

FOUGHT HOPELESS ODDS--GRAZIANO

Soldiers Fled Superior British Forces in Libya, Crying With Last Spark of Life, 'Long Live Italy,' Commander Reports to Duce.

ROME, Dec. 23 (U.P.)—Italy published today its own story of the British offensive against its North African Army—a story, as told by Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, commander in chief, of the superior weight of the British arms on land, in the air and at sea, and of brave Italian resistance in face of hopeless odds.

Graziani told how the British offensive broke with shattering force just as he had completed preparations for an offensive of his own, how division after division of his Army was overwhelmed, how he ordered a retreat Dec. 10 and how his men at Bardia still held out.

Graziani said that "it certainly is premature to make any predictions as to the developments in this terrible battle in which the enemy has concentrated the best troops of four continents."

"If today—12 days from the beginning of the offensive—British armored divisions mark time before Bardia," he said, reporting as of Dec. 21, "this is exclusively due to the bravery of the soldiers of Italy of land and air, who know how bravely to oppose the enemy and die without sparing themselves.

All Have Done Duty

"I once again confirm in categorical manner that all down here have done their duty to the limits possible. If the number of those who had the misfortune to fall prisoner is high, this must not make you doubt their valor. They resisted with the will to resist until the very end."

Concluding his report, which he addressed to Premier Benito Mussolini personally as Duce, Premier and War Minister, Graziani said:

"Until face to face with the enemy, who inexorably advanced, well protected, toward a prey they (the soldiers) cried with the last spark of life: 'Long live Italy!'

"In view of these facts the ignoble claims advanced by enemy propaganda are nothing but a mass of lies, which bring shame upon those who dare write them and thus show they have lost even that sense of dignity and respect toward bravery—even though luckless—which has always been characteristic of the people of great civilization."

Built 75-Mile Aqueduct

Graziani told Mussolini how after advancing into Egypt to Sidi Barrani he had built an aqueduct 75 miles long to provide water for his advanced forces, how many soldiers had walked scores of miles across the burning desert afoot, "only wishing battles, as is clearly seen from censored mail."

He told how he had built a road and had stored in advanced depots food stuffs, munitions and food, and how Italian planes bombed the British rear—and the British began bombing the Italian rear positions also.

"We lacked only the complement of motor vehicles, which as you

knew were pouring from the mainland," Graziani commented. He continued to say how patrol actions showed the British steadily increasing in aggressiveness; how he gave orders for full artillery protection against an attack on the southern flank; how airplane pilots reported the British massing forces; how on Dec. 7 a British prisoner said that the British would attack within 10 days.

Kept Troops on Alert

"Though this news might have appeared tendentious, it was not, however, ignored," Graziani said. "I immediately informed the Army, which kept all troops on the alert."

"During the day of Dec. 8 from various symptoms . . . I felt that the enemy attack was imminent and repeated a warning to commanders ordering them to be ready to oppose an attack if launched . . . As you see, there was no surprise."

"Against strongholds occupied by our troops in the flat desert terrain, without any possibility of tactics, the enemy had the opportunity of employing masses of armored units, armored cars and medium and heavy tanks supported by mobile batteries and with effective cooperation of air forces."

"The brief preparation (for the attack) was generally intrusted to artillery and aviation."

"As soon as the massacring air bombardment ceased armored units struck from every direction against our troops. Thus despite fiercest resistance our strongholds within a few hours were one by one taken."

"The first strongholds to be attacked were that held by the Maletti troops, which began an orderly retreat until it was stopped and dragged along with it the Second Libyan Division, which had sent a strong lightning column to aid

Armored Units Superior

"Against an armored mass operating concentrically on a large front our anti-tank arms and artillery, which were forced to waste shots on numerous mobile targets that determinedly came forward, had little effect."

"The essential reason for the enemy's initial lightning-like success must be attributed to the crushing superiority of the enemy's armored units."

"Our National (Italian) and Libyan divisions in this battle also kept the high traditions of bravery and heroism of our Army. Commanders and troops in the western desert regions wrote pages of the greatest heroism—episodes of epic greatness occurred in the unequal battle between soldiers of Italy and the British Empire's armored formations. Detachments of our divisions, isolated and encircled on all sides, resisted to the last cartridge."

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Italian Retreat Is Termed Worse Disaster Than Guadalajara

By HENRY T. GORELL
United Press Staff Correspondent

WITH GREEK ARMY NORTHEAST OF PREMETTI (VIA ATHENS), Dec. 22—(Delayed)—Italian airplanes have started an offensive against Albanian towns and roads in this sector in an attempt to impede the Greek advance.

