南太平洋週報

第五號

三月廿日

國内情勢、今週の特種は東京からの政情通信で愈々戰時特別諸法令が議會を通過以って如何に政府が其政策、財政、軍事等に關し訛判を恐れ憂國忠良の臣民の口を閉じ陛下及其臣民の意思に反して迄も自己政權の保留に汲々たる恰もヒトラムソリニ一派と何等かはりの無い事を曝露した。

此陛下及臣民の意志に反しても自己政權の保留を企つる決意と之に對し國内に高まり來った反軍部意識はつひに奥村情報部長をして貴族院に於て「政府は其各種機關を通じ之が取締りにあたっておる」と云はざるを得ざらしむるに至っておる。

又、聯合國側ラジオ放送對抗策に關しても当局は頭痛鉢巻の體で東京放送局主事頼母木氏の議會に於ける説明によれば海外向け放送員の如き神經衰弱にかゝる者の續出の有樣であると。

以上は目下日本内地に於て如何に具眼達識の人々が國を憂へ軍部、財閥、並びに戰爭を利用して自己の名を成さんとするの徒輩に對する一般民衆の反感が高まって來ておるものであるかを示しておるものである事は識者を待つまでもなかろう。

ビスマルク海覆滅戰と其評論、

中立國軍事專門家の論評は日本統帥部がビスマル

の兵要地点を失ふに至った今回のナチ軍敗戰の深酷さを忘れたるものゝ如く、ディトマル將軍も口シア軍の壓倒的成功より來る今後の敗報にドイツ民心をならすため例の有名なるプロシャの軍人帝王フレデリック大王の「戰略的必要には自國領土の一部を失ふをも覚悟せざる可らず」の語を引用した。其ため口シア軍はまだ國境より程遠きにもかゝはらずドイツ人心は甚だ動揺し

だしてきた。

カサブランカ特電。

北部チュニシアに於ける英軍は其進撃をつじけ、南部に於ける ナチ軍の攻撃は甚大なる損害を受けて挫折した。

ビルマ方面、ニューデリー公表は聯合國空軍のビルマ進駐日本軍に對する活躍を報じラングーン河に於て先週三隻の日本側商船を爆撃沈沒、其節の偵察によれば前空襲に損傷を受けたる五千トン級日本側商船は其後沈沒せる事

を確認した。

銃後見透し。

日本政府がナチドイツ人の欵待に至れりつくせりである事は次の樣なことでも分る、即ち去る三月五日夜の東京商工會議所及主立た重工業者の東京におるナチの頭株を招待するに際し帝國ホテルを用ひシャンペンをぬいた。此夜約三百名の日獨お偉方が集った、ところが同じ三月五日にベルリン放送は東京でナチ連がそんな欵待を受けておる

ク海に於て艦、船、航空機輸送中の陸兵多數を失ひむざ〱とこれらを殺ししかも敵方に何等の打撃を加ふる事を得ず全くの丸損であつた事について皆論じておる。諸評論家の意見、諸評論家の見る所はこの船團の全滅で南太平洋方面日本軍部作戰は根本から覆へさせられ、此注意の精細を欠いた日本統帥部の軍隊移動計画には只あきれるの外はなき事を論じ、又嘗ての

日本側公表即ち「枝葉的南方作戰日本軍の鋭を以てすれば半月もかゝらずして片がつく」云々を想起し、某評論家の如き「日本統帥部の敵側情報に關す驚くべき無智、それより來る誤算これが謬無くやり得ると思ひこんで始めた南方作戰が珊瑚海、ミドウェ、ガダルキャナル、パプア等に於て頻々戰隊艦船、航空機、兵團等を喪失、遂にビスマルク海に於て敵に一矢をも酬ゐ得ずして全船團

と其搭載兵團を失ひ以て日本參謀本部作戰計画の杜撰は其最高峯に達した」と酷評しておる。

ベルリン通信、ナチ軍情報部長ディトマル陸軍中將はロシア戰局について一場の放送を試みた。ドイツ國民は一時的にもせよロシア軍の南方正面進撃が緩んだのに安心、スターリングラード正面に於ける第六軍の慘敗に始り、コーカサス其他の方面に於てロストヴを始め幾多

