

## Japs Starting New Drive To Crush Chinese

### Foe Begins Attacks In Seven Widely Separated Sectors

## SHOW GREAT ACTIVITY

### Not Since Last May Have Invaders Revealed Such Movement

CHUNGKING, Feb. 18.—(AP)—The Japanese have begun attacks in seven widely separated areas, from the lake country north of Shanghai to the jungles of Yunan in the southwest, apparently with the hope of ending Chinese resistance, the Chinese announced today.

Not since last May when the Japanese attempted simultaneously a push up the Burma road, a twin-headed drive in Kiangsi and Chekiang provinces on the eastern seaboard, and made several lodgements on the Fukien coast have the invaders shown as great coordinated activity.

### No Indication of Big Drive

A Chinese spokesman told a press conference that there was no indication that the current operations were the "prelude to a general offensive." He said they were motivated by the desire to "dissipate Chinese strength."

(However, a Tokyo broadcast recorded in London said a Japanese army spokesman had announced that Japan now intends "to take all conceivable measures to crush Chungking resistance," thus suggesting that the Japanese might be delivering the first blow in an effort to knock out China before the United Nations can bring effective assistance to her.)

Foreign observers noted that the reports of widespread Japanese action, which were receiving much prominence in the Chinese press, coincided with renewal of the clamor for increased aid to China and the visit of Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of the generalissimo, in Washington where she made an appeal to the United States Congress for immediate aid to China.

One of the two biggest Japanese drives was east of Lungling in Yunan where the Japanese were said to have brought 10,000 reinforcements up the Burma road from Lashio and made some progress toward the Salween river barrier.

This drive began last Friday, and bloody fighting still was going on five days later, a high command communique said.

The other was in northern Kiangsi province in the lake and swamp area north of Shanghai, where the Japanese were said to have concentrated 20,000 men and begun an eastward march.

A Tokyo broadcast by Domei, recorded by the Associated Press, indicated that crack troops formerly employed in Malaya or the South Seas might be engaged in this theater. It said imperial troops "victorious in jungle warfare are proving themselves equally proficient in swamp warfare" and said one column was advancing eastward from Suichow, junction of the Lungai and Tientsin-Pukow railway, while another was moving northward up the Grand canal.

Three other areas of activity as announced by the high command, were along the Yangtze river valley in central China. From west to east these were:

## Not A Political Plum

If municipal ownership and operation of the Tide Water Power company properties is authorized by the legislature, and a board of seven directors set up, as contemplated, the Star-News feels that the men chosen for membership, in the interest of the public welfare must be business men of proved ability and irreproachable integrity; and that their compensation should be on a per diem basis, calculated on actual attendance at directors' meetings and other essential services rendered—not on a salary basis which could too easily be converted into a political plum.

The Star-News has not had time to analyze the measure as it will be presented at Raleigh, and therefore cannot give it either full endorsement or dissent from its provisions. But this newspaper is definitely and unalterably opposed to any provision which could give the politicians control of the properties of the Tide Water Power company.

## BROWN FLAYS BACK BITING

### OPA Head Lashes Out At Under-the-Table Talk In Congress

NEW YORK, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Prentiss M. Brown, the nation's new price administrator, today lashed out at "back-biting, this under-the-table" talk in Congress, pleaded for a rebirth of unity, and declared "there must be no strike" in the bituminous coal industry.

"In the strongest words fired by any Washington official in recent months, Brown covered a wide field of administrative problems in one of his first public speeches since becoming head of the OPA. He spoke before the technical association of the pulp and paper industry.

"There must be no strike and there must be no compromise," Brown said of the coal situation, adding that there must be a determination in the administration, "we cannot accede to the demands in the bituminous coal situation."

Brown said two bills were now being considered by Congress which would "just about wreck the control law of food prices." He identified these as the Pace parity amendment and the Senate bill to eliminate government payments in computing parity prices.

"The possibility of these agricultural price changes was the foundation for pay increase demands which would ruin price control," Brown said.

