

L.H. - Sunoco. Wednesday, July 14, 1943.

RUSSIA

The German offensive in Russia seems to be turning into a Russian offensive. This is indicated by Moscow today, which states that the Red Army is slowly gaining the initiative, and taking the play away from the Nazis. The Russians are attacking, and soon may have a full-fledged counter-offensive under way.

Moscow dispatches warn, however that it is too early to conclude that the great attack which the Germans launched, has been definitely stopped and permanently broken. However, for several days now, the enemy has gained no ground, and the Russians have captured various positions.

<sup>and -</sup>  
Today's bulletin from Berlin confirms the Moscow statement that the Russians are attacking. The German communique tells of heavy Soviet assaults at the Belogorod end of the battleline.

PACIFIC

Today more details came through about the latest battle in Kula Gulf, <sup>that</sup> second American victory in those waters north of New Georgia Island. It appears now that the Japanese vessels were in two groups. The first consisted of six cruisers and two destroyers, and all of these were either sunk or damaged. In the second group were four destroyers, which sustained some damage.

We are <sup>also</sup> told how the battle came about. American scouting planes spotted the first Jap squadron, which apparently was attempting to run reinforcements and supplies to <sup>the</sup> beleaguered garrison at Munda Airfield. Our planes reported the position and course of the enemy warships, and an American light force steamed to intercept it. The Japs were sighted in the afternoon, and the interception occurred at night, two A.M. The enemy was taken by surprise, and was hit by the opening American Salvo. With that initial advantage, our warships continued to batter the enemy -- in the clash on the ocean at night.

While this was going on, a second Japanese group arrived on the scene, and was likewise hit by American shells. Our losses are described as having been slight.

Meanwhile, Marines and Army troops are closing in on Munda.

They are approaching that airport from two directions -- east and north. On the east, army patrols are within a mile of Munda, while on the North the Marines are eight miles away. However, we are warned that the campaign on New Georgia Island is not likely to be over too quickly.

A spokesman at Admiral Halsey's headquarters stated today that the fall of Munda appears to be only a matter of time, but emphasized the advantage the Japs have for defense. He spoke of a terrain of rugged hills and tangled jungle. Also, those always bedeviling elements of rain and mud. In addition to which -- the Japs have constructed many strong points. The latest news informs us that two of these fortified positions on the road to Munda, had been wiped out. Nevertheless, Admiral Halsey's spokesman today stated that the capture of the airfield could not be expected to develop into what he called -- "A one-day affair."

AIR WAR

On the Northern side of Hitler's Fortress-Europa, American fortresses, the flying kind, today delivered powerful attacks against Nazi flying facilities in occupied France. Eight of the giant bombers were lost, but the fortresses shot down forty-five enemy planes, as swarms of Nazi fighters assailed them.

This daylight assault by American Air Power followed a heavy blow struck last night by the British R.A.F. bombers smashing at Aachen - Aix - La - Chappelle, the famous medieval city of Charlemagne which is now an important war center. ~~Twenty R.A.F. bombers were lost in an attack that wrought destructive havoc at Aachen - Aix - La - Chappelle.~~

RUMOR SICILY

In Sicily tonight, the allies hold more than a hundred and seventy-five miles of coastline. The Island of Sicily is shaped like a right triangle, of which the Southeastern angle is the scene of invasion. The long United Nations bridgehead is along the two lines that form the angle.

The British are on the coast that extends northward to Messina. The Canadians are at the middle, while the Americans occupy the western sector. Yesterday we heard how the Canadians and Americans had joined forces, with the capture of ~~Ragusa~~ Ragusa. Today the news is that the Canadians and British have formed a junction, with the Canadian capture of the town of Modoca. This means that the three major sections of the invasion have united, and the allies have now one solid front. They made many landings, and the process of linking these together has been completed.

The British are driving northward in the direction of Messina, that key point which is nearest to the Italian Peninsula. Units of the eighth army, those veterans of the battles against Rommel in

North Africa, have reached the outskirts of Catania, -- which is a halfway to Messina. In fact the late word from Algeria is that Allied troops are now smashing their way into Catania. The place is an important harbor, and a rail center. Sicilian and its fall will be a major event of the campaign.

On their way to the vicinity of Catania, the British captured the naval base of Augusta, as we heard last night. Today the word is that there was a little resistance at Augusta, and the naval base was left undamaged by its Axis defenders. The land advance was supported by naval bombardment, and the place surrendered to the warships. This points to a characteristic of the advance along the coast -- warships hurling their shells in front of the drive, preparing the way for the push of the soldiers.

