

The Task Ahead

By John Curtin

*That reddish veil which o'er the face
Of night-hag East is drawn . . .
Flames new disaster for the race?
Or can it be the Dawn?*

SO wrote Bernard O'Dowd. I see 1942 as a year in which we shall know the answer.

I would, however, that we provide the answer. We can and we will. Therefore I see 1942 as a year of immense change in Australian life.

The Australian Government's policy has been grounded on two facts. One is that the war with Japan is not a phase of the struggle with the Axis powers, but is a new war.

The second is that Australia must go on to a war footing.

Those two facts involve two lines of action—one in the direction of external policy as to our dealings with Britain, the United States, Russia, the Netherlands East Indies and China in the higher direction of the war in the Pacific.

The second is the reshaping, in fact the revolutionising, of the Australian way of life until a war footing is attained quickly, efficiently, and without question.

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AS the Australian Government enters 1942, it has behind it a record of realism in respect of foreign affairs. I point to the forthright declaration in respect of Finland, Hungary, and Rumania, which was followed with little delay by a declaration of war against those countries by the Democracies.

We felt that there could be no half-measures in our dealings with the Soviet when that nation was being assailed by the three countries mentioned.

Similarly, we put forward that a reciprocal agreement between Russia, and Britain, should be negotiated to meet an event of aggression by Japan. Our suggestion was then regarded, wrongly as time has proved, as premature.

Now, with equal realism, we take the view that while the determination of military policy is the Soviet's business, we should be able to look forward with reason to aid from Russia against Japan.

We look for a solid and impregnable barrier of the democracies against the three Axis powers, and we refuse to accept the dictum that the

Pacific struggle must be treated as a subordinate segment of the general conflict. By that it is not meant that any one of the other theatres of war is of less importance than the Pacific, but that Australia asks for a concerted plan evoking the greatest strength at the Democracies' disposal, determined upon hurling Japan back.

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THE Australian Government therefore regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the Democracies' fighting plan.

Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pang as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom.

We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces. We know the constant threat of invasion. We know the dangers of dispersal of strength. But we know too that Australia can go, and Britain can still hold on.

We are therefore determined that Australia shall not go, and we shall exert all our energies toward the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone, which will give to our country some confidence of being able to hold out until the tide of battle swings against the enemy.

Seized up, Australian external policy will be shaped toward obtaining Russian aid, and working out, with the United States, as the major factor, a plan of Pacific strategy, along with British, Chinese and Dutch forces.

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AUSTRALIAN internal policy has undergone striking changes in the past few weeks. These, and those that will inevitably come before 1942 is far advanced, have been prompted by several reasons.

In the first place the Commonwealth Government found



Mr Curtin

it exceedingly difficult to bring the Australian people to a realisation of what, after two years of war, our position had become. Even the entry of Japan, bringing a direct threat in our own waters, was met with a subconscious view that the Americans would deal with the short-sighted, underfed and fanatical Japanese.

The announcement that no further appeals would be made to the Australian people, and the decisions that followed, were motivated by psychological factors. They had an arresting effect. They awakened in the somewhat lackadaisical Australian mind the attitude that was imperative if we were to save ourselves, to enter an all-in effort in the only possible manner.

That experiment in psychology was eminently successful, and we commence 1942 with a better realisation, by a greater number of Australians, of what the war means than in the whole preceding two years.

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THE decisions were prompted by other reasons, all related to the necessity of getting on to a war footing, and the results so far achieved have been most heartening, especially in respect of production and conservation of stocks.

I make it clear that the experiment undertaken was never intended as one to awaken Australian patriotism or sense of duty. Those qualities have been ever-present; but the response to leadership and direction had never been requested of the people, and desirable talents and untapped resources had lain dormant.

Our task for 1942 is stern. The Government is under no illusions as to "something cropping up" in the future.

The nadir of our fortunes in this struggle, as compared with 1914-1918, has yet to be reached.

Let there be no mistake about that. The position

The year that begins next Thursday will be the most critical in the history of Australia.

Here the Prime Minister (Mr Curtin) in a special message, tells the Australian people of the job that is to be done in 1942.

Australia faces internally far exceeds in potential and sweeping dangers anything that confronted us in 1914-1918.

