RED VICTORY CLIMAXES BATTLE OF OR

Not War—Only Defeat—Destroys the Freedom Of Men And The Privileges Of Democracy

Livest Newspaper In The Carolinas

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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BRITISH SMASH ON AS CATANIA FALLS

Soviets Fight Way Through City Streets

Red Army Expected To Strike Soon At Other Sections of Nazi Lines

By HENRY C. CASSIDY

MOSCOW—(AP)—The battle for the stronghold of Orel reached its blazing climax today with the Red Army fighting its way through the streets of the city to complete the reconquest of its first major objective in 1943, and signs of danger to other exposed sections of the German lines in Russia appeared immediately.

(The German High Command announced that Orel was evacuated last night after all stores had been removed and all military factories methodically destroyed. It claimed the withdrawal had been planned "quite some time.")

Where the Russians would strike next after the elimination of the Orel Salient remained their own military secret, but there was no doubt here that the Red Army soon would strike again.

Russian forces have edged forward on both sides of the enemy's Kharkov salient and are improving their positions near Belgorod and southwest of Voroshilovgrad. The Germans have begun to show signs of uncertainty where they should cling to their defenses around Smolensk in the central or Moscow sector.

RED ATTACKS

The German communique said the Russians launched a series of violent counter attacks yesterday against newly-won German positions north of Kulbyshevo on the Mius River front, but said every

See RED ARMY on page 2

New Peace Talk Stirred By Italian Development

Cabinet Called To Meeting

By FRANK BRUTTO

BERN, Switzerland—(AP)—Announcement that the Italian government would meet today to examine "important measures" again stirred the hopes of the Italian people that steps would be taken to remove them from the war.

(Associated Press dispatches from London said the British looked for the meeting to bring an answer to the Italian people's cries for peace and Germany's demands that Italy stay in the war.)

(A radio correspondent in Bern reported the Italian Foreign Minister Raffaele Guariglia had drafted peace proposals containing among other conditions that no Allied troops come into the country except for control purposes and that the peninsula be "neutralized". Guariglia's proposal was said to be up for consideration at today's cabinet meeting.)

AIR OF DESPERATION

A Swiss correspondent in Milan said an air of desperation had settled on the Italian people and signs were scribbled on walls at night reading

"Death to Badoglio and the King."

"We want peace and work."

"The Germans must get out of Italy."

Cardinal Maglione, Papal Secretary of State, meanwhile convoked an extraordinary session of the Sacred Cardinals here in Rome for the apparent purpose, said the Corriere Della Sera of Milan, of discussing questions connected with the international situation.

ACTION EXPECTED

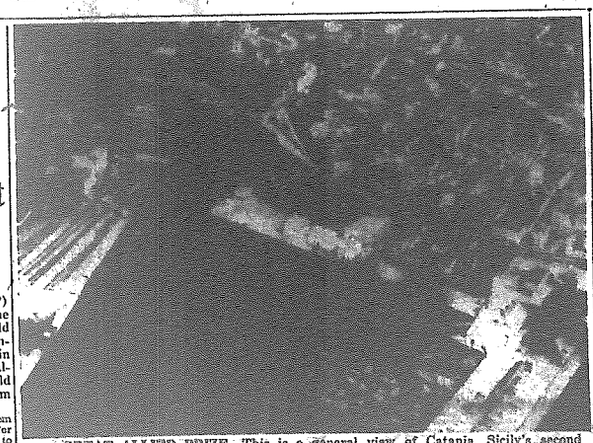
At the same time a constant stream of ambassadors, ministers, apostolic nuncios and other diplomats was reported flowing in and out of the foreign office in Rome, lending credence to the belief that some important development was in the offing.

The Lavoro Italiano, taking a different tack than that of the past two days, when the press on orders from Premier Badoglio warned the Italian people that "the war must go on," today declared the sessions of the British Cabinet held last Tuesday "have been interpreted in many capitals as a prelude to an eventual armistice."

The newspaper said the position of Italy and her allies was "very fluid and very dangerous" in a moment when "the voices of the diplomats should be raised."

"The problems of peace are more difficult than those of war—but that is exactly the reason that a solution should be attempted with-

See MORE TALK on page 2



GREAT ALLIED PRIZE—This is a general view of Catania, Sicily's second largest city, which was captured today by the British Eighth Army. Catania is on the island's east coast and is 55 miles south of Messina, last remaining important Axis base in Sicily.

Sweep Around Etna Base To Take Paterno

German Line on East Coast of Sicily Crumbled By Assault

By DANIEL DE LUCE

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA —(AP)— British Eighth Army troops seized Catania early today and swept around the base of Mt. Etna to the northwest capturing Paterno, ten miles away, to crumble the German line on the east coast of Sicily, Headquarters announced.

