

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Nazi Defenses Crack in West; Batter Japs' Industrial Belt; OPA to Tighten Price Control

Released by Western Newspaper Union.  
(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.)



Waving white flag, German troops surrender to doughboys on Aachen front during Allied offensive.

PACIFIC: Hit Jap Heart

As U. S. troops punched forward on Leyte island in the Philippines, with a driving rainstorm slapping them in the face, huge B-29 superfortresses blasted the great industrial district in Tokyo feeding enemy armies all along the far-flung Pacific front.

Flying from newly established bases in the recently conquered Marianas, 1,500 miles to the south-east, the B-29s took the first crack at Tokyo since Lieutenant General Doolittle's carrier-based medium bombers raided the Japanese capital in the spring of 1942. Successful development of the B-29 attacks would imperil the major portion of enemy industry, concentrated in the Tokyo district.

Speaking of the operation, U. S. air chief, General H. H. Arnold, declared: "The battle for Japan has been joined. . . (it) will be carried on relentlessly . . . until the day of land-sea invasion."

Although enemy resistance on Leyte continued stiff, U. S. forces continued their encircling advances, with General MacArthur stating that our superior artillery and infantry firepower was cutting deeply into Japanese strength, which had been feverishly reinforced in an effort to hold up the Yank drive.

As a result of persistent U. S. attacks, the enemy has been unable to concentrate his forces on Leyte for counter-attacks, General MacArthur said, rather being compelled to throw in his troops here and there in an effort to check the U. S. offensive.

STABILIZATION: To Hold Prices, Wages

With living costs already estimated at 30 per cent above January, 1941, levels, OPA Administrator Chester Bowles moved to check recent small price increases, especially in clothing and textiles.

Vigorous action to halt further advances was seen as part of the government's indicated policy of retaining the disputed "Little Steel" wage formula, under which pay boosts have been kept within 15 per cent of January, 1941, levels.

Because of the permissible 15 per cent wage raises, plus large overtime earnings, it has been felt that workers' weekly incomes have balanced price increases. But with further rises in living costs threatening that balance, the government was expected to press hard to maintain present price levels.

Although the National War Labor board's recent findings that living costs have gone up 30 per cent since January, 1941, was expected to bolster the CIO and AFL's campaign for wage increases over the 15 per cent limit of the "Little Steel" formula, the government has shown no inclination to give in to their demands.

On the other hand, it has been suggested, with the President's favor, that as long as overtime earnings are being paid, current wage rates be retained. With a trim-off to the 40-hour week, however, it has been proposed that wages be boosted to allow workers to "take home" the same average income as they now do.

Under such a plan, workers would get about a 30 per cent raise in pay, thus assuring a continued high purchasing power with a resultant stimulation of employment.

As part of its program to maintain the present cost level, OPA was expected to take a firmer stand on manufacturers' requests for higher prices.

GI Railroaders Follow Troops

Unsung, but nevertheless of vital importance, are the army railroad men, helping supply the advancing U. S. forces on world fronts.

"These troops are scattered all over the world," said Brig. Gen. A. F. McIntyre, chief of the army rail division. "They are in New Guinea, Alaska, New Caledonia, England, France, Italy, Iran and India. They also supported the invasion in Africa where the Moroccan railroads had been barely able to support the

EUROPE: Big Crack

First German lines to crumble during the Allies' big fall offensive along a 460-mile front in the west were on the southern end, where the Nazi 19th army, under steady U. S. and French pressure, was told to abandon equipment, break into small groups and beat it back, as best it could, to the Reich border.

Indicative of the crack in the enemy's lines was the French 1st army's break through the Belfort Gap, and its swing northward up the Rhine in a maneuver designed to trap some 70,000 Germans who had been holding the Vosges mountain passes to the west.

The rapid French dash was followed by the U. S. 7th army's smash through the Saverne pass in the Vosges 50 miles to the north, which had the effect of forming a nutcracker squeeze on enemy forces caught between the two pincers.