"If we break through the price structure as it is today," he said, "the wage structure will inevitably be broken through, and we will face in this country the most dangerous domestic situation that this nation has ever faced. It would be equal to a tremendous defeat on the military front."

He said earlier in an interview that "if we break over on prices we'll provide ammunition for the organized labor groups."

Speaking of Congress, Brown said: "I have never known a time when there was so much disunity in the Congress of the United States. When there was so much back-biting and fighting between the American people over inconsequential things."

"We need a rebirth of the spirit of unity. I hope all of us will realize that unity in spirit is necessary, that these great nations who are not united together must stand together."

## Russians Cut Nazi Escape Route

Rail Line Taken With Capture of District Center

## ENEMY MAY BE CAUGHT

### Latest Red Maneuver Imperils Large Units of Axis Troops

LONDON, Friday, Feb. 19.—(AP)—Advancing with a speed indicating little effective opposition, the Red army in pursuit of beaten Nazi troops in the area west of Rostov has cut the only escape railway on this front, the Russians announced in the midnight communique recorded here by the Soviet monitor.

The rail line was cut with the capture of the district center of Matveev-Kurgan, 25 miles north of the Azov port of Taganrog, and although it was not immediately clear from which direction the victorious Russians came, it was entirely possible that large forces of Germans were trapped by the stroke.

The Russians have been operating both north and east of Matveev-Kurgan, and the town could have been taken from either direction. If the Soviet forces came down from the north, the trapped Germans might be counted in great numbers—probably less if the Russians advanced from the east.

Even in the latter case, however, observers believed sizable Nazi groups might well be caught in the Taganrog area.

The bulk of the midnight communique dealt with Red successes in the areas north and northwest of Rostov, indicating the Soviet armies were quickly cutting into the Germans retreating from this great area.

Elsewhere, the Russians were moving in still closer to the Nazi strong point of Orel, at the north end of the now active front. The communique reported the capture of the railway town and district center of Zalesoskiy, only 30 miles east of Orel, Verkhnyaya Sosna, 45 miles southeast of Orel, and Pokovskoye, 40 miles southeast of the strong point.

The Russians already have reported progress toward Orel along the railway from the south—the direction of Kursk.

The midnight communique, however, dealt mainly with the battle against the German armies left behind in the region of Rostov and to the north in the Donets basin area.

West of Novo-Shakhtinsk, the communique said, the Soviet troops took 60 populated places as they "continued their successful offensive." Heavy losses fell to the enemy, and one Russian motorized formation alone killed 1,000 and captured 1,500 German officers and men, the communique said.

Particularly heavy losses were said to have been inflicted on the 79th German infantry division, which, according to the Soviet bulletin, "consisted mostly of wounded officers and men released from the hospital ahead of time, and also squads from Taganrog and other strongholds."

"Southwest of Voroshilovgrad our troops continued their successful advance and captured several populated places," the communique continued. One formation "after heavy engagements" disabled ten enemy tanks and two armored cars. Other war material was captured, including 37 trucks.

# ROMMEL'S TANK FORMATIONS STAND ALMOST ON ALGERIAN BORDER AFTER RAPID DRIVE

## Stinson Says Fairly Heavy Losses Suffered By Americans In Tunisia

### Physicians Worried About Condition Of Gandhi During Fast

POONA, India, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Physicians who made an exhaustive examination today of Mohandas K. Gandhi, now in the second week of his projected 21-day fast, looked more worried than at any time before as they left the palace of the Aga Khan where Gandhi is being detained.

It was understood that the frail little Indian nationalist leader had showed no inclination to talk or see visitors since this morning.

"This was the ninth day of his fast in protest against his confinement in the palace prison. A government communique issued at Bombay said there was deepening anxiety over his condition."

"Although Mr. Gandhi had a total of nine hours sleep, he is not refreshed nor mentally alert," it stated. "His heart action is feeble."

