

N.E.I. FORM VANGUARD OF WORLD SEA-WAR

says Dr. P. S. GERBRANDY

Following is the talk to be broadcast by the Netherlands Prime Minister and Minister for the Colonies over Radio Orange at 7.45 B.S.T. this evening:-

Compatriots, particularly in the Netherlands East Indies:

Last Saturday and Sunday, thousands of Dutch people in all parts of the world sent up their prayers to the Almighty for the Netherlands East Indies which are in dire distress and where a fierce battle is raging.

The Netherlands East Indies have the privilege of forming the vanguard in this world war on the seas, which is at present straining the nerves of all.

It is, and will ever be, to the glory of the Dutch fighting forces in the Archipelago, that they have entered upon this vanguard action with heroic courage and have struck the Japanese assailant those first blows which in the further course of the struggle will prove to have been the first of a number of causes leading to the doom of the enemy.

We, the Netherlands and the Netherlands East Indies, are at war with Japan.

True, but this war is a world war, extending far beyond the Java Sea; it embraces all the oceans of the world.

In this world-embracing struggle the Indies are involved, and in particular Java, one of the most valuable strongholds of the sea.

Valuable in the first place by reason of its oil. That - so much is certain - the Japanese will never get. But I am not speaking of that now.

Valuable also as a barrier between the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean. But I am not speaking of that either.

The Indies, and in particular Java, are one of the most valuable strongholds of the sea in this struggle, since it is here that the enemy is bound to attack. He cannot avoid it, just as the German cannot avoid the Crimea in his quest for the Caucasus.

That very fact gives us our opportunity to strike the enemy, for it is here that he becomes vulnerable, however superior his forces may be. Helfrich has understood this. One of the problems of this world war is the question where to meet the enemy, where best to give battle.

That spot is here, at this outpost in the seas. This means risks. Those must be taken, and those have been taken, for instance at the end of last week.

As Minister for the Colonies and on behalf of the Netherlands Government, I express our joy and satisfaction at the fact that Jhr. Tjarda van Starckenborgh Stachouwer, Helfrich, Doorman, ter Poorten, van Oyen, all the Indian fighting forces, have made this outpost in the battle of the oceans to us far more than an outpost, that they have made it for us our own country and our own people, the noble material in which West and East are interwoven.

As Minister for the Colonies and on behalf of the Netherlands Government, I express our joy and satisfaction at the fact that you, men of the Netherlands East Indies, have made this outpost also the instrument with which to strike at the hated enemy, that you have inflicted on him the first wounds which, with the wounds that will yet be inflicted on him, will cause his death.

Rest assured, Governor-General, that the Netherlands Government in London is doing everything possible to send you the allied reinforcements which should enable you to strike long and hard.

And you, heroes, who perished in the waters of the Java Sea which you sailed so bravely, you who sailed all the seas, for the freedom of which we are fighting - to you I now bid an eternal farewell!

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