REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - 1

Notes of an innocent bystander

I was recently embarrassed to hear that someone remarked that they had learned more about the Marianas from Ernie Pyle's column than from my letters. I was stung to the quick, and regretted that in all my letters I never did get around to telling much about these parts. The idea occurred to me that, since I correspond with so many people, I might mimeograph up a column of my own, which I could send along with my letters, as a supplement. The death of Ernie Pyle on a small island of Okinawa has made the idea seem very appropriate, and has crystallized my ambition; I shall carry on now that he is gone.

Thus follows a Seeger's eye view of his own small corner of the war, typographical errors and all!

In the first place, the censor rules I can only say I am "somewhere in the Marianas". [redacted]

However, we must continue the polite fiction, and so you will understand a vagueness here and there, and gaps in information which no city editor would tolerate.

Many guys here were sore when they read Ernie Pyle's columns about this spot. I didn't read them myself, but I understand he said it was a pretty damn nice place to be, compared to some of the muddy, dusty, burning, freezing battlefronts he'd been on in Europe. So he said the soldiers here had a comparative paradise and didn't know it.

Ernie did exaggerate, I believe; he lived with Navy officers while he was here, and the navy usually lives better than the army, as anyone knows. And he didn't stay here long enough to realize that the greatest hardship of any soldier overseas: the mere fact of being away from home and women - is just as bad here as anywhere else. Even New Guinea has WACs, I believe.

But in the main, I think he was right. It's mighty comfortable here in many ways. Dry barracks and plenty showers. Little mud and except in certain areas not too much dust. It's hot, but there's always a breeze. It rains often but it drys off quickly. Few mosquitoes, especially since airplanes sprayed the whole damn island with DDT (main purpose: to eradicate Dengue fever, mosquito-carried).

In addition, if you want to spend a little time hitchhiking, and you have a few hours off some Sunday, you can go swimming on a swell beach, hunt for shells along the reef, and generally make believe you are taking one of those expensive pre-war vacations in Florida.

What am I thinking of! Here I am in Special Service, and I fail to point out that this island is a paradise because of the MANY WONDERFUL STAGE SHOWS which we have organized on the island. Not only that, but GIRL SHOWS from the states are right now flooding the island with feminine pulchritude. Everyone flocks to see 'em. There are near riots for seats. But afterwards - something I have always thought about girl shows in the army - I think they mainly serve to emphasize our sexless existence.

When Ernie died, most who criticized him were silent. Most were very sorry to hear it. One die-hard wouldn't reneg, though: "I guess now he knows there's a war on out here, too," he said

Notes of an innocent bystander

In rear echelons, which seem to be about 95% of the army, the boredom and the endless routine induces a lethargy which makes things even worse. You lay aroundon your bunk even when you don't have to. You listen to the 5-minute news broadcasts even though you've heard it five times before that day and know it by heart. Some men will hardly vary their life from month to month, eating - taking food in at one end and letting it out the other - and sleeping and working and in the evening seeing a movie. Every day the same thing in the same spot.

For this reason, I usually try and get away from home base every Sunday. I happened to come over on the boat with a unit which set up a hospital for the civilians on this island, and since they live right on the beach where there's good swimming, and since they also eat very well, I have been used to visiting a couple friends down there. I take the banjo along, and if I do not have to come back to help with a show in the evening, we sit around and have some good singing.

One of my best friends there has just left the island, unfortunately. For convenience, I'll call him "Bert"; censor says I can't give names of friends in otheroutfits. Well, Bert was once a civil engineer, and was placed in charge of a gang of local workers building quonset huts, drainage ditches, etc etc. In about three months, from this daily contact, he learned an extraordinary amount of Japanese. And through him I learned a great deal about the people who lived on this island before the Americans came.

On Sundays Bert and I used to go into the civilian enclosure, with the banjo, and swap songs with the kids. You should hear "Coming Through The Rye" and"Auld Lang Syne" sung in Japanese! These are two very popular songs with them. And of course they have all learned "You Are My Sunshine" from the American soldiers. And some have learne "Lay That Pistol Down". Of the Japanese songs, the one we liked most was a children's nature song (Bert translated it vaguely for me) called Umi-o-kaba. I don't know the spelling, but that's the pronunciation of the first line. The kids sang well, with the directness and enthusiasm that kids the world over have.

Through Bert I also became acquainted with the recently elected Mayor of the Chamorro encampment, Gregorio Sablan. He is a very well educated gentleman, elderly and slight of frame. He knows half a dozen languages or more, having been born under Spanish rule, grown up under German, and spent the last 30 years - until last summer - under Japanese rule. He graduated from the University of Peking, was an officer in the German army in the Pacific during World War one, and since then a schoolteacher. It was in his house that the man who wrote the articles in the National Geographic stayed during his brief visit here. Sablan welcomes the Americans as liberators now, for the Japanese occupation, at first fairly liberal, grew increasingly fascist and harsh. More basically, I believe that Gregorio Sablan is a man who feels he and his people, a small Pacific colony, must swim with the tide

I would like to write a great deal more about the civilians on this island - it's a story that needs telling, I believe - but I am not sure how much the censor will allow me to say. All for now.

Notes of an innocent bystander

It is pure propaganda to say these are the "notes of an innocent bystander". It is just a trick to try and convince my family reading public that I am giving them an objective and impartial report of this corner of the woods. No one can be impartial about matters that affect ore's self. Though by temperament I may be more of an innocent bystander than most - when it comes to action - yet my uniform and my beliefs color this writing.

To pretend impartiality is a common, almost universal trick, though. "Time" and "Life" are especially successful at it. "So-and-so had this opinion, which was opposed by So-and-so; the real truth is..." And they go ahead and give their own biased opinion, palming it off as historical fact.

If I had to enlist over again I think I'd go into the Seabees; they are always building something. When they wipe the sweat from their eyes they can survey their concrete accomplishments; when the echoes of my songs fade, I have only the memory.

I was told that on a lonely little island a USO show landed, but planned to leave again right away, because there was no stage. The Seabees wouldn't hear of it, though; at 4 in the afternoon they started to build a stage. All night they worked, and by 11 o'clock next morning it was ready, complete with footlights and wings. The Seabees boast that "the difficult we can do immediately; the impossible takes just a little time."

This "Yankee ingenuity" you hear about is a very real thing - tho I couldn't say for sure how much is "Yankee" and how much plain human initiative. All over this island you will run into little gadgets rigged up to make life run a little more smoothly. I guess there's no doubt that the average American soldier's familiarity with elementary mechanics has made this war go a lot smoother.

One of the most common gadgets is a home laundry run like a miniature windmill: a crude propeller turning a crank which sloshes the clothes up and down in an old gas drum.

When I mentioned to a friend that life here previous to fascism was probably pretty damn nice, he looked at me incredulously. "How could it have been? They didn't even have any roads..." Nor any moving picture palaces, or bowling alleys, he probably would have added.

A peculiarly American concept. Yet I suspect those, like Lin Yutang, who preach of the simple peasant, happy and humble. Too many rulers think humility is a fine thing - for their subjects.

Our office is a madhouse where we book stage shows on the island, give advice on building theatres, basketball courts, etc., and alot special service equipment. Major So-and-so comes in to arrange for a show to come to his outfit 's theatre; he chats very amiably with Private Seeger, who says, "Why yes, I think it can be arranged." Actually, yours truly is one <u>very</u> small cog in the office, and my main jobs to date have been to organize four or five hillbilly shows; to help design a standard stage; to build a satisfactory bass fiddle out of plywood and draw up plans for same. Etc etc etc. All of which constitutes the full-time job of one U.S. soldier in the year 1945.