The year 1942 will impose supreme tests. These range from resistance to invasion to deprivation of more and more necessities, not only the necessities of existence but those enjoyed in time of war.

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AUSTRALIANS must realise that to place the nation on a war footing every citizen must place himself, his private and business affairs, his entire mode of living, on a war footing. The civilian way of life cannot be any less rigorous, can contribute no less than that which the fighting men have to follow.

I demand that Australians everywhere realise that Australia is now inside the fighting lines.

Australian governmental policy will be directed strictly on those lines. We have to regard our country and its 7,000,000 people as though we were a nation and a people with the enemy hammering at our frontier.

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AUSTRALIANS must be perpetually on guard; on guard against the possibility, at any hour without warning, of raid or invasion; on guard against spending money, or doing anything that cannot be justified; on guard against hampering by dissipation or idle, irresponsible chatter, the decisions of the Government taken for the welfare of all.

All Australia is the stake in this war. All Australia must stand together to hold that stake. We face a powerful, ably led and unbelievably courageous foe.

We must watch the enemy accordingly. We shall watch him accordingly.

H of our families. The people must be prepared for anything and for any demand that may have to be made upon them.

There was a lot more, but Lord Mayor Crick must come in here. On that same momentous day, referring to the McKell Government's "arrangements" for evacuation, Mr. Crick declared savagely that, "though responsible for the protection and safety of the citizens, I have no instructions on what I am to do or on what is expected of me in an emergency."

Conflicting and overlapping regulations have been sent to the City Council, first from the Minister for N.E.S. and later from the Premier's Department. Other State departments also issue conflicting instructions dealing with evacuation and N.E.S.

The State Government is merely trying to pass on to the councils financial and other responsibilities that the Government must should undertake.

The City Council is now asked practically to take a census of all the people in the city area and the suburban councils are expected to do the same. This work will take months to complete.

Who is responsible for preventing a rush of people to shelters?...

Evacuation and all matters relating to it should be immediately co-ordinated and placed under the control of an official Federal body.

The Monday holiday arrived. Workers in war industries were implored by the Commonwealth Government to work, and nearly all of them did, but many

complained that they were late in reaching their places of employment because holiday timetables were observed, particularly by the (McKell) Railway Department" ("S. M. Herald").

The McKell department which controls trams and buses also sacrificed the needs of war workers to the convenience of holiday-makers: McKell Government clerks and the rest. Special McKell trams (124) were put on for the Randwick races (attendance, 24,500) and for a Stadium fight (attendance, 12,000). But an A.C.I. employee said that he and about 400 other workers waited outside the company's gates at Waterloo after finishing work. They counted more than 40 special race trams go by; then one already-crowded ordinary tram came to take them home" ("Daily Telegraph").

It is to be hoped that the claims of "complete realism" will not be too exacting to prevent Mr. McKell continuing his journalistic exercises. Though they doubtless make many people leap with rage, others persist in regarding them as funny without being vulgar.

The Superfluous Six.

BAD as was their record before, the performance of the six State excrecences

since the advent of Japan in the war beggars description. Though a page were filled with the muddle, confusion, conflict, waste for which they are responsible, more pages would be needed to outline in full the dreadful state of affairs. And in their constant clashing with the national Government they have come to be a positive menace. Witness, for one thing, the frequent Loan Council wrangles—there was to have been another this week.

Many a thoughtful "serviceman," at grips with the old enemy, and going out to meet the new, must turn his back on the excrecences with an uneasy shiver at what he is leaving behind. And still more thoughtful men, forced by age or unfitness to stay at home and wait, eager to work, to do anything to help, but balked at every turn by the awful bottleneck of departments, politicians, boards, regulations, etc., turn envious eyes across the Tasman to Maoriand, where a Labor Government, with no illusions about anybody's rights or privileges in such a time, with no squawking State Governments to bother it, is getting on with the big job at full speed and with full credit.

The sort of spectacle we must present to the Maoriander should not be allowed to hold the stage a day longer.



THE NEW BOUNDARY RIDER.

"The eastern approaches to Australia and New Zealand are to be known as 'the Anzac Area,' and will be under American command."

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Glorious Exploits of Perth and Yarra—Page 3

THE SUN

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BLUNT WARNING TO U.S.A. BY CURTIN

Australia Must Be Supported

By Mr. Curtin, Representative

CANBERRA, Saturday.

