

Yanks On New Britain Consolidate Positions; Fires Gnaw At Berlin

AUSSIES ADVANCE

Japs Strike Back At Beach-Head At Arawe, On Southwest End

14 NIP PLANES DOWNED

Liberator Bombers Continue Pounding Of Strategic Marshalls

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS) American invasion forces on New Britain island have consolidated their positions at Arawe, won at light cost Wednesday, while Australian forces to the west on the Huon peninsula of New Guinea, have captured Lakona, a coastal supply base.

These successes were announced today by Gen. Douglas MacArthur at his New Guinea headquarters. The Japanese air force struck back at the Arawe peninsula, on the southwestern end of New Britain, but lost 14 planes in its futile effort to dislodge the American Sixth Army units.

Gloucester Pounded To the northwest of Arawe American Liberator bombers gave Cape Gloucester another pounding, dropping 232 tons of explosives on that off-bombed enemy position.

That brought the total weight of bombs cascaded there since late November to 1,100 tons.

In mid-Pacific, Liberator bombers of the American Seventh Army are continuing their pounding of strategic airbase atolls in the Marshall Islands.

The Japanese air force struck back at dusk Wednesday, the second attack of the day. The air force received numerous direct hits. There was no enemy interception.

Chinese Fighting Force fighting continued in China, centering on the outskirts of Anshien and Manshien, two important towns in the rice bowl area.

A Japanese counter attack from their base at Lihshien, was frustrated. The battle for Changteh, strategic rice bowl city which the Chinese retook recently in bloody fighting, was a pivotal success for the whole strategy of the United Nations in the Pacific region.

Gen. Hsueh Yueh, commander of the Changteh war area, told correspondents, Changteh is the military gateway west of Tungting lake and key to Changsha, a provincial capital.

Echoes of the costly invasion of Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands in November were heard in Washington. There the Senate naval committee received assurances from Gen. A. A. Vandegrift, commander of the Marine corps, that the Tarawa operation was a well planned and skillfully executed.

He wrote to Chairman Walsh (D-Mass.) of the committee who had inquired about the heavy Marine losses on Tarawa's beaches.

Heavy Losses Expected Vandegrift warned that a heavy loss could be expected in future attacks where firmly held islands were assaulted by troops wading from landing boats. "There are no foxholes off shore" and "no royal road to Tokyo," he said.

GEN. MACARTHUR'S HEADQUARTERS IN NEW GUINEA, Saturday, Dec. 18.—The Japanese air force has struck back at the Sixth Army's beachhead on the southwest coast of New Britain but lost 14 planes while the invaders strengthened their newly won position at Arawe.

A short distance northwest of the beachhead, two waves of American Liberator bombers smashed Japan's Cape Gloucester air base with 232 tons of explosives. That brought to more than 1,100 tons the bomb weight to smash that small target since late November.

These latest developments in the fight for New Britain, which opened on Wednesday, were announced today by Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters.

Westward from the ground scene (Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)

6 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT TO GET PERFUME FOR XMAS Buy Christmas Seals

Churchill Reported Directing The War From His Sick Bed

LONDON, Saturday, Dec. 18.—(AP)—With the old tenacity that lifted Britain from the brink of defeat to an assurance of victory, Prime Minister Churchill has insisted on directing the country's war effort from his sick bed in the Middle East where he is fighting lobar pneumonia, it was reported today. The Prime Minister has been in communication with the war cabinet since he became ill, the Daily Mail said, and is keeping in closest touch with the war situation and "transacting urgent state business."

Mrs. Churchill reached her husband's bedside after a hasty flight from England. Official reports of the prime minister's improvement cheered everyone, but it is felt here that it will be a few days before he passes the crisis.

Churchill was allowed to read important war dispatches, the Daily Mail said, and "is said to have insisted that nothing—least of all the operation of (Continued on Page Five; Col. 5)

PRESIDENT TELLS OF HIS JOURNEY

Says Nazis Had Plot To Kidnap The 'Big Three' Leaders At Teheran

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—(AP)—President Roosevelt said today that the Russians got wind of a Nazi plot to kidnap the "Big Three" while they were in Teheran for their momentous war conferences. That was why, he explained to a news conference, he took up lodgings in the Russian embassy compound where Stalin also was staying.

