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WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Big Allied Winter Push Aims At Heart of German Industry; WFA Sets Food Goals for 1945

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(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.)

With President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin scheduled to meet soon, there again has been a resumption of discussion as to the future disposition of Germany. On the basis of the latest information, the Reich might well be reduced to half of its 1938 size, with (1) France claiming the area west of the Rhine river; (2) a restored Austria obtaining Bavaria; (3) Holland being compensated for flooded land; (4) the Russians and Poles dividing East Prussia; (5) Poland receiving Pomerania and part of Silesia, and the Breslau area going to Czechoslovakia.

EUROPE:
Big Push

Using their superior forces to prevent the Germans from building up strength for next year, the Allies launched an all-out drive against the enemy's west wall, moving forward toward the vital industrial Ruhr and Rhineland despite wintry weather.

Although they had anticipated a general offensive, the Germans conceded the Allies' superiority, stating that until their vaunted new weapons could be delivered to the front, their troops would have to rely on their spirit to stay in the fight.

As the Allied attack got underway, the British 2nd army striking in southeastern Holland stood only 37 miles from Duisberg; the U. S. 9th hitting to the Tommies' south was 31 miles from Dusseldorf; the U. S. 1st swinging below Aachen was 28 miles from Cologne; the U. S. 3rd working past Metz was 13½ miles from the Saar, and the U. S. 7th and French 1st were 40 miles from Bavaria.

Focal points of the attack centered in the U. S. 9th and 1st army fronts, where swarms of Allied heavy bombers supported by fighter-planes dropped thousands of tons of

From debris caused by war, Dutch youngsters in s'Hertogenbosch build their toy castles.

fragmentation explosives on the enemy's forward positions to smoothen the way for the Yanks' advancing forces.

Heavy concentrations of artillery joined in the bombardment of the German positions, then the Yanks moved forward, with members of the infantry slogging alongside of mud-caked tanks to score gains.

Prior to the general offensive, the British in Holland, the Yanks around Metz and the mixed Allied force in the foothills of the Vosges mountains had improved their positions in hard fighting.

The Yanks around Metz engaged in some of the toughest fighting as Lieut. Gen. George S. Patton edged closer to the vital Saar basin, famed for its coal and chemical industry. In slashing forward, U. S. forces ringed the formidable fortress city of Metz.

In writing off Metz, the Germans loudly broadcast that the bastion had largely served its purpose of holding up the U. S. drive to give them time to build up their fortifications farther to the rear.

The Allied attack came off in the midst of a welter of rumors that Heinrich Himmler had taken over absolute charge of the Reich from an ailing Adolf Hitler. Appointed commander of the Reich's home army by Hitler himself, Himmler busied himself trying to shove up German morale for the mighty blows that fell about that nation's unhappy head.

PACIFIC:
Bloody Science

Bloody business, war is also a science, and as U. S. troops plodded forward on Leyte island in the Philippines, Gen. Douglas MacArthur's strategy unfolded.

With the enemy's main forces compressed on the northwest corner of Leyte, General MacArthur's tactics pointed to their annihilation by the prized military maneuver of engaging them from the front while sending other units to cut them off in the rear.

Thus did the 24th division move to press the enemy frontally, while the 1st cavalry and 96th divisions pierced the mountain ranges to the southeast in a drive to entrap the Japanese from the rear.

Meanwhile, U. S. airmen kept a close eye on the important port of Ormoc, through which the Japanese had previously sent reinforcements to help their troops holding out against the American advance.

Manila Bay also came under the bombsights of U. S. airmen, with carrier-based craft hitting at this important nerve center of enemy shipping for the entire Philippine area. In one strike alone, 11 Jap cargo vessels and oilers went to the bottom.

WAR WOUNDS:
Greater Recovery

Because of better organized and equipped medical service, sulfa drugs, penicillin, plasma and whole blood available for use in forward areas, less than 4 per cent of Americans wounded in this war die as compared with 7 per cent in the first world conflict.

The full picture of medical advance, however, is best told in the fact that from 50 to 60 per cent of the soldiers wounded in the present war are incapacitated by heavy guns, artillery or mortars, which inflict more serious injury, compared with only about 20 per cent in 1917-'18.

