THE CHARLOTTE NEWS ★★★★ Final

ESTABLISHED 1888 — CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1944 — 16 Pages—Price Five Cents

ALLIED PLANES AND GUNS ROUT NAZIS FROM MT. CASSINO ABBEY

Little Boy Is Tragic Figure Of Man's War

By HAL BOYLE

A REGIMENTAL AID STATION ON THE RAPIDO RIVER FRONT, Feb. 1—(Delayed)—(AP)—Leonardo probably will die.

He is eight years old, and he shivered as he sat barelegged on an Army cot this raw morning while an American medic dressed a great gash in his head left more than a month ago by a piece of shrapnel.

BOYLE

The shell destroyed his home Dec. 27 and tore away a five-inch piece of his scalp and ripped part of his skull.

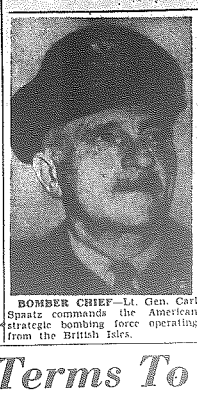
Kindly old Thomas Gatana, a neighbor who used to live in Boston, told in half-forgotten English what else the shell did.

"It make his mother die. It kill grandmother. It break her into three four pieces. His father? Ever since then his father he walk like a man drunk."

Old Gatana brought the boy and his brother, Dominic, 13, to the aid station for a fresh dressing. There was nothing wrong with Dominic. He just came along to see his younger brother through.

When Leonardo, his small hand in Gatana's work-gnarled fist, crept timidly into the aid station on the second floor of an Italian farmhouse, the

See REPORTER'S on page 4



BOMBER CHIEF—Lt. Gen. Carl Spaatz commands the American strategic bombing force operating from the British Isles.

Nazi Peril Grows With Korsun Fall

Trapped Enemy Ranks Thinned

By EDDY GILMORE

MOSCOW — (AP) — The Red Army has halted a heavy tank attack launched by the Germans northwest of Zvenigorodka in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue large Nazi forces hopelessly trapped in the Cherkasy pocket, the Army newspaper Red Star said today, while at the northern end of the front two Soviet armies are moving closer to the German-held stronghold of Pskov.

Red Star declared that the German tank attack in the northwest corner of the Upper Dnieper Bend was exceedingly fierce and that Field Marshal Fritz Von Manstein apparently was unmindful of the amount of men and machines he was losing. It was hurled against a narrow sector and was stopped after a bright, wedge-like penetration, the paper added.

Fighting was most violent northwest of Zvenigorodka and west of captured Korsun, core of Nazi resistance in the Cherkasy death ring, Red Star pointed out that the ranks of the enemy within the trap had been markedly reduced and that even if a few tanks crashed the Red Army lines, the Germans' great losses would in no way compensate them for what they would find.

LARGE NUMBER LOST

Of the 100,000 to 150,000 Germans originally reported trapped by the Red Army, there is reason to believe that no more than 50,000 remain, Red Star said. The capture of Korsun, where resistance was especially fierce, saw many Nazis die, dispatches said, while the battles of the last few days have greatly increased the enemy death toll, as the Russians mercilessly slaughtered all those who refused to surrender.

Describing the unsuccessful German attempt at rescue, Red Star said that Soviet Stormovik dive bombers turned the rolling land northwest of Zvenigorodka into a field of flaming tanks, while Russian artillery fired over open sights at the waves of German armor battering at the Red Army's outer ration.

Russian Terms To Finland Reported

LONDON—(AP)—Soviet Russia was reported today to have advised Finland that she has no drastic designs upon Finnish territory but that if the Finns want peace they must surrender unconditionally and grant Russian forces use of all their air and sea bases as well as internal communications facilities.

The London News-Chronicle in a dispatch from Stockholm said that these terms had been "intimated unofficially" to Finnish leaders who arrived recently in the

STOCKHOLM — (AP) — The Finnish leader Juho Kusti Paasikivi has conferred with the Russian Minister to Sweden, Mme. Alexandra Kollantay, and expects to meet with her again, a Finnish Legation source said today.

Paasikivi, a former Finnish Cabinet minister, has been a leader in the faction seeking peace with Soviet Russia.

There were rumors that Russian terms for an armistice were being sent to Helsinki today, but no confirmation of these reports could be found.

Swedish capital, presumably for the purpose of sounding out the Russians on the subject of peace

SAYS FINNS TO WAIT

At the same time Walter Talz Stechbarn correspondent of The London Daily Mail, said in a somewhat similar dispatch:

"The impression I get is that Finland will be out of the war in a matter of weeks and possibly days."

