

L.T. - SUNOCO. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1943.

*Carman*

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

This afternoon's Navy communique is brief and terse on the subject of the sea and air battle in the Solomons. It states: "Sporadic encounters between United States and Japanese air and surface forces in the Solomon Islands area continue."

Those sporadic encounters have been going on for days now -- in what the Navy once described as a major enemy attempt to recapture Guadalcanal. Details about the new revival of air and ocean conflict are withheld, and will not be made public until the Navy thinks the information no longer can be of any use to the Japs.

Today the wires brought an eyewitness account of the action. United Press staff correspondent Francis McCarthy was on an American warship, right in the middle of things, when the Japs launched their air attack by

night -- the first time that planes have assailed warships in the darkness. By what light did the attacking planes operate? "The enemy's use of color flares over a broad expanse of the sea provided a breath-taking phenomenon -- writes the newspaperman. He tells how in that weird kind of color flare illumination, the first wave of Jap torpedo planes whirled to the attack and adds: "The next seventy minutes," he relates, "were filled with the glare of strange lights, and close calls from torpedoes launched at short range."

The ship on which the newspaperman was stationed dodged the torpedoes, and had one mighty close call when one enemy missile came speeding through the water. "At first it looked like a sure hit," he writes, "but it only scraped the side of the ship and failed to detonate."

48  
RICKENBACKER

Here's a telegram sent this afternoon, and quoted in a news story just off the wire. It's from Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, American flying ace in the previous world war, to Captain Joseph Jacob Foss in the Solomon Islands.

The telegram reads: "Just heard that you had shot down your twenty-sixths enemy airplane, which equals my record of victories in world war number one. I hasten to offer my heartiest congratulations, with the hope that you will double it."

Captain Foss of South Dakota, is the top ranking American ace in this war thus far---twenty-six planes to date.

## RUSIA

Moscow states today that Soviet armies are poised for what the dispatch<sup>tbl</sup> calls "a grand assault." The Red Army command is ready for a new mighty offensive, a triple drive against the three principal German centers of defense in southern Russia---Rostov, Kharkov and Kursk.

Tonight Soviet troops are only ten miles from Rostov, the southern anchor of the whole Nazi line.

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Today they reached Bataisk, just south of Rostov. This is the area in which the Germans seem to be the worst off. Their powerful army, which once drove most of the way across the Caucasus, is now backed against the coast of the Black Sea and is in imminent peril of annihilation.

The capture of Rostov would isolate it completely from all escape by land. Its only way out would be across the narrow straits of Kerch into the Crimea, and we hear tonight the German command is evacuating its troops across that stretch of water---for what appears to be a Nazi

Dunkirk.

Moscow announces the capture of Izyum, southeast  
of Kharkov. And ---Stary Oskol, southeast of Kursk.

If Kharkov and Kursk<sup>to</sup> were to fall, the whole Nazi line to  
the south of Moscow would seem to be in danger of caving  
in.

Finland

~~NEWS CONFERENCE~~

*at*  
~~I~~ attended the White House news conference today,  
*Q*  
~~and~~ was particularly interested in answers the President  
*^*  
gave to the questions about Finland. There have been  
insistent reports that Finland wants to drop out of the  
war and make a separate peace with Soviet Russia.

*50*  
The American minister to Finland is in this country  
right now, and yesterday had a conference with President  
Roosevelt. There have been rumors that Minister Arthur  
Schoenfeld would not return to his post at Helsinki.

The President was asked about that today, and  
replied that so far as he knew our minister to Finland  
would return to his post in Helsinki. He remarked that he  
had not heard anything to the contrary.

The return of the minister would emphasize the fact  
that the United States is maintaining its diplomatic  
relations with the northern republic. And while we continue  
to do so the way is kept open for a possible removal of  
Finland from the war.



## HITLER

There is a lot of rumoring and guessing these days about the possibility that Hitler may be dead. Last night <sup>e</sup>~~Joseph E.~~ Davies, former American ambassador to Moscow, said he thought it might be true. And today the ex-ambassador expanded his opinion,---giving the reasons.

He pointed out that in times previous, Hitler threatened suicide if he turned out to be mistaken. In nineteen thirty-five, when he invaded the Rhineland against the advice of his military commanders---he told them that, if his judgment turned out to be wrong, he would shoot himself.

