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MEMBER
A.B.C.

The Russian Front . . .

German propaganda still continues to play up the measures being taken for a house-to-house defence of Berlin. However, Berlin is not necessarily a primary or immediate objective of the present offensive operations. The capture of Silesia, the neutralization of East Prussia and the enormous losses of men and equipment so far suffered by the Germans are in themselves achievements tantamount to a first-class military victory.

Marshal Konev's bridgehead across the Oder River which, says Dittmar "will decide Germany's fate," is clearly of first-class importance. Its possession opens up several possibilities. Konev might, for instance, roll up the northern flank of the defences covering Moravska and Ostrava, the last Silesian centre of industry left in German hands.

More important, he is enveloping and neutralizing Breslau from the south and southwest. This done, he can move northwest, perhaps by way of Dresden and outflank the German's Kustrin and Frankfurt line before Berlin.

The Germans are once more in the dilemma wherein the Red Army has so often and so skillfully put them. They have to meet Konev's threat but also have to keep Zhukov covered, since he is on the direct road to the Capital.

Meanwhile, on this so-called "Berlin front," Zhukov is tidying up. He must clear his communications, Poznan and Schneidemuh, bring up large forces so as to guard the flanks of any assault he may mount in the future against Berlin, and eliminate the German bridgeheads east of the Oder, from which immediate and telling counter-attacks could be launched against the flanks of his own bridgeheads on the west bank.

The centre of gravity has now moved south from Zhukov towards Konev. This is what one might have expected, since Konev opened his original offensive first and has had more time to build up than Zhukov.

The Battle of Berlin . . .

A collapse of the German home front could, of course, completely alter the course of the war. But so far it appears that the German General Staff can still plan and execute and that the military machine still functions.

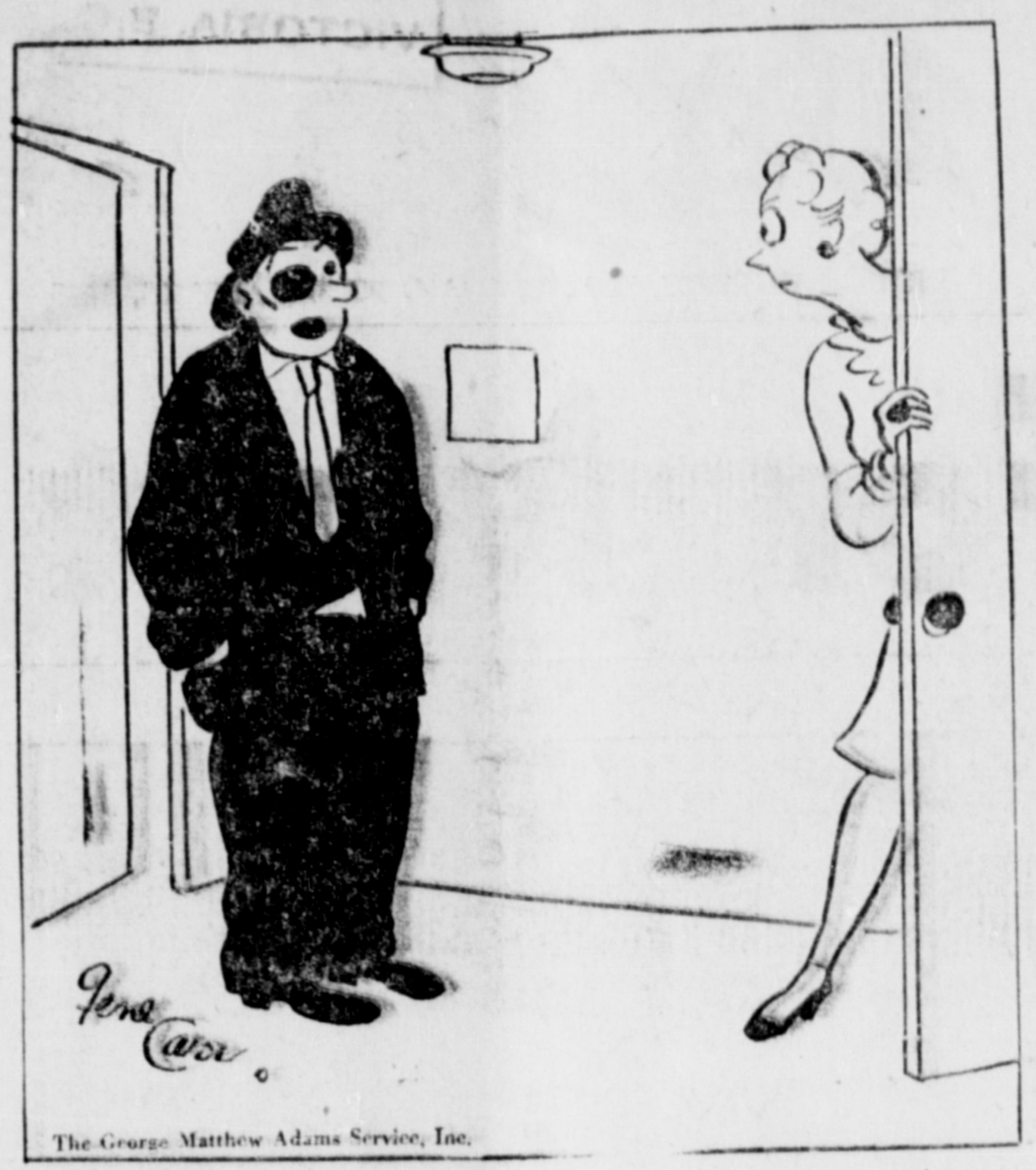
What can the General Staff do in the face of the Russian avalanche and what does it seem to be doing? The northern and southern flanks — East Prussia and Silesia — which had been counted on to contain any Russian drive seem to be cracking. Can the Nazis break or at least control the central spearhead now aimed straight at Berlin?

