

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
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Single Department for War?

Senator Truman has an article in Collier's calling for the union of the war and navy departments. President Roosevelt says there is "general agreement" that after the war the two departments should be merged under a unified command. We had understood there was rather wide discussion of the subject, but not that there was "general agreement" in favor of the merger.

The proposal is one that sounds plausible. We have had instances of failure of coordination by the two branches of the service; and in Washington claims have been made that there would be great economies if the departments were joined and unified purchasing carried out.

But study will show that merging the two departments is not a guarantee of unity. For some years we have had pressures for a separate air force, so there are arguments for division as well as unification of war services. The navy fears that in the event of a consolidation it would suffer and perhaps the army feels the same way, especially if an admiral was at the top. The air force might come in with claims that it was being discriminated against both by the navy and the infantry division of the army.

Even with a single department headed by a civilian you would have immediately a division of the department into army and navy bureaus with separate chains of command. The rivalries would continue, and they would be no less fierce. In the event of war it still would be necessary to get the separate services to coordinate their efforts.

As far as congress is concerned such a merger would force the merger of the separate committees on naval and military affairs. But no one member could absorb all the information necessary to pass on legislation for all branches of the service. So again the general committee would have to be sub-divided.

There is also the matter of tradition of each fighting service. Both army and navy have an esprit de corps which is worth something. To roll both together might destroy something of that invaluable psychological element which is indispensable for a good fighting outfit.

In Washington in June the writer heard a radio forum discussion of this topic, in which our own Congressman Mott took part. From the debate we came to the conclusion that substantial opposition will develop if a merger bill is brought up.

Grass Fires

From various parts of the country come reports of grass fires. The casual reader is inclined to scan this news without appreciating its real significance. While our grass fires are nothing like the Indians set in the open glades of this valley to keep down forest growth and insure pasture for horses and deer, and nothing like the old prairie fires of the plains states, these local fires are not without real damage. They destroy pasturage, at least for the rest of the season; they may reach grain fields and destroy the crops; they may ignite farm buildings and wipe them out.

Farmers are giving more attention to the fighting of fires. Suburban communities and rural districts are forming fire districts, under state law, which can levy taxes and purchase fire-fighting equipment. In other cases individual farmers or groups of neighbors buy light equipment of tank and hose which is very useful in putting out grass and other fires. This equipment is not now available, but when the war is over, farmers will do well to equip themselves so they can fight fires in fields and in buildings more successfully.

Editorial Comment

MEASURING WORTH OF CITIES

All over the United States there is a demand that in the post-war the aim of cities must be NOT just "bigger and better" but definitely BETTER even where the city happens to be getting bigger as is the case of Eugene.

In the past, two factors—transportation and markets—have dominated the placement of industry. There are many indications that in the future, LIVING CONDITIONS will be regarded as quite as important by the hardboiled gentlemen who direct industry.

Why? Because the workman who must live in a crowded slum is likely to be both inefficient and "a trouble maker" from the employer's narrow point of view. From the community's broader viewpoint, the slum impairs citizenship.

Recently a distinguished scholar, Edward L. Thorndyke attempted a method of measurement for cities and the results are published in a little book, "Your City." He sets up 10 items by which (upon application of certain mathematical formulas worked out with the U. S. Census) it is possible to determine whether your city is above or below par in "good living":

1. Infant mortality rates.
2. Expenditures for maintenance of parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities.
3. Estimated value of schools, libraries, museums, parks and recreational facilities.
4. Value of public property used for public service, offset by NET DEBT.
5. Expenditures for operation and maintenance of schools.
6. Proportion of high school graduates to population for the given year.
7. Public library circulation in relation to population.
8. Proportion of persons 16 to 18 still in school.
9. Proportion of telephone to population.
10. Proportion of power use.

Soon as we can get the necessary base figures and do the required arithmetic we will tell you how Eugene stacks up. By the Thorndyke measurement very few of America's "great cities" get even a passing mark. Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Oakland do pretty well, but the high marks go to smaller communities such as Springfield, Mass.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Schenectady, N.Y.; and suburban Evanston, Ill.; Newton, Mass.; Glendale, Calif.; and a few of the "swell burbs" like Pasadena are tops. Most of our Southern cities are near the bottom of the heap, largely on account of their ansolved Negro problems.

—Eugene Register-Guard.

Victory in France

Seldom in modern military history has an army suffered as overwhelming and sudden a defeat as the German seventh army in northwest France. To this is added a large part of the 15th army which had been moved south of the Seine to aid the seventh in making an escape. All now are caught in the merciless whipping of allied planes and pounding of allied armor. So confused is the rout that the flight is now reported to be to the Rhine and not toward any intermediate line such as the Seine or the Marne. If this proves true then the battle of France will quickly come to an end with the liberation of France and the Low Countries.

