

LOWELL THOMAS' BROADCAST FROM ROME

April 27, 1945

GOOD EVENING, Everybody:

Genoa fell today; Genoa, the home town of Christopher Columbus; captured by the American Army. The honor went to a task force consisting of the 473rd and the 442nd Infantry of the 92nd Division. The 442nd, by the way, is the outfit made up of Japanese-Americans, which gave such a good account of itself both in Italy and France.

Partisans had already occupied several sections of the city. As for the harbor, no word has come through as yet regarding the condition it is in. But the taking of Genoa gives us the second largest seaport in Italy. Naples being the first.

Yesterday's stories to the effect that Milan and Turin had been liberated by the Partisans, were a bit premature. In flying over those cities, if you got

down low enough, say in an A-26, you discover that the Germans are still there -- or were -- this morning.

At any rate, the captured commander of Hitler's 76th Panzer Corps, Lt. Gen. Count von Schwerin, had it about right when he said: "The situation is hopeless." As one American headquarters staff officer said to me this evening: Of the 27 German and Fascist divisions we had against us only a week or so ago, we now have two-thirds of them in the bag, and we are rounding up the rest. Their escape routes through the Brenner and other passes have been cut off. They have nowhere to go. Yes, things are moving fast in northern Italy, and when the news blackout is lifted you may get a surprise.

Meanwhile I have a new General Patton story. Everybody has a Patton story. Papers over here in Italy today printed news that you probably had in the States yesterday, that Georgie Patton's promotion to the rank of full General, with four stars, has been

confirmed by the U. S. Senate. A group of us were with General Patton just a week ago when the word came that the President's nomination had been okayed by the House -- but only by the House. However, that morning Patton turned up wearing his new star. Shirts, battle jacket, steel helmet -- all had it on.

I believe I was the first to notice it, and I pointed it out to General Weyland, the air expert with Patton. He congratulated the colorful commander of the Third Army, and then I called to three Army cameramen, Leo Lieb, Chris Young and Dick Hamm, and they started taking pictures. Whereupon General Patton said: "My four stars are not legal yet! So hold those pictures up a few days, boys. The Senate may turn me down!"

Seeing that the photographers were a step lower than he was, and shooting up at him, he sang out: "Get on a level with me, fellows. If you don't, you'll make me look like an old turkey gobbler."

Patton is full of epigrams and salty language, and his men swear by him. He's a driver and a dynamo, and he and his men have struck terror into the souls of the Nazis. He also has a poetic and sentimental side -- as you probably have suspected. Perhaps his proudest boast so far as the war with Germany is concerned, is that he swept across the Rhine at the place most sacred to the Teutonic peoples, the rocks where the Lorelei sang.

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The other night, from Paris, when I told about flying to Berlin, and watching the Russians and Nazis fighting in the streets below, I failed to mention one of the lesser reasons why I wanted to get to Berlin in the closing hours of the European end of World War Two. Twenty-seven years ago, at the end of World War One, Webb Waldron, then with Collier's and now one of the editors of The Readers Digest -- Webb and I were the first from the outside world to get to Berlin and

then stay on and follow the German revolution. So, on Monday, while flying over Berlin, I asked Colonel Kraft to waggle the wings of our Mustang fighter, in a sort of salute to Webb.

For the benefit of my family, I also intended, and forgot, to addⁱⁿ that broadcast that there was nothing dangerous about flying to Berlin. No wonder Goering has asked Hitler to allow him to resign, for Fat Hermann hasn't any Luftwaffe any more. As for the Germans down below shooting at us, they were ~~hxy~~ busy. The Russians were taking care of that.

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General Mark Clark, here in Italy, has just sent a message of congratulations to all our troops who took part in the crossing of the Po. And he singled out for special praise, high praise, the 10th Mountain Division, which was the spearhead of the drive that sent the Germans reeling. The 10th Mountain Division, as many of you know, includes the troops who trained in

Colorado, at Camp Hale -- volunteers from Dartmouth, Williams, Amherst, Middlebury, and other colleges in the snow country, brought in by "Minnie" Dole and the National Ski Patrol. Also, many crack men of Scandinavian and Austrian background. Picked men, all. I am on my way to join them now, as I say so long, and turn you back to Hugh Gibson in New York.

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Evening, Everybody! -

Swiftly moving events ^{at} of the San Francisco Conference today brought about a defeat and a victory for Soviet Russia -- and a compromise.

The defeat came when Soviet delegate *Today at San Francisco* Molotov demanded that the Conference admit the Soviet-sponsored provisional government of Poland. To this American Secretary of State Stettinius replied with an immediate -- no, polite but firm. And others of the United Nations rallied to his support.

This occurred in a meeting of the Steering Committee, ~~this afternoon~~, with Molotov arguing that Poland, which has been so brave, and ^{has} suffered so much in this war, deserved to be represented as one of the United Nations. The reply to this was that it was indeed unfair to ~~exclude~~ ^{but} Poland, that the Soviet-sponsored provisional government has not been reorganized as promised by Stalin a Yalta and ~~could not~~ ^{cannot} be considered a representative regime. So the decision was that the question of Poland must be decided, not by the San Francisco Conference, but by the Big Three.

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There was earnest work for a compromise -
with British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden as the
chief conciliator. And he it was who devised the formula
adopted today - Molotov agreeing to the Eden proposal.

Here it is -
~~This is that~~ there shall, as a matter of form, be four
Chairmen, each a delegate of one of the four big powers.

