

U.S. NEWSPAPER COMMENTROMMEL'S POSITION NOT IMPROVED

The New York Herald Tribune this morning comments: ... the character of the fighting along the line of Rommel's retreat shows that the German commander has been unable to profit to any noticeable extent by his breathing spell at El Agheila. As at El Alamein he has been cut-generalled by the really superb tactics of General Montgomery ...

The picture revealed by Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham of the naval position in the Mediterranean is no less important and no less cheering than the victories of General Montgomery. Allied naval forces are moving freely at both ends of the Mediterranean according to the Admiral; the Eighth army is being supplied by sea; Malta is receiving regular convoys; the Allies are reinforcing their troops in North Africa faster than the Axis - which is losing more than a ship a day in its attempts to maintain communications across "mare nostrum". All of these factors fit into a pattern ... the pincers are closing on the last enemy foothold in Africa.

U.S. "GOOD NEIGHBOUR" POLICY

The New York Times today says: Herbert H. Lehman now bears the ... title of Director of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation operations. ... our Latin American friends ought not to mind if we call Mr. Lehman's organization the good neighbour agency thus applying to a larger field an idea that the Roosevelt administration has tried to work out in this hemisphere. Its purpose is to aid liberated countries by sending them the food, clothing, medical supplies and other things they will need when the Nazi locusts have been driven out; and to encourage the peoples of Nazi occupied lands by promising them this help at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. Lehman said at his first press conference last week in his new capacity that arrangements were being made for joint action by the United Nations in this field. The immediate need will be urgent as it has seemingly been found to be in North Africa. Beyond feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and sheltering the homeless, will lie the large tasks of restoring economic life so that shattered communities can get back as soon as possible to making and distributing their own goods. By sheer incompetency as well as by design the Germans have wrecked the trade and industry of every country where they have trespassed. This will be the biggest reconstruction job in history. Half the earth will be like a burned city in which the old streets and buildings cannot be and should not be restored exactly as they were before. The good neighbour policy will be a ... realistic as well as a humanitarian method of making sure that the conditions which produced the present conflagration shall not recur.

BURMA "A THIRD FRONT IN ASIA"

The New York Herald Tribune today writes: The unheralded British invasion of the Arakan district of South-Western Burma is not being construed in Washington as the beginning of the big effort ... to reconquer all of Burma but as a demonstration of the Indian Army's readiness to resume the offensive. ... according to ... Observers a large part of the greatest Indian army in the sub-Continent's history is "piled up" on the Burma border, newly equipped with and trained in the use of a surprising amount of modern engines of destruction, and waiting to go in. The fighting spirit is high ...

The Cleveland Plaindealer today says: The Allies have taken the road back to Mandalay to drive the Japanese out of Burma and regain control of the famous supply road into China. ... Wavell has opened a third front in Asia. One is the battle in the Solomons Islands and New Guinea which is engaging ever larger numbers of Japanese troops and almost all the naval forces of Japan and the other is in China where it has existed since 1937. Should the Allies successfully travel this road back to Mandalay a turning point in the war in the East will have been reached.

/ The ground

The ground will have been prepared for the final closing in on Japan...that cannot be completed with all the might of the United Nations until the Axis is liquidated in Europe.

The San Francisco News of yesterday states: After five straight days of bombing which we recognise now as having been a softening up process Allied troops under General Wavell are moving into Burma....If the Allied move is really the long awaited invasion of Burma it comes none too soon. Two months of the dry season are gone and the rains come with the spring. The weather is right, the military preparations are advanced and the need is great.

"BOMBERS TO COME"

The Atlanta Journal yesterday states:...air tacticians say that bombing in 1940 was an infant art...the Germans in 1940 know nothing for instance of the precision bombings which the Americans have been practising with such devastating effect.

....General Arnold has been saying that today's big bombers are probably the least of the new little bombers. New bombers now on the way in are to make the big bombers now on the way out look by comparison like toys. When these and their bombs get going nothing can withstand them. No enemy country can endure them.

The Atlanta Constitution yesterday said: Prime Minister Churchill the other day revealed to the liberty loving people of the world just how close Britain was to going under and at the same time how determined the people of Britain were to fight to the last man if invasion had come....the people of the island kingdom...had no physical equipment with which to battle an invader but they had plenty of the intangible things, the sort of things that helped Britain fight through to its present strength....

Never again must the Democracies allow themselves to be caught short-handed. Further, we must exert every ounce of effort to beat down our enemies now that we have won through to the "end of the beginning".

AMERICANS' CHRISTMAS IN STRANGE LANDS

The Kansas City Star today states: More Americans will celebrate Christmas this year in more strange and far off parts of the world than ever before in our country's history. More than a million Americans^{are} overseas in the army alone, the President revealed the other day, giving no count of sailors and marines....

They are away because they intend Christmas to mean something to us in the years to come, as it has in the past, as it still does today.

Our men are in "Greenland's icy mountains", in the death-haunted islands of the Solomons, in Africa, in India, in little Iceland....

We Americans are celebrating Christmas in those countries "down under" - Australia and New Zealand which were made lands of hope and freedom by Englishmen who had no luck at home, yet took home with them in their memories and made it a reality half way across the world. We are in the wind swept Aleutians and in fragrant Hawaii.

"Merry Christmas"? No! It can hardly be a merry Christmas....But it is a brave Christmas, a gallant Christmas. Our young men are ready to give their lives for the faith that is their's, for their country and their countrymen....Brave Christmas. Patient Christmas. Christmas of passionate belief in peace on earth, long in the coming but one day to come, if we keep faith.