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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

By Edward C. Wayne

Japanese Lose Heavily at Macassar When Dutch and U. S. Forces Unite; Compromise Price Control Passes; Additional Food Rationing Forecast

(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.)



There was no sightseeing for these Axis evacuees from South America as they went through the Panama Canal Zone to the United States. Part of the group of 111 persons, including seven German and seven Italian diplomats, are pictured disembarking from the special train which carried them across the isthmus. Uncle Sam took no chances of any Axis sightseeing, which would have been possible had the passage been made by boat.

MACASSAR:

First Victory

Americans had hailed the Battle of Macassar straits as the first definite American victory over the Japanese, worked out in conjunction with the indomitable Dutch.

The action amounted to the virtual trapping of a large Jap convoy in the straits, probably heading for a frontal assault on Java or Sumatra, and its virtual decimation with heavy losses in men and ships for the Nippon forces.

The fight lasted several days, and a number of Japanese warships were engaged by light American naval vessels including destroyers and submarines, and by considerable forces of airplanes.

One of the earliest ships sent to the bottom in the engagement was a Jap aircraft carrier, and if she was not sunk she was immobilized by a direct torpedo hit, and that meant she was useless as a carrier.

This meant instant air supremacy for the American-Dutch forces, and they went to work without mercy. One vessel after another was destroyed and as others were damaged and the Japs attempted to keep their convoy intact by slowing their pace to that of the slowest vessel, they were hopelessly trapped.

It apparently took more than six days for the Japs to negotiate the less than 500-mile journey through the straits, and the toll was upward of 31 vessels.

The engagement showed several things—that strong air reinforcements had arrived from the United States into the area; that they were being deployed effectively to prevent a further southward Japanese invasion of the East Indies; that American naval units, once at grips with the Japs, could give a good account of themselves; that the early toll of two ships a day could easily be enlarged to a deadly amount of shipping, an amount which the Japanese could not lose and continue their pace in the South Pacific.

PRICES:

Bill Passed

The passage of the compromise price control bill, setting ceilings on 74 commodities, brought to a head a situation which now was in the hands of the government, namely inflation of commodity prices.

From this point on it would be a criminal offense to sell anything above the ceiling price.

The senate vote had been at a higher ratio than the house, 65 to 14. President Roosevelt had been expected to name Leon Henderson to the post of price administrator, set up in the bill.

Henderson had been doing what he could along this line from his OPACS office, and had been placed in the War Production board under Nelson.

All Henderson's previous work, wherever it did not conflict with the ceilings in the bill, immediately was validated, and became the law of the land, just as though congress itself had announced the ceilings.

Maximum penalties were one year in prison and a \$5,000 fine for willful violations of the law.

A fight had been expected against Henderson on the grounds that the former administrator had been close to the President, who himself had been chief critic of the bill.

LUZON:

MacArthur's Fight

Though MacArthur's men were admittedly in a desperate position, it had become evident that he was getting at least some reinforcement, as his latest communique had told of American "fighter planes," and also of the work of PT boat squadrons in Subic bay and at other points, probably near Corregidor.

But it had not been believed that MacArthur's army had any airplanes left, therefore his report that Curtis P-40 fighters had downed a number of Jap bombers led many to think that they might have been flown in there from a distant base.

How many of the Japanese estimated Luzon army of 300,000 was able to get at MacArthur's men in their tiny front on Bataan peninsula was a problem, as many of them naturally would have to be holding the rear and supply lines against constant harassment of guerrilla bands of Filipinos.

RATIONING:

To Increase

Additional rationing was deemed a certainty, with the placing of sugar on a pound-a-week basis.

In fact, it was known that those who controlled the priorities were frowning even on some of the civilian defense activities.

Among these were the "indiscriminate knitting of sweaters," which was said to have a bearing on a possible shortage of wool.

Another was the selling of commodities in tin cans when they could be otherwise packaged or sold in bulk. Among the list was baking powder, beer, biscuits, candy, confectionery, cereals and flour, chocolate and cocoa, coffee, dog food, petroleum products, spices and condiments and tobacco.

Shipbuilders were being asked so to design their ships that they could use steel of the type milled for automobiles—somewhat narrower plates.

Leon Henderson would be in charge of retail rationing, and James S. Knowlson in charge of that which occurred in industrial quarters, it was announced.

