DARWIN PREPARES. Already bombs have fallen on Australian soil, and the landing of Japanese forces in New Guinea and Timor presents a direct threat to the continent of Australia. The little town of Darwin in the north of Australia, less than 400 miles from Timor has now become one of the most important strategic bases in the Empire. Here are stationed thousands of A.I.F. troops as well as large air and naval establishments and a strong garrison of home defence forces. The photograph above shows a gun crew of the Australian Artillery at Darwin laying an 18-pounder.
The Way of the War

SINGAPORE: THE WAY TO LOSE AN EMPIRE

Not since 1781, when General Cornwallis with 7,000 British regulars surrendered to Washington at Yorktown, has the British Empire suffered such a blow as the fall of Singapore. Yorktown lost us the American colonies; it marked the end of one British Empire. Will the historians of a hundred years hence write that Singapore marked the end of another?

As yet the magnitude of the disaster is not completely realized. Our spirits are depressed, it is true, but our minds are too numbed to appreciate the full force of the blow we have suffered at the hands of a race which for years we have regarded half contemptuously as mere Orientals. When I was a boy I remember studying the pictures in The Illustrated London News of the Russo-Japanese War: "Fancy, that great big Russian soldier being taken prisoner by that little jap!" It is not pleasant to think of those thousands of British, Australian, and Indian troops being counted on the quays of Singapore by these same Japs and shipped off to some distant part of the world.

Why has this thing come upon us? Did we deserve it? Could we have avoided it?

Can we learn from it so as to avoid a similar fate in the future? Why did it happen? To begin with, it was a war in the military sense at all; it was a naval base from which it had been intended that the ships and planes of the Allies should sail forth to keep the Japanese hundreds of miles away. All its guns pointed out to sea, and the possibility of an attack from the land, down the Malayan peninsula, had hardly been considered. Unlike Malta and Corregidor, it was not built on a rock, but on a swamp. Unlike Tobruk, civilian population, most of whom, unlike the people of Singapore, were just so many spectators of a conflict which they seem to have concluded was no concern of theirs.

Even so, how were the Japanese able to capture Singapore in 8 weeks, and by the end of the tenth week to have marched in triumph into Singapore? The first reason is that the Japanese were a thoroughly and constantly weak air force. At the very outset we lost half our fighter strength, mostly on the ground, and the planes which our pilots had to take up were Brewster Buffalos, Hudsons, and Wirraways—old types which were no match for the Japanese fast climbing fighters. We had a few bombers, but the Japanese had more, and dive-bombers in plenty.

"This is what the Japanese landed on the island," reports a Special Correspondent of The Times and The Manchester Guardian in a dispatch recently published on Feb. 18, "when Japanese dive-bombers, accompanied by fighters, were bombing and machine-gunning our men mercilessly, there were six in all, and six only—"a seventh was having its wheels repaired—giving our men air support. Hardly less important was the crippling of the Royal Navy, when at the very beginning of the battle two of our finest ships were sacrificed in what must seem to be, despite all the official excuses, an act of sublime folly. "All our troubles flowed from Japanese sea and air superiority," says Sir Keith Murdoch; "we never really had a chance on land."

With 60,000 men—Mr. Churchill's figure—we tried to hold a country larger than England, against an army far more numerous than ours, and far better equipped. The enemy were, moreover, toughened and acclimatized, whereas our troops were not only far fewer but the enemy but many of them, to quote The Times Special Correspondent again, "never seemed to be physically up to the mark. Some had been too long in this tropical climate and had gone soft. Others had only just arrived, and were not accustomed either to the terrain or to the climate. One brigade was plunged straight into jungle fighting in Johore three days after it arrived in Singapore after eleven weeks at sea." We made a bad start when the troops in Kedah left their strong positions and crossed the isthmus to meet the Japanese at Singora, and were caught halfway. More heavy casualties were suffered in the long retreat through the jungle. The British lost heavily in great stands as they retired. Sir Keith Murdoch has declared, "when the Australians came in north of Johore the Indians were tired and almost finished. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders suffered heavily among them."

"On British soldier is equal to ten Japanese," said a wounded Tommy to Cecil Brown, correspondent of Columbia Broadcasting, "but unfortunately there are eleven Japs." Then the American went on to make those accusations against the Singapore authorities for which the military banished him from the microphone. This is what he cabled on Jan. 14, a month before Singapore fell. Already it was a touch-and-go affair, such was the incredible and unbelievable unpreparedness. He spoke caustically of the Singapore mentality, of civilians who were apathetic towards everything, except making gin and rubber money, having stenches (whiskies) between 3 and 8 o'clock in the evening, keeping fit, being known as "a good cabbie", getting thoroughly "plastered" on Saturday night. To the suggestion of any and every change, however slight, they rejoined "with a sneer through the nose, changing a whisky glass—can't be done."

Not only Cecil Brown, but every observer who has commented on the failure to use the vast resources of Asiatic labour which should have been available. With the exception of the most arduous and physically conscious of the Chinese community, the bulk of the Asiatic population remained spectators from start to finish. When Penang was bombed in December, says Mr. P.W. D. Bickers, a member of the Legislative Council, "the civilian population evaporated in the most amazing manner, so that the essential services were disrupted. A meeting ensued—looting, pollution, dirt, sink, debris, rats, blood—impossible horrors which cannot be mentioned. So it was at Singapore. The Times Special Correspondent after alleging that "the Government had no roots in the life of the people of the country," states that the people hastened to get as far as possible from the scene of hostilities. So that soldiers had to be taken away from military duties to load and unload ships; thousands of people could be found sleeping on the way from Singapore but for the fact that there were not enough Europeans to man and store the numbers of small ships and launches that were lying in the harbour; while early on in the war, the 12,000 Asians normally employed at the naval base, only 800 were reporting for duty.

Here is a point we should do well to dwell on and to ponder. Malaya is the first instance of a British colony which has been directly attacked. The enormous preponderance of its people is not of British nationality, but of Chinese descent, although they have been under British rule for many years. Under that rule the material progress has been striking, but the people themselves have been regarded as coolies—as so much yellow and brown labour whose muscles may be conveniently used in the tin mines and on the rubber plantations. We—or rather the Singapore wallahs—have treated the people as coolies. It is surprising that in the hour of testing they acted as coolies, "did a bunk" into the jungle? Is the same thing happening now in Burma? Will it happen in India?

A great Empire and little minds," said Burke, "go ill together." We have them both, the Empire and the little minds—the year before this, the Colonel Blimp, the nincompoops and licksplitters, the blatherers of Army spokesmen in Cairo and far more. But we must keep to the one we must get rid of the others—and quick.

E. ROYSTON PARK
America's Air Watch Over the Atlantic

U.S. "BLIMP" on patrol duty along the sea lanes of the Atlantic takes a close look at a freighter. The American Navy uses a number of these small airships for reconnaissance work.

At Wheeler Field on Jan. 9 these two American airmen—Lieuts. George M. Welch and Kenneth M. Taylor—were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for bringing down four and two Japanese planes respectively. Wheeler Field lies north of Pearl Harbor on Oahu Island, scene of the first Japanese attack on the U.S. on Dec. 7, 1941.

BARRAGE BALLOONS are now being mass-produced in America. Here is the new balloon room at the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company plant at Akron, Ohio. The room is large enough to accommodate twelve inflated balloons at a time.

Left, pilots of a pursuit squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps standing by ready to beat off any enemy attempt to raid America's Eastern seaboard.

SARAWAK, where the Japanese made their first landings on Dec. 17, 1941, lies on the N.W. coast of Borneo. The photograph at the top of the page shows the port of Miri, which is the centre of an important oilfield. Centre, one of the first photographs received of the invasion of Sarawak, shows Japanese infantry with a light field-gun after landing. Above, Japanese troops climbing over an obstruction are lit by the glare from a blazing petroleum field set alight by the defenders before it could fall into enemy hands.

