazine, reports that the German prisoners in the west likewise hope to avoid any personal penalty because they were merely obeying orders as "little men." To quote from his article:

The prisoner of war is strictly an individualist; his life having been saved by what he considers a miracle, he is more interested in his individual fate than in the collective fate of the nation. He is not worried by the possibility of Germany's being split up into small vassal states, but he is tremendously worried about his own personal responsibility for acts committed during the war by the German army and police is brought to his attention. He immediately protests: "I always disapproved of cruelties!" "Nothing of that kind ever happened where my unit was!" "The regular army has nothing to do with it—that was all done by the SS!"

The interrogator interposes carefully: "But you knew of these things?"

"Well—yes."

"What did you do about them?"

Now the prisoner really gets heated. He gestures, "What could I do. I am only Ein Kleiner Mann!"

I am only a Little Man. This is the standard phrase, the standard escape from any and all responsibility. As soon as the war turns against them, as soon as the fear of retribution for all the agony they spread grips them, the excuse is ready. They had to follow orders.

The little men will escape, except where direct personal connection is established with specific misdeeds, because not even the Poles would go through with a mass slaughter of all the Germans. But it is time that "little meh" be given responsibility for the actions of their leaders. The German people, the masses of them, cheered Hitler in the Sportpalast and swarmed at party rallies at Nuremberg. They provided the base for his support; and they ought to suffer a punishment for their own correction.

## Paper Drive Next Sunday

Waste paper is the prime need in salvage at the present time. War consumption added to civilian demand makes paper genuinely scarce. Not only is economy in consumption required, but prompt return of old papers, cardboard and carton board through salvage collection channels is urged.

Salem will stage a paper collection special effort next Sunday. Gardner Knapp, salvage director, is anxious to have people here beat Portland's per capita record of 8 1/2 lbs. per capita. The paper is here, if people will only bundle it and turn it in at the many convenient collection boxes scattered over the city.

The proceeds of the paper sold, it may be added, will go to the improvement of the boy scout camp, which adds a worthy local project to the patriotic reason for liberal response to this appeal.

## Interpreting The War News

By ELTON C. FAY  
Substituting for  
KIRKE L. SIMPSON  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WAR ANALYST

Any final battle to destroy the last vestige of Japanese sea power will be brief but fierce. Naval men, while believing that the war of attrition waged against the enemy's sea power may be brief and air power has dissipated Japan's chance of victory in any major naval clash assert however that the enemy fleet remains an unknown but certainly dangerous factor.

Destruction of hundreds of thousands of tons of shipping needed to fuel and supply the striking force of the Japanese fleet presumably has pined the fleet to operations not far from the home bases. Japan's fleet is thought to include at least 13 battleships, with as many as five of them 40-000-ton vessels mounting 8 or 9 sixteen inch guns. In addition to the capital ships, it is suspected Japan has been experimenting with extremely heavy cruisers, of virtually battleship proportion. Japan started the war with 10 battleships, four of which have been sunk. At least seven of her aircraft carriers have gone down.

Curiously enough, in all of the American navy and air contacts with elements of the enemy fleet, there have been no reports of the sighting of any of the new construction. The latest engagement was the carrier-borne plane attack on Japanese ships and aircraft near the northern tip of the Philippines in June—and dispatches mentioned no modern fighting ships in that enemy force.

The assumption, therefore, is that the enemy may be husbanding truly powerful battleships, cruisers and aircraft carriers to make a last stand near home. In such an engagement, the enemy would be opposing a naval force certainly numerically superior. Moreover, since the start of the war, the United States has added to its fleet between 35,000 and 45,000 tons battleships of the most modern design and of super fire power.

This American fleet may have the support of powerful units of Britain's navy as indicated in the recent Quebec statement of Prime Minister Churchill that England expects to be in on the kill in the Pacific.



'Dead Soldiers'

## The Literary Guidepost

By JOHN SELBY

"SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE SOLDIERS," by Margaret Halsey (Simon & Schuster; \$2.50)

I don't suppose that Margaret Halsey was ever a lowly gob in the Navy, but I once was that, and remember with some acuteness the sensations thereof. I remember because I had a certain correspondent of the feminine gender who was clever. The first few of her letters were amusing, and led me to respond in what I fondly hoped was "kind." Then I got bored. Not merely a little bored, but abysmally, and eventually I began resenting the fact that "father" became "protector" to her, and puns such as "habeas corporal" dropped from her fountain pen, more and more heavily.

So perhaps Margaret Halsey's "Some of My Best Friends Are Soldiers" should never have been administered to me in the first place. It is, presumably, a series of letters from a sister to her brother in Fort Bragg. Miss Halsey actually is writing what she truthfully calls "a kind of novel," however, complete with love affair, with sidelights on the character of the relatives, with introduction, conflict and denouement. It has the advantage of the letter form, which is that literally anything can be dragged in without apology. It has the great disadvantage, too, that none of the characters ever actually enters the stage. They cannot (because the text is presumably a set of letters) ever get closer to the reader than once-removed. They must be strained through Miss Halsey's mind, and when Miss Halsey's mind takes up a serious problem, it is a bit on the opaque side. She once did a quite delightful and neatly satirical book on the English called "With Malice Toward Some." The same method does not work for the so-called "minority problems" which means for the Negro problem and the Jewish problem.

