

P.J. - Sunoco. Wed., Dec. 23, 1942.

RE: COWARD (early in broadcast)

Before I sign off tonight, and before Hugh comes on, we will hear a voice from across the ocean. It will be the voice of a well-known Britisher who has just produced a motion picture of the present war that tells a powerful story of the Navy and the sea.

Owing to the problem of switching, there is a chance that I may not have an opportunity to properly introduce him when he does come on. We may get some static and then you may suddenly hear him speaking. But I hope I will at least have an opportunity to say: And now, Noel Coward speaking from Aberdeen, Scotland.

RUSSIA

The Red Army today is back in the Ukraine, ~~the~~
~~bread basket of Russia,~~ that rich ~~growing~~ province which
first tempted Hitler to his Russian adventure. ~~And it~~ ^{Maybe}
~~may be~~ ~~this is an historic and symbollic event.~~ At any rate,
~~everybody must hope so.~~ Moscow was jubilant enough
to claim that the Nazis are ^{on} the run and in such a
hurry that the German generals ordered ~~the air arm to~~ ^{their air bombardiers to}
bomb their own retreating troops. The object of that,
of course, ^{being} ~~was~~ to stem the rout, to make the fleeing
soldiery more afraid of their own officers than of the
enemy.

So far, the big winter offensive of the Soviets
has carried their ~~men~~ ^m to a point not far from Kharkov.
The Red Army, says Moscow, has ^{now re-} occupied several positions
on the important railroad between Rostov and Moscow.

There are two powerful Red armies in this
offensive. One ~~of them is~~ driving west to Kharkov.

The other, moving south, has reached a sector a hundred and twenty miles north of Rostov, the gateway to the Caucasus.

According to front dispatches from the Russian Army, the Germans are becoming disorganized and discouraged by having to go through another ~~siege of~~ ~~the ferocious~~ Russian winter. Russian correspondents report that columns of German prisoners have nothing but thin overcoats, their boots wrapped in rags, while their heads are swayed th in cloth.

The Russians also report success further north in the Velikie Luki zone and west of Rzhev. But it must not be forgotten that the Russians have not yet captured either of those two places, either Velikie Luki or Rzhev.

The Germans do not corroborate this glowing Russian picture. The Nazi agency admits there have been

strong Soviet attacks on newly organized German positions in the middle Don sector but, say the Nazis, these attacks were repelled with heavy losses. However, this mention of new positions indirectly confirms the Russian announcement that the Nazis have been obliged to withdraw along the Don.

ADD RUSSIA

The latest from Moscow just in, brings word that the Red Army drove ahead ^{another} eighteen miles in some places ~~yesterday~~. It captured six big towns, and many smaller places. It also inflicted seventy-six thousand casualties on the Germans.

There was a late special communique from Moscow which bore out reports that in some sectors the Germans are fleeing in utter panic.

AFRICA

The story of the fight for Tunisia was being written in the air today. ~~It is~~ ^a battle of supply lines. The Americans and British, ~~for our side,~~ are bringing up large reinforcements of men, supplies and ~~firepower. Getting set for~~ ^{machinery of death.} They aim to concentrate the largest ~~volume possible for~~ an all-out assault on Tunis and Bizerte.

~~But that isn't all of the strategy. At the same time, our air force has been~~ ^{Allied fliers have) chopping} ~~chucking~~ away at the supply routes of the Axis ^{across} ~~in~~ the Mediterranean. ~~The~~ Allied naval and air forces have sunk at least six warships and transports; ~~of the Axis,~~ perhaps ten. At least one destroyer was among the vessels damaged and probably sunk. ~~It~~ ^{Another small man o war)} blew up after a direct hit with ~~a~~ ^{that flew out from} bomb from a plane based ^{on} Malta. This ~~was~~ in an attack on a convoy off the west coast of Sicily.