Tough war, isn't it.

REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - 4 May 3, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander

Every week posters go up on the bulletin boards of some outfit announcing the coming of one of our most popular shows: "THE KANAKA DANCERS! Largest cast on the island; 150 men, women and children! All native dances: the Yap Stick Dance, the March Dance; the Women's Dance! A treat you'll never forget!"

Thinking to write a human interest story on the show, to publish in our mimeographed entertainment newspaper, I went down to the civilian encampment and arranged through Military government to interview some of the members of the show.

Antonio Angailen, leader of the Kanaka Dancers, is one of the five civic 'Chiefs' elected last New Year's day. We interviewed the dignified, erect old man down in the schoolhouse....a heavy pre-war building which had miraculously survived the battle.

Contrary to the fond belief of most soldiers,(who in innocent arrogance label all native "gooks") the Kanakas are not Chammorros. The latter are descendants of the Spanish colonial soldiers and their native wives; the Kanakas are Micronesians who migrated from down in the Marshall and Caroline islands. More than a hundred years ago a group of Kanakas landed here in their canoes, having been blown off their intended course to another island. Since then others drifted in looking for work, till there is now a colony of about 750.

The show was originally organized last fall by one of the officers in the Military Gov't., who watched them doing their ancient tribal stick dances as a pastime. Since then, every week, they pile into trucks and go out to put a show on. A purist would weep at the conglomeration of influences in the dances, but I think rather that it's extraordinary how much they have retained of their old culture. Some of the dances undoubtedly date back to the rites of an ancient stone age civilization. But they wear G.I. shoes as well as grass skirts. And some of the songs (to the accompaniment of guitar and harmonica) sound suspiciously like "You Are My Sunshine".

Some soldiers are disappointed because the hulas are not as sexy as the tourist-inluenced Hawaii variety. And like most folkdances they keep on going interminably without variation. But on the whole it's an exceedingly interesting performance.

If there are foreign influences in their show, it's not surprising. They lived under so many different imperialisms, in the shifting tides of Pacific hegemonies. Antonio Mangarero, our Kanaka interpreter, could speak Spanish, German, Japanese, English, Chamorro - not to speak of four or five Kanaka dialects.

I asked the Chief what Kanakas thought of American swing, and jitterbug, but he shrugged his shoulders, and didn't know what I meant. We explained further, and it seemed that though they had seen modern dancing done by the Japanese in town, the elders and the Catholic priest didn't approve of it. Not quite the thing for a self-respecting Kanaka girl to do!

Before the war they were all fisherman - and a few farmers. Now someof them follow the old trade; others are busy rebuilding, and many work for the army, and look forward as much as anybody to the end of the war. But the children are picking up the ways of the Yankee, and things will never be the same again.

REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - 5

May 9, 1945
(great day, yesterday)

Notes of an innocent bystander

I told you these seabees are wonderful guys, didn't I? Here's a story about one of them that beats anything.

Louis Gagnon is a truckdriver 12 hours a day in the Seabees - a plain enlisted man. But when he's through work, he becomes a promoter - but a different kind from any you ever heard of. He organized guys his outfit to go up to one of the hospitals every night and put on shows and parties for the wounded men in one of the hospitals.

He got several little string bands together - swing and hillbilly - who play short programs in different wards, taking on all comers in the way of requests. He got some barbers to come up with him to cut guys hair. He found a movie machine that wasn't being used and wangled some films from our film exchange. He persuaded his messhall to part with a pail of ice cream on special occasions, to help celebrate guys' birthdays, and because he's a promoter who knows theright people in the right places he locates cokes wherever they can be located, gets them by hook or crook, and brings them up for parties. Louie keeps a file of the home town of all the seabees in his outfit, and he asks patients where they're from. Then afterwards he consults his book, and if possible brings along with him the next night some one from the patient's home town, to chat with him!

All this not occasionally, or once or twice a week, but every night. The groups of musicians and barbers take turns going with him, but he goes 7 nights a week. Piles everybody in his truck and off they go.

Why? I don't know. I think it's just out of the goodness of his heart, really. It's the old story: he gets a deep pleasure from making these men happy. To see some guy with a leg or an arm off, grinning from ear to ear at some silly song being sung, and forgetting about his troubles - that's a real reward.

Louie is an obstinate democrat; he's proud that he's never had any assistance from the officers in doing this work. A hard-muscled trucker, always chewing gum, very serious sometimes, and then breaking out in a big grin. I don't know who he is or where he came from; an ordinary workingman with a slight accent - but what a guy!

I dropped in on a birthday party he arranged for a guy in one ward. One of the most terrific swing guitarists I ever heard was giving forth with a hillbilly fiddler - some combination. Should hear 'em do "Little Brown Jug". The guitar picker was due to go on the night shift in a few minutes, and it was his last number. He finished, and clapping echoed down the long ward. One wounded marine turned to a nurse - his bare toe sticking out the end of a long cast, was still twitching in rhythm - and said, "Say, Nurse, you tell these Seabees they got to come around again."

I could write you for many pages of this swell gang of guys, but may be you get the idea. I just realized, incidentally, this evening, one good reason why morale in the Seabees is so high - why, in spite of their long and hard work, they can always be counted on for things like this; & put on shows on the island; etc. They have a deep underlying solidarity I believe, largely because they are mostly former skilled workers, and union men. Carpenters, welders, jackhammer men and cat-skinners. And if fighting a war is work - why, they're workingmen, and take it in their big stride.

Notes of an innocent bystander

There has been too much generalization about what soldiers think. "G.I. Joe" says this, or "G.I. Joe" says that. Really, there are just as many differences of temperament, outlook, and background among soldiers, as civilians. If our common life and experience does breed certain common outlooks, remember that there is almost as great a difference between the life of a front line combat man and a rear echelon chair-warmer as there is between the latter and a civilian.

Certain soldier opinions are undeniable, however. The vote for Roosevelt among the armed forces was 60 to 40, as against 52 to 48 for the country as a whole. When the UAW-CIC polled its members on the no-strike pledge, the vote was something like 70 to 30 for it. The soldier members were 95% for it, however.

My company is probably typical: We all long to go home; we hate the regimented life; we also want total victory and no half measures with the enemy. But there is little agreement exactly how to treat the enemy nation when conquered.

We want home and family terribly - and a job to hold them together. But damn little agreement as to exactly how these are to be provided.

Like the movies and the radio, the army is a great leveler of cultural tastes and social outlook. Some acquire new prejudices and bad habits; others are forced to discard some their own.

Many soldiers pride themselves on their scepticism, but actually we are more at the mercy of propaganda from such widely read magazines as Life and Time, and Reader's Digest, than civilians are. Many surprisingly good books reach us through the paper bound armed services editions, though. Also, Book-of-the-month Club selections receive complete distribution, and are well read. "People On Our Side" and Black Boy" are two recent examples. Men who read little before during their lives, often read a lot now, for lack of other diversion.

Back in Hawaii there was a bunch in our company who used to argue each others ears off. There was more shouting than sense, usually, and it used to annoy the quieter members of the company. Few discussions had logical progression. Here, the platoon I am in now argues hardly at all. We seem to value each others friendliness, rather than his opinion. After all, we have to live in the same barracks with each other for an awfulully, awfully long time.

