

OPA WILL REVISE POINT VALUES OF RATIONED FOODS

Change Thought To Bring About Reduced Cost Per Can In Coupons TO BE ANNOUNCED

Complete Details Of New Plan Will Be Made Public Sunday Morning

WASHINGTON, March 25. (AP)—The Office of Price Administration announced tonight that a new table of point values for processed fruits and vegetables—behave substantially lower than present coupon costs—will be announced in Sunday morning newspapers.

The disclosure was made in a statement advising storekeepers, wholesalers and others in the food business to supply at their post offices Monday morning for copies of the new chart, which will go into effect April 1.

No Discussion Of Change While OPA officials declined to discuss just what changes have been made, they indicated that numerous reductions will be made in the point values of various brands of cans, bottles, and packages—especially fruits and large sizes of other products.

These changes have been based on the first few weeks' experience with actual consumer purchases of rationed fruits and vegetables. Canners and store keepers have complained generally that the public has not been buying canned goods since the rationing began because the point values are too high.

However, it is likely that in a few cases, point values may be increased because some items are selling faster than they can be replaced on store shelves.

OPA officials said the adjustment of point values is a normal thing, which may be repeated from time to time as conditions change. The first adjustment, however, may be more general than later ones because the original point values, which went into effect on Jan. 1, were based only on statistical estimates, whereas now OPA has actual experience to guide it.

Another Bulwark To R Drive

Continue To Seize Additional Points In Push On Smolensk

FOE NEAR KHARKOV

Soviet Unit Outflanks Enemy And Knocks Out Complete Garrison

LONDON, Friday, March 26. (AP)—Russian troops have overpowered another German stronghold and captured additional villages in the central front drive toward Smolensk while repulsing Axis efforts to crack their defensive line east of Kharkov in the Ukraine, Moscow announced early today.

One Soviet column pushing on Smolensk was near Dukhovschino, 32 miles northeast of the central front anchor, and another was operating near Dorogobuzh, 50 miles east of the big base, but the midnight communique did not locate the areas in which the villages were seized.

Short Skirmish Occurs The bulletin, recorded by the Soviet monitor, said one Soviet unit outflanked a Nazi stronghold by knocking out its garrison in a short skirmish which ended in the capture of an undisclosed number of prisoners, an ammunition dump, three guns, and a quantity of rifles and hand grenades.

In the Belgorod-Chuguev sectors above and below Nazi-held Kharkov the Russians said German attacks had collapsed.

Around Gelgorod, 50 miles north of Kharkov, the communique said, that more than 100 German automatic riflemen were killed when a Nazi company of them attempted to cross a water barrier. Soviet artillery also disabled five tanks, five anti-tank guns, and dispersed and annihilated part of an enemy infantry battalion.

North of Chuguev, 22 miles southeast of Kharkov along the Russian-held Donets river defense line, (Continued on Page Two; Col. 6)

Papuan Advance



Allied troops occupied the Mamberi River Valley area, 40 miles north of Buna and within 100 miles of Jap-held Salamaua, in New Guinea. Meanwhile, Gasmata airfield, on the south coast of New Britain, was hit with 5000-ton bombs. Also hit were Finschafen, Lae and Madang. Japs raided Milne Bay.

TWO JAP VESSELS HIT AT AMBOINA

Allied Airmen Bomb Enemy Cargo Ships With Many Explosives

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN AUSTRALIA, Friday, March 26. (AP)—Allied airmen attacking two of the strongest Japanese bases in the southwest Pacific scored hits on two enemy cargo ships at Amboina, and dumped a great weight of explosives, including one-ton bombs, on Rabaul where six hours later smoke plumes still were rising 3,000 feet above the burning wreckage, the Allied communique announced today.

Liberators were used in both attacks, and the smash at Rabaul found the four-motored bombers raining explosives on the base for two hours without encountering any fighter interception, although anti-aircraft fire was intense.

"Large fires and heavy explosions were seen along the northern shore of the harbor," the communique said of this raid.

"Six hours later one of our reconnaissance planes over the area observed smoke and flames from water front fires rising to 3,000 feet."

