

WESTERN FRONT

P. J. - Sunoco. Monday, Dec. 18, 1944.

On the Western Front, a hungry, muddy, battle-tired soldier was apologizing to his commanding officer because he and the rest of his company of engineers had retreated. Said First Class Private **GARNETT** Harry ~~Garnett~~ of Conshohocken, Pennsylvania: "You can't do ~~very~~ much against a tank with a rifle, Sir."

Actually, that unit of ~~wet and dirty~~ ^{mud-caked} G.I's had been forced back by no fewer than thirty Nazi panzers and half-tracks full of troops.

Private Wilson of Ocean Springs, Mississippi, told another detail of the disaster with the words: "Just after we had finished chow, ten German armored vehicles rolled into the town." And a private from Texas exclaimed: "If we only had some bazookas, ^{Boy!} what we could have done with bazookas!"

~~It's not easy to figure out just what is happening after the first defeat of an Allied army~~

Little by little, we learn how ~~far~~ far the great German counter-attack has smashed the ~~in~~ lines of the American First Army. For obvious reasons, neither the Nazi High Command nor our own is giving out details. There is a blackout of the news for security reasons. However, the Nazis boast that they took General Hodges and his First Army completely by surprise and the quoted remarks from lips of our doughboys seem ~~to~~ to bear this out.

But ^R reports that filter in give an alarming picture of the ^{depth} ~~extent~~ of the German penetration. ~~As~~

Late this afternoon, came a bulletin that a formation of Allied planes got ^{sight} ~~sight~~ of twenty German half tracks and attacked them eighteen miles inside the Belgian frontier. Then later news is ~~more~~ worse than that.

The London News Chronicle, reports that the Nazis have recaptured Malmedy, a town where several important highways meet in Belgium. Air Force pilots report that the Rundstedt counter-offensive has swept our First Army in front of it for twenty one miles in three days.

The Germans did this in the face of violent attacks by American fliers, who wrecked or ~~damaged~~ damaged no fewer than one hundred and twenty one armored vehicles during this one day.

We are told that our own generals have ordered swift troop movements to block ~~that~~^{the} great offensive of Field Marshal von Rundstedt.

Naturally Eisenhower gives us no particulars about his counter-measures. On both sides there is a blackout of news. All we may infer is that at this moment a terrific battle is raging along a fluctuating battlefront of some seventy miles.

RUSSIA

In spite of the heavy German pressure on the Allies in the west, there still is no sign of a Russian offensive in Poland. The report from Moscow tonight again emphasizes the battle for Hungary. The Soviet high command announces that the Red armies have thrown the Germans back out of northeastern Hungary, into eastern Slovakia, on a sixty-eight mile front. They've cleared the Nazis entirely out of the area northeast of Budapest. Berlin admitted that the Russian operations along the Czech border were increasing in violence. The Nazi report ^{went on to say: -} ~~stated~~ "It is here that the Soviet command is expecting its next success."

As for the siege of Budapest itself, the reports are conflicting. One of them has it that Red soldiers are fighting the Nazis hand to hand, in the defense of the Hungarian capital. The Communist paper PRAVDA reported the shock troops of one army of the

Ukraine as only five and a half miles from the city limits in the northeast. The free Hungarian radio broadcast that they were within a mile of the city limits. Radio Paris, an unreliable source, declared that one Red army had crossed the Danube from Pest, and was fighting in the streets of Buda, the western half of the twin cities.

The Nazi military commentators believe the Russians have deliberately slowed down on the siege of Budapest. Their latest operation against Slovakia means they are trying to pinch off a Nazi salient there.

Whatever they mean, they are not helping the Allies on the west front.

ITALY

As for Italy — there
~~Not much excitement in the war news from Italy~~

~~tonight~~ The British Eighth Army is cashing in on the capture of Faenza by the ~~Fighting~~ New Zealanders. Mixed units of British, Poles, Italians, and ~~men~~ from Down Under, fanned out from Faenza, advancing toward Bologna.

American
Seventeen ~~Congressmen~~ today visited the Italian front. There they saw for themselves why that campaign has been so slow. They saw acres of mud — ~~knee deep~~; and rivulets that the rains and melted snow had swollen and to streams; [^] the ruins of bridges.

Lucien
Lieutenant General [^] Truscott, commander of the Fifth Army, explained to them that the Germans had some of their crack divisions facing the Fifth and Eighth Armies in Italy; ~~and~~ *these* fighting with all their power to defend the rich valley of the Po River and the industrial north of Italy.

