

IT SEEMS TO ME

By Charles A. Sprague

What no one else had been willing to touch Director Byrnes of the office of war mobilization took hold of Saturday and dealt with decisively.

Horse tracks were closed in Washington and California, but the dogs continued to chase rabbits in Portland as money-lush crowds posted their bets at pari-mutuel wickets.

One reason why there was no earlier prohibition of racing was the partnership of government in the take. I recall at the governor's conference in Asheville in 1942, just after tire rationing had come in, much of the concern of governors present was over the effect of rationing on race meets.

(Continued on editorial page)

Allied Planes Blast German Supply Lines

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)— Allied fliers rocked the Germans with a lightning one-two punch today as Britain-based bombers and fighters lashed out at vital enemy supply lines and swarms of fighters based in France, Belgium and Holland poured bombs and rockets on Nazi troops and armored vehicles in the third straight day of clear-weather attacks.

Following on the heels of the gigantic 7000-plane Christmas eve assault, the U. S. 8th air force based in England today sent 800 warplanes — half of them heavy bombers — streaking across the channel in renewed blows at the railroad and highway lifelines of the German counteroffensive.

War Prisoners Make Escape

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 (AP)— Twenty-five German war prisoners broke out of Papago park camp near Phoenix, Ariz., yesterday afternoon and 19 still are at large, the federal bureau of investigation reported tonight.

Three Salem Families Get Christmas Babies

Three babies were born Christmas Day in Salem hospitals, two girls and a boy. At 12:03 a. m. Mr. and Mrs. Carl Boedigher, 120 Morgan avenue, became the parents of a daughter, born in General hospital. At 3:42 a. m. Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Boomer became the parents of a son, weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces, at Salem Deaconess hospital.

It Wasn't Santa Claus

HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 25 (AP)— It wasn't Santa Claus that visited actor Robert Walker's home last night. Thieves removed jewelry and clothing valued at \$4000.

Weather

Maximum temperature Monday 52 degrees, minimum 28 degrees, no rain, river -2 ft. 2 in. Fairly cloudy with few snow flurries over and east of the Cascades Tuesday and Wednesday. Showers northwest portion. Little change in temperature.

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GERMANS STRIKE ANEW

Nazis Drive for Meuse in Fierce Armored Assault

Allied Air Fleets Darken Skies; Enemy Gains One-Three Miles But Meets Stiff U.S. Resistance

By James M. Long PARIS, Dec. 26.—(AP)—The Germans were bursting toward the Meuse in a fierce new show of armored power on this bitter cold Christmas day in which allied air armadas for the third straight day darkened the skies with one of the mightiest attacks since D-day and wrought terrific ruin.

On the basis of latest positions disclosed at supreme headquarters tonight as of mid-day Sunday, these advances were measured in perhaps one to three miles, but from field dispatches describing the force of the onslaught it seemed probable they had gone farther in terrific Christmas day battles bloodily costly for both sides.

Against toughened doughboys' resistance, the Germans this time were not reeling off big gains, but they had definitely broken the 48-hour virtual stalemate.

One of the new surges was aimed west of Laroche toward the Meuse, probably no more than 15 miles ahead of advanced enemy units farther south, reported operating near Rochefort, 14 1/2 miles from the river.

A second was aimed northward from Laroche in what appeared to be an attempt to outflank the St. Vith wedge which has split in two the big German push in Belgium.

One German force, pressing southward within 16 miles of the French border, finally seized Libramont, 23 miles northeast of the French gateway city of Sedan, and drove the Americans from Rosieres, eight miles to the east.

As these forces traveled south, an American relief force some four miles farther east was fighting north in an attempt to relieve doughboys forces cut off in the Belgian road center of Bastogne, six miles ahead of its advanced positions.

U. S. Blows Hurled Along the 25 miles of Field Marshal Karl Von Rundstedt's southern flank in the Ardennes Hills, Gen. Eisenhower's counter-attack kept up its steady battering but there were no further gains reported since this morning's announcement of the capture of three towns.

(The Berlin radio said US forces in great strength, paced by veteran divisions of the Third and Seventh armies, went over to the attack Sunday on a broad front against the southern flank and had forced some German withdrawals.)

Chinese Stab Supply Lines

CHUNGKING, Dec. 25 (AP)— A series of stabbing attacks at Japanese supply lines northeast and northwest of enemy-held Kweilin, capital of Kwangsi province, was announced tonight by the Chinese high command.

While the main body of Chinese forces still battled for Hochih, in western Kwangsi, knife-like attacks struck at two important Japanese communications hubs deep in enemy-held territory.

Christmas, Anno Domini 1944, Mixture of Tradition & War

By Romney Wheeler LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)— This was Christmas, anno Domini 1944. A mighty organ filled the vaulting darkness of London's Westminster cathedral with the throb of "Silent Night" at midnight mass.