The carnage was evidently so terrible that soldiers and war correspondents turned from the revolting sight as the helpless Nazi columns were riddled and as clumps of enemy formations were caught in pockets of artillery fire.

While the noose was not drawn tight enough between Falaise and Argentan to capture the full remainder of the seventh army, those who escaped merely rushed into a wider loop thrown by the allies. It is clear that allied infantrymen and airmen responded to General Eisenhower's order of the day and grasped the "fleeting but definite opportunity for a major allied victory." It is clear too that his forecast was accurate and that the realization of this crushing victory "will mean notable progress toward the final downfall of our enemy."

Hitler himself may well meditate on the caption of the sundial: "It is later than you think."

Stiffening in the East

For some weeks the Russians have made no such progress as they did during the latter part of June and through most of July. In their summer offensive they swept the enemy out of the remainder of Russian territory and made some penetration of the Baltic states and of Poland. But they have been stopped before Warsaw and still stand at the borders of East Prussia. Some of the hesitation may be due to organization of armies and communications for fresh attack, but there is reason to believe that German resistance has stiffened.

At Warsaw there was a German attack in force and in one sector of the front the Russians admitted yielding a town to the enemy. There have been varying reports of the distances of Russians from Warsaw and from East Prussia, with little indication of recent progress except toward the latter.

It may be anticipated that the Germans will fight with greater fury to defend their own soil; and the same rule applies in the west as in the east. Hence the great importance of destroying the German armies in the field rather than merely forcing them to retreat and yield territory.

Interpreting The War News

By KIRKE L. SIMPSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WAR ANALYST

The war that Hitler made has come to German soil in the east by land as well as air—this crucial August weekend and it was moving swiftly toward a climax in the west.

Faced with possibilities of disaster, Nazi front-line cheer leaders preached the strange doctrine of a retreat to victory, seeking to lull German public opinion against ever mounting military reverses. Vague promises of new armies and new weapons rolled off the lips of spokesmen. Distorted versions of battles still raging in towns and cities which for days have been held by the Russians or allies filled the German air. No mention was made of the internal revolt in France against the German conquerors that is ripping French soil loose from Nazi control even before allied liberation armies reach the scene.

To German troops reeling backward in East Prussia under Russian blows, to shattered remnants of the once powerful Nazi seventh army in northwestern France, to survivors of stunned German garrisons in southern France, and, most of all perhaps, to the men of Vichy and their satellite French collaborationists these Nazi outgivings must have brought sardonic laughter. They know the fate awaiting them with a German flight from France.

And it was for that Nazi broadcasters were preparing the German people. It was already in progress west of the Seine as they spoke. It was no less impending in the south as the allied Riviera beachhead expanded against still meagre opposition, and as French underground armies leaped from cover to pounce upon isolated enemy detachments.

The full scope and effect of that French uprising in response to the long delayed call to arms is yet to be assessed. Only snap-shot glimpses of its operation are yet revealed. However, it has an obvious definite relationship to allied grand strategy. It is a potential factor of supreme importance in hastening a German retreat into the old battle grounds of world war one in northeastern France.

American columns hammering up the Loire above Orleans on the right flank of Eisenhower's battle line and the nearest prongs of Patch's Mediterranean invasion army curling swiftly about Toulon are still nearly 400 miles apart. In between them, however, all through the mountains that flank the Rhone valley from the Swiss frontiers to the sea, French patriots are busy mopping up German control centers.

Traced on the map these French uprisings tend toward linking up allied operations theatres in the north and south. They seem most effective and powerful in the region east of Lyon in the upper Rhone valley and virtually midway between the two nearest approaching allied wings. That they are forcing diversion of German troops and also exposing German communications to ground sabotage as well as allied air harrying is unquestionable.

The gathering momentum of the French internal uprising bids fair to help turn the German occupation in most of France into a German entrapment before enemy garrison forces ill equipped for fast movement can effect their escape.

With the final allied clean-up of the seventh army west of the Seine—and it cannot be long delayed—Eisenhower will be in a position to throw tremendous power by land and air southeastward through or around Paris to reach the upper Rhone and effect a junction with Patch's Franco-American troops in the south.



"Century Plant?"

News Behind the News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 20 — Traveling Mr. Roosevelt and his war publicist, Elmer Davis, came back from the Pacific front with promising but indefinite and almost warning reports about the time necessary to crush Japan.



The common notion that "it will only take a few months" after Germany is being correspondingly altered here—at least by official authorities. The new notion is that another newly-mounted campaign next spring will be required and the end may not come until a year from now. So they say now.

