

# WILLIAMS BALKS ON NAVY MUZZLE

Correspondence Reveals Aviation Writer Quit Marine Corps Reserve After Being Warned to Cease 'Further Criticism.'

By GUY V. MILLER  
Times Special Writer

PITTSBURGH, July 15.—Maj. Al Williams, Scripps-Howard aviation writer, resigned from the U. S. Marine Corps reserve because the Navy Department, of which the Marines are a branch, threatened to revoke his commission for criticizing the Navy in print.

This was revealed today in correspondence between the Department and Maj. Williams, made public for the first time. Maj. Williams released the correspondence—which the Navy had refused to do—because, he said, "the Navy violated my proposal for gentlemanly silence."

Last week the Navy Department announced Maj. Williams' resignation, but gave no explanation beyond quoting Maj. Williams as saying "he could serve his country best as a private citizen without military affiliation."

The correspondence, however, discloses that Maj. Williams was served a virtual ultimatum to cease "further destructive criticism by you of the administration of the Navy" under penalty of having his commission revoked.

Warned April 18  
It was this edict, unusual in that it was applied to a reserve officer subject only when on active service, that brought about Maj. Williams' resignation.

The correspondence reveals that Maj. Williams was warned in a letter on April 18 from Maj. Gen. Thomas Holcomb, Marine Corps commandant, that "certain articles, published under your name in the Pittsburgh Press (a Scripps-Howard newspaper) in the early part of February, 1940, contain statements derogatory in tenor to the administration of the U. S. Navy."

"Such destructive criticism of the administration of the naval service in the public press," the letter continued, "by an officer of your rank in the Marine Corps reserve, is exceedingly inappropriate and cannot be condoned by the Major General Commandant."

Then followed a warning that "further destructive criticism" would be considered sufficient cause for a recommendation to the Secretary of the Navy that Maj. Williams' commission be revoked.

Termed It America's Business  
Gen. Holcomb's letter evidently referred to a column published on Feb. 2, in which Maj. Williams declared that "I think our Navy Department needs a major overhauling. It is fairly crawling with internal politics, hidebound and obsolete practices, and reactionary inhibitions which choke off and discourage its more efficient and worthy personnel."

In the same column Maj. Williams criticized the selection board method of promotion, charged that there was discrimination against non-Annapolis officers in the service, and asked:

"Is this the Navy's men that must be washed in public? I'll say it's not. It's America's business. It's our national defense."

In that column Maj. Williams cited the case of eight wartime Navy aviators who, although declared fit for promotion, were not to be retained in active service.

On April 23 Maj. Williams replied to Gen. Holcomb's letter, asking a clarification.

"Specifically," he wrote, "I would like to know where my privileges as a private citizen are overlapped by my duties and obligations as a reserve officer."

"I am well aware that, if on the active list, my statements and opinions must conform with, and be limited by, the policies and regulations of the service."

Got No Reply to Letter  
"Being on the reserve list, however, I have been of the opinion that the spoken or written word of mine in nowise is to be interpreted as official or under censorship."

To this letter Maj. Williams received no reply.

Six weeks later, on June 7, he tendered his resignation quietly and without publication. He said that he "desired to speak freely and vigorously in expressing my

opinions and in advocating what I believe to be essential to our national defense" and that he "therefore could not conscientiously heed the Navy Department's warning against 'destructive criticism.'"

He said, however, that "my services will always be at the command of the U. S. Marine Corps and in case of emergency I shall bring with me my two standard single-engine fighting planes, and they shall be donated without cost to the Marine Corps."

Two days later Maj. Williams finally received a reply to his previous request for clarification of the warning letter. It was dated June 8, the day before his resignation, but postmarked June 8, the day after.

Judge Advocate General Rules  
This letter, also from Maj. Gen. Holcomb, said Maj. Williams' request had been referred to the Chief of Naval Operations, who had set forth the following policy, in which the Judge Advocate General of the Navy concurred:

"That under section 301 of the Naval Reserve Act Maj. Williams 'is not subject to U. S. Navy orders or regulations concerning the publication of articles in the public press.'"

"However, it has been established by custom and usage in the naval service that persons therein shall not publicly in the press or otherwise criticize the naval service in a derogatory manner. Inasmuch as the U. S. Marine Corps reserve is a component part of the U. S. Marine Corps which in turn is a component part of the U. S. Navy, it follows that Maj. Alford J. Williams, U. S. M. C. R. (V), is an officer in the naval service."

