

Hoosier Vagabond

By Ernie Pyle

TIMERLINE LODGE, Ore., Feb. 10.—These last few days, while dwelling on other things, we've sort of neglected my personal skiing. I mean neglected it in the column. But I've been right out there every day, laboring conscientiously. The days are building up now, and it'll soon be time to leave. And so far I haven't learned how to do a thing. We're still out on that same little slope, still trying to find out how to make "stem turns."

I still can't force myself to lean OUT on a turn—and when I do accomplish that violation of scientific balance I always fall over in that direction.

Maybe I could learn some day. I'm not sure. Certainly I can't be accused of not persevering. I'm known around here as the guy who's always down but never out.

One of the girls in our threesome class disappeared, leaving only one girl and myself. We are both tenacious students.

For days I didn't know this girl's name, or where she was from, or anything about her. Finally it occurred to me that maybe I should get her identified, just in case of accident or something.

He Meets Maureen

SO AFTER ROLLING down the same hill together for several days, we at last met in the lodge, shook hands, and introduced ourselves. Her name was Maureen Jackman.

Maureen is from Spokane. She's just a kid. She went one year to college, and then got a job as telephone operator in Spokane.

She got a week's vacation after six months. She didn't know what to do with it, so she went to the

Inside Indianapolis By Lowell Nussbaum

IF YOU THINK your Uncle Sam is kidding when he says "no weather tips that will aid the enemy," consider the experience of none other than Mayor Sullivan, himself.

One day last week Hizzoner was scheduled to make a radio talk in connection with the Victory Book campaign.

The talk he prepared started out something like this: "In one way, the weather today is a help to this campaign. The downpour of rain and the bleak skies impress upon us the value of books as a medium of entertainment as well as information."

He showed his manuscript to the radio station 15 minutes before he was to go on the air, and would you believe it? They made him cut all reference to the weather. Uncle Sam's orders

Trudging Along

JUDSON L. STARK, the former Prosecutor, is a member of the TNT Dancing Club. The "TNT" is a misnomer, as it's a sedate group of married couples. They have a formal dance once a month, and met last Friday at the Woman's Department Club. After the first dance, Jud looked down at his feet, then remarked to Mrs. Stark: "No wonder my feet felt so heavy." She, too, looked down and saw he still was wearing his overshoes. Better save those overshoes, Jud; they're rubber.

Marjorie Main, the Hoosier girl who is doing all right in the movies and who got considerable space in the local papers recently when she visited here, is

Washington

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10.—For a year we were told that the automobile industry could not be converted to war work, yet that is being done now. Which leads one to think that maybe if an effort were made we could convert a lot of the Government to war work.

This is not so much a matter of dollar economy. All the dollars that could be saved by non-defense economies would hardly be noticed among the billions that must be spent on the war. The point is in other kinds of economy.

As it is going now, thousands of new people are coming into Washington every week. The War Department is trying to add 40,000 civilians, mostly clerical. Mr. Roosevelt has spoken of possibly a quarter-million additional employees coming here during the war. I don't know what there is for so many to do, and employees are coming in faster than they can be digested and put at a full day's work.

But even on the assumption that most of the additional help will be needed, the question arises whether some of this influx might not be eliminated by converting employees from old non-war agencies to emergency work.

Too Much Moving Around

THE GOVERNMENT is moving some agencies out of town. Clerical forces, which form the largest percentage of the number, are to go along. Why shouldn't these non-defense agencies moving away take only the key and specialized personnel and leave the routine employees here to be transferred to war agencies? Routine help can be picked up in the new location.

My Day

By Eleanor Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, Monday.—It was perfectly wonderful on Saturday morning, when I stepped off the train, to be met at 7 o'clock by our eldest son, who had just flown in from the coast on orders. I find that in war time these visits are always a surprise.

They are doubly precious, not only because of their unexpectedness, but because one's whole outlook today is sharpened to an appreciation of the need to make the most of every opportunity to be with those one loves.

My nephew, Mr. Henry Roosevelt, also was with us for a brief two days, so we had a quiet family dinner Saturday night. Yesterday, I went to see a friend in the hospital and devoted most of the afternoon catching up on

on Saturday, after being checked up at the hospital, and was ordered to report on Monday afternoon in preparation for the removal of his appendix early Tuesday morning.

I am so thankful that after the slight attacks which he had during his last period of sea duty, he is able to get off and to have this operation performed, for destroyers in winter seas are not very good places on which to be taken ill. He tells me over the telephone that the new baby is wonderful, but he is a little afraid of handling it.

We have a perfectly lovely baby spending a few days with us in the White House. She is three-and-a-half months old, the daughter of my cousins, Mr. and Mrs. W. Forbes Morgan Jr., and seemed completely engrossed in the President so long as he held her in his arms.

The governor of New Hampshire, Robert O. Blood, has sent me two wonderful wooden pails. They are called "Granite State Bom-Pails."

And he says: "We of New Hampshire are pleased to contribute in a small way to the national defense program by furnishing substitute which will conserve scarce material, such as metal, using our hurricane lumber and using labor of an average of 60 years of age as is found in our pail factories."

