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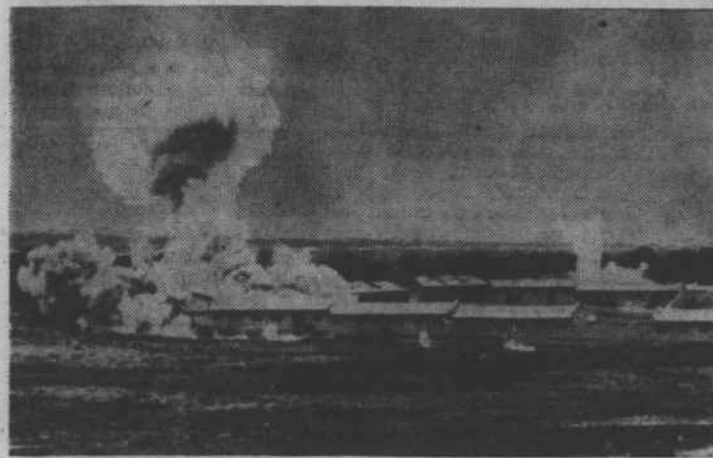
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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

By Edward C. Wayne

Rome Discloses Plot to Kill Mussolini As Part of Widespread Revolt Plans; Soviet Claims Gains in Bitter Fighting; Nazis Stall British Campaign in Libya

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.)
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)



This air view made from a British bombing plane shows the result of aerial bomb hits on enemy barracks near Mellaha, Tripoli, during a fierce raid that preceded the British push into Libya. The attack was carried out by planes which flew close to roof-height of the buildings.

ROME: Admits Revolt

With an air of having quelled the whole thing, official Rome had admitted that ever since the start of the war there has been a huge fifth column organization busily engaged in sabotage of the nation's war effort.

Sixty of the leaders had already been arrested and tried, it was reported and at least one plot to assassinate Mussolini had been quelled.

Official Rome accused Britain and Russia of sponsoring the group, of financing it and directing it.

Of chief interest was the fact that it was centered in Trieste, center of the largest Italian industrial concentration, and that much of its activity had been the blowing up of munitions factories.

Though it was claimed that 60 leaders had been arrested, the Stefani report stated that 11 actual perpetrators of many of the outrages were still at large.

Listed as taken from the plotters were 550 pounds of high explosives, 149 hand grenades, 75 incendiary bombs, two machine guns, 85 revolvers, rapid-fire pistols and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

Though the report was confirmatory in many respects of previous stories of revolt and terrorism in Italy, many observers wondered chiefly at the purpose in making an official disclosure of the facts of the trial at Trieste.

BRITAIN: Libyan Drive

The British in Libya, basing their general tactic on a split-up of the German mechanized divisions into two parts, met their first setback when General Rommel's Fifteenth, "fighting recklessly and ferociously," according to the London communiqués, succeeded in reuniting.

Fortunately for the British, the union was formed inside the general trap on the Libyan "hump." And the royal navy rapidly rushed reinforcements ashore to the armies battling on land, making landings successfully at several points on the coast.

British spokesmen at Cairo regarded the incident of the juncture of the German forces simply as "one of the downs in an up-and-down fight," said the imperial troops had not lost their confidence nor their initiative, and that British mechanized forces and airplanes still were dominating the fighting.

He said: "In this fluid battle which had raged on the main front with fluctuations over an area of more than 1,600 square miles for many days, the center of gravity has altered almost daily as our or the enemy's main tank concentrations massed for attack or counter-attack."

That was as clear a picture as it was possible to obtain. It was not, however, immediately discernible from the war maps where Berlin, still worried over the situation, had a little more confident, had anything to cheer about yet.

STRIKE: Rail Settlement

President Roosevelt disclosed details of the settlement which had averted the rail strike of 1,200,000 members of the brotherhoods and had resulted in an estimated pay increase of \$200,000,000 to \$300,000,000.

