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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

U. S. Troops Fighting Nazis in Tunisia As British Push West Through Libya Close Strong Pincers on Axis Forces; Ceiling Is Lifted on U. S. Farm Wages

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



Pictured at their weekly joint luncheon in Washington, U. S. chiefs of staff plan future strategy. Left to right: Admiral E. J. King, commander in chief of the U. S. fleet and chief of naval operations; Gen. George C. Marshall, chief of staff, U. S. army; Admiral William D. Leahy, chief of staff to the commander in chief of the army and navy, and Lieut. Gen. H. H. Arnold, commanding general, U. S. army air forces.

TUNISIA:

Kick for Rommel

American soldiers battled against German troops in their first regular engagement of World War II when the British first army and a smaller United States force clashed with Axis troops defending the naval base of Bizerte in Tunisia.

While United States Rangers participated in the raid on Dieppe this was the first time that a strong force of United States soldiers and the Germans faced each other in battle.

When the Morocco radio—controlled by the Allies—announced that contact had been established between the Allied force and the Germans the broadcast was confirmed by German wireless. The Morocco radio estimated at the time of the broadcast the Axis had landed 10,000 German and Italian troops in Tunisia, and said enemy forces were reported arriving in transport planes and by sea.

Early reports gave no indication of the size of the American force. However, Lieut. Gen. K. A. N. Anderson, British commander of the combined operation in Tunisia, said that it made up one-tenth of his striking force and included special units. The British nine-tenths consisted of veteran soldiers, superbly trained, who have met the Germans in previous engagements.

Lieut. Gen. Dwight E. Eisenhower announced that the drive in Tunisia was "advancing as fast as possible according to plan."

Several French garrisons were battling incoming Axis troops, concentrating on transports and shooting soldiers as they came to earth. However, the opposition from the poorly equipped French was considered more as a harassment than a serious hindrance, but was given a warm welcome by the Americans and British.

Eisenhower reported that the Mediterranean waters were "swarming with enemy submarines" detailed by the Axis to disrupt Allied landing of reinforcements and war stores. In London Prime Minister Churchill announced that Allied countermeasures had resulted in sinking 13 enemy subs in North African waters, five of them in two days.

MAXIMUM PRICES:

Amended Regulations

Office of Price Administration officials have announced amendments to the regulations covering certain essential food products such as butter, eggs and fruits.

Under this OPA policy food prepared and sold on the premises is excluded from the maximum price control. Sales by a farmers' cooperative are covered, but sales by a farmer of the products on his farm are not included, unless made to an ultimate consumer.

War procurement agencies can buy any of the products at higher than established prices. Sales deliveries to the U. S. or United Nations in some cases are exempt.

Meanwhile, after a four-week enforcement drive throughout the country, more than 4,000 grocers were served with OPA license warnings. These charge violation of the general maximum price regulation.

NEW GUINEA:

Trap Closes

Word of ever-increasing action on New Guinea came from General MacArthur's headquarters where it was announced that American and Australian ground troops, converging on the Jap invasion base at Buna, had joined forces for the attack.

Continuous air attacks supported the steady advance in New Guinea, an official communique said. The Allied forces had been closing on Buna, only Jap base in southeastern New Guinea, ever since American troops were landed by air late in October.

Australian troops have pushed down the north slope of the Owen Stanley mountain range to near Buna from the west. The Americans approached up from the south. "The enemy, under command of Lieut. Gen. Tomatore Horii, now faces the Allies to the west and south, with the jungle and the sea at his back. Our air force is attacking without respite," the communique said.

GUADALCANAL:

Touch and Go

While American and Japanese warships hammered at each other in a gigantic Solomon Island battle, Australian Navy Minister Makin warned his people that the outcome of the naval engagement will determine Japan's plan for the invasion of Australia.

A navy communique from Washington said that the fight which raged on the sea, in the skies and on Guadalcanal resulted from "a determined effort on the part of the Japanese to recapture positions in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area" which U. S. marines had captured last August.

Navy Minister Makin warned that there should be no undue optimism or complacency over Allied successes in Africa and New Guinea. "The Solomons," he added, "are the screen between the enemy and Australia, and if the Japanese should break through the Allied naval cordon they certainly will attack Australia."

