

RUSSIA

L.J. - Sunoco. Tuesday, July 20, 1943.

Both the Russians and Germans are pretty much in accord about what is happening around Orel. Soviet troops are now attacking that key city on three sides, northeast and south, and the battle is developing into one of the most important of the

war. Moscow announces the capture of a strongly fortified town *the German defense center of Mtsenals.* north of Orel. And right now the Soviets are holding out

against desperate enemy counter-attacks. Their army, moreover, has seized many other strong points in a general advance of the

~~pincers movements~~ that is threatening to isolate Orel. We ~~hear~~

that the northern and southern jaws of the ^{Red} nutcracker are now ~~separated~~

separated by a space of only twenty-five or thirty miles, making

it look like a trap about to spring shut.

The Germans are fighting fiercely, but the Soviets have gained so much ground that, in addition to Orel, another

number one city is threatened -- Bryansk. Moscow says that Stalin himself is at the front, personally directing the offensive.

Berlin declares that the Russians ^{also} launched an attack on the northern coast of Norway, but that this was repelled. The Soviet attempt is described as an amphibious operation of a dramatic sort --

the same sort of landing assault that the Allies launched so successfully in the Mediterranean and the Southwest Pacific.

The Nazis claim that the Soviet Amphibian Force was driven off

by the fire of artillery on the coast. It will be interesting to learn more about this. The Russians, impatient because the British and Americans have not invaded Norway, decide to tackle the job themselves.

ROME

In a city of Northern Italy yesterday, two men were meeting in discussion -- when a piece of news flashed. The two were Hitler and Mussolini -- and the news was the bombing of Rome.

This was disclosed today by an Axis declaration, which told of this latest conference between the Nazi Fuehrer and the Fascist Duce. They had plenty of heavy tidings to talk about in the first place, for the Nazi news service states: "The Axis leaders discussed the military situation created by the desperate onslaught of ~~immense~~ ^{d Forces} tremendous Soviet masses against the European Front in the East and by the landings carried out by the Anglo-Americans in the Mediterranean area."

Yes, Hitler and Mussolini had that amount of bad news to consider, when suddenly the other ~~dispatch~~ dispatch flashed -- "Rome bombed". We hear that the two ^{were} dictators [^] stunned by what may well have sounded like ^{the} a crack of doom for Italian Fascism.

Hitler and Mussolini have had a lot of meetings. Their getting together used to ^{be} one of the loud pieces of show business on the international stage. They strutted and were photographed, and all the world watched with interest and misgiving. Time was

when a Hitler-Mussolini pow-wow meant spectacular things. Their first meetings marked the formation of the Axis, while others preceded terrifying Axis assaults and victories. More recently, ~~they~~ they've ^{gotten} ~~got~~ together in the shadow of defeat; and now ~~Fate~~, and the American Air Command, produced the climax of irony -- Hitler and Mussolini having still another of their meetings when the news of the bombing of Rome flashed ^s upon them.

Today at Allied headquarters in North Africa, aviation officers studied a lot of pictures. These were reconnaissance photographs of the damage done at Rome. American photographing planes wasted no time, and flew over Rome an hour after the last bomb had been dropped. The pictures they made were speedily developed, and then there was a long process of study. What did the photographs show? Accuracy. ⁸ The targets hit exactly.

This same thing was stressed today in the message of congratulation sent by Lieutenant General Spaetz, Commander of the Allied Air Force in Northwest Africa, to Major General James H. Doolittle, Commander of the strategic air force, which sent the bombers on the sky road to Rome. The message characterized the

bombing in these words -- "accurate and devastating."

There is some surmise that Jimmy Doolittle himself led the raid -- the Tokyo bomber flying against still another enemy capital. London gives us ^{that} ~~the~~ rumor and so do some Nazi sources. One line of Nazi propaganda, however, asserts that the air raid on Rome was commanded by an American General named Levy. Whether or not Doolittle was with the bombers, several of his Tokyo fliers were, and these today said their ambition was to add to their list of Tokyo and Rome, that other enemy capital -- Berlin. Just to complete a round-up of the Axis capitals.

