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Friday, February 13, 1942

Where is the Navy?

Big question in the minds of millions of Americans has been: "Where is the Navy?" That question was partially answered on January 24, 25 and 26, when the Navy Department announced that a group of destroyers from Admiral Hart's Asiatic Fleet had pounced upon a convoyed fleet of Japanese transports in the East Indies and destroyed numerous vessels and damaged others.

The actual disposition of the main fleet is one of the most closely held naval secrets. Those amateur strategists who urge that it should boldly sail into Japanese-dominated waters and come to grips with the enemy's main fleet in a gigantic action, are given no support by men who understand naval warfare. The advantages possessed by the Japanese fleet in the Far East are clear. She has major bases less than a thousand miles from the Philippines. Her ships can be given constant air support. Our nearest important base, Pearl Harbor, is thousands of miles away, far beyond the effective range of even the largest airplanes. We would, in short, go into battle with all the odds against us, and risk the loss of a great fleet which is still our first line of continental defense.

It may be that Admiral Hart is using his forces for what might be termed guerrilla naval warfare. Small units can strike quickly, inflict damage on the enemy, and get away. They can constantly harry the Japanese, and make the enemy convoy problem one of ever-growing difficulty. Japanese land victories in the Far East have overshadowed the fact that we and our Allies are destroying tremendous amounts of Japanese shipping. That, in the long pull, will be exceedingly important. According to all authorities, Japanese ship-replacement capacity is exceedingly limited, now that she has been cut off from this country's scrap-iron and other resources. Every ship that goes down represents a serious loss.

It is clear what Japanese strategy is now. First, she must have oil—that is the reason for invasion of the East Indies. But the Dutch say they have destroyed all wells in Jap-occupied areas so thoroughly that many months of labor will be required to return them to production.

Second, she must completely conquer the Philippines. As long as General Douglas MacArthur's magnificent troops are able to hold positions on the mainland, along with Corregidor fortress, key to Manila Bay, Japan will have to maintain and supply a tremendous army in those islands. MacArthur headquarters have reported

that the Japanese have between 200,000 and three hundred thousand soldiers in the field against him.

Third, she must take Singapore. Whoever possesses that great base dominates the Far East to a tremendous extent. If it should be lost to the Allies, the job of defeating Japan would become immensely harder and longer.

Japan has gone all-out, following the German blitzkrieg technique. According to reports from the front lines, she apparently care little for casualties—MacArthur has said that wave after wave of Japanese troops, many without even complete uniforms, have been sent against his forces, mowed down, only to be followed by more waves. Japanese commanders apparently feel that they must win their objectives swiftly, if they are to win at all.

The next month or two may tell the story. If Japan takes Singapore, the Dutch Indies and the Philippines, there can be little doubt but what years must pass before sufficient Allied power can be turned loose to unseat her. If Singapore is held, and Allied air and naval units are able to inflict increasingly heavy blows on the enemy, the Japanese drive could lose momentum very suddenly. Today, Japan is the strongest force in the Pacific. The hope is that the balance of power will be reversed before she is able to consolidate her gains and stabilize the positions she has seized and is attempting to seize.

Not Too Hot Not Too Cold



By JOHN EMBERT

Oil in War Time

The oil industry was prepared for war long before that fatal December 7, 1941. Today it is devoting its full energies and resources to the job of meeting the combined military and civilian needs of the country. According to a publication of an Oil Company, "The fortunate location of the nation's producing areas, in California and the Gulf Coast, in Mid-Continental states and the Caribbean, makes possible the uninterrupted flow of petroleum products wherever needed—whether in the Pacific or on the West Coast, in the Middle West or the Southwest, on the Atlantic Seaboard or ocean, to our Allies in Europe or to the friendly nations to the south."

Oil must perform many a task in war-time. Most obvious is that of keeping lubricants, engine fuels and furnace oils flowing out to the four corners of the country. In addition, the industry has been called upon to increase its present production of 100 octane gasoline three times, to greatly increase the production of toluene, which is a basic material in the manufacture of TNT and to produce the principal raw materials, for the production of the great quantities of synthetic rubber now planned. The industry is confident of its ability to meet the demand.

It is possible that, due to transfer of oil tankers to our Allies and the destruction of other tankers by enemy action, there may be temporary shortages of oil products in some areas, which will make equitable rationing necessary. But the industry's production and refining capacity is the greatest in the world by a vast margin. It is indispensable to assure final victory for the United Nations.

