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THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

THE RED ARMY JOINS THE FIGHT NEAR BERGZIG

Reds Find Center Of Berlin Like Junk Heap

By EDDIE GILMORE

MOSCOW.—(AP)—Russian storm units, breaking into the center of Berlin under clouds of rolling smoke, found it looking more like a gigantic junk heap today than the heart of the capital of the Third Reich.

Investa Correspondent Vsevolod Ivanov quoted a Red Army officer from Stalingrad as saying: "You can't recognize Berlin. Not that I was here before, but if this is the center there should be some buildings."

SUBWAY FIGHTING

Fighting also broke out at the subway station, the city said. Capt. Edward Gekhaman, a correspondent for the Army newspaper, Red Star, said struggles also raged high above the ground "in the corridors, on the staircases and even in the attics and on the roofs of the bigger buildings" and added:

"The situation on the Berlin front appears in official dispatches like this:—The infantry has gained Square No. 381. The enemy continues to resist in the upper floors of the square. Between Square 308 and 374 in a subway tunnel we have gained about half a kilometer—one-third of a mile."

The Javista correspondent reported: "Berlin is really a burning city. Dark thick clouds of smoke hang over the city like the shroud of night."

Ivanov added that Soviet tanks pressing toward the center were checking the breakthrough.

"Two great streams of people are seen in the streets of Berlin," he said. "One is going into Berlin and the other is coming out. The enemy from Berlin are liberated people. On the other side of the road are German pale, thin, frightened and silent, returning to the city."

The Javista correspondent said a commander who Soviet forces penetrated forward without changing all the blocks.

HORSTIA HELD

"It is a difficult situation," the commander replied. "It is not difficult to blow up those upper floors. I have got the ammunition and explosives, but I have no Panzerfausts that the Germans are holding hostages there. We can destroy them and our own people. Another thing, there are all sorts of German arms bears in these houses. There are policemen, firemen and school teachers. They don't know how to fight, and often when they find line has passed them by they put up a white flag."

Previa Correspondent Vsevolod Ivanov said that has happened to Berlin life.

"For fourteen days no newspapers have been issued. Recently there have been long lines of German civilians before shops looking for bread. White flags hang from many Berlin windows, but none come from them. The city is a mass of ruins from the British-American bombings. We see signs—Berlin won't be surrendered."

"Artillery, tanks and self-propelled guns are firing point blank at the city where there are soldiers. Going along streets our men are hurling bottles of inflammable liquid grenades into cellars from which the Germans are shooting."

Plane Crashes At Washington

WASHINGTON.—(AP)—Several passengers were reported killed when a Page Airways transport plane, northbound from Miami to Rochester, N. Y., crashed and burned at the National Airport shortly after noon today.

Witnesses said the plane, a fourteen-passenger Lockheed Lodestar transport, was taking off at the time of the crash, failed to get into the air and rolled into a ditch at the south end of the runway.

Potsdam And Spandau Fall In Furious Berlin Battle

Capital's Inner Core Cracking

By RICHARD KASSISCHKE

LONDON.—(AP)—First White Russian Army troops have captured Spandau on the western outskirts of flaming Berlin, Potsdam five miles outside the capital area, and Rathenow, 33 miles to the west, Premier Marshal Stalin announced tonight.

Potsdam has been the headquarters of the German Army since the days of Frederick the Great. Before the First World War it was the home of the German royal family.

In his order of the day Stalin described the three cities as "important road junctions and powerful German defense bases in central Germany."

Inside Berlin the Nazis' inner defense core appeared to be cracking under a massive Soviet aggression which already had gained the Russians two-thirds of the capital.

Marshal Gregory K. Zhukov's forces in the northwest sector pushed forward three miles during the night, breaking into the workers' district of Moabit and the other to the east of the city in the center of the flaming capital.

The First White Russian Army's advance from industrial Hagenau, captured yesterday, was disclosed in front dispatches broadcast by the Moscow radio.

It was complemented by gains in the south by Marshal Ivan S. Konev's First Ukrainian Army, which was believed to have completed the occupation of Berlin's main airport at Tempelhof.

IN PRISON AREA

At Moabit the Russians were in the area of the biggest prison in Berlin. The district adjoins the Hauptstadt on the northwest and German reports indicated that battles already were swirling over that great park. The Germans now held only a third of Berlin.

Soviet dispatches described Berlin as a wilderness of crumbling flames swept by hot winds from the flames of burning buildings and the charged with brick and cement dust.

Russian flame throwers went to work trying to German units in the ruins. One Soviet account said the fighting now raged high above the street in the corridors, on the stair cases, in attics and on the roofs of the larger buildings. Fighting also continued underground in cellars and the tunnels and stations of Berlin's subway system.

Japs Expecting Clash At Frisco

SAN FRANCISCO.—(AP)—Continuing a propaganda trend established by the powerful Tokyo newspaper Asahi, the Japanese paper Yomiuri-Shimbun, predicted today a "pitched diplomatic battle" between the United States and Russia at the United Nations Conference in San Francisco.

Mecklenburg Casualties

(Storica Inside)

KILLED

Cpl. Hugh E. Lathery

Pfc. Calvin D. Brown

Chairmanship Issue

Stettinius Seeks To Break San Francisco Deadlock

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER

SAN FRANCISCO.—(AP)—Secretary of State Stettinius went into an early morning huddle with the British, Russian and Chinese Foreign Ministers today in a new effort to settle the chairmanship of the United Nations Conference.

