

L.I. - Summary. Wed., Sept. 29, 1943.

RUSSIA

Today a Soviet newspaper stated: "The whole Dnieper is ablaze." The Germans have retired across that river, and apparently are holding it with their new battleline, and Moscow dispatches are speaking of "The battle of the Dnieper."

Today Red Army troops captured the city of Kremenchug, an important place on the east bank. All along the river line Soviet forces have driven the Germans to the west bank. They've been pouring across under a deluge of fire. At a few points, however, the Nazis still retain footholds east of the stream. There they are resisting fiercely parties of German rear guards, but their number is steadily decreasing.

The battle of the Dnieper is along a four hundred mile front, and the river provides the Germans with a formidable position. The terrain is such that the east bank where the Russians are is low and marshy, while to the west is high ground with bluffs rising steeply. This high ground gives the Germans considerable defensive advantage, but just the same Soviet troops at various points have got across the stream and established themselves on the west bank. This is reported by the Germans themselves.

Another important Soviet capture is that of a town called Rudnya, thirty-eight miles from Smolensk, that number one German bastion which the Soviets occupied some days ago. The Moscow dispatch tells us that the capture of Rudnya opens what is called - the Smolensk gate. " This is a sort of free and open corridor stretching westward, and a drive through the Smolensk gate would be the route for a major Red army offensive through White Russia and on to Poland and the Baltic states.

ITALY

under Gen. Mark Clark,
The Allied Fifth Army, has broken through the enemy

mountain line defending Naples and has thrust down onto

the level ~~sub~~ ^{sub} volcanic plain. This means that they are

advancing across flat land on both sides of Mt. Vesuvius.

So today, once again, the name of a famous volcano dominates

the war news. It was that way in Sicily, when the stormy

tides of battle swirled around Mt. Etna- that other historic

And then we had our men capturing Stromboli.
summit of fire. But Vesuvius, by all odds, is the most

renown volcano on earth; and today American, British and

Canadian troops were ^h pushing past it.

The break through the Nazi battle line in the

craggy hills was accompanied by aid of a tremendous

bombardment, ^h land, air and sea; with squadrons of warships

hurling their salvos. The lower slopes of Vesuvius where

the Germans had many gun positions, were raked by shells

and bombs, and they say the concentration of explosions,

glaring in the night, rivalled the fires that spout from the

crater of Vesuvius itself. One report states that in an advance along the base of the volcano, British troops occupied ancient Pompeii-~~and there's~~ another celebrated name, ~~for you~~ Pompeii - the city of two thousand years ago, ^{that} ~~which~~ was overwhelmed and buried by Vesuvius.

The volcano is just around the bay from Naples, and is an imposing sight from ^{nearly all} ~~various~~ parts of the city. It's a mere twelve-and-a-half-miles away. ^{And} that's an indication of how close to Naples the Allied forces are tonight. The belief is that the Nazis have evacuated their major forces from that most important harbor, and that the fall of Naples is imminent.

The speed of the recent Allied advance is illustrated by the story of the capture of a German General - in bed - sound asleep. A British unit dashed in and captured the German headquarters, and the surprise was so complete that a score of German officers were seized as

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they strolled around, completely unarmed. One lone British Tommy wandered into a private office and there he saw the Nazi General, ~~right~~ on his back, ~~and~~ snoring loudly. He was promptly awakened and herded out to join the other prisoners.

There is more word ^{concerning} ~~for~~ the wanton havoc and destruction wrought by the Nazis in Italy's great port.

The Germans are said to have blown up the Royal Palace and other famous buildings in Naples--" out of sheer spite."

So states an Italian Army officer who escaped from the devastated city. This officer got away in a boat with his son, and rowed all the way to Capri. He tells how the Nazis are destroying historic buildings which had not been damaged by the Allied bombings. These bombings, said he, caused a number of casualties- although most ~~of~~ ^{of} the people during the raids took shelter in the ancient tunnels under the city. Naples, like many other antique places, has mazes of underground passages- catacombs. The escaped officer said that a number of aircraft plants, making warplanes, are

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located under ground. These were immune from bombs, but they are not producing because they were sabotaged by the workers and engineers.

From other parts of Italy we hear of Italian resistance to the Nazis. From the Swiss frontier comes word that in the Valley of the Po and in Brenner Pass, Italian soldiers are using guerrilla methods, such as are employed by the Jugoslavs. And their operations against the Nazis are so skillful that they are tying up large numbers of German troops, which have to be detailed to fight against the Italian guerillas.. ^{TP} The German-controlled newspaper in Turin told today how the ~~I~~Italians charge-in for brief fierce skirmishes with German outposts, then vanish after the attacks. And we have a German announcement that forces of tanks are being transferred from France to crush the continuing resistance in northern Italy.

PRISONERS

The Navy tonight releases a story of what, I suppose, is the first example in history of an airplane capturing a considerable force of ground troops. The story tells how in Sicily a seaplane forced the surrender of a hundred and fifty Italian soldiers. In the plane were pilot Lieutenant Paul Coughlin of Edina, Missouri, and aviation radioman Richard Schaeffer of Albany, Oregon.

Lieutenant Coughlin relates how he flew over an Italian position and began to strafe the troops below with machine gun fire. The solitary plane blazed away with such effect that pretty soon white flags began appearing and the Italians came out of their entrenchments.

