

U. S. Is Using A New Weapon In The Pacific

Japs Being Driven Back By World's Greatest Carrier Fleet

DESTROYER IS SUNK

Navy Has Not Been Idle In Arms Development, Knox Says

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—American secret weapons, plus the world's largest fleet of aircraft carriers, are driving the Japanese back from bases captured in the enemy's initial lunge out into the Pacific.

This was disclosed today by Secretary of the Navy Knox who revealed at the same time that an American destroyer was sunk and a small coastal transport damaged by enemy bombs Sunday in the invasion of Cape Gloucester on New Britain island. That landing is part of the campaign to knock out Rabaul Japanese key base in the south Pacific.

Ship Not Named

The destroyer was not identified nor was Knox able to give the number of casualties. The sinking of the destroyer brought to 124 the number of American naval craft lost since the war started.

Knox provided little information on the secret weapon or weapons which he said the Navy has developed during the last year and put into service against the Nazis and the Japanese.

"In the field of new weapons, or secret weapons," he said in reviewing the year, "the Navy has by no means been idle. The Japanese especially have felt the sting of weapons which although greatly improved, nevertheless are of conventional types. Japanese and Nazi alike, however, also have felt destruction wrought by weapons not known to them, and will continue to do so."

Largest in World

In discussing expansion of the fleet—to the largest in the world—Knox said that carriers, including escorts, now total "six times as many in commission as there were when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor." At that time the Navy had seven carriers in service, making the present total more than 42.

Aboard those carriers, Knox said, "we have the most powerful fleet of aircraft carriers in the world."

N. C. GAS SHORTAGE UNKNOWN TO PAW

Officials Say Buying Spree Has Caused Stocks To Drop

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—A petroleum Administration for War (PAW) spokesman today attributed a reported gasoline shortage in North Carolina to a rush of holiday buying and the recent scare brought on by rumors that a sales freeze was planned.

The PAW representative said officials here were not aware of a North Carolina gasoline shortage, but if one exists it should only be a temporary matter since we are meeting allocations to all east coast areas.

He explained that PAW was not denying a drought existed, but that "spot shortages like this appears to be developed frequently and are often cleared up before we are advised."

The spokesman added that "with the small margin under which

WEATHER

FORECASTS

NORTH CAROLINA: Cloudy with a slight drizzle Wednesday. Rain changing to snow west portion ending Wednesday forenoon. Rain east portion ending Wednesday afternoon. Colder Wednesday night. Temperature 22.26 west and 22.22 east portions. Thursday partly cloudy and continued cold.

(Eastern Standard Time)
(By U. S. Weather Bureau)
Meteorological data for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m., yesterday.

Temperature
1:30 am, 46; 7:30 am, 45; 1:30 pm, 48; 7:30 pm, 49.

Maximum 51, Minimum 44, Mean 48, Normal 47.

Humidity
1:30 am, 96; 7:30 am, 100; 1:30 pm, 92; 7:30 pm, 96.

Precipitation
Total for the 24 hours ending 7:30 pm, 0.11 inches.

Total since the first of the month, 2.34 inches.

Tides For Today
(From the Tide Tables published by U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey)

Wilmington High 11:58a 6:10a Low 11:33p 6:52p
Newport Inlet High 9:24a 2:37a Low 9:41p 3:49p
Sunrise, 7:17 am. Sunset, 5:12 pm.
Moonrise, 9:27 a. Moonset, 8:13 p.

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Fresh Ham Raised One Ration Point

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—Fresh ham was boosted one point per pound in ration value today and other meat items in general were left unchanged for January in the face of a congressional move to take pork off the ration list entirely for a time to clear a market glut.

The Office of Price Administration, in announcing next month's few changes in meat and fat values, reported that movement of fresh hams has increased considerably since validation of spare stamp No. 1 in ration book 4 for five points on pork. For that reason the current difference between ration point value of fresh and smoked hams was eliminated.

Because of overcrowded cold storage facilities, another general reduction of meat point values had been considered a possibility. Such a slash recently was applied to pork items to move a record production into consumption.

Movement of some processed foods out of storage, however, is expected to provide additional space for meat. That movement at the same time increases the likelihood of a reduction in processed food values.

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TWELVE JAPANESE SHIPS ARE SUNK

One Destroyer And Other Vessels Destroyed By U. S. Subs

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—Raiding Japanese supply lines over which the enemy is trying to supply bases in the South Pacific, American submarines have blasted a destroyer and 11 other vessels to bring to 536 the number of enemy craft sunk, probably sunk or damaged by the undersea arm of the Navy.

This largest sinking report in recent months gave emphasis to a recent statement by Secretary Knox that the submarines on their lonely patrols through the far Pacific are doing "an excellent job."