A grim warning to America that Australia was the last Democratic bastion protecting the west coast of USA was given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) in a short-wave "heart to heart" broadcast to the American people today.

Wavell Expects Invasion Of India

Associated Press

NEW DELHI, Saturday.

India is threatened with seaborne invasion in the not-distant future.

Issuing this warning in a broadcast to the American people, Mr. Curtin said that the Japanese were now in a position to launch a seaborne invasion of India.

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600 Miles To Freedom

From the Dan Corcoran

LONDON, Saturday.

Forty-three Norwegian women, including the largest contingent to escape from Norway, have arrived at a British port after a 600-mile voyage in a fishing smack.

The women, who were rescued by the British, are now being held in a camp.

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"Australia is the last bastion between the west coast of America and the Japanese. If Australia goes, the Americas are wide open," declared Mr. Curtin.

"It is said that the Japanese will bypass Australia and that they can be met and routed in India. I say to you that the saving of Australia is the saving of America's west coast. If you believe anything to the contrary, then you delude yourselves."

Speaking For United People

Mr. Curtin stated that, without belittling Britain, Australia had looked to America for counsel and advice and regretted that even now, after 95 days of Japan's staggering southward advance, we have not obtained first-hand contact with the United States.

"You must be our leader," he told the American people.

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Loss Of Pacific Disastrous

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, Saturday.

The Australian Government has fought for its people. We never regarded the Pacific as a mere theatre of the great struggle. We did not insist that it was the primary theatre of war, but we did say and mean have we not unthinkingly placed our backs to the wall of the Pacific.

We have now seen the Pacific as a theatre of the great struggle. We did not insist that it was the primary theatre of war, but we did say and mean have we not unthinkingly placed our backs to the wall of the Pacific.

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The Handyman

Jap F Raba By R.

Keeping up it

RAAF on Thurs

planes on Rabaul

One heavy

Japanese aircraft p

Port Moresby

Japanese fighters t



First Flag Fired on Here

From the Spring Representative

CANBERRA, Saturday.

A national Australian flag, with sun star missing and a hole for the Union Jack, was presented to the Minister for the Interior, Senator Forgan, today.

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How the militia in Australia is getting fit for war. Troops show their speed and skill in clearing a high hedge with rifles and machine guns during exercises.

STOP PRESS

ESSEN SMOULDERS, WITH

Great R.A.F.

'Britz' Still

In Progress

With Essen still a heap of smouldering

ruins and rubble from last Sunday's

Monday's raids the RAF is relentlessly

inflicting its spring 'Britz'—RAF term for

'Blitz'—on Germany and German occupied

territory.

The principal target

was Essen, where the big railway ma-

shalling yards were being

reconstructed. The RAF

was again in the air

last night, dropping

incendiary bombs on

the city and the

industrial area.

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Australians "Fighting Mad"

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, Saturday.

The Australian Government has fought for its people. We never regarded the Pacific as a mere theatre of the great struggle. We did not insist that it was the primary theatre of war, but we did say and mean have we not unthinkingly placed our backs to the wall of the Pacific.

"Klexema" Treatment
For SKIN and SCALP DISEASES
 ECZEMA, PSORIASIS, VARICOSE ULCERS,
 BABY-ECZEMA, FALLING HAIR
 Successful Treatment at KLEXEMA ROOMS,
 BANK OF AUSTRALASIA BUILDING,
 156 Swanston Street, Melbourne
 CONSULTATIONS FREE. Phone Cent. 912.

GEN. MACARTHUR AT MELBOURNE

Message To People Of Australia

MEN AND MATERIAL

General Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander of the Allied forces in the South-West Pacific, reached Melbourne on Saturday morning. A large official party headed by Federal Ministers and chiefs of the Australian fighting services met him on the platform, and a huge crowd awaited outside the station and lined the streets beyond in a collective and enthusiastic popular welcome. General MacArthur gave a message to the Australian people on the task ahead.

Soon after his arrival General MacArthur paid a call on the State Governor, and during the week end he conferred with American service chiefs.