(Westward an American defense line braced for the next hammer blow of a German army gambling on a knockout punch.) Bright Christmas trees and lights cheered GI's far from home in Red Cross clubs and canteens. (An infantry colonel said, "we just sat up on this hill and mowed them down. The whole valley down there is littered with their dead.") The lit of carols, traditional as

Churchill, Eden in Athens

'Czar' of All Food Is Sought

GOP's in House Declare Single Man Necessary

By William F. Arbogast WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 (AP)— House Republicans renewed today their suggestion that a food "czar" be appointed with almost unlimited authority over pricing and distribution.

Their recommendation came from Representative Jenkins of Ohio as he announced renewal of a republican food study committee named last year.

Jenkins, chairman of the 444-man house group, did not comment specifically on OPA's announcement over the weekend of tighter food rationing, but he said the present food situation was due to failure of the administration to appoint a single man to supervise the handling of food as the committee recommended some time ago.

"A single individual, free from the administration's whims, could coordinate and regulate all ramifications of the food industry, eliminating many shortages and providing better distribution," the Ohioan said in an interview.

The proposed food "czar" would have the assistance of experts on wheat, corn, fruit and vegetables.

All 55 Yank Pilots Return For Dinner

EIGHTH AIR FORCE FIGHTER STATION, Dec. 25 (AP)— When 55 Thunderbolts streaked off this field, banked into the sun and headed for Germany today, cooks began preparing turkey for Christmas dinner.

It was their job to guess how many places to set. With utmost confidence they set 55 places. At dusk, the 55 places were filled.

The famed 56th-fighter group— 52 of its pilots are aces with five or more kills in combat— had returned from the flak-filled German skies without loss. Two planes roared in an hour late, but their pilots made it for dinner.

Ranging over the Cologne area on patrol duty, the group shot down eight enemy planes, bringing its three-day total to 45 and its two-year total to a record-breaking 800.

Yanks Bomb Swiss Town

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)— An American squadron bombed Thuningen, Swiss town on the southwest German border today, an official communique broadcast by the Swiss radio reported.

The bombing damaged the German rail station on the frontier, some factories and a number of houses, the communique said. One German was killed and four Swiss were injured, according to the report.

Mustang Group Tops Its Christmas Goal

A U. S. FIGHTER STATION, Dec. 25 (AP)— The Eighth air force's 337th Mustang group shot down 31 German planes in yesterday's big air battles and thereby exceeded its Christmas goal.

For several days a sign had been hanging on the bulletin board — "500 by Christmas." The day's kills gave them 514.

Yanks Killed in Break-Through



Two American soldiers lie dead on the ground somewhere in Belgium, killed in the new German break-through. Photo is one from a roll of film captured from a German soldier and shows equipment removed from Yanks, as well as shoes from man in foreground. (AP wirephoto from signal corps radiophoto)

Shipyards Employes Work Without Pay On Christmas Day

BRUNSWICK, Va., Dec. 25 (AP)— More than 1500 shipyard employes voluntarily gave up their Christmas holiday today to work without pay on a cargo carrying vessel as a Christmas gift to the men on the fighting fronts.

An additional 500 volunteered for the night shift. The workers are among the 13,000 employes of the J. A. Jones construction company.

U. S. Prisoners Hit by Bombs Claims Berlin

LONDON, Dec. 25 (AP)— A Berlin broadcast today declared U. S. bombers set fire to an American prisoner of war camp on the Lahn river Sunday and that many Americans were killed.

"Direct hits were scored on several barracks, one of which was a hospital for the wounded and sick U. S. prisoners, and all of them were killed," said the propaganda agency.

"Out of 60 American officers, the greater part were killed. Others were seriously injured. Still other American prisoners of war who were just being transferred to the camp from a train, were machine gunned," the German report said.

Pan-American Meet Planned

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 (AP)— A Pan-American foreign ministers conference to discuss hemisphere problems may be held either immediately before or after a United Nations meeting, probably in March of April.

Argentina was asked a conference to discuss her diplomatic isolation. The delay of most nations in answering her request and the vagueness of replies sent in make it certain that the meeting will not be on Argentina's terms, according to diplomats here.

German SS Elite Guard Massacres 300 Italians

By the Associated Press The office of war information reported last night that members of the German SS elite guard and Italian fascists had massacred about 300 civilians at Moncyuo, in the Reggio Emilia region of northern Italy, according to reports received from abroad.

Seek to Conclude Conflict

Furious Fighting Continues; Meet Set for Today

By Stephen Barber ATHENS, Dec. 25 (AP)— Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Eden arrived dramatically in embattled Athens today and immediately began conferences seeking to settle the 23-day-old Greek conflict.

Even as the British Prime Minister and his foreign secretary were arranging for a general meeting of all factions at 4 p. m. Tuesday, the left-wing ELAS group continued furious fighting with British and Greek government forces throughout this Christmas day. Cannon fire and rocket blasts reverberated in the city.

ELAS Invited The ELAS was invited to send three or four representatives to the conference, with promises of safe conduct.

Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens, mentioned as a possible regent for Greece in previous attempts to settle the conflict, will preside at the Tuesday meeting.

The seriousness with which the Greek situation is regarded was indicated by the announcement tonight that Churchill and Eden had arrived and disclosure that Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander, Allied commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, and Harold MacMillan, British resident minister in the Mediterranean, both were in Athens also.