FARM WAGES:

Ceiling Lifted

It was announced by the Office of Economic Stabilization that for the time being the ceiling on agricultural wages has been lifted. According to OES Director Byrnes, this plan will be in effect until the department of agriculture can determine two things:

(1) What effect farm wages have on farm production in the more critical farm labor shortage areas; and

(2) Where increases in farm wages may threaten to cause an increase in the price ceilings on farm products.

1942 Production

Meanwhile the department of agriculture was estimating the 1942 production of principal farm crops and comparing them with last year. This is the way these figures looked:

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1942 Production | 1941 Production |
| Corn 3,185,141,000 bu. | 2,672,541,000 bu. |
| Wheat 984,046,000 bu. | 945,577,000 bu. |
| Cotton 13,329,000 bales | 10,900,000 bales |

LEND-LEASE:

Still Up

Even while the United States was undergoing the huge task of preparing for the North African invasion our allies were getting even more lend-lease aid than before. This fact was revealed by President Roosevelt when he announced that amount of goods and services furnished the other United Nations last month increased one-third over any previous month. A record-breaking \$915,000,000 worth of lend-lease was chalked up in that period.

This, the President indicated, should convince all that the Axis was wrong in assuming that our aid to the United Nations would decrease once we began a strong offensive action. Also, said the President, our lend-lease aid will not decrease in the future. Production schedules are aimed at supplying both the needs of military forces and many of the needs of the United Nations.

Among items which did not show up in the cold figures of the report was news that before the U. S. aircraft carrier Wasp was sunk, that ship had carried two priceless loads of British Spitfire fighting planes to Malta and that American engineers and soldiers are expanding the capacity of railroads taking supplies into Russia.

The President pointed out that two-thirds of the goods were military items, including large numbers of planes and tanks that helped turn the tide in Egypt and to hold the lines in Russia.

DARLAN:

Legal Authority?

The status of the French fleet at Toulon appeared unchanged as the Vichy radio reported that a large number of French troops had arrived to occupy the city.

Although Adm. De La Borde, commander of the Toulon naval squadron, renewed his pledge of allegiance to Marshal Petain, crews were reported unable to leave their ships, indicating Axis mistrust of the sailors. A Nazi broadcast said that "all strategically important points on the Mediterranean coast of southern France are now protected by German and Italian arms."

Adm. Jean Darlan and the Vichy government continued their bickering over which is the legitimate authority in French North Africa. Darlan, over the Morocco radio, proclaimed that his authority is legal because it came from Marshal Petain himself. He pointed out that



ADMIRAL DARLAN Takes North African reins.

whatever the marshal might say now should not be heeded "because he (Petain) is unable to let the French people know his real thoughts.

Darlan, in one of his first demonstrations of power, appointed Gen. Henry Giraud commander in chief of French forces in the region. Vichy radio replied with an order attributed to Petain "prohibiting" French colonial troops from obeying Giraud. Also it was stated that Giraud "broke his officer's word and thus lost his honor. He received his self conferred title of commander from a foreign power."

London dispatches said that the appointment of Darlan was unpopular there because he worked to assist the enemies of Britain and America since the fall of France. Hope was expressed in some quarters that Darlan's assignment was only temporary.

DOUBLE FEATURES:

Dim Out?

Meeting in New York city, the motion picture National Board of Review passed a resolution recommending theater owners suspend double features for the duration "as a saving of time, critical materials and manpower needed for winning the war."

Previously, Lowell Mellett, chief of the Office of War Information Bureau of Motion Pictures, had appeared before the board asking for the elimination of double features.

Geography Makes Modern History in Huge Mediterranean Theater of War

(Specially prepared for Western Newspaper Union by the National Geographic Society.)

OF THE many regions that stretch behind the world's shifting battle lines, none is more fantastic than those of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East (the "Middle East" in British geography). In size alone this theater of war, and preparations for war, is spectacular. It covers a broad band of land and sea that extends from somewhere in the vicinity of bomb-shaken Malta to the shores of the Black and Caspian seas.

Within this general area, four significant campaigns already have been fought with varying degrees of intensity and bloodshed: The battles for Greece, Libya, Syria and Iraq—plus a fifth struggle near by for East Africa, which resulted in the return of the Ethiopian King of Kings to his ancient throne.

Today, the east Mediterranean and the adjacent land-bridge of nations, which links the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia, form a gigantic chessboard, made up of independent and occupied countries, of opposing colonies and island bases. It includes Axis-occupied Greece and Libya; British-held Egypt; technically at peace while bombs fall on her cities and battles rage in her deserts; and uneasy, neutral Turkey. It holds the all-important approaches to the Egyptian and Russian fronts by way of the Red sea and the Persian gulf, through Iran and Iraq, across the Levant States (Syria), Trans-Jordan and Palestine.

