

SOLOMONS

R. J. - Sunoco. Thursday, Dec. 3, 1942. 9

Another battle ~~of~~ the Solomons has been fought, and once again it has been a success for our warships. It occurred three nights ago, the night of November Thirtieth and December First. <sup>IP</sup> It becomes almost impossible for the imagination of us over here to picture those sea fights at night, but here are the facts:-The Japs were out to get reinforcements and supplies to their troops on Guadalcanal Island. After our naval victory in the Solomons a couple of weeks ago, Secretary of the Navy Knox warned us that the Japs would come back again - and have another try. And they did. <sup>IP</sup> A powerful force of warships guarding troopships steamed ~~to~~ <sup>ed</sup> to Guadalcanal. <sup>They</sup> were just north of the island when they were intercepted by a task force of the United States Navy, and then the wild fantasy of <sup>once more - -</sup> oceanic battle at night began <sup>^</sup> - flame in the darkness.

The Japs were beaten off, and their attempt to

land reinforcements on Guadalcanal was frustrated. That alone made it a success for us; and, then there is the list of losses on both sides. <sup>TP</sup> The Japs lost two large warships - either big destroyers or cruisers. Four of their destroyers were sunk - and two troop transports and one cargo ship. Nine enemy vessels in all were sent to the bottom. The loss of enemy life must have been heavy - considering the fact that the two troop transports were on their way with ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ reinforcements, and were therefore crowded. <sup>TP</sup> Our own loss consisted of one cruiser sunk and ~~the~~ other vessels damaged.

All this comes in a Navy bulletin given out late this afternoon. <sup>Which</sup> ~~It~~ <sup>^</sup> refutes the big talk issued by Tokyo earlier in the day. The Jap radio announced that an American battleship, a heavy cruiser and two destroyers were sunk - while only one Jap ~~battleship~~ <sup>destroyer</sup> <sup>^</sup> was lost. Our own Navy communique answers this promptly.

GUADALCANAL EPISODE

A few years ago, one of the headliners of prizefighting was Barney Ross. He was the lightweight champion, and he was also a welterweight champion. Barney fought some four hundred prize ring bouts in a dizzy punching career, ~~But~~ now he says he never knew what a fight really was like. For,

Ex-Prizefight Champion Barney Ross, <sup>is today a</sup> ~~now a~~ United States Marine, ~~is~~ in a hospital at Guadalcanal, ~~where he is~~ recovering from a combination of malaria, shell shock and shrapnel wounds. <sup>TP Barney</sup> He is scheduled to be promoted to the rank of corporal, <sup>also to be</sup> ~~and be~~ recommended for a medal. That's because of what happened two days ago when Barney found himself in a shell hole <sup>-with two</sup> ~~and~~ wounded companions. <sup>And he</sup> stayed there during fourteen hours of Japanese attack.

~~His outfit was attacking the Japs in the jungle five miles northwest of Henderson Field - when suddenly they saw a big force of Japs come out of the tropical~~

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~~thicket~~. There was shooting and hand grenade tossing from every side. Barney Ross, ~~with two other companions~~, ~~was~~ in a shell hole, ~~He~~ tossed every hand grenade he could find. ~~at the enemy~~. Then with his rifle he fired eighty rounds of his own ammunition, after which he took the guns and ammunition of his wounded companions and blazed away some more. He poured three hundred rounds in all into a nest of Jap machine guns. And busy machine guns they were. <sup>IF</sup> "Every time I poked my head up", says the former ring champion; "bullets were ricocheting off the log and bounced off my helmet. I was told later," he adds, "that there were at least thirty furrows in my tin hat."

In old prizefight days, many a blow to the head was aimed at Barney Ross - but they all amounted to nothing beside those Japanese machine gun bullets that smacked him on the helmet.