Former Ambassador Davies points out that Hitler directed the Russian campaign. His generals were opposed, and gave sound military reasons. Hitler relied on that cockeyed occult thing he called---his intuition. And the conflict of high command versus Hitler-intuition was climaxed in the drive against Stalingrad. The Nazi fuehrer

2-Hitler

stacked everything on that gamble, and lost.

tel { The day before yesterday, I remarked how strange was the German propaganda reaction to the Stalingrad defeat---playing it up with lugubrious dramatics, ---telling the bad news to the German people with a showmanship of disaster and the Wagnerian music of *Gotterdammerung*.

Today former ambassador Davies states: "Now Germany is in mourning, and the more they grieve the more serious they make Hitler's mistake appear. The more they grieve," he continues, "the more criminal they make the error which Hitler perpetrated against the German people."

52 { It was noted everywhere that the Nazi fuehrer a few days ago failed to make a public appearance and a speech on the anniversary of his own rise to power---the tenth anniversary of the Nazi triumph. Why was he so conspicuously off the scene?



At the time the only suggestion that I could make was to ask---what could Hitler say, with the Stalingrad calamity staring him in the face? Davies, on the other hand, thinks that Hitler would have relied on his oratory to get by. "Knowing Hitler," says he, "I should think that if he were acting in character, he would certainly be out in front---with confidence in his persuasive powers to preserve his leadership."

Then the former ambassador makes this shrewd observation: "Mussolini took it on the chin," says he, "and faced his people." He refers back to the time when the fascists got their first beatings---from the Greeks, and from the British in North Africa. Mussolini, the inveterate speech-maker, admitted the whole of his North African disaster in a public address. He seemed even to magnify the bad news---relying on his speech-making and getting by.

4-Hitler

So why wouldn't Hitler be just as confident in his own oratory?

Today, our former ambassador to Moscow, reasons it this way: <sup>A</sup> "Why has Hitler made no personal appearances?" *he* He asks. "Either the high command prevented his appearance," reasons Davies, "or he shot himself, or the high command shot him. I can't help feeling that something kept him from speaking," *concluded the ex-Ambass. to Moscow,*

*And* The Davies analysis today gives the best reasons that I have heard for the current rumors that Hitler may be dead.

## AIR RAID

The air war bases<sup>d</sup> on Britain continued today---  
with the RAF making daylight raids across the channel.  
Last night attacks ranged from the Nazi submarine base  
at Lorient on the west coast of France, to the great  
German industrial center in the Ruhr, along the Rhine.  
And---all the way south to Italy.

The Italian industrial city of Turin was smashed  
by the heaviest bombing it has received to date. And allied  
planes hit a big Italian naval base. Two ton block busters  
were dropped and tens of thousands of incendiaries. The  
British pilots say that the blaze in Turin looked like a  
carpet of fires too numerous to count.

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London tells how one big four-engined Lancaster  
caught fire, and immediately dropped its bombs---though  
the plane was five miles from Turin. The high explosive  
blasted in woodland and set a huge forest fire---which

## 2-Air Raid

crept close to the city. Devastation indeed--when Turin is not only bombed but also threatened by a forest fire.

## EUROPEAN COMMANDER

The appointment of a new commander of American forces in Europe is accompanied by the explanation that the European theatre is considered distinct and separate from North Africa. Thus, Lieutenant-General Frank M. Andrews does not supersede Lieutenant-General Dwight G. Eisenhower. General Eisenhower was our European commander, and then took command of the North African offensive. He remains the boss of that theatre of war, which is separated from the European command. This goes to General Andrews.

He is a Tennessean, and during the early stages of the European war was in charge of the Panama Canal area. Later, he was transferred to the middle east, and played a part in the defeat of Rommel's North Afrika Korps--- being decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal for that.

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## 2-European Commander

One significant thing about General Andrews is this--- he's an air officer, a veteran of Army aviation. His flying experience goes way back to nineteen seventeen. He's a practical pilot and is qualified as a combat observer. So today his first statement, as our new European commander, was to pledge all-out air war against the Nazis.