Photos, L. T. Lucas, Keystone
Oilfields Now ‘Scorched’ by Our Dutch Ally

BALIK PAPAN, on the east coast of Borneo, is one of the most important oil ports of the Netherlands East Indies. It has extensive oil-product manufactories as well as refineries. Some of the storage tanks and plant are seen above, with the edge of the jungle in the background.

SUMATRA is an island, rich like Borneo, in petroleum deposits. Above are seen the oil tanks at Palembang, attacked by the Japanese on Feb. 14. The output of the Palembang oilfield is 4,250,000 tons a year. Below, part of the oil installations of the Royal Dutch Oil Company at Pladjoe, Sumatra.

TARAKAN, rich oil island off Dutch Borneo, captured by the Japanese in January. It is stated to be, for its size, the richest oil land in the world. PHOTO: L. T. LINCOLN, G.P.U., E.N.A. Page 333
From Brest Hitler’s Ships Got Safe Home

At 1:35 on the morning of Feb. 13 the Admiralty and Air Ministry issued a communiqué to the effect that the German warships, Scharnhorst and Gneisenau (25,000 tons each), and the 10,000-ton cruiser, Prinz Eugen, accompanied by torpedo-boats, E-boats and minesweepers, had been in action in the Channel with our aircraft and destroyers. The significant paragraph in the communiqué reads as follows: “When last sighted, the enemy, which had become separated, were making for the ports in the Heligoland Bight.”

It is hardly surprising that the public were startled by this sensational, if brief, information. They had long been under the impression that the English Channel was inviolate, at least to German battleships. Further, as a result of 110 night and day bombing attacks on these ships, immured for nearly a year at Brest—Mr. Churchill disclosed on Feb. 17 that 4,000 tons of bombs had been dropped in the course of 3,299 bomber sorties, at a cost of 43 aircraft and 247 Air Force personnel—they had reason to think that the familiar S & G and the Prinz were hardly fit enough to take so long and hazardous a trip.

The mystery deepened still more when it was learned that Bomber Command had visited Brest a few hours before the departure of the German vessels, and that it was not until about 11 a.m. on Feb. 12 that R.A.F. aircraft reported that an enemy squadron was approaching the Dover Straits from westward heavily escorted by fighter aircraft. Thus more than three hours of daylight in which an attack on these German ships might have been fatally effective was apparently lost. This delay in getting to grips with the enemy, and the possibility of lack of cohesion between Coastal Command and the Admiralty, and between the other R.A.F. Commands and the Admiralty, became the subject of an official inquiry, appointed by Mr. Churchill in accordance with his pledge on Feb. 17.

Let us try to follow the course of this engagement. Having reached a point of 400 miles from Brest, and being already near the Narrows on their way to the open North Sea by 11 a.m. on Thursday morning, it can be assumed that the German squadron had started some time before midnight. Admiral Ciliax had chosen the moment well; he lacked nothing for meteorological intelligence and the weather was excellent for this purpose. The ships hugged the French coast and were protected by relays of fighter aircraft from aerodromes all the way. They formed a vast umbrella of steel over the whole convoy. This weather, so favourable to the enemy, was a great handicap to our air reconnaissance; as it happened the battleships were “spotted” between Berck and Le Touquet by two Spitfires flying low beneath the clouds on a shipping reconnaissance mission, and one was attacked by 12 Mc.109s as well as A.A. fire, but they managed to escape to their base.

**Swordfish into the Inferno**

Our first aircraft to get into action were six Swordfish from the Fleet Air Arm, which were ordered to take off when the enemy ships were reported at 11:35 a.m. to be at the western entrance to the Straits of Dover. Led by Lieut.-Commander E. Esmonde, D.S.O., R.N., they attacked heedless of the overwhelming odds against them. They well knew how vulnerable were their machines to the enemy’s fighters, and that the German ships would put up a veritable flaming wall of “flak.” But each pilot, like a modern Icarus, flew into the inferno, pressed his machine at top speed and dived, but could not be stopped. Not one Swordfish returned to its base, and of the 18 men composing their crews only five were saved by our light craft.

Next, a formation of British torpedo-bombers with an escort of fifty fighters, followed at short intervals by fresh waves of fighters and Hurricane bombers, rushed to the assault. The sea and air battle unique in the history of warfare increased in violence. The sky was literally awash with conflicting planes darting all over the place, diving, ascending, stalling, and crashing. Bomb, shell and cannon-burst stove the almost impenetrable grey atmosphere with brilliant orange flashes of fire.

The Navy’s part in this extraordinary action was no less conspicuous for verve and heroism. The first ships of the German convoy were sighted at 12:33 p.m., when a number of M.T.B.s struck in against heavy fire and enemy aircraft which dived on them continuously. The M.T.B.s hung on grimly, releasing their torpedoes, but being to a heavy smoke screen it was impossible to say whether any of these had taken effect.

A magnificent effort was made by our destroyers. Called from the North Sea, they could only join issue with the swiftly-moving enemy ships if they risked the minefields. There was no time to make a detour through the swept channels. Straight across these fields of death our destroyers, under Captain C. T. M. Pizey, stormed into battle, defying a whole arsenal of naval guns. Eighteen 4.7-inch guns, twenty-four 5-inch and twenty-eight 4.1s belonging to the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. In addition, there were eight 5-inch and twelve 4-inch guns on the Prinz Eugen and innumerable other weapons, not to mention the aerial armament and hurling bombs. Everything was done by German aircraft to divert our fire from its main objective, the huge German battleships.

The British destroyers put their helms over at about one mile and three-quarters from the enemy and let go their torpedoes. Lieut.-Commander E. C. Coats, R.N., of H.M.S. Worcester went even closer in and engaged the battleships from no more than across a mile and a quarter of turbulent sea. The Worcester was hit and set on fire forward. She was stopped, her crew got the fire under, started her engines again and were able to bring her back to port under her own steam.

Another destroyer attack was made on the Prinz Eugen led by H.M.S. Mackay (Captain J. P. Wright, R.N.). The German cruisers protecting the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau bore down on the destroyers. Our torpedoes were fired at close range, but owing to bad visibility it was not certain whether she had been hit. Notwithstanding all these valiant efforts, the enemy ships escaped about nightfall on Feb. 12, and entered a German port in Heligoland Bight.

Our losses in aircraft amounted to 20 bombers (including 5 machines of the Coastal Command), 12 fighters, and 16 fighters. As far as is known, the enemy lost about 20 fighters and some escort ships. There is no doubt that some damage was done to the enemy’s ships.

Naturally enough, the Nazis were cock-a-hoop. In a broadcast on Feb. 14 Rear-Admiral Lützow boasted that ‘‘for the first time for 250 years a fleet of an enemy of Britain has dared to enter the Channel..."
Salute to the Men Who Gave Them Chase

Sub-Lieut. E. Lee (below) was the only one who escaped uninjured of the 18 men who flew their six Swordfish into action against the German battleships. Only five men, four of them wounded, returned from the engagement.

Lieut. Commander E. Esmond, D.S.O. (below), who led the Swordfish attack on the German warships in the Dover Straits, was killed, together with his crew, after having sent a torpedo straight at the leading battleship.

The Wing Commander of a Blenheim Squadron which took part in the attack (third from left) chats with his men on returning to their station. At least one hit on a German battle-cruiser was scored by this squadron.

Captain C. T. M. Pizey, R.N. (centre), who led the destroyer attack in H.M.S. Campbell, photographed after the action with Gunners Officers Lieut. M. B. Collings (left) and Lieut. A. E. Fanning.

RACING INTO ACTION against the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen off the Dutch coast are H.M.S. Worcester and other destroyers. The Worcester, braving the Germans' heavy guns, went into within a mile and a quarter of the enemy before firing her torpedoes. She was hit and set on fire, but returned safely to harbour. Centre right, H.M.S. Campbell, Batilla leader, a destroyer of 1,330 tons, carrying six 21-inch torpedo tubes in triple mountings and armed with five 4.7-inch guns.