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をよそに寧面当的にアジア人たる日本を疎外ナチ精神、即ち北歐洲人のみ眞の人也と云ふ精神、涵養を名としゲルマン民族のみの青少年團大會を催ふしておった。

増税反響。拾壱億四千五百万圓増税について説明があったがそれによると衣類等は従價六割に引上げられ現在一足一円五十戔の靴下が四月からは一円九十戔となるわけで其靴下も戰前は一足僅に六七十戔で買へた物である。又一杯十五戔のスフコーヒー等も四月の一日からはこれ又税金の關係で廿四戔となり、其ほか色々の飲食物も同様に値上りとなるのである。

人的資源の問題、今回軍部は高田直彦氏の廿万圓と傷痍軍人だけでやってゆく工場の獻納を大喜で受た。右は目下軍需工業は人不足で悩んでおる爲燒石に水的乍ら歡迎されたものである。

滿洲からの珍客滿洲國貴夫人の一行が親善を兼ね觀光の目的で東京に到着した方は既に京阪地が一行は見物ずみで戰時下の日本の態勢についてはに大に感服しておると云ふ。

筆のしずく。人の子が其母を思ふ情なるものは洋の東西、時の古今にかゝはるものではない。石川啄木の

たはむれる母をせおひて
そのあまり
かろきに泣きて三歩あゆまず

の如き鬼神も泣く戰しても人は人だ。

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HOME FRONT - TOKYO The most important news this week comes from the capital and deals with the political situation at home. The much debated special amendment bill controlling wartime criminal law, held until the last for the present Diet session, has now been passed. The Bill provides for strictest penalties against any expression of individual thought on Government policy and measures. It is punishable by death to even discuss suggestions for an alteration of policy. These extraordinary laws show the fear the present military and financial leaders have of the mass of thoughtful patriotic citizens who think only of the good of Ja pan and her common people. These new Japan laws are comparable to the institutions existing in Italy and Germany by which the Axis dictators are kept in power, irrespective of the wishes of the people and their Supreme Rulers.

The anxiety of the present Tokyo authorities is reflected in many other ways. In the House of Peers President Okumura, of the Cabinet Board of Information, told the House in reply to a query that the control of what he termed "reactionary thoughts" at home is handled by several Government agencies working in close liaison. To counteract the effects of Allied wirless announcements, the authorities are feverishly trying to work out conter-measures. Confirming this disquietude, Mr. Shinroku Tanomugi, official in charge of Radio Tokyo, recently revealed that several of the announcers of the overseas staff have been taken ill from worry and overstrain. Competent observers feel that these various reports all add up to an ever-growing dissatisfaction of the populace and the really wise and patriotic elements with the cliques of war profiteers, ambitious officers and financiers now in power.

REVIEW OF BISMARCK SEA BATTLE. Comment from neutral sources on the recent Bismarck Sea battle has been concentrated on the enormous wastage of men and material for no result on the part of the Japanese. Commentators agree that this defeat has completely dislocated Japanese strategic and tactical plans in the South Pacific. They regard as even more serious, however, the significance of this battle as the crowning folly of a series of reckless and wasteful moves on the part of the Japanese High Command. They recall the announcement made by Rokyo Radio just a year ago in which operations in this area were described as "a small South Seas campaign of trifling importance that will be cleaned up by the Nipponese forces within 2 weeks". From this, one writer says, it is clear that the High Command envisaged only an insignificant expenditure of men and material. Yet with consistent disregard of the facts as presented in the balance sheet of war, they have thrown fleet after fleet, and division after division into a campaign which has made no progress in the face of sustained losses. This policy of reckless and unthinking expenditure of Japanese lives and Japanese resources, continued from the Battle of the Coral Sea, via Midway, Guadalcanal and Papua, he goes on to say, reached its culmination in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea where the Japanese lost everything they had to lose and gained absolutely nothing.

