

SICILY

P.I. - Sunoco Tuesday, August 17, 1943

Here's a news dispatch that may have a sensational meaning. It states that a great allied invasion fleet has been <sup>raighted</sup> ~~signed~~ off the coast of Sicily. The word comes from the enemy radio, <sup>from</sup> Rome; and <sup>it</sup> is specific in stating that the invasion fleet includes landing barges loaded with troops and tanks.

If this be true, what is the meaning? It does <sup>not</sup> seem likely that we'd be sending a big ~~invasion~~ invasion armada, with landing boats and all - to Sicily. That would be rather odd on the very day when the largest of headlines tell us the Sicilian victory is complete, the island entirely in allied hands. One can only surmise that the alleged invasion ~~for~~ fleet is meant for the Italian peninsula - a drive against the mainland launched on the very day that the Sicilian battle comes to an ~~end~~ end.

The precise position of the amphibious <sup>that is</sup> forces <sup>given</sup> is interesting. The Rome radio places the fleet off the east coast of Sicily, off Catania, at a point about fifty miles from the Italian mainland. To what part of the Italian mainland would it seem to be going? <sup>well,</sup> An expedition would hardly be on its way <sup>^</sup> to some northern point on the coast of Italy. For that would take

it through the narrow Straits of Messina - only three miles wide and the Germans on one side. The logical guess would be that such a force would be bound for the south coast - somewhere between the toe and heel.

It would be dramatic if all this turned out to be true, although, of course, <sup>it's</sup> based on nothing more than a bulletin flash by the ~~xxx~~ Rome radio - and the jittery Italians might possibly have mistaken an ordinary supply convoy for an invasion fleet.

The final act of the Sicilian campaign was performed by the Americans. This morning, <sup>U. S.</sup> ~~United States~~ armored units pushed into Messina, the city ~~at the~~ at the eastern tip of Sicily, the ~~last~~ last bit of land the Axis forces held in any organized way. There was little opposition, <sup>x</sup> except one sharp clash with a German battalion that put up a desperate last ditch fight ~~an~~ in the outskirts of Messina. The German soldiers there fought until their cartridges were exhausted. <sup>And then</sup> ~~after this~~ all was over but the shouting, <sup>^</sup> the procession of American forces into the bombed shattered harbor, the capture of which marks the completion of victory in Sicily.

The British have been slower in getting there - <sup>Montgomery</sup>~~the~~  
 Eighth Army held up by the ~~extreme~~ difficulty of the terrain  
 in which they had been operating. The British had the toughest  
 nut ~~xxx~~ to crack all along. Not that the last stage of their own  
 advance to Messina is attended by any violent fighting. What  
 hampers the British mostly is the way the Germans demolished  
 roads and bridges in the craggy mountain country.

After the fall of Messina, save the cleaning-out of  
 some isolated German positions - the usual mopping-up ~~the~~  
 campaign ends triumphantly thirty-eight days after American and  
 British forces staged their spectacular surprise landings on  
 the southern and eastern coasts of the island.

The Germans claim to have got out the bulk of the  
 troops they had left -- ~~xxx~~ evacuating them across the narrow  
~~Six~~ Straits of Messina. And allied sources believe that a  
 considerable portion of the garrison that fought the stubborn  
~~xxxxxx~~ rear guard action may have succeeded in escaping. Berlin  
 claims the fleeing Nazi troops managed to evacuate all their  
 equipment; but, this is ~~is~~ not likely. A dispatch from Madrid

gives us the statement, apparently from inside Axis sources, that the Germans got out their light armament, but had to leave their heavy equipment behind - the larger guns and tanks which they destroyed.

And now what? Well, we have that story of an invasion fleet on its way right now. And even if that particular report does not happen to be true, there is no doubt that blows against the Italian peninsula will be struck without delay. A late ~~am~~ story from London gives us the prediction that the Allies are prepared to strike swiftly for a knockout of Italy. London observers point out that it wouldn't be General Eisenhower's way to give the ~~Italians~~ Italians a breathing spell - not while the whole peninsula is clamoring for peace, especially the people of the heavily bombed cities of northern Italy.



TURIN BOMBING FOLLOW SICILY

<sup>R.A.F.</sup>  
Last night <sup>^</sup> bombers ~~of the British Royal Air Force~~

assailed the north Italian city of Turin, swinging their aim from devastated Milan. The news dispatches describe Milan as a scene of utter havoc - all a part of ~~the~~ the explosive ~~argument~~ argument to hasten Italy in getting out of the war. Last night the great industrial city of Turin bore its share of the argument - high explosive raining down.