MILLIONS OF WASTED HOURS

Lord Gainford pointed out in the House of Lords on Feb. 10 that pottery work is not an industry vital to the war effort. In any case, it is an extra-ordinary mudlark. Working children should be allowed to work eighty-four hours a week at a trade which is dangerous to their health, when there is other labour available.

It would be interesting to know how much potential labour in Britain is being wasted by ridiculous restrictions. Take the A.I.P. personnel for instance. There are 250,000 full-time Civil Defence workers. Apart from "clocking in and out," their shifts they have been able to do very little work of national importance for months. Many patriotic wardens and firemen admit a sense of frustration and would be glad to amalgamate their duties with the work of the forces. It is true that arrangements are now being made for this reservoir of labour to be more effectively used, but this concession from T.U. General Union interests is so hedged with restrictions as to make an almost negative result. Skilled Civil Defence volunteers can be employed only on "constructural work of national importance connected with civil defence," and they receive the same rate of £3.50 a week for up to 24 hours' work, or 7s. 6d. if over 30 hours' work. In such cases, they can exercise their pastime trades for not more than six hours a day. Nor must they be employed alongside men engaged under ordinary industrial conditions. Under no circumstances may, for example, the painter or carpenter in Civil Defence uniform work on the same ladder or at the same bench as his fellow-craftsmen. Where is the comprehensive plan that will make practical use of idle hands in the place where they are most wanted - the war factories?

BELGIAN "COOLIES"

In 1941 the Belgian national expenditure totalled 36,640,000,000 francs, while the revenue was only 15,530,000,000 francs. The official cost of German occupation, which were 15,150,000,000 (as against 4,500,000,000 in 1940), practically equalled the total revenue. 

These figures are eloquent of the working of the New Order in Belgium. The Nazi Herrenvolk, or overlords, have appropriated the whole of the Belgian people. They either work for the tyrant, starve, or go to the concentration camp. In addition to this crippling penalty Belgium finds itself, in 1941, a 38,000,000 francs' worth of goods and labour for which has had nothing but a credit balance in Berlin. Of this amount 5,000,000,000 francs represent a compulsory loan of goods, and over 1,000,000,000 francs remittances from Belgians working in Germany and in Belgium, who had nothing left to send. The Belgian forces. It is not true that the Belgian banks, which the German authorities did not pay out, but caused the Belgian banks to issue in advance. This is what the German Brusseler Zeitung describes as Belgium's contribution towards financing the war against Bolshevism and its allies. The cynicism of this remark is typical. Russian communism, or Bolshevism, as the Germans and their lickspittles in Spain and Italy persist in calling it, is a genuine effort to improve the lot of the workers. Nazism is a system whereby all the workers are turned into coolies to enrich a minority of German overlords. Hitler hopes that the workers of the world will be united some day, not in freedom and prosperity, but in a chain-gang for the benefit of the German overlords.

COLLECTIVE SECURITY

It is not necessary that an international organization aiming at security and collaboration should include every European nation. But it is essential that Great Britain and Russia should make their stand by the side of the lesser states. Dr. Ntitchich, Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The League of Nations failed because certain nations were neither ready for nor wanted the democratic movement in its structure. The United States, whence it originated, in President Wilson's mind, started the League, but Britain "joined up," and, true to the disarmament policy upon which it was founded, disbanded her armies and "scuttled" her ships. History repeats itself, but it is to be hoped most fervently that no such folly will inspire our post-war politicians. Do we not owe our present troubles to the futility of pacifism, which is incompatible with a Great Power? It was an invitation to the political pirates in Germany, Italy and Japan to boost their Jolly Rogers and set forth for the loot in the form of riches that Britain left abroad. We considered triffes. We have temporarily lost our possessions in the Far East, but the question might be asked whether we deserved to hold them. Britain will get them back after the war, but whether we can keep them will depend on our will and strength to defend them. Make no mistake, Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese are not phenomenal freaks. Such men are only super-cracksmen and they recur in history. The British, Russia, and the United States will take charge of the future, but as armed guardians of the peace, and not pacific visionaries.

BACK TO THE MUD

The Ostdeutscher Beobachter reports that among the ruins of Wolkwikow a large quantity of stone axes, tinders, and iron weapons and bone spindles have been discovered. With the aid of these, it will be possible to establish the national-political features of this area in ancient times.

SOMEONE once brilliantly diagnosed the whole Nazi movement as a "muddle for the men." It may well be that the Germans are the missing link between the age and the human being, who have managed to outwit evolution and remain like their original parents. Here is something for the biologists to get their teeth into, but is it not strange, to say the least, that the Germans are always delving into the remote past for facts or legends applicable to, if not explanatory of, their aboriginal pedigree? Surely their earnest and interminably boring desire to be supreme is an acknowledgment of their conscious inferiority. Whether the stone axes, iron weapons and bone spindles found at Wolkwikow fit in perfectly with the national political features of Niasim or not, there is no doubt that they symbolize the time-lag in Nazi psychology. When Hitler's swastika fades as the national emblem, the Neanderthal skull (which was found near Dusseldorf) and two stone axes might be adopted.

COLONEL BLIMP'S PROGRESS

Mr. David Low, the cartoonist, first drew his engaging character, Colonel Blimp, eight years ago. Are there as many Blimps in the Empire today as there were in 1931? We hope not. If ridiculous could kill, Mr. David Low's Colonel Blimp, that fatuous type of military expert, who is always preparing for the last war and pompously wrong about everything in this, would long ago have been interred without military honours. The famous cartoonist has recently told us over the wireless that the idea of Blimp occurred to him about ten years past when in a Turkish bath he was listening to a couple of fat asses in their birthday suits telling one another that what Japan did was no business of Britain. "Someone ought to draw something about all this," said Low to himself, "put in the under the steam. Whether there are fewer Blimps in this country than there were in 1931 who can say? But it has been suggested that the Blimp mentality has not decreased in numbers east of Suez. A well-known Blimp is the one who is always painfully surprised when the enemy does something rather unusual, unexpectedly successful, and to the whole art of war was not to surprise your opponent and take him off his guard. Does Blimp then still use the expression, "It isn't cricket," or has he awakened to the craze idiocy of such a remark? Let us preserve a Blimp or two. We could ill afford to spare the laughter he gives us in these grim days.
Our new War Cabinet, announced on Feb. 20, consists of seven instead of nine members as previously. One newcomer, Sir Stafford Cripps, is included, and the three departing ministers are Lord Beaverbrook, Sir Kingsley Wood, and Mr. Arthur Greenwood. Lord Beaverbrook was invited to join the new War Cabinet, but declined on health grounds. He will go to America to continue his work in regard to the pooling of resources between the United Nations.
From Rangoon to Darwin One Long Battle

Confined indeed was the position in the south-west Pacific following upon the disastrous surrender of Singapore. Fighting went on continuously in a score of places, and here is possible to reflect only the high lights of the vast struggle. See map in page 514.

Since the Burma Road is the Chinese life-line, the failure of the continued resistance of China is one of the principal hopes and mainstays of the Allies, there was ever-deepening anxiety as the Japanese advance multiplied towards Rangoon, ocean terminus of the great highway.

Moulmein was evacuated by the British on Jan. 31, and fresh positions were taken up on the western Salween. Here a determined effort was made to halt the invader, but the Japanese were in overwhelming strength, and by the capture of Martaban on Feb. 11 and of Yawbi, Feb. 16 they outflanked the Salween defenders. Once again General Hutton's men were compelled to fall back, this time to positions which had been hastily prepared along the line of the Bilin river. Action was swiftly joined, and the Japanese preponderance in arms and men was soon made apparent. There was a gallant diversion on the part of Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese operating from the Shan states, who delivered a big thrust at Chiangmai, northern terminus of the railway to Bangkok. But soon it was apparent that the Bilin line could not be held much longer, and the week-end brought news of fighting on its western side, between the Bilin and the Sittang. This brought the Japanese within some 75 miles of Rangoon; and the significance of their appearance was apparent from an official statement issued on Feb. 20 from Chukking, concerning the results to date of General Chiang Kai-shek's visit to India. It was revealed that concrete measures had been decided upon for the transportation of supplies direct from India to China, by a new route whose capacity would exceed that of the Burma Road.