Representative Parnell Thomas of New Jersey

told a reporter that when he gets back he is going to demand an investigation into six critical shortages on the Western Front. Our fighting men, he said, are lacking in heavy ammunition, rubber tires, hospital ships, cigarettes and other essentials.

PHILIPPINES

General MacArthur's headquarters on Leyte reported^s that in seven days ^{our} American air ^{may out} ~~forces~~ there have destroyed no fewer than seven hundred and forty-two Japanese planes. Twenty-three ~~of them were~~ ~~destroyed~~ on Mindoro yesterday. ^{And,} Our planes encountered no ground opposition from the Japanese. This number includes enemy planes shot down by the carrier-based aircraft of Admiral Halsey's fleet.

The Jap^{news} news agency today announced the ~~death~~ death of another admiral. And that runs the score up to ~~xx~~ seventy-nine Jap admirals killed since May S^{eventeenth}.

SUPERFORTS

The B-29s full of bombs paid a return visit today to Nagoya, third largest city in Japan, where the great Mitsubishi firm has a huge aircraft plant. Not one, but two fleets of B-29s hit the target.

General Hansell, commanding officer of the Twenty-First Bomber Command, reported that photographs ~~in~~ showed that the great bombers did heavy damage in their ^{previous} raid on December ^{thirteenth. Burning} ~~thirteenth. They~~ out the larger portion of two of the biggest assembly buildings, gutted ^{two} other big ones. And, twenty-two smaller buildings were destroyed or badly damaged.

Another fleet of B-29s carried out a raid on Japanese positions in China; attacking docks and warehouses at ~~Hxj~~ Hankow. Good results there, too, says the War Department. With the Superforts doing a lot of damage on the waterfront, plus destroying five Jap fighter planes, and damaging seven others.

JAPANESE

The Supreme Court of the United States today backed up the United States Army on the Japanese ~~question~~ question. ^{That} Loyal American citizens of Japanese blood should be set free immediately. ~~This~~ applies particularly to those who have proved their loyalty.

~~It remains to be seen whether the folks on the west coast will react ~~any~~ in any more friendly fashion to the Supreme Court than they did to the Army order. One California state senator declared that if that order were carried out and Japanese returned to the Golden state, there might be violence and even bloodshed.~~

~~On this head, Secretary of the Interior Ickes made an announcement in which he tried to sooth public feelings.~~ The Japanese will not be sent back to the coast in any hurry, ^{Sec. Ickes,} ~~says he,~~ but those who wish to go back to their former homes in California, Oregon

or Washington, must be allowed to do it.

Ickes, as head of the War Relocation Authority,

which has control over this, ~~business.~~ *He added that* ~~He said the~~

the W.R.A. would do its best to relocate Japanese-Americans

in other parts of the country. *But that* ~~Nevertheless~~ those

who want to return to the west coast have every

legal and moral right *to do so. — those of*
proven loyalty.

ADD JAPANESE

~~Allythxrxspnznzix~~

~~Most of the responsible officials on the~~

Here are some West Coast comments:
~~West Coast speak up for an orderly acceptance of the decision of the Supreme Court.~~ Governor Warren of

California said that any public unrest would retard the war effort. Major General Pratt, acting commanding general at the western defense command said he expected only minor incidents, nothing that would require military intervention. Governor Langlie of Washington said the decision for the return of Japanese to the West Coast was premature. Mayor Bowron of Los Angeles declared that he could not guarantee the Japanese protection.

POLAND

At last we have a declaration from our own government on the Polish question. Just how clear and definite it is, the listener will have to judge for himself. It does ^{not} mention either Britain or Russia; ~~it~~ ^{it} does ~~not~~ mention the Curzon Line, ^{and} the surrender of former Polish territory to Russia or ^{the surrender of} former German territory to Poland. Here are some of the words used by Secretary Stettinius:

"The position of the United States Government as regards Poland," said he, "has been guided steadfastly by full understanding and sympathy for the interests of the Polish people." ^{Then he} ~~he~~ goes on to say: "The United States Government stands unequivocally for a strong, free and independent Polish state with the untrammelled right of the Polish people to order their internal existence as they ~~see~~ see fit."

"The consistent policy of the United States

Government," he continued, "has been ^{that} ~~with~~ questions relating to boundaries should be left in abeyance until the war is over." Then he repeats the statement by Secretary Hull last April, in which ^{Mr. Hull} ~~he~~ said: "This does not mean that certain questions may not and should not, in the meantime, be settled by friendly conference and agreement." *Our new Sec. of State*

adds: "If a mutual agreement about the future frontiers of Poland is reached by the United Nations directly concerned, this government would have no objections, provided it made an essential contribution to the prosecution of the war against the common enemy."

