

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Farm Implement Quota Boosted 30%; Hitler's Disasters Mount as Russians Speed Up Caucasus-Ukraine Offensive; Tripoli's Fall Spurs Tunisia Drive

EDITOR'S NOTE: When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of Western Newspaper Union's news analysts and not necessarily of this newspaper. Released by Western Newspaper Union.



Closer relations between the United States and Chile and a harder crackdown on Nazi espionage in South America were results expected from the recent action of the Chilean government in breaking diplomatic relations with the Axis. Shown above are Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles (left) and Senator Don Rodolfo Michels, Chilean ambassador, discussing the situation.

FOOD PRODUCTION: Gets New Incentive

Two significant steps to spur the "Food for Victory" campaign were taken when the War Production board authorized a 30 per cent increase in production of farm machinery and Secretary of Agriculture Wickard announced a program of federal credit designed to extend from \$200,000,000 to \$250,000,000 to farmers for stepping up essential food production.

The WPB increased the steel allotment for farm machinery from 137,000 tons to 187,000 tons for the first quarter of 1943. This new tonnage was in addition to an increase previously authorized for the production of repair parts for farm implements.

Mr. Wickard said loans needed mostly by small and medium-sized farmers would be extended through the Regional Agricultural Credit corporation. Size of loans will be limited only by the amount needed to do the production job. The loans will be of short-term duration at 5 per cent interest.

NORTH AFRICA: Death of Empire

Tripoli's fall had various meanings for various interpreters. To historians it wrote finale to Mussolini's grandiose dreams of empire, for it was here the Duce had begun his disastrous expansion policy. To military observers it meant that the Allies could now concentrate closer attention on cleaning up the last Axis strongholds in Tunisia.

It had been apparent to observers that Marshal Rommel's retreat through Tripolitania had had Tunisia and not Tripoli as its goal. Rearguard efforts to protect the main body of his retreat had constituted the only action in and around Tripoli.

Allied airmen had not only strafed doomed Tripoli, but General Montgomery's British eighth army and General LeClerc's Fighting French had constantly harried the retiring Afrika Korps.

PRICE RISE: Predicted by Brown

As additional rationing and price regulations were promulgated, the American public learned that Price Administrator Prentiss M. Brown's direction of the OPA would be less dramatic but no less firm than that of his predecessor Leon Henderson. Mr. and Mrs. Average Citizen were assured by the new administrator, however, that the OPA would be operated solely for the protection of the American people. Frankly acknowledging that price rises were inevitable, Mr. Brown promised that such rises would be "slow and well-ordered."

HARD COAL: Miners Bow to FDR

Dangers of a crippling hard coal shortage were averted and a face-saving maneuver for labor executed when 12,000 Pennsylvania miners returned to work after a three-week old unauthorized walkout following a curt ultimatum from President Roosevelt.

The President had served notice that unless the miners ceased their wildcat strike within 48 hours, he would take "necessary steps" to safeguard the war effort. A tangled skein of labor politics had complicated the eastern hard coal situation. Efforts of John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, and the War Labor board to get the strikers back on the job had failed.

AXIS TRUMP: Subs Still Potent

Hurled back on all world fronts by the ever-increasing ferocity of United Nations attacks, the Axis still controlled one ace offensive weapon—German submarines.

Hitler was said by British Admiral Sir Percy Noble to be maintaining 200 U-boats of his fleet of 500 at sea all the time in an effort to keep the tremendous output of Allied war factories from the battlefields. Unofficial British estimates placed Nazi submarine construction at 15 to 20 a month—faster than naval experts believe the Allies are sinking them.

Elmer Davis, director of the Office of War Information, reported that German submarines had sunk more Allied shipping in January than in December.

A brighter side of the picture emerged, however, when the Lend-Lease administration announced that the United States and Britain had sent Russia 5,800 tanks and 4,600 airplanes up to January 1 and promised that aid to the Soviet "will grow still more in 1943." Regardless of submarine wolfpacks, convoys were getting through.

