

SUPERFORTS

C. J. - Standard. Friday, Dec. 29, 1944.
Sunoco.

Another raid on Tokyo . The report comes from the Japanese radio, which reported that several flights of yankee planes had dropped bombs over wide areas of the mikado's homeland. If true, the planes must have been superfortrs, because no smaller aircraft are capable of making the distance. The japanese declare that the big bombers dropped explosives and incendiaries not only on tokyo but also the big industrial cities of Osaka and Kobe. The Japanese also say that single planes flew over Japan, apparently on reconnaissance to obtain information for future raids.

~~A formation of twenty - three jãpanese planes attacked american installations on the island of Mindoro and did some damage, though eight of them were shot down.~~

~~American heavy bombers destroyed six planes at the Japanese air base on the island of panay.~~

PHILIPPINE CONVOY

The Japs report a big american convoy moving through the inland waters of the Philippines. Tokyo states that the seaborne force consists of fifty ships, thirty transports and twenty cruisers and destroyers - and adds that it is under jap air attack. The immediate assumption is that the convoy is on its way for some new invasion of the Philippines.

We ^{all} ~~news~~men have a vivid memory of how the landings on Mindoro Island a couple of weeks ago were heralded. Before the american command let out a word, the japs told with all sorts of excitement of a big American amphibious force on its way through the inland waters. The japs couldn't guess where it would strike. Neither could we over here, until the official MacArthur bulletin came through ^{telling} - the invasion of Mindoro.

All of which leaves one to surmise that now it may be the same thing all over again - and that today's Japanese announcement of an American Convoy may be followed by a MacArthur bulletin telling of another landing.

The Analogy is the more striking, because the Japs today say that the convoy now on its way is taking the same route that the previous amphibious force did, going to Mindoro - through Surigao strait

and mindānāo sea. Today's convoy may be bound for another invasion of the large island of Mindoro - a landing at a point that mac- arthur's troops have not yet occupied. Or may be the seaborne force is headed for some other destination - some other island perhaps.

From this side of the water it would seem that MacArthur might soon be striking at Luzon, the main island of the Philippines.

JAPAN

From Washington today we have a statement to counteract the popular but foolish notion that once Germany is beaten, we can dispose of Japan in short order. This statement comes from War Under-Secretary Patterson, who has been making a tour of the War theatre in the pacific. "The war machine of Japan," says he, "is formidable." In his travels he found nothing to support the idea that the Japanese would be a push-over. When we beat them, it will have to be done the hard way.

Patterson said there was no question as to our superiority over the Japanese in numbers and efficiency. That goes for our air forces and our navy too. *But he added that* [^] the enemy will avoid a straight out test of strength as long as possible.

he points out that [^] In spite of our victories, the Japanese army today is bigger and stronger than it ever was. The industrial machine of the mikado's empire is powerful, backed by strategic raw materials which they have been accumulating for years and by millions of slave laborers. Furthermore, the mikado's war machine has a powerful ally in ~~XX~~ Geography, says under-secretary Patterson.

~~Correction - In Western front story, fifth paragraph, change first sentence to read; "Today has been quiet along most of the Western~~

WAR SUPPLIES

The Navy closes the year by giving ^{us} up an impressive picture of American sea power. But, at the same time, the Navy warns that its plans for the coming year are threatened by a decrease in production. The American fleet, as the year closes, includes one thousand, one hundred and sixty-seven fighting ships. And these are backed up by nearly sixty thousand landing craft and auxiliary vessels. Four years ago, on January first, nineteen forty-one, the tonnage of the fleet was a little less than two million. Today its tonnage is eleven million, seven hundred thousand. In four years we have built ten battle ships, twenty-five large first line aircraft carriers and a hundred and two escort carriers. Subtracting losses, we have now in action more than ninety aircraft carriers of all types. And as for planes, the Navy has thirty-seven thousand.