Miss Halsey takes up the latter through an incident at a serviceman's canteen; it does not occur to her that this incident should have been solved on the spot by a neatly directed slap. The "Negro problem" she gets at through the brother in Carolina—she lectures him on his reaction toward southern thought on the subject, which strikes me as being much like a little boy trying to kill a bird by throwing a stone around the corner of a barn. At the end of Miss Halsey's book all I had was a few snickers.

## "THE YOUNG IDEA" By Mossler



## News Behind the News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 18—In this spot Sunday I began the presentation of facts to demonstrate that compulsory military training is undemocratic and the proposed legislation to take 17-year old youths into the army for a year would not provide an efficient, sufficient army because most fighting lines today are highly skilled techniques which require constant practice by more mature persons.

This youth nucleus discharged at 18 could not keep up with the scientific developments of war, but must become another national guard, taking inadequate refresher courses by mail. The training therefore could be not much more than a physical culture year taken out of the life of every citizen.

If physical culture and minor preparatory training is what the army wants, why does it not put the facilities for these into our existing educational structure? Why take a year out of a boy's life. Delaying his college education or his start in work, delaying the contribution of every one to the productivity of the country, when it will not give us what we must have—a capable army?

The unusable money training the unusable and unadaptable boys, as the army proposes under the pretense of thus maintaining democracy?

Many boys have no talent or desire for plane-piloting, gunnery, tank operation. And money spent training them for a year at 17 to be soldiers would be thrown away.

Would you not get a better way out of this? The practical way to keep away from military cliques is by practicing democracy, not sacrificing your defense to the fear of an avoidable possibility. Prevent the military minority from becoming ruling civil authorities as has been done with our admirals cliques.

Avoid such totalitarian practices as this proposed youth draft. Raise your army in a democratic way, keep it democratic, and away from political influence and control.

An Oakland California editor sees more clearly the fundamental truths of the situation. He says the country must face the necessity of maintaining a large enough standing army and paying for it. He guesses we will need 500,000 men, ten times what we had before.

Kenneth L. Dixon  
AT THE FRONT!  
7th Army Speed  
Brings Problems  
To New Air Arm

WITH THE AEF IN FRANCE, Sept. 12—(Delayed)—(AP)—Communications problems caused by the speed of the seventh army's drive has brought plenty of work, trouble and danger to a new branch of the army air forces which is seeing its first action in southern France.

Although attached to the ground forces, the air corps liaison squadron commanded by Kenneth L. Dixon, Maj. J. Mess Percy, of New Orleans, La., reminds all comers somewhat grimly that it belongs to the ranks of the flyboys. Often it is mistaken for an artillery observation outfit which—as much respect as liaison pilots have for cub pilots—angers them even more.

The reason is they are not flying cubes but Stinson L-5s which have about three times the power of artillery's "flying jeeps" which they resemble at a distance.

"We have been getting a good workout right off the bat, what with radio-telephone communications not being able to keep pace with the troops or else being subjected to some other interference," said Lt. Joseph W. Kenny, Cleveland, O., an observer with the outfit which only left the states last June. "As far as we know we are the first air corps liaison outfit flying Stinsons to see combat in any theater."

In addition to running messages between army headquarters and various front line units, the squadron serves as a reconnaissance outfit "in its spare time."

Besides that, it came to the rescue of correspondents during the early days as the beachheads

IT SEEMS TO ME  
(Continued from Page 1)

a guaranteed annual wage and certain other union demands. William H. Davis, chairman of WLB which now must review the panel's findings, gave out a statement last week that a "change in the pay stabilization policy is inevitable" and said WLB would start work on the problem October 9 and make its decision known "before the November elections." The timing there is not without political importance!

In fact, the politics of the move is plain as a pikestaff, but I want to discuss the proposition on its economic aspects.

If we look directly at the problem faced by WLB the conclusion is forced that upward wage adjustments are justified on the basis of the increase in cost of living. OPA simply hasn't done its job, and the great reason it hasn't is the pressure of producers for price increases and readiness of consumers with money in their pockets to pay the increase. But looking ahead just a little the wisdom of further wage increases is put in grave doubt. For the war in Europe is sifting drawing to a close, and with it the demand for war goods will fall sharply, men will be demobilized and the whole country forced to reconvert to peace. The early effect will be a reduction in prices under the force of competition. Food prices will decline in spite of government support to agriculture. If then the wage structure is on a high plateau the

facts of world life and quit playing around with false notions—such as the currently popular one that a year in the army for 17 year olds will solve the defense problem or be any less expensive than intelligently, democratically producing the army we need.

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