



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION SEPTEMBER 2004.

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PRESIDENTS PAR

VP Day, 2004

By some mishap CBICA's usual invitation to be represented in the official party at the Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph went astray in the post. Fortunately Mike Ross of the RSL was good enough to contact me by phone to enquire why no reply had been received from us.

Of course there was the added complication that the phone concerned was a mobile one, which I was answering in a small boat in the Noosa River from which I was fishing at the time. All's well that ends well, however, and due to prompt action by Joy Granger and the co-operation of Alan Norton who attended in Martin Place at short notice and laid a wreath on our behalf, there was no further drama.

Alan reports that although attendance at this important ceremony was disappointingly small, it was, nevertheless, an impressive and moving occasion.

As we all know, VP Day is August 15th. We have been hearing lately of the Battle of Australia Day, which is commemorated apparently on 1st September, but also receives little publicity. Surely it would be better to aim at greater public awareness of one event rather than two. Just my view.

Mini-Reunion 11th November, 2004

Last year, for the first time, our Mini-Reunion was held at the Roseville Memorial Club. The attendance of 35 was the largest for some time and everyone seemed to find it a pleasant venue with private room, excellent meals and courteous service. More details later in this Newsletter, but please make a note in your diary now: same place, same date!

Mini-Reunion 2005

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee Frank Hughes reported that Stage One of the MacArthur Museum, Brisbane, has been completed and that the aim is to complete Stage Two by August 2005 – the 60th Anniversary of Victory in the Pacific. Meanwhile the Museum will be open to the general public from October 2004.

The Committee then discussed the possibility of a Brisbane Reunion next year, including of course a visit to the Museum. Not all of us are as ready as Frank to travel long distance to our capital cities on the Association's business (or pleasure) so nothing has been set in stone as yet but the suggestion will be open for feed back from readers and also those attending this year's Mini-Reunion at Roseville.

Gordon Gibson
President
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HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

As 59 years have just passed since VJ or VP Day, we have very few members under 80 years of age.

Unfortunately a few members, or former members, are now nursing home residents while many are not enjoying the best of health.

Subscriptions. About 20% of members have not paid this year's subscription. We ask members who have a red cross at the head of this Newsletter to check their records. If we are correct please forward the outstanding subscription at the earliest opportunity.

Bruce Bentwitch
Hon Treasurer
7 Holly Street
CASTLE COVE NSW 2069
Phone (02) 9417-1427

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR

Hello again; am I glad to be inside away from a howling nor'wester. First off – due to popular demand we'll again have our Mini Reunion at the Roseville Memorial Club (a short walk from the railway station) at 12 noon, Thursday, 11 November. Please let Treasurer Bruce, or me, know if you are coming; it helps the Club's catering. For those interested there is a Memorial Service in the Club's garden from approx. 10.30 a.m.

In June I was able to hand over all memorabilia to Chris Clark, our historian. No doubt a number of you already have been interviewed. Thanks again for responding so well.

V.P. Day Commemoration. Alan Norton kindly stepped in at short notice to represent us at the Cenotaph Service. He said it was a sombre occasion with about 300 present. Governor Bashir gave a very appropriate address, reminding all of the price paid for liberty and peace. Alan was also very impressed by Commissioner of Police Moroney, and noted that our wreath was one of the few containing real flowers.

Frank Hughes was a guest at the official opening of the First Stage of the MacArthur Museum, Brisbane. More about this elsewhere in Newsletter. I should mention that despite the sad loss of his dear wife Betty such a short time ago Frank continues to pursue C.B.'s affairs with his usual diligence, although not himself in best health.

At this time of writing, Treasurer Bruce had had surgery in the Adventist Hospital (San) and post-operatively, is doing well. He's just gone home. We wish him a speedy recovery. President Gordon was in the San at the same time. He's now on a pacemaker, and is home again. May all be well with both.

That's it for now. Our sincere good wishes to all members in nursing homes of hospitals. We know you are with us in spirit.

