

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Battle for Italy Grows in Intensity As Allies Close on Supply Routes; Pacific Sea Lanes to China Cleared By U. S. Triumph in Marshall Islands

(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—Captured German prisoners are marched through Anzio as bitter battle raged for Allied beachhead below Rome.

EUROPE: Fight for Rome

In the coastal plains 18 miles below Rome, Allied and German forces locked in battle for the Eternal City, while farther to the south, Fifth Army troops closed in on the supply lines feeding the enemy forces resisting doggedly in the Cassino area. While fighting in Italy rose in fury, waves of Allied planes thundered over Europe, pounding the French coast along the English channel to soften the Nazis' concrete and steel defense emplacements and rip their network of air fields, on which they are counting to check invasion forces.

As fighting developed below Rome, the Nazis brought up heavy armored reinforcements to challenge the big Allied army operating along a 30 mile coastal stretch. Both sides threw swarms of planes at each other's supply lines, with the German force demonstrating in strength for the first time during the Italian campaign.

The Germans' hold on battle-scarred Cassino was shaken when Fifth Army troops worked their way toward highways over which supplies were being fed to enemy forces hanging on near the town, key to the broad plain leading northward to Rome.

RUBBER: U. S. Steps From Brazil

After two years of pioneering deep in the steaming Amazon jungle, the U. S. is pulling out of rubber growing there and leaving the job to Brazil, from whom this government will purchase the material for .60 a pound.

To help develop an accessible source of natural rubber after the Japs overran the English and Dutch plantations in the east after Pearl Harbor, the U. S. decided to rebuild the industry in the Amazon basin, once the world's rubber capital and producer of the seed which was smuggled to the Orient for cheap cultivation there about half a century ago.

Since 1942, the U. S. spent large sums on recruiting workers for the steaming rubber districts, transporting them to the sites, and maintaining them there, with equipment, food and medicine. As a result, rubber cost per pound was supposed to have risen to anywhere from \$1.22 to \$50 a pound.

POST-OFFICE: Profit Shown

A money-maker in the 12 months ending last June when it realized a profit of \$1,332,849 for the first time in 24 years, the post office department is seeing red again during the current fiscal year.

Supplied by Postmaster Frank Walker to the house committee considering appropriations for the department for 1944-45, figures showed that during the 12 months ending last June, gross postal revenues totaled \$966,277,288., of which \$964,894,439 was expended. In addition, \$122,343,000 of free service for soldiers and government agencies was rendered.

For the fiscal year 1944-45, the house committee recommended an appropriation of \$1,105,697,583, an increase of \$205,719,248 over the present year.



Frank Walker

PACIFIC: China Bound

The Pacific sea lanes to China are being cleared by U. S. army and naval forces for a grand assault upon Japan from bases in that country, Admiral Chester Nimitz declared in reviewing the quick triumph in the Marshall Islands, where over 12,000 enemy troops were killed to the Americans' 1,600.

Revealing that U. S. policy was "to get our ground and air forces into China as early as possible" because "I do not believe we can defeat Japan from the sea alone," Admiral Nimitz said: "I believe the Japs can only be defeated from bases in China because they draw food, iron and other supplies from Manchuria and China, and as long as they have access to these they will be difficult to beat."

As Marine Commander Maj. Gen. Holland Smith's troops rung up Old Glory over the Marshalls, U. S. air forces again hammered the big Jap base of Rabaul on New Britain, going after airdromes from which enemy craft have been taking off to blast American ground units on the western end of the island.

MEAT SUPPLY: Civilians Share

About 131 pounds of meat will be available to every person in the U. S. during 1944, and this supply might be increased if the government can spare stocks from its emergency reserves, the U. S. department of agriculture announced.

Reviewing the meat situation, the department reported that a record 25,000,000,000 pounds may be produced in 1944, even though numbers of cattle, hogs and lamb on hand were about 15 per cent less than last year. The services, lend-lease and other U. S. agencies will get the 8 per cent increase.

Cattle and calf slaughter in recent weeks has been heavier than a year ago, and about 46 per cent of the animals now on feed are scheduled for marketing by April, the department said.

