THE WAR · WEEK — Commentary on Current Events

Air Power To Play Key Part In Future Operations Of War

In Washington, last week was a week of long-range planning, says the New York Times. In England it was a week of long-range bombing, aimed at the industrial heart of Germany and carried out on an unprecedented scale. In North Africa it was a week of chipping and blasting at the southern wall of Hitler's fortress. In all the United Nations it was a week of rising hope, based on the anticipation of new blows that were obviously in the making. And in the Axis—it seemed sure—it must have been a week of uncertain speculation about where the United Nations would strike next.

Complete Agreement

That next step has been decided in Washington, where the highest ranking Army, Navy and air officers of Britain and the United States have been conferring with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, the President issued this statement:

The conference of the Combined Staffs in Washington has ended in complete agreement on future operations in all theatres of the war.

There could be little doubt that in these "future operations" air power is going to play a key role. The evidence was to be found in last week's record of bombing attacks on Europe and in the latest analysis of Axis and Allied air strength. In figures, which tell only part of the story, the analysis goes like this: America is producing 6,200 aircraft monthly, possibly a third of them transports, trainers, etc.; Britain is producing not less than 2,000; Russia at least 1,800. The Allied total of all types is 10,000 planes a month, of fighting craft well over 5,000 a month. In the Axis, German production is estimated at about 1,500 a month of all types, Italy's 400-600, Japan's perhaps 1,200—a total of 3,100-3,300 a month. Allied production is still expanding; Axis production has reached its peak.

Nature of Planes

The other part of the air-power story lies in the nature of the planes. Britain and America are building large numbers of improved bombers; Germany has no new types and has converted a large part of her bomber production to fighter planes. If German fighters were good enough, they would be able to stop Allied bombers and allow German bombers to operate in any chosen theatre. But English experts say Germany's best fighter, the Focke-Wulf 190, has already been beaten by the new Spitfires and Typhoons, and the new Mustangs and Thunderbolts are also expected to cause trouble for the FW-190. In such a situation, therefore, the Germans must rely on weight of numbers for defense in a given sector, a tactical rather than a strategic use of the Luftwaffe.

Against the Fortress of Europe, the Allies have already launched both a tactical and strategical air offensive, having two objectives: (1) breaching the fortress wall of Italy and its islands; (2) destroying in the German heart of Europe the ability and perhaps the will to fight.

Assault on the Wall

The tactical offensive in the south was last week bringing a startling phase of war home to the people of Italy. To them the Mediterranean had long been Mare Nostrum—"Our Sea"—with imperial outposts and military conquests extending across most of the southern shores. Now, as the people felt the weight of the air attack, they knew those shores were gone, control of the sea was gone. The Allied roll-back seemed about to reach the homeland. Its preface was the bomber assault. Every day and several times a day the bombers came over, in fleets that seemed impervious to the fighter planes and the explosives the anti-aircraft guns hurled into the sky.

The effects of this intensive attack are clear. The civilian populations are fleeing northward. Air and ground defenses have been reinforced but are causing little damage. The farther the zone of air superiority can be extended the larger the field the Allies will have for surface operations in the Mediterranean. It is a step in clearing the approaches to the Balkan Peninsula, where many observers expect an important Allied invasion thrust to be made. The great Vardar River valley, leading up through Greece and Yugoslavia to the Danube, has many times been a military highway. Furthermore, the neutralization of mainland Italy and Sardinia would protect the flank of any moves into Southern France.

The Siege in the North

The assault on the inner keep of Fortress Europe reached new levels last week. Despite the belt of searchlights, detectors, guns and interceptor fields which has been taking a heavier toll of bombers, the R. A. F. smashed hard at Germany's industrial Rhur. Acres of dusty rubble and fires that burned unchecked for two days lay in the wake of the big British bombers.

These raids in strength, repeated at much shorter intervals than was possible a year ago, are seemingly aimed at speedy prosecution of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's idea that "there is no harm in finding out" if Germany can be brought to submission by bombing, providing other methods are not neglected. There are some who hold that the effect is marked already; that Germany has had to change from a "military economy of plenty" to a policy of conservation. Resources, production and transportation have suffered heavily, and London observers predict that the month of June will see the blows greatly stepped up in frequency and weight.

The Next Steps

All these things must have been in the minds of the Allied leaders in Washington last week. On two points relating to the air offensive Mr. Churchill was emphatic:

(1) the United Nations now have air superiority over their enemies and have a far superior replacement rate; (2) Italy would be well advised to discard its present rulers and throw itself on the justice of the Allies.

