

1,500 NAZI PLANES DESTROYED BY RED IN SIX-WEEK PERIOD

1,000 Of Them Knocked Out In March Alone, Russians Claim

ALSO WIN IN BALTIC

Russian Big Guns Reported Drawn Within Range Of Smolensk

By NOLAND NORGAARD LONDON, April 20.—(AP)—Soviet pilots and ground batteries destroyed 1,500 German planes in the six weeks ending April 14 to amass one of the biggest scores of the air war, the Moscow radio announced tonight.

The reported bag was remarkable in itself but all the more so because 1,000 of the Nazi craft were declared knocked out during March alone, when blizzards caused some of the worst flying weather encountered by Red airmen.

Aerial warfare has exploded in the far north with the Soviet air force smashing heavy Nazi assaults upon the Red northern fleet, the Russians announced. In one engagement 15 German craft were declared downed without a Soviet loss.

The biggest news from the Eastern front was the report that the Russian army of the center had drawn its big guns up to within range of Smolensk, center of German military power, about 230 miles west of Moscow, while northern Russian forces were violently assaulting the main German and Finnish lines about Leningrad.

Dispatches from the Russian front said these attacks in the north, apparently a supreme effort to relieve the second city of the Soviet union before the spring thaw becomes general, were loosed along the Volkhov river south of Leningrad and against the Finnish lines on the Svir river and on the Karelian isthmus.

The Germans, said unofficial advisers received here, were hurling every ounce of their strength into the struggle in an effort to hold on at any cost until the ice of the Volkhov melts and it becomes again a strong and fluid barrier to protect the German flank and rear.

The Nazi high command acknowledged "local enemy attacks" in both the northern and central sectors but claimed that all had been broken and that German counter-attacks in the north had been locally successful.

On the Svir front, northeast of Leningrad and east of Lake Ladoga, the Russians claimed an advance of two miles at one point, while Berlin itself acknowledged

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LANEY IS NAMED HEAD OF CHAMBER

New Officers Will Be Installed At Meeting Thursday Night

E. A. Laney, president of the Morris Plan Bank, was elected president of the Greater Chamber of Commerce at a meeting Monday of the newly-elected board of directors of the organization.

Other officers chosen were H. A. Marks, first vice president; E. E. Bugz, second vice president, and Hamilton Rolison, treasurer.

Harris Newman and John L. Morris were renominated national councilor and executive secretary, respectively.

Elected members of the executive board were Mr. Laney, A. E. Jones, Mr. Marks, W. D. McCaig and O. H. Shoemaker.

The new officers will be installed at the annual meeting of the organization scheduled for 7:30 o'clock Thursday evening at the Cape Fear hotel.

A report on the Community Chest survey was heard by the directors, who told Executive Secretary Morris to call a meeting of charity agency heads and advise them to form a Community Chest.

Endorsement of the city council county commission action in calling for a conference with the State Utilities Commissioner Stanley Winborne on power rates in this area was voiced.

Executive Secretary Morris was elected by the directors as the organization's delegate to the United States Chamber of Commerce convention in Chicago April 27 to 30.

Corregidor Pounded By Heavy Artillery

WASHINGTON, April 20.—(AP)—With nine-inch shells from the heaviest guns they have, the Japanese pounded beleaguered Corregidor today in a punishing cross-fire from fresh positions, inflicting "some casualties and some damage," in the words of a laconic communiqué.

The War department's report at the close of the day made no mention of answering fire from the American and Filipino defenders, although a forenoon communiqué told of telling blows delivered yesterday by gunners of the main fortification and the lesser Manila bay forts.

Three or more additional enemy batteries were silenced then and one bomber was hit, giving a reply to periodic Tokyo assertions that the anti-aircraft defenses had been crushed.

The Japanese used weapons of 240 mm caliber in the assault, launched yesterday, from the forts, the last remaining center of resistance to the enemy invasion of the Philippines.

For the first time since the loss of Bataan, dive bombers as well as high-flying enemy war planes joined in Sunday's attack, but today hostile air raids

were reported to have decreased in number and intensity.

On the island of Panay some 150 miles to the south the invaders made landings in the vicinity of San Jose on the southwest coast. Sharp fighting occurred in the northern part of the island near Lambanaw where counter-attacks of American-Filipino defending forces temporarily halted progress of the occupation.

In a distant area of the Philippines on the southern island of Mindanao one of the isolated forces which have been successfully harassing the invaders scored again by ambushing two busloads of Japanese troops near Zamboanga. Numerous casualties were inflicted.

Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright's report of the opening of the latest phase of the Corregidor siege was contained in a morning communiqué which failed to disclose how the bay fortifications withstood the shelling. Military officials said the artillery hammering unquestionably was the most intense experienced thus far although air attacks probably have been heavier.

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In raising this possibility, however, the Japanese Imperial headquarters identified the planes as North American B-25's, which are big two-motored Army bombers never known to have been launched from the short flight decks of carriers.

Tending nevertheless to support the Japanese conclusion, the Reuters news agency in London quoted "well-informed quarters" in Chungking as saying United States planes which raided Japan had arrived safely at their destination. Chungking had said previously the raids were not launched from China.

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An official summary of the naval court's report said the "direct and sole" cause of the fire, which led indirectly to the capsizing of the 83,423-ton ship, was "gross carelessness and utter violation of rules of common sense" by the company's workmen.

The court recommended that a proceeding be instituted against the Robins company for damages to the full extent of liability.

One section of the contract, it was brought out, said liability for damages from fire or other causes should not exceed \$300,000, but whether that limit would apply specifically in this case was not stated.