There was no immediate confirmation of these reports from any source, and neither Helsinki nor Moscow gave any intimation that contact had been established as a basis for peace negotiations.

In fact Helsinki dispatches, passed by the Finnish censors and relayed here through Stockholm, said there was no official indication that the Government had asked Russia's terms or was even ready to do so.

It was clear, however, that the Finnish majority party, the Social Democrats, was pressing strongly upon the Government to act and there were some intimations that the issue might precipitate a cabinet crisis.

A summary of purely unofficial reports gave this pic-

See RUSSIAN on page 6

Mrs. Bost Resigns

WINSTON-SALEM — (AP) — W. A. Blair, chairman of the State Board of Welfare, announced today that Mrs. W. T. Bost had resigned as State Commissioner of Charities and Public Welfare.

He said she did not specify the date for termination of her services.

Mrs. Bost will have completed fourteen years as Commissioner in April. Blair said he presumed she would desire to be relieved of her post by that time.

Chairman Blair said he would appoint a committee immediately to consider appointment of the successor to Mrs. Bost.

He praised her highly for her outstanding work over a long span of years.

"Mrs. Bost has made a fine Commissioner," he said, "and we hate to give her up. But we recognize that she is entitled to a rest after fourteen years of such faithful and distinguished service. She has worked night and day at her job."

Relief Action Recommended

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Senate passed unanimously today a resolution calling on Secretary of State Hull to cooperate with Great Britain, Sweden and Switzerland in setting up a relief system to feed starving populations in Helgium, Norway, Poland, The Netherlands, Greece, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

Approved precedents for the Foreign Relations Committee's action, adoption had been urged by former President Hoover and others, the measure does not require those actions. It has no force of law, revising merely as a recommendation to Hull.

Pole Exile Leader Puts Off Trip To America

LONDON — (AP) — Premier Stanislaw Mikolajczyk of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London has indefinitely postponed a scheduled visit to the United States, it was announced today, because his presence here is necessary in connection with attempts to settle the Russian-Polish dispute.

Mikolajczyk announced several weeks ago that he planned to go to the United States to present his Government's views to Washington.

Raid On Rome Is Reported

LONDON — (AP) — The Rome radio said that Rome was bombed at 10:30 A. M. today.

"Allied planes dived down to machine-gun the population," the broadcast asserted.

Nazi Vets From Russia Fight "American Texans"

STOCKHOLM — (AP) — German veterans of the Russian front are fighting against "Americans from Texas" in the battle for Cassino, the German-controlled Scandinavian Telegraph Bureau said today.

The battle was likened to Stalingrad, with the Texans "just as good fighters as the German East front fighters."

British Brigadier Is Captured In Albania

CAIRO — (AP) — The capture of British Brig. Edmund F. Davies, chief of an Allied military mission to the Albanian Partisans, was announced officially today.

Davies was severely wounded by Albanians who were fighting with the Germans during a surprise attack early in January and now is in a Tirana hospital in a serious condition.

Despite his capture, the announcement said, the Allied military mission will carry on.

Hopes For Finland To Withdraw Mount

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER

WASHINGTON — (AP) — American officials are more hopeful now of Finland's getting out of the war than they have been for almost a year.

The presence of several Finnish leaders in Stockholm, a logical spot for preliminary peace negotiations, has brought a reappraisal here of the chances for a Russo-Finnish settlement—and they are pronounced fairly good.

There is little belief that Russian demands at this time would be too severe for the Helsinki Government in view of the military situation in which the northern nation now finds itself.

Principally it is believed that the Russians would be willing to make an armistice based on the boundaries set up in March, 1940, after the last Russo-Finnish War, which deprived the Finns of 16,000 square miles of territory, including the city of Viipuri and the naval base of Hangoe, on the Baltic Sea.

It was reported from London that Russia has intimated her willingness to forego her lease of the naval base but that she wishes cession by Finland of the Arctic port of Petsamo.

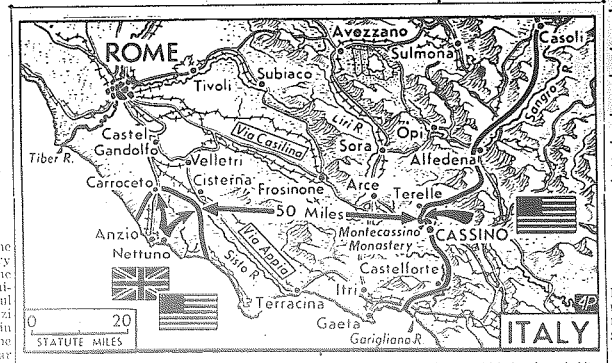
NOTHING ELSE TO DO

The Finns might not like the Russian armistice terms but there is nothing they can do about it except keep fighting in the certain knowledge that eventually they will face overwhelming assault. The Russians want the territory, as part of their Karelo-Finnish republic, presumably to afford greater protection to the city of Leningrad, and improve their naval position in the Baltic.