Yes, this is impressive, but the bad part of the picture is - that we are not keeping up the good work. Production is lagging, and this is caused by what today's navy dispatch calls - "A severely critical manpower shortage."

This manpower shortage this holiday season has not helped. On the ~~contrary~~ ^{caused by} absenteeism among war workers, ~~has been such that the armed~~ services have had to take direct action - and do war-worker jobs

themselves, using men in uniform.

Today at Philadelphia, soldiers moved into the dock section to help in the loading of ships - G I's loading the war supplies which will enable other G I's to fight. This was because of absenteeism over Christmas; so many war workers staying from their jobs that supplies vitally needed at the battle fronts were being held up - held up to such a degree that today the G I's themselves had to pitch in. All of which brings an urgent appeal from the war production board and the army. Christmas absenteeism made things bad - so don't let's have New Year absenteeism, ^{and} make things worse. War production chief

J. A. Krug and Under-Secretary of War Patterson today urged that all workers be on the job on Monday, New Year's day. ~~Don't let the celebration of New Year's eve keep you away from your job on Monday.~~

The joint production board and army appeal puts it in these words; -

"Our fighting men have a right to expect that all of us will be on the job New Year's day - and every working day until Victory is won."

*Hugh - your message from
(Note - This last is at the personal request of Krug)
Stan. of Cal. while I check the
rest of the news.*

WESTERN FRONT

The Gravest part of the news from Europe is that we may expect another heavy german attack, perhaps ^{more smashing than} ~~worse than~~ the first. This may be gathered out of the dispatches from American correspondents in three separate areas of that Western front.

^{all} They agree that Von Rundstedt's operation ^{now} has reached its most critical phase. He failed in his primary objective, so now he is withdrawing his spearhead. All his advance shock troops are breaking ^{contract}, retreating. Their only operations now are small counter attacks to cover the operations of the Nazi troops that are digging in on the shoulders of the bulge. The allied generals are giving them no rest and attacking constantly to prevent them from digging in.

All this means that Von Rundstedt is preparing to reorganize his battered advance troops and combine them with his reserves, which are known to be numerous.

This means he is regrouping his forces. Our observers have spotted heavy movements of troops in the country back of the Eupen, ^{by pen forest} ~~(Pronounced Eupen) forest.~~

Today has been quiet ~~all~~ ^{most of} along the Western front, except for the local german attacks and the pressure on the bulge by allied troops.

Snow is falling, there is a hard freeze with fog, and the roads are covered with ice. Once again the weather favors Von Rundstedt's plan for regrouping and hurling a new attack at us.

The Nazis gave a demonstration of their desperate spirit by blowing a field hospital to pieces with two 500 pound bombs. There can be no doubt it was ~~XXX~~ deliberate, because they aimed at it three times, missed on the first two, and finally succeeded. They killed fifteen wounded men and injured more than fifty. They would have killed even more, but for the fact that most of the patients had been moved just a few hours before the Nazi attack.

An early dispatch from Paris reported that the American first and third armies had almost completed the creation of a pocket which would mean a death trap for tens of thousands of Von Rundstedt's crack troops. At latest reports, less than fifteen miles separated the two armies. Naturally, the high command does not reveal the exact location of this operation.

Patton's advance into the Ardennes forest, spectacular as it was, cost a great many lives. But undoubtedly it was effective in checking the Nazi advance.

In Belgium the first army advanced eleven miles and fought their way

WESTERN FRONT

into Rochefort, where several highways joined. Patton's men advanced
no more than one or two miles, but ^{in doing so} they recaptured fourteen towns.



PROTEST FOLLOW WESTERN FRONT

Our state department has protested , through the swiss government against the massacre of one hundred and fifteen American prisoners by the Nazis. Of a group of ~~one~~^a hundred-and-thirty ~~rank~~^{of us} soldiers and officers captured by a German tank copps, only fifteen survived. One hundred and fifteen of them were stripped of their equipment and then shot down by machine guns. This took place at Malmedy december twentieth.

