

AFRICA

L. J. - Sunco. Thurs. Apr. 1, 1943

Uncle Sam's Flying Fortresses have dealt the Axis a major blow. They carried out a huge raid, with complete success, on the Island of Sardinia. And it ended with twenty-six Axis ships wrecked or damaged, and seventy-one Axis planes shot down.

It was an air attack of great importance and superbly timed. The idea of course being to spoil the chance of the Axis armies in Tunisia escaping across the Mediterranean. It was a heavy blow to the shipping that no doubt was being made ready to evacuate the armies of Rommel and von Arnim.

All this havoc was wrought by the greatest armada of Flying Fortresses ever assembled and sent into action at one time. Nearly a hundred of them - and their fighter escort as well. They went roaring out against the Italian Island of Sardinia, aiming at the area around Cagliari, a seaport nestling in a gulf

on the southeast coast of the big island. Sardinia is an important source of supplies for the Nazis and Italians - also a trans-shipment port.

Nor did the Fortresses have so far to go. Sardinia is only a hundred and forty miles northwest of the coast of Tunis. And - here is the surprising part:- the great planes went, fought and returned without a single loss. In addition to attacking the shipping in Cagliari harbor and wrecking twenty-seven ships, they attacked three airfields that the Nazis had built in Southern Sardinia.

The whole thing, it appears, was such a surprise that the Axis defenses in Sardinia were paralyzed. The Fortresses descended so suddenly that the Italians and Germans on the spot were unable to rally for a counter-attack. And the Fortresses dropped literally thousands of bombs of all sizes.

They landed direct hits on five merchant ships, two of which immediately burst into flame. Then they got a coastwise vessel, and another smaller one. Also they landed their bombs on nineteen ships of smaller size, ranging anywhere from motor vessels to schooners. After which they roared over to a nearby airdrome and found a hundred and fifteen enemy planes neatly lined up on the ground - just sitting there waiting to be destroyed. Whereupon the American raiders dropping in from Africa, obligingly blew forty-four of them to bits. Not satisfied they next set fire to an underground fuel depot and an ammunition loading station.

After leaving their devastating cards at another airdrome, they jubilantly turned south. By then German planes were hot after them, and then came a running fight all the way from Sardinia to Tunisia. The only consequence of which was that the

Flying Fortresses and their escort of Lightning interceptors bagged seventeen more Axis planes.

The Allies did suffer some loss. Twelve fighter planes. But not one of the Fortresses. In fact, not a single Fortress was seriously damaged. All of which sounds like proof of the durability of the Flying Fortress. ~~xxx~~ Its ability to bomb, and fight. It also shows what Rommel and von Arnim may expect if they try a Dunkirk evacuation from Tunisia. For in addition to our Flying Fortresses and large numbers of Royal Air Force planes, there will be the British Royal Navy for the escaping Nazis to reckon with.

On the ground, nothing spectacular is reported from Tunisia today. We learn the British and Americans are tightening their ring around the trapped armies of von Arnim and Rommel. The Americans under

General Patton, are steadily pushing on, picking their way through vast German minefields, hurrying to effect a junction with the British Eighth Army.

The last we heard of Montgomery's men, they were storming enemy defenses twelve miles north of Gabes; while to the north, the British First Army has made further gains, putting them within thirty-five miles from the stronghold of Bizerte. So bitter was the fighting at one point that it took eight bayonet charges by the British to clear the Germans away. The last of those charges was led by the commanding officer of the British battalion in person.

The British First Army is now pushing beyond Sedjenane, capturing booty as it advances.

"The moment is now near when Axis troops will be thrown into the sea." So says Radio Algiers. Conservative military observers shake their heads a bit.

But, Radio Morocco, which frequently has been ahead of Allied official communiques, broadcast a report that Rommel today has been blowing up all the installations at Sfax to prevent them from being useful to the British, who are hot on his heels.

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The Royal Navy is also busy. The King's men-o-war have been shelling the coastal road running north from Babes to Sfax.

One of their difficulties is that the enemy is using many small ships -- schooners, yawls, barges. These are not easy to torpedo. And -- the barges have exceedingly strong fire power. They are used to transport tanks, also eighty-eight milimeter guns and heavy calibre machine guns. All of which makes them a dangerous enemy for submarines, surface ships, and for planes.

Radio Vichy reports that a strong Allied naval squadrons has been gathered at Gibraltar.

Experts in London foresee a tremendous naval battle in the Mediterranean. Perhaps a combined navy and air fleet action from one end of the Mediterranean to the other. The betting is that Hitler is ready to sacrifice all of Italy's fleet -- no inconsiderable force.

