

WESTERN FRONT

The latest from the Maelstrom of war on the Western Front is that the Germans have now driven thirty miles into Belgium. They have cut an important supply line between the cities of Liege and Bastogne, and are thrusting for the Ardennes Gap--their invasion route into France in nineteen forty.

This news comes from Allied Headquarters, and it can only be called--bad news. The Nazi offensive is still unchecked, is still rolling. Allied headquarters states repeatedly that the battle is in a state that it calls--"fluid." And that is an ominous word, "fluid" meaning that a front has not been stabilized. In other words, we have not been able to establish a solid line where the enemy offensive is being checked.

Another ominous indication is found in the air news--the statement that British Lancaster bombers flew in force today, supporting the American First Army. And the weather is described as atrocious. That has been one of the greatest of allied handicaps, air power being almost tied down, the squadrons of planes that represent the greatest Allied superiority over the Germans. Yet, in the cloud and fog, the Lancasters flew today--heavy bombers

doing the unusual job of giving immediate close range aid to the ground troops.

The Germans claim that they have smashed six American divisions, four infantry and two armored, and now run their count of American prisoners up to twenty thousand. And yet, Nazi propaganda today featured a note of caution to the German people, playing down over-optimism, giving a hint that the German drive is slowing down and stating that the heaviest battles are yet to come.

There are other angles to temper the ill tidings. For example, it is definite now that American troops have recaptured the town of Stevelot, which is ten miles behind the deepest enemy penetration. Our soldiers are holding grimly on to the city of Malmedy, which likewise is to the rear of the more advanced spearheads of the Nazis. Moreover, Berlin reports that General Patton's troops of the Third Army are wheeling out of the Saar for an assault against the southern flank of the Nazi breakthrough.

These facts may be indications of what might be the best news of all to come--American forces on the flank of the German bulge, and cutting into it. ~~That might be the best news of all to come~~

~~American forces on the flank of the German bulge, and cutting~~

~~into it.~~ That might be the future turn of battle--transforming our present defeat into enemy disaster. Let's hope that's the way things turn out.

Meanwhile, however, dispatches from headquarters are conveying a frankly ominous tone. For example, United Press correspondent James McGlinchy, cables: "The United States Army has suffered, in Belgium and Luxembourg, its worse set-back since the loss of the Philippines in nineteen forty-two. The Germans" he goes on, "are still advancing and their counterattack probably has yet to reach its peak."

Supreme Allied Headquarters echoes the same thought, saying that the situation is grave and may become still graver before the tide of battle turns. "We are confident," declares an official spokesman at Supreme Headquarters, "that we are going to win this battle, but we are not going to win it this week, and probably not next week."

It is pointed out that the Germans, in three days, drove further into Belgium than we were able to drive into Germany in

in three months. We are told that the enemy is hurling into the fight between a hundred-and-fifty-and-two-hundred-and-twenty-five-thousand men, and perhaps as many as six hundred tanks. ^{with} ~~and~~ the German high command ^{having} ~~may have~~ the ambitious plan of smashing all the way through to the North Sea, ^{which} ~~that~~ would ^{set things} ~~be the gravest kind of reverse for the Allies, one that might set back their whole~~ ^{backs for} ~~campaign as long as six~~ months.

Stating that, is facing the worst. ~~It is not likely to~~

~~happen. In fact~~ The idea of a German drive to the North Sea has all the ring of fantasy, but we might as well consider the worst, while reckoning with the best. The best in this case being--a complete German collapse after Hitler's army has utterly exhausted itself in its present mighty drive.

STIMSON FOLLOW WESTERN FRONT

The confusion and obscurity in the news of the German offensive during the past few days makes it worth while to scrutinize things that were said by Secretary of War Stimson ^{here in Washington} today. He gave a brief and succinct account of what happened--telling of events that were hidden by a censorship and garbled by rumor.

Here is the story given by Stimson: "All day last Saturday from the Duren area to the southernmost point of the German-Luxembourg border", said he, "enemy artillery heavily shelled our lines. At the beginning ^{of} that afternoon, Germans began stabbing at a variety of points along this whole first army front.

"That night," the Secretary went on, "German parachutes were landed at various points along the same front, in an effort to create confusion and perhaps to raise doubts as to where the principal attacks were accumulating. However," he added, "the largest forces of parachutists were landed to give direct tactical support to the main German thrust." In other words, the Nazi paratroopers were landed at points where they could strike at the rear of the American positions, while the main German assaults were being launched.