### NO MAJOR DISASTER

Secretary Declares Defeat Amounts To Serious Local Setback

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Fairly heavy losses in both personnel and equipment are being inflicted on American forces by the German thrust in Tunisia, Secretary of War Stimson acknowledged today, but he said there has been no major disaster.

The American defeat amounted, he told a press conference, to a "serious local setback" but one which should neither be exaggerated nor minimized.

The development was not altogether unanticipated, he said, and constituted "one of those reverses which must be expected from time to time in an operation of the size of the Tunisian campaign."

In a general discussion of the war, Stimson also said: "It appears that the Germans, having lost Kharkov, must abandon all hope of holding their last winter's line in Russia and fall back all the way to the Dnieper river."

Despite the heavy losses in men and supplies, it is much too soon to expect a German collapse; the Nazis still have a powerful army and air force.

This country has no confirmation of reported changes in the German high command, including replacement of Adolf Hitler as the active head of the army.

Peace feelers, already rumored, may be expected "sooner or later" from Germany and Italy but they already have their answer—the Casablanca demand for "unconditional surrender."

Explaining what had happened in Tunisia, the war secretary said it was indicated the Germans threw two armored divisions against inferior American forces in central Tunisia at a time when the British Eighth Army in Tripolitania was reorganizing, after the long pursuit of Rommel's legions, and the British First Army was "mud bound" in northern Tunisia.

With support of fighter and dive bombing planes, the Nazis quickly overran advanced American positions and cut off some artillery and infantry units.

American counterattacks delayed the advance while the Gafsa oasis, three air fields and other vulnerable positions were evacuated, but arrival of German reinforcements forced our troops to fall back.

### Goebbels Tells Nazis 'Cruel Truth' About New Russian Success

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Propaganda Minister Paul Joseph Goebbels told what he called the "cruel truth" to the German people today—that "motorized robot divisions" of the Red army had "broken loose with a power eclipsing all imagination," and that "we must act quickly and thoroughly or it might be too late."

"Danger is imminent," he was quoted as saying by the Berlin radio. "It is not the moment for asking questions how it happened. We must act, and this immediately and thoroughly."

The Nazi propagandist complained that other nations, including the United States and Britain, failed to realize the "Bolshevist-Jewish peril," again promised death to saboteurs, said German's living standard probably would fall lower, and many businesses would be closed to raise men both against Russia and against an Allied invasion danger to the west.

He again attempted to explain why Germany, who had a non-aggression pact with Russia, ever attacked that nation, explaining that "in view of the big camouflaging and bluffing maneuvers of Moscow we did not correctly estimate the war potential of the Soviet Union."

"Only now," he added, "it is revealed to us in its wild greatness."

## FUEL RATIONING MUST CONTINUE

### Ickes Says Present System Will Go On For Duration of War

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Petroleum Administrator Ickes said tonight that the end of oil rationing is not yet in sight and that "gasoline, fuel oil and kerosene conservation must continue for the duration."

"There is little or no hope that additional amounts of gasoline, fuel oil and kerosene can be made available in the near future," he said in a (March of Time) radio broadcast.

"If it were possible for me to tell you just how much oil will be needed to carry out the tremendous Allied offensive planned for 1943, you would readily understand my failure to be optimistic as to the future as far as concerns civilian supplies."

"However, I can tell you that doubling or tripling the amount of oil shipped across the seas will result in a great deficiency in civilian oil stocks. And this gloomy picture of the oil supply situation holds as true for the West Coast as it does for the East Coast and the Midwest."

## TAKE LARGE AREA

### Germans Capture About 4,000 Square Miles of Land From U. S.

## INFLECT SEVERE LOSSES

### Pressure On Americans Appears To Be Slackening From First Push

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, Feb. 18.—(AP)—German tank formations stood almost on the Algerian border after capturing 4,000 square miles of central Tunisia in four days from American forces who have withdrawn into the mountains below Tebessa, an Algerian town 12 miles west of the border.

