

Washington Digest

Army, Navy, Marines Join In Big Caribbean Maneuver

By BAUKHAGE

News Analyst and Commentator.

WASHINGTON.—About the time these lines are in print, 35,000 American soldiers, sailors, fliers and marines and a hundred ships will be shoving off for the greatest peacetime maneuvers in our history. Providence permitting, your correspondent will be on the scene.

A strange and sinister "aggressive force" which will have seized and fortified the island of Vieques in the Caribbean will be bombarded by sea and air, attacked, and (we trust) captured by a joint marine corps and army expeditionary force landed by navy ships and planes which have fought their way past enemy planes, and submarines.

The purpose of this undertaking is officially described as "to advance and ensure combat readiness for Fleet Marine Force Atlantic units, and to provide amphibious training for Army and Marine Corps units."

Admiral W. H. P. Blandy, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic fleet will be in over-all command. Lieut. Gen. Keller E. Rockey, USMC, will command the joint mar-

ine corps and army expeditionary troops which will be composed of the second marine division and the 65th infantry, Caribbean command.

Many of these men are veterans of Pacific landings and the North African operations, but, the experts tell me, there are many things to be learned for great progress has been made in amphibious training since the war.

This is the first operation of its kind since the merger of the armed services has been in effect, and nothing approaching it in size has ever been attempted in peacetime.

Of course the marine corps was virtually born amphibious and for the past 23 years has perfected the methods which were used in the late war. Now they serve as the instructors in this particular field of activity for the other branches of the service.

Maneuvers which get comparatively little notice in the press are largely regarded by laymen as a spectacle or as a series of highly technical military problems which are too complicated to follow. As a matter of fact, the actual maneuvers are a small part of the operation compared to the planning which dates back to the days when Caesar took his famous tenth legion from small boats onto the soil of ancient Britain, or before.

Perhaps the earliest important invasion from the sea in modern times was one of the most unsuccessful -- the ill-fated Gallipoli battle when the British troops were almost annihilated in their first attempt to invade Turkey in World War I.

Intensive study of this debacle was made in this country, and the marines had made great strides long before World War II made such training necessary. Very few people realized this. In fact, many people probably think that the Japs had a special patent on amphibious tactics.

As one officer expressed it to me, there is nothing secret about this method of fighting. It is simply a question of "know-how." A vast conglomeration of minute detail which is not used at all in ordinary land fighting. For example, an infantryman takes for granted that he and his rifle are more or less one piece. But the first time he has to go over the side of a ship and into a small craft, he suddenly finds he is faced with a major problem in assuring not only his own arrival on the beach but, what is equally important, the simultaneous arrival of his gun. If you have ever tried to crawl down a net with no equipment whatever, you realize it requires all the hands you have.

But long before D-day, thousands of details have been worked out hundreds of miles from the scene of action. As one officer put it, the stack of charts that have to be drawn are a mile high. Beans, bullets, shoelaces—all are part of the picture quite as much as radar and range-finders.

The little island of Vieques will be pounded with tons of shells, hauled, mauled, captured, and deserted, and then go back to a sub-tropical siesta. But what happens there on and before March 2 and 3, 1949, may be of vital importance a decade hence.

A New Truman Going to Work

As the Ides of March approach, the new administration swings into its stride with a good deal of honeymoon fervor still in the air. From the day of the first White House press and radio conference after the inauguration, it was clear that we had a new President.

Washington reporters had become used to several Harry Trumans. There was the very grave and not very certain man who was called in 1945 to a job which he

didn't want and never expected to have with the shadow of tragedy over him. A man who was at first so anxious to reassure the country that there would be no break in the continuity of leadership that he sometimes rushed in where a more experienced man might have feared to tread.

There were many "off-the-cuff" remarks with some disastrous results. Then came a period when he leaned over backward with caution; after that, the period when his own party seemed to be falling apart and it was no secret that the man in the White House was disappointed and unhappy.

