

AFRICA

L. J. - Sunoco. Wed., Dec. 3, 1942.

In Tunisia, Axis troops quit retreating and delivered a heavy counter-attack ^{on} ~~at~~ British General Anderson's First Army. They turned upon the Allies at Tebourda, some nineteen miles from Tunis. ^{and that} ~~This is a~~ ^{would put them} ~~sector~~ well back of the forward spearheads of the Allies, which have closed in around Tunis, ^{with} ~~thus~~ the capital of Tunisia ~~is~~ cut off from all communications with Bizerte and ^{all the rest of North Africa} ~~also from Sfax and Gabes on the east coast of Tunisia.~~

^{Axis} This counter-attack evidently was made by the ~~the Axis~~ garrison at Bizerte. The Paris Radio, overheard in London, broadcast the claim that the American and British troops in Tunisia had been held up at Tebourda, also at Mateur, twenty miles to the south of Bizerte. The Paris Radio, ~~which is controlled by the Nazis,~~ naturally put as pro-Axis a coloring as it could on the story. It said the British lost

fourteen tanks and the Americans lost several armored cars and two hundred prisoners, also that fifteen British planes were shot down.

But Allied headquarters announced ³ that the Nazi counter-attack ~~had been fought~~ ^{was thrown} back. ^{IP} British warships have been operating off the coast of Tunisia, providing a cover for the advance of General Anderson's ~~forces~~ ^{warships} laying down a barrage and bombarding the Nazi and Italian installations on shore.

In the matter of air warfare, reports are conflicting. One broadcast ~~interrupted~~ intercepted by the Federal Communications Commission said the Nazis were withdrawing their air units from Tunisian bases. In a way this may sound logical, as the Allied forces are coming so close to Bizerte and Tunis that they can bombard ~~the~~ the airfields ^{blast them} remaining in Axis control with artillery fire.

and it ^{is next to} ~~is almost~~ impossible to hold an airfield that
is ^{well raised by} ~~properly bombarded by~~ artillery, heavy ~~cannon~~. On the other
hand, we hear repeated reports³ of a fierce battle for
control of the air, ~~with innumerable dogfights.~~

Nevertheless, correspondents with the British

First Army send stories which indicate Hitler has

abandoned his idea of making a long stand in Tunisia.

^{that he is simply putting up a strong}
~~and is just going to put up the best kind of a delaying~~
action. ~~that his troops can.~~

DARLAN

47
Ever since Admiral Darlan threw in with the Allies, he has been openly rebuked by the aged Marshal Petain. But now it turns out that the old Marshal has privately been in sympathy with Darlan and in secret communication with him. This was revealed today in a copyright and exclusive dispatch filed by John A. Parris of the United Press -- filed from London. John Parris has been in North Africa and returned to London today by plane. He phrases it, that American authorities in ~~North Africa~~ North Africa informed him that Petain agrees whole-heartedly with Darlan on the future of France under Allied direction. The chief U. S. officers in Africa believe that all France considers Darlan its Number One hope, now that the Germans have occupied the whole of their unhappy country.

The facts revealed by John Parris today were guessed, openly stated and denied at Vichy when Darlan first popped into the picture. And that Petain is a prisoner with Laval in the driver's seat. Actually,

according to information in American hands, Petain was virtually a prisoner even before we invaded Africa. But still able to communicate secretly with Darlan.

Parris adds that Darlan is playing for keeps. And intends to make his leadership in Africa permanent.

In spite of all this, the Fighting French under General DeGaulle, refuse to be reconciled. A spokesman for DeGaulle today described Darlan's action in assuming the title of chief of state in Africa as a monumental piece of effrontery.

Newspapermen today again asked Secretary Hull about the Darlan matter. His answer was that so long as we are in this terrific struggle to win the war, politics must wait. That when the people of conquered countries have been restored to freedom, then they can select their own leaders and their own form of government. Secretary Hull, however, made no specific reference to Darlan. But his meaning was obvious.

ITALY

The reports of Mussolini's illness evidently stung him into making a public appearance. At any rate, he has just appeared before his Chamber of Fasces, making a speech that ranged all the way from hysteria to pleading.

In it he described the British as a race of brutes and barbarians and urged his people to concentrate on hating them. He also implored them to fight with their Allies, side by side with Germany. And begged them not to believe wild rumors. Also, he discounted the reports that there is a strong demand for peace among the Italian people.

9
Though the ailing Duce did his best to show he is not ill, listeners could not help notice that he was ~~xxxxxx~~ hoarse and coughed often. Something unusual for ~~Mxxxxx~~ Musso-the-orator.

In his speech he promised his people that he would build stronger air raid shelters for them. He added, however, that no shelter could withstand a direct hit by heavy bombs. According to reports from London

the Chamber of Fasces received this news in dead silence.

The no longer boastful ~~Duce~~ ^{who} urged his people to leave the cities and live in the beautiful Italian countryside. And he admitted that in Genoa alone over eleven thousand buildings have been destroyed.

