

L.I. - Sunoco. Thursday, Dec. 24, 1942. 2

Those astonishing Soviets have launched still another offensive against the Germans. They are continuing their smashing drive into the big bend of the Don, which threatens to cut off the huge Nazi Army in the area of Stalingrad ~~and~~ and in the Caucasus. And now they have taken the offensive in the Caucasus too, the furthest<sup>†</sup> point of the German advance, near the town of Nalchik.

It isn't clear how ambitious an operation the Caucasian offensive may be, but it means that the Red Army is hitting at the front edge of the enemy bulge, while the drive into the big bend of the Don creates the most dangerous kind of out-flanking ~~threat~~ threat to the entire Nazi bulge.

This flanking effort made further progress today, with late reports from Moscow telling of another advance of from twelve to fifteen miles and the capture of two important ~~railroad~~ railroad stations. The Soviet offensive, that for eight days has been pushing south from the Don, has now scored gains of between eighty-three and a hundred and <sup>(eighteen)</sup> ~~eighteen~~ miles at various places.

Earlier reports today told how the Red Army had seized the town of Suliensky, twenty miles north of the Stalingrad-Kharkov Railroad. That virtually cut the northern half of the Don Valley in two, and Soviet troops scored a spectacular ~~and~~ success in capturing a German general, Commander of a division, and one thousand of his men.

These Moscow reports of astonishing success continue to imply the likelihood of an enormous disaster for the Nazi war machine in southern Russia, but it remains to be seen whether or not the Red Army advances will ~~continue~~ continue until they assume a decisive character.

as if a major attempt might be made to get reinforcements across ~~the~~ Mediterranean waters - this according to reports from Madrid. We hear that an Axis convoy of a hundred and fifty ships is massed and ready for an attempt to make the run to Tunisia. The convoy is likely to get a hot reception from Allied ships and planes.

In Tunisia ~~it~~ itself, not much activity is reported. Today's Army bulletin tells merely of one <sup>ground</sup> enemy raid. An Axis detachment made a local attack, which was repelled. (It is assumed that bad weather is hampering <sup>ground</sup> military operations - perhaps air operations also. Today's Army bulletin has only this bit of sky fighting to report: "In the course of routine patrols over Tunisia yesterday," it says, "our fighters destroyed one enemy bomber and one enemy fighter, without loss." )

BURMA

In Burma, British General Wavell continues his advance into the <sup>country</sup> ~~Japanese-occupied province~~. The British, pushing down <sup>along</sup> the Bay of Bengal, are now within sixty miles of the important port of Akyab. The Japs are offering no resistance apparently. Why not? We don't know. Neither do we know whether Wavell's thrust is merely a local operation or the beginning of a major attempt to recapture Burma.

3  
The British are being supported by American air forces based on China, General Claire Chenault's big bombers) struck heavily at the ace Jap air base at Lashio, <sup>put it</sup> and ~~they put the airdrome~~ out of commission. The ~~amount of damage done is related~~ ~~vividly~~ vividly by Captain John Ruse of LaGrange, Illinois. He led a bomber formation that attacked the <sup>Lashio</sup> ~~warehouse area~~ of the air base. "We could see two big fires," says he, "and the remainder of that area of the city was

## RICKENBACKER

Today one of Eddie Rickenbacker's companions in that adventure and ordeal on the Pacific, told about the attitude of the others toward Rick. Lieutenant James G. Whitaker says: "When we started out, we thought he was just another man who had influence enough to get a ride."

When the plane was forced down at sea, <sup>and</sup> they went drifting for three weeks in a boat, ~~and~~ their attitude changed. "Captain Rickenbacker took the leadership and pull <sup>ed</sup> us through," says Lieutenant Whitaker.

Not only did America's ace in the First World War display the moral qualities that made him a leader, but he also showed the greatest amount of physical stamina. Lieutenant Whitaker says that when they were finally picked up, none of the others could have lasted more than forty-eight hours - while Rickenbacker



could have <sup>stuck it</sup> ~~stayed~~ out for another week.

Today people were talking about the extraordinary story that Rick told on Saturday at a War Department press conference and <sup>yesterday in part</sup> ~~later~~ on the radio.

One ~~xxxxxx~~ particular thing ~~that he told~~ is provoking a lot of discussion; how the castaways prayed for food, <sup>And how Rick</sup> held a prayer meeting. ~~Rick now~~ goes on to tell:

"Within an hour after the prayer meeting," says he,

"A seagull came in and landed on my head, and you can imagine my nervousness in trying to turn around and get him, which I did."

So they had seagull to eat, <sup>and for bait to catch fish</sup> ~~and the episode~~

<sup>Another episode</sup> ~~is one~~ to add to the anthology of stories <sup>of</sup> ~~is~~ response

to prayer.

for food.

## FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

Probably the largest number of American war correspondents ever to be together at one time will foregather Wednesday evening of this week. They are going to see the American premiere of a motion picture called "In Which We Serve." ~~Although~~ Some of the correspondents, Quentin Reynolds and others, have already <sup>seen</sup> ~~had~~ a preview ~~of this film~~ which tells the life story of a destroyer in this war. -- ~~The~~ picture was conceived, the story written and produced, by one man. And, he plays the leading role. His name is Noel Coward. And the role he plays is supposed to be taken directly from the life of young Lord Louis Mountbatten.

At any rate, at the American premiere this Wednesday night at the Capitol Theatre in New York, the entire proceeds will go to a fund for American war correspondents. In proportion to their number, more war correspondents have been killed in this global war than men in any other line of activity. There are no exact figures on this. But ten American correspondents

have been killed since Nineteen thirty-nine; twenty-one wounded; two are missing and unaccounted for; and fifteen have been captured, not including the large number who were taken prisoner and put in internment camps and prisons in Germany, Italy and Japan until they were exchanged and sent home.



OIL

The oil rationing is going to stay ~~pretty much~~ as it is. - ~~no relaxation.~~ This was stated today by Economics Stabilization Director Byrnes. "There is no hope for any lessening of the restrictions upon the use of gasoline and fuel oil," said he. He added that any change would consist of an improvement of rationing methods.

This statement ~~by Stabilization Director Byrnes~~ followed the lifting of the ban on sales of gasoline to private automobile drivers in seventeen eastern states and the District of Columbia. You get <sup>now</sup> gas on <sup>your</sup> A, B and C coupons, ~~again,~~ but not as much as before on <sup>the</sup> B and Cs. The value of these ~~coupons~~ is reduced from four to three gallons. A coupons stay at three gallons. And T coupons, used only by commercial vehicles, retain their former value of five gallons.

~~Oil Coordinator Ickes today issued an order~~

## DIVORCE

The Supreme Court today upheld the legality of Reno divorces. This came about in a decision handed down by the high Justices in a North Carolina case.

~~A North Carolina~~<sup>g</sup> man and woman went out to the metropolis ~~of divorce,~~<sup>Each</sup> ~~and each~~<sup>of whom</sup> had a spouse back in North Carolina. They got Reno divorces, and proceeded to marry each other in Nevada. Then they went back to North Carolina, where they were presently charged with bigamy, tried, and convicted.

They appealed to the state Supreme Court, which upheld the conviction. They carried the case on up to the Supreme Court of the United States, and today the highest tribunal gave its verdict. The conviction is set aside, the Justices voting six to two to reverse the conviction for bigamy. <sup>And</sup> this amounts to a Supreme Court verdict upholding Reno divorces.

Legal opinion around Washington is that today's

decision is of far reaching importance, and that the courts of any state, no matter what the divorce laws of that state may be, hereafter will have to uphold the validity of divorces granted in Nevada or in any other state.

## HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood stars are temperamental, as we all know. But you'd think that even screen celebrities would be a little more consistent than is revealed today.

Each year the members of the Hollywood Women's Press Club take a vote to pick the most cooperative actor and actress of the year -- the most popular. Their vote, as announced today, picks Rosalind Russell as the most cooperative actress.

Nothing so surprising about that, but a paradox is discovered when we learn what actress was voted to be the most non-cooperative. The prize for unpopularity goes to Ginger Rogers. Why is that astonishing? Because last year it was the other way around. Ginger was then voted to be the most cooperative, the most popular.

A similar upside down reversal of things is to be discovered in the vote for the most cooperative actor. Cary Grant is named. He is acclaimed as the

3/2  
most popular this year. He has changed a lot since last. Because a year ago Cary Grant was at the foot of the class, was handed the boobey prize for non-cooperative unpopularity.

So apparently the stars change a lot in Hollywood. One year <sup>they</sup> a scowl and growl, <sup>and</sup> the next year they are all smiles and gentle friendliness. Which now calls, not for scowls and ~~no~~ growls, but for smiles and gentle friendliness, from Hugh James.

9



## RAIDS

London today summarized the heavy air raids that hit Italian industrial areas between November Twenty-eighth and December Ninth. The R.A.F. made a series of bombing expeditions. the Great industrial city of Turin, for example, was hit six times. And here is the damage that was done:- Seventy important war factories were blasted, including ten airplane units of the Fiat Company. "Many industrial plants were gutted completely", says Today's London communique, "and others were so seriously damaged that they seemed to be out of commission".

NORTH AFRICA

In North Africa, there is little fighting on the ground. Tunisia reports only patrol activity, and in Libya the British ~~sixteen~~ Eighth Army is encountering no resistance as it continues to move on after the retreating Axis <sup>Forces</sup> ~~Army~~.

