

# SOUTHERN OREGON MINER

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Carryl H. & Marion C. Wines, Editors-Publishers

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## WILL WE HAVE CONSCRIPTION?

We heartily approve of a recent statement by President Truman, that he thought the National Guard should be enlarged and reactivated for the national defense, rather than to go in for an all-out peace-time draft to keep up our defense.

There has been a lot of discussion in the papers, magazines, radio, etc. about this much contended question. Surely none of us want to see the United States in the position she was in 1940, with no army, no planes, tanks, guns, etc. We had a fine navy, but not large enough to stave off attack. Such a position is an open invitation to attack by an aggressor nation, and we suffered the consequences of such a position at Pearl Harbor. Only the blundering of the Japs in not pressing the attack, permitted us to recover to go on to victory.

Since that time, there has been considerable sentiment in favor of a full peace time draft to keep up our army. As we see such a plan, it fosters a military setup that in a few years would lead to imperialistic aims, or the government would in time become militaristic. With a huge army, some one sooner or later would like to try out its strength.

We have always made the boast that we are not militaristic minded in the United States. But a generation or two of young men brought up under a military setup could easily change us.

Personally we think that under war conditions as at the present time, is no time to decide such a fundamental policy as incorporating a permanent draft plan into our constitution or national laws. If such a law was adopted it would be a complete reversal of our ways of national thinking. It is a subject that would require a lot of deep reflection, and under war time conditions is no time to make the decision.

We do think some plan should be made for maintaining a peace time standing army, enlarged National Guard, or something. We are not sure what would be the best, but we are "agin" having an all-out peace time draft. It is not necessary and is against the principles of our constitution.

## OUR NEW BOMB

The announcement this week of the new Atomic bomb, claimed to be the most destructive on earth, makes us deeply gratified that the weapon is in the hands of British and American rather than under control of German or Japanese army men. When we read that one small bomb has the destructive power of 20,000 tons of TNT, we realize what a terrible weapon has been brought into being.

We are told that it was a race for time against the German scientists who had nearly perfected a similar weapon, which would have been used against Great Britain and the United States. In the hands of the German demons, who controlled the army, there is no telling what use would have been made of it. They would have had little mercy on any of their enemies had they had the use of such a weapon.

We shudder to think of what could happen with the uncontrolled use of this newest of war machines. We have been told that it could utterly destroy mankind, and we sincerely hope that proper safeguards are set up against its falling into the hands of those who would like to dominate the world. Used in the right channels, it can be a blessing to all civilization: in the wrong hands it will blot out that civilization. The United States and Great Britain have a tremendous responsibility placed on their hands with the invention of this new weapon.

## OUR WILD BLACKBERRIES

The time of the year has come again when the wild blackberries are beginning to ripen. Now this may not mean much to the native Oregonian of this region where most people consider the wild blackberry a nuisance and classed along with the wild morning glory, bind weed, etc. But to us, only a year in Oregon, they are wonderful. Even those who disdain them as a nuisance, will admit that they make mighty fine pies, cobblers, jell, etc. Certainly we had no such abundance of wild fruit in the interior where we came from and we could hardly believe that such existed.

But abundant as the berries are, and as easily gotten to, they still are a problem to pick. Like most wild fruit the berries are amply protected by a mass of thorns. The long rambling runners, cling to ones clothing, so that picking the berries is no cinch. But we are sure that the pails of luscious berries are worth the effort of getting them.

## WE ARE LEARNING

The net result of all the comment and investigation relating to sugar shortage, butter shortage, cheese and milk products shortage, beef shortage, poultry shortage, pork shortage, lamb shortage, egg shortage, dry bean shortage and shortage piled upon shortage, is as clear as mud to the average citizen.

He is told that cattle on the range number approximately 30 per cent more than ever before in history, but he can't eat cattle on the range. In the butcher shop he sees horse meat, colt meat, much fish that was never before used for anything but crab bait, various insides of animals which are now sold for human consumption, bare bones sold for several cents a pound, and all manner of substitutes for legitimate food.

The OPA, the War Food Administration, and the Department of Agriculture are blamed for this situation. In all fairness, it should be stated that no one agency is to blame. A world war upsets any domestic economy. But it is safe to say that the "planned economy" which we accepted as a war and anti-inflation measure, had a great deal to do with the disorganization and shortages in our normal sources of supply. Uncontrollable elements in a planned economy create shortages in many instances. Holding down the hog supply or the wool market may help some producers while it hurts the consumers of lard and wool shirts.

The people must remember that the idea of a controlled economy is no different than the philosophy of socialism which puts government into business to the exclusion of private citizens. Are we going back to a free economy with the risks and rewards which it entails, or will we

become resigned to accepting the judgment and oppressions of government in lieu of our own opinions and freedom of action after the war? We are having experiences with a planned economy now on which to base our peacetime decisions.

## The Ship of State

By Ruth Taylor

Many centuries ago a Chinese philosopher wrote of government; "The king is the boat; the common people are the water. The water can support the boat, or capsize it."