Unified Allied Leadership

America, Britain, Russia and China are the primary components of a great alliance—whether it be so called or not. They are waging war, with fine support from Holland against a combination of three powers whose ability to coordinate their efforts has been proved time and time again. We shall find this war vastly harder to win, we and our Allies, if we do not dispose our forces and resources according to a common plan, agreed upon and modified from time to time by the leaders.

Silence Has its Uses

Called upon for a speech, Ambassador Steinhart, now in transit between his former mission to Moscow and his new one to Ankara, delivered himself of one of the pithiest sentiments on record—"These are days when people should keep their mouths shut"—and forthwith sat down. It is an example which one could wish, as one surveys the public prines, might be more widely imitated. It would have helped if Senator Tom Connally had experienced a similar restraining impulse before dropping his unintended bombshell into the Rio conference. The chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee was, of course, anxiously only to help; but it didn't work out that way. When Secretary Knox recently shook the whole Pacific perimeter with his observations on Hitler as the No. 1 enemy, it was clear that his heart was in the right place, but somewhat more than doubtful as to whether his mouth was.

Home Economics in War Time

"Home economics" used to be a course that a few women took in high school or college. Today, with half of our national income about to be devoted to the needs of war, home economics must play a role in the life of every family in the land.

Home economics simply means scientific planning for the household. It means making each dollar do its full duty in purchasing food, clothing, household effects or anything else. Today, in thousands of homes, it is the housewife's most difficult problem. Fortunately, she has one excellent ally to help solve that problem—the retail stores of this country.

The chain stores have been particularly active in work to advise and aid the consumer. Thousands of other stores have also cooperated. The result is that the retail store has become something more than a place where you shop for what you need. It is also the place where trained, informed men will aid you in making necessary readjustments in your living.

The stores are pledged to furnish the public with supplies at the lowest possible cost. They are advising consumers on the use of substitutes. They are fighting hoarding, speculation and scarce advertising. They are thus performing services which come straight home to every family in America.

As a consumer, take advantage of what the stores are doing. Help them in the campaign against waste and high prices. That's the way to keep our standard of living as high as possible during the war.

Covington Rites

Held Friday

The funeral of J. Harry Covington, 71, former chief justice of the District of Columbia Supreme Court and former member of the House of Representatives from Maryland, who died Wednesday at his home in Washington, D. C., were held at his late residence Friday. Interment in Easton.

Covington, suffering from a cold, had been ill since Saturday. He was improved Tuesday, but suffered a relapse Wednesday and died at 2:30 p. m.

A native of Talbot county, Maryland, he was one of the District's most widely known attorneys and founded one of Washington's largest law firms.

He was State's Attorney of Talbot county from 1903 to 1909, when he was elected to Congress. He resigned from the House in 1914 when President Wilson appointed him chief justice of the District of Columbia Supreme Court.

He resigned from the bench in 1918 and with Edward B. Burling founded a law firm which now has six senior, ten junior and thirteen associate partners. In 1918, also President Wilson named him a member of the United States Railroad Wage Commission.

While on the bench he taught law at Georgetown University.

He is survived by his widow Mrs. Ethel Covington, and two children, J. Harry Covington 3d, a member of his law firm, and Mrs. Lewis Clark, whose husband is in the diplomatic service in Ottawa.

Priorities Linked To

Crop Control

Priorities on farm machinery is expected to give the Federal Government another means of exercising control over Maryland crops.

The Government for example, wants less wheat planted in Maryland due to the national surplus. To make certain that farmers do not increase their acreage of wheat, the Government, through the exercise of priorities, it is said, will see that wheat harvesting machinery and repair parts for such equipment are placed low on the replacement scale.

On the other hand, greater milk production is desired. Therefore, the high replacement percentage—some 250 per cent—is placed on some dairy machinery, such as automatic milkers. This not only provides for an increase in mechanical milkers but also serves to offset difficulties from labor shortage.

On December 28 last the Office of Production Management, since replaced by the War Production Board issued an order granting eighty-five per cent priority, as of 1940, on materials for new farm machinery.

The 1940 farm machinery production was about two thirds of that of 1941. Therefore, under the priority order, there will be available materials for about sixty-seven per cent of the farm machinery produced in 1941.

The same is said to apply on the 150 per cent priority granted on materials for replacement parts for farm machinery. This, too, was based on the 1940 figure. Thus, it is explained, there will be available this year about the same amount of materials as used in 1941 in the manufacture of replacement parts for farm machinery.

