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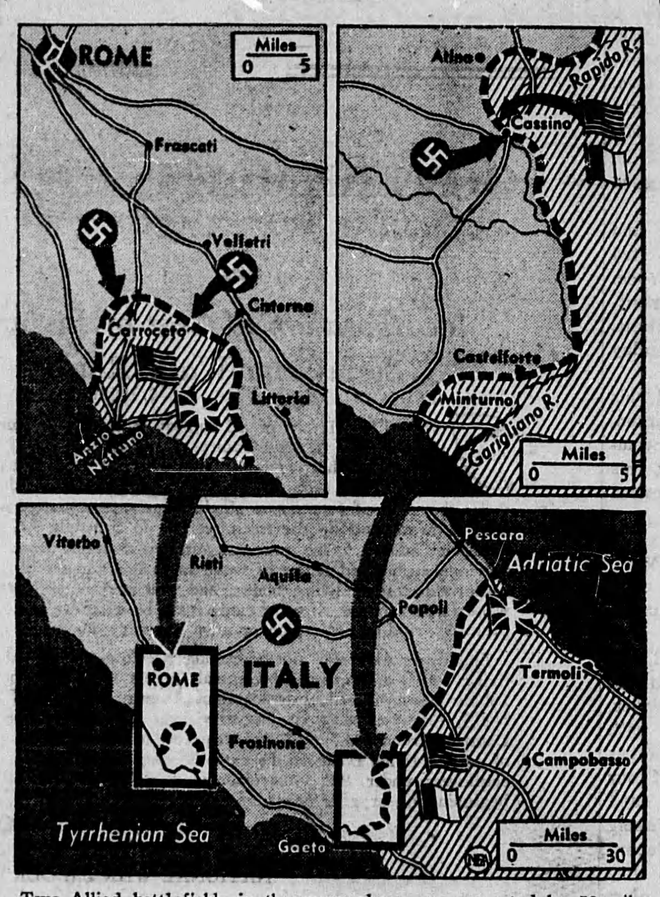
THE WAR · WEEK — Commentary on Current Events

Allies' Anzio Beachhead Withstands Repeated Heavy German Attacks



..Two Allied battlefields in the maps above are separated by 50 miles, varying from the mountainous terrain near Cassino to the swampland south of Rome. Nazi legions are attacking the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead in force, while Allied armies are seeking a break-through in the Cassino bulge. Lower map shows locations in Italy of close-ups shown at top.

Thanks to the valor and determination of the American and British soldier the immediate danger to the Allied beachhead at Anzio appears to have passed. With the return of weather which permits the resumption of air operations the Allies have renewed their offensive. The fighting is still indeterminate, but the tide seems to be running in our favor, and if this view is correct the Anzio battle has already achieved one important result. It has robbed Hitler of a quick and impressive victory for which he tried hard—a victory which was to demonstrate his continued striking power for the benefit of Germany's own morale and that of her satellites, and to impress both Russia and the Western Allies with the hopelessness of any new invasion and a new front in Europe. Whatever further results the Anzio battle may produce, the frustration of Hitler's calculations will alone justify its cost, says The New York Times.

But the stubborn resistance which the Germans are putting up, both around Anzio and at Cassino, is a renewed warning that even after more than four years of war Germany is still a powerful enemy. Neither defeats in the field nor the wholesale bombings of German cities and war factories have been able thus far to break German fighting morale. Nor, judging from reports from the front, have German arms diminished either in quantity or in quality, except for the relative decrease of German air power. In fact some German weapons are declared to be even superior to our own. And with the approach of spring, which promises at least temporary surcease from Russian pressure Nazi hopes for prolonging the war are rising again.

Fight from Room to Room

The Italian campaign cannot be considered wholly typical of what Allied invasion forces would face in France. For in Italy the Allies have been confronted with the same difficulties which the Germans faced in the mountains of the Caucasus and about Stalingrad. Mountains are natural fortresses which always favor the defense, and cities which the defender is willing to sacrifice can be converted into similar strongholds. That was shown by Madrid in the Spanish civil war, shown by Leningrad, and in supreme measure by Stalingrad. Though on a smaller scale, it is again being shown by Cassino. For here, as at Stalingrad, the fight is proceeding from building to building and from room to room.

Lesson Of Campaign

Nevertheless, the lessons of the Italian campaign and the ascertainable results of the bombings have been such that a good deal of the unwarranted optisism of a few months ago, about the war in Europe being "all but over," has disappeared. Even military quarters are beginning to revise their timetable of victory. And this adds new emphasis to the qualification which General Eisenhower attached to his famous prediction: victory is possible this year, but only if "every man and woman, all the way from the front to the remotest hamlet, does his or her full duty."