Joy Granger,
Hon. Secretary,
WarVets,
2/5 Endeavour Drive,
NARRABEEN, NSW, 2101
(02) 9981-2397

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

Having recently taken in large quantities of records regarding wartime signals intelligence activities and CB in particular, I have been mainly working for the past month or so to extract notes that expand my research into the subject. Among the people in Sydney whom I contacted, visited and relieved of material were Mrs Margaret (Peggy) Moore and Mrs Madeline Chidgey.

The former is the widow of the Association's long-time Newsletter editor, and held several boxes of notes that her husband Dennis had assembled from his many contacts, while the latter held a number of albums recording the Association's reunions of the past two decades.

Currently I am planning a trip to Queensland to visit some of the sites associated with CB in Brisbane, to hopefully explore material held by the School of Military Intelligence Museum at Canungra, and interview some veterans living in or around the area. One person I particularly wish to consult is John Stumm.

The cost of the trip will be met from funding recently organised with the Army History Unit, which will ultimately arrange for publication of the book through Oxford University Press under a deal finalised in the last few weeks. This money is additional to the funds raised by CBICA, and is specifically intended to support an oral interview program at key localities around Australia.

Dr Chris Clark,
RAAF Historian,
Air Power Development Centre,
Tuggeranong ACT.
August 30, 04.

MACARTHUR MUSEUM – Stage One

It's happening. Stage One of the MacArthur Museum, Brisbane, opened to invited guests in late August, and will be open to the general public from October 2004.

Frank Hughes, unable to fly because of doctor's orders, travelled by train to Brisbane, and represented CB at the Museum's official opening. The chosen date was August 15, the 59th

anniversary of the ending of war in the Pacific – VP of VJ Day as we know it. On return to Sydney- by train – he handed to our Committee two press releases.

The first, headed “MacArthur Museum is a window into our history,” began: “Premier Peter Beattie officially opened the first stage of the MacArthur Museum. He said that “the Museum in Edward Street in downtown Brisbane would be to Australia what the Cabinet War Rooms in London are to Britain.”

The Museum is on the eighth floor of the heritage-listed building, and General Douglas MacArthur’s office is part of the museum display. Here MacArthur and his staff directed actions in the SWPA. Mr Beattie said: “This Museum is far more than a memorial to a distinguished American soldier. It’s a realistic window into our past and ... will be a fantastic resource for anyone who wants to know what life was like in Brisbane during World War 11.” The Museum displays photos, uniforms, personal items, furnishings and a multimedia presentation. An interactive display allows visitors to see every front page of every wartime issue of the The Courier-Mail from 1939-1945. The furnishings “include a large planning table which was recently tracked down by the Museum’s Executive Officer, Lt Col John Dwyer in a shed at Warwick.”

The release, put out by premier@cabinet.qld.gov.au, said that Mr Beattie had been interested in developing the Museum for many years, that he “was delighted to start the ball rolling with seed funding in 1999, and the Queensland Government has now contributed \$350,000.”

Funding support came also from the Brisbane City Council and from the Commonwealth.

Anyone who has items from World War 11 appropriate for display in the Museum should contact the Museum through the website at www.macarthurmemorial.com.au. Or by phoning (07) 3211-7052.

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The second media release from Lt Col J. Dwyer AM, Executive Officer of the MacArthur Museum, begins: “A story of Brisbane at War – General MacArthur Returns.” It describes how the Museum will feature the restoration of General MacArthur’s office, from where he planned the New Guinea and island hopping campaigns and the “I shall return” campaign for recapture of the Philippines.

It goes on: The Museum will go beyond a public display of Brisbane’s involvement in a critical phase of the war in the South West Pacific ... It will provide another insight into Brisbane’s living heritage and the sacrifices of those Australians and Americans who served together.

The design of the Museum will “complement the architecture of the new MacArthur Central shopping complex, particularly in the use of glass panelling and wood grained features.”

Stage 2 of the project to complete the Museum should begin early in 2005. Subject to funding, the aim is completion by August 2005, the 60th anniversary of Victory in the Pacific.”

QUEENSLAND WIRELESS UNITS

The Queensland Wireless Units Association held its annual lunch at the Irish Club, Brisbane, on July 10, at which the newly elected president, Bruce Cooper, welcomed 22 members and visitors.

