

Newsprint Shortage Chief Headache in Efficient Invasion Coverage Setup



On a troopship Bert Brandt girded for his beachhead photo beat

The world's press, on a strict war diet of newsprint but gorged with invasion news, nevertheless gave readers last week swift and thorough coverage of one of the biggest stories of their lifetime.

Home: In America, the news broke for the morning papers. Only one, The New York Daily News—circulation 2,000,999, largest in America—apparently could claim a real scoop. At 12:36 EWT, Tuesday, its short-wave listening post relayed the flash, "Invasion has begun," from a German news broadcast. The News interrupted the Milkman's Matinee over station WNEW to put it on the air at 12:40. The Associated Press and the International News Service received the same flash by cable from London (where it also had been picked up) a minute after The News and gave it to the national networks immediately. It was close, but The News and WNEW could claim an honest beat. (For radio's coverage of the invasion, see page 95.)

The official announcement was a dead heat by arrangement. As the networks brought General Eisenhower's communiqué No. 1 directly from London at 3:32 a.m., the press associations flashed it simultaneously. Most papers already had extraed or replated for the German report; now they made it official.

The speed with which the real thing followed the Associated Press's false alarm June 3 put papers in a forgiving mood toward AP.

So alerted, the press outdid itself—within the limits of the newsprint shortage—except for a bit of pardonable exuberance with headlines. Highlights:

- In black or red type as high as 8 inches (used by The Los Angeles Times and The Los Angeles Examiner), the single word "INVASION" screamed from front pages all over the country. The San Francisco Chronicle's "Extra" overline, headlines, and a six-column map left room for only fourteen lines of two-column, eighteen-point type to start the story. This layout, part of a wrap-around, had been prepared two months earlier.

- Circulation managers cursed the newsprint shortage. In New York, The Daily News's circulation on June 7 rose more

The Fourth Estate

than 400,000 to a staggering 2,424,161; The Daily Mirror, 130,000 to more than 900,000. The Chicago Tribune leaped nearly 100,000 to pass the million mark. In Los Angeles the largest paper, The Herald and Express, went up 176,000 to 485,000, more than for the Pearl Harbor figure but still 2,000 shy of the copies that announced the capture of William Edward Hickman, baby kidnapper and killer of the twenties.

Adless editions appeared in Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York to permit heavier press runs and more news. "An editorial department paradise," gloated George A. Cornish, managing editor of The New York Herald Tribune, when his paper jettisoned virtually all ads on June 7. Glenn Neville, executive editor of The Mirror, commented that in his adless paper 80 per cent of 44 columns was war news. In the rush, part of one Mirror edition appeared without page 3 but with page 2 duplicated.

The invasion news appeared on page four (cable news) of the staid London Times. Austerely, its two-column head read: "The Great Assault Going Well."

Front: From abroad, never had so many correspondents (450) poured so much copy (millions of words) into so many press associations, photo services, newspapers, magazines, and radio stations (115 organizations in all). Representing the combined Allied press, some 100 reporters covered every phase of the actual battle operations. Their pooled copy started to reach the United States within four hours of General Eisenhower's communiqué. Some firsts:

- For newspapers, the first eyewitness account (airplane view) came from Gladwin A. Hill, Harvard-educated, 6-foot, bespectacled wise-cracking correspondent whom the AP calls "the Air Marshal." He flew to France in a B-26 and returned by prearrangement to a base near London where, also by prearrangement, telephone facilities awaited him.

- Henry T. Gorrell, veteran United Press correspondent, apparently got the first account through from a beachhead. Dated from North Central France, it



Typical of the speed with which the country's newspapers handled D-Day developments was the fast-changing front page on four editions of The N. Y. Daily News

OldMagazineArticles.com

The Fourth Estate

began simply: "At H Hour plus 90 minutes the progress of American assault troops is satisfactory today." But the first beachhead dispatch with newsy details came from Pierre J. Huss of INS. And the first complete account of the beachhead assault—by a correspondent who was in the first wave—was wirelessed by Kenneth Crawford, of NEWSWEEK (see page 25).

- To Bert Brandt, aggressive Acme photographer, went undisputed honors. His pictures of tanks and troops boarding an invasion barge reached America within four hours after the communiqué. He personally delivered the first beachhead pictures to the pool by hitchhiking rides on returning assault craft and a jeep.

- First casualties: Henry B. Jameson, 32-year-old AP man, and David Woodward, 35, of The Manchester Guardian, both slightly wounded. After being hit on a beach, Jameson filed two takes before notifying his London Bureau he would have to return.

- A beef about faulty military cooperation with the press came from Don Whitehead of the AP. From a beachhead he complained that communications had broken down for 28 hours and that promised Army couriers did not appear. This was "more bitterly disappointing," Whitehead pointedly wrote, because British press communications worked well.