

AFRICA

P.J. - Sumoco. Monday, Dec. 14, 1942.

In Africa, the situation at Dakar seems to have been cleared up completely. We heard a couple of weeks ago that the important French port on the West African coast was coming over to our side - according to arrangements negotiated by General Eisenhower. Today we hear from Washington that the French authorities at Dakar have announced that they are now firmly on the side of the United Nations. They have released the British they had interned, and today the Dakar radio stated: "On our frontiers the situation is completely clarified, no dispute separates us any longer from the British."

One key factor all along has been the anger of the Dakar French ~~against the British - this~~ because of the futile attack that the British and Free French made against that port earlier in the war. Now all resentment is disclaimed, and today's announcement would

appear to mean that our side will have the use of the French naval forces at Dakar; ~~These include~~ a number of warships, *including the giant battleships Richelieu.*

In Libya, the British today were chasing Rommel again. The Nazi Afrika Korps abandoned its fortified positions at El Agheila without a fight.

They retreated at the first sign of <sup>a</sup>~~the~~ British thrust.

~~and~~ *A7* It is disclosed today that General Montgomery's Eighth Army had no chance to launch the major assault that it had been preparing. A few thrusts were made against Rommel's line, mere reconnaissance affairs.

But apparently the Nazis thought that the minor attacks were the beginning of the all-out offensive that they were expecting, and they cleared out before the Eighth Army could hit them.

It's uncertain what Rommel will do now, where he will go. There is some supposition that he will

make a stand at a place called Misourata, two hundred and eighty-five miles to the rear of El Agheila. ~~It is~~

~~Much closer, of course, to Tripoli, where Rommel gets most of his supplies. The supply route would be shortened, and he might try to make a stand at Misourata.~~  
Or, he may retire all the way to the City of Tripoli.

<sup>77</sup> Some suppose that the Afrika Korps may try to crash into Tunisia, break through the British and American lines there, and join the Germans in the defense of the area of Bizerte. That kind of maneuvering would complicate things in Tunis<sup>ia</sup> and turn the campaign into something of a free-for-all tangle.

Not much is reported <sup>about</sup> ~~in~~ the tip of Tunisia.

The only ground action <sup>we hear of</sup> ~~reported~~ today consists of the smashing of an Axis motorized column. This was driving forward in the Tebourba area, and was broken up by Allied artillery fire. The success accomplished by our

guns was announced by a <sup>War Dept</sup> ~~war~~ bulletin today, which adds,  
"otherwise activity was limited to patrolling."

<sup>H</sup> The Army communique tells of air action, with our heavy bombers hitting the docks of Bizerte and Tunis. Our medium bombers smashed the enemy at a couple of points, and our fighter planes attacked ground targets - strafing Nazi troops and supply lines. The night before last, five enemy bombers were shot down.

FRENCH

The London government today turned over to General DeGaulle's Fighting French the administration of the island of Madagascar. ~~The British took Madagascar from the Vichy French, and now have recognized the DeGaulle group as the legitimate government of the island.~~

This is taken to mean a London reaffirmation of confidence in DeGaulle, and it may have some bearing on the quarrel concerning North Africa. The DeGaulle people are bitterly protesting the supremacy there of the former Vichy chieftain, Admiral Darlan. So, on the one hand <sup>we</sup> ~~they~~ recognize Darlan in North Africa, while on the other hand Madagascar is turned over to DeGaulle.

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## RUSSIA

On the bitterly cold warfront in Russia, the Germans launched a blow to crack the southern arm of the Soviet pincers movement in the Stalingrad area. This attempt to smash the trap was defeated. So we are told by Moscow, which adds that Red Army troops have penetrated the second enemy line of defense in the southern outskirts of Stalingrad.

Today we have a new figure for German casualties in the Russian war. The Soviet Army newspaper, RED STAR, states that the Nazis have lost more than eight million, killed, wounded or captured, since they launched their offensive against the Soviets last year. Eight million might seem to constitute most of Germany's manpower, but that is the figure which Moscow gives.

## HIMALAYAS

One of the most daring of rescues was reported from India today:— ~~We are given~~ the story of how an American Army pilot saved two Army airmen who were lost in the lofty mountain wilds of the Himalayas.

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Three weeks ago, a United States transport plane was flying on <sup>that new</sup> ~~the~~ run between India and China.

