

IT SEEMS TO ME

By Charles F. Squire

Perhaps you noticed in the news that a Messerschmitt 109 fighter plane was knocked out at an altitude of 35,000 feet by our anti-aircraft fire. Wonderful shooting—over six miles up in the air; hitting a target moving at 300 miles per hour or better!

This was not accidental. I talked the other day with a man whose company is manufacturing equipment used in spotting planes. He didn't know how the thing worked; but it must be something like the range finder the bombers use, only worked in reverse: situated on the ground and used to locate planes accurately and so control the aiming of the anti-aircraft fire. The device must be pretty good, for the allowable margin of error is seven feet; that is, the burst of the shell must be within seven feet of the target. Such accuracy almost baffles one's credulity, when you figure the variables of speed of plane, height, deviation from course, wind velocity and direction between gun and plane. No wonder gunnery students need to know mathematics, physics and astronomy!

When we read of the success of our anti-aircraft fire in knocking out a German fighter at 35,000 feet, we are inclined to settle back in our comfortable chairs with broad smiles of satisfaction. But wait a minute: what if the enemy should develop a mechanism with similar accuracy? Then what would happen to our bombers now busy pulverizing German industrial centers and communication junction points?

For we are waging the aerial offensive now; and Germany is on the defensive. Naturally the Germans are under tightest pressure to improve their anti-aircraft gunnery so that they can knock out of the sky the Flying Fortresses and Liberators that carry lethal cargo for their cities. Remember this rule of military invention: every offensive weapon stimulates the production of its countering defensive weapon. The high-powered projectile is answered by thicker armor plate; the tank with an anti-tank gun, and so on. We can depend on it, German science is devoting itself desperately to perfect a (Continued on Editorial Page)

Labor Board Stands Pat On Strike Vote

CHICAGO, August 23—(AP)—The national labor relations board, refusing to reconsider its denial of a collective bargaining election, declared today "An agency of the government should not allow itself to be influenced by any pressure brought to bear on it through strikes or threats of strikes."

The board declared this statement, issued in the case of district 50, United Mine Workers of America, at the Springfield, Ill., plant of Allis-Chalmers manufacturing company, was the first enunciation of NLRB policy involving strike votes under the recently enacted Smith-Connally war labor disputes act.

District 50 had asked for reconsideration of an earlier decision in which the NLRB declined to order a collective bargaining election at the plant. The board ruled that such an election was forbidden by existing contractual relations between the company and the United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers of America.

The plant was the scene of the first secret strike ballot under the Smith-Connally act on August 4. In the voting, 1005 employees balloted "yes" and 836 "no" on the question:

"Do you wish to permit an interruption of war production in wartime as a result of this dispute?"

After the voting district 50 asked for reconsideration of the earlier NLRB ruling denying the collective bargaining election on the ground that the strike ballot established the majority status of district 50. The union argued that the strike ballot result made it obligatory upon the board to reverse its previous decision, the NLRB related.

Shipyard Worker's Death Is Probed

The Oregon Statesman

NINETY THIRD YEAR 12 PAGES Salem, Oregon, Tuesday Morning, August 24, 1943 Price 5c No. 128

Dimout
Tues. sunset 8:05
Wed. sunrise 6:23
(Weather on Page 5)

Billings' Head Is Crushed

Clues Few, Say Police; Autopsy Is Performed

Death of Stephen Jay Billings, 33, shipyard worker, apparently from a blow on the back of the head, was being investigated Monday night after his body was found, crumpled against the wall of an enclosed porch at the home of his mother, Mrs. Ethel C. Billings, 1540 North Liberty street.

Death occurred sometime between 3 and 5 o'clock Monday afternoon, Coroner L. E. Barrick estimated. The body was found about 6 o'clock by Miss Barbara Lutz, 1276 North Liberty, who visited the home expecting to find Miss Rosemary Billings, sister of the slain man, who was not at home. Billings' mother was reported to be at Newport.