Catania fell to the Eighth Army at 5:30 A. M., (2:30 A. M., EWT) today, after a bitter defense since July 15, and the British pounded ahead in a lightening advance clockwise around the base of Mt. Etna.

The heart of the German Army Corps appeared to be broken.

Paterno is ten miles northwest of Catania, and it was assumed that Misterbianco, three miles northwest of Catania, also had been engulfed.

German withdrawal of non-essential personnel from Sicily has been in progress for the last five or six days, it was learned authoritatively.

The German defense road around Mt. Etna was blasted apart by the British successes today and the next German line was expected to run from Taormina across the northeastern tip of the island to the seacoast on the northeast behind San Fratello, which already is menaced by U. S. Seventh Army troops.

This would mean abandonment of the whole Mt. Etna area by the Axis.

The east coast stretch of road between Catania and Taormina was expected to be cleaned up by the Eighth Army with great speed.

The days of the enemy's resistance in Sicily were greatly shortened, but there is a possibility that a fair share of

See CATANIA on page 2

Great Decisions Face Allied Heads

F. R. and Churchill Must Prepare For Shattering Hitler's Forces

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER

WASHINGTON—(AP)—A swift round of Allied victories in Russia, Sicily and the air over Germany appears to have brought the war to a point where President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill must decide soon on the best strategy for shattering Hitler's European fortress.

In the past, decisions of such magnitude have been in personal conferences in Washington, or Casablanca, or aboard ship.

The present situation suggests that although the two leaders last met in Washington in May, they may find it necessary to confer again at an early date in order to give final shape to a victory campaign in Europe which the prospects for an early victory and relate these prospects to the possibilities of speeding up the war in the Pacific.

WHAT TO DO?

News of Catania's fall, indicating the imminent collapse of all Axis resistance in Sicily, was regarded here as posing the immediate problem of whether to follow the Sicilian conquest with an invasion of Italy or whether to soften up Premier Pietro Badoglio's strongholds by air first in hopes of forcing surrender without invasion.

Even more important ultimately is the question of whether to crush Germany by

See LEADERS FACE on page 2

Can Supply More Gas

Transportation Problem "About Whipped"

CHICAGO —(AP)— Petroleum Administrator Harold L. Ickes declared today "the oil transportation problem has been about whipped" and that fair and just handling of the oil supply problem would require diversion of petroleum products from the Middle West and Southwest to the East, now that they can be moved.

Ickes set forth his office's position at a meeting of a group of Congressmen called to discuss the question of whether the Midwest and Southwest shall have less gasoline. The Administrator brought with him from Washington staff members to answer queries from members of an unofficial midwest

See CAN SUPPLY on page 2

Battle On Fringe Of Munda Field

American Infantrymen Clash At Close Grips With Japanese

By C. YATES McDANIEL

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC—(AP)——United States infantrymen fought at close grips today with Japanese on the south fringe of the Munda airfield opposite its center after breaking through a long, covered trench.

The battle for possession of the New Georgia Island air strip, which long since has ceased to give Japanese planes but which in American hands would pose an aerial threat at enemy bases in the northern Solomons and on New Britain, was a slow-moving and violent one.

The jungle-fringed airdrome runs roughly east and west. The infantrymen now near its center came in from the east along the coast. Across the strip from them and about a mile north of the airdrome, other Americans strove to rout the Japanese from the western slope of Bibolo Hill preparatory to moving against the field.

(A naval spokesman at headquarters of Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr.'s command in the South Pacific said that capture of Bibolo and Kokengolo Hills, two enemy strongpoints guarding the approach to Munda from the northwest, was expected momentarily. He added that a drive past these positions would put the American forces on the sea coast behind Japanese lines, thus pinning the defenders within a small area and cutting off all routes of escape.)

JAPS RUN INTO SEA

Along the coast on the western end of the field, many of the Japanese were frightened from their foxholes into the nearby reef-studded waters by swarms of fighter-escorted bombers which dropped 45 tons of high explosives Wednesday.

Navy Corsairs saw to it that no aid for the tottering Munda garrison should be forthcoming from the north. They tore into the enemy base on Shortland Island below Bougainville, destroying seven float planes, three barges and a small cargo ship.

The Japanese airforce, which lost 345 planes trying to stem the Solomons offensive during the first month, starting June 30, sent 10 Zeros against American positions on Rendova Island, below Munda. Thirteen were shot down. We lost two. Rendova is the island from which our artillery has shelled Munda since the opening day of the current operations.

Naples Gets New Blows

Fourth Allied Raid on City in Four Days

By DANIEL DE LUCE

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA—(AP) — American Flying Fortresses engulfed bombtorn Naples in another flood of high explosives yesterday in the fourth Allied raid against the southern Italian seaport in four days.