RUBBER: Jeffers vs. RFC

With his synthetic rubber program facing further curtailment so that more convoy escort vessels can be built and more high octane gasoline produced for fighting fliers, Rubber Conservation Director William M. Jeffers assumed control of all rubber import programs formerly exercised by the Board of Economic Warfare through the Rubber Re-



WILLIAM M. JEFFERS

serve company, a Reconstruction Finance corporation subsidiary.

This action meant that henceforth Jesse Jones, as head of the RFC's Rubber Reserve company, which supplies the money for operations, would take orders from Mr. Jeffers instead of from the BEW on rubber imports. It meant, moreover, that Jeffers hoped to bolster lagging synthetic rubber production by imports as a means of keeping civilians supplied with automobile tires.

SOUTH PACIFIC: Prelude by Air

"Softening up" attacks by air on Jap-held Lae were carried on by Allied fliers as a prelude to land movements by General MacArthur's forces. For Lae was the next calling spot on the Allies schedule after mop-up operations had been successfully concluded in the Sananda area, last Jap toehold in the Papuan peninsula.

Aerial activity was not confined to the Lae area, for American and Australian planes bombed shipping at Finschaven and hit the airdrome and wharf sections of Madang in New Guinea. Elsewhere Allied air-then visited Cape Gloucester and Gasmata in Jap-held New Britain and strafed an enemy barge concentration off Willuamex peninsula.

In Australia, Allied bombers continued their pounding of enemy warships and merchantmen far to the north. At Ambon, 600 miles northwest of Darwin, they scored hits on a cruiser and cargo vessel.

MORE BLOOD: Asked by Red Cross

Mounting war casualties prompted a request from the army and navy for the Red Cross to procure 4,000,000 pints of blood during 1943, or more than three times the amount obtained from donors last year.

Red Cross Chairman Dwight F. Davis disclosed that the request had come from Maj. Gen. James C. Magee and Rear Admiral Ross T. McIntyre, surgeons general of the army and navy respectively.

Before Senate Agricultural Committee



Top ranking officials of three government agencies are shown as they appeared before the senate agricultural committee to answer charges that the army's system of draft deferment is interfering with farm production. They are, left to right, Paul V. McNutt, director of war manpower; Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, draft director, and Secretary of Agriculture Claude R. Wickard.

U. S.-China Pact Signed in Washington



A treaty has been signed between the United States and China for the relinquishment of extraterritorial rights in China, and for the regulation of related matters. The treaty was signed in Secretary of State Cordell Hull's office. The Chinese ambassador, Dr. Wei Taoming, is using a brush pen. This is the first time that the language of the Chinese has been used in signing a treaty. Secretary Hull is shown at the right.

Nazis Take Time Out From Retreat to Eat



The crew of a German field gun have stopped their retreat long enough to partake of some much-needed food, on the Russian front. These men of the super race do not seem very happy about the fix they are in, with the Red army hot on their frozen trail. This picture was received in London from a neutral source after appearing in an Axis magazine.

They Tote Their Own Groceries



Mrs. Lewis B. Hershey, wife of the general who directs the selective program, is shown (left) and Mrs. Henry Wallace, wife of the vice president of the United States, is at right. Both ladies are carrying their own packages on a shopping tour as their contribution to the "I'll Carry Mine Campaign" sponsored by the Office of Defense Transportation. The idea is to help conserve vital delivery equipment for the war effort.

Jap Marine Flag



This official navy photo shows marine Private Massaro, of Edgewater, N. J., proudly exhibiting some Japanese war tools that were captured during a fierce engagement on Guadalcanal (facetiously nicknamed Death Island by the marines). Gas masks are hanging on the post behind Massaro, while he holds a flag of the Jap marines.

Studies Big Budget



Senate Majority Leader Alben W. Barkley takes a few minutes to study the largest budget ever sent to congress—calling for 109 billions. It will be the majority leader's problem to map plans for putting the necessary legislation through.