No details were disclosed on the sinking of the destroyer, two large tankers, one large freighter, two medium transports and six medium freighters, which went down "somewhere in the Pacific."

All of the ships sunk were in the category of vessels used to carry men and materials to the far-flung Japanese bases. Presumably the destroyer was on convoy duty. The submarine damage, which with aerial bombing has forced the Japanese in some parts of the South Pacific to resort to use of barges for moving supplies, brought to 386 the number of enemy ships definitely sunk. In addition the Navy has announced probable sinking of 36 Japanese ships and damaging of 114 others.

Marines Advancing

ADVANCED ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, New Guinea, Wednesday, Dec. 29.—(AP)—The United States Marines invading Cape Gloucester, New Britain, are within a mile and a half of the enemy airfield, Gen. Douglas MacArthur's communique said today.

Thirty-seven Japanese planes were downed in heavy enemy raids on the Sixth Army's positions at Arawe, 60 miles southeast of Cape Gloucester. The enemy again attacked outposts there, but were repulsed as they were in previous attacks Sunday morning.

The enemy showed fighting energy in opposition to the Marine landing forces at Cape Gloucester, setting off four stiff counterattacks against the Leathernecks east of the cape. All were beaten back, the communique said.

The airfield at Cape Gloucester is the prime objective of the Leathernecks who established beachheads there in Sunday's landings. Target Hill, a 450-foot elevation, fell to the Marines shortly after the landing, and this position is being used by Marine artillery to pound the enemy positions on and near the airfield.

Tiny Island In Atlantic Aids Allied Movement Of Planes To Africa

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—A pinpoint of land in the South Atlantic, less than 38 square miles in area, was disclosed by the Army today as one of the most vital spots in Allied strategy. It has served as a funnel for shipping 5,000 planes to Africa.

The War Department lifted the veil of secrecy from the role played by tiny Ascension island, a dot on the place ferry route between South America and Africa.

Ascension is only one stop on one route which the Air Transport Command uses in its trans-Atlantic operations, but the department declared that probably no base has such strategic significance.

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Soviets Cross Terev River In Fast Drive

Red Troops Push Southward Toward Border Of Old Rumania

KOROSTISHEV TAKEN

Shock Force Beats Back 18 German Counter-Attacks

LONDON, Wednesday, Dec. 29.—(AP)—The Soviet second Ukrainian army, sweeping through 60 more communities in its fast-moving winter offensive, has forced the Terev river and captured Korostishev, 16 miles east of Zhitomir, in fierce street fighting and at the same time is pushing southward toward the border of Rumania, 115 miles away.

Another important Russian shock force beat back 18 German counter-attacks and killed more than 1,200 Germans as it captured several populated places in northern White Russia on the approaches to Vitebsk. Moscow reports said the Russians, who were bearing down toward this German fortress from the north and east, were five miles away in one sector.

Tense Engagement

Far to the south, in the Dnieper bend, more than 33 German tanks and 1,000 men were destroyed after a tense engagement north of Kirovograd in which a German attack with large forces of infantry and tanks cracked up against a deadly Russian artillery and mortar barrage.

The Moscow midnight communique, recorded by the Soviet monitor from a broadcast, said the Germans were forced to withdraw to their original positions in this area.

In the Kiev area the Soviet offensive, now in its sixth day, has wrested back fully half the ground the Germans had painfully won in six costly weeks of counter-offensive. The Germans were falling back so rapidly they were forced to abandon 76 big guns, 10,000 mines, 30,000 shells, nearly a million cartridges and 100 trucks to the Russians, who also took a considerable number of prisoners. Thirty-six German tanks and self-propelled guns were destroyed and six were captured.

Equipment Abandoned

Moscow reports said the area was strewn with German dead and abandoned equipment as the Russians moved to within artillery range of the strategic rail junction of Zhitomir.

The Moscow daily communique, reported at least two more towns captured in the fast-growing bulge to the south of this area where the Russians appeared headed straight for Berdichev and the Besarabian border. These were the Nekhoroschen, 17 miles northeast of Berdichev, and Pavoloch, 25 miles southwest of Fastov. The Russians had previously captured Valerians, marking out a 22-mile salient posing an ultimate threat to Rumania and an immediate threat to the Germans' important east-west communications.

When the Russians first swept out west of Kiev to capture Zhitomir on Nov. 14 the Germans held grimly against a southern push and maintained a line from Fastov west to Khomyevka and Zhitomir. This German-held "floor" on the Kiev bulge indicated Nazi fears against a southern push and was a prelude to their determined counter-attack that took back Zhitomir and rolled east to the Terev river.

Now the Russians have broken through that floor and in addition to driving straight west for Zhitomir are pounding along that rail line southwest to Kazatin, Vinitsa and Zhmerinka. This line, part of the hitomir-Oessa north-south communications route, is an important Nazi feeder route for its southern front.