OIL: Seek Arabian Reserves

To relieve the strain on U. S. petroleum supplies which will be called upon to furnish the fuel to enable the country's military and naval forces to help maintain collective security in the postwar world, the federal government will co-operate with the Standard Oil Company of California, the Texas company and the Gulf Oil company in exploiting Arabian oil resources.

At a cost of approximately 150 million dollars, the government will build a 1,250 mile pipeline which will carry the crude from the companies' fields to the Mediterranean coast, with the companies repaying the principal cost plus interest within 25 years. The companies would maintain a crude oil reserve of 20 per cent of the total field for the government and sell to it below the market price.

Since the consent of Saudi Arabia and smaller Kuwait will be needed before work could start, Senator Moore (Okla.) said the agreement would amount to a treaty affecting relations between the peoples of the U. S. and the countries concerned, thus requiring senate approval.

GRAIN STOCKS: Rail Movements Spurt

With farmers anxious to move grain and fertilizer before the planting season and box cars being diverted to haul in Canadian feed, rail facilities for the rural regions are being tightened up. Further strain on rail transport looms with Great Lakes shippers asking for early movement of grains now aboard vessels in storage so that they can begin operations in the spring.

While tightening of the rail situation was announced, it was also revealed that the Commodity Credit Corporation's total wheat stocks at the end of January amounted to 87 million bushels, and corn supplies to only 1 million bushels, reflecting the big pinch in this commodity.

Since July, 1943, CCC purchased 146 million bushels of wheat, of which 75 million bushels were Canadian. Since July, CCC wheat sales aggregated 230 million bushels.

RUSSIA: Nip Threat

Believed to be the spring board for future German operations in the southern Ukraine, the Nazi-held manganese center of Nikopol came under heavy fire of Russian forces driving in from the east.

The Germans' position at Nikopol was their farthest extension eastward in Russia, following their withdrawal along the whole 800 mile front, and with a similar eastward bulge further to the north, was seen as a possible prong for a gigantic Nazi pincer movement against the back of the Red armies far inside pre-war Poland.

In the Baltic region to the north, the Russ pressed forward below Leningrad, and continued heavy attacks farther to the south between the Pripet and Berezina rivers, where a break-through would enable them to loop the entire German army heavily engaged in the Baltic states.

VETS: Discharged Redrafted

Discharged vets who have fully recovered from battle wounds and can meet the physical requirements of the services, are being redrafted in accordance with selective service regulations, but not for overseas duty.

In striving to meet its tremendous manpower needs, the army also has advised commanders to check men thoroughly in the light of lowered physical standards before discharging them. Many disabilities on which men formerly were released are no longer recognized, it was said.

Aware of the redrafting of vets, the army has ordered restoration of their old ranks.

Get-rich-quicksters are enjoying a field day in the Chungking, China, black market, where beef is selling at \$2.50 for 1.33 lbs.; eggs at 35c apiece, and fish \$10 for 1.33 lbs.

Driving past WAC quarters in Algiers, North Africa, one night, Col. Oveta Hobby and Commander Maj. Westray Battle espied a couple in a long embrace behind a tree outside the grounds. There's nothing wrong in a WAC kissing her boy friend good night, Maj. Battle said afterwards, but she must do it inside the company grounds.



COL. HOBBY

California's Senator Sheridan Downey received this postcard from an irate constituent trying to fill out his income tax report:

"My Dear Senator: I hope you read a thousand years in hell for each minute I put in on this federal income tax report."

"Frank Warren."

TRUCK RATES: Urge Competition

Such factors as competition with the railroads should be considered when formulating trucking rates, the Supreme court declared.

The high court took this position in disputing what it said was the Interstate Commerce commission's rule that lower rates for shipments by motor carrier were justified only when a reduction in operating costs is achieved.

"Each form of transportation presents its own problems for the function of rate making," the court said. "Hence in such situations, principles previously established for application with a single form of transportation cannot always be transplanted without consequence unduly harmful."

As an example, the court pointed out that by tying rates to weights, a railroad with carloads of 30,000 pounds would have a great competitive advantage over a truck, for instance, with 20,000 pounds.

