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GERMANY'S MAIN NAVAL BASE SET AFLAME

Prepare for Tobruk Assault

BASE GUARDED BY 30-MILE DEFENSE LINE

BY EDWARD KENNEDY

With British Forces, Outside Tobruk, Libya—Guarded by a 30 mile defense line against massing British assault forces, the garrison of beleaguered port of Tobruk, estimated at 30,000 Italian regulars, apparently has been ordered to hold out as long as possible.

Breathe Sand Free Air

British soldiers, breathing sand free air for the first time in a week, redoubled preparations for the grand assault.

Tobruk's position is about the same from a military point of view as Bardia's was a week before it fell Jan. 5 to the British offensive into Libya.

British armored units are to the west and British infantry and artillery to the east and south while warships keep watch on the Mediterranean front of this Italian base.

All civilians were removed from Tobruk before the British arrived. The fortifications, though not so strong as Bardia's, extend over a longer line.

Welcome Respite

The ring of guns surrounding the town has been firing steadily despite seven days of heavy sandstorms but the withering fire such as smashed into Bardia just before it fell has not begun and soldiers welcomed the respite from the swirling sand to hasten movement of equipment for the new attack.

Guns from the Italian fortifications around the port are replying, sometimes with a show of energy, but usually weakly.

Italian aircraft seems to be giving besieged Tobruk little help—British flyers say the Italians have abandoned every air field this side of the Adkar mountains with the exception of Derna—and the main resistance is expected to come, as it did at Bardia, from artillery.

Claim Italian Planes

British planes have disabled many Italian craft. Eighty-seven disabled planes—more than twice the number claimed by the RAF—were counted during a visit to El Adem airfield, south of Tobruk, which now is in British hands.

British mechanized units surround Tobruk. To the west they dominate a line at least 15 miles wide right down to the sea. British artillery is lined up within four miles of Tobruk's perimeter of defenses and night patrols have penetrated this defense ring.

Soldiers Sail for New U.S. Military Base

New York, N. Y.—(AP)—The first contingent of American soldiers to leave for military bases recently acquired from England sailed for Newfoundland from the Brooklyn army base yesterday on the old German liner Amerika, seized by the United States in the World war and now refitted as the "swankiest" army transport afloat.

In the ranks were doughboys from the 2nd, 3rd and 7th corps areas—New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland and the Midwest. Officers asked that the exact number of men aboard and "the type or numerical designation of units" be excluded from press reports "in the best interests of national defense."

Army officials said the aged, coal burning troop transport—once the pride of Kaiser Wilhelm's merchant marine—would be used as a floating barracks for about five months while land barracks were being constructed. Lumber for the buildings was in the liner's holds and army trucks were lashed to her decks.

Renamed the Edmund B. Alexander, the 21,329 ton vessel was painted a dull camouflage gray with huge American flags on her sides.

Charged With \$100 Theft from Company

Marshfield, Wis.—John Atwood, 22, an employe in the purchasing department of the Roddis Lumber & Veneer company here, was arraigned in municipal court this morning on a larceny charge alleging theft of \$100 from the company. He was released on \$1,000 bond and a preliminary examination was set for January 23.

Second Quota of Army Volunteers Leave Tonight for Induction Center



SOUTH WOOD COUNTY'S SECOND QUOTA—Here are the eight volunteers from the local draft board office, eight south Wood county young men prepared today to board a Milwaukee road train tonight for their journey to Milwaukee and induction into the U. S. army.

Final details of their enlistment cleared Wednesday afternoon at the local draft board office, eight south Wood county young men prepared today to board a Milwaukee road train tonight for their journey to Milwaukee and induction into the U. S. army.

They comprise the second quota from draft district No. 1 of the county, and, following induction and final examination at the Milwaukee center Friday morning, will be sent to Fort Sheridan. There they will be given the opportunity to select service branches of their choice and be assigned to units of the armed forces.

APPROVAL GIVEN NAVAL MEASURE

Washington — (AP) — The house naval committee gave prompt and unanimous approval today to an urgent navy request for authority to spend \$909,000,000 for 400 relatively small new ships for the navy and for a vast expansion of shipbuilding and ordnance plants.

Increases Outlays

The action brought to \$1,209,000,000 the naval outlays which the committee has recommended in less than 24 hours. Approved yesterday was a \$300,000,000 program for strengthening the fleet's defenses against dive bombers and other aerial attacks.

No funds were carried in the legislation but the navy announced it would seek a large part of the money soon via a supplemental appropriation bill.

