

# Twenty Years Ago Today Battle of Stalingrad Ended After Five Months

By GERALD S. SNYDER  
United Press International  
Twenty years ago today, the roll of muffled drums sounded over the state radio in Nazi Germany. It was followed by the second movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and then by a communique from the eastern front.

The news was grim: The five-and-a-half month battle for the Russian factory city of Stalingrad had ended. The frozen, half-starved remnants of the proud Nazi sixth army, which marched to the banks of the Volga the summer before, had given up.

Four days earlier, in the darkened basement of a bomb-shattered Stalingrad department store, German field marshal Gen. Friedrich von Paulus, weary and numbed by shock, nodded "yes" to a squad of Soviet troops who demanded his surrender.

**Devastating Defeat**  
Germany had suffered its most devastating defeat of World War II. Like Lee at Gettysburg, the Nazis had mounted a massive assault, made their deepest penetration of the enemy's homeland and failed in a go for broke campaign.

German casualties exceeded 250,000 and the price of victory for the Soviet defenders was far, far higher.

Stalingrad (known as Volgograd since the de-Stalinization of Russia) had been not under siege by 330,000 German troops in mid-August, 1942, and soon was pounded to rubble by their heavy guns. But the Red army wrote into the history books a legend of courage, holding stubbornly to the 40-mile complex of factories and homes until the cruel Russian winter became their ally and the battle tide turned.

In retrospect, the battle of Stalingrad proved to be the beginning of the end for the Nazis.

"Taken together with the British victory in the battle of El Alame in Egypt and the American defeat of the Japanese navy at the battle of Midway in the Pacific, Stalingrad marked the turning point of the war as a whole," said Col. Vincent J. Esposito,



**PATROL TENEMENTS**—Russian troops, shown in this picture taken Jan. 26, 1943, patrol blocks of tenements in war-torn Stalingrad following Nazi Germany's defeat in a battle for the city. (UPI)

military historian at the military academy at West Point. Hitler had played his ace in hopes of driving through the southern tier of Russia to the oil-rich Caucasus, to Moscow and eventually to India. But, like Napoleon, he underestimated the Russians and the ferocity of their winter.

On Aug. 22, 1942, Hitler announced to the German nation:

"We are attacking Stalingrad and we shall take it."

The tank-equipped Sixth army opened its Russian campaign with a series of victories. It was a well-trained, well-armed, confident legion-

of veterans of the Belgian, Yugoslav and Greek campaigns.

The Germans rolled swiftly to the banks of the Volga, 1,000 miles southeast of Moscow. They came supported by armies of Italy, Hungary and Rumania. The Luftwaffe rained fire and destruction on Stalingrad and the axis ground

forces blasted it with mortars, artillery and tanks. The Soviet perimeter was breached and fighting was carried into the city-house to house, factory to factory.

**Launch Counter Attack**  
Then, in a lightning-swift, surprise move, the Russians launched a 13-division coun-

ter-attack on Nov. 19. Thousands of Soviet troops were thrown into the battle and they closed a ring of bayonet steel around the German force. The timing was perfectly coordinated with the onset of the bitter Russian winter. Almost like magic, the thick, silent snow and plate glass ice became the Soviets' biggest asset. The Russian troops were ghostlike in their white camouflage capes, worn over heavy uniforms, thick woolen underwear and fleecy-lined boots. The Germans' greatcoats proved inadequate and their blankets ran short.

Hitler's propagandists proclaimed Stalingrad a fortress, but food and ammunition was short and planes of the Luftwaffe no longer had a place to land.

**Germans Die, Pray**  
Many Germans died. Some prayed. A chest of anti-aircraft shells became an altar and the field gray tunic of a fallen soldier became the mantle.

Christmas dinner for the Germans consisted of the frozen flesh of horses or dogs and the roots of trees. They drank "German Tea," as the Russians called it. Melted snow.

In a monotone, Radio Moscow repeated time and again in German:

"Every seven seconds a German soldier dies in Russia. Stalingrad—mass grave!"