RUSSIANS:

Find Going Tougher

As the Russians announced that the "last live German" had been removed from Moscow province, and that the invaders in the Rzhnev area were trapped and doomed, and as they swarmed ever closer to Smolensk, they reported that the Nazi resistance was growing stiffer.

This, the Red high command said, was to be expected, but they drew much cheer from the fact that one victory was following another still, and that the general tactical campaign was shaping up well.

One expert in Red tactics said much credit was being given to a new Russian system of putting fairly heavy artillery into the front line with the infantry.

This, he pointed out, was a bold procedure, but one which the Germans, with nothing heavier than trench mortars in the front line, were finding it difficult to combat.

The Russians have 46 mm. guns and some 76s in the front lines, and though they are not so mobile, they are even being handled by manpower when horses cannot be found to draw them.

'Over There'



SOMEWHERE IN IRELAND.—Maj. Gen. James E. Chaney of the U. S. Air Corps, who has been made commanding general of the U. S. army forces in the British isles, is pictured above. He has a high rating as both a combat pilot and combat observer. His headquarters will be "somewhere on the British isles."

REINFORCEMENTS:

For 10 Areas

The arrival of a considerable force of American troops in northern Ireland had been an exciting bit of news which the press leaped on with avidity, and which brought from the White House the statement that this was but one of six, eight or ten areas to which reinforcements had been sent.

Pressing the President for more information, newsmen succeeded in getting the revelation that help is being rushed with all possible speed into the Pacific war theater.

Nothing was said officially about the identity of the Northern Ireland troops, but the fact that a major general was named commander and that his staff included brigadiers led many to believe it was at least a division.

News dispatches from Ireland, passed by censorship, used the words "from their training ground in Louisiana" and the fact that they had come "from midwestern homes," but this was as close to identification as the war department would permit.

President DeValera criticized the sending, said his government should have been consulted, but though President Roosevelt recalled that DeValera was a "warm personal friend," he expressed no sympathy with his viewpoint.

The soldiers were there, reportedly eager for a "crack at the Nazis," and getting accustomed to British fare, living conditions and surroundings.

The President was positive in stating that aid of the strongest sort was being poured into the Pacific theater of the war, and war department estimates of the total manpower of the Japanese in that area was 1,000,000 men.

ROMMEL:

Drive Halted

The counter-drive by Gen. Erwin Rommel's troops in Libya, which had hurled the British back over considerable ground to a former battleground near Bengasi, had apparently been halted with a terrific blast of air power, causing the Germans huge losses.

As Churchill told the house of commons that the German-Italian casualties had been three times that of the British, his cohorts in North Africa had just finished a devastating blow to the Germans, which many believed had halted them in their tracks.

The advance from Agedabia to near Bengasi had found the Germans forced to halt for a time to organize their supply services, and the British took advantage of this respite to do the same.

But the R.A.F. moved forward to attack the supply lines, and reported the destruction of literally "hundreds of vehicles including tanks" and that they had reduced the German rear to "utter and hopeless confusion."

MISCELLANY:

New York: Joseph Lash, friend of Mrs. Roosevelt and one of her proteges, for whom a naval commission had been sought and refused, had been changed from 1-H to 1-A and had not claimed or asked deferment.

Washington: The justice department has ordered the removal of all enemy aliens from vital defense areas throughout the nation.

Washington Digest

History's Future Course Hinges on U. S. War Aid

Deciding How American Fighting Materials Are To Be Divided on World's Battlefronts Is FDR's Grave Responsibility.

By BAUKHAGE

National Farm and Home Commentator.

WNU Service, 1343 H Street, N-W, Washington, D. C.

Washington has at last waked up to the solemnity of the task America has before it. Donald Nelson has begun his assignment of sweeping clean the Augean stables of the inefficiency and selfishness which block our defense production. But suddenly there is revealed a new responsibility which rests upon the President's shoulders, as great spiritually as Nelson's is materially.

On every front men are dying and armies and fleets are impotent for want of the sinews which America alone can forge. We can forge them. But how are we to decide how our aid shall be divided while, as yet, there is not enough for all?

That is the problem which the President and his advisors face today.

When Winston Churchill came to America at least one-half of his task was to convince President Roosevelt and the latter's military advisors that the main objective is the defeat of Hitler. That we must not permit the Nazi strategy of forcing Japan into the war to accomplish its aim—namely, to divert American supplies from Europe to the Far East and neglect the battle of the Atlantic for the battle of the Pacific.

