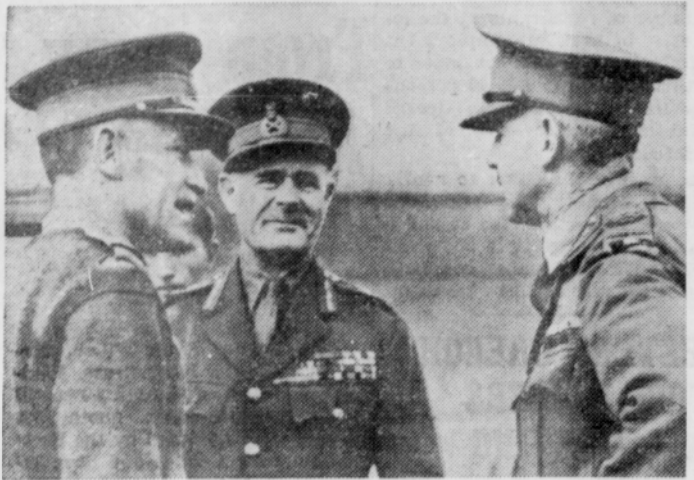


WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS By Edward C. Wayne

New Violence in Nazi Aerial Blitz Aimed to Cripple British Shipping; Destroyer 'Lanes' Across Atlantic Urged to Replace Hard-Hit Convoys

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.)
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)



Hailed by some experts as one of the really great military exploits of all time has been the sweep of the British forces against the Italians in Africa. Shown here with two of his aides is the British commanding general, Sir Archibald Wavell, (center). General O'Connor of the British forces is shown at left and Australia's General Mackay at right. Real test of Wavell's military genius would come if his troops should clash with Hitler's in the Balkans.

AERIAL:
Blitz Crows

Nazi Germany brought out its heaviest air blitzkrieg, perhaps as a "workup" of an invasion attempt, and the results were not too happy, as far as the British defense was concerned.

The first three days of the main attack were directed at London, Liverpool and Bristol, and while the damage was heavy, and casualties correspondingly high, British aerial leaders were jubilant over the fact that 30 German attackers were shot down, and gave the credit to the night-fighting air arm, the anti-aircraft batteries, and a "new weapon."

This latter, it was later explained, consisted of some sort of anti-aircraft shell which contained coils of wire, which unwound when the shell exploded with lethal effect on enemy planes.

However, later news was not so favorable. The opening attack was followed by another terrific blast at Bristol, one at Glasgow and a third at Hull.

The first two cities, in a single night, reported around 1,000 casualties, and the blast at Hull was reported to have been even more severe. The British apparently figured that they might as well abandon any attempt to disguise the towns attacked, at least in news dispatches.

At first they would simply designate the town as "a northeast town" or "a town in the Midlands" or a "southeast town," and then, within minutes, the German releases would be out with the name of the city, and what observers reported from there.

This British reticence continued up to and including all attacks except that on Hull. In this case, the morning dispatches said "a southeastern port town," but the afternoon papers were able to carry the story under a direct Hull date line.

It was apparent that Hitler's air-men were not trying day attacks, being satisfied with heavy night bombings in large force.

One after another they were trying to knock various British provincial cities out of the picture. Charts were being printed showing it was costing Hitler an estimated \$43,000 to kill each civilian slain in air-bombing.

Britain published her losses since the start of the war at 25,000.

The ominous character of the raids on Bristol, Glasgow and Hull were that although the German raiders came over in large numbers, judging by the weight of bombs dropped, in two nights the total British claims of bombers shot down was exactly two.

Prior to this attack, British commentators had been proudly saying an estimated 3 per cent of the bombers were being shot down, and that if this figure could be raised to 10, then the German air force could not stand the strain.

Those observers who saw in the heavy blitz from the air a prelude to an invasion attempt, while they were numerous, ranged all the way from "any day" advocates to one high Japanese official, who, at 10,000 mile distance, blandly announced that the "Germans would land on British soil in a matter of hours."

Hull, Glasgow and Bristol, the hardest hit towns, are not noteworthy as being invasion-resistant centers but are rather famous as general shipping centers.