The wind knifed across the steppes and the temperature stood at 35 below.

For every German who lived seven died.

Guns jammed and fuel froze. On the morning of Jan. 8, three young Soviet officers entered the German lines under a white flag.

"Surrender!" they demanded of Gen. Paulus.

From Berlin came the order: "Stay and fight!"

On Jan. 10, the battle entered its final phase. Soviets, now outnumbering the Germans 20 to 1, cut the German position in half and one of the halves was cut in two. The Germans' allies lost their will to fight and one division surrendered en masse with all its equipment.

The Russians offered Paulus another chance to surrender. The general pleaded with Berlin, but Hitler screamed: "The Sixth army will hold their positions to the last man and the last round."

**Fighting Hand To Hand**  
The fighting now had become largely hand to hand and the mortal struggle enveloped the city of Stalingrad. Its cheerful white houses, the kiosks, the piers, were gone. Russian women and children dug caves in the snow-covered cliffs along the Volga. Soviet gunboats plied the river.

Hitler, by this hour, seemed to sense that all was lost but he hoped for a miracle.

"There is no record in military history of a German field marshal being taken prisoner," he told an aide in Berlin. By radio, he conferred on Gen. Paulus the coveted marshal's baton. For the beleaguered Paulus it was no magic wand.

In the last 20 days of January more than 100,000 Germans were killed. Those who lived scratched holes in the snow or hobbled about on bandaged, frost-bitten feet.

Finally, at month's end, the last three strongholds gave in. Paulus and two dozen lesser generals surrendered.

As historian Col. Esposito sees it now, the end was inevitable and its effect on the remainder of the war was far-reaching:

"Overextended and unable to reconstitute a strategic reserve in the east, Hitler was

now powerless to counter effectively the successive, widely separated, alternating Russian blows.

"Now he could not concentrate adequate strength on any front to launch a sustained offensive of sufficient magnitude to gain a local decision."

Want To  
**SAVE MONEY ON INCOME TAXES?**

Find out how the new tax laws and rulings can save YOU money, in SYLVIA PORTER'S all-new TAX SERIES

Beginning Feb. 4 in

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

BARKER'S

(Gent's Stuff)