Comparisons between the two world wars show 80 per cent of the wounded now returning to duty as against 70 per cent, and number of infections kept down to 10 per cent as against the old figure of 60 per cent.

FOOD PODUCTION:
Bumper Harvests

Even as the U. S. department of agriculture forecast bumper grain crops for 1944, the War Food administration announced that its 1945 food production program would remain substantially the same as this year's.

Boosting its estimates of corn production 61,000,000 bushels, the USDA predicted a record 1944 crop of 3,258,000,000 bushels, while standing pat on its previous forecast of an all-time wheat harvest of 1,108,000,000 bushels. Coupled with a record sorghum crop of 160,000,000 bushels, overall grain production, including oats, barley and rye, was set at a top of 157,500,000 tons.

In addition, bumper crops were forecast for cotton, tobacco, potatoes, sweet potatoes, soybeans, apples, peaches, pears and pecans.

Alterations in the WFA's 1945 food program call for an increase in pig, cattle and milk production, but a 16 per cent decrease in egg output closer to the 1935-'39 average.

CHURCH LOANS:
Aid Homesteading

As a result of a homesteading program financed by the board of national missions of the Presbyterian church, farm families are settling on property purchased on extended terms of 30 years, with down payments deferred from one to three years, if practicable.

In addition to homesteading, funds may be used for the acquisition of forest lands for the benefit of the whole community, or for loans to improve home and farm equipment. Funds also have been utilized for awakening interest in farm ownership through the provision of general education in proper farming methods and advice in selecting suitable crops.

Under the homesteading program, an application is approved by the pastor and three elders of the church, with the prospective owner agreeing to cultivate the land and raise self-supporting crops. Starting modestly, the program has grown steadily.

Farm Values

Despite increases in the value of farm land since the outbreak of the war, the over-all situation remains spotty, with prices reaching inflationary proportions in some sections while rising to fair figures in others unduly depreciated during depression years.

Considered in all its aspects, farming has risen from a 49 to a 70 billion dollar industry since the war began, with value of land and buildings totalling over 45 billion dollars, crop and livestock inventories over 15 billion dollars, and liquid capital about 12 billion dollars.

Making good use of wartime prosperity, farmers have whittled mortgage debts down nearly a billion dollars since 1939, with the figure now standing at about 5½ billion dollars.

Wonder Show

With America's learned scientists behind the test tubes looking more and more into the substance of matter, wonders may never cease.

Already the list of accomplishments runs high, as evidenced at the National Chemical exposition in the turreted Coliseum in Chicago, Ill., where lightweight and weather resistant plastic magnesium furniture, lawn sprays which kill weeds but spare grass, and women's synthetic clothes, were on display.

Spectators milling about the great hall also could see a new method for producing a high mileage gasoline; artificial aromatics for use in soap, cosmetics and perfumes, and a spray for the painless treatment of severe burns.

Scientists explained the processes of electronics—the magical little electric atoms of which 30 billion, billion, billion make an ounce—in the drying of plywood to the welding of thermoplastic materials.

LAND REFORM:
Split Polish Estates

Carrying out its policy of agricultural reform, the Moscow sponsored Polish committee of national liberation divided up 5,000 acres of land owned by Count Alfred Potocki among 1,050 families.

At the same time, the liberation committee announced that it had taken over the Potocki family's Lancut castle, which would be converted into a museum. All together, Count Alfred Potocki, a prominent industrialist said to have fled to Vienna with the Germans, owns 75,000 acres.

In dividing up the Count's estates, the liberation committee was following its avowed policy of redistributing lands operated by great families, with the owners dominating the entire social structure within their districts.

POLITICAL ACTION:
CIO Success

With 110 congressional members elected with the support of the political action committee, the CIO declared that the victory demonstrated the effectiveness of labor's first big organized effort in a campaign.

Whether the PAC would be continued was considered at the CIO convention in Chicago, Ill., where union leaders called for support of their fight for higher wages and demands for industrial, labor and government planning for provision of 60,000,000 postwar jobs.

Declaring that the election of the 110 candidates backed by it assured the presence of an "improved congress" for the next session, the CIO said that its PAC "proved to be the decisive factor because it did the organized, door-to-door work that brings success in a campaign."

The 110 men and women backed by the PAC comprise 96 representatives and 14 senators, coming from 28 states in every section of the country.