The Japanese had already captured Rangoon; it went on, 'as the port of entry has therefore been abandoned, and its approaches have been mined.'

No details of the new road were issued, but it was generally assumed that the reference was to the partly completed Assam Road which has been under construction since the summer of 1939. As the map in this page shows, it runs from Chukking to Sadiya in Assam, which is the railhead of the Bengal-Assam railway, giving it connexion with Calcutta and Chittagong on the Bay of Bengal. The road is given as about 2,200 miles, of which (so far as is known) only 500 miles have been constructed as yet.

The difficulties involved are enormous, greater even than those which confronted the builders of the Burma Road. Its 'root' is 9,000 feet, several thousand feet higher than that of the Burma Road. Between Chukking and Batang the road, running on a generally westward direction, must cross great rivers and several mountain ranges before, at Prome, it ascends the Lower Hilayas. Here it proceeds south-west through some of the most mountainous country in Asia, a jumble of great ranges and precipitous defiles. Then, just before entering Assam it drops from the clouds to

the Brahmaputra valley. From Chittagong to Sadiya is about 600 miles; from Calcutta it is about 300 miles farther.

But the building of the Assam Road is part of a long-term policy; for the present the Burma Road is of much greater importance, and the Burma Road, following the threat to Rangoon, is now as good as closed.

Moreover, consequent upon the Japanese triumph in Malaya, it may be expected that the Japanese fleet will make an incursion into the Indian Ocean with a view to cutting the far-stretched lines of Allied communications—those which lead to and from India by way of the Persian Gulf, round the Cape, and from Australia.

While the threats to Burma and India,

pushed up the Mosei river in the direction of Palembang, other detachments of the Japanese army were engaged in the illumination of the oil refineries and equipment—supplying the needs of their occupation forces in the territories of China. On Feb. 17 they seized Banjermasin, advancing along the coast from Balik Papan, in Celebes, Macassar was theirs. On Feb. 19 Darwin in Northern Australia was raided by the first time by Japanese aeroplanes; and on the next day Japanese landings were effected in Timor and Bali.

In Bali, which is separated from Java by only two miles of water, the Dutch fought a determined delaying action. The Japanese were in considerable strength, and fierce fighting developed in the neighbourhood of Den Pasar, where the DutchFinding Fortresses, flown by American pilots. Their position, indeed, was not altogether a happy one, since not only were they bombed from the air, but they were cut off on the seaward side.

On the night of Feb. 19 an Allied squadron, consisting of Dutch cruisers and Dutch and American destroyers, attacked the stock concentrations of enemy warships and transports off the east coast of Bali. One of the Allied destroyers was torpedoed and sunk, but the enemy had lost far the worst of it. The battle lasted for four days, and a statement issued by the Dutch East Indian Government on Feb. 23 declared that it could not be assumed that the greater part of the fleet—nineteen was the figure mentioned—which the Japanese set out for the conquest of Bali had been destroyed. One badly damaged transport ship which succeeded in escaping destruction had fled.

Said an Indies Government spokesman in Batavia the same day, the most important successes of the Allied sea and air forces justify the belief that the conquest of Bali means to the Japanese as pyrrhic a victory as the conquest of the burning homes at Tarakan, Balik Papan and Palembang.'
Foes and Friends on the Pacific War Fronts

Radiola from Tokyo to Berlin, this photograph shows the opening phase of the Battle of Singapore from the Japanese side. Japanese troops are in position on the mainland facing the island, awaiting zero hour for the assault.

*Photo, U.P.I.*

Taken aboard a Japanese invasion barge, this photograph shows Japanese troops about to make a landing on the shores of Luzon, in the Philippines—where General MacArthur still puts up a great resistance.

*Photo, Keystone*

Below, transporting light artillery by pack horses over the difficult terrain of the island of Java. Java contains the headquarters of General Wavell's Command.

*Photo, Sport & General*

Below, the Government House and War Memorial at Darwin, seat of Northern Australia, only separated from the Japanese forces which invaded Timor by the 310 miles of the Timor Sea.

*Courtesy of Australian War*
In Burma ‘We Intend With the Men and Material Which Continue to F...
On the vast Russian front, from the Ukraine to Leningrad, the Don, Kuban and Terek Cossacks are fighting the Nazis with all their traditional skill. Of course, it would be folly to throw cavalry, unsupported, into a modern battle, and the Soviet cavalry units are supplied with machine-guns, artillery and even tanks. The cavalrymen themselves are taught not only horse-riding but also bayonet-fighting, bomb-throwing, trench-digging and ski-ing.

The horse is the means of locomotion which enables a blow to be struck quickly and unexpectedly. For instance, recently the Germans made a break-through near a very important point. For twenty-four hours Cossack troops raced from one flank to another, through forests and across rivers covered with thin ice, where no tank could venture, went into action and checked the enemy until the breach could be repaired.

On one occasion the 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps, with their famous leader Major-General Dovator (since reported killed in action) at their head, broke through the German front line, penetrated deep into the enemy's rear and for many days, behind the backs of the German generals, smashed headquarters, dispersed transports and disrupted communications. Into such a panic were the Germans thrown that an order had to be issued announcing to the Nazi troops that, contrary to rumors, not 100,000 but only 18,000 Cossacks had penetrated their rear. In fact, there were only 3,000, but they twice scattered the headquarters of the 6th German Army.

This is how one of Dovator's successful raids was carried out. The Cossacks took no baggage train with them, but carried everything they needed on their horses. After smashing an advanced battalion of the 66th "Hitler" Infantry Regiment, and routing the Rumanian Royal Guard, they penetrated about 60 miles into the enemy positions. There they became complete masters of the situation, damaging roads and communications, burning stores and destroying motor columns and fuel lorries. For twelve days they harried the enemy without respite. On the second day of the raid they ran into the 9th battalion of the 430th Infantry Regiment, and after a pitched battle destroyed it.

When informed by partisans that the Germans were forming special detachments to exterminate his Cossacks, Gen. Dovator broke up his formation into small groups which began acting independently in all directions. Making their base in a dense forest, the Cossacks appeared in the night or at dawn where they were least expected. From the surrounding woods stranded Red Army men and officers rallied to the Cossacks and Dovator furnished them with rifles and machine-guns captured from the enemy. In twelve days he had thus armed a detachment of 1,000 men. Destruction during the raid included 2,500 German soldiers, 10 guns, 87 machine-guns, 115 lorries, six tanks, two ammunition dumps and three wireless stations. When it was time for them to return to their lines, local inhabitants led them through dense woods to the rear of the German front line. On a misty morning they charged their way through the Germans from the rear, broke through and returned safely to their own units, leaving behind them over 1,000 armed men as guerrillas.

Hero of the Soviet Union

Major-General Lev Dovator commanded the Red Cossack Corps which was recently renamed the 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps. For his daring and heroism in battle he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Another famous Russian cavalry commander is Major-General Byelov, commander of the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps, whose troops fought splendidly in the Ukraine later and in the defence of Moscow, routing the Germans after they had broken through in the Tula sector.

A woman war-correspondent, Eugenie Krueger, went to interview Dovator when he was fighting on the Moscow front. It was no easy matter to find his headquarters. The only accurate direction that could be given was: "Look for Dovator where the fighting is hottest." When she did reach his H.Q. she summed up her impressions of the man in this manner:

"The day was drawing to a close when the General returned from the main line. Without pausing to remove his coat he walked over to the table and, unfolding a map, proceeded to explain the situation and the plan of subsequent operations. His speech was quick, laconic. Giving little time to minor detail, he tried to make everybody understand his main idea. His enthusiasm is contagious, his speech picturesque and expressive. This is how he speaks of his Guardsmen:

"Our weapons? Rifle! Sabre! Handgrenade! Fire bottles! The men of my command, believe it or not, he once got on a horse and attacked a tank. What was the outcome? Queer chap. But what can you do with him if he actually did destroy the tank? And he is by no means young. I scolded him, but inwardly I thought: This old boy is made of real stuff, he is a real Guardsman."

