

L.T.-SUNOCO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1944

PACIFIC

American air power has struck deep into the island stronghold of Japan-with Army Bombers blasting the enemy in the Caroline Archipelago. The Acrolines which the Japs acquired as a result of World War Number One, represent one of the main systems of the vast Japanese island ring of fortresses in the central Pacific. And the target as reported by Admiral Nimitz today was a volcanic isle heavily fortified by the Japs and used by them as a fighter plane base.

RABOUL

And, another hard smack has hit the Japs at Raboul, with the Navy tonight informing us of the sinking of three cargo vessels at the big enemy New Britain base. Two more were probably sunk by American bombers--which flew through powerful opposition. A hundred Japanese planes whirled to the attack and were met by a lesser force of American fighters. In the melee on high we lost twelve while shooting down eighteen Japs.

RUSSIA

Moscow tells of the cracking and smashing of what tonight's dispatch calls- "some of the strongest fortifications in the world." Meaning-the German defenses along the front south of Leningrad. And there is every reason why they should be strong.

The Nazis have been close to Russia's second largest city ever since the early days of the Nazi-Soviet war. And they have had ample time to construct the most elaborate of fortifications. These are described as being reminiscent of the static trench warfare in the previous world war-deep underbround shelters, cleverly constructed positions, subterranean and reinforced with steel and concrete.

Yet these fortifications have been stormed and penetrated in what appears to be one of the most violent offenses that the Red army has ever staged. Stalin apparently is determined to smash the German siege line against Leningrad once and for all. And tonight's late dispatch tells of advances of from twelve to eighteen miles, with the capture of 106 towns.

The Moscow story telling of the prolonged and intense fire of the Soviet artillery, describes the condition of German prisoners, who, emerging from their frightfully bombarded positions to surrender, were so shell-shocked they couldn't talk-stricken dumb by the shattering violence of the Soviet artillery fire.

LEAD RUSSUA PROPAGANDA

Today in Washington Secretary of State Cordell Hull had a long conference with British Ambassador Lord Halifax on the subject of the puzzle and enigma presented by Soviet propaganda. I don't know what kind of explanation the Secretary and the Ambassador were able to figure out, but today the propaganda twisters in Moscow became still more complicated.

There is a turn for the better--to be found in the fact that the Stalin government have a blast of wide publicity to the indignant British denial of charges made in the Communist Party newspaper, Pravda, The charges that the British had engaged in separate peace negotiations with the Nazis.

But along with the publication of the British denial, the Soviet press and radio laid marked emphasis on a story quoted from the London Sunday Times--which is different and distinct from Britain's famous newspaper the Times of London. The newspaper article stated that Hitler has been trying some peace moves--via

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Turkey. From what one can gather, the London story is nothing in particular, just another version of Nazi peace feelers, and one wonders why it should be given so much Russian attention

Russian Propaganda

And all of which is followed by a Soviet blast against what are called- American and British defeatists and pacifists. This appears in the authoritative Moscow publication called "War and the Working Class." The statement is made that in the United States and Great Britain certain elements are trying to sabotage the war and hinder the opening of a second front. How? By speaking of anarchy in Europe in the event of an Allied invasion; and, by dwelling on the high losses to be expected from a second front landings; so says War and the Working Class, which adds that such talk is inspired by Hitler.

The Soviet newspaper goes on to say that these American and British defeatists and pacifists are not being squelched properly, and it calls for a process described in the following words - "purge in the political atmosphere of the poisonous miasma of enemy provocations."

RUSSIAN PROPOGANDA

In London, on the other hand, optimism is expressed on the subject of Soviet-Polish relations, with Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden telling the House of Commons that he still hopes for what he calls "a favorable solution."

HITLER

Oh, yes and here in Washington tonight

Secretary of State Cordell Hull refused either to confirm or deny a story that Hitler has arranged to take refuge in Argentina--when the hand of doom closes down on Nazi Germany. This report was printed today in the New York World Telegram, which stated that the recent revolution in the Argentina had been engineered by the Nazis, part of whose purpose was to fix up a place where Hitler could go and be safe from the justice of the United Nations.

ITALY

Today's account of the Fifth Army charge across the Grigliano River in Italy presents a picture of desperate thrill and fantasy in the darkness. The battle of the river crossing was fought along the lower reaches of the stream, where it flows into the Mediterranean-a sector that had been quiet for two and a half months; hardly any shooting, a stalemate. So the Nazis had time to build powerful shooting positions which they did. The unusually wet weather in Italy had swollen the Grigliano and turned it into a flooded torrent for weeks. But now the weather had turned dry and the river was down to its normal width of from sixty to eighty yards. Yet, it was so swift, that the Fifth Army Command had to figure that landing boats would be swept fifty yards down stream before they got to the other bank.

