

TUNISIA

L.I. - Sunoco.

Thursday, Feb. 18, 1943.

X

The ~~unhappy~~ reports that come to us today from North Africa are best ^{kept} ~~described~~ in the words of the Secretary of War ~~Stimson~~ himself. At his press conference

Mr. Stimson ^{or minimize} ~~he~~ made no attempt to conceal ~~or mitigate~~ the gravity of what ^{has happened.} ~~our armies suffered.~~ "We have suffered a

serious local set-back in Tunisia," ^{he.} ~~he~~ said. "The ~~The~~ And then he went on: - "The importance should not be minimized, and, still more,

should not be exaggerated." ~~The Secretary added:~~

"It is one of the battle losses which must be expected in a battle as extensive as the occupation of North Africa," ~~said~~ ^{said} the Sec. of War.

Rommel, with his Afrika Korps veterans and heavy tanks ^{has} delivered a series of blows ~~that~~ ^{pushing} our army back ^{some} thirty-five miles. ^{TP} Yesterday we heard that ^{our} ~~the American army there was~~ ^{lads had been} driven out of three airfields. Today comes word that the Germans turned us out of three important towns in central

~~the towns of~~ And Tunisia, Feriana, Sbeitla and Kasserine. Our soldiers were forced to take refuge in the hills west of those towns.

And still worse, with it all went ~~had~~ a heavy loss of in lives, and equipment. the

Secretary of War ~~Stimson~~ acknowledges this, in discussing the ~~as much~~ battle at his press conference today, made no attempt to conceal or even mitigate the fact of the defeat.

"Our losses," he admitted ^{S,} "are substantial, both in personnel and equipment." Then the Secretary used these words: "Many of our tanks were destroyed by

To which German dive bombers." And he added: "Indications are that the Germans are employing two ^{armored} ~~armed~~ divisions

47 against ^{the} American forces. This," ^{says} the Secretary, ~~said~~

"is considerably greater than our strength in this area." He went on to explain it in this way:

"A large formation of Rommel's forces was able to

concentrate against the relatively more lightly held and more extended American lines. There were four days of heavy fighting between armored units on both sides. The fight began last Sunday when two German tank columns moved westward from Faïd and Sened. Advanced, lightly held, American positions were ~~xxx~~ overrun and some advance elements were cut off." In other words, the German attack broke our lines and surrounded some American units.

Said the Sec. of War: -

~~Stimson then continued~~ "An American

counter-attack delayed the German advance while we evacuated Gafsa. On February Fifteenth, ~~he said~~ ~~further,~~ we counter-attacked and drove the Germans back six miles. However, Axis reinforcements again compelled the American forces to withdraw."

The Secretary went on to say that the fighting

is still
~~was~~ going on, *and the* ~~even now, but he also added that~~

~~apparently~~ ^{apparently} the Germans have been slowed down. ^{which} ~~this~~ is explained in the German communique, ~~which~~ ^{is} announces that the Nazis considered their offensive in Tunisia as ended.

Geographically, ^{all this} ~~it~~ means that Rommel has cut almost clear across the ^{waist} ~~west~~ of Tunisia, ^{with} the capture of the town of Feriana ^{putting} ~~puts~~ him only fourteen miles from the Algerian border, ^{on the west.} Some in some quarters it is

believed that ~~that~~ he halted his offensive in order to turn around and take care of ~~General~~ Montgomery's British Eighth Army, which has ^{now} advanced within actual sight of the Mareth Line. In fact, advance engagements ^{are on now} ~~have begun~~ at the northern end of that system of fortifications.

Military experts ~~are~~ pointed out that the retreat of the Americans was by no means entirely due to the fact that they were unseasoned troops facing

Rommel's Afrika Korps veterans. ~~The fact is that~~ ^{truth}

Rommel has heavier and better equipment. He has the famous German Mark-Six tanks, ~~heavy land battlewagons,~~ ^{massive new tanks} ~~that~~ ^{which} can easily overrun our lighter ~~rolling stock.~~ ^{tanks.}

It also appeared ~~but~~ ^{though} it was not so announced, that

we do not have air superiority on that battlefield.

This is indicated in Sec.

~~That was implicit in~~ Stimson's acknowledgment that

many of our tanks were destroyed by Nazi dive bombers.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

There is some good news tonight. And it comes, again, from
~~Our best news tonight again comes from~~

is in
Russia. The town of Orel ~~comes back into~~ the limelight
once more, Orel, the scene of some of the bitterest
fighting in the past. It ~~is~~ not a large place, but
the Nazis made it into one of the strongest bastions
of their line north of Kharkov. It now becomes the
immediate goal of the Red ~~armies~~ armies led by
Colonel General Golikov. Four railroad lines meet at
Orel, and when the Russians get it back, they'll be
able to resume direct rail traffic between north
And Russia and the central Ukraine. ~~They will incidentally~~
regain control of the main trunk line to Moscow.

ahead
The Reds are also pushing ~~forth~~ at Poltava and

Kolotop, which & present are also important German strongholds, though not as vital as Orel. Poltava is northwest of Kharkov; Kolotop southwest of Orel.