Association secretary, Mac Jamieson, wrote in his Newsletter that past president Harold Cook was sadly missed. (He died in January this year).

Mac says: “At our luncheon we did some back tracking on our 1 WU days at Pimlico in Townsville. Charlie Baxter and Doug Kantor were the longest servers of our chaps, then came Geo McKinnon, myself, Doug Goebel and, I think, Bob Satchell. Also Pimlico men were K. Carolan, T. Chisholm, A. Marsland, H. Mills, P. Howard, A. Jenkin, R. Fisher, S. King and A. Norton.

“Then we moved out to Stuart’s Creek. Of course Bruce Cooper was in it long before this, serving RAAF at Garbutt.”

This was the WU's 28th reunion. The first, in 1976, owed a lot to the late Alf Bobin, who located "long lost fellows". It was held at Mac's Brisbane home.

At the July 2004 Reunion, it was decided to send "Thinking of You" cards, bearing signatures of all present, to Albert and Eunice Jenkin and Fred and Estelle White. Al broke a hip and is now in nursing care. Fred White, on the sick list, is in a nursing home at Cairns.

The Newsletter also mentioned Stan King, Cber, who's in a nursing home in Sydney.

[The "Thinking of You" cards are a great idea, and one CBICA might take up at our Roseville reunion. What's the opinion of Cbers? H.K.]

ASWG Report

The July issue of ASWG's Newsletter "Ink Emma Ink," told of Anzac Day ceremonies, including the Dawn Service, after which Aswegians had a "Gunfire Breakfast" of sausages, baked beans, scrambled eggs, coffee and Anzac biscuits. The Catering Corps attended to this.

On the Anzac Day march, "sickness had taken its toll and we could muster only 12," said the newsletter. "The two banner bearers were serving members from Simpson Barracks."

As usual "Ink Emma Ink" had many interesting details about personalities, and the dedication of a plaque at Morningside Racecourse, where members were stationed in 1944, and about the origin of the Dawn Service.

There was sad news too, under the Lest We Forget heading. One name here was that of Beth Ballard, wife of Geoff. Geoff's own death followed soon after.

VALE

GEOFFREY StVINCENT BALLARD OAM



The 9th of August, 2004, was a sad day for both Central Bureau and the Australian Special Wireless Group Associations with the passing of Geoff, one of their most illustrious members.

Born in 1915, fathered by a Methodist minister who was an Army Chaplain in WWI, Geoff's Christian principles did not at first mesh with war service. However, pre-WWI travel experiences in Europe convinced him that he should acquire a VX number, so, leaving his job with the Government Tourist Bureau in June 1940, he said 'yes' to the Recruiting Officer and commenced his five shillings a day job.

His brilliant and varied Army career is covered in a comprehensive and thoroughly researched book entitled 'On Ultra Active Service' which he wrote and published in 1991 after 8 years of endeavour involving hundreds of interviews and several overseas trips.

In Summary:

As a private at HQ 7th Division.
Attended an Intelligence course at Broadmeadows.
October 1940, sailed with the Division on the 'Mauretania' for the Middle East.

Early 1941, transferred to the Intelligence Corps.
Crash course in Traffic Analysis at Heliopolis,
Joined 4 Australian Special Wireless Section at Ellassona, Greece.

German invasion of Greece, a series of strategic withdrawals by the Allies, the Section's first taste of war.

Evacuation from Piraeus, taken to Crete and the world's first air borne invasion.

Casualties incurred, more withdrawals and evacuation after a 65 km forced march over the mountains.

To the Syrian campaign against the Vichy French. As a corporal, selected for an Officer's Training Unit in Cairo.

Graduated, Japan had entered the War, instruction courses in Japanese Kana introduced and Australian troops recalled to defend their country.

Billeted in Adelaide, home leave, then Section began operations at Park Orchards before moving to Bonegilla.

May 1942, ASWG formed to handle the interception of enemy transmissions and CB (April '42) to deal with decrypting etc.

Geoff, a foundation member of the CB organisation.

Late 1942, promoted to Captain and appointed Intelligence Officer in 51 Section ASWG, Darwin. Late 1943, appointed CB representative Advance Echelon, Port Moresby, promoted to Major.