In the face of these statements, hammered home by the destruction that rained down on Europe, the people of the Axis last week could only wonder what their future is to be like. Not the least of their difficulties, most observers felt, was the realization that the roles in the war have been reversed, that the future is being decided, not in Berlin or Rome or at the Brenner Pass, as it used to be, but in Washington and London.

OTTAWA REPORTS

That "Little Blue Book" Will Aid Women in Checking Prices and Quality of Purchases.

Canada's internal war against inflation is regarded as second only in importance to the task of beating the enemy in Europe and on the Islands of the Pacific.

Those charged at Ottawa with the duty of maintaining a wartime economy which will permit of reasonable comfort, security and happiness to the most Canadians after "Victory" are continually combatting influences calculated to disrupt the astonishingly successful "controls."

While Donald Gordon, Chairman of the Prices and Trade Board, was issuing warning before the National Labor Board against wage and commodity price increases, his organization was busily arming the women of Canada with many thousands of new "little blue books" with which women are invited to fight rising price tendencies.

A new edition of this "little blue book" is newly off the press and ready for distribution amongst Canadian women who ask for it. The "little blue book" has never been distributed promiscuously; it has been sent only to those who requested it. It can be obtained from Women's Regional Advisory Committees or local offices of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board.

"The Little Blue Book" is intended as an aid to women in checking on prices and quality. Bearing on its blue front cover the caption, "My Price Ceiling Record," it provides writing space in designated columns for jotting down the article bought, size, brand, quality, date purchased, last price paid, name of the store where purchased, and price increase if there has been any price increase.

Should Mrs. X find on checking hre blue book notations that the price of article A has increased over the price prevailing say last month, she may ask the storekeeper about it. If his explanation does not satisfy she may telephone or write a report to her Women's Regional Advisory Committee, or the nearest regional or sub-regional office of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. Her report is absolutely confidential. The Enforcement Administration takes up the inquiry and has the authority to make the fullest investigation.

A form has even been prepared upon which Canadian women may report price increases which come to their attention by reason of the check kept in their "little blue books." The form, obtainable at the same sources, concludes with the notation; "Information given on this form will be treated in confidence. In the event of prosecution no unwilling witness will be called."

And that is one way the authorities intend to keep a tight rein on forces which would precipitate the Canadian people on a toboggan ride to inflation. Only the smallest percentage of merchants require watching, say the Board experts, but with 3,000,000 Canadian women warned and equipped to guard Canada's price levels, the belief is that nothing can remain out of line and undetected for very long.

Germany's Barter System Failing

Germany is searching Europe for gold. All her allies have been asked about their reserves. The Nazis need this gold because their barter system is breaking down.

This gold-hunt follows the failure of Clodius, Hitler's No. 1 commercial traveler, to bring off a new deal with Turkey. It was revealed recently that negotiations for a renewal of the trade deal had been deferred because Germany had been unable to convince the Turks that she could deliver the barter goods.

Turkey has now asked for payment in gold as an alternative, Germany has little gold left.

Canadian Gold Mining Securities

During the past year "freezing orders" by the Metals Controller's Office have caused considerable misunderstanding among investors in Canadian gold mining securities. The original order was interpreted to mean that all new development work in gold properties would be halted. An article in the "Financial Post" points out that preliminary developments, surface work and diamond drilling may be carried on at gold properties, as such operations do not require large quantities of materials and manpower.

One of the most recent developments now before the investing public is the Abamet Prospecting Syndicate, formed to explore and develop its holdings which are known to indicate copper and gold deposits. The location is outstanding and is in close proximity to Canada's greatest producer of copper, Noranda Mines Ltd. The adjoining property, Adnaron Copper Corporation Limited, is carrying on an extensive drilling programme and reports released indicate the development is of major importance. The Abamet Syndicate have made arrangements to start their diamond drilling campaign at the property concurrently with the adjoining operation of Adnaron and Noranda. The management of this syndicate is composed of the same group responsible for the progress of the Adnaron Copper Corporation Ltd., which company was brought into being through an offering of units in the original Adnaron Prospecting Syndicate, each unit containing 500 shares of stock. This stock at the present writing is actively quoted on the Toronto market. Abamet Syndicate will be developed along the same lines and it is believed should meet with the same measure of success.