The New Britain base of Rabaul northeast of Australia was the target for a mass raid three days ago when 54 tons of bombs were dropped on 250 Japanese planes found parked on three airdromes there. A substantial number of the planes were believed to have been destroyed or damaged in that raid.

Amboina island is in the Banda sea some 600 miles north of Australia and its principal harbor once was a big Dutch naval base.

"Our heavy bombers attacked the enemy-occupied town and ship piling in the harbor," reported the communique from General Douglas MacArthur.

AMERICANS SEIZE CONTROL OF VITAL TUNISIAN AREA DOMINATING FOE'S LINES

U. S. And Turkish Chiefs Meet

Story Of Axis Repulse Of Eighth Army Told In Blood And Sweat

RETREAT FOR 1ST TIME

British Fall Back Across Gully For Initial Repulse Of Campaign

WITH THE BRITISH EIGHTH ARMY AT THE MARETH LINE, March 23. (Delayed)—(AP)—The Germans, attacking the 100-yard British bridgehead across the wadi Zigbaou, poured tanks and infantry into battle yesterday in such number that they closed this breach in the Mareth line today after 24 hours of fierce fighting.

Thus the British troops who had penetrated the Axis line came back across the "highway to hell" to dig in on the east side of the wadi—the first time they had fallen back in their 1,700-mile advance across Africa from Egypt.

Thin Supply Line The "highway to hell" was a crude strip of rocks and brushwood flung into the marshy land of the wadi — the almost dry river bed — by British engineers under artillery cover in their week-end attack against the Nazi stronghold. It became the thin line of communication and supply across the wadi for the British, fighting grimly to maintain their gain.

For three days and nights the road was raked by machinegun and shellfire and was thus at point blank range of the German guns during the night the Eighth Army attacked the Mareth line. Everything that moved across it ran a gauntlet of flying steel.

Every time a shell ripped out a chunk of the road, men rushed (Continued on Page Two; Col. 2)

PLANS COMPLETED FOR USO OPENING

All In Readiness For Open House At New Dormitory Tonight

All is in readiness for the formal opening Friday of the new USO-YWCA recreation center at 223 North Third street, Miss Jeanne de Graffenried, director of the unit's activities, announced Thursday night.



Commander of the Allied forces in North Africa, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (left) is shown with General Salih Omurtak, head of the Turkish Military Mission, after they had conferred at headquarters in Algiers. U. S. Army Signal Corps Radiotelephoto. (International)

Patton Braves Axis Fire In Visit To Front Lines

WITH U. S. FORCES IN SOUTHERN TUNISIA, March 24 (Delayed) (AP)—Lieut. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., a life-long exponent of the thesis that military leaders must take an active part in battle action, rode through German artillery fire today to visit front line forces east of el Guetar and compliment them officially for taking and holding the valley heights.

In the trip to the command post unit which stuck to its positions despite a two-day heavy tank, artillery and infantry counterattack, the general was forced to dismount from his command cars as shells landed on a road bend ahead. He finished the journey afoot.

As he began climbing a steep hill to the outpost, heads of soldiers popped out like rabbits from foxholes to watch the tall spare figure.

"It's the first time I ever saw him except in pictures," said Pvt. William Hazen, 27, of Hancock, N. Y. "He looks like quite a man. Bet he is a real bruiser."

"It sure is good to see him in the front lines," said Cpl. John W. Davis, 25, of 1705 Woodbind street, Brooklyn, N. Y. "I hear he wants to get Rommel in one tank and him in another and have it out."

"If he ever does, I sure want to have some money down on him." Several more artillery shells, apparently 88's, landed only a few score yards away before Patton and Maj.-Gen. Terry Allen reached a dugout shelter.

Dozens of soldiers temporarily lost interest in the battle in their eagerness to see the commander known throughout the Army as "old blood and guts."

Gen. Patton studied the battle zone almost an hour before working his way back down the rocky slope, poking jauntily at boulders with a silver-tipped cane presented to him by a friend.

He wore an aviator's leather jacket over his uniform and carried his famous ivory-handled .45 revolver strapped to his waist. Despite further shell bursts fired by German batteries harassing American military traffic on an adjoining road, the general refused to hurry his pace.