One town has been raided by as many as 40 planes at a time. The casualties were mostly civilians.

The whole countryside is being bombed and machine gunned. A wounded Greek soldier, who set out on mule-back for a base hospital was found dead later by comrades on the road to Premetti. He had been riddled with machine-gun bullets from a low-flying plane.

The Greek positions are a few miles east of Klisura, where three Italian divisions (50,000 men) are holding out after a 50-mile retreat from Liskoviki, on the Greek-Albanian border.

The retreat lasted 12 days and the Italian divisions now are being sides.

I SAW the Italian retreat from Guadalajara in the Spanish War and it was small by comparison to what has happened here. At Guadalajara, two Italian motorized divisions sent to occupy Madrid were met outside Brihuega by French and other units of the international brigade and fled 13 miles, leaving virtually all their equipment behind.

Here, three divisions have been thrown back 37 miles as the crow flies, or 50 miles over the worst type of mountain road conceivable, and they are still in peril. I have just driven over that road, from Liskoviki to Premetti, through mountains ranging from 1800 to 3000 feet.

One has only to crane his neck to look 3000 feet straight down the side of the precipice. It seemed that in any one of these hairpin turns, a determined machine-gun crew could hold off an army for days. Yet near Liskoviki I saw gun emplacements set in rocks along the road—positions that looked as strong as Gibraltar—which the Italians apparently had abandoned with little fighting.

Italian planes still range over the road dropping bombs, and I saw craters not far from the road large enough to hide a truck, but saw only one hit on the road itself.

PREMETTI has been bombed, as have almost every village in the area, and the Italians have devised a new trick to increase the casualties. They maneuver high over the towns, where the planes cannot easily be identified, and pretend to be dog-fighting. Civilians and soldiers leave their shelters to watch what they think is a battle between Italian and British or Greek planes. Then the planes swoop down, dive bombing and machine-gunning.

I have met many Greek-Albanians in this area who formerly lived in America. One of them, Angel Papadopoulos, native of Erseka, who formerly worked for the Continental Shoe Co. at St. Louis, Mo., said: "I'm an American. I served in the American Army in the last war, so please send my regards to the folks back there." He cursed the Italian fliers for "destroying our homes and shops" we spent our lives working to get, and for killing our women and children."

Several Greek and Albanian soldiers, fighting together here, told me they used to live in New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Massachusetts or New Jersey.

At Ease!

Service Men Ordered To Think of Peace On Christmas.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (U.P.)—The order of the day for Christmas in the Army and Navy will be:

Enjoy yourself and give a thought to peace and goodwill. Permit every man to go home who can be spared; bring the ships to port and ground the warplanes.

From Brooklyn to Cavite, from the Canal Zone to Alaska, the Army and Navy were determined to make the merriest kind of Christmas for its officers and men who for months have been under the pressure of the greatest rearmament program in peacetime.

Mr. Losey strongly denied that his magazine will have any connection with the Silver Shirts or with D. C. Stephenson, former Ku-Klux Klan leader who is expected to seek a parole soon from a life term in state prison for murder.

'Unfair,' Says Losey

"So far as Stephenson is concerned, it is unfair to say that he will be identified with the magazine just because I happened to know him personally," Losey said.

Mr. Losey was a close associate of the Klan leader during the early 1920's when Stephenson was a power in Indiana politics.

The printing equipment arrived on two heavily loaded trucks. It included three job presses, a Linotype machine and files, books and other office equipment.

Truckers Reluctant

It was taken immediately to the building which is being remodeled for occupancy by the Fellowship Publishing Co. Employees at the building said the truck drivers told them more equipment was on the way.

The drivers refused to discuss reports that other equipment had been held up in Asheville because of wrecks of attachment for unpaid bills.

The Navy said there would be no curtailment of holiday leaves.

The War Department authorized liberalization of its 15 percent furlough maximum to whatever extent conditions in cantonments will permit.

While two firemen administered oxygen, she was brought to Long Hospital in an ambulance. She was placed in a respirator again but efforts to save her life failed. Physical symptoms similar to those have developed in other infantile paralysis victims and that the death probably was due to its complications.

Mrs. Cook was stricken with infantile paralysis four months ago and was placed in a respirator in Riley Hospital. She bore a child while suffering from the disease and the child died the next day. The child's death was due to infantile paralysis.