Thus before the election, there was a minumum of arguments, it seemed to me, and when FDR won, a minimum of exulting. When Roosevelt died, many faces fell, and a few sober comments. But at least in my hearing, no arguments.

I cannot, therefore, presume to talk for other soldiers; the censor is supposed to forbid such generalizations, anyway.

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NOTES FROM ANYWHERE:...In the chapel of one outfit is a small wooden figure of Christ, salvaged from a local church after the invasion. Like a Bonwit Teller manikin, it has movable arms, wrists, and hands, and was evidently meant to be clothed with a real robe.....Any home-made likker is called "Torpedo Juice" after the concoctions brewed by sailors using as a base the alcohol meant for torpedo fuel.....When the first USO girl-show reached the island after a six-month's drought of them here, we met them with a brass band, five floats representing the various services, a troupe of native dancers, newsreel photographers, and several hundred GI's. They stepped from the plane and a mike was put in their hands; to say they were astounded is putting it mildly.

REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - Number 7 June 8, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander

Since my special service job is to arrange as much entertainment as I can get for the men in the hospital wards on the island, I am thrown in contact with many small groups of singers and musicians. Hillbilly fiddle bands; spiritual quartets, swing guitarists and accordion players, etc. The other day I thought to ask a Lieutenant I knew down at Military Government if any of the civilian internees might not be able to put on some songs, or other music. Sure enough, he said he thought he knew what would be just right: a bunch of little Korean girls had been taught some songs by their schoolteachers, and were quite sweet to hear, the Lieutenant told me.

So now every Sunday afternoon twelve very tiny little ladies all well-scrubbed, come clop-clopping in their wooden sandals to the wards of some hospital. Whatever else it is, it's the most unusual hospital show I've been able to arrange so far. I have arranged for a friend of mine to accompany them and act as Master of Ceremonies, and explain to the astonished and amused patients who the girls are and what the songs are about.

The parents of these kids are mostly farmers from southern Korea who came here within the last five or ten years, to work for the Japanese Empire. It was called 'voluntary' service, but actually it was "Come or else...". So today the Koreans here long to go home just as much as any G.I. - every time the interpreter comes around they pester him for war news, and ask how soon the war will be over so they can go home.

The kids go to school six days a week, spend about 2/3 of the time in the classroom, and the other third working in their gardens. Some of them are learning English, but interestingly enough, the main subject in school right now is their own Korean language. Their conquerors had tried to squelch the continuing aspirations of Korea for national independence, by wiping out their culture. This was a difficult job, for Koreans had a written history 5000 years old, and had maintained for centuries a stubborn independence from both China and Japan - though over long periods they did pay tribute to the Chinese emperors.

So the Japanese forbid the children to speak their own language - if one was caught doing so he was punished. This also went for their songs, of course. Their teacher, however, used to accompany his brother, an ordained Christian pastor, back home, and now he is teaching his flock a lot of regular Methodist hymns - with Korean words. Another song they have learned is a National anthem written in 1919 by an emigre Korean nationalist - which goes to the tune of Auld Lang Syne!

The kids all wear bright cotton print blouses and skirts, homemade and handsewn, from raw material bought from the camp Trade Store. The community chipped in $2500. to give their store a working capital, and the store gets certain staple supplies in the way of food and cloth from Military government stores.

From the interpreter, a bright young Navy boy (Hawaiian of Korean ancestry) I got a translation of the first few lines of their national anthem:

"Until the waters of the eastern sea
"And the great white mountains dry and blow away
"With the grace of God, our country will exist....."

The thin clear voices rise in the silent hospital ward, singing the scottish air with an oriental inflection....

"...And the paths of our countrymen lead finally
"Back to the Homeland."

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REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - Number 8 June 9, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander

I took on an interesting job the other day. One of the hospitals here has asked Flecther and me to come down and study their methods of treating 'combat fatigue' - the neuro-psychiatric casualties, with the object of writing a play which these patients can see. The play is supposed to expose their own problems to them, much as "Lady In The Dark" exposed to many professional women in America the roots of their own psychological problems.

So Fletch and I have gone down and accompanied the doctors on their rounds; we have sat in on "group psycho-therapy" discussions, on individual patient-doctor interviews, and watched doctors use hypnosis to cure patients.

The latter is very interesting; they have taken hypnosis from the realm of magic and witchcraft, and made it a very valuable medical tool to help the patient realize his own problems.

Though the exact physical workings of the mind may not be known, nevertheless there is nothing extraordinary about hypnotism. Have you ever woken up to find that the last part of your dream has incorporated certain noises in the room - a door slamming, or something someone has said? Or have you ever held a faltering conversation with someone who is talking in his sleep? The psychologist, as deftly as a doctor opens a boil to let out the pus, talks to the patient's subconscious mind, and brings to light the causes of his trouble. He must be careful, of course, but that is where his training comes in.

This treatment is only given to a small percentage of patients....ones who really need it. Many patients realize their difficulties by simply talking commonsense with the doctor, going over their experiences, and their reactions logically. Some patients only need rest and decent treatment - but most need more. For often their subconscious is in the process of building up ailments to protect him...these, combined with the guilt feelings a patient may have for not being with his buddies on the front, can cause serious lifetime trouble for a man, unless he gets to the root of matters while he is still over here.

Fletch and I have no small job ahead of us. Our aim is to take a typical case and follow it through. The nurses and doctors of the hospital will act the parts (patients would, but they are too transitory). We have not started writing yet, wanting to learn as much as we can first.

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The Armed Forces Radio Service maintains local radio stations all over the whole damn globe, it seems, wherever American soldiers are, for their information and entertainment. They play transcriptions sent out from the states of some of the top radio shows (with the commercials blanked out), and then also many programs are recorded especially. If the station is on all day, they have to dig up some live talent shows on their own to take up the time, hence here we have several programs every day with local entertainment outfits taking charge.

I myself help out three times a week on a 'hillbilly' program. The AFRS took exhaustive surveys of serviceman's listening habits, likes and dislikes, and on the basis of that survey, alot such and such percentage of their time to classical music programs, to hot jazz programs, to sweet popular music, and to hillbilly programs. Here our hillbilly program has evolved considerably from a doleful collection of sentimental southern songs, to a much more varied program now. In our 15 minutes we'll have a couple fiddle tunes, a southern number, a popular song, maybe a spanish song, or ragtime, and a steel guitar Hawaiian number, and maybe an old banjo song by me. Nothing pleases everybody, but everybody likes something - which is best, considering our varied solder audience.

REPORTS FROM THE MARIANAS August 12, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander - No. 9

Soooooo....the war is over. Or least the radio says it is a matter of days, or maybe hours. We gave them an ultimatum; they were coy: said they would accept unconditional surrender terms if the emperor could retain complete control. So we reword it and fling it back. When will they get tired of playing and make up their minds?

Well, the war is over - and now the fighing will begin. That is, we will all start fighting to get home. Business will start fighting each other to see who can grab the first millions spent for civilian goods. The NAM will fight labor (all the harder). Etc. etc.

The night before last, when the news first came over the radio that Japan hadoffered to surrender, there was whooping and shouting. It was about 11:30 PM - one boy burst into the barracks, turned on the lights and shoutedthe news. We rolled over rubbing our eyes, and thought, Chrrrist, Peileke's drunk again. But then we heard the midnight report on the radio, and for some there was very little sleep that night. A neighboring outfit promptly rounded up some beer and had a party, with much singing. I confess I was so sleepy, though, that after that midnight newscast I rolled over and slept soundly from then on.

