

ANOTHER NAVAL AND AIR BATTLE BELIEVED BREWING IN ALEUTIANS

Pearl Harbor, June 15.—The third great naval-aerial battle of the Pacific war is brewing in the foggy reaches of the north Pacific where United States forces are striking at Japanese who have toeholds on the remote Attu and Kiska islands, well informed quarters understood Monday.

There was no indication yet whether the Japanese had attempted to press farther eastward, but it was believed certain that United States planes were striking at them.

Informants here believed the Japanese had sent a naval force and a transport-borne troop force to the Aleutian zone, and that at least one aircraft carrier was included, with a cruiser-destroyer escort and several transports.

It was known publicly here that the United States has considerable air strength based on the Alaskan area.

It was believed that if the Japanese provoked a new engagement in the northern Pacific they would be likely to make a simultaneous thrust

in the central or southern Pacific, from bases in the Caroline, Mariana and Marshall islands, in an attempt to split the United States forces.

If they attempted to push farther east in the Aleutian chain toward Alaska, informants said, they would provoke a new major battle which would probably develop into a hide and seek engagement due to the prevalent fogs.

The Japanese are thoroly familiar with the area, due to their years long "fishing" operations in which
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SEA AND AIR BATTLE BREWS IN ALEUTIANS

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naval officers in disguise took part in order to obtain information.

It was agreed here that Japanese possession of Attu and Kiska would present little threat to the American bases to the east.

But if the United States launched an offensive, Japanese naval forces would be supported by airplanes based on the Kuriles island which stretch down toward Japan.

Well informed quarters believed it unlikely that the situation would remain static and that if the Japanese did not press eastward, the United States would push westward in an attack that might involve an attempt to smash the Kuriles bases in preparation for the first real blow against Japan itself.

Warning Given By Congressmen

Washington, June 15.—(I. N. S.)—In taking at least two Aleutian islands, Japan has won vital weather reporting and potential land-plane bases on the "short route to Tokyo," the two members of congress probably best informed of the north Pacific warned Monday.

Senator Ralph O. Brewster (Rep.) of Maine, who flew for hundreds of miles over the Aleutians last September, and Anthony J. Dimond (Dem.), Alaska's delegate in the house, in separate statements called attention to the importance of the Jap strategy.

Dimond was "openly alarmed" over the development on the grounds that the Nippon invaders might press for quick construction of plane bases on Kiska or Attu islands and "put us up against the same thing the Japs found at Midway."

Brewster pointed out that the capture of the two points had brought the Japs almost halfway along the route the United States might have used to attack Tokyo.

He described both as the sites of important weather stations in the area "where weather is born"—sources of information essential to military and naval operations.

"Since General Doolittle's raid on Tokyo the Japanese have realized their danger," Brewster said. "Few people are aware that the great circle route to Tokyo by way of Alaska is about 2,000 miles shorter than by way of Hawaii.

"Likewise, it is about 2,000 miles shorter to America from Tokyo. Therein lies the strategic value of our far northern lands."