The 400 new ships, to cost approximately \$465,000,000, would consist chiefly of sub chasers, seagoing escort vessels, minesweepers and torpedo boats.

Cost of 400 Million

Of the \$315,000,000 for new shipbuilding facilities, Rear Admiral Samuel M. Robinson, chief of the bureau of ships, testified that the bulk of them are to be built on the Great Lakes, but the specific yards had not been selected.

Total cost of building the 400 small auxiliary vessels was estimated at \$400,000,000.

British Admit Sinking Cruiser After Damage by Axis Planes

London — (AP) — The British announced tonight that last Friday's attack by German dive bombers and Italian planes on a Mediterranean convoy caused the British naval forces to sink the badly damaged 9,100 ton cruiser Southampton.

Illustrious Also Damaged

Fire broke out aboard the warship while she was being towed to port, said a communique, the crew abandoned ship and she was sunk. Most of the crew was saved.

In the attack, the first real show of German aerial force in the Mediterranean area, the 23,000 ton aircraft carrier Illustrious, was also damaged. That same day the Brit-

ish destroyer Gallant of 1,335 tons, likewise was damaged. Both were able to reach port.

Another admiralty communique said the British submarine Pandora had sunk two Italian supply ships of about 5,000 tons south bound in the central Mediterranean.

Italian Destroyer Sunk

The British sank an Italian destroyer in or near the Sicilian channel, between Sicily and the north African mainland, shortly before the Nazi dive bombers, apparently based in Sicily, opened their attack.

Twelve planes were shot down in that engagement, the admiralty said Tuesday.

Krohn Introduces Bill to Repeal Reorganization Plan for U. W. Board of Regents

A bill to repeal the University of Wisconsin reorganization plan voted during the first term of the Heil administration and restore the board of regents to its former basis was introduced in the state legislature today by Assemblyman Chester A. Krohn (Prog.) of Marshfield, according to the Associated Press.

Would Classify Members

Krohn's measure would require that members of the university board of regents include two women, two farmers and two tradesmen. The reorganization law enacted in 1939 did not provide any classification of board members.

In the senate, Senator Rudolph M. Schlabach (Rep.), LaCrosse, received the controversial proposal to transfer authority for the issuance of automobile licenses from the state motor vehicle department to county clerks. Schlabach introduced the same bill he sponsored as a member of the assembly in 1939. The measure had a stormy course and was defeated two years ago only by the ability of its opponents to forestall final action before sine die adjournment.

Senator Milton T. Murray (Rep.), Milwaukee, offered a bill permitting Wisconsin communities to adopt daylight saving time. It would repeal that section of the statutes prepared by—LEGISLATURE—Page 9

Roosevelt Formally Requests Power to Expand Fleet

Washington — (AP) — President Roosevelt put in his formal request to congress today for authority to build a fleet of 200 merchant vessels "upon an emergency basis," and asked for an appropriation of \$312,500,000.

The chief executive already had disclosed at a press conference that the program was in the making. He sent a message to congress today saying:

"I am convinced that the national interest demands that immediate steps be taken upon an emergency basis to provide against the effect upon the United States of a possible world shortage of cargo vessels.

"Therefore, I feel that there should be undertaken with the least possible delay the construction of not less than 200 steel cargo vessels, suitable for use in the present emergency and of such type and design as will permit their most rapid construction."

The program would be in charge of the maritime commission, which has estimated its cost at \$350,000,000.

Fined for Possession of Untagged Venison

Henry Hoffenbredel, town of Milladore, paid the minimum fine and costs yesterday after pleading guilty before Justice of the Peace Byron B. Conway for having in his possession on January 3, the carcass of a deer without an attached tag.

Hoffenbredel was first brought into court on January 7, but his case was postponed by the court until January 15. The complaint was made by Conservation Warden Vince Skilling.

Night Air Assault on Wilhelmshaven 'Most Successful'

London—(P)—British bombers left the main base of the German North sea fleet "a waste of flame" in a four hour attack overnight on Wilhelmshaven which exceeded any yet made on that port, the air ministry announced today.

The attack was focused on Bauhafen, a square harbor joined by the Hafen canal to the other harbors and the sea, where there are slipways, docks, engineering works, storehouses, assembling sheds, armor plate shops, foundries, iron works and gun stores, the account related.

Within this section, said the air ministry, were "areas of raging fire."

BUDGET MEASURE IS INTRODUCED

Madison, Wis. — (P) — The state budget bill, calling for the expenditure of \$74,469,148 for state aids to local communities and operation of government the next two years, was introduced in the assembly today by P. Bradley McIntyre, (Rep.), Lancaster, co-chairman of the joint finance committee.