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The court heard Mrs. Mattie Williams, clerk of Robeson county draft board No. 1 in Lumberton, testify that Kalaf threatened her life if his son, Charles A. Kalaf, Jr., were called for induction into the army.

She declared that the older Kalaf appeared at the board office in July with a pistol in his pocket and told her: "If you send my son to the army, I'm going to kill you."

Mrs. Williams, chief witness for the government, and Draft Board Chairman D. D. French said that Mr. and Mrs. Kalaf had made several attempts to have their son deferred and that finally he was sent to the army under special orders by the state board. The youth

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REDUCED POWER RATES ARE ASKED

State Utilities Commission Urged To Take Immediate, Effective Action

A resolution requesting that "the North Carolina Utilities Commission accept its responsibility and take immediate and effective action to assure the people of New Hanover county fair, equitable and competitive" power rates was adopted by the County commission Monday on motion of Commissioner Harry E. Gardner.

The resolution, prepared in the office of Mayor Hargrove Bellamy at the request of Mayor R. C. Harrelson, of Tabor City, was mailed to the commission by Mayor W. D. Herring, of Rose Hill, who is secretary of the Electric Rate Adjustment committee. He wrote that Mayor Bellamy suggested that each governing body in the affected area adopt the resolution and send a copy of it to Utilities Commissioner Stanley Winborne before the informal conference to regulate the Tide Water Power Company electric light and power rates, which has been scheduled for 11 o'clock Friday morning at the office of Commissioner Winborne.

Mayor Herring informed the commission that the resolution had been passed by various governing bodies in the area.

"Whereas, the County Commission is of the unanimous opinion that the rates charged by the Tide Water Power company to its users residing in the county of New Hanover are unreasonable, unfair, and discriminatory, and its services and equipment are not in keeping with the recognized requirements and standards of other utility companies, and

"Whereas, the North Carolina Utilities Commission is vested with full power and authority to demand of all utility companies fair and equitable rates and to require of them that they render efficient and effective service, and

"Whereas, it is the duty and responsibility of said commission, in accepting its public trust, to exercise its power for the protection and interest of the consuming public,

"It is, therefore, resolved that this resolution be considered a for-

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After Chairman Addison Hewlett told of prices asked by two owners of land, which the county wishes to obtain for use by the airport, the commission voted on motion of Commissioner Harry R. Gardner "to offer them the same price per acre as we offered others" at the Monday meeting.

The land in question is the rear part of lots facing on Carr avenue which is needed in the relocation of the north-south runway at Blueheron airport.

Chairman Hewlett said H. C. Croom, who owns five strips of land facing on Carr avenue, wants \$5,000 for the 14 and a fraction acres of cleared land at the rear of the tracks, which the county wishes to obtain. He explained that S. R. Croom wanted \$250 per acre for the 2.87 acres of uncleared land at the rear of his tract.

For property previously obtained at the airport, Chairman Hewlett explained, the county has paid \$200 per acre for cleared land and \$150 per acre for uncleared land.

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On motion of Commissioner J. M. Hall the board voted that the baseball committee—a representative from the shipyard, the Cape Fear league, high school and the American Legion—work out details of the schedule for games to be played at the stadium and provided something arises on which

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Peace In Europe Rests In Friendship Between Germany, France, He Says

REPUBLICANS BLAMED

People Asked To Support Him As He Pleads Cause Of Rapprochement

P I FRANCE COMMITTED By TAYLOR HENRY VICHY, Unoccupied France, April 20.—(AP)—Speaking tonight amidst new stirrings of unrest and Nazi orders for the execution of 30 more Frenchmen, pro-Axis Pierre Laval branded France's 1939 declaration of war a "crime" and told the French people the condition for peace in Europe lay in friendship between France and Germany.

In his first broadcast as chief of government, Laval placed blame for France's predicament upon the old Republican regime, declaring that he had "no responsibility whatever in the misfortune which has befallen us."

He appealed to Frenchmen to support his new government with the assertion that their choice now lay between rapprochement with Germany or "seeing our civilization disappear."

Referring to the Anglo-Saxon powers, he said that "in the past I never have accepted or submitted to any foreign influence, and such is the explanation of the unrelenting of passions to which I am so often subjected, above all in England and again."

"My thoughts go especially to those among you who have suffered the attacks of our former ally, all the more fierce against our territories because she is incapable of protecting her own," the bitterly anti-British Laval continued.

"After having led us into war, after having abandoned us in battle, she tried to destroy our fleet; she killed our sailors and starved our people.

"Today her airplanes are again in French skies; after deserting us in a moment of danger they (the British) would complete the destruction of our homes which the battles have left unscathed."

Reaching an understanding with Germany, Laval said, was "like an obsession" with him.

After recalling the meeting he arranged between Chief of State Pe-

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FRANCE COMMITTED CRIME IN GOING TO WAR AGAINST GERMANY, DECLARES LAVAL

Japanese Say Raiders Came From Carriers

Reports Of Number, Destination And Damage Conflict, However

WASHINGTON SILENT

Reports Indicate Enemy Is Baffled By Sudden Attacks Upon Cities

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TOKYO DURING ITS FIRST 'AIR RAID' This air view of Tokyo shows the city after the Japs dropped "bombs" in a test air raid drill. According to the Japanese radio, this scene was repeated in reality, as enemy bombers attacked the city for the first time in the current war, inflicting telling damage.—(Central Press.)

Drydock Co. Blamed For Normandie Fire

Full Responsibility Placed On Its Workers By Navy Board Of Inquiry

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