

JAPAN SEEKS 'ASSISTANCE' FOR THAILAND

By DeWITT MacKENZIE
The Special News Service

The Japan Times and Advertiser, a newspaper controlled by the Japanese foreign office, has added a handful of tinders to the Far Eastern fire by urging assistance for Thailand (Siam) against what are described as foreign, anti-Japanese elements.

"Assistance" presumably would take the form of Japanese troops, which again raises the red-hot question of the occupation of Siam.

Now this little country lies right up against British Malaya, at the base of which is the great British naval base of Singapore, and London has once more made it clear through a spokesman that the occupation of Siam would be a direct threat to British interests. It also would be a challenge to the position the American government has taken.

In other words such a move by Nippon might easily precipitate war. That being the case, and since the Times and Advertiser wants to talk on this subject, it is permissible for us to enter the discussion without backing into it apologetically.

The other night down in Tulsa, Oklahoma, I joined in a talk-fest with a dozen big-time oil men and other prominent citizens, and the topic of war between the United States and Japan came up. Someone asked if there was any doubt at all about the United States winning such a conflict, and the answer to that is definitely in the negative—no doubt whatever.

"However," I added, "I may shock some of you by saying naval experts assert that if it came to a question of any navy having to go after the Japanese fleet when it was on the defensive in its own home waters, the attack probably would fail. Over a long period I've raised that question with both British and American naval experts and never yet have found one who didn't say that neither John Bull nor Uncle Sam could perform that feat. The point is, of course, that the saw-tooth coast of Japan would be so heavily mined that enemy ships venturing into that zone would come popping out of the water like corks out of soda bottles."

Still, while the Japanese fleet could protect itself for a time by getting behind its mine fields, that wouldn't save Japan from defeat. The little island empire is so terribly vulnerable to blockade that the navy would have to come out and fight to keep ocean channels open. The Japanese navy is powerful, but in open fighting the United States would give the Nipponese a terrible trouncing.

The cold fact would seem to be that Japan would be beaten before she started, owing to her bad economic position and lack of essential supplies.

America was Japan's major source of war materials up to the time we started applying an embargo, and 56 per cent of Nippon's essential supplies for heavy industry came from us. There is no alternative market to which Japan could turn, excepting that a partial replacement would be possible if she could secure the resources of the Dutch East Indies.

Bombers Set for 'Attack' on West Part of Oregon
SALEM, Oct. 23 (AP)—Fifty bombing planes, including flying fortresses and medium bombers, will attack western Oregon in the air-raid exercises to be held October 28 to November 1, Jergold Owen, state civilian defense council coordinator, said today.

The planes will make three daylight raids daily over each county in the area from October 28 through the 31st, with four night raids scheduled for the night of October 31, when most of the area will be blacked out.

About 125 pursuit planes, based in Portland, Tacoma and Salem, will try to intercept the bombers.

The exercises will give the 400 observation posts in the area their first test. These posts, manned by civilian reserves, will report to filter centers at Eugene, Roseburg and Portland, these centers to report to the Portland information center. These centers will give the army reports of approaching bombers so that interceptor planes may be dispatched.

Owen's office issued instructions today to counties planning blackouts. All traffic will be stopped, and no lights should be visible outside except those on such obstructions as radio towers.

Civil reserves will be on duty to enforce the blackout.

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