We are told that Rommel's Afrika Korps has been building hasty defenses at a point East of Misurata. They are utilizing that typical desert thing, which the Arabs call a "Wadi". A "wadi" is a <sup>parched valley;</sup> ~~dried up bed of a stream,~~ and anybody

who has ever been out on either the North African or Arabian Desert is familiar with those <sup>waterless land valleys</sup> ~~gullies~~, which at one time were <sup>and at times each year, are, raging torrents.</sup> ~~were raging torrents, and now are like the ghosts of burbling~~ ~~streams.~~

Wadis are often steep and rocky, and are useful for military events. Rommel is said to be taking advantage of this fact, and is fortifying the Wadis. It is believed that the Afrika Korps intends nothing more than a delaying resistance - something to hold up the British advance, rear-guard action while the main body of the Axis Army makes its way toward Tunisia.

Another strategy that Rommel is employing has an agricultural sound -- plowing. The Nazis in North Africa are plowing furrows, the way a farmer does. This happens at air bases, the enemy cutting up the flying fields, making them useless for the British -- <sup>ie.</sup> until the ~~fx~~ plowed furrows are straightened out, which takes time.

The British pursuit of Rommel is slowed down by that eternal military factor -- transport, supply lines. General Bernard Montgomery has to bring most of his war material by land from Egypt, and this right now involves a ~~xxx~~ distance as great as that from New York to Chicago. So the Eighth Army can move only as fast as its long supply lines can be organized.

50  
The North African quiet is believed to be the familiar lull before the storm. In Tunisia, for example, the Axis forces are strangely inactive. They are doing next to no fighting on the ground, and have withdrawn their advance forces <sup>at</sup> several places. And in the air, Axis activities have been cut down.

The belief is that the Nazi Commander in Tunisia is

mustering his forces in preparation for launching a blow.

This certainly is true of the Allied side, where time brings an ever-increasing volume of strength for an offensive.



STIMSON FOLLOW NORTH AFRICA

The war situation in North Africa was sized up today by Secretary of State Stimson. "Both sides are busy bringing in reinforcements and gathering strength for the coming clash," said he. "But our side is preparing itself for an offensive ~~to an~~ <sup>to</sup> attack, while the other side is trying to stall off and delay that attack." This he qualified to some extent by saying: "I don't mean to say that we won't get some strong counter-attacks there".

The Secretary thinks that the Nazis in Tunisia will launch counterblows at the southern end of the line. ↗

51  
But, we have the preponderance of force. "As far as we can estimate," he declared today, "we seem to have a good margin for the purposes we are aiming at".

He spoke of the aviation angle of the Tunisian battle, and <sup>stated</sup> ~~stated~~ that allied Air Forces are destroying two enemy planes for everyone that we lose. And then he analyzed the air situation as follows: "The Germans have the advantage of existing bases. We have the advantage," said he, "in the mounting size of our air force and in the development of new bases".



Secretary Stimson then expanded the theme of war to include the entire scope of the global conflict. He compared the prospects of the United Nations this Christmas with the outlook a year ago. "Then we were almost everywhere on the defensive, and wondering where the Axis would strike next," he said. "Now the Axis is on the defensive and its high command is wondering where we will strike next".

FOLLOW NORTH AFRICA

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London states that American forces at Dakar are being increased - this following news ~~is~~ that United States troops are now stationed at the great French port on the west coast of Africa.

FRENCH MISSION

A French military mission from North Africa has arrived in Washington -- this was announced by the State Department today.

<sup>a</sup>  
The mission ~~was~~ appointed by General Giraud, Commander of the French troops ~~that are~~ <sup>now</sup> cooperating with Americans and British in Tunisia.

Its purpose is to coordinate supplies of material from the United States to the French North African forces.

The mission is headed by a General who made a notable reputation for fighting against the Germans before the fall of France. Afterward, he was head of a French Armistice Commission in French North Africa, and in that capacity used his influence to resist ~~Nazi~~ Nazi demands. His attitude is stated by the War Department as follows:- ~~What~~ "His sympathy for the cause of the United States and Britain has been consistent and well known".

53  
We don't <sup>yet</sup> ~~know~~ <sup>just</sup> how the presence of this French North African mission in Washington will be taken by General DeGaulle's Free French, who are in such complete opposition to the Darlan regime that we recognize in North Africa.

Word from Burma indicates <sup>extensive</sup> ~~an~~ aerial ~~pre~~ preparation for a new advance by the British; - General Wavell's forces having already pushed a considerable distance toward <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ important Burmese airport of Akyab. Air action reported today was based on both India and China. One raid hit Lashio, which big Jap air base was smashed from the sky earlier in the week. Both of these blows came from China. American bombing forces there ~~are~~ acting in concert with the British thrust from India.