Yes, they are all made of the real stuff, these Cossacks— and the Nazis fear them. In the letter of a German N.C.O., one Kurt Gerisch, we read: "The most terrible thing I have ever experienced is a Cossack attack. We were blinded by the glitter of their sabres and deafened by their savage shouts."

And here, to end with, is the tale of the five messengers. A squadron of Cossacks was trying to fight its way out of a deep valley, where they were being hemmed in by German tank detachments. Their commander had to send for reinforcements and chose five dispatch riders for the job, hoping that one, at least, would get through. All were given sealed envelopes with an identical message, and they made for the only gap in the German ring which was guarded by cross-fire from German machine-guns. In full view of the Germans they climbed the hillside. In a moment not less than ten machine-guns were trained upon the horsemen. The five Cossacks fell from the saddle, seeming to trail lifeless from the stirrup as their horses dragged the men along the snow-covered ground. As soon as the horses disappeared over the brow of the hill the seemingly helpless riders sprang into the saddle again. All five reached headquarters.

SOVIET CAVALRY are seen galloping into action on the Eastern Front in this photograph radioed direct from Moscow to London. Colonel-General Gorodowky, a Soviet cavalry commander, stated recently: "Formidable Cossack groups are gathering on the Don, in Kuban and Terek. The peoples of the North Caucasus and Daghestan, the Turenenians and Tajiks, the Kazakhs, Kalmucks, Bashkiriins, Tartars and other descendents of Jenghiz Khan's troops are forming new cavalry units."
Red Horsemen Eager for the Fight

SOVIET CAVALRY, emerging from their hiding-place, gallop forward to attack the enemy. The Cossacks have a reputation as horsemen second to none, and their furious attacks have time and again demoralized the German infantry.

COSSACKS played a great part in the defence of Moscow, and here some of them are seen trotting along a forest ride near the outskirts of the city. Stalin himself praised them for their splendid work.

The old mother of Marshal Budenny stands at the roadside of her native village, waving to Cossacks of her son's old regiment who have formed themselves into a People's Guard.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright: Keystone
Our Diary of the War

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18, 1942
90th day
Sea.—Admiralty announced the successful passage of important British convoys through Mediterranean. Five enemy planes shot down, four more presumably destroyed. One enemy heavy cruiser torpedoed by submarine; two cruisers and destroyer torpedoed by naval planes.

Russian Front.—Russians claimed capture of Zakhorova, west of Bytynik. Heavy fighting in the Crimea.

Africa.—Widespread patrol activity in Libya. Far East.—Japs launched heavy attack against British line on Bilin River, Burma. Off Sumatra, where Jap forces pushed towards Sunda Straits, many invasion forces were sunk by Allied bombers. More Jap reinforcements landed in Luzon.

Home.—A Dorchester 217 shot down off East Coast. Single raider bombed E. Anglian coast.

General.—Gen. Chiang Kai-shek had a long conversation with Mr. Gandhi in Calcutta.

THURSDAY, FEB. 19
91st day
Sea.—Two E-boats destroyed during night attack on a British convoy. One enemy bomber destroyed and four others damaged.

Russian Front.—Capture of Kresty, 80 miles N.W. of Smolensk, announced by Russians.

Far East.—Japanese who had crossed the Bilin River driven back. Chunks announced new overland route in use to replace Burma Road. Rangoon stated to be closed as a part of entry and its approaches mined. Allied reinforcements reported to have reached Java. U.S. fighters shot down 6 Jap planes over Surabaya. Fighter fighting in Pukbriang area, Sumatra.


General.—Riom trial opened.

FRIDAY, FEB. 20
92nd day
Air.—Fighter Command set an E-boat on fire during offensive patrols over Channel and N. France.

Russian Front.—Fighting in all sectors reached great intensity.

Far East.—Islands of Bali and Timor attacked by Japs. Invasion fleet off Bali heavily attacked by Allied bombers. Burma battle continued along Bilin River.

SATURDAY, FEB. 21
93rd day
Russian Front.—Heaviest fighting was around Leiningrad. Kiev, Orel, Kurak, Kharkov, and the Crimea.

Africa.—In Libya, a patrol of the Royals penetrated as far as Mius, raiding Rommel's base. Enemy vehicles were destroyed and prisoners captured.

Far East.—Allied H.Q. announced that forces inflicted on Jap invasion fleet on Feb. 19-20 off Bali were at least 1 cruiser sunk and five damaged; 2 destroyers sunk; 1 transport sunk and six damaged. In Burma, Japs advanced toward Pegu.

SUNDAY, FEB. 22
94th day
Air.—Bomber Command made night attack on ports and other targets in N.W. Germany. Docks at Ostend also bombarded.

Russian Front.—Fifteen inhabited localities in a southern Front sector reported to be occupied as the result of one day's fighting.

Africa.—Nazi forces moving up in Libya.

Far East.—In Burma, a battle raged between the Sittang and Bilin Rivers. Enemy drive from Palembang towards the Sungai Berit, in Sumatra, held up by Dutch forces.

Home.—Changes in six Ministries were announced from Downing St.

MONDAY, FEB. 23
95th day
Russian Front.—Show communiqué reported capture by Red Army of Dongorganj, 45 miles east of Smolensk.

Far East.—Lighth houses destroyed.

Japanese invasion fleet off Bali driven off with heavy loss. Japanese force on Bali fighting for hold part of the island.

Australia.—Part of the Northern Territory placed under military control.

General.—President Roosevelt broadcast from Washington.

One Crime Only Can Rob Us of Victory

HOW do matters stand now? Taking it all in all, are our chances of survival better or are they worse than in Aug. 1941? How is it with the British Empire or Commonwealth of Nations? Are we up or down?

The first and greatest of events is that the United States is now unitedly and wholeheartedly in the war with us... When I survey and compute the power of the United States and its vast resources and feel that they are now in it with us, with the British Commonwealth of Nations all together, however long it lasts, till death or victory, I cannot believe there is any other fact in the whole world which can compare with that. That is what I have dreamed of, aimed at and worked for, and now it has come to pass.

BUT there is another fact, in some ways more immediately effective. The Russian armies have not been defeated, they have not been torn to pieces. The Russian people have not been conquered or destroyed. Leningrad and Moscow have not been taken. The Russian armies are in the field. They are not holding the line of the Urals or the line of the Volga. They are advancing victoriously, driving the foul invader from that native soil they have guarded so bravely and love so dearly. More than that: for the first time they have broken the Hitler legend. Instead of the easy victories, and the westward drive which he and his hordes had gathered in the west, he has found in Russia so far only disaster, failure, the shame of unspeakable crimes, the slaughter or loss of vast numbers of German soldiers, and the icy wind that blows across the Russian snow.

HERE, then, are two tremendous fundamental facts which will in the end dominate the world situation and make victory possible in a form never possible before. But there is another heavy and terrible side to the account, and this must be faced as we balance against these immense gains. Japan has plunged into the war and is ravaging, savaging its victim, the island which is the most densely populated lands of the Far East... Tonight the Japanese are triumphant. They shout their vandals boasts from mountain tops. But the verdict which history will pronounce upon the authors of Japanese aggression, after the events of 1941 and 1942, has already been inscribed upon its somber pages.

No one must underrate any more the gravity and insidiousness of the Japs. Whether in the air or upon the sea or man on land they have already proved themselves to be formidable, determined enemies. But I am sorry to say, barbarous antagonists. This proves a hundred times over that there never was the slightest chance even if Jap had been much better prepared in many ways than we were, of our standing up to them alone while we had Nazi Germany at our throat and Fascist Italy at our belly. It proves something else. And this should be a comfort and reassurance. We can now measure the wonderful strength of the Chinese people who under Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek have single-handed fought this hideous war for four and a half years and let him baffled and dismayed...

