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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

OWI Predicts 6% Cut in Food Supply; Bombers Strafe Italian Supply Ports As Allies Close Axis Tunisia Trap; U. S. Promises MacArthur More Planes

(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.)
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Typical of the harvest of Axis prisoners in the Tunisian campaign is this batch of German soldiers guarded by a lone British Tommy. They were taken in the early stages of the drive northward, after General Montgomery's Eighth army had shattered the Mareth line.

SOUTHWEST PACIFIC: Battle for Air Control

While Gen. Menryo Sato, chief of the Nipponese military affairs bureau in Tokyo threatened Jap air raids on the United States, enemy planes continuing a battle for control of the air over a wide area at the approaches to Australia mounted a 100-ship raid at Milne Bay, New Guinea. Allied fighter planes, alert to the danger, shot 30 of the enemy raiders out of the sky.

Meanwhile, Allied air forces ranging over the vast battle area described by Gen. Douglas MacArthur as "our bomber line—the first line of Australian defense" attacked a Japanese convoy of six merchant ships and three warships approaching the enemy base at Wewak, 450 miles north of Port Moresby, New Guinea. Three of the merchantmen were hit, including two 8,000-ton and one 5,000-ton ships.

In answer to warnings from General MacArthur's headquarters of the increasing strength of Jap air, sea and land force concentrations threatening Australia, Secretary of War Stimson promised that enough planes would be sent to the South Pacific to counter the rising Jap power.

TUNISIA: 84 to 3

As the Allied armies closed in on the Axis' last mountain bastions in Tunisia, the gravity of Marshal Rommel's supply problem was shown by the heavy German reliance on aerial transport from Sicily.

That this supply problem would become even more critical was evident from two facts: 1—The Axis had lost all but three airports in Tunisia; 2—Rommel's thin supply line was being menacingly depleted by American Flying Fortress attacks.

Typical of the potency of the American aerial offensive was a raid on Axis rear bases at Castelvetrano and Milo in Sicily in which 84 enemy planes were destroyed with the loss of but three American aircraft.

With the Mediterranean, at their back, the forces of Rommel and Col. Gen. Von Arnim were hemmed into an area less than the size of Connecticut in Northeast Tunisia. The Axis did, however, have the advantage of holding mountainous positions difficult for the Allies to storm.

The strongly fortified ports of Tunis and Bizerte were the Allies' final goal. Operating under the supervision of Commander-in-Chief Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the British First army in the North, American and French forces in the center and General Montgomery's British Eighth army on the South steadily closed the trap on the Axis.

MEAT: Ceilings Deferred

Following through on President Roosevelt's directive to "roll back" the cost of living items found too high, OPA Chief Prentiss M. Brown suspended until May 17 the price ceiling schedule on beef, veal, lamb and mutton.

Meat trade sources disclosed that the OPA had received complaints that its previously proposed standard prices on these meats would have resulted in higher prices.

BALKANS: Hitler Builds Fences

Even as Hungary was reported pulling 200,000 men out of Axis ranks on the Russian front, a Rome broadcast announced that Adolf Hitler in a move to strengthen his Mediterranean defenses had called in leaders of his Balkan satellites for conference.

The seemingly frank tone of the Rome broadcast, plus reports from neutral Spain and Sweden that German engineers were dissatisfied with defense works in the Balkans led observers to believe that the Axis was on a fishing expedition for clues to possible Allied invasion plans.

Commenting on a conference between Hitler and Rumania Premier Ion Antonescu, the Rome radio said: "The Fuehrer and the Marshal restated their decision to continue the fight against the enemies of Europe until unconditional victory has been achieved."

ARMY: Cuts Food Waste

Better planning by mess officers and co-operation by cooks and KPs has reduced the amount of food wasted at army camps by more than half since the beginning of the year, it was disclosed when testimony of a private hearing of the senate war investigating Truman committee was made public.

Before the army's conservation program was inaugurated as much as 20 to 25 per cent of the food served at camps was wasted. This wastage has now been reduced to about 11 per cent—a saving sufficient to feed a million civilians for a year.