However, word that the British Eighth Army, driving from the south to relieve the situation, had reached Medenine after a 45-mile advance, promised an early lessening of Marshal Rommel's pressure on the Americans.

Straggling units which fought their way back from behind the German lines reached American outposts in the heights east of Tebessa, bringing accounts that tended to scale down early reports of Allied losses.

(Gallagher's dispatches did not say whether the American outposts were east or west of the border. The mountains below Tebessa sprawl on both sides of the line.)

Advance About 60 Miles  
The Axis veterans had advanced some 60 miles since Sunday and the Allied communique today announced that they had taken Sbeitla, Kasserine and Feriana, the last only 12 miles from the Algerian border.

Rommel apparently was using two tank divisions in two columns. The northern wing had driven from Faid pass about 55 miles to Kasserine and the southern column had swept up through the Gafsa oasis some 60 miles to Feriana.

Rommel's veterans of the Egyptian and Libyan campaigns inflicted a severe defeat on American armored forces in their first important clash, but the pressure appeared to be slackening.

"Fighting in southern Tunisia yesterday was on a reduced scale, Gen. Eisenhower's communique said.

The less experienced troops were in stronger positions west of the three abandoned towns on the eastern slopes of a mountain range which is 4,500 feet high at its peak.

It appeared that Rommel had inflicted such losses that an Allied attack on his flank was virtually impossible. Thus he was ready to turn south to meet the British Eighth Army which now is 65 miles inside southern Tunisia at the outpost of the Mareth line. These positions of dugouts, barbed-wire entanglements and gun emplacements had been held principally by infantry since Rommel employed virtually all the tanks he could scrape together for his assault against the lightly held American line.

## Madame Chiang Declares Jap Defeat Is Of Major Importance To Allies

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—(AP)—Jade-jeweled and exquisite in black embroidered Chinese silk, Madame Chiang Kai-shek brought a cheering House to its feet today as she declared it was against United Nations interests to allow Japan to continue "as a vital potential threat" to civilization.

Earlier the petite wife of the Chinese generalissimo electrified the Senate by clenching a small fist to pronounce the four freedoms proclaimed by President Roosevelt "a song of freedom to the United Nations and the death-knell to their aggressors."

## WEATHER

Forecast: Warmer Friday.  
(Eastern Standard Time)  
(By U. S. Weather Bureau)  
Meteorological data for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m. yesterday.  
Temperature  
1:30 a. m., 40; 7:30 a. m., 34; 1:30 p. m., 47; 7:30 p. m., 41.  
Maximum, 50; Minimum 33; Mean, 43; Normal, 48.  
Humidity  
1:30 a. m., 70; 7:30 a. m., 50; 1:30 p. m., 37; 7:30 p. m., 63.  
Precipitation  
Total for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m., 0.00 inches.  
Total since the first of the month, 0.47 inches.  
Tides For Today  
Wilmington High 4:06p Low 9:24a  
Masonboro Inlet 7:14a 1:02p  
Moore's Inlet 7:34a 1:22p  
New Topsail Inlet 7:24a 1:12p  
(All times Eastern Standard)  
Sunrise, 6:52 a. m.; Sunset, 6:00 p. m.  
Moonrise, 5:39 p. m.; Moonset, 6:32 a. m.  
Cape Fear river stage at 8 A. M. Thursday, 12.35 feet.

## NOTICE!

If your carrier fails to leave your copy of the Wilmington Morning Star, Phone 3311 before 9:00 a. m. and one will be sent to you by special messenger.

## House Committee Approves Bill To Draft All Single Men First

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—(AP)—A House committee approved a bill today requiring that all eligible single men in each state be drafted before fathers are called to uniform, while a Senate group voted to investigate why an armed force of 11,200,000 is needed.

"We are going to find out who fixed this figure as the amount the Army, Navy and Maritime Commission will have to have," said Chairman Smith (D-SC) of the Senate Agriculture committee. "If we keep going at the present rate the people will be going hungry, barefoot and naked."