^R British submarines also torpedoed and sank three supply

ships in the Axis communication line between Sicily and Africa. ~~All in all, British submarines are being, exceedingly active in the mediterranean, with repeated attacks, many of them successful, on Nazi and Italian convoys.~~

~~The attack on Tunisia, as we know, is under the direct command of British Lieutenant-General Kenneth Anderson. Evidently, he is an exceedingly careful general. At any rate, it was notable that the Allied advance on Tunisia became considerably more cautious and slower from the moment it was announced that he was in command of the Allied spearhead. There is no news of ground battles in ^{Tunisia} ~~that part of Africa~~ today.~~

The latest communique from Allied headquarters merely mentions vigorous patrol activity on both sides.

It adds that Axis artillery showed some opposition.

In the north section, ^{or,} ~~the~~ the French forces compelled

an enemy detachment to withdraw. The French captured some prisoners and equipment.

The Italian high command claims that Axis troops gained ground in Tunisia. A Rome broadcast states that the Germans and Italians stormed mountain positions that were strongly defended. From our high command, nothing on this.

ADD AFRICA

One piece of good news reported from London tonight is that the Allies now command virtually all of the Mediterranean. Of course they still have to win the big battle for Tunisia. The Allies today are in a stronger position in the Mediterranean than they have been at any time since Italy entered the war in June, Nineteen Forty. If now they can just get those narrows between Sicily and Tunisia! There's the rub. Aside from Sicily and Tunisia the Mediterranean is won, according to the opinion of London. Evidently London doesn't take the Nazi occupation of Crete as of crucial importance in the command of the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

MONTGOMERY

British General Montgomery, ^{tells how} ~~for all his great~~
~~success with modern tactics, appears to be a General~~
~~of the old school. He takes his army into his~~
~~confidence, talks to his men as though the newest~~
~~private were a partner in the venture,~~ ^{Montgomery} ~~He insists upon~~
~~commanders outlining a plan of battle before it begins.~~ ^{to the men}

~~Also, he makes no bones about calling freely~~

~~upon Providence,~~ ^{he called} ~~He~~ ^{for guidance. Montgomery} broadcast a message to his army

today, saying: "Before the Battle of Egypt began,
October Twenty-Third, I sent you a message saying,
'Let ^{us} pray that the Lord Almighty in this battle will
give us victory.'" And Montgomery continued: "He has
done so, and I know you will agree with me when I say
we must not forget to thank him." General Montgomery
added: "It is wonderful what has been achieved since
October Twenty-Third."

Apparently the wonders have not ended, for we

hear today that Montgomery's advance fighters are ahead of Marshal Rommel's rear guard. They have penetrated deep into Tripolitania. The bulk of the Nazi Afrika Korps has already passed Misurata, which is only a hundred and fifteen miles east of the City of Tripoli. The report is that Misurata is defended by a strong Italian garrison. Which may mean that Rommel again intends to leave the Italians behind, to be captured by the British. Anyhow he seems to want the Duce's lads to protect the retreat of his rapidly fleeing Germans.

MALTA

The British garrison at Malta has been reinforced

again. The Admiralty at London today announced that

British Navy has brought

not only fresh reserves of men but war materials and

supplies in large quantities ~~have been brought by the~~

~~British Navy~~, to the island fortress. These reinforcements

were completed without major interference from the

enemy, ^{adds} ~~says~~ the Admiralty.

This is particularly good news in connection with ~~out~~ operations in Libya and Tunisia. Never since

the British first captured Malta, has the island been

so important; for ^{today} it lies right ^{athwart} ~~spanning across~~ the

communication lines of the Axis ^{to Africa}.

COMMANDO

The Germans claim to have destroyed a British
commando ~~unit~~ somewhere in the south of France. The
Nazi high command describes it as a British sabotage
unit. *They say the Commandos*
~~The Germans report that it~~ landed on the French
coast near Bordeaux, ^{on} December Seventeenth, and ~~was~~ ^{were}
intercepted ~~and destroyed~~ before ~~it was~~ ^{they were} able to carry
out ~~its~~ ^{their} assignment.

London had ^{and} nothing to say about this ~~report~~.
The Germans themselves give no details, ~~do not say~~
~~how much of a unit it was or of what it was composed.~~
~~They merely say it was destroyed.~~

BURMA

It looks as though it would not be long before
— the seaport near India,
the big battle is fought for Akyab in western Burma.

