

Ernie Pyle With the Navy:

Dry, Brown Okinawa Like Indiana in Late Summer

Natives Live Poorly, However;
Cultivate Small Farm Tracts

By Ernie Pyle

OKINAWA.—Since this island is the closest to Japan we've landed on and since we seem to feel this really is Japan, rather than just some far outpost, I'll try to describe to you what it looks like.

Actually it doesn't look a great deal different from most of America. In fact it looks much more like America than anything the marines have seen for the last three years.

The climate is temperate rather than tropical, and so is the vegetation. There are tropical-like trees on and near the beaches—I think they're Pandanus bushes. But there are also many trees of the fir family with horizontal limbs.

The country over which my regiment passed during the first two days was cultivated. It rose gradually from the sea and was all formed into small fields.

It didn't look at all unlike Indiana in late summer when things have started to turn dry and brown, except that the fields were much smaller.

The wheat, which looks just like ours, is dead ripe in the fields now. The marines are cutting it with little sickles. In other fields are cane and sweet potatoes.

Each field has a ditch around its edge, and dividing the fields are little ridges about two feet wide. On top of the ridges are paths where the people walk. All through the country are little dirt lanes and now and then a fairly decent gravel road.

As you get inland, the country becomes rougher. In the hills there is less cultivation and more trees. It is really a pretty country. We had read about what a worthless place Okinawa was, but I think most of us have been surprised about how pretty it is.

Poverty and Filth Continue Together

Okinawa civilians we bring in are pitiful. The only ones left seem to be real old or real young. And they all are very, very poor.

They're not very clean. And their homes are utterly filthy. Over and over you hear marines say, "This could be a nice country if the people weren't so dirty."

Obviously their living standard is low. Yet I've never understood why poverty and filth need to be synonymous. A person doesn't have to be well off to get clean. But apparently he has to be well off to want to keep clean. We've found it that way clear around the world. The people here dress as we see Japanese dressed in pictures: women in kimonos and old men in skin-tight pants. Some wear a loose, knee-length garment that shows their skinny legs.

The kids are cute as kids are all over the world. I've noticed marines reaching out and tussling their hair as they marched past them. We're rounding up all the civilians and putting them in camps. They are puzzled by it all.

Most of the farm families must have got out when our heavy bombardments started. Lots of farm houses have either been demolished or burned to the ground before we came. Often, in passing a wrecked farmhouse, you smell the sickening odor of death inside.

But there are always people who won't leave no matter what. We couldn't help feeling sorry for the Okinawans we picked up in the first few days. We found two who spoke a little English. They had once lived in Hawaii. One was an old man who had a son (Hawaiian-Japanese), somewhere in the American army!

They were all shocked from the bombardment and yet I think rather stupid too, so that when they talked they didn't make much sense.

I don't believe they had any idea of what it was all about. As one marine officer said, "The poor devils. I'll bet they think this is the end of the world."

They were obviously scared to death. On Love-Day the marines found many of them hiding from us in caves. They found two old women, 75 or more, in a cave, caring for a paralyzed girl. She wasn't wounded, just paralyzed from natural causes. One of the old ladies had a small, dirty sack with some money in it. When the marines found her she cried and tried to give

them the money—hoping I suppose that she could buy herself off from being executed.

After all the propaganda they've been fed about our tortures, it's going to be a befuddled bunch of Okinawans when they discover we brought right along with us, as part of the intricate invasion plan, enough supplies to feed them, too!

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During our first afternoon on Okinawa my group of marines went about a mile and a half inland. Our vehicles were not ashore yet, so we had to pack on our backs everything we had.

Personally, I was overladen as usual. I had two canteens, a musette bag, a blanket rolled up in a poncho, three rubber life preservers, a shovel, and assorted knives, first aid kits, etc. Furthermore, I had on two pairs of pants, was carrying two jackets, and it was hotter than hell.

Anyhow, we finally got where we were going. We stopped on a hillside, threw down our gear, connected our phones to wires on the ground, and were ready for business. That is, the others were. Me, I lay down on the grass and rested for an hour.

Finds Nice Spot To Go to Sleep

After that we began getting ready for the night. We figured the Japs would bomb us all night, that their artillery would soon start up from the hills, and that when it got dark, some sly infiltrators would start infiltration.

So we dug foxholes. The slope was so steep I chose a nice depression at the foot of a small embankment that didn't require much digging.

Now we come to the life preservers. You may have wondered why I was carrying three lifebelts on dry land. Well, I knew what I was doing all right.

I just blew up my three life preservers, spread them in the foxhole and I had the nicest improvised Simmons you ever saw. We finally got onto that trick after a few invasions in Europe and I slept all last summer in France comfortably on three blown-up preservers.

Everybody who wasn't on guard at the edge of our little camp, or who wasn't standing duty at the field telephones went to bed, for in Jap country you don't move around at night unless you have to.

Going to bed was merely a figure of speech for everybody except me. I seemed to be the only one who had brought a blanket and I definitely was the only one who had nice soft life preservers to sleep on.