*At least 30 bullets  
bouncing off Barney's dome.*

## NORTH AFRICAN LOSSES

In considering today's list of Allied losses in launching the North African offensive, we must match the figures ~~given~~ with the number of ships involved in the operation. It was the greatest armada in the history of the world; ~~it was~~ divided into three giant sections. One convoy sailed from the United States to seize Casablanca on the west coast of Africa. The two other sections sailed from Great Britain and went into the Mediterranean to take Oran and Algiers. The convoys consisted of American, British, Belgian, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, and Polish vessels. There were eight hundred and fifty ~~vessels~~ <sup>craft</sup> in all, three hundred and fifty warships and five hundred transports, freighters, tankers and auxiliaries.

With that great number of ships involved, the losses announced today consisted of five United States naval transports and ten British ships. The five naval transports were ~~former President~~ <sup>the</sup> liners, -- ~~The~~ <sup>President Lines</sup> CLEVELAND and PEARCE, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> the passenger vessels

SANTA LUCIA, EXETER, and EXCALIBUR.

Three transports were sunk off Casablanca, one off Rabat, the other off Algiers. These losses were the result of submarine attack, enemy undersea craft concentrating against the immense landing operation.

In addition three ~~other~~ transports were damaged and so were a destroyer and a tanker.

The predominant question tonight is this -- were there troops aboard the American transports when they were sunk? Was there heavy loss of life when the ships were torpedoed and went to the bottom? The answer is ~~probably~~ -- no. This afternoon in Washington a spokesman for the Navy stated that he understood that the soldiers had disembarked from the ships before the enemy blows were struck. He added that the casualties from the sinking of the troop ships had been in his words -- "very small." That is a good angle in the news -- ~~with~~ <sup>the</sup> thousands of ~~ships~~.

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50  
Troops were off the transports before they were torpedoes, and the loss of life was small.

The British losses in launching the great African offensive were recited in London today by First Lord of the Admiralty Alexander. The vessels sunk were one small aircraft carrier, an anti-aircraft ship, two destroyers, a corvette, two cutters, a sloop, a depot ship and a mine sweeper. Ten in all. The Dutch Navy lost one destroyer.

~~Again, we must take a comparative view and relate the number of ships lost with the number that were in the operation -- eight hundred and fifty. So that's the background for the official statement that the losses were surprisingly light.~~

Now for some enemy losses. London today announces the sinking of four Axis supply ships and two protecting destroyers. This occurred on Tuesday night, when a British squadron assailed an enemy convoy in the Mediterranean. The convoy was taking badly

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needed reinforcements to the enemy in North Africa. So the blow struck by the British was of vital importance.

51  
During the day, on Tuesday, observation planes had spotted the convoy, whereupon a British force of light naval vessels went speeding to the attack. They consisted of the cruisers AURORA, SIRIUS, and ARGONAUT with some destroyers. They found the convoy shortly after midnight, and dashed in at top speed. The enemy ships threw out a smoke screen, and scattered -- trying desperately to get away. But the British vessels of war rushed in to the convoy with blazing guns and smashed the four supply ships and two destroyers -- which sank or were left as burning wrecks on the sea.

The British squadron sustained not a bit of damage, but later were attacked by enemy dive bombers and torpedo planes. One destroyer was sunk.

*the following*  
~~And you can add this to the enemy losses!~~



AFRICA

The battle for the tip of Tunisia ~~was~~ on in full fury today, with Allied attacks and Nazi counter-attacks. The Germans appear in considerable force - some thirty thousand men with mechanized equipment and supported by formidable air power. So our troops and the British have a fight on their hands.

*How*  
Their military position looks decidedly favorable.

*with*  
~~They have got~~ the Axis enemy pinned against the coast,

~~and~~ Every thrust of a few miles that we make is a dangerous threat.

52  
One ~~salient~~ *notable* thing about this battle is that it ~~is~~ *is* on such a small scale, *i.e.* geographically speaking.

