

# COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN., SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 4, 1942

TELEGRAPH SERVICE BY ASSOCIATED PRESS, UNITED PRESS, CHICAGO DAILY NEWS FOREIGN SERVICE, INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 16 PAGES \*\*\* PRICE 5 CENTS

FIRM  
GRESS  
US PAY

ent Profit  
ntracts,  
ges

S. LOAN  
fiteering,  
old

COSTLY  
g Project  
asteful Of  
erial By

ED  
Statf Writer  
3. — Evi-  
tion despite  
ary plants,  
ure that a  
ill make a  
war con-  
f Congress

Committee  
program,  
v.) unfold-  
ie Govern-  
Magnesium  
s, Nev., is  
four of its  
g between

## Langley, Two Other Navy Vessels Sunk In Pacific With 700 Seamen; Allies Give Way To Japs In Burma

\* \* \*

### FORMULA TO SATISFY INDIA BELIEVED NEAR

Cripps And Wavell Work On Self-Government Offer

F. D. R. MAY STEP IN

Speculation Arises After U. S. Envoy Arrives In New Delhi — Chiang Urges Acceptance Of Compromise

By The United Press  
NEW DELHI, April 3. — A formula that may satisfy India's demands for a native war minister and swing Indian political leaders to support of Britain's self government offer was believed to have been worked out Friday by Sir Stafford Cripps, British negotiator, and Sir Archibald Wavell, the Allied military chief.

A Chungking dispatch said there was speculation that President Roosevelt might intervene to save the New Delhi negotiations by of-

### War Summary

WASHINGTON—Aircraft tender Langley, destroyer Peary, tanker Pecos sunk by Jap bombs in Pacific with 700 lives lost.

BURMA—Japs force British to withdraw from Frome; Chinese fall back on left flank.

INDIA—Cripps and Wavell work out formula for Indian Independence which they hope will be accepted.

RUSSIA—The Soviet westward offensive appears worn down to patrol forays and raids against Nazi forward bases.

### PROME IS ABANDONED

British Yield At Approaches To Central Oil Fields, Retire To New Line

INVADERS BEAT FORWARD FROM FALLEN TOUNGOO

U. S.-Led Chinese Falling Back—Fall Of Port Denied

By WILLIAM SMITH WHITE  
Associated Press War Editor  
The Allies had lost still more ground last night in Burma, the one Pacific theater of decisive action.

On the right the British forces defending the approaches to the central Burmese oil fields were forced to abandon Frome and took up new positions just to the north of the city and below the Maton River.

Chinese Fall Back  
On the left continued Japanese progress against the Chinese troops under command of the American Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell was re-

### STANDARD OIL CLUNG TO AXIS AIRLINE DEAL

State Department 'Blacklist' Required To End Service To Condor, Lati

By ARTHUR F. DEGREVE  
United Press Staff Writer  
WASHINGTON, April 3.—Standard Oil Co. (New Jersey) rebuffed a Government request that it stop supplying gasoline to a German

Famed Old Aircraft Tender Lost Off Java Under Deadly Hail Of Enemy Bombs— Was Former Plane Carrier

DESTROYER PEARY'S CREW FIGHTS TILL SHIP SINKS

Tanker Pecos, Laden With Survivors, Goes Down Under Planes' Attack

By The Associated Press  
WASHINGTON, April 3.—The aircraft tender Langley, destroyer Peary and naval tanker Pecos have been bombed and sunk by the Japanese in the Southwest Pacific, the Navy announced Friday night, with a loss of life estimated at more than 700 officers and men.

The loss of these three ships raised the Navy's total losses of all types of vessels from all causes to 25 ships so far in the war

The Pecos was sunk under heavy air bombardment south of Java while en route to port with several hundred survivors of the Langley which previously had been bombed and sunk with a loss of only 14 persons.

Personnel losses when the Pecos went down were reported at two-thirds of the total personnel of the Langley and Pecos.

These two ships were sunk early in March.