The mere list of place names on the routes of men and materials bound for the battle lines indicates the international complications and physical difficulties. To these far-flung regions, the war has brought innumerable problems for technicians and diplomats—and ceaseless activity. New motor roads appear and airports spring up in desert wastes. New harbor facilities are built in old ports, toward which convoys of troopships, oil tankers, freighters and vessels of all kinds, race under the constant threat of the enemy in the air.

Key Points Manned.

At key points throughout the eastern Mediterranean and beyond, the armies of fighting men and machines have gathered. Axis forces may operate from Italian Taranto, Greek Piraeus, Libyan Tobruk; from the German-captured island of Crete; and Italy's Pantelleria and Dodecanese islands.

On their side, the United Nations stand at such vital spots as Suez and the Nile delta, in the Egyptian deserts and on the island of Cyprus; at Syrian and Palestine ports and inland oil fields of Iran and Iraq.

On a map you can see at a glance how geography dictates the war's movements. You understand why the British base of Malta, athwart the Axis life line to Libya and the Egyptian front—and less than 60 miles from Italian Sicily—is the most bombed spot on earth: How the oil pipe lines from the Caspian fuel the Russian fleet on the Black sea; How variations in the earth's surface, from the sunburnt Qattara Depression of Egypt to the eternally snow-capped mountains of the So-

mesopotamia (now Iraq) is Ur of

Old Meets New on the African Front



This picture tells its own story! The camel (sometimes humorously called the "ship of the desert") is valuable in desert warfare. But for combat and for swift maneuvers the airplane is still indispensable.



No man may wear his street shoes into a Mosque, the Mohammedan house of worship. Since Moslems (or Mohammedans) dominate the theater of war in North Africa, scenes like this are customary.

viet Caucasus, determine the methods and tools of warfare.

The Mediterranean and Near East areas, however, are extraordinary for more reasons than contrasting battlegrounds and governments. There, where East meets West, today's machine-age conflict is being played out against a background as old as the recorded history of man.

Where New Meets Old.

Multi-motored bombers fly over the traditional Garden of Eden, now largely desert, and over the City of Babylon, seat of empires that rose and waned thousands of years before Christ. Flying boats land on the Sea of Galilee, and tanks rumble along routes that once were caravan trails such as the Three Wise Men followed to Bethlehem. British and American engineers set up anti-aircraft positions, and plan underground storage tanks for gasoline and water for their winged forces near ancient routes followed by the Children of Israel and the foot-weary armies of Alexander and the Crusaders. They install modern machinery for unloading mass war shipments in Persian Gulf ports of Arabian Nights romance, such as Sindhbad the Sailor knew.

The Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx rise within sight of busy, crowded Cairo on the Nile, British base and capital of Egypt. In the bazaars of Damascus (probably the earth's oldest inhabited city), American soldiers from Boston or St. Louis, Oregon or Florida, may bargain for candied fruits, or sit around smoking braziers where Oriental chefs fan spitted mutton with a chicken wing, or serve such clabbered milk of sheep or goat as has been a mainstay in the Levantine diet for thousands of years.

Cradle of Civilization.

This part of the world has often been called the "Cradle of Western Civilization." From the regions of the eastern Mediterranean spread the alphabet, knowledge of mathematics, medicine, politics, and philosophy; lessons in sculpture, architecture and drama. There primitive wheels turned on their bulky axles, and men learned to use sails and save their arms from the heavy pull of galley oars.

Near the Euphrates in what was Mesopotamia (now Iraq) is Ur of

the Chaldees, birthplace of Abraham. For Bible students these are the Holy Lands: Land of Goshen, where the Israelites toiled; Mount Sinai of the Ten Commandments; Jerusalem, Jericho, and the River Jordan.

The world's three major religions, Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, were born in this corner of the globe. In Jerusalem are found three shrines, sacred to the adherents of these faiths—the Wailing Wall, where reverent Jews come to pray and lament, the Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and

And Now—



And now, what? Fast action and stirring deeds on the African front have replaced the earlier talk about that continent's possible strategic importance. But the prophets, aware that anything can happen (and often does), are maintaining a Sphinx-like silence. Here an Indian soldier is shown chatting with an Egyptian.

the Moslem Mosque of Omar. Legendary site where Jesus was buried, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is shared by most of the world's Christian religions, including the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian, Jacobite, and Coptic.