Our North African offensive began as an operation over great distances - those large spaces of north and west Africa. *and* Now it has narrowed down almost to a point - the tip of Tunisia. The amount of narrowing down may be taken as a vivid geographical expression

of the great success <sup>of the</sup> ~~our~~ offensive, ~~has had~~

3  
The map shows a fighting front ~~of~~ scarcely more than fifty miles long - on a line from the naval base of Bizerte to the big port of Tunis, ~~These are~~ the two key places that the Nazis are defending. <sup>and</sup> their forces are on a line not far in front ~~of them~~ - and not far from the sea either. ~~An Allied drive through the center of the line would not have to go very far to arrive at the Mediterranean shore, and thereby split the Nazis in two, severing the line between Bizerte and Tunis. That would seem to be obvious strategy for General Eisenhower. He would then have the enemy in two pockets, two besieged seaports.~~

In today's war news from the tip of Tunis, <sup>ia,</sup> we have mention of three places. One - Mateur. That is only about ten miles south of the area of Bizerte. Nazi Berlin claims that its forces have scored some.

# RETAKE

slight success against our own at that point.

The second place is Tebourba, ~~That is~~ a key highway point about midway between Bizerte and Tunis.

*We hold it,*  
~~We have it,~~ and the Germans have been counter-attacking.

They have launched two counter-attacks - both beaten off.

The second one tried to smash ahead today, and it was more powerful than the first - but the enemy was hurled back.

The third place is Djedeida, nearer to Tunis. We hear that the fighting has spread that far.

There is violent air action - the Axis being able to throw into the battle forces of planes from the flying fields of Sicily, just across a narrow strip of water from Tunisia. (Our own sky squadrons, commanded by General Doolittle, are bombing all day long, hitting at vital points of Axis communications. And our fighter planes are going into dogfight after dogfight. During

{ the past twenty-four hours they have shot down eight  
enemy planes, and damaged twenty-six others. No plane  
losses of our own are reported.

## LIBERIA

For several months American troops have been in Liberia -- covered by such successful secrecy that there has been hardly a rumor about them. Today the fact was disclosed by the State Department in Washington. ~~Our soldiers are in that small African republic in~~ accordance with an agreement made last March -- when Liberia granted to the United States the right to construct, operate and defend airports for the duration of the war. That was followed in due time by an American convoy -- a fleet of troopships crossing four thousand miles of submarine imperiled waters with <sup>out</sup> ~~xxx~~ any loss whatever.

4  
Our forces in Liberia consist of negro regiments, and that's appropriate, considering the historic fact that the Republic of Liberia was founded in 1822 by freed negro slaves from the United States. Today Liberia holds a strategic position on the African side of the Atlantic Ocean, and is one of the few rubber producing areas that has not fallen into enemy hands.

## RUSSIA

In Russia, the Stalingrad area, Red Army forces made a sudden drive against the Nazis northwest of Stalingrad. They lunged at a key point on the east bank of the River Don, and ~~they~~ captured it. Moscow says that the success was of such strategic advantage that the Germans may have to make a withdrawal along their line from the Don to the Volga.

To the north, in the sector facing Moscow, the Soviets report the repulse of strong German counter-attacks. The key to the situation there is the railroad that runs from Rzhev to Vyazma. The Red Army has driven deep wedges into the German line, ~~there~~ and the Nazis are counter-attacking to cut off these wedges. No success for them, says Moscow.

One clue of conditions along that battlefield is a statement that the Soviets intend to place all of their troops on skis this winter. Right now ski

troops in increasingly greater numbers are being thrown  
against the enemy. That gives us an idea of the  
weather on the front facing Moscow - the blizzard of  
terrible Russian winter.

