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Persistent But Unconfirmed Reports Declare

47 Japanese Transports Sunk

Hitler's Armies Suffer New Reverses

Sudden Move By Germany Is Expected

Turkey and Middle East, Spain, Gibraltar, French Africa and British Isles appear as likeliest targets of attack.

Sharp new reverses jarred Adolf Hitler's invasion armies on two fronts today—in Russia and north Africa—as the world speculated on the possibility of a sudden berserk thrust by the Fuehrer in an attempt to retrieve his tattered military fortunes.

European observers predicted that Hitler, in his new role as supreme warlord of the German armies, would soon try to open a new front in regions less hostile to blitzkrieg campaigning than winter-frozen Russia.

Turkey and the Middle East, Spain, Gibraltar, French Africa, and the British Isles appeared the likeliest targets of attack.

A Soviet broadcast said that German-dominated Bulgaria was speeding war preparations along the Turkish frontier and that announcement of Bulgarian mobilization was expected shortly.

Berlin and Rome both hinted that important military developments were imminent, with Nazi and Fascist commentators using the word "decisive," while Stockholm observers predicted that axis operations would be moved "from east to west."

On the north African front, Cairo headquarters said British mobile troops had reached the coastal plain of the Gulf of Sirte, south of Benghazi, in what appeared to be a maneuver to cut off the main axis armies fleeing southward from Derna and westward from Mokili toward Benghazi.

British reinforcements were reported steadily increasing the pressure on Benghazi itself.

The whole line of axis retreat west of Mokili, as pictured by British Middle East headquarters was "littered with abandoned material."

On the Russian front, counter-marching Soviet armies were reported to have driven the shivering ill-clad German invaders from 25 more villages, and fierce Russian guerrilla bands were now said to be blocking the Nazi retreat, abandoning their hit and run tactics for stand and fight battles.

Of the 750,000-man army Hitler sent against Moscow, the Russian newspaper Pravda declared more than 170,000 were killed in a five-week period ended December 20.

The heaviest Soviet smashes were said to be falling in the Tulja sector, 110 miles south of Moscow, around Malozvanovets, 65 miles southeast of Moscow, and in the Tikhvin area, 110 miles east of Leningrad.

Front line dispatches said that in one sector on the Leningrad front where the Germans attempted a counter-offensive, 800 nazis were killed and the remaining forces were sent blundering through the snow-bound forest. Soviet ski troops were reported hunting them down.

The Russians acknowledged difficulties in only one sector of the entire 1,200-mile front. This was in the Crimea, where German troops besieging the big Sevastopol naval base were reported hurling attack after attack at Red army defense lines. Soviet dispatches said the city's situation was serious.

Private Wins D.S.C.



Joseph McElroy

For his extraordinary heroism during the aerial bombardment of his airfield in the Philippines, First Class Pvt. Joseph McElroy of Philadelphia, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Instead of seeking shelter, he shot down one plane and drove off two others, and saved his own plane from damage.

Voroshilov To New Post

Soviet Marshal Appointed Commander in Far East; Action Against Japan Possible.

London, Dec. 23.—(AP)—A London authority said today Marshal Klement Voroshilov, who organized the all-out defense of Leningrad last August as commander of the northern Russian front, had been appointed commander of Soviet forces in the Far East. The appointment does not necessarily mean that the Russians are contemplating action against Japan, the source said, though he acknowledged that such action is a possibility.

Information received here, he added, was to the effect that the Russians "wanted the front well protected."

Marshal Klement Y. Voroshilov, who will be 61 February 5, is the former commander in chief of the Soviet army, navy and air force who is probably responsible more than any man in Russia except Premier Josef Stalin himself for the mighty organization of the present Red army.

NORWEGIAN CITY FINED BY NAZIS

Bern, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The city of Stavanger, Norway, was fined 2,000,000 kroner by occupation authorities who confiscated all radio sets for the duration of the war, the Stockholm correspondent of the Basler National Zeitung said today. (The kroner is no longer quoted in New York.)

BRITISH SUBS SINK SIX AXIS VESSELS

London, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The admiralty announced today that British submarines had destroyed six more axis transports or supply ships in the Mediterranean.

One of the ships was a large supply ship which had already been seriously damaged by a torpedo from a submarine.

The ship had been beached and axis soldiers were trying to carry out salvage operations when she was hit again by a torpedo and "this time destroyed," the admiralty said.

WEATHER
FOR NORTH CAROLINA.
Occasional rain and mild to light.

Good News Heard From Three Main Pacific War Areas

U. S. and Filipino Defenders Fight to Standstill Vanguard of Japanese Invaders; Hongkong Garrison Counter Attacks.

Good news came from the three main theatres in the 17-day old battle for the Pacific today as President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill conferred in Washington on a master "victory program" for destruction of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo powers.