YOU know I have never prophesied to you a promised smooth and easy way out, and now all I have to offer is hard adverse war for many months ahead. I must warn you, as I warned the House of Commons in January, they gave me their generous vote of confidence a fortnight ago, that many misfortunes, reverse and suffering losses which the world cannot know will beset us over the months, and the gnawing anxieties lie before us. To our British folks these may seem even harder to bear when they are at a great distance than when the savage Hun was shattering our cities and we all felt in the midst of the battle. But the same qualities which brought us through the awful jeopardy of the summer of 1940 and its long autumn and winter bombardment from the air, will bring us through this other ordeal, though it may be more costly and will last longer. One fault, one crime, and one crime only, can rob the united nation and the British people, upon whom this grand alliance came into being, of the victory upon which their lives and honour depend. A worsening in our preparation and therefore in our unity— that is the mortal crime. Whoever is guilty of that crime or of bringing it about in others, of him let it be said that he were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea.

Mr. CURTIS HILL, in his "Singapore has fallen" broadcast, Sunday, Feb. 15, 1942.

FLYING FORTRESSES under construction in one of the Boeing Aircraft Company Plants at Seattle, Washington. New models of the famous four-engine bomber incorporate several advancements over previous types.

Photo, Central Press.
GERMAN COASTAL GUNS on the French shores still bombard the Dover area and Channel convoys from time to time. Above, one of these heavy German guns has just fired and the shell is hurtling across the Dover Straits. Top left, men of the Todt Organization, formed by the late Dr. Fritz Todt, are seen indulging in a little recreation after working on a battery emplacement on the French coast. These German guns are the object of constant attention by the R.A.F. during their offensive sweeps over the Channel.
Sansom's Rough-Riders Have Powerful Mounts

The 5th Canadian (Armoured) Division, known as Sansom's Rough-Riders after their Divisional Commander, Maj.-Gen. E. W. Sansom, arrived in Britain on Nov. 21, 1941. Canadian tank men are seen above during exercises in England using American "General Lee" tanks. It has been disclosed that some of Canada's own new heavy tanks, a type known as the "Ram," have already reached Britain.

The former Fort Garry Horse, a crack Canadian cavalry regiment, is now a unit of the Canadian Armoured Division, and is training with American "General Lee" 30-ton cruiser tanks like that on the left. Note the American-type crash helmets.

Photos, Central Press
TREADS FOR TANKS being assembled in a U.S. factory. These treads are put on to the rollers of the tank in two sections. First of all, the tank is hoisted by crane and lowered into the bottom section; then the upper part is lowered from a crane and pulled over the rollers as shown in the photograph. Finally the two parts are bolted together by hand.

Photo, Central Press
Above Singapore Floated the Flag of Japan

"Never has Britain lost so much face in the Orient. A fortress deemed impregnable has been reduced in nine weeks."  
"So read the New York Times on the murder of Singapore's fall. "Not since the collapse of France has the anti-aggressor cause suffered so catastrophic a blow."

SHORT of food, water, petrol and ammunition, his troops surrounded in Singapore city and the centre of the island, General Percival realized that it was impossible to carry on the defence any longer. This he indicated in a message to General Wavell. The last British communi- 
cation was issued on Saturday, Feb. 14.

Today (it read) the enemy has maintained his pressure, supporting his attacks with a number of high-level bombing raids by large formations of aircraft, continual shelling by his artillery, and low dive-bombing attacks. His artillery have also shelled the town intermittently throughout the night and this morning. Our troops, British, Australian, Indian and Malay, are displaying every attempt to advance further towards the heart of Singapore town. In the town itself the civil defence services are making every effort to deal with the damage and civil casualties caused by hostile shelling and bombing.

On the afternoon of the next day, Feb. 15, a peace mission, headed by Major C. H. D. Wild, attached to the British General Staff, with four British officers, was dispatched to the Japanese Army headquarters with a white flag of truce. They were handed the Japanese peace terms and left the head- 
quarters at 4:15 p.m., after arranging for a meeting between the leaders of the two armies.

Later on Sunday evening the meeting was held in the Ford motor plant at the foot of Bukit Timah hill, in the centre of the island. Accompanying Lt. Gen. Percival were Brig.-Gen. K. S. Torrance, Major Wild, and Brig.-Gen. T. A. Newbigin. They were met by Lt.-Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Expeditionary Force in Malaya. The meeting lasted 49 minutes. General Yamashita demanded unconditional sur-
render. According to the Japanese News Agency the following conversation ensued:

Lt.-Gen. Yamashita: I want your replies to be brief and to the point. I will only accept an unconditional surrender.

Lt.-Gen. Percival: Yes.

Have any Japanese soldiers been captured?—
No, not a single one.

What about the Japanese residents?—All the Japanese residents interned by the British authorities have been sent to India. Their lives are fully protected by the Indian Government.

I want to hear whether you want to surrender or not. If you want to surrender I insist on its being unconditional. What is your answer, yes or no? Will you give me until tomorrow morning?

Tomorrow? I cannot wait, and the Japanese forces will have to attack tonight. How about waiting until 11.30 p.m. Tokyo time?

If that is to be the case, the Japanese forces will have to resume attacks until then. Will you say yes or no? (Lt.-Gen. Percival made no reply.)

I want to hear a decisive answer, and I insist on an unconditional surrender. What do you say?—Yes.

All right, then, the order to cease fire must be issued at exactly 10.00 p.m. I will immediately send 1,000 Japanese troops into the city area to maintain peace and order. You agree to that?—
Yes.

If you violate these terms the Japanese troops will lose no time in launching a general and final offensive against Singapore city.

THEY WERE IN MALAYA

British and Imperial forces which took part in the Malayan campaign and the defence of Singapore.

(i) 18th British Division, comprising 53rd, 54th and 55th Inf. Bdes., including battalions of:
- R. Northumberland Fusiliers
- R. Norfolk Regt.
- Shropshire Regt.
- Cambridgeshire Regt.
- 22nd and 27th A.I.F. Bdes.
- (iii) 9th and 11th Indian Divisions, including battalions of:
- East Surrey Regt.
- London Irish Regt.
- Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders
- Punjab Regt.
- Jat Regt.
- Rajputana Rifles
- Royal Gurkha Rifles
- 1st and 2nd Malay Inf. Bdes., containing battalions of:
- Loyals
- Gordon Highlanders
- Indian and Malayan Rns.

Besides the artillery regiments included in the above field formations, a number of Coast Artillery Units, A.A. Regts., A.T.K. Regts. and Searchlight Units; while in addition to the Engineer Units included in the above there were a number of Fortress Companies, R.F. and Army Troops Companies. Also R.A.M.C., R.A.S.C., R.A.O.C., etc. Indian Medical Services, Army Nurses and local volunteer battalions.

Lt.-Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, C-in-C. of the Japanese expeditionary force in Malaya, who dictated the terms for the surrender of Singapore.

General Yamashita also accepted full responsibility for the lives of the British and Australian troops, as well as the British women and children remaining in Singapore. "Rely upon Japanese Bushido," he de- 
clared. (Bushido is the ancient Japanese code of chivalry.)

The unconditional surrender dated from 7 p.m. Singapore time (12.30 p.m. British time), and three hours later fighting ceased along the entire Singapore front. Following the capitulation the civilian population was reported to be quiet but bewildered. The civil defence and fire services were carrying on, and the telephone girls were still at their posts, "Ragged Tommies and Anzacs," cabled the Japanese Domei Agency war correspondent in Singapore, "stumbling with fatigue after being driven before the relentless Japanese juggernaut, are enjoying their first real rest in a month and a half."