The four-engined bombers slashed at docks and submarine bases and left the target "well covered with bombs," headquarters said. One merchant ship was left blaze.

The unescorted Fortresses winged through heavy anti-aircraft fire and engaged 25 to 30 Axis fighters, destroying three of them.

(The Italian communique reported that by count so far, 150 persons were killed and 220 injured in the attack on the "central quarters of Naples" and that numerous

See NAPLES GETS on page 2

Catanians Cheer Allies

Welcome Given When Eighth Army Enters

By NOLAND NORGAARD

CATANIA, Sicily—(AP)—Catania scheduled to the victorious British Eighth Army at 8:30 A. M. today after troops entered the outskirts of the battered second city of thirty soon after dawn.

(This was ten minutes earlier than announced by Allied Headquarters.)

The majority of the defenders who had covered roads to the city from pillboxes fled during the night.

The surrender, which was handed to the Colonel who led the first infantry units into the town, in turn was handed to war correspondents at 8:35 A. M as our caravan entered the streets and frenzied civilians ran alongside the cars, cheering, clapping hands and reaching through car windows to pull at our hands and kiss them.

This dispatch is being written in an automobile in the city's main square, Piazza Duomo, facing the cathedral.

The square is littered with

See CATANIANS on page 2

American Casualties In Sicily Through July 22 Total 6,741

WASHINGTON —(AP)— American casualties in Sicily through July 22 totaled 6,741—501 killed, 3,670 wounded and 2,370 missing.

Secretary of War Stimson reported this today, observing:

"Considering the number of troops involved, these losses are considered moderate—particularly in view of the terrain in Sicily."

The Secretary said he did not have the figures on British casualties for the same period, but they were "not a great deal higher." Casualties since July 22 were believed to be "relatively light."

The Secretary told his press conference substantial gains had been made by Allied force in all theaters in the last week.

In northeastern Sicily, the Allies have cracked the outer defenses of the Axis Mt. Etna line, in an operation climaxed today by capture of Catania. Farther west, Stimson said, British and Canadian forces have made important gains in the vicinity of Regalbuto, while to the north the American Seventh Army has seized San Stefano, Mistretta and other towns, and is less than two miles from San Fratello.

The effect of the crushing drive by the Allied forces has been to pen the Axis troops into a small corner of the island. Stimson pictured their position as somewhat analogous to their positions in the final phase of the Tunisian campaign. An important difference, however, is that the Strait of Messina is only a few miles wide, making supplies and reinforcements, or a means of escape, much more accessible than they were to Axis forces in Tunisia.

Prisoners taken in Sicily total

See CASUALTIES on page 2

Moscow Dateline

by HENRY C. CASSIDY

Mr. Cassidy, one of the outstanding foreign correspondents of the war, has been in charge of the Associated Press service in Russia since before the war began. His letter to Stalin, the latter's reply constituted one of the epics of modern journalism. "Moscow Dateline" is based on his personal knowledge of the Russian situation.—Editors, The News.

CHAPTER 4

One day later in the year than Napoleon, Hitler invaded Russia, June 22, 1941. Beyond that much as they were to be compared, there was little comparison between the campaigns of the nineteenth century French emperor and the twentieth century German Fuehrer. For Napoleon marched to Moscow with a mobile column, turned around and marched back again. Hitler flung himself on Russia with a huge force, stopped short of Moscow, and hung on for a fight to the finish.

When it began, that fateful Sunday at 4 A. M., 170 divisions, numbering more than 2,000,000 men, with 10,000 tanks and 10,000 planes, were unleashed against the Soviet Union. With them, death and devastation stalked onto the steppes of southern, the forests of western, the tundra of northern Russia.

The invasion caught the Soviets by surprise. Despite all alarms and warnings, they were not ready. Unexpectedly, bombs showered down on Kiev, Sebastopol, Kaunas, Zhitomir, and other important cities of the west. Shells rained on Brest-Litovsk, Belostok, and other towns on the frontier. Border posts were rapidly overwhelmed. So complete was the surprise that junior pilots raced about their airports, seeking superior officers for orders to take off, while they themselves were being bombed. And meanwhile Ministers [illegible] to Japan [illegible] because of the Russian [illegible] It was not until [illegible] the Russian [illegible] had been [illegible] views [illegible] war.

The [illegible] The Red [illegible] 22 [illegible]

See [illegible] on page [illegible]

WEATHER

Continued warm this afternoon, tonight and Friday forenoon, with scattered thundershowers late this afternoon and tonight.

Temperature:
2:30 P. M. 94; L. 76
Sunset Today 8:22
Sunrise Tomorrow 6:36

Additional U. S. Weather Bureau data will be found on page 2.