German reports of fighting in this area said the Soviet "large scale attacks" continued with strong infantry and tank forces, but said the Russians had been checked with the loss of 20 tanks.

"Often I have been shocked, as I know you have been, by the selfish clamor of those who seek higher and still higher prices and profits while the country as a whole is fighting for its existence and its future."

Bowles' appeal for cooperation on the home front followed a review of the supply situation for January on each ration point, to be held generally at current levels during January, may have to be raised in February for some items, adding that "it seems most likely" there will be further increases in subsequent months.

Bowles said there would be "some changes" in canned and frozen food values for January, to be announced Thursday, but did not indicate whether they would be lowered or raised.

The Administrator asserted that in many respects the truck tire situation constituted the most serious shortage in the country to date.

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GOVERNMENT EXTENDS ITS CONTROL OF CARRIERS, TROOPS ARE READY; MOST OF STEEL MEN RESUME WORK

VICTIMS LIMITED

More Than 25,000 Men Have Gone Back To Mill Jobs

125,000 TONS ARE LOST

No Agreement Reached On Wage Dispute—Murray Is Silent

PITTSBURGH, Dec. 28.—(AP)—Most of the more than 170,000 steel workers idle since midnight Dec. 24 returned to their jobs today, with some of their leaders claiming victory in the first round in the battle of the CIO united steelworkers union for a wage boost of 17 cents an hour above the ceiling fixed by the "Little Steel" formula.

Reports from the nine states where scores of mills were closed showed more than 125,000 had returned by nightfall with others expected back when operating conditions permitted.

The American Iron and Steel Institute in a tentative estimate said about 125,000 tons of steel was lost by the work stoppages.

Murray Silent

Philip Murray, president of the Union, maintained silence about the controversy and during the day joined his committee which is negotiating with subsidiaries of the U. S. Steel Corporation here for a new contract.

The "Big Steel" contract is expected to be the master plan for others to be made with 500 concerns. Neither side would give an estimate of just when this agreement would be ready for the War Labor Board's approval—or if a stalemate developed as in the recent coal controversy, when it would go before the board for a directive.

Although a War Labor Board spokesman emphasized again today that wage agreements will be retroactive only so long as the increases conform with the administration's stabilization program, the feeling was growing in the industry that some way will be found to give steel workers a boost.

"And I don't think it will be by giving up our lunches," chuckled one union leader, referring to the agreement between secretary Ickes and John L. Lewis which cut 15 minutes off the miners' lunch period.

He also said he considered the WLB directive of last night granting the retroactive pay agreement a victory because it gave the union a chance to prove its Italian campaign.

The original landings at Salerno were made by one American and two British divisions in a military gamble because there was insufficient time after the end of the struggle in Sicily to prepare other forces for an amphibious operation.

The seriousness of the Allied position in the early stages of this battle and the developments in

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USE OF FUEL OIL MUST BE REDUCED

OPA Says Many Persons Using More Than Their Allowances

Fuel oil users are again warned by officials of the local War Price and Rationing board that they must stay within their allotment if they are to have sufficient oil to carry them through the winter. They definitely cannot get more oil," officials said Tuesday. "They haven't lived within their allowances or this situation would not have arisen and we cannot do anything for them."

A large number of fuel oil users have visited the ration office this week to make a plea for more fuel because they have used more than their allotment and now are short, due to this recent cold spell.

Theodore Johnson, district director, declares that there is a critical shortage of fuel oil due to the "overuse" of fuel by North Carolina ration holders.

Reports to the Raleigh OPA office indicate that in many areas of North Carolina fuel oil users have far surpassed their percentage consumption based on their annual ration already and unless the fuel use is cut the entire ration will be used long before the expiration of the ration period.

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These few pickets showed up at the Dilley Road gate of the Republic Steel company's main plant in Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 27, as 7,000 CIO United Steel Workers of America halted work after expiration of their contract. Nearly all of the 7,000 workers in this plant were idle. More than 100,000 workers were reported to have stopped work in the nation's steel-producing areas, despite President Roosevelt's appeal for peaceful settlement of a wage controversy. (AP wirephoto)

Nazis Throw Extra Men Into Bloody Italian Fight

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Algiers, Dec. 28.—(AP)—The Germans threw another fresh division into the mud and blood of the Italian front today in a desperate effort to halt relentless Allied attacks which are prying the Nazis loose from their grips on the road to Rome and on the flaming, flattened port of Ortona on the Adriatic sea.

(Tuesday's Germans communique said Nazi troops had evacuated the ruins of Ortona and had taken up new positions northwest of the town after inflicting heavy losses on attacking Canadian forces. Hours afterward there was no confirmation from Allied Headquarters.