Looking Up, Down



Gov. J. M. Broughton, the tall head of the North Carolina commonwealth, who is 6 feet 1 1/2 inches tall, is shown here greeting his smallest legislator in the state capital, Raleigh, N. C. The short one is Billy Arthur, successful publisher of the Onslow County News and Views, who is only 36 inches tall.

Walks 145 Miles



Lieut. W. J. Dooley, U. S. A., is shown swearing in Donald B. Shaw as a member of the U. S. army at the induction center in Grand Central Palace, N. Y. Shaw, who is 22, walked from Albany to New York, 145 miles, part of the way through rain and snow, to report to his local draft board.

Washington Digest

Opinions Vary on Success Of Mexican Labor Plans



West, Southwest Farmers Reported Objecting to Minimum Wage Clause; Many Prefer Familiar 'Padrone' System.

By BAUKHAGE Senior Analyst and Commentator.

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What has happened to the scheme for bringing Mexican labor into the United States to help fill the gap left by the drain which industry and the draft have made on the farm?

In trying to get an answer to that question I turned up some rather interesting data which I wish to submit as an answer to that slur on our fair city that you hear frequently these days: "Washington is a mad house." It may at least explain what makes the wild cat wild.

I first went to an official in one of the war agencies with my query about Mexican labor. He is a very energetic, sincere worker, an anti-New Dealer, who is here trying to do his share to win the war. I am not permitted to use his name. He said:

"Somebody in our government with a lot of high ideals went to the Mexican government and made an agreement to send Mexican laborers to the United States. They arranged to have a contract which would deal with each laborer as a free agent and put in all sorts of conditions which the farmer who had to hire him had to agree to, including housing, transportation, and a minimum per diem rate.

"But instead of sending over experienced farm laborers the Mexican government gathered together a lot of ne'er-do-wells and hoboes. It didn't work. In fact, the farmers got less help than usual. The trouble was that before the social-conscious officials took a hand the American farmers had been making contracts with padrones (bosses) who got the money and the workers, established the working conditions and paid the workers as they saw fit. They brought in trained workers and they made them work. But the starry-eyed members of the Mexican and American governments wouldn't hear of making use of the padrone system."

That sounded very bad to me, so I called up the offices of Senator Downey of California and Senator McFarland of Arizona, who are members of a special committee holding hearings in California and New Mexico on this question of imported farm labor.

Then I talked with Senator McFarland. He said he would go along with Senator Downey in some of the things but not all. He said the farmers' complaint in Arizona was that they got neither the quantity nor the quality of workers they wanted. Cotton and dairy workers are their chief needs. He said that some of the farmers wouldn't sign a contract which the American government required. All protested against it. The objection was to the clause which established a minimum daily wage. The farmers said that the worker came out to the field in the morning, picked until he wanted to quit and then weighed in. But in order to be sure he had worked his minimum hours it was necessary to have a timekeeper and a book-keeper to check on his time and the whole process was too expensive.

Success Reported Senator Downey was still in California but his office was enthusiastic. I was told about how successful the use of this imported Mexican labor had been under the government's plan, in the beet industry, how it worked in the great guayle rubber fields of which 500,000 acres have been planted as part of our home-grown rubber program. How the senator was arranging with the state department for the admission of more foreign labor.

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Looking Up, Down There are two reasons why MacArthur may have another reason for not ballyhooing his achievements. He was beaten in Bataan. He may feel that until he has a complete victory to his credit, he doesn't want to sing too loudly.

Long-Staple Cotton He said, on the whole, that the Arizona farmer didn't get as many workers as needed and didn't get as good ones as he had expected.

On the department of agriculture's program for the next year there is a quota of 160,000 acres of long-staple cotton. One hundred thousand acres are allotted to Arizona. Normally, we import most of our long-staple cotton from abroad.