The capture of eight more Sicilian towns was announced today. The Americans stormed ahead and seized a place called Ponte Olivo, six miles northeast of Gela -- that same Gela which was an historic battlefield for the Greeks and Carthaginians some twenty-five ~~centuries~~ centuries ago.

Another American drive captured the towns of Naro and Palma. These <sup>two</sup> places are eight and nine miles respectively from the important military base at Agrigento. Yes, Agrigento, which was one of the great Greek cities of antiquity <sup>and</sup> now the <sup>site</sup> ~~spot~~ of impressive classical ruins. American naval formations shelled the port that serves Agrigento, a port named after Empedocles, the great Greek philosopher.

*by the way,*  
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frightful beating the Sicilian airports have taken -- rendering most of them useless. And, the Allied naval forces have an equal supremacy on the sea -- with immense quantities of supplies and reinforcements traversing the Mediterranean waters to Sicily; ~~pouring~~ pouring an overwhelming force on the island to make its complete capture a mere matter of time and methodical effort.

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ADD SICILY

One important feature of the whole thing is -- the attitude of the Sicilian people. <sup>turning out to be</sup> They are <sup>^</sup>friendly. They shout and wave greetings to <sup>the</sup> Allied soldiers. The men are volunteering to do work in <sup>re</sup> <sup>^</sup>pairing the blasted roads. <sup>^</sup> This Sicilian attitude, in turn, may give a clue to the larger question of the state of mind of the Italian people in general. The Sicilians indicate that they are tired of Fascism and the War, and if all Italy feels the same way about it, the course of the conflict may be greatly affected.

~~(Note: In the Sicilian story about Catania, state the following: A late flash from Rome declared that Allied troops have penetrated the defenses of Catania and are smashing their way into the city.)~~

## TRANSPORT

Here's a new kind of air thriller, which celebrates the glory  
of a branch ~~of the~~ of the flying service that has enjoyed mighty few  
headlines. The transport service -- the big lumbering planes  
that haul troops and equipment. They have been the poor relation  
in the family of war flying -- just doing heavy chores, with little  
excitement and none of the fame of battle. Their pilots trained  
for combat and dreamed of action thrills; but <sup>they</sup> found themselves  
assigned to dull and prosey jobs -- mere aerial truck drivers.  
With bitter mockery, they called their service -- the milk route.

But that's all changed now. And in the Mediterranean theatre  
the transport crews are holding their heads high and strutting a  
bit. All because of the invasion of Sicily -- which put the  
lumbering troop carriers into the thick of violent action. Coming  
back from flights in Sicily, the men of the one time milk route  
laugh proudly, and swap stories about ~~the~~ narrow escapes and hair-  
raising thrills. Here's an example, the story of a transport piloted  
by Captain James R. Ferris, who used to be a clerk with an oil  
company at Saratoga, Texas:—

In the invasion of Sicily, Captain Ferris was handed a ~~blue~~ blue ribbon assignment -- that of carrying parachute troops. He took aboard a big load of the soldiers of the sky, and flew at night to drop them in Sicily. ~~As~~ <sup>As</sup> a milk route, <sup>that</sup> ~~it~~ was dynamite alley. Near the place for dropping the paratroopers, there was a storm of anti aircraft fire. Searchlights and blazing guns. A shell hit the plane, and smashed the starboard side of the fuselage -- ripping a hole four feet by six. A shell fragment ripped off a door, and another shell carried away a part of the left stabilizer.

"The Airplane," relates Captain Ferris, "Spun at a right angle, and nearly pulled the control<sup>s</sup> out of my hands. For a second I didn't realize what had happened." <sup>However</sup>, he managed to steer the ship after a fashion; and flew on to the point where the paratroopers were to jump and go drifting down in the darkness. The parachute attack was made according to schedule.

"I've got to hand it to those boys," said Captain Ferris afterward. "One<sup>who</sup>, <sup>P</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>A</sup> hit by shrapnel, ~~but~~ insisted on leaping with the others -- although he was ordered to remain in the plane."

<sup>TP</sup> Then the transport started back, and ran into some more <sup>heavy</sup> <sup>fire</sup> anti-aircraft.

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The co-pilot, Lieutenant ~~Joseph~~ <sup>Joe</sup> Baxter of Lumberton, Mississippi, went ~~after~~ <sup>off</sup> to look things over and reported that they had about half a ship left. But, somehow, the half-~~a~~-a-plane continued to fly. The pilot, steered by the reflection of the moon in the Mediterranean and the plane skimmed the waves all the way back.