The positions on the map indicate that the Soviet high command aims to cut off the Germans in Orel, and further south to drive for Odessa. In that drive they

evidently aim to take in their stride Dnieperopetrovsk,

where ^{American Engineers and} the Soviet ~~Government~~ ^{that famous} had built ~~the~~ giant

hydro-electric plant which the ^{Reds} destroyed before ~~it~~ the

^{plant} fell into the hands of the Nazis.

Sill further south, the armies that took Rostov are advancing on Taganrog, the city west of Rostov at the mouth of the Mins River.

The German high command has only just

acknowledged the evacuation of Kharkov. The Nazis make the usual old claim that it was according to plan and that all important military installations

were destroyed. Berlin also claims that Russian attacks were unsuccessful in the western Caucasus and in the region of Krasnodar, (the big city on the Kuban River. They also claim to have repulsed the Russians on the Black Sea south of Novorossisk.)

The Nazi communique admits that the Soviet forces have been attacking fiercely north of Kursk. ^{But,} They claim to have repelled them. ^{however} ~~And,~~ The Germans ~~xxxxxxx~~ acknowledge that the Russians are on the offensive in the battle just south of Lake Ladoga. — near Leningrad.

A broadcast by Nazi Propaganda Minister Goebbels today had the consequence of making many people ask once more, "Where is Hitler?" The club-footed Doctor spoke apparently for the Nazi Party and Government. ~~In a way,~~ It was a characteristically Nazi speech, but it served to show considerable confusion among the leaders of the Axis.

Earlier in the day, the Rome Radio ^{had} ~~xxx~~ repudiated Virginio Gayda, once considered the mouthpiece for Mussolini himself. Specifically, the Rome Radio ^{disavowed} ~~repudiated~~ Gayda's article in which he said the time might come when Italy would make peace with America and Britain. The Rome Radio ^{said in contemptuous} ~~stated that~~ this newspaperman, as it called Gayda, was in no way inspired or authorized by the Government to say such things.

But subsequently, Dr. Goebbels in his

2
broadcast said a lot of things obviously aimed at British and American audiences and meaning exactly what Gayda wrote yesterday. Like Gayda, Goebbels tried to throw out suggestions aimed at driving a rift between Soviet Russia, ~~on the one hand,~~ Britain and the United States, ~~on the other.~~ He asked the question:- "What would England and the United States do if the worst happened and the European continent fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks?" Then he continued: "Is London trying to tell Europe that such a development would come to a halt at the Channel frontier?"

For the rest, ~~th^e~~_^ Goebbels broadcast was obviously aimed at bucking up the war morale of the German people. ~~But frankly, the aim did not seem to be awfully good.~~ ^{troubled} He asked the folk of the Reich a lot of questions, such as: "Are you determined to

53 follow the Fuehrer in the fight for victory, come what may? Are you determined, if the Fuehrer gives the order, to work ten, twelve and if necessary sixteen hours a day? Is your confidence in the Fuehrer greater than ever? Do you agree that he who acts contrary to the war effort should have his head cut off?"

~~This was one of the spectacular days in the history of the Seventy-Eighth Congress of the United States.~~ ^{Congress paused} The lawmaking business of ~~both houses was~~ ^{today} ~~dropped~~, while the Senators and Representatives listened to a slender, elegant lady from China. ~~She~~ ^{And, as expected, she} received more attention than any one from her country has ever ^{received} ~~had~~ here before. Yes, it was Madame Chiang Kai-shek, urging the Congressmen and through them the nation at large, not to forget that in the Japanese we have an even more formidable enemy than the Germans.

The wife of the Generalissimo ^{is indeed} ~~certainly is~~ one of the most decorative figures ^{to} ~~that~~ ever addressed ^{our Congress.} ~~that assembly.~~ She was arrayed in a straight long black silk ^{gown,} ~~dress,~~ typically Chinese, ornamented only by a few black and green sequins in the front. ^{on} ~~her left hand a~~ beautiful green jade ring, ~~flashed from her left hand,~~

And her
~~and her fingering~~ fingers tapered *to their* ~~into~~ bright red
 highly polished nails. She wore her hair combed back
 straight and knotted behind her head. Her shoes were
 open toed, high heeled ~~sandals~~ ^{TP} sandals. ~~So much for~~
~~the details that feminine~~ *listeners* ~~must be told.~~

The galleries in both Senate and House were
~~and Madame Chiang~~ *and* received ~~a regular~~ *an* ovation.
 jammed. Not even the grave news from Tunisia could
~~diminish the interest of people in the capital~~ *Washington folks* in their
~~brilliant~~ *lovely* visitor *from China*.