By the way, he complained about our government - because Uncle Sam recently declared that Italian nationals are no longer considered enemy aliens. He accused us of discriminating between Italians and other Europeans. He added, too, that we have discriminated between various kinds of Italians. He said: "Why, if I were to land on Long Island, I'd be quarantined!" And, I guess he's right about that. New York would hardly present him ~~xxx~~ with the keys to the city.

--o--

According to the German radio, sixteen trains a day are now evacuating refugees from Genoa. And, children in other Italian cities are being evacuated.

--o--

London continues to relate stories of widespread unrest in Italy.

CORRESPONDENTS

612-1200

Reports of Mussolini's illness have aroused worldwide interest, and today at a luncheon for war correspondents, at the Advertising Club of New York, I asked Reynolds Packard what he thought about it. Packard for years was United Press chief in Rome. Not long ago, upon his release from prison camp at Siena, he returned to this country, and he and his war correspondent partner and wife, Eleanor Packard, have now written a brilliant and informative book about Italy and Mussolini, called "Balcony Empire." When I asked him to tell the huge crowd that packed the Advertising Club, just what he thought about these rumors concerning Mussolini's illness, he replied that Musso at sixty, ill or not, is still able to cause a lot of trouble in the world.

Reports of the Duce's illness, he added, he always took with a grain of salt, though it is known that Mussolini suffers from paresis and megalomania.

As for the imminent collapse of Italy, Packard of U.P. told us that the Italian people have been and still are particularly fond of the American

people. That is because of the number of Italians over here who write home telling them so much that is favorable about the United States. That, said Packard, is one propaganda that Mussolini never was able to combat. He added that the Italians are not the hot blooded Latins some people believe them to be. They will not throw Mussolini over or come to our side until Allied Armies have achieved actual victories on the Italian mainland.

Every correspondent present emphasized the idea that this war will have to be won by victories at terrific costs, not by any interior collapse in either Germany or Italy.

Victor Keen of the "New York Herald Tribune" was there, just back from many years in China. I asked him what about the probability of the Chinese hanging on, was there any likelihood of their ever getting together with the Japs against us. Keen replied that the tenacity with which the Chinese have resisted all these five years with all supply routes cut off, is proof enough that they will hang on. So long as Americans keep up their commitments to the Chinese we have nothing to worry about.

Among the distinguished correspondents was Harold Denny of the "New York Times", veteran of seven wars; captured by Rommel in Africa -- which gave him material for his book "Behind Both Lines." Denny told us that "everything in Africa is exactly the opposite of what it was a year ago when Rommel picked me up," as he put it. And he described our own invasion of Africa as one of the most brilliant and beautiful operations in history. He said that British Generals Alexander and Montgomery have overcome every mistake made in previous offensives in Egypt and Libya. "The British," said Denny, "have shown conclusively that they have broken the hoodoo that afflicted them for a long time."

Another speaker was Otto Tolischus of the "New York Times", whose book "Tokyo Record" is to come out shortly. I asked him whether he thought the Japanese were likely to crack. He replied: "The Japs will never collapse from the inside because they don't know how. They may not be the strongest but they are the toughest of all our enemies. They have conquered territories which give them every material they need for their war machine."

"The Japs," Tolischus continued, "will have to be conquered island by island, army by army,

man by man. We must remember," Tolischus added, "that the Japanese are not really a people but a savage tribe with a varnish of civilization over them. They do not know anything but their own tradition."

However, young Dan DeLuce from Arizona took issue with Veteran Tolischus. DeLuce is one of the younger foreign meteors to flash along the journalistic sky during this war. Coming from Arizona in 1939, he had never been farther east than Fort Worth, Texas. But, since then, he has represented the Associated Press in Germany, the Baltic countries and Scandinavia. He also went through the invasion of Poland, and the occupation of the Balkans. After that he served the A.P. in Turkey, and from there made his way to Iraq and Iran, and finally on to India and Burma. He was with the British armies during the Japanese occupation of Britain's Burmese Empire, and escaped through the dense jungle and across the Naga Hills to Assam.

While in Burma, Dan DeLuce spent a good deal of time with the Chinese Fifth Rout Army. And, he came away convinced, that if the Chinese are given the weapons, they themselves will polish off the Japs.

However, the views of Otto Tolischus were corroborated by Cecil Brown, one of the two correspondents who went down on the British battleship REPULSE off Malaya, author of "Suez to Singapore." Brown hammered in the fact that this war can be won only by military victory. As he put it: "There will be dozens of Tunisias, scores of Guadalcanals. The war is not nearly over," said he, "although the Germans have lost their vision of victory!"

William L. Shirer, famous author of "Berlin Diary," which has now sold more than seven hundred thousand copies, told something mighty interesting too. I asked him what he thought Germany would do when Italy collapses. "If Italy cracks," said Shirer, "Hitler may write it off, withdrawing along behind a long line of defense from the Pyrenees along the Swiss Alps, the Tyrolean Alps and the Balkan Alps to the Black Sea. It will be a line mighty tough to crack," Shirer added, "with only a few passes to defend. Hitler will do this, he thinks in hopes of a negotiated peace. He prophesied that we will see a strong Hitler peace offensive this coming February.