The element of surprise was invoked. The plan was for a night attack, and to achieve the maximum of the unexpected-the artillery did not open up until

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the troops in their boats had already started across the river with its fast running current. Only then did the cannon start to shoot. But the bombardment made up in violence what it lacked in duration.

Massed American guns hurled an immense barrage of concentrated destruction blasting the Nazi positions with a deluge of shells. And under this cover the boats made their way to the opposite bank. The night was cold, the sky clear, the stars glimmering and the troops were British-British units of General Mark Clark's Fifth Army.

The Germans were taken by surprise all right, but they fought savagely. In the darkness of the cold and crisp night, they sent up parachute flares-chandeliers as they are called, and these lighted up the scene for the German gunners, but only briefly. Allied guns shot down the Dhandeliers, and in the darkness the landing parties established a bridgehead along a ten mile front. The Germans counter-attacked fiercely t but the Bridge-

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head was so secure that the enemy assaults were beaten off-and tonight the British of Clark's Fifth Army are well established on the other bank, with supplies and reinforcements pouring across to them.

ITALY

Meanwhile, on the other side of the peninsula British troops were engaged in savage fighting along that coast. The Eighth Army, in an attack against the Nazis in the hills-hills overlooking the Adriatic shore.

Air action too, plenty of it, with bombers and fighters blasting and strafing German communication points far behind the lines. One story declares that Rome was bombed today; this, as usual, comes from the enemy side-with no confirmation from ours.

PLANES

We have an estimate for American warplane production during the coming year, a big figure-one hundred one hundred thousand. This comes from Chairman Charles E. Wilson of the Aircraft Production Board, who states moreover that during 1944 we will build a greater proportion of combat planes and fewer trainers. There will be a fifty-per-cent increase in the output of the flying machines that do the fighting.

Along with this comes the expression B-twenty nine, meaning a sky monster of the most gigantic sort. Our present fighting fortresses are B-seventeens, and the B-twenty-nines are described as Superfortresses. The Chairman of the Aircraft Production Board stated that during the coming year we are going to build Super Fortresses at an ever increasing rate. They have been recently developed; but are rumored to have been in action already and soon apparently the war fronts of the air will see great formations of the B-twenty-nine SuperFortress.

SUBSIDIES

The plan for subsidies took another defeat today-when the Senate Banking Committee voted to outlaw the Presidential program for paying subsidies to food producers. The committee vote was close, then to nine-representing a narrow victory for the farm bloc. President Roosevelt has been warning that without subsidies, we cannot check inflation. He repeated his contention in a recent in a recent emphatic declaration, but today the Senate committee decided to ignore the voice of the White House-and voted to outlaw subsidies.

LABOR DRAFT

The National Service idea of drafting labor for war was advocated powerfully today-and just as powerfully assailed. The Senate Military Affairs Committee is considering the Austin-Wadsworth Bill, which would mobilize the entire population for war both men and women. The authors of the bill believe that it meets with the demand issued by president Roosevelt. The demand for a national service law.

The principal witness at the hearing today was Secretary of War Stimson, who stated that industrial unrest on the home front, with labor disputes and strikes is having a bad effect on the morale of the American fighting forces at the war front, and said the secretary "The voices of these soldiers speak out very clearly in demanding that all Americans accept the same liability which a soldier must accept for service to country." In other words, every individual should be on the same footing as the men in uniform-subject to a draft;labor-draft in this case.

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The attack on the National Service idea was made by the American Federation of Labor, the executive council of which today called upon Congress to reject the bill for drafting labor. The A. F. of L. Council argues that the whole thing is based on a mistaken premise-"the premise," says the council "that a National Service Act, which would introduce compulsory labor in America for the first time in History, would prevent strikes." And then the A.F. of L. goes on to reiterate the argument that Great Britain, which has a labor draft, has also had plenty of strikes-more strikes proportionately during the past two years than the United States has had.

DEMOBILIZATION

This afternoon here in Washington the House of Representatives, by a unanimous vote, passed a bill to provide mustering out pay to the veterans. The House bill provides from one-hundred to three hundred dollars for service men upon their discharge.

The Senate has also passed a muster-out measure which would give larger sums, from two-hundred to five-hundred dollars. The two versions now go to committee, to be harmonized; and probably a compromise will result.

