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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Nazi Forces Retreat Toward Rumania As Russians Regain Rich Farm Lands; Allied Troops Drive New Wedge Into Germans' Main Defense Line in Italy

(EDITOR'S NOTE: When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of Western Newspaper Union's news analysis and not necessarily of this newspaper.)
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Italy—Row on row, these little white crosses in Mount Sopran cemetery mark the graves of fallen American Doughboys in Italy.

OPA:

Renewal Sought

Claiming that OPA has held wartime price increases to half the level of World War I, Price Administrator Chester Bowles appeared before the senate banking committee to testify for continuation of the agency for another year.

Following early increases to iron ore, prewar depression prices, the cost of living has been held absolutely stable during the last 11 months, Bowles said.

Asking for retention of present powers, Bowles said OPA would continue with present techniques for keeping down prices, including subsidies, which he called essential.

Cattle Subsidy

To bring cattle off the range and prevent a market glut in the fall, OPA considered increasing packers' subsidies by 30 cents to enable them to offer higher prices for the stock during spring and summer.

At the same time, government officials considered placing a floor under medium and lower grade cattle whose quality may be affected by the tight feed situation, with floors for the spring and summer above those for the fall.

While increased subsidies were being considered for cattle, lower subsidies were being studied for hogs, in line with government policy for decreased pig production. Now \$1.30 a hundred pounds, the hog subsidy may be cut by 30 cents.

SOLDIER VOTE:

President Gets Bill

Passed by congress, the compromise soldier vote bill, allowing use of the short federal ballot if certified by the governor and state ballots are unobtainable, found its way to President Roosevelt's desk for signature or veto.

Once outspoken in his opposition to a bill limiting soldier voting to state ballots alone, the President took up the compromise measure with caution before acting, wiring all 48 governors to report to him whether they would permit use of the short federal ballot, which only lists the presidential and congressional offices without including the names of the candidates.

If the governors O.K. the short federal ballot, servicemen will only be able to use it if their states have no absentee voting laws, or if they have applied for state ballots but have not received them.

RUSSIA:

Free Ukraine

Germany's remaining foothold in the Ukraine was loosened as Russian troops smashed into Nazi lines along the Bug river, and as the enemy's forces fell back toward Rumania, the Reds regained the rich farm and mineral land.

As Russia scored its military success in the south, Finland in the north turned down Moscow's armistice offer, based on restoration of the 1940 borders and internment of German troops entrenched in the little country.

Russia's southern drive carried Red troops to within 30 miles of the prewar Rumanian border, while farther to the northwest, they were within 100 miles of the old Czech and Hungarian frontiers.

IRELAND:

Faces Isolation

Traditionally strained, Ireland's relations with Great Britain have again tensed, this time over London's threat to completely isolate the Emerald Isle from the outside world if German and Japanese officials are permitted to remain in Dublin and carry on alleged espionage activities detrimental to Allied invasion forces massed in the United Kingdom.

Anxious to maintain its neutrality, one reason being given that its cities were open to destructive bombings, Ireland replied that it could not banish Axis diplomats without inviting war, and insisted that it had clamped down on any suspicious enemy activity.

As the U. S. refused to sell Ireland ships for carrying needed imports and Britain closed all travel between the two countries, Eire grimly awaited events, its economy already hard hit by unemployment caused by a scarcity of imported raw materials.

COLD STORAGE:

More Meat, Produce

With cooler space 73 per cent occupied and freezer capacity 92 per cent filled, U. S. storage holdings as of March 1 were at record levels, with only apples at a low mark.

Beef stocks aggregated 276,300,000 pounds; pork, 792,700,000 pounds; trimmings, 151,300,000 pounds; lard and rendered pork fat, 354,300,000, of which War Food administration held 200,200,000.

Frozen fruit stocks were 29 per cent over those of a year ago, frozen vegetables 107 per cent, creamery butter 792 per cent, cheese 85 per cent, frozen eggs 75 per cent, and poultry 117 per cent.

Knitting Vet



Ninety-two-year-old Mrs. Christine Lorenzen of Clinton, Iowa, is an old hand at knitting for the boys, having first made mittens for Civil War soldiers, and other apparel for vets of the Spanish-American and World War I conflicts. Now, Mrs. Lorenzen knits for the Red Cross for World War II's heroes.

Declaring that Americans are suffering little deprivations compared with Civil War days, Mrs. Lorenzen said: "We had no coffee at all, and, sometimes, little to eat but cornbread."

WAGES:

Control Attacked

Labor's efforts to revise the War Labor board's stabilization formula limiting wage increases to 15 per cent over January, 1941, were thwarted by the public's and industry's representatives on the board, who advised holding off consideration until congress goes over the whole question of price control.

In an effort to revise the stabilization formula, labor asked that the President be requested to modify the wage ceiling to reflect actual living costs, and the War Labor board hold public hearings to bring out facts which might justify higher pay. Steelworkers pressed for public hearings on their demands for a 17-cents-an-hour raise.

MONEY SYSTEM:

Shaped for World

Long in consideration, the United Nations' plan for an international money system after the war is taking shape, with gold to play an important part as a result of Russia's support.