Served in Hollandia, then Dutch New Guinea, then with Forward Echelon, Leyte, Philippines, a most demanding task.

Early 1945, attached to American Special Security Officers Section.

July 1945, Sigint liaison Officer to Lord Louis Mountbatten's HQ near Kandy, Ceylon.

'Sat in' on the British Wireless centre in Delhi. The War over, posted to the War Crimes Commission, then transferred to Brisbane to assist in the disbanding of Sigint.

January 1946 discharge from the Army. Worked in the same field as a civilian, serving in many embassies.

Over the period of the Olympic Games, was 2 i/c Olympic Village in Heidelberg 1956, and wrote a book about it – 'Nation with Nation' in 1997.

Carried an Olympic torch near the Village prior to the Sydney Games in 2000.

Remained very active with social issues, made a great contribution to International Amnesty and was an active Church member and chorister at his local Uniting Church.

The book has closed on a wonderful life of achievement and caring for his fellow man.

Vale, Geoff

Steve Mason
President ASWG

THE PASSING OF A "CB" ORIGINAL

Few CB "originals" remain – and few officers. Now Geoff Ballard has gone, three months after the death of his wife, Beth, whom he married in June 1942. It was almost a CB wedding in Melbourne, with Mic Sandford as best man, and the American cryptographer, Charles Girhard, as groomsman.

There were to be six daughters of this marriage – Lorraine, Jackie, Hilary, Christine, Anne and Clare. CBICA sends sympathy to them and to their families, and will always be grateful to Geoff for his book "On ULTRA Active Service."

Geoffrey St. Vincent Ballard, OAM (11.9.1915-9.8.2004), wrote a brief account of his life in 1997. He was the first child of the Rev. A.V. Ballard and his wife, Winifred, and his birthplace was Zeehan, Tasmania, where his father was the Methodist minister. From Zeehan, the family moved to Burnie, then to Melbourne, where Mr Ballard was appointed Assistant Director of the Methodist Young People's Department, eventually becoming the Director. The family lived at Brighton Beach. Geoff had a brother Ron and a sister Gwen.

The ruling philosophy in the home was "people first." His most lasting impression of the depression years was of his mother "preparing food and drinks for the almost daily visits of tramps, unemployed and homeless – as a parsonage we were probably targeted."

At Haileybury College, Brighton, he excelled in languages, particularly Greek. His headmaster urged that the lad should go to university and study for a language degree. The parents agreed, but Geoff would have none of it. He wanted to travel, to use his languages.

He went to night school; studying French, German and Greek, and – being a railway enthusiast – took a job with the Victorian Railways, at the North Melbourne Loco. Depot.

By 1937 he'd saved enough to sail to England by the P. & O. liner, "Strathnaver". In London he worked for a travel agency and stood outside Buckingham Palace to watch the Coronation Parade of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

In April 1937, on Hitler's birthday, April 20, Geoff Ballard had been to Berlin, and had seen a more sinister parade down the Unter den Linden. The dictator stood in an open car, and drove down the avenue to the crowd's adulation. A "forest of arms" rose in salute. "Der Fuhrer!" voices cried.

"The drugged obeisance was frightening and the whole occasion was the most menacing demonstration of strength and intent that I had ever seen," he was to write.

He was a pacifist by inclination, but memories of Nazi Berlin, and of occupied Vienna with its smashed windows of Jewish shops and the labels "JUD" (Jew), brought him to a "moment of truth".

He enlisted in the AIF as a private in 1940 and left for the Middle East. He took part in the Greece, Crete and Syria campaigns as a member of No. 4 Aust Special Wireless Section.

Steve Mason, president of ASWG, belonged to this unit and was among speakers at the special service of thanksgiving for Geoff and Beth Ballard on August 29. (The funeral service took place on August 13.)

Steve said that 4 Special Wireless Section gave first warning that the Germans would attack Crete from the air. In Greece many commanders had been reluctant to take much notice of signal intercepts, but in Crete, the New Zealander, Major-General B.B. Freyberg, V.C. Commander-in-Chief of all

Greek and Commonwealth Forces, was most receptive.

