

Mystery Planes Fly Over Los Angeles

Stimson, Commenting On Anti-Aircraft Fire, Says It Is Better To Be Alert

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—(AP)—An Army report that as many as 15 planes may have been operated by "enemy agents" over the Los Angeles area, where an air raid alarm early yesterday sent anti-aircraft guns into action, was made public today by Secretary of War Stimson.

Coming a day after Secretary Knox had told reporters that Navy Department information indicated the episode was "a false alarm," the Army report said the unidentified craft might have been commercial planes flown over the area by enemy agents to spread alarm, disclose anti-aircraft gun positions, and test the effectiveness of black-outs.

No bombs were dropped, there were no casualties among American forces, no planes were shot down, and no American Army or Navy planes were in action, Stimson said.

The secretary announced that the report came to him from General George C. Marshall, army chief of staff, and apparently was based on information relayed by West coast Army officials.

The conclusion that the planes might have been obtained from commercial sources, he said, was based on the varying speeds of the planes and the fact that no bombs were dropped.

"As many as 15 planes may have been involved," said the report, "flying at various speeds, from what is officially reported as being 'very slow' to as much as 20 miles per hour, and at an elevation of from 9,000 to 18,000 feet."

Elements of the 37th Coast Artillery Brigade, composed of anti-aircraft forces, fired 1,430 rounds of ammunition between 3:12 and 4:15 a. m., Pacific War Time, during yesterday's alarm, Stimson said.

The secretary said the only comment he wanted to add to the report was that "perhaps it is better to be too alert than not alert enough. A any rate, they were alert there."

In Los Angeles Wendell Willkie, arriving for an address tonight, told interviewers: "Conflicting statements from the heads of our armed forces tend to discount what they may say in the future. It was this same lack of coordination and confusion that brought the disaster at Pearl Harbor."

Willkie applauded the Army's quick response to duty, asserting "whether there were enemy planes or not, it is always wise to be on the side of safety."

Columbus County Schools, Closed By Snow, Re-Open

WHITEVILLE, Feb. 26.—Schools of Whiteville, Fairbluff, Old Dock, and New Hope, which had been suspended because of the heavy snow, resumed operations today after being closed down for one day only.

WEATHER

(Continued from page one) WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—(AP)—Weather Bureau report of temperature and rainfall for the 24 hours ending 8 p. m., in the principal cotton growing areas and elsewhere:

Station	High	Low
Ashville	39	19
Atlanta	39	26
Boston	38	24
Buffalo	27	15
Charlotte	43	26
Chicago	31	25
Cleveland	32	27
Denver	30	22
Detroit	34	24
El Paso	55	30
Jacksonville	62	34
Kansas City	28	23
Little Rock	37	31
New Orleans	51	40
New York	40	24
Norfolk	46	28
Richmond	44	18
Savannah	60	32
Washington	45	32
Wilmington	49	31

SOVIETS CLOSE TRAP ON 96,000 GERMANS

(Continued from Page One) the surrounded forces promising them good treatment if they would surrender.

Army Surrounded
Gen. Brockdorf himself was said to have admitted in an order of the day that the 96,000 men were surrounded, and also that their position was "hopeless."

Admittedly, however, General Pavel Alexievich Kurochin, the man who led the encirclement and is hourly tightening the ring around the German army, is directing one of the most difficult offensives in recent military history.

The weather is extremely bad. There are blinding snows, icy marshes, and high banks in the wooded lake sector, offering every kind of operational problem for the 42-year-old successor to Marshal Klementi Voroshilov.

Besides the weather, Kurochin is fighting crack units of the German army which, knowing they are encircled, are struggling more desperately than ever.

In the final hours before closing the trap, the Russians inflicted a resounding defeat on reserves thrown into the German lines, dispatches said, and elsewhere in this region further tore apart other surviving units of the smashed 16th German army.

The Staraya Russa battle was a final disaster to befall this 16th army since it drove into Russia last year, the Soviet dispatches recounted. They said these German forces suffered heavily throughout the Nazi summer and fall offensive and had to be reinforced repeatedly, losing "tens of thousands" along the way.

Try To Escape
Now the trapped Germans were pictured as trying desperately to break out, but meeting disaster. One of the units meeting such a fate was identified as the 56th regiment of the German Fifth division.

Attempts of German transport planes to get supplies into the trap to sustain the invaders were said to have failed as Russian fliers and anti-aircraft units combined to shoot them down.

In recent fighting the Russians said they had reconquered 147 settlements in the Staraya Russa area. A war correspondent for the communist party newspaper Pravda reported that Russian forces surrounding a large German-occupied town in an undesignated sector, and had offered the Germans an opportunity to surrender. The Germans refused, the writer said, and added that "now our troops are annihilating the enemy."

It was not made clear whether this concerned the Staraya Russa front. It might have been on the southwestern front, where the Russians reported smashing the first Rumanian division killing more than 2,250 and taking 200 prisoners. The Russian accounts said that the Rumanians were placed at the head of a counterattack, with German troops on the flanks and at the rear. This attack was declared to have failed upon running into a heavy Soviet artillery fire.