Next day came the reports of indecision back in the states. Reports of sidewalk interviews which said 60% in favor of holding out for complete unconditional surrender, 30% for taking the offer, and 10% in favor of leaving it up to the experts.

You should have heard the resentment of some guys! I was surprised, and as it went on, disgusted. "Those lousy c.....g civilians making a lot of money, want to keep on fighting the G...D.... war. Every single one of that 60% ought to be stuck out on one ofthese islands for two years!!!"

I nearly got into a couple fights about it. To me it seemed silly to debate the point. A few more atomic bombs, if necessary, would bring the Japanese government to its senses. Furthermore, on the other hand, what's wrong with leaving the emperor there if we take away the two main groups whose support gave him his power: the militarists and the big trusts?

I only regret that one has to show any deference to any emperors anywhere. I foresaw that the Allies would do just as they did: reword it to say that the Emp. could stay but we'd tell him what to do.

From the looks of things, it's my own personal opinion I won't get home any too soon, in spite of this quick surrender. A large force will be needed to occupy Japan, and garrison troops like me who haven't borne the brunt of combat so far, would naturally be picked for such a job.

So...as the gagman said, I'll see you in the spring if I can get through the mattress.

Pete

passed by censor (I hope).....

PS - I forgot to mention Wendell (an actor in my office) trying on his civilian suit yesterday, to our amusement. (He had it here for a show.) Nor did I mention the comment of another: "Think of the poor officers who will have to give up their private empires out here." Tsk.

REPORT FROM SAIPAN - Number 10 August 22, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander

I thought you might be interested to see firsthand some of our weapons on the psychological front. One of the attached slips was used to induce surrender in Okinawa; the other was dropped over Japan.

I don't know exactly what these two leaflets say, but I did get a translation of about seven other leaflets, which I will give you here.

These leaflets are all about 4 to 8 inches across, single pages printed on both sides. Or maybe there will be a picture on one side, a political cartoon or a slogan with a few figures to illustrate it. If there are quotations from some well-known person, either American or Japanese, there is liable to be a photo or sketch of him. In some cases there were graphs with statistics. One leaflet looked like a 10 Yen note on one side, and the appeal on the other side pointed out how the financial structure of Japan had sunk to a low level.

Here are some of the translations:

"Bombings to date have destroyed only a relatively small part of your homeland. But from now on the rate of destruction will be doubled, and Japan will ultimately be completely destroyed. By no means can you say that being an inactive spectator to this destruction is an act of loyalty toward your country. It is the act of a cowardly person. Save your country. Stop your resistance. A stitch in time saves nine."

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"TO ALL JAPANESE: These are the words of US President Harry Truman: 'Nazi Germany is now completely destroyed, and the Japanese people can surely realize from this the overwhelming might of the American land, sea, and air forces. If your political and military leaders continue the war, our forces will overwhelm yours more and more, expanding our movements and increasing our attacks. The production of munitions which support Japanese operations, transportation, and manpower is obviously declining, and continuing the war not only increases the hardships of the people of Japan tremendously, but also is of no avail. Our forces demand unconditional surrender of your military, abandoning of hostilities, and laying down of weapons. This unconditional surrender includes Japanese civilians, too. In short, it means the ending of the war. The power of the military group which has resulted in the present chaos will be destroyed. Families who love their sons who are fighting uselessly in the front lines will see them return quickly to their old jobs. Present hardships and sickness will be stopped forever. There is no reason to fear that unconditional surrender means obliteration of the Japanese people, or bondage.'"

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"WHERE ARE THE GREAT MEN OF JAPAN? Japan was made great by people who understand freedom. 'The independence of actions stems from the independence of her people,' declared Fukusawa Yukichi. Dr. Fukasaku Yasubumi freedom in his work, "Thought and Character". For many years it was championed in the Diet and government by the good name of Ozaki Yekio. When attacked by assassins, Itagaki Taisuko cried, "Though Itagaki die, freedom does not."

"These people well understand the truth of old Japan, "Only a free

(cont'd on next page)

nation can be made mighty.' In 1936, when Ozaki Yukie said, "When a person thinks he is showing most devotion to his country by checking world progress in a policy involving the old abuses of national militarism, he is actually neither devoted nor true to his country." It was probably the last thing he preached. The military restrained such utterances, and men like Araki led Japan to a military defeat.

The theory of choosing military leaders to lead Japan to ruin has now been proved wrong, and it has been well-demonstrated that men like Ozaki are in the right. The only way of guaranteeing Japan's future is by once again establishing free speech, thought, and government."

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"Anyone can see that it is helpless for Japan to fight against the whole world. The military leaders who were foolish enough to lead you into such a conflict will be punished. But if Japan is to continue and not destroy itself, the war must be ended before all you young and potent men are killed. Save the nation by saving yourself. That is your most important duty at present."

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(Accompanied by a cartoon showing a militarist trying to keep from falling over a cliff, by pulling on a rope tied to the leg of a man who is trying to keep his house from falling down.)
"No one will run away when his home is about to fall. He will repair the weak spot before it falls. Japan is facing a national crisis. The rotten portion of the national structure is the Gumbatsu. The recent air raids over Japan have proven the fact that the Gumbatsu have deceived you concerning their strength. Displace the Gumbatsu. Save yourselves and save the nation."

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"The following is from an article in Chuo Koron for April, 1925, by Hironori Mizuno: 'To underrate and look down upon the fighting spirit of the American people is a great mistake.....etc" (I shall not print the rest of this. It was accompanied by the caption: The Gumbatsu miscalculated America's fighting strength.)

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"There is no denying the facts. The figures on the other sides (statistics) show how much Japan depends on places across the ocean for necessary materials. American submarines, planes, and warships, are now sinking your ships at the rate of three million tons of shipping a year. It was really foolish of your military men to start a war against the two greatest naval powers, America and Great Britain, when they knew that the life of your nation depended upon shipping. This is one of their many blunders. Every day of resistance further destroys the fleet on which Japan's prosperity is built. Cease useless resistance - save the homeland."

* * * * *

One can note several interesting things from the above translations of seven leaflets: Nowhere is the emperor attacked. Also, however, neither are the Zaibatsu (large family trusts like Mitsui and Mitsubishi) attacked.....but only the Gumbatsu (militarists).

Also interesting is to note how the best and most democratic men of Japan are freely quoted. Not all of them, but some.....the "liberals".

Saipan, August 22, 1945

passed by censor.....

REPORT FROM THE MARIANAS - Number 11 September 16, 1945

Notes of an innocent bystander

Several friends have written and asked me what kind of soldier songsI have run into in the army. Since this is rather a large order, I have delayed doing anything about it.....but now will take a whack at it, even though it is bound to run into many pages, and only a fiend on the subject would have the perseverance to read through it all.

I've never tried hard to collect songs, but I have run into a lot, because I do a lot of singing with miscellaneous people, and I've remembered the best. At beer parties and such get-togethers, and on long boat trips where there is not much else to do but sing, read, or play cards to relieve the damned monotony.

Incidentally, in the interest of accuracy and honesty, I have not censored any of the fourletter words, so ladies, watch out.