He made a good landing, although one engine was so hot it wouldn't stop when it was switched off.

*And that's how the milk route has turned into something else.*

GIRAUD

Today, July fourteenth, is the French national holiday.--

Bastille Day. In all the United Nations, tribute was paid to France which, though under the conqueror's heel, has not given up the fight. Secretly, in enemy dominated France, and with valor on the battle-fronts, Frenchmen are striving for their country's liberation.

In New York today, a distinguished visitor, General Giraud, Co-President of the French Committee for National Liberation, appealed to the United States ~~to~~ to send weapons to his North African forces, and he stated the purpose of this in the following words:—"To get the French Army back into France at the earliest possible moment."

He said that French troops are fighting in the invasion of Sicily; but <sup>he</sup> added that Sicily was a secondary matter in his mind. He waits for the day when invasion talk will mention Marseilles, Savoy, Paris.

FIVE PUBLISHERS

This is the sad story of <sup>the</sup> five forlorn ~~North American~~ publishers. Flying up the West Coast of South America I encountered five publishers from New York who were headed the other ~~in~~ way. In fact, they were just getting started on their trip having, until we met, only made stops in Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia and Peru. They told me they were touring South America on a special mission arranged jointly by the State Department in Washington and <sup>by</sup> Nelson Rockefeller, the Coordinator of InterAmerican affairs. Nelson Rockefeller's office has a large number of representatives scattered throughout the southern continent, men and women who are doing an excellent job trying to improve relations between the Americas in order not only to speed up the war effort, but to keep the ball rolling after the war.

~~New York~~  
The five publishers explained that they were on their way around South America in behalf of all American publishers, <sup>sent by our State Dept., and Co-ord. Nelson R's Office,</sup> to survey the field, and figure out, if possible, how we can, now, and after the war, give our Latin American neighbors the benefit of our culture, such as it is, and in return benefit from their even older civilization -- do it



through the medium of the written word, principally books.

They are distinguished men in their field and

represent famous firms: ~~which are known to all of us:~~

James Thompson, of McGraw Hill; Burr Chase, of Silver Burdett

~~which~~ publishes <sup>most</sup> school books; Bob deGraff, head of Pocket

Books; Malcolm Johnson of Doubleday Doran, and George Brett

of the ancient house of MacMillan.

I call this the sad story of the five forlorn

publishers because I found them in a state of collapse --

from their long flights through Mexico, Central America and

on to Columbia and Peru, with stops in between just long enough

for them to be overwhelmed ~~with~~ with Latin American culture

and, ~~hospitality~~. Loss of sleep, the strain of so many hours

in the air, strange new foods, and, and, <sup>South American</sup> ~~the rest of the~~

hospitality!!

As we separated at dawn, at the Lima Airport, they

asked me to convey messages to their offices and families to

say that they are still alive, but to tell the folks at home

that they ~~are~~ will never never again be quite the same.

General Grant, Head Surgeon of the Army Air Force, has told me of ~~the~~ new hospital planes ~~that our airmen have developed~~ for transporting ~~xxxxxxxx~~ casualties from continent to continent. *I am going to suggest to the* ~~General~~ *that he* ~~will~~ have one of these stretcher planes ready when the five American publishers reach the East Coast of South America, after they have been to Rio!

And while we are on the subject of extending the benefits of our ~~western~~ culture to South America, here is a complaint that I heard a number of times on my way round that continent. It usually came in the form of a puzzled

question. *The* ~~question~~ *being:* "Why, when <sup>*you*</sup> ~~we~~ send so many short wave musical broadcasts to <sup>*us here in*</sup> South America, why do ~~we~~ <sup>*you*</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>*North American*</sup> ~~send us~~ <sup>*by*</sup> ~~the~~ South American music <sup>*of*</sup> South American orchestras that are up <sup>*in your country on tour?*</sup> ~~here in the states~~ They say they

get plenty of South American music in South America; and they wonder why we ~~don't~~ <sup>*why we don't*</sup> in our short wave broadcasts, ~~send them~~ <sup>*send them*</sup> our North American music, and the classical music ~~played~~ by our great ~~my~~ symphonic orchestras.

~~It~~ Does seem weird, that idea of our sending

South American music, from North America, to South America.

No wonder they ~~have a little difficulty signing us out.~~ *Latin Americans think we are*

*a little odd.*

~~Now~~ Now Hugh, what final cultural note from you?