TASK AHEAD

"I Shall Keep the Soldier Faith"

Here is the message which General MacArthur read to the people of Australia on his arrival in Melbourne on Saturday morning:

"I am glad indeed to be in immediate co-operation with the Australian soldier. I know him well from World War days, and admire him greatly. I have every confidence in the ultimate success of our joint cause. But success in modern war requires something more than courage and the willingness to die—it requires careful preparation.

"This means the furnishing of sufficient troops and sufficient material to meet the known strength of a potential enemy. No general can make something out of nothing. My success or failure will depend primarily upon the resources which the respective Governments place at my disposal. My faith in them is complete.

"In any event, I shall do my best. I shall keep the soldier faith."

VOYAGE FROM BATAN

It was learned on Saturday, from Brigadier-General H. R. Casey, of the U.S. Engineer Corps, who returned from the Philippines with General MacArthur, how the party of 21 left the Batan Peninsula. Incidentally, it was related also how, some days before, Mr. Francis B. Sayre, the U.S. High Commissioner in the Philippines, boarded a submarine in the bay, and has since arrived in America.

Five days before General MacArthur's party arrived at Darwin in two army planes, they set out in speed boats, 70 feet in length, for the open sea. There was no muffled-engine departure, the craft roaring across Manila Bay at 2 p.m. at a speed of 25 knots. When the engine of one boat conked out, some of its passengers transferred to General MacArthur's boat, but the trim motor vessels eventually set out for their destination. For two nights and a day they pitched and tossed in the ocean swell. More than half way on their 600-mile voyage to Mindanao (the second largest and southernmost island of the Philippines), a Japanese destroyer was sighted on the horizon, but the enemy greyhound continued its course without having observed the speed boats. On Mindanao, only a small area in the south-western portion of which is occupied by the Japanese, General

the planes. They stayed on the island, the home of the Moros, and one of the most valuable islands in natural resources as yet undeveloped, for two days.

General MacArthur's 5-year-old son, Arthur, was sick during the hazardous voyage from Manila to Darwin, and at Alice Springs Mrs. MacArthur rested with him and his native nurse, while the General acquainted himself with the military preparations in the heart of Australia.

[City's welcome on Page 3.]

U.S. SHIP LOSSES

WASHINGTON, Mar. 22 (A.A.P.). The Navy department has announced that the 1270 tons United States gunboat Asherfield was attacked south of Java early in March, and is now presumed lost with all personnel. The vessel's normal complement was 185 officers and men. The Navy also announced the sinking of two U.S. ships described merely as "large merchant vessels," also a smaller Mindanao ship. Only six lives were lost on the American merchantmen, but 48 persons, including three women and three children, are missing from the Honduran craft.

NEW R.A.F. FIGHTER

LONDON, March 22 (A.A.P.). It is revealed that Britain's new Whirlwind fighter is a two-engined single-seater, with four cannon. Its speed is estimated at 350 m.p.h.



General MacArthur, welcomed by Australian service leaders as he stepped from the train at Spencer-street on Saturday. He is shaking hands with Brigadier W. Pascoe, of Southern Command. Others in the group are (from left), Colonel Merle-Smith, U.S. military attache; Lt.-General G. Brett, deputy supreme commander of Allied forces; Lieut.-General E. K. Smart, G.O.C. Southern Command, and Vice-Admiral Leary, commander of the Anzac naval forces.

AID IN S.W. PACIFIC

Mr. Evatt Sees President

WASHINGTON, March 22 (A.A.P.). The Commonwealth Attorney-General (Mr. Evatt) spent four hours at the White House yesterday submitting to President Roosevelt urgent reports by the lend-lease director, Mr. Harry Hopkins, on the need for increasing immediately aid in the south-west Pacific if the Japanese aggression were to be halted.

Later in a press statement Mr. Evatt said: "My conversations today have been most satisfactory from an Australian viewpoint. It has been a long, hard journey, but I am convinced that Mr. Curtin was right in sending one of his Ministers to Washington at this critical stage. I hope to see President Roosevelt again next week."

Mr. Evatt said he had come to America to submit urgent reports and recommendations, including the creation of a Pacific War Council at Washington, in which Australia and New Zealand would have a voice. The idea of a Pacific War Council had been advocated for many months by Australia and New Zealand. They wanted such an organisation in Washington, with operations in the Pacific war theatre under the command of an American officer. General MacArthur's appointment satisfied the latter. At present there was no procedure whereby Australia and the United States could make common council at any point. Australia was represented on the Pacific Council in London, but the United States was not. The purpose was to effect such contact. The council should be composed of Cabinet Ministers. Washington was desired because it was closer to the scene than London.