The others slept on the ground in their foxholes with their ponchos wrapped around them. A poncho is wind and waterproof, but it has no warmth. In fact, it seems to draw all the warmth out of your body and transmit it into the air.

The day had been hot, but the night got mighty cold. And a very heavy dew came gradually, soaking everything. All the others practically froze and got very little sleep. But for once in my life, I was warm as a bug.

But I didn't sleep too much. There's always a flaw somewhere. My flaw was the mosquitoes. I've never been so tortured by mosquitoes as that first night on Okinawa.

They were persistent. They were tenacious. And they were the noisiest mosquitoes I've ever associated with. They were so noisy that when I pulled the blanket over the side of my face and covered my ears tight I could still hear them.

I doused my face twice with the mosquito repellent which the marines had issued, but it did no good whatever. It was 11 o'clock before I finally got asleep. At 2 a. m. I awakened and knew something was wrong. What was wrong was my face.

My upper lip was swollen so that I thought I had a pigeon egg under it. My nose was so swollen the skin was stretched tight over it. And my left eye was nearly shut.

Those mosquitoes really put a scare into me. For they say Okinawa is malarial and I certainly got enough mosquito venom that night to malariaize half of California. So bright and early, I started taking atabrine for the first time in my life.

Washington Digest

Conference Irons Out World Air Problems

Future of Commercial Flying Depends on 'Freedom of Air' Pacts, Allowing Planes To Fly and Land Anywhere.

By BAUKHAGE

News Analyst and Commentator.

Baukhage has made a study of that highly important question: Freedom of the Air.

The air transport command, with the help of the American aviation industry, has built up the greatest international aerial communication system in history.

Military and civilian experts alike admit that this tremendous system that links the globe from Arctic to Antarctic and around the world is the result of the "know-how," imagination, energy and initiative which have made this nation what it is today.

How shall the arts of wartime communication be woven into the expansion of American trade development in the peace to come?

Baukhage sets forth some of the leading military and civilian aviation opinions in this series of two articles, appearing as UNCIO (United Nations Council on International Organization) opens in San Francisco.

Some time after V-Day, when the forces of the occupation are withdrawn and the world once more settles back to peace, the greatest international air transport system which was ever built will largely cease to be. That system, the Air Transport Command of the U. S. army, criss-crosses the western hemisphere from Nome in Alaska to Rio de Janeiro; from Iceland to Panama City. It stretches eastward across the Atlantic, laces Europe and Africa, reaches India and then swings around the globe by way of Australia, through Honolulu to the Pacific coast.

Over the ATC's more than a hundred and fifty landing fields, the American flag now flies. Big planes travel the routes at the rate of 51 million miles a month, which is equal to 70 trips around the world at the equator every 24 hours.

From the flagpoles on most of those bases, the Stars and Stripes will be lowered after the world has returned to peace. And strange as it may seem, the thing that worries the friends of commercial aviation most is not so much whether Old Glory flies free over those bases, as whether the air over them and the rest of the world is free to the extent that American planes will have access to those and other bases over the globe.

We have achieved freedom of the seas. Why can't we have freedom of the air, too?

I carried that question right into the Pentagon building to the office of one of the AAF officers whose job includes worrying over that important question. He is William Mitchell, lieutenant colonel, United States army air force, assistant executive to the assistant secretary of war for air. This was his answer (Colonel Mitchell made it clear that he was expressing his personal views and was not speaking for the war department, but he stated that his opinions were shared by many other members of the air staff):

"Conflicts over artificial barriers on intercourse by sea," he said, "used to be a fertile breeding ground for wars. But for 200 years vessels of any nation have been able to travel the oceans in peacetime without international supervision, and as a result, this source of international conflict has disappeared."

If he had stopped there I might have left his office feeling quite reassured. But that was only the beginning.

Each Country Rules The Airways Above It

The analogy between freedom of the sea and freedom of the air, it seems, is an attractive one but it won't hold water.

"An airplane does not merely touch the coast of a country," the colonel explained, "it may penetrate into the remotest interior. Accordingly it has become fairly well established that a nation has jurisdiction over the airspace above its land to the same extent that it has jurisdiction over the land itself. The result is that, in the absence of agreement between countries, no plane may cross a foreign border. The air is not free, it is closed."

American ambition doesn't like to be fenced in and already we have mapped a pattern of air routes we'd like to establish when peace comes. Those routes will encircle the globe. Our own civil aeronautics board is in the process of holding hearings to determine which carriers will be certified to fly these routes.

But the certificates issued, says Colonel Mitchell, "will be mere scraps of paper unless other countries consent to operations by United States carriers."

Arrival at such common consent is in the making today, and has been greatly advanced since the state de-

partment called the conference in Chicago last November. Representatives of 52 countries met. At the last minute the Soviet Union dropped out, but certain basic agreements were reached. This conference Colonel Mitchell calls "the civil air part of the peace settlement" because it provided "in the main convention which was prepared, a proposed international organization which might, with respect to air matters within its competence directly affecting world security, enter into appropriate agreements with any general organization set up by the nations to preserve peace."