Miss Lutz telephoned the city police. Since it was not known when that Billings was dead, the first aid car was called and at the same time an investigation was begun by Inspectors George Edwards and Hobard Kiggins. Later the body was taken in charge by Coroner Barrick, who notified District Attorney Miller Hayden and after consulting with him called Dr. Joseph Beeman of the state police criminal detection laboratory. State police officers of the Salem district also aided in the investigation.

Dr. Beeman's autopsy, concluded early this morning, revealed that Billings had been ill with pneumonia and that this was possibly at least a contributing cause of death. This somewhat modified the officers' theory of foul play, in spite of the severe skull fracture and brain hemorrhage.

Inspectors Edwards and Kiggins indicated that clues were few. The enclosed porch where the body was found was disordered, a case of empty bottles having been upset and scattered about. Some money and a ring also were found on the floor suggesting, though not establishing for certain, that robbery was not involved.

Billings' estranged wife, Mrs. Gladys Billings, 1164 North Front street, said she had not seen him for some time. Billings had been working at the Swan Island shipyard and living, at latest report, in workers' barracks there. No one who was questioned by the police had any knowledge that he had been in Salem for several days.

Government, Lewis Coal Showdown Due

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—(AP)—The government headed toward a showdown with John L. Lewis Monday by returning the mines of 53 coal operators to them despite Lewis' stand that his United Mine Workers would stay on the job until October 31 only as government employees.

The miners' chieftain kept his own counsel as to what he would do. "No comment," he told reporters.

The companies, operating scores of mines and including some of the larger producers in the industry, are scattered throughout 10 coal producing states. Secretary of Interior Ickes, as fuel administrator, took over about 3800 mines on May 1. Five which have not had contracts with the UMW and several holding agreements with the Progressive Mine Workers (APL) previously had been turned back to the private owners.

A spokesman for Ickes took the attitude of "wait and see what happens" when asked about Lewis' demand for government operation of the pits until October 31. Lewis made the stipulation in sending the miners back to work in June to end the third general coal strike.

The instructions to work, Lewis told the miners at that time, "will automatically terminate if government control is vacated prior" to October 31.

Since then, also, Lewis has signed an agreement with Illinois coal producers and made known that he considered it to be a model for settling the soft cost wage dispute. The proposed contract, now before the war labor board (WLB) for consideration, grants the miners wage increases of about \$3 a day including \$1.25 daily for underground travel pay, crux of the soft cost wage dispute. Originally, Lewis had demanded a 45 day wage boost for the bituminous workers.

Russians Capture Kharkov

Victorious Reds Drive Germans Back in Donets

Berlin Acknowledges Fall Of Ukraine Metropolis; Moscow Celebrates Victory

LONDON, Tuesday, August 24—(AP)—Victorious Russian forces yesterday captured vital Kharkov, streamed through a major break in the German Donets river front almost 200 miles to the south, and hammered the retreating nazis at both ends of the southern salient today in a drive to retake the industrial river basin.

Moscow's midnight communique said the Red army, perhaps 150,000 strong, broke into the third largest of Russian cities from the north, east and west and inflicted enormous losses on the enemy. The Russians continued to throw heavy blows at the reeling Germans as they fled the city.

Nazi forces west of Kharkov attempted to counterattack, the Russians said, but were repulsed with 2000 killed.

Fifteen more villages were recaptured by Russian forces in another sector of the Kharkov front, said the communique, recorded by the Soviet monitor.

Berlin acknowledged Kharkov's fall prior to a special Russian announcement by Premier - Marshal Joseph Stalin, but the Germans said the city had been "evacuated" in an orderly retreat.

In the break on the Donets river south of Izum, the Russians said their forces had smashed through from 19 to 22 miles in three days of savage fighting and had overrun 30 villages, including the railway station of Donetsk-Komrosvieka on the only rail connection with German - held Taganrog 50 miles below on the sea of Azov.

In announcing Kharkov's capture the soviet war bulletin said: "Today our troops as the result" (Turn to Page 2—Story B)

Eye Witness



CAPT. ROGER MILLER

Roger Miller Writes Attack Story in Yank

Yank, the official army weekly, reported an eye-witness account of the American strafing of Sicily tank and train columns in Sicily by Captain Roger Miller of Salem who was flying one of the new A-36 Invader planes of this country.

