

The new invasion of the Philippines is certainly striking swiftly -- driving for twenty-one miles since the landings of yesterday, twenty-one miles ~~more~~ in two days. That kind of progress took American troops straight to Olongapo, a former big American naval base on Subic Bay. Philippine guerrillas had brought in reports that only some three hundred Japs were at Olongapo, the enemy making virtually no defense. So the former American naval base was captured today, MacArthur's late dispatch tells us that the port is already in use, and Olongapo will be a base for the American Fleet soon again.

The city is the terminus of a strategic highway. From Olongapo, MacArthur's troops are striking along a fine American-built road for a junction with the invasion forces pushing toward Manila. Tonight's late bulletin states that they are within a mere ~~twenty~~ ~~two~~ twenty-three miles of a junction. And the same figure pertains to Manila, the big advance having reached a point twenty-three miles from the Philippine

capital . This follows a thirteen mile dash from the captured highway junction of San Fernando.

And MacArthur's men have made still another landing in the area of Subic Bay. They today seized an island at the entrance of the Bay.

NEW LEAD EASTERN FRONT

A late bulletin tonight states that the Nazis are going to defend Berlin to the bitter end. Stockholm has word that the German high command is expected to declare formally that Berlin is a fortified city -- a fortress in which a street by street battle will be fought. According to this the German capital will go the way of destruction, as have so many of her cities.

From another source we have the word that the roar of the guns can be heard in the German capital tonight, and once again the statement comes through that the glare of cannon can be seen in the city -- a red glow on the eastern horizon. This was stated before, at the time the Russians were seventy-eight or eighty miles away -- and it didn't seem likely. Now the story of the glare of guns grows increasingly probable. For today's headline was forty miles from Berlin.

~~Once again we have the sensational~~

~~word of etc. etc.~~

EASTERN FRONT

~~Forty miles from Berlin that's the headline from the Eastern Front tonight. And once~~
Once again we have the sensational word of Nazi disaster from the Nazis themselves. Moscow is much more conservative - tonight's latest Soviet dispatch placing the Russians at sixty-three miles from Berlin. But then, the Russian reports, all along, have lagged behind the swift and overwhelming surge of Soviet success, and the Germans themselves have been telling the worst - the worst for their side.

Berlin tonight places the farthest point of Soviet advance at the junction of two rivers - the Warthe and the Oder. That river junction is in the vicinity of the fortress town of Kuestrin, and is forty miles northeast of the German capital.

All day long, the figures for the distance between the Russians and Berlin were shrinking. And one bulletin cited a curious comparison - pat enough to be a turn of wit.

The dispatch, at that hour of the day,
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placed the Russians within fifty-eight miles of Berlin, and it added: "That is the approximate distance between Moscow, Vermont, and Berlin, New Hampshire". To be less brilliant but ~~xxxxxx~~ also more informative, we may note that the latest German figure of forty miles places the Soviet forces as near to Berlin as Stamford, Connecticut, is to New York City.

The more conservative Moscow bulletins announce the fall of the city of Landsberg, which is of vital consequence as a highway and railway junction. Also Meseritz was captured, which represented a Soviet dash of twelve miles. Moscow summarizes by stating that a hundred towns and villages in Berlin's home province of Brandenburg have been seized by the Red Army. And the latest, just off the wire, is the Russian seizure of Beyersdorf. That's the place which gives us the latest Soviet figure of sixty-three miles from Berlin.

In East Prussia, Stalin announces the capture of the Fortress of Heilsberg, taken after a thirteen mile advance. Also Friedsland, the historic battlefield where Napoleon defeated a great Russian Army.

In the East Prussian news, the Germans go in for a bit of ~~an~~ novelty - announcing a success. Berlin declares that a Nazi counter-attack has broken the Russian encirclement of Koenigsberg, capital of that isolated Province. Berlin has mighty little victory to announce these days, and the pitifully futile character of this East Prussian success is indicated by the German statement that the counter-attack restored communications between Koenigsberg and a pocket of encircled German troops southwest of the city. In other words, communications reestablished between two traps.