Figures on the extent of army food conservation were presented by Maj. Gen. E. B. Gregory, quartermaster general. He told the committee that army food purchases had to be sufficient for an average of 2,100,000 men overseas and 4,500,000 men in this country during 1943. He indicated that the average size of the army will be 6,600,000 this year.

Warning that the food situation is serious, OWI experts said, "There will be more or less continuous shortages of some kinds of food—such as canned vegetables, meat products, and so on. Civilians, however, will get enough to eat. In fact, compared to the pre-war years they will have about 3 per cent more food.

Among food supplies on the debit side for 1943, OWI roughly estimated: 11 per cent less meat, 21 per cent less butter, 11 per cent less cheese, 3 to 25 per cent less canned vegetables, 27 per cent less canned and shell fish. Among items on the credit side, OWI calculated: 30 per cent more chickens, 57 per cent more margarine, 13 per cent more frozen fruits, 7 per cent more wheat and 13 per cent more rye. Listed among food supplies that will be about the same as last year were: Fresh and frozen fish, eggs, fluid milk and cream, lard and other cooking fats, fresh citrus fruits, potatoes and sweet potatoes.

Business must form its own post-war plans and meet the problems ahead with its own practical solutions if it does not want the government to step in and do the planning for it.

RENTS: No Boost Now

Landlords and tenants were informed by the OPA that present rent regulations will be continued. In rejecting rent control change proposals by the National Association



PRENTISS M. BROWN
OPA frenns on rent changes.

tion of Real Estate Boards, the OPA ruled that any such changes would be in conflict with the President's orders "to hold the line" against inflation.

Commenting on the realtors' suggestions, Price Administrator Prentiss M. Brown said that "while the proposals do not explicitly request any general increase in the rent level, their adoption would clearly achieve such a request."

While the OPA is considering a few minor changes in its rent rules, Brown asserted that so far as the basic program is concerned, "I do not intend to alter either its method or administration."

Farmer Plots Crop Acreage Under New AAA Program; Agency to Assist Drive To Meet Record Wartime Production

Committeemen Will Carry Grievances to War Boards; Goal Is to Raise Yields Per Acre; All Problems Will Be Dealt With on Local Basis.

The 1943 farmer is on his honor!

Like the boy taking an examination at school, it's up to him and him alone. He's strictly "on his own."

Under the 1943 agricultural adjustment agency plan, the farmer for the first time has the full responsibility for measuring his acreages on specific crops and reporting the results he gets. Formerly this was done by AAA employees, but the new scheme will conserve travel, cut down wear and tear on tires and cars, and decrease the use of gas and oil.

Now it is up to the farmer to check on his own fields.

He appears to be happy about this change in program administration, department of agriculture reports show. While AAA committeemen — themselves farmers — will continue to give him every assistance, the responsibility for carrying out production plans and doing his share in the national program rests with the individual operator.

Spot checks will be made periodically to determine the status of community and county production, and farmers are being asked to keep records and lay out their crops so that reports can be made easily and quickly.

Goals this year call for about 5 per cent more production than in 1942. Basis for the 1943 AAA program to reach these goals is "local action." It recognizes that the job of production adjustment — of shifting crops to meet war needs and planning acreage to the best advantage — must be worked out and carried out on the individual farms. It can't be done in Washington, say the committeemen. It must be done locally, to conform to the local situation.

Instead of a national over-all goal "formula," each state and county has been left free to adopt the means which seem best suited to the particular section concerned. Wide latitude is given the committeemen in making goal assignments. They are not only allowed to determine such assignments on a "capacity of the farmer to produce" basis. They are expected to use such a yardstick.

Capacity to produce varies according to the character of the farm land, machinery and labor available, and many other factors. Each region has its individual problems which must be taken into consideration in determining what the specific area may reasonably do in a given period.

AAA Committeeman Will Keep Government Informed

The role of the AAA committeeman will be that of an important go-between who keeps the government informed on the farmer's progress and problems, and the farmer informed on what the government



Committeeman will hear grievances.

expects of him and what it is doing to help him circumvent obstacles that present themselves.

Adjustment, the process of helping the farm operator to scale his crop production upward or downward to fit into the national agricultural picture, has always been one of the major activities of AAA. It helps farmers meet production problems by providing guidance and assistance in producing the kinds of crops that are needed in the required amounts, working in cooperation with other units of the department of agriculture.