SHOES

As shoe rationing enters its second year OPA officials stated that there will be about 25 million pairs of footwear available a month same as in 1943. That means about 2 1/4 pairs per person a year, or one pair every 21 weeks. The leather situation remains tight, and army needs are increasing, officials commented.

Stamp No. 1 in Book Three (the airplane stamp) will remain valid until May 1, and No. 18 in the first book will remain good indefinitely.

Washington Digest

Compromise Forecast in Debate on CCC Extension

Labor to Use Organized Strength to Fight Increased Prices; Administration Is Counting on That Support.



By BAUKHAGE
News Analyst and Commentator.

WNU Service, Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C.

A few weeks ago, an earnest and agreeable young man came to my office from the American Farm Bureau federation. His name is Ben Kilgore. He is a Kentucky Farm Bureau man, a former farm paper editor who has just been put in charge of the bureau's publicity here in Washington, probably as a result of some remarks without any bark on them which Chester Davis, former war food administrator and president of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, made at the recent bureau convention.

Davis did not say that the bureau and some other farm organizations were interfering with the war effort and trying to be hoggish by fighting for higher food prices but he did say that the people of the country were beginning to talk that way about farmers. And he told the organization members that if they weren't as black as they were painted, they had better begin telling the people of the country so.

And so the bureau went out for some "new blood." Kilgore is not new to the farm bureau but he is new to Washington. He has served in Kentucky. He knows his subject and can write about it.

I couldn't say whether he has brightened the grim picture which Mr. Davis painted to the bureau—he has hardly had time—but his presence is evidence of dynamics which are energizing this chip of the farm bloc—or one might put it the other way, for the Farm Bureau federation is really the tail that wags the dog when it comes to getting congressional action.

And soon action will begin, for the credit extended to the Commodity Credit corporation expires February 17 and then the fight over the subsidies begins in earnest.

The Federation 'Line'

What the publicity plans of the farm organizations are, I do not know, but this is the "line" as Kilgore expressed it to me:

"The American Farm Bureau federation is not opposing consumer subsidies in order to break down price control and obtain higher farm prices. The present general farm price level is high enough. All we ask is for a few sensible price adjustments on specific commodities. . . . Such small and specific adjustments are far more practical and wholesome than a billion or more dollars out of the federal treasury to help pay the consumers grocery bill and to regiment and socialize the farmers of this nation."

The War Food administration, charged with carrying out the war farm program, has no publicity plan. As a matter of fact, the office of Administrator Jones is about the quietest place in Washington as far as the public goes. Its work is carried on without press agenting right now.

One reason why we don't hear much from the war food administrator right now is because the food situation is pretty good. Of course, there is wrangling about prices but that isn't in his department. The last week in January he announced his support prices which can't be carried out unless the three billion dollar agency that keeps floors under farm prices, the Commodity Credit corporation, is continued. Jones made it plain that the 1944 program depended entirely on congressional action. In reply to a question, he said it could be carried out "without subsidies."

There isn't any question that congress will favor the support plan. That's accepted as essential in wartime and sometimes welcomed at other times. The reasoning is that you don't ask a munition maker to sign a contract to deliver machine guns without telling him what the price will be. In order to carry out the farm program, you have to demand certain things of the farmer in order to get the thing you want. Hence the guaranteed price.

But subsidies are a horse of a different color. Support prices protect the producer. Subsidies protect the consumer. Without them, the price ceilings crack.

Farm income has risen 116 per cent in dollars since 1939 when the war in Europe began. During the

last war, it rose steadily, 128 per cent. However, there is a catch in those figures. In the last war, the farmer's dollar rose only 13 cents in purchasing power. Today, the farmer's income has risen 72 per cent in terms of purchasing power.

Preliminary Report

Just what is ahead? On or before February 17, debate will begin on the bill extending the life of the Commodity Credit corporation containing an anti-subsidy provision.

