

Nazi German Forces Advance Into Spain

CHURCHILL F.D.R. PLAN

Canadian-U.S. Alliance Model For Allied Plan

From The Times:

Today In Europe

News and comment on international events from the London Times of this date and cables from The Vancouver Daily Province, London Bureau, Times Building, Printing House Square.

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LONDON, Dec. 23.—Battling more against bad weather than against the enemy, British columns in Libya have now almost reached Bengasi, says the Times' Cairo correspondent. By Sunday evening they had reached El Abiar, about 25 miles east of Bengasi. Meanwhile other columns advancing from Mekkhi had arrived at Feidia, south of Bengasi.

Now that Rommel has fled with the remnants of his armored forces, the campaign is becoming more and more similar to the march on Bengasi, so successfully carried out by General Wavell last year.

The enemy withdrawal during the last few days has lost all vestiges of order, and the troops are abandoning everything in the frantic effort to escape relentlessly pursuing British columns. This time R. A. attacks are even more formidable than they were last year, despite greater enemy opposition, and tremendous damage has been caused to fleeing columns in men and machines.

During the present stage of the Libya battle the weather has been almost uniformly bad. Heavy sandstorms, rain and bitter cold have all served to slow up the advance. That the advance has been so rapid in spite of unfavorable conditions speaks volumes for the determination and dash of the men and the excellence of supply arrangements of the imperial forces.

The German withdrawal from the Moscow area continues. There is heavy rear-guard fighting in some sectors but the Russian push goes on.

Speed of the Russian advance is due partly to the absence of natural obstacles, says the Times Stockholm correspondent. Since they are frozen the rivers are no longer obstacles. There is scarcely another area in the world without natural obstacles so vast as that between the Baltic and the Black Sea in winter. It is difficult to imagine where in this vastness Hitler hopes to erect or dig defenses which the Russians in their present mood can not pierce or circumvent or cut off and isolate.

Russian progress towards relieving Leningrad was much more apparent during the weekend, particularly along the Moscow-Leningrad railway. The Russians have now renewed the Chudovo district and unless Von Leeb, or whoever is now in command there, lets go of Schusselburg and the surrounding area soon his chances of withdrawing will be small. Such a withdrawal means raising the siege of Leningrad, which has been practically complete for two months except for an outlet over Lake Ladoga.

(Continued on Page 1.)

See TIMES.

(Weather report appears on Page 23.)

First 'War Council' Meets at Washington; 80 British Staff Heads Meet U.S. Chiefs FUTURE OF WAR AT STAKE

Further details of the significance, purpose and events of Prime Minister Churchill's visit to Washington are given in earlier reports by R. T. Elson and other observers on Pages 3 and 6.

By R. T. ELSON.
Special Staff Correspondent The Daily Province and Associated Southern News.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 23.—In the oval study of the White House where Abraham Lincoln used to work far into the night during the great struggle to preserve the American union, a British Prime Minister and another war-time President sat talking late last night and into the morning hours.

They were discussing how best the freedom of one nation, but of all peoples, might be preserved in the face of the greatest tyranny of all time.

But thus, alone and simply in terms of their own friendship—their mutual respect and a momentous meeting between Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Today it expands beyond the exchange of personal views into a great meeting, embracing strategic objectives that encompass the whole globe—a conference unparalleled in modern history and upon which will depend perhaps the whole course of the conflict.

Eighty in Party

For it was revealed this morning that the scope of the meeting is much more far-reaching than was at first anticipated. Accompanying Mr. Churchill was a party of more than 80, headed by Lord Beaverbrook and the naval, air and army chiefs of staff.

Thus while the President and Prime Minister are exchanging views directly in the executive offices of the White House, Sir Dudley Pound, first sea lord; Sir Charles F. A. Portal, air chief marshal; and Sir John Greer Dill, chief of the imperial general staff, will be able to meet their respective members here.

Announcing the conference, Steve Earley, the President's secretary, told reporters: "That group you might call the war council, for with them are their respective members in the U.S. service."

Visiting the President's office, the President's own lead administrator in London, is also here. His presence is particularly significant, for Lord Beaverbrook accompanied the minister to Moscow and talked with Stalin, the wartime leader who is missing from this party. They understand the Russian problem and can best present Russia's problem.

Canada's Part

Canada will play a significant part in the discussions. Prime Minister Roosevelt talked to Prime Minister Mackenzie King by telephone yesterday afternoon.

When the Prime Minister and the President attend an inter-continental conference service here on Christmas Day, it is expected that Mr. King will be there, emphasizing the essential unity of the United States, Britain and the Dominions in this war struggle.

It is significant that the President chose this morning to announce his approval of the Russian proposal for a joint war production committee of the United States and Britain. (Reported on Page 6.) For that statement, which promises the sweeping away of customs and administrative barriers—in fact of anything that impedes the war effort—may well be in itself a model for the wider agreement between Britain, the United States and the Dominions, the Netherlands and all the nations opposing Hitlerism.

Expand Policy

What has worked on a smaller scale between Canada and the United States may be expanded on a broader scale to include the whole world.

Thus, out of these meetings three objectives are seen as immediate goals.

1. **UNITY OF ACTION**—Perhaps in the form of a supreme war council that would coordinate the action of four main theaters—Europe, Africa, the Far East and mainland China.

2. **EXPANSION**—The sphere which becomes the supply base for the world struggle.

(Continued on Page 1.)

See ELSON.

Two Tankers Targets

JAPANESE SINK ANOTHER SHIP OFF CALIFORNIA

Blasts and Gunfire Shake Houses on the Shore.