Based on a plan drawn by the U. S. treasury's monetary expert, Harry D. White, the new money system would require each country to contribute a certain percentage of gold and its own currency to a stabilization fund, which would then operate to prevent any nation's exchange from rising or falling.

White's plan differs from Britain's, which considered having each nation contribute to an international stabilization fund on the basis of its prewar trade, thus tending to favor countries which had heavy foreign commerce.

With a comparatively small prewar trade, Russia found the U. S. plan more acceptable, thus swinging the balance in its favor.



Notes of a New Yorker

The Wireless: Radio historian Harriet Van Horne quotes a medico as saying that listeners to the daytime soap operas expose themselves to "increased blood pressure, nocturnal frights, vasomotor instability, vertigo, gastro-intestinal disturbances, profuse perspiration, tremors and a slight touch of tachycardia." . . . Of course, that doctor is talking about only those who LIKE the programs . . . Marion Coveridge, the minor (she's 14), packs a wallop with her ballads Sunday ayems via NBC . . . Too many radio jesters really believe the studio audiences' howls as legitimate. The result is that the comics are getting careless. What brings big laughter in studios often brings yawns in the parlors.

The Love Letter of the Week: From Quentin Reynolds' book, "The Curtain Rises": "Most of what I wrote in the diary is nothing but gossip. Still I suppose if a thousand years from now someone were to dig up the Winchell columns of the 1920s, he would get a pretty clear picture of life here during those hectic days. You cannot dismiss gossip columns by saying they discuss only trivial things. To a great extent they reflect the age in which we live."

Editorial Dept's Nolette: It happened in the city room of one of the Big Town gazettes . . . Two of the boys were back to say hello . . . One (who has never been out of the country) wore the army oak leaf . . . The other wore the gray-green of the marines, with a couple of hard-won stripes . . . Tipped and blustering, the Major called upon the Marine to salute . . . The kid responded quickly . . . After all, he had been only a copy-boy; the Major had been an editor, if you please . . . It was a tight, tense moment . . . A real editor looked up from his work with studied puzzlement . . . "Tell me," he said in clipped, quiet, carrying syllables, "which one of you was it who killed six Japs on Guadalcanal?" . . . The Major waddled out the door . . . The kid was too modest.

Midtown Vignette: This is one of those shawt-shawts that caress the eyes and ears . . . He is a very young member of a Fortress crew now being rehabilitated after service among the flak in Europe . . . He has most of the campaign ribbons but no medals for outstanding heroism . . . Two of his buddies have several . . . The lads had a few hours leave last night and decided to go to one of the night spots with their buddy and his bride . . . And because he had no silver star or other medals—the other two didn't wear theirs.

The Magic Lanterns: Hollywood, which has too often pictured a kick in a Jap's pants as the pay-off for Pearl Harbor, gets down to cases in "The Purple Heart." Here's a flicker that brings the film colony up to date. Its story gets inside you and twists and burns with its report on the Sneakiness savagery. The tale is told not with a ladle, but with a typewriter of cold steel. Dana Andrews, Sam Levene and Richard Conte are superb as the captured fliers . . . Nora Bayes gets her big song and danced in "Shine On Harvest Moon," a rich load of ye old time nostalgia. Its typical of the them-was-the-dayish musicals, and you can't imagine anyone not reveling in some of the memories of the big town before it went soft on crepes suzettes and laced shoes.

In the forthcoming film of Nora Bayes' life — "Shine On Harvest Moon," they omit this incident . . . Nora once wired E. F. Albee, the vaudeville magnate: "Beginning next week my salary must be \$10,000 a week" . . . Albee replied: "Your salary will remain \$1,000 per week" . . . Nora opened as scheduled, but after singing eight bars of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" she stopped the music and told the audience: "That's \$1,000 worth of my act"—and walked off.

Then there's the one about the playwright who was called upon to make a curtain speech . . . He rambled on and on, with words going round and round looking for an idea . . . When he came to the phrase: "I am speaking for the benefit of posterity"—a heckler in the audience drove him from the stage with the squelch: "Yes, and if you aren't quick about it, they'll be along to hear you."

American Seed Raisers Grow Record Crops To Meet Unprecedented Wartime Demands

U. S. Producers Must Make Up for European Imports Now Cut Off

In a remote outpost of New Caledonia a sergeant bellows from the door of a mess hut, "Hey, Murphy, how about those vegetables?"

"Coming right up, Sarge!" And Private Murphy moves at a fast clip from the camp garden, laden with fresh vitamins and minerals in the form of sweet corn, tomatoes and string beans for the evening meal.

This scene is not as fantastic as it sounds, even in the middle of a war, according to the War Food administration. It's a fact that Uncle Sam is sending many hundreds of tons of vegetable seeds to all parts of the world with the armed forces. Wherever a permanent camp is set up, and other factors are favorable, fighters who otherwise would get none of the bulky, perishable vegetables are themselves raising the familiar things they know and like with seed from home.

Seeds are so small, compared with the vegetables they produce, that they are an economical method of exporting food via either steamer or airplane. In European countries, for example, as much as five tons of tomatoes can be raised from a single ounce of seed. Rutabagas, another favored vegetable there, will produce as much as 500 bushels from the seed contained in a pint jar.

