

# **THE TIMES**

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**September 30, 1941**

## **ITALIANS COLLAPSE - OUR BOYS AND THE GALLANT FREE FRENCH CLOSE ON TUNIS!**

By Harold Rawlings (Tripoli)

This past month saw decisive breakthroughs against the Italians in both the north and in the south. In the north, Free French forces overran Italian opposition and advanced into the city of Tunis. In the south, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Corps removed any remaining fight left in the Italian 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps, which surrendered quickly. An additional 36,000 Italian troops joined over 200,000 of their fellow countrymen in Allied custody. Other formations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army probed enemy positions, and found that two Italian armour divisions are now out of fuel and immobile. Our boys will soon deal with them and continue their advance north to Tunis.

Staff Sources within 2<sup>nd</sup> Army have confirmed that the Italian air force has retired from Africa to Italy and that an additional 6,000 Italian Air Force prisoners of war were taken into custody by Allied forces.

With the action of the combined Allied fleets keeping any supplies from reaching the Italian forces in Africa, the Italian Army in North Africa is on its last legs as the Free French and British 2nd Army move to continue to close their grip on the remnants of Mussolini's elite troops. The destruction of much the Italian air force in Africa during our advance will surely hasten the day of the final expulsion of the Axis from Africa. On to Tunis!

# ROYAL NAVY MAULS ITALIAN FLEET AT TARANTO!

By Clive McLeod (Alexandria)

The men of the Mediterranean Fleet under the intrepid leadership of Admiral Ramsay, executed a daring carrier strike upon the Italian fleet at anchor in their main base in Taranto harbour. The raid hit the napping Italians at dawn to find four Italian battleships, 13 cruisers, 18 destroyers, and 12 submarines moored neatly in rows. The first wave of our bombers broke for the Italian battlewagons and unleashed a torrent of 500 pound bombs. The Battleship Impero was hit seven times and had a fire erupt on the forecastle whilst BB Roma took eight hits to her forward main battery and superstructure. The second wave disposed of both these vessel --- the main magazine of Impero was ignited and she exploded before quickly settling to the bottom and Roma took another six hits and rolled twenty degrees to port before coming to rest on the bottom of the harbour. BB Caio Dulio suffered heavy damage as one of our bombers managed to put a bomb down her funnel ripping the upper works apart. Additionally, three cruisers were sunk as they attempted to make steam and escape the port. As the third wave came in the enemy had started to bring elements of its anti-aircraft fire to bear; however, this failed to stop the battleship Hadrian from taking six hits and two more cruisers turning over and coming to rest on the bottom of Taranto Harbour. As the strike force headed home the Italians were left to salvage what they could from their once proud fleet. BB Impero and BB Roma were sunk by elements of the Fleet Air Arm while BB Hadrian and BB Caio Dulio both suffered severe damage. Additionally, five Italian cruisers were sent to the bottom and another 6 damaged. Taranto was a proud day indeed for the men of the Royal Navy.

# THIRD ARMY CHECKS THE NAZIS IN SPAIN!

By A.S. Thompson (Lisbon):

The past month saw our 3rd Army hold fast against repeated Nazi attacks along the Tejo River. In the north, elements of the Portuguese Army destroyed a Nazi Special Forces group. SS infantry attacked 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Corps but the Canadians expertly used the terrain to their advantage for defensive operations and threw the attackers back. In central Spain, the Airborne Corps and the 11<sup>th</sup> Armoured Corps conducted a determined defense against the German 3<sup>rd</sup> Heavy Panzer Corps, holding a line along on the banks of the Tejo. In the south, the 16<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Corps and the 21<sup>st</sup> Mechanised Corps freely roamed the Nazi rear areas – destroying some 400 aircraft on the ground and making the crews Prisoners of War. The way to Valencia is now clear. The brave men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Portuguese Armies will continue to hold the line against the Axis and to move the flame of freedom forward!

# **P.M. SPEAKS TO THE EMPIRE AND WORLD ON THE BBC!!!**

By M.T. Ewell (London):

Yesterday evening, the Prime Minister addressed the world via the BBC World Service pledging to avenge the barbaric German attack upon the city of Hull:

... “We ask no favours of the enemy. We seek from them no compunction. On the contrary, if tonight the people of Hull were asked to cast their vote whether a convention should be entered into to stop the bombing of all cities, the overwhelming majority would cry, ‘No, we will mete out to the Nazis the measure, and more than the measure, that they have meted out to us.’ The people of Hull with one voice would say to Hitler: ‘You have committed every crime under the sun. Where you have been the least resisted there have you been the most brutal. It was you who began the indiscriminate bombing. It was you who have rounded up your own countrymen for ‘resettlement to the east’ in concentration camps. We know too well the bestial assault you are making upon the Russian people, to whom our hearts go out in their valiant struggle. We will have no truce or parley with you, or the grisly gang who work your wicked will. You do your worst – and we will do our best.’

## **IN BRIEF**

### **JAPANESE ATTACK DUTCH CRUISER – NETHERLANDS CEASES TRADE WITH JAPAN**

As has been extensively reported over the BBC for the past two weeks, elements of the Imperial Japanese Fleet engaged and destroyed the Dutch cruiser Tromp on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. This act of treachery Against their erstwhile “friendly trading partner”, has resulted in the complete cessation of all Dutch trade with the Empire of Japan. While the Dutch have not yet moved to declare war upon the Japanese, they have put their armed forces on high alert. Having learnt first-hand the barbarity and treachery of the Japanese, it can only be a matter of time until the Dutch nation takes its rightful place in the vanguard of resistance against Axis aggression.

### **ICELAND WELCOMED INTO THE WORLD COMMUNITY OF FREE NATIONS!**

Following last month’s landings by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Strathclyde Division at Reykjavik to a warm and enthusiastic welcome of the Icelandic people,

the Icelandic Althing has proclaimed Iceland to be an independent member of the community of democratic nations. The democratic government of Iceland has been recognized by His Majesty's Government, The United States of America, Free France, The Kingdom of Norway, The Kingdom of Belgium, The Kingdom of the Netherlands, Portugal, the Dominion of Canada, the Dominion of New Zealand, Brazil, The Dominion of Australia, the Dominion of South Africa, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, China, Brazil, Iraq, and Luxembourg. The Kingdom of Denmark lodged no complaint at this Icelandic declaration of Independence but has stated that the peoples of Iceland have expressed their wills and desires and they hold the right to free determination. May the people of Iceland long continue to enjoy freedom and democratic government!