Another problem the Finns face in any peace move is what to do about German troops now in their country. Estimated at three to six divisions, these are threatened with loss of their supply lines through the Baltic as Russian Armies advance into Estonia.

Still a third problem has to do with supplies for the Finns themselves. Finland must import a large part of its food as well as its oil. This probably could be solved with help from Sweden, although Russian assistance also would be necessary and the aid of the United States and Great Britain might be required.

The Allies would win two great advantages in getting Finland out of the war. Russia would be relieved of military commitments on that front and Germany would be deprived of a co-belligerent, giving the German people one more warning of their own eventual defeat.



MT. CASSINO ATTACKED—American bombers today struck at the bottleneck which has been holding up the advance of U. S. troops in the Cassino area when explosives were rained on the old Benedictine Monastery (Montacassino Monastery). Germans had converted the peak into a fortress to pepper the doughboys. Arrows on this map denote the positions of Allied troops who have taken the initiative in fighting in the beachhead sector south of Rome, and have gained ground in the Cassino region.

Ancient Monastery Blasted By Allied Bombs And Shells

By LYNN HEINZERLING AND GEORGE TUCKER

NAPLES—(AP)—Waves of Flying Fortresses dropped bombs on the centuries-old Benedictine monastery at Mt. Cassino today to help clear the road to Rome, routing almost 300 Germans from the lofty observation post where they had directed murderous fire against American doughboys.

As the smoke of the aerial bombardment died down, Allied big guns started shelling the Abbey.

The first aerial attack came about 9:30 A. M. (4:30 A. M., Eastern War Time) and sent from 50 to a hundred uninformed German soldiers running from the Monastery, ground observers reported to Allied Headquarters.

Once they appeared in the open, Allied artillerymen opened up with a barrage of shells that covered the terrain over which the Nazis were fleeing.

A second wave of bombers followed, sending an estimated 200 more Germans out of the Monastery. They likewise were engaged by artillery.

The Monastery, founded fourteen centuries ago, is perched on Mt. Cassino overlooking the town of Cassino and dominating the road which the Germans hold as a cornerstone of their desperately resisting troops in Cassino.

NAZI FORTRESS

Because of its strategic position the Germans had converted the Monastery into a fortress and an important key for their network of fortifications, 70 miles southeast of Rome.

Direct hits were scored by the Fortresses, but there was no immediate estimate as to the extent of the damage inflicted.

"Ground troops of the 15th Army were onlookers as our Air Force dropped bombs on the Monastery and German network of defenses on Abbey Hill this morning," an Allied Headquarters statement said. "Ground observers reported direct hits on the massive structure."

A Reuters correspondent with the Fifth Army said Maranello and Mitchells bombed the Abbey again this afternoon.

A Berlin broadcast declared the Monastery was in flames from the morning attack, saying "as there were no German troops in the Abbey nor in its neighborhood at the time of the bombing, no fire-fighting appliances were available. Therefore the buildings could not be saved."

High explosives from at least two strings of bombs smashed directly on the roof of the sturdy old Abbey, founded in 529 A. D. by St. Benedict.

Nazi troops have taken up positions there, Allied Headquarters declared, to send murderous fire against U. S. troops assaulting the hill overlooking the town of Cassino.

Smoke poured from the roof of the Abbey itself, and the earth-shaking bombs sent up great plumes of gray and black smoke.

Max Hill, radio reporter, sent an estimate that the monastery received about 50 direct hits and said it was in partial ruins. "The outer walls of the ancient monastery are still standing, but the blow done with its cross is gone, and there are gaping holes in the walls."

The Fifth Army has fought for more than two weeks to enter the town of Cassino and the rocky peaks around the Abbey without damaging the old monastery.

But the slopes of monastery hill have been honey-combed with German machine-gun nests and sniper positions, and Allied officers asserted the enemy has been using the monastery itself for machine-gun posts and artillery observation, and also as a cover for Germans defending the hill.

German use of the monastery

See ANCIENT on page 6

U. S. Forces Occupy Vitiaz Strait Island

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC—(AP)—Bloodless occupation of Rooke (Umboi) Island in the important Vitiaz Strait between New Guinea and New Britain was announced today in Gen. Douglas MacArthur's communique which told also of a 326-ton bombing of Japan's shattered Rabaul and Kavieng bases.

