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THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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GERMANY CUT IN TWO BY THIRD ARMY DASH

Report Red Troops Can See Flames Of Berlin

Battle Reported At 'Its Climax'

By RICHARD KASISCHKE

LONDON — (AP) — German broadcasts declared today the battle for the eastern approaches to Berlin had "reached its climax," with Russians breaching defense lines only 18 or 20 miles from the capital, and that the Soviets had launched a third offensive south of Stettin aimed at linking with the Allies on the North German Plain.

Front dispatches to Moscow asserted the Russians could see Berlin burning, but did not yet specify that any offensive was underway.

Nine Russian armies are smashing toward Berlin, the Germans said, conceding Red Army gains through the strong hedgehog positions in the blazing arc east and northeast of the bomb-shattered city.

The enemy declared Stalin had thrown in a third offensive on a seventeen-mile Oder River front south of Stettin, intending to slice in between that Baltic port and Berlin, and join the Western Allies north and west of Berlin. This drive has assumed great dimensions, the broadcasts said.

KONEV DRIVE

The Germans declared Marshal Ivan Koney had expanded his surge across the Neisse River southeast of Berlin to a 45-mile front, and was nearing Cottbus, on the Spree River 48 miles from Berlin. Mos-

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Two-Minute News Roundup

Western Front

Lt. Gen. George Patton's tank-riding infantrymen have invaded Czechoslovakia with a plunge into the Sudetenland. An American Third Army dash of eight miles from positions south of captured Plauen (Athof) has succeeded in bisecting Germany. The American Ninth Army on the western approaches to Berlin has seized all of Magdeburg with the aid of flame-throwing tanks. British Tommies on the northern flank are sweeping toward the lower Elbe against scattered resistance. British tanks rolled forward on a 40-mile front to within 18 miles of Hamburg and less than twelve of Harburg.

Russian Front

Berlin says the bitterest battle of the war is in prospect on the eastern approaches to the Reich capital. Nazi broadcasts reveal that the Russian Army has cracked German defense lines within eighteen miles of Berlin.

Italy

The major German base in Northern Italy, Bologna, is the object of hard-hitting Poles in the Eighth Army who have driven to within ten miles of its borders. The British radio says heavy guns already are sending shells into the Bologna rail station.

The Pacific

The Battle of Japan continues to be a mad merry-go-round, both in the air and on land. Our Superfortresses staked another big raid today on the enemy's Kyushu Airdromes. But the Jap suicide bombers still are making it hot for our fleet units off Okinawa. In the land fighting, while the Japs counter-attack on southern Okinawa, the Americans, according to Tokyo, have invaded another tiny airfield island just off the Okinawa coast.

A News-Man's Reaction

President Truman Quick, Suave And Sure With Press

(The News sent its associate editor, Burke Davis, to Washington yesterday to attend the first press conference held by President Harry Truman after taking the oath of office. Here is Mr. Davis' report:)

By BURKE DAVIS
Associate Editor, The News

WASHINGTON — Harry Truman is going to be no country-boy President. Diplomats and politicians, imported or domestic, will find they can't lead him around by the nose.

Burke Davis

This judgment is delivered after the momentous experience of watching him in action at his first press conference—while standing on a White House porch with 50 other reporters from all over the country, straining to hear and see through a screen door.

We could get enough out of the crowded room to sense that a perky little man, quick, suave and sure of himself, was running the show. There was none of the modest, retiring and humble man of popular legend.

Regular White House correspondents expressed amazement at the quick, unequivocal answers he popped back to their questions. He hemmed none, hawed none. He has a manner of bowing his head, staring, and pursing his lips when hearing a question he is not ready to answer. And when the questioner is done, he snaps back his head and shoots a sharp answer, like: "There will be no discussion of appointments today." And then he flashes his wide, flat smile.

HE MADE A HIT

Throughout, he was very pleasant, and made an instant hit with veterans who have seen Mr. Roosevelt in action in the Oval Room for so long. From the start, when he stood to read the rules to the press, he remained on his feet. He turned from one to the other as questions arose, one hand on hip, very erect. He parried questions and brushed off broad implications with skill.

He was, in short, very much his own man, and very much in his element. He was far more forceful, joking, speaking soberly, or hammering his desk with emphasis, than he was in his maiden speech to Congress. He found occasion to pound on his desk, incidentally, when he was explaining that he would attend to business there, where he belonged.

Twice during the session there were outbursts of laughter, but there were no pauses in the routine. Men who have covered the White House for many years said that never in their memory had the doors opened on time before, and that never had so much ground been covered so quickly. The President was, I judge, the Truman of the Truman Committee yesterday.