" I flew low, " relates the Lieutenant , " and motioned for them to go into the general direction of our troops. " The Italians started that way, with the plane firing an occasional round of machine gun fire to keep them moving.

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There were other surrenders. White flags appeared over other entrenchments. " I flew over " , relates Lieutenant Coughlin, " and waved to the soldiers to come out and go in the direction of the others. They were a little slow, " he goes on " until a few shots were fired close to them. "


" We 'rode herd' on them " says the Lieutenant, " And when one would start to stray or they would start spreading, shots were placed close to the stragglers. This worked very well, " he adds.

And so the plane herded the prisoners to the American line. They first time , I imagine, that an airplane ever captured a force of ground troops.

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DRAFT

The debate on the drafting of pre-Pearl Harbor Fathers brings a loud boost for airpower and a prediction that bombers can knock Nazi Germany out of the war within four months. This was stated today by Senator Downey of California, who is supporting Senator Wheeler's bill to defer the draft of the married men with pre-Pearl Harbor children. Senator Downey's thesis ^{is} ~~was~~ that there is no need for the huge land army demanded by the military command for the nation. He argued ^s that the drafting of all those millions of men constitutes a wasteful burden, "because the war against Germany can be best won by the air power," said the Senator.

He declared he had word on what he called "undeniably" ~~was~~ that Naziland right now has been pounded so heavily from the air that German war-power is weakening fast. He claimed that Hitler's Reich would have been knocked out of the war months ago if the full weight of ~~*~~ 

Allied air power had been applied relentlessly. And he said that if we do it now, Germany will collapse in four months.

Senator Downey contended that the full power of Allied bombers could ruin twenty-five percent of German cities and war production in sixty days. In four months of destruction it would be at least fifty percent, he added; and that would be decisive. He gave what he said was confidential information concerning aircraft production, ours being five times greater than Germany's. And within four months it will be ten times greater, said he.

Hence, the Senator demanded that the army give up its plans of drafting pre-Pearl Harbor fathers, and concentrate on the bombing of Germany.

SPENDING

The Ladies, it seems, are on a nationwide shopping spree. The stores across the country are jammed, and, with so many men in the armed forces, the customers are mostly women. War earnings are high, and the hand that rocks the cradle is ^{now} the hand that is shelling out the ~~cash~~ ^{sheekels}.

Today the United Press releases a survey which shows the following:- ~~The~~ Sales of women's ^{is} clothes have jumped sixty percent over last year, with a peak at San Francisco where there is a seventy - two percent ^{rise} ~~increase~~.

The sales of furs have doubled in some places and tripled in others- with emphasis on land silver fox and ~~and~~ other expensive pieces.

~~And~~ ^{And} comparatively little demand for cheap fur coats and neckpieces.

^{As for} Jewelry, nationwide sales have increased thirty-five percent over last year, with a heavy demand for diamond rings.

Flowers; ^{up} twenty-five percent, the demand concentrating on flowers for corsages.

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In the Southwest, ~~the~~ purchases of orchids and gardenias have more than doubled.

Beauty parlor business is up twenty percent in big cities, and in the mid-west ^{— out in the tall corn belt —} beauty shops are forced to ration appointments.

Theatre attendance is up. ^{up} In New York, th thirty-five percent ^{also} in the big motion picture houses. [^] Restaurants and taverns are booming, and all through the fields of entertainment and hospitality an increasing percentage of the customers are women, yes, the hand that rocks the cradle is a lavish hand.

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ADD SPENDING

The^a spending spree is to be explained by our old friend
- excess purchasing power. And he certainly is a huge fat
fellow, judging from official information released in
Washington this afternoon. The O. W. I. reports that the
excess purchasing power in this country has soared to a
record-breaking total of fifty-one billion , four hundred
million dollars. The people of this country have that
much additional money in excess of their normal expenditures.

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~~NEW YORK NY . SEPT. 29~~

POSTAL CARD

Thirty - one years ago , a young woman at St. Paul felt bitterly that she had been forgotten. She was engaged to be married. Her fiance went East to look for a job, ~~he~~ promising ~~ing~~ that when he found one he would return for their wedding. Also, when he got to his destination in the East he would write to her and give her his address, so that she could write to him. ^{Well,} She waited, and she waited-- and never a word from the man to whom she was ^{Naturally} engaged. [^] She was bitterly disappointed; and, after a year had gone by and still ^{no word,} ~~a complete silence~~ ^{she,} ~~from him,~~ she married another chap.

Everything turned out all right for her, the marriage a success. For thirty one years she ~~has~~ lived happily with her husband--quite forgetting that former fiance. [^] ^{What had} ~~happened to him?~~

[^] Today she received a postal card from him, and that postal card is dated September Twenty-First, Nineteen

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Eleven. "It says : I am still looking for a job." And it gives the address where she was to write to him, thirty one years ago. ^{Evidently he} had been a faithful fiance after all.

You can imagine what his state of mind must have been, as he had promised -- those years ago. He sent her his address, and then never heard from her. He must have taken her silence as a sign that he wasn't wanted anymore. So he never wrote again.

A mishap of romance--all because of the post office.

~~me~~ I wonder if he ever got a job.

I have a new book just out, made up of such true stories. It's called Pageant of Romance; and this one I have just related that came over the press wires today -- it should be in it.

And now ^{just a moment, here's} a striking message from Hugh, one that appeals to me, as I am sure it will to you.

So now Hugh James