

# JAP PLANES RAID U. S. POSITIONS IN WESTERN ALEUTIAN ISLANDS

## Attacks on Sunday and Monday Do No Damage; Five American Bombers Missing in Solomon Islands Actions.

Washington, Feb. 2.—(A. P.)—The navy reported Tuesday that Japanese planes had attacked American positions in the western Aleutian islands on Sunday and Monday but caused no damage.

This was the first attack reported on United States bases in these north Pacific islands since last June, altho on Jan. 28 two Jap planes had bombed American ships operating to the westward of our positions, which were not specifically identified.

The raids were reported in a com-

munique which disclosed heavy air activity over the weekend in the south Pacific. In one attack against the Japanese-held Shortland area of the northwestern Solomon islands, made by a flight of Flying Fortresses, twenty enemy Zero fighters intercepted the American planes and three of the Fortresses are missing and a fourth is badly damaged.

Two American dive bombers also were reported missing, having failed to return from a raid on the Jap air base at Munda in the central Solomons.

The communique said that on Jan. 26, a week ago Tuesday, army planes had bombed and scored near hits on a Japanese cargo ship at Tarawa island in the Gilbert group. This, as far as is known here, is the first time that land-based bombers have struck so deeply into enemy mandated island territory. Tarawa is approximately 1,000 miles from the nearest American bases which are Guadalcanal, the Fiji islands and Samoa.

### TEXT OF NAVY COMMUNIQUE.

The text of navy communique No. 268:

South Pacific:

"1—On Jan. 26:

"United States army planes bombed and scored near hits on a Japanese cargo ship at Tarawa harbor in the Gilbert group.

"2—On Jan. 30:

"(A)—During the morning, Marauder medium bombers (Martin B-26) attacked enemy positions at Munda.

"(B)—During the afternoon Marauders and Flying Fortress heavy bombers (Boeing B-17) carried out a second attack on enemy installations at Munda. Fires were started as the result of hits in the enemy areas.

"3—On Jan. 31:

"A United States destroyer shelled a number of enemy barges off Cape Esperance on Guadalcanal island.

"4—On Feb. 1:

"(A)—During the morning a force of dive bombers and Avenger torpedo planes (Gruman TBF) with Wildcats (Gruman F-4F) escort, bombed the enemy-held area at Munda. Two dive bombers failed to return.

"(B) During the morning a force of Flying Fortresses, with Warhawk (Curtiss P-40) and Lightning (Lockheed P-38) escort, bombed a large Japanese cargo ship off Shortland island. Three direct hits were scored. All United States planes returned, altho three of the fighters had suffered damage from antiaircraft fire.

"(C)—A second wave of Fly Fortresses, which had been dispatched

"(C)—A second wave of Fly Fortresses, which had been dispatched to attack shipping in the Buin-Shortland area, was attacked by twenty enemy Zeros. Three of our planes are missing and a fourth returned badly damaged.

"(D)—United States ground forces on Guadalcanal continued to advance slowly toward the west.

"North Pacific:

"5—On Jan. 31:

"Two Japanese float type Zeros bombed United States positions on the western Aleutians. No damage was suffered.

"6—On Feb. 1:

"Japanese planes attacked United States surface units and shore positions in the western Aleutians. No damage to ships or shore installations resulted."