

HUGH GIBSON - SUNOCO. MONDAY, Jan. 4, 1943.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Once more we start a week with Russia providing the most exciting war news. Moscow reports another important town captured. The Red Army driving west of Stalingrad has taken the town and railroad station of Chernyshkovsky. It is one of the key points on the railway line from Stalingrad to Rostov, a hundred and ten miles west of Stalingrad.

For the time being, this eclipses the successes of the other Red Army, operating in the Caucasus. That one, having driven the Nazis back from the rich oilfields, has begun a two-pronged attack on the strong Axis base at Prokhadnaya, twenty-eight miles west of Mozdok, on the direct railway line which connects the Caspian with the Black Sea. Moscow reports

that official dispatches from the front indicate that the fall of Prokhadnaya is imminent.

Axis radios were broadcasting reports that the Russians on the southern front were massing for a general attack. A communique of the Nazi high command in Berlin admitted the Red Armies were attacking heavily. But the Germans claim all the attacks have been repelled.

AFRICA

Apparently the British and Americans made no further progress towards Tunis and Bizerte today.

In fact, it was the other side who took the aggressive.

German armored units are delivering a heavy attack on

FONDOUK.

French forces at ~~Fundok~~. That is an important railroad junction fifty-two miles inland from Sousse. And Sousse, as you may recall, is the principal supply port for the Axis on the east coast of Tunisia.

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According to the official French bulletins, the French infantry and motorized cavalry units are being supported by American planes and anti-tank guns. Evidently the German attack is quite a serious one. Radio Morocco broadcast a French communiqué that the enemy offensive last night, which was made with numerous tanks, had had considerable success at the beginning. But finally they were repulsed. There was a reconnaissance movement by a fairly large force of

British tanks northeast and southeast of Medjez-El-Bab. They got through the Axis lines about five miles in each direction and met with only ~~x~~ light opposition from anti-tank guns.

According to weather reports from Africa, we cannot expect much progress for the next two months. The rainy season on the North African coast is now at its height, and it usually lasts all the way through February.

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The Britons are beginning to show signs of impatience at the slow progress in Africa. The LONDON DAILY MAIL published an editorial calling upon ~~His~~ *The* ~~Majesty's~~ Government for an explanation. There is considerable dissatisfaction in Britain, says the Mail, because it would appear that we have been mostly on the defensive since December Fifth. Furthermore, adds *newspaper,* the ~~Mail~~, there is no sign whatever of a further push

PARATROOPERS

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The ~~most~~ vivid item in today's news is the tale of the ~~adventures~~ of six American parachute troopers in Africa. They were led by Lieutenant Dan DeLeo of Chicago, who ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ tells the ^{story} ~~tale~~. They dropped behind the enemy line about the middle of December and until the other day were out of contact with the main Allied army for the entire intervening time.

Lieutenant Dan DeLeo says: "We jumped from an altitude of several hundred feet and we all got away although our planes were shot at just before the jump. Demolition charges and other paraphernalia had been dropped for us," he continues, "and when we landed we had little trouble finding them. Only one man was missing. The rest of us headed for a railroad line where we were going to cut a bridge, but we didn't find it."

So they set out to do what other damage they

could, carrying their demolition equipment in small carts. From time to time they ran into ^{parties} ~~a party~~ of Germans and had to hide ^{in olive groves or wherever they could.} But one way or another they got through.

Another bridge they intended to blow us was too well guarded, so they learned from the Arabs. So instead of that they blew up telegraph poles and tore down ^{Communication} ~~the~~ lines. They were discovered by the Germans and surrounded. Says Lieutenant DeLeo: "I knew we would never get out together, so I told the men to break up into groups of two or three." Then he continues; "Our group saw a civilian truck approaching. We held the truck up and frisked the Italian driver, who was unarmed. Two of us got in in front," added DeLeo, and he continued: "We took off our helmets and wrapped white scarfs over our heads to make us look like Arabs. The rest of us lay in the truck body,

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out of sight. We passed many a German soldier sitting by the road, but the sun was low and the windshield dirty, so they paid no attention to us."

When the truck got stuck in the mud, they had to leave it. They offered the Italian driver five hundred Francs but all he would take was three hundred.

Thereupon that party of paratroopers began a hike, walking day and night. They obtained food from the Arabs but always had to say they were Germans. ~~They~~

The only exception was a French farmer, who gave them food, coffee, and showed them how to reach the French outpost. In ^{re}turn for which they gave the farmer's youngsters chocolate and gum..

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et { When DeLeo and his six comrades reached advance base in Tunisia, their first question was whether their other comrades had got back safely.

SOLOMONS

The Japanese are making another desperate attempt to reinforce their starving garrison on ~~Guadalcanal~~ Guadalcanal Island. A communique issued by the Navy today gives indications that a battle of considerable scope is going on. However, the Navy uses the words "isolated engagements" to describe that battle. Eight Japanese destroyers were involved, and they were attacked by a detachment of the Navy's speedy motor torpedo boats. That happened on Saturday. The American boats definitely scored one hit with a torpedo, and possibly three others. The Navy does not say whether any enemy warship succeeded in landing either men or supplies in Guadalcanal.

The P T boats in turn were attacked by enemy bombers, but they sustained only slight damage.

ALEUTIANS

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vivid.
~~active~~. The Japanese have been able to reinforce their garrison on Kiska Island by air. So our Army fliers are encountering more opposition of late than they had been meeting. For weeks, they attacked the enemy installations on Kiska without let or hindrance. But recently the Japs brought in a mixed squadron of single and double-float Zero fighters. And in spite of the utmost efforts by our own planes operating from the Andreanof Islands, the enemy ~~docked~~ ^{succeeded in docking} two cargo ships in Kiska harbor. However, ~~some~~ of our own pilots believe they damaged those enemy ships so badly that they both sank.

