

American Planes Sweep Across Japs' Ryukyu Islands

U.S. SOLDIERS BATTLE TO NEW STAND ON RHINE

Naval Guns Shell Isle 350 Miles From Japan

Ships Blasted In At Okino Daito

By ELMONT WAITE
U. S. PACIFIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS, GUAM — (AP) — American carrier planes swept across the Ryukyu Islands virtually unopposed Thursday, destroying or damaging 55 Japanese ships and 91 planes, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz announced today.

That night a task force from Adm. Raymond A. Spruance's Fifth Fleet followed up the daylight raid with a night-long bombardment of Okino Daito, 210 miles east of the main Ryukyu chain which guards the approaches to southern Japan and the China coast.

Bombardment warships were only 350 miles south of Japan, the closest announced approach to the enemy mainland in a naval gun attack on shore objectives.

Nimitz said 13 enemy vessels were sunk, 13 probably sunk and 29 damaged.

Forty-one Japanese planes were destroyed and 50 others either demolished or damaged on the ground.

CHASE JAPS
Only four of the total were shot down in the air and American pilots had to chase Japanese planes to bring them down. Not a single interceptor ventured to oppose the American planes, which Tokyo broadcasts previously said swarmed over the islands 600 strong.

The attack cost the raiders eight aircraft and 13 planes.

Airfields, barracks, warehouses, radio, radar, mills and lumber yards were destroyed in the sweep over the islands in the center of the chain.

The attack centered around Okinawa, frequently hit by Vice Adm. A. Mitscher's fast carrier forces and now almost a daily target of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's land-based bombers from the Philippines.

Two-Minute News Roundup

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Western Front

Allied troops on the Western Front formed a solid front west of the Rhine today. Advance units of the American Ninth and the Canadian First Armies joined near Geldern to slam the fate on the Germans caught between the two armies. Although the Nazis have been withdrawing fast across the Rhine, it is possible that thousands of German troops have been cut off completely.

The American Ninth Army holds a six-mile stretch of the west bank of the Rhine opposite Düsseldorf. That big German city is being shelled by American guns in dispatch from Associated Press Correspondent Wes Gallagher reveals that the Germans blew up every bridge across the Rhine in the Düsseldorf area last night and early today. Other American Ninth Army units are within eight miles of Düsseldorf, biggest river port in Europe.

Air Warfare

This is the nineteenth day of round-the-clock air operations against Germany. The Nazis have spotted a parade of bombers and fighters flying over the city of Berlin. It was the eleventh consecutive night that Berlin has been hit.



"HONEYBUNCH" PERFORMS FOR HIS "CHOW" — In the German town of Frieschweiler, Lt. Gen. Harmon of Johnson, N. Y., member of a Third Army tank destroyer unit makes his pet pup "Honeybunch" sit up and beg for food. The pup was adopted as a unit mascot. (International News Photos.)

Pacific Search On

Lt. Gen. Harmon Missing On Flight

By REMBERT JAMES
ARMY HEADQUARTERS, PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS, Honolulu — (AP) — Lt. Gen. Millard F. Harmon, commander of Army Air Forces operating in the Pacific, is missing with nine other officers and men in a transoceanic flight.

Early today the Army announced that the 57-year-old general's plane was mysteriously missing on a routine flight and the greatest air and naval search ever launched in the Pacific was under way.

The brief announcement by Lt. Gen. Richard C. Richardson Jr., commander of Army Air Forces in the Pacific Ocean area, did not disclose when or where the plane was lost.

HAD AMPLIFIED

When last heard from the General, his converted bomber had been dispatched to a combat zone and might have been attacked by Japanese aircraft or whether it may have crashed because of operational difficulties.

General Richardson told all available naval ships and planes had been dispatched to join in the search for Harmon, who as deputy commander of the Air Force played a leading role in the Superfortress attack on Tokyo.

Vast areas of the ocean undoubtedly are being combed by surface ships and planes since the hunt exceeds the great quest in the Pacific for Amelia Earhart and Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker. In 1937 a U. S. Navy task force combed 20,000 square miles of the Pacific in a search for Miss Earhart and her navigator, Fred Goetz. J. Noonan. They were not found although airplanes circled the same area and a Japanese fleet unit searched nearby waters.

The rescue of Rickenbacker,

Two Japs Near Doom In Hot War

Marines Attacking Last Enemy Line

By LEIF ERICKSON
U. S. PACIFIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS, GUAM — (AP) — Only 600 yards of terrain stood today between the Third U. S. Marines and the point at which they may cut the last interconnecting Japanese pillbox line, along blood-soaked Two Island's northern end.