One foreign news correspondent in Switzerland tells of transports, hospital ships, trains, concentrated in southern Italy, with every indication that the Italians are preparing for a mass evacuation from Tunisia.

STIMSON FOLLOW AFRICA

~~Colonel Stimson~~, Secretary of War ^{Stimson} confirms the report that Rommel is heading for a union with von Arnim. The Secretary qualified what he said with the word, "apparently", but he added, "The union of Rommel's and von Arnim's troops would give the Axis a strong army in good defensive positions." He continued: "Before the final phase of the campaign is over, there will be a great deal of heavy fighting. Several American divisions are on this front," he said, "and will take part in the expulsion of the Axis from North Africa."

Most of the fighting ~~front~~ on the northern front so far, reported the Secretary, has been by the British First Army. Reports of losses are not complete yet, he said, but the enemy definitely has lost large numbers of Germans and Italians killed, many thousands of prisoners, large quantities of guns, tanks, rolling stock. The British, American and French troops are

2
pressing the Axis forces into a pocket that is growing narrower and narrower. ~~at least in Tunisia~~ Through ~~that Rommel must try to escape~~

Sec. of War

Stimson paid a tribute to the British ~~Eighth Army~~ fighters from the desert. ^{"Successes} ~~Successes~~ of the last few days," he said, "are due to the leadership of General Sir Bernard Montgomery and the skill of the British Eighth Army."

RUSSIA

On the Russian front, German fighting units are being replaced by French troops. That is the latest from Moscow. In spite of bringing up all their reserves of tanks and men, the Nazis, in their latest offensive, failed to ~~break~~ ^{crack} the Red Army line on the Donets. So the tired and battered German soldiers are being sent back from the front, given a rest. And the Russians claim that the line is now being held by French troops.

The Russians are taking advantage of the lull to improve and strengthen their own line on the west bank of the Donets, getting ready for an attack as soon as the mud on that front dries up enough for motor transport.

~~Down~~ ^{In} the Caucasus, there has been some activity, ~~however~~. The Russians have captured a town only twelve miles from ~~the German line~~ the last main highway that connects the Germans north and south of

the River Kuban. ^{And} The Germans have now lost their
bridgehead there.

On the Smolensk front, the mud still is
waist deep. But in spots the Red soldiers are
trekking through, wedging their way into that almost
impregnable German defense belt.

BIBLE

The Japanese are rewriting the Bible for us.

It should be explained that in Nineteen Forty-One, practically all ~~the~~ Protestant churches in Japan were

- by force, this one
consolidated into one, ~~This was~~ called the Church of

Christ of Japan. It seems a little weird to ~~contemplate~~

contemplate a Church of Christ controlled by the

Mikado. *any how*
~~Japanese Government, but there it is.~~ And we learn

today through the Tokyo Radio that the *Mikado's* Church of Christ

is revising the Old Testament.

The Protestant Church, however, is not the only one that comes under the thumb of the Mikado's war lords. The Roman Catholic Church in Japan is also state-controlled. And that Church likewise is at work on a new translation of the Old Testament, *and* has already completed the Book of Genesis.

WALKER

The Honorable Frank & Walker returned to Washington today from a tour of ten western states. ~~He was~~ Touring not ~~in his capacity~~ as Postmaster General of the United States but as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

4
Newspapermen promptly ~~winked~~ pounced on him for opinions about ^(possible Presidential) ~~the~~ candidates ^{next year.} "I would rather not discuss candidates at this time," replied Chairman Walker. "It is too early." Then he told the press that he will try to make an agreement with the ~~opposite member of the~~ Republican ^S Party for a short ~~presidential~~ campaign in Nineteen Forty-Four. It would start preferably in October; ^{and} ~~but at any rate,~~ no earlier than September. ^{TP} He completely evaded all attempts to draw him out on ^{the} ~~the subject of~~ a fourth term ^{question,} ~~for Mr. Roosevelt.~~ But he admitted ^{that} ~~that the~~ Democratic prospects for next year were pleasing to his eye. "From the grass roots

up it appears very good to me," said he. ^{and he says} He does not take ~~very~~ seriously the talk of a Democratic revolt in the South.