NAVIES: Grid for Action



WINSTON CHURCHILL
Were U. S. warships relieving his navy?

The arrival of the first British capital ship ever to go to the Far East at the head of a fleet, the 35,000-ton battleship Prince of Wales, electrified Singapore and was accompanied by the announcement from Washington that launchings of warships during November by the American navy had totaled more than one a day.

In addition to the huge battleship whose identity was revealed, at least one other capital ship had been sent to the Far East by Britain, and the fleet, under Admiral "Tom Thumb" Phillips, was of considerable proportions.

As to American launchings, these had included the 35,000-ton battleship Indiana, the 10,000-ton light cruiser Cleveland, four destroyers and a submarine, added to many other smaller craft.

Keels were laid during the month for one cruiser, nine destroyers and three submarines, Washington revealed.

Prime Minister Churchill, announcing as the ships arrived that reinforcements were being sent to the Far East, said this had been made possible by increased American aid in the Atlantic, bearing out the general feeling that the U. S. navy was picking up much of the load in that ocean.

WOMEN: In Uniform

Churchill had solemnly told the house of commons that with American aid and increased tempo of British production, the crisis of material was at an end, but that 1942 would be dominated by a new crisis—that of man and woman power.

He asked authority to draft 3,000,000 more men into the uniformed services, also to begin to draft women, also for service in uniform, though combatant work would be done only by women who volunteered.

Many other changes were to be made in the conscription structure as Britain prepared to enlist the services of the nation's full power on the "right little, tight little isle."

Men 18½ years old were to be called up. The age for compulsory military service was to be raised from 41 to 51 years.

This, he said, would yield 2,750,000 men. He asked also permission to withdraw a government promise that no men under 20 would be sent overseas. He wants, he said, to send them overseas at a minimum of 19 years.

As to the women for the draft, he explained he wants the right to conscript single women between 20 and 30 years old for the uniformed services, though not for combat "unless they volunteer." It was the first indication that with modern mechanized war women might be just as acceptable as men for the fighting services.

HOW MUCH: Aid to Reds?

There was quite a controversy raging in lease-lend quarters in Washington when it was revealed that the October and November promises of aid to Russia had fallen far short of being carried out.

The reasons were four-fold, but back of them all was an apparent inability of those in command to decide whether to send aid Russia asked, and whether, if it was sent, it would arrive at usable points and in good time.

Asked why this was, authorities had responded first that there was a considerable lack of ships to carry the materials; second, there was difficulty getting the British to permit the United States to cut down on British aid, sending the material to Russia; third, there was a lack of information as to whether Russia really could handle 350,000 tons a month at the port of Archangel.

Because of a shortage of docks, the stuff would have to be unloaded on the ice, they said, and might be lost or wasted.

Washington Digest

British Libyan Campaign Tests New U. S. Tanks

Superior Type of Mechanized Units Developed; 'Sea Otter,' Powered by Auto Engines, To Be Used as Cargo Vessels.



By BAUKHAGE
National Farm and Home Hour Commentator.
WNU Service, 1343 H Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

Is this statement true or false? "A popular military song now being widely sung has in it a line to the triumphs of American soldiers in Africa."

The answer is "true." But do not be alarmed, the song is the hymn of the United States marines and the line is: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli." It refers to our fight with the Barbary pirates in 1801. Nevertheless, the United States army is now celebrating another American triumph of arms in Africa—not human arms but tanks. Whether the British can drive those tanks to victory against one of Germany's foremost generals is another matter, but the superiority of our little 13-ton iron wagons in the early engagements of this British offensive is evidence, military experts say, that the United States still has the mechanical genius that can outmatch any in the world.

I have just talked with a high officer who has served with America's new first armored division. He says that America has a mechanized army in the making that will be superior to any Hitler can produce. This officer credits our success to an old American characteristic which some people were afraid had run to seed in this push-button age; the ability to do things with our hands.