These four Chairmen will be entirely ~~what is called~~
"proforma". ~~a matter of ceremony~~. There is - They will delegate
their power, their right to preside, to Stettinius.

So he, in effect, will be the Chairman who will conduct
the deliberations of the United Nations.

So that's the compromise which now enables the
conference to acquire a Chairman - that most necessary
officer without whom a conference cannot confer.

(Mr. Gibson:)

In just a moment we will hear

Lowell Thomas speaking from Rome, but first, a
message from Standard of California.

JUNCTURE

Thank you Lowell - It's good to hear from you
meeting

The long awaited ~~junction~~ of the troops of the

Western Allies with the Russians is announced with formal precision in statements issued simultaneously in ~~Washington~~

Washington, London and Moscow. In London, ~~typically,~~

the event was hailed by the British Prime Minister with a characteristic bit of Churchillian prose. It goes as

follows: "After long journeys, toils and victories

across lands and oceans, across so many battlefields -

the armies of the great Allies have traversed Germany

and have joined hands together," ~~said Winston Churchill.~~

The headline ~~junction~~ that was announced today

was not really the first - the official reports telling us

that an American patrol had made contact with a Russian

unit a couple of days ago. ~~But this was quite unofficial.~~

In fact, it was an accident - one of those things.

It is apparent that the American army along the Elbe

~~was~~ holding back, its push eastward halted - while the

Russians were approaching from the other side.

The contact between the two forces was to be made only at the right time and at the right place. However, in the case of one American advance unit, the signals went wrong. A twenty man patrol was pushing ahead, and an order was sent to stop that outfit. The order failed to arrive, and the Americans kept going. They went on twenty-three miles beyond the point at which they were ordered to stop and in that way they stumbled into the Russians.

However, that did not count ~~not in the formal~~

~~record~~ and the official meeting of the forces occurred

^{today} ~~later~~ at the town of Torgau, on the River Elbe. That

major even, too, was ^{characterized} ~~accompanied~~ by a ^{certain} oddity - the

town of Torgau being captured, not by the Americans or

by the Russians - but by an Irishman. That is - an Irish

sergeant in the British army, who was a prisoner ^{of war.}

Near Torgau, Allied prisoners were held at a camp,

which was abandoned by its German guards, and the

prisoners took over. What happened is told by an American sergeant - David Colin of St. Louis. "We prisoners had taken over control, when this Irishman got hold of some cognac somewhere, and decided to go to town and buy his wife a present. He was weaving and marching down the street, and when the German civilians saw his British uniform, they figured the Allies had arrived and began putting out white flags."

So that's how Torgau surrendered to an Irishman who had found some cognac, and shortly thereafter an American jeep appeared - the lead jeep of the American force that was coming to meet the Russians at Torgau.

~~The official ceremonies in the joining of forces were led by an American and a Russian general. Major General Emil Reinhardt of Detroit, Michigan, commander of the American Sixty-Ninth Division, presided~~

BERLIN

The latest is that the Soviet Army now holds about nine-tenths of Berlin, the Nazi defenders forced back to an area in the center of the city -- the section of the Tiergarten. Desperate Nazis have concentrated in that once magnificent park, and today the Russians threw a new ring around them, the joining of Soviet forces completing an encirclement of the Tiergarten area. ^{TP} And the Russians ~~have~~ captured Tempelhof, the great Berlin airport. ^{This} ~~And this~~ gives them possession of the last flying field from which Hitler and Goebbels might escape by air -- assuming they are still in the doomed city. They are -- ~~now~~ according to a prominent German General captured today. ^{He is} General Kurt Dittmars, well-known during this war as a military radio commentator, a spokesman for the German army. He today surrendered himself to the Americans at Magdeburg, and is quoted as saying Hitler and Goebbels are still in Berlin and expect to stay there until the bitter end. ~~They will well may have to~~ ~~with the Russian capture of the Tempelhof, the airport~~

~~that represented, apparently, their last chance to
get away through the sky.~~

And the Russians captured another familiar
place today -- Potsdam. Soviet troops pushing on south
of Berlin seized the town, which Frederick the Great
made the seat of the dynasty of the Hohenzollerns.

BAVARIAN REDOUBT

Austria

The American break into ~~Bavaria~~ was made almost without resistance. Patton's tanks, coming through the flat country of Bohemia, rolled across the frontier, into Austria. And hardly a shot was fired, as they made their rapid advance. The most obvious objective would be ^a joining up with the Russians in the valley of the Danube west of Vienna } ~~for a joint assault against~~ ^{combined} ~~the Nazi mountain stronghold in Bavaria. A meeting of Patton's Third Army and the Russians would place the Allies along a line east of Bavaria, a solid front threatening the redoubt of the Nazi last stand.~~

OKINAWA

On Okinawa, there are signs that the stubborn
~~Japanese~~ Japanese defense is beginning to break up. Major General
Hodge, commander of the Twenty-Fourth Corps, states:
"The Jap is pretty well disorganized."

This follows the American capture of dominating
hills, which places them in sight of two key flying
fields. [A deep bulge has been driven into the powerful
enemy fortifications across Okinawa - the bitterly
fighting Japs unable to stem the surge of American
mechanized power.]

FOLLOW OKINAWA

The latest news tells of a general American advance on Okinawa -- our troops now in the near vicinity of the important Machinato air base.

8' ~ And now Hugh James

Speaking for L. Tr.
So long until Monday