The total vegetable supply, through June, 1944, is estimated by the department of agriculture at 391 million pounds. Of the allocable portion, (379,500,000 pounds), 73 per cent or 277 million pounds will go to American farmers, to Victory gardens—of which 22 million are sought this year—and to other civilian consumption. This is a somewhat larger supply than was available in 1943. Some varieties to which gardeners are accustomed may not answer roll call this spring, and there will be a scarcity of cabbage seed, but no U. S. gardener, says WFA, need be without plenty of vegetables.

Another allocation of 9,600,000 pounds or 2.5 per cent goes to Lend Lease outlets. About five million pounds will be available to Russia, and some four million pounds to the United Kingdom. An additional 1.3 per cent, or about 4,450,000 pounds, will be divided among the other Allied countries and liberated areas.

A total of 3,818,000 pounds, or 1 per cent, will be apportioned to U. S. territories, the Red Cross, friendly nations, etc. U. S. military and war services will receive substantial quantities.

All of these exports and shipments total only 4.8 per cent of the total seed allocation. The remainder of the allocable supply, 84 million pounds or 22.2 per cent, will go into what is known as "contingency reserve," a reserve to be used as need arises.

Seed needs during recent years have made increasingly large demands on America's domestic supply. Balancing available seed against claims to bring about a fair division among the claimant groups, and assisting the necessary expansion in vegetable seed production, has been a part of the War Food administration's overall food production and distribution programs.

Seeds Came From Europe

Small vegetable seeds were produced almost entirely in continental Europe prior to 1939. When the outbreak of war cut other supply lines, it also stopped, for example, the importation of cabbage and cauliflower seeds from Denmark and Holland.

Larger acreages of most kinds of vegetable seed, 30 out of 48, helped offset decreased yield per acre of a majority of the crops. Biggest reductions in acre yield were reported for cabbage, 40 per cent less than 1942; broccoli, 56 per cent; pepper, 70 per cent; parsnip, 73 per cent; kohlrabi, pumpkin, chichory and cauliflower, each 76 per cent less.

The harvest during the coming season of increased amounts of grass and legume seeds, vegetable seeds and of seed crops in general is highly advisable, says the War Food administration. It will raise the national seed supply and provide for increased domestic farm production to meet expanding war requirements for food and fiber. And it will provide seeds to help meet the needs of the Allies and of the liberated countries as they are freed from Axis control. Making as much seed as possible available to European farmers when that phase of the war ends, will aid them to rehabilitate their land so that they can grow more food and fiber for themselves, thereby lowering their requirements for farm commodities from the United States.



Enough seed for five tons of tomatoes is in the little pile on the scales. According to the department of agriculture, one ounce of seed can grow into that much, if carefully cultivated, as is the practice in Europe.

land. Great Britain's growers, who once looked to the European seed market to answer most of their needs, faced a serious shortage. Seed requirements had increased in accordance with a 50 per cent acreage increase, while the accepted sources of supply diminished. Russia suffered a dangerous domestic seed source loss when Germany invaded the Ukraine. And other areas were in similar difficulty.

As a natural result, production of almost the entire load of vegetable seed for world needs was assumed by U. S. seedsmen.

What those growers accomplished is history, and the prospect for 1944 is for a still further increase in acreage and in yield.

The 1943 vegetable seed harvest was the largest in United States annals, latest figures showing production of 355 million pounds. This is a 91 per cent increase over the three-year (1939-41) pre-Pearl Harbor average of 186 million pounds.

Very few American farmers grow vegetable seeds as their only cash crop. However, many give vegetable seeds first place, particularly in the Pacific coast states. A government survey has shown that production of 29 out of 48 seeds topped the 1942 record harvest for a total increase of 21 million pounds over the 334 million pounds harvested last year.

Beans, peas and corn accounted for 331 million pounds of seed in 1943, 6 per cent more than the 1942 production of 313 million pounds. The figure for small or light seeds, such as beet, carrot and cucumber, totaled about 24.1 million pounds last year, 16 per cent more than the 1942 crop of 20.8 million pounds. The harvest on these small seeds fell below expectations due to a smaller yield per acre for 27 of the seeds and a total harvested acreage 16 per cent less than was intended.

Yields Multiplied. Phenomenal increases in acreage yields on some seed were recorded. Brussels sprouts, with an increase of 371 per cent, led the list. Other large increases were 228 per cent for okra, 225 per cent for mustard, 194 per cent for kale, and 172 per cent for salsify.

Total crop production for 1943 exceeded 1942 by 27 times for brussels sprouts, 370 per cent for mustard, 358 per cent for dill, 343 per cent for mangelwurzel, 213 per cent for okra, 202 per cent for kale, 195 per cent for looseleaf lettuce, 181 per cent for Chinese cabbage, 178 per cent for chichory, 165 per cent for carrot, 153 per cent for onion, and 150 per cent for leek seed. Greatest decline in total production probably will be recorded for broccoli, cabbage, romaine lettuce, pepper, kohlrabi and parsnip seed.

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