Americans, who warmed ashore Saturday met no opposition, apparently the Japanese had moved out some time before, considering their position unhealthful in view of occupation of both the Huon Peninsula of New Guinea and the western tip of New Britain, on each side.

VALUABLE TO ALLIES

A headquarters spokesman described Rooke Island as quite valuable to the Allies. It provides with nearby Long Island which we took Dec. 26, control of both Vitiaz and Dampier Straits through which Allied shipping may eventually flow into the Bismarck Sea and Japan's Caroline Islands to the north.

The stepped-up offensive against Rabaul on New Britain continued Sunday with a heavy raid by 200 planes of all categories which unloaded 129 tons of bombs on the Lakunai, Tobera and Vunakanau airdromes with excellent effect. At least seven enemy interceptors were downed, while we lost three planes.

Kavieng, on the northeastern end of neighboring New Ireland, was hit by 147 tons of bombs which smashed the airdrome, demolished two parked bombers and blew up an ammunition dump. No interception was encountered.

Further around in the Bismarck Archipelago the Admiralty Islands were struck by medium bombers whose 50 tons of bombs caused considerable damage.

Weather on the northeastern coast of New Guinea also was bombed, our attack planes damaging a runway of the airfield, destroying seven planes on the ground and leaving a 3,000-ton cargo ship afire in the harbor.

American Marines advancing through rugged country on the north coast of New Britain drove more than three more miles to Gavisi village near Cape Merisiny. They are now about 21 miles from the Cape Gloucester invasion point.

U. S. Bombers Attack France

LONDON— (AP) —American bombers today attacked German installations in Southern France for the fourth time in five days, after earlier smashes against targets in the same area by American Marauders and RAF medium fighter bombers.

Swedish Red Cross Official In England

LONDON—(AP)—Count Folke Bernadotte, vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross, has arrived in Britain to discuss a further possible exchange of British and German war prisoners. He supervised technical arrangements for the exchange last October.

Trade Isle Air Punches

U. S. PACIFIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS, PEARL HARBOR—(AP)—The Americans and Japanese have traded aerial punches in the Marshall Islands, with the American getting in the hardest licks by a three-day pounding of Eniwetok Atoll and its important airfield.

The Navy said that United States carrier planes, in six separate strikes, caused severe damage to the air base which the enemy used to ferry planes into the Marshalls from the Carolines. There was no ground fire or fighter opposition.

Eniwetok previously was attacked heavily by carrier planes on Jan. 30 and Feb. 5.

JAPS HIT ROI

Roi Island of Kwajalein Atoll was the target of the Japanese making their first raid on American positions in the Marshalls.

Adm. Chester W. Nimitz said the enemy attack, made Friday night, caused only "moderate damage and casualties."

Embargo On Shipping In The Bay Of Biscay

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Secretary of the Navy Knox reported today that the British have clamped an embargo on shipping through the Bay of Biscay that will be a major step toward halting completely any movement of supplies into Germany.

He told a news conference that the action parallels the efforts of the American Fleet to halt blockade runners moving from Japanese held ports with war materials vitally needed by Germany.

"It will reduce to a minimum and eventually eliminate transport of goods to Germany through France," he said.

PACIFIC REPORT

Knox reported that American carrier and land-based planes are "operating at will" in the Marshall Islands area of the Pacific and are carrying our attacks on Islands between the Marshalls and Truk, major Japanese naval base in the South Pacific.

He said Islands in the eastern group of the Marshalls cut off from supplies by American occupation of Kwajalein, are facing serious problems and that garrisons on those islands may face starvation.

Knox said that American bombers attacking enemy bases throughout the Mid-Pacific are meeting only meager Japanese fighter opposition and light anti-aircraft fire, indicating the enemy is short of ammunition and planes.

In the South Pacific, he reported American air forces are "vigorously pounding away" at Japanese installations in and around Rabaul which he said "practically lost its usefulness as a major base."

Knox, referring to them as "the humor department," quoted Tokyo broadcasts asserting that since the first of the year 1,065 American planes have been shot down in action in the Rabaul area. On the contrary, he said, our losses there "I think are approximately 30 or 40 planes."

Knox reported in connection with the Bay of Biscay embargo that he believed it would halt any attempt at smuggling goods into France or Germany from Spain. "There has been considerable of that going on," he asserted.

Foes Driven From Shelter In Monastery

No Word Yet As To Whether Troops Have Occupied Positions

By EDWARD KENNEDY

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Algiers — (AP)—U. S. Flying Fortresses today bombed Mt. Cassino and its historic monastery, transformed by the Nazis into a fortress, beginning an all-out offensive to crack the German line while ground troops maintained pressure both in the Cassino and Anzio invasion bridgehead areas.