Tales of the Town:

This story has never been printed before, we are told . . . How Vice President Henry Wallace scared his staff during the Chicago convention. . . . He left word that he was not to be awakened until 8 a. m. . . . His secretary rapped on the connecting door and, getting no answer, opened it and looked in. . . . He was alarmed to see two boys asleep in the twin beds. . . . The secretary hastened to spread the alarm. . . . He finally located the Vice President in the lobby reading a book. . . . Wallace explained. . . . At 3 in the morning two soldiers had knocked on his door while looking for someone else. . . . He learned they had no accommodations. . . . He insisted they take his room. . . . Then he dressed, went downstairs, and sat up all night reading.

Lieut. Col. James Roosevelt is supposed to have told this to friends. . . . He had just returned after considerable action in the South Pacific when he was stuck on a coast highway. He started to walk back to his camp. . . . Along came an army truck. . . . Colonel Roosevelt, using the hitch-hiker's thumb sign, stopped it. . . . The Sergeant driving it welcomed him for a lift. . . . He didn't recognize the President's son and started griping about his luck. . . . "Colonel," he said, "it sure is tough that two fighting men like us can't get into the Big Show, instead of motoring along a peaceful highway like this."

"Yes, it is," said Roosevelt's boy, "but orders is orders!"

"Yeah," said the Sarge, "the trouble with men like us, Colonel, is that we don't know the right people."

Most of Wall Street has been keeping a watchful eye lately on the Fisher Brothers, who are prominent in the automobile industry. . . . One of the Fishers was motoring through Manhattan's industrial area recently, when a tire on his car blew. . . . He stopped near a small factory where he went looking for a phone. . . . He went to several places looking for a booth and was recognized by the owners of small plants in the neighborhood. . . . The eyes of these excited minor tycoons popped as they saw him. . . . "He must," they reasoned, "be inspecting one of the factories!" . . . And that is why the stock of a relatively minor company jumped 2½ points.

The epidemic of suicides (who have been "committing sidewalk") was stopped by a newspaper photographer. . . . A woman frantically telephoned a newspaper and said that her girl friend (who lived around the corner from the paper) had just phoned that she was going to jump from her window. . . . "Please," she urged, "do something to stop her!" . . . The editor assigned a photographer to the scene. . . . Instead of phoning the police, this hard-boiled photogger (thinking only of getting a good picture) talked his way into an apartment across the street and got his big camera ready. . . . The would-be suicide climbed out on the ledge. . . . Just as she was about to jump, he yelled: "Make it good, lady. I gotta make a living! Go ahead!" . . . She was so furious at this "invasion of her privacy" she climbed back inside and changed her mind about the whole thing.

And you think you have it tough, huh? . . . Along Melody Lane he is rated as a kid with a real future. . . . Before he was drafted into the Army he was the conductor of the New York City Symphony. . . . And so the Brain Trusters in khaki made him a band leader. . . . The last time he was home on leave he was guest conductor of that august group of long hairs when they held their concert at Carnegie Hall. . . . When he returned to camp he was summoned by the C.O. and handed the bawling out of his life. . . . Because he failed to make a satisfactory marching arrangement of the waltz: "Carolina Moon."

Intimates will tell you that they are beyond hope of reconciliation. They no longer speak to each other or look at each other without glaring. . . . He is well known in the theater and so is she. . . . They decided on an eventual divorce about a year ago. . . . But because of the exasperating apartment shortage both refuse to move out for each other. . . . They are keeping their estranged interlude as much to themselves as possible—just so they can have a place to sleep!

Army Strives to Take Some Of the Risks Out of Warfare

Soldiers Taught How To Avoid Accidental Injuries in Battle

Ordnance specialists call it "brisance." A layman would call it the shattering power of a detonated explosive. But whatever you call it, it's terrifically dangerous. Controlled brisance kills the enemy. Uncontrolled by rules of safety, it kills and maims Americans.

To speak of safety methods in connection with the grim business of waging war sounds incongruous. Yet the army's ordnance department, its ground forces, its air forces and its service forces have piled up an amazing safety record in time of war.

For example, look at the score in the nation's three score government owned, contractor operated explosive producing arsenals under supervision of the U. S. army ordnance department.

