

Opinions  
Finish  
Of The War  
Vary Much

BY HAL BOYLE  
AN AMERICAN AIR BASE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA, Dec. 12—(Delayed)—When this war is being ended?

Before we started the long hard fight through the Italian looses and the German "come though" would be over before Christmas. Few of those on this side of the war who have anything to do with the actual conduct of operations shared this rosy optimism.

But the subject of the subject remains intensely interesting to the soldiers. There are enough bets being placed on it to make a fortune for an enterprising bookie.

I asked five airmen at random when they thought Germany would collapse and their guesses ranged from two months to a year and a half. Here they are—but remember they're just one man's opinion.

"My guess is June 14, 1944, for the European end," said Major Roy Nelson, of Seattle, Wash., a pilot. "I call the turn on the weather for the 15th Air Force. I'll take the most interesting to crumble the German."

"Washington's birthday is my bet—next Feb. '47," said Major Frederick O'Connor, of Fort Meade, N. Y., who has finished 50 "Mills Arrow" B-17 Scouts and is going home soon. "I think the Germans are cracking and that Germany will finish them."

"No, the Germans still have a lot of fight left in them," said Major H. L. "Tommy" Hall, a ground officer from Clonson, N. C. "I'll say that they'll hold out until the end of 1944."

Most optimistic of all was Lt. Col. Sidney Wogan of Alexandria, Va. "I'll take Feb. 17, yes, next Feb. 17," he said. "We're going to turn them back from the Rhine and they'll be back in Berlin."

"I'll take March 15, 1944," said Major J. W. "Bull" Bullen, a ground officer from Clonson, N. C. "I'll take the end of the war."

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AMERICAN TAKES ITALIAN POSITIONS

Yanks Push Forward In Snow Storm  
Take 2,600-Foot Mt. Spinucchio

By WES GALLAGHER  
ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Algiers—(AP)—American Fifth Army forces have lunged forward two and a half miles in a snow storm to capture the 2,600-foot Mt. Spinucchio, while U. S. 15th Air Force heavy bombers escorted by long-range fighters attacked Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, and an Athens airfield, it was announced today.

In companion drive, Gen. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's Eighth Army Forces pushed ahead in stiff fighting toward Tobruk in the central sector of the coastal front, improving their positions near Ortona, the Allied Headquarters communique added. German resistance was said to be increasing.

ALLIED LOSSES  
Allied planes shot down 23 enemy planes in the twin attacks on Sofia railroad yards and the airfield in Greece and in the heavy attacks on the coastal front, improving their positions near Ortona, the Allied Headquarters communique added. German resistance was said to be increasing.

NEW CARRIERS IN SOUTHWEST PACIFIC ACTION—Headed for action on a Southwest Pacific front, two of the Navy's most modern, hard-hitting aircraft carriers are pictured framed by the dual-purpose guns of another big U. S. warship. They are of the 25,000-ton Essex class, which have spearheaded task force attacks on Jap island outposts from Wake to Rabaul, including the Marshall Islands, Nauru and the invasion of New Britain. (U. S. Navy photo.)

Red Forces Drive Close To Vitebsk  
LONDON—(AP)—The Russian Baltic Army, steadily expanding its breach in the heavily-fortified German line, has plunged down the east side of the Nevel-Vitebsk railway to within twenty miles of Vitebsk, Reuters reported today from Moscow.

Japs Seen As Fleeing  
WASHINGTON—(AP)—Secretary of the Navy Knox reported today that the Japanese apparently are fleeing from the southern part of Bougainville in an obvious effort to concentrate their forces further north on that island.

Shipbuilders Boost Record  
SAVANNAH, Ga.—(AP)—With the launching of the 385 Louis M. Godey yesterday, the Savannah shipyard has set a new record for the number of ships launched in a year.

Use War Stamps To Mail Cards  
WASHINGTON—(AP)—Stamps were wrong, officials declared when Christmas cards were mailed through the Post Office bearing 2-cent war stamps instead of the one-cent postage stamps.

German Planes Crash Together  
LONDON—(AP)—An summary of 1943 activities of British anti-aircraft defenses disclosed that two German raiders were destroyed over the year without being hit, the pilots crashing while blinded by searchlights.

Wavel Says India To Be Great Base  
CALCUTTA—(AP)—Field Marshal Lord Wavell, British commander in India, declared today that India is being organized as a base for a military force of warships, armies, and air forces that India has ever before gathered in the East.

Troops Guard Bolivia Tin Mines After Government Overthrown  
LA PAZ, Bolivia—(AP)—Troops guarded Bolivia's tin ore mines today as a Nationalist Junta which yesterday overthrew the Government of Gen. Enrique Penaranda announced that it was firmly entrenched and disconcerted rumors that a counter-revolution had begun.

Large Armada Of Planes Hits Crushing Blow  
British Lose 42 Aircraft In Attacks On Frankfurt and Elsewhere  
By JUDSON O'QUINN  
LONDON—(AP)—Hundreds of RAF bombers gave Frankfurt its most crushing blow of the war last night, raining 2,000 long tons of incendiaries and explosives on the German chemical and armament center.

Americans Hold Araware Air Strip  
ADVANCED ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, New Guinea—(AP)—The American Sixth Army expanding six miles from its Cape Merkus, New Britain, beachhead has taken the Araware air strip, adding another landing field to the perches from which Allied war birds are punning the air of Japan.

Rail Talks Resumed  
WASHINGTON—(AP)—While House conferences designed to settle the railroad wage dispute and avert a scheduled strike were resumed today, fast on the heels of a Presidential statement that the best Christmas present the American people could get would be an assurance that there would be no general transportation stoppage.

Senate Winds Up Session  
WASHINGTON—(AP)—The Senate adjourned at 12:47 P. M. today, bringing to a close the first session of the 77th Congress.

Tito Partisans Reach Vicinity Of Zagreb In "Major Battle"  
By EDWARD D. BALL  
LONDON—(AP)—The 250,000-man Yugoslav Partisan Army of Marshal Josip Broz (Tito) announced today it had advanced into the Zagreb area, the cutting of the Zagreb, in a campaign which London termed a major battle.

Weather  
Fairly cloudy and slightly foggy with light rain, partly cloudy and mild.

Wavell Says India To Be Great Base  
CALCUTTA—(AP)—Field Marshal Lord Wavell, British commander in India, declared today that India is being organized as a base for a military force of warships, armies, and air forces that India has ever before gathered in the East.