A WARM, EASY RELATIONSHIP

He steered things the way he wanted them to go, but welcomed all kinds of questions. There was no brusqueness in his manner, but all of us understood that only business was in order. He established, in his first conference, a warm and friendly relation with the press which should be most helpful to him. (Afterward, in the lobby, there was even Columnist George Dixon, the droll anti-New Dealer, speaking fulsomely of the unity which would now come in Government.)

When a Secret Service guard led our party of outcasts into the room there was time only to file by and shake hands with the new President. He shakes like a Missouri farm boy; even far down the line his grip had not weakened.

His desk, which probably attracted the eyes of every regular correspondent in the group, was almost clean. Just the bare essentials of carrying on executive business were there: pens, pencils, a few pads of paper. The accumulated treasures of Mr. Roosevelt were gone.

MATCH FOR JOE AND WINSTON

His face has a greater strength than photographs had hinted. His thin mouth is set straight in a strong jaw, and deep creases in his cheeks become long dimples when he grins—and he grins often. You can believe that he is the simple man of the early stories, but you can't see him in action without sensing that he is a strong man, physically fit and boiling with energy. I cannot believe that he is going to sit and allow advisers to run his administration, or that he will long be at a disadvantage in dealing with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin.

The conference, as might have been expected, did not reveal the course his Administration will take, but his performance was enough to assure that he will hold the helm himself. He has quickly become accustomed to the rigamarole which must surround a President, apparently, just a few days after his first experience at being chaperoned by Secret Service squads. He has fallen right in with them, and acts as if he didn't know were there.

He's still "folks," as we say at home. You can't miss that on seeing him perform—any more than you could in the story of his begging a meal from his next door neighbor last Thursday morning, after an all-night visit had caught his family without food in the house.

Washington is still full of speculation as to what he will do with appointments, and the guessing here is apparently as hephazard as it is in other parts of the country. At any rate, his goings and comings will not bother Washington so much any more. He moved from his five-room Connecticut Avenue apartment Monday into Blair House, and the sirens won't be whirring at gruesome hours of night and morning, as he goes to and from work. Reporters who've seen him being escorted grandly through the streets say that he always has a glum look on his face, as if he'd much rather be riding the busses, like he used to.

LEAVES WAR TO THE EXPERTS

Chances are that the military situation will not confuse the new President. Not only has he determined to leave our present leaders free to carry on the war—but he is also a long-time and serious student of the War Between the States.

He owns a large library on that war, and has taken many long walking tours of the old battlefields in Virginia and Pennsylvania. He had time for that in his senatorial days, but no more.

There was one military-political incident yesterday morning which must be reported: as 50 visiting correspondents came out on the White House portico Jimmy Byrnes and Admiral Leahy came down the walk. Before us Duchess, the handsome young daughter of the world-famed Blake, was sipping playfully at a large black dog (officially unidentified). As Byrnes and the Admiral approached, smiling, Byrnes quipped: "Is that what you gentlemen came to watch?"

Rail Yards Near Hitler Hideout Hit

U. S. Bombers Make Attacks

LONDON — (AP) — U. S. heavy bombers today battered railyards at Traunstein in Southern Germany less than 25 miles from Hitler's mountain stronghold at Berchtesgaden.

The force hitting Traunstein was part of a fleet of more than 750 Flying Fortresses and Liberators which attacked ten rail objectives in Southern Germany and Western Czechoslovakia.

Another target was Rosenheim, just north of the Austrian border and within 40 miles of Berchtesgaden.

Rocket-firing American Thunderbolts based in Italy attacked Berchtesgaden itself last Feb. 26.

Close to 1,000 RAF and Canadian bombers, following up a night attack on railway yards near the Czechoslovakia frontier, made a night concentrated attack in clear weather today on the German North Sea naval base of Heligoland. A number of German warships were believed to be hiding there.

Fighters escorting the American heavy bombers raided airfields in Southern Germany and Western Czechoslovakia in another ruinous blow at the diminishing German Air Force.

During the night, Berlin was pounded by the first co-ordinated double blow from British and Russian bombers. Other night-flying planes hammered Nazi escape railways into Czechoslovakia and airfields in Southern Germany.

It was the third straight day of hunting by U. S. fighter fleets writing off the German Air Force. Hundreds of German planes still were jammed on airfields, most unable to fly for lack of fuel.

A recapitulation showed that Allied pilots destroyed at least 453 German planes yesterday, bringing to nearly 3,000 the total knocked out in eleven days.

German Story

Report Stalin Says War To End April 25

LONDON—(AP)—A German radio reporter quoted Russian prisoners today as saying that an order of the day by Marshal Stalin read to them at the start of the new Eastern Front offensive said the war would end April 25, with Berlin falling to the Red Army.

No order of the day broadcast from Moscow has mentioned a specific date for the collapse of Germany and such a forecast would be contrary to Stalin's previous policies.