Berlin is the centre of a vast spiderweb of railroads and highways. If it is possible for the Germans to stabilize any sort of line along the Oder and from the Oder south to the Sudeten Mountains, such a line could be supplied and backed up at critical points through this communications network. If it is now too late to fortify and man such a line, the General Staff has the alternative of grouping a striking force, an army of maneuver, for a counter-attack at the place and moment the Russian drive appears to be nearest over-extended.

Much of the evidence points toward such a counter-attack rather than toward a decisive line. The counter-attack is basic German military strategy and tactics. An army of maneuver can be assembled much farthur to the rear—hence more rapidly—and moved to the chosen area. It can be grouped with more certainty than troops can be deployed on a long and fluid front.

Field Marshal Heinz Guderian, or whoever now commands the Reich's armies on the Eastern Front, might well wait until the Russian central columns had crossed the Oder and then strike out from Berlin with the city at his back and the river behind the Russians. The success of such a move is another matter. So far Russian generalship and power have overwhelmed everything the Nazis have thrown in. In any event, we may well look on Berlin, not as the goal line, the crossing of which would end the war in Europe, but as the pivot on which turns one of the war's last and most decisive plays.

THIS AND THAT


Gene Carr
The George Matthew Adams Service, Inc.

"Some of the boys got to talking about plans for permanent peace."

In Hospitals and Mud—

LETTERS OF THANKS FROM PRINCE RUPERT BOYS ON FIGHTING FRONTS

A few of the many letters of thanks for cigarettes received by the Women's Auxiliary of the Coast Regiment from our local boys on the battlefronts are given below:

Sgt. R. A. Winder, C.A.C.M.F., in Italy — "Please convey my warmest thanks to all members of the W. A. Your grand 'Xmas parcel arrived on Christmas Eve and it was certainly enjoyed and appreciated. It is very heartwarming, especially at this time, to realize that we have not been forgotten by you in Prince Rupert. I would like to add my thanks for the cigarettes and parcels which came in the past year. Though I sometimes failed to acknowledge their arrival, they were centainly a Godsend to us all in Italy. Thank you ever so much. Very best wishes to all for the coming year."