Troops who have been in the Pacific several years have picked up the song "Bless 'em all" from the Aussies. The songbooks havea regulation version, but every outfit that sings it very much usually has it's own set of verses.....the first one, here, is widely known, especially among Marines:

1) They sent for the Army
to come to Tulagi
But General MacArthur said 'No'
And this is the reason
it isn't the season
Besides, there is no U S O

Bless 'em all, bless 'em all
The long and the short and the tall
Bless all the admirals in ComSoPac*
They don't give a shit
If we never get back
So we're saying goodbye to them all
As over thegangplank we crawl
There'll be no promotions
This side of the ocean
So cheer up my lads, bless 'em all

(PS - some outfits sing 'Bless 'em all'
and others sing 'Fuck 'em all')

2) They sent for the Navy
to come to Tulagi
The gallant Navy agreed
With one thousand sections
in different directions
My god, what a fucked up stampede

(repeat chorus)

3) They sent for the nurses
to come overseas
The reason was perfectly clear
To make a good mariage
and push a carriage
While fucking all hands, my dear

(repeat chorus)

*ComSoPac - a typical Navy abbreviated title meaning "Commander South Pacific"

There is another really wonderful Aussie song which I learned from some friends here who were formerly stationed on New Cal (New Caledonia). The melody is the fine old music hall tune "Sweet Betsy From Pike" also uses....except for the chorus, which goes as shown. It's called "Dinky Die" with the Die pronounced like the i in 'kite'.

1) He went up to London and straightaway strode
To army headquarters on Horse Ferry Road
To see all the blodgers who dodge all the straff
By getting soft jobs on the headquarters staff
Chorus: Dinky DIE! dinky dinky die,
Dinky DIE! dinky dinky die,
By getting soft jobs on the headquarters staff

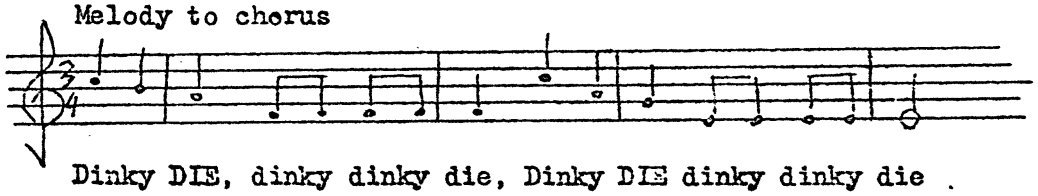
2) The lousy lance corporal said, pardon me please,
You've mud on your tunic and blood on your sleeve
You look so disgraceful that people will laugh
Said the lousy lance corporal on the headquarters staff
Dinky DIE! dinky dinky die,(twice)
Said the lousy lance corporal on the headquarters staff.

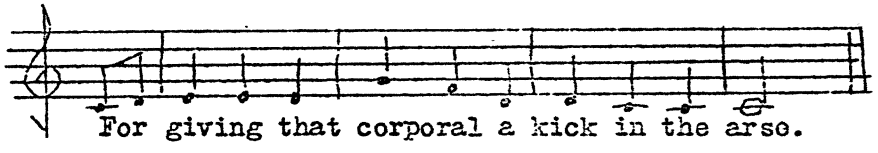
3) The digger just shot him a murderous glance
He said, we're just back from the shambles in France
Where whizzbangs are flying and comforts are few
(slowly →) And brave men are dying.....
(in tempo →) For BASTARDS like you
Dinky DIE! dinky dinky die
Dinky DIE! dinky dinky die
(slow) And brave men are dying....
(in tempo) For BASTARDS like you.

4) We're shelled on the left and we're shelled on the right
We're bombed all the day and we're bombed all the night
If something don't happen and that mighty soon
There'll be nobody left in the bloody platoon
(Chorus as in other verses)

5) The story soon got to the ears of Lord Gort
Who gave the whole matter a great deal of thought
He awarded the digger a V.C. and two bars
For giving that corporal a kick in the arse
(Chorus as before)

Melody to chorus



Dinky DIE, dinky dinky die, Dinky DIE dinky dinky die

For giving that corporal a kick in the arse.

(P.S.- Have decided to put complete melodies on p.10

There must have been literally hundreds of thousands of parodies made up by soldiers in this war . But a parody, unless it is a good song in its own right, will not catch on and last. So 99.99% percent of these ditties are sung for a laugh once or twice by the persons who made them up, and then forgotten. Newspapers and service magazines have published thousands of them (look through back issues of Yank, or Leatherneck, etc.) and Special Service has distributed many which were made up for some soldier variety show. Most of them are so bad they don't catch on at all.

Here are a few of the better ones I've run into, though. The first here was made up by a friend of mine here to the tune of "Big Rock Candy Mountain", and I sang it on the local hillbilly radio program with some success:

"Oh, the city of San Francisco, it's a town that's fair and fine
The whisky flows from faucets and the water tastes like wine
There are majors there to tote your bags, and colonels sweep the floors
The beer is cold, and so I'm told
The girls all wait at the Golden Gate
In the City of San Francisco

There were more verses, but that's representative. Another song here, I learned from a Red Cross girl, and have since found several others who know slightly different versions - it's a parody to "Pretty Baby", and, so I was told, was

made up by stateside WAVES.

If you're nervous in the service and you don't know what to do
Have a baby, have a baby
If you're hurried and you're worried and you're feeling kinda blue
Have a baby, have a baby
If you're tired of regimentation and you don't like your chow
And you'd go back to civilization if you only knew how
I can help you, pretty Wavie, if you'd like to leave the Navy
Just have a pretty baby on me
I really mean it!
Just have a pretty baby on me.

The other day I was singing at a beer party when someone handed up a copy of Leatherneck magazine and asked me to sing this song, printed in the letters column....it got a terrific hand: (to the tune of 'Don't Fence Me In')
(It was entitled, "Stateside service")

Oh, give me land, lots of land, under starry skies above
Don't ship me out!
Let me rest at my desk with the pencil that I love...
Don't ship me out!
Let me dream up ideas for the training courses
Punching out lines for the fighting forces
Keeping far away from the original sources
Don't ship me out
I want no role in that commotion on the ocean
Where the fellers shoot to kill
Just let me mope like a feather merchant dope
At the Annex on the hill
Cause while I'm armed to the teeth with my illustrations
Carrying the torch for the United Nations
I can get along without the decorations
Don't ship me out!

Quite often some small jazz band, hillbilly band, or group of singers that get together to put on shows, will use a local, topical parody for a novelty song on their shows. An air corps combo here has a weekly radio program on which they often use those parodies. Here's one, to the tune of "Holiday for Strings":

We will leave the Marianas
Catch the Japs in their pajamas
Drop our eggs on Fujiyama, Tokahama, Yokahama
Matsuama, Kobe and-a have a holiday on wings
We will fly o'er Kito Jima
Iwo Jima, Chi Chi Jima
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha Jima, Okinawaw is a shima
We'll have lots of gasolina for our holiday on wings
Guam, Saipan, we love you Tinian
Don't knocka, you will find
We'll rockya, block by blocka, in Osaka
Matsu-o-ka hear us, you will learn
To fear us, here we come
What's moya, we'll drink saki in Nagoya
Retto Jima, Kato Jima,
Iwo Jima, Chi Chi Jima
My Oh my Minami Jima, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha Jima
This I know, that it will seema like a holiday on wings.

It's in the debonair air corps tradition all right.....a cute song. I liked it..... but especially after the atomic bomb, I feel war and bombs are a little too grim and serious for such things. I wonder if aviators would be so debonair, anyway, if they knew the impact of their bombs from a closer distance.

