

L.T. SUNOCO, THURSDAY, August 5, 1943

Good Evening, Everybody:-

Four important victories in one day -- for the United Nations. For days we have been looking forward to the fall of Catania in Sicily, Munda in the Solomons, and Orel in Russia. And they all fall on the same day!

But that's not all. The Russians, sweeping on from the capture of Orel, also took Belgorod, a hundred miles to the South.

First, about Sicily. The British Eighth Army captured Catania today after a twenty-one day siege. Reporters at the front describe it as the culmination of the most brilliant of all military operations of that brilliant general, Sir Bernard Montgomery.

The main body of the Germans has fallen back and is already eighteen miles from the evacuated

city. The Nazis are digging in, in the mountains near the coast.

We hear that the brunt of the attack all along was borne by two tough British regiments, the Fiftieth Northumbrians and the Fifty-first Highlanders. Tonight's report tells how when they entered the battered city, the civilian population welcomed them with cries of Viva!

Apparently the Sicilians of Catania were not sorry to see the Nazis take it on the run. Even if ~~xx~~ they did leave the city a wreck -- from the pounding it got from Allied planes and artillery.

Though the United Nations have been awaiting the fall of Catania these days, the end came with dramatic suddenness -- while the news of tough fighting on the outskirts of the city was still coming in.

Meanwhile the word was that the Americans were still meeting furious resistance in their sector, to the north.

The final blow to Catania was delivered when Montgomery brought in a fresh division of troops, the Seventy-eighth; veterans of Tunisia, where they had fought with the First Army. After the Canadians cut a breach in the German line twenty miles northwest of Catania, the British Seventy-eighth Division poured through the hole in the line. Then Montgomery set up a heavy artillery barrage, under cover of which the British drove to Paterno, only nine miles northwest of Catania, cutting the Mt. Etna road. Then it was that the Germans saw the game was up. Northumbrians and the Highlanders redoubled their attack, and the Germans began to fall back.

Later today, Montgomery's men also captured Gerbini, the center of the most important group of Axis airfields on Sicily. There being fourteen ~~airfields~~ airfields in that one area!

~~The~~ The Question now is whether the Germans will fight a delaying action along the road to Messina or

take to strongholds they have built on Mt. Etna.

If they do the latter they will be cut off from either reinforcements or supplies.

The Germans and Italians now have only one ~~xxx~~ place of any consequence left on Sicily, and that's Messina. When the Allies do take Messina, they will find nothing but ruins because it has ^{been} bombed over and over again in this short campaign, bombed until it is nothing but a relic of the port it once was. The defenses of Messina have been so badly shot up that warships of the Allied fleets are now patrolling the waters within rifle range. Which means that neither reinforcements nor supplies can get to Messina, nor anybody escape from it. American torpedo boats are combing the nearby waters, and U.S. cruisers and destroyers are bombarding the northern shore line day and night, giving support to the Seventh Army led by General Patton. Also a British naval squadron is bombarding the eastern coast, to prevent the escape of the Germans fleeing from ^{Catania.} ^

The Nazi propaganda in admitting the fall of Catania does so with a comic note. That is, the Berlin radio describes it as one of the most successful maneuvers ever carried out by the German army -- to mislead the enemy.

On the northern sector, the Americans are plugging away, against German guns that are high in the hills in a position to mow down the advancing troops that are trying to drive through the valleys.

We would have heard of another bombing raid on Rome today. The ~~Axis~~ Allies had ~~it~~ planned it.

But, visibility was poor, so the British and American air forces again attacked Naples and various railway junctions in southern Italy.

MUNDA FOLLOW LEAD

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Now for the news from the Pacific. The battle for the big Munda airfield has come to an end. Nothing remains but some mopping up at that important point in the Solomons.

The Munda siege has lasted thirty-five days. And Marines and U.S. Infantry had to fight through jungle, fight yard by yard. We hear they were a battered and worn lot when they finally streamed onto the airdrome.

As for the Japs, it is believed they began evacuating their high ranking officers by destroyer to Kolombangara Island, as well as some of their troops, several days ago, leaving a rear guard to protect the evacuation. And those soldiers of the rear guard had been ordered to fight to the death for their Emperor. Some of them, in fact, are still holding out on a hill overlooking the airport.