The latest cargo of high explosives and incendiaries boosted to 16,000 tons the weight of bombs dumped on the world's most battered city today.

For last night's attack the bomber command must have sent its four-engined aircraft into the skies shortly before midnight, as most of them had returned by midnight.

Dinnertime Raid Stockholm reports said the dinnertime raid appeared to have caught the city's defenses by surprise for Berliners had only a few short minutes in which to race for shelters before the first explosives shook the city.

Unable longer to soothe the shattered nerves of millions of bombed Germans with talk of an impending and fearful revenge on England, Propaganda Minister Paul Joseph Goebbels again admitted at a meeting of his propaganda chiefs that the relentless bombing of Germany was causing more anxiety than the Russian campaign or threats of invasion.

Virtually admitting the Nazi inability to stem the growing attacks through Hitler's rooster European fortress, Goebbels declared in a speech later broadcast by the Berlin radio:

"In principle, the problems presented by the Russian campaign and the invasion were solved in advance. The bombings cause us much greater anxiety."

Emphasizing this implied admission of Germany's aerial defense weakness was the success of the night attack.

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 4)

Aviation's 40th Birthday Celebrated Near Manteo

MANTEO, N. C., Dec. 17.—(AP)—Aviation's 40th birthday was celebrated here today near the spot where the Wright brothers made their first flight but the elaborate exercises planned for the occasion were by the board because of the worst snowstorm in this area in 26 years.

30 BOMBERS MISSING

Governmental District Also Reported To Have Been Blasted

LONDON, Dec. 17.—(AP)—Fires which spread black choking smoke through many quarters of Berlin gnawed at Germany's crumbling capital tonight in the wake of the latest RAF assault which stunned Berliners with 1,500 long tons of explosives, including about 20 two-ton bombs.

The strong force of Lancasters that hit the city last night in the sixth major attack since the "Battle of Berlin" began less than a month ago swept over the cloud-covered capital at the earliest hour they have yet attacked the city—shortly before 7 p. m.

Thirty bombers—about average for a mission of its size—failed to return, at least five Nazi fighters were shot from the flame-red-dyed skies.

The German communique acknowledged that considerable damage had been done to the city and blasted by 40 previous raids this year.

The Spandau district, named in reports to neutral capitals as one area particularly well plastered, is the site of the immense Brandenburg aero-engine works as well as other important war industries.

Earlier reports to Stockholm said fires were still raging many hours after the attack, and that telephone connection with the German capital was irregular.

Government Area Hit The city's governmental district—Germany's nerve center—was also reported to have been hit hard. One report reaching Stockholm said a train loaded with war prisoners was hit, resulting in 60 killed.

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(Continued on Page Two; Col. 1)

Senate Okehs Mustering Out Pay Measure

Acts With 'Break-Neck' Speed To Provide 'Christmas Gift'

IS SENT TO HOUSE

Approval Comes After A Little More Than Hour's Debate

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—(AP)—With breakneck speed, the Senate approved overwhelmingly and sent to the House today a "Christmas gift" measure to provide mustering out pay ranging from \$200 to \$500 for men and women in the armed forces.

The Senate acted after only a little more than an hour's debate and without the formality of a roll call vote after Democratic Leader Barkley (Ky.) had urged a "Christmas present" to the fighting forces.

\$500 Is Provided Under the measure, \$500 would be paid to each man and woman up to and including the rank of colonel who had served 18 months or more overseas or in Alaska. One third of the sum would be paid on termination of service and the remainder in two monthly installments.

The mustering out pay would be \$400 for 12 to 18 months overseas service and \$300 for less. Persons who served more than 12 months in this country would get \$300 and those serving less than that \$200. All payments except that of \$200 would be in three equal installments, the latter being paid in two monthly checks.

Estimates Vary Estimates of the over-all cost of this reward for service, recommended in a message to congress by President Roosevelt, ranged from \$3,000,000,000 fixed by Barkley to \$4,000,000,000 estimated by Senator Johnson (D-Colo.), who headed a subcommittee which whipped the bill into shape.

Since the payments will be made to all persons below the rank of brigadier general who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces since Dec. 7, 1941, Johnson estimated accrued obligations at \$350,000,000. The mustering out pay, however, would not be available to persons who obtained discharges through their own initiative or who are entitled to retirement pay.