At 8 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 16 (1.30 a.m. B.S.T.), the Japanese army, tanks in the van marched into Singapore. The flag of the Rising Sun was hoisted over the Government buildings, and guards were stationed in the suburbs, and are completing the work of clearing up seditionist elements. Meanwhile the Japanese naval forces completed the occupation of all the defence positions, including those of the Seletar naval base, the Keppel harbour, and Fort Changi. A joint conference a British officer gave a detailed explanation regarding the port facilities, after which a decision was reached regarding the disposal of British warships remaining in Singapore ports."

How many men actually surrendered was not clear, but the number was very large, since no evacuation of the fighting services had been contemplated. The first Japanese claim comprised 60,000 men—campaigning forces, fortress guards, and volunteers, made up of 15,000 of the British metropolitan forces, 13,000 Australians, and the remainder Indians. It was also stated that there were still a million inhabitants left in Singapore.

Then on Feb. 21 Berlin radio, quoting Tokyo reports, stated that the number of prisoners at Singapore was now given as 73,000. Among them were 8,000 wounded, under medical care. It was also claimed that 300 guns, 2,000 machine-guns, 200 tanks and armoured cars, one steamer of 10,000 tons and three 3,000-ton tankers were also captured.

SINGAPORE raid damage in Raffles Square, named after Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore. A Japanese bomb hit the building in the corner strewing wreckage all over the square, and these Malayan workers have been cleaning up. A concrete pill-box is marked with an arrow on the left.
In Corregidor MacArthur Still Held Out

Top, rows of shells in their racks in the underground ammunition depots ready to feed the big guns of Corregidor Island.

Above, American soldiers running to their action stations along a naturally camouflaged pathway on the fortress island of Corregidor.

Circle, a gunnery officer receiving firing data from the observation posts at a gun site on Corregidor Island.

Photos, Associated Press from Paramount News

Above, American gunners on Corregidor working the range-finder. The heavy guns of the island fortress guard the entrance to Manila Bay.

Left, a giant howitzer forming part of the powerful Corregidor defences. The island has proved a valuable banking bastion for MacArthur's gallant forces.
I Was There!... Lye Witness... Stories of the War

Singapore Was Burning as I Packed My Bag

This dramatic picture of Singapore in the last days before its fall was written on the eve of his departure on Feb. 11 by C. Yates McDaniel of the Associated Press, the last foreign correspondent to leave the island.

The sky over Singapore is black with the smoke of a dozen huge fires today, as I write my last message from this once beautiful, prosperous and peaceful city.

The roar and crash of cannonade and bursting bombs, which is shaking my typewriter, and my hands which are wet with the perspiration of fright, tell me without need of an official communiqué that the war which started nine weeks ago, 400 miles away, is today in the outskirts of this shaken bastion of Empire. I am sure there is a battle raging around Japanese positions and unloading their bomb burden with a resounding crash.

It makes me ashamed of myself sitting here with my heart beating faster than their old motors when I think what chance those lads have of getting back in their antiquated machines. If ever brave men earned undying glory, those R.A.F. pilots have this tragic morning.

There are many other brave men in Singapore today. Not far away are A.A. batteries in open spaces—they must be to have a clear field of fire. Please overlook the breach in continuity, but a packet of bombs just landed so close I had to duck behind a wall which I hoped would, and did, screen the blast. But those gun crews are keeping on fighting; their guns peeping the smoke-limited ceiling every time Jap aeroplanes come near, and that is almost constantly.

The "All Clear" has just sounded—what a joke, for from my window I can see three Japanese aeroplanes hedge-hopping not a mile away.

A few minutes ago I heard a tragic two-way telephone conversation. Eric Davis, director of the Malayian Broadcasting Corporation, urged the Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas, to give permission to destroy an oil-burning broadcasting station. The Governor demurred, saying the situation was not too bad. Davis instructed the station to keep on the air but to stand by for urgent orders.

We tuned in to the wavelength of the station in question. In the middle of a broad cast in Malay urging the people of Singapore to stand firm the station went dead.

My colleagues left last night, and the military spokesman gave his daily talk on the situation to an audience of three—the representatives of two local newspapers and myself. Henry Steel (of Richmond, Surrey), an Army Relations Officer who has seen us through the bad situation from the Thai border to Singapore, has just told me I have 10 minutes to pack up and leave, so I am embarking with about a 20-30 chance of getting clear.

Grim Was Our Flight From the Doomed City

The majority of the British women and children were evacuated from Singapore before the final Japanese assault. From the Daily Mail correspondent, Cedric Salter, came this impression of the scene on one of the liners engaged in the work of rescue.

Women and children are sleeping on the decks in hammocks slung from all conceivable supports, and on the floors of packed cabins and saloons aboard this great North Atlantic liner, now a rescue ship. The liner landed Indian reinforcements at Singapore before picking up 900 British women and 500 children to carry them to safety.

Twice we have been attacked. Once a bomb fell only 30 yards away, blotting out one of the flags helping to nose us out of the English Channel. All four of the lug lines were shot, and a dozen small holes were drilled in our own side. But after three days we were out of range of enemy bombers.

There is still need for unceasing vigilance, however, against submarines or surface raiders. In my two-hour turns on watch, shared with the mere handful of men on board, I have seen nothing but the endless waste of blue water, occasionally scud across our path, lashing us at our look-out posts with warm rain, which a minute later rises in steam from our clothes as the scorching sun reappears.

The drama of life goes on aboard ship. There have already been four births. Most of the women have left homes and husbands behind in besieged Singapore, but even so the ship has something of the holiday air it used to have on its peacetime fashionable summer cruises.

Only for the hushed quarter of an hour when the news is broadcast from London is there any tension. Gaiety then dies out of faces as the grim story is told of those left behind.

Beach pyjamas or shorts are the mode. But the wearers must wait on themselves, carrying heavy trays from the kitchens to release the skeleton staff of overworked stewards for the actual cooking. Long lines

A Vickers Vildebeeste torpedo-bomber flying over H.M.S. Coventry in the Solent. How brave pilots of the R.A.F. were sent up against the Japanese over Malaya in these slow and obsolete biplanes is told in the dramatic story above.

Photo, Associated Press
of drying laundry continually flutter in the hot tropical wind.

The greatest hardship is the black-out. It means that every porch and door must be sealed at night against showing a light. In the airless temperatures of the hundreds the heat becomes intolerable. The result is that now, after nearly a week, some of the children are pale and fretful. Their mothers even are showing signs of strain.

I am writing this in my quarters—a mattress under the long muzzle of a gun mounted aft—as Lights Out is being sounded. The faintly phosphorescent wake is stretching away towards the east as the ship bears its cargo from danger towards friendlier land.

**My Farewell Visit to the Great Naval Base**

The special correspondent of The Times, who paid a visit to the great Singapore base shortly after it had been evacuated by the Navy, described this “most moving experience” in the following dispatch.

**HERE** was one of the great naval bases of the world. It was more than a base: it was a self-contained city, covering several square miles. It had been nearly 20 years a-building. Millions of tons of earth had been moved, one whole river had been diverted. It had cost perhaps £60,000,000.

Here were a floating dock, towed 8,000 miles from England, that could accommodate a 45,000-ton battleship; a smaller floating dock for the repair of destroyers and submarines; a graving dock able to accommodate with a few feet to spare the Queen Mary or the Queen Elizabeth. Here was a giant 500-ton crane able to lift an entire gun-turret out of a battleship. Here were workshops for the repair and maintenance of machinery and guns; an Admiralty transmitting station, one of the most powerful in the world; wharves for revictualling and refuelling ships; huge underground oil and armament depots; shore accommodation for the crews of ships; whole residential areas of small villas, such as might be found in any London suburb; and 17 football fields.

**Brain Centre of the Far East**

Here was a large concrete administration building which had been the brain centre and the nerve centre of British Far Eastern strategy. Here were barracks that housed a labour force of 12,000 Asians. Just off the shore of the base were 22 square miles of deep sea anchorage which could accommodate with ease a combined British and American naval force. Next door were the great airfield and the R.A.F., establishment of Seletar, an air base complementary to the naval base—huge hangars, repair shops, administrative buildings, houses for personnel, runways from the sea for seaplanes, and great oil tanks.