British Warships Rehearse Battle

A little glimpse of the Royal Navy at its deadly games is given in a London despatch which tells of the careful plans made for disposing of the German battleship Scharnhorst should she come out of hiding and give battle, says the Ottawa Journal.

Several times the British warships in Northern waters rehearsed for the big day they hoped would come. A British ship represented the Scharnhorst, went through the motions of attacking a convoy, of running for safety, using every protective and defensive device the enemy might be expected to bring into play. Most of the ships actually engaged when the Scharnhorst did finally come out took part in the manoeuvres, and we are told there was an amazing similarity between the atcual action and the rehearsals.

This was intelligent anticipation of things to come, and but for these careful preparations the Scharnhorst might have escaped.

Mustang Is Answer To New Nazi Plane

The British-Designed, American-built Mustang plane apparently is more than the answer to the new German rocket-bomb plane, says The Kansas City Times. In their first fifteen missions the Mustangs have destroyed or damaged eighty-seven German planes with the loss of only six Mustangs. These fighter planes have such a long radius of operations that they have been able to escort American bombers to within 100 miles of Berlin.

British Do Real Job of Salvage

"All Sorts of Weird Things" Handled In Twelve Huge Warehouses

Scattered throughout the British Isles are twelve huge warehouses filled with Army, Navy and Air Force clothing and other materials, relates the St. Thomas Times-Journal. Samples of these goods fill shelves of an office of the Ministry of Supply in London where experts decide what can be done with all the stuff. They handle everything in the textile line, also old ropes from the Navy, hose pipes, camouflage nets, used parachutes, old or obsolete towing targets for the R.A.F., and, as a recent speaker on the B.B.C. stated, "all sorts of weird things."

In one month, 1,300,000 items of outer clothing were sorted and graded in these depots. A vast amount of repair work is done, but what is not repairable is used in a multitude of ways. A great deal of the stuff will be converted to relief of the populations when the occupied countries are liberated. Wornout battle dresses are repaired, dyed brown and become suits for prisoners of war, or they may be dyed green for agricultural workers, or for workers in various war industries.

One important wartime discovery has been how to take the shrinkage out of socks. The Ministry of Supply has millions of pairs of socks and stockings which had been worn by members of the women's divisions. By a process known as "defelting," the shrinkage is removed, and the socks and stockings are repaired and made as good as new.

* * *

From old hose pipes overshoes are made for men loading tankers so that they will not make sparks with their feet. These pipes are also made into snowshoes and into mittens for women handling steel sheets with sharp edges. The cotton from R.A.F. towing targets is made into rain-water catching sheets and the netting from the end of the target is made into vegetable bags for the Navy and for ice bags. The cotton fabric of anti-gas capes is de-oiled and used for superfine wiping rags. Various kinds of cotton fabric, useless for making up, go back to the services as wiping rags. Three thousand tons of wiping rags a year are supplied by the disposal department. Oily rags are de-oiled and cleaned until they fall to pieces and then they are pulped for paper.

Old tentage is used for making a new type of kit bag for the A.T.S. and the W.A.A.F's. The old type is awkward for a girl to handle. It is too heavy to sling onto her shoulder and too long to carry by the string, so many of the girls got the habit of dragging them along the ground. The new type is shaped like a sports bag with two canvas rope handles. It opens lengthways and is fastened by press studs.

* * *

The ship's ropes have the worn outer fibre removed and the inner fibres are respun. The worn fibres go to paper manufacturers for a special kind of paper used in plastics. The A.T.S. girls have a shoulder bag when walking out, and these are now made from the sleeves of firemen's coats, with a zip fastener from a bomber pilot's harness. Glider tow ropes are remodeled to make ropes for boxing rings and for tug-of-war contests. From old charts of blue-prints very fine linen handkerchiefs are made. Many prewar Army uniforms are sent in, and one of the uses to which they are put is to sell them to film companies for old battle scenes.

Another extraordinary job of salvage has been the canvas from blitzed premises and asbestos wool from gas respirators which have been converted into heavily padded suits for the men who train the bull-mastiffs that guard airdromes.

"Waste not, want not," is an old motto. Britain has learned lessons that will be most valuable after the war.

An estimate that Japanese factories are turning out aircraft at a rate of 1,200 or more a month came from high quarters, coupled with a report that the Japanese—like the Germans—are concentrating significantly on defensive types.

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OTTAWA REPORTS

That Discharged Servicemen Are Advised to Take Jobs Now And Save For Placement on Farms Later

In view of what happened last time, the question of Service men going farming after the war is apt to be looked on with a pretty big question mark in rural communities.

As far back as 1941, when the Department of Pensions and National Health sponsored the Order-in-Council known as "The Post-Discharge Rehabilitation Order," careful consideration has been given to farm settlement as to other phases of re-establishment, and the plans set up seek to avoid pitfalls of the period following 1918.