RESCUE MADE

(By Associated Press.)
SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 23.—(AP)—The 440-foot Union Oil tanker Montebello was attacked and sunk by an enemy submarine at 4 a.m. today off the San Francisco coast, the 12th navy district announced. Four lives were carried off.

The navy said it had no report of any casualties. While the Montebello was being attacked, the Richfield tanker was also being attacked. The Richfield was reported to have encountered trouble with an undersea raider in the general locality, but to have escaped. The navy said, however, it had not been in communication with the Doherty since the attack.

All members of the Montebello 40-man crew subsequently rescued. A few of them were injured, but apparently not seriously. The Montebello was attacked and sent to the bottom just before dawn.

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HURL HUNS ACROSS RIVER

Blizzards Fail to Halt Russian Advance in Leningrad Sector

By HENRY CASADY.
(Associated Press Staff Writer.)

MOSCOW, Dec. 23.—The Red army, pressing relentlessly its general counter-offensive, was reported today to have driven the Germans back to the Volkhov River, southeast of Leningrad, and in some places to have thrown them across the river.

While blizzards raged in a temperature of 22 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit) the Russian troops advanced 50 miles west of Tikhvin, jumping off place for the rush in the northwest and 110 miles east of Leningrad.

OPEN COMMUNICATION

Private letters arriving in Moscow from Leningrad were cited as proof that communication between Leningrad had been reopened. Writers said the food situation in the Baltic delta had improved and expressed the belief supplies had arrived there from United States and Great Britain.

Military dispatches said German lines at the heart of the Moscow front also continued to break back after having been broken at the end of the Malinlin and Tula sectors.

NEW ROUTE

Pravda, the Communist party newspaper, reported Soviet troops bursting through Leningrad had routed the Germans on that front. In one sector, where the Germans sought to impede the Russian pursuit of a general counter-offensive, Pravda said, 800 Germans were slain by the Russians and the remaining forces were scattered floundering through forests, where Soviet ski troops were hunting them down.

AS HONGKONG HURLS JAPS BACK

Brig. Lawson Among Many Canadian Dead

Heroic Fight Hurls Japs Back from Key Position

Commander and Staff Chief Are Killed; Ottawa Says Situation Still Critical

(A picture of Brigadier Lawson and Colonel Hennessey, taken as they left Canada for Hongkong recently, appears on Page 24.)

HONGKONG, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Hongkong's defenders have "continually held and perhaps surrounded"—Japanese forces who made "penetration" in their line on Mount Cameron on Hong Kong Island, the British command announced today.

(By Canadian Press.)

OTTAWA, Dec. 23.—Fighting day and night on the hills and streets of Hongkong, Canadian army forces have suffered heavy casualties, Defense Minister J. L. Ralston announced today.

The minister said it was believed Brig. J. K. Lawson, commander of the Canadian contingent, had been killed. His senior staff officer, Col. Patrick Hennessey, was killed by shell fire. Both men were seasoned professional soldiers of the permanent force. Their homes were in Ottawa.

The minister, in a statement, said: "A situation report from Hongkong up to 6 p.m. (2 p.m. P.S.T.) yesterday, received through the British admiralty, indicates that the force generally has suffered heavy casualties."

"The only particulars given of casualties was the regrettable news that the Canadian commander, Brig. J. K. Lawson, was believed to have been killed, and that the senior staff officer, Col. P. Hennessey, had been killed by shell fire."

"The enemy has succeeded in landing fresh forces and has been attacking our positions continuously."

"Two Canadian counter-attacks had not succeeded in making progress. They had, however, killed a number of the enemy though at some cost to ourselves."

"It would appear that the situation is critical."

Authorities said there was no indication when a casualty list was given.

Sister In City

At least one Vancouver home has been hit by enemy shells, casualties announced today. Mrs. George St. John, 5609 Angus, was a sister of Brigadier J. K. Lawson.

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HUNS MAY TRY TO REINFORCE AFRICA TROOPS

Nazis Moving Through Occupied Section Of France NEAR BORDER

BERNE, Switzerland, Dec. 23.—(AP)—German troops were reported authoritatively today to be moving through western occupied France to the Spanish frontier.

The movement was noted after Hitler's Sunday proclamation, upon assuming command of the German land forces, to the effect that the German front from Norway to the Spanish border must be consolidated.

MAY BE SHIPPED.

So far the number of troops moving southward is reported to be small. It was apparent whether they were equipped for shipment from Spain to North Africa, where the Axis armies are in dire straits.

It was, however, the first step in the French-Spanish border area since the fall of France.

Considerable German army equipment has been shipped up on the Spanish-French border for several months.

Observers here saw further evidence of Reich co-operation with the Axis in the appointment of an Italian ambassador to Paris.

"What We Take We Hold to End," Says Canadian

NEW YORK, Dec. 23.—"What we take we hold to the last man."

This was the message broadcast today from London by a Canadian veteran of the first Great War to the Canadian defense of Hongkong over the B.B.C.

The veteran said that holding on to the last man was the spirit of the Canadian forces.

"You are putting up a grand fight," he said. "As a Canadian veteran I feel sure you are just as proud of your task as our boys were in the first World War, and from your resistance we draw inspiration."

"I hope with you in your trying hour. We know you will continue to give a good account of yourself. To everybody in Hongkong: 'Good luck!'"

NEW NAZI MOVE—Possibility of the Germans reinforcing their inviolable African troops were seen today in the announcement that Nazi forces were moving to the Spanish frontier.

Manila, Dec. 23.—(AP)—A Japanese force has landed on Wake Island.

In making this announcement today the United States navy said that enemy units of unspecified strength landed this morning on the tiny mid-Pacific island where marines had beaten off repeated onslaughts by enemy aircraft and naval units.

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