On the other hand, although the Russians have made a masterly defense and are conducting a successful counter-offensive, they have regained little more than one-tenth of the ground the Germans captured. There is no evidence that any permanent German winter line has been cracked.

This means that a German offensive is still possible in the spring and since Russia is exhausting her supplies it is doubtful if she will be either willing or able to attack Japan from Siberia.

In the Far East, Singapore has been the hot spot from the time the Japanese established their superior air power in the western Pacific. From then on, Singapore was no longer valuable as a base because its docks were no longer safe from air attack. Military men said from the first, however, that as long as it stood, it had a powerful nuisance value for it immobilized Japanese air, sea and land power and prevented successful invasion of the Netherlands Indies, or at least the key island of Java. Even if it fell, they said, that did not mean that the defense line of the United Nations based on Java would crumble.

As a result of this overall picture, those in charge of getting aid to the United Nations have worked out this division of supplies:

Continue to send to Europe (Britain and Russia) the amount of supplies which she has been receiving. Send the increased production to the South Pacific.

Reinforcements are now arriving in the Pacific in greater numbers. As the tide of battle changes it will rest with the President and his advisors to make the choice of where and in what volume America's contributions to the defense of democracy shall go. On the wisdom of this choice will depend the future course of history.

Radio Censorship And News Casting

Sometimes the radio commentator grows very wrath at those who steer the censorship of state. Recently into every broadcasting station which has a news service came a dispatch telling of the crippling of an American ship by a submarine off the coast of North Carolina. It was official. The censor had passed it for publication but NOT for radio.

Immediately, as president of the Radio Correspondents' association, I was stormed by colleagues demanding that I protest at such discrimination. But the decree was logical. If we had broadcast that the crippled ship was putting into port, the submarine could have picked up the message and pursued and perhaps caught its limping prey.

Next morning, when the papers came out with the story the battered ship was safe in harbor. It isn't likely that the submarine commander gets the morning papers.

What irked me as a commentator far more than this incident was my inability to tell you Washington's little secret of how spring came to the capital in January. I couldn't say anything about it at the time, because that might have helped the enemy, too. Now that it can be told, it doesn't seem so interesting. In fact it seems improbable.

Great Britain is in the Atlantic and with her navy ought to be able to command that area. We're more vulnerable in the Pacific. In Berlin, Propaganda Minister Goebbels probably smiled his cyn-



Help Men Prove U. S. Citizenship

WPA Traces Clues That Show Many Workers They Are Americans.

LOS ANGELES.—True stories, stranger than the fanciest fiction, are unfolding daily in offices of the Works Progress administration where hundreds of eager workers seek help in proving they are Americans.

From yellowed newspaper clippings, frayed baptismal certificates and other long-neglected records, parents are finding long lost children, brothers are learning of sisters they never knew existed and others are discovering dramatic events in their lives for the first time.

H. Russell Amory, Southern California administrator for the WPA, explained that proving citizenship is an important part of the agency's program in getting workers back to private employment.

It is essential to have proper certificates of birth before obtaining jobs in defense industries, to which most of the rehabilitated WPA workers are going, Amory said. In searching for these certificates, clerks have uncovered hundreds of comic, tragic and dramatic facts, he added.

Murder Story Helps

From a certified copy of an old newspaper, which one WPA clerk found, a man read for the first time about the murder of his father 35 years ago. The story also mentioned surviving children and dates of their birth, aiding the man in procuring his birth certificate.

Another man, learning he was an illegitimate child, found his mother living, happily married, and with four other children. The WPA worker didn't identify himself.

"What's the use?" he said. "It might benefit me in a material way for a short time but it might wreck the happiness of a nice family."

A brother and sister, adopted by different foster parents, were united when a southern California WPA worker unearthed their relationship.

In another case, a man discovered he was two years younger than his parents had told him. This improved his chances of a job.

Amory said that many people never knew, until proof of their birth was required, that they were born abroad. On two cases, he said, children born abroad were brought to the United States by foster parents. They had to become naturalized since the law prohibits claiming citizenship through foster parents.

Lost Citizenship in War

Several persons, born in the United States, found their enlistment in the British army during the period prior to April 6, 1917, had lost them their American citizenship.

"An average of 100 persons a day seek our assistance in clarifying their citizenship problems," Amory said. "Nearly all of them have been offered work in one of the many aircraft factories in southern California but they can't get the jobs until they prove they aren't aliens."

"To date we have helped approximately 7,000 persons establish their citizenship by birth. From old letters, family Bibles and a wide variety of odd sources we get suitable proof of birth."