Clever Strategy Outwitted Nazis

8th Army's Reputation Alone Frightened The Enemy

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, reviewing his six-month campaign in North Africa, said the final blow was struck in a clever move by which the bulk of the enemy troops were held on the Eighth Army front while the First Army got in the knockout punch.

"The reputation of the Eighth Army alone was enough to hold powerful enemy forces in front of it," the commander-in-chief said.

"There was a peculiar circumstance at the end which General Sir Harold Alexander (deputy commander-in-chief in charge of ground forces) took advantage of. In many punches the Eighth Army delivered hammer blows while the other units served as the anvil. Because of its efficiency, the Eighth Army got an enormous reputation, with everyone, including the Germans, expecting the killing punch to come from it.

Unified Command

"General Alexander counted on that. He built up the First Army and, to make its (western) front still stronger, brought around some of the Eighth Army to the First Army front. The Germans thought the real fight was coming from the south."

General Eisenhower cited the success of this move as another proof of the advantages of a unified command.

All indications were that the Germans were greatly surprised by the thrust from the west and this led to their disorganization and collapse.

The Allied chieftain said the governments of both Britain and the United States and the local French "have a real reason for encouragement and hope as a result of this campaign."

40,000,000 Slaves

There are now 40,000,000 workers, including 10,000,000 foreigners and prisoners of war, employed in German factories, accoring to a broadcast by Rennes radio.

VOICE OF THE PRESS

IDEAL FOR SHEEP

Canada possesses great tracts of open country which should make ideal grazing land for sheep. Marauding dogs have caused serious losses, but the answer to that could be found in adopting effective measures of control. No better form of protection for sheep has ever been devised than a shepherd and his collie. More of them should be employed in this work in Canada; flocks could then be larger, and what is now too often no more than a bleak countryside would have a pastoral beauty.

—Hamilton Spectator.

—o—

FOR TIMID FOLK

Those timid folk who would restrict there hatred for Germans to the leaders only might do well to heed the words of Air Marshall William A. Bishop who said in New York: "A good healthy hate for the Axis is necessary in the war." Referring to recent Allied bombings he added that he didn't care "if there isn't one house left standing in Germany."

—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

—o—

BUT BEE GETS IT

It is estimated that a bee travels 43,776 miles in gathering a pound of honey—a distance only outdone by the consumer in his search from store to store for the same pound.

—Stratford Beacon-Herald.

—o—

EQUINE INEQUALITY

It is odd that all men should be born equal when racehorses obviously are not.

—Peterborough Examiner.

—o—

HARDLY POSSIBLE

Ottawa says the new income tax forms are remarkably simple, which is simply remarkable.

—Brandon Sun.

—o—

WELCOMED

Hitler to Stalin: "I am coming."
Stalin to Hitler: "We welcome you with tanks."

—Montreal Star.

—o—

TAKE A PEEK

If you see a moth sporting a fur coat, look in the closet. It might be yours!

—Ottawa Citizen.

How Old Is Anne?

The village doctor and lawyer were spending a convivial evening with the economist from the big city and eventually the discussion came round to which represented the oldest profession.

"Well!" said the doctor, "Eve was made from Adam's rib. That makes the medical profession the oldest on record."

"Not at all," said the lawyer. "Before Adam—if you will search the record—order was created out of chaos. To get order there had to be law and that makes my honorable profession the oldest."

"And," asked the economist. "Who do you think created the chaos?"

—The Printed World.