The bombs drove about 300 Germans out of the massive shelter of the monastery into the raking fire of Allied artillery, and Allied guns laid a barrage down upon the monastery and enemy hillcrest positions.

There was no information available here whether the doughboys, fighting only a few hundred yards away, had occupied the abbey after this thunderous fire, or on the extent of the damage to the monastery.

American troops have fought grimly on the slopes leading to the monastery, and many have been killed by fire from the fortifications of which the monastery was a part.

COULD DOMINATE ROAD

Once the crest of the hill is occupied, it will bring the road leading out of Cassino under Allied domination.

The bombs, some hitting the Benedictine Abbey founded in 529 A. D., rained down in support of American infantry crawling up the hill against machine-gun and artillery fire, and followed a warning to monks and citizen refugees to vacate the Abbey.

Doughboy troops battling in Cassino below were said unofficially to have occupied one-third of that bastion town in bitter house-to-house fighting.

BEACHHEAD ACTION

On the invasion bridgehead to the west Allied troops threw back a small German attack in the Carroceto (Aprilia) area, and repulsed Nazi patrol in the Cisterna in northeast of Anzio. Artillerymen broke up a German attempt to bridge a stream ten miles above Anzio at Vellemaldeta, Allied headquarters announced.

Liberators and Flying Fortresses struck powerfully yesterday at enemy rail and highway communications in Northern Italy pouring troops and supplies southward for battle. They concentrated on a triangular area between Arezzo south of Florence to Verona, Southern terminus for rail lines from Germany through the Brenner Pass.

The Fortress bombs sent great plumes of gray and black smoke spiraling above the Benedictine Monastery, blotting it from sight, with some of the explosives hitting the abbey itself, and others crashing upon German positions nearby on the top of the hill.

LEAFLET WARNING

Time-shells fired over the monastery yesterday scattered leaflets declaring:

"Italian friends, beware! We have until now been especially careful to avoid shelling Mt. Cassino monastery. The Germans know how to benefit from this. But now the fighting has swept closer and closer to its sacred precincts. The time has come when we must train our guns on the monastery itself.

"We give you warning so

See NAZIS ROUTED on page 6

Priests' Fate Is Unknown

NEW YORK —(AP)— Max Hill, reporter on the Cassino front, radioed today that Allied artillery units began shelling the Benedictine monastery on Mt. Cassino after more than 100 American planes had bombed the building, converted into an observation fortress by the Germans.

"There is no way of telling whether the priests left before the (air) attack or remained in the abbey cells," Hill said. "There were 2,000 men, women and children refugees from Cassino also in the monastery, but it is not known whether they were still there after the warning." He referred to leaflets dropped yesterday by the Allies, warning those in the monastery to leave.

"Clouds of smoke rose 2,000 feet from the first wave (of bombers), obscuring the monastery. And hardly had it cleared when the second wave laid a terrific pattern of bombs from the top to the base of the southeast slope of the monastery hill. The third wave hit the top and northeast slope while the fourth wave hit the top and west slope, where our troops have been trying to take positions."

Hill said each wave of Fortresses was made up of 30 to 36 bombers.

No Air Loss On Kurile Push

SEATTLE —(AP)— Air Commodore Leslie E. Gehres, commander of a fleet air wing in the Aleutians, reported here yesterday that air raids against Japan's northern strongholds of Paramushiro had been made "with no losses to date either by enemy action or weather; not a man scratched; only one plane scarred."

On the last mission, Feb. 4, we sent a flight of nine planes in three waves—two waves of PBY's and one of Venturas at intervals of 2 1-2 hours," he said in a Post-Intelligencer interview.

"This air attack was coordinated with the cruiser bombardment of Paramushiro."

Paying high tribute to the pilots operating out of the nation's new air bases in the Aleutians, the Commodore said they sometimes run into heavy flak over Paramushiro and occasionally night fighters come up.

Labor Racketeer Refused Parole

NEW YORK — (AP) — George Scalise, one-time $25,000-a-year international president of the Building Service Employees Union, was denied freedom today by the State Parole Board, which found him "an unsuitable parole risk" and ruled he may not appear for consideration for another two years.

The squat, voluble Chicago man was serving a five-to-ten-year State Prison term on a grand larceny conviction arising from the theft of $9,662 of union funds.

WEATHER

Fair and slightly colder tonight; partly cloudy and moderately cold tomorrow.

Today's Temperatures
2:30 P. M. 47.
Sunset Today
Sunrise Tomorrow

Additional U. S. Weather Bureau data will be found on page 6.