"These thrusts," Secretary Stimson related, "came at four

places in the fifty-five mile region between Monchau and Trier. The Germans initiated these attacks," he said, "with at least four panzer and two infantry divisions--but with seven or more other divisions available in the general area.

"This was a section," he explained, "which had been loosely held by both sides. It was a terrain which had not offered the Allies much incentive for exploration."

From which we may gather that not much was expected to happen in this area of difficult country--forests and rugged ground. And the Germans took advantage of this fact to achieve the element of surprise.

Secretary Stimson dwelt upon the previous Allied gains and the heavy losses the Germans had sustained--seven-hundred-and-fifty-thousand of their soldiers captured, for example. Moreover, they had been taking a terrific pounding from the air. And yet--they were able to launch so powerful an assault.

Secretary Stimson indicated that the enemy offensive was an all-out gamble for the purpose of forestalling a big Allied assault. They preferred to gamble on an all-out attack of their own, rather than stay on the defensive, letting things drag out to

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sure defeat. Their hope is to make the Americans use up so much *of our* supplies and ~~xxxx~~ reserves that an allied offensive will have to be delayed for an indefinite time. If the Germans succeed, said the secretary of war in Washington, it will prolong the war in Europe for months. If the Nazi offensive fails, the Americans may turn the whole thing into a decisive victory, and bring the European War to a speedy conclusion.

The dreadful cost of the battle was reflected in an American Red Cross appeal today--an appeal for donations of blood. The Red Cross is asking for the common type for immediate shipment to France. This is in response to a call from Army Headquarters over there, blood donations being urgently needed--because of heavy American casualties in the fighting.

And the seriousness of the crisis is indicated in a statement by the War Production Board, which warns us that the German offensive may, in the words of the W.P.B., "hit us between the eyes." Because of the urgency of battle, there may be a further tightening of the civilian production program. Vice-Chairman Anderson of the W.P.B. stated that the enemy drive will have an impact on the home front over here--by increasing production demands.

RUSSIA

The Russians have renewed their drive to encircle Budapest. Word from Berlin tells of a hundred thousand Soviet troops in an offensive to break through to the Southwest of the Hungarian Capital. Berlin adds that Hundreds of tanks and planes are supporting the hundred thousand soldiers on the ground, as these drive to envelope Budapest.

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And now a message from Stan. of Calif. by way of Wash. D. C. and then more news.

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hurled mortar shells in to the docks, where the unloading of the food ships was going on. The explosion of insurgent shells stopped the relief activity--until British cannon went into action and silenced the mortars of the ELAS.

~~So the food crisis in Athens was relieved today, after it had become acute. The legal government has had to resort to soup kitchens, and yesterday long lines of people received rations of soup--ten thousand of them. But that too was interrupted, twelve-hundred portions of soup could not be distributed--because left wing snipers opened fire and halted the distribution of food to the hungry.~~

~~With the new British drive against the ELAS, the acute crisis of rebellion seems to have passed in Athens. ~~Tonight the area northeast of the Acropolis is free of left wing forces. But~~~~

~~The British estimate that some twenty thousand insurgents remain in Athens and vicinity, after incurring at least five thousand casualties since the civil war began.~~

~~The other night we heard how the ELAS people stormed a jail, and four hundred and fifty prisoners were missing, presumably seized by the insurrectos. One of these was the former collaborator~~

GREECE

There is a note of irony and pity in one bit of news today-- the announcement that the distribution of food sent by Allied Relief has been resumed in Athens. No people suffered more bitterly under Nazi tyranny than the Greeks. Their need was so great that special efforts were made to send food supplies to them--and save them from starvation. And yet, for nearly two weeks, no food was distributed. Shiploads of relief supplies lay in harbor, at the Port of Athens, but the cargoes just remained there. Because of the Greek civil war, ~~(because the revolt of the left wing ELAS made it impossible to transport the supplies that Allied Relief had sent.)~~

~~(Yesterday British General Scobie gave a deadline to the left wing insurgents, nine o'clock this morning--at which time the British General announced he would send his full forces to wipe out the gun positions from which the ELAS was shooting. And now~~

~~comes word that one-third of Athens has been cleared of the rebels.~~

And the British drive today opened the way for supplies of food to the hungry people of Athens.

Cargoes were unloaded from ships, and truckloads were sent rolling. However, at one time today, the unloading of the relief ships was halted--because ELAS guns opened fire. The left wingers

senate.

Today there was a striking example of the way Congress *here* in Washington feels about power politics over in Europe, the British and Soviets forming spheres of influence; apparently, dividing things up. In the Senate, two lawmakers of the most opposite kind got together and agreed on one thing--the way they regard *the present display of* ~~power~~ *regards the* power politics over there.