The bombing of Rome is rated by the Allied air authorities as the most carefully and elaborately prepared operation in the history of the war of the air -- this because of the care taken to hit military objectives precisely, and nothing else. Also -- because of the fact that the Allied Air command had given the Italians notice in advance of the coming of the raid, warning them. That should have made it unusually dangerous. However, the Fascist resistance turned out to ~~be~~ feeble and only five planes were lost out of the more than five hundred that took part in the assault.

The accounts of the accuracy of the raid stress the two great railroad yards. Other targets were hit too, like a steel plant and a chemical works. But the weight of the assault by more than five hundred bombers was against the Littorio Railroad Yards and the San Lorenzo Railroad Center. Reconnaissance photographs disclose that both of these key points for transport are ^{now} a mass of twisted rails, shattered buildings and round-houses, and wrecked locomotives and cars. Southbound traffic from Rome is said to be entirely stopped and one story states that an ammunition train exploded in one of the yards.

Axis propaganda spreads the usual crop of atrocity stories, and these claim that the American bombers wantonly blasted the great religious and cultural monuments of Rome. There is no truth in this, though the ancient Basillica of San Lorenzo was damaged. This is announced by the Vatican radio. The Basillica was built in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., and therefore is between fourteen and fifteen centuries old. Pope Pius the Ninth is buried there. That venerable church is near the railroad yards in the center of Rome, as is indicated by the name, the

San Lorenzo Railyards. The Basillica is surrounded close up by a whole series of important military objectives, the railroad, military barracks, the ministry of aviation, and the biggest field artillery range in Italy.

We are told today that ~~x~~ at the Vatican, while notables all over Rome fled to air raid shelters during the bombing, Pope Pius the Twelfth refused to go to a shelter and remained in his private chapel -- praying. Later he went to the damaged Basillica of San Lorenzo, and there knelt in prayer -- in spite of the danger of falling walls.

The Nazis issue a report that the Pontiff is protesting to the United States Government about the bombing of Rome. But today Secretary of State Cordell Hull stated that he had no information whatever to support any such notion.

In this country, Roman Catholic Prelates today expressed their regret that it was necessary to bomb Rome, and also their appreciation of the care that the American Air command used to avoid hitting the ancient religious monuments of the Eternal City. The Most Reverend Edward J. Mooney, Archbishop of Detroit, used the words, "surprise

and regret." Then he added: "No one, of course, will take seriously the crocodile tears of the Fascist propaganda."

Abroad, there are many demands that Rome should be declared an open city, that the Fascist Government should completely demilitarize the site of so much that is ancient and historical. Today in Dublin, the Irish times, a Journal of Protestant opinion, suggested that Irish Prime Minister Devalera should ask Fascist Italy to declare Rome an open City, under the conditions that the Allies have laid down. Whether such a thing is practical or not is a question. It may be that the Nazi-Fascist warlords, rather than abandon the military uses of Rome, might prefer to see the city bombed and make propaganda out of it.

SICILY

One sensational word came out of Sicily today, the word -- mutiny. At the center of the battle line, with the Americans driving rapidly forward, Italians are surrendering in defiance of their own military command. Today's communique states: "There are many indications of mutiny by Italian troops commanded by German officers."

The Americans are smashing straight across the island. They captured Caltanissetta and have pushed on to ^{the} ~~an~~ important road junction called Enna. They ~~by-passed~~ by-passed that place and have gone on. Our forces are on the verge of cutting Sicily in two, for the news tells us that the defense front is disintegrating, with Italian troops in mutiny.

The cutting in two of the island will leave the western part a simple matter, apparently -- not more than a job of mopping up. But, the eastern tip of Sicily is something again.

That's where the Germans are, and they are putting up a terrific ~~xxxxx~~ battle in front of Catania. The British Eighth Army is *on the* assaulting ~~ing-in~~ there and reports the hardest kind of going. The

terrain is rocky and mountainous, and German Panzer units are using the difficulty of the ~~country~~ country to every advantage. They are fighting a last ditch battle in front of Catania and when that place falls are expected to retire to the furthest tip of the island to keep on battling. There, in the region of Mt. ~~Aetna~~ Aetna, they will have the utmost advantage of rugged terrain.

However, I suppose the assumption should be that the well organized and disciplined Germans will put ~~up~~ up a strong fight until they see ~~that~~ that there is no further hope. Then they may be expected to collapse as they did in Tunisia -- when they see the game is up.