In January, 1941, less than 11 million pounds of powder and explosives were produced in the U. S. Three years later, in January, 1944, we produced more than a quarter of a billion pounds of explosives, and during those three years our total production was nearly 6 billion pounds.

Incredible as it may appear, in handling the most powerful explosives known to man, some so sensitive they must be transported under water, others so potent that a small amount penetrates five inches of concrete, it is nevertheless a fact that there were only 255 injuries during 1943 throughout all these installations in America.

Nor is this safety program confined to civilian workers. Our men in uniform have benefited greatly from modern safety methods. No one would describe the job of a soldier on active wartime duty as a "safe" job. Yet, granting that the soldier risks his life constantly in the performance of his duty, the army makes sure that he does not risk it needlessly.

Gun tubes, for example, which must resist high pressures yet must

A twisted or broken ankle can disable a soldier as effectively as an enemy bullet. American fighting men learn how to jump from a moving vehicle and land without injury. This is only one of the many tricks taught in army training camps.

also be light for easy aiming and transportation, are tested with excess pressure rounds before acceptance to insure their safety in the hands of the troops.

Now our projectiles are "bore safe." They cannot explode within the gun. Reflecting this confidence in the safety of their weapons, our men are now regarded as the finest marksmen in the world.

Escape Hatches in Tanks.

The combat crew inside a battle tank cannot have and do not expect to have absolute safety. But the army sees to it that within the limits of normal battle hazards they are protected from unnecessary risks.

Tanks are provided with hatches on both the top and bottom surfaces for easy escape, regardless of the position of the tank. New automatic controls reduce driver's fatigue. Seats are cushioned against shock and are provided with safety belts. Padding is placed at many points to avoid dangerous impact shock. Forced ventilation cools the tank interior in summer heat, and drives off toxic gun gases during combat.

Accident prevention, however, in no way impairs the effectiveness of our fighting men, the war department said. A hard-hitting, tough-bodied army continues to be our objective. There are fewer sprained ankles, wrenched knees or sprained backs in our field armies of today because safety training programs have taught men how to jump correctly from relatively great heights with rifles and packs. Men lifting various heavy objects in the field do so without injury because they were taught how during training courses.

Our realistic training methods are actually safety methods. Experience has shown that the average recruit is as frightened by battle noise and battle confusion as he is by bullets. Such a soldier becomes excited, perhaps fires his rifle unintentionally, perhaps kills or wounds his own comrades instead of the enemy. Such a soldier is unsure of himself, nerve - taunt, "jumpy."

On army infiltration courses battle-green soldiers are taught how to crawl across rough terrain, through barbed wire, while machine gun bullets whiz above their heads, and TNT charges explode nearby like enemy land mines. Graduates of these safety-in-battle courses are not likely to suffer needless wounds or needless death. They know that in crawling it is vital to keep the head and body down; that a smart soldier crawls under barbed wire, not over it; that a soldier whose weapon is not clean and ready to function when needed is a soldier most likely to become a casualty.

Mention the word "doughboy" to most persons, and they think of a man with a rifle and a bayonet. That may have been true in previous wars, but it is not true in this one. Safety training and practice in the army ground forces goes a long way beyond this basic rifle-and-bayonet conception of the American foot soldier. Weapon training adds to the soldier's chance of survival by making him versatile with a great many more weapons than his rifle.

Among these are hand and rifle grenades, combat knife, automatic pistol, machine pistol, carbine, automatic rifle, three types of machine guns, two types of mortars, flame thrower, bazooka, mines and booby traps, bangalore torpedo and other demolition equipment. Most probably the individual infantryman will never be called upon to use all these weapons in combat, but he may at any time be called upon suddenly in an emergency to use any one of them. The knowledge and facility gained during training increases powerfully the safety factor protecting the uniformed man in battle.

In addition the army ground forces protects its men in the field by careful instruction in battle and field sanitation, in personal hygiene, in the safe use of drinking water, and in defense against diseases caused by insects and parasites. Even so small a thing as the common foot blister is not ignored in army safety practice.

Fewer Air Corps Accidents.

Equally insistent on the highest possible safety standards in the dangerous business of waging war is the army air forces training command. During the first six months of 1943 a total of 13.4 million military flying hours were logged in continental U. S. During the same period in 1944 the total was 20.1 million. Despite this impressive increase of more than 6,500,000 hours, fatal accidents and death totals were actually reduced.

