

AFRICA

P.T. - Lunoco. Wednesday, Feb. 26, 1941.

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German troops in Libya! They ^{have} ~~had~~ been expected for some time, and now it's an accomplished fact. Hitler's motorized units came to grips with an outpost of the British army ~~of the Nile~~, near a place called Agedabia; ~~That is~~ about a hundred miles southwest of Benghazi. ^{This was} ~~That is~~ the first actual fighting between Nazis and British in Africa. It followed close on the heels of the intimations by both Axis dictators that Hitler was coming to the rescue of the crumbling empire ^{that} ~~of~~ the Black Shirt Duce had piled up with so much pomp and fanfaronade. ^{is out} ~~comes by way~~ of Rome, an announcement from the ^h ~~much~~ arrassed high command of Italy. The Fascists claim that their Nazi allies destroyed numerous British motor trucks and tanks and captured prisoners.

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The military in London admitted it was not improbable ~~and~~ that there were German units in Africa, but they also say that it did not mean that the Mediterranean was open and that Hitler's generals had been able to land any sizeable force in Africa. The British blockade still is effective. ^R A communique from the Nazi high command in Berlin describes their units in Africa as consisting of motorized scout troops. Of course ^{that} ~~they~~ could be landed anywhere

ⁱⁿ~~with~~ the large air transport planes that the Germans have, ^{planes}~~which~~ are capable of carrying as many as forty men apiece with complete equipment.

Anyway, that engagement a hundred miles southwest of Benghazi didn't really amount to anything and is interesting only because it's a beginning. Also, because it has the correspondents and the military experts wondering and asking a big question: Where is the great British Army of the Nile? There has been no mention of it in headquarters reports for days. Consequently, the military soothsayers are speculating that maybe part of it has been shipped northeast across the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, to head off the Nazi advance ^{on Greece}~~through Bulgaria on Greece~~. But that's only the wildest kind of conjecture and has no basis in any official announcement.

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Meanwhile, the Army of South Africa came to bat with a spectacular triumph. It pulled off one of the quickest campaigns in this war. The South Africans accomplished a lightning stroke ^{And that's fast!} by marching two hundred and ten miles in three days. ¹ At one swoop they captured the seaport and capital of Italian Somaliland,

~~Mogadiscio~~. The South Africans were helped by East and West African native troops, also by John Bull's navy. The spectacular advantage of that is that it gives the British another port on the Indian Ocean, in fact complete control of the East African coast as well as an additional base for British attacks on Ethiopia.

Returning to the shores of the Mediterranean for a moment, there's an interesting rumor concerning Mussolini's Commander-in-Chief in Libya. The rumor comes from Vichy, and it says that the trunks and personal effects of Marshal Graziani, Fascist Generalissimo in Africa, arrived at the French African port of Tunis, whither they had been sent from Tripoli. That would indicate that the unlucky Marshal is, in our own American slang, "taking it on the lam", taking no chances of having to face Mussolini and hear the Duce's opinion of the eggs that the Fascisti have been laying all over Africa.

The capital of Somaliland isn't the only place that Mussolini has lost in the last few hours. The British have started nibbling away at the Dodecanese, those twelve islands off the Turkish coast that the Italians first took away from Turkey in the Tripolitan War. It has been a sore point with the Turks ever since,

particularly as the Fascists built some formidable fortifications there in the last few years.

So far the British have captured only one of those² twelve islands, the one called Castel Oritzo. ~~That's~~ the southernmost of the Dodecanese. It was the site of an important Italian air base, and lies barely ten miles from the Asiatic coast of Turkey. The ~~capital~~^{capture} of Castel Oritzo is more important ~~than~~ politically than in a military sense. Neutral diplomats were pointing out today that the British Navy ~~would~~^{not} have attacked any part of the Dodecanese without the knowledge and consent of Turkey. Those twelve islands being so close to Turkey, are obviously of supreme ~~strategic~~ strategic importance to the Turks. And it may mean something that the British grabbed Castel Oritzo at the very moment that Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and Chief of Staff General Sir John Dill arrived at Ankara, the capital of Turkey.

WHITAKER FOLLOW AFRICA

In Rome, the Fascist authorities ^{showed the door} administered a ~~walk-out~~ powder to another American newspaperman. John Whitaker, correspondent of the NEW YORK EVENING POST and the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, ^{has been} ~~was~~ invited to leave. ~~That is, it's~~ One of those invitations with a ~~large~~ boot behind it.