Moslem World in Allied Sphere. The eastern-Mediterranean and Near-East areas within the wartime sphere of the United Nations are, however, predominantly Moslem countries. There is found the world's heaviest concentration of the followers of Mohammed, whose ways may seem strange to many a British Tommy and Anzac, many an American Doughboy, engineer, or technician meeting them for the first time.

The Moslem disciple lives according to dogmatic religious rules, including prayer, fasting, and the holy pilgrimage, especially to Mecca. Pork and wine are strictly forbidden. During Ramadan, the sacred ninth month of the Moslem calendar, good Mohammedans observe a rigid fast between dawn and dark, when they neither eat nor drink, or engage in any activity that might come under the head of pleasure or comfort, from smoking to smelling perfume or flowers.

From Egypt to Iran, this is Arab country, where the flapping bur-noose, the mosque, and the "ship of the desert"—the camel—are still typical features of the scenery. Yet, more and more, long before the outbreak of the war, the "Changeless East," was changing fast under the impact of Westernized industry and Western habits.

WHO'S NEWS This Week
By Lemuel F. Parton
Consolidated Features.—WNU Release.

NEW YORK.—Just after the last World war, there was an airplane rough-rider known as the only man who could crowd Jimmy Doolittle in putting a plane through a murderous punishment and landing all of a piece, with his ship still holding together. He looked like Francis X. Bushman and spoke softly.

That was young Lieut. Aubrey Casey Strickland, just now Brigadier General Strickland, leading our bombers against Rommel and giving our side just about its first chance to cheer without keeping its fingers crossed. As chief of the bomber command of the United States army air forces—overseas last July—he rode the first plane of our bomber formation which wrought historic havoc and hurried the Axis on its way. There's a sidelight on General Strickland in his commendation of his fliers in a successful attack a few days ago: "Knocking them right down on their own airfield! That will teach those monkeys a lesson! We'll drive these rats out of their holes! Tonight treats for the whole squadron, and it's going to be on me."

He was born in Braggs, Ala., September 17, 1895, attended Alabama Polytechnic college, where he played football, and joined the army in November, 1917, not a West Pointer. He was a first lieutenant in the reserve corps and served overseas in the artillery. In July, 1920, he switched to the regular army, getting a joint commission as first and second lieutenant, the latter a formality incidental to the former. He was a captain in 1930, a major in 1935, a lieutenant colonel in 1940, a colonel in 1941 and a brigadier general last July. He completed the army flying school course in 1922 and attended tactical school in 1939.

FOR obvious reasons, it is a pleasure to spot a sound Americana item in the news these days. Here's a nice one in the story of the New York Philharmonic picking up a baton Howard Barlow to swing its baton for a spell at Carnegie hall, even if his first program was of foreign origin. Mr. Barlow swung a cowboy's quirt before he ever waved a baton, worked in lumber camps and engaged in other uniquely American occupations before his career as a musician.

He caught the real American idiom, in speech and music and in his 15 years conducting the CBS orchestra, he played American composers and fostered American genius. In 1940, he was awarded a certificate of merit by the National Association for Composers and Conductors as "the outstanding native interpreter of American music" during that season.

When he was around 17, Mr. Barlow left his home at Plain City, Ohio, where he was born, for a job on a Colorado ranch, near Denver. He rode an Old Paint and rode an Old Dan and made the little doggie gig along for about two years and liked it so well that he almost made it a business. However, he was diverted to the University of Colorado, where he swarmed all over the music department in his glee club and orchestral activities. A necessary sabbatical interval of heaving logs and slabs in an Oregon lumber camp landed him at Reed college, Oregon, where he picked up an A.B. degree, a scholarship at Columbia university, and \$25. Thus accoutred, he crashed New York, conducted choral societies and made his debut as an orchestra conductor at the Peterborough, N. H., MacDowell festivals in 1919.

As an aside, he had served as sergeant with the AEF. He conducted the American National orchestra from 1923 to 1925, and joined CBS in 1927. High musical dignitaries were inclined to high-hat the radio then, as a medium for serious music. Mr. Barlow stepped right into the classics and has been a pioneer in proving that no subtlety of tone or musicianship is beyond the capacity of a good loud-speaker. The Philharmonic calls him after quite a long absence of Americans from its podium.