RUSSIA

The Nazis tonight admitted that Stalin's Red Army has achieved successes in its offensive northwest of Moscow. But they describe them as local successes and added that the Russians had lost so many men that they were unable to exploit what they had gained.

~~The place names mentioned by the Germans help to back up the Russian claims. The Nazi official news agency reports fighting near Byelyi, sixty miles to the southwest of Rzhev, thirty miles to the south of the railroad from Rzhev to ~~Velikie Luki~~ Velikie Luki.~~

As we have been hearing for several days, the Russians have been making a strong effort to crack the German lines *southwest of Rzhev;* ~~at Velikie Luki, a most important railroad center.~~ But the Nazi ³generals brought up reinforcements and beat back the Soviet attempts to break through. The Germans also claim to have repulsed Red Army attacks at Rzhev. To do this, they moved troops by

train from Vyazma. That contradicts the claim of the Russians to have cut the railroad between Rzhev and Vyazma.

Reports from Moscow, ^{again} emphasize the fighting

in and around Stalingrad. Dispatches from the front ^{tell us} ~~report~~ that Soviet fighters took two important heights in the Stalingrad area ^{by storm} ~~and drove~~ ^{driving} the Nazis back from two-and-a-half to five miles. One of those heights was the southern hill, south of the Volga capital. There three German infantry battalions were destroyed and two artillery units. According to the Russians, the defenses around Stalingrad are being tightened because the height north of the city was taken by storm troops of the Russian marines. ~~The Soviet reporters claim that the Nazis have withdrawn an entire division from inside the City of Stalingrad itself in an attack to recapture the southern hill.~~

KNOX

Secretary of the Navy Knox in an optimistic mood today declared that the horizon is brighter than at any time since the outbreak of war. With nearly all French North Africa in our hands he pointed out that Italy is shaky.

And, then, he was even more sanguine about production. He says that we are in a position to profit by the mistakes we have been making. All this he said to the Congress of the National Association of ~~Manufacturers~~ Manufacturers, meeting here in New York.

J. Howard Pew, President of the Sun Oil Company -- my sponsor -- sounded a note of warning about government regimentation. He called regimentation and industrial cartels the Siamese twins. One as destructive of industrial initiative as the other.

Mr. Pew pointed out that actual war production has been ~~menaced~~ menaced by more than one government policy. One being the threat of re-negotiating war contracts. Another, the proposal to give the workers

time-and-a-half pay, but not time-and-a-half-pay
to management. Then he pointed out the twenty-five
thousand dollar salary limitation, with its destruction
of all incentive -- and, other similar restrictions.

ICKES

President Roosevelt today increased the authority of ^{Harold} Ickes in the field of petroleum. Hitherto, the Secretary of the Interior has been Director of the Office of Petroleum Coordination. Today he becomes Petroleum Administrator for the War. That gives him complete authority to order rationing of all petroleum products in areas where shortages exist.

However, in areas where shortages do not exist, the job of gasoline rationing is left up to Rubber Boss William Jeffers.

^{This} means ^{see.} ~~that~~ Ickes will ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ not become Secretary of Labor with sweeping authority over manpower. The Secretary's friends explain that he told Mr. Roosevelt he did not want to be both Secretary of Labor and Director of Manpower because ^{as he put it,} both those jobs would require more physical endurance than he had.

^{by the way} Secretary Ickes is sixty-eight years old.

It has been reported that the labor union heads have been urging President Roosevelt to give the labor and manpower job to Daniel Tobin, head of the Teamsters' Union.

LABOR

8

The two major labor organizations will suspend hostilities for the duration of the war. That appears to be the up-shot of negotiations that have been going on between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. They have almost come to terms on what amounts to an armistice, to last until the war is over.

PLANES

may or may not be
Whatever ~~is~~ ^{is} amiss between the War Production Board
^

and the Army chiefs, the United States is turning out a prodigious quantity of planes. More than fifty

thousand a year, ^{So} ~~^~~ said Major Nathaniel F. Silsbee today

to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. And

he said those on the secret list are enough to make the angels gasp.

While he was telling this, a story was

released that a couple of Army pilots ^{souped} ~~whooped~~ up one
^
of the latest ^{army} planes to a speed of seven hundred and

twenty-five miles an hour. [^] *And* That ^{is} a velocity difficult

for ^{the} ~~any~~ human ^{mind} ~~being~~ to grasp.. It ~~means~~ ^T twelve miles a
minute! a mile every five seconds. ~~Any good~~ *How's that*

Hugh?
~~mathematical schoolboy could figure out how much faster~~

that is than the speed of ~~gravity~~ gravity. As a matter of fact, these pilots almost came up to the speed of sound, which travels seven hundred and thirty ~~five~~ ^{six} miles