

RUSSIA

L.I. - Sunoco. Thursday, Sept. 3, 1942

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All day long the press wire in my office has been silent about Soviet Russia - and that would seem to be ominous. Earlier news had told of the Germans driving ever nearer to Stalingrad, closing ~~in~~ on the city with terrific fighting. Berlin claims that its troops have reached the River ~~xx~~ Volga. - Stalingrad is on the Volga. And the Germans says that the fall of the great industrial city is only a matter of time. ^{TP} An early Moscow story indicated that the Red Army at Stalingrad appeared to be short of ~~xxxx~~ tanks, short of warplanes, short even of manpower. The Moscow tone was ~~grimly~~ grimly ~~xx~~ pessimistic. So it may be that the Germans are on their way toward the goal of establishing a front along the Volga reaching to the Caspian Sea. ^{TP} That would give them a favorable line - but, nothing like a decision in Russia.

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In London today military minds were puzzled about Egypt, puzzled about Rommel. ^{Why} ~~What~~ is the Nazi commander sitting still, staying more or less quietly where he is? The London military mind notes that Rommel is not famous for quiescence. When he starts hitting, he keeps on hitting. He isn't the kind ^{to} ~~of~~ start something, and then stop in the middle for a quiet smoke. ^R Still, the fact remains that, after ~~xxxx~~ a powerful offensive thrust which gained ground, ~~xx~~ Rommel is acting as if he had gone to sleep. In the pocket captured by his drive he is keeping his Nazi Panzers right where they are - ~~xxxx~~ launching no further attacks. This has been the state of affairs for the past twenty-four hours. ^R The military ~~xxx~~ situation of the battle in North Africa is fairly clear tonight - with simple elements of strategy. ~~Let's rehearse the fact~~ that the desert front extends north to south, from the Mediterranean to the Quatara depression - a mere forty miles.

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Rommel's attack was launched at the southern end of the line, ^{that region below sea level, that Quatara} where it is anchored to ~~the~~ ^{the} depression. ~~And~~ ^{he} broke through

the British mine fields. The German experts at tank attack opened a mine field gap, and the Panzers rushed through.

They did not penetrate the British active defense beyond, but

they did thrust forward a wedge. ^{TP} Then their obvious strategy

was to swing around to the north toward the coast - in an

effort to roll up the line and trap the advance-British-

~~re~~-defense-forces. This Rommel tried to do. Having broken

the mine field and driven ~~through, xxxxxxxx~~ through, he ^{(swung} ~~swing~~

his armored forces to the north - but ^{TP} was checked. The British

resorted to new tactics. Instead of hurling their tanks at

Rommel's tanks, armor against armor, they placed their trust

in cannon. They met the Panzer charge with a blasting of guns -

knocking out tanks with point blank ~~shellfire~~ shell fire range,

a thousand yards range, sometimes as short as two hundred and

fifty yards. That gunnery defense halted Rommel. ^{TP} The British

assumption was that he would promptly return to the attack,

reform ^{his} ~~the~~ armored divisions, and try it again - keep punching.

But nothing of the sort, the Panzer commander proceeded to sit

quiet, just holding the ground he had won - the wedge driven into

^{TP} the British front. The latest from Cairo states that the Nazi

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commander has withdrawn a little, has pulled back from some

British guns battering Nazi tanks
of his more advanced positions. [^] But he is clinging firmly

to the foothold inside ~~of~~ the line of the British mine fields.

Cairo thinks ~~that~~ Rommel, while staying put, ~~is~~ is intent on

bringing up supplies ^S - especially quantities of eighty-eight

millimeter anti-tank guns, that ace weapon of the German north

Afrika Korps. ~~Saying that Rommel is sitting quiet does not mean~~

~~that he is being left in quiet.~~ ^H The British are hitting hard.-

especially by air. The Panzers in the pocket were today subjected

to the heaviest air attack launched thus far by the British and

American^s in the war of the ~~desert~~ desert. ~~And~~ An official spokesman

at Cairo states that the all-day air attack was twenty percent

heavier than in ~~the~~ previous sky ^{bombardments} ~~bombardments~~ in North ~~Am~~ Africa.

⁵⁰ ~~It~~ British and American bombers are blasting at the Rommel tanks,

and are carrying ^{the} war to the Germans far behind the line - smashing

at their supply transport. ~~It is~~ ^A accurate bombing, too. One

air photograph made by a bomber crew today shows a pattern of

bursting high explosive right in the middle of a huge concentration

to retreat. But Rommel is clinging!

of Nazi trucks. Another German transport center was set ablaze,
and at night the leaping flames could be seen across the
desert for miles.

R.A.F.

