

WAR CHANGES MANY THINGS FOR ALASKANS

By WILLIAM L. WORDEN

FAIRBANKS, Alaska, (AP)—The food is better, the mosquitoes seem more important and war is very far away from the towns of Alaska now. Much farther away than it was a year ago.

To understand what 19 months of war have done it is necessary to remember constantly that this was, before the war began, part of the United States. The residents resented frequent queries by tourists as to whether foreign stamps were necessary on mail. The towns—Fairbanks, Anchorage, Seward, even Nome—prided themselves on being very much like towns in Kansas or Connecticut, despite the great distances and fierce weather.

Had Clubs

The white residents—some 35,000 in all the territory—had their Rotary clubs, their local politics, their clean-up campaigns. They renamed many of the more colorfully-titled localities—from something like Deadhorse to something like Jonesville; peaks with Russian names were re-titled to honor local businessmen.

To this civic-minded group the opening of war was more startling than to the rest of the nation. The territory was virtually undefended. Civilian activities came to a dead stop while the army moved in.

Nothing Ready

Nothing was ready for this enormous influx. No barracks, no roads, food was short so was cold-weather clothing. There was nothing for the men to do in their spare time.

Prices skyrocketed, houses became impossible to rent, restaurants served long lines of customers while the workers quit in droves for better paying jobs.

The attack on Dutch Harbor in June, 1942, brought it all to a head. Anchorage prepared for attack. Nome citizens took to the hills in expectation of bombing and shelling from the recently-thawed sea.

No Effect From Japs

No tragedy occurred. The Japs in the Aleutians had no more effect on the mainland of Alaska than they did on Salem, Oregon. They were, as a matter of fact, almost as far away.

So far the past year, soldiers and civilians alike have been arranging to live more or less comfortably.

For the soldier, life in Alaska is never too easy. But in Anchorage today four theatres bring him movies. Whereas a year ago most of the garrison was in tents, today they are occupied only by casuals en route somewhere else. Continuous building has expanded the number of places a soldier can go for entertainment, whether he wants to roller-skate or drink at a bar.

Transportation Improved

Surface transportation between Anchorage and Fairbanks has improved in the last year until it is no longer necessary to run any great number of freight-carrying airplanes. A year ago mail piled up at the ends of the Alaska railroad and freight was still slower, sometimes suffering a 25 per cent loss from exposure before cars could be found to move it. Now both move promptly.

At Nome, the present situation can well be summed up in the experience of a typical private. He is driving a truck. He lives in a good barracks. He eats well, his mess often at this season including fresh lettuce grown at nearby Unakleet or cabbage brought by ships. His chief problems are mosquitos.



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Spalding W. Holt, Managing Director

dust and the fact that he saw, before leaving the states, most of the movies now available.

Fairbanks Country Club

At Fairbanks, often referred to enviously by other Alaska soldiers as a military country club, there is no sign of war anywhere. Guns that were manned constantly a year ago are well kept still, but crews have more comfortable assignments than standing 24 hour watches in the tundra for enemy planes that could hardly conduct a surprise raid now.

Even the shopkeepers are happier now. A year ago, many were about to close their doors—not for lack of trade but for lack of goods. Eskimo novelties, jewelry, knickknacks of all kinds were in demand that the supply disappeared en masse.

Situation Better

Today, the situation is much improved. It still is impossible to get a watch fixed promptly anywhere in Alaska. It still is a major problem to get laundry done within weeks (or to get your own laundry back once it goes out). But stores are crammed with goods. Much of the novelty merchandise is pure junk, manufactured in Cleveland or Kankakee; but there is lots of it. Prices remain outlandish, especially for anything including expert services; but the supply of everything is better. In some lines, it compares favorably with the current civilian supply situation in the states, as reported by the lucky few who have had leaves of absence there.

Speakman Death Confirmed by Navy Recruiter in North

Further confirmation of the death of CBM C. J. Speakman, former Klamath navy recruiter, has been received here from Lt. Commander Glen F. DeGrave, head of the Portland recruiting district.

He said Speakman died at the U. S. naval hospital at Treasure Island, of injuries suffered in an automobile accident near his post at the naval air station at San Jose, Calif. Lt. Commander DeGrave had no further details on the accident.

Speakman served here for puffed to second or Oris Hock. He is survived by his parents and several brothers in Tennessee.

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MAJOR SHILLING TO HEAD AIR CADET BOARD

Major Eric K. Shilling, just back from Africa after a year as operations officer for the African-Middle East wing, United States air forces, will head a traveling aviation cadet board that will visit Klamath Falls on August 10 and 11 to examine applicants for the aviation cadet training program. Major Shilling is in Oregon on a special mission from the war department to stimulate cadet recruiting in the state.

"The tremendously increased production of military aircraft makes it necessary to call upon more and more young men to volunteer for flight training, and at once," said Major Shilling, who is cooperating with the Oregon recruiting district of the army.

Men between the ages of 17 to 28 years of age are eligible to make application for aviation cadet training. This opportunity is divided into two groups.

Youths 17 to 18 will make application for enrollment in the air corps enlisted reserve and, if found qualified, will be called when they are 18. Those between 18 and 28 may volunteer, take the examinations, then request their selective service boards to release them for voluntary induction into the air corps. They will be called at once and assigned to a college for approximately five months of pre-flight training before actual flight instruction.

The program is also open to enlisted men now in the army and to officers below the grade of captain.

Candidates may apply to the traveling board that will visit Klamath Falls, on August 10 and 11. Directing the local phase of the statewide drive is Leslie Rogers, 412 Main street, cadet procurement chairman.

Full particulars and literature may be obtained without obligation from Rogers or at the army recruiting office, 219 Post Office building.

English Have Them, Too—Fisticuffs Fall in House

LONDON, July 29 (AP)—A sizzling feud between two members of commons, Capt. Alex Cunningham-Reid and Oliver Locker-Lampson, came to a climax with fisticuffs in the corridor near the entrance to the house of lords today.

The incident followed a verbal exchange in commons centering around questions put by Locker-Lampson, who once called Cunningham-Reid—a friend of the heiress Mrs. Doris Duke Cromwell—a "cad."

Cunningham-Reid asked Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in commons the nature of the disability Prince Paul of Yugoslavia was suffering which necessitated the prince's removal from Kenya to South Africa, but before Eden could answer, Locker-Lampson put in:

"What medical disability was Captain Cunningham-Reid suffering when he left England in the blitz?"

Cunningham-Reid retorted that Locker-Lampson reminded him of the cuckoo which "makes a nuisance of itself in other people's nests."

Cunningham-Reid on another occasion had been charged by Minister of Information Brendan Bracken of "beachcombing" in Honolulu during the battle of Britain.

Cunningham-Reid last April replied in commons to Bracken's charge, asserting he had gone to Hawaii during the heavy air attacks upon Britain to arrange with Mrs. Cromwell for evacuation of 500 children to the United States.

Explaining the fisticuffs, Cunningham-Reid said he drew

Girls from a private school in the east volunteered to work on farms. Culture doesn't come ahead of agriculture.

A Georgia man swallowed a glass of gasoline by mistake. The best antidote we know of is keep away from fire.

Uncle Sam has offered to buy all beer surpluses on hand in Venezuela, says a Caracas paper. And we'll have a barrel of fun!

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