

AMERICAN STEEP SWEEP NO AND WEST, ITALY MO THREATEN

Munda Now In Reach of Capture By Americans

"Few Thousand Yards" Away

SOUTH PACIFIC HEADQUARTERS—(AP)—United States ground troops are within a few thousand yards of Munda, which "now is in reach of capture," a spokesman for Admiral William F. Halsey Jr. announced today.

The beleaguered Japanese, clinging tenaciously to the key New Georgia Island position, are situated behind strong defensive positions ringing the field, but the Americans are making "very satisfactory progress," the spokesman said.

"This dispatch indicated the American troops may have succeeded in moving closer upon Munda than the position two miles away which they have held for some time and which was their nearest approach previously reported. Although two miles and a few thousand yards are roughly synonymous, the statement that the enemy now is contained within the defenses surrounding the airfield itself and that to capture it in reach suggests a further advance has been made."

JAMES HAYWARD

The majority of the enemy's artillery has been knocked out, and the Japanese are fighting chiefly with mortar machine-guns and small weapons.

The spokesman said there was no sign the enemy could break through the American lines. A blockade of Munda and that no important Japanese forces have yet been able to break through to the beach.

Japanese opposition was said to be deteriorating steadily, but the spokesman was unwilling to estimate the time when a final breakthrough and capture is believed possible.

There have been minor raids by enemy ground patrols, but these have resulted in heavy losses to the Japanese. The Americans, he said, have suffered far less severely.

The fighting is going on in heavy jungle which extends to the edge of the field from all sides. U. S. planes are operating in close support of the ground campaign, and "we are pouring it on" with many daily air strikes, the spokesman added.

Los Angeles British Warships Has Tie-Up

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Those who depend on the Los Angeles Co. for transportation will be inconvenienced only for 24 hours, B. D. McQuinn, local president of the AFL union of drivers and motormen, said. The 3,000 workers voted the 24-hour stoppage in protest of a War Labor Board refusal to approve a 10-cent an hour increase. "Their present scale ranges from 80 to 90 cents."

Possibility of Army interference in the work stoppage was dispelled with a statement by J. G. R. B. McQuinn, senior in command of the Southern California section of the Western Defense Command.

Only the President can declare martial law, he said. "It is absolutely untrue that the Army will take over transportation. That would require a directive from the President."

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Yanks Moving Upon Sicily's Western Tip

Americans Nearing Palermo, With Last Mountain Range Guarding City

By DANIEL DE LUCE

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The American columns now were approaching Palermo, the capital of Sicily, with a last mountain range guarding that vital seaport.

Castellvetrano is 50 miles west of Agrigento and Porto Empedocle, towns on the south coast captured by the Americans last Saturday and Sunday. Sciacca is about 30 miles west of these two places.

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The American steamroller was making rapid progress in a drive to capture Palermo on the north coast, herding panicky Italians and their German allies into the northeast corner of the island, and the Italian 26th Aslettia Division was said to be surrendering almost en masse as prisoners mounted to more than 40,000.

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The Eighth Army, however, was making steady, if slow, progress. The Italian debacle in central and western Sicily appeared to be on a scale comparable to Marshal Montgomery's defeat of the hands of the British in the Libyan desert in 1941.

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See PEACE STEP on page 7

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Peace Step Advanced

Bid Given Republicans And Independents

WASHINGTON—(AP)—House Democratic Leader McCormack today said that the House would not look to a majority of the Republicans and Independents for support in the fight to preserve peace after the present war "come into the ranks of the Democratic Party and help accomplish this great human effort."

Congratulating those who attended the recent Republican Post War Policy Association meeting in New York on their efforts to get their party away from isolationism and geared to a program of post-war permanent peace, McCormack said in a statement:

"However, if the people of America expect a definite step towards permanent peace to be taken, it cannot look to a majority of the Republicans of Congress for cooperation. There are some in Congress who will cooperate, but the great majority will continue their past double-action policy of speaking in favor but working and voting against."

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Alaska Highway Is the Name

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Reds Within 9 Miles Of Orel

Nazis Rush Up Reinforcements But Soviets Continue Advance

MOSCOW—(AP)—German reinforcements, rushed into the Orel breaches by forced marches, counter-attacked yesterday but were smashed back as the Soviet offensive rolled on to within nine miles of the German stronghold, the Russians announced officially today.

In a battle of increasing violence which raged 200 miles south of Moscow, the Russians said they beat through masses of enemy tanks and infantry for gains of four to nine miles and overran 50 villages.

LONDON—(AP)—The Russians have launched a heavy attack near Leningrad and strong fighting has been raging there since the German radio said today in a broadcast recorded by the Associated Press.

"The London radio said that Hitler had ordered Orel, king of the entire Nazi south-central defense line, held 'at all costs.'"

The three-pronged Russian drive which threatened to outflank the city of 110,000 from the north and south and menaced it from the east, held these positions:

Delving from the north, the Russians had reached Buiky, about 40 miles west of the city and within five miles of the crucial Orel-Bryansk railway at a point 25 miles northeast of Bryansk. Another column from the north had topped Orelbukh, nine miles north-east of Orel on the railway from fallen Moscow.