Then comes a sentence which may be significant: - ~~It reads:~~

^ "If, as a result of such agreement, the government and people of Poland decide that it will be in the interests of the Polish state to transfer nationality groups, the United States ~~of~~ Government, in cooperation

with other governments, will assist Poland insofar as practical in such transfers."

Stettinius ~~also~~ repeats that the United States Government sticks to its traditional policy of declining to give guarantees for any specific frontiers. ~~The~~ ^{Our} United States Government, ~~he adds,~~ ^{says he,} is working for the establishment of a world security organization.

Stettinius also repeated the aim of the United States Government, subject to the consent of Congress, to assist liberated countries in repairing the devastation of war. This applies to Poland as well as to the other United Nations.

It will be interesting to observe the reaction of the British and the Russians to ~~that statement from~~ ^{today's} Washington statement.

ADD POLAND

One reaction to the Stettinius declaration was a chorus of demands in Congress that the President himself describe his foreign policy in the light of what is going on in Europe today. Congressmen of all shades of opinion joined in this demand, liberals and conservatives alike. There were even members who urged the Senate to declare a foreign policy, since it is the Senate that will have to ratify any treaty.

ADD POLAND

This diplomatic crisis ^{brought forth} ~~had the effect of~~

rebuke, ~~for~~ the first time in quite a long while, ~~a~~ ^{from}

~~speech by~~ Senator Hiram Johnson of California. His voice was noticeably quieter than the stentorian tones in which he denounced the League of Nations twenty five years ago. Some of his colleagues could scarcely hear him. The California statesman is today seventy-eight years old. The last speech he made was a year ago when he opposed the Resolution by Senator Connolly of Texas in favor of a world organization for peace.

The aged trojan called upon his fellow senators to speak up for American sympathy in behalf of Greece and other small nations whose people, ~~as~~ as he put it, "are being ~~xxx~~ shot down by dogs with weapons we furnish".

LABOR

Once again the C.I.O. unions ~~have~~ ^{has} made overtures to the A.F. of L. and once again the A.F. of L. rejects the olive branch. Philip Murray, President of C.I.O., wrote to William Green of the A.F. of L. suggesting a meeting of representatives of both sides, for the purpose of drawing up a plan for cooperation to obtain better wages for employment after the war, broader social security, repeal of all anti-labor laws.

In Washington, this was interpreted as an effort by Murray to patch up animosities aroused during the election. A.F. of L. officials objected strongly to the work of the P.A.C., objected to it as an organization, and resented the way in which the P.A.C. took credit for the reelection of President Roosevelt, also for the defeat of what were called, anti-labor Congressmen. The A.F. of L. people think

they were just as responsible as the P.A.C. for the victory.

President William Green of ~~xxx~~ the A.F. of L. said Murray's letter proposed the same sort of "phoney functional unity." - That's the way he put it - phoney functional unity about which the C.I.O. has often prated in the past.

HOLDUP

From Seattle, comes a story of ^{an odd} ~~the most~~

~~sort of~~
~~peculiar~~

bank robbery, ~~I ever heard~~. A bandit walked

into a seaboard branch of the First National Bank

at a time when more than two hundred ~~in~~ depositors

were crowding the tellers' cages. ~~He was~~ brandishing

a bottle ~~and~~ ^{he} told the crowd it was full of nitro-

glycerine, ^{and} If he did not have his wicked way, he'd

~~said~~, he would crash the bottle and blow everybody

to smithereens. ^{He said he only} ~~His wicked way meant he~~ wanted four

million dollars, ^{but he'd} ~~from one of the tellers~~. He settled

for four thousand ~~dollars~~ and then went towards the

~~door~~. Then somebody ~~was~~ grabbed him and then the truth

came out, that ~~the~~ bottle of nitro-glycerine ^{turned out} ~~held nothing~~

~~to be~~
~~mayonnaise~~

~~mayonnaise~~, sauce.

LOVE

At Mishawaka, Indiana, a seventeen year old lad was about to join the Navy. He was very much in love with seventeen year old Virginia Lewis of South Bend, Indiana. They decided to spend the entire night walking in the park. They walked and they walked and they walked. Snow began to fall, but they kept on walking. The thermometer fell to twenty-seven degrees, but they kept on walking. But finally they become so tired that they lay down in the snow and fell asleep.

Hours later, when they woke up, they discovered that the girl's feet were frozen. The matron in a public rest room saw what was the matter, took her to the hospital, and for a while it was touch-or-go whether the surgeons would have to amputate both her feet. Fortunately, they delayed, and the young lady's extremities grew better. At any rate, the story shows

that romance has not perished from the earth, *doesn't it Hugh?*