The raid against Lashio reported today was a night ~~time~~ affair -- our bombers striking through the darkness, United Press correspondent Robert Martin was with the air fleet and tells of the result of the raid in the following words: "I rode in one of the ~~rem~~ bombers," he writes "and as we swung away from Lashio there was light enough from exploding ammunition dumps and burning warehouses for me to read a newspaper".

54  
Another story from the American Air Forces in China tells of some powerful shooting by Colonel Robert Scott of Macon, Georgia. Shooting, in this case, has two meanings. One the British meaning -- hunting. The other - marksmanship in air ~~batt~~ battle.

Colonel Scott of Georgia found some swampy Chinese land where the ducks and geese were plentiful -- it reminded him of Georgia. So out he went and bagged fifteen birds -- big ones. He returned with eighty pounds of ducks and geese. And just as he got back to the air base, the air raid alarm sounded. Japs were approaching through the sky. The Colonel dashed to his fighter plane, tossed his bag of birds into it, and took off. He intercepted three of the Jap raiders, and shot one down, running ~~hi~~ up his score of victories to eleven.

A mighty hunter is Colonel Robert Scott of Macon, Georgia, a veritable Nimrod, when it comes to shooting birds and Jap planes.



## SHIPS

251  
A new idea for fighting the submarine menace is being discussed in London. Over there an anti-U-boat committee is on the job. It was formed early this month by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and is studying all sorts of plans to protect shipping against the wolves of the undersea. The anti-U-boat committee is giving a lot of consideration to what are called - "cargo warships".

The proposal is made by a marine engineer that Britain should build cargo ships that are capable of meeting the U-boats and defeating them. Make them fast - eighteen knots. That's faster than most submarines can go, although the Germans are said to have some that can do twenty knots. Cut down the superstructure and eliminate a lot of that tall bulk which makes a freighter so visible. Then the subs couldn't see them so well.

The proposal calls for plenty of aircraft guns and a flight deck - each of the fighting freighters to carry an airplane for spotting and ~~xx~~ attacking U-Boats. Let the ships have engines

both at the bow and the stern, so if one is put out of commission by a torpedo - there will ~~be~~ still be another. And have two separate sets of steering mechanism, so that if one is hit, the ship can be steered with the other.

These are some of the specifications for the new type of craft that is ~~be~~ proposed <sup>a</sup> cargo warship.

## GASOLINE

The Petroleum Administrator stated today that he hoped it would not be necessary to make further reductions in the value of gasoline rationing coupons. In the Eastern States the value of the coupons was cut recently from four to three gallons. "I hope", said Administrator Ickes today, "that the twenty-five per cent cut is all that will be necessary."

He warned motorists, however, that they must not stage runs on filling stations, going after all the motor fuel they can get. "It looks like we'll have enough gas to meet present commitments," said he, "unless people are foolish enough to do just what I am told they are doing now - making runs on filling stations".

POPE

A Christmas declaration was made at the Vatican today, with Pope Pius denouncing all forms of totalitarian government - and Marxism socialism. "They consider the state or its representatives," said the Pontiff, "as the absolute authority, ~~EXEMPT~~ exempt from any criticism - even if their acts are in violation of Christian and human laws".

Speaking to christians, he called upon them to oppose totalitarianism. "They must," proclaimed Pope Pius, "refuse to let the state make individuals a herd of whom the state disposes as if they were lifeless things".

PRESIDENT

Tonight, on Christmas eve, let us echo a ringing statement made by President Roosevelt today. "The forces of darkness," said he, "stand against us with less confidence in the success of their evil ways".

This was said in a ~~Y~~ Yuletide address that was broadcast to the entire world with a special message to American soldiers. "To you who serve in uniform," said the President, "I also send a message of cheer - that you are in the thoughts of your families and friends at home and that Christmas prayers follow you wherever you may be".

SOLDIERS

At Hendricks Field in Florida today, a sign was posted in the barracks, it read:- "All men who do not believe in Santa Claus will sign their names to this list".

A lot of soldiers looked, but not one made a move to sign - afraid to avow their disbelief in Santa Claus at Christmas time.

A Corporal stepped forward, "Oh, who believes in Santa Claus?" he jeered. Whereupon he signed, and so did a number of other non-commissioned officers. Corporals and sergeants are likely to have more hardihood than mere soldiers.

Later in the day, the Commander of the Field issued an announcement: "All those whose signatures were on the anti-Santa Claus declaration are ordered to report for kitchen police tomorrow. So on Christmas day a lot of Sergeants and Corporals will be peeling potatoes and they'll growl with disgust when soldiers saunter by with a cheery call of - "Merry Christmas, Sarge!".

And what have you to say along about now, Hugh?