



Henderson Daily Dispatch



ONLY DAILY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THIS SECTION OF NORTH CAROLINA AND VIRGINIA

TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR

LEASED WIRE SERVICE OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

HENDERSON, N. C., MONDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 22, 1941

PUBLISHED EVERY AFTERNOON EXCEPT SUNDAY.

FIVE CENTS COPY

Large Japanese Force Tries Landing On Island Of Luzon

World Speculates On Hitler's Move

Fuehrer Now Commanding Nazi Forces

New German Stab in Another Sector of Battle-Torn Europe Is Possible; Von Brauchitsch is 'Scapegoat.'

(By The Associated Press.) Adolf Hitler's "intuitive" firing of his army chief, Field Marshal Gerd von Brauchitsch, with the Fuehrer himself taking personal command, invoked a flow of speculation today on what Germany might do next.

The move may be a straining effort to check the headlong retreat in Russia and the move may be a new German strike in another sector of battle-torn Europe.

London, Dec. 22.—(AP)—A foreign office commentator declared today Adolf Hitler "has found it expedient to provide a scapegoat for the fact that his 1941 campaign has not ended in the way he intended and the way he forecast it would."

Discussing the Fuehrer's assumption of the German army command, the commentator said Hitler had found that "scapegoat not among politicians but among soldiers."

The move might be a straining effort to check the headlong retreat in Russia and the move may be a new German strike in another sector of battle-torn Europe.

An attempt at an invasion of Britain was a possibility.

In Atlantic warfare the German high command declared today that a British aircraft carrier had been sunk by submarines.

A privately circulated Spanish news letter reaching London said that Hitler is not to be defeated in north Africa. Spain must come into the war. It asserted that "plans are now mature and all that remains is for the button to be pressed."

The letter added that German air and military missions had been conferring with officials in Madrid for two weeks.

A bridgehead in Spanish and French north Africa via Gibraltar might give the collapsing axis fight in Libya or vary the war in a new zone south of Dakar, French West African port facing the South American bulge.

One Ship Is Sunk, Another Attacked In Pacific Ocean

Explosions Off Shore Of Maryland

Ocean City, Md., Dec. 22.—(AP)—Lead explosions offshore rattled windows and slightly shook houses in this resort city today and were heard in Berlin, 23½ miles inland.

Henry Burbage, a garage owner, said the explosions began between 1:30 a. m. and 10 a. m. and continued at intervals for more than an hour and a half.

Burbage and other residents said there would be three or four quick explosions, then silence, followed by other outbreaks.

Coast Guard officials here would not comment.

The sounds also were heard all along the lower Delaware coast.

Army officials at Fort Miles, Lewes, Del., and at Fort Saulters, Del., reported hearing the explosions, and said neither fort had been firing its guns.

Knox Tells Of Sinkings

Navy Secretary Says 14 German and Several Japanese Subs Sunk or Hit by Navy.

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—United States naval forces were credited today with sinking or hitting 14 German and several Japanese submarines this year—a rate of damage to undersea craft four times as good as the Navy reaped in the World War.

Axis submarines hunted American shipping off both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, Secretary Knox noted the announcement of German and Japanese losses to "assure the public that the Navy has already adequately dealt with more than one submarine which has sought to make attacks on our naval and merchant vessels."

Twenty miles off California the Japanese torpedoed the steamer Eneida and shelled three of its lifeboats. Five men were injured and possibly five men were lost in this attack, but the tanker Agaworth escaped without damage from another because of the poor marksmanship of Japanese gunners.

Selective Service Amendments Signed

RAF Raids Jap Air Base

Rangoon, Burma, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The RAF attacked a Japanese air base in eastern Thailand, destroying grounded planes and gasoline reserves yesterday in the first aerial smash of the enemy forces there, it was announced today.

How many planes the Japanese had on the field was not disclosed, but the report said they were machine-gunned from the 7000 altitudes and none escaped destruction.

All the British planes were said to have returned unscathed.

Supreme Court Holds Company May Express Views Without Violating Wagner Act.

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The Supreme Court held today that a company might express "its view on labor policies or problems" without necessarily being guilty of coercing its employees in violation of the Wagner act.

The court said the law contained no injunction against expressions by employers, but that under certain circumstances, such utterances might constitute illegal coercion.

War Declared

London, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The Netherlands government in exile announced today it has declared war on Italy because of Italian participation with Germany and Japan in the new axis war treaty.

Japanese Planes Fire On Civilians In Guam Streets

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—The Navy said today its last message from the island of Guam—received two days after the attack on Pearl Harbor—reported that civilians in the streets and a native hospital in the capital had been machine gunned by enemy planes.

The Navy said at that time it had been unable to contact the Pacific outpost 1,600 miles east of the Philippines and 1,500 miles west of Wake. Four hundred Navy men and 155 Marines were stationed on Guam.

U. S. And Filipino Troops 'More Than Hold Their Own'

Hong Kong General

(By The Associated Press.) Six to eight Japanese divisions—80,000 to 100,000 men—drove for a real foothold on the island of Luzon today 150 miles from Manila and were met by a valiant defense in which American and Filipino troops "more than held their own."

An estimate from the War department at Washington doubled previous estimates of the Japanese invasion strength carried toward the Philippine beaches by 80 troop ships under strong naval and air escort.