^{John is} ~~He is~~ the third NEW YORK EVENING POST ^{and} CHICAGO DAILY NEWS correspondent to get the ^{-o} ~~heave~~ out of Rome. Frank Smothers and Richard Mowrer, who preceded Whitaker, also achieved the ^{same} ~~distinction~~, ~~of being turfed out~~. The explanation given is that the NEW YORK EVENING POST and CHICAGO DAILY NEWS have been editorially unkind to Italy. The CHICAGO DAILY NEWS announced in an editorial that Whitaker, like Smothers and Mowrer, had been given the rush because of the unfriendly tone of the stuff he sent home to the United States. The NEWS added that it would not replace Whitaker, would not bother sending any correspondent to Rome until Italy once more becomes a reasonable working place ^a ~~for~~ newspaperman. The NEWS also said that this makes at least eighteen American correspondents who have been run out of Rome.

BRITAIN

The other day

~~Two days ago, Fuehrer~~

Hitler told the world that his new army of torpedo boats would start their all-out attack on Britain in April. But dispatches today indicate that they've already

begun, if not the attack, at least the curtain-raiser. Berlin claims that Nazi planes and submarines have been hunting in wolf

packs, ~~and~~ inflicting gigantic losses on ^{British} the shipping, ~~of the British.~~

Again there's a wide discrepancy between German claims and what the British Admiralty admits.

~~But~~ Evidently the real purpose of this Nazi

announcement was to afford an excuse for a warning to us, for it

was accompanied by a hint that whatever happened to the British Aid

Bill, no matter how soon it's passed, it will be too late to save

Britain. And a Nazi spokesman also threw out the broad hint that the

havoc created by the new German submarines in the last few days

offered ^{an} ~~a pretty good~~ inkling of what will happen to any American

war materials that are shipped to Britain. The Nazis declare that the

U-boat raids in the last few days are only a sample of what will

happen in the spring. By April there will be a complete blockade of

the British Isles and neither war material nor food will be able to

get through it, ^{So they say.} ~~they claim~~. As for shipping →

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the stuff in American bottoms, the Nazi spokesmen point out that it's an idle dream; even if it had not been made legal by Congress it would be impossible, because in plain figures, the United States hasn't got the ships. In Nineteen Thirty-Nine we built only two ocean-going freighters and even that was a record year since Nineteen Twenty-One.

That part of the Nazi spokesmen's claim is borne out by Uncle Sam's own Maritime Commission. Not one of ~~the~~ existing merchant vessels now flying the United States flag could be spared for any such purpose. Every American ^{ship} ~~vessel~~ is needed to haul materials necessary to ^{our} ~~the~~ defense program. In fact, we could ^{well} ~~handsomely~~ use at least sixty more cargo vessels, freight ships of ten thousand tons apiece. ^{It} In a week or so, ship operators will institute a system of cargo priorities, to insure that first consideration be given to the needs of the defense program.

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BRITISH AID

Correspondents in Washington tell us that the British Aid Bill is as good as passed. But the opposition isn't willing to admit it. The opposing senators are fighting every inch of the way. The principal speaker today was the isolationist Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota. He made the charge that the British were in a financial sit-down strike to inveigle this country into giving them free help.

But the speech by Nye was interrupted and eclipsed by a sharp exchange of compliments between Senator Wheeler of Montana and Senator Happy Chandler of Kentucky. Wheeler declared that if he had known about this British Aid Bill last year, he would have opposed Mr. Roosevelt in the election, ^{would have} spoken against him from every political platform. Then he threw out ^a ~~the~~ challenge, dared the administration to put the Lend Lease Bill to a vote of the American people. And he cried, "Let the people tell us whether they want to go to war."

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Then he made the charge that every Cabinet officer and every New Dealer in Washington has been saying that we're in the

war now. To which the Montana Senator added the question, who put that idea in their heads. And he then said that it doesn't take any courage for a lot of old men to say, "Let's fight. "

All of which aroused the ire of Kentucky's Happy Chandler. He got up and walked right over to Wheeler and told him that he himself is a captain in the Reserve Corps and fully intends to take his place in the army if war comes. Senator Chandler threw in the jibe that the Senator from Montana will probably go home; but, that the country would be better off if Wheeler spent as much time building up confidence as he does tearing it down.