In the Philippines, a U. S. Army bulletin indicated that American and Filipino defense fighters had fought to a standstill the vanguard of powerful sea-borne Japanese forces which landed at Santo Tomas, 125 miles north of Manila.

A War department communiqué said the Japanese invaders were still pouring in troops on the Lingayen gulf coast, where the main struggle is raging, and that the fighting was marked by "increasing intensity."

The communiqué said hostile landing operations were "being supported by increasing numbers of bombing and attack planes."

American and native Filipino troops, hidden in the green jungles, were reported taking a heavy toll of the Japanese on land while U. S. aviators hacked at them from the skies.

A Netherlands East Indies communiqué said a 10,000-ton oil tanker received a direct hit with a 440-pound bomb and instantly burst into flames.

In the siege of Hongkong, dispatches from Singapore said that Hongkong's defenders, far from surrendering, actually had counter-attacked and netted a slight gain from firmly held lines. Chinese forces on the mainland, attacking at the rear of the Japanese siege armies, were reported to have advanced to within 14 miles of the beleaguered island, while other Chinese troops were reported 27 and 40 miles away.

On the Malayan front, where Japanese invaders are slaying through the jungles in a drive against Singapore, the British reported "no change" in the situation.

British Malayan troops were credited with inflicting heavy damage on the Japanese in a sharp fight 350 miles north of Singapore, with 250 Japanese planes reported shot down by the RAF yesterday.

Imperial Tokyo headquarters, silent on the bitter fighting north of Manila, as noted that Japanese expeditionary forces had completely occupied the "little Japan" city and province of Davao, on Mindanao island, 600 miles air line south of Manila.

General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters said the situation in Mindanao was "obscure."

In northern Luzon, army headquarters declared the Japanese invaders had been checked for the last 24 hours, with American forces holding a line north of Zamboanga, four miles south of Santo Tomas, on the Gulf of Lingayen, where 80 Japanese transports were reported to have been unloading between 80,000 and 100,000 troops for an all-out drive against Manila.

Unconfirmed reports said three of the Japanese transports had been sunk in the gulf, and American pilots were said to have smashed an attempted landing under the guns of Japanese destroyers.

PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS WARSHIP ARIZONA WITH GUNS ALOFT

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The Navy released today a photograph of the ravaged battleship Arizona, hit by bombs and aerial torpedoes, showing that the dreadnaught sank to the bottom of Pearl Harbor with flags flying and anti-aircraft guns turned aloft.

Jap Sub May Be Sunk

U. S. Bombing Planes Drop Depth Charges On Attacker of Tanker Emidio.

San Francisco, Dec. 23.—(AP)—United States bombing planes may have damaged or sunk the big enemy submarine which torpedoed the American tanker Emidio.

The belief was expressed by Captain Clark A. Farrow upon his arrival yesterday at Eureka, Cal., with 30 survivors of his ship.

Captain Farrow said he believed the submarine was a large Japanese midget craft, one of several axis submarines operating off the California coast.

He said two American planes raced swiftly to the attack after the submarine shot at the tanker and then sent a torpedo into its stern. Each plane dropped depth charges, Captain Farrow said.

He said it was only ten or fifteen minutes after his distress message when the American planes came pouring overhead.

CANADA-U. S. GROUP FAVORS ABOLITION OF TRADE BARRIERS

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The Canadian-United States joint war production committee recommended today the abolition of all tariffs or other "legislative and administrative barriers" hampering combined all-out manufacture of weapons by the two nations.

The committee, in a seven-point statement of policy made public by President Roosevelt, declared that import duties, "and other regulations or restrictions" which impede the war effort should be suspended "or otherwise eliminated" for the duration.

"This declaration has met the approval of the Canadian war cabinet," President Roosevelt said. "It has my full approval."

Japan Holds Priority As Enemy

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill put their heads together today on a unified "victory program" for the destruction of the axis — and Japan had high priority.

Even before the capital recovered from his surprise at Churchill's dramatic arrival, the conversations were under way and the White House had become, for the present, the G. H. Q. for the world wide battle against totalitarianism.

The British prime minister reached the executive mansion early enough last night for President Roosevelt to have the whole evening with him and their preliminary exchange of views continued today.

The questions before them were momentarily—global strategy for synchronized allied action, the creation of a supreme allied high command to coordinate the operations, and the matter of a full formal alliance of all axis foes—but the war in the Pacific seemed the top immediate consideration.

Ship Crews Want Guns

Axis Undersea Raiders Apparently Confident of No Armed Resistance in Pacific.

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Undisciplined masters and crew members of U. S. merchantmen harassed by submarine attack in the Pacific looked to the Navy today for redoubled speed in arming ships to fight off the axis undersea raiders.

Apparently confident that there would be no armed resistance, submarines in three of the attacks surfaced and opened up with their deck guns. Shell fire sank the freighter Lahaina but failed to hit the tanker Agawaldorf or the steamer Samoa.