British and American leaders were hopeful of reaching an agreement with Foreign Commissioner Molotov along the lines of the compromise proposed yesterday by Foreign Secretary Eden. But some conceded it might not be possible to clear up this voting deadlock in time to get the conference down to business today.

The Big Four meeting was called preliminary to a meeting of the Conference Steering Committee, met with Eden, Molotov and Song in the Veterans War Memorial conference headquarters.

It was in this building that Molotov blocked an Eden motion to make Stettinius chairman of the conference. Eden then proposed that the job of presiding over the big open sessions be rotated among the Big Four—which Molotov approved—and that Stettinius be made chairman of the key Steering and Executive Committees—which Molotov disapproved.

Molotov wanted all three assignments. He said the British and American delegations were not equal to the Soviet delegation.

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Yanks Drive Into Genoa

By MAURICE MORAN

ROME.—(AP)—Twenty U. S. Fifth Army divisions within 25 miles or less of Milan today as the entire Italian front surged toward a scrum of the Nazis' Alpine stronghold on the south.

On the Ligurian coast. In the west, said a "Free Milan" radio broadcast recorded in London, a swift Allied advance penetrated Genoa, a key north Italian port where partisans previously had been reported unofficially in control after driving out the German garrison.

At captured Verona, where the Americans broke through the German bridge across the river into the Brenner pass, the Germans were about 100 miles from the Brenner pass, now virtually in American hands.

The Fifth was some 180 miles from Genoa. This was 100 or more winding coastal miles west of San Remo. This was 100 or more winding coastal miles west of Genoa, immediate objective of the Fifth Army troops surging northward on the Ligurian coast.

While the British Eighth Army consolidated positions, the Americans broke through the German bridge across the river into the Brenner pass, the Germans were about 100 miles from the Brenner pass, now virtually in American hands.

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Patton Shuts Front Door To Redoubt

French 31 Miles From Munich

By AUSTIN BEALMEAR

PARIS.—(AP)—Gen. Patton's Third Army invaded Austria and established radio contact with the Russians west of Vienna today in a swift advance nearly sealing off Czechoslovakia and shutting the front door to Hitler's Alpine redoubt.

The French closed to within 31 miles of Munich and 78 of the Rhine Pass, toward which the sweeping American Fifth Army in Italy was striking from the south.

The Seventh Army approached Munich from 35 miles northeast of that cradle of the Nazi Party.

At last reports, many hours behind the action, the Third Army and the Russians west of Vienna were 85 miles apart, but Air Correspondent Edward D. Ball was said:

"The two armies are in radio contact and a physical junction appears likely soon."

The ordinary range of Russian radio tanks is 25 miles.

Ball's dispatch was heavily censored but he was allowed to say that "the impending linkup would mean that all Southern Germany, with its so-called national redoubt, and the German forces in Italy would be trapped."

Marshal Fedor I. Tolbukhin's Third Ukrainian army group had reached the Austrian frontier, the area 35 to 40 miles west of Vienna. Patton's troops were close to the city, the third city of Austria, from last reported positions 31 miles away. Resistance collapsed. Austrian troops fled.

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Americans And Russians Link Hands On Elbe

Historic Town Of Torgau Scene Of Historic Meeting Of Allies

By AUSTIN BEALMEAR

PARIS.—(AP)—The American First Army and the Russians have joined in the heart of Germany near Leipzig, cutting the Reich in two.

Americans and Russians joined hands yesterday. Their paths had met the day before. Torgau, historic town of 14,000 where ancestors of the Russians met their Western Allies nearly two centuries ago in the Seven Years War, lies 65 miles southwest of dying Berlin and 26 northeast of Leipzig.

Gen. Hodges' doughboys and jubilant troops of Marshal Ivan Konev's First Ukrainian Army celebrated the historic junction with singing, dancing and music.

Americans and Russians slapped each other on the back, gave each other bear hugs, and sat in the warm sunshine drink champagne from beer mugs and toasting the great occasion of the meeting of the two armies.

Not in all this long war have there been scenes such as those enacted in the town of Torgau on the west bank of the Elbe and across the River in the Red Army encampment where Russian and American troops saw each other for the first time, and began to get acquainted despite the handicaps of language.

It was enough that they were Allies and had whittled the enemy to open the way for this joining of armies in the heart of Nazi Germany. Parts of the city are deserted and empty. In other sections Russian and American troops wheeled, sang and formed fast friendships within a few minutes of meeting.

IT WAS A STRANGE DAY

The whole day was almost too fantastic to believe from the time a column set out in the morning to meet the Russians until dusk settled over the Elbe—and there was nothing more to be wrung from hours crammed with emotional outbursts.

This is the story of the memorable day which began

See GERMANY on Page 6

Truman Statement

WASHINGTON.—(AP)—The "Juncture of Angles" American and Soviet armies in the heart of Hitler's Reich, cutting Germany in two, was triumphantly announced at the White House today.

President Truman gave out the news as a statement released at the moment in Washington. Moscow and London at a pre-arranged hour, 10:30 Eastern War Time.

The text of the President's statement:

"The Anglo-American Armies under the command of Gen. Eisenhower have met the Soviet forces where they intended to meet—in the heart of Nazi Germany. The event has been out in two."

VICTORY NEAR

"This is not the hour of their victory in Europe, but the hour for the world which the world will draw near, the hour for which all the American people, all the British people and all the Soviet people have called and prayed for."

"The union of our arms in the heart of Germany has a meaning for the world which the world will not miss. It means, first, that the Nazi regime, desperate hope of the last, has been shattered. It means, second, that the German people are now free. It means, third, that the German people are now free. It means, third, that the German people are now free."

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