But it was a rugged stretch, by anybody's definition. It sloped irregularly downward to a cliff which probably will serve as the last stand of the Japanese.

Between the Marine outpost and the cliff runs a system of half-underground concrete defense works which, like others the Marines have faced in the last ten days, must be taken the hard way. And the Japanese are beginning to show signs of desperation.

The 3rd Division Leathernecks, under Maj. Gen. Graves B. Erskine, jumped forward 700 yards Friday to seize a 362-foot hill in the northern part of the island, within rifle range of the cliff, and in position to cut the boomerang-shaped Japanese line in two, approximately 100 yards in from the water line, is one outside edge of the boomerang.

JAPS NEAR END

The American advance formed a salient pointing toward the inside of the bend. The cliff, running along the northeastern shore about 100 yards in from the water line, is one outside edge of the boomerang.

Once the Japanese back up beyond the cliff they will be in the open, between the Devilknot and the sea, and they no longer will have the advantage of connecting shorepoints.

The 4th Marines, on the right flank of the 3rd, also inched forward a little after having been stopped for five days by ferocious enemy fire. To the left of the 3rd Division, the 5th Marines also advanced, but met the largest-scale counter-attack the Japanese have offered in several days. It had some aspects of a banister attack such as the enemy has mounted elsewhere when his position became hopeless. The enemy also was believed to be running out of ammunition.

Capture of the 362-foot hill by the 3rd Division left the enemy with only one remaining similar height near the steep cliffs. It also brought the Yanks to within 600 yards of the northernmost tip of the island.

The advance of the Fifth Division also took in another 362-foot hill.

See JAP LINE on page 11

Mecklenburg Casualties

(Stories Inside)

KILLED

Cpl. Earl Eap
Sergeant C. John Arbor

MISSING

Capt. Harry W. Alexander

PRISONER

1st Lt. Jack Caldwell
1st Sgt. James V. Perry

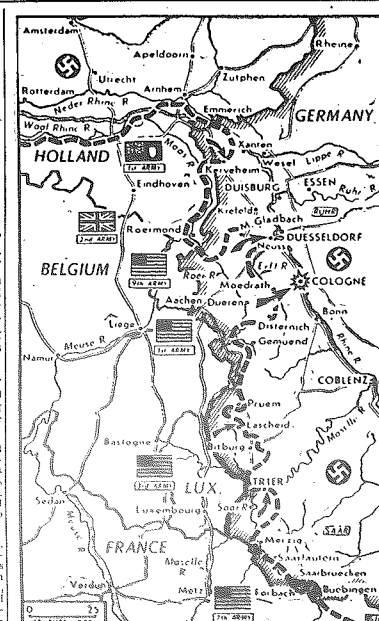
Looked Like Suicide

Hot Fire Of Few Bold Yanks Routs Vet Nazis Near Rhine

By HAL BOYLE

Battle favors the defense, you should have three to one odds before attacking. That was the old theory.

But these Americans faced facts, not theory. Somebody just told them to get their trenches cleared so the light could go on to reach the enemy.



U. S. FRONT ON THE RHINE—American and Canadian troops joined forces north of captured Krefeld today forming a solid Allied front extending from Xanten on the Lower Rhine Bend to Bonn, as the Germans frantically fled eastward across the Rhine. Germans destroyed bridges over the Rhine between captured Neuss and Düsseldorf on the east bank. To the south, First Army forces were 4 miles from Cologne. Third Army troops pushed on from fallen Trier.

Attack Along Rhine

Germans Mauled By Divebombers

By HENRY B. JAMESON
LONDON — (AP) — While Allied divebombers were mauling the Germans along the Rhine, more than 1,800 U. S. Eighth Air Force planes flew into central and southern Germany for the third straight day and battered more than a dozen rail, oil and industrial targets essential to the Nazi war machine.

This great fleet, including 1,400 heavy bombers, first gave Berlin a hammering yesterday, dropping by more than 6,000 Allied aircraft.

RAF Liberators and Halifax bombers from Italy joined in last night's assault, attacking the Berlin Yescova rail yards at Verona and leaving a number of fires in a follow-up to yesterday's blasting of German communications in Northern Italy and Austria by heavy bombers and fighters of the Mediterranean Allied Air Force. The German Air Force was mauled severely yesterday as it came up in strength for the first time since mid-January in an effort to stop 1,500 U. S. Eighth Air Force bombers and 700 fighters slashing at a half dozen targets in Southeastern Germany.