All of which doesn't mean that everything is over on New Georgia, for the rest of that island is

still to be occupied by our people.

One unit of American troops has moved north to cut off the Japs fleeing from Munda.

What finally broke down Jap resistance on Munda was an unending series of bombardments from both American artillery and aircraft.

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The Marines and U.S. infantrymen found half a dozen Jap Zeros and two-motored bombers on the field. Those of them who like to collect ^{souvenirs} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ began stripping the Jap Planes. The ~~xxx~~ others took the first rest they had had for days, and had a good meal. A correspondent saw one of the boys reading a baseball magazine in the shade of a wrecked Japanese bomber.

The Japs left huge stores of rice and clothing and blankets, as well as cannon and other things.

RUSSIA FOLLOW MUNDA

In Russia, eight armored columns of Red soldiers

rolled through Orel ^{today.} But, they did not stop. They pushed ^{right} on to fresh conquests. They drove ^{through} ~~into~~ flaming villages

and along roads ~~that were~~ strewn with the wreckage of German tanks and trucks, ~~also the bodies of~~ German dead.

The Berlin radio announces the news in these words: "In the course of straightening out the front,

the evacuation of Orel, which had long been contemplated,"

^{it says,} "was carried out on the night preceding August Fifth,

undisturbed by the Russians. All stores were removed

according to plan and important war installations

completely destroyed."

^{And,} It is a fact that by evacuating Orel, the Germans

have straightened out their line, because Orel was a

big salient. Evidently the Nazis are now preparing

to hold the front from Kirov, southeast of Smolensk,

through Bryansk, to the northwest corner of the Kursk salient.

^{also} It is true that the Russians failed to achieve
one object ^{we} ~~for which they had hoped. They did not catch~~
~~the entire two hundred and fifty thousand Germans; in~~
~~the garrison in a trap.~~ ^{For} The main body of ^{Germans} ~~Germans~~
~~defenders~~ escaped.

However, Moscow claims that thousands of
^{Nazis} ~~Germans~~ in individual groups are being encircled.

And the swift little Russian tanks and tommy gun
squadrons are forging ahead and threatening to enter p
other ^{large} German units.

————— 0 —————
The next goal of the Red Army is Bryansk.
^{now} They are driving from all directions to join up all
their forces at a point southeast of Bryansk.

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The spectacular aspect of ^{all} this is that it
marks the first big summer victory of the Soviet
armies. If and when they capture Bryansk, they aim to
attack Kharkov.

The Soviet high command denies that the Germans had given ^{up} the city ^{of Orel} ~~up~~ according to plan.

On the contrary, the Russians fought their way in from street to street, and house to house. However, they admit that the Germans dynamited factories, public buildings and homes as they retreated.

Aside from the moral effect of the victory, the Russians have now control of ninety miles of the most important railroad in that part of the country. That gives them three hundred and seventy miles clear from Moscow to ^YBelgorod. And ^YBelgorod is only forty-two miles northeast of Kharkov. Thus the Red generals are in a position to move both men and supplies freely for either offense or defense.

They have plenty to celebrate in Moscow tonight. The ~~Ru~~ bells rang out at midnight, and a hundred and twenty guns fired twelve salvos by order of Premier

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Stalin, to celebrate that double victory. The Soviet chief announced the fall of Belgorod just as the world had hardly finished digesting the news from Orel.

It means more than the capture of two cities. The significance of the taking of Belgorod after Orel is that the Red armies are now carrying out a double threat offensive and the entire German front/ south of Smolensk/ is in danger.

Stalin announced the victory in rhetorical fashion, beginning with the words "Eternal glory to the heroes who fell in the struggle for the freedom of our country," to which he added, "death to the German occupants."

It is to be noticed that the Soviet Dictator this time uses the word "Germans" to describe the invaders. Hitherto, all the official Russian dispatches have alluded to the Germans as "Fascists" or "Hitlerites."

Stalin went on to point out that the Red armies had taken Orel and Belgorod exactly one month after the Germans opened their offensive on July Fifth. He was also jubilant over wiping out the German legend that Soviet troops are unable to carry out a successful offensive in the summer.

