

# Understand Why Italian Fleet Hides

Would Be "Suicide" To Come Out

LONDON.—The mystery of why the Italian Fleet does not come out to fight is not hard to solve, British naval observers said today, adding they did not look for any challenge from Premier Mussolini's warships to the landing of additional Allied troops and supplies in Sicily.

Once described by the Rome radio as "the floating shield of Italy," the fleet made no attempt to evacuate trapped Axis armies from North Africa and remained in harbor hiding places even when the Allied invasion of Sicily began.

**CAN'T RISK BATTLE**  
Despite pressure from the Italian people whose morale has been severely shaken by the fleet's refusal to fight, naval sources here say that for the Italians to risk battle with the immense sea forces the Allies have mustered in the Mediterranean would be virtual suicide.

Before the war the Italian Fleet maintained a rough parity with that of France, but it is known to have suffered heavy losses in the three years of war.

Naval observers estimate the effective fighting strength of the Italian Fleet at three battleships, seven light cruisers and hardly enough torpedo boats to form an adequate anti-submarine screen.

They say it is doubtful that the Italians could put to sea more than 25 destroyers. Some old battleships of the Cavour class recently have been reported reconstructed, they are regarded as of little real consequence.

Reliable reports reaching here say the Italian Fleet is now under two commands—half in Spezia on the west coast at the top of the boot on the Ligurian Sea, and the other half at Taranto on the inner side of the heel on the Gulf of Tarento.

It is virtually impossible for them to be joined into a unit powerful enough to threaten Allied supply lines, observers say, since they could be untried only by passage through the narrow straits of Messina—the two mile channel between Sicily and the mainland—or by steaming through the Sicilian narrows between the island



**ALLIED FORCES GAIN IN SICILY BATTLE**—U. S. forces at the western wing (A) of the Allied drive into Sicily have captured Narco, east of Agrigento, and the Comiso and Ponte Olivo air bases. On the eastern flank (B), the British advanced toward Catania. Allied warships (symbols) gave support to invading land forces. Black line represents the approximate front.

## Cinderella Plane, The Plodding C-47, Takes Paratroops To War

By IVAN H. PETERMAN (distributed by the Associated Press).

**AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN TUNISIA, July 13.**—Delayed—That poor relation in the family of the American military aviation, the Troop Carrier Command's C-47, shouldered into the picture with flying porters, A-20s and P-40s today as Allied forces in North Africa acclaimed its part in the airborne invasion of Sicily.

Perforated by 50-caliber bullets and torn by ack-ack and tracer, the plodding transport that went over the field with a cargo of paratroopers fought its way home like a hero.

and the North African coast, and the Allied air umbrella over both areas alone would be sufficient to block passage.

his big brother B-17, but without any of the latter's armor.

The story unfolded on every field and in every group as the experiences of two night centers were told by pilots and crews who until the eve of the recent assault had been no nearer than lugging loads of land mines into the battle zone.

**LIFE WAS BORE**

Life had indeed been a bore for these kids until the other night. They called their job the milk run, disdaining its low altitude hazards, enjoying fighter and bomber pilots and occasionally relieved such feelings by buzzing over the field with a cargo of combat airmen going somewhere for a rest.

Sometimes they did a chance drop or loop with a load of honitizers and jeeps when no

hazardous were near. They said they were treated in flight but trucking battle-wounded men from field to base hospitals was the nearest they had come.

But that was yesterday, before Cinderella went to the ball.

Today their planes stopped punctuously on the edge of runways while the crews counted scars and barn patching. Today pilots excitedly compared notes on what the boys from Syracuse threw at them or how they escaped Axis flak Sunday night. Today they packed away mission companion's effects and heard how they landed the tanks but left survivors eager for a chance to avenge.

According to a survey of photographs and reports from returned observers, the first night's operation was successful and the Troop Carrier Command anticipates a brisk business in the future.

Those pilots who dropped American paratroopers around Gela, seizing an important port and air bases, proved the value of a surprise attack under cover of night. And their ponderous planes demonstrated that even a beast of burden like a C-47, when given the incentive of high explosives.

Consider the case of the "Geronimo" piloted Sunday night over the southern coast by Capt. James B. Farris, 27-year-old oil company clerk at Saratoga, Texas, an alumnus of fourteen months standing. A few minutes before reaching the dropping point with parachute troopers a shell smashed the starboard side of the fuselage, knocking a hole four by six feet, while a fragment split the aluminum and every rib from the hole to the rudder. Passing through the plane, it ripped off the door, killing one trooper as a second ack-ack burst carried away a portion of the left stabilizer.

The explosion also blew away a large piece of equipment. The impact was such that Farris said it felt like a motor crash in the pilot's cabin.

Slowed by holes in the fuselage, Farris returned the plane, using excessive power from the motors to offset damage to the tail assembly and steering by reflection of the rudder in the sky. He ducked the waves all the way home.

Once his co-pilot, Lt. Joseph Baxter Linslerman, Miss., went aft to report he had only about half the ship left, but somehow managed to land safely at a 110-mile speed. Farris made a landing, although one engine was so hot it wouldn't stop when switched. He was the fourth of the squadron to return, and companions made the good landing a stack of wheat cakes before retiring.

