

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Jap Reinforcements Smashed; Yanks Weaken Nazi Strength; Iron Out Huge Highway Program

Released by Western Newspaper Union. (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.)



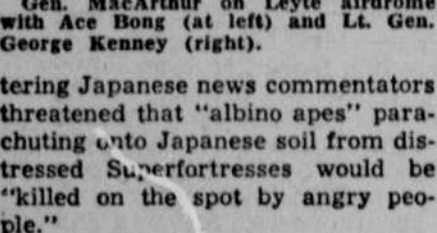
Supported by tanks in the rear, U. S. infantrymen advance near Gellenkirchen inside Germany on western front.

PACIFIC: Smash Reinforcements

Despite the fact that ground fighting on Leyte island stalled in bad weather, with November rainfall totaling 23 1/2 inches, there was no lull in action in the Philippines.

As Jap General Yamashita tried to take advantage of the inclement weather to reinforce his beleaguered troops on Leyte, U. S. airmen rose to combat enemy transports ploughing through western Philippine waters to Ormoc.

Meanwhile, B-29s continued their raids over the Tokyo industrial area, encountering moderate opposition.



Gen. MacArthur on Leyte airframe with Ace Bong (at left) and Lt. Gen. George Kenney (right).

ter Japanese news commentators threatened that "albino apes" parachuting onto Japanese soil from distressed Superfortresses would be "killed on the spot by angry people."

Pushed to the wall in the Philippines, the Japs had better luck in China, where Chiang Kai-shek's armies were hard put to it in an attempt to blunt an enemy drive aimed at cutting the Burma road to Chungking.

Thrusting westward from their north-south juncture at Luichow, where they joined to seal off the whole eastern Chinese coast, Jap columns stood about 100 miles from the Burma road, key communications line linking much of the southern part of the country.

HIGHWAYS: Postwar Project

Following separate action by both houses, senators and representatives got together in the nation's capital to settle on a definite postwar federal highway program, the first major public works project planned for peacetime.

After the senate had approved of the expenditure of \$450,000,000 annually for three years after the war for construction of rural, secondary and urban highways, the house passed a bill providing for \$500,000,000 annually for three years.

Under both versions, states would have to contribute an equal amount of money for road projects, and sums would be distributed throughout the country on the basis of regional importance.

HIGHLIGHTS . . . in the week's news

Meat: The largest production of beef and veal on record for any November was made at federally inspected meat packing plants last month, according to a review of the livestock and meat situation today by the American Meat Institute.

WESTERN FRONT: Battle of Attrition

To the Nazis being pressed back to the Rhine, the great battles raging along the western front were "the most ferocious in all history."

To doughboys of the U. S. Ninth First, Third and Seventh armies, slogging forward in heavy gush, they were the hardest of the war, with desperate resistance encountered at every step.

With airplane activity limited by somber skies and rainfalls, the battle was being fought along the ground, with heavy U. S. field artillery and big, rumbling tanks pouring their deadly fire into enemy entrenchments to clear the way for the doughboys of the infantry.

Although General Patton's Third army about the Saar, and General Patch's Seventh army east of the Vosges, maintained heavy pressure on Nazi lines, the focal point of action centered on the Ninth and First army fronts between Julich and Duren.

East of the small, but strategic, Roer river, both of these towns are vital communications centers, with elaborate highways running in from the Rhineland to feed other roadways running to the north and south.

As the great battle of attrition—wearing down—rose in tempo, this highway network was vital to the Germans in rushing troops and materials to the endangered front, and then transferring them to the north and south.

Indicative of the great pressure General Eisenhower was exerting in this sector was the report that his opponent, foxey Field Marshal von Rundstedt, had transferred troops from the Dutch front to the Julich-Duren sector to cope with the Allied powerhouses.

No sooner had the report come through than it was announced that Canadian troops had taken the field on the Dutch front, increasing Allied pressure back in this sector, and giving the German high command no rest.