~~One reaction at home to this action by the state department is the question, why make such a useless gesture as a protest? It is pointed out that protests to the Nazis are like water on a duck's back. Some~~ People wonder why we do not say to the Nazis that such outrages are a matter of record, and will be repaid by the execution of ranking German Generals when the war is over.

ITALY

The German drive against the allied fifth army on the West coast of Italy came to a halt today. After three days, a huge fleet of planes came to the rescue of the ground fighters and stopped the Nazis in their tracks. Allied troops, including ~~roughfoot fighters~~ including negro troops, ~~even~~ took the initiative again and recaptured some of the ground they had lost.

The allied armada included brazilian fighter-bombers as well as american and british planes.

RUSSIA

The Nazis are stepping up their deliberate destruction of Budapest.

The latest is that

They have dynamited the city hall and started so many fires that

the ancient palace of the Hungarian kings is literally surrounded

with flames. In order to hold up the advance of the armies of the

Ukraine, the Germans are razing to the ground what used to be one

of the most beautiful cities of Europe, *— of the world for that matter.* But meanwhile the Red

soldiers, including veterans of stalingrad, are ^{ca}pturing the place

block by block and house by house. At the same time, soviet armies

that have by-passed the hungarian capital, are advancing on a ninety

mile front toward vienna and bratislava. Spearheads of the red armies

are only ninety-~~four~~ miles ~~away~~ from the capital of Austria. The

Nazis claim they have stopped the soviet advance between the river

danube and lake balatan. ~~(Nevertheless, they admit that the russians~~

are pushing in an all-out effort to cross the defense line of the

Hron river, which is flooded. That defense line blocks the way to

bratislava.

Moscow, on the other hand, announces that the Soviet divisions

northwest of Budapest have forded the Hron river and pierced the

German defense line, in spite of the flood and the ice flies in

the river.

GREECE

The fighting in Greece today became hotter than ever. The British, together with Royalist greek troops, attacked in three columns and pushed into the southeastern part of Athens, ~~but~~ *hoping* ~~to~~ ^E ~~drive~~ the Elas guerrillas out of at least half the city. This indicates that the Elas ^E had a far greater control of the ancient greek capital than we realized. The British and Greek royalists were in greater force than they had ever

shown yet. ~~Prime Minister Churchill returned to London today~~ after his hurried visit to athens. A story from Whitehall conjectures that Churchill and Foreign Secretary Eden will probably meet King George the second of Greece and ^U ~~urge~~ him to legalize the regency of archbishop Damaskinos, who has been the ^{de} ~~facto~~ ^{the archbishop} regent for several days. But until the king gives his consent, ~~the~~ position is un-constitutional.

GREECE

~~(Use first paragraph of the early story, cut the rest and substitute the following.)~~

Churchill returned to London today from his hurried visit to Athens, then called a cabinet meeting to report. Thereupon they sent a message to George the Second, the German King of the Hellenes. He tore himself away from his luxurious quarters in a fashionable London Hotel, ~~and~~ went to Downing Street, ^{and} according to the story from London, Churchill ^{has} ~~presumably~~ urged the German King of Greece to legalize the regency under arch bishop Demaskinos. The arch-bishop has been functioning as regent but without the King's consent it was unconstitutional. ~~The La-Si-Da monarch King is believed to be excessively indifferent to the idea of a regency.~~ All of which will go to make his story in the weeks to come.

PANAMA

The army command today announced a status of full alert in the Panama Canal zone. This was a natural result of the political upheaval in the republic of Panama, next door. Acting President De La Guardia this morning dissolved the National Assembly and suspended the constitution. He announced a national election for May.

That makes his regime a revolutionary government.

Fourteen members of the assembly fled from Panama and took refuge in the canal zone.

CUBA FOLLOW PANAMA

There is trouble in Cuba too, the city of Havana in a state of tense excitement. The chief of staff of the army notified the armed forces tonight that he had removed five officers including the Commandant of the big fortress in Havana. He charged that they were attempting to create unrest in the army.