One was Senator Ball of Minnesota, who bolted Dewey in the recent election and supported the fourth term on the grounds of internationalism--the republicans not being internationalist enough to suit the republican Senator. The other--Wheeler of Montana, a Democrat who was a leading non-interventionist before the war, and is loudly an isolationist.

Ball and Wheeler, usually poles apart, were in perfect harmony today--both stating that if the power politics of the British and the Soviets go on, the Senate is unlikely to ratify the world security organization proposed at Dumbarton Oaks.

Senator Ball declared: "The unilateral political decisions made in liberated Europe by great powers on the Allied side, if they continue, may do irreparable harm to the whole cause of collective security envisaged in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals."

Senator Wheeler put the same thing ^{this way:} ~~in these words:~~ "It would be pointless for the President to send the Dumbarton Oaks proposals to the Senate unless Russia and England completely change their present policies in Europe."

The harmony between the two opposites was confirmed by Senator Ball, who said that, "for once," he agreed with Senator Wheeler.

Whereupon Wheeler, the non-interventionist and isolationist, stated that if great Britain and Soviet Russia would definitely commit themselves to the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, and would put these into effect throughout Europe and the Orient, he personally would, in his words--"Be willing to go a long way in a world organization."

Well, the way things change around is enough to make a plain ordinary citizen dizzy, if not daffy. Here is Wheeler, the isolationist, championing the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, and President Roosevelt saying the day before yesterday that there never was any Atlantic Charter document, no charter ever signed, nothing except conversation and some fragmentary

philippines.

The news from Mindoro island, in the Philippines, is important---not that there's any fury of battle to report. The headline is that today American fighter planes began to use the flying field on Mindoro. The airstrip was constructed in record breaking time, within four days after the MacArthur landing. The engineers did a championship job, aided by the quality of the Mindoro climate. No wet and soggy jungle as on Leyte, ~~Island~~ Mindoro is comparatively dry, open, rolling terrain.

The arrival of the land-based fighters was all the more welcome because of the character of the war on Mindoro. No ground resistance, but a good deal of air action. The Japanese have been replying to the American invasion by sending over constant flights of planes, and these have been a nuisance. Now, with American fighters based on the swiftly constructed Mindoro flying field, Japanese resistance, non-existent on land, will be knocked out of the air.

On the opposite side of the Archipelago, ^{at} Leyte, ~~Island~~, the battle moves relentlessly toward an end. Today two American columns, pushing through Ormoc Valley from opposite sides, joined forces, and this leaves the Japanese driven from the shattered Yamashite

line, in a ~~final~~ hopeless trap. It's all over but the mopping

up, which, however, is likely to be tough and hard, in ~~the face~~ ^{view of the}

^{way the} Japanese ~~tactics of~~ ^{it out} fighting ~~to~~ ^{to} the death.

Volcano.

If there is anyone who wants to buy a volcano, here's a chance. Dionisio Pulido, a citizen of Mexico, has one to sell.

He is the Mexican farmer on whose field a remarkable phenomenon of nature burst forth in nineteen forty-two--when fire erupted from the ground and a volcano was born. For weeks and months the eruption continued, and now a tall flaming summit stands at the place where Dionisio Pulido used to cultivate Mexican beans and peppers.

Dionisio got a lot of publicity as the world's only owner of a volcano, but that didn't do him much good. All he had was that farm, which now had turned into an exploding crater. He couldn't cultivate it now, couldn't grow any beans or peppers where volcanic lava was erupting. Dionisio was in the unhappy position of being a farmer with a volcano instead of a farm.

What does he do now?

Oh, today he is working as an orange picker, ~~in~~ in California--
Si Senor, and
~~is~~ a migratory ~~XXXXX~~ Mexican worker. ~~and now~~ [^] he has written to

a newspaper in Mexico City ~~and~~ ^{ing} announces that he wants to sell ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~infernal~~ volcano. "Of course," he writes, "I am proud to be the only volcano owner in the world, but I can't farm it. "And," he adds,

with a note of pathos, "Farming is the only thing I can do."

So step up ladies and gentlemen, what am I bid for this

volcano?, this live volcano, this still belching volcano? As a matter of fact I'd like to buy it myself. -o- A fire-spitting volcano would make quite a xmas present wouldn't it? ~~it?~~

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ugh!— Well Lowell I've already got a little spitfire --- but wait a minute what I want to say is: —