Only enemy rearwards retarded the U. S. and French maneuver, but the Germans profited from the murky weather, which prevented the superior Allied air force from rising in full strength to smash the knots of Nazi troops beating their way eastward to the Rhine.

In an effort to extricate the bulk of his 19th army, Col. Gen. Johannes



Heinrich Himmler (foreground) inspects fanatical SS troops on western front.

Blaskowitz assembled all kinds of boats and barges to transport troops unable to move across the Rhine on stationary bridges.

Although less spectacular, news from other sectors of the winding battle-front was good, with General Patton's 3rd army probing into the coal-laden Saar basin east of Metz, and the U. S. 1st and 9th and the British 2nd armies maintaining their terrific pressure on German defenses east of Aachen. Even though the Allies were throwing masses of men and material at them all along the 460-mile front, the Germans expected still another drive, this one in northeastern Holland, where they said the British planned to drive around the anchor of the Siegfried line at Kleve down into the Ruhr valley.

Best description of the fighting about Aachen was provided by this Thanksgiving report from the battle-front:

"For Lieutenant General Hodges' 1st and Lieutenant General Simpson's 9th and the British 2nd armies, knee-deep in mud in heavy battles, this day at the approaches to the Ruhr and Rhineland was hard and bitter slugging, yard by yard."

German plan was to slow up the big Allied drive by wearing down U. S. and British strength, and toward this end, the enemy launched repeated counter-attacks with his new King Tiger tanks.

As the Allied troops advanced, they found Nazis in the forward defense positions of inferior quality, the German plan apparently being to save their best for a last desperate fight along the main line.

In the east, bad weather interfered with the Russians drive upon Budapest, and the broad Hungarian plains leading to the gateway to Austria.

MEAT: 1945 Prospects

More veal, about the same amount of beef, but 15 per cent less pork—that's the meat prospect for 1945, the War Food administration revealed.

The continued stringency in beef will continue because 31 per cent of the supply will go to the armed forces, it was said.

Increased supplies of better grade beef were in prospect for domestic consumers, with reports that midwestern farmers were aggressive buyers of stockers for fattening, what with feed stocks at high levels. Much of the beef on sale this year was of the utility type coming from grass-fed range cattle.

Meanwhile, cattle slaughter remained heavy during October, with an all-time record of 1,450,572 beef animals put on the block, along with 919,599 calves. The total of 4,223,255 hogs butchered was 1 per cent below the 5 year average.

Farm Income

U. S. farm income has continued its rise in 1944, with the department of agriculture now figuring that the total return for the year will run to over 20 1/2 billion dollars for the nation's 6,000,000 operators.

The USDA's estimates were based on cash marketing and government benefit income of 14 1/2 billion dollars for the first nine months of this year, a little less than a billion dollars more than for the corresponding period in 1943.

Combined with steady debt reduction, wise utilization of the farm plant without undue expansion and the accumulation of large liquid resources, the continued high income further strengthened the farmers' position for the uncertain postwar period.

Thieving Craze

Latest of the wartime juvenile problems to plague authorities was a shop-lifting spree among "teen-aged" "bobby-sox" girls in Portland, Ore.

Carried on by girls stealing for personal use rather than resale, the spree reached alarming proportions, with losses so heavy in one big department store that auditors first thought there must have been a book-keeping error in the amount of merchandise originally listed.

One 15-year-old was caught with \$150 worth of sweaters, breads and bracelets. A 17-year-old said she had stolen \$700 worth of goods in seven months for her sailor sweetheart.

Sobbed one tearful culprit: "I guess it is stealing, only I didn't think of it that way. It was an adventure sort of. The other girls were doing it."

CHINA: Japs' Progress

Even as Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek shook up his government to revitalize the Chinese war effort, and Donald Nelson arrived in Chungking with a group of steel and alcohol experts to build up war production, the Japanese tightened their hold on the whole eastern coastal section of the country.