Senator Austin (R-Vt.) brought out that discharges from the armed forces for disabilities, age and (Continued on Page Two; Col. 1)

FRENCH FIGHTING NAZIS IN ITALY

Battle Along - Side Allies For First Time Since November, 1918

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Algiers, Dec. 17.—(AP)—For the first time since Nov. 11, 1918, troops of the four great Allies of the first world war—America, Britain, France and Italy—are fighting side by side against the Germans in the rugged mountains of Italy.

Splendidly equipped with the most modern American weapons, crack French units trained in North Africa have been in the battle line for some time and have scored outstanding successes, capturing several important Nazi hill positions and seizing prisoners, the Allied command announced.

This first appearance of French troops in European mainland fighting since the fall of their homeland in 1940 created a sensation among the Italian people.

The quick, incisive successes scored by the highly mobile French striking force contrasted sharply with the debacle suffered recently by Italian militia in its first offensive gesture in the Mignano area. The French, however, are much more highly equipped and trained than their new Italian allies.

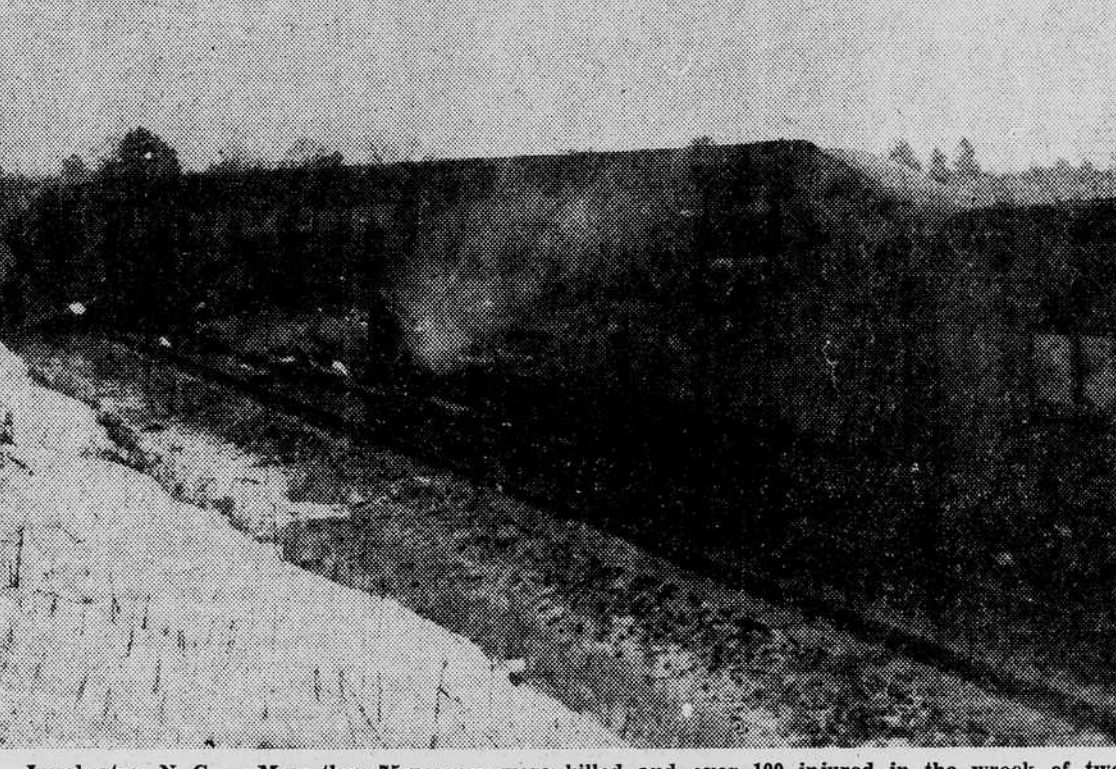
Since they fought alongside the Americans and British in Tunisia, Gen. Henri Giraud's men have learned to use the best American light and heavy machine-guns, tanks and tank destroyers and mobile field artillery. Their officers declare they will prove invaluable as the drive toward Rome continues. Their uniforms differ but slightly from those of the Americans.

"Just give us a chance on equal terms," a French soldier told an Associated Press correspondent. "If you thought we were good in Tunisia just watch us now."