PARAMUSHIRU

Today we have the word that the United States Air Force has bombed Paramushiru, the number one Japanese base in the Northern Pacific. For a week there were insistent rumors that American bombers had blasted Paramushiru, but today's Navy communique gives the date as -- yesterday. So perhaps the earlier reports were in advance of the fact -- premature.

The Japanese base was hit by big four-motored bombers, Liberators. They scored near misses on ships, and started fires ashore. The weather apparently was good, and that's news because *is in the Kurils, which* Paramushiru, like the Aleutians, ~~are~~ a haunt of almost perpetual fog.

Irrespective of the material damage done, to the Jap Naval base, the air raid represents a blow reaching down toward the heart of Japan. And it's the first assault launched against the Japanese home islands since Jimmy Doolittle and his bombing crews assailed Tokyo.

Paramushiru is the northernmost of the Kurils, ^{the} string of small islands that extend^s northeast from the large islands of *the* ~~the~~ *archipelago. Paramushiru* *is* twelve hundred miles from Tokyo and seven hundred and *main* *Japan* *is*

sixty miles from Attu, ^{at the uttermost tip of our} ~~the most advanced American base -- from which~~
Aleutian chain from whence our
bombers may have flown.

KNOX

Today we have a few statements from Washington that may not sound so pleasant, but they ought to do us some good. Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox held a news conference, in which he was joined by Admiral Horne, vice-chief of Naval Operations. They both denounced the rosy optimism that has been sweeping the country. They spoke of what they called -- "Our minor military successes." And they described the optimism in one word -- "silly."

"We haven't even begun to dig into the enemy's main defenses yet," said Secretary Knox. "It is true," he added, "That things look better, but just look at the Pacific, the amount we have taken and the amount we still have to take." Turning to the European theatre, he said: "Remember, Sicily is only an outpost. We have still to crack the Germans and their main fortress."

How long do they expect the war to last? Admiral Horne stated that the Navy is making plans for a war in the Pacific ~~ix~~ lasting -- "At least until nineteen forty-nine," said he. The vice-chief of Naval operations explained that this nineteen forty nine reckoning is based on what he called -- "The distance we

yet
have to go

That's the sort of calculation which makes ~~the~~ rosy optimism look - "silly." And, it ~~is~~ is harmful too. "Nothing is worse for ultimate victory," said Secretary Knox, "Than to promote the idea that the end of the war is near at every minor success we have."

Admiral Horne echoed that by saying: "One of the biggest difficulties facing us is the wave of optimism every time we have a slight military success. The public, thinking the war is nearly ended, becomes complacent, and our production program suffers."

That thought was expanded by Charles E. Wilson of the War Production Board ~~who~~ ^{who today} told how production is lagging. "We ought to produce eighty-five hundred planes this month," he said, but ^{then} ~~he~~ added that we are not likely to do so. "We have the manpower, the plants and the materials," he explained, "but war complacency appears to be slowing down our production levels." And he added that in shipbuilding too there is a decreasing efficiency of manpower -- because of the rosy optimism.

BOY

Today at Minneapolis they broke into a house, disregarding the protests of a five year old boy inside. The little lad tried to keep them out, pleading -- "Mommie is asleep."

In the bedroom they found Mrs. Catherine Doyle, forty-four years old. She had been dead for three days, had succumbed to a chronic ailment -- on Saturday apparently. And all that time five year old Larry Doyle had been with her, thinking her asleep.

On Sunday a neighbor, Mrs. Charles M. Quinn, telephoned to the house to have Mrs. Doyle accompany her to Church. They had gone to Church every Sunday for years. Little Larry Doyle answered the telephone, and insisted in his lisping prattle -- "Mommie is asleep."

Finally, Mrs. Quinn felt that something must be wrong. She summoned relatives of her neighbor, and today they broke into the house -- Larry still objecting. He was a good little boy, and he didn't want his mother disturbed when she was asleep.

They got from him the story of his three days in the house. "I ate bread and jam," he said. "Mommie didn't have any milk,. I went to bed like a good boy every night and told her good night-- even if she was asleep."

She was his foster mother. Mrs. Doyle, a widow ^w had adopted Larry when he ~~x~~ was eighteen months old.

And now Hugh.