Object of the Japanese drive, which covered 750 miles in six months, was to eliminate the bases of the 14th American air force, whose planes had harried enemy ground forces, shot up communications and ranged a sea to blast coastal shipping.

The shift in Chiang's government followed the row over giving Gen. Joe Stilwell command of Chinese forces to stimulate their prosecution of the war after it was hinted that the Generalissimo was using much of the army for the preservation of his own political party against the encroachment of the Communists.

Nelson's return to Chungking followed a previous visit during which studies were undertaken as to what kind of industrial development would fit into Allied aid to help the Chinese war effort.

SAVINGS: Well Heeled

What with total savings estimated at \$100,000,000, Americans should find themselves able to meet a short period of adversity in the postwar world.

Of the huge amount of savings, \$36,883,000,000 are in war bonds, it was revealed. About \$1,000,000,000, or 60 per cent of the population, held these securities in comparison with about 25 per cent in World War I.

Next to war bonds, bank and postal savings deposits constitute the largest source of savings at over \$36,000,000,000. Of this amount, over \$34,000,000,000 were in bank deposits held by about 33 per cent of the people.

Life insurance forms the third largest source of savings, what with 50 per cent of the people paying in over \$33,000,000,000 on their policies, it was revealed.

COTTON EXPORTS

With cotton exports down to an average of 1,235,000 bales for the four crop seasons from 1941 to 1944, the trade looked to the recently invoked War Food administration export subsidy program for possible increased shipments.

Estimates as to the amount that might be sold under the WFA's new program varied, with the volume of shipments depending upon the availability of cargo space, it was agreed. Exports have been lowest since the Civil war.

Washington Digest

U. S. Plans Simpler Aid To Business in Future



Reduction in Forms Would Be Relief; Hope To Acquaint Small Operators With Vital General Trends.

By BAUKHAGE  
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Washington, D. C.

When the mysterious Ninth army suddenly rose full-armed on the western front and the First army, beside it, started General Eisenhower's winter offensive there was one question on most people's lips. Will peace come in Europe before spring? In Washington, on the lips of many thoughtful people, there was another question, too: "If it comes (or for that matter when it comes) will we be ready for it?" In one of the many compartments of government which must be prepared for the ordeal of sudden peace, preparations are now going forth, I believe, are both significant and hopeful.

Specifically, I am thinking of a report made by the director of the budget, Harold Smith, a summary of which was passed along by Senator Murray, chairman of the committee on small business, for the consolation it might bring. The director of the budget believes that information needed by the government and valuable to small business is going to be obtained, while the statisticians who obtain it are at the same time going to cut down on the number of forms which the small businessman will have to fill out.

Filling out forms, especially the income tax blanks, is the subject of considerable jesting these days. But there is a more serious side to the process if we accept form filling-out as a symbol of the growing part which government plays in regulating our personal and business affairs.

That is why this promise coming from the bureau of the budget is significant, especially when it is considered side by side with two trends to which my attention has been called this week and to which too few people have paid sufficient attention.

Expect Government To Take Lead

One is the tabulated result of a poll made by the National Research center expressly for Factory magazine, a McGraw-Hill publication, and the other is a statement, which I heard recently. It was entirely unofficial and surely an expression of his own view, set forth by a British diplomat.

The question which Factory magazine had asked of men earning hourly or piece wages only (no supervisors or foremen) was this: "Who do you think will do the most to solve the job problem after the war—the government, the labor leaders, or company heads?"

Forty-seven per cent of those interviewed looked to government; 24 per cent looked to company heads; 14 per cent to labor leaders; 15 per cent undecided.

The opinion expressed by the diplomat was this: "After the war we can look toward a United Kingdom where considerable government control is exercised—ownership of railroads, utilities, mines . . . a sort of socialistic monarchy."