What was said then of ancient China is true today of our modern democracy. Our government requires the support of all the people - or it sinks. "Government" does not mean particular leaders - but it does mean the republican form of rule and the democratic way of life. It is up to us to support the boat of our own building - to abide willingly and cheerfully by the laws we had a part in making, and to carry our full share of the load.

The small business men are not alone the common people. The farmers are not alone the common people. Labor alone is not the common people. But the small business men plus the farmers plus Labor plus the unorganized workers, plus the bankers, the lawyers, the doctors, the preachers, the housewives - all taken together are the common people.

The party in power, those who hold public office, are neither the king nor the boat. They are but a part of the whole and they sail or sink as they are supported by the people.

There is no privileged group in this country - no one who has a right to shirk his duty of citizenship. Neither worker nor employer is beyond it. Neither rich nor poor can avoid its tasks. Neither youth nor age deserves special consideration. Neither Black nor White can shrink from its commands. Protestant, Catholic and Jew are alike bound by the call of duty.

We are entering upon a period of even greater strain than that of the past four years. How we come through it will depend upon ourselves. There must be no tidal wave of demands by any one group to swamp our Ship of State. There must be no eddying whirlpool of internal conflict to suck it down into the depths of the Sea. There must be no hidden sandbars of resistance on which it might founder.

We have seen what has happen-

ed when the ships of other countries have disintegrated. We must support the boat of our way of life, for if it capsizes, the argosy of the hopes and dreams of common people the world over will go down with it.

## SOUTH SEA EXPERIENCES

(Continued from Page 1)

tion I had seen since leaving San Francisco, California. All evening long we sat on deck and watched the hundreds of lights in the harbor and on shore, a most welcome sight.

WAC's were unloaded first, on the following morning. Due to the great number of ships and lack of docks, our ship was unloaded out in the harbor. We were jammed into LCM's with all our equipment on us (pistol belt, to which canteen and first aid pack were attached, gas masks (which I've never used) leggings, musette bag, utility bag, and carrying our helmets): that is the usual impediments for traveling. None of us could take in enough of the sights on the way to shore and to "camp" in big army trucks. It was such a thrill to ride again on city streets, even though they were very rough and dusty and the results of fire and destruction were seen everywhere. Thousands of Filipinos, old and young along the streets welcomed us enthusiastically, all were smiling and waving and making the V for victory sign. Some of the young men and women were very handsome.

When we arrived, the weather was hot, dry and dusty; it had not rained for a long time. Then we had a week or so of heavy rains, almost as bad as New Guinea, but the mud here is much worse-gumbo. Oh what a mess where I lived at first. The rainy season is at hand now, a bad time for destroyed Manila. All headquarters, offices, living quarters (other than tents) are in partially destroyed buildings. Reconstruction and repair work are going on all about as the offices try to function, so the dust, dirt and noise are terrific, and when it rains most everything and everybody gets wet. The sides of most of the buildings are pretty much wide open—no windows left anywhere.

Upon arrival, I lived in an officers tent area at the outskirts of

the city, from which everyone commutes to offices in the city by big army trucks. Two of us shared a tent about 15 feet square just wooden framework (much of and eves with a shrip of thin and eves, with a shrip of thin burlap about 4 feet wide around the sides; that's the walls—even a more open air and public way of living than we've ever had. There wasn't a stick of furniture, shelves or anything; we were issued a canvas cot, 2 blankets, and a mosquito net (for over the bed), and each tent had one canvas bucket, one wash basin and one 5 gallon water can which was filled once a day. At first the only drinking water available was at the mess hall but later, lister bags were placed in our area. Also showers were on only a few hours a day, two or three days a week; although water is still a critical commodity, the showers are on, at least part of the time most every day.

The tents are unmercifully hot in the day time in spite of the breeze in the afternoons. We hung our clothes on hangers from the ropes tying the tent to the framework, with no protection from dust and spray from the heavy rains, unless another garment was used to cover them. Our Tent No. 28, was up at the end of the double row of tents only about 2 blocks or so from the latrine and showers. The latrines around here are mostly the pit variety, which are burned out now and then. Very few buildings have useable plumbing, so the only running water is that which cascades through the shell holes and twisted remains of metal roofs not yet repaired. Filipino women do the cleaning and laundry; there are no laundry facilities. Some of us have poor luck keeping a good laundress—some of them are almost more bother than the service is worth, having to be told and shown everything. For laundry we pay 25 centavos for each shirt, wash dress skirt and such articles, 10 centavos for a towel etc. There are no dry cleaning facilities, period! Soap is very scarce also, so these women are always asking for more soap and use it also for their own laundry and bathing. Starch is scarce too—when we run out of "stattsides" starch, they use rice starch which gives the clothes a disagreeable odor. Most of us unpacked as soon as footlockers and bedrolls arrived because everything was damp and musty; that is New Guinea for you. Some of the WAC Officers who have been transferred rather rapidly from one location to another haven't seen their bedrolls and footlock-

ers for as many as 9 months. Some of this luggage has arrived recently—much of it had been rifled, quantities of clothes, cosmetics, souvenirs, etc. have been stolen—just where and when they are trying to find out. That happens much too often over here.

(To be Continued)

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