ALBATROSS

A lot of great flights are being made these war days, but consider this one. Do Today on the South American coast of Chile what should come flying in but an Albatross. The big bird landed on the shore all worn out and died shortly afterward of sheer exhaustion. On the Albatross was found a tag saying "return to Southland Museum, New Zealand." So apparently the bird had made the stupendous flight across the South Pacific from New Zealand to South America

BOXING

California is having a lively row, raging around the beak-busting sport of boxing. Today there was accusation and denial with the local Boxing Commission expressing high indignation because of charges made by the Chief Inspector of the State Athletic Commission. This chief inspector is a personage whose name rings in the history of pugilism and fisticuffs,-- Willie Ritchie, the old time lightweight champion. Gray beards of the game will tell you with endless gusto how Ritchie defeated Ad Wolgast, who in turn subjugated the legendary Battling Nelson.

Willie Ritchie, now California's Chief Athletic Inspector, is asking Governor Earl Warren to transfer him to some other department, because he has become disgusted with the sport in which he was champion those years ago. He describes boxing in California in these words: "The filthiest, dirtiest business I've ever seen." He charges that open gambling on fights has produced all kinds of crookery and de-

BOXING

CLares that fake boxing bouts are being staged all the time.

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noon I caught was held by Louis L. Morgan, who
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and now a final article from Roger Krupp over
in N. Y.

LOUISIANA

Well, in Louisiana, the hilly billy song echoes loudly tonight, with candidate Jimmy Davis leading in the election for Governor. Until late this afternoon a margin was held by Lewis L. Morgan, who was supported by the old time Huey Long political organization. But Davis closed the gap and forged ahead with a narrow margin that has been slowly increasing.

Jimmy Davis has a tuneful reputation in the Bayou State, a writer and singer of hill billy songs. It isn't stated how much he knows about the art of government, but he sure can warble those lyrics of the back-country-and -the-shotgun-packing-pappy.

And now a final warble from Roger Krupp over in N. Y.

Letter

Today in Washington a twist of mystery entered the affair of that Harry Hopkins letter. A central figure in the case has disappeared.

The letter in question is, of course, the one printed in the book called- "One Man*Wendell Willkie." It was alleged to have been written by Harry Hopkins, whit that Presidential advosor i indicating that he was tking a hand in Willkie's political aspirations.

The whole thing is denounced as a forgery, and in the genenral mix-up of charge and counter-charge, the claim is made that the alleged Hopkins letter was turned over to the author of the book by an employee of the Department of the Interior, one George N. Briggs, who has since been suspended from his job, and nonight we learn that the missive on White House stationery, was typed on a typewriter in Briggs' office. Moreover, the charge was made that Secretary Ickes himself examined the letter be-

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fore Briggs sent it to the author of "One Man-Wendell Willkie."

This secretary Ickes utterly denies. The whole thing is being investigated by a Grand Jury in Washington, and one of the witnesses today was Secretary Ickes, who revealed that Briggs has disappeared. Slated to be a witness, he can't be found. His wife has also vanished, their house in Arlington locked up.

On the other hand the Department of Justice intimated that they know where Briggs can be found. That's the latest from Washington-a statement by a Department Attorney who says: "I have no reason to believe that Briggs is missing." Which makes the affair all the more mystifying.

DEWEE

It seems odd to find somebody introducing the game of softball into a discussion of the coming Presidential election-especially the brand of softball played by the worst bobbling, blundering team in the country. I mean-those superanquated cripples that I manage, the Nine Old Men. Yet, writer Forrest Davis contrives to do this in an article printed in the new issue of the Saturday Evening Post.

Forrest Davis holds forth on the subject of the New York Governor, Thomas E. Dewey, who, in spite of all that he says, cannot keep himself out of mention as a likely possibility for the Republican nomination. The Dewey personality gets a going-over, including that quality of reserve, which some consider aloof. Tom Dewey is not the conventional type of glad handing mixer so often found in politics. He has little of the free-and-easy ~~backslapping~~ backslapping manner.

Dewey

Forrest Davis noted that most people who know Dewey think that his reserve is really based on an inward shyness-basically bashful. But the writer thinks it's somethings else. He figures that Tom Dewey is just plain serious, taking his job as a downright serious matter, with no fo@ooooo fooling around. "Actually," he writes, "Dewey takes his duties and life itself with a sustained gravity that he finds it hard to dissemble."

In proof of this, he cites the softballing Nine Old Men as witness-Tom Dewey having been a player on our celebrated-or should I say Not@ious team. He indicates that Dewey's serious attitude toward life is reflected in the way he plays the game, the way he tries to hit the ball of field it. And, as one witness, I will say that there is something to the idea.

All of which indeed may account for the reserved manner noted in him- so little of the glad handing

DEWEY

and back slapping.