I think you will find them most satisfactory. They look ample and substantial.

ARMY PUSHES ROAD TO HELP DEFEND CANAL

Engineers Racing Weather; Rain Would Turn It Into Sea of Gumbo.

By NAT A. BARROWS

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PIO GATUN, REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, Feb. 10.—From where we stood looking down into a jungle abyss near the partly completed highway across the Isthmus of Panama, the youthful, barebacked operator of the bulldozer tractor wasn't worth a dime as an insurance risk.

Nonchalantly he pulled and pushed his levers to send the bulldozer snorting into the side of the mountain. From his casual manner he might have been in the middle of a prairie.

We shuddered as we watched the tractor whirl and twist a few inches from the edge of the cliff. One small mistake in judgment . . . one delayed yank of the control levers . . . one tiny landslide under the weight of that mechanical monster—and then a plunge, over and over, into eternity.

He was betting his skill and his nerve against \$435 a month. And earning every cent of it.

"Couple Goes Over Side"

Nearby, another bulldozer was attacking a barrier of matted jungle growth that would have denied access to even a cat. This driver, too, was skirting the edge of a cliff and, at the same time, somehow contriving to balance his bulldozer on a slope that must have been close to 40 degrees. Everyone of us, even our nerveless Army "peep" drivers, got a little pale at that sight.

"Yes, we've had a couple go over the side in the 14 months since we started this 26.7-mile section from Colon to Madden Dam," remarked one of the engineers. "They do get away once in a while. But, counting everything, we've had only five deaths out of more than 1400 gold and silver employees."

The low mortality rate was convincing—but, just the same, bulldozer operators on the trans-Isthmus highway can have their job. The odds seem better.

These highway constructors work 10 hours a day in two shifts seven days a week. That leaves them little time or energy for anything but sleeping and eating.

Bankroll Piles Up

Daily their bankroll piles up. The United States Government, which is building the highway through the public roads administration at a total cost of \$8,000,000, charges them exactly \$1 a day for three hearty meals and lodging.

Figure that out for the shovel operators with their \$575 monthly pay and you'll see why men—college graduates, former office workers, oil-field workers, bigtime construction men—are willing to shut themselves up in a teeming jungle wilderness for months at a time.

At present, the dry season is upon Panama and the progress is rapid, some 7000 feet of concrete laid each working day.

If the heavy rains hold off through March, the Atlantic half of the coast-to-coast road may be finished and opened to military traffic.

Certain to Be Hot

But no one here ever is rash enough to make any predictions about the weather. Only one thing is certain: It will be just as hot tomorrow as it is today, probably even hotter. So, the proposed completion of the Atlantic section of this 48-mile road is merely a wishfulness. Two or three unseasonable downpours will turn the unsurfaced section into a quagmire of red gumbo mud.

With fingers crossed and eyes upturned anxiously at rain clouds, the highway engineers are pushing forward with every ounce of energy this race against the weather.

This highway is of the greatest importance to the increased defense of the Panama Canal. Otherwise, Lieut. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, commanding the unified Caribbean defense command, would never have thrown the army engineers into that by-pass construction which finally gave army trucks a passage from coast to coast.

Government departments are full of boondoggling work that now could come under the head of non-essential activity. Jimmy Byrnes, long before he went on the Supreme Court, once said that the nearest thing to immortality on this earth was a Government bureau. Much of this has grown up over a long period of years. Most of it developed during the depression when there was some excuse for it.

Senator Byrd of Virginia has been crusading to reduce non-essential expenditures. But there isn't much appeal in trying to save a few million dollars when you are spending 50 billion in one year.

However, there is a case to be made about the number of people, the amount of office space, and the living quarters that this non-essential work is eating up.

HOLD EVERYTHING

SOUTHERN INDIANA TO HONOR PIONEERS

SULLIVAN, Ind., Feb. 10 (U. P.)—Southern Indiana's pioneer institutions, business firms, churches, clubs, schools and citizens will be honored Feb. 12, 13 and 14 at the state's first "Valley of Democracy" folk festival at Merom, Ind.

Nominations of institutions and persons to be honored are being made daily by neighboring communities.

The festival will feature demonstrations of pioneer crafts such as weaving, quilting and candle-making. Ancient articles will be displayed and folk games will be played.

Mrs. Edward Dickinson, secretary of the projected event, said the festival will be held "because never before have the pioneer virtues of religious faith, love of land and responsibility to one's fellows been more important than today."

HONORED AT PRINCETON

Cornelius O. Alig Jr., of 4420 Washington Blvd., has been elected circulation manager of the Daily Princetonian, undergraduate newspaper of Princeton University. He is a member of the class of 1942.

Jeeps' Try Out Isthmus Highway



Army "jeeps" parade over a section of the trans-Panama highway which has not yet been laid with concrete. A motorcade recently traversed the Colon-Madden Dam section of the highway on a round trip from the Pacific to the Atlantic. In some places bulldozers have to make 100-foot cuts through hogback hills and also make fills in sheer-dropping water-torn ravines during the construction of the road, regarded as vital to the defense of the canal. The road is open for emergency use. It is 47 miles long.