Both these opinions together indicate a trend in the thinking on both sides of the Atlantic along parallel lines. The American workman feels that the American government will take the responsibility for employment after the war; the British official feels that the British government will take over several of the nation's important industries.

More "forms to make out," if you will. Which brings us back to small business. Committee Chairman Murray, and Budget Director Smith, and the promise of more help for business with less forms to make out, and (symbolically) we hope, less actual domination of business by government.

Small Business

Measure of Enterprise  
I chose this particular example because I believe that the relationship of small business to government is vital. The people who have made the most careful studies of the subject agree that the measure of small business is the measure of the whole system of private enterprise, that if small business is crushed in the process of reconstruction, all private enterprise will

eventually be stultified and not only those great semi-public institutions, like the utilities and the mines, will suffer the fate predicted for them in England, but eventually all enterprise will find itself in government hands.

Let me say at this point, however, that some industries have already reached the point where they have forced government operation in other democratic countries and even some very conservative minds in this country are beginning to fear that similar conditions are being created by certain businesses themselves here.

But it is the purpose of those persons in government and out of it, who are struggling with the problem of preserving small business, to give it the aid it needs to preserve its independence.

In order to provide this aid it is essential that some compromises be made on the part of the businessmen. They cannot expect the government to provide them with help they have to have to get them over the hump of reconversion without making certain sacrifices—government officials cannot spend the public money without establishing some checks and balances on the institutions which are thus benefited.

Filling out forms is one of the minor afflictions which government-comforted economic flesh is heir to.

However, it is refreshing to read Mr. Smith's report to Senator Murray in which he tells us of how, according to his custom, he has considered the requests of numerous government agencies for surveys and has turned them down. (His job is to save the people's money by preventing duplicate effort of government agencies.) He announces that statistical services of the government are going to be "revised and overhauled" in order to produce "a rounded program to supply the basic industrial statistics needed not only by the government, but by industry as well."

Most of the failures in little business are due to ignorance on the part of the proprietor of the one thing he ought to know most about—his own business. In the first place, he doesn't know whether he is making money or losing it because he doesn't keep his books properly and he doesn't know enough about the conditions in his line of business, outside his immediate ken, to guide him.

This is the type of information which the government wishes to collect and in turn place at his disposal.

One of the plans already worked out is a census of manufacturers of 1944 covering a wide field of data, which it is not my intention to enumerate here for that is not the purpose of these remarks. The purpose is to note hopefully the fact that here is evidence of a trend which, in some measure, balances the other two mentioned at the beginning of these columns, the trend toward government control.

That is why I quote the following paragraph, not merely for the hope it brings to weary fillers-out of forms, but because it looks like a hopeful sign in an otherwise somewhat cloudy sky:

"An analysis made by one war agency of the need of present informational needs shows that about half such material would still be required by that agency after victory; of the remaining half about two-thirds would be discontinued entirely and about one-third continued by other agencies."

Railroads are now handling about 2 1/2 times the amount of freight traffic and more than four times the volume of passenger business that they did before the war, the Association of American Railroads reported.

"They are carrying," the report added, "virtually double the load of the first World war, and they are doing it with a fourth fewer freight cars, about a fourth fewer passenger-train cars, and a third fewer locomotives than in 1918. The reduction in freight cars alone amounts to about 600,000 units."

BRIEFS . . . by Baukhage

A London transportation company is experimenting with a central entrance bus with a pneumatically operated door and central staircase.

Twelve ships a day are now sliding down the ways in this country, according to Rear Adm. Frederick G. Crisp, director of the navy division on shore establishments and civilian personnel.

Cubans saw their first snow when it were flown all the way from New Hampshire to Havana last winter.

Sunflowers may surpass the soybean which now brings in a return of \$600,000,000 annually. Sunflower oil sells for 14 1/2 cents a pound and the meal has a 53 per cent protein content.