Then came a gradual change which even many of his intimates did not realize, a change that gradually culminated in the combative confidence which most of his supporters failed to share. Washington watched his election campaign with considerable admiration for his fighting spirit but without being convinced that even he, himself actually had the confidence he displayed.

Then came the election upset and two months later, the tremendous turnout at the inauguration. There was evidence for those who could recognize it, in the manner of delivery of his inauguration speech, that here was still another Truman. At that first press and radio conference, it was plain enough. At last he was his own man. He felt he had earned his office. He probably had felt all along that he was fully competent to carry on its responsibilities. But now something had been added: a controlled self-assurance.

I think Mr. Truman was sincere when he told a luncheon meeting of the Democratic party's finance committee that there were a million men in the United States who would make a better President, but it was his job and he would carry it out. He was simply saying that he realized there were men in the country with greater ability than he had. He didn't say, nor did he think, that he didn't have enough ability. If events prove that he hasn't, he probably will be the first to admit it.

That is my own interpretation and is offered for what it is worth. It is an impression based not only on what Harry Truman has said and done, but largely on the way he has said and done it. If he continues to handle himself in the way he has since the election, the men in government and out, in his own party and out of it, will find him a lot easier to deal with. Likewise, he is going to be proportionately more successful with those with whom he has to deal.

Press Conferences Have Changed, Too

At a recent White House news conference, an old timer came up to me and remarked that the last few times he had attended these gatherings, all of which had been especially well attended (well over 100 reporters) he couldn't help thinking back to the days of Taft when, as he put it, Robert Small of the Associated Press and perhaps one of two others who used to be sneaked into the back door of the White House for confidential talks with the President, but no other newsmen or women had any access whatever to the Chief Executive.

I was not in Washington then but later I came to know Small very well and I know he was known as "the fair haired boy" of the Taft administration. It was the first time I had ever heard the expression. Small was a brilliant newsman and Taft was very fond of him. I well recall the ex-President (Taft was then chief justice) comforting Small's father at Bob's funeral. The former White House reporter was comparatively young when he died.

I do not know how the press corps felt about Small's intimate relationship with the White House—or the other fortunate ones who were given these exclusive privileges but I doubt if it occurred to anyone to suggest the possibility of having regular open press conferences. Teddy Roosevelt, however, did call in press association men on occasion.

And yet such a situation (no regular conference) seems incredible today. No President would dare refuse to see newsmen and stand up to questions which sometimes are more impertinent than pertinent.

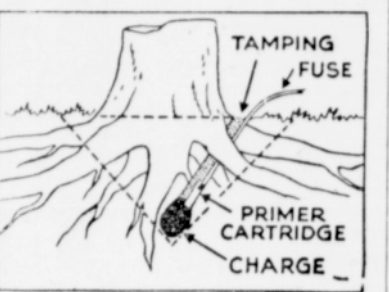
Farm Topics

Dynamite Is Magic Worker on Farmland Must Be Carefully Used to Prevent Harm

Dynamite is the Paul Bunyan of the modern farm. Like the make-believe, giant lumberman who could uproot trees and do other remarkable things, explosives, properly and carefully used, can perform scores of labor-saving tasks about the farm, according to F. S. Eldred, manager of the explosives and powder divisions, Olin Industries, East Alton, Ill.

Farmers today are finding they can save much labor and time in digging ditches, blasting out stumps, making post holes, cleaning out water holes and even planting trees by the use of explosives, Eldred says.

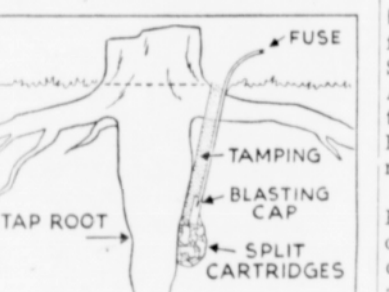
"But caution is the watchword," he warns. Like fire, dynamite is an excellent servant and a terrible master. When the farmer uses it with full knowledge of the great labor-saving work it can do, as well as the fearful damage, he has a giant farm hand who can almost perform miracles."



