

Hospital Poison Mistaken for Dried Milk

Showdown With Rommel Near; Agheila, Tunis Areas Pressed

Bizerte Positions Pounded

Allied Troops Pour in, Hope To Clear Tunisia

CAIRO, Nov. 21.—(AP)—Striking swiftly beyond newly-captured Bengasi, the British Eighth army squeezed Marshal Rommel's chastised Africa corps into the approaches of the El Agheila defile Saturday night in a race to deliver a knockout to the hapless axis survivors before they could burrow into the natural defenses of that 30-mile-wide Libyan coastal strip.

British forward elements, now more than half way to Tunisia from their starting point at El Alamein in Egypt, caught up with the axis rearguard at Agheila, some 70 miles from El Agheila Friday. With the Eighth army maintaining its average advance of 30 miles a day, it appeared that the showdown clash on the heretofore unbreached El Agheila line was only a matter of hours away.

By GAYLE TALBOT Associated Press War Editor

Hard-driving allied armored columns bent upon clearing Tunisia of axis domination, pounded German defensive position about 30 miles from Tunis and Bizerte today while strong British, American and French forces were rushing to win all north Africa for the allies.

The axis army, hastily reinforced by air and sea, was striving desperately to hold its grip on a corner of Tunisia and avert an "African Dunkerque," while to the east of Tripoli Marshal Erwin Rommel was reported to be bracing his shattered remnants for a stand at the narrow pass at El Agheila.

French troops were reported hurling themselves upon German dugouts in Tunisia after American, British and Fighting Frenchmen had snatched control of an important crossroad from nazi mechanized forces.

From distant Casablanca on the Moroccan coast, American and British troops were streaming eastward to aid the attack, indicating the major push was on. Reports from allied headquarters said French troops controlled Gabes on the southern Tunisian coast, thus cutting off the nazi Tunisia from Rommel's surviving Africa corps. French troops in Algeria were being instructed in the use of American arms to assist in the assault.

The German and Italian forces facing the British First army in Tunisia were dug in on a semi-circular line about 30 miles outside the cities of Bizerte and Tunis on the northern tip of the protectorate, completely cut off (Turn to Page 2)

One Escaped Con Caught

LA GRANDE, Ore., Nov. 21.—(AP) State police pressed their hunt for 17-year-old Glenn Wilson Saturday night after capturing his brother, Truman, 16, here today. The youths, convicted of rape and robbery, escaped from the Oregon State penitentiary yesterday.

State officers, following a tip from a Pendleton service station attendant who reported two youths driving a Washington-licensed automobile, picked up the Wilsons' trail. The youths jumped from the moving car and began to run. Truman was caught but Glenn reached the Union depot and disappeared in the freight yards.

Glenn was sentenced to 10 years in prison, Truman to seven for raping and robbing two 17-year-old girls in Portland last July. They made their escape from the prison by lowering themselves over the wall with a rope made of towels.

Adair Sergeant Awarded Medal



Sgt. Clarence D. Leach, left, being congratulated by his commanding officer, Lt. Col. W. F. Sammet, of the Timber Wolf Division artillery. The sergeant has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for his act in jumping into a truck and driving it out of danger, in an oil fire of September 19. (Public Relations photo.)

Life Risked To Prevent Fire Spread

CAMP ADAIR, Nov. 21.—Sgt. Clarence D. Leach, in the artillery of the Timber Wolf division here, has been awarded the soldier's medal for his act in jumping into a truck and driving it out of the way of danger, in an oil fire of September 19. Word to that effect has come from Washington, DC.

Five men were burned, one being the sergeant, who was in the hospital for 20 days. A partly filled barrel of waste oil had exploded while soldiers were spreading oil for the burning of an area near the incinerator.

Pvt. William O. Skaugs, who was burned slightly in beating out the fire in Leach's clothing, has been promoted to be technician, fifth grade. Both men have Lt. Col. W. F. Sammet as commanding officer.

Sgt. Leach was an auto mechanic in Hamilton, Texas, before entering the service in 1940. The medal which will be formally presented later was established at the same time as the distinguished flying cross, in 1926, and was originally "intended as a reward for heroism by members of the army during time of peace." The medal is in bronze and is suspended from a blue ribbon with seven narrow stripes of white and six of red in the middle.

Army Control Fought

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21.—(AP) Demands that control of industrial manpower be retained in civilian hands instead of allowing it to pass to military authorities came from bi-partisan sources in congress Saturday.

SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, Nov. 14.—(Delayed)—(AP) Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, famous American flier, upon setting foot on this still in the dark early morning hours yesterday, after 25 days lost at sea, said to Private John F. Bartek, one of his companions in the ordeal:

"You'd better thank God for your Testament, son. You see now what faith can do for you." Rickenbacker and seven companions flying the South Pacific were forced down October 21 when their big army plane ran

out of gas during an inspection flight. The flier, known almost as well for his many escapes in air mishaps as for his record as America's premier ace of the last World war, talked more of other subjects than of his experiences on a tiny rubber life raft, from which he and two companions were rescued by a navy flying boat. He said he knew of the planned American landings in Africa, which occurred November 7 while Rickenbacker was floating on the sea, because "my dear friend Jimmy Doolittle was going to be in charge of the air supporting forces." At this point a medical corps man who helped care for the six survivors — one of the men having died before rescue — said that he'd heard that one evening while the men were on the raft a sea-

Axis Sub Activities 'Knocked' Mediterranean Menace Hit by Royal Navy

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ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, Nov. 21.—(AP)—During the past 48 hours there has been a "definite slackening" of axis U-boat activity in the western Mediterranean, Admiral Sir Andrew Brown Cunningham, commander of the naval forces in North African operations, declared Saturday.

He said that the Royal navy and the RAF had given the German and Italian submarines a "good knock."

In his first press conference since becoming naval commander of the allied North African operations, the British admiral said he thought there had been about 50 axis U-boats operating in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic just off Gibraltar.

Discussing the complete operation, he said that "in the approaching stage, the losses of merchant and navy ships were considerably below what I expected and I don't think the losses of ships were out of proportion to the results obtained."

The admiral said he regarded the estimate of two million tons of merchant shipping to be saved if and when the Mediterranean route was reopened as "conservative."

If North Africa is cleared of axis troops, the Mediterranean sea will be opened to fast convoys which could get by the Sardinia-Sicily bottleneck, but some ships will have to continue around the Cape of Good Hope, he said.

The admiral expressed doubt that the French fleet at Toulon would ever join the allies. The commander of allied naval forces praised the Solomon islands victory by the United States fleet as "a very fine show" and said that as a result of the American navy's efforts in the Pacific against the Japanese and the obtaining of North African bases, "the allied naval situation is getting better every day, particularly in the Atlantic."

Russians Nip Nazi Drives

MOSCOW, Sunday, Nov. 22.—(AP)—German assaults intended to better the nazi position in the Caucasus after the smashing Russian victory before Ordzhonikidze have been consistently hurled back by Russian units and at least two companies and a battalion of the enemy have been annihilated or dispersed, the Russians reported early Sunday.

The soviet midnight communiqué announced that in the Mozdok area (in the same general sector where the Germans were beaten) one soviet unit in one day repelled three enemy attacks, "annihilating some two companies of enemy infantry."

Going, Going, Gone! For \$12,500—Bid For Football

BOISE, Idaho, Nov. 21.—(AP) The football used for Saturday's opening kickoff in the Idaho-Portland game was auctioned off between halves for purchases of war bonds.

High bidder was Bob Lees of Ontario, Ore., who bid \$12,500 and got the pigskin. Gov. Chase A. Clark autographed the ball.

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Coffee's Sale Off For Week

Limited Ration For Butter and Cheese Talked

By STERLING F. GREEN

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21.—(AP)—Coffee took its place with sugar Saturday night on the list of foods restricted by the war while rationing officials studied the status of meats and butter.

As coffee sales were halted for one week preliminary to the start of cup-a-day rationing, a spokesman for the office of price administration said that butter and meat supplies were in "pretty bad shape" although butter was not scarce enough yet to warrant immediate rationing. Meat is to be rationed about January 15 when the new "universal" books are expected.

Meanwhile officials proceeded with plans to ration gasoline throughout the country December 1 as a tire conservation measure despite fresh clamor in congress against the program. A house committee questioned William M. Jeffers, rubber administrator, during the day.

For easterners, Saturday night brought a zero hour in the garage as well as the kitchen. The value of the basic "A" gasoline ration coupon was cut from four gallons to three in 16 east coast states—a squeeze that took most of the "family driving" out of the gasoline tank.

Forty per cent of the country's entire storage supply of butter was frozen for military and lend-lease purchases Friday night. And OPA Saturday night notified boarding houses, restaurants, hotels, hospitals and institutions that they must keep records of virtually all goods served throughout the month of December.

"Regardless of which food commodities are rationed or not rationed, the OPA needs the fullest possible information on the use (Turn to Page 2)

Lochner Says Hitler Beaten In Africa

LEXINGTON, Ky., Nov. 21.—(AP) Louis P. Lochner, for 14 years chief of the Associated Press bureau in Berlin, declared Saturday night that "the United Nations have beaten Hitler at his own game in Africa."

Speaking to a Lexington public forum audience, Lochner cited instances when Hitler focused the spotlight on one possible invasion point, as if he planned to strike there, and then unexpectedly struck in another place.

"Those who have been privileged to see the Siegfried line and the fortifications along the coast of Europe," Lochner continued, "know that without a long softening-up process, any large scale attack there must result in the loss of an enormous number of lives."

Lochner was one of three correspondents allowed by the nazis to inspect the German west wall.