## MANUFACTURERS

Today former President Herbert Hoover recommended that the war effort be directed by individual administrators instead of boards, committees and commissions. He said that the committee-way of doing things has proved to be a failure, and that one-man direction in various phases of war production was much the <sup>better.</sup> ~~best.~~ He suggested that the top administrators ~~xx~~ should form a group dealing with the President, ~~xx~~ "should ~~comprise~~" a war council sitting directly with the President.", <sup>was the way ex-Pres. Hoover put it.</sup> ~~said Herbert Hoover.~~

These ~~xx~~ recommendations were made before the War Congress of American Industry in New York, while in Washington the National Association of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States denounced what they called "needless questionnaires." ~~This applies to the many forms that business men are required to fill out. Business men have been complaining about the time and~~



~~effort they have to give to answering complicated and perplexing questionnaires.~~ It was stated ~~in Washington~~ that in eighty-nine industries alone, the reports required by the Government take up a total of four hundred and ninety-five thousand, four hundred and thirty man hours a year.

During a mere three months, the ~~Rx~~ Eastman Kodak Company filed two hundred and sixty-two regular reports and a hundred and forty-seven special forms. <sup>and</sup> The man-hours involved were sufficient to build three flying fortresses.

In a year, <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ Pump and Machinery Corporation <sup>^</sup> ~~Worthington~~ had to fill out one thousand and twenty-three questionnaires. That took the full time services of twenty employees, at a cost of ninety thousand dollars a year.

These facts were laid today before the joint

Congressional Committee ~~Committee~~ on Economy, which was told that during the past summer the War Production Board had eliminated seventy forms and simplified a hundred and thirty others. <sup>TP</sup> Keep up the good work, and relieve business men of the burden of all that questionnaire answering. That was the plea made to the committee.

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BUTADIENE

B.O. must

It ~~has~~ <sup>just been</sup> announced ~~today~~ that the Defense Plant Corporation has allotted three million dollars for the building of a plant somewhere in Ohio to make butadiene. That is the chief constituent of synthetic rubber. This factory will extract the butadiene from gasoline by the Houdry process.

The ~~great~~ <sup>quaint</sup> fact about butadiene is that there is an enormous demand for it today, whereas once upon a time it was a nuisance. The engineers of the Sun Oil Company have known all about it for years. Eugene Houdry, the French chemist, says he first ran across it trying to perfect a better way of cracking down gasoline out of petroleum. ~~Petroleum~~ Engineers for years were perplexed with the problem of getting rid of butadiene.

But today there is nothing more greatly wanted, ~~than butadiene.~~ One consolation is that there

# RETAKE

The Treasury Department announced today that a mistake was made. There was an error when they got up a poster to be displayed on December Seventh, the anniversary of Pearl Harbor. On that day in motion picture theatre lobbies all over the country, a placard will appear. <sup>And</sup> On it will be displayed the picture of a baby, a cute kid. One line accompanying the picture reads like this: "Give us little guys a chance."

Another line says: "Make sure he grows up a free man."

Now what's wrong about that? Where is the mistake?

Aren't we going to make sure that the little guy grows up to be a free man? No - that's the trouble.

We can't, it's impossible. Because he is a girl.

The Treasury Department reveals that the "little guy" is Linda Petersen of New York. The error was made because when the picture was taken, Linda who was than ten months old, had a bald head and the

X

generally indeterminate look which you often see in babies. The poster experts did not bother to investigate any further. *She was a fine looking boy.*

*And now here's a fine*  
~~Today Linda's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Peterson, said it wasn't astonishing that the Treasury~~  
*looking lad whose name is not Linda,*  
*It's Hugh.*

~~was fooled. Other people likewise mistook Linda for a boy when she was ten years old. It is different now,~~  
*months*

~~say the parents. Linda is no longer bald-headed. She has grown a fine head of curly *blonde* hair, and you~~

~~would never mistake her for anything but a young lady.~~

The mistake is really quite trivial, because *on the posters* when you see the "little guy" you realize that we must ~~xx~~ make sure that girls grow up as free women, just as boys shall grow up as free men. Of course, the ~~two~~ *they* of ~~them~~ might go ahead and get married, but in that case they can only blame themselves.