~~Chairman Walker would like to have not only a short campaign but one on a high plane. Evidently there was a rude reporter present. He asked the disconcerting question: "How are you going to get New Dealers to run a campaign on a high plane?"~~

~~To that Chairman Walker was diplomacy tiself.~~

~~He replied: "Both parties are somewhat responsible."~~

PLATFORM-PRESIDENT

25
The President of the United States issued a statement today that will be of interest to millions of Americans, and of extreme interest to service clubs, colleges, women's clubs, forums, and organizations of many, many other types. And, of equal interest to war correspondents, lecturers and speakers of all types from one end of this continent to the other.

Committees who arrange public gatherings have not known just where they stood, what part they could play in the war effort. Speakers likewise. And the public too. Today the President states clearly what he thinks about it all.

"Since the days of the Lyceum," says President Roosevelt, "the lecture platform has been an indispensable agency of ~~public~~ popular education. In times of national crisis, it has given people through the land, in every city, town and village, the facts they needed to know. I am delighted to hear

that, under the leadership of the American Platform Guild, speakers and lecturers are preparing again to render this great national service.

26
"To this end," he adds, "the American Platform should be recognized as an integral part of the war effort. Indeed it has assumed new opportunities for patriotic service. Through its forums, town halls, women's clubs, service clubs, college and high school assemblies, summer conferences it is bring together millions of people in thousands of communities to receive information and inspiration which makes for unity of purpose, courage and understanding.

And then the President goes on to say:- "We shall not truly have won the war unless victory finds us with a clear understanding of what we must do to prevent another. That understanding can come only from free and honest discussion by the people of the vital issues of war and peace. I am sure that the platform will take the lead in fostering this

discussion, serving as a great national forum to clarify our purposes and strengthen our resolution."

Committees, civic officials, speakers, and many others who wish a copy of the president's statement may get one by addressing Doctor Arthur Bestor, care of The Town Hall, New York City. The President's statement was made to a committee of the American Platform Guild, headed by Doctor Bestor, William K. Huff, head of the Philadelphia Forum, Mrs. Parker Griffith, head of the Forum of Newark, and Doctor Susan Silvercruys, Harold Peat and others representing the national organization which is made up of the nation's leaders in everything that concerns the public platform, the platform where the American people have always talked over their problems.

TAXES

Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau was jubilant over the defeat of the Ruml ^{tax} plan in the House of Representatives. "Naturally I am pleased," said he.

"War time," he added, "is no time to discuss forgiveness."

~~But~~ The Treasury is in favor of a law withholding taxes from payrolls. In the Treasury scheme of things, that would be in addition to the ordinary already crushing taxes. If everybody had a fifth of his pay withheld, said the Secretary, it would help in the government's fight against inflation.

The Secretary was in a most cheerful mood, and said the action in the House would prevent any pay-as-you-go system from being instituted before ^{next} January. ~~First.~~

~~But~~ Congressman McCormack of Massachusetts, the majority leader, thought differently, ^{and} he said that a tax to be withheld from the payroll should be enacted quickly. McCormack is in favor of a withholding tax

with partial forgiveness of Nineteen Forty-Two taxes. McCormack said a majority of the members of the House feel that the Ruml plan went too far, but he added that "the recommittal vote also showed that the great majority of the House feel that some kind of a partial forgiveness plan should be considered."

The Republicans issued a statement saying:

"The New Deal administration and the Democratic leadership cannot long defy the people's will." And it added: "Contrary to their announcement, the Ruml-Carlson bill is not dead."

The Committee on Ways and Means, you may recall was instructed to restudy the subject and come back with a new tax bill. The indications are this will be a Treasury bill. Congressman Doughton, Chairman of the Committee, announced that he would consult the Treasury.

MANNERS

The House of Representatives listened to a lecture on deportment this afternoon. The lecturer was Representative George Dondero, who is described as of the quiet, scholarly type of Congressman. He objects to the manners of his colleagues. He quoted House rules which, he says, they have been breaking. Such, for instance, as talking while another Congressman has the floor. It is also against the rules to read newspapers on the floor of the House, or ~~to~~ smoke, or ~~to~~ put your feet on the seat in front of you. It is also unseemly in the eyes of the congressional Emily Post to address another Congressman by his first name during debate. You must not, for instance, say: "Now you are wrong, Jo." The way you should put it is this: "The gentleman is in error."

Congressman Dondero's reproof had an immediate effect. While he was still talking, half a

dozen newspapers disappeared, as many sets of feet were
lifted off seats and replaced on the floor. The entire
House sat ^{up} ~~on its haunches~~, erect and quiet. ~~One~~ ^{And one}
Congressman put his cigar out so quickly, he burned
himself.

9 Hugh, we are all attention.