According to the Yank report, Captain Miller dove through flak to spray German flat cars carrying tanks and strafed the German train. Later he returned to machine gun a column of trucks.

The story continued: "A little farther up we ran into another locomotive pulling flat cars loaded with tanks. We shot up the tanks and blew up the locomotive. It was really a sight to see. The locomotive just went up in steam."

"About two miles farther we found another locomotive with six tanks and guns all around it. I saw the engineer get out in a hurry. We got that one too."

Bombers Again Hit Berlin

Occupied France Takes Pasting, RAF, Yanks

LONDON, Tuesday, Aug. 24—(AP)—British bombers made their first big raid on Berlin in five months last night, it was disclosed today, suggesting the possibility that the long-expected blitz on the German capital might be under way.

Concentrated attacks on Berlin have been anticipated almost nightly since the RAF—supplemented by American daylight bombers—carried out a series of repeated assaults on Hamburg late in July which devastated that great north German port.

The last heavy raid on Berlin was carried out March 29, when 21 British bombers were lost. Since then the German capital has been raided eight times by Mosquito bombers—the first of these raids being May 19.

The RAF night assault on Berlin followed a series of daylight forays by American medium bombers, which made their fifth visit to St. Omer in two months to blast railway yards and rolling stock. The previous night the RAF had attacked the Leverkusen chemical works and other Rhineland centers.

By RICE YAHNER
LONDON, August 23—(AP)—Paying their fifth visit to St. Omer in two months, American medium bombers again blasted railway yards at the town in occupied France today in a follow-up of an RAF bombing of the Leverkusen Chemical works and other Rhineland centers last night.

US airmen first attacked the freight yards at St. Omer, 22 miles southeast of Calais, on June 24. Later they made three attacks on the German air field there.

Off the Dutch coast, Spitfires attacked enemy shipping and coastal command Beaufighters struck at a small force of enemy escort vessels, the air ministry announced. Beaufighters destroyed an enemy bomber over the North Sea and Spitfires shot down an enemy fighter in a sweep over the Bethune area in France.

"Uneventful sweeps" were made by Spitfires over northern France (Turn to Page 2—Story E)

Bean Pickers in Urgent Demand; Mexican to Aid

PORTLAND, August 23—(AP)—Salem will get some 800 Mexicans within a few days for the bean, prune and hop harvests, the war food administration's labor office announced today. Some may remain for the nut harvest. Five hundred will be housed in a Salem camp, the others in neighboring communities.

Retarded by the weekend's unfavorable weather—which did not help the maturing of the crop—the bean harvest was clamoring for every picker available on Monday and to complicate the harvest picture, hop and pear growers also were calling for pickers.

Bean growers are still in need of more pickers than they are able to find. Although some bean fields in the Talbot area are past their peak, many West Stayton growers need additional help badly. Several of them phoned in Monday morning, urgently requesting more help.

Peach picking has been getting under way for a couple of weeks and it is expected that the present crews will be entirely inadequate by the end of this week.

A number of hop yards were opened Monday with more help being sought in some cases. First call of this season for pear picking reached the emergency farm labor service office Monday morning.

Quebec Looks at Japan



Evidence that the Quebec war conference has taken into consideration steps of the utmost importance toward a strategy to defeat Japan is the presence of Chinese Foreign Minister T. V. Soong at the talks. He is shown as he arrived in Quebec, greeted by Canadian Prime Minister MacKenzie King. (AP Telegram)

Quebec Confab Decisions 'Of Utmost Importance' Envisage Defeat of Japan

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER
QUEBEC, August 23—(AP)—Military decisions "of the utmost importance" in which the strategy to defeat Japan constitutes "a very important part" have been made at the Quebec war conference, it was announced Monday night by Brendan Bracken, British minister of information and an intimate of Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Bracken made his statement after a luncheon conference attended by President Roosevelt, the British prime minister, T. V. Soong, China's foreign minister, and Harry Hopkins, presidential adviser. The Pacific decisions were made at this meeting.