Last night's British Air raid on the Great German industrial city of Karlsruhe, is described with emphasis on one word -

fire. R.A.F. pilots, in describing the state of the city when

they left it, say -- a "flaming hell." British bombers went over

and dropped plenty of high explosives, but they concentrated on

the handsome city of
incendiaries -- turning Karlsruhe into a giant blazing beacon.

ICELAND

We have been hearing about Nazi bombers monkeying around Iceland, and today's news tells of one shot down.

U.S.
~~United States~~ headquarters on that northern island describes

what American fighter pilots did to a ~~for~~ four motored

long range bomber. Six of our *chaps tackled* ~~boys assailed~~ the big Nazi

thoroughly
skycraft, and shot it up so ~~well~~ that the bomber exploded.

Two of the American fighter pilots receive ^d silver star

citations for extraordinary heroism in the *air battle* ~~air fight~~

over Iceland.

SPAIN

One important question in the war situation is this - what is the meaning of today's cabinet shake-up in Spain?

Franco has taken complete control -- control of the Madrid Government and also the falange, that Fascist - minded outfit so dominant in Spanish politics. In doing all this, Franco ousted the most important figure of his government, next to himself - Serrano Suner. ^{TP} He ousted Suner in two ^{ways -} ~~days~~ - removed him as Foreign Minister and also as head of the Falange. This is all the more striking, because Suner is Franco's brother-in-law. And he is moreover, the leader of the Pro-Nazi, ^{and} Pro-Fascist^s, ^{He} ~~and~~ has been advocating a policy of ever closer collaboration with Germany. ^{TP} So you can see the possible implications of the fact that Suner is out - out as Foreign Minister, out as head of the Falange, which is the real source of his political power.)

The assumption suggests that the shake-up in Spain marks a drift away from the Axis and toward the United Nations. ^{TP} Spanish rumors have been for some time that Franco and Suner were in disagreement over collaboration with the Nazis - Suner for, Franco against, and today's event may well be in accord with that pattern. →

Meaning - less of a pro-Axis policy in Spain. London welcomes this view, and thinks the change in the Spanish government may constitute the first big diplomatic defeat for Hitler in this war. It is noted, for example, that ^(some)~~some~~ days ago President Roosevelt announced a move in behalf of Spanish art treasures - obviously a gesture of friendship toward Franco Spain. And maybe that kind of policy is bearing fruit.

SUBMARINES

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London announces some ~~mighty~~ favorable news anent the submarine crisis. The First Lord of the Admiralty, A. V. Alexander, announced today that more Nazi-U-boats were ~~destroyed~~ destroyed in July and August than in any other two months since the beginning of the war. He said, moreover, that other enemy submarines had been ~~damaged~~ damaged and put out of action; and, he added that the Italian Navy has lost more than half of the undersea craft that it had when the war began. As for the ~~reasons~~ ^{For this} ~~of the~~ favorable development, he said "new ^{been} methods have developed, and new devices are in action."

AMERICAN SUBS

Tonight's navy bulletin tells of successes by American submarines. Five Jap vessels are listed as having been sunk, ^a and one of these ~~were a~~ [^] ~~was~~ light cruiser. Our undersea craft are in busy action away off in the Far East, and today's list of victories for them does not include anything that has been announced before. For example, the list of sinkings has nothing to do with previous reports on the Solomon Islands. It's a brand new list -- five enemy craft sent to the bottom, four cargo vessels and tankers and ^{Jap} a [^] light cruiser.

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt today spoke burning words to youth.

He addressed the International Student Assembly. And I cannot do better than quote the key phrases of his proclamation to the young. "The world knows," declared the President, "that the Nazis, the ~~Fascists~~ Fascists and the militarists of Japan have nothing to offer to you-- except death. On the other hand," he went on, "the cause of the United Nations is the cause of youth itself. It is the hope of the new generation -- and the generations that are to come -- hope for a new life that can be lived in freedom and justice and decency."

TAXES

Today the Finance Committee of the Senate interrupted its proceedings to adopt a resolution -- stopped the business at hand, and resolved, ^{Senate} The Committee puts its okay on a proposal in favor of a sales tax. The ~~Treasury~~ Department is directed to submit plans for what the news dispatch describes as -- "A general war sales tax". ^{TP} The interruption came as the Treasury Department ^{was} proposing a tax program of its own -- a different kind of program. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau recommended to the committee a plan embracing two points -- a two-fold tax. Onepoint was quite familiar -- lower the income tax exemptions. ~~The Treasury wants to cut individual exemptions to five hundred dollars for single persons, a thousand for married couples, and two hundred and fifty for each dependent. These reduced exemptions are substantially lower than those contained in the tax bills voted by the Senate and House of Representatives.~~ ^{TP} The second point in the plan advanced ~~by~~ by the Secretary of the Treasury, was a decided novelty -- a tax on spending, which would also consist of enforced savings. ~~The idea is that people would be taxed on the money they spend, and then part of this would be returned to them after the war -- the enforced savings angle.~~ ^{TP} ~~The scheme is rather complicated but we may note~~