~~Madame Chiang was first introduced to the
 Senate by Vice-President Wallace. There she spoke
 informally, and briefly. But then she went over to the
 House where Speaker Rayburn presented her to the
 Representatives, and what an ovation they gave her!~~

Madame Chiang began her remarks with the
 words: "I am not a very good speaker, in fact I'm not
 a speaker at all." Then she went on in a beautiful,

well modulated voice to express herself in exquisite,
lucid, simple English. ~~In fact, her~~ ^L listeners ^{admitted} ~~declare~~

~~that~~ they seldom hear English pronounced so beautifully

as ^{by} ~~does~~ ^{uttermost} this lady from China. She prefaced her remarks

about Japan by quoting an old Chinese proverb which

runs:- "It takes little effort to watch the other fellow
carry the load."

Madame Chiang then said she had been shocked
^{to find the opinion prevailing here} ~~with the prevailing opinion here is~~ that the defeat of

the Japanese is less important ~~than~~ the crushing of

Hitler. She used these words: "This is not borne out

by actual facts." And she added:- "It is not to the

interests of the United Nations to allow Japan to

continue as a vital threat and ^{a weighty} ~~a striking~~ sword hanging

over our heads, ready to descend at almost a moment's

notice." Japanese military might," she said further,

"must be decimated before its threat to civilization .

is removed. ~~She said further:~~ "Let us not forget,"

she went on,
^ "that Japan in her occupied areas today has greater

resources at her command than Germany. The longer she

is left in undisputed possession of those resources,

the stronger she must become." (And she added; "Let us

not forget that during the first four and a half years

of total aggression, China has borne the sadistic fury

of Japan unaided and alone."

Ruth
Streeter,
woman
Marine.

Feb. 18,
1943.

MAJOR STREETER:

Some song writer of lyrics will have to write ~~a new verse~~, an additional verse for the song which begins: "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli." I mean a verse for the Women's Marine Corps. Yes, a Women's Marine Corps. To prove it I have the commanding officer of the corps facing me here in the studio. Major Ruth Cheney Streeter has had many experiences working and organizing things for the *But organizing this corps is the biggest job she has had yet* men in the armed forces. [^] Major Streeter is the mother of four children. Two of them are ensigns in the Navy and another is in the Army Enlisted Reserve.

Major Streeter, tell us about the Women's Marine Corps. How does it differ from the Waacs? ~~and the Waves?~~

STREETER: Our principal difference, Mr. Thomas, is that we are not, definitely not an auxiliary corps. We are members of the Marine Corps. We shall be trained to do everything that the male Marines do, except one.

L.T.: What is that?

STREETER:- As you know, it ~~is~~ a proud boast of the Marine Corps that there is no such thing as a noncombatant. Marine. We shall not be combatants. In any man's army there are many essential jobs which have to be done by people in uniform. We of the Women's Marine Corps will take over the desk jobs and in that way will help to free more than an entire division of men Marines for combatant duty.

L.T.: How many of you will there be?

STREETER:- Eighteen thousand enlisted women, one thousand officers. Of those nine thousand will serve in Marine aviation, as ground crews, administrators, radio operators.

L.T.: Suppose you tell the ladies what qualifications they need to join.

STREETER:- They must be between twenty and thirty-six with two years of highschool. Officer candidates from twenty to fifty with either a college degree or two

years college and two years business. Every woman who joins will have an opportunity to win a commission.

L.T.: There is one thing everybody will be wanting to know, Major Streeter --

STREETER: Yes?

L.T.: What will be the feminine of leatherneck?

STREETER: (laugh if possible) They do call us Leathernecks.

FOOD

The people of the United States are threatened not only with hunger but with malnutrition. That statement came from Senator Reynolds of North Carolina, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the Senate. Thousands on the home front will go hungry this year, he said, unless the government solves the problem of manpower shortages. *And he added that* Already, workers in offices and factories are going along on improper diets because of the growing scarcity of food.

~~Senator Bankhead of Alabama has drawn up a couple of bills to relieve the shortage of manpower on the farms. One of these would require the Army to release all soldiers now in the United States who worked on farms before they were in ~~xxxxxxx~~ the armed forces, to release them by the end of this year. Another bill ~~x~~ drafted by Bankhead would forbid anybody to leave a job on ~~the~~ ^a farm unless his~~

RICKENBACKER

8 1/2
Captain Eddie Rickenbacker spoke out today on the subject of labor laws. At a public luncheon in New York, he pleaded ~~wixkwx~~ that Congress should face the facts and clarify the legislation governing unions. Clarify them, he urged, using these words: "so that millions of innocent men and women will have the same protection from our government as do labor racketeers."

He said absenteeism of workers from war plants and the slow down of production was due to the favoritism shown by the laws to labor racketeers and parasites. Then he asked the question: "Why should labor leaders be immune from reporting their incomes or paying taxes on the dues they get from millions of workers?"

59
And s-l-u-tomorrow,