Announcement of the presence of the reborn French army on the (Continued on Page Five; Col. 4)

WRECK DEATH TOLL IS SET AT 70 BY THE RED CROSS; CARS CLEARED FROM LINE

Train Wreck Kills Scores



Lumberton, N. C. — More than 75 persons were killed and over 100 injured in the wreck of two crowded streamliner trains along an icebound stretch of the Atlantic Coast Line here early Thursday. This is a section of one of the northbound train piled up on the bank after it had crashed into three derailed coaches of a southbound train. All except one of the dead were passengers on the northbound train. (NEA Service.)

FIGURES REVISED

Traffic Is Resumed Over The North And South-Bound Double Lines

TO BE INVESTIGATED

Sibley Issues Statement Explaining How Tragic Accident Occurred

LUMBERTON, Dec. 17.—(AP)—While wrecking crews continued to cut into the mass of twisted steel for more bodies, the Red Cross tonight revised its figures downward and placed the death toll in the Atlantic Coast Line wreck near here yesterday at 70—47 service men and 23 civilians.

The tracks were cleared late today of the telescoped cars of the two streamliners and traffic was resumed over the A.C.L.'s north-south double trunk lines. Whether there were additional bodies in the wreckage moved off the tracks was not known.

Six More Bodies Before the tracks were cleared six more bodies were found—three sailors, two soldiers and one WAVE.

The first train to move over the rails was a north-bound passenger train, and as it passed the door of a baggage car swung open and long rows of caskets were bared to the view of wrecking crew and onlookers.

The War Department announced tonight in Washington the names of 28 soldier dead but was unable to say whether the list was complete. The task of identifying the civilian dead proceeded slowly.

Investigation Set Meantime, C. G. Sibley, general manager, announced from the railroad's general offices in Wilmington that "a formal investigation will be held to develop the facts with respect to the action of the crews of both trains."

Sibley had previously explained that a broken rail caused the derailment of three coaches of the Florida-bound Tamiami West Coast Champion at 12:50 a.m. About 35 minutes later, he added, the northbound Tamiami East Coast Champion smashed into these coaches which had fallen over upon the northbound double track.

Statement Issued In a statement today he said the road's information was that the fireman of the southbound train went ahead after the first wreck to flag the northbound streamliner, carrying with him a fuse and a red lantern. While making his way through the icy night, the statement said, the fireman fell and broke his fuse, but continued his effort to stop the other train by using his lantern.

"The engineer on No. 8 (the northbound train) evidently did not see the fireman's signal," said Sibley's statement. "We understand that the sled and snowstorm was still in progress at that time."

Railroad sources said they believed only one passenger on the southbound train met death. First Lieut. Roy A. Griffin, who had just been graduated from Harvard (Continued on Page Two; Col. 5)

MINERS, LEWIS SIGN WAGE PACT

Two Year, No Strike Agreement Is Submitted To WLB

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—(AP) President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers signed a two-year, no-strike agreement today with more than two-thirds of the soft coal industry and submitted it to the War Labor Board.

Lewis signed the document at his home, where he is ill with a cold, after a joint conference of the union and operators had approved it. It provides that no strike shall be called or maintained during the period of the agreement. The base date is last April 1, which means that the agreement may be opened on March 31 next, the end of the first year, if either party wishes to negotiate general wage terms. It also may be reopened if "a significant change" occurs in the government wage policy.

The terms for the miners are substantially the same as those now in force under the agreement between Interior Secretary Ickes as federal custodian of the mines and John L. Lewis, UMW president, plus a \$40 individual retroactive payment for underground travel time.

It will become a binding contract between private operators, the mine union, (with the government relinquishing control) and the Office of Price Administration grants price increases satisfying the operators.

(Continued on Page Two; Col. 1)

Snow Fall Here Heaviest Since Bureau Established

The 6.2 inch snow which fell here Dec. 15 proved to be the earliest, heaviest snow since the weather bureau was established here in 1871, Paul Hess, weather bureau official said Friday. The heaviest snow recorded was 12.1 inches on Feb. 17-18, 1896. There have been snows earlier than Dec. 15 but they have never been as much as 6.2 inches as the snow which fell here Wednesday.

