

AFRICA

P.I. - Lunoco. Tuesday, Dec. 15, 1942.

The British are increasingly inclined to believe that the German Afrika Korps may try to retire ~~to~~ into Tunisia. Rommel's battered legions are being hotly pursued by General Montgomery's Eighth Army. And their flight is so precipitate^{ate} that it doesn't look as if they intend to stop at any defense line for a long distance. They may even abandon their number one port, Tripoli -- and join up with the Axis outfit that is defending the northern tip of Tunisia. ^{How they} ~~may~~ ^{will} ever get there is not clear. They might attempt to crash through the American-British line in that province. ~~Or~~ Or they might go to Tripoli and make an attempt to get to the tip of Tunisia by sea. London hears that Rommel is no longer with his defeated army. There were reports that he ~~abandoned them some while ago,~~ ^{has gone} ~~and flew~~ to Tunisia to command the Nazis in battle there.

Today's war reports picture a continued lull

in the battle for the tip -- with the Americans and British mustering their forces for a new drive.

The field of activity is the sky, with American air forces making ^{powerful attacks} ~~violent attacks~~ against Axis communications. The port of Sfax was bombed violently today.

General Jimmy Doolittle's pilots report that Nazi fighter planes are trying out new tactics. A formation of Messerschmitts will pretend to attack, putting on a show to divert American attention. Then a single fighter, hoping to be unnoticed, will make the real attack. And American fliers report that the Messerschmitts have been painted a blue-green to match the color of the Mediterranean. This makes them hard to see against a background of blue water.

RELIEF

48

From Washington we have a statement that relief work in the countries occupied by the United Nations will help to shorten the war and bring a just peace. This was stated by the Director in charge of Foreign Relief Work - former Governor Lehman of New York. Today he held his first news conference in his new position, and advocated active and vigorous attempts to rehabilitate the countries that come under the United Nation's control. He said these countries are prostrate - desperately short of food and raw materials. ^{TR} ~~Former Governor Lehman stated that he, as Director of Foreign Rehabilitation and Relief, expects to visit the occupied places where the work is to be done.~~ He was asked whether rehabilitation and relief would be extended to the Axis peoples, when they are defeated, and he replied that this point had not yet been discussed.

CHURCHILL

49

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill today disclosed the tank force that Britain had to oppose a Nazi invasion after Dunkirk. If the Germans, when the British were groggy from defeat in France, had staged a landing, they would have been opposed by fewer than one hundred tanks. That was all the armor the British had left after their loss of so much equipment at Dunkirk. And Churchill stated that the one hundred tanks were of a type that had failed in France. During the blitzkrieg there, they had proved to be too weak to stand up against German anti-tank guns. *Were simply shot to pieces,*

All of which is factual support of the view that the Nazis made ^{*their*} a big mistake when they failed to strike straight at England after Dunkirk.

NEW GUINEA

Fierce fighting is reported in New Guinea, and once again the name of the key point is -- Buna. Not the village of Buna -- that place has been captured by General MacArthur's troops. ^{This time it's a} ~~It is a~~ nearby point called -- Buna Mission, a former missionary station. The Japs have turned it into a stronghold. And, after the loss of the village, they are making a last stand at the mission.

They seem to be in a desperate position, virtually surrounded -- and a new attempt to get reinforcements to them by sea has been beaten off by Allied air attack.

SOLOMONS

In the Solomon Islands, American air power based at Henderson Field on Guadalcanal is striking continuously at the Jap air base at Munda, ~~This place~~ ^{Munda} is on the island of New Georgia, ~~and is~~ a hundred and fifty miles northwest of Guadalcanal. ~~It~~ ^{is} is so situated as to be a decided nuisance to our forces.

The Japs are building airport facilities there, and ^{at} ~~on~~ these our warplanes are striking. Today's Navy bulletin tells of a series of attacks against Munda - assaults by ^{Boeing} flying fortresses, dive bombers and fighting planes.

There is little or no ground activity on Guadalcanal - the key point of battle now being the air base which the Japs are trying to set up at Munda.

TRANSPORT

In Washington, a naval board of inquiry is investigating the sinking of the liner PRESIDENT COOLIDGE in the Pacific. The ship as an Army transport had four thousand troops aboard. ^{But} only five lives were lost in the sinking.

The PRESIDENT COOLIDGE struck a mine in the Solomons area, and today Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox was asked - "Was it an American mine?" A newspaperman suggested that the small loss of life indicated that the ship was close to shore or in port, and therefore the mine it hit might have been American.

To this the Secretary responded: "It is a very reasonable implication that the ship was close to shore." ~~There is no doubt that the mine was an American mine.~~

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PRESIDENT COOLIDGE struck an American mine might not

51

be true, ^{for the} ~~The~~ Secretary pointed out that a Japanese ^{Submarine} could sow mines in the same waters where American mines were placed.

"Eventually," he continued, "we will get the full story of whose fault it was - but there is a question of possible fault."

At Stockton, California, an outright statement was made by a director of the American President Lines, which owned the COOLIDGE. Director Hugh Jackson stated that the liner sank after it hit two American mines. The story, as he told it, was that the COOLIDGE reached the entrance of ^a ~~the~~ harbor, and the captain stopped the ship and asked - Was the harbor all right? He was assured that there was nothing to worry about. What thereupon happened was stated by the ~~ship~~ director in these words: "The ship ploughed into the harbor - and struck two American mines."