## BOMBING

Today American flying fortresses launched a bold daylight raid - and a long distance affair it was. Flying from North Africa, the fortresses winged for more than five hundred miles across the Mediterranean and bombed Nazi targets in southern France - ~~they~~ <sup>ing</sup> smashed up two strategic airports northwest of Marseilles.

Switzerland gives us a story of two American heavy bombers forced down - on Swiss territory. ~~This happened~~ Today.

It is not indicated what the ~~big~~ <sup>just</sup> big bombers ~~might have been~~ <sup>were</sup> doing; ~~in that neighborhood - unless, of course they were~~ <sup>but, they may have been</sup> a couple ~~of~~ <sup>those</sup> fortresses that took part in the great raid across the Mediterranean.

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During the past few days there has been a comparative let-up in the bombing of Germany, but the Nazis themselves know that the lull is not due to last long. The evacuation of threatened German cities goes on apace, Berlin especially. Stockholm today tells us that virtually all the government departments of the Hitler regime have already been moved. Most of them

have been transferred to towns in the nearby Prussian province of Brandenburg. Another story states that the Hitler foreign office has been moved to Vienna. All of which indicates that the Nazis

expect Berlin to become a second <sup>Evidently</sup> Hamburg. They anticipate a concentrated <sup>in</sup> ~~application~~ of bombing <sup>that was</sup> to wipe out the German capital, <sup>just as Germany's number one</sup> ~~the same way the great~~ seaport was ~~be~~ knocked out of the war.

## RUSSIA

In the Russian war we hear of what is called - a super-offensive. Berlin uses that term in describing a Russian assault launched southeast of Kharkov. Moscow is not so clear about the Red Army super-offensive, and speaks mostly of German counter attacks in the Kharkov area. The Russians <sup>emphasize</sup> ~~emphasize~~ increasing enemy resistance, with the Nazis fighting desperately to hold the ~~great~~ great Ukrainian city. This ~~is quite~~ in contrast with the melodramatic Berlin headline telling of a Soviet super-offensive.

Way to the north of Kharkov, on the front facing Moscow, the Russians are stepping up their drive aimed at Bryansk, the key fortress to the whole German front in that area. Moscow tells of five Red Army columns converging toward Bryansk, capturing scores of towns and villages.



RICKENBACKER

A sobering word to put a check on all <sup>our</sup> ~~that~~ optimism <sup>today</sup> comes from Captain Eddie Rickenbacker who has just returned from a fifty-five thousand mile tour of all the fighting fronts. Rick has been on an official mission for Secretary of War Stimson, has seen things at first hand, and has had access to the best military opinion of the leaders at the scenes of fighting.

"Germany", says he, "will not even crack before the fall of Nineteen Forty-four at the best - at our present rate of progress toward total victory". In other words, Germany will not only last this year but most of next year.

And Then, we have Japan to deal with, after Nazi Germany has been overthrown. <sup>And that he says</sup> ~~That~~ will take another year - or more.

Add it all up and you have several more years of war at least.

~~And~~ "Only a miracle can bring victory sooner", says Rickenbacker.

<sup>along with this so</sup> ~~You can add this to~~ the stern realistic statements made last night by War Mobilization Director Byrnes, who gave the President as an authority for warnings against over-optimism.

Yesterday a lot of people were glibly referring to an alleged statement made by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who

was said to have predicted that the European war would end in six months. It now turns out that Churchill didn't say anything of the sort. ~~He~~ declares that he was misquoted.

At his news conference today, Captain Rickenbacker had still another striking thing to say, this in connection with Soviet Russia, where he spent a good deal of time and looked things over a lot. How communistic is Russia? Rick answers this as follows:- "Russia" says he, "may come out of this war the greatest democracy in the world, while if we continue to ~~move~~ move to the left as we are doing, we may easily be Bolshevik at the end of the war". That certainly would be a strange reversal. ~~We might have~~ <sup>To have</sup> Stalin uttering grave warnings against the Red menace of the U.S.A. *! That would be startling.*

a ground battle of it. This is predicted by Admiral Wilkinson, Commander of the Amphibious forces in the South Pacific. So all may not be so lyric and idyllic on Vella Lavella.