He positioned his forces in readiness, but they lacked air cover, and though ground troops fought gallantly, Crete had to be evacuated.

Back in Cairo Geoff Ballard obtained his commission, and early in 1942 sailed for Australia with his unit. It was at sea on the way back (said Steve Mason at the memorial service) that it was decided the same Sigint tactics would be needed to deal with the Japanese. From this decision came eventually ASWG for interception and CB for decoding and translating.

Steve Mason has given the summary of Geoff's war time service. He rose to the rank of major and was mentioned in despatches for war service.

After the war he continued with inter-intelligence work at the Defence Department, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, until 1948 when the Ballards moved to Rosanna, their home for the next 50 years.

He was Deputy Commandant of the Olympic Village, Heidelberg.

After the Olympic Games, he returned to the Commonwealth Government Service, using his language skills. From 1964-67 he served at the Australian Embassy in Vienna and from 1972-1975 at the Australian Embassy in Paris.

At the service of thanksgiving for Beth and Geoff, a paper "Daughters' Reflections" was read by Lorraine Sanford, who said: "I and my sisters Jackie, Hilary, Christine, Anne and Clare wish to present a brief snapshot of him as a father and family man, so from now on he will be referred to simply as DAD."

They spoke of DAD, the wonderful gardener who made Clare's bridal bouquet with flowers he had grown. He ruled the household in a rather military manner, but the girls "loved and feared him and always sought his approval." He was positive, optimistic, and he and Beth took the girls camping in Victoria and overseas.

In Austria, they went on "massive camping trips. Every day we set up camp in a different town,

which he orchestrated with precision. We each . . . had our own numbered tent poles to put together.

“Eight beds and a rudimentary kitchen could be set up in half an hour. We were ‘Dad’s Army!’ Once, someone watching this spectacle was heard to say “the circus has come to town!”

In sickness and in health Beth and Geoff made a team. They were deeply involved in the Rosanna Methodist (Uniting) Church. He sang with the choir until last year. Beth had a beautiful voice, and her recording of “Solveig’s Lied,” Ibsen, made in 1948, was played at the funeral and memorial services.

Both worked for Amnesty International, and raised more than \$500,000 for this cause, travelling on “safaris” in Victoria and interstate to sell Amnesty’s cards. Geoff received the OAM for this fund-raising activity. He also received the Centenary Medal for community work.

Geoff had become politicised by seeing pre-war slums in the East End of London, and was deeply involved with the Australian Labor Party. He had been a campaign manager and had done his share of door-knocking, even producing a booklet “Diary of a Door-knocker.” Professor Brian Howe, Australia’s deputy prime minister from 1991 to 1995 gave the eulogy at the thanksgiving service for Geoff and Beth.

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In 2001 when Beth’s health began to fail, she entered Waterdale Assisted Living Hostel. Geoff followed in 2002. Eventually Beth had to move to a nursing home.

Geoff, his own health declining, went by foot to visit Beth every day, sometimes twice daily. After her death he was “ready to go.”

[Newsletter could not have compiled this “Vale” without the help of many. Our thanks to Steve Mason, who wrote the obituary, to Ian Buckingham and Coral Hinds who sent cuttings from “The Age” and to Geoff Patience who posted us copies of the two services, and reminiscences written by Geoff’s daughters. Particularly we would like to thank

Jackie Ballard for sending a tape of the thanksgiving service.]

COMMENT

We’re pleased to know that the MacArthur Museum is to open, but are puzzled by missing words in the press releases. War in the South West Pacific is mentioned but never does the name of the enemy – Japan – appear. *?? thought this was obvious!*

At this stage we would like to remember the late Allan Campbell, who for decades, preserved documents, photographs and urged the establishment of the museum. Without his efforts we doubt if it would exist. *!!*

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Newsletter sends thoughts to all readers and contributors, and apologises to some whose valuable reminiscences have been held over for too long. Particularly we thank Joe Richard and Robert Jones, as well as Geoff Day and Sylvia Paris, and hope that they realise it is only a lack of space that has delayed publication. A copy of Joe’s work has been passed to the historian. The same will happen to other manuscripts. Your work will not be lost. HK.

