

A Week of War

North Africa

The Tunisian Campaign

From where Ike Eisenhower was sitting, things looked so-so. In Libya, the British Eighth Army was 90 miles below where Misurata juts out into the sea and approximately 150 miles from Tripoli. But Erwin Rommel was still hanging on to what he had. He was still retreating in order, and he had received reinforcements. It looked as though he might make a stand at Tripoli.

But then, it looked like many things. There was confusion in North Africa. Not much information was coming out, at least not enough to give a clear picture of the situation. Rommel might make a stand at Tripoli, true, but he might also fall back and join up with the forces of General Nehring in Tunisia.

The Red Army had Hitler on the Run

The force that had crossed the border of Algeria with such high hopes seemed stymied. There was some patrol activity, a few bombing forays, and not much else. The whole front seemed to be marking time, might possibly explode at any moment.

There was a possibility, however, and a very good one, that the Allies did not want to take Tunisia, did not want to break Rommel. The very fact that the Fox of the Desert had received reinforcements showed that badly needed men were still being diverted from the Russian front. As long as North Africa could be a drain on German strength it was worth keeping up the campaign. It was rather like Guadalcanal, on a much wider scale.

In point of fact, all areas of combat seemed to be tied up with the Russian campaign and to be hanging breathless on its outcome. The sun of 1943 was rising brightly over the cold and bloody steppes, and all over the world men listened to the reports of the frozen cities that were being retaken and passed. In the heat of Africa and India and in the heart of the Australian summer and in the muddy jungles of New Guinea the soldiers of a dozen free countries listened and waited. They knew that the tide had turned, that the pendulum had swung in the other direction.

And if there were lulls in other theaters, they were only the lulls before coming storms.



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African War in Second Phase As Russia Slaps Nazis' Ears Again



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