"JAPAN Unmasked" By HALLETT ABEND

Chapter VIII—Hawaiian Defenses

THE UNITED STATES Army plays a vital part in the defense of the great American bastion in the Pacific, which Hawaii has gradually become. By the end of January of last year the Army garrison numbered about 35,000 men, infantry, artillery, engineers and allied services.

This was separate from the air forces of the Army at Wheeler and Hickam Fields. At these air fields, buildings, homes and barracks were under way to house 2700 flying officers and 13,000 men. By the first of September these buildings had been completed and were fully occupied, while construction was under way to bring the personnel of the field to a total of 25,000 officers and men.

Similar expansions had been achieved and were being planned for all other Army contingents in the islands—a loose general statement from which the size of our military establishment, as distinct from our Naval forces at Pearl Harbor, may be gauged.

Whereas Pearl Harbor had been rapidly expanded into the world's strongest and most important naval base, it had been the task of the Army to fortify the island of Oahu so effectively that the task of capturing Pearl Harbor would be prohibitively costly to any enemy naval attack.

Ten years ago a project was afoot to ring Oahu with a vast system of concrete fortifications and pill boxes, similar to the Maginot and Siegfried lines along the frontiers of France and Germany, but this plan was later abandoned in favor of a scheme for elastic and mobile defense.

four 16-inch guns on the island, and "about a dozen batteries, of two to four guns each, of 12 and 14-inch artillery."

Heavy Guns in Forts

IN ADDITION, they concede, there are "approximately" 20 batteries, of from two to four guns to the battery, of six and eight-inch coast artillery, "several" batteries of four guns each of "less than six-inch caliber," and a very large number of 155mm. rifles.

Forts de Russy and Rugar, guarding Honolulu from the shoulder of Diamond Head, have heavy guns, as do the three forts guarding Pearl Harbor and its entrances—Forts Kamehameha, Barrette and Waiola.

These "five lines of defense," in their order of contact with an enemy, are as follows: first, naval aircraft; second, naval surface craft; third, Army aircraft; fourth, coast defense artillery; and fifth, infantry of all branches. Probably the strength of these defenses nurtured the fatal feeling of security which made possible the surprise of December 7.

There is an understandable and purposeful vagueness about Army discussions of the strength of coast defenses, but it is readily admitted that there are at least thirty-nine new supply ships were purchased in 1940, and in 1941 another 52 vessels, averaging 15,000 tons, were acquired, while an undisclosed number are being rushed to completion in our shipyards.

Diamond Head, which juts out beyond famous Waikiki Beach and is a favorite landmark for seamen and tourists, is not a cliff, as it appears to be from the west, but is really a gigantic volcanic bowl, is strictly prohibited to all persons except those having military business.

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A definite policy of "buy American" has been adopted by the Navy, and with the exception of tea, coffee and cocoa, nearly all foods consumed on the ships and at shore stations come from American farms.

Our various deficiencies in Hawaii, as in the Philippines and elsewhere, were due to the fact that we had to send so great a proportion of our mounting production of ships and material to Britain and to Soviet Russia. All last summer and autumn the problem to be decided was "how much will keep them going?" and "how much are our own irreducible minimum demands?"

It is now evident that wise decisions were made. The Japanese attack upon us must have been coldly and calculatingly in preparation for many months. Had we, in those months, strengthened ourselves to such a point that either Britain or Russia would have gone under for lack of certain supplies, the ranks of the embattled democracies would have been dangerously weak.

And he says: "We of New Hampshire are pleased to contribute in a small way to the national defense program by furnishing substitute which will conserve scarce material, such as metal, using our hurricane lumber and using labor of an average of 60 years of age as is found in our pail factories."

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"Hey, come back! You can't attack Japan that way!"

THREE CAUSES GIVEN FOR AXIS GAINS IN LIBYA

British Air Mastery Offset

By Bad Weather and Desert Hazards.

By RICHARD MOWRER

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CAIRO, Feb. 10.—The British have all superiority in the Middle East—the only war theater to date where the Allies are enjoying such an important advantage. Yet this air mastery has not been sufficient to prevent the Axis forces under Marshal Rommel from retaking half of the Cirenaica. Why?

The answer is that when the Axis launched its counter-offensive in Libya the British, South Africa and Free French air forces here were unable to operate with 100 per cent efficiency—this, for three reasons:

1. The weather.

The Axis forces took full advantage of the bad weather conditions which greatly neutralized the British air power. Thus Marshal Rommel, anxious to press his initial advantage with the utmost speed, could afford to divert the fuel originally intended for his planes to the tanks and vehicles of his ground forces instead.

2. Airfields and interdependence of land and air arms.

Because the ground forces were unable to stem the enemy advance the air force was repeatedly compelled to evacuate convenient airfields, and because the air force had to think of the evacuation of its threatened landing grounds, it was unable to give the ground forces all the support it might otherwise have given.