That route is across the eastern end of the Himalayas,

"<sup>over the</sup> ~~The plane was~~ the world's greatest mountain range. <sup>hump,</sup> the boys call it. Yes, the world's highest <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ plane was piloted by Captain William Owens of Atlanta, Georgia, and aboard it were Lieutenant Cecil Williams of

Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and Corporal ~~Mathew~~ <sup>of Hammonton,</sup> Campabella ~~of Hamilton,~~ New Jersey. Deep in the mountains, trouble <sup>Himalayan</sup> developed - ice. The weather was atrocious and the

big transport collected such a weight of ice, that it was losing altitude, was being forced down. The pilot thought the plane was doomed, and he ordered the other two men to jump, take to their parachutes. They did,

floating down in as frightful a mountain wilderness as you will find on this earth. The pilot stuck to his plane, and accomplished what seemed to be a miracle. He managed to get to an airport.

Thereafter, Lieutenant Williams and Corporal Campabella were missing. Planes went out over the <sup>Himalayas</sup> ~~mountains~~, scouting for them. No luck. Then three weeks later, a Tibetan runner arrived at the United States Army Transport Headquarters. And he gave the location of the two men. They were ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ marooned deep in <sup>an unmapped</sup> ~~a poorly charted~~ section of the Himalayas, <sup>from where they</sup> almost unknown; - ~~and~~ couldn't get out.

5)   
 But, ~~an~~ Army transport plane went out and found the place. ~~It was a~~ giant canyon surrounded by cliffs, <sup>cliffs</sup> three thousand feet high. The rocky walls rose from a small <sup>meadow</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~ - about three hundred yards long. The transport plane couldn't possibly land there. It seemed



as if no airplane ever could. However, when the word was brought back to headquarters, Major Paul Groze

of Salt Lake City <sup>said</sup> ~~thought~~ he would try. ~~He was the~~

~~Commander of a fighter squadron, and took off in one~~

~~of his~~ <sup>In a</sup> small speedy <sup>fighter</sup> planes. ~~He~~ <sup>he</sup> flew to <sup>Lost Horizon</sup> that canyon,

at the bottom of which the two ~~lost~~ airmen were

hacking away the limbs of trees to provide a little

landing space. Major Groze swooped down into the

canyon, and managed to land. <sup>Then he</sup> ~~He~~ took aboard the

Corporal, and tried to take off. He made five attempts-

before he was able to get his plane into the air. and

~~xxxxxxxx~~ gain enough altitude to clear <sup>those</sup> ~~the~~ three

thousand ~~xxx~~ foot cliffs.

It was a prodigy of skillful piloting. <sup>And then</sup>

the Major did it all over again. Having flown the

Corporal to transport headquarters, he went back to the

<sup>Shangri La</sup>

~~the~~ canyon and brought out the Lieutenant.

NEW GUINEA

Out in the New Guinea jungles, a man without a country has been decorated for heroism and recommended for an officer's commission. He is Sergeant Herman Bottchner, who played a great part in the wiping out of the Japs at Buna. The <sup>is</sup> man without a country led a detachment of <sup>our</sup> troops in a fighting advance to a position that split the ~~enemy~~ <sup>Jap</sup> force in two. This enabled the Australians and Americans to eliminate one-half, and then the other - and capture Buna.

Sergeant Bottchner is a German by birth. He came from a town near Berlin, immigrated to the United States, and became an American citizen. Then he lost his citizenship - because during the <sup>recent</sup> Spanish Civil War he went to Spain and enlisted as a private in the International Brigade. The law was that any American joining a foreign army in war was automatically

deprived of his citizenship. So that left Bottchner a man without a country. <sup>H</sup> In Spain he became a captain, and when the Civil War ended, returned to the United States. Right after Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the Army, which did not change his technical status of having no citizenship, no country.

In the New Guinea exploit, he had twelve men left in his party when they seized and fortified the strategic position that cut the Japs in two. Bottchner was wounded several times, but made his way back through the jungle and fetched water and bandages for his companions. <sup>H</sup> They repelled a Jap attack, but were bothered badly by an enemy machine gun post that was raking their position. Bottchner loaded his pockets with hand grenades, crawled out, and blasted the machine gun post, silencing it. He was wounded again. Another attack repelled, and the Japs built a barricade

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to stop the Americans. Bottchner scored a direct hit  
with a bomb fired from a mortar and blew the barricade  
to bits.

*this former German, now (X)*

All of which would seem to show that ~~the~~ man

without a country has given heroic service to the  
country that technically is not his.

## FREIGHTER

The Japs have been saying that they intend to supply Nazi Germany with some of the products of the great tropical empire that our Far Eastern enemy has seized - things like oil and rubber from <sup>Malaya</sup> ~~the land~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~in~~ the Dutch East Indies. The question was - How could the Japs ever get such materials to the Nazis?