Mrs. Cook apparently was recovering from the disease and was dismissed from the hospital Nov. 1 and taken to the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Surface of Ladoga.

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Out-of-town mailings, he said, should be sent now by air mail—special delivery.

WOMAN POLIO SUFFERER DIES

Complications Are Blamed For Death of Young Hoosier Mother.

Complications following an attack of infantile paralysis probably caused the death yesterday of Mrs. Ruby Cook, 19-year-old Hoosier mother.

She died in Long Hospital after an emergency ambulance trip from the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Surface of Ladoga.

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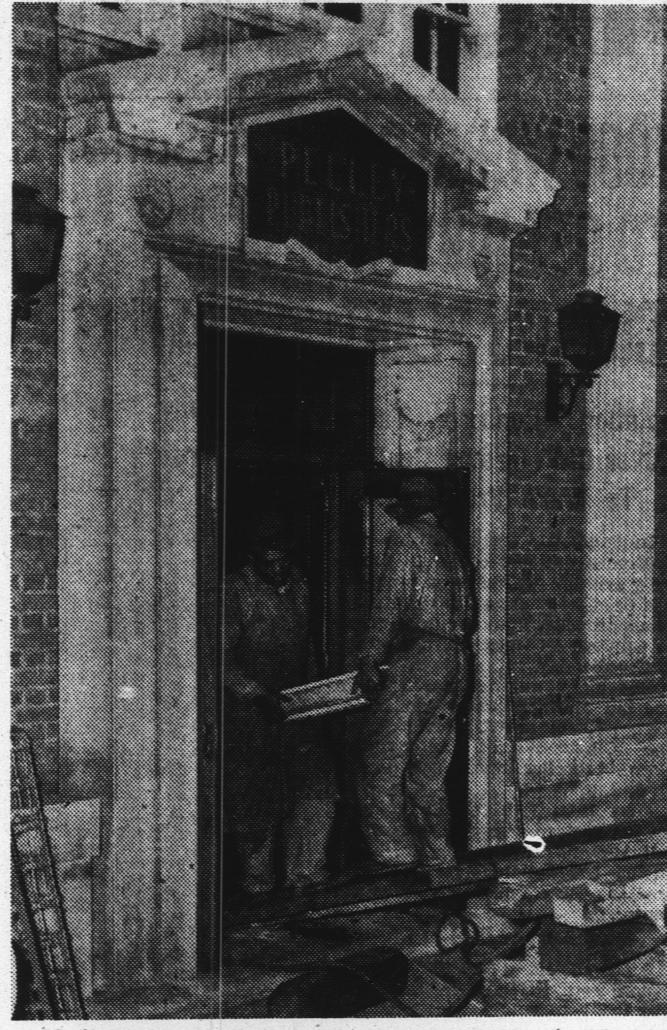
Postmaster Adolph Seldensicker said today that Christmas mail for Indianapolis addresses should be sent to the home of the recipient.

Swede Loreg, who was elected Mayor shortly after his 21st birthday last year, has signed up and is stationed at the Great Lakes Training Station.

15 ARE GIVEN YULE PAROLES

Two Who Participated in Bus Terminal Holdup Win Release.

Moving Day for Pelley



Moving men are shown carting printing equipment, files and furniture from the building at Asheville, N. C., where Silver Shirt leader William Pelley's magazine "Liberation" was published.

3 DIE IN MINE CAVE-IN

NANAIMO, British Columbia, Dec. 23 (U.P.)—The bodies of three coal miners, killed by a cave-in at the Canadian Collieries-Dunsmuir, Ltd., operations, were to be brought out today by rescue workers and inspectors from the British Columbia Department of Mines.

At Gray's Harbor, Wash., the Coast Guard station reported a wind of 85 miles an hour, strongest on the Olympic peninsula since 1920.

Rivers in northern California where it has rained almost continuously for a week, were rising, but there was no immediate flood danger.

Portland, Seattle, Aberdeen, Longview, Tacoma and Olympia suffered most severely from the winds. Power and telephone lines were blown down during particularly heavy blows early Sunday. Small buildings were smashed and highways were littered with debris. For many hours communication between Olympia, Aberdeen, Longview, Seattle and Port Angeles was cut off.

Raymond E. Den Hartog, 17, and his brother, Vernon, 13, were electrocuted near Mount Vernon, Wash., when they attempted to remove a fallen power pole from the road.

A tree fell through the roof of a crowded dance hall at Pleasant Hill, near Kelso, seriously injuring two persons.

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