Gunner Tommy Flewin, R.C.A. in Italy—"Well after such a very long period I am writing to you to say 'Hello' and hope you are well. I have been going to write to you many times but kept putting it off up to today when I received your cake, candy and greetings. Then I just sat down and thought how selfish I'd been all along. I hope you will forgive me. For the cake and candies I thank you ever so much. I haven't touched the cake yet as I am saving it for 'Xmas Day but oh what a temptation! It smells so good but 'Xmas is only eight days away so I'll have something good for that day anyway. Ray Paschal said he was writing to you and that you would like me to write too. Do you hear from Danny (Magnet) very often? I saw him one day some time ago. He was in hospital, or rather was just coming out. Oh, to be back in good old Rupert again! This country doesn't agree with my likings at all. I do hope this won't last much longer. The weather here is pretty cold now but I guess we can take it for a while. Prince Rupert has changed a great deal from what I hear from people back there. They tell me buildings are springing up all over, probably I won't know the place when I come back. Please thank the Women's Auxiliary for me and say that I have surely appreciated all they have sent me for the past three years."

Sgt. Inman, in Italy, General Hospital—"Received your letter some time ago but haven't felt much like writing. A little over five weeks ago I came in close contact with a German tank and have been flat on my back ever since in different hospitals, ending up in this—the last one before I leave for the U.K. and Canada. The Jerries waited until I was a 100 yards from them before they fired at my tank and it really made a mess. Two of my crew were killed instantly but the other three of us were able to get out although we were all wounded. I had my right leg badly smashed up with four inches of bone knocked out between knee and hip. I am very lucky though because the doctors say I won't lose my leg. They are going to heal me up as well as they can here and then send me back to Canada where I will have some bone grafts. It will take a long time as I will be in bed six months yet but it will be worth it to save my leg. A stretcher is not the best way to land back but I'm not complaining as I'm lucky to get back.

Trefry has gone back to England. When his wound healed it left him with a stiff arm so they sent him back to the U.K. Dick Winder has a job in a camp behind the lines and is through fighting I hear. Sandy Ross, Finlayson, Red are still with the regiment and were all well when I last heard of them about two weeks ago. The casualties have been quite high for the Canadians here on our last drive but the Germans' were not low either. Write again when you have time, I appreciate hearing from you people."

Pte. Don Norton, First Cnd. Army, in Britain—"A few lines to express my thanks for your cigarettes and 'Xmas parcel. The cake was excellent and did much to add to the 'Xmas spirit. Considering the circumstances we spent an enjoyable 'Xmas Day. Our dinner was all that could be wished for and included a more or less informal speech by General Crerar. Once again my thanks to you for your many gifts received in the past four years and I am sure you can understand just how much they are appreciated."

Bdr. W. R. Forshmer, Artillery in Holland—"Just a line to let you know I received your cigarettes and 'Xmas parcel and was very glad to get them. The cake and chewing gum was very nice and I wrote and thanked Mrs. Magnet. It is very nice of the ladies to make and send these things to us boys overseas. This letter leaves me in Holland up to my knees in mud but quite happy and living in hope for the day when we return to God's country, the north of B.C. Really one never realizes how much we miss it at times. But then I don't think the war will last much longer and we will all return to our natural lives once again.

We spent a couple of days in Antwerp. It's a grand city, the people live much like Canadians. The city is very modern and they live very fast, so you can be sure we had a good time on our short stay there. I will close for now—Thanking you all once again."