PATTON FANS OUT

U. S. Armored Units On Both Sides Of Highway Near Mezzouna

ARTILLERY DUEL SEEN

Axis And British Guns Roaring In Battle For Mareth Line

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, March 25. (AP)—American troops throwing a cordon around Marshal Rommel's besieged Mareth line forces were reported today to have won control of the last mountain barrier overlooking the Axis coastal lifeline only 28 miles away.

Field dispatches said the troops of Lieut.-Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., were fanning out on both sides of the highway a few miles short of Mezzouna, whose airfield already has been pounded by American "Long Toms," the 155-millimeter rifles.

Seventy-five miles to the southeast in the Mareth line, Axis artillery was dueling with British Eighth Army guns in an apparent stalemate after German troops had wiped out a large part of early British penetrations of an offensive begun last Saturday night.

Superior Allied Forces (The Berlin radio said the Germans were fighting "superior Allied forces" in southern Tunisia, and quoted the propaganda agency, International Information Bureau, as saying that U. S. troops had been "strongly reinforced.") This broadcast recorded by the Associated Press appeared to be preparing the German public for a possible announcement of American breakthrough to the sea behind Rommel.)

An Allied communique announced continuing fighting in the Mareth line "with heavy artillery duels on both sides," and said that U. S. troops had made "local gains" in the Maknassy area where the push to the sea is being attempted.

General Patton, known as "old blood and guts" to his troops, was in the field with his men, an ivory-handled .45 revolver strapped to his waist.

The Americans also have pushed ten miles beyond el Guetar on a road south of the Maknassy salient, and a dispatch from Associated Press correspondent Harold V. Boyle at the front said Patton personally complimented his men on beating off two strong Axis counterattacks in that sector.

The Allied communique said patrols in the el Guetar area had carried out successful offensive operations yesterday in this third prong being driven into Rommel's positions.

A fourth threat to Rommel, who has been forced to divide his armored strength, is a British column operating eight miles below el Hamma, 20 miles west of Gabes, the German coastal pivot in the south.

The communique did not mention any further progress by these ground troops who had traced around the southern end of the Mareth line, but said Allied airmen twice attacked enemy vehicles at el Hamma, destroying (Continued on Page Two; Col. 4)

PRIORITY GIVEN FOR SEWER LINE

WPB Grants Rating For Pipe Extension To Maffitt Village Area

Materials for the construction of sewer lines to serve the new divisions of Maffitt Village have been granted AA-3 preferential priority rating by the War Production Board, Kenneth Markwell, of Richmond, regional director of the Federal Works Agency advised the local FWA office Thursday.

Plans call for 6,000 feet of outfall sewer, construction of which is scheduled to begin next Monday.

Contract to build the sewer line was awarded to the A. H. Guion company by the Federal Works Agency in February.

According to local FWA officials, the project should be completed within 90 days.

WEATHER

FORECAST: North Carolina: Little change in temperature. (Eastern Standard Time) (By U. S. Weather Bureau) Meteorological data for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m., yesterday.

City Is Plunged Into Total Darkness By 40 Minute Surprise Blackout Test

Wilmington and southeastern North Carolina were plunged into darkness last night (Thursday) for a 40-minute test blackout that came as a complete surprise to OGD officials and citizens alike.

Neither the city police department nor the state highway patrol reported any accidents during the surprise test.

Chief of Police Charles H. Casteen, chief air raid warden for the Wilmington Air Raid Warning district which embraces 10 southeastern North Carolina counties, said the surprise blackout was a success throughout his district.

NOTICE!

If your carrier fails to leave your copy of the Wilmington Morning Star, Phone 3311 before 9 a. m. and one will be sent to you by special messenger.

Stimson Says Americans Shoving Axis Back In Africa But Casualties Ahead

WASHINGTON, March 25.—(AP)—American troops, hardened, keen and eager for battle, are shoving the Nazis back in North Africa, but must pay for their successes with heavy casualties, Secretary of War Stimson said today.

He gave British and American fighters a large share of credit for successes achieved thus far in North Africa, but added "it must always be remembered that in this fighting in Tunisia the grim, conclusive work must be done on the ground."