A Russian unit commanded by one Gordov on the southwestern front was reported to have killed about 3,000 men and officers in ten days of fighting, and to have destroyed ten German tanks, 79 guns of various sizes, and much other material.

Freighter Is Lost Off Carolina Coast
SOUTHPORT, Feb. 26.—The freighter Raritan ran aground during a storm on Frying Pan shoals, about 20 miles from here, early Wednesday morning and, according to reports from boatmen, later broke up and sank.

Twenty-nine officers and men, the full crew of the freighter, were taken off the ship and brought here by the Coast Guard last night. No one was injured but three were treated at Dosier Memorial hospital here for exposure. Members of the crew left this morning by bus for their homes in the north.

COLE AND GUION GET CONTRACTS TO ERECT TANKS

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signals on the shirts and stripes, or braids, on the legs of the pants. After deciding to eliminate the erection of traffic lights at Second and Walnut and Third and Wright streets, council on motion of Councilman Brand awarded the contract to Westinghouse Electric company on the basis of the bid submitted subject to approval on erection of six lights and controls at approximately \$2,400. The city is to buy the equipment and do the installation of the lights, City Manager Wallace said.

Opened in Morning
The bids were opened at the morning session, after which they were turned over to City Engineer J. A. Loughlin and William C. Olsen, of Raleigh, consulting engineer for the city, for study before the afternoon session.

Councilman Edgar L. Yow presided over the special session in the absence of Mayor Hargrove Bellamy. Present for the meeting were Councilmen J. N. Brand, Jr., Robert LeGwin, and Ronald Lane and City Attorney W. B. Campbell.

According to the specifications for division one of the waterworks improvement program, all work on the jobs must be completed within 320 calendar days after work is commenced on the projects.

However, City Engineer Loughlin estimated that they should be finished in considerably less time than specified.

They will be used to maintain a pressure reserve in the city water system to be used should the pumps have to be halted or should an emergency occur.

U. S. WILL EVACUATE ALL SAN DIEGO JAPS

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aliens or American-born, from the state of California has been expressed by such groups as the California county supervisors. Such expressions increased after the recent oil field shelling by a Japanese submarine off the coast in the vicinity of Santa Barbara and this week's anti-aircraft barrage in the Los Angeles area directed at unidentified planes.

Demands for more stringent alien regulations also followed the discovery that among Japanese seized in recent raids upon colonies bordering military establishments were some who identified themselves as reserve officers in the Japanese army and navy.

A self-described Japanese army reservist was among three Japanese seized today in raids in the Stockton area, near an army air corps advanced training base.

Search of another's house disclosed photographs of Japanese planes and water materials and a picture of the arrested Japanese wearing a Japanese army uniform, federal agents said.

Some of the information on which the arrest warrants were based came from records and correspondence of Japanese secret societies seized in a coast-wide roundup last week during which more than 500 aliens, mostly Japanese, were arrested.

Twenty-eight Japanese were arrested today in the San Diego area, bringing to about 150 the number taken in that sector. Agents also arrested two Japanese in the Fresno area and another in San Francisco. The raids were continuing.

Defense Meeting Set Tonight At Acme-Delco

All families in Ransom township have been requested to attend or be represented at a national defense meeting to be held Friday night at 8 o'clock in the auditorium of the Acme-Delco school.

In the interest of defense and production for defense, the leaders of the defense committee will meet at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon in the agricultural building with John J. Barnhart, vice-chairman, to complete listing of farmers in their communities.

Charles Raper, assistant county agent, will explain the agricultural phases of the program.

City Briefs

MEET TUESDAY
A. E. Jones, Chamber of Commerce president, announced Thursday that the organization's new post war planning committee will meet in the chamber offices at 4 o'clock Tuesday afternoon.

ANOTHER PERSON
Berry Williams, ice plant worker, 723 North Fifth street, is not the Berry Williams arrested this week on charges of violating the hotel registration law.

38 ALIENS REGISTER
The enemy registration office in the postoffice building has registered 38 persons of German, Italian and Austrian nationality. L. A. Beck, officer in charge, said Thursday. No Japanese have signed here.

DEFENSE GROUP
A civilian defense for Myrtle Grove School will be organized when residents of the community meet at the Loop Road school at 8 o'clock Friday night.

DIVIDED INTO GROUPS
Members of the Bradley Creek 4-H club were divided into groups and received knitting instructions at a meeting this week, County Home Demonstration Agent Ann Mason said Thursday. The girls plan to knit scarfs for the Red Cross at each meeting.

MINISTERS TO MEET
The Ministerial association of Wilmington and New Hanover county will hold its monthly meeting at the Y. M. C. A., Monday, March 2, at 11 o'clock, it was announced Thursday.

CANTEEN CLASS
Eighteen women attended the organizational meeting of the Red Cross Canteen class in room No. 132 at the customhouse Thursday morning. Miss Anne Mason, home demonstration agent, was instructor of the class which will meet at regular intervals.

