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The Last Phase Axis threatens A War Of Atrocities

By Dorothy Thompson

WHY have the Japanese threatened to suspend all international law in the treatment of American aviator prisoners as "reprisals" for what they choose to describe as the bombing and machine-gunning of civilians in the Doolittle raid?



The President's statement carries an additional moment—when there was great unrest and even defections from German ranks among the occupied countries. There recently have been reports from France, Belgium, and Norway in this effect. It is some that among the German soldiers there are men who are trying to find a personal way out.

And why, previous to this, did the Nazis, again claiming it as reprisal, manacle British prisoners of war? I have been trying to find, in my own mind, the answers to these questions because obviously there are purposes involved in this policy.

This is the true explanation, and it is the only logical one that I can think of, than the Allied Governments must be very careful not to fall into a trap. It has been acknowledged for centuries that the only protection against breaches of international law is retaliation. But if one is dealing with enemies who are systematically trying to create retaliation, then one must think twice.

Obviously, the purpose is not to protect Japanese or German prisoners of war. The Allies' prisoners of war are under the supervision of the International Red Cross and the War Prisoners' Aid. There have been no atrocities committed against them in any Allied prison camp, and the Germans and Japanese know this.

The second motif is an act of terrorism. He is saying to us: "If you insist on continuing to fight and won't negotiate a peace, you are in for war of atrocities. Do you want that kind of war?"

On the other hand, the Nazi and Japanese treatment of prisoners has been horrible, although the Nazis have differentiated between national classes of prisoners, treating Slavs abominably, French very badly, and the British better.

It is the introduction of a new weapon into the war, namely the use of atomic energy, with the double object of awakening the horror of mankind for peace, and of using atomic energy, as it were, as a threat, compelling to his own people that they must fight and win, or perish, promising to use atomic energy against some kind of enemy.

The obvious reason for this has been that the British hold many prisoners and, therefore, are themselves in a position to take reprisals against German prisoners of war.

The Tolman Committee, investigating war labor problems, has made another report to the House. Recently President Roosevelt told a press conference that one of the things Congress was investigating things they couldn't possibly know much about.

So if it is now clear what all this means, especially if taken in connection with other happenings. Neither the Germans nor the Japanese are trying to protect their own prisoners. On the contrary, they are trying to precipitate a war of atrocities. They are inviting reprisals.

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Another promising sign is the thought that the members are trying to improve the machinery of Congress, to make it more efficient and more adequate to present needs.

The British State Department, determined to deal conservatively with the Hess case, apparently has in mind a post-war trial for him. He is being given no special privileges, but has not been charged with any crime.

Representative Dirksen also proposes a joint House-and-Senate Committee to handle war legislation. That would end duplicating and committee hearings so that officials busy running the war wouldn't have to repeat their testimony before two, three and four different committees, and answer the same questions several times over.

The world could wonder what all this is. He was entitled to, and if German threats would keep him safe from trial and punishment so long as the war lasted. What prevents British action patterned after Axis techniques: a quick, unoppressed trial of the guilty, followed by the muted report of the trial in action in a hidden country?

The fact that House members are seriously thinking of such things is a cause for rejoicing. Change such as these suggested would make an instant hit with the country.

In Du Fight Italy Manages To Remain In The War News—As Ever

The word Axis, in these troubled days, isn't what it used to be. Now it embraces only Germany and Japan and doesn't run as far as the glory that was Rome. You think twice before you remember Italy, and it isn't far to a nation of stalwart talkers and fighters.

In contrast, unfortunately, is the spectacle in the Senate where two men, Medicare of Tennessee and Willard of Indiana, look on the war as a source of political patronage. They want the Senate to check the kind of things that are being done in the war.

The fates deal unkindly with the Fascists, the opposite reason apparently was that the Axis leaders were known as our mortal enemies. And, as you forget, they're still in the war.

Consider, rather, that the man who writes for fools is always sure of a large audience; be careful to limit your time for reading, and devote it exclusively to the works of those great minds of all times and countries who wrote for the people who are the voice of a free people to be such. These alone really educate and instruct.

In Northern Italy, when an Alpine regiment was ordered to the Russian front, revolt broke out, the leaders were killed, and the soldiers put on trains and sent away, without arms. It does not send reinforcements of tanks and planes to control his men, and hold fighting Albanians and Serbs in check.

You can never read bad literature too little, nor good literature too much. Bad books are intellectual poison; they destroy the mind. Because people always read what is new instead of the best of all ages, writers remain in the narrow circle of the ideas which happen to prevail in their time; and so the period sinks deeper and deeper into its own mire.

In Egypt, General Frederico Ferrar-Orsi was killed in action, while "leading his troops." He was the eleventh general killed in the war to date. An unannounced number have been captured.

There has been a change in the weather the last few days.

And in New York, Mayor Fiorella La Guardia, accused of possessing two Italian medals, freely admitted the truth of the charge. He had gotten them, he said, in 1919, for a bombing mission. That, said the Mayor, was in the days when Italy was a nation, instead of a colony. The medals he will keep, because they came to him when Mussolini was unknown.