Community farmer committeemen in 1942 totaled 89,000 regular elected committeemen and about 58,000 al-

ternates. County committees totaled 3,029 with 9,087 members. The county committeemen are responsible to the state offices, which in turn report to the regional offices. Uncle Sam's millions of farms depend upon the AAA committeemen to keep them informed of changing phases of the over-all national program, of the state's particular part in the 1943 farm plan, and of the numerous details having to do with production goals and how they can be met.

AAA county chairmen are also chairmen of the County Farm Transportation committees, which issue certificates of war necessity for mileage rationing, and the County Farm Machinery Rationing committees, which ration many types of farm equipment. In the matter of labor shortage, the community committees report localized needs to the county committee and war board chairman, the latter then carrying the problems on to the proper authorities.

Chairmen of AAA state and county committees head up the war boards which correlate the efforts of department of agriculture agencies to assist farmers in their war production.

Getting the right fields into the right kind of production and getting higher yields out of every acre through better farming practices is the basic theme of the committeeman's work in 1943.

Committeeman Will Help Arrange Cooperative Action

Among his activities is helping to arrange co-operative use of scarce machinery and co-operative transportation programs. Many localities already have worked out successful schemes for sharing trucks



Mr. Farmer's on his own.

and trailers, as well as binders, combines, picking machines and other mechanical aids to planting and harvesting essential war crops. Facilities for storage of crops are sometimes another item for him to handle.

Assistance in the various loan and purchase programs instituted by the Food Distribution Administration and Commodity Credit Corporation is made available through the AAA committeeman. Increased production of peanuts, soybeans, hemp (under a special program), castor bean seed, Irish potatoes, and many other crops has been greatly aided by such programs. New applications for insurance on the 1943 cotton crop will be handled by the committeeman, and he will in addition keep farmers informed of the availability of loans, insurance and payments under the program.

Program objectives of AAA also vary in certain instances from past planning. Emphasis is falling still more heavily on the need for better yields per acre. To achieve this, more attention is being given to production practices which immediately increase yields.

All-out activity in the use of lime and phosphate, contour cultivation and terracing, for example, is being urged. Over three-fourths of 1943 production practice payment funds for the country as a whole will be used to promote such "quick" helps to better crops. In the East Central region, about 80 per cent of such payments are going for promotion of this immediate-yield program.

Production practices, reports show, are feeling the "localizing" influence just as are other branches of the AAA program. Formerly the rates of payment for different practices were worked out on what might be termed a national basis. This year the various regions determine the soil building allowances for the farms in their particular areas, with relation to the particular problems involved. In the Southern region each state has its own basis for determining soil-building allowances.

Reason for this localization is obvious. Production practices may be

more easily adapted to the individual areas and the individual farms within them. In turn, available funds may be used to the best advantage and with the greatest efficiency.

Acreage limitations have been removed on a number of crops which previously had such limits. Except for short staple cotton, tobacco and perhaps one or two other crops, farmers are urged to exceed their goals in 1943. This is particularly



Will aid cooperative plans.

more easily adapted to the individual areas and the individual farms within them. In turn, available funds may be used to the best advantage and with the greatest efficiency.

Goals for most crops are minimums, calculated as the least possible amount which will keep the national efficiency at a reasonable level, and at the same time provide for the armed services and war plant workers and give assistance to America's Allies.

AAA committeemen and the farmers, working hand in hand, are doing their best to develop and carry through the most efficient and productive individual farm programs they can. Problems of every sort stand in their way—labor, machinery, transportation and material shortages being paramount.

By their close personal co-operation, however, they make possible an equally close relationship between the farmer and his government.

America's farmers have a tremendous production job ahead of them. Demands for food such as they are now attempting to fill have never before been made upon any nation. Last year they upped production 12 per cent over '41. Another 5 per cent increase is hoped for in '43.

Grandma Learns Blueprinting in Aircraft School

In San Diego there's one school in a great building left over from the San Diego exposition—another in a church—another even in a one-vacant store room. They're crammed with students the like of which has never been seen before.