Tax Levies Presented

In the upper house meanwhile, Senator Otto Mueller, (Rep.), Wausau, senate finance leader, submitted for re-enactment the expiring cigarette, privilege dividend, gift, inheritance and 60 per cent income surtax levies.

The \$20,500,000 these taxes would raise, plus some \$45,000,000 in anticipated revenue from continuing laws, will leave a gap of nearly \$9,000,000 between estimated receipts and expenditures, but Governor Heil has said no new taxes would be necessary. Many legislators favor diversion of highway funds to make up the deficiency.

The budget bill and the tax measures were referred to the joint finance committee which was scheduled to hold its first hearings on the proposals next week. This puts the current legislature about a month ahead of its 1939 predecessor.

Governor's Recommendations

In its present form the budget bill contains the governor's recommended appropriations, but these may be revised by the committee or the legislature.

Projected expenditures for the 1941-42 biennium are about \$9,000,000 over those of the current fiscal period, but a little more than \$2,000,000 will go for increased pension and social aids. Approximately \$39,614,000, or more than one-half of the budget revenues will be turned over to the local communities in the form of charitable, school, road and other aids.

Boost in U. W. Funds

A boost of \$338,969 was recommended in the University of Wisconsin appropriation which was cut two years ago. This is exclusive of a proposed \$3,668,000 building program, a part of which at least Governor Heil has indicated he would approve. The governor also suggested an increase of approximately \$101,000 for the state teachers colleges.

Hospital Donations Nearing 500 Mark

Nearly 500 donations have been made toward the Riverview hospital building fund, the committee heading the drive reported today.

Cards and receipts are now being mailed out to all donors to the project, with membership cards in the Riverview Hospital association going to all contributors of \$5 or more and receipts to others. The membership cards are for the period of one year.

BEAR WAUSAU KIWANIAN

A round table discussion of club activities with a brief talk on activities of the Wausau Kiwanian club by Joe Duskey of Wausau comprised the program at the regular weekly luncheon of the local Kiwanian club at the Hotel Witter this noon.

Four Groups to Stage Plays in County Dramatic Festival

Four play groups will participate in the annual Wood county rural dramatics festival which will be held in the Lowell school gymnasium this Saturday starting at 7:30 p. m. Madison Judge, Critic

Mrs. Marie Kellogg Kolb, of Madison, will be in the city for the festival to judge and criticize the performances, Miss Cecilia Shestock, home and club agent, announced today.

The North Kellner Homemaker club will present a play called "Joint Owner in Spain," directed by Mrs. Howard Kortcamp. A cast of six directed by Mrs. Wilbur Miller and also representing the North Kellner club, will put on the play "Many Happy Returns of the Day."

"Mushroom Coming Up" is the title of the presentation of the Lynn Creek Homemaker group, with Mrs. Carl Vehrs directing. The fourth play is called "Polly Put the Kettle On," a Port Edwards club produc-

Eaton Plants Reopen, But Dispute Remains Unsettled

Detroit — (P) — Four plants of the Eaton Manufacturing company closed for two days by sympathy strikes called by the United Automobile Workers (CIO), reopened today, but the inter-union dispute which occasioned the walk-out still appeared unsolved.

AFL 'Not Consulted'

At the Saginaw, Mich., plant, scene of the original dispute, leaders of the United Automobile Workers (AFL) said they had "not been consulted" on the settlement demanded by James F. Newey, federal conciliator, in the interest of national defense.

Gerry Ahlred, international secretary of the UAW-AFL, said his union "certainly will have to be the party which decides who goes back to work" at the Saginaw plant.

Of the five Eaton plants, that at Saginaw is the only one operating under a contract with the AFL union. Sympathy strikes in the other plants, under contract with the CIO union, were called when the UAW-CIO charged the company with failing to live up to a rehiring agreement which followed an earlier walkout at Saginaw.

Strikes Began Monday

The strikes, which had threatened to interrupt production of airplane engine parts for defense orders, began Monday in the Saginaw plant with the UAW-CIO charging that the company refused to keep a rehiring agreement reached after a walkout in November.

Sympathy strikes by the CIO union followed at plants in Detroit, Battle Creek, and Marshall, Mich., and at Cleveland. All four of these plants were closed, while the Saginaw plant continued oper-

Invasion of U.S. by Air Hinges on British Navy, Stimson Says

Washington — (P) — Secretary Stimson declared today that "I think we are in very great danger of an invasion by air in the contingency that the British navy should be destroyed or surrendered."

The war department chief made this statement to the house foreign affairs committee in response to an inquiry by Representative Fish (R-N. Y.).