The first is the central ship-building point, the second is a great center for shipping to and from the United States, and Hull is where most of the sailors are trained.

There seemed more weight, at the moment, to the argument that the heavy air bombing of such centers was aimed at Britain's general ocean life-lines, and not as a set-up for the landing of troops.

CONVOY:
Or Lanes?

Britain was sticking to the convoy system, while American shipping experts suggested abandoning it, and substituting the "lane protection" system, which seemed full of typical Yankee ingenuity.

The Great Circle route, about 2,000 miles long, according to this project, was to be patrolled with at least 50 destroyers, each of them given 50 miles to patrol 10 times a day.

That would mean that every 2.4 hours a destroyer would pass any given spot in the lane, and with a constant lookout, should be able to spot enemy submarines.

The plan would be putting 40 destroyers on the lane, with 10 allowed to be in port refueling and getting supplies.

Advantages were these—not only a better lookout and more warship strength for protection purposes, but a much more efficient use of ships. For under the convoy system, if 40 ships are gathered together, the speed of the fastest is the speed of the slowest.

The proposed Traffic Lane Plan would permit the faster vessels to move at top speed from one side of the Atlantic to the other, permitting them to take many more loads, in the long run. They would sail from destroyer to destroyer, and it would be the latter's duty to keep the lane clear of enemy raiders.

And the present great hazard, of lumping 40 or 50 slow-moving vessels together for a mass target would be removed.

Plan Debated

As an interesting background for this very question of convoys, and how they ought to be conducted, Washington debated the statement of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, chief advocate of the lease-lend bill, urging that the U. S. provide guards for convoys.

The President, conferring with the press, dismissed the question, saying there had been some reports to that effect, but that he had paid no attention to them.

However, in view of the Committee's action, it was believed that the President was more interested than he was willing to admit. British authorities, also, it was learned, were expecting the United States to do something along this line.

It was recalled that the British naval leaders had said that they had men enough on hand to man the entire U. S. navy, if necessary, and this was taken to mean that Britain was prepared for a "lease-lend" of more naval vessels.

There were two possible plans being discussed:

1. The transfer of more destroyers and possibly cruisers to Britain so they could be assigned to convoy service.

2. An extension of the neutrality zone further into the North Atlantic to keep the Nazi warships away further, and/or to permit U. S. naval vessels to patrol those areas and release the British ships for the more distant patrol duty.

The navy department transmitted to ship operators the news, sent to the U. S. by Churchill, that Nazi raiders and submarines were operating inside the forty-second meridian of longitude, some of which is within the present neutrality zone.

ETHIOPIA:
Nearing Fall

The "battle of Ethiopia" in which the Italians, as they did in Albania, started out with successes and ended up with reverses, seemed about in its final phases, with a British victory, if not certain, at least extremely likely.

This again was a reversal of early war predictions by the British themselves, who had warned the English public that it could expect no success whatever in the general African campaign.

STRIKES:
Hold Attention

Here are some of the pickets which surrounded the Harvill Aircraft Die Casting corporation plant early in the labor dispute there.

See Below

Two strikes, one big in volume and the other involving only 423 men, but holding a vast menace to plane building, held the attention of those in charge of production management.

The big strike was at the \$5,900,000 construction project at Wright field, Dayton, Ohio, huge testing ground for army airplanes. The strikers were refusing to negotiate, saying "we'll go back to work as soon as they chase those other fellows, (non-union members) off."

This was a strike of the A. F. of L. building trades unions of Dayton. It seemed, to the public, a picayune matter. The work of thousands was being held up by 400 A. F. of L. men, who objected because an electrical subcontractor put 4 C.I.O. men to work.

The contract of the electrical subcontractor was held up, and the men went back to work. The contract finally was reinstated, and out went the men again. There was talk at this point of the government taking over.

The other strike was that of the Harvill manufacturing company, an organization headed by a 42-year-old former soda jerker who invented a process for casting airplane parts from aluminum and magnesium, light metals.

Harvill's plant, employing only 423, makes parts for practically every big plane manufacturer on the Pacific coast, including such giants as Boeing and Lockheed, Douglas and Vultee, Vega and North American.