### McDowell Dies Here

Had Been Failing In Health Years

Henry Walter McDowell died at his home, 2028 Floral Ave., last night at 11:15. Funeral arrangements have not been made, awaiting the arrival of members of the family.

Although he had been in failing health for a number of years, Mr. McDowell's death was sudden. He was born July 18, 1886, in Vernon Hill, Va., and was the son of the late Joseph T. and Annie Elizabeth Petty McDowell. Mr. McDowell was a World War I veteran, going over with the Rainbow Division and spending 22 months in France. He was a member of American Legion Post No. 9, and had recently spent three months in the Veteran's Hospital.

For a number of years Mr. McDowell was employed by Swift & Co. as a salesman. He was a member of Dilworth Methodist Church. Surviving are his wife, formerly Mrs. Rosa Butt; two daughters, Mrs. J. B. Hurt Jr., and Mrs. Lawrence V. Benn, both of Charlotte; a brother, J. P. McDowell of S. Boston, Va.; six sisters, Mrs. J. E. Stewart and Mrs. Katherine Huntley, both of Moore, Mrs. B. J. Cline of S. Hill, Va., Mrs. W. C. Conley of S. Boston, Va., Mrs. Christine McGee of Jacksonville, Fla., and Mrs. Albert Caldwell of Charlotte.

## Guide Book For Sicily Was Issued

Put Out Just Before Invasion Started.

AN ALLIED COMMAND POST IN NORTH AFRICA.—(P)—Shortly before American forces invaded Sicily they were issued a succinct little guide book containing a brief description of the island its history, currency information, disease warnings, maps, pictures and a dictionary.

Say, "I Saw It In The News," Thank You.

**WHO DUNNIT? IT'S THE FATEEG-A-JEEBIES!**

ENERGY OFF THE BEAM—JUST CAN'T SEW A STRAIGHT SEAM!

THEY SCRAM WHEN YOU DRINK A BITE TO EAT

**Dr. Pepper**

Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, Charlotte, N. C.

## Here's the Wartime Favorite A Point Saver In Every Way!

**V... MORE FOR YOUR MONEY!**

**Now Coolerator** REFRIGERATOR

\* The Ice Conditioned

Buy it on Easy Terms!



**\$75** NO PREFERENCE ORDER REQUIRED

**Family Size**

- Exciting FEATURES**
- \* FULL FAMILY SIZE—over 5-Cu. Ft. Cap.
  - \* PLENTY OF ICE—rusts free and crystal clear!
  - \* BUILT TO LAST—and give years of service!
  - \* KEEPS FOODS FRESH—garden freshness guarded!
  - \* LESS DRYING OUT—of all foods in chilled air!
  - \* BEAUTIFUL, MODERN—as well as Efficient!
  - \* 4-WAY CIRCULATING AIR—method is New!

**MORE than 5 cu. ft. capacity**

See Them On Display Now

**IT COSTS LESS AT**

**STERCHI'S**

425 S. TRYON ST.

**TO FURNISH YOUR HOME**

Pure Washed Air keeps foods fresh!

**SPECIAL!**

**Croquet Set**

Only \$4.95

A sturdily built set for four. Make your lawn your Summer playground.

**EASY TERMS**

**"LIBERTY MAID" KITCHEN CABINET**

**\$23.75**

Imagine—A big, roomy, well planned cabinet to give you more useful space at such a low price. You'll positively want to take advantage of this offer.

**\$1.25 Weekly Pays**

**"WARM MORNING"**

**AUTOMATIC COAL HEATER \$64.50**

Holds Fire From 12 to 36 Hours

**SAVE**

Up to 20% on Coal Next Winter

**PLAY SAFE—BUY NOW!**

**\$1.25 WEEKLY PAYS**

**BUY ON EASY TERMS**

**STERCHI'S**

425 SOUTH TRYON ST.

## COUNTY SCHOOLS OPEN VERY SOON—SCHOOL APPAREL SPECIALS

This Week-End at Belk's College Street Store

**Sanforized Boys' WASH PANTS \$1.98**

Long wearing, dressy and tough trousers are the economical bargains this year. Include khaki, brown and blue twists. Sizes 8 to 16.

**Boys' Khaki SHORTS \$1.49**

Sanforized fabrics... elastic sides and pleated fronts... and belt... made exceptionally well. Sizes 4 to 12.

**Boys' Knit POLO SHIRTS 98c**

Have crew neck, and short sleeves. All wanted colors in stripes. Small, medium and large sizes.

**BOYS' OVERALLS 79c Pr.**

He'll feel he's "one of the boys" in these strongly constructed overalls. Solid blue chambray, or blue and white striped seersucker. Sizes 2 to 10.

**SHOE DEPARTMENT**

SMART—LONG WEARING—ECONOMICAL SHOES

**GIRLS' OXFORDS \$2.98**

Come in brown. Low heels and leather or composition soles. Sizes 4 to 9.

**Boys' School OXFORDS \$3.85**

Others From \$2.48 to \$3.95

Features: non-skid toe oxford with long wearing "raw cord" soles... in dressy brown finish. Ideal school shoes. Sizes 2 1/2 to 6.

**Girls' Comfortable Loafers \$2.98**

Comfortable and easy to wear made of good quality leather. Low heels. Sizes 4 to 9.

**BELK'S COLLEGE STREET STORE**

125-127 N. College St. Phone 2-3121