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AMERICANS PUSH ON IN TUNISIA

RUSSIAN LINE FORCED TO YIELD SLIGHTLY

Fresh Nazi Units Pour Pressure on Defenders

Cross Donets But Are Hurled Back

By EDDY GILMORE

MOSCOW — (AP) — Dispatches from the front today said the Germans had thrown new air units, motorized infantry outfits and tank detachments into the battle for mastery of the upper Donets River fifteen miles east of Kharkov, and that the tremendous pressure of the new forces in the last few hours had caused the Russian line to yield slightly in the Chuguev sector.

The Nazis succeeded in throwing infantrymen across the river in some sectors, but ultimately they were hurled back, while tanks attempting the crossing crashed through the thinning ice, Russian dispatches said.

"In the district of Chuguev fierce battles continued," the Soviet noon communique declared. "The enemy brought up fresh forces of infantry and tanks in attacks on our positions.

"The fighters of 'X' unit repulsed the attacks of the Hitlerites, damaged five tanks and killed up to 400 German soldiers and officers.

"As a result of the battles in only one sector were enemy tanks able slightly to press back our detachments."

RED FLIERS STRIKE

Russian fliers, however, smashed at German transport, the communique said, destroying or damaging about 100 trucks hauling men and supplies.

This furnished an indication here that the Germans were depending in this sector on highway travel rather than by rail, although west of Kharkov they are supposed to have railroads in operation.

The dispatches did not say how heavy the German reinforcements were, but the Nazis' continued assaults on the Russian lines both from the air and land are perhaps as furious as anything they have attempted in Russia since they tried to take Stalingrad and Voronezh.

SMOLENSK DRIVE

New gains in the drive for Smolensk were reported, with a Red Army column smashing westward along the Vyazma-Smolensky

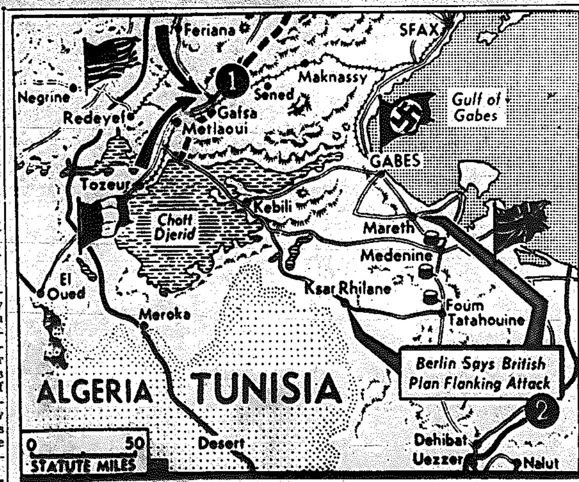
See RUSSIAN LINE on page 7

Hitler Illness Reports Scouted

LONDON — (AP) — Edgar Louis Granville, Independent member of Parliament, declared in an address at Slough today that reports Adolf Hitler was ill were sheer propaganda intended to lull the United Nations into complacency.

"Propaganda Minister Goebbels is attempting to put over the biggest Nazi sensation since the flight of Hess," he said. "It takes the form of saying Hitler is ill, dethroned by the German Army or retired to Berchtesgaden."

This was described as a desperate trick intended to "postpone our readiness to come to final grips with the enemy in Europe." Granville said "We have got to defeat Hitlerism as well as Hitler, Goebbel's tongue as well as Reichsmarshal Goering's Army."



GAFSA RECAPTURED—Allied Headquarters in North Africa have announced the recapture of Gafsa (1), central Tunisian airbase, by U. S. forces. American troops moved in from Feriana, while the French advanced from Metlaoui. The German radio said that in addition to the British four-division assault on the northern sector of the Mareth Line, General Montgomery was sending strong reinforcements against the Nazi right flank (2). Broken line indicates approximate battlefront.

F. R. Would Delay Civil Draft Long As Possible

Talks on Service Legislation

WASHINGTON —(AP)— President Roosevelt told a press conference today he wanted to avoid national service legislation just as long as he possibly could.

No decision has been reached on the question of drafting of workers for war industries, Mr. Roosevelt said, and he added that it might be unnecessary to have it, or that eventually it would have to be put into effect.

Senator Austin, Republican, Vermont, co-author of the Austin-Wadsworth Bill for a National Service Act, was told of Mr. Roosevelt's remarks and he commented, "to me, he is assuming that it may be necessary."

"That's the whole point of difference — whether it's necessary now or not," said Austin. "If we wait until the crisis it may be too late. Also the lives of many of our boys will be lost while we're debating the type of legislation the country wants."