TARGETS HIT

The targets included three factories at Brunswick where Panther tanks, trucks and oil refinery equipment are produced; four small oil refineries northeast of Brunswick; large synthetic oil plants at Rothenburg, a suburb of Magdeburg; Ruhlberg, 27 miles north of Dresden, and Mibitz near Hanover.

One of the task forces of heavy bombers sent 50 miles beyond Leipzig and cracked the huge Magdeburg plant at Chemnitz for the second day running.

BERLIN ATTACKED

Last night RAF Mosquitoes attacked Berlin with blockbusters for the eleventh successive night and landed Tactical Air Forces. Losses also bombed the railway center of were still to be announced.

Incomplete reports showed a total of 122 Nazi planes destroyed—46 in aerial combat and 76 on the ground by the Eighth Air Force.

There were two American casualties. Twenty-four-year-old Lt. William C. Shaw Jr. of Hutchinson, Kan., led his men off first.

They opened up with everything—machineguns and tommyguns and had as they stepped out in a tank line into the wide, flat field.

U. S. Soldiers Battle To New Stand On Rhine

Allied Front West of River Solid—Nazis Blow Duesseldorf Bridges

PARIS — (AP) — U. S. troops fought to a new Rhine stand today at Uerdingen and joined forces with the Canadian First Army, forming a solid Allied front west of the river.

Ten miles farther south the Germans blew all the Rhine bridges in the Duesseldorf area.

Americans entered Uerdingen, just northeast of fallen Krefeld, and were fighting on the approaches to the fine superhighway bridge there.

The Canadian-American juncture, apparently trapped sizable portions of two German armies. RAF pilots spotted Germans in headlong, disorderly flight eastward toward the Rhine.

The Uerdingen Highway leads on to the big port of Duisburg. Further north another U. S. Division was within eight miles of the Homburg bridge near Duisburg.

NEARER COLOGNE

Further south the U. S. First Army struck to within four miles of Cologne, fourth city of the Rhine. The German line was within 12 miles of Bonn.

Two American armies and the Canadian Army now had a solid front from Xanten near the lower Rhine bend to Bonn, shoring Germans in pell-mell retreat across the river.

The Ninth Army pushed forward six miles today to link with the Canadian forces.

Rosa Munro, Canadian Press Correspondent, said the German line given up the entire western sector facing the Canadian Army front.

The German retreat in face of swift Allied advances lost all semblance of order, and enemy troops were frantically attempting to scurry across the Rhine in ferries, small boats and a few bridges in a life or death race to escape, a front dispatch said.

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By German account, Russian armored spearheads cut across the Danube-Saale communication cord at Koenigs, seven miles from the Baltic coast.

Moscow has not confirmed this report nor a German statement that the Russians were in the outskirts of Koenigs.

Base Of Lashio Under Siege

CALCUTTA — (AP) — The enemy's big Burma Road Base of Lashio was brought under attack by British and Chinese forces today and air today and the Chinese First Army began assaulting the outer defenses six and a half miles north of the city.

Bombers wheeled over in endless waves so close they had to raise their turn in the sky, and the railroads earthwork and warehouses of explosives went up in smoke and flames.

Three columns were closing on the city.

The frontal assault came from the north. Twelve miles east a flanking force broke a tough enemy stand, and the beaten Japanese fled for the dubious safety of the city.

A third column swung in about eight miles west of the city. In all, a dozen Burma villages were occupied.

Rehr Under Fire

Eisenhower Tells Nazis To 'Stay Put'

LONDON — (AP) — Gen. Eisenhower's radio spokesman warned German civilians west of the Rhine today to stay put because "there is no security east of that river."

"The Ruhr already is under Allied artillery fire and heavy aerial bombardment," said the broadcast over the Luxembourg radio. "Every attempt to evacuate east means immediate danger of death."

"Women, children and the aged who try to flee east will not only be endangered by the Allied bombardment but also from German troops and the German armies in their panic flight."

The broadcast urged civilians living in bridgehead areas to do everything in their power to conserve their lives.

Japs Announce Naval Transfer

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

A new command, Rear Admiral Kusunobumi Matsuda, has been appointed for the Japanese Naval Station on the coast of Honshu, main Japanese island, the Tokyo radio said today.

WEATHER

Cloudy and mild with scattered showers falling. Temperature in the 40s and 50s. Windy and cooler tonight. Tomorrow cloudy and moderately cool.