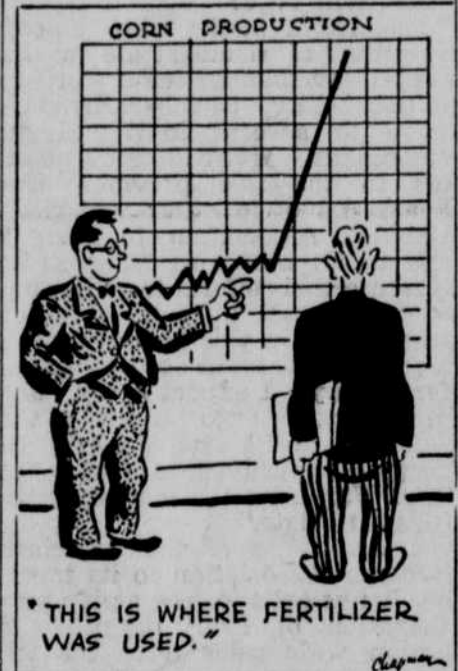


Soil Fertility Is Essential to Food

Fertilizers Help to Increase Value of Acre

Agriculture, in all its forms, rests upon the basis of soil fertility. Whatever renews or increases that fertility benefits the farmer and those dependent upon him for food, clothing and essential articles from farm commodities.

War Food administration reports show that the planting of millions



Increases as much as 57% resulted from fertilizer use.

of additional acres in crops has been avoided during the war years, by increased use of fertilizer, resulting in marked increases in yield.

It has been determined that two extra bales of cotton were produced per ton of fertilizer; 125 extra bushels of corn; 85 bushels of wheat; 185 bushels of potatoes; and 140 bushels of oats.

On a group of West Virginia farms, forage production was reported increased 87 per cent from the use of a ton of ground limestone and 180 pounds of triple superphosphate per acre. Protein content of the forage increased more than 40 per cent.

Winter legume cover crops on which fertilizer was used showed increased growth, which was reflected in larger yields of succeeding crops benefiting from turning under the green manure. An average increase of more than 11 bushels of corn per acre was reported from plantings immediately following the vetch, without the use of additional fertilizer.

Increases in alfalfa hay yields from fertilizing the soil were reported as 33 per cent in the north-eastern states; 25 per cent in the east central area; 40 per cent in the south; and 15 per cent in the north central and western regions.

How to Keep Poultry Flock in Good Health

Proper location of the poultry house will do much toward keeping a flock healthy. The poultry quarters should be on light, sandy well-drained soil and should be provided with some shade. The house should face opposite the direction from which storms usually come.

Clean, comfortable, well-ventilated and spacious poultry houses, abundant and nourishing feeds, and clean water in clean receptacles help keep fowls in good physical condition; when these things are provided, no medicine is needed to keep poultry well and productive. Without such provisions, no medicinal treatment will insure the maintenance of health. It usually pays to kill, not doctor sick hens.

New Farm Facts

A new apricot developed by Russians contains 50 per cent sugar when tree dried.

Proper care of tractor this winter, together with correct adjustment may mean a saving in fuel of from 13 to 26 per cent next season.

Small dried peas, 3,000 years old, taken from the tomb of King Tutankhamen have been planted in Florida by an army officer and produced a good crop.

Shortage of certain small grain seeds for next year looks possible. Proper handling this year will assure the farmer of sufficient seeds for planting later on.

When ordinary fly sprays have been used in barns or other buildings, avoid breathing the fumes for long periods of time. The fumes are also detrimental to livestock.

Calf Vaccination

While calf vaccination for brucellosis is not a substitute for proper management and sanitation, it is recommended by Dr. R. R. Birch of the American Veterinary Medical association. Calfhood vaccination, accompanied by a program of elimination of reactor animals, has been responsible for the greatest amount of progress in brucellosis control during the past year. The vaccinated calves, however, should be removed from those not vaccinated

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