

CASUALTIES

L.I. - Standard. Wednesday, Dec 22, 1943.
Sun.

Here's a Washington statement attributed to what the United Press calls a high government official. This high official predicts that during the next three months the American forces in the war will sustain casualties to the number of almost four hundred thousand. Thus far in the global conflict we've had one ~~h~~ hundred and thirty one thousand killed, wounded and missing. And that's only one third of the predicted number for the next ninety days. It would seem that any such prophecy must ~~be~~ be made on the assumption of a second front invasion of the continent of Europe, which when it comes will certainly cause us very heavy ~~l~~ losses.

The high government official who made the four hundred thousand casualty prediction

expressed concern because of that often mentioned
thing, complacency. ^{The point was} That the forth-coming casualty
list will rudely ~~shook~~ shake this country out of
its rosy optimism -- a complacent^t state of mind
which is said to be ~~worrying~~ worrying government
officials -- from President Roosevelt on down the
line.

32

RUSSIA

London has word that the Soviets are dropping paratroopers in the Baltic states -- soldiers of the sky landing in those nations occupied by the Nazi countries that are now not far behind the fighting front in northern Russia.

The paratroopers, ~~xxxx~~ if the story be true, might well supply some effective cooperation with the Soviet forces that are battering their way forward along the line south of Leningrad. And these certainly are moving forward, with the latest dispatch from Moscow telling us that the Red Army has captured twenty more towns and villages ~~xxxx~~ at the sector of Nevel -- the focal point ~~ix~~ of the northern drive. More Soviet progress toward that key point - Vitebsk.

~~To The south, along the remainder of the immense front, the story is mainly one of violent Nazi counter attacks which are getting nowhere, says Moscow. Repelled -- hurled back.~~

NAZI RETALIATION

Today we have an ugly Nazi threat following the war guilt execution of three German officers by the ~~the~~ Soviets. At Kharkov three arch Nazis among ~~the~~ the prisoners captured by the Russians were put on trial and found guilty of committing atrocities. They were hanged in a public display.

Since then, the ~~the~~ press and radio of Hitler's land have been raging against the executions, and today the Nazi vituperation took the form of a threat of retaliation against what the Germans call -- "Anglo Saxon prisoners".

Specifically -- captured British and American war flyers.

The Nazi menace is worth reciting ~~in~~ word for word. A Berlin broadcast today stated:- As a result of the staged Kharkov trial of three members of the German armed forces, a German military court

will soon deal with Anglo-Saxon prisoners accused of committing grave violations of international law. Apparently ~~that~~ these alleged violations have to do with the bombing of Naziland and in this ^{connection} ~~connection~~ we have a sinister turn of Nazi propaganda. The Germans are publishing the photograph of an American airman on whose flying suit is inscribed the words: "Murder Incorporated". ^{TP} Of course, we know what that probably means -- the name given to an American bomber and reference to the headline ^{gangster trial} ~~gangster trial~~ ~~in~~ and punishment in Brooklyn of a couple of years ago. The Nazis are ~~giving~~ giving it another twist. They are trying to ~~imply~~ imply that the slang phrase "Murder Incorporated" constitutes what the Nazis call "an official admission", an admission of murder. ^{TP} Of course the ~~German~~ Goebbels propagandists know better.

But
~~they~~

they are using a twisted propaganda trick --

which is regarded as tieing in with their threat

to retaliate against British and Americans for the

war crime executions in Soviet Russia.

ADD NAZI RETALIATION

Nazi propaganda is likewise claiming that the execution of the three war criminals is tied in with the Teheran Conference. And, we hear ~~th~~ tonight that the Soviets hold that the executions were in accord with the Teheran declaration made by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Soviet Premier Stalin -- their declaration that Nazi war criminals would be punished. *Soviet attitude is* This ~~is~~ stated in a late Moscow dispatch.

35'
London tells us that the Nazi threat of reprisals against British and American prisoners has been placed before Prime Minister Churchill -- who is recovering from his illness. *And* Churchill is giving his ~~particular~~ personal attention to this sinister menace to prisoners of war.

Neutral Stockholm expresses the belief that the Germans may be trying to frighten the

AIR WAR

The air war based on Britain continued unabated today, with the big bombers of the U. S.

assailing the Nazis with still another daylight

raid. They hit targets in northern Germany with ^{tons of bombs.} /Thirty eight German fighter planes were shot down, while we lost twenty one heavy bombers and four fighters ~~tons of bombs.~~ This following a night of raiding

by British medium bombers, the speedy ^{Mosquitos} ~~Mosquitos~~

of the R.A.F. Both the day and the night operations

followed similar attacks delivered yesterday -

just piling the bombs on the Nazis day after day.