Very often a singer will change around a song he knows in some small way to fit the local situation. A friend of mine here sings a terrific version of "The Man Who Comes To Our House Every Single Day" - and his last verse runs like this:

Now, when I grow up to be a man, I don't want to be
A soldier or a sailor - uh, uh, none of that stuff for me
I don't want to be a doctor with an office down town
I only want to be that man who comes around.

And the other night we put on a show out on a ship in the harbor, and one of the sailors got up a sang a few songs (after everybody had urged him for a full five minutes).....and his parodies were received with howls and cheers. He had paraphrased the first verse of "Smoke on the water" (one of the best hillbilly war songs, and quite popular here....at least for fans of that type of music)

There will be a sad day coming for the bos'ns of this time
They must answer to a seaman and it's troubling their mind
All the seamen who has feared them will rejoice on that great day
When the temporary ratings have been taken all away
There'll be smoke on...etc (Chorus as in original)

This same seaman, in response to repeated calls, sang a song he had made up about an incident which occurred last Christmas on the ship. Enlisted men, sore because the officers could go ashore to get drunk when they couldn't, broke open the hold where the beer was kept, and got roaring drunk. No one ever found who broke the lock, it seems. The sailor who sang the song, said first: "You all come down and see me in the brig now, cause that's where'll I'll probably land for this."
The song went to the tune of "Old Chisolm Trail"

Who broke the lock on the foreward hold?
We'll find out before we go
Coma ki yi yippi yippi yay yippi yay
Coma ki yi yippi yippi yay (after each verse)

They come by ones and they come by twos
pretty soon the beer all flew

Took it by the can and they took it by the case
Everybody had a smile on his face

The beer was hot, it wouldn't do
Everybody grabbed him a CO^2 (A CO^2 fire extinguisher, sprayed on a case of beer, will cool it well)
A 1st Lieutenant came snooping around
And boy, was he surprised at what he'd found

The cans were strewed both here and there
And boys, you could smell the beer in the air

The officers went ashore just to celebrate
The crew on board had all they could take

Who broke the lock, the question was asked
As far as I'm concerned, they can kiss my ass

This sailor also sung his own version of the widespread service song "Glory, Glory what a helluva way to live" (Tune: John Brown's Body)

We have seen our aircraft carriers, we have heard the cruisers roar
We have seen our mighty wagons sweeping everything before
But we're stuck upon a tincan till this earthly strife is o'er
Then we ain't going to sea no more
Chorus: Holy Jesus, what a helluva way to live (three times)
Then we ain't going to sea no more.
Submarine men all are heroes and the tankermen are tops
Landingcraft men do their duty, and the Seabees never stop
Aviators get the medals, tincan sailors get the knocks
And we ain't going to sea no more
Repeat chorus.
There is rust upon her focs'l, there is rust upon her stacks
Fuel oil in her bilges, salt upon her depth charge racks
Barnacles upon her bottom, seaweeds growing on her sides
And we ain't going to sea
Repeat chorus.
When Marines and troops are landing and the going gets too rough
Then the call goes out for tincans, shell the beach and blast it up
Stateside papers praise the cruisers, Davy Jones gets two more cans
And we ain't going to sea no more
Repeat chorus.

I think this last song is really quite a classic in it's way. The whole ship sung the chorus at the very top of their lungs.

Now here are a couple more miscellaneous verses here and there....parodies which have bobbed up here and there. Here is an extra verse to Rum and Coca Cola which a swing band made quite well-known on this island:

On Saipan island it is clear
Enlisted man gets just one beer
While officers get the whisky and wine
Making whoopee all the time.

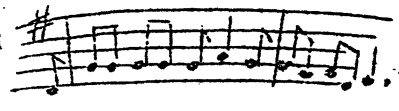
A complete parody on 'Rum and Coke' was sent me by a sailor on a ship, who heard me singing on the local hillbilly radio program....this is a verse from it:

When sailor boys are on the shore
They drink their beer, then drink some more
But when the boys are out to sea
They stick to Alky and Pepsy
Drinking Alky-pepsi cola
Just to keep the old gloom away
Drinking alky-pepsi cola
Anytime of night or day
(And other verses.)

*Alky is torpedo alcohol, commonly swiped by sailors to spike drinks.

There is quite a famous parody to the Marines hymn, made up by a 27th Div. army man, tired of not getting credit, he believed.....this is a gripe of many infantrymen who have fought and won islands in the Pacific, to find that most people think the Marines have done it all. I only remember the last two lines:"..and the army is the secret weapon of the United States Marines."

A number of the songs we used to sing back in Air Force training camps one doesn't hear much of.....the numerous marching ditties, such as "I've Got Sixpence", "Ten More Miles to Go", etc. However, this famous one is still sung:

"The coffee that they give you
"They say is mighty fine,

&c.

"It's good for cuts and bruises
"And tastes like iodine.
Chorus: I don't want no more of army life
Gee but I want to go home!"
(And several dozen more verses)

There is one song, however, that has lasted through thick and thin, and is also a classic, in its way. To the tune of "John B's Body, again:

"When the war is over we will all enlist again"(3 times)
"Like HELL we will like H ELL.

"We were only only fooling" (repeat three times)
"Like HELL we were like HELL."

To the same melody goesthis verse, which only last night I heard sung in the showers by some rock happy guys:

"All we do is sign the payroll
But we never get a god damn cent."

Maybe I am discouraging you; do you think all soldiers do is gripe? Well.....a guy has to be inspired by something to make up a song, and disgust for war, and the army (or navy) seemsto be the most common emotion. However, one does often run into an outfit which has hooked on to a song boasting about itself.....on the same plane as the Marines Hymn. I met up once with a combat engineer outfit that had a very popular singer-guitar player in it. He had made up several parodies which the whole outfit sang with hardly any encouragement. This one used the Marines Hymn for a melody:

From the shores of Maine to Frisco
Fighting engineers are we
We build our country's bridges
To make way for victory
Whenever we are needed to build or to repair
You can bet that you will always find
The one-hundred-and-fiftieth there. (150th=name of Co.)

When I was in the AAF ground crew line, I and some friends made up what I still think is a darn good song, though it hasn't been sung much since then: (The melody is 'Lincoln & Liberty Too' in 2/4 time)

You have heard of the pilot so daring
As he gracefully floats through the air
But without all the boys in the hangar
He couldn't be flying up there
Chor: So here's to the aircraft mechanic
And oilers and greasemonkeys, too
Our motto and aim, keep 'em flying
Three cheers for the army ground crew
O, give us the wrench and the pliers
The will and the spirit is there
If the thing has two wings and an engine
We'll fix it to fly in the air
Repeat chorus.

I shan't bother to write down here a couple dozen miscellaneous and inconsequential little parodies I have seen, or helped make up. Many a bulletin board will have posted up on it some little poem or verse a local man has composed. Here's a few verses from a poem made up by a hospital patient here after the Iwo campaign:

1) A small volcanic mountain
Far out in the sea
Has captured world attention
and made Marine history

2) This rocky little island
5 miles long at the best
Held atop its volcanic ash
War at its bitterest

(3), (4), and other verses tell of the battle, then it ends up:

Historian of this battle site, let it be truthfully said
Each side fought well on Iwo. We honor them their dead
May God above prevail for us, to stem this tide of hate
Where men must die for victory, so men can live for hate

This type of serious and earnest poem is not at all uncommon. There is another type which is often pinned on bulletin boards....this one received much publicity through Dick Jurgens Marine Show, which came through here:

When bugles sound their final notes
And bombs explode no more
And we return to what we did
Before we went to war
The sudden shift of status
Will make some worthy gentlemen
Feel like an awful mess.
Just think of some poor captain
Minus all his silver bars
Standing up beind some counter
Selling peanuts and cigars
And think ofall the Majors
When their oak leaf's far behind
And the uniform they're wearing
Is the Western Union kind

Shed a tear for some poor colonel
If he doesn't feel himself
Jerking sodas isn't easy
When your eagle's on the shelf
Tis a bitter pill to swallow
Tis a matter for despair
Being messengers and clerks again
Is a mighty cross to bear
So - be kind to working people
Wherever you may go
For the waiter at your table
May be your old C.O.