RICKENBACKER HEARD

At Capitol Hill today Captain Eddie Rickenbacker of flying fame in war and peace, told a Senate Committee considering a civilian draft bill that he is "crusading to make the public conscience-stricken," to arouse the people back home "to the point where they will work as our boys on the battlefields work."

Rickenbacker said the war "may go for years" unless a mighty increase of production speeds the day of victory.

Mr. Roosevelt, asked why he wanted to avoid civilian service legislation, said he thought it would create a lot more machinery, make things a lot more complicated in

See F. R. WOULD on page 7

Tax Collections Force Upward

WASHINGTON—(AP)—March income tax collections have reached $1,835,353,710, the Treasury reported today, forging well ahead of last year's corresponding period.

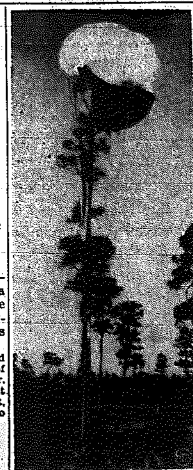
The figures in the Treasury's daily statement for March 17, which compare with March 18 of last year, showed collections for the day of $452,895,355, which was a drop of around $60,000,000 from the peak of March 16.

Since the fiscal year began July 1, the Treasury has taken in $7,452,793,089, which compares with $3,911,459,648 in the corresponding period of 1942 fiscal year.

Income tax collections for the first sixteen days of March compared with $1,671,591,218 on March 18, 1942.

Jap Positions in Solomons Raided

WASHINGTON— (AP) —American bombers hitting at Japanese positions in the Solomons started a fire at Vila and bombed Kahili and Ballale, the Navy announced today, adding that results of the latter two attacks were not observed.



UP A TREE—Neatly capping a tree is a 'chute left behind by misguided paratrooper on maneuvers in Alabama.

El Guetar, 12 Miles Beyond Gafsa, Taken

Patton's Forces Enter Town Following Abandonment By Enemy

By EDWARD KENNEDY

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA—(AP)—United States troops have occupied El Gueter, twelve miles southeast of Gafsa on the road to Gabes, in a pursuit maintained despite torrential rains and flood conditions, it was announced today.

Forward elements from the command of Lieut.-Gen. George S. Patton Jr. entered the town after its abandonment by the enemy, a communique said.

(A dispatch from the Tunisian front from Noland Norgaard, Associated Press war correspondent, said United States infantry reoccupied positions east of El Guetar, thus restoring their position to a rough approximation of that of two months ago.)

The soldiers often were wading through water in the muddy gullies to press the advantage gained in the reconquest of the Gafsa area.

(An Algiers radio broadcast recorded by the Associated Press in London said United States and French troops spearing northeastward from Gafsa were bearing down rapidly on Sened, 28 miles away.

(More than 48 hours after U. S. troops entered Gafsa Wednesday, a German radio broadcast admitted the fall of city, which it said "was evacuated some days ago according to plan.")

In the northern sector British First Army troops withdrew yesterday from the mining village of Tamera to new positions three miles to the southwest, where they [illegible] two German [illegible] attacks. Tamera [illegible] west of a former British base at Sedjenane and [illegible] miles southwest of Bizerte, the Axis-held naval base.

(Of this action the German High Command communique, broadcast from Berlin and recorded by the Associated Press, said that on the "northwestern Tunisian front an Axis local offensive enterprise is progressing favorably).

The renewal of activities of the force under General Patton, which includes the First U. S. Armored Division and the First and 34th Infantry Divisions, was accepted by military observers here as new evidence of the Allied determination to clear up enemy holdings in Tunisia.

The communique said the British Eighth Army continued normal patrol activity which resulted in slight local adjustments in the Mareth Line zone while Allied forces withdrew slightly on the northern Tunisian front in the Tamera area west of Sedjenane.

SQUEEZE CORRIDOR

"United States armored patrols thrust on from recaptured Gafsa toward the Gulf of Gabes by two roads to squeeze the corridor between the forces of Marshal Erwin Rommel and Col.-Gen. Jurgen Von Arnim.

The communique said El Guetar had been evacuated by the enemy before the arrival of the Allied vanguards. The Mareth Line adjustments—their nature not officially announced—also were said to have been made "with little interference by the enemy."

Bad weather curtailed aerial operations on the northern front, but fighters and bombers attacked Axis-occupied buildings and started a fire, the bulletin reported.

"The Western Desert Air Force continued bombing attacks on the Mareth position," it was announced. "None of our aircraft is missing."

General Patton, new commander of all American ground forces in Tunisia, sent his armored patrols to the region of El Guetar, about 73 miles from Gabes, while other units probed the road leading toward Maknassy and Maharès on the coast.