Patient Sent to Cellar By Cook Admits He Got Into Wrong Container

Clears Case



A. B. McKillop, assistant cook at the state hospital, who told state police Saturday night that he sent a patient to the cellar after powdered milk for the scrambled egg dish served with fatal results in four wards. The patient, police concluded, accidentally brought back similar-looking roach poison instead.

Assistant Cook Reverses Earlier Statement, Says Afraid to Confess Error

Mystery of the poison that killed 47 patients at the state hospital for the insane here last week was largely cleared Saturday night with the announcement by Dr. John C. Evans, superintendent, that a patient at the institution had accidentally substituted roach powder for powdered milk.

A. B. McKillop, assistant cook at the hospital proper since last July, and for 18 months prior to that on the cooking staff at Cottage farm, in a statement to Capt. Walter Lansing of the state police, at 9:30 Saturday night reversed a previous statement and admitted having sent a patient to the cellar for the powdered milk to be used in the evening's meal of scrambled eggs, Dr. Evans said.

The poison resembles powdered milk, and it was mixed in the eggs without detection, Evans said.

"It was a terrible error," the superintendent said.

Within minutes more than 450 patients were ill. Some died within the hour of the meal, and by the next day the toll was 47. Dr. Evans said recovery of all those ill seemed assured Saturday. Dr. Evans said that McKillop earlier had insisted he got the powdered milk out of the storeroom himself. The storerooms were kept under lock, and only McKillop and three other employees had keys. McKillop gave his to the patient he sent for the milk, Evans said.

Capt. Walter Lansing said the patient, George A. Nosen, 27, Medford, Ore., who voluntarily entered the hospital in August for treatment of epilepsy, also admitted the error after questioning Saturday night.

Capt. Lansing said McKillop and Mrs. Mary O'Hare deduced, after the poisoning, that Nosen had brought up six pounds of poison instead of powdered milk, but that they were afraid to talk, because McKillop was not supposed to allow patients in the storerooms.

McKillop told him he only sent Nosen after the milk because he was rushed in his work.

Lansing continued his questioning late Saturday night. Dr. Evans said, however, "it was not a criminal act so far as I can tell."

The roach poison contained deadly sodium fluoride, which paralyzed its victims within seconds. Their breathing grew labored. Some were contorted with pain. The lips of others turned blue with numbness. Still other retched blood.

Only one ward of the five in which the eggs were served escaped. There Mrs. Allie Wassell, attendant in charge, tasted the eggs, and ordered her 63 patients to stop eating. She became violently ill, but will recover.

Many of the stricken patients, all of whom worked at various essential tasks about the institution, were begging to be permitted to go back to their jobs Saturday, Supt. Evans said. Few were allowed to, however, for fear they had not regained sufficient strength.

Without his knowledge, the superintendent said, 40 of the paid non-patient employees went to work in the institution after hours last night to help catch up on much-needed operations there.

The Oregon state board of pharmacy only Friday recommended that coloring of sodium fluoride poisons be mandatory in the future to prevent them from being mistaken for powdered milk, salt or sugar. The board said the poison is commonly used by many hotels and restaurants.

That no powdered milk was used in the egg mixture served Wednesday night was revealed early Saturday afternoon to the investigating officers by Dr. Joseph Beeman, director of the state police crime laboratory. That statement came in answer to a query from Gov. Charles A. Sprague.

Police recalled Saturday night that when McKillop at the time he was originally questioned referred emphatically to a five-minute trip to the cellar for needed supplies, State Treasurer Leslie Scott cross-questioned because, he later declared, the story "was too patent."

McKillop's delayed admission was corroborated by Nosen, officers said. At an early hour this morning they had not finished interrogating Mrs. Mary O'Hare, head cook.

Both McKillop and Mrs. O'Hare knew Wednesday night what was the cause of the general illness, Dr. Evans said that McKillop had declared.

"He broke a hospital rule in sending a patient to get the milk, but he was busy, and I understand that this has happened before with other members of the staff and other patients. We cannot deny that we may have had to be niggardly in providing sufficient help."

Had the knowledge possessed by two cooks been made available to the doctors Wednesday night, the results of the poisoning could have been little different, Evans said. "We used the same methods in combatting the poison that would have been required for the sodium fluoride," he declared.

Pure fright, the superintendent and police captain agreed, evidently held back McKillop's admission.

Investigation into the poisoning should continue "for evidence that will be necessary to determine definitely from a legal standpoint whether or not an actual crime has been committed," District Attorney Miller B. Hayden declared early today. "I'm waiting until this investigation is complete, Dr. L. E. Barrick, coroner, said.

Briton Wins Battle 9 Miles Up

LONDON, Sunday, Nov. 22.—(AP) Reynolds, of Kenya colony, who went aloft from an Egyptian airplane above the Mediterranean which ended with a 49-year-old British test pilot in a special Spitfire shooting down a German high-altitude Junkers-86, was reported today by the air ministry news service.

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