Asked whether the conclusions taken regarding Japan were the most important made, Bracken said: "It's rather hard to give priority to any decision—there have been so many important decisions made here."

Bracken also disclosed that following the week's conferences, which close tomorrow Prime Minister Churchill plans a broadcast and a fishing trip before he returns to London. The time for the British leader's speech and where he will go from Quebec were not disclosed.

Mr. Roosevelt, it already had been announced, will address Canada's parliament in Ottawa Wednesday before heading south.

In describing the luncheon gathering, Bracken said it was a "military luncheon and a meeting to decide important matters of strategy in the Pacific."

The general assumption was that the president and prime minister already had reached a tentative agreement on war strategy involving China, had informed Soong of it and asked him to ratify it.

Bracken told the press conference that he had not previously seen "a more hopeless assignment for journalists" because while so many were fattered here yet nothing could be released about specific military decisions which have been made.

"I can assure you," he said, (Turn to Page 2—Story A)

Evidence In Layton Trial Ends

Final Testimony Deals With Low I.Q. of Suspect

DALLAS, August 23—(Special)—Final testimony, dealing chiefly with the defendant's mentality, was offered Monday in circuit court here in the trial of Richard Harry Layton, charged with first degree murder in connection with the death of Ruth Hildebrand, 17, of Dallas. Both state and defense rested, and arguments of opposing counsel will be offered Tuesday. Indications were the case would reach the jury late Tuesday or sometime Wednesday.

In rebuttal to defense testimony to the effect that Layton was of low mentality, the state produced records of his grades in the Salem schools. In the fifth grade he had made average or better scholastic marks; reading 2, writing 3, arithmetic 3, conduct 1.

Miss Fannie L. Douglas, teacher in the Salem school system for 25 years, said Layton was in the middle third of his class "when he worked." She also testified that he had been in the seventh grade, contrary to defense claims.

Dr. John C. Evans, superintendent of the Oregon state hospital, remarked that he felt Layton had not cooperated with him in his mental examination of the defendant, and that he considered him quite sane. He added that (Turn to Page 2—Story D)

Germans Say Reds Irritated With Allies

STOCKHOLM, Aug. 23—(AP)—The German foreign office said Monday that the recall of Soviet Ambassador Litvinoff from Washington was based on "Russian irritation" over American and British "failure to open another front immediately on the continent," rather than any "conflict over political policies," dispatches from Berlin said.

A Wilhelmstrasse spokesman was quoted as saying there was no reason to believe political differences existed between "Russia and her allies." The Berlin correspondent of Dagens Nyheter reported this, adding that the Germans interpreted the recall as a "clear step by Moscow expressing irritation caused by the western powers' war methods against Germany."

Biddle Says War Frauds Bigger Now Than in '17

CHICAGO, Aug. 23—(AP)—United States Attorney General Francis Biddle said Monday that war frauds in the United States are "much bigger than they were in 1917 and 1918" and announced the department of justice was "seeking heavier penalties" and giving priority to the prosecution of such cases.

He told a meeting of United States attorneys from 10 middle western states that 123 federal indictments charging war fraud have been returned and that 1278 investigations are pending. In 71 cases already disposed of, he added, convictions and penalties have been obtained in 90 per cent.

Firemen Extinguish Motor Fire in Hotel

Salem firemen were called to the Marion hotel at 11:30 Monday night to extinguish a burning motor of the refrigerator system in the southwest corner of the basement.

Danish-Nazi Clashes Reported

NEW YORK, Aug. 23—(AP)—The British Broadcasting corporation, quoting advices from Sweden, declared Monday that "A state of emergency" had been declared in Odense, Aarhus and four other towns in Denmark as a result of clashes between Danish and German troops.

Fifteen German soldiers were killed in one clash at Flensburg, said the broadcast, which was recorded by CBS. It quoted the Stockholm newspaper Svenska Dagbladet as the source of its information.