Havana was ~~filled~~^{rife} with rumors . Not only the soldiers but the police forces of the capital were confined to barracks.

WARDS

The Chicago establishment of Montgomery Ward today resembled two camps, one of them armed. In that one sat Major General Joseph W Byron of the army of the United States sent there by the president, to take over. But Sewell Avery, chairman of the board, held the fort in his own office, declaring he was still in charge and that he declined to turn the plant over to the Government. He said he would stay where he was unless he was thrown out or fenced out. Business went on, and general Byron said the war department was operating all the Montgomery Ward establishments. ^{TP} But so far as the eye could see, the officers of the company, rather than the officers of the army, were giving orders and signing pay checks. The government applied to the courts for an injunction to restrain Montgomery Ward from interfering with the army's operation of the store. The federal judge set January eighth as the date for a hearing. ^{TP} Sewell Avery issued a statement repeating his caustic criticism that when patillo, head of the musicians' Union, defied the war labor board, the government did nothing.

DESSERTERS IN ITALY

In Times past, thrills in the new were found in gangster stories. Nowadays the war produces the tales of excitement and thrill. Today we have a combination - a war-gangster melodrama; and the scene is the eternal city, of Rome. There, a mob has been operating - a bandit gang made up of deserters from the allied armed forces, a sort of military underworld. Their leader - an American deserter who is known as Robert Lane.

For weeks, the mob ran a racket of hold-ups and robberies of all sorts - terrorizing the people of Rome. Citizens ^{of Rome hearing} heard a local version of - "Stick 'em up".

Many were robbed, many assaulted - 'the eternal city on the Tiber having a replica in war of the gangster rampages of American prohibition days. The allied deserters-turned-bandit were tough, and their american leader called Robert Lane, was achieving the notoriety of a ^QMillinger or ^ACapone.

The part of the G-Men of American racketeering days was played by the military police, and they did a regular F B I job - with sleuthing and manhunts. After all sorts of detective work, they rounded up the deserter gangster mob - including its big shot leader, Robert Lane. The prisoners were locked up, and this was

followed by another typical gangster episode - a jail break.

Big shot Lane and seven of his deserter mob, escaped - and then ^{the} manhunt was on in a bigger way than ever. The M P's blocked all the roads out of Rome, and went on a house-to-house hunt through the city. And the latest is that gangster leader Lane and three of his mobsters ^{have} ~~had~~ ^{re} been captured. This was reported today by the Army newspaper, Stars and Stripes, which tells of still another detail reminiscent of G-men and gangsters.

The military police got a tip - somebody squealing on the deserter-big-shot and his mobster pals. The clue was that they were hiding in a roman apartment on via carlo alberto, and to the address given ten jeep-loads of heavily armed M P's went speeding. The clue led them to the apartment of a girl.

In Rome the mob had found that kind of companion so familiar in the history of the American underworld - a Moll. A roman girl was hiding Lane and his number one henchman, a Candian deserter.

The M P's found the two concealed in a wardrobe chest. They were yanked out, resisting ~~fiercely~~ and were badly beaten by the M P 's before they were subdued. The girl, the Roman Moll, confessed her part in the affair, and told the military police that she planned

to dye the gangsters' hair, make them blonde to disguise them.

Another angle familiar in Cops and Robber stories.

~~And now - H - ^{is} about a little story
from you? but not about cops
and robbers. - and a - l - u - ~~Monday~~~~

9 And a - l - u - Monday.

FOOD

We on the home front will have to do a great deal less eating for at least the next three months. That warning comes from the department of Agriculture. During January, February and March there will be a shortage in practically every important food, meat, poultry, potatoes, both canned and fresh vegetables, and probably lard. Also, of course, butter. There will be more fruits, milk, cheese, eggs and fish, and some cereal products. But those increases will not compensate for the shortages.