

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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ATAZING MOUNTAIN WAR AIR ATTACKS DESTROY 96 AXIS PLANES



Big Transports Knocked Out By Allied Ships

85 Blasted Yesterday and Eleven More Victims of Assaults Today

By DANIEL DE LUCE ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA (AP)—Allied warplanes blasted down 85 Axis aircraft yesterday, including 58 Junkers-52 transports and sixteen fighters caught over the Sicilian Straits in the greatest single air victory of the war in this sector, and followed up by destroying ten more transports and a Messerschmitt fighter today.

The blazing air attacks on the enemy's vital air transport service across the Sicily Straits still were continuing. Up to 10 A. M. the day's score stood at ten Junkers-52 transports and one Messerschmitt-109 shot down, making the two day total of 69 transports and 23 other planes destroyed. In the past two weeks 129 of the Junkers-52s have been destroyed.

The Allied aerial squadrons were striking heavily in support of General Sir Harold Alexander's 18th Army Group in raids from the Enfidon area to Palermo. A Cairo communique said nine American planes were lost, but one of the pilots was known to be safe.

Sardinian, Sicilian and Tunisian targets were heavily attacked. Flying Fortresses in large numbers hit the freight yards and on an air field at the Sicilian port of Palermo and a communique said that the planes were seen to burst among enemy fighters that had just landed from an attack on the preceding formation of transports.

SPECTACULAR BLOW United States and South African pilots of the Western Desert Air Force hunted across the Sicilian Straits until late yesterday afternoon to score the spectacular blow against Marshal Erwin Rommel's aerial shipping facilities.

The huge formation of Junkers with strong fighting protection, was sighted flying toward Sicily airport at sea level.

Wahawk squadrons dived as a single unit at the lumbering transports while the Spitfires engaged the covering Messerschmitts. Bombs and rockets fell into the sea wreathed in flames. Others deliberately crash-landed on Cap Bon which juts into the Mediterranean 50 miles northeast of Tunis.

"It was a massacre and the Axis fighters could do little to prevent it," an official statement said. "It was only when their ammunition was exhausted and their fuel run out."

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Says Hitler Struggling Against Blows of Fate

BERLIN (AP)—The Berlin radio broadcast an address by Propaganda Minister Goebbels in which he said Hitler is struggling against the blows of fate.

Goebbels' speech was in commemoration of Hitler's 54th birthday anniversary tomorrow.

Goebbels said Hitler has issued an order of the day to the armed forces.

"Hitler visibly embodies the German people's unshakable faith in victory," Goebbels said.

PROPAGANDA COPIES WASHINGTON (AP)—The State Department today announced that it has ordered the Office of War Information and the Central Postal Directory to make every effort to get the copies of the Senate of all propaganda pamphlets and leaflets to American troops.

WEATHER

Today's Temp. 71. High 75. Low 58. Wind S. 10-15. Partly cloudy. Tomorrow's Temp. 72. High 76. Low 59. Wind S. 10-15. Partly cloudy.

WAR NURSE ON JOB IN TUNISIA—An Army nurse in sheepskin jacket and galoshes directs the loading of a wounded American soldier into an ambulance plane at an air base in Tunisia. The soldier's helmet and knapsack are on the stretcher with him.

British Fly Across Alps And Attack Italian Base Naval Post of Spezia Struck

LONDON (AP)—British home-based bombers made the long trip across the Alps again last night to blast the Italian naval base of Spezia for the second time in six nights, it was announced today.

"PRESENT ARMS" FOR GENERALS IN TUNISIA—As an aide (left) salutes, General Dwight D. Eisenhower (second from left), commander-in-chief of the North African war theater, and Lieutenant General George S. Patton Jr. (third from left), commander of an American task force, receive the salute of a sentry (right) during Eisenhower's tour of the Tunisian front.

Germans Stiffen Caucasus Forces Air Unit in Effort To Prevent Ground Troops Being Pushed Into Black Sea

By EDDY GILMORE MOSCOW (AP)—The Germans are stiffening their ground forces in the Kuban region of the Caucasus with large air units in an effort to hold their positions against a Red Army drive to push them into the Black Sea, a dispatch to Pravda said today after the Russians had thrown back repeated German counter-attacks.

Destroy Six Jap Planes Many Raids Made in Aleutians Area

WASHINGTON (AP)—Six Japanese planes were destroyed yesterday in the Aleutians area, two enemy surface ships damaged and Nipponese positions in the Aleutians were raided ten times in American aerial activity reported by the Navy yesterday.

RUSSIAN REPEL ATTACK

The mid-day communique said the Germans launched fresh forces in an attack last night and succeeded in breaking into the Soviet trenches, but were repulsed after a fierce engagement in which they suffered heavy losses.

Enough Oil for Next Winter

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Petroleum Administration for War reported today that pipeline facilities now under construction will provide sufficient heating oil for the East this winter.

Severe Anti-Aircraft Barrage Is Encountered By U. S. Fortresses

LONDON (AP)—United States bombers, flying in force Saturday, encountered the most severe anti-aircraft barrage ever encountered by a large fighter force.

Rules on Fake Agents

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court ruled today that the statute prohibiting anyone from impersonating a Federal officer, was intended to defraud the public.

Mines Expected Off East Coast

WASHINGTON (AP)—Naval experts said today that German submarines might resort to extensive use of mines in American coastal waters this Spring or Summer.

Welder Gets Year & Half Sentenced on Charges Of Sabotaging Ships

BALTIMORE (AP)—A twenty-year-old shipyard worker, one of ten arrested on charges of sabotaging ships by doing defective work, was sentenced to one and a half years imprisonment today by a judge who declared war workers "must be made to realize the importance of their work."

51 Of 74 Downed Planes Were Carrying Troops From Tunisia

Cairo (AP)—Military quarters said today that 51 of the 74 Axis planes shot down in the aerial battle of the Sicilian Straits yesterday were Junkers transports carrying troops out of Tunisia.

Hospital Ship on Way to England

LISBON (AP)—The hospital ship which was en route to England today with 314 wounded British soldiers exchanged yesterday for 409 wounded Italian prisoners.

RUSSIANS STRIKE

The loss of 55 planes in the dual RAP raid Friday night against Pula and Manfredonia was not above the vigorous level of 10 per cent because more than 60 planes participated.

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