

BERLIN RAID

P.T. - Sunoco. Tuesday, March 2, 1943.
Mar 2

London places a large interpretation on last night's air raids against the Nazis - the raids that featured the biggest bombing of Berlin to date. It was the seventh day of daily bombing, and London is inclined to think that the sustained aerial offensive is a prelude to an invasion attack against the Nazis on the continent.

Today, ^{the} British Under-Secretary of State for Air said: "The present raids are the opening tune which will rise to the crescendo of a march on Europe."

Last night's R.A.F. assault hit Berlin twice as hard as the German air force ever struck London in the days of the historic blitz. The heaviest bombing of London occurred on the night of April Sixteenth-Seventeenth, Nineteen Forty-One, when between four hundred-and-fifty and six hundred tons of Nazi high explosive are estimated to have blasted

the city. Last night the R.A.F. smashed Berlin with a thousand tons of bombs. ^{JP} The Nazis admit heavy damage, calling the raid "large scale." Berlin states that a minimum of eighty-nine people were killed.

The British lost nineteen bombers. And if this loss were according to the usual percentage, it would indicate that four hundred planes were in the raid.

~~They were what the British call - truck horses,~~

~~Big ones - Stirling, Halifax, Lancaster. London~~

~~describes the Stirling as probably the largest and~~

~~heaviest bomber in the world, with a maximum capacity of eight tons of bombs.~~

The mighty bombing of Berlin last night brought a warning on this side of the Atlantic today. The Director of Civilian Defense, James M. Landis, stated that Hitler is likely to try retaliation by striking across the ocean at American cities. He said

47
the German people are demanding reprisals, and points out that the Berlin radio is saying that Washington, New York and Boston are not safe from air attack.

"Hitler wants pictures of burning American cities to show to his people," warns Director Landis.

And he said we've got to be ~~xxx~~ on guard.-

~~civilian defense has to be on guard. He told how the~~

~~volunteer organization of the O.C.D. has slumped from time to time - especially after victories. The worst let-downs of all occurred after the Battle of Midway and the launching of the North African offensive.~~

~~There must be no slumping now, he warned - in the face of possible Nazi reprisals and after the present seven-day air offensive, which culminated in the blasting of Berlin last night.~~

AFRICA

In Tunisia the battle on the American front is receding back to where it started -- Rommel's North Afrika Korps ^{retiring} ~~receding~~ toward the positions it ^{before} ~~occupied~~ ^{occupied} for its offensive a couple of weeks ago.

Allied headquarters announces the American recapture of Sbeitla, ^a ~~that was the~~ number one position taken by the Nazis in their previous drive. Sbeitla is twenty-three miles east of Kasserine Pass -- the mountain gap beyond which the Germans never got very far. ^{TP} From Sbeitla the Americans are pushing on, and at last reports were three miles beyond that place. They were approaching ^{Faid} ~~Faid~~ Pass, which ^{was} ~~is~~ one of the first places the Germans took when they lunged forward. ~~The road of the American advance is encumbered with by heaps of enemy wreckage -- equipment smashed by the incessant American air bombing. However, a good deal of the abandoned machinery can be salvaged and American engineers are busy repairing it -- so that our own troops can use Nazi equipment against the Nazis.~~

The Germans are putting up little if any resistance, ^{and} ~~in~~ the principal obstacles for the Americans are land mines and booby traps. (As they advance the engineers have got to dispose of charges of high explosives ~~s~~ laid in the ground, and the troops have to be mighty careful about all sorts of things that blow up when touched -- booby traps.)

To the north, where the Germans have been attacking the British no change is reported. The German assaults appear to have lost their momentum.

HITLER-MUSSOLINI

We have reports of a Hitler-Mussolini meeting. Time was, in the days of the victories of the blitzkrieg, when those meetings between the Fuehrer and the Duce were brass band affairs with blatant headlines. Now things are not so glorious for the Nazi-Fascist combination, and mere underground rumor tells of Hitler and Mussolini having another of their pow-wows.

This is said to have preceded the Ribbentrop negotiations that we have been hearing about - Ribbentrop making arrangements ~~with the~~ ~~Fascist government~~ whereby Italy would send more ^{to} Soviet troops ~~to~~ ~~the~~ Russia and would regiment civilians completely for greater war production.

RUSSIA

19
The new Russian advance ~~is~~ away to the north,
is progressing,
toward Leningrad, Marshall Timoshenko is driving back
the German Sixteenth Army toward the key city of
Staraya Russa which is on ~~the~~ ^{an} important Leningrad
railroad ~~xxxxxx~~ line. Moscow announces the recapture of a
Fortified area,
major ~~area~~ and this is admitted by Berlin -- the Nazis
claiming that they deliberately evacuated that fortified
area, which ~~is~~ ^{was} the salient thrust into the Russian line.
Moscow says evacuation was forced by smashing blows
in which the Red Army stormed chains of fortified
villages -- and a virtual underground city. This, ~~was~~
an extensive subterranean stronghold -- big enough to
be called a city.