* * * * * *

I learned from a marine friend who had served with the British 8th Army an amusing, if libelous (and chauvinist) song, sung by the Tommies when they were in Egypt:

O, the wogs fuk the dogs
And the dogs fuk the wogs
Fuk Farouk, fuk Farouk
Hang his bollocks on a hook
O Farida, fuking great lumps of duf
O, farida, fuking great lumps of duf
Oh, Fareeda oh Farida
how the boys would like to ride her
Maleesh, quoiskiteer, bardin
Fuk farouk!

It goes to the tune of the Egyptian National Anthem, which I have scribbled above.

Here is a rather amusing topical song from New Zealand...I like it because it makes fun of us for a change.

1) When they send the last Yank home
How happy the kiwis* will be
They will pray for the day
When they all sail away
And all ofthe girls are free
Nevermore they'll be alone
They'll each have a girl of their own
if love still exists
they may even be kissed
When they send the last Yank home

(*The Kiwi is the national bird, and the term here denotes a New Zealander)

2) When they send the last Yank home
How lonely some women will be
They be back on army pay

(cont'd on next page)

No flats or apartments free.
Evermore they'll be alone
For their kind the Kiwis won't own
All they'll have are their clothes,
Kids who talk through their nose
When they sendthe last Yank home.

* * *

You may have heard of the song made up by Chamorros on Guam during the Japanese occupation, "Mister Sam, Sam, won't you please come back to Guam." I had heard several different versions of it from different soldiers and Marines who fought on Guam, but recently came to hear it directly from some Guam Chamorros who came up here to live, and have been singing every Sunday in various hospitals on the island.

8th of December, 1941
8th of December, when they came to Guam
Chorus: O, Uncle Sam, Sam, dear Uncle Sam
Won't you please come back to Guam
Early Monday morning, the Japanese came to bomb
The people nearly crazy, right here in Guam
(Chorus after each verse)
The Japanese planes fly overhead, drop many bomb
We need your help so badly, won't you please come
back to Guam?
Raise up your banner of red, white, and blue
You know the people in Guam are very few.

Nippon Army, Navy, and Marines
Got plenty ketchup, no got pork and beans.

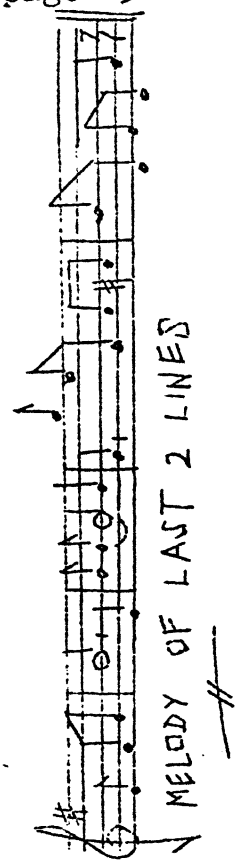
We don't like Saki, we like Canadian*
We don't like Japanese, we like American
(*Whisky)
16 destroyers, and many battleship
Please send some help, and please do
send it quick.

There are many verses and versions to this song. When they sing it they use straight two-part hillbilly harmony, and the song sounds swell, and goes over with the audience. In case you are wondering how come they get such a typically American little folk tune, I should mention that Chamorros nowadays are further from the culture of their ancestors than Hawaiians. They do sing some old songs dating back to Spanish days, and on this island they sing some Japanese songs. But they all know a number of American songs, hillbilly, barbershop, or popular.

* * * *

The last song I'll mention is, I think, one of the best. It was made up by a friend of mine here, a Seabee named Carl Cliff (from Spokane, Washington). The melody is, of course, Swinging On A Star, and it gets cheers from Navy men who hear it. It's called: "Or would you rather be a chief?"

A seaman is a fellow who has only one stripe
The fact he's not promoted is his favorite gripe
His brain is warped by rerate tests
And the jobs they give him, they're not the best
But if you're tired and you still refuse relief
You may go up to be a chief.



Or would you like to stay on K.P.?
Do a guard detail until 3?
Dream about all the beer that could be?
Or would you rather be a chief?
Now, a chief is a fellow who works awfully darn slow
There isn't a singlething that he doesn't know
Everyone knows he's never in the sack
And he's willing to work until you break your back
But if he drivesyou and drivesyou, I'm afraid
He may go up to be a braid
Or would you like to eat the same grub?
Leave your trays for some seaman to scrub?
Invite your friends to your own private club?
Or would you rather be a braid?
A braid is a Misten who has goldon his cap
He's winning the war for us all over the map
He's planning the battles, and bringing in supplies
But it takes the old grog to open his eyes
If he did everything the correspondents say,
Why are we out here anyway?
Or would you like to stay where you are?
Gripe and growl, and fight near and far?
Or be better off than you are.....

We'd rather be.....civilians.....by far!
Forget this doggone military life!

(Of course, now that the war is over, some words in this should be changedto the past tense.)

* * * * * * * *

After you have read all these songs, I wouldn't want you to get the idea that soldiers are always singing them. The average guy might not know more than 2 or 3 of these songs, and would sing them only on a rare beer party. For some reason riding on the top of an open truck sometimes makes guys want to holler, too.