But the Japanese advance down the mainland had obliged the Navy to evacuate. A few Indian sentries were on duty at the gate. Hardly anyone was to be seen where formerly there had been scenes of such tremendous activity. The Japanese were lobbing mortar shells into the base from across the Strait in a desultory fashion. An occasional forsy, going down to bring away supplies, sped to the warehouses. On the waterfront British troops were in position, seeking what protection they could from the mortar shells.

We crept along, keeping behind buildings as far as possible. Even so the Japanese must have spotted us as we crossed one rather exposed stretch, for one mortar shell landed with a resounding crack only 50 yards in our rear.

The great floating dock had been sunk just off the shore. Its upper works rose above the still water of the Strait. The great crane still stood, one of its girders scarred by a shell. Shells had flown through the roofs of the boiler shop, the tight machine shop, and the foundry. One or two had struck the administration building, from which everything had been removed.

The room of the Commander-in-Chief, the scene of so many vital conferences in the past—indeed, it was here, perhaps, that was taken the fateful decision to send the Prince of Wales and the Repulse on their last voyage—was empty save for a large Admiralty chart of the world on the wall and some odd books of reference. Two dartboards and some billiard tables and the remains of a hastily eaten meal were all that remained in one of the petty officers’ messes. One of the oil tanks was on fire. Flames were leaping up and gusty clouds of black smoke were blowing over the Straits of Johore. Two or three Japanese reconnaissance aeroplanes were wheeling round in clouds like kites. The purr of their engines, now swelling, now dying away, went on all the afternoon.

Such were the last days of the great Singapore naval base. Like the Maginot Line it never came fully into action at all. That was its supreme tragedy. Two months before it had been the greatest Allied naval base in one half of the globe. It was now one military sector out of many such sectors in the defence of an island. It had been tucked away at the back of the island as if an attack on the base from the mainland was a possibility that had never occurred to its designers. Indeed it had built on the premise that our Navy and Air Force would never permit an enemy to come within 100 miles of Singapore. But Singapore’s back door had become its front door. One machine-gun firing across the Strait was worth all the 500-ton cranes in the world.
Editor's Postscript

There's usually more than one way to any one place, and I have derived additional interest from watching how certain religious leaders (chiefly bishops) and certain able non-religious publicists (chiefly socialists) by different paths of reasoning have arrived at the same happy meeting place, where the banner under which both sides join hands bears the words: 'Spare the German people.' I can understand the bishops and not the super-humanitarians of the extreme left. But both are elements of some danger to the future of the world in that now farther-off event to which I sincerely hope the happy situation of the last war are to be revenged upon the victors. Even among the socialist republicans the smouldering hatred of the French and British, which was to be expected after so humiliating a defeat, was beginning to grow into redness long before Hitler came to fan it into flame. And among the anti-Nazi Germans are many whose chief difference from Hitler is political. Their aims were the same, their methods different.

Had Hitler never arisen another German-made war would have had to be fought, but not perhaps for another generation, which would have suited many of us much better, but in the long run would not have been much better for humanity at large. I assert that no atrocity of this War is a new thing to German (not just Nazi) mentality. Every expression of hate is the same as in the last war—only more so. The difference is not in kind, but in degree. Just reflect on that and see if you don't agree with me. I haven't the space to illustrate my contention in detail just now, but you can take it that had the Kaiser possessed the means of frightfulness which Hitler commands it would have been used in equal measure. Kaiserism was mild simply because it had no means to do ill deeds done. The leopard's spots remain even if you whitewash him. A shower of rain will wash them off. There is no change of skin or heart in the German of today, and once more I am glad that I have never approved the early injunction of our Ministries of Propaganda which urged British editors to distinguish between the German people and the Nazis. The good Germans are at present in a helpless, negligible minority.

Having occasion to refer to one of Kipling's books last night I was interested to notice that the set to which it belonged (published round about 1900) bears a fly-leaf the sign of the swastika with Kipling's autograph enclosed within a circle. On the front of the binding the swastika is also used in association with an elephant's head. And, as though to be right either way, the hooked cross in one of the devices is given in reverse to the other. It occurred to me that a day may come in a very distant future when any of Kipling's books bearing the swastika that may still survive may suggest that they were the work of a Nazi author! For I am sure that this ancient good luck symbol which has been used for thousands of years in every part of the world by peoples in all stages of culture will become peculiarly Germanic: the symbol of Germany's great bid for world-dominion, losing entirely its old Sanskrit significance of 'Well-being, or good luck.'

Much nonsense has been written about its evil meaning when the arms of the cross are turned upwards or downwards (I don't know which), but to Kipling it was evidently acceptable either way. And I venture the opinion that it has always been used indiscriminately in this respect, just as the Nazis use it either as filling a conventional square or tilted diamond-wise. I am afraid I was one of the many who ten or twelve years ago contemned the swastika as a childish primitive badge for a great national European movement to adopt, or I would not have chosen it as a feature of the design for the binding cases of my Manners and Customs of Mankind, its ancient symbolism being the only reason for its use.

Then there is to be little doubt about its Aryan origin, which first commended it to Hitler, but the world knows the sort of 'well-being' it now stands for, and when the Nazis have shot their last bolt its evil meaning will have been made clear to all the world: the swastika as a bringer of good luck will no longer influence even the most primitive of savages.

One of my readers, at present on military service, is good enough to question my reference to the Athenia as an American ship, for which many thanks. It reminds me that it was a Clyde-built vessel of the Donaldson-Atlantic Line, and I must attribute any lapse of memory to the fact that the Athenia was carrying the new North Atlantic Express, comprising passengers who were all U.S. citizens returning to America, the vessel having been chartered for that purpose; a fact well known to the Nazis, I'm afraid. On that particular voyage it should have had the immunity from sea attack to which any American vessel at that time was entitled. Readers will remember that it was the Admiralty's decision that had it been sunk by instructions of Winston Churchill 'in order to create a situation which might have induced the U.S. Government to demand reparation, and so produce an incident between Britain and U.S.A. There actually were many evil-minded persons in America at that time, and later, ready to use the Athenia case to foster ill feeling. The crime attracted world-wide attention because it was the very first instance of a German ship being sunk at sea, and all the facts and illustrations were fully given in the first two numbers of War Illustrated.

At no time more than today do we stand in need of an occasional laugh. I am as eager as anyone to be taken out of my gloomy self and always ready for a laughmaking wise-crack. You will not believe me when I say that I was found by my wife in a state of helpless hilarity on my floor tonight. But the cause thereof could be traced by any alchemist to a paragraph in an evening paper I was clutching, wherein it was stated that a comedian, whom I know only by name, is starring in a London show while he is sending out a show of his own called 'You Lucky People.' The paper goes on to say: 'Writing the material for his star, Vic Wise, Tommy Trinder worked out a stunt, whereby Trinder, the boss, will talk on a radio set to Vic. 'Don't you realize that I can turn you off,' returns Vic—do.ing so.' Now ain' that just' too funny? We ought to be very grateful for those highly-paid stars who can think up such side-splitting quips . . . we lucky people!

Before any of my readers spend tuppence-ha'penny to correct me I must amplify what I wrote about Corregidor, as I observe, re-reading the paragraph, that in seeking after brevity I may have not quite done justice to the subject. While it is correct to state that, in languages derived from the Latin, the sound of g, when followed by e or i, is soft like j, in Spanish these pronunciations are quite easily represented by our j sound as it can in French or Italian. The true sound is something like a combination of the guttural ch (as in Scotch loch) and the g as in soft g in Corregidor is better represented for the strictly Spanish pronunciation as Cor-ech-edor, the ech being made noticeably guttural. But the 'egy' sound has no sort of warranty.


S.S.