The Americans have not yet

See AMERICANS on page 7

Sweeping Raids In Southwest Pacific

More Than Dozen Japanese Points Attacked By Allied Bombers

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN AUSTRALIA—(AP)—In the most widespread aerial sweep against Japanese concentrations ever launched in the Southwest Pacific area, General Douglas MacArthur sent his bombers on damaging raids yesterday against more than a dozen points where the Japanese are building up concentrations, an Allied communique said today.

Big Allied bombers ranged from Timor to Salamaua, New Guinea, and Gasmata, New Britain, hitting everything they could find, but they concentrated on the Japanese strongpoint of Madang in New Guinea.

Three separate sweeps were made at Madang between Finschhafen and Salamaua and more than 38 tons of bombs were poured on the Japanese stronghold, the communique said. Long-range fighters "thoroughly strafed the whole area," it added.

FLAMING RUINS

They left the little village in flaming ruins with supply and ammunition dumps shooting up

See ALLIES MAKE on page 7

Guiana on Giraud Side

South American French Colony Swings

WASHINGTON —(AP)— French Guiana's swing to the leadership of Gen. Henri Honore Giraud raised hopes in Washington today that the French West Indies, Martinique and Guadeloupe, would soon join in the fight against the Axis.

The High Commissioner for French colonies in the Caribbean, Admiral Georges Robert, was believed in diplomatic quarters to face a crisis in his refusal thus far to rally to the Giraud side. It was brought nearer by a critical food situation in Martinique, Robert's headquarters, since the United States suspended shipments to that island. No food has been sent there since the Allied occupation of French North Africa.

Giraud's military mission in Washington confirmed yesterday that the Governor of Guiana and the mayor of its capital, Cayenne, had telegraphed their allegiance to Giraud.

Guiana, site of the notorious Devil's Island penal colony on the north coast of South America, thus becomes the first of France's West-

See FRENCH GUIANA on page 7

Sinking of 2 Steamers By Italian Planes Claimed

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Italian High Command, in a communique broadcast by the Rome radio and recorded by the Associated Press, said today that Italian torpedo planes sank two steamers of 5,000 tons each in an attack on a convoy in the Western Mediterranean and hit one of 7,000 tons.

This claim was without Allied confirmation.

It reported Allied air attacks in which bombs were dropped "on the outskirts and on the neighborhood of Naples and in Syracuse Province without causing casualties."

It said there was slight damage in one locality and reported one plane crashed into the sea after being hit by anti-aircraft fire.

Four Stars For Arnold

GENERAL ARNOLD.

Air Chief Named To Be Full General

WASHINGTON. —(AP)— Lieutenant General Henry H. Arnold, commander of the army air forces, was nominated by President Roosevelt today for promotion to the rank of full general.

Arnolds hold the permanent rank of major general, and he will rank as a full general temporarily, during the period of the war.

Rent Control Ruling Asked

WASHINGTON —(AP)— The Supreme Court was asked today to pass on the constitutionality of the rent control powers of the Office of Price Administration.

The appeal was filed by Edward Roach of South Bend, Ind., who contended that he had been charged $45 a month by his landlord, Dick M. Johnson, when the ceiling price had been fixed at $35.

Roach's suit dismissed by Judge Thomas W. Slick in the Federal District Court at South Bend on the ground that the delegation of rent control powers of the Office of Price Administration was unconstitutional.

U. S. Bombers Attack Naples

CAIRO —(AP)— Liberator bombers of the Ninth United States Air Force attacked Naples twice yesterday, once during daylight and again after darkness fell, an American communique announced today.

"Results of both attacks were unobserved due to solid cloud cover over the target," the war bulletin said.

(The Italian High Command said "enemy planes dropped bombs on the outskirts and on the neighborhood of Naples and in Syracuse Province without causing casualties).

Americans Batter Nazi U-Boat Yard

Flying Fortresses and Liberators in Deepest Daylight Penetration Yet

LONDON—(AP)—United States Air Force bombers hit hard at the heart of Germany's U-boat strength again with a two-hour attack yesterday on Vegesack, fifteen miles northwest of Bremen, their fourth foray in force on Germany proper.

Flying without fighter plane escort on the 800-mile round trip that marked the deepest penetration yet effected by Flying Fortresses and Liberators in their daylight attacks on Germany, the American fliers fended off nearly five-score German fighter planes, laid a heavy load of explosives on a submarine construction center, and then fought their way back over the North Sea with the loss of two bombers, a communique said.

DOWN MANY NAZI PLANES

Many of the enemy fighter planes were destroyed or damaged, it was announced, but returning gunners said they could keep no accurate check on their victims.

"It was just like shooting clay pigeons," remarked Lieut. James Devinney of Atlantic City, bombardier of the Susie Q. "I don't know how many we shot at . . . The Susie Q crew scored possibly five German victims."