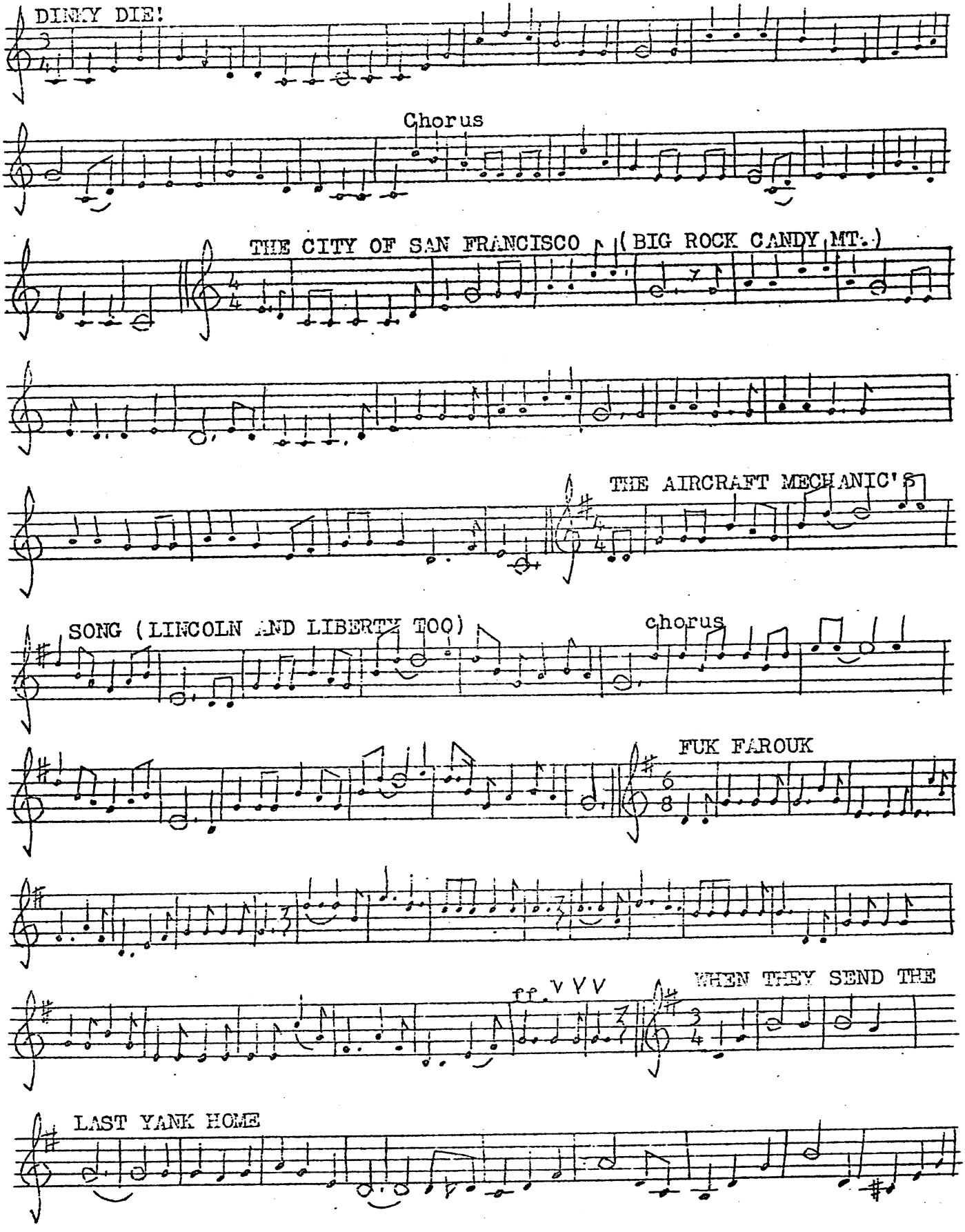
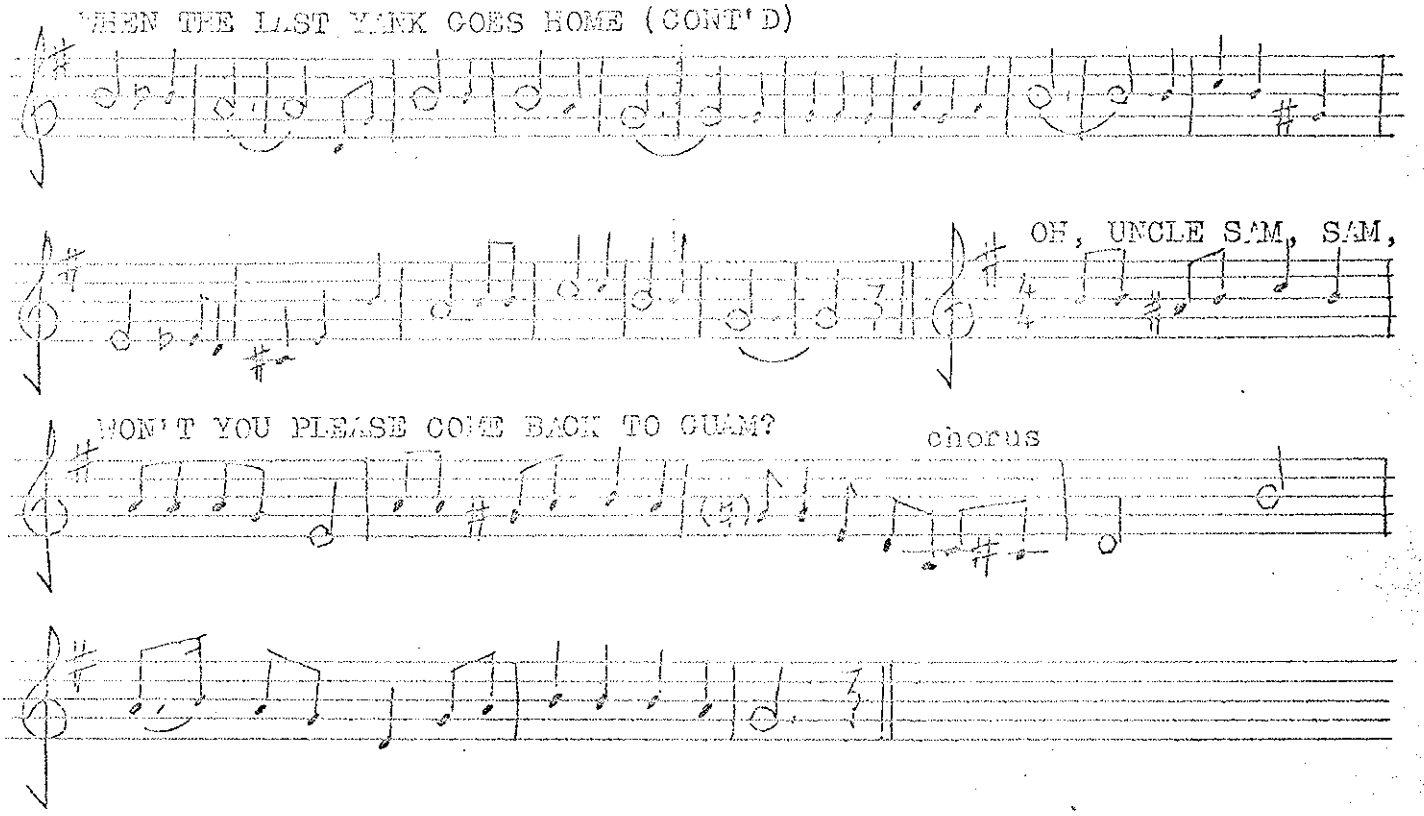
Furthermore, the songs soldiers sing tend to be those which they liked back in that dim civilian past. When I go out and lead a little singing, the hillbilly fans (60% southerners) will ask for Roy Acuff numbers, the hepcats will want jive, others will want barbershop harmony songs, old favorites, college songs, etc. I have got to know and classify these many kinds of songs, so that once I know what kind of crowd I am in, can lead off with other songs I know they will like. There are, it's true, a few 'common denominator' songs....ones in any group, which are well-known enough and liked, for almost anyone. Red River Valley, Dinah, Old Millstream, etc.

Though we don't seem to have any stirring or exciting war songs (such as, for example, the Russian "Meadowland") nevertheless it is interesting to note that certain straight patriotic numbers are liked for their straightforward zing and zip: Caissons, Marines Hymn, Anchors Away, Air Corps Hymn.....many polkas are liked for the same reason. Also, through movies and radio, an increasing number of soldier get to know and like Russian marching songs, and would sing them if it wasn't for the language difficulty.

Which is about all I know on the subject...and I better quit my talking. Hope this has been of interest.

Peter Seeger, Saipan - 1945

******FINIS*******

At first I was going to write in certain melodies along the margin, where the words were printed, but I found that I didn't have enough room. Music to "Bless 'em all," and others can be got at music stores.

WHEN THE LAST YANK GOES HOME (CONT'D)