In the months prior to the invasion of Normandy German propagandists several times broadcast announcements that Allied landings would be attempted at specific periods and exulted when each of these passed without incident.

Navy Rocket Planes Attack Kuriles Cape

AN ALEUTIANS BASE, April 16 —(Delayed)—(AP)—Rocket - firing Navy search planes attacked Tomari Cape on northeastern Paramushiro in the Kuriles today pouring both rockets and machine gun fire into the Japanese installations from a low level.

One Navy plane went in so low that debris from its own rocket explosion struck it as it roared over the target.

Nominal damage to the enemy installations was caused by the American raiders, all of which returned safely.

Three unidentified Japanese planes were seen in the air but made no attempt to attack. Scattered and inaccurate flak was fired by the Japanese.

Dies On Ie Jima

Ernie Pyle Killed By Japanese Fire

By LEIF ERICKSON

GUAM — (AP) — Ernie Pyle, the GI's columnist, was killed today by Japanese machine gun ambush on Ie Jima, a 10-square mile island just west of Okinawa.

Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz' headquarters said Pyle was killed instantly by a surprise machine gun attack at 10:15 A. M. on the southern side of the island, while observing the advance of Tenth Army troops who had invaded the island Monday.

Pyle when hit was standing with a regimental commanding officer of headquarters troops when a Japanese machine gun opened fire.

The commanding general of the Ie Jima invasion troops officially reported Pyle's death as follows:

"I regret to report that War Correspondent Ernie Pyle who made such great contribution to the morale of our foot soldiers was killed in battle on Ie Jima today."

In Washington, his death was announced by Secretary of the Navy Forrestal and President Truman issued a statement of condolence.

(Because Okinawa is fourteen

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ERNIE PYLE

Yanks Win Air War

2,280 Jap Planes Shot At Okinawa

By AL DOPKING

GUAM — (AP) — More than 2,280 Japanese planes—a sizeable chunk of the Nipponese air force—were destroyed by American and British carrier planes and anti-aircraft gunners in the last month in support of the Okinawa invasion.

This staggering toll was announced by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz today amid increasing indications that Japan's fierce air attacks on the American invasion armada off Okinawa heavily drained the enemy's supply of planes and pilots.

The planes were knocked odt of enemy air fleets attacking the Americans on and off Okinawa, and also in U. S. and British carrier raids on the Ryukyus and the Japanese main islands.

MITSCHER IN LEAD

Pilots from Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher's Fast Carrier Force shot down the greatest number—1,600. Land-based aircraft, anti-aircraft guns and planes flying from escort carriers accounted for 600. British carrier planes covering the southern flank wiped out 80.

Destruction of the Japanese Air Force thus averaged 76 planes a day from March 18 through April 17 (yesterday).

This toll does not include planes shot down by Superfortresses or by escorting Mustangs from Iwo Jima. In one recent Tokyo raid,

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Yanks Close On Baguio

By FRED HAMPSON

MANILA—(AP)—American soldiers fought inside the Japanese stronghold of Baguio today as Gen. Douglas MacArthur announced the rescue of more than 7,000 civilians from the once gay, attractive Summer capital of the Philippines.

From a line on the northwest outskirts, four miles from the center of the ruined city, doughboys of Maj. Gen. Percy W. Clarkson's Thirty-Third Division encountered heavy fire from guns dominating this approach.

The battle increased in intensity as the Japanese indicated they intended to defend their mountain citadel to the limit.

Other units of the Thirty-Third, which has been closing in on Ba-

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Stinking, Filthy Horror

39,000 Prisoners Freed From German Camp By Allied Forces

By WILLIAM FRYE

BRITISH SECOND ARMY HEADQUARTERS, Germany — (AP) —Prisoners in the Belsen concentration camp, a stinking, filthy horror, were freed Sunday by Gen. Sir Miles C. Dempsey's men.

The camp contained 39,000 persons still alive and uncounted dead.

It contained typhus, typhoid, tuberculosis, nakedness, starvation, dumps of unburied corpses in vast heaps, mounds covering great burial heaps, one cavernous pit half-filled with blackened bodies.

There were children—300 of them—in the midst of this.

Babies were born here daily.

These were the findings of a senior medical officer of the British Second Army who has been at the camp three days and says "anything you have seen doesn't even begin the story."

The living are being moved to the relative luxury of a nearby army barracks. Soon none will be left here except those with communicable diseases too ill to move.

MUST BE DESTROYED

Eventually, says this officer, the only conceivable disposition of this Nazi monument will be destruction by fire.

There were 2,000 women in three compounds in this camp and nearly 12,000 men in two other compounds. In adjacent barracks in one corner of the vast Nazi camp are 13,000 more prisoners who are fairly recent arrivals.