We have heard how
~~Five days ago we learned that~~ British General Wavell's
had army advanced within forty-five miles of *Akyab,*
~~the place.~~

Today we hear that the Royal Air Force is maintaining
a pounding series of raids to soften up the Jap ground
positions in Western Burma. The British not only bombed
the Japs but ground strafed them with machine gun fire
from low altitudes.

Meanwhile, there were *more Jap* ~~Japanese~~ raids on
Calcutta, but the British authorities estimate them
as no better than nuisance attacks.

PACIFIC

Military observers today were prophesying that the Allies are getting ~~all~~ set for another major offensive. ~~But~~ This one ~~will be~~ against the Japanese, ~~and it will~~ ^{TO} start from the west, ~~It has not begun yet,~~ ^{from Asia.} ~~but it is under way.~~ The most significant omen of this is considered the attack by British naval planes on the Japanese base of Sabang, ~~That is just~~ off the northwestern tip of Sumatra.

Another clue is found in the Christmas message of Lieutenant-General Stilwell to the United States forces in India, Burma and China. I mean the sentence in which he ~~said~~ ^{said}: "We have not had a lot to work with yet, but we will get it ultimately."

In other words, the beginning of the offensive is a question of supply; ~~it is~~ a problem of assembling enough land, air and naval forces to ~~make sure first of regaining~~ ^{retake} Burma. The prime purpose

of that, ~~of course, is to~~ ^{would be to re} open a clear road to China.

After that, ~~to~~ ^{to} come the job of recapturing Singapore.

The plans for this offensive ~~will of course be~~ ^{are being made}

under the command of British General Sir Archibald

Wavell and our own Lieutenant-General Joseph P. Stilwell.

^{And it's} ~~It is~~ no secret that they are determined ~~to make a~~ ^{not to be} premature ~~drive.~~ ^{about it.} ~~We are going to take no chances of~~

~~what would be the physical and moral effect of~~

~~starting too soon with too little.~~ It is believed

they have been heavily reinforced in recent months.

^{with} And those reinforcements ~~are~~ continuing to pour in.

The people of Britain and of our own country are being warned not to expect anything to happen in

a hurry. What the Japanese took with such apparent

ease, ~~may~~ ^{may} require years of preparation and fighting

to regain. ~~The Japanese took what we were not prepared~~

~~to defend.~~ We have to retake with assaults for which

~~the Japanese are exceedingly well prepared.~~

It is believed that if we have luck, the road to China could be opened again within the next

four months. The rainy season does not begin until

~~next~~ May. ^{But} If the drive through Burma got as far as

Rangoon, the Allies would be able to dominate the

eastern coast of Malaya both by air and by sea.

Thus they would pave the way for the eventual all-out

attack, the big push. And the big push is not likely

to start before next September.

CHENAULT

There was a simple but thrilling ceremony somewhere in China today. Officiating was Lieutenant-General Joseph Stilwell, Commander of all American forces in China, Burma and India. The hero of the occasion was Brigadier-General Claire Chenault, Commander of Uncle Sam's Air Forces in China, former chief of the old Flying Tigers. And lo and behold it was the first American decoration the magnificent hero of the Flying Tigers has received in this man's war, although he long has had the highest in the gift of the Chinese.

Chenault is one of the old time army fliers, a man who achieved generalship by special knowledge and ability in the handling of men and planes - in combat. The citation read by General Stilwell tells the story. He said, addressing Chenault: "Although greatly outnumbered in personnel, airplanes and other essential items, you succeeded in protecting a large section of

unoccupied China from enemy air attack and caused severe losses to the enemy."

(Stilwell said further:- "^{you}He demonstrated keen knowledge of Japanese technique and air tactics." And he added:- "Your appreciation and understanding of the China theatre resulted not only in highly successful air operations but also a high degree of good-will between the United States Air Forces and the people of China."

On top of this comes the news that King George the Sixth has made General Chenault a Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

NEW GUINEA

In New Guinea the Americans and Australians have forced a crossing over an important stream at two points. ~~It is~~ ^a stream which flows into the sea between Buna Village, which the Allies have already captured, and the small position to which the Japs are still hanging on. ^{This} ~~It~~ was the first natural barrier which protected the Japs on that side. So the Americans and Australians are ^{now} ~~that~~ much closer to their objective in sweeping the Japs at Buna into the sea. ^{The enemy has} ~~They have~~ but a small and slender beachhead to call ^{his} ~~their~~ own now on that part of the New Guinea coast.

