

Retired U. S. Naval Officer Urges Immediate Seizure Of Singapore If War Starts

(Editor's Note: If war comes with Japan in the immediate future, the United States battle fleet should at once make for Singapore to secure this great naval base in the south Pacific and begin a blockade of Japan, in the opinion of Rear Admiral Yates Stirling Jr., USN (retired). In the following dispatch Admiral Stirling, former chief of staff of the US fleet and now United Press naval critic, discusses probable fleet moves in the event of hostilities in the Pacific.)

By REAR ADMIRAL YATES STIRLING JR.
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NEW YORK, Oct. 10 (UP)—If Japan should go to war with the United States, it does not seem likely she would send her fleet against ours where it now is based, in Hawaii. That distance is too great for many of her major fleet units, at least until she

can secure a base in the western Pacific.

What then would be Japan's likely move?

Coast Raids Eyed

Cruiser and airplane carrier raids might be expected both on our Pacific coast cities and upon our fleet and its Pearl Harbor base. In addition, Japan has more than 30 big submarines capable of operating across the Pacific and these undoubtedly would try to "whittle down" our battle fleet and disrupt our commerce.

The above type of action might happen without any declaration of war, for the purpose of delaying movement of our fleet toward the western Pacific and thus give Japan more time in which to capture Singapore, Hong Kong and perhaps the Dutch East Indies.

Once involved in a war with Japan, it would seem wisest for us to prosecute the war to the ut-

most and carry the fight to the enemy as soon as possible. No useful service would be served in holding our battle fleet away from oriental waters unless it is more urgently needed elsewhere.

Expect Dutch Support

If the decision is to take the offensive with our fleet and enter the orient, the fleet must start in time to save Singapore for our fleet's use, and Hong Kong also if possible. A major operation with troops would be necessary to drive Japan from these bases if once they passed into her hands.

Singapore should hold out for two months, if not longer. Steaming time for our fleet from Hawaii, by the longer but safer route, would be 27 days at 12 knots. With fueling and delays, probably six weeks would be required. This route would be through the Phoenix Islands, Fiji Islands, New Hebrides, past the northern tip of Australia and Bali and across the Java sea to Singapore. On this route, of 7600 miles, we could expect the support of British and Dutch air forces and could obtain oil for the fleet at British and Dutch islands.

The direct route, by way of Guam and the Philippines, would be 1500 miles shorter but would

be subject to almost continuous attack by Japanese submarines and airplanes.

Assured

Every available warship and airplane should go with the fleet, if they are capable of making the voyage without delaying arrival at Singapore. Once started, our fleet should not be diverted for side engagements but should make its best sustained speed to its first objective—Singapore.

Once Singapore is occupied by our fleet and we are assured of safe communications for the needs of the fleet, then a blockade would be begun. This probably would entail the use of Manila as an advanced base for cruisers, destroyers, submarines and airplanes—the instruments of blockade.

The navies opposed to each other in case of war are about equal in submarine, destroyers and cruiser strength. The United States has a slight edge in the number of battleships, and ours are more heavily armored, of greater steaming radius, and probably more highly trained, especially in gunnery. Our aircraft carrier force has fewer carriers, but if comparisons made by air experts can be believed,

our airmen are considerably better than the Japanese.

Unless Japan could receive naval reinforcements from her two allies—Germany and Italy—it does seem, when one contemplates such a war as this one would be for Japan, that she has been sold out by Hitler. Most certainly Hitler would be willing to sacrifice Japan in order to win what is dearest to his heart—The destruction of British sea power, which he believes he can achieve by winning the battle of Britain. This he believes he can do if aid to Britain by the United States can be stopped. Our naval efforts in the Pacific against Japan, at least at first, might be expected to curtail our airplane aid to Great Britain, because of Japanese naval air power which would have to be met and defeated.

If the British navy and air force should lose the war before our naval efforts had been pushed sufficiently to free our fleet from duty in the Pacific, then our country would be faced by a severe almost cataclysmic, men-ace in the Atlantic from the navies of two victorious allies. Great havoc could be committed upon our industries and cities before we could break off the

campaign in the far east, and cover the 11,000 miles to the Atlantic.

SENECA INDIANS MAY TEST DRAFT SERVICE LAW

BUFFALO, N. Y., Oct. 10 (UP)—Wilfred Crouse, president of the Seneca Indian nation council on the Salamanca reservation, said Wednesday Seneca Indians may go to court to test the right of the federal government to draft them into military service.

If a court test is made of the issue, the Seneca spokesman said, it would be based upon a claim the act of June 2, 1924, making all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States citizens, is unconstitutional in that it was never ratified by the Indians.

"However," Crouse added, "one of the things that might prevent such a test may be inability to find a Seneca willing to refuse to register for selective service. We're objecting to registration of Senecas as a matter of principle and not be-

cause we want to avoid doing our duty."

CONSULATE NAMED

PORTLAND, Ore., Oct. 9 (AP)—A newly created consulate here

for Guatemala has been filled by L. W. Hartman, Portland customs broker. Hartman said today he had been named to the post in addition to similar duties for Panama, Argentina and Chile.

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