EUROPEAN COMMANDER - 3

President Roosevelt was asked about the question of unified command in North Africa. He replied that as far as he was concerned the necessary unity command exists right now. Our own General Eisenhower is in full charge of the armies in the former French colonies, while British Generals Montgomery and Alexander are in command of the British driving from the east. The East and West forces of the Allies have not yet joined, and maybe the need of a common commander for the two is not so much to the point -- until they do effect the junction.

## WASHINGTON

While chatting with the President and with Economic Administrator Byrnes, Manpower Commissioner McNutt and Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, and White House Secretary Steve Early, Explorer Bradford Washburn, who had gone to the White House with me, delighted the President by giving him a stone brought from the summit of Mt. McKinley, at an altitude of 20,000 feet, the highest point in Uncle Sam's domain - for the President's museum at Hyde Park. When Washburn told the President of how he and his companions had lived for three weeks at 17,000 feet, just below the top of McKinley, to test equipment for the Army and Air Force, the President shook his head and said that he himself didn't even like to fly above 8000.

The President looked bronzed and fit from his North African trip. A little thin, perhaps. But no circles under the eyes such as you sometimes see in pictures of him on the screen. Speaking of his unprecedented three-continent flight, he had high praise for Captain Howard Cone, the young skipper of the Pan-American Clipper and his crew.

Captain Cone, whom the President spoke of, has just celebrated his ninth anniversary as a pilot for Pan-American Airways.

## SOUTHERN DELICACIES

I did not have lunch today in a restaurant ~~at~~ the Capitol; but, if I had I would have sniffed apprehensively--- for the savor of broiled gopher. The gopher is a southern, ~~and a~~ <sup>western</sup> animal that burrows in the ground, ~~and looks a good deal~~ <sup>It seems you</sup> like a big rat---which hardly sounds like caviar. But you never can tell what you'll get in the dining rooms of the Senate and ~~lower~~ House---not while the drive for southern delicacies is going on.

~~The South is ambitious to have its own particular~~  
~~tidbits adopted as substitutes during the war time shortage~~ <sup>There seems to be a war time shortage</sup>  
<sup>here in Washington,</sup>  
of sirloin steaks and lamb chops, <sup>served muskrat, fricasseed muskrat,</sup> and some days ago a congressman from Louisiana <sup>entertained</sup> a party of legislators. ~~What do you think he served as the piece-~~  
~~de-resistance? Muskrats, fricasseed muskrats.~~

Last night the Gulf Coast shrimp industry got in its bit of food propaganda, when Congressman Colmer of Mississippi threw a shrimp-eating festival ~~in the dining room of the~~

## 2-Southern Delicacies

~~speaker of the House.~~ <sup>with</sup> The cooking was done by the police captain at the capitol, Skeet Hunt, who is from down near Biloxi.

~~Skeet Hunt was asked for his recipe, his culinary secret. To which he gave the following illuminating explanation: "People who grew up where I did, just naturally knows how to fix shrimp," said he.~~

~~Congressman Harris of Virginia is talking about~~  
~~eatfish.~~ <sup>TP</sup> Congressman Cox of Georgia is calculating how many possums it would take to feed the entire House of Representatives. But the lawmaker who is causing fear and trembling is Dies of the Dies Committee, who usually

likes to fry a few rears, <sup>but who now is suggesting</sup>  
~~broiled gopher.~~

~~This time, however, he suggests a legislative banquet of broiled gopher. To which Congressman Rankin of Mississippi responds by saying: "I always understood that gopher was best stewed---that is, when the one eating it was stewed."~~

Well, I was waiting around in midtown Washington today, waiting to have a talk with the President, so I didn't have broiled gopher or any of those exotic things they are dishing out on Capitol Hill. I was luckier than that. Sitting at the table next to me at the New Willard, was Pete Ford, an old friend from Martinsville, Virginia, whom I hadn't seen in years. Pete is on his way to the headwaters of the Amazon, for wild rubber. Anyhow, said Pete:- "Lowell, you all will starve to death in this man's town, unless you bring your own food." Whereupon he proceeded to call the waiter and order him to go out and have the cook prepare some food for me that he had brought up from Martinsville. Sounds fantastic? Well, that's what some of the people coming to Washington are doing - bringing their own food to the nation's capitol for fear they'll starve to death.

As for the broiled gopher they are talking about serving in the restaurants in the Capitol



Congressman Rankin says: "I always understood the gopher was best stewed. That is, when the one eating it was stewed."