PLANES

Rambling around the Army Flying Fields

here at Tucson, I've been impressed by the way the training program emphasizes -- team work. You might think that Air ~~Commander~~ ^{Chief} General ~~Arnold~~ ^{Hap} and his staff had plagiarized the three musketeers and filched its ringing line -- "one for all and all for one".

~~That's the way the fighter pilots and bomber crews are taught to work together -- team work.~~

~~Everybody knows this, I suppose, but I've been seeing at first hand here on these western flying fields.~~ ^{And,} Then, in the news today along ~~came~~ ^{came} a couple of ~~little thrill~~ stories to illustrate.

~~showing how the team work taught here is put into practice in distant battle fields of the skies.~~

~~Flasher~~ ^{Flasher} one about From London, ~~came~~ ^{came} the story of how a crippled

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~~From London,~~ ^{flashes one about} ~~the story of~~ how a crippled

Flying Fortress was saved and nursed along and brought

home by twelve Thunderbolt Fighter Planes. The Fortress was in the latest great American daylight raid against the Nazi war port of Bremen. The anti-aircraft fire was intense and the Fortress was hit badly, its fuselage and wings ~~were~~ riddled by the flak. One stabilizer was shot off and so was the rudder. The unlucky Fortress was knocked right out of the formation, and went staggering, crippled, like a limping derelict of the sky; ~~it~~ was an easy mark for the Nazi fighters, and five of these came swarming for the kill.

But away up there was an American fighter group led by Colonel Joe Mason of Columbus, Ohio.

~~They saw the killers were swooping down to assassinate~~

~~the cripple and~~ They swooped down, coming out of the

sun, and ~~shot~~ shot down all five of the Nazi fighters.

The cripple was saved but only for the moment.

The limping and staggering Fortress had a long way

~~home~~ to go and German fighters were everywhere.

So Colonel Joe Mason's Thunberbolts closed about

the stricken ~~Fortress~~ ^{plane} ~~fire~~ intercepting enemy attack

and nursing the Fortress home. The wabbling giant

of the sky, as it came in for an unsteady landing,

dipped its wings in perilous salute, ~~in~~ risking a

crash, ~~at~~ to say -- "thanks, ~~you~~ fellows".

And from the other side of the world comes the story of Hugger Mugger. That plane with a tough name is a Liberator which got into a thirty-five minute fight with thirteen Jap Zeros off New Ireland.

~~Hugger Mugger did its bombing okay - seeing six near hits with one thousand pound bombs against a big enemy transport. But the Zeros were all around~~

~~now and~~ In a fierce duel Hugger Mugger shot down half

ITALY

In Italy the Fifth Army word today told of a two mile advance toward the road junction at Cassino -- the goal for which there has been so much desperate fighting. This time the advance is ascribed to both American and French troops. Soldiers under the command of the French Committee of National Liberation joined their American ~~xxxx~~ comrades in arms ~~and~~ for another push forward among the snow-capped peaks of the Appenines. Progress is slow in that wild winter terrain, but at least its progress.)

And the word is much the same at the other side of Italy where Montgomery's Eighth Army ~~was~~ battling Nazi Panzers today in the streets of the town of Ortona. ~~At least~~ It was a town ~~though~~ ~~Now~~ a blasted burning ruin as the British fought a ferocious tank battle with the ~~Nazis~~ Nazis.

An oddity from the Eighth Army front tells of artillery shells that are explosive only in an ideological way. These shells are fired along with the blasting variety and hurl forth printed leaflets which inform the German soldiers of the actual state of the war; -- ~~and~~ advising them to ~~be~~ surrender.

And, some take the advice, and yield themselves as prisoners, -- ^{When they do} ~~hurry~~ presenting to the British troops copies of the leaflets. We've heard of aerial bombardments of printed material, but the propaganda artillery shell is less familiar.

9
And still another curious turn in the news tells of three black sheep. No, not ne'er-do-well sons of good families nor even real four legged mutton. ~~These three black sheep~~ ^{They} looked peculiar, as they rambled around grazing with other sheep in a flock up in the mountains. The ~~other~~ ⁵ ~~ones~~

were skinny and half ~~xxxx~~ starved while th^f three black sheep looked much too plump and well fed.

Nor did they have that peculiar waddle of a sheep.