Furthermore, the improvement is continuing. In July, 1944, the accident rate for training type planes was the lowest yet recorded. During July in the continental U. S. trainees in undergraduate pilots' schools logged an amazing total of flying time in PT-13's, -17's, -18's and -27's, with only one fatal accident!

Graduate pilots operating combat type airplanes in transition schools and in the replacement training units established safety records, too. Pilots in B-17 Flying Fortresses achieved an all-time low in crack-ups. Also in July, 1944, there were only two fatal accidents in the high-speed B-25 Billy Mitchells.

This is not the safety record of a commercial airline, or even a commerical truck fleet, but the safety experience of a giant air force engaged in global war.

The motto of the army has never been "Safety First." In army parlance safety is knowledge. Army airmen achieve safety because they know.

Typical is the procedure for forced landings in water, which includes how to swim through fire, how to handle rubber boats and parachutes, defense against sharks, precautions to take against wind, weather and the hundreds of hazards that confront men adrift in open water. Airmen know how to take every conceivable precaution in case of jungle landings, or any other type of landing which may lead to danger or difficulty.

In war great hazards cannot be avoided, but trained and disciplined men with a knowledge of those hazards, and the "know-how" to avoid or to overcome some of them, have developed one of the greatest organized safety programs of all time.

Photo-Cell Enables Blind to Operate Machinery Safely

Important new mechanical devices to simplify life for returning servicemen who have lost their sight and for the upwards of 200,000 civilian blind in the United States are announced by the American Foundation for the Blind.

Chief of these devices, in view of its wide application to the employment of blind people, is a new use for the versatile photo-electric cell. The foundation has adapted the "electric eye" principle to make completely safe the operation by blind people of electric sewing machines in workshops and in their homes. In practice this device puts a safety curtain of light around the rapidly plunging needle. The moment the fingers of the blind operator reach dangerously near the needle's point and come within the light circle, the machine stops in a split second.

Another useful invention which will aid sightless people in business is called the "bill detector." This gadget also utilizes the "electric eye" principle and was first thought of by a sightless Canadian, George A. Lafleur of Overbrook, Ontario. In this contrivance a beam of light scans the numerals of paper currency and the number of times the light is reflected from the bill is indicated by a buzzing noise. The number of audible sounds indicates the denomination of the bill.

The "magic eye," a photo-electric cell, stops the needle of the power sewing machine as soon as the operator's fingers come within the circle of light. With this attachment blind persons may safely use many kinds of machines.

Already in limited use by sightless workers is the "audio-scale." This enables them to weigh certain objects by sound rather than by touch. Here a flashing light is registered by a photo-electric cell. If the scale registers overweight, the sightless operator hears a sound of high pitch; if underweight, a sound of low pitch; and if in balance, no sound at all. This idea, too, first came to a blind person, Mrs. Evelyn Watson of Buffalo. In war plants this audio-scale has such uses as weighing out specific amounts of powder for fuses, mica for radio mechanisms, and uniform buttons.

Winter Driving Hazards Can Be Reduced by Taking A Few Simple Precautions

The following practices, based on National Safety council research, are recommended by the Safe Winter Driving committee to all who must drive this winter:

1. Fill your car to comfortable capacity and go prepared to get through, regardless of snow or ice.

2. Reduce your speed to conform to the conditions of the road—and take no chances.

3. Use tire chains on ice and snow to reduce braking distances as much as 40 or 50 per cent. Chains also provide necessary "go" traction, and uniformity in performance under severe winter road conditions.

4. Follow other vehicles at a safe distance. It takes from 3 to 11 times as long to stop without anti-skid chains when pavements are snowy or icy.

5. Apply brakes on slippery pavements lightly and with a pumping action. If you jam on the brakes, they may lock and throw your car into a dangerous skid. Try to avoid need for making a quick stop in front of another vehicle. A rear-end collison may cripple your car for the duration.

6. Keep windshield and windows clear of snow and ice outside, and fog and frost inside. Remember, you must see danger to avoid it.

7. Keep posted on winter road and weather conditions. A safe driver is always aware of his limitations and equipped to get through safely and on time. Be a good defensive driver.