Meanwhile, the farm bloc adherents and supporters will probably carry on a pretty good publicity plan for their side and some of the consumer groups will be heard from. Labor will shout the loudest and most effectively. But that is simply because it is a large and a well-organized group. It is a strange thing, but America, which has organizations of almost every kind and description formed largely for increasing the income of its members, has very few organizations formed for the purpose of decreasing their expense. Consumers, as such, are not organized. There are, of course, a few cooperatives but they are hardly more than local affairs and, comparatively speaking, small and weak. This is due to the cheerful American theory that if you haven't got enough money to pay your expenses, you ought to go out and get some more money.

In any case, labor (although organized primarily to get more pay) is going to use its organized strength to fight higher prices and the administration is at present counting on enough support from the labor lobby itself, the results of the pro-subsidy publicity on the general public, to sustain a presidential veto of any measure banning subsidies. There is no sign of enough votes to prevent the passage of the bill, but enough are expected to sustain the veto. So that legislative process will have to be gone through with unless the farm bloc feels it has an accurate measure of the administration's strength, as revealed by various test votes, so that it can compromise without going through the veto process. Either way, some kind of a compromise will undoubtedly be reached.

But the way is a weary one.

Preview of Invasion Tactics

With invasion in the offing I decided I wanted a preview. A little difficult to arrange, I admit, I know, however, that you could see a full dress rehearsal at the amphibious base at Fort Pierce, Fla. That institution has been cloaked in the darkest secrecy until recently. Just before the base celebrated its anniversary I was allowed to look behind the scenes.

No details can be reported of this revolutionary development in American military history that started fresh from zero.

For almost a full week I watched and, in some cases, worked with the men who make "amphibious action" possible—those who go over the transport-side into the landing craft and up the beach, and the other men who see that they get there, from scouts and raiders who slip in at night, crawling through the wash of a strange beach to throttle the sentries and clear the way for the others, to the last of the reserves. I have never met a finer type of man, soldier or marine, and they are all there—army, navy, coast guard, and the engineers, the sea-bees, the medics, scouts, raiders and the other specialists. Cooperation is the key to the greatest achievement in amphibious action—army and navy working together as one. It is a navy operation right up to the tide water mark, where the army takes command, but a closely interwoven texture, as much a single unit as a fighting division of land troops or a navy task force.

I talked with their leaders, tough, quiet young men, who have learned by doing—they know what it is to land on a strange shore in Africa or Sicily or the Pacific. They are a great lot—the scouts and raiders (our commandos) some big, some little, some college athletes, some from farm and factory, but all hard, wiry, certain, and anxious for more action.



Dwarf Fruit Trees Suited to Gardens

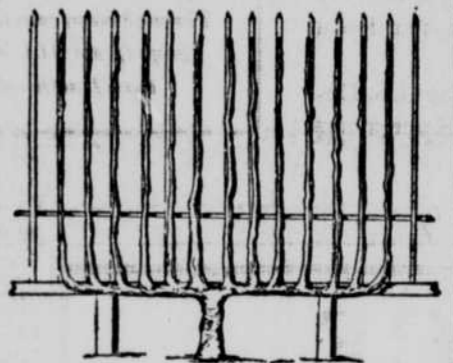
Smaller Plants Produce More; Easy to Handle

While dwarfing of fruit trees is a common practice in Europe, there has been comparatively little interest in this practice in this country, says W. L. Howard, a University of California professor of pomology. In "Home Fruit Growing in California" he outlines the advantages of this method of cultivation in small orchards and home gardens.

Europeans, he says, have perfected special methods of training known as espalier and cordon, with numerous variations, which cause the trees so treated to be smaller than normal. Climatic conditions of western and southern Europe are very well adapted to fruit growing, and the people as a whole are far more garden-minded than we are. Since, however, land is scarce and the average citizen with a tiny garden wants to grow as many things as possible, dwarf fruit trees seem to have been the answer.

Small Deciduous Trees. Most if not all of our deciduous trees are reduced below their normal size in three general ways: by heavy pruning, especially in summer; by partially starving the roots by confining them in pots or boxes; or by grafting them upon the roots of other trees that naturally grow more slowly or remain smaller. The use of dwarf or partially dwarfing stocks is the method chiefly employed both here and abroad, although careful pruning is important in holding down excessive wood growth and in keeping dwarfed trees both small and fruitful.