# RETAKE

From allied headquarters in the southwest Pacific, we hear that the Americans expect trouble at Vella Lavella. That place with the lilting, liquid name is the island seized by ~~United States~~ <sup>American</sup> forces over the weekend. Vella Lavella is a strategic place, lying to the north of Kolombangara. Our ~~forces at Munda~~ <sup>lads on</sup> Munda by-passed Kolombangara in seizing Vella Lavella. In other words, they skipped a Jap-controlled island in a bold thrust.

~~Our~~ <sup>The American</sup> amphibious forces encountered little opposition at Vella Lavella - although they found three hundred and fifty Japs ashore. These however, were survivors of Jap warships that had been sunk nearby. Few had any weapons, and were quickly rounded up. So all was smooth and easy - but not for ~~as~~ long. Jap air attacks began immediately - a series of bombing assaults launched against the ~~Americans~~ <sup>Yanks</sup> on Vella Lavella. These, however, were beaten off in violent air battles, <sup>with</sup> our ground forces suffering only minor loss. <sup>So. But the</sup> ~~the enemy~~ enemy is expected to continue the attacks from the sky. ~~And~~ Not only that, - the American command believes the Japs will try to sneak landing ~~for~~ parties to Vella Lavella and put some troops ashore ~~to~~ to make



a ground battle of it. This is predicted by Admiral Wilkinson, Commander of the Amphibious forces in the South Pacific. So all may not be so lyric and idyllic on Vella Lavella.

7 We hear a lot, at least I do, about the difficulty of

Uncle Sam

or ever establishing really friendly relations with <sup>his</sup> ~~our~~ Latin

American neighbors. That is, we hear that they are interested

mainly

~~only~~ in our Lend-Lease policy -- what they can get out of us --; and  
we are constantly hearing how little  
~~and how~~ the two continents have ~~so little~~ in common.

Well, there are ways in which we can be good neighbors,

ways that we can do much toward establishing strong bonds of

friendship. <sup>and</sup> I encountered one of them today. On a train I met

three young women from South America who have just arrived in this

country to study Infantile Paralysis -- methods of treatment.

These three are a part of a larger group of fifty-two, some of

whom are already here and the rest ~~are~~ on their way, fifty-two

South American nurses who are to study in this country under the

famous Australian Nurse Kenny, at the University of Minnesota.

These nurses are all the guests of the Readers Digest, which

remarkable magazine sent one of its staff editors, Lois Mattox

Miller, on a four months tour of South America to extend this

invitation, and arrange for the sending of the nurses.

8 Miss Miller, by the way, was in Brazil just at

the time when the President's son <sup>there</sup> died from this dread malady.

So it was all much in the minds of the Brazilian people.

And no one can tell me that cooperation of that kind can do anything but improve relations between north and south

America and help create a lasting bond of friendship between

the two continents. <sup>TP</sup> We are doing many things like that. <sup>It's</sup> Not

all just Lend-Lease. True, there was a time when South

America was much nearer Europe than ~~it was~~ to us. But the two-

hundred-mile-an-hour sub-stratosphere planes of Pan

American and Panagra have changed all that.

1/2  
~~And now Hugh, what have you to say? ~~what~~ What's on your mind tonight?~~

## CONFERENCE

It is likely enough that right now President Roosevelt is in Quebec, and that soon he'll be sitting down to dinner with ~~with~~ a distinguished company headed by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and the Earl of Athlone, ~~the~~ Governor -General of Canada. The supposition is, in fact, based on the presence of the Earl of Athlone in Quebec. He arrived there today - from Ottawa, the Canadian capital.

As the Governor General of ~~of~~ the Dominion, it would be his duty to welcome the President of the United States on an official visit to Canada, the ~~Earl~~ acting in behalf of the sovereign, King George. The word is that he will return to Ottawa tonight - after' he ~~xxx~~ has completed his task ~~xxxxx~~ of welcoming the President and entertaining him at dinner.

The latest from Quebec, a dispatch just in, tells us that the newest Roosevelt-Churchill conferences will begin immediately, tomorrow' - the President and Prime Minister having ~~already~~ already had some preliminary talks at Hyde Park. It is believed that the discussions will feature large diplomatic angles. This opinion is based on the fact that among those to



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participate in the conversations will be Cordell Hull, American Secretary of State, and Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary. Quebec gives us the opinion that one immediate topic will be the action of the Badoglio government in declaring Rome an open city. We may have a Roosevelt-Churchill decision on that point as early as tomorrow.

And now, Hugh, What have you to say?  
What's on your mind tonight?