Heavy Snow Slows Action In Italy Area

ROME, Dec. 25 (AP)— A heavy Christmas snowfall carpeted the Italian front today, confining activity to probing stabs at enemy positions after heavy German artillery, mortar and machine gun fire throughout the night.

The northward and westward push of the Eighth army above highway nine has whittled the strong, broad enemy salient east of the Senio river from a width of 10 miles to less than five.

Canadian units advanced along the heavily-mined lateral road on the Senio's east bank, rooting the enemy from many fortified buildings in the area of Rossetta, 10 miles northwest of Allied-held Ravenna. They encountered thick German mortar and machinegun fire.

Red Cross Workers Arrive in Australia

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Dec. 25 (AP)— Forty-six American Red Cross workers have arrived safely in Australia.

Eight Violent Holiday Deaths Reported in Portland District

PORTLAND, Dec. 25 (AP)— The Christmas holiday wound up to a close today with a toll of eight violent deaths in this area as police predicted an all-time record of traffic accidents.

A crash-punctuated weekend, which kept police cars and ambulances screaming through the city, cost five lives and sent nearly a score of motorists to hospitals. A two-year-old girl burned to death, and two persons were fatally shot.

Killed in head-on collisions were Jack Marston, Molalla, in a crash on the Molalla-Colton highway; William Smarten, 42, Portland, and Guy McBride, 32, Vancouver, in a crash on the St. Helens road. Other traffic victims were Joseph Roy, 51, Milwaukie; and John Burton, 44, Portland. Mrs. Viola Belle Hamilton, 23, died today from a bullet wound inflicted in her Vanport City home last night. Deputy sheriff Ralph Benton quoted her husband, Maurice, 31, as saying he drove away after a tiff and returned a few minutes later to find his wife shot.

Yankees Capture Port City

Nippon Suffers Greatest Defeat Says MacArthur

By C. Yates McDaniel GENERAL MACARTHUR'S HEADQUARTERS, Philippines, Tuesday, Dec. 26 (AP)— Gen. Douglas MacArthur declared today that the Leyte-Samar campaign "was closed except for mopping up" yesterday after American doughboys had captured Palompon in a water-borne assault which sealed the fate of the Japanese and closed their last escape port on northwestern Leyte island.

Asserting that Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita (Nipponese commander in the Philippines) "has sustained perhaps the greatest defeat in the military annals of the Japanese army," MacArthur's communique said the Japanese had lost an estimated 112,728 killed and 493 captured in the 67-day campaign.

Crushing Defeat "The completeness of this destruction," said MacArthur, "has seldom been paralleled in the history of warfare."

The magnitude of the American victory in the first phase of the campaign to liberate the Philippines was further borne out by Gen. MacArthur's assertion that 2784 enemy planes were destroyed in the islands, since the landing on Leyte Oct. 22, by the Third and Seventh fleet carrier planes, the Army's Fifth air force, marine units and American shore and ship anti-aircraft guns.

Many Ships Sunk A total of 27 warships and 41 transports sunk during destruction of 10 Leyte-bound Japanese convoys does not include enemy losses in naval battles in Leyte gulf October 25. The American casualties of 2623 killed, 8422 wounded and 172 missing covered only the American ground forces losses.

The coup de grace was given the Nipponese on Leyte Christmas morning (Philippine time) when a 77th division force entered Palompon bay and stormed ashore while escorting US Seventh fleet PT boats beat a tattoo against the beach and the division's own artillery laid down a heavy bombardment from advanced positions inland from Palompon.

Russians Drive To West Limits Of Budapest

LONDON, Tuesday, Dec. 26 (AP) The red army drove to the western city limits of Budapest yesterday and, in a 15-mile advance, cut the last railway escape route westward from the Hungarian capital and came within 10 miles of completely surrounding it.

The Russians also surged westward through southern Czechoslovakia toward the Hron (Garam) river north and south of Leva (Levice) in a drive within less than 65 miles of Bratislava and 98 miles from Vienna.

The soviet communique, announcing these successes last night, said they were accomplished with severe cost to the nazis in both men and material, inflicted by Russian bombers as well as ground troops.

The toll of German and Hungarian dead in the five days of fighting southwest of Budapest has risen, by Russian account, to more than 14,000 and hundreds of nazi dead were left on the battlefields of southern Czechoslovakia.

Reds, Hungary Near Accord

MOSCOW, Dec. 25 (AP)— Political observers in Moscow believe an armistice will be effected soon between the soviet union and the new provisional government of Hungary formed at Debrecen.

All negotiations between this new government and the soviet union are being reported fully to United States and British representatives in Moscow. Representing co-belligerents against Hungary, U. S. Ambassador W. Averill Harriman and British Minister John Balfour certainly will sit in on the coming armistice conference.

Reds Confident 'Ike' Will Handle Germans

MOSCOW, Dec. 25 (AP)— In a lengthy review of the German counteroffensive on the western front, the newspaper Pravda took the line today that General Eisenhower would deal with the situation, and gave the impression of every confidence in the western allies.