Fine Mechanical Experts

"The new army," said the officer, "is developing the finest set of mechanical experts I ever saw. Americans are natural mechanics and it is coming out as a result of the training of our motorized units."

When the army laid aside "May West," the heavy tank the United States built first, and concentrated on the smaller and far more mobile 13-ton unit mounted with a 37-mm. gun, many people wondered if it could stand up against the heavier German tanks with their much higher caliber weapons. In the first week's fighting in the present offensive in Libya the American creation proved superior. The anti-tank gun it carries because of their high muzzle velocity have a greater penetrating quality than the Germans' heavier guns.

But the superior mechanical integrity, the greater speed, and the other qualities that go into the American product are only half the battle. Just as horses have to be watered and fed, so tanks must be cared for. Maintenance is a vital factor. And this is where the mechanical genius of the individual is important. When a tank division rolls out, tools, spare parts, machinery must follow after. And the American ordnance unit, really a rolling machine shop, which moves in the wake of the mobile units, is able to make any repairs short of those requiring the equipment of an arsenal.

At home, American motorized units have been submitted to all practical endurance tests in the field that they would have to meet in battle except being shot at in action. Now, thanks to the fact that the British in Africa are using American tanks, they are getting the necessary final test without risking American lives.

That is one reason why army officers are celebrating America's bloodless battle of Africa. Perhaps somebody will write a song about it.

Sleek Sea Otters And Lease-Lend Cargoes

Overlooking DuPont Circle where once the children of ambassadors played under the watchful eyes of their nurses and one could hear the chatter of half a dozen foreign languages, there is a modest office. In that office has been carried out a typical American venture which may shape the final course of the war—at least it will help launch a thousand ships.

On the second floor there is a gentleman with a straggling gray mustache. He is Starling Burgess, one of the nation's leading marine architects. At the back, downstairs sits a man with thinning gray hair and the energy of youth. He is a structural engineer, the man who makes the blueprints work, J. B. Weaver, head of Weaver Associates.

This organization has just made an idea work. It was conceived by Hamilton Bryan, a retired naval

commander, and Warren Nobel, an automotive engineer. The idea was to build a small cargo boat to be driven by automobile engines to help get lend-lease supplies across the Atlantic.

In addition to making the wheels go round, these were the problems to be faced in such an undertaking: 1. Speed in construction. 2. Method of building and use of material which would avoid use of over-taxed shipyards and an under-supply of expert shipbuilders. 3. Material which could be obtained from small mills not now busy. 4. Low cost.

As to design, the ships had to be of shallow draft and producible in large numbers, so that the loss of one would mean small losses in material and manpower.

'Otter' Passes Tests

Weaver Associates took the job and produced the sleek "Sea Otter," a creature which has now passed all tests, a characteristically American enterprise because it was conceived and executed on private initiative, a result of typical American inventive genius.

There are many remarkable technical qualities of this revolutionary craft which to the layman seems to be a glorified outboard motorboat. Aside from technicalities some of the features of the achievement are worth mentioning: Instead of making use of the large steel plates for the hull usually used in shipbuilding, a smaller plate has been adopted. These small plates can be made in small steel mills, many of which up to now have been unable to get materials because they are not equipped for the work required by the big shipyards. In order to do away with the need of expert hand welders a special device has been created so that the welding can be done automatically. Because the ships are only 250 feet long they can be taken through the Great Lakes. They require such a shallow draft that inland factories on rivers can be utilized.

So simple is their construction that great speed in manufacture can be attained. And when it comes to operation, instead of a skilled engineer any good auto mechanic who doesn't get seasick can take care of the engines. The automobile engine is virtually fool-proof and is so cheap that it can be replaced economically with spares which can be carried on board.

These sleek little otters cost less than one-third of the ordinary ship of the same size.

As soon as the practicability of the "Sea Otter" was established the plans were submitted to the navy department. Like all revolutionary ideas many obstacles were thrown in the way of its consideration, but it appealed to President Roosevelt immediately, who, with Secretary of the Navy Knox, pushed it through.