that it provides for a tax to be levied on total spendings of more than five hundred dollars a year for a single person, a thousand a year for a married couple, and an extra two hundred and fifty a year for each dependent.^{TP} That way it figures, a family spending thirty-eight hundred dollars a year for ^{the} costs of living and amusement would pay a spending tax of four hundred and sixty dollars -- this in addition to their income tax. Of the four hundred and sixty dollars, three hundred and eighty would be paid back to them after the war -- enforced saving. The Treasury Department argument is that a spending-tax would bring in a lot of revenue for waging the war and would also act against inflation.^R ~~An obvious angle is this -- by~~

By taxing people on the money they spend, you discourage spending, thereby causing a lesser demand for goods. It is the spending and demand that cause prices to rise -- inflation.^{TP} While the tax on the spending was being argued, various committee members expressed their objection. The principal dissident was Senator Vandenburg of Michigan. Speaking of the spending tax, he said:- "It combines all the burdens and ~~disadvantages~~ disadvantages of the sales tax, and has none of the advantages of the latter."^{TP} That was a cue for what proceeded to

happen. The spending tax proceedings were interrupted, with

Senator Vandenburg introducing a sales tax resolution -- the

Treasury called upon to get up a sales tax plan. *and the Senate* ~~The~~ Committee

adopted the Vandenburg resolution unanimously.

MEAT

At Chicago today, a federal judge issued temporary injunctions against nine Chicago packing houses, which are charged with violations of the Price Regulation Law. This was the Chicago angle of a general drive by the Office of Price Administration, which is taking action in eighteen cities against more than a hundred meat packers. The O.P.S. lists various causes for complaint. In some cases, the meat firms are accused of -- plain and simple overcharging. ~~They just demand more than the ceiling prices. In other instances, the overcharging is less direct, and consists of what they call -- "upgrading." That is to say, lower grades of meat that are sold as if they were higher grades -- with a consequent raising of the price.~~ The O.P.A. states that complaints have come from all parts of the country, complaints that meat companies ~~are~~ ^{are} in the words of the O.P.A., "palming off inferior goods." Moreover, the companies are ^{charged} ~~charged~~ with issuing incorrect invoices -- all for the purpose of overcharging.

Today into my office walked a square faced man with
direct blue eyes. He said:- "You hear a lot of stories about
how sailors from torpedoed ships go drifting on the ocean for
a long time. If you think these stories are exaggerated" *he said*
he,
~~argued,~~ "listen to what happened to me". The sailor was John
Robinson of ~~Cushocton~~, Ohio, member of the crew of ~~a~~ *an American* freighter
torpedoed by the Japs in the Indian ~~Oceania~~ Ocean. The ship
sank in six minutes off the coast of Mozambique. Most of the
men got away in boats, but sailor John Robinson was not so
lucky. He was tossed into the sea, and drifted astern. "I had
my life preserver on", he relates, "and grabbed hold of some planks.
In that way I drifted for twenty four hours. The next day I had
my first break of luck. An empty boat came floating along, *with a*
hole in it and nearly swamped.
I climbed into it," he goes on, "and found a little food and
fresh water". *In that boat with a hole*
in it and nearly full of water, but that
wouldn't sink, ~~Blown~~ *he* by the ~~xx~~ wind, ~~drifted in the lifeboat~~ for four
days, ~~and By~~ that time there was no more fresh water. "I knew
I was a goner", he says, "knew I would die of thirst -- unless
something happened". And then he tells what did happen -- another

break of miraculous luck. Toward the boat drifted a life raft. Nobody on it. But, it was completely equipped. The crew had been unable to launch it, and the raft had floated off when the ship sank. There was food and water aboard, and to Sailor John Robinson it was like a palace -- as he climbed aboard. And then the wind blew him down between Madagascar and Africa for another five days -- finally to be picked up by a passing ship. A lone castaway adrift for ten days on the Indian Ocean! That would indicate indeed that the stories do not exaggerate the terrors endured by the men of our merchant marine.

Dame Fortune surely was with Sailor Robinson of Coshocton, Ohio! Torpedoed, alone in the Indian Ocean on a couple of boards; then after a day along comes an empty lifeboat with a fresh water in it; four days more and along comes a life raft with not a soul aboard, but fully stocked with water and food! I say miraculous that! And s-l-u-t-m.