TODAY'S BIBLE THOUGHT We must turn from our wrong doing now and never repeat it. Repent and iniquity has no place in the truth.—1 Corinthians 13:6.

Yes, the modern replica of ancient Rome is having its troubles. But it's still in the fighting, the same as ever, which is to say not much.

Bravest of the brave, we believe, are Philadelphia ball teams that carry on to the bitter finish without asking for a separate peace.

In the stockade we have long had in mind, the farm boy will occupy the other side of a double house, with the silver gang.

A condition has arisen in this interesting country where a 10,000-ton freighter can be built in less than a year. It takes a congressman to mend his fence.

Fact & Figure

Draft To Take Over A Million Men This Year, Regardless

Because of the apparent lack of purpose in Selective Service policies and the present working of conflicting orders, an impersonal statement of the latest known facts seems to be in order. Based upon authorized statements collected from hearings in Washington are these: The Army wants 1,100,000 new men by the end of the year, and draft board quotas are set two months in advance, cannot be stopped. In the interim, more drafted men will be taken, single men left behind. The 18-19-year-old class won't be called until July, after school terms are finished. The Army has not set a uniform basis for calls because it badly wants young married men up to 30, who make the best of their material, and are now being forced into active duty by the draft picture.

The figures: Present size of the armed forces: 4,900,000. Total by December, 1943: 9,000,000. Number to be secured in fourteen months: 4,100,000.

Available supply of manpower: In 18-19 group, between one and one and a half millions (500,000 already in service, over 600,000 expected to be deferred as unfit). Single men without dependents, ages 18-45, 3,200,000. Single men with dependents, 900,000 physically fit. Married men, no children, 2,700,000 physically fit. Fathers, 11,000,000 in all.

Reserves are still plentiful so far as the nine million-man army is concerned, but there are no immediate, married men will continue to be taken before some single men. The 18-19 year will be allowed to finish school terms. State quotas take no cognizance of types of men — only population totals.

Most of the groups are simply pressure groups, some 400 of them being listed in the Washington telephone directory (dubbed the National Associations of Gimme-Gimme). So many of them are on the scene that their removal would make room for 10,000 war-essential men. Granting that many of them still serve useful purposes, a determined speed-finder might work wonders for the duration.

Time To Retire Washington's Peace-Time Lobbies Are in the Way

Washington, supposedly the world's only city whose growth is restricted by law, could use some elbow room. Already, in defiance of the old law, the city has overflowed into Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and New Jersey. While Government agencies have been moving out to give up office space for war, many an organization which would seem to be outdated still hangs on, tenaciously.

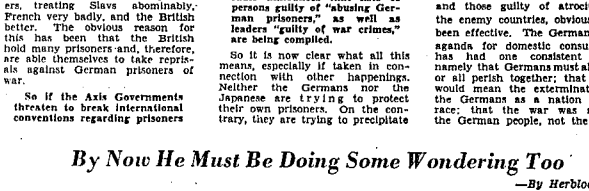
These, and many more, robbed of their chance to protect, promote and preserve, might be quickly and quietly transported from a city driven wild by war and stuffed away in company with other trimmings we are managing to struggle along without.

Fair Exchange The Life of Rudolf Hess For A Horrible Axis Threat

The new flurry of propaganda between enemies in the battle of fear wears mainly about Prisoner Rudolf Hess, who is has apparently left the English custody and is being simply held for his price as is until peace comes. A Russian demand that he be executed as a leader of the Nazi war-making

By Now He Must Be Doing Some Wondering Too

—By Herblock



Unfair Geography Hell In The Solomons

By Paul Mallon

THE TROUBLE at Guadalcanal has been that the main Jap battle fleet was centered in an area just north of there, while ours was scattered around the world.

The Japs, therefore, have been able to call upon an overwhelming force of naval power to center upon that one point anytime they chose and we could do nothing to balance it. Their naval strength available for summoning to that point outlasts ours probably two to one.

As shore, on that magnified fly speck in the Pacific, the opposite reason apparently was that the Axis leaders were known as our mortal enemies. And, as you forget, they're still in the war.

This is the reason why Navy Secretary Knox and other officials lately have been viewing the situation with open pessimism. While the official communiques may have been holding steady, some phases of the operation, the basic situation was enough to inspire apprehensions.

You may have noticed the communiques on this subject for the first time since the war began, have been current, that is, dealing with day to day action. Up to this time the Navy has espoused a policy of being sure of the outcome, and waited until engagements were concluded or longer before announcing any preliminary about them.

Conflicting announcements about our plane operations the past week are attributable to the fluctuating status of our important airfield on the island. One day it was announced no American planes had been in the air for 48 hours, while the next day news reported the overwhelmingly successful operations of American planes.

Despite McKellar Congress Moves

By Raymond Clapper

ALTHOUGH a low exhibition of peace-time politics at its smallest the Manpower Commission—the House of Representatives—has been several signs of taking a new lease on life.

As mentioned the other day, the House moved quickly and efficiently to lower the draft age, once the Administration had given its nerve to ask for it. Members of the House must take their chances at the polls in less than a year. But they went ahead with this legislation promptly, as if this was not a political season. You can't ask for anything more than that.

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