Although pears are commonly grown as dwarfs in this country, dwarf apples are seldom seen. In Europe peach trees are reduced in size in order to adapt them to cold foggy climates by growing them against walls or under glass. The small need for such special-purpose



One of the easiest ways to train dwarf fruit trees in "espalier" fashion.

trees in this country accounts for their scarcity.

Dwarfing a tree is popularly supposed to shorten its life. This is not necessarily true, although in practice dwarf trees are often permitted to overbear and consequently do not live so long as they might otherwise do. Under expert management such as English and French gardeners give their trees, dwarf pears, for example, may live to an age of 75 years.

Dwarf Apples.

The Paradise apple, a natural dwarf, serves as a stock for reducing the size of any variety of apple grafted upon it. On this stock, trees may be so much reduced in size that they can be grown in 10- or 12-inch flower pots. If planted in the ground they will range in height from three to six feet, the height depending upon the variety. The training they receive—that is, the kind of pruning—has much to do with their size. The Doucin apple is a natural half-dwarf. Varieties grafted upon that root attain about half their normal size.

Dwarf apples are trained to various shapes. The young trees are often set two or three feet apart and made fast to a three-wire trellis for no particular purpose except the ornamental effect they give. They are generally tilted over at an angle of about 65 degrees and kept pruned to a system of spurs. They will begin bearing the second year. This is a favorite method of training in the English fruit gardens, but the trees require much detailed attention. It would be safer for the amateur to set them about four feet apart.

Dwarf apple trees usually bear too heavily but, if judiciously thinned, will produce larger fruit than the same variety does on standard roots. Even with only fair treatment, dwarf apples should live for 25 years, provided they are kept fertilized, are properly pruned, and are not allowed to overbear—the last being the most important. Under ideal conditions they will live much longer.

Homemade Egg Candler



You can make an egg candler with a small box and a 100-watt light.

Lowly Worm, Sans Eyes And Feet, Benefits Soil

A worm leads a lowly life, but it is not such a simple creature as most folks believe. The typical earthworm has a slender tubular body, with the front part rounded and the rear section tapered.

The earthworm has no eyes, but determines its course by feeling. Lacking feet, it moves along by means of four double rows of bristles beneath its body.

In winter it burrows beyond the reach of frost and during warm months to a depth of as much as two feet. In its diggings it swallows the soil but digests only the organic matter. As a result of worms' burrowings, the soil is made porous and permeable to rain and air.

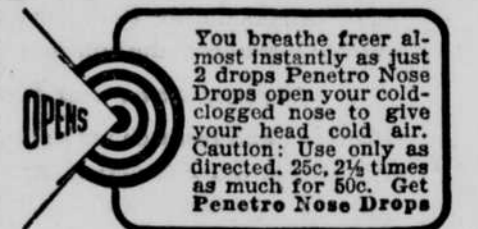
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SNAPPY FACTS ABOUT RUBBER

With synthetic tires about to be in general use, experts emphasize again that speed is important in determining tire mileage. The legal limit of 35 m.p.h. has been found to be the best mileage conservator with synthetics, just as it was with tires of crude rubber.

Tire cords lose elasticity as they grow older, which accounts for many blowouts when a well-worn tire strikes a rough spot in the road.

War-time regulations are saving nearly 200 million bus miles a year for the country's highway transportation system. Converted into tires, this conserved mileage means a lot to the rubber program.

James Shaw



HIGHLIGHTS . . . in the week's news

HOUSING: Two million new homes will be needed immediately after the war to take care of married servicemen and families that have doubled up during the conflict. John Blandford, administrator of the National Housing Agency, told the Associated General Contractors. Other new houses will be needed at the rate of 600,000 a year for replacements, he said.

CANNED MILK: Civilians will get slightly less condensed and evaporated milk this year than last, the War Food administration announced. An allotment of 1,740,000,000 pounds of evaporated, and 190,700,000 pounds of condensed milk has been made from stock estimated at 3,562,200,000 pounds total. Military supplies were increased to 939,800,000,000 pounds.