

From DAVID BROWN, Representing Combined British Press

With General Eisenhower,
Advanced Allied Headquarters,
18th September, 1943

General Eisenhower expressed the fullest satisfaction with the progress of the invasion of Southern Italy. The success of the operation to date exemplifies once more the results to be obtained through use of air, ground and sea forces in the closest co-operation.

The Allied Commander-in-Chief found things in very good order and everybody working hard and in good heart during the course of an exhaustive visit in company with General Clark and Admiral Hewitt, during which he travelled for $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours by aeroplane, cruiser, P.T. boat, landing-craft, jeep, peep and amphibious duck -- virtually every method of transportation available to the invading forces -- to inspect the larger part of the Allied front on Italian soil.

General Eisenhower spent some time at each of the Army Headquarters, Corps Headquarters, Divisional Headquarters and field hospital. Everywhere he characterised the conduct of the troops as absolutely splendid and at the hospital he was full of praise for the unquenchable spirit of the wounded men.

General Eisenhower had a close look at the artillery whose ceaseless efforts contributed so heavily to the establishment of the bridgehead. He remained for some time with a battery in action and stood beside the gunners while they were firing their pieces.

General Eisenhower arrived in the Salerno area aboard a British vessel which brought him from Palermo. A speedboat then ferried him to the landing-craft which put him ashore where he transferred successively to a jeep, and a smaller peep for the battle fronts tour.

A German shell landed near General Clark's Fifth Army Headquarters while General Eisenhower was there. Hearing the warning whine everyone in the tent instinctively hit the dirt -- except General Eisenhower and General Clark who were so interestedly conferring together that they failed to hear the shell whistle and remained seated, talking, unaware what was happening until after the shell had harmlessly exploded near by.

The untried American Fifth Army divisions have given an excellent account of themselves. General Eisenhower also highly praised the conduct of the British troops whom he regretfully was unable to visit on this trip though he received accounts of their action from several British officers who reported to him during the tour.

The losses in establishing the bridgehead have been reasonably heavy but no greater than was anticipated in view of the fact that the Allied troops faced the most bitter opposition from the moment of landing on the beaches.

The fighting at Salerno was the hardest the American troops had yet been up against anywhere and the British have been in the thick of it too. Acknowledging the losses the Allied Commander knew at the beginning that it was very risky and that we were playing for big stakes. The enemy claims that they were throwing us into the sea had no foundation at any time however.

The Army, Navy and Air Force working beautifully together applied tremendous power whenever it was needed and even when the situation appeared to be blackest he never believed the Germans could do anything against our artillery concentrations and naval gunfire.

Throughout the planning stages of the campaign and its execution to date Admiral Cunningham, Air Marshal Tedder and General Alexander have skillfully directed their respective forces and co-ordinated them with the other services. The conduct and morale of the troops of all three services is of the highest order and their efficiency is evidenced by the results they have achieved.

The Allied forces are rapidly getting into position to undertake seriously a major battle with the German forces in Italy.

When on board the British vessel General Eisenhower endeared himself to the ship's complement by an informal and brief talk over the ship's public address system. The sailors cheered him heartily at the conclusion and when he left, in addition to the usual honours sailors standing at attention on the decks during the piping of the bosun's whistle and other formal ceremonies for distinguished guests, gave him three lusty "hip-hip hoorays".