Stumps are a bugbear to farmers. Each is a problem in itself. The farmer must study the type of stump, whether it has roots that run along just under the ground, or has great tap roots. Then he must carefully plan how to blast out that stump with dynamite. Again "caution" is the watchword. If not sure, the farmer should consult an explosives expert. But the typical way to blast a stump is to place the dynamite as near as possible under the center mass, or under the largest roots. If there are two large roots, it may be necessary to plant the explosive under both.

Figure 1 shows the proper way of loading to remove an evenly rooted stump. The charge is under the center of the stump.

Sometimes there are stumps with central downward roots, called tap roots. In such a case, as shown in Figure 2, the charge is placed down alongside the tap root on the side that will bring it as near as possible to the center of the stump. Another great labor-saving task



can be performed with dynamite. That is the digging of ditches. Dynamite can be easily carried through the woods, swamps and other country impassable to horses or machines and, once there, can quickly do more work than dozens of laborers or several machines.

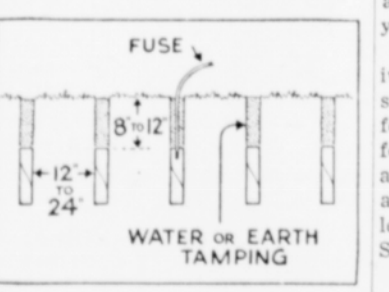


Figure 3

But always the words "safety-first" must be kept in mind. The farmer should know his explosive, know the type of soil in which he is operating and should not trust his own judgement. If there is ever any doubt, he should consult an expert.

Ditches are dug by dynamite not by placing one charge, blowing out a hole then using another charge. Figure 3 shows the dynamite planted stick by stick at regular intervals so that whole sections are blown out at the same time. In this way, the earth does not fall back into a part of the ditch already dug. One of the advantages of digging ditches with dynamite is that there are no "spoil banks."

Knowledge Is Valuable To Those Purchasing Eggs

U. S. department of agriculture marketing specialists report that knowing where to buy eggs and how to keep them are the only two ways that consumers can be sure of having a quality product at all times.

The homemaker's first step in this direction is to buy from retailers or wholesalers who keep eggs under proper conditions. Her next step is to keep the eggs cool.

Sportlight

Pigskin Previews

THE MONTHS of September, October and November still lie some distance to windward. But things are happening now that will affect the coming autumn such as arranging football schedules. Especially the schedule that Notre Dame will face.

It might be mentioned here that Notre Dame, after all the hullabaloo, did slightly better than all right. Southern Methodist, Tulane and North Carolina offer three of the better games of the year.

Southern Methodist was Southwestern champion last fall, and probably will be again this year with Doak Walker and Kyle Walker in action. Tulane has one of the best teams in the South. Tulane and Vanderbilt look to be two southern leaders next fall. North Carolina will have the brilliant Justice and the able Art Weiner back, but there will be many gaps to fill. Carl Snavely will fill them well. He usually does.

These three additions to the Irish slate are hooked up with a far stronger Navy team, Southern California, Purdue, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan State and Washington—no easy march. This is better than the average schedule. It has no deliberate soft spots that so many others have. It will certainly be a total of eight hard games.

Notre Dame, like Michigan, North Carolina and others, will lose good men and return good men. But you can gamble—if you like to gamble—that Frank Leahy will have a first-class squad with fast, hard-hitting runners and at least two good passers. You can also be fairly sure he will have a good line.

What about Army's schedule? It has a number of soft spots, but it also has some rough-and-rocky bridges to cross. One of them is Michigan. That's a sure thing. Others can be Stanford, Pennsylvania and Navy.

But outside of Michigan, there is no trouble ahead. This forces too much pressure on the Michigan game. A defeat here can play havoc with either team's final ranking—more with Army than with Michigan.