54 { Military observers point out that the importance of the capture of Orel is that the Red army is now threatening Bryansk. The taking of Belgorod gives them the anchor point of the Kursk salient, and if they continue in that direction, the Germans at Kharkov will be at their mercy.

STIMSON

Those four United Nations victories were so exciting that I have not left myself much time, ^{for} ~~so I~~ *anything else.* ~~down~~ shall have to boil ~~ixxdwnn~~ the rest of the news ~~down~~ pretty fine.

Secretary of War Stimson, back in Washington, hoped that the news would not make the people of the United States so sanguine as to cause them to let up on war efforts at home. If that happened, said ^{See.} ~~Stimson,~~ it would be criminal. "The greatest breach of national faith. Ultimate victory," he said further, "can be won only by infinitely more sweat and sacrifice."

Then he revealed that the number of American casualties in Sicily is amazingly small. Up to July Twenty-Second, only five hundred and one were killed, three thousand eight hundred and seventy wounded, and two thousand, three hundred and seventy missing. The British casualties were not much higher. The Allies

have now taken more than a hundred thousand German and Italian prisoners.

5 { The Secretary amused correspondents by
x describing his arrival at Newfoundland recently.
When he climbed out of his plane, there were a couple
of lieutenants looking eagerly. As they saw ^{see.} Stimson,
their faces fell. The Secretary learned later that
there had been a rumor that Heddy Lamar was coming in
at that field.

ITALY

News from Italy tonight confirms a story published this morning. I mean the story that Badoglio is not going to surrender and has turned his face definitely toward Hitler. ^{TR} The popular clamor for peace ~~xxxxxxxx~~ by the Italian people has not abated. There are stories from Madrid that the big industrial leaders and bankers have been begging Badoglio to give in. But their pleas were of no avail and there seems to be good ground for the jubilation of the Nazis. The Berlin radio broadcast an announcement that the political situation in Italy has changed in favor of Germany.

HAMBURG

Travelers from Hamburg are reporting that the British and American raids have paralyzed the city.

They say normal life is not functioning, and even money is ~~not functioning~~ ^{out of circulation} in Hamburg today. The only places to eat are the public field kitchens, which are scattered all over the city. Nobody pays, nobody seems to think of money. Hamburg is being evacuated. Trains are leaving at regular intervals ~~■~~ packed with hundreds of people taking with them whatever they can carry.

There were hints in London today that the treatment given to Hamburg will presently be meted out to Berlin. The big bombers today are so large and powerful and have such a wide range that mass raids with block-busting bombs are now possible on the German capital. Berlin is full of war factories.

TAXES

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It looks as though there were going to be another stiff difference of opinion between the Treasury and Congress over the new tax bill. The Administration wants fresh taxes which will raise twelve billion dollars in addition to those we are paying already. Congressmen, even Chairman Doughton of the Ways and Means Committee, have declared that they have reached the limit. Any heavier taxes, they think, will wipe out the middle class and put excessive burdens on the shoulders of the little fellow.

Apparently that irked Secretary Morgenthau. He told his press conference today that in spite of what Congressmen feel, the Treasury is going to push for more and bigger taxes, and will aim to raise those twelve billions, come what may.

ICKES

Secretary Ickes as Petroleum Administrator has had plenty of fights on his hands ever since gasoline has been rationed. First he had his troubles with eastern congressmen. He and the other agencies controlling gasoline have made plans to ease up the situation for drivers in the eastern states. Now Ickes has the western senators and representatives on his hands. He met a hundred and fifty people at Chicago today and listened to their protests. The westerners appear to be willing that the drivers in the east should have more fuel, provided it is not done at the expense of the middlewest. Ickes was obliged to assure them that any sacrifices ~~xx~~ which the people of the middlewest and southwest have to make are not for the civilians of the east coast but for the sake of their own fighting men.

FATHERS

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Congressmen are not going to let fathers be inducted into the armed services without a struggle. This is no surprise to Washington. Senator Wheeler of Montana opened the ball with a telegram to Paul McNutt, Chairman of the War Manpower Commission. Wheeler ~~is~~ asked McNutt to postpone the induction of fathers for at least one month so that Congress may be given a chance to define its policy. *of now if.*

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