"There are no set rules for obtaining this important evidence. Each case is a problem unto itself and success of the search is determined mainly by the resourcefulness of trained personnel in this department of the WPA."

British Bachelors Outdo Women in Buying Clothes

LONDON.—Bachelors are the heaviest users of clothing coupons under the British rationing scheme, with unmarried women running them a close second. From returns issued by the board of trade for the first 19 weeks under the rationing plan it was found that bachelors used 30 coupons and unmarried women 28.

The survey shows that a majority of the people bought sensibly, and the idea that women had borrowed coupons from men has been proved wrong, as well as the idea that parents spent their coupons on their children.

Eleven per cent of the men and 6 per cent of the women—mostly elderly—spent no coupons.

Men of 18 years and over spent 27 coupons and women of the same age spent 26.

Boys and girls between 14 and 17 years spent 27 and 25, respectively; married men and women, 26 and 24, respectively.

Texas 'Guerrillas' Ready for Defense

Sheriffs Form Group of Men To Stop Landings.

BEAUMONT, TEXAS.—This corner of Texas is a far piece from the famed cow country in the Panhandle but a lot of men down here know how to handle their six-guns.

For that reason 300 of them are organizing a guerrilla band, equipped for home defense duties if need arises.

Old heads are taking charge. Sheriffs of five southeast Texas counties and cattlemen who know the value of fast, straight shooting are the leaders, banding their men for night patrols and action on the Gulf coast.

There will be a horse cavalry unit, made up of Texans who are more at home in the saddle than in a car.

The "guerrillas," as they call themselves, are rated men who "know how to shoot and how to fight." They believe they are the first such group to organize for home defense in the nation.

The five sheriffs are W. W. Richardson of Jefferson county, Pat Lowe of Liberty, Miles Jordan of Hardin, Sam Scherer of Chambers and Dick Stanfield of Orange, who was once a Texas Ranger. Dan Hines of Orange, another member, is a cattleman who formerly rode with the Rangers.

Each sheriff has named five captains, each an expert with a shooting iron.

The guerrillas say they are ready to help repel any landing party on the coast. They will help guard industrial areas in their counties.

In Spanish guerrilla means "little war." The southeast Texas guerrillas promise to be ready for just that.

Speed Traps Are Used to Curb Traffic Violators

CHICAGO.—The speed trap system—with all of its good points and none of the bad—is being used in four middle western cities to curb speed law violators, according to the American Municipal association.

Known officially as the speed-check zone system, the new method is being used in Minneapolis, Fort Wayne, Cincinnati and Kansas City, whose police department developed it. The system was installed in Minneapolis and Fort Wayne in the last few months.

Five hundred speed-check zones are located throughout Minneapolis. The zones were widely publicized before being set up and zone markings are clearly visible to motorists.

Each zone is marked by bright yellow bars painted on the roadway 176 feet apart. (The bars are spaced 110 feet apart in Kansas City and Fort Wayne, and 113 feet apart in Cincinnati, but the check method is the same in all cities.)

As motorists cross the first line, a police officer equipped with stop watch and various tables notes the time it takes for cars to travel through the zone.

The check is facilitated by mirrors set at each end of the zone.

Grateful Tentmates Hail Private as an Inventor

CAMP BOWIE, TEXAS.—Private Gerald Sorrells of Waco is a good soldier, but if he wasn't an inventor in civilian life, he missed his calling. At least his grateful tentmates are inclined to think so.

A member of headquarters company, Thirty-sixth division, Sorrells decided there wasn't any sense in scampering around on a cold floor these chilly mornings. He devised a means of lighting a stove in the cold early hours and thereby eliminated the necessity of even getting out from under the cozy, comfort of warm army blankets.

He attached a strong cord to the jet of the stove and ran it across the floor of his tent and under the covers of his bed. Awakening a few minutes before the first bugle blast sounds, he simply gives the cord a yank while still in bed. The gas is turned on and the pilot in the stove does the rest.

Caterpillar Bill Won't Tell Japs What's Ahead

WASHINGTON, N. J.—William ("Caterpillar Bill") Sheats, who annually forecasts the winter weather by the hairiness of caterpillars, declined to make any definite prediction for the coming season. "I'm not going to let those treacherous Japs know what the weather conditions are going to be," said he.

Although many persons say they miss the regular weather forecasts they probably won't mind not knowing how hot it may be this summer.