Soviet forces smashing frontally from the east had driven into Zolotarev, eleven miles away.

Toughest Opposition

The southern advance on the city was meeting the toughest German opposition and a Soviet communique said only that the city was being fought for.

See SUB LOST on page 7

See REDS DRIVE on page 7

Labor To Hit Brown, Little Steel Rate Unless Prices Rolled Back

WASHINGTON—(AP)—Organized labor served notice today it will demand removal of Price Administrator Brendan Brown and scrapping of the Little Steel wage formula if prices are not rolled back to the Sept. 15, 1942, level as stipulated by Congress and the Administration.

William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor and Philip Murray, head of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, joined in this statement today after a meeting between President Roosevelt and the combined Labor War Board.

Green said the threat to sack Brown's removal was not made to the President, but that the labor leaders did emphasize to the Chief Executive that unless prices are reduced they will demand that the War Labor Board cast overboard the Little Steel formula, under which wage increases of 15 percent are permitted to compensate for rises in the cost of living since Jan. 1, 1941.

Green said Brown and other Price and Wage Stabilization agencies had failed to check rising prices with the result that wages are practically frozen and prices are soaring.

Labor's acceptance of the stabilization program, Green told reporters, was based on the assumption that both prices and wages would be established.

Murray said no deadline had been set in their conference with the President, but he hoped something will be worked out by the time the group sees the President.

"The President," said the CIO head, "has got to be given opportunity under the grant of Congress for use of subsidies to roll back prices to last Sept. 15, 1941."

"He said the group emphasized to the President the utter necessity of continuing the present hold-the-line order in the stabilization of prices and the obvious unwillingness of certain anti-inflation agencies to make effective the commitments of Congress to maintain prices at the September level."

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British Warships Shell Mainland

Steam Boldly Up To Strike at Crotone, On Toe of Italian Boot

LONDON—(AP)—Reuters reported today from Allied Headquarters in North Africa, that the Royal Navy has bombarded the Italian mainland at Crotone in the Gulf of Taranto, on the toe of the Italian boot.

Desmond Tighe, a Reuters correspondent with the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean, reported cruises hurried shells into the harbor area for five minutes in the early hours of yesterday, causing a number of fires.

The British warships suffered no damages in the raid, he said.

The object of the shelling, which had been foreseen in informed quarters in London, apparently was to cut one of the routes by which the Axis might send reinforcements to the toe of the Italian boot for transportation to Sicily.

This shipment involves a circuitous route down the Eastern coast of Sicily, and may be used more intensively since the bombing of Rome.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower in a press conference yesterday in North Africa said the Germans were still sending reinforcements to Sicily.

Shuttle Service

The German radio added today that a day and night shuttle service ferrying Axis troops across Messina Straits was using 32 fast motor launches.

The bombardment was the first by Allied surface craft of the Italian mainland since the invasion of Sicily and the second of the war. The first naval bombardment of the mainland was at Genoa on Feb. 9, 1941.

It was possible that some of Britain's newest and largest battle-ships participated. The Axis has reported the Nelson, Rodney, King George V and Queen Elizabeth in the Mediterranean.

Win Their Spurs: American Airborne Troops Prove Extremely Effective In Sicily

By LEWIS HAWKINS

LONDON—(AP)—By repulsing German armor to protect beach landings, airborne troops proved their worth in Sicily and won the right to a still more prominent part in coming invasions, Maj. Joseph M. Swing declared today.

At a press conference the general disclosed that the American airborne force which descended on Sicily was larger than any other ever set down in a single operation. Gen. Swing did not make public the exact number of troops employed, but he indicated it was close to the whole personnel of the 82nd Airborne Division.

In their first test under fire, these young parachute and glider troops used anti-tank guns and 75 millimeter field howitzers to beat back efforts of the 15th German Armored Division to smash down on the beaches where the American First and 45th Infantry Divisions were coming ashore. The soldiers from the sky held staunchly against the best the enemy could throw at them from Friday night until the land forces reached them Monday, the general said.

LEFT SICILY

Gen. Swing, who is the commander of another airborne division in the United States, was sent to North Africa to help co-ordinate the Sicilian invasion plans. He left Sicily a few days ago, and after a series of conferences with Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, commanding general of United States forces in the European theater, is now on his way back to Washington to report on the lessons learned on the island.

He reported at the press conference that airborne troops not only proved their worth to their own commanders, but completely sold themselves to the ground commanders. "Major Gen. Troy Middleton, commanding the 45th Division, was so pleased with the way the airborne unit that he tried to keep them."

Regarding British airborne operations along the enemy lines in the Syracuse area, Gen. Swing quoted Gen. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery as saying: "Our operations by a week."

He added that a single airborne unit, which took up its station a few miles inland from Gela, caught the full force of the German effort to drive down on the island.

See AIRBORNE on page 7

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