TIRE CUT
Paul Allen, Nesbitt Curtis, reported to police about 11 o'clock Thursday that someone had cut a tire from an automobile parked in the parking area at the housing project during Wednesday night.

SPOTLIGHT STOLEN
Two nickel plated spotlights were stolen from a city street roller while it was parked at 11th and Market streets about 11 o'clock Thursday morning, police revealed. The lights were in new condition and were valued at \$8. F. D. Cline, the driver, told police.

SILVER DOLLARS STOLEN
Rolf Harris, of 719 Red Cross street, told police Thursday night that someone had taken 31 silver dollars from a trunk in his room sometime Wednesday. Harris said he did not miss the money until Thursday morning and that the trunk apparently was opened with a key.

TWO MORE JAP SHIPS TORPEDOED BY ALLIES

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point just across the Strait of Sunda—only 15 miles at its narrowest point.

Heavy Air Action
Air action proceeded in an ordered violence from both directions—the enemy beating doggedly at Javanese airdromes and Allied planes ranging out north against the bases seized by the invader.

Telling of two successive days of raids against Palembang, the great and now ruined Dutch oil center in southern Sumatra, the Dutch reported that Allied bombs had added great fires to those still raging there since the defenders first put the torch to \$500,000,000 worth of property.

Even the initial blazes, it was declared, were observed to be still out of control nine days after they had been set.

Enemy raids on Java were thus summed up:
Two airdromes in west Java; Two enemy planes shot down, two Dutch fighter craft lost, no damage mentioned to first field; no damage of consequence reported to the second.

Gasoline Dumps Blaze
Tandjong Park: Two gasoline dumps set aflame by "a great number" of enemy bombers; some enemy planes believed hit by strong anti-aircraft fire.

Soerabaja, the great Dutch naval base in eastern Java: Although the attack was in heavy force, no damage save to a shed and a house; seven civilians killed, 21 wounded; at least two enemy planes shot down, probably two more.

Earlier Japanese claims to extensive damage to an airdrome at Bandoeng, Java, Indies army headquarters, were dismissed semi-officially as "wildly exaggerated; Japanese claims to have destroyed 68 planes in attacks on the airdrome last Friday and Saturday were branded as "fantastic."

Whiteville Cafe Robbed During Tuesday's Snow

WHITEVILLE, Feb. 26.—Farmers cafe here was broken into Tuesday night and five dollars stolen from the cash register.

H. L. Shaw, of the local police department, said entrance to the building was gained through a rear window.

The guilty parties presumably working under cover of a blinding snowstorm to elude the notice of the local police.

VOLUNTEERS ASKED FOR CONTROL ROOM

Commander Jones Issues Call For Persons To Serve On Staff

Call for men and women to volunteer their services to staff the has been set up at the expense of the city and county, was issued Thursday night by Sheriff C. D. Jones, commander of civilian defense activities.

Sheriff Jones asked that persons willing to volunteer their services telephone 3123 or go by the New Hanover defense council in room 412 of the Tide Water building and register.

Under the plans for operating the control room, women will work in three-hour shifts from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock at night while the men will work in six-hour shifts during the night hours.

Women working on Sunday, Sheriff Jones said, will work only one day a week while others will work two three-hour shifts during a week. The men will give their services for a six-hour shift one night each week.

Sheriff Jones said no technical work was involved as the duties would consist of answering telephones.

M'ARTHUR'S ARMY TAKES OFFENSIVE

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the enemy which Tokyo has not disclosed. Presumably the tribesmen of Mindanao mean to harass the Japanese forces there with guerrilla warfare, a type of fighting at which they are adept. Stimson noted that they offered strong resistance to American occupation forty and more years ago.

The assurances that they would battle the Japs to the end were contained in messages to Stimson and to General MacArthur signed by Captain Datu Gumbay Plang, their leader. The latter identified himself as the son of Datu Plang, a friend of Stimson's when he was Governor General of the Philippines some fifteen years ago. The message said:

"Am son of your friend the late Datu Plang of Mindanao and as war leader of the Moros I wish to reiterate to the great American President, through you, my people's pledge of loyalty to the government of the United States. The 20,000 Moros enlisted as Bolomen of the United States Army whom I command will fight to the last and die for America and, their country."

The captain's message to General MacArthur said that a saber which once belonged to the General's father, Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur, was now being used against the Japanese.

The Army communique said that Japanese forces on Mindanao had

been reinforced by a detachment of Japanese Marines. "Desultory fighting," it added, was in progress there.

Guerrilla fighting was also reported from central and northern Luzon where "small bodies of American and Philippine troops" were "continuing to harass the Japanese with continued success."

A 40-ton railroad car, hauling a full load daily, would take 1500 years to transport the concrete in Grand Coulee dam.

Soldier Who Threatened Officer Sent To Prison

FORT DEVENS, Mass., Feb. 26.—(AP)—Pvt. Chester A. McDowell, 24, of Emporia, Va., was dishonorably discharged from the United States Army today and sentenced to five years in prison after court martial convicted him of threatening a superior officer with a knife and refusing to obey orders.

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