This deepening attitude is due to a new conception of the military situation. Next logical steps for us in the Pacific are the Philippines, Formosa and the southern string of islands off the Jap mainland (Ryukyu islands, and even Kyushu, southernmost large Jap island contiguous to the home-land group).

No secret can be made of General MacArthur's intention to move promptly upon the Philippines. He promised it. The president, after calling him to Honolulu, confirmed the promise.

We cannot go anywhere in the Pacific without air coverage. Dangers of landing and sustaining troops subject to Jap air attack are too great to be considered.

From this basic consideration has grown the strategy of pushing our land bases for air power steadily forward. This progress has reached the Guam-Saipan frontier, which Mr. Davis promises will lead now to the next steps ("not long" were his words, but every good democratic politico here hopes MacArthur will be back in the Philippines before election day).

The bulk of the Jap armies are strewn over the thousands of miles of Asia from Manchukuo to Burma (no longer India, from which they now have been chased).

Conceivably, we could establish beachheads on the South China coast and open a sea route to Chungking. Our people may be reluctant to do this without air bases on Formosa and in the Philippines to cover that operation.

But what is needed to annihilate Jap fighting power in China, is not necessarily our armies, but weapons and food for the limitless number of Chinese who want to do the job.

The source of Jap military power, however, is not in their farflung armies but in the group of large islands known as the Jap mainland. If Japan proper could be conquered, the armies in China and elsewhere must fall for lack of supplies, weapons, even food, as the whole Jap distribution system would be destroyed.

As we have 100 aircraft carriers plus the overwhelming Pacific seapower we know we control, plus whatever will be released from Europe as Germany falls, why not create an armada sufficiently powerful to blast straight into Tokyo, carrying our air coverage with us? It would save a lot of chasing around and heavy fighting for preliminary positions.

Jap airpower is still a little better than the German, but not much. They have production while Nazi factories practically have been extinguished by our air bombardment. Also, a considerable army remains on home Jap soil.

The air force would have to be met and defeated first, then the land force, but the task is not beyond assured, daring planning. Incidentally, we have an admiral in charge of Pacific operations, the only front at which the navy controls.

If we could do it at Saipan, we can do it in the Jap center at home or on a China beachhead. In case we head straight in, the war should not require another year.

As for the land fighting in China and Burma, we are only marking time, as far as grand strategy goes. Nothing pleasant can be reported about the Jap successes on the Yellow river (Hengyang). Talk survives that



(Continued from Page 1)

brought the Norsemen down from Norway and Denmark to overrun England, ravish the coasts of France, and found settlements from Normandy to Sicily and North Africa, had been tamed. A century of Christian teaching gave it a new sense of direction, and the abbey church with its attendant dormitory and refectory and cloister and "great hall" where in 1469 Louis XI constituted the Order of St. Michael, marks its climax. Of this and of the cathedral of Montreale built by Normans settled in Sicily, Adams wrote:

"No art—either Greek or Byzantine, Italian or Arab—has ever created two religious types so beautiful, so serious, so impressive, and yet so different, as Mont-Saint-Michel watching over its northern ocean, and Montreale, looking down over its forests of orange and lemon, on Palermo and the Sicilian seas."

The Mont rising from the na-

they may try to organize a winter campaign westward to go into Chungking by the back door, but this seems an undertaking beyond their ability.

The monsoon has been on in Burma since mid-May. They said we could never fight during the rains. But General Stilwell first showed them how and Mountbatten planned similarly, so we have accomplished limited, yet unbelievable successes.

The rains will be over in three or four weeks. Then there will be more action.

The Literary Guidepost

By JOHN SELBY
"FINAL SCORE," by Warren Beck (Knopf; \$2.50).

Warren Beck's "Final Score" is pretty wonderful. It is true that he gets himself needlessly involved in one of those fictional devices so popular with novelists, but even that cannot do too much harm. The device is that Mr. Beck insists on telling his story in the form of a conversation between two men, one a featured player in the drama itself, and the other an outsider. This does not obscure the story too much; it does, however, have the effect of straining it through a gauze at times, and it makes for oblique rather than straight narration.

But although these things are true, it is also true they do not dim Mr. Beck's little allegory. He has written a wholly accurate and often brilliant study of a man who made a great success on a fluke, and never could escape the pattern of the success. In "Final Score," Bill Hutten was a football player at "Monroe," which appears to be another name for Madison, Wis. He had no brains, he was sullen, egotistical, deadpan, resentful of people with more polish and manners, a boor. It happened that Bill was lucky in making a wonderful run, one day, and that the coach saw a chance to build up a star by providing interference. Bill became a living legend, and the crystallization of the mind of the "South Side" of Monroe. This was a heavy and dull mind, the material from which fascists are made.