POLAND

Reports from London state the likelihood of a shake-up in the Cabinet of the exiled Polish Government - this because of Russian statements that the Soviets intend to take what they acquired when Stalin and Hitler divided Poland between them.

20 Last week ~~the Polish government in London insisted~~ that when victory is won, Poland ~~must~~ have not only what the Nazis, but also what the Soviets, took. This is ~~answered~~ *we have* today ~~in~~ a statement ~~made~~ by the official Russian news agency, which declared that the part of Poland that Russia seized is really Russian in character, and belongs to the Soviets. This ~~has been the Moscow~~ contention all along.

All of which puts the Polish Premier, General Sikorski, in a shaky position - he having alligned Poland on the side of the Soviets in the conflict with Nazi Germany. ~~They say that Sikorsky may be replaced by~~

~~General Sosnowski who opposed the Polish agreement to support Russia. It isn't clear what the Poles can do. They are said to be asking the United States and Britain to persuade Stalin to renounce his demand for former Polish territory. The attitude of the United States is said to be that Poland and Russia must settle the question between themselves.~~

One report is that Premier Sikorski may go to Moscow and try to persuade Stalin to renounce his demand for former Polish territory.

Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox today made a statement about the air bases the United States is building in lands owned by our Allies. There is a demand that we should acquire possession of some of these ~~bases~~ in return for Lend-Lease. ^{Secretary} ~~Senator~~

~~Tydings of Maryland, for example, would like the British to give us full title and sovereignty over the West Indian bases that we have leased. Secretary Knox states that he doesn't think the bases we have built should be made a part of Lend-Lease bargaining. He told this today to the Congressional Committee that is considering a renewal of the Lend-Lease bill. The Secretary thinks that the question of the bases that we have built should be left until the end of the war.~~

"I imagine," says he, "that any group of Americans in writing any peace terms, will be able to

21
present a pretty strong case for American rights
when the war is ended."

PACIFIC

The Navy tells us that planes based on Guadalcanal have again hit the Japs at Munda. ~~It was~~

The eightieth raid against the enemy airfield there.

And our submarines have sunk five more Jap ships, cargo vessels and tankers.

We get these reports of American submarine activity periodically, and they represent steady hammer blows against the long lines of Jap communications.

DESTROYER

Here's a story of the submarine war that should help to put an end to the old wheez about the British not having a sense of humor. Today, there's a painting in the ward room of a British destroyer, a masterpiece by a sailor-artist depicting - "the Battle of Lasola Island." Sounds like the commemoration of an heroic exploit - doesn't it?

52
The destroyer has a stately name - H.M.S. CHURCHILL. It's an American built craft renamed after the British Prime Minister. Way back during the historic days of the Atlantic conference between Churchill and President Roosevelt, the Prime Minister visited the destroyer named after him, and Churchill promised the men of the crew that he would come back and see them again - when they sank a German submarine.

From that day on, the crew of H.M.S. CHURCHILL were on the super alert, but they were in quiet waters

off Venezuela, and for months ~~they~~ never saw a U-boat.

TP Then suddenly one night, the lookout shouted an alarm.

"Enemy submarine!" It was night, and in the darkness

a low black shape loomed ahead. Men rushed to their

battle stations, and H.M.S. CHURCHILL dashed to the

attack, trying to ram the U-boat. But the skipper's

steering aim was not so good, and the destroyer missed

the long low shape - luckily. *TP For* The Nazi U-boat turned

out to be Lasola Island - a tiny bit of land two

hundred feet long and ten feet wide. If the destroyer

had named it -
~~had landed, it would have been~~ good-bye, H.M.S. CHURCHILL.

So that was the Battle of Lasola Island, and a sailor-

artist proceeded to immortalize it in a painting -

which today is on the wall in the ward room of

53
H.M. S. CHURCHILL.

GANDHI

I suppose that about now Gandhi is having his breakfast. Today was the last day ~~of~~ the Mahatma's fast - that foodless ordeal which sent repercussions around the world. For twenty-one days Gandhi has had nothing to eat, and for a while it looked as if he might succumb and die; but he rallied, and today's medical report pictures him as in good enough shape and cheerful.

A dispatch from Poona stated that he would end his hunger strike tomorrow morning - which is along about now in India. So at this moment the Mahatma may be having breakfast - taking his bird seed, which he is supposed to eat *for chota hazri*.