Endorses Aid Bill

Stimson previously had endorsed President Roosevelt's bill for lend-lease aid to Britain.

Fish started the questioning by asking whether the secretary thought that, with this country's naval strength, any foreign nation could invade our shores.

"Not now, probably not," Stimson replied slowly.

"Any time this year?" Fish pressed.

"I wouldn't dare to say any time this year."

Fish then raised the question whether the United States army could repel a force of 50,000 troops should they be landed.

"I think they probably could, if the gentleman means a land invasion," Stimson responded, adding that he thought that air forces would accompany any attempted invasion by infantry.

Discusses Air Bases

"Is there any airplane built which could span the Atlantic, drop bombs here and return across the Atlantic?" Fish inquired.

"Probably not the width of the Atlantic," Stimson said, "but they are rapidly developing in that direction and there are many bases short of the full width of the Atlantic."

Asked by Fish what bases he had in mind, Stimson said:

"Newfoundland would be a base within easy range of all of our New England coast. North Canada would be within easy range of the New England coast."

"Does the secretary believe," Fish continued, "that our navy would remain locked up in our harbors if any such invasion were attempted?"

Lack of Cash

"No," said Stimson, "but where is our navy now?" (most of the big ships of the navy are presently based in the Pacific.)

Fish then inquired whether there was "fear of invasion," and the secretary replied that there was danger of an air invasion if the British fleet were destroyed or otherwise rendered ineffective for this country's protection.

Local Banks Reelect Officers, Directors

Incumbent officers and directors of the First National and Wood County National banks of Wisconsin Rapids were re-elected at the annual stockholders' meetings of the two institutions.

Directors of the Wood County National are John E. Alexander, Guy O. Babcock, A. F. Gottschalk, G. R. Wood, Linar Olsen, A. E. Bennett, and E. C. Wittig. Mr. Babcock is president; Mr. Alexander, vice-president; Mr. Wittig, cashier, and F. H. Muehstein, Fred F. Haertel and Charles V. Stark are assistant cashiers.

The directorship of the First National will continue to be composed of Isaac P. Witter, E. B. Redford, George W. Mead, C. D. Searles, W. J. Taylor, H. C. Demitz and R. F. Johnson. Officers are Mr. Witter, president; Mr. Taylor and Mr. Redford, vice-presidents; Mr. Demitz, cashier, and W. G. Schroedel and E. C. Brenner, assistant cashiers.

The annual meeting of the Neokosa State bank will be held tonight.

Axis Claims Damage to 15 Vessels

Rome — (P) — The axis' report of its bomb and torpedo offensive against British seapower in the Mediterranean—a total claim of damage or destruction of 15 "enemy" vessels—was further filled in today by the assertion of a Rome newspaper that the 22,600 ton aircraft carrier Eagle had been torpedoed.

At the same time the high command acknowledged a new night attack by British warplanes on Catania, Sicily (supposed to be the main base for the German Stuka dive-bombers now cooperating with the Italian air force). The damage was minor, the high command communique said, and "a few" persons, were killed or injured.

(Catania had been bombed last Sunday night, according to the British.)

Il Giornala D'Italia, reporting the attack on the Eagle, a converted battleship, claimed only that a wave-skimming Italian torpedo plane had scored a hit recently between Tobruk, Libya and the Greek island of Crete.

The Italians thus have identified two British aircraft carriers reported hit in connection with the running battle with a heavily protected convoy which started Jan. 9 in the strait of Sicily. They are the Eagle and the 23,000 ton Illustrious.

Local Youths Enlist in U. S. Air Corps

Two local youths, Henry Yeske, 20, and Eugene Haza, 19, left today for Wausau to enlist in the United States air corps. The boys will join a group of 20 central Wisconsin flying cadet candidates and will immediately leave for either Chanute field at Rantoul, Ill., or Scott field at Belleville, Ill.

Both Yeske and Haza filed their application papers yesterday with army officials in Wausau and they will be assigned to one of the Illinois air corps bases for a year's preliminary training. Both boys will take a special course leading to graduation as an army flying cadet.

Henry is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Yeske, 541 Ninth avenue north, and Eugene is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Haza, Route 1, city.

THE WEATHER

For Wisconsin: Cloudy, snow north and freezing rain or snow south tonight and Friday; colder Friday; a d northwest and extreme west tonight.

Today's Weather Facts—Maximum temperature for 24-hour period ending at 7 a. m., 26; minimum temperature for 24-hour period ending at 7 a. m., 22; temperature at 7 a. m., 26.