Today we have an indication of how they are trying. A dispatch from Sidney, Australia, tells of a German freighter in the Indian Ocean - an eight thousand tonner that was intercepted by Allied warships. The German crew aboard scuttled their ship. They were made prisoners - seventy-eight of them.

Today it was revealed that the Nazi freighter was loaded with Japanese goods, ~~it was~~ trying to make a sneak voyage from Japan to Europe - <sup>an attempt to</sup> ~~trying to~~ carry out the Japanese promise to send badly needed supplies to the Nazis.

NEWSPAPERS

25)  
The War Labor Board intervened today to stop the newspaper strike in New York. This morning, New Yorkers went to their news stands, but found no papers; - ~~this~~ because of a strike by newspaper delivery workers. Later on, only one afternoon paper appeared - not connected with the strike.

The War Labor Board states that the walkout is a violation of union pledges that there would be no strikes in wartime. And the Board calls upon the newspaper New York ~~xxx~~ deliverers to return to work promptly.

In Albany, Governor Poletti announces that he has asked the New York State Mediation Board to take action - "make every effort to mediate the existing dispute," says he.

MRS. ROOSEVELT

There's one particular news conference in this country to which no newsman ever goes. Mr. Reporter stays strictly away from that news event. He's not allowed in -- and he will continue to be excluded. This was decided today by a lady -- the First Lady, in fact.

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Mrs. Roosevelt's news conferences in Washington have always been limited to women reporters, <sup>and</sup> no man has ever challenged that all feminine fact. That is -- not until recently. Last week Washington Correspondent Gordon Cole announced that he wanted to attend the First Lady's news conferences. He placed his demand before the organization of newspaper women known as Mrs. Roosevelt's Press Conference Association. ~~They~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~did not turn him down.~~ They placed the question before Mrs. Roosevelt herself. ~~And~~ Today she <sup>handed down</sup> ~~gave~~ her verdict. Nothing doing. The First Lady explained that she, in her own words: "considers this a woman's conference dealing with questions of interest to women

with a woman's point of view."

So if any mere male-news-gatherer wants to get in, he'll have to put on a silk, swishy skirt, an off-the-face-bonnet, and a pair of high-heeled shoes.



BLONDES

The ceremonies that attend the launching of a ship were the subject of testimony before a Congressional Committee today. The Committee was considering charges of irregular practices connected with the building of ships, and one witness was George B. Howell, President of a Florida concern that turns out tonnage.

There has been talk about the money spent on ceremonies of launching. It has been said that large sums of government cash have been used to buy ~~xxxxx~~ presents for the sponsors. You know - the ladies who christen the ships with bottles of champagne. Today, Shipbuilding<sup>er</sup>~~ing~~ Howell entered a denial. He admitted that the sponsors get valuable gifts, presents that sometimes cost as much as three hundred dollars each. "I saw an admiral's wife who launched a battleship get a silver bowl so big she couldn't lift it," said he.

He contended, however, that the gifts were purchased by contributions - and not by the government. "The Navy, <sup>he</sup> ~~he~~ said, ~~he~~ "allows only twenty-five dollars for this part of the ceremony.

The testimony went on to the question of the looks of the sponsors. With all those innumerable vessels sliding down the ways, the ladies who do the christening are sometimes wives of high officials. And more often they are simply decorative, young women with good looks. Shipbuilder Howell stated that these charming sponsors are selected by the Navy, and the question arose, "Has the Navy any particular preference regarding types of pulchritude?"

"Do they pick bondes or brunettes," asked Congressman Culkin of New York. - *interestedly,*

To which the witness replied; *warmly;* "They do not pick enough blondes to suit me."

This is a point that I want to emphasize - this ardent homage paid to blondes. I hope it will help me ~~to~~ square myself with the young lady who wrote me a sharp letter of criticism the other day. She did not like ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> bit of news I told ~~me~~ about blondes and brunettes - with the brunettes represented ~~as~~ being more stable and steady. My fair critic wrote as follows:

8/2  
"Dear Sir - I do not think much of what you said about the blondes. Brunettes are as flighty, flirty and deceitful as the blondes, and some are more so.

*she continues,*  
I write this <sup>"</sup>to let you know that for once you have made a great mistake, and <sup>"</sup>hope you can say something better for us blondes another time." Signed "Ms. Flighty!"

9/2  
Well, this is the time - as I echo the words of the romantic shipbuilder: "They do not pick enough blondes to suit me." What say you, Hugh.