British Reasons For Hope of Victory

In the last few weeks American officials have been telling us here in Washington that the British are taking a much more optimistic view of their chances of victory. I asked one prominent Briton in a position to know, why this was the case. Here are the reasons, as he outlined them:

1. It has been demonstrated that American-British collaboration can produce the necessary sinews of war more rapidly and in greater quantity than Germany can.

2. Hitler made a fatal mistake by treating the conquered nations so badly that Germany has no chance of obtaining willing or whole-hearted co-operation from them no matter what their puppet governments may decree. If the Nazis had been more tactful and less brutal this situation might have been very different.

3. The feeling is growing that the German army will crack up when the men in the ranks and the people at home realize that victory is no longer around the corner.

The last point he elaborated. Although the German army was beaten in the last war, he pointed out, it was not really defeated until the home-front cracked and the effect of the attitude of despair on the part of the civilians broke the fighting spirit of the armies in the field.

Old Tribe Paint Helps U. S. Arm

Black Earth Indians Used Contains Element That Toughens Steel.

LAKE PLACID, N. Y.—Centuries ago the St. Francis Indians would bathe in the magical waters of a lake deep in the Adirondack forests and then rub their bodies with the peculiar black soil near by to make them invincible to the fierce Iroquois.

Now the white men are chopping roads to the spot at Tahawus, near the headwaters of the Hudson river, to scoop up the same soil to make their "fire sticks" and "war birds" strong against another enemy.

The National Lead company will spend \$5,000,000 reopening the long abandoned Tahawus iron mine to extract titanium, an element valuable for toughening steel. And the name given to the new mining settlement is "Elihu," for the Indian who guided pioneers to the place in 1826 for "a dollar and a half and tobacco."

Mountains Are Rugged

Once again the white man will try to whip the rugged mountains that reduced the earlier venture to a ghost town and since have protected the sacred waters of Lake Sanford—believed by the Indians to give everlasting life—from all but a few hunters.

Spurred likewise by the defense program, other large companies are pouring out several more millions of dollars reopening iron mines at Clifton, near Canton; at Port Henry, on the southwest shore of Lake Champlain, and at Benson mines, west of Tupper lake.

The region of the developments is historic territory. In 1907, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt whipped a team of horses over the bumpy roads at night to get to Buffalo, where President McKinley had been shot by an assassin. Roosevelt had been vacationing at a hunting lodge near Tahawus.

This also was the section traveled by the abolitionist, John Brown, who proposed to transport slaves through the forests in a scheme to establish a free colony for Negroes.

The titanium, used also for whitening paint, is combined with the iron deposits that blacken the ground at Tahawus. It was estimated that 20,000,000 tons of ore lie beneath these outcroppings on the slopes of Mount Marcy, the highest peak in the Adirondacks.

Indians Showed Them

The first miners in the area were skeptical when the Indian, Louis Elihu, entered their camp with a chunk of the rich ore and assured them, "Find 'm where water run over iron dam." But they followed him and the truth of the guide's story may be seen today in a natural dam of iron, five-feet high, in one of the streams. Furthermore, according to records of the first party, whole sections of the upper Hudson river bed were found to be nearly pure iron.

Archibald MacIntyre and his associates in the party hurriedly staked claim to the land and finally acquired 105,000 acres, about two townships, for 10 cents an acre. Their mine prospered and Tahawus ore won gold medals at the Philadelphia Centennial exposition in 1876. MacIntyre grew wealthy and served as state comptroller for several years.

But transportation was difficult in the mountainous country, and when more accessible deposits were developed and operated more cheaply in Minnesota, Tahawus lost money. The mine closed in the 1880s.

Invents Tiny Black Box That Grades Diamonds

ST. LOUIS.—A small black box that detects minute gradations of color in diamonds was exhibited here.

The tiny mechanism was developed after seven years of work. It instantly grades the color quality of diamonds, much more accurately than the human eye.