And when they went baa-baa, their bleat had a guttural accent.

These strange black sheep were spotted by Moroccan troops ^{who} ~~and then~~ proceeded to stalk them and finally made a dash at them. Whereupon the three examples of mutton ros'e on their hind legs threw off their sheep's clothing and appeared as ^{wolves,} ~~as~~ fully uniformed German soldiers. They were taken prisoner and explained that they had ~~disguised~~ ^{themselves as} sheep so as to crawl out into no-man's land and cut allied lines of communication.

BOLIVIA

40

An official voice in Washington today expressed the apprehension that the recent revolution in Bolivia might ~~have~~ have been instigated, in part at least, by the Axis enemy. And this grave suspicion comes from Secretary of State Cordell Hull. He spoke of the problem of recognizing the new regime set up in Bolivia, and stated that U. S. recognition will have to wait until it has been determined whether ^{or not} the revolt ^{brought} ~~was~~ ~~caused~~ ^{about} by what the Secretary called "outside influences unfriendly to the allied cause."

DIVORCE

There is nothing like the Christmas spirit,
~~which injects the human heart increasingly along~~
~~about now~~ and in ^{Omaha,} ~~Omaha,~~ Nebraska there is a Judge
who today announced a turn of Santa Claus benevolence.
~~which certainly should be appreciated by those whom~~
~~it is intended to benefit.~~ His Honor, Judge Herbert
Rhoades declares ~~he is animated by the lofty purpose~~
~~expressed in the familiar words: "Peace on earth~~
~~and its good will toward men".~~ ~~What form does this~~
~~take? Why, the Judge proclaims~~ that during the
Christmas holidays he will grant no more divorces.
Judge Rhoades handles all the divorce cases for the
entire Omaha District, and until after the holidays
he decrees what he calls ^{"a Yuletide} ~~a~~ divorce moratorium".
~~This is the Christmas gift which His Honor presents~~
~~to Omaha spouses who seek a severance of matrimony.~~

The Judge ~~rhoades~~ figures it this way:- "Any

DIVORCE - 2

man suing his wife for divorce ^{says he} should take her
to Christmas dinner, buy her flowers and become
reconciled." And he adds; "any woman suing a man
for divorce should invite him for Christmas, have a
Christmas tree and become reconciled".

I don't have to add any comment to this
because the Judge himself provides the apt remark:-
"This court" he proclaimed today "still believes in
Santa Claus". ~~I'll say you do, Judge - wishing~~
~~you and all these battling couples a Merry Christmas.~~

HULA

Here's stern warning addressed to many an American girl. We are told that one of the Commonest gifts that soldiers and sailors in the southwest Pacific are sending to the girl friends at home is a native grass skirt, the hula variety. And often, when the girl friend puts on the hula skirt she feels she must also dance the hula. Her ideas on the subject are likely to be driven from hootchie-kootchie, they wiggle in some local juke joint. That's all wrong according to Charlotte Mitchell, a professor of the classic hula. "The Hula is a beautiful dance," says she, "originally done for the Hawaiian fire Goddess Pele. "Every American girl receiving a grass skirt she adds should learn to do it properly." Whereupon

She gives a set of directions for doing the hula --

~~that~~ in a way ^{to} ~~that will~~ please the Hawaiian

Fire God, ^{deas.} The instructions are so long and

complicated that they are enough to bewilder the

brains of a higher mathematician -- let alone an

American girl in a grass skirt.

TRIAL

The New York trial of seven defendants
extortion
on charges of/conspiracy against the film industry
has resulted in a verdict of -- guilty. The
convicted men include a labor leader and six members
of the one-time Scar-face Al Capone gang in Chicago.
They were ~~xxx~~ accused of having squeezed the film
industry for a million dollars, and among the
witnesses who testified against them were the convicted
union racketeers Bioff and Browne. The case dragged
on for long days, ^{until} ~~xxx~~ tonight in New York the jury
gave its verdict -- guilty.

INTERVIEW

Any newspaper man knows what it means to get a good fast interview, in which no words are wasted and the subject comes right to the point and tells ~~the~~ story ^{without} ~~without~~ rambling all over the place.

So any newspaper man will ~~interview~~ ^{enjoy} Lt. Earle

J. Wilson of Washington, D.C., ~~has~~ a ~~special~~ public relations officer ^{with} of the Marines, ~~and~~ ^{who} after the

conquest of Tarawa and the storming of Betio, ~~he~~ interviewed a native polynesian of the island to get a local view of the wiping out of the Japs. Here

in full is a verbatim account of the way the

^{He quipped:—}
polynesian told the story:-- "Betio! Boom - boom!