Mr. Evatt expressed the opinion that Australia and New Zealand should not be excluded from the councils, and he honestly hoped his views would be accepted. His mission was to take counsel with President Roosevelt and his service and other advisers, especially in relation to the Pacific struggle.

In the Pacific theatre a great opportunity existed. It may be the last one of hurling back the Japanese aggressor. By General MacArthur's appointment President Roosevelt himself had initiated the offensive, which was deeply appreciated by the people of Australia and New Zealand.

Supreme War Council

Regarding a supreme war council, Mr. Evatt said: "We are on the eve of such a development." Asked if Mr.

SAVED FROM LOST YARRA

13 Ratings On Raft

CANBERRA, Sunday. — Thirteen ratings from H.M.A.S. Yarra, which was lost in action off Java recently, have been rescued from a raft, and are now at a British port.

This dramatic news is contained in a brief statement issued today by the Prime Minister. There are no details available yet of the rescue or of the action in which the sloop was lost.

The names of the survivors are:—Jack Rea Archibald, ordinary seaman.

Victor Brazier, supply petty officer. Geoffrey Granville Bromlow, acting leading signaller (temp.).

Keith Patrick Buckley, ordinary seaman.

Francis James Cairncross, acting leading stoker.

William Geoffrey Clark, ordinary seaman.

Edwin Alexander Latham, leading supply assistant.

Reginald Leslie Manthey, ordinary seaman.

Alfred George Orton, able seaman.

Ernest Leigh Ramsden, engine room artificer.

Duncan Love Stevenson, acting leading stoker (temp.).

Howard George Wagland, leading cook.

William Dennis Witherill, ordinary seaman.

CHINESE ARMIES IN BURMA

At Grips With Japanese

LONDON, March 22 (A.A.P.). Despatches from the Burma front received by Mandalay yesterday indicated that the Chinese blows against the Japanese on Thursday and Friday near Pyin, 136 miles north-east of Rangoon, were developing into a major fight.

The Fifth Chinese army, now under Lieutenant-General Stilwell, which is taking part in these operations, is the same as that which defeated the Japanese at Changsha. It is highly mechanized to an extent unknown

RED ARMIES ADVANCE

Nazi Divisions In Danger

"The Age" Special Service and A.A.P. LONDON, March 22.

Moscow radio reports that the Red armies are moving steadily forward in many sectors. Areas particularly mentioned are those around Kalinin (north-west of Moscow), Karelia (northern) and Leningrad, where fighting is particularly heavy.

Six German divisions are stated to be in danger in and around Kharkov. Russian guerrilla forces continue to wreak havoc behind the German lines and in the neighborhood of Kharkov have blown up two bridges and destroyed oil dumps.

To-day's Moscow communique said the Russians yesterday carried out offensive actions in several sectors, and occupied a number of populated places. The Soviet Air Force on Friday destroyed 35 German planes for the loss of five.

The Moscow "Red Star" says scores of well-trained divisions of Russian troops are waiting in Siberia to go to the front. All are eagerly awaiting the order to start the long westward journey.

According to a Vichy News Agency report, the Russians are using large numbers of tanks, and are maintaining intense pressure against the German positions near Kharkov.

The Moscow "Red Star" says the Russians on the Kharkov front are overwhelming the stubborn resistance of the Germans defending the approaches to an important locality. The Russians split the German defences into sections, causing them to fall back in disorder.

The Swedish newspaper "Svenska Dagbladet" reports that bitter fighting is raging for Poltava, through which the Germans' main supply line runs. The Russians have occupied a village 15 miles south of Rye, probably Sjenkova.

A Berlin communique yesterday said the Russians continued unsuccessful attacks on the Korch Peninsula. The Germans repulsed attacks on the Dnieper, central and northern fronts. German heavy artillery successfully bombarded Leningrad.

The Russian News Agency says that in the Crimea the defenders of Sebastopol are hitting back strongly. Russian artillery silenced ten German



A US view of the SW Pacific Com-
mand.

—Los Angeles Times

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