On July 8 Maj. Williams was notified of the acceptance of his resignation. The acceptance letter expressed Gen. Holcomb's regrets at Maj. Williams' separation from the reserve and thanked him for his "generous and patriotic offer of service in the event of need."

On that same day the Navy in Washington formally announced the resignation. When asked what lay behind the resignation, the Department said the correspondence would not be made public.

Outstanding Speed Flier  
In making public the correspondence today Maj. Williams said: "I resigned from the U. S. Marine Corps, reserve, the grandest military organization in the world, because . . . in my newspaper column I exposed and criticized the evils of officer promotion under the selection board procedure. The Navy threatened to revoke my commission. . . . I wrote the criticism as a newspaper writer of daily columns. The record speaks for itself without further comment."

Maj. Williams formerly was an officer in the naval air corps and for years was its outstanding speed flier, establishing several world records. The Distinguished Flying Cross was presented to him in 1929 by President Coolidge. In 1930 he resigned from the Navy and was commissioned a captain in the Marine Corps reserve. In 1935 he was promoted to major.

He is a graduate of Fordham University and of Georgetown law school, and is a member of the school of engineering faculty at the University of Pittsburgh.

## Giant Dies at 22



Robert Wadlow . . . dies of foot infection. His health usually was good, although he received treatment in 1935 for an infection from a blister. His parents, brothers and sisters were of normal size. Although he wanted to become a lawyer, he abandoned his studies and traveled for a shoe firm and appeared with various shows and circuses.

## TALLEST MAN IN WORLD IS DEAD

Foot Infection Is Fatal to Robert Wadlow, Giant From Alton, Ill.

MANISTEE, Mich., July 15 (U. P.).—Robert Wadlow, whose height of eight feet 10 and three-tenths inches made him the tallest man in the world, died today of an infection.

Mr. Wadlow became ill on July Fourth while appearing at the National Forest Festival here. A foot brace he wore to help support his weight broke the skin along the ankle and an infection set in. He had been seriously ill with a high fever for several days but last week had shown considerable improvement.

### He Was 22

Late yesterday his fever began mounting rapidly and death came early this morning. He had been given a transfusion yesterday.

His home was in Alton, Ill., and he was 22 years old. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Wadlow, and a younger brother were here. Funeral arrangements were not completed pending word from an uncle in Nebraska. It was expected, however, that the body would be removed to Alton later today.

Mr. Wadlow's extreme height was attributed by physicians to an over-active pituitary gland. He weighed 481 pounds.

Mr. Wadlow, who weighed 8½ pounds at birth, began attracting first local, and then national attention shortly after his fourth birthday, when his unusual growth began.

### Wore Size 27 Shoes

By the time he was 5, he was wearing clothes designed for a youth in his teens. In five more years he was wearing garments made for large men, and his family was discovering that ordinary furniture would not support his weight. Special shoes, size 27 and larger, were required to cover his feet.

## Far From War



While William C. Bullitt, U. S. Ambassador to France, grapples with war-time problems, his daughter, Anne, relaxes at Atlantic City, N. J. She's pictured strolling the boardwalk there.

## U. S. CONTRACTS FOR 627 TANKS

Army to Spend \$11,000,000 To Speed Mechanization Of Land Forces.

WASHINGTON, July 15 (U. P.).—The Army, speeding mechanization of its land forces, today contracted with the American Car & Foundry Co., Berwick, Pa., for 627 heavily armored light tanks, said to cost about \$11,000,000.

The order was the largest of its kind in American peacetime history. The award was made from bids opened at Rock Island, Ill., arsenal last week.

Informed officials said the tanks would be about 12 tons each, equipped with 30 and 50-caliber machine guns and one 37 mm. cannon. The new tanks, described as "the latest thing," will be used to augment the equipment of the new mechanized divisions being established this summer at Ft. Knox, Ky., and Ft. Benning, Ga. The two divisions are patterned after the lines of the famous Nazi Panzers, and ultimately will use 1400 tanks, 13,000 semi-automatic rifles, 600 pieces of artillery, and 18,000 men.

