

L.T. - SUNOCO. TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 1942.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

I am in Washington tonight, and that pretty well dictates the kind of news ~~I've got~~ to talk about. The time was ~~when~~ Washington, the site ^{of} our Government, was a place for hearing about domestic politics, the proceedings in Congress, home affairs. These things still go on here - and they are mighty important. But today Washington is, above all, a war center. It is right now, the Number One war capital of this world, headquarters of the United Nations in the supreme struggle for our survival. So, during ~~xxxxxxx~~ a quick day of news gathering in the shadow of the Washington Monument, I picked up items mostly about the war.

EGYPT

It was a shock in Washington late this afternoon, when the news spread that the Nazis in Egypt had captured the place called El Daba. There was a general realization of what this meant - especially among army men. Field Marshal Rommel's panzer forces are on their way to Alexandria. By driving on to El Daba and taking that place, they have got through the last natural line of defense left to the British - the short compact line only forty miles long, from El Daba on the coast to the Qattara Depression, ~~which is supposed to be more or less impassible.~~ The German armored forces are now beyond that Qattara Depression, and there is no natural line of defense between them and Alexandria and the delta of the Nile.

Rommel's panzers are driving at a terrific speed. They went ~~speeding from~~ ^{from} ~~Matruh~~ ^{Matruh} to a place called Fuka, where they were reported to be early today. Then they went on to El Daba, and that ~~means~~ ^{was} an advance of ~~fifty~~ ⁴⁰ miles - that far in spite of the fact that the British were reported to be fighting fiercely with armored units to delay them. And British and American bombers were blasting at Nazi columns on the desert.

It is not clear why the British Empire forces retired so rapidly. It may be they simply haven't got enough iron ^{and} explosive to stop the headlong charge of the panzer columns. Maybe Rommel just crashed through at high speed - by sheer ~~weight~~ weight of metal. Or maybe there was an elaborate outflanking operation.

Insistent stories from headquarters' at Cairo stated that ^{a Nazi} ~~the Nazi~~ columns ^{was} ~~were~~ sweeping far to the south, ~~were~~ skirting around the southern end of the Qattara Depression - thus threatening to come on up north behind the rear of the British. So maybe the Empire forces pulled out of their last defense line, because it was being outflanked. ^{It} Whatever the fact may be, Rommel is now beyond the

Qattara Depression, and has an open road ahead - only eighty miles to Alexandria. At the speed he has been going, ^{he may in a few hours be in} ~~he might be within~~

^{sight} ~~the site~~ of that great naval base, ~~within hours~~ - unless the British can rally for a final battle to shield the city founded by Alexander

the Great.

There is a question about the direction that Rommel may now take. The coast bends somewhat to the north, which places Alexandria to the northeast ^{or} ~~and~~ the furthest point of German advance.

or Rommel may head due east, and strike for the Nile, ^{or he} ~~where he might try~~
might try south^{east}~~west~~, for Cairo, that metropolis of Islam ^{on} ~~along~~ the
Nile. Anyway, the moment Rommel reaches the valley of that river
which is the mother of Egypt - the mighty naval base of Alexandria is
outflanked.

ADMIRAL CUNNINGHAM

Sir Andrew Cunningham, hero of many naval battles in the Mediterranean, during this war, the man who was in command of the British Mediterranean Fleet, has arrived in Washington. I had a rather long talk with him this afternoon, and he made a number of observations that are most timely in view of the news from Egypt.

When the word was flashed to us that Rommel and his Nazi legions had taken Mersa Matruh, and were pushing on into Egypt, the news mentioned a region called Qattara Depression, stretching south from the Mediterranean coast at Matruh, south for nearly two hundred miles to the oasis of Siwa. And military observers were wondering whether Rommel's tanks could negotiate the Qattara Depression. It was referred to in dispatches as a sort of vast desert swamp.

Admiral Cunningham, although not a soldier, told me that he had flown over the Qattara Depression, that


it looked like the rest of the desert from the air, but is softer, much more difficult for mechanized vehicles to traverse than most of the desert. However, it is not a swamp. It is called a Depression because it is several feet below sea level. Many, many thousands of years ago it was a vast salt lake. In it are hillocks and patches of coarse vegetation that camels can live on.

Admiral Cunningham expressed the hope -- and the belief -- that Rommel's Nazi forces would not be able to reach the actual delta of the Nile, and then attempt to storm the City of Alexandria. He pointed out that the delta of the Nile is extremely soft country, a region where he said he thought it would be impossible for tanks to operate, and where battles would have to be fought between infantry forces.