The men were asking raises from 50 to 75 cents an hour, and the strike, according to Harvill himself, was threatening plane factory shut-downs that would throw 60,000 out of work and would jeopardize the construction of thousands of war-planes.

This the workers denied, saying that the factory was well ahead of the needs of the other plants. Here, too, the government and the defense administration were looking with an anxious eye, wondering how far to go to break the walkout.

TURKEY:
Green Light?

The Bulgar-Greek front continued to teeter on the brink of war, and observers were interested to hear through "grapevine" channels that Soviet Russia had given Turkey the "green light" to go ahead and defy Germany.

Whether this was wishful thinking or not, many of those on the scene considered it was sound politics and even sounder diplomacy.

They harked back to the old statement, which has been held to since the beginning of the war, that Russia's long-range policy would be that of a "fisher in troubled waters," that she would egg on the weaker party against the stronger, particularly where this suited Russia's convenience, and then step in for her own personal grab.

They pointed to the Polish experience, and the Rumanian outcome as proof of this contention.

Just as Yugoslavia was tottering and about to be forced to sign a Nazi pact after showing plainly that her sympathies were on the other side, and just as the British had landed 300,000 men in Macedonia and Thrace, and were said to have more on the way, and just as Turkey was debating whether or not to "toss in with England," came the dispatches about Russia's attitude.

Russia was soundly placed in this position. The Soviet is friendly with the Bulgars, also with Yugoslavia, both by race and general sympathy, and especially with Bulgaria because of her location on the Black sea.

Russia had picked up half of Poland, a huge slice of Rumania, and was sitting with her legions ready to grab off the Black sea coast of Rumania if the slightest chance of fever.

RAIL WRECKS:
Two

The death list was not large, but the number of injured extremely heavy in two railroad wrecks within one day of each other.

Near Pittsburgh a crack flier was purposely derailed, crashed into the Ohio river, with four dead and scores hurt.

Near Ravenna, Ohio, a commuting train, loaded with hundreds of workers bound for a government arsenal, backed out onto a cross over and was cut in two by a freight train.

The Washington
MERRY-GO-ROUND
BY DREW PEARSON
& ROBERT ALLENBIGGEST CROP BUYING
PLAN YET

During debate on the lease-lend bill, Senator Murray of Montana came up to the vice president's dais and whispered in Henry Wallace's ear. The bill, he said, ought to contain a provision whereby Britain would buy or borrow farm products as well as armaments.

Vice President Wallace replied that he thought so, too, but had not felt it necessary to "spell it out" in the bill. However, he mentioned the matter to Senate Floor Leader Barkley, who offered an amendment to the lease-lend bill.

This was the simple mechanics whereby the biggest farm purchase plan since the last war was started. Most people don't realize it, but the lease-lend act makes the United States not only the arsenal for Great Britain, but also her granary, packing house and slaughter house.

A total of \$1,300,000,000 has been allocated out of the seven billions for British defense—all of which will bring sorely needed help to the farmer. So while industrial regions have prospered in this war, the farmer so far has not.

In the last war not only England, but France, Italy and the Scandinavian countries, even Russia needed wheat and cotton. Farm prices zoomed. But in this war all these areas except England have been cut off from American markets by the British blockade.

As a result, farm prices are low and surpluses mounting. We have a corn carry-over four times normal, or 700,000,000 bushels. The wheat carry-over is 400,000,000 bushels; while the government has 11,000,000 bales of cotton under loan or wholly owned, plus 372,000,000 pounds of tobacco, 2,735,000 pounds of surplus butter, 3,609,009 dozen surplus eggs, 37,000,000 pounds of surplus vegetables and 25,000,000 pounds of surplus fruit. In other words, the ever-normal granary is not normal at all. It is full and running over.

Sales—or loans—to England will be chiefly in live stock products such as canned pork, dried eggs, evaporated milk, lard and cheese, which England once got from Poland, Denmark and Holland, but doesn't any more.

Agriculture department experts who have been studying the question don't expect the British to ask for wheat or corn. England gets all its needs from the Dominions. But they figure that British purchases of live stock products, such as pork, will greatly help the price of corn and be a great boon to the corn belt.

Whether or not the British will pay for this later or make some kind of a swap, has not been decided yet. The matter is entirely up to the President, and he has kept completely mum on the subject.