The Army has on hand or on order approximately 3000 tanks, the largest being the so-called "medium" type of about 18 tons. It is understood, however, that President Roosevelt's latest request for an additional \$5,000,000,000 for the Army and Navy envisages the purchase of about 3000 more tanks.

Among these, it was said, will be several hundred huge "land battle ships" ranging from 60 to 70 tons. The Germans had 80-ton tanks during their swift conquest of the lowlands and France.

### CLIPPER AT CANTON ISLAND

HONOLULU, July 15 (U. P.).—The American Clipper, blazing an air trail from San Francisco to New Zealand, was ready today to take off from Canton Island for Numea, New Caledonia, on the fourth leg of its journey.

## Here's Vacation Sun Tan Hints

STATE COLLEGE, Pa., July 15 (U. P.).—Science now can tell the summer vacationist where to get the best sun tan in the quickest way.

Dr. Helmut Landsberg, assistant professor of geophysics at Pennsylvania State College, has developed a new method for measuring ultra violet in solar and sky radiations by use of the photo-sensitive glass rods.

Using the photo-sensitive glass in nation-wide tests, Dr. Landsberg found the southern regions showed 30 to 50 per cent more ultra violet—hence quicker sun tan—than the northern.

Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, had the highest recorded value while Tucson, Ariz., was a close second.

### SCHOOL AID DEAD

MARTINSVILLE, Ind., July 15.—Raymond E. Blunk, recently elected vice-president of the County Superintendents Association of Indiana, of the Department of Justice and Morgan County superintendent returned to Marion county to stand of schools, died yesterday. He was 43.

## MURDER CHARGE IN PLOCH CASE DROPPED

Grand Jury charges of first degree murder in the 4-year-old case of Charles Polley were dismissed today.

Polley was indicted with three other defendants in the holdup-murder of Harry Ploch, Beech Grove tavern owner, which occurred March 7, 1936.

Deputy Prosecutor John M. Kelly said that the prosecutor has "insufficient evidence," and explained that the only alleged eye-witness to the murder is unable to identify Polley, and that the three co-defendants are already serving long prison sentences on other charges.

However, Mr. Kelly declared that Polley will be returned to the Indiana State Reformatory as a parole violator on a grand larceny sentence. Polley was a fugitive for nearly three years after the alleged crime. He was arrested in Redwood City, Cal., May 2, 1939 by agents of the Department of Justice and Morgan County superintendent returned to Marion county to stand of schools, died yesterday. He was 43.

**ROST**  
This Complete  
\$19.75 Portable Radio  
Famous R. C. A.  
\$12.95 \$1.00 A Week  
Ideal for vacations, camps, cottages, picnics. Complete with batteries. See other outstanding radio bargains in our radio department.

We Specialize in Fraternity Jewelry  
For 35 Years Your Dependable Jeweler  
Rost Jewelers  
25 N. Illinois St.

## DO YOU SMOKE THE CIGARETTE THAT SATISFIES

GARY COOPER  
Outstanding star who scores again in Samuel Goldwyn's Production of "The Westerner"

One Grand Performance After Another

Every time you light a Chesterfield you can count on the best in smoking pleasure. The answer is that Chesterfield sets the pace with every modern improvement that makes for a better cigarette.

Millions buy Chesterfield, pack after pack, for all the things they want in a cigarette . . . Real Mildness, Better Taste and Cooler-Smoking.

**Chesterfield**  
ONE-AFTER-ANOTHER They Satisfy

BETTER MADE FOR BETTER SMOKING  
Here as seen in the new film "TOBACCOLAND, U.S.A." is one of the most amazing devices in cigarette making—Chesterfield's electric detector. Twenty mechanical fingers examine each cigarette in a pack and if there is the slightest imperfection a light flashes and the entire pack is automatically ejected.

LOOK FRESH and LOVELY MACHINELESS PERMANENT  
Complete With Shampoo, Trim and Set . . . \$2.00  
All Work Strictly Supervised  
International Beauty School  
229 N. Penn. St. R1. 0192

VISIT YOUR FRIENDS! RENEW OLD ACQUAINTANCES!  
ENJOY THE TRIP TO AND FRO IN A COMFORTABLE, ECONOMICAL AND SAFE TROLLEY OR BUS!  
INDIANAPOLIS RAILWAYS