OIL

Gasoline supplies may be suspended once again before the end of this month as they were December Eighteenth. That is official. A committee of Senators heard the news from Price Administrator Leon Henderson this morning. That special committee of the Senate is investigating the oil situation. Its members observe d ~~the fact~~ that although Secretary Harold Ickes is Petroleum Administrator, there still is a divided command in this domain since Henderson does the rationing.

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The news about fuel oil is not any better. Administrator Ickes told the Senators ~~xxxxx~~ the new pipeline from Texas to Illinois will probably be finished and working by February First. But at best, he added, we can expect only a very small relaxation of rationing of fuel oil. "As for next winter," said the Petroleum Administrator, "we do not feel cheerful about it at all." Then he explained: "Overseas oil requirements will be

greatly accelerated from now on."

He went so far as to warn the Senators that there may be a serious break-down of oil transportation next summer or fall unless ~~there is~~ a definite uninterrupted building program is undertaken. Ickes has great difficulty in persuading the War Production Board that oil pipelines to the east coast are necessary. He pointed out that a new line to the east coast would make the delivery of oil by tank ships to our forces overseas much safer. But so far he has been unable to convince the War Production Board.

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Another witness before the Committee was Transportation Director Eastman. He told the Senators his Board is trying to help out the situation by construction of ~~whole fleets of~~ whole fleets of tank trucks and converting box cars into tank cars.

FLOOD

The annual midwestern floods have come early this year. At Cincinnati, as usual the crucial spot, the Ohio has reached a stage of sixty point six feet.

Already it is almost nine feet above flood level.

Uncle Sam's Coast Guards, together with the Red Cross, have been busy evacuating some thousand families in the lowland areas of northern Kentucky. But they had a hard time doing it because heavy winds lashed the flood waters into dangerous waves. *About* ~~Altogether~~ ~~some~~ fifty thousand persons have been driven from their homes.

Up river from Cincinnati, numerous villages and cities are flooded. At Maychester and Ripley, Ohio, entire populations have been evacuated. Maysville, Kentucky, is under several feet of water.

However, the defenses are holding, including the great flood wall at Portsmouth, Ohio. Portsmouth, you ~~xx~~ may recall, was the scene of frightful destruction

FLOOD - 2

and deprivation in Nineteen Thirty-Seven. They are being patrolled by army engineers and volunteer citizens.

And this morning the waters were reported falling at many points.

MACHINISTS

Union officials and members of the West Coast were astounded today to receive a rebuke direct from the White House. They were the officers and members of the International Association of Machinists in the San Francisco Bay shipyards. *President Roosevelt sent them a* ~~The President's~~ telegram *which* read; "I am informed by Army, Navy and Maritime Commission that actions of your union are seriously interfering with vital war production. I am *further* ~~therefore~~ informed," it continues, "that these actions have delayed shipments of men and supplies to fighting ~~fronts.~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ fronts." Contrary to the actions of practically all other labor," continued the President, "you have refused to abide by agreements for work on Saturdays and Sundays and to comply with measures established to prevent unnecessary migration of labor."

56 The telegram ends with these words: "You are directed to conform with the amended Pacific Coast

shipbuilding and ship repair agreements and to conform also with anti-migration measures adopted and generally operating in the San Francisco Bay area."

FIRE

The nightclub fires in Boston, Massachusetts, and St. Johns, Newfoundland, had a repercussion in a New York court of law today. A county judge, addressing the new grand jury, instructed it to investigate restaurants and nightclubs in Brooklyn. The judge charged the jurors to find out whether life and safety were being properly protected in places of public assembly.

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The court declared that the general public had been left with a feeling that the appalling loss of life in Boston and St. Johns was due to gross negligence. "Therefore," he added, "I request you, in addition to your regular duties, to direct your inquiry toward all fire prevention and safety laws as they apply to places of public assembly throughout Brooklyn."

CONGRESS

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One of the big decisions to be made by the Seventy-Eighth Congress will be the question of continuing the Lend-Lease program, also reciprocal trade agreements. The existing law expires in June. Unless it is renewed, Lend-Lease and reciprocal trade agreements come to an end. On this point the Roosevelt supporters in both Houses will fight to the last ditch.

The gauntlet was thrown down by Sam Rayburn of Texas, ~~the~~ Speaker of the House. He will undoubtedly ~~be reelected~~ be reelected when Congress convenes on Wednesday, and he declared today: "We are going to make a fight on Lend-Lease and reciprocal trade agreements even if we face defeat."

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Far more sweeping was Congressman McCormack of Massachusetts, the majority leader of the House. He announced that he expects the new Congress to gear itself one hundred per cent to war-time exigencies

8 and ^{drop} ~~exclude~~ political considerations. He used these words: "I expect the members of Congress, without regard for party, to cooperate on all war measures and pass them speedily." Then he added: "We have to remember that we cannot have democracy as usual in the midst of war, any more than we can have business as usual."

Of course from now on, the part played by the Republican members of the House is going to be far more important and prominent than it has been. Joe Martin of Massachusetts, the Republican leader, said there would be no serious partisan differences over war measures. However, there is to be a conference of Republican representatives tomorrow, after which Martin will make a more detailed declaration of party policy.

9 And now, speaking for Lowell Thomas, so long until tomorrow.