Slowed in their frontal assault on Budapest, Russian armies crossed the Danube to the south of the Hungarian capital to thrust one spearhead northward toward the embattled city and another westward toward the Austrian frontier, less than 100 miles away.

SEDITION TRIAL: Death Ends It

With the death of 65-year-old Justice Edward C. Eicher of Iowa, the seven-month-long, and at times farcical, sedition trial of 26 defendants in Washington, D. C., came to an abrupt end, with small chance of resumption.

Although government counsel said the trial could go on if both the U. S. and defendants agreed to the selection of another judge, it was recalled that a federal court previously had ruled that justice required completion of a case by the same judge and jury and no substitutions could be made, even with consent.

Even though the trial of the 26 defendants, accused of trying to undermine the morale of the U. S. armed forces and establish a Nazi form of government in this country, had already taken up seven months, government counsel revealed that at least six more months would be necessary to complete presentation of its evidence.

CANADA: Worst Crisis

Although pudgy Prime Minister MacKenzie King looked to a vote of confidence from Canada's parliament over the question of partially conscripting the home army for overseas service, it was expected to come only after one of the most severe crises of the country.

Principal hostility to King's compromise proposal to send over 16,000 of the home guard to the European front to bolster the volunteer force came from the province of Quebec, where the French, long allowed to keep their own speech and customs and religion, stood firmly on their traditional opposition to conscription.

Where the rub came in was that King long has depended upon Quebec for political support, and the province, almost to the last, pressed the prime minister to abide by his government's earlier pledge against conscription for overseas service despite his obvious effort to compromise by restricting the number of draftees to 16,000.

Despite Quebec's violent opposition, King relied upon his compromise to draw some support from its representatives to ride out the storm.

Yanks in Battle

With the greater number unknown heroes, U. S. soldiers, slogging through the mud on the western front into Germany, are only identified in the mass as members of the various army units driving onward.

Included in General Simpson's 9th army battling along the Roer river were the 2nd armored division, the 29th, 30th and 102nd infantry divisions, organized in the 19th corps.

With General Hodges' 1st army fighting east of Aachen were the 3rd and 5th armored divisions, and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 8th, 9th, 28th, 38th, and 104th infantry divisions, organized in 5th, 7th, and 8th corps.

General Patton's 3rd army driving into the Saar included the 4th, 6th and 10th armored divisions, and 5th, 26th, 35th, 80th, 90th and 95th infantry divisions, organized in the 12th and 20th corps.

Fighting alongside the French in General Patch's 7th army east of the Vosges were the 3rd, 36th, 44th, 45th, 79th, 100th and 103rd U. S. infantry divisions, organized in 6th and 15th corps.

NEW FACE: Smiling Diplomat

As elder statesman Cordell Hull, 73, passed from the presidential cabinet, his place as secretary of state was assumed by personable Edward Stettinius, 44, another of the nation's big business men who have made good recently in governmental ranks.

Son of a Morgan partner, Stettinius, 44, started his own business career in the stock room of a roller-bearing works, then rose rapidly as vice president of General Motors and, at 37, as chairman of the U. S. Steel corporation.

Smiling, hearty and blunt, Stettinius has been chiefly noted for his ability in handling people.

FARM INCOME: Up Again

With income from crops 10 per cent greater than last year, and receipts from livestock and livestock products 4 per cent more, farm income for the first 10 months of 1944 totaled \$18,430,000,000, 6 per cent above the same period in 1943, the U. S. department of agriculture reported.

At the same time, the USDA said that farm prices, which have only changed about 2 per cent within the last year, would probably remain exceptionally stable for several more months.

WAR BONDS

With government outgo in the first nine months of the present fiscal year ending in July totalling \$82,000,000,000, and receipts equalling \$35,000,000,000, Uncle Sam will be forced to borrow \$47,000,000,000.

Washington Digest

Congressional Machinery Is Slated for Overhauling

Bulk of Complaints Against the Legislative Branch Are Inconsistent, but Committee Setup Needs Revision.

By BAUKHAGE News Analyst and Commentator.

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

It is an old American custom to take a pot-shot at congress whenever something goes wrong and nobody else is handy to blame, no matter whether the trouble is dust-storms, sun-spots, jaundice or just plain grouch.

You may recall that this feeling reached an unhappy high in the famous "bundles-for-congressmen" campaign of 1942. Some practical jokers in Seattle seized on the civil service retirement bill which made all government employees, including members of congress, eligible for pensions, as an excuse to start the horseplay.

That was very funny to everybody except the recipients of the bundles — and a few thoughtful people who know that the greatest danger to a democratic government is lack of confidence in the parliamentary body. They knew, too, that most of the sins of congress are due to the fact that some of the congressional methods established by the founding fathers have grown out of date.

As one congressman put it to me the other day: "We can't be expected to handle billion-dollar budgets with a penny-gate setup."

In July, 1943, Senator LaFollette (Progressive) of Wisconsin introduced a plan for the reorganization of the committee structure of the senate. This year the senate approved the appointment of a joint committee on organization of both houses. The Smith committee in the house, Senator Maloney and Representative Monroney and others carried on, until today the chances seem bright for consideration by the 79th congress of a plan to streamline the machinery of the government's legislative branch.

In addition, a committee of lawyers has just completed a four-year study on the reorganization of congress, the results of which have found favor in congressional circles. I think it apropos at this point to offer two quotations, one from the works of the historian Charles Beard, mentioned by Senator LaFollette in an article he wrote on the subject, and another from the article itself.

This is what historian Beard said: "As a more than casual student of the Congressional Record, I venture this opinion: It is possible to pick out of the Record for the past 10 years addresses (not orations) which for the breadth of knowledge, technical skill, analytical acumen, close reasoning and dignified presentation, compare favorably with similar utterances made in the preceding century by the so-called great orators."

LaFollette, subscribing to this opinion, adds frankly, "There is, to be sure, more trash—bad poetry, demagogic claptrap, and clogged nonsense—in the Record of the past 10 years than there was from the annals of congress from 1789 to 1799." (Aye, aye!)

The senator reminds us, however, of the extremely complex quality of the problems which congress has to face today and the distractions to which the members are subjected, and then, comparing the congress about which he is writing (the 76th) with the first congresses, he says he is convinced "that for disinterestedness, absence of corruption, and concern with the public good, the present body is of a higher order."

And that is a sentiment which, in the humble opinion of this writer, is substantiated by the majority of objective students of the two bodies.

All Democratic Institutions Suffer During Wartime

The present legislators, if they wished to be as tritely expatiating as many civilian slackers in this cur time of national stress, could answer some of their critics with a shrug and a reminder that "there is a war on." When a war is on the toughest fibered of democratic institutions suffer.

The inconsistency of the bulk of the complaints against the legislative branch of the government in the last two years can be seen when it is realized that the two most popular charges offered were either that congress was a "rubber stamp" or that it was "obstructionist," which adds up to a contradiction.

Because of the fact that the growth of the country has demanded an increase in the body of administrative and executive law, congress is forced to delegate more power and more functions to the administrative branch. To overcome this trend in so far as possible will be one of the efforts of the reorganization, of which I will speak in a moment. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that Senator LaFollette himself called attention to the accomplishment of the Truman investigating committee in exposing executive errors already committed and in preventing others by the mere threat of "ever present exposure and censure."

Star Dust STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO

By VIRGINIA VALE ALFRED HITCHCOCK, who's just signed to produce and direct one picture a year for five years for Selznick-International, came up the hard way.

The master of suspense began his career in England by sweeping the cutting room floors. In the years following he filled almost every job connected with the making of movies. When he finally picked up a megaphone and began directing, he turned out such immediate successes as "The Lodger," "The 39 Steps," "The Lady Vanishes," etc.

Remember back three or four years when Sylvia Sidney was making pictures that always seemed to put her into drab costumes, in drab stories? Well, just wait till you see her in "Blood on the Sun," the William Cagney production.



SYLVIA SIDNEY

robe used to consist of a black dress, a gray dress, and a flannel night-gown, as a rule. Now she'll wear six daring evening gowns and an eye-opening negligee.

From now on we're going to be hearing about movie stars who were discovered when working in television. Shirley Hunter's one. She'd always wanted to get into pictures. She and her mother moved to Hollywood in 1936, and Shirley studied singing, dramatics, everything that could help toward attaining her goal—and landed in television. A scout for a major studio saw a telecast, she was sent for, given a screen test, and there she was in the movies! You'll see her in an outstanding role in "Delightfully Dangerous."

It was no hard luck for Marc Platt when he sprained his ankle and couldn't do his spectacular dance routine for Columbia's "Tonight and Every Night." The director used the time thus gained by ringing in an extra kiss scene for Marc and Janet Blair.

Sergt. Robert Foster, a tank crewman on the French-German battle line, went to a movie provided by the Army Pictorial Service. Too tired to notice the name of the picture, he fell asleep. He was awakened when the GI's began whistling at a gorgeous girl shown in Technicolor on the screen. He nearly fell out of the hayloft where he'd been napping—she was Jean Colleran, in "Cover Girl"—also Mrs. Robert Foster!

Umbrago, Jimmy Durante's "Little man who wasn't there," will be the little man who's everywhere this Christmas. A Des Moines woman started it by sending several packages to her son, in camp, for soldiers who don't get holiday presents. Inside each package is a card saying "To Umbrago." Other mothers heard of the idea—as a result Umbragos all over the country will receive unexpected gifts.

The unhappy voice of the Postman on "George Burns and Gracie Allen" show is Mel Blanc's. The gruff voice of "Hubert Peabody," father of "Phoebe" on the "Jack Carson Show" is Mel Blanc's. And the stuttering squeal of Porky Pig in the movie cartoon is—Mel Blanc's.

Mary Mason, who's gay little "Penny" on the Blue Network's "My Best Girls," says she couldn't have avoided being an actress. Her mother played in early Western movies, and Mary was so entranced by her mother's work that she couldn't imagine any other career.

ODDS AND ENDS—Another 'teen-age lyric soprano is being launched in the movies: she's Donna Lee, who makes her screen debut in RKO's "The Body Snatcher." Warners have changed the title of Joan Crawford's picture back to the original "Mildred Pierce"—no matter what it's changed to in future, we'll say no more about new titles for it. . . . Errol Flynn will have eight leading ladies in "The Adventures of Don Juan." . . . Lillian Fontaine, mother of Joan and Olivia de Havilland, makes her screen debut in "The Lost Weekend." . . . 40% of the profits of "Hollywood Canteen" will go to the Hollywood Canteen.

A Thrilling Surprise For This Christmas

DO YOU know a young housekeeper who would love to make a home for a family of dolls in this charming Colonial house? It is easy to make from scraps of plywood or from panels with



slight flaws now available for civilian use. It is even possible to make the front, partitions and other special features to fit book shelves that you may have now. Another important feature of this house is that it fits into a 28 1/2 inch space against the wall, where it won't be stumbled over.

NOTE—Pattern 273 gives illustrated directions and dimensions for making the combination doll house and shelves shown here; also actual-size outline drawings for the doors, windows, shutters, fireplace and views into up-to-date kitchen and bath. Directions for coloring these features and gluing them in place, making flower boxes and other details are included. To get this pattern, address:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS Bedford Hills, New York. Enclose 15 cents for Pattern No. 273.

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BARBS . . . by Baukhage

Washington is 84th on a list of 92 cities in lung afflictions. Still sound of wind, anyhow, I hear you remark.

Under the Hull reciprocal agreements, tariffs to 35 per cent are only 1 per cent lower than they were before 1913 and 8 per cent higher than under the Underwood act of that year.