The snow this week ranked the eighth heaviest of all months and all years since 1871, Mr. Hess continued. Following are all the snows of this area above 3.7 inches recorded since Jan. 1, 1871 during all months: 12.1, Feb. 17-18, 1896; 9.8, Feb. 10-11, 1912; 9.0, Feb. 23, 1901; 8.6, Jan. 13-14, 1912; 8.0, Feb. 24-25, 1942; 7.5, Dec. 20-21, 1915; 6.5, Jan. 30, 1936; 6.2, Dec. 15, 1943; 4.5, Jan. 4-5, 1904; 4.3, March 2, 1927; 4.2, Dec. 29-30, 1917; 3.7, Feb. 21-22, 1936.

With the temperature reaching 18 degrees Thursday night this proved to be the lowest recorded since 1934 when the mercury dropped to 10 degrees. The low last night was 22 degrees which gives signs of a slight rising in the temperature for Wilmington. The lowest temperature recorded since 1871 was 5.2 degrees on Feb. 14, 1899. The other two low recordings were 5.9 degrees on Dec. 31, 1917 and 9.0 degrees on Jan. 6, 1884.

The slight rise in temperature Friday did considerable melting which made the streets slushy. The rain and sleet which preceded this snow caused unusual icy streets, Mr. Hess said.

The city had a large number of men out Friday clearing the streets and sidewalks, but pedestrians as well as drivers still were cautious. Tide Water officials reported that the buses were going more frequently and more regularly Friday night and they expected to be in normal operation (Continued on Page Five; Col. 5)

(Continued on Page Two; Col. 3)

88 Women Marines Are Disappointed With N. C. Weather

"I came South expecting to see beautiful homes and cotton fields, and my first sight in North Carolina was a snow storm," said one of the 88 women marines, who were marooned in Wilmington Wednesday evening and Thursday. Eighty-five women marines, who had been recruited only recently and were on their way to boot training at Camp Lejeune, arrived in this city Wednesday under the direction of Lt. Dorothea Daly of New Orleans, two enlisted marine women and a marine military police at 8 p. m. The buses which were to have taken them to their new camp slipped off the road and the girls had to be taken care of for the night. Three USO clubs came to the rescue and shortly after 12 p. m. all the girls were comparatively comfortable—two to a single bed. The Third and Orange club took 14, the Fifth and Orange took 44, and the rest were housed in the two lounges of the Second and Orange club. The girls represented Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Florida and South Carolina. Those of the Middle West had assembled in (Continued on Page Two; Col. 3)

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 5)

Walter Lippmann Says: U. S. Becoming Interested In New Parts Of World

By WALTER LIPPMANN Two distant and unsettled regions of the world have come within the range of our diplomacy, and in respect to each of them the formation of an American policy is necessary. One region is that broad belt of territory which stretches from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and lies between Russia and Germany. The second comprises the lands, predominantly Moslem in religion and culture, which extend across northern Africa and the Middle East to the borders of India.

The more clearly we can define the American interest in each re-

gion, the more sure-footed and acceptable will be our policy. Our greatest concern must be to see to it that the complicated difficulties in these lands do not confuse our minds and then divert us from our paramount object, which is that this war shall be the last great war—the last global war in which we are involved—for many generations to come.

There is some danger of our being confused and diverted. For the main lines of our policy have never yet been well defined, and we are highly susceptible, therefore, to sentimental and ideological propaganda from abroad, and to (Continued on Page Two; Col. 2)

WEATHER

FORECAST NORTH CAROLINA: Fair and slightly warmer Saturday Not quite so cold Saturday night, with temperature 24 in 28 in west, 28 to 32 in east portion. Sunday fair to partly cloudy and warmer. (Eastern Standard Time) (By U. S. Weather Bureau) Meteorological data for the 24 hour ending 7:30 pm, yesterday.

Temperature 1:30 am, 20, 7:30 am, 19, 1:30 pm, 23, 7:30 pm, 30. Humidity Maximum 35, Minimum 18, Mean, 26 Normal 49.

Precipitation Total for the 24 hours ending 7:30 pm 0.00 inches. Total since the first of the month 1.94 inches.

Tides for Today (From the Tide Tables published by U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey) Wilmington High 2:13a 9:25a Low 7:30 pm, 46. Masonboro Inlet High 2:32a 10:05a Low 11:38a 5:57a

Sunrise, 7:12 am, Sunset, 5:06 pm Moonrise, 11:31 pm, Moonset, 11:35 am Cape Fear River stage at Fayetteville, 10.10 feet. (Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)