While employment is at its peak men interested in farming who are being currently discharged are advised to take jobs and to save for later investment in agriculture, according to officials in charge of rehabilitation. To date very few have been set up under the Re-establishment Order.

* * *

Those eligible must have had previous satisfactory practical experience in farming, or may qualify after serving apprenticeship with a successful farmer in addition to having served in a theatre of war, or had not less than 12 months' service, or be in receipt of a pension.

The Veterans' Land Act 1942 provides a maximum of $4,800 on land, and a maximum of $1,200 on equipment. A tenth of the value of the land, (in the case of $4,800, the amount would be $480), must be paid for in cash and two-thirds of the property value over a period of 25 years with interest at 3½%. The cost of equipment is not repaid, and no annual instalment is over $195 including interest. A veteran who has a job and wants to buy a small farming property nearby comes within the same limits as to amount and conditions of payment.

* * *

A veteran who owns a farm may secure through the Veterans' Land Act funds to pay off a mortgage, make necessary improvements, or buy additional stock and equipment. He may borrow up to $3,200 (but not more than 60% of the value of his property), to pay off a mortgage, or up to $2,500 (but not more than 50% of the value), to pay for equipment. The loan is secured by mortgage at 3½% payable over 25 years.

Available to those buying farms are properties bought by the Government for soldier rehabilitation, or properties chosen individually so long as these are approved and come within the price limits set by the Veterans' Land Act.

* * *

For several weeks purchases of bacon for the United Kingdom have averaged over 20,000,000 pounds, an average of which if kept up for fifty weeks out of the year would mean 1,000,000,000 pounds of bacon, Hon. J. G. Gardiner, Minister of Agriculture told the House of Commons recently. Mr. Gardiner said little value should be attached to rumors of a meat shortage when replying to J. H. Blackmore, Social Credit leader in the Federal House as to whether there might be a beef shortage next year. Explaining the present surplus, he said this was due to lack of shipping and steps have been taken to divert additional ships to Canadian ports not only to handle additional bacon stocks, but also to lift surplus quantities of beef and mutton, and recently the Meat Board was able to accept immediate shipment of some seven million pounds of beef. The Minister felt there is every reason to believe that in future all surplus beef available will be handled and lifted as offered for export. With plans in hand to export also accumulated stocks of mutton and lamb, a better market for this class of livestock is in sight.

The Reason Why Malta Is British

Malta has a wartime history that goes back to the time of the great Phoenician traders, says the Ottawa Citizen. As the island of Malta, of course, it has its place in Bible history, for it is the island converted to Christianity by St. Paul, who was shipwrecked upon it while a prisoner of the Romans.

During the Crusades the Knights of St. John were granted Malta and they held it throughout the great siege against the Turks. As the centuries passed, the knightly order fell into disrepute. With the coming of the French Revolution, by which time the preponderance of the French Knights within the order had upset the international equilibrium, conditions became hopelessly disrupted.

Later when Napoleon set out to conquer Europe he took possession of the island. Native Maltese patriots, however, resisted the French, and in the knowledge of the presence of the English fleet under Nelson in the Mediterranean, the Maltese, under Canon Caruana, appeared to the admiral to take possession of the island in the name of His Majesty.

The British Empire has grown in many strange ways. But Malta is British because it wanted to be. And now, as Malta, G.C., the George Cross having been awarded by the King in recognition of the stand of the island against another enemy, it is doubtless still content to remain so.

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Reinforcements

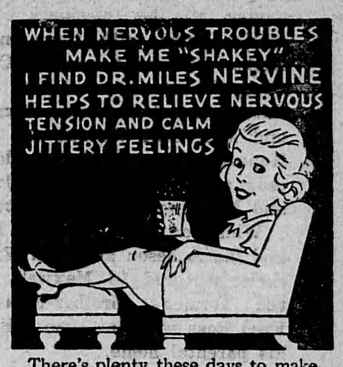
The Marietta, Georgia, Rotary Club publishes a weekly newspaper called Rotalight. The following appeared in a recent issue:

QUICK WORK IN 3 ACTS.

1. Australia—MacArthur appeals for reinforcements.
2. Quebec — Roosevelt and Churchill promise reinforcements.
3. Eleanor arrives in Australia.

—Magazine Digest

Approximately $10,000,000 worth of gold is contained in a cubic mile of sea water.



There's plenty these days to make people nervous. And overtaxed nerves can turn nights and days into misery! If you suffer in this way, try the soothing, quieting effect of Dr. Miles Nervine which contains well-known nerve sedatives. Take Nervine according to directions for help in general nervousness, sleeplessness, hysterical conditions, nervous fears; also to help headache and irritability due to nervousness. In the meantime, eat more natural food . . . get your vitamins and take sufficient rest. Effervescing Nervine Tablets are 35c and 75c. Nervine Liquid: 25c and $1.00.

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