VIERECK

Here's a rather surprising aftermath of yesterday's Supreme Court decision in the Viereck case. Today in the Senate, Langer of North Dakota stated that he will introduce a bill to reimburse the pre-Pearl Harbor Nazi propagandist, whose conviction was reversed by the Supreme Court. The court found that Viereck had been wrongly found guilty of violating the law regulating foreign agents. Senator Langer's idea is that the government should pay Viereck for the time he spent in jail *and giving him back* ~~by reimbursing him for~~ the cost of his trial. The Senator says he is going to introduce a bill to that effect.

Today I got a telegram from the Viereck prosecutor, William Power Meloney, who reminds me that the Supreme Court did not throw out the Viereck conviction because of the way the prosecution was handled -- but because of a technicality of law. The court did say that statements by the prosecutor were prejudicial to the rights of the defendant. *To which* ~~William Power~~ Meloney makes this comment:

"The prosecutor," he wires, "must draw a careful line. On one hand he should be fair. He should not seek to arouse passion or engender prejudice. On the other hand," he goes on, "earnestness or even a stirring eloquence cannot convict him of hitting foul blows."

MOVIE ACTORS

Hollywood today let out a loud wail, and cried in Gilbert and Sullivan words - "a paradox, a paradox, a most ingenious paradox!" Hollywood also says it in the form of a selective service appeal, asking that Mickey Rooney be deferred from the draft. Micky, the perennial boy, has been called for service. And his studio, M.G.M. - is asking that he be reclassified.

The case of Micky Rooney is only a Number One example of the paradox in which Hollywood finds itself because of the draft - its actors being taken into the armed services. Officially, the government has classified motion pictures as an essential industry. Yet, at the same time, selective service decrees that movie actors shall be ~~taken~~ taken by the draft. Under the essential industry ruling, studio workers like electricians and carpenters, are deferred - but not

actors. And that's the paradox, with Hollywood asking - How can you have movies without actors? Of course, they have actresses - lots of them. But how can you have boy-meets-girl ~~romance~~ without the boy? There aren't enough sixty year old juveniles to go around.

Hollywood thinks that actors can do more toward winning the war by acting than by soldiering - and I suppose that some army men will agree. A Hollywood spokesman today stated that movie stars in the armed forces are not doing so well. "Let us ~~xxxxxxx~~ consider Clark Gable as typical," said he. "Wherever he goes he attracts crowds. He can't help it, but he causes confusion. I understand," the movie spokesman went on, "that the Air Corps somehow would like to get rid of him if only it could do so gracefully." To which he added: "Gable, incidentally, is more than forty years old. And he's a big man, too big by

far to fit into the seat of a fighting plane."

Attention is directed likewise to Orson Wells, the actor-producer. He has just been taken into the army, in spite of his medical examination. The army doctors found that Orson Wells has the following:-

He has asthma, flat feet, a weak back and arthritis.

He has been taken in for - "limited service." No, not

for
^
commando combat.

As for Mickey Rooney, the Hollywood spokesman today stated: "He's barely five feet tall. His heart is not good and his blood pressure^{is}_^ is high." Now, if his stature were high and his blood pressure were low - that would be something else again.

57
All of which illustrates the Hollywood paradox - Movies essential, but actors not.

WIFE

If any of you folks feel that you have a knack of getting into complications, just consider the case of Frank Neubauer of Chicago. Today, a judge decided that Frank's first wife was not his wife, nor was his second wife, and neither is Frank's sister his wife, although she is sentenced to jail for marrying her brother. So Frank is declared a single man, although he married two wives, and he also married his sister, and he has a year old daughter. ~~And to straighten all that out, Frank will have to do some more marrying and he'll have to do it in a hurry because the army is about to get him.~~

It seems that five years ago Frank married his sister. This was because his fiance' was too busy at work to take time off to get married. She is a Rumanian, and somebody told her that it was an old American custom to have marriage by proxy - somebody else taking the place of the bride, a stand-in. Frank's sister agreed

to be the proxy, ~~and~~ ^{and} she filled in as the bride at the wedding. ~~She~~ neglected to tell the judge who performed the wedding that she was only a stand-in, ~~So~~ the ceremony was performed as the real thing, and the sister was legally her brother's wife. Or she would have been except for the fact that she was already married. For this mix-up and deception, the sister today was sentenced to twenty-four hours in jail.

The marriage by proxy not counting, Frank was legally a single man. So, according to law, it was all right when he went ahead and got married again. ^{ah}

^{but} He was single, but his bride was not. She was married, ^{having} ~~and~~ neglected to get a divorce from her husband.

~~She has, however, since then, but that doesn't make any difference. She and Frank are not married - but they have a year old daughter.~~

5812 **My** By this time I think you will echo the

sentiments of the Chicago judge today. When the facts were presented to him, he said: "Wait a minute, till I catch my breath." When he did, he pronounced all the marrying illegal and said Frank would have to

marry his latest wife all over again - which he said

he would do. And in a hurry ^{-- because he's} ~~before the top sergeant~~

~~caught him.~~ about to be taken into
the army.

9