STRIKE

~~It looks as though we were threatened with two major strikes.~~ The steel workers organizing committee have set nine o'clock tonight as the deadline for a walkout at the huge Lackawanna plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation.

Representatives of the Office of Production Management are on the job doing their utmost to avert the strike, also an agent of the federal conciliation service. Uncle Sam's men claim that they are making some progress, but the officials of the C.I.O. ~~union~~ say they are going to close every Bethlehem plant ~~of the country~~ if the corporation doesn't come to terms. And they threaten also

to tie up Bethlehem's iron ore and coal mines. *Three thousand men voted for the strike yesterday.*

And now the plants of Henry Ford are menaced with a strike; ~~it's~~ the culmination of a long and bitter struggle between the motor company and the union organizers. The United Automobile Workers, ~~an~~ a C.I.O. union, has decided to file notice with the Labor Mediation Board of Michigan at Lansing, of its intent to strike. ~~That's in accordance with the Michigan law.~~

Both companies are working.
~~After the union has filed its notice, there has to be a thirty day~~
on defense contracts.

PUBLISHER JAY WELLS

L. T. :- The Publisher of a certain magazine is sitting here at the microphone. Through my sponsors, the Sun Oil Company, he has ~~given~~ been given permission to interrupt me for a moment. His excuse being that he has a news item.

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J.W. :- The news I have, Lowell, will please your friends of the air, I hope.

--O--

L.T. :- Jay Wells, publisher of SKI, the National Magazine of Winter Sports, seems to have the floor.

--O--

J.W. :- Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have been given permission to interrupt the flow of world news for a moment, but only long enough to make a presentation. SKI MAGAZINE presents an annual award to the person who has done the most to popularize the sport of skiing, which for some years now has been sweeping over North America. This year we are presenting this award to our radio friend, Lowell Thomas, and at the same time we would like to salute his radio sponsors, the Sun Oil people, for allowing

him to broadcast from snowy mountain spots, from time to time, during the winter. Lowell, here, through his broadcasts from the White Mountains, the Adirondacks, the Laurentians, and the Green Mountains, has undoubtedly told about the delights and the thrill of skiing to far more people than anyone else. But, he goes much farther than that. He takes part in all kinds of ski events, and his enthusiasm has been passed on to thousands of others. Incidentally, his boy has naturally caught the contagious galloping ski fever from him. In the current issue of SKI, Lowell Junior writes about his Alaskan ski expedition with Explorer Bradford Washburn. Again this weekend, throughout the nation, more than a million skiers will be off on a ski holiday. And, if it will cheer you up any, Lowell, I know that thousands of them will be making the trip by car!

--o--

L.T.:- Most of them using Blue Sunoco, I hope!

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J.W.:- Well, SKI Magazine here and now takes pleasure in presenting its silver ski to you.

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L.T.:- Many thanks, Jay Wells. I hope this silver ski is a magic talisman and will enable me to stand up more of the time on my way down the Nose Dive, the Kandahar, the Taft, the White Face, Thunderbolt, Sherburne, and other trails that you and my friends negotiate with such abandon. Anyhow, for real skiers the season is just beginning. The long sunny days, spring corn snow -- ah! would that I were a poet, so I could really express my thoughts on the subject!

ARMY

Last week we heard about ~~a couple of~~ ^{those} sergeants who tore off their stripes ~~sooner~~ ^{rather} than be father, mother, friend and brother to ~~the recruits,~~ ^{rookies,}

~~There is now~~ ^{Now comes} another new army regulation ~~which~~ ^{to} jars the soul of the old-time sergeants and corporals. The use of profanity is forbidden for the purpose of emphasizing orders to private soldiers.

58/2 It appears that some of the draftees have been writing home and complaining that when they were told to form ~~for~~ ^{four,} shoulder arms or about-turn, the orders were backed up with words not customarily used ~~by their teachers~~ in Sunday school. Hence the new order.

59 Can you imagine an old top kicker ~~of the Leathernecks~~ addressing his Company and saying, "Now gentlemen, will you be so good as to right dress." And, "Private Smith, kindly do not offend my eyes by sticking out your stomach so that it protrudes beyond your chest." "Private Jones, it pains me to observe that the buttons on your tunic look as though they had not been polished since the Civil War. Gentlemen of Company "H" you grieve me, indeed you grieve me!"

59 1/4 And now Hugh, my dear sir, will you carry on, sir.