The mother ships put a host of 150-man barges into the water and these swarmed toward the shore through the shallows and surf under a hail of defense fire and into a maelstrom of hand to hand and tank combat on the beaches.

"Some of them succeeded in getting ashore," said the War department communique.

"The attempted invasion is being met with fierce resistance by American and Filipino troops."

The Washington statement placed the point of assault in the vicinity of Agoo on the innermost shore of Lingayen gulf. Agoo itself is but 130 miles from Manila.

Whether United States air or naval forces had gone into action against the invasion armada was not stated either at Manila or Washington.

Counting its naval escort and supply ships, the Japanese invasion fleet numbered perhaps 100 vessels.

Manila's official report said that heavy fire shattered one landing speedboat.

The afternoon communique from the Manila headquarters carried this statement for the mixed forces now bunched in battle where the Chinese sea teams into Lingayen gulf.

"Our troops are behaving well." More than 6,000 troops from the low score of battle, an ominous shutdown of radio broadcasting at San Diego was ordered by the headquarters of the north intercept command at Los Angeles. Whether this resulted from an air raid alert was not stated. The radio blackout was lifted at 2:45 p. m. PCT. after it had been in effect for 45 minutes.

As President Roosevelt Signs Measure Enlarging Draft Plan, Senate Hears Demands That Recruiting Be Halted.

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—President Roosevelt signed today the bill enlarging the selective service plan, while the Senate heard demands that the recruiting be halted and that the nation rely entirely upon the draft to build up a war machine of six million men or more.

Under the new law, all men of 18 through 64 must register and all from 20 through 44 are liable for active military service.

Senator Hill, Democrat, Alabama, the Democratic whip, argued that the draft was the most efficient method of doing the job, and in support of his contention, he cited the case of a "defector who had enlisted as a private when the Army was going for more doctors."

Secretary of War Stimson already has announced that the Army will stop accepting volunteers as soon as there is a falling off in the patriotic rush prompted by declaration of war against the axis powers.

The Navy already has asked and received from Congress the right to draft 30,000 for the fleet and 10,000 for the marines.

Several members of the senate military committee, including Hill and Senator George, Republican, South Dakota, agreed that the Army must expand beyond recent plans for a force of 2,000,000 men.

The Senate later approved legislation to increase the authorized enlisted strength of the Navy from 300,000 to 500,000 and to raise the limit on the Marine Corps from 60,000 to 104,000 men. The measure now goes to the House.

Nazis Explain Hitler's Move As Natural

Berlin, Dec. 22.—(AP)—Official broadcast received by AP.—The war is approaching its decisive phase and it is therefore understandable that Hitler should now take over supreme command of the army in order to achieve even greater concentration of German forces, said a German military spokesman today.

This comment was made in connection with Hitler's announcement yesterday of the dismissal of Field Marshal Gerd von Brauchitsch from his post as commander in chief and the transfer of his troops to his address and his troops being held in a "war of decision" in the east until spring.

The speaker said the WWIV had mentioned in Hitler's appeal referred merely to the east front and declared that there were various other battlefields where it was believed big things are in the offing soon.

There is no rift between Hitler and von Brauchitsch, the spokesman emphasized, and the army has received a strong impulse through Hitler's taking full powers of command.

War Plans Discussed

President Roosevelt in Conference With Envoys of Allied Nations.

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—In conferences with the Russian, Chinese and Netherlands envoys to the United States, President Roosevelt today took preliminary steps in joint planning for unity of action by the countries combating the axis.

The chief executive conferred separately with Maxim Litvinov, the Russian ambassador, Dr. H. S. Shih, the Chinese ambassador, and A. London, the Netherlands minister.

He saw Lord Halifax, the British ambassador, yesterday.

The White House said that all these conferences were in line with an announcement Saturday night that Britain and the United States already had taken steps toward coordination of the war effort and that the joint planning for unity of action would be extended to Russia, China, the Netherlands and other governments engaged in the common cause of defeating the axis.

Stephen Early, presidential secretary, returned at today's conferences, however, that they were of a "very preliminary" nature.

Hull Confers With Horn

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—Secretary of State Hull conferred for an hour today with Rear Admiral Frederick J. Horn, just returned from conferences with the French high commissioner at Matruh, and reports that a naval accord had been reached neutralizing the strategic French possession near the Panama Canal.

Admiral Horn declined to discuss the subject of his conversation with the Secretary of State but indicated the State department might issue an announcement later today.

UNREST INCREASING AMONG NORWEGIANS

Washington, Dec. 22.—(AP)—Crown Prince Olav of Norway said today that because of military reverses in Russia and Livonia, Germany was pulling troops out of occupied Norway, and underground movement among loyal Norwegians was growing day by day.

The crown prince has just arrived here from London where he has been with the Norwegian government in exile. He told a press conference that with the entrance of all great world powers into the war, axis members were going to find that the way of the aggressor "doesn't pay."

U. S. And Filipino Troops 'More Than Hold Their Own'

Japanese Fleet of Approximately 100 Ships Carries 80,000 to 100,000 Men Attempting Landing 150 Miles From Manila.

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SHOPPING DAYS LEFT HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ANYONE? Buy Christmas Seals

WEATHER FOR NORTH CAROLINA Cloudy and somewhat warmer. Rain in west portion tonight.