The old World War type destroyer Peary was bombed in port at Darwin about Feb. 19. Her crew fought for her to the last, then members swam ashore, some through wreckage and flaming oil. Loss of life was light.

Two of the commanders of the three ships were rescued. They were Commander Robert P. McConnell of the Langley, San Diego; and Commander Elmer P. Abernathy of the Pecos, Los Angeles. Lieut. Comdr. John Michael Birmingham of New York City, commander of the Peary was killed.

#### **Crew Heroic**

The communique reporting the loss of the vessels was accompanied by a statement by Capt. Felix B. Stump who praised especially the heroic action of the Peary's crew and said that "no man abandoned ship until the ship sank completely under them." A day or so ago Captain Stump told reporters how one man from the ship, not then identified, had fired his gun until the water lapped at his knees, then swam ashore through flaming oil and suffered such severe burns he died.

The Navy communique said "Tokyo claimed the sinking of the Langley at least three times during the first month of the war, during which period the Langley was not damaged. She was sunk after a prolonged attack by the enemy south of Java in late February.

"The Pecos, a small tanker, employed in supplying fuel to units of the fleet in the Far East, was sunk in early March.

The Peary, a World War destroyer which received minor damage in the Japanese bombing attacks on Cavite immediately after the outbreak of the war, was sunk

*(Please Turn the Page)*

# THREE NAVAL VESSELS, 700 SEAMEN ARE LOST

Former Aircraft Carrier Lang-  
ley Sunk Off Java

## VICTIMS OF JAP BOMBS

Destroyer Peary's Crew Fought  
Until Guns Awash; Tanker  
Pecos Goes Down, Laden  
With Survivors

*(Continued From Page One)*

in the harbor at Darwin about Feb. 19. The Peary had participated in many of the offensive actions of our destroyers in the Far East.

### Relatives Notified

"War conditions in the South-west Pacific have greatly complicated and delayed reports of casualties, and the public is urged to refrain from initiating individual inquiries regarding casualties. The next of kin of all casualties are always notified by telegram as soon as possible."

The Langley, displacing 11,050 tons, was formerly the fleet collier Jupiter. Launched in 1912, she served as a collier until March, 1920, when she was taken out of commission to be converted into an aircraft carrier. In 1937 she was further modified and reclassified as an aircraft tender.

The Pecos, a 5,400-ton craft, was launched in 1921. She was 475 feet overall, 56 feet in the beam, and was armed with four 5-inch and two 3-inch guns. She could carry 7,850 tons of oil, exclusive of her own fuel.

The destroyer Peary, with a standard displacement of 1,190 tons, was 314 feet four inches long, 30 feet 8 inches in the beam, and her main armament was four 4-inch 50-caliber guns.

In 1922, when the Langley was converted to an aircraft carrier she was renamed the Langley in honor of Prof. Samuel P. Langley, aviation pioneer. Five years later the already historic vessel became a seaplane tender and in that capacity she carried a normal complement of 64 officers and 648 enlisted men.

#### Named for Explorer

The tanker Pecos carried a normal complement of 15 officers and 302 enlisted men. The flush deck, four-stacker Peary, named in honor of the Arctic explorer Robert E. Peary, normally carried 9 officers and 118 enlisted men.

In his graphic personal account of the losses of the vessels, Captain Stump, who has just returned from the Southwest Pacific where he was attached to the Allied headquarters staff in Java, recalled that the Peary was bombed in Manila Bay, the Philippines, soon after the war broke out.

"A number of her officers and enlisted personnel wounded then were transferred to the naval hospital and later evacuated to the South on a hospital ship that went in to take out 'badly wounded,'" Stump said.

"She later arrived in Darwin after being bombed several times en route. She was repaired and was again bombed while on convoy trip. She was finally sunk in a heavy bombing at Port Darwin.

"The survivors of the Langley were picked up by two destroyers which later transferred them to the Pecos, after which the Pecos was sunk in a heavy air bombing.

"After floating around in the water for four hours and a half the survivors were rescued by a destroyer and taken to an Australian port.

"Approximately two-thirds of the combined crews of the two ships were lost."

---