As to the present disposition of the British fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean, the man who was its commander, said he had been away from there

sufficiently long that he could not know ~~where~~ where any of the vessels actually were. But he said that he most certainly did not think that they had left the Mediterranean, and that he hoped they had not. If Alexandria should fall -- which he doesn't think it will -- the fleet would still have bases at Port Said, Haifa, Beyrants and elsewhere.

Having spent many hours on the banks of the Suez Canal, myself, and having gone through it quite a number of times, I was interested to hear what he thought about the chances ~~of~~ the Germans might have ~~to~~ of completely blocking it. His answer to my question on this was that the British emergency crews are now so well organized along the Canal that no matter how it is mined or what vessels are sunk in it, they can clear it in a matter of a day or two, or perhaps three.



He spoke of the Germans having laid mines in the Canal a number of times -- dropping them, at night, from planes.

Admiral Cunningham looks the role that he has played: -
He ~~looks like the~~ ^{the} sea dog that he is, and the fighter. His face is weather-beaten. His eyes are bloodshot from the storms and the shell fire that he has faced. His speech consists of incisive, clear cut, positive, clipped sentences -- nearly always with a flash of humor, and a graceful remark, ^{— a compliment to someone.} For instance, he declined to sit in judgment on the Italian Admirals who had made a mess of things in the Mediterranean for their own people. ^{And, even though he did} He deplored the fact that the French Admiral with the French fleet that is tied up in Alexandria Harbor, has been pro-Vichy, ~~But,~~ he expressed great personal admiration for that French Admiral, ^{He} and said he believed the Admiral and his men hated the Germans more intently even than the British hate them, "if that were possible," ^{added} said Admiral Cunningham. And he thinks that if Rommel's forces ever ^{do} ~~should~~ get to Alexandria, ^{that} the pro-Vichy French on the battleship LORRAINE and on the cruisers and destroyers tied up at Alexandria, will sink their ships rather than let them fall into the hands of the Germans.

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Admiral Cunningham expressed great anxiety over the situation in Egypt today. But he still thinks something will be done about it, ^{And he} and is certain that the United Nations will win out in the end no matter how dark any present hour may be.

RUSSIA

In Russia, the Germans once again have made some advances in their unceasing attacks against Sevastopol, that naval base which is being defended with such bitter desperation. Moscow admits that the Soviet forces yielded some ground, but adds that at last reports the Red Army defenders of the fortress were counter attacking.

Further to the north, in the area between Moscow and Kharkov, the Nazis are still trying to drive forward in the vital Kirsk area. A deep advance there would threaten either Moscow on one side, or the Caucasus oil wells on the other. The Soviets relate that with violent panzer attacks, a German tank column got through, but then was cut off from the infantry forces that were trying to follow it and consolidate the ground.

DOOLITTLE

Today here in Washington a medal was presented - not surprising, considering all the heroes to be decorated. But this medal has a turn of surprise. It was awarded to Brigadier-General James H. Doolittle, and had nothing to do with the air raid ~~ka~~ that bombed Japan.

He was presented with the Daniel Guggenheim Medal for notable achievement in the advancement of aeronautics and the citation specifically tells General Doolittle the following:- "You were nominated for this award," it says, "before you made your notable Pacific flight -- because you are a Doctor of Aeronautical Science and made flying your research laboratory." And then the citation goes on to mention the Jimmy Doolittle contribution to the science of aerobatics and blind flying.

I dropped in to see Jimmy today. I asked him some thing about that memorable bombing of Japan, questioned him in detail about why his men had flown

so low in raiding Tokyo and other cities -- they just skimmed over the housetops. He explained a thing that has already been elucidated, namely that by flying so low they could get past the anti-aircraft batteries before the guns could be pointed at them. And then he went on to say that by flying so near the ground, they could fool the Japanese fighting planes that would naturally go after them. The fighting planes could only dive at them, and he explained that if the Japs had taken the regular routine dive, their fighter planes would have plunged into the ground.

"Jimmy," I said, "in the old days we called it Hedge-hopping."

"Yes," he smiled, and we both thought of the times when barnstorming dare-devil aviators would get a thrill out of skimming over houses and trees. So I thought it would be entertaining to get a Jimmy Doolittle story of hedge-hopping in those days, to tell in connection with the history making hedge-hopping they did in Japan.