Another new development viewed by jewelers was a magnifying device that can instantly distinguish between real and synthetic emeralds.

Private Boots Sergeant In the Pants Just Once

CAMP WOLTERS, TEXAS.—At least this is the story:

When Harry D. Brunner, Brooklyn, N. Y., was promoted to be sergeant, a private barracks-mate, said:

"All my life I've wanted to boot a sergeant in the seat of the pants. Now you and I are pretty good friends, so I'm asking you to grant me my wish."

And—it's reported—the sergeant graciously complied.

127 Midget Ships Added to Program

Planned to Meet Shortage In Cargo Vessels.

WASHINGTON.—Confronted with an immediate shortage of merchant shipping, pending delivery of mass tonnage of Liberty ships and other cargo vessels now on the ways, the United States maritime commission announced that it plans to build 127 smaller special-type vessels which can be constructed without interfering with the larger shipbuilding program. Some are already under construction.

The new program will consist of 16 small Diesel coastal-type tankers, 25 seagoing geared-Diesel tugs, 26 Diesel harbor tugs, 45 small cargo ships of a British design known as coasters, and 15 concrete barges for transport of bulk cargo.

The small Diesel tankers are based on existing design.

The Diesel-powered tugs will be 185 feet long and, except for horsepower, among the largest ever built. The design is new. The latest type of such tugs afloat are Dutch models of from 3,000 to 4,000 horsepower, but this has been cut to 2,250 horsepower by maritime commission specifications. If necessary, these tugs could tow across any ocean, but they are primarily intended for use in Gulf and American coastal waters. The navy uses a somewhat similar tug to tow targets.

The harbor tugs are to have 1,000 horsepower delivered by direct-drive Diesels. They are to be 100 feet in length, equipped with towing machinery.

There are no set specifications for the harbor tugs and they may be designed either by the commission or privately.

Launching of Alabama

Rehearsed for 2 Years

PORTSMOUTH, VA.—The battleship Alabama will make a big splash when it is launched at the Norfolk Navy yard here next February, a splash so big that engineers already are calculating how wharves across the narrow Elizabeth river can be protected from damage. Drag chains weighing 600 tons will help check the ship's speed.

The Alabama has been "launched" time and again in miniature in the David W. Taylor model basin, operated by the navy under the bureau of ships at Carderock, Md., and every conceivable problem connected with the actual launching has been studied.

Naval architects were letting the model of the 35,000-ton vessel slide down the ways into the basin as long as two years ago, and from these launchings engineers have collected data which tell them exactly what to expect when the sister ship of the Massachusetts and the South Dakota actually hits the river.

The model tests showed, for example, that a possible wave eight feet high might be set up by the battleship, but that the height of the wave in the confined waters of the Elizabeth river probably would not exceed five feet.

It was found that unless the momentum of the ship was checked in some way the vessel undoubtedly would crash into the Berkley wharves across the river. That is why the tons of chain drags, placed in 50-ton clumps and secured to pads at the side of the ship, will be employed.

Uruguay to Build Base

To Aid American Defense

MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY.—Early construction of a base for landplanes and seaplanes that would have full command of the vital Rio de la Plata mouth and be available for United States use in the event of war is reported planned by Uruguay.

The base, informed sources said, would include a strip of land facing the Atlantic, which would be used by landplanes, and Laguna Negra for seaplanes and flying boats.

Part of the cost, these sources said, would be met from the \$17,500,000 obtained recently from the United States for national defense.

Heart Medicine Causes Flurry in Cleaning Shop

ATLANTIC CITY.—Employees ran from a cleaning establishment here, shouting "bomb!"

Neighbors fled from their homes. A police car ran screaming to the establishment, emptied the "bomb" and submerged its contents in a bucket of water. It was a bottle of medicine, labeled nitroglycerine tablets. Someone had left them in a suit.

Dr. William Kurland, called by police, explained the tablets were used for heart ailments.