The condition of farm machinery in Maryland will have a great deal to do with agricultural war production in the State, according to Ray W. Carpenter, chairman of the Farm Machinery Repair Committee, of the State War Board, of the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. Carpenter in addition to reading the committee, is professor of agricultural engineering at the University of Maryland, and State drainage engineer.

"Aladdin, Jr." New Comic

In "Puck" Weekly

Boy sand girls will enjoy the mysterious adventures of "Aladdin, Jr.", new comic added to the popular tained a notice regarding the legal Weekly "Puck" distributed regularly with the Baltimore Sunday American. On sale at all newsstands.

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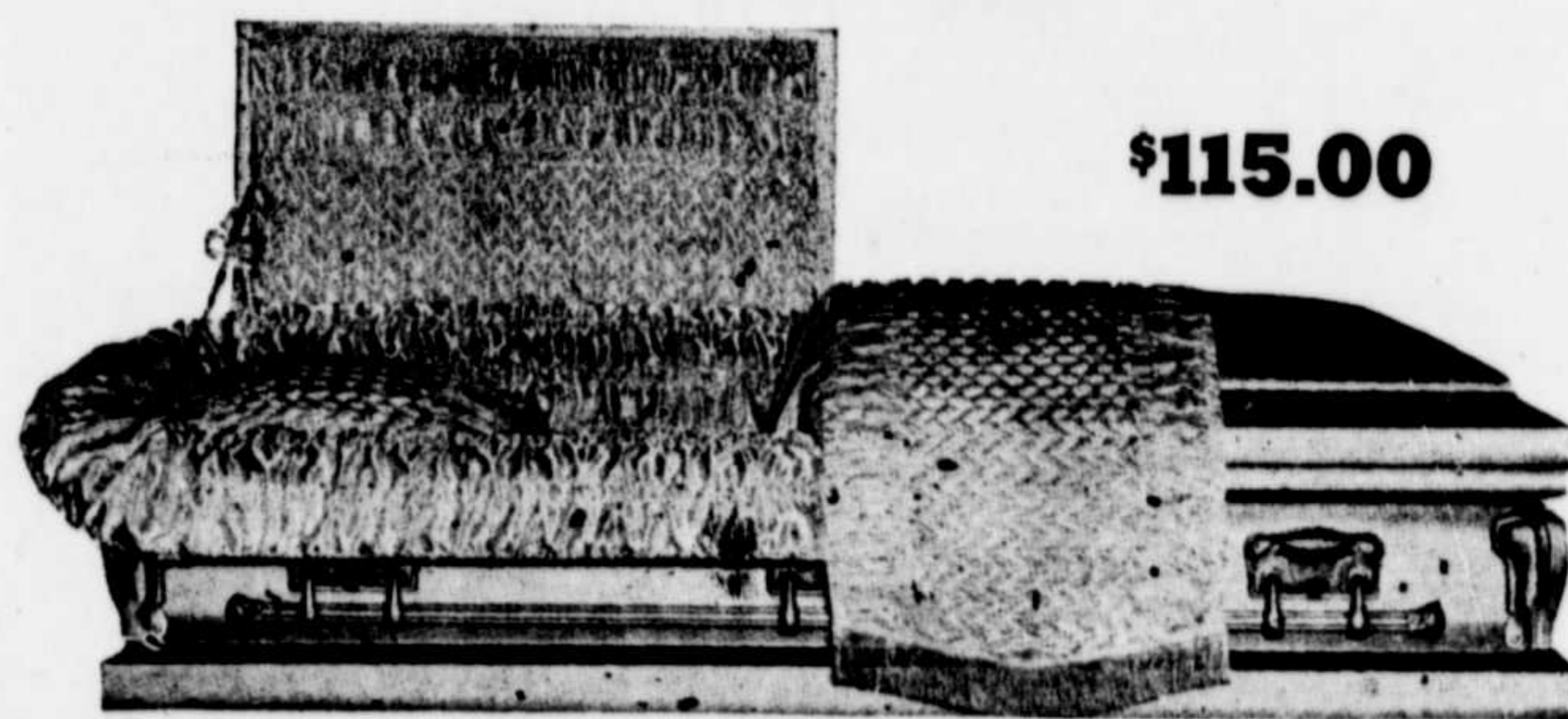
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