Deadly Focke-Fulfs, slower Messerschmitt 110's and some Junkers 88's were in the attacking force, many of them bearing the silver and black paint that marked them as usually reserved for night fighting.

HIT ON SUBMARINE

One bomber crew said a direct hit was scored on a submarine. Installations on the repair yards and partly-completed U-boats were seen by the bombardiers.

Staff Sergeant Arthur R. Cressman, a gunner from Los Angeles, placed the palm of his hand over an aerial photograph of the target

See BATTER NAZI on page 7

British Subs Take Toll

Six Axis Supply Ships Among Victims

LONDON—(AP)—Two British submarines sank six supply ships, a tanker and a naval auxiliary in a recent ten-day patrol in the Mediterranean, the Admiralty announced today.

"Within ten days two of His Majesty's submarines operating in the Mediterranean have sunk four large enemy supply ships, a tanker of medium size and a small supply ship," the Admiralty said in a communique. "In addition, they destroyed a naval auxiliary and another small supply ship."

In addition, a minesweeper was so severely damaged she had to be run ashore.

Two of the large supply ships, it said, were torpedoed off Sicily while they were westbound under escort of two destroyers and a sloop. The other two large supply ships were sunk off northern Italy.

The tanker was torpedoed off northwest Sicily, burst into flames and blew up almost immediately, the Admiralty said.

All the others listed as destroyed were engaged by gunfire, including two small supply ships and an anti-submarine vessel.

Will Resume Production Of Some Items To Supply Civilian Needs

WASHINGTON —(AP)— WPB Chairman Donald M. Nelson said today some civilian items whose production has been halted "for the duration" would be brought back into production to supply essential civilian needs.

Household refrigerators probably will be among the items, Nelson told a press conference. Because the food shortage demands additional refrigeration facilities. The War Production Board is reviewing the whole field of consumer goods with manufacturers and sellers, he added, to learn which other items are most urgently needed.

"We believe it is important that the things which are essential to a sound but lean civilian economy be provided," the WPB chief said. "Added emphasis has to be given to the production of things which contribute to civilian health, communication and transportation. We are studying to find the proper methods of providing those things."

As part of its program, WPB expects to strengthen its office of civilian supply and make it "a strong claimant for the needs of the civilian economy," Nelson said.

He described as untrue, however, reports that WPB had offered the directorship of the Civilian Supply Office either to Willaro Thorp, trustee of the Associated Gas and Electric Company, or Emil Schram, president of the New York Stock Exchange. WPB has been reported seeking a prominent, "broad gauge" figure for the post now filled by Joseph L. Weiner.

Charles E. Wilson, WPB executive vice-chairman who participated in the press conference, reported that all production schedules for the critical component parts of the munitions programs are "in good shape." Parts for the Navy's crucial destroyer-escort vessel program, he said, "will be ready when the Navy needs them."

South Atlantic Tragedy:

Scores Of Women On Sinking Ship Choose Death To Axis Capture

RIO DE JANEIRO, March 18 (Delayed)—(AP)—The tragic story of how scores of women risked death on a sinking Brazilian ship in shark-infested waters of the South Atlantic rather than face capture by Axis seamen was related today by survivors of the Afonso Penna, sunk by a submarine off the east coast of Brazil on March 2.

After the ship, a 3,540-ton vessel carrying 241 passengers, including many women and children was hit by a torpedo she began to sink immediately, said survivors who were picked up by an American oil tanker.

The submarine surfaced and an officer, shouting through a megaphone, offered to save the women but warned they would be held as prisoners. At once a cry of protest went up from the women.

Dozens of panic-stricken passengers were said to have jumped into the water, where many of them died. The ship sank within fifteen minutes with some of the passengers apparently still aboard.

According to one of the ship's crew the submarine was Italian, but its identity was not definitely established. It was recalled, however, that the Rome radio announced on March 5 the sinking of a Brazilian vessel.

The survivors, who reached here several days ago, said the fate of Captain Euclides Almeida Braulio was not known.

A reliable informant said 123 persons, including many women and children, had been listed as missing. The first official announcement of the sinking was made March 6.

One of the survivors, Dr. Senhora Eudesia Vieira, told a vivid story of the sinking from a hospital bed where she is recovering from a severe scalp wound.

"I was in my stateroom when I felt the ship shake as the torpedo struck," she said. "The fastest way out seemed to be the porthole, through which

See WOMEN TAKE on page 7

WEATHER

Continued warm tonight.

Today's Temp.: [illegible]
Sunset Today [illegible]
Sunrise Tomorrow [illegible]

Additional U. S. Weather Bureau data will be found on page [illegible]

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