ARMY

52
President Roosevelt today gave an answer to arguments that we are planning too big an army. The schedule calls for an army of seven and a half million by the end of Nineteen Forty-Three. Add to this the figures for the Navy and Marine Corps, and the total expected size of the armed forces comes to about ten million men - that many to be in service by the end of Nineteen Forty-Three. Some have been saying that this is too much. ~~It~~ would be impossible to equip so many men. - ~~The~~ ten million in service would harm domestic economy and cause the slackening of armament production. ~~With so many in service,~~ ^{Not} enough men ~~would be~~ left for the war industries.

Today at the White House news conference, President Roosevelt was asked about this. He was reminded of a statement made recently by ^a~~the~~ former French Minister of Aviation, [^]
Pierre Cot, who gave testimony before

53
a Senate Committee. This former French Minister said the fall of France was partly because the French army was too big. They put so many men in uniform, that French armament production was handicapped. They couldn't turn out enough equipment for the soldiers who had been taken away from the factories.

The President replied that he found this statement most amazing as an explanation of the fall of France. He said it was equally amazing that some people in Congress had applied the moral to this country.

He said that an army of seven and a half million by the end of Nineteen Forty-Three could be properly equipped, and he denied rumors that the seven and a half-million-planned ~~ned~~ would be reconsidered. Reports to that effect would probably be reduced. Reports to that effect have been going around in Washington recently, and are now denied by the President.

BRIBERY---

At Los Angeles, an Army sergeant is on trial, charged with conducting a school of draft evasion. The Sarg is accused of having given instructions on how to keep out of the Army. How? The top kick taught his pupils to simulate chronic alcoholism. He showed them how to act like such incurable drunks that the draft boards would turn them down.

54
One witness testified today that he paid the Sargeant fifty dollars and received detailed instructions on how to simulate a perpetual jag. ^{And he} ~~he~~ was rejected. Another witness said he paid a hundred dollars, and presumably got twice the amount of schooling in the pie-eyed symptoms. He didn't learn his lessons well enough, unfortunately. He did his best to impersonate demon rum, but the draft board put him straight in the Army.

Still another was coached by the sargeant, and

he learned plenty - which ^{also} did him no good. He testified today that he lost his nerve when he faced the draft board and did ^{not} dare to play his gin and whiskey part. He's in the Army.

It looks as if the instructive sargeant, having conducted a school of draft evasion, ^{had himself} ~~had~~ better ^{go to} ~~start~~ a class in jail evasion.

Today the Seventy-Seventh Congress of the United States voted its own end - finished^{ing)} going out of existence. The Senate first, and then the House of Representatives, decided to adjourn tomorrow - sine die. That being Latin for no day, no day for going into session again. So the Seventy-Seventh Congress dies and gives way to the Seventy-Eighth - which will convene on January Sixth.

The retiring Congress has been one of the most historic since the foundation of the Republic. It voted declarations of war. It appropriated some two hundred million dollars for war - and imposed the highest taxes that we have ever had.

The Seventy-Seventh Congress was in session for almost two years. Because of the war peril and then the war, the legislators stayed continuously on the job - foregoing the usual vacations. There was

only one adjournment - and that a matter of only two days.

The Seventy-Eighth Congress, convening on January Sixth, will receive the President's regular message the next day. On January Seventh, President Roosevelt will appear before Congress and present the customary report on the state of the nation.

OVERTIME FOLLOW CONGRESS

Before going out of existence, Congress passed a bill to increase the earnings of federal employees. The measure grants to government workers either of two alternatives - time and a half for overtime in excess of forty hours a week, or a flat ten per cent pay increase. The boost is not quite as simple as that - certain qualifications that require a bit of figuring are involved. And, moreover, the thing is only temporary - not regarded as a permanent solution of the pay of a million and a half federal employees.

The Senate okayed the bill unanimously, the House acted shortly afterward, and the bill went to the White House for the signature of the President.

CRASH

Today's airline crash in Utah presents this tragic record -- of nineteen persons aboard the big transport, only two survived. This was

ascertained when a Civil Air Patrol pilot found ^{the}

wreck on a Utah mud flat and landed near it. He ^{discovered} ~~found~~

^{ered} two persons alive, ^{and} made them as comfortable as he

could, ^{Then he} ~~and~~ flew back to summon help. ^R The plane was

on its way from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles. It

made a report to an air station at Fairfield, Utah --

then crashed a few minutes later. A woman checking-

station-operator at Fairfield says that when the

plane reported, its motors as heard by radio, did not

sound right. "The motors sounded heavy," ⁷ ~~said~~ she.

BOLIVIA

In the South American Republic of Bolivia, martial law was proclaimed today in five districts. These areas are of key importance - ~~they are the~~ tin mining areas. And Bolivia is one of the few countries that produce tin in large quantities. Labor disturbances have broken out among the miners, and the blame is placed on what are being called - "extremists." These extremists are believed to be inspired by Nazi agents - the Nazi plan being to hamper the production of Bolivian tin.

Typical of the trouble is a strike at the Catavi mines, one of the greatest of tin producers. Yesterday the miners walked out in protest against a system of Company stores, and they demanded a wage increase - a pay boost of one hundred per cent. *Where -*

upon
Mining operations were tied up.

This ~~ixxxxx~~ sort of thing, said to be Nazi

inspired, caused the Bolivian President, Panaranda, to declare a nationwide state of siege yesterday - this followed by a declaration of martial law in the tin mining districts today.

BURGLARS

At Los Angeles, a forty-nine year old father began a prison sentence today - because he accompanied his seventeen year old son on burglaries. The youthful son specialized in robbing post offices, and the dutiful father went along. Dutiful is right. The father said today: "I knew my son was going around with bad company and would get into trouble so I accompanied him."

Which was a nice turn of fatherly devotion - he wanted to keep the boy from burglarizing in bad company.

9
And now, to prove that I'm in good company, here's Hugh.