Note—Man at the head of the farm-products-for-Britain program is Milo Perkins, a dynamic young Texan, who as administrator of surplus marketing already is an expert on getting rid of Uncle Sam's perpetual excess crops.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

Bottlenecks may be snarling some phases of defense construction, but not the two-ocean navy. Inside fact is that battleships, cruisers and destroyers—the "big three" of the ship-building program—are being turned out months ahead of the schedules laid down when congress approved the naval expansion last year.

Two new battleships, the North Carolina and the Washington, originally slated for commission late this year, will join the fleet in June, increasing the number of "battle-wagons" to 17. Fifteen others are under construction.

Naval chiefs estimated that the top number of destroyers to come off the ways this year would be 12. But actually 17 will be completed in the next nine months, bringing the destroyer fleet up to 176, a large part of them super-craft of the latest design.

Here's the present status of the whole fleet:

Ships on hand—15 battleships; 18 heavy cruisers; 19 light cruisers; 159 destroyers, including 74 over-age; 105 submarines, including 68 over-age; and 6 aircraft carriers. Total combat ships in commission—322.

Ships being built—17 battleships (including the North Carolina and the Washington); 14 heavy cruisers; 40 light cruisers; 204 destroyers; 80 submarines; and 12 aircraft carriers. Total ships being built—367.

The 204 destroyers will be completed by 1945; 17 this year, 45 in 1942, 86 in 1943, 52 in 1944, and four in 1945.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

There are many wags in the state department, but only one who wears the name—Alfred Waggs III. He handles refugees.

Colorado's Rep. Edward T. Taylor, 83, is the wordiest man in the Congressional Directory. His personally penned biography, over 650 words long, takes up almost an entire page. Unlike 84-year-old Sen. Carter Glass, who does not give the year of his birth, Taylor makes no secret of his.

Near Fight in Harvill Strike



When President H. L. Harvill and 50 employees tried to enter the Harvill Aircraft Die Casting corporation at Inglewood, Calif., their way was blocked by a barricade of timbers and an auto. Police arrived (above) and started to tow away the auto, but one striking employee shown with his hand on officer objected. Violence was in the air, but the police departed with the car.

Landslide Halts Rail Traffic



A landslide on the Conemaugh division of the Pennsylvania railroad along Pittsburgh's Allegheny River boulevard. An estimated million tons of dirt and rock slid down to disrupt rail traffic, and temporarily blocked the boulevard, one of Pittsburgh's main traffic arteries. Wheels of the freight engine were derailed.

U. S. Troops on Duty in Newfoundland



U. S. troops recently sent to Newfoundland on the U. S. transport Edmund B. Alexander, are getting used to winter warfare conditions. At top the transport is shown, docked at St. John's. It serves as headquarters and barracks for the soldiers. Below: Ski troops dressed in white to blend with the snow leave for the training grounds.

To Investigate Defense Contracts



A senate investigation of strikes, bottlenecks, etc., was outlined by Senator Truman (D.) of Missouri, chairman of special committee to probe defense contracts. The committee, is L. to R., (standing) Senator Ball (Minn.), Senator Wallgren (Wash.), Senator Connally (Texas), Senator Mead (N. M.), Senator Brewster (Maine), Senator Truman (seated).

Torpedoed!



P. S. Schlafin, second assistant engineer of the torpedoed Standard Oil tanker Charles Pratt, standing by the mast of the lifeboat which he commanded for five days. The gun strapped to his waist is his badge of authority. Schlafin, with some of his shipmates, returned to Bayonne, N. J., aboard a tanker.

Seized by Nazis



Jay Allen, American correspondent, arrested by Nazis for crossing from Vichy to occupied France without permit. He is the second U. S. newsman recently seized.

Ambassador



Anthony J. Drexel Biddle Jr., who is ambassador in England to the exiled governments (Holland, Norway, Poland, and others), is pictured at LaGuardia airport in New York city just before taking off on the Yankee Clipper for London, by way of Lisbon.

Arrest Nazi



Dr. M. Zapp, chief Nazi propagandist in the U. S., after arrest in New York by federal agents. He is charged with failure to register properly as foreign agent.