TELKWA COAL IS AVAILABLE

Frank Dockrill, Well Known Pioneer Operator, on Business Visit to City

Frank Dockrill, head of the Bulkley Valley Collieries, pioneer coal producers of the Telkwa district, is a visitor in the city on business, having arrived on Wednesday night's train from the interior. Mr. Dockrill's property has been operating steadily with a crew of about 32 men employed, much of its production going to the army. Now some of the output is becoming available for the local market and it is in that connection that Mr. Dockrill is here. The colliery now being operated by the company is on the west side of Goat Creek whereas the former workings were on the east side.

1,000 Hear YMCA Opening

(Continued from Page One)

Mayor H. M. Daggett representing the city.

Don Forward paid tribute to members of the local advisory committee of the YMCA, two of whom were on the stage. They were Mrs. R. M. Winslow and P. H. Linzey. R. M. Winslow, William Cruikshank and Mrs. L. W. Kergin were unable to attend.

A message from Air Vice Marshal Heakes, who had been scheduled to attend but was unable to do so, was read by Mr. Forward.

John W. Beaton, general secretary of YMCA War Services, Toronto, greeting from National YMCA War Services and congratulated the citizens of Prince Rupert on receiving so fine a building.

"This building is being dedicated in the first year of the second century of YMCA service," he said. "The organization celebrated its hundredth birthday on D-Day last year. During that time it has done war service on four occasions—the Fenian raids, the Boer War, the Great War, and now, the second World War.

"Unlike Germany, the allied nations give a large place to voluntary organizations in peace time. Consequently there were many such groups which offered their services when war came. In addition to Red Cross, Navy League of Canada and YWCA which operate independently, among the organizations signing agreements with the government to do special war service were the Canadian Legion, Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army and the YMCA. During the early part of the war work of the latter bodies was financed voluntarily but later they were required to accept funds from the public treasury."

Mr. Beaton outlined the vast network of YMCA centres across Canada, in England and continental Europe. Iceland, too, has a Canadian YMCA centre and staff workers went as far afield as India.

Widespread War Work of YMCA

When the Canadians landed in Sicily, "Y" workers went with them and there are still 115 of the "Y" staff in that "forgotten" area. "Y" men landed in France 10 days after D-day and each supervisor had a 3-ton truck loaded with sports equipment, chocolate bars and other comforts. There are now 200 Canadian "Y" staff personnel in Holland, Belgium, France and
Germany and many mo
be needed as Allied armie
trate deeper into Ge
where voluntary assistan
not be secured.

In all, there are 184
adian "Y" staff members
ing with the war servic
these are assisted by mor
14,000 volunteer helpers. P
of-war camps are visited
secretaries in 35 countri
that is a job that wil
much bigger after the wa
Mr. Beaton said.

"Our aim is to see th
through in the highest
terms of military and
morale," he concluded.

T. S. Dixon, B.C. mem
the advisory board of th
partment of War Servic
how Prince Rupert's ne
building had been proje
1941 and construction aut
in 1942.

**"Due to conditions we
not able to start constr
at that time. Some may
plain that you have go
building too late in the
I do not think it is too
After hostilities are th
it will make a mar
centre for the citizen
Prince Rupert. I feel
arrangements will be m
meet that end."**

Col. Ferrie touched
same theme when he said
centre wil pay large d
to the city after the
helping to make good
adians."

Allan Hurst, B.C. are
tary, Vancouver, gave pr
praise to the volunteer
who helped with constru
the building and in oth
activities.

"In the emergency
coast we sent our most e
ced men and tremendou
tities of material here.
we hope the emergency
this building will help
and women in brown a
and blue to enjoy the
of life."

Prior to the opening
the band of H.M.C.S. C
played in the auditorium
crowd entered and,
ceremony as the visitor
the building they were
by music of the Prin
garrison band which
the lobby.

In the evening th
was opened to service
of both nations, and
entertainment was p
a stage show "Merry-G
in the auditorium and
hockey games in the g

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Sanding Floor W
Fire Doors
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BENNIE LEE, Secret

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