"Do you happen to remember anything thrilling along that line -- when you were a young army flyer?", I asked.

The famous Doolittle smile became a trifle grim. "The only thing I remember," said he, "is that hedge-hopping was against army regulations, and we weren't supposed to do it."

So there you have it -- when Brigadier General James H. Doolittle was a young army dare-devil of the air, he never did any hedge-hopping. Well, hardly any.

F.B.I.

^{The} ~~That~~ big sensation of the week, ^{was} the capture of Nazi saboteurs landed by submarine - had an interesting follow-up today.

Before a Congressional Committee appeared Assistant F.B.I. Director Clyde Tolson, who is right-hand man to the F.B.I. chief -

J. Edgar Hoover. Clyde Tolson told the Committee that during the past ten months, five thousand, two hundred and forty-six

complaints of sabotage had been investigated. That is about twice as many as for the corresponding period of ten months. ~~(One~~

~~hundred and seventy-seven sabotage convictions were obtained by the F.B.I. - and that is a decided increase over the figure for the previous corresponding period.)~~

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Now how does that tie in with the landing of Nazi saboteurs on our coast by U-boat? Does that sensational headline give us a clue to the increase of sabotage cases?

Apparently not. Assistant F.B.I. Director Tolson ^{informed} ~~told~~ the Congressional Committee that the sabotage in general was the work of disgruntled people and cranks. Said he:- "Our experience has been, up to the present time, that there has been no foreign inspired sabotage in the United States."

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All of which would make it appear that the Nazi saboteurs landed by submarine ^{were} ~~have~~ not ~~been~~ able to get in any of their dirty work - that they were all caught, for example. Here in Washington, I ^{got in touch with} ~~telephoned~~ the F.B.I. office, and spoke to the director in charge, Louis B. Nichols. He said that the inference that I drew was quite logical, and referred to a statement by J. Edgar Hoover ^{says} that in catching the two gangs that landed in Florida and Long Island, the F.B.I. had grabbed them all - all that had been put ashore by U-boats.

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Now, there is another deduction I would like to make - that, if there has been no actual enemy sabotage committed in this country, it means that the Nazi spy ring over here was broken up. Espionage did exist, with the F.B.I. making arrests and getting convictions. So, J. Edgar Hoover's men must have ~~been~~ knocked out the Nazi secret organization here pretty thoroughly. (Which leads to a further implication - that ^{if} their secret outfits over here have been obliterated, the only way they can work their espionage and sabotage ~~is~~ is by landing agents secretly on our coast - as was the case with the ones arrested. Hence, the kind of precaution that is most to the point right now is a sharp guard along our shores.)

DETROIT

In Detroit tomorrow, all merchants are devoting their display space to the promotion of war bond sales. In the newspapers there will be no commercial display advertising of any kind. One paper, for instance, with its forty pages, ranks second among all the newspapers in America in display space. Tomorrow, it will appear without a single line of commercial advertising! "Retailers-for-Victory Day", they are calling it.

END

I suppose I ought to end this working day with a lot of pep, because I certainly began it that way. Upon arriving at the New Willard in Washington early this morning, I promptly ran into ~~the~~ ^{Washington} ~~hotel~~ ^{manager} Harry Somerville, who said: "Come on and have breakfast with the Early Birds."

I shuddered- remembering how it's the early bird that catches the worm, and I thought maybe the breakfast might consist of ~~xxxxxx~~ caterpillars and centipedes.

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But it wasn't that. ^{In the Congressional} ~~In a big~~ room, I found a meeting of the Early Birds Breakfast Club, which consists of Washington businessmen who rise somewhere near the crack of dawn, ^{once a week} assembled to begin the day with a snappy meeting before going to their offices. ^{all so cheery and mirthful at 7:00} ~~The idea is~~ to begin the day with plenty of pep so they have a ceremony that is ~~full of pep~~. For example, the Early Birds sing an opening ode and a closing ode - all exceedingly birdlike. The closing ^{ode} ~~note~~ goes this way:

"Tweet, tweet!

"Tweet, tweet!

We are perched upon our feet,

We have had our food, We have had our fun.

Tweet, Tweet!

Tweet, tweet!

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END

Now it will be a week
Till once again we meet.

So ~~all together~~ all together Birds *let's sing:-*
~~Let's sing:-~~

Tweet, Tweet!

Tweet, Tweet!

all that And now, after, twittering, *Hugh, how about a*
~~that, I'll let Hugh James do the~~

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chirping *from you.*