Army will have a fine backfield and uncertain line strength with such stars as Yeoman, Henry, etc., missing. Her ends will be her strongest point.

Navy, again, has no chance to beat her schedule, the toughest in football. The 1949 menu includes Southern California, Notre Dame, Army, Pennsylvania, Duke, Princeton and others of heavy calibre. But the 1949 Navy squad should move well up in the year's ranking.

Oklahoma will be strong again. Bud Wilkinson has a winning grip on the situation with a team that can exchange class with anyone around.

Ivy League Returns

There has been a tendency in recent years for other sectors to look with a certain amount of scorn on Ivy league teams. Part of this was justified, although scholarship requirements in the league are well above the average, no matter what you hear.

As far as 1949 is concerned, the ivy-covered colleges and universities will have no apologies to offer for any section in the matter of football ranking. Last fall, Cornell and Dartmouth would have been an even match for most of the leading teams of the Midwest, South, Southwest or Far West.

This will be true again this year. Few of the better teams in any section will have backs to match the Big Red or the Big Green. I mean such backs as Johnny Clayton of Dartmouth, a passer of the Bertelli type—or Frank Miller and Jerry Fleischmann of Cornell.

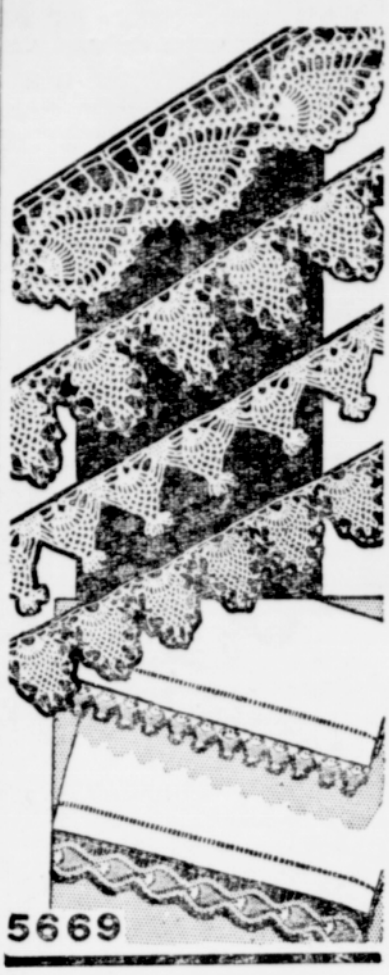
Lefty James and Tuss McLaughry had two fine teams last fall. They would have been even bets against any team in the Big Nine except Michigan—which is favored over many. This new season they can be joined by Princeton and Harvard.

Princeton's outlook is good. So is Harvard's. Both can be first class. Brown can also move up. Pennsylvania is never weak. George Munger loses Chuck Bednarik and a few other good men, but if you keep track, year after year, you'll find the Red and Blue a rather rugged barrier.

Columbia is definitely below 1948 form, even with the redoubtable Lou Little in charge. Columbia is never flooded with material, and no team can lose 12 of its best men from a small squad—such men as Kusserow, Rossides, etc.—and hope to have much left. It will take the full genius of Lou Little to win a game here and there.

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Household Hints

Bread crusts, left over after the preparation of certain dishes, should be dried and made into crumbs, then stored in the refrigerator in a covered jar.

When making clothes for children, buy an extra card of matching buttons for each garment. Such buttons are priceless when it comes time to replace lost buttons.

Few patterns for little girls call for a placket opening into the skirt; but a sash just can't pull in and conceal excessive inches of dress material—a zipper in a placket and two waistline darts, front and back, will make a surprising improvement in the fit and appearance of the garment.

Baked potatoes should be carefully timed in baking and promptly served to avoid the loss of this vegetable's valuable vitamin C.

A coat of spar varnish applied to wooden drain boards in the kitchen will provide an extremely durable finish.

Cream whips best when it is very cold, but egg whites whip best when they are at room temperature—70 degrees fahrenheit.

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