CLOSED

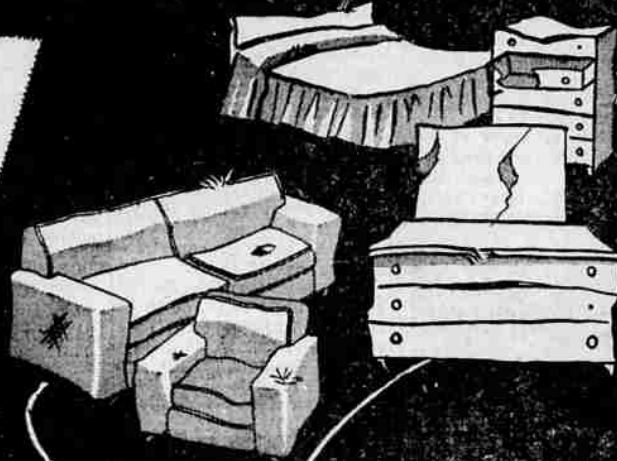
MONDAY

and

TUESDAY

# DON'T THROW IT AWAY!

## Believe it or not!! Your old Living room sofa or Bedroom set - REGARDLESS OF AGE OR CONDITION - - is worth...



# \$75

IN MERCHANDISE ON THE PURCHASE OF ANY LIVING ROOM OR BEDROOM SET  
*This Week Only at*

# GRAY'S

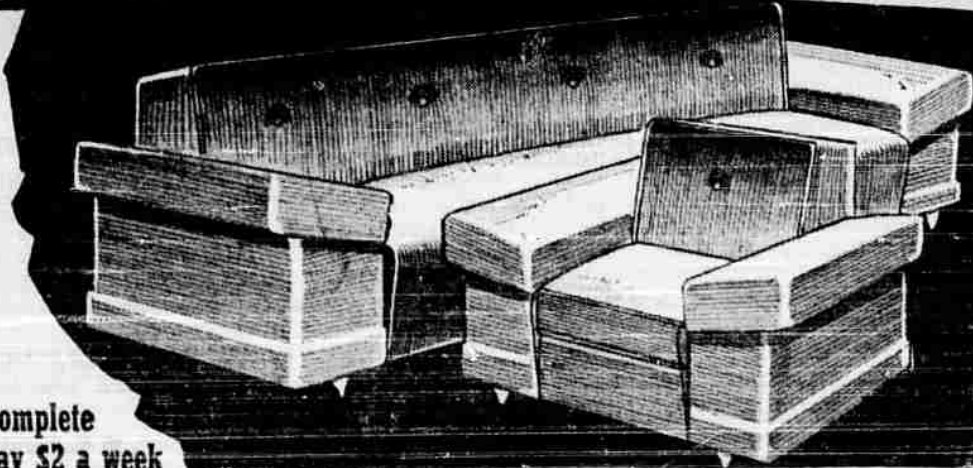
Furniture Barn, Inc.

Hwy. 99  
Central Point

**NYLON & FOAM SOFA and CHAIR**

LUXURIOUS SOFA SEATS 4 COMFORTABLY... OPENS EASILY TO MAKE UP INTO A RESTFUL DOUBLE BED. BOTH SOFA AND SPACIOUS MATCHING CLUB CHAIR HAVE TOUGH DOUBLE SPRING CONSTRUCTION - plus A 5-YEAR GUARANTEE. IN CHOICE COLORS.

ONLY \$199 complete Pay \$2 a week



**3-PC. BEDROOM SET**



Magnificently designed modern bedroom set includes, Chest, Bookcase headboard, and Dresser with tilting mirror,

ONLY \$199

Pay \$2 a week

Free Delivery

\$5 HOLDS any item for delivery at a future date

If your credit's good, it's good at GRAY'S

NOTHING DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT

**BUCK SAYS:**

Starting Monday morning and continuing all next week your old living room or bedroom set is worth \$75 in merchandise. One more reason why you're way ahead to buy your home furnishings at Gray's. Remember... we're open till 8 o'clock Monday nights, bring the family and look over our huge stock of furniture and appliances.



### Faber Voices His Approval of Bill

County Commissioner Donald Faber said Friday he is writing State Rep. Edward Branchfield voicing his approval of Senate Joint Resolution 7 which would authorize appointment of an interim committee to study Oregon wildlife.

Faber said he is writing as an individual urging the legislature to issue a temporary law forbidding the killing of doe deer until the committee's studies are completed. Faber is a director of the Central Point Sportsmen's club.

"Until recently I didn't realize the wonderful fish and game heritage Oregon has," Faber commented. He noted that all of the Jackson county legislative delegation endorsed the bill.

### Women Officers to Conduct Interviews

Three officers from the women's armed forces will be in Jackson county Feb. 4, 5, and 6, to conduct a panel in Jackson county high schools. Chief Ronald A. Velkos, of the Navy Recruiting station here, has announced.

When not conducting panels in the high schools, the three, representing the WAVES, the WACS and the WAFFS, will be in the recruiting offices to conduct interviews with high school seniors and graduates during regular office hours. Parents, also, are invited to attend the interviews.

The recruiting offices are located in the Medford post office building. The Army and Navy recruiting offices are in the basement and the Marines and Air Force offices on the second floor.

### Local Man Placed On Probation Here

Keith Edward Schroeder, 30, of route 3, box 193, Medford, was placed on probation and sentence was suspended for one year in Jackson county circuit court on a charge of driving while under the influence of liquor.

Schroeder Thursday pleaded guilty to the charges of driving under the influence of liquor. Earlier charges of negligent homicide were dismissed upon request of the district attorney's office.

Schroeder had been charged in connection with an accident involving a car driven by Annie Matilda Jones, Medford, last April 6. Miss Jones died of injuries received.

Last Oct. 22, a circuit court jury failed to return a verdict in a circuit court jury trial.