STEEL

During the coming year, the United States will produce ~~steel in such quantities that they will amount,~~
as much steel as
to almost twice [^] the combined output of all the Axis
nations. ^{So} ~~That sounds like a staggering order, but so~~
reads ^a ~~the~~ report made by War Production Chief Donald
Nelson today. Our ^{steel} expansion program will be completed
by the middle of Nineteen Forty-Three. ^{with a} ~~That means a~~
capacity of ~~something like~~ ninety-seven million tons.
The combined annual steel output of Germany, Italy
and Japan, ~~altogether,~~ will be no more than fifty to
fifty-five million tons.

Nelson admits that this has been no easy job,
for when steel production is expanded, there must be
new blast furnaces to make pig iron and new open
hearth and electric furnaces to convert pig iron to
steel. ~~It is a~~ ^{ing} task ~~that~~ involves not only large
~~quantities of time~~ ~~and~~ but ~~also~~ materials, including,

~~incidentally~~, steel itself. It means the mining of
more iron ore, the building of more ships to carry
the ~~increased iron~~ ore, the production of more coke
and ^m ~~limestone~~ ^{for smelting,} Also scrap, more and more of it.

HIGGINS

Uncle Sam will soon have one thousand two hundred giant airplanes for carrying cargo. This has been in the wind for some time, and became official today. The War Department announced^s the letting of a contract to Andrew J. Higgins, the shipbuilder of New Orleans. *We are not giving* ~~for this job. The War Department declined~~ ~~to give out the~~ actual figures, but it is generally understood that there will be twelve hundred for a start. They will be ~~be~~ Built largely of non-strategic materials.

BUTTER

In case you think you are having your troubles with butter, consider the housewife in Detroit. Mrs. Detroit today found she could get all she wanted—at a dollar and a quarter a pound.

Some of the customers groaned loudly and made hurried telephone calls to the authorities. But the Detroit Office of Price Administration said Yes, a dollar and a quarter a pound is legal for butter ^{out there.} ~~there.~~

On the outskirts of Detroit, the farmers were selling it direct at prices from seventy-five cents to a dollar. But in the city itself, a dollar and a quarter.

INTRO TO NOEL COWARD

Many of our American foreign correspondents have been wounded in this war, some have been killed, others have been captured. A large number have been in concentration camps and prisons in Germany, Italy, and Japan. Active correspondents are taken care of by the newspapers and press associations for which they work. But, when a war reporter reaches old age, he generally has to look out for himself. And then there are some who are of the free lance variety. The Overseas Press Club of America, the only organization made up entirely of American newspaper people who have served abroad, is establishing a fund to take care of just such problems. And the fund is to get its real start tonight when United Artists will turn over the gross proceeds of the premiere of the inspiring new Noel Coward film "In Which We Serve," at the Capitol Theatre about an hour from now.

Noel Coward not only wrote it and produced it, but he also plays the leading part. Right now we are trying to get in touch with him across the Atlantic, in

Scotland, and at any instant you may hear his voice, telling us -- well, telling us whatever he has on his mind. Noel Coward, what does one have on one's mind at midnight, in Aberdeen, Scotland?

CABLED TEXT FROM NOEL COWARD

It's a strange experience talking to New York from Aberdeen. I've just finished an evening show and am now thinking nostalgically of American friends. I should love to be with you to see if you like the film as much as I hope you will. There has been much publicity here, some good, some idiotic, but this won't affect your view of the film. All who worked on it did their best to make it worthy of its subject, but unsucceeded. No film or book or play however brilliant and sincere, could define the indefinable spirit of the Royal Navy. We in the Dominions take it for granted like the air we breathe. 'Tis our heritage uniting the best traditions of the past with bravest hopes of the future. If this picture expresses a fraction of the courage and comradeship of the Navy, we are proud and grateful to have had the opportunity.