IN BRIEF

Historian Chris Clark sent us excerpts from Harold Marshall’s book “The Cliff – Before and After . . . an autobiography of sorts.”

The excerpts deal with Harold’s Central Bureau career - he was with ASIPS – and of his attempt with Hugh Dunn to scale Mt Cyclops in Dutch New Guinea, and of his time in the Philippines. Later he hitch-hiked to Okinawa and Japan, and after the War became a diplomat serving in New York, Sri Lanka, Karachi and London.

This Broken Hill boy, born figuratively speaking, with a “leaden spoon” in his mouth faced hardships that few but Albert Facey of “A Fortunate Life” would understand: a broken home, TB, life in a “Waifery,” a dreadful fall from a cliff. He came through with distinction helped by friends and teachers at Broken Hill High. At the University of Sydney, on a teaching scholarship, he won the George Arnold Wood prize for history – twice. Then came the War. The book is written in letter

form and was published about nine years ago.
Thanks to the author for sending Newsletter a copy.

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To quote the Bible “Of making many books there is no end ...” To hand is “Acorns ... A great bunch of nuts,” compiled by Major A.D. Craig. It’s subtitled “A Personal History of the Australian Army Intelligence Corps,” and contains reminiscences of some who served in World War 11, Korea and Viet Nam. Joe da Costa is pictured as a Major in Viet Nam and other photos taken before that show of GS (INT) personnel at Hollandia in 1944 and Morotai in 1945. The author says Intelligence personnel were dubbed “acorns.” Were they in World War 11 or did that term come later?

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Doug Pyle’s book about CB should come out early in 2005. He has the proofs and thanks Joe Richard in the USA for agreeing to write the foreword. We wish him success and look forward to reading it.

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As Treasurer Bruce wrote in his column, “We have very few members under 80.” Having their 80th birthdays in October are Coral (Osborne) Hinds of South Frankston, Victoria, and ??? of ???. It is a surprise party so the name cannot be mentioned. Congratulations to them and to anyone else who gains an O.B.E. this year. (O.B.E. stands for Order of the British Empire but in this case, as most of us know stands for “over bl.... Eighty.”)

DRAMA OF THE PAST

Some time ago Bill Rogers and Frank Hughes sent Newsletter the text of a play “The Shadow of the Eagle” by George Blazevec and Ingle Knight.

It is an imagined account of the first meeting between General MacArthur and Prime Minister John Curtin in late March, 1942 – a meeting of which it is claimed there are no records in notes or signed documents.

Recently the play has been touring Australian cities and towns. Newsletter went to see it at the Glen Street Theatre, on Sydney’s outskirts. In this play, without interval, Michael Loney appeared as MacArthur and Geoff Kelso as Curtin.

The director, Alan Becher, had provided additional material for the play which was “commissioned by and in partnership with the John Curtin Parliamentary Library. Production was by the Perth Theatre Company.

The setting was the Prime Minister’s office in old Parliament house, with décor and furnishing true to period. A screen at the rear showed shots of wartime newsreels, maps, and posters.

Into this setting strode the leather-jacketed, uniformed MacArthur, the defender of Bataan, the soldier ordered by President Roosevelt to leave his troops at Corregidor and to come to Australia.

Now he met his complete opposite, Curtin the socialist, the anti-conscriptionist of the First War, the Labor politician who was the PM. Curtin, a sick and worried man, held out his hand.

“Call me Jack,” says Curtin.

“Call me General,” answers MacArthur.

The play (Whitlam called it “imaginative” according to the programme) held interest.

The men, differing in background and interests, had one aim – defeat of the Japanese.

Geoff Kelso convinced utterly in his depiction of Curtin, overshadowing Michael Loney’s MacArthur, whose accent and character seemed less realistic.

In the play, tensions between MacArthur, Eisenhower and Roosevelt are revealed, as is the conflict between Curtin and Churchill.

Curtin, the ex-journalist, the ex-alcoholic, offers Tasmanian apples and cups of tea to the General, who, in turn, hands the PM a carton of American cigarettes.

The stage MacArthur despairs of Australia’s armed forces, Tiger Moths... (Where are the tanks?)

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It is a play of our times. See it if you can, and make your own judgment.