WESTERN FRONT

On the western front, the principal action today was to the East of the city of Malmedy. There, two divisions of the United States First Army drove across the border into Germany. Pushing on a four mile front, they reached positions half a mile from the main fortifications of the Siegfried line. The latest tonight was that masses of artillery, moving forward with the advance, have opened a giant bombardment of the Siegfried forts in that sector. The cannonade is described as the greatest artillery barrage of the new winter offensive on the western front.

To the South, General Patton's Third Army gained new ground inside of Germany. Patton's troops have thrust a wedge across the river Our^(oor) and this bridgehead they today expanded to a width of five miles. At the same time they pushed forward for a depth of one and a half miles.

Spokesmen at Allied military headquarters describe today's events as "a feeler offensive". The

Americans are hammering at one place and another, thrusting forward to test out the strength of enemy defenses - feeling them out in preparation for a real offensive.

About the conference of the big three, we can only put two and two together. The news from Italy is that Presidential advisor Harry Hopkins, who has been in Rome ~~and~~ conferring with Pope Pius the Twelfth, has left by plane for an undisclosed destination - and with him was Secretary of State Stettinius. Both are scheduled to be at the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin get together.

In London, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden failed to show up in the House of Commons for the second day in succession. Questions addressed to Eden were answered by Minister of State Richard Law. Nor has Churchill been present in the House of Commons, and the word from London is that both the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have left for foreign parts. Moreover, as we know, President Roosevelt was not at the White House for his birthday celebration yesterday.

Add all these facts together, and it would seem to be as simple as two and two - the

CONFERENCE - 2

conference of the big three is about to happen, or
it may be going on right now, or maybe it has happened.

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Now Hugh there are some strange tales in the
news but first let's hear from Standard of California.

RUSSIAN CHURCH

There was a scene of solemn ceremony in Moscow today, a stately ritual of religion - this in the land of communism, which at one time was officially dedicated to atheism and in a war against religion.

A council of bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church convened in a Moscow cathedral to elect a new patriarch. Some weeks ago, Patriarch, Sergius died, and now his successor is being chosen by two hundred bishops. They have gathered in the splendor of traditional vestments of the Russian Church. And with them were high Orthodox ecclesiastics from foreign countries, including America - Bishop Benjamin of Brooklyn. Also - prelates from the patriarchates of Serbia, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.

This meeting of the council of Russian bishops is a spectacular sign of how the anti-religious policy of the Soviet government has been modified during the war - the traditional Orthodox Church having a wartime revival.

MUSSOLINI

Here's one of the weirdest rumors in a long time - Mussolini has gone Communist. The story comes from Italian sources in London, and states that the former Fascist Dictator is now being held a virtual prisoner by the Germans - because he has become a Red, a Bolshevik.

This, they say, came about in the course of a Mussolini attempt to win the support of the workers of Northern Italy, for his new Fascist Republic - which was formed as a Nazi puppet. Currying favor with the industrial masses, he announced himself more and more in favor of their social demands - the more extreme social demands, way over to the left. ^{Then he} climaxed by coming out for a republic of the workers - a proletarian state.

This Mussolini shift to Communism discombobulated the Nazis no end. They ousted the former Duce from his leadership of the puppet Fascist Republic, and retired him to strict seclusion under

guard.

One doesn't know how seriously to take this report, but it has an apt sort of pattern - for Mussolini began as a blazing radical, a Red revolutionary.

~~The story from London tells of some other ~~xxxx~~ trouble the Nazis are having with their Fascist puppets. These have a sort of Army, and a large force of this was sent to Germany for training and armament. Then, when these puppet Fascist Legionaries were sent back to Italy to fight against the Allies, they proceeded to desert in large numbers - some joining the Anti-Nazi Maquis, fighting guerrilla warfare in the mountains, while others, at the battlefront, went over to the Allies.~~

GERMAN PRISