

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Nazi Rail Lines Hammered by Allies In Pre-Invasion Softening Process; Lend-Lease Grants Total 30 Billion; Stilwell Advances in Northern Burma

(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.) Released by Western Newspaper Union.



Beachhead—There's more to establishing a beachhead than merely forcing a landing. At Aitape in Dutch New Guinea, Doughboys are shown bringing up supplies for continued operations.

EUROPE: Nazi Preparations

As it was reported that the Germans were prepared to sacrifice 200,000 men along the "Atlantic Wall" to slow up the Allies' landing operations and allow the German high command opportunity to shift large reserves to the most critical battle areas, U. S. and British bombers continued their non-stop bombardment of enemy defense installations and communication lines to blast a forward path for the invasion forces.

As the zero hour approached, the Nazis sought to assure against Allied landings in Holland by preparing to flood the lowlands, part of which already have been inundated following the removal of the inhabitants. Heavy U. S. and British aerial bombardments reportedly razed Nazi rail lines 100 miles inland from the channel coast, putting a severe crimp into the transport system over which the Nazis hoped to rush seasoned troops to encounter early Allied landings, possibly made in conjunction with a great Russian offensive in the east.

U. S. SEIZURE: Congress Acts

Stirred by U. S. troop seizure of the Chicago plant of Montgomery Ward and company after the latter's refusal to extend a CIO union contract upon order of the War Labor board, both the senate and the house moved to review the whole field of wartime executive authority.

In introducing a resolution for studying the Ward case which was quickly adopted, Sen. Harry Byrd (Va.) said: "... should lead to correction of legislation under which this (the Ward) seizure of a private business was made."

Previously, Rep. Charles Dewey (Ill.) called upon the house to authorize an investigation of the government's occupation of the Ward plant, a seizure nation's No. 2 mail order company contested in federal court on the ground it is no war industry, and an action the U. S. defended on the strength of its claim that the business sells productive machinery to farmers in advancement of the war effort.

MEAT: Plenty on Hand

Reduction of government purchases of meat in the face of crowded warehouses and heavy hog receipts at markets resulted in OPA's removal of meat rationing except on beef steaks and roasts.

On April 1, warehouses held a near record of 1,246,813,000 pounds of meat compared with 780,806,000 pounds a year ago. Packing facilities were being stretched to the utmost as farmers continued heavy hog shipments, partly because of the tight feed supply recently aggravated by the government's embargo on all private corn sales in 125 mid-west counties to divert stocks to industrial processors.

As a result of the government's program, virtually all wet corn millers were operating, with enough grain pledged for four months.

HIGHLIGHTS . . . in the week's news

POSTAL NOTES: A plan to provide "postal notes" for transmission of money by mail in sums under ten dollars for a flat five-cent fee is being considered by the senate postal committee. The house has already approved the proposal. These notes would not supplant the use of the regular money order for small sums but would be a convenient addition to the postal services.

PACIFIC: Stilwell Advances

Lieut. Gen. Joseph Stilwell's mixed U. S., Chinese and native Burmese troops pushed the Japs farther back in northern Burma in their drive to clear a new supply road to distressed China, while British and Indian forces continued to slow up the Japs' determined campaign to sever the Assam-Bengal rail line feeding General Stilwell's army.

In the South Pacific, U. S. troops strengthened their hold on the Hollandia area in Dutch New Guinea, while American bombers raged up and down the island smashing at Jap bases supplying straggling enemy troops.

In addition to threatening General Stilwell's supply lines, the Jap drive in India reportedly was designed to establish India's Collaborationist Subhas Chandra Bose on native soil for an intensive propaganda drive to arouse the Hindus to revolt against the British.

LEND-LEASE: 30 Billion

Including special assistance given by other government agencies, lend-lease aid now approximates \$30,362,687,362, the senate was told in considering extension of the act.

Broken down into loans, grants, investments, construction, purchases in foreign countries, current expenses and other aid and expenditures, the special assistance alone, chiefly extended by the army and navy, amounts to \$8,500,000,000. Ordinary lend-lease assistance totals \$21,794,237,819.

Of the \$30,362,687,362 spent, Great Britain has received \$19,700,297,674; Russia, \$4,214,921,449; So. America, \$2,327,378,789; China, \$920,349,451.

SURPLUS MATERIAL: Use Considered

With U. S. sales of surplus war goods already running between \$12,000,000 and \$15,000,000 monthly, the knotty problem of allowing production of civilian goods, with raw materials and scrap reverting to the government through termination of war contracts, has arisen.

Although some flatirons, alarm clocks, furniture, kitchenware, radio tubes, electric fans, stoves, kitchen ranges and bathtubs are scheduled for delivery in 1944, they are but a drop in the bucket compared with civilian requirements.

Despite the admitted surplus of many raw materials, the War Production board has opposed their appreciable use in civilian goods on the grounds that such manufacture would aggravate the manpower situation.

POLITICS: Army Impartial

The ticklish problem of supplying U. S. soldiers with political information on the 1944 national elections was bravely approached by the war department, with emphasis firmly placed on impartiality.

Although doughboys will be permitted to read their favorite magazine or newspaper, the war department ruled that in radio broadcasts and service publications, equal time or space must be granted to both sides.

Motion pictures and entertainments also drew the attention of the war department, with no partial material to be tolerated in either source, and commanding officers to closely guard against the revision of scripts violating the regulation.

DESIGNER: Paul Poiret, 64, once among the world's most famous fashion designers, died in Paris virtually a pauper. RAYON HOSE: More thin rayon hosiery will be produced and less of the heavier grades, by permission of the War Production board. The industry has been complaining that women were not buying the better wearing heavier lines.

CHINA:

Japs Tighten Hold

With no less than 80,000 troops backed by large forces of reserves, the Japanese pressed their drive to clear the embattled Chinese from the Hankow-Peiping railway in northeastern China.

Japanese success would clear a considerable belt of the road for north-south traffic, strengthening the enemy's stranglehold on eastern China, which includes all of that stricken country's principal seaports.

Since overrunning eastern China, the Japs have worked hard to establish new industries in the occupied territories to capitalize on the country's material and manpower resources, and there have been reports that the Jap war machine has considered transfer of government and economic administrative offices to the Chinese mainland in the event of sustained U. S. bombardment of the home islands.

MEXICO: Ends Snooze

As one means of saving tires by cutting down travel between business and home, and of conserving electricity by avoiding the necessity of working later at night, Pres. Manuel Avila Camacho ordered an end of Mexico's famed midday siesta for government and industry.

Beginning June 1, government offices will open at 8 a. m. and run throughout the day; stores will operate from 9 a. m. to 3 p. m., and factories will work from 6 a. m. to 2 p. m.

In putting an end to Mexico's midday snooze, President Camacho said that because of the time consumed in travelling, few people got in a real nap, anyway. Chief objection to the new order is expected to come from conductors and drivers, who receive a share of fares.

WHISKY: No Prospects

Unless there is a sudden reduction in requirements for alcohol for synthetic rubber and other war needs, there is no immediate prospect for a resumption of whisky manufacture. War Production Chief Donald Nelson said.

"I'm opposed to the use of any facilities for production of civilian commodities if it is not feasible and might interfere with necessary war production," Nelson declared.

PROFITS: Going Up

With some industries like petroleum showing a 46.8 per cent boost in net incomes, and others like the wholesale and retail group reporting a 16.5 per cent drop, profit of 259 leading big businesses for the first quarter of 1944 amounted to \$274,032,000, 6 per cent higher than last year, but 19 per cent below 1941.

At the same time, an analysis of operations of 50 manufacturing companies for 1943 showed that costs helped to counterbalance income, and profit was held to 3.1 per cent per dollar of sales.

For instance, it was reported 1943 wages and salaries took 72.8 per cent of gross income, before taxes but after other costs, compared with 66 per cent in 1940. Taxes claimed 20.8 per cent against 15.8 in 1940.

AIR TRAVEL: Monopoly Debated

Burning question in aviation circles today is whether various U. S. lines shall form a single company for international service or whether they shall compete for business as separate organizations.

Although only two of 19 U. S. lines favor a single company, there is strong pressure for such a setup on the grounds that its operation on a volume basis could allow it to compete against foreign air lines which undoubtedly will be financially supported by their governments.

In opposing the single company idea, no less than 17 U. S. lines feel that competition could be expected to result in improved service and promotion of air travel, without fettering free enterprise.

CASUALTIES: Total 197,841

Latest figures put U. S. casualties in World War II at 197,841, with the army suffering 153,302 and the navy 44,539.

Of the army casualties, 26,575 were reported killed, 62,312 wounded, 33,814 missing and 30,601 prisoners. Navy losses included 18,992 killed, 11,899 wounded, 9,192 missing and 4,456 prisoners.

With 45,567 deaths already reported, the death toll already neared World War I's, when 53,000 men died in action or of wounds.

WOOL CHEAPER

To move a part of the large stockpile of wool on hand, the Commodity Credit corporation has decided to fix the price of domestic wool at a figure equal to or slightly below imported wool. At present, the imported article is 18 cents a pound cheaper than the domestic.

This procedure will mean a loss to the CCC but another federal agency, which owns the foreign wool ultimately will make a profit which will more than offset the loss on the domestic sale.



Rotenone Destroys Many Insect Pests

New Insecticide Is Harmless to Man

Among the newer insecticides are those containing rotenone. This valuable product of the roots of species of Derris and Lonchocarpus (commonly called cube or timbo) was imported from the Southwest Pacific and South America, respectively, before the war. After supplies from Malaya and the East Indies were cut off, the development of derris culture in Central and South America was given impetus.

Rotenone is an organic compound toxic to many insects and poisonous to fish, but is not considered harmful to man in dilutions sufficient to kill insects. This makes possible the use of the ground derris or cube root on leafy vegetables. The roots are usually ground sufficiently fine so that most of the powder will pass through a 200-mesh screen, and it is used in diluted form. Ground rotenone-bearing roots, however, may irritate tender skin and the mucous membranes. Both the spray and dust methods are used in treating infested plants.

The most important uses of rotenone root powder are on vegetables, fruits and flowers to control the Mexican bean beetle, cabbage caterpillars, cucumber beetles, the pea aphid, the pea weevil, the asparagus beetle, flea beetles, the cherry fruit fly, the currant worm, rose slugs, the Japanese beetle, spittle bugs on strawberries, and the iris thrips.

In combination with pyrethrum extract and sulfonated castor oil, rotenone is also effective against red spiders, thrips (except the gladiolus thrips), aphids, cucumber beetles, tarnished plant bugs, certain species of leaf rollers, and leaf thrips.

The department of agriculture reports that properly packaged and stored ground roots containing rotenone do not deteriorate appreciably for several years. Deterioration was also not found when the ground roots were diluted with inert carriers like pyrophyllite, neutral talc, or powdered plant products and placed in closed containers in a dark, dry room.

Imports of rotenone-bearing roots into the United States had reached a total of eight million pounds in 1941, showing a rapid increase over the preceding five-year period. With the extension of the use of rotenone insecticides through experiments by entomologists, a further upward movement in demand may be anticipated. Already, development of the rotenone industry in the Latin American countries has reached such proportions that the southern nations are establishing their own experimental stations for the further study of these root crops.

Better Grade Chicks Sell Quickly, Say Experts

Poultrymen who make up their minds early to buy good chicks are the ones who get the birds with the ability to lay eggs, says Prof. L. E. Weaver of the New York State college of agriculture. Though the chick market is not as crowded as last year, the better chicks are selling fast, and late buyers have to take whatever is offered.

While chick buying is somewhat a gamble, the grower who buys from a hatchery that has given him good birds before, has a good chance to get good stock.

Other pointers on buying are to purchase only from hatcheries that follow an effective pullorum control program to reduce chick losses; and to buy only from dealers whose chicks do not produce birds with heavy losses from big livers, fowl paralysis, or blindness. Chicks from flocks that show little of these diseases are usually more resistant.

Rabbiteye Blueberries Rapidly Gaining Favor

Harvesting blueberries from a step-ladder is not unusual in Georgia and Florida. The tall and prolific "rabbiteye" blueberries, rapidly coming into favor, are responsible. Yields of 2,000 quarts of berries per acre are not exceptional, and the variety grows faster as well as higher than other species, say the horticulturists. One-year shoots 60 inches high are common in well-fertilized fields, it is reported, and mature bushes often reach 15 feet. Valuable for home and market fruit, the rabbiteye blueberry also helps control erosion by means of its many fine, fibrous roots close to the ground surface which help anchor the soil.

New Variety of Pumpkin Is Being Developed

A small-fruited, bush-type pumpkin suitable for small gardens has been developed by plant breeders of the U. S. department of agriculture. Seed will be available for general planting in 1945, according to present plans. This is the first bush pumpkin adapted to the usual pumpkin uses, and resembles the small sugar pumpkin. It is called Cheyenne, from the field station at Cheyenne, Wyo.

Washington Digest

Justice Is Sole Principle Guiding Steps of UNRRA

Relief and Rehabilitation Program Claims Support of Congressmen Noted for Internationalist Viewpoint.

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While the bombs are bursting over Europe, it is pretty hard to think of postwar activities. America just doesn't like to do it. Furthermore, it is perfectly natural that, after our experience in the last war, when we talk about "relief" for Europe, we feel we don't want to play the role of "Uncle Sap" again.

The one organization which has gone ahead with very definite, specifically delimited plans for civilian international activity, is the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation administration. Forty-four nations have combined to set up this organization and finance its work.

The United States' part in this organization has the specific authorization of Congress. But it never could have had this backing if it hadn't been for the wholehearted cooperation of certain men in Congress whom nobody by the greatest stretch of imagination could label as internationalists. One of them largely responsible for the unopposed authorization by congress for the \$1,350,000,000 which is America's contribution to the UNRRA fund was Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg, a member of the foreign relations committee, who cannot be described as an "internationalist."

He supported UNRRA in this way after a long and careful consultation with the State department concerning the administration's obligations which the United States had to accept if it joined this body of 44 nations. Vandenberg was supported by representatives of the delegation from Ohio, among others, a middle western state not noted for international tendencies.

I asked a member of the UNRRA staff why he thought these people were convinced that the United States ought to take part in this humanitarian movement which although it proclaimed ultra-practical aims might naturally be doubted by the cynical.

"Nobody who has read the limitations which this organization has placed upon itself could have the crust to oppose it," was his answer.

Selling Point

At that moment, I took this rather categorical statement with a grain of salt. Later, after talking with Morse Salisbury, who is well known over the air to many of the readers of this column and all of the listeners to the "Farm and Home Hour," I must admit I was sold.

Morse Salisbury gave up an important position in the department of agriculture which he had held through various administrations to handle the public relations for UNRRA under former governor of New York Herbert Lehmann, its administrator. I broke in on him when he was puzzling over the question of an emblem or flag or a designation for UNRRA—somebody thought it ought to have a distinguishing insignia but he was unconvinced and then he said something to me which is important to remember.

"Here is one governmental institution — governmental in the sense that 44 nations are backing it—which, instead of wishing to perpetuate itself, as most bureaucratic units are said to do, has for its chief aim—self liquidation. Like the boys in the front lines, it wants to get the job done and then quit."

The object of UNRRA is to do what it can to resolve to normalcy the chaos produced by the war and then quit.

For that reason, former Governor Lehmann has set as one of his objectives the keeping of the number of administrative employees down to the absolute minimum. I'll have more to say about that later, first just a very brief summary of what UNRRA has set as its objective, how it hopes to obtain the objective, as set forth in its so-called "bible," containing the official statement of the resolutions of the organization. This is the document which I was told if anyone read he would not have the crust to oppose the UNRRA program.

On November 9, 1943, the representatives of these 44 nations met in the White house and signed an agreement to cooperate in binding up the wounds of war. Later, they met in Atlantic City and drew

up resolutions spelling out what would be done under the agreement.

Since they knew the bitterness and controversy which grew out of the unpaid war loans of the last war, one prime purpose is to achieve their aim without running up a lot of uncollectible debts. In other words, they got down to brass tacks and decided that their effort to restore normalcy in the world should be accomplished on a very simple principle of justice. They divided up the world into two categories. First, those who have enough of the things needed to feed and clothe and house their people, and those who don't. Then there is another division between those who, while they don't have the basic resources, nevertheless have the money to pay for them.

All of the nations which have enough to take care of their own people are to contribute 1 per cent of their national income as of the year ending June 30, 1943.

Those nations like France and Holland and Belgium and Norway and others which have been able to get gold or other wealth away from the Axis robbers and into Allied or neutral countries expect to pay for the supplies they get.

Those countries which have no foreign trade or credit balance abroad will receive supplies and services to bring their people up to a rather stern standard of living and get normal daily life started again. The supplies contributed will be put into regular business channels and most of the people who get them will pay in their own money. Of course, this money would have no value outside of the country involved. It would, however, have value within the country and UNRRA would take, we will say in the case of Greece, drachmas for the supplies delivered.

No Big Payroll

Those drachmas would be spent within the country and will help carry out the principle which Governor Lehmann has laid down—that UNRRA itself will not develop a big payroll. It will help the people to help themselves. Let me give you an example:

The Greeks haven't enough food. Their various public utilities are smashed to pieces, they have no shoes to walk on, their hospitals and other health institutions have been destroyed or disintegrated. All right. UNRRA will set down a certain number of pairs of shoes in Greece —it will set down a certain amount of food, a certain amount of clothing, a certain amount of machinery and other supplies—that will be paid for in drachmas which are nothing more than pieces of paper as far as the rest of the country is concerned, but which have a cash value in Greece.

They will take those drachmas and hire personnel, people who will arrange to load the supplies into trucks at the ports where UNRRA sets them down and handle the distribution of food and clothing through the agencies within the country; they will do the dirty work of rebuilding the waterworks and electric light plants, the public schools and other buildings necessary for an ordered life. Thus employment will be furnished out of the nation's own wealth.

This is a very brief attempt to show how UNRRA works but as I sat in the Du Pont building on Connecticut avenue and heard Mr. Salisbury, who is one of the most practical-minded government officials with whom I have dealt in my 30 years experience in Washington, detail UNRRA's activities, I began to feel quite an emotional upsurge. Salisbury may have felt it too but, of course, he wouldn't show it any more than I would since both of us are laconic middle-westerners.

I said: "Isn't this whole idea an historical innovation?" He replied: "Well, yes. But don't think the 44 member nations are laying any pattern for postwar planning in UNRRA. They have created here an organization of a purely transitional nature. It's merely an attempt on the part of the nations which have something to offer to provide it. If the others can pay for the food and clothing and other things they get, they are willing to pay for it. If they can't, the contributing nations are going to get it to them."



Hadda Hopper: Looking at HOLLYWOOD

KIDS in Hollywood with talent are a dime a dozen. Ability alone never has made a picture star. Sure Van Johnson has talent. But he has something more important—warmth and sincerity of personality that makes friends, the kind that stick through thick and thin. Van is too modest to think of himself as a star. Success to him is a fantastic miracle. He expresses the deepest appreciation, and means it, to those who have believed he could make it.

Last March a near-tragic automobile accident struck him down just as he got a top role with Spencer Tracy and Irene Dunne in "A Guy Named Joe."

The pulse of life wavered within him as Van lay on a hospital cot. A nurse held a mask over his face, preparing him for an emergency operation. A big man with gray hair walked into the room.

Standing By

"Would you hold this mask on his face a moment?" asked the nurse.

The man did. Later he stood outside the door of the operating room as Van was wheeled inside, and waited till he came out again.

That man was Director Vic Fleming, who has more heart than most folks give him credit for.

But I'm getting ahead of the story of Van Johnson, a husky, typically American kid with unruly red-gold hair, freckled face, a pair of bright blue eyes, and an infectious smile. Back in Newport, R. I., he was a popular song-and-dance man from the time he wore knee pants. He wowed 'em at the various clubs, lodges and church socials.

In 1937 Van headed for New York. Luck landed him in "New Faces." The show ran for nine months.

Ups and Downs

Then Van's luck ran out. He patronized the hot dog stands around Times square until he heard about an audition for the summer circuits in the Catskills. For his audition he sang "You Go to My Head." Then he smiled, and was hired for \$9 a week, room and board.

"Our circuit started at Swan lake, Liberty, N. Y.," Van said. "We were just a bunch of ambitious kids, and loved it. I had a broken-down wardrobe that served many purposes."

Back in New York, Van made daily rounds. Finally he went to work at the Roxy theater. There he met Lucille Page, an acrobatic dancer, and one of many friends who gave him a hand.

Van's singing teacher helped him land a job with "Eight Men of Manhattan." His salary was \$50 a week. They into the Rainbow room, where Mary Martin was the toast of the town.

"Mary was a peach," Van said. "Never stopped boosting for me. She had more faith in me than I did."

Try, Try Again

From then on Van did a bit of everything, in a chorus here, doing a song and dance there, finally winding up in Hollywood. There he made one picture, "Murder in the Big House," then was dropped. Van was packed for New York when he stopped in at Chasen's. He walked straight into Lucille Ball whom he had met in Chicago. Bill Grady, MGM talent scout, was sitting at the next table. Lucille spoke up for Van with the result that he was tested with Donna Reed and two days later had an MGM contract in his pocket and a smile in his heart.

People liked his smile and the way he handled himself. He got a chance to play a flier in "A Guy Named Joe." The picture was well under way when Van had his accident. And the picture waited for his recovery.

Gratitude Pays Dividends

"What can I say about it?" Van asked. "You can't put such thoughts into words. But my gratitude to Louis B. Mayer, to Spence, Irene Dunne, Vic Fleming, Keenan Wynn, and everybody on the lot who was pulling for me to get well is boundless. My debt can never be paid." Now Van's playing Lieut. Tex Lawson, the lead Tokyo raider, in "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo."

You Should Hear Margy

If you can hear Margaret O'Brien's delivery of Lincoln's Gettysburg address without getting a lump in your throat so big you can't swallow, then you're a hard-hearted critter. Charles Laughton taught her how to do it, and if Metro doesn't put it in a picture then the studio's not as smart as I think it is. Andy Devine's pals—Pat O'Brien, Spencer Tracy, Bing Crosby—all have played priests on the screen, so Andy doesn't see why he can't. He'll do it in "Bowery to Broadway."



Van Johnson



Mary Martin

BRIEFS . . . by Baukhage

At present 19 per cent of the trucks on the road are at least 10 years old and a minimum of 8 per cent are more than 15 years old.

Nylon's high-service temperature of approximately 275 degrees Fahrenheit, greatly exceeding that of other thermoplastics, has contributed to the plastic's quick adoption for war use.

Vital messages are carried for marines by trained dogs when phone wires are cut.

An increase of 31 per cent in the number of juvenile delinquency cases disposed of by representative juvenile courts last year over the 1942 figure is reported by Katherine F. Lenroot, chief of the Children's bureau, U. S. Department of Labor.