Good!" And that was the ^{whole} story ~~of the~~ ^{told with} admirable

terseness.

And Boom, boom Good!
here's Ben Slack, with a terse message, ~~though, but not quite as~~
~~bright~~ from Arizona.

MARSHALL

That latest round the world flight and most spectacular circumnavigation -- is being ~~not~~ hailed as a number one event in the winning of the war. I mean the flight that General Marshall has just completed -- from Washington to the Teheran Conference and then on to the war areas in India, the south^{west} western Pacific, Pearl Harbor and back to Washington.^T Special emphasis is being laid on the military planning talks the Chief of Staff had with General MacArthur in the southwest Pacific and ^{with} Admiral Nimitz at Pearl Harbor. These are taken to indicate that the Army is scheduled to play a much greater part in the war against the Japs.

^{TP} Hitherto the conquest of the comparatively small islands has not required any great masses of manpower, and the larger share of the job has gone to the Navy and the Marines. ~~not~~ ^{TP} a larger employment of

Army in the Pacific-areas is taken to mean the invasion of larger land masses -- bigger islands; or, the Asiatic mainland.

The United Press Military Commentator, Louis Keemle, ~~xxx~~ points out that General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz have declared themselves for what appeared to be different ~~xx~~ objectives. General MacArthur calls for the recapture of the Philippines, his old stamping ground, ~~is~~^{so} dear ~~xx~~ to his heart.

Admiral Nimitz has indicated that the final defeat of Japan will probably be accomplished by a drive through China.

The Philippines and China might seem to be contradictory goals ~~xx~~ but really they are closely linked in point of strategy because the Philippines are less of a road to Japan than a highway to China. The Islands are a long long way from Tokyo; but, Manila

is only six hundred and fifty miles from Hong Kong. So a drive through the Philippines might very well be one arm of a two-fold drive, aimed at the China coast -- the other being an inland ~~route~~^{push} via Burma.

Each of these requires major military forces -- such as might well have been the subject of dicussion during General Marshall's tour of war ~~planning~~^{on his way} through the Pacific war area.

On the more romantic side, the General's monumental flight around the world brings back a train of reminiscence. ~~This is~~ This is particularly true to anyone who happens to be down here in Tucson, Arizona. For one of the military figures down here is an Air Force Colonel who twenty years ago, as a young First Lieutenant, was the commanding officer of man's first flight around the world. He is Colonel Lowell Smith -- and I knew him then. I having

been named official historian of the first
circumnavigation by air.

Colonel Lowell Smith is famous locally here
in Tucson because he is the man who ~~built up~~
has done so much to build up
the great
Monthan Field at the foot of the spectacular Catalina
Mountains, [^]one of the finest air bases in the world.
In aviation history he is recorded as the commander
of the first world flight.

Lowell Smith and I have been talking and
reminiscing about that epic-making globe-girdling
flight a score of years ago. How different it was
in those primitive days from the air voyage the
Army Chief of Staff, ^{has just} made and his powerful modern
bomber. It took Lowell Smith and his companions
six months to fly around the world. In their single
motored Douglas biplanes of Nineteen twenty-four
they had a speed of ^{under} [^]eighty miles an hour and if they

had tried to fly into some head winds, they'd have gone backward. They were in open cockpits, a crew of two, pilot and co-pilot. They flew to improvised flying fields of which they knew nothing, and had to repair their own planes -- no ground crews to help them. They had to pick up new motors in many countries because of the way they kept wearing out ~~thir~~ their ~~own~~ motors. They had no radio communication and only the most primitive of instruments, flying by dead-reckoning; -- as aviators say: "by the seat of their ~~plank~~ pants" No electrically heated flying suits, no oxygen to use at high altitudes.

Four Army planes ~~xxxxxx~~ started out on that first flight around the world. One got as far as Alaska and crashed into a mountain. Another went down in the North Atlantic, between the Orkney Islands

and Iceland. Two planes made it all the way, one of them piloted by Lowell Smith, the flight commander.

Yes, I knew him then and now I've run across him once more -- a full Colonel and one of the greatest authorities on big planes, bombers. But still the same old modest Smith, hiding his light under a bushel.

British and Americans into bringing pressure to bear on the Soviets -- pressure to persuade the Russians to stop any further executions. The Swedish opinion is that any such German maneuver will fail, because the Russians will refuse to recognize any difference between Russian lives and British and American lives.