A Song In Praise Of The Lowly Spud

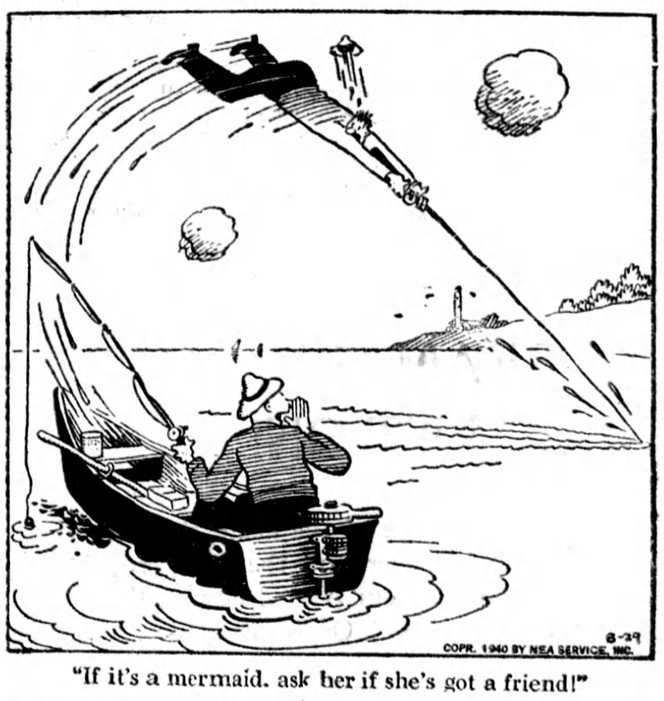
The potato, now scarce hereabout, has inspired our Professor Ensyke to research and song, says the New York Times Magazine. It is at home, he finds, "down where it's hilly in far-away Chile." Thence it roved to Peru, was carried by monks to Spain, and spread to Italy and Belgium. Meanwhile, "the ocean was squally when Sir Walter Raleigh" discovered it near Albemarle Sound and transported it to Cork, where the Irish made it their own. How it got to Carolina from the Southern Andes, Dr. E. doesn't know.

He confesses a fondness for looking into its eyes. He defends it against all substitutes. "To me, macaroni is so much baloney," and "spaghetti is petty," while "as regards rice, my feeling is colder than ice." He concludes, "So, therefore, by Plato! I'll sing the potato, the great indispensable spud! Who loves not its tuber is either a boob or an absolute stick-in-the-mud!" The professor is now haunting Tin Pan Alley with his potential song hit. So far, no offers.

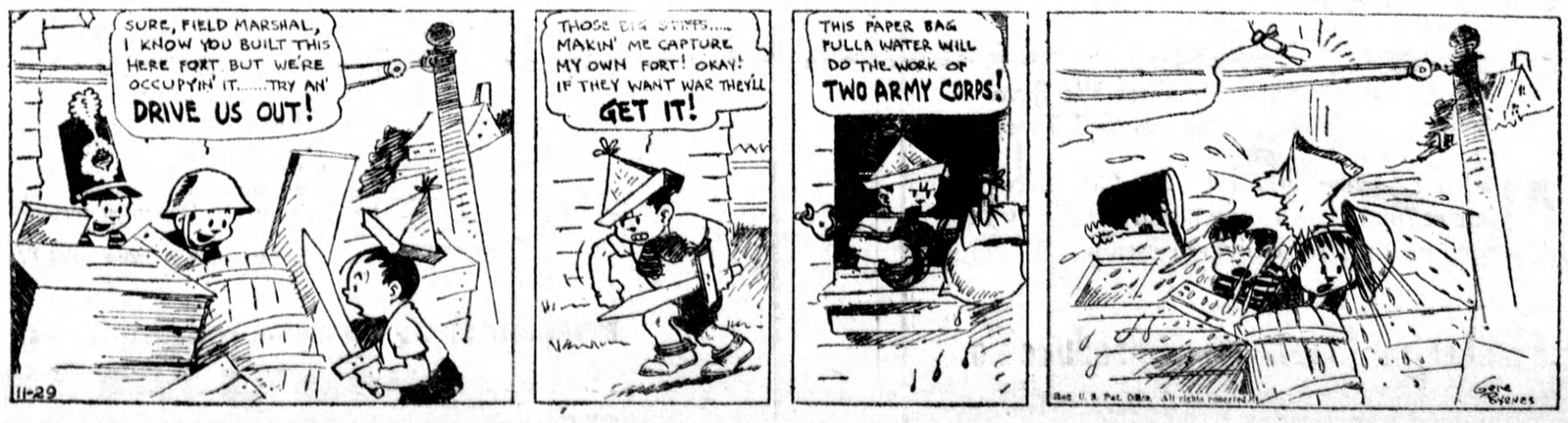
Green Pastures

There is nothing so refreshing to horses' feet as the damp coolness of grass into which they are turned in May; and nothing so calculated to remove every enlargement and sprain as the gentle exercise which the animal voluntarily takes while his legs are exposed to the cooling process of evaporation, which is taking place from the herbage he treads. The experience of ages has shown that it is superior to all the embrocations and bandages of the skilful veterinarian. It is the renovating process of nature, where the art of man fails.

FUNNY BUSINESS



"If it's a mermaid, ask her if she's got a friend!"

REG'LAR FELLERS—A Smash Hit

By GENE BYRNES