Gun crew sailors on the Agawaldorf shook their heads and said "we'd only had a gun." Their captain added that a rifleman on the Agawaldorf's deck could have wiped out the submarine's gun crew, so short was the range.

The Navy announced November 15 that it would provide trained gun crews and three, four and five inch weapons for cargo vessels coming into Atlantic ports. Secretary of the Navy Knox conceded there was a shortage of such armament at that moment, and said the danger of routes travelled would determine which ships would be armed.

How many of Atlantic merchant ships have received guns has not been disclosed.

PORTUGUESE EXPRESS HATRED FOR BRITAIN

Lisbon, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Anti-British feelings among the Portuguese people were demonstrated yesterday when several motion picture theatres in Lisbon were forced to halt the screening of views of Sydney, Australia, by roaring protest in the audiences.

This was in variance to the press, which displayed a favorable tone to Great Britain, despite the seizure of Timor island by British, Australian and Netherlands Indies troops.

Heads U. S. Fleet



Adm. Ernest J. King

President Franklin D. Roosevelt named Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Fleet, King, Commander of the Atlantic Fleet, succeeds Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, who was relieved of his post shortly after the Japanese attack on Hawaii. Rear Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll will take Admiral King's place as head of the Atlantic Sea Force.

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BURST WATER MAIN FLOODS BROOKLYN

New York, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Water from a burst main flooded a half-mile square area in the navy yard section of Brooklyn today, threatening two jails and hospitals as well as the navy yard itself and halting work in a defense plant.

The water, gushing from a 48-inch main in what the department of water supply described as one of the worst breaks in the city's history, poured through the street for three and one-half hours before an emergency crew was able to find the proper shut-off valve.

Mechanized Units Speed To Lingayen

American Tanks Battling Luzon Invaders Are Reinforced; Navy Reports Japanese Landing on Wake Island This Morning.

(By The Associated Press) U. S. Army mechanized forces were reported speeding to reinforce American tanks locked in battle with Japanese invasion columns 125 miles north of Manila today amid persistent but unconfirmed reports that 47 Japanese transports had been sunk off the Luzon coast.

Halfway between the Philippines and Hawaii, the Navy announced Japanese forces of unspecified strength have landed on U. S.-owned Wake Island, where a tiny band of American Marines has been holding out since the first days of the war under repeated Japanese air and sea bombardment.

The invaders landed this morning, the Navy said. Information was not immediately forthcoming whether the "leatherneck" defenders were still resisting.

Late dispatches from Manila said heavy casualties resulted when Japanese warplanes bombed a center reserved for people evacuated from bombed areas.

Meanwhile, President Roosevelt called a conference for 5 p. m. EST, with U. S. Army and Navy officials and Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his staff—officially designated by the White House as a "war council."

First eye witness accounts of the Lingayen invasion from north of Manila said "the Filipinos the plenty food and morale is excellent among troops and civilians."

A long line of Japanese ships, faintly discernible through a low lying mist, were reported off the coast and the thunder of heavy artillery fire rolled incessantly across the countryside.

An American observer said he saw U. S. mechanized units heading toward the tank battle, but the movements of both armies were so fast he could not size up the situation.

Army Opposes Civilian Board

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The War department registered its opposition today to a proposal that a civilian board of supply handle war production, contending that the program may be followed would throw all the country's resources into turning out military materiel.

"The pains we have been undergoing have been due to the partial transmission from a peacetime economy to a war economy and not to inefficiency of the armed forces," Undersecretary of War Patterson said in a statement.

"Now that we are at war and the nation is ready for a tremendous all-out effort calling on all production resources, some of the pains will be alleviated," he added.

Patterson appeared before the House committee headed by Representative Tolson, Democrat, Colfax, N. C., investigating migration of defense workers, which has recommended creation of the civilian board. Indorsement of that proposal came only a few minutes earlier from the United Automobile Workers, a CIO affiliate.

New York, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Wall street today began to feel that the stock market retreat possibly had gone too far and enough bidding came in to give selected leaders a moderate lift.

Improved tendencies crept up here and there at the start in lively dealings. While gains of fractions to a point or so were fairly well distributed near the fourth hour, an agreement of issue elapsed to see

Anti-Strike Bill Ready

Washington, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Senator Connally, Democrat, Texas, said in a telegram today to Governor Paul B. Johnson of Mississippi that he was prepared to seek Senate action on a bill giving the government authority to take over struck war production plants even if an agreement was reached by labor-industry conferences to eliminate strikes.

Connally said that the head of a government department engaged in the production of military articles had called him on the telephone and had urged that the Senate take action on the bill.

SHOPPING DAY LEFT

HURRY! IT'S THE LAST DAY!

Buy Christmas Seals

Stock Market Is Stronger

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