Mr. Beck makes it clear that his pattern would have worked just as well if Bill had, for ex-



Kenneth L. Dixon
AT THE FRONT!

Maj. Benny Shatters
Quiet of Italy Night
With Lone Missions

WITH THE AEF IN THE MEDITERRANEAN THEATER, Aug. 12.—(Delayed)—(P)—Some times the night's quiet around this fighter headquarters is broken by a Thunderbolt taking off in the moonlight.

And the men around the map and strategy boards look at one another and say:

"Where's Benny?"

The chances are pretty good that Maj. William B. Benedict, 26, huge, redheaded pilot from San Quentin, Cal., is bound on some lone, self-assigned mission.

They've nailed him to headquarters temporarily and technically he's not supposed to fly, but after nearly 200 RAF and AAF missions, and after shooting down six enemy planes and having four shot out from under him, he can't sit still.

He picks the tough ones, skip bombing railroad tunnels to seal off enemy guns inside, going through the hottest flak to knock out some enemy position, doing personal reconnaissance. When his pilots fly cover for the bombers, he often flies solitary top cover for them, just to see what happens and whether the boys are on the ball.

"If we didn't watch him he'd fly a couple of missions every day," the commanding officer said.

In June 1940, when he had only two years of college, the army air corps looked somewhat askance at Benny's educational qualifications, so he went up to Canada to visit his aunt and dropped into a RCAF recruiting office "just to see what their qualifications called for."

They shoved blanks under his huge freckled hand and Benny began singing. He hasn't been back to San Quentin.

In August, 1941, he went to England, was adopted by the RAF and flew a dozen combat missions. Then they sent him to Cairo just as Rommel was starting his big drive, and Benny spent the next year mostly helping cover a retreat.

In December, 1942, he transferred to the US air force with visions of going home for more training, but when he walked into AAF headquarters in Cairo and laid his log book on the desk they took one look at it and said: "You're just the guy we need. There's a P-40 waiting for you. You're a second lieutenant. Here's your orders, here's your money for uniforms, good-bye and goodluck. Just like that."

Benny had never seen a P-40. So he went out to the airport and asked the crew chief to give him a cockpit check. Hurricanes and Spitfires had been simple—just turn a couple of switches and take off. The P-40 had nine separate gadgets you had to tinker with first. But Benny solved them the first time and flew to Tunisia. In six days from combat with the RAF he was back in combat with the AAF.

Since then he's flown more than 100 additional missions. When stuck on the ground he storms and swears at the "soft life" he says the boys lead. He says "They're all spoon-fed, good guys, and have got what it takes, but not trained right." Then he beats on the table, roaring about how they should be trained.

"Benny, you're nuts," some ranking officer will tell him good-naturedly. "You can't run an air force that way."

Then, in an aside not intended for Benny's ears, the officer usually will add: "But what I would give for a squadron of guys just like him."

Benny doesn't want to go home now until the European war is over. After that:

"I'll go home and stay there. None of this Pacific war for me. I get malaria too easy. Those guys seem to be handling the situation all right by themselves."

Then a speculative look comes into his eyes:

"But that's quite a little war they've got out there in the Pacific, at that, isn't it?"

Then you know he chances are that on some night the stillness over some Pacific atoll will be shattered by a Thunderbolt and the men around the maps will look up an ask "Where's Benny?"

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War Prisoner "Coddling" Is Investigated

WASHINGTON, Aug. 19.—(AP)—Reports of "coddling" of axis war prisoners and "unworthy" treatment of wounded United States service men are being investigated by the house military committee, Chairman May (D-Ky.) disclosed today.

Committee investigators, May told reporters, have been sent to prison camps in Kentucky and Pennsylvania to inquire into complaints "that axis prisoners of war are being coddled and treated like heroes."

"We have received many complaints," the Kentuckian said, "and according to reports some of these prisoners are being treated like guests, being transported to movies and held up as great heroes. It is one thing to treat them decently, but it is something else to give them a lot of privileges just because they happened to be captured while trying to kill a lot of our boys."

May also said the committee's criticism of conditions at the nearby Bolling field station hospital was "just the beginning of an investigation of conditions in all these army hospitals."

Bolling field's hospital was described as "a firetrap" and its discontinuance was recommended after an investigation headed by Representative Fenton (R-Pa.), physician member of May's committee.

"THE YOUNG IDEA" By Mossler



"May I eat in?"

Stevens

Diamonds

Each beautiful jewel enthroned in a handsome setting has a personality of its own. Choose yours with care and confidence from our select collection of fine stones.

Credits
H. Deusted

Stevens