Fourteen German divisions (perhaps 200,000 men) now are known to be engaged in the fighting across Italy. Yesterday the enemy employed great numbers of flame-throwers all along the Eighth Army front and literally established a wall of fire before Canadian infantry and tanks fighting in the northern outskirts of Ortona.

An Allied field dispatch said German troops still clung to a few buildings at the city's edge after a solid week of house-to-house fighting, but were being gouged out methodically. Ortona, now a shambles, was a small town of 9,000 before the war swept through its streets. It is 11 miles down the Adriatic coast from the Major port of Pescara, main objective of the Eighth Army's drive up Italy's east coast.

American troops of Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark's Fifth Army looked down from the last dominating heights of the Samucro mountain range into the streets of the fortified village of San Vittore, six miles east of Cassino, and prepared for another vicious battle to wrest this key point on the Via Cassina from German hands.

After ousting the Nazis from the last two peaks on Samucro and firmly consolidating their hold on this important feature, American patrols pushed down the southwest slopes to learn that San Vittore was elaborately defended from that side, as well as from its Liri valley approaches. The village must be taken before Clark's troops can plunge on toward Cassino.

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Picket Line Thin At Republic Steel Plant



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Events On Soviet Front Do Much To Support General's Prediction

By KIRKE L. SIMPSON Associated Press War Analyst

Events in Russia go far to support General Dwight D. Eisenhower's sober confidence that 1944 can be made the victory year in Europe under the Allied-Russian three-way attack program mapped at Teheran.

Eisenhower made his declaration in his farewell to his western Mediterranean command to take over the job of Anglo-American supreme commander in the west. It will now be his duty to set in motion at the appointed time the western Jaw of the vast pincer attack agreed upon at Teheran.

Berlin estimated the Russian forces into this resumed Red Army offensive at 500,000 men, which

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FDR IS HOPEFUL

Says U. S. Will Surrender Control At End Of The Emergency

UNDER STRIKE ACT

Plans To Name Group To Get Together On His FEPC Committee

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28.—(AP)—Hope that the railroads can be turned back to private operation soon was expressed by President Roosevelt today as the Army, on his orders, extended its control to all major carriers and prepared to use troops to untrain if necessary.

Mr. Roosevelt was not specific at his press-radio conference, however, as to the conditions under which government operation would be surrendered.

Question Too Much

He was asked if the carriers would be restored to private management if the three operating brotherhoods which had not done so agreed to arbitration of their wage dispute. The question was too itty, he replied.

"Will the government keep the railroads for the duration of the emergency?" another reporter asked.

Mr. Roosevelt said yes, but when meant the duration of the war or the strike threat, he replied that he wanted to turn the carriers back to private operation as soon as he could.

Under Strike Act

In response to another question, he said a rail strike would come under the Connally-Smith Act. This law makes it a criminal offense to conspire to strike, or encourage a strike, in a government-operated war facility.

Mr. Roosevelt also told the conference he hoped to appoint a committee to get labor and railroad management together on the question of an order from his Fair Employment Practices Committee, some be without discrimination as to race.

Seventeen Southern railroads and terminals replied that they were prevented by union contracts from complying with the order, and also challenged the authority of the FEPC.

Question Brought Up

A reporter brought up the case of the 15 non-operating railroad unions which agreed yesterday to accept a government award of 4

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PARTISANS PUSH THE NAZIS BACK

Germans Forced To Retreat In One Section Of Croatia

LONDON, Dec. 28.—German forces have been thrown back in one section of Croatia by the Yugoslav partisan army, and in Bosnia fighting has turned especially violent as German reserves stream up to the front, Marshal Josip Broz' headquarters announced today.

German propaganda, now acknowledging the major nature of this action on the Balkan front, claimed through the Nazi-controlled Hungarian news agency that four full Yugoslav brigades numbering in all about 4,500 men, had been "wiped out" in a single battle about Samaritza in Croatia.

Broz' communique said several hundred Germans were killed in the Livno-Duvno area of western Bosnia where the partisans repulsed and threw back in disorder a column of Germans which sought to take Glamoc, 15 miles north of Livno.

In all parts of eastern Bosnia the partisans were on the offensive, battling Germans and Czechs especially around the towns of Kloduz and Zivinjar.

The Yugoslavs said they attacked a "field near" Zivinjar, capturing 225 prisoners and taking 100 horses. They asserted a large enemy camp at Turpocje in the same area was blown up as well as a bridge nearby.

Broz' partisans clashed with Czech troops of Gen. Dr. Dra. Mihalic near Novo Selo and routed them with heavy losses, the communique said.

The German news agency DNB asserted that in a large-scale operation which lasted 12 days German troops near Banja killed 670 partisans and took 136 prisoners.