Senator McFarland said that unless some solution of the farm labor problem was reached, unless the present contract was modified and the Arizona farmers were assured more and better hands at a lower cost, they wouldn't be able to invest

BRIEFS . . . by Baukhage

"An Idle Ship Is a Crime Against the Public Interest,"—so reads a sign over the door of John H. Lofland, Co-ordinator of Ship Repair and Conversion.

Officers of ships sailing the inland waters of the United States are licensed to sail their ships on a river where no ships sail—the Red River of the North.

their money in planting the long-staple cotton the government wants.

Neither Senator Downey's office nor Senator McFarland's had any comments on the padrone system. Then I talked with a department of agriculture official. He was of the opinion that the contracts had worked out fairly well, and he pointed out that there was an "ideological" as well as a practical objection on the part of the farmers to the contract—the objection to establishing a minimum wage for farm labor.

Here are three quite different viewpoints. They represent a tiny fraction of the tangle which Washington has to untangle, has to reconcile. If Washington is a madhouse, who made it mad?

MacArthur Lauded For Leadership

When the chapter of war history dealing with the Battle of New Guinea is written, it will be one of the most important in the whole book. That is what military men here tell me.

They began telling me that bit by bit just before the second front in Africa opened. Then the African story wiped everything else off the first pages. Recently they have been talking about New Guinea again. They keep saying to me a little reproachfully, "the American people don't realize what MacArthur has achieved down in that jungle country."

These aren't the "MacArthur men"—there are such in the army, a little group of hero worshipers who perhaps worship a bit more fervently than logically. But the men who have watched the New Guinea campaign from Moresby straight up over the Owen Stanley range and down the other side and up to the eastern coast of the island tell me that MacArthur and the leaders he has about him have done a great and a significant job.

It is great because he has accomplished what it was freely predicted the Japs could not do (and didn't). It is significant because it has proved that Australians and Americans, given the training, can beat the Jap at his own game. They can (and have) beaten him with less training, without the fatalistic quality of the Jap, whose religion is to die rather than surrender even when dying isn't a military necessity.

There are two reasons, which military men put forward why the battle of New Guinea has not been painted in its true colors—represented in its true importance. One is the fact that MacArthur leans backward in his communiques. Another is a peculiar copy-desk prejudice of American newspapers, which causes them to play down reports from the distance and play up the reports from the war department in Washington.

There are two reasons why MacArthur's reports are given out from his headquarters in Australia instead of by the war department in Washington. One is that the Australians (and perhaps MacArthur) want it that way, and another is because American newspapers, who pay a lot of money to keep correspondents in that area, don't like to have their men scooped by Washington.

Why He Is Winning MacArthur may have another reason for not ballyhooing his achievements. He was beaten in Bataan. He may feel that until he has a complete victory to his credit, he doesn't want to sing too loudly.

But MacArthur has won so far in New Guinea because the men under his command were able to do what they never had a chance to do on Bataan because of lack of numbers, supplies and food.

On New Guinea they were able to do better than the Japs could, the very things which the Japs could do best. And they did it in the kind of jungle country in which that "best" was even better. They were able to adapt themselves to the environment which required a kind of fighting and a kind of endurance for which the Japanese had spent years in preparing. The kind of fighting that resulted in the fall of Singapore and the kind which the conventional British soldiers—even the Far Eastern experts—said was impossible.

HIGHLIGHTS . . . in the week's news

WASHINGTON: Dependents of 1,294,852 enlisted men in the army are now receiving allotments, according to a war department announcement. The announcement revealed that up to January 1, a total of 1,519,055 applications for such payments had been received. Of these, 133,750 were disallowed temporarily, pending receipt of additional information.

LONDON: An 80-year-old San Francisco sea captain, George E. Bridgett, commanded a new Liberty ship in a convoy which recently brought relief to Malta. It was disclosed here. Captain Bridgett, believed to be the oldest active sea captain in the world, emerged from 15 years' retirement to make the run on a ship that had been built in 24 hours at the Kaiser shipyards.