"Horror camp" is what the medical officer calls it.

After his arrival at the camp 30 guards under the direction of their commander were still shooting prisoners who were trying to steal potatoes. The SS had failed to abide by the surrender issues to turn in their arms because they feared the vengeance of the emaciated victims of their inhumanity.

The SS men were promptly disarmed when discovered, and are now assigned to cleaning up the camp as a slight measure of retribution.

How many died here there is no

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Yank Troops Sweep Into Sudetenland

Americans Drive 8 Miles From Area Of Hof To Enter Czechoslovakia

By JAMES M. LONG

PARIS —(AP) — Tank-riding U. S. Third Army infantrymen invaded Czechoslovakia today, bisecting Germany with a plunge into the Sudetenland, which Hitler annexed to the Reich after Munich in 1938.

The 90th Division invaded Czechoslovakia northwest of Asch in the northwestern tip of the country. The Americans had dashed eight miles from the area of Hof, which is about 10 miles south of captured Plauen.

The last lap of the drive to cut Germany in two was made without opposition except for a brief flurry of gunfire in the German village of Prax, less than a mile from the border, a front dispatch said.

The 90th smashed two miles beyond the border to the vicinity of Gottmasgrun.

Eastern Czechoslovakia has been deeply invaded by the Russians who were fighting within eight of the industrial city of Brunn. It was the seventh, or perhaps the eighth country invaded by Gen. Eisenhower's Western Armies. The others were France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Germany and Monaco. Some of Eisenhower's forces in the Maritime Alps may have crossed the Italian frontier as well.

Ahead of Lt. Gen. George Patton's Army in Czechoslovakia, 750 Flying Fortresses and Liberators smashed rail junctions on lines which the Nazis would need either to make a stand or escape into the national redoubt to the south.

MAGDEBURG FALLS

The Ninth Army captured Magdeburg (334,258) securing a firm anchor on the Elbe River opposite Berlin. The industrial and commercial center was the twentieth largest city of Germany before bombs and shells reduced it to the smoking ruins which the Hell on Wheels (Second Armored) and Old Hickory (30th) Divisions captured.

Flame - throwing tanks reduced the last snipers' nests in Magdeburg. Most of the Germans surrendered.

The Second Armored Division captured the industrial southern part of the city including its Krupp Works. The 30th Division fought through the heart of Magdeburg past its thirteenth century cathedral. Armaments and aircraft works were found badly smashed up. The whole city was a great ruin.

CIVILIANS RUSH OUT

As the battle reached the Elbe —last river before Berlin—civilians emerged from cellars and rushed for water. The Ninth Army also fought five miles east of the Elbe in the bridgehead beyond Barby, fifteen miles southeast of Magdeburg and within 52 miles of Berlin.

The Germans blew the highway bridge across the Elbe but, at last reports, the rail bridge still was intact. Germans held out on Rothla

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Poles In Po Valley Drive

By LYNN HEINZERLING

ROME—(AP)—Polish troops of the Eighth Army, sweeping up the Po Valley, advanced today to within ten miles of Bologna, major German base in Northern Italy.

Fifth Army forces also drove slowly closer to the big Italian arsenal and industrial center from the south, battering their way through enemy troops entrenched in scores of caves, tunnels and pillboxes along the mountain highway from Florence.

Other Eighth Army forces have advanced beyond Argenta, on the extreme right, cutting the Germans off from this stronghold in the Argenta Gap, the key to Ferrara and the Po Valley.

The Germans were still holding out in Argenta, but they appeared to be trapped, with Allied troops astride the railway a little more than a mile beyond the town.

BRIDGEHEAD ENLARGED

The bridgehead over the Marano Canal, next water barrier to Ferrara and the Po Valley, was enlarged and strengthened, with heavy casualties inflicted on the Germans.

Polish troops who had spearheaded the advance north of Alfonsine Friday fought their way nine miles beyond Castel Bolognese.

Pushing out from captured Medicina, fourteen miles northeast of Bologna, Indian troops reached the Canal Di Medicina, four miles to the northeast. West of Medicina New Zealand troops blasted their way 4,000 yards across a mass of water obstacles to reach the Galma Canal on a two-mile front.

Italian troops two miles beyond the Sillaro River were chasing the Germans from one hill position to the next. They had captured 1,000 prisoners in the last 24 hours.

Russian News Policy Assailed In London

LONDON — (AP) — Two London newspapers took the Soviet government to task today on the ground that accredited American and British correspondents have been permitted to visit captured Vienna.

Characterizing the fall of Vienna as one of the great stories of the war, The News Chronicle asserted the Russians of being unreasonable.

WEATHER

Clear and mild this evening, tonight. Thursday, fair and mild.

High and Low Yesterday
Mean Yesterday
Normal for Today
Year Ago Today