BERLIN. A review of the German situation in Russia was broadcast by Lt. Gen. Dietmar, Chief German spokesman. The Germans are so relieved at having halted, at least temporarily, the great Russian drive in the South, that they are apt to forget the magnitude of their defeat which began with the destruction of the German 6th Army before Stalingrad and ended with Russian recapture of the whole Caucasus area, Rostov and other vital places. Lt. Gen. Kietmar, to prepare the Germans for bad news from the northern front, where the Russians are scoring overwhelming successes, quotes the famous German soldier-emperor, Frederick the Great's saying that "even parts of one's own territory may have to be sacrificed for strategic gains". The Russians are still quite a distance away from Germany's borders but such warnings must cause deep anxiety in the hearts of the German people.

CASABLANCA. The British advance continues in Northern Tunisia. The Germans were again heavily repulsed in Southern Tunisia.

BURMA Frequent Allied air operations over Burma are reported in a communique from New Delhi. Last week, 3 medium sized Japanese merchant ships were sunk in Rangoon river. Reconnaissance on the

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same occasion revealed that a 5,000 ton vessel, damaged in a previous raid, had sunk.

PEEPS AT THE LAND BEHIND THE GUNS.

Japanese-German relations. The manner in which Tokyo ministers to Germans was illustrated by the announcement of a large banquet to be given to Nazi dignitaries by the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and other industrial interests on March 5. It was stated that 300 guests will be present at the feast. Far from appreciating Nipponese hospitality, Berlin wireless on the same day told of the opening of a Hitler Youth Camp of European youths to foster the Axis spirit. Only boys of the Germanic race were asked and no invitations were tendered to the Japanese. This news, coming on the same day as the announcement of the banquet in Tokyo, will rightly be considered as an affront to Japan.

Tokyo. Details of some of the new taxes, expected to yield 1,145 million yen more than last year, have just been announced. Taxes on some kinds of clothing have been raised to 60%. A pair of socks which up till now cost 1.50 yen will now sell at 1.90. Before the war the price for this quality of socks was around 60 to 70 sen a pair. As a result of new food taxes a cup of sufu coffee which cost 15 sen, now costs 24 sen. The taxes on other commodities of daily use has been similarly increased.

Tokyo reports the donation of a war factory by an industrialist, Hikondo Takata, who will also contribute the sum of 200,000 yen to the war effort. The interesting part of this scheme is that the factory will be run entirely by men wounded in the war. The shortage of manpower is believed to have forced the authorities to adopt this measure.

A DROP FROM THE BRUSH. How strong are the ties of sentiment binding a man to his mother. Her image appears before him in the wake of sweet and bitter memories haunting him however far away from her he may have gone. The other day (my) eyes fell on that famous "waka" (Type of Japanese poem) of Takuboku (Ishikawa) in which he expressed, in a way all his own, the love of a son for his mother. Filial love of course rules everywhere in the world and countless are the poems in all languages written on thus subject. There is somethi ng so very touching in the words used by Takuboku to show his filial sentiment! It would be a pity indeed if you should forget it in the clang and noise of warfare. For that reason it is here reproduced:-

In Jesting frolic
I lift my mother on my back,
But at her withered
Lightness, weeping for her sake,
Three short steps I cannot take. (Trans. Glenn W.Shaw)

YOHAKU SUNGEN Afterthought on the Bismarck Sea Battle.

When all of a sudden the Japanese convoy had to bear the brunt of the forceful attack of the Allied airforce, (reference to foreign eagles in the sky), intent upon their task of annihilation, the Japanese command must have found itself in the position of the unsuspecting hunter of the proverb who saw the bird fly up near his feet. (Ashimoto kara tori ga tatsu).

Moreover the loss of so large a number of troops in a single day, in view of the care given to their education and training, may be likened to the effect of a damaging fire, as expressed in the old saying:- "The reeds cut in a thousand days are lost in a single day". (Sennichi ni katta kaya wo ichinichi ni horobosu).

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