Colonel Mitchell believes that "the degree, or lack of it, to which the world can be linked by aviation, will be an important element in determining whether the nations of the world can be brought together in peaceful understanding."

Preliminary Agreements Made at Chicago Meeting

Now, what did the Chicago conference achieve?

After considerable discussion in which there were sharp differences of opinion, the conference prepared two multilateral agreements on commercial operations which were separate from the main convention and which any country was free to sign if it wished. They are concerned with the "five freedoms of the air" which will be taken up in detail in a later article. They are (1) the right to fly over a country (2) the right to land for non-traffic purposes (3) the right to disembark passengers, mail and freight from the country of origin of the aircraft (4) the right to embark traffic for the country of origin and (5) the right to do business along the way.

Because all of the countries were not prepared to accept all the freedoms, a choice was provided. One agreement offered, between the signatory countries, merely the first two freedoms. That is right to fly over the country and the right of non-traffic stop, which means permission to stop at an airport for refueling and such purposes.

The other grants all five freedoms, but the fifth could be denied by any country on proper notice to other contracting countries.

At the time this is written the "Two-Freedoms" agreement has been signed (but not definitely accepted) by 34 countries, accepted by four (including the United States, Canada, the Netherlands and Norway).

The "Five Freedoms" agreement has been signed but not definitely accepted by 22 countries; definitely accepted by two, including the Netherlands (without the fifth freedom) and the United States.

The main work of the conference was the writing of a convention on International Civil Aviation and Interim Agreement which will set up an international organization. The conference also recommended a model form of agreement on commercial services to be used in bilateral negotiations.

"The work of the Chicago conference," said Colonel Mitchell, "is merely a blueprint for further activity. A start has been made, but, like Dumbarton Oaks, much remains to be done."

Further details of some of the problems involved and the attitudes revealed in negotiations so far will be set forth in a second article appearing next week.

• • • • • Australia's famous Empire Air Training Scheme, which provided airmen for Britain, has ended. Ten thousand trained Aussies were promised, 35,000 provided. Of them, more than 6,000 have been killed, 2,900 are missing, 1,000 are prisoners.



SEWING CIRCLE PATTERNS

Well-Fitting Slip for Matrons Tots Will Love This Party Dress



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Tot's Party Frock

A PRETTY party frock for a very young lady. The neckline, side button closing and pocket are daintily edged in contrasting

ASK ME ANOTHER?

A General Quiz

The Questions

1. What is the limit set by the U. S. government for first class mail?
2. What language is spoken by more people than any other language?
3. Which is lighter, cork or balsa wood?
4. What is the present population of the United States, including those in the armed forces?
5. Which is correct, anchors away or anchors aweigh?
6. Is there a fixed North pole?
7. When army transport crews fly the "clothesline," where do they go?
8. What was the shape of handkerchiefs before the time of Louis XVI?
9. What does ibid. mean?
10. Who was the first white man to lose his head after seeing the Pacific?

The Answers

1. Seventy pounds is the limit for first class mail.
2. Chinese, including dialects. English is second.
3. Balsa wood (one-half as heavy as cork).
4. 138,100,874, an increase since 1940 of 6,431,599.
5. Anchors aweigh (just clear of the ground and hanging perpendicularly).
6. No. It is the northern extremity of the earth's axis which moves within a small area.
7. From Miami to Brazil or British Guinea where they can get overnight laundry service at prices far below U. S. prices.
8. Oblong.
9. Ibidem (in the same place).
10. Balboa, beheaded for treason.

Movable Type in 1409 Before Johannes Gutenberg

Johannes Gutenberg, "the father of printing," has long been credited with the invention and first use of movable cast metal type in the early 1450s.

Yet such type had been made and employed in Korea in 1409, and 53 authentic pieces of it are on exhibition today in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.



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FOR GENTLE RELIEF FROM INTERNAL SLUGGISHNESS

Okinawa Strange Invasion Beachhead

Never before had I seen an invasion beach like Okinawa. There wasn't a dead or wounded man in our sector of it. Medical corpsmen were sitting among their sacks of bandages and plasma and stretchers, with nothing to do.

There wasn't a single burning vehicle. Nor a single boat, lying wrecked on the reef or shoreline. There was hardly anybody at all

on the beach when we landed. The few assault waves ahead of us had pushed on inland. And all that vast welter of people and machines that make a beach hum with work were still many waves behind us.

The bulldozers and the jeeps had not yet arrived. There was no activity and hardly any sound. It was almost as though we were the original explorers.

BARBS . . . by Baukhage

The April quota of new automobiles is 25 per cent below the March figure—1,500 as compared with 2,000.

Japan junked its old and only political party and created a new one called the Political Association of Great Japan. The old one was called the "Imperial Rule Assistance Political Party." What's in a name, Hirohito?

It looks as if one of the worst pieces of misuse of labor unions is going to be smashed when congress gets through with one "Czar" Petrillo, head of the AFL musicians' union. It all started as a children's crusade when Petrillo banned all school orchestras and bands from the networks but it has turned into a move to stop a violation of the bill of rights.

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