Two grandmothers, one white haired, the other pink-cheeked and marcelled, bend together with compass and rulers over adjoining desks. They are both learning to be mechanical draftsmen, to turn out their share of the ten acres of blueprints required to build a single flying battleship.

"How on earth," you ask the Consolidated Vultee teacher, "do you manage to guess that a grandmother can learn some engineering, when she decides she wants to help in the war?"

"It's not so difficult at that," you are told. "First we look for evidence of artistic talent. Perhaps a woman has done painting, or drawing, or fine arts design. Perhaps she laid a career aside to bring up a family. If she can draw, and if she is intelligent, we can easily teach her mechanical draftsmanship. She is straight on her way into the engineering department."

In California, where the airframe industry of the nation centers, literally hundreds of thousands of people have gone to school, and are today at work doing precision jobs. Most of them were never before in a factory.

In an age that has been called revolutionary, here we have the real revolution.

The lure of wartime money is not enough to have done this. In San Diego, for instance, Consolidated early realized that the sort of workers needed must be appealed to on the basis of their patriotic willingness to serve.

Who's News This Week

Delos Wheeler Lovelace

Consolidated Features.—WNU Release.

NEW YORK. — In army circles they rate Maj. Gen. Harold L. George as one of the best impromptu speakers in the service. He likes to talk, his colleagues will tell you, and does it easily and well. He's the chief of the air transport command of the army air corps, and has been ever since its formation last July.

Out in Australia the other day he likened the feats of his fliers to the tales of Jules Verne, and it wasn't so long ago that he was picturing with delight how his men had flown the equipment for a 24-bed hospital to Nome, Alaska, after a fire had destroyed its lone hospital. Just a year ago when he was made head of the ferry command of the army air corps, his major task was getting new planes from the factories to wherever they were needed. Now he has that problem and a whole lot of others, such as flying troops and essential supplies overseas.

He first learned about flying in World War I. A native of Somerville, Mass., he was a student in the law school at National university on April 6, 1917. A month later he was a second lieutenant of cavalry. Fall found him training to be a flier, however. He won his wings in March, 1918, and the following September he was in France as a bombing instructor at Clermont. Before the Armistice, he had been assigned to the 163rd aero squadron. After the war, he resumed his studies and won his LL B in 1920. His heart was in the army, however, and in 1921, he went back, this time to stay.

Since his return he has been stationed at a lot of places. Kelly Field, Texas, the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, out in Hawaii, and down at Maxwell Field, Alabama. They made him a captain in '32 and a major in '39. Meanwhile he had done plenty of flying.

Fit and bronzed and with keen blue eyes, he looks every inch a flier. He'll be 50 this summer, but he seems a lot younger despite graying hair.

THE man who has been swinging Bolivia into war against Hitler & Co. is a fighter and a believer in orderly government. Enrique Penaranda won his way to a military leadership in the Chaco war against Paraguay. Today he is equally famous as an able president.

When General Penaranda was elected chief executive in March, 1940, he depended on the ballots of his countrymen, not the muskets of his troops. For some years before that the stylish way to land in the presidential palace was by coup d'etat. His political opponents, on hearing the résumés from the polls, decided old methods were best. The general promptly showed them he was still a warrior, and inauguration day found him taking office as scheduled and expressing his faith in democracy.

Born in the La Paz district 50 years ago, he entered his country's West Point in 1907 and graduated a second lieutenant three years later. He became a captain in '17, a major in '21, and a colonel in '32. The start of the war with Paraguay shot him swiftly to the top and three months after hostilities began he was made commander-in-chief.

FREE FRENCH circles offer a double barreled explanation for the failure of the United States to clear up the middle of Martinique

Martinique's Four Families' Control All but Mt. Pele. They say the vice admiral is pro-Robert, but anti-everything else save the Four Families. These, they explain, boast of being the only truly white families on the island.

The four families are in complete control, it is claimed, of 247,000 natives and Martinique's economic existence.

The vice admiral could, if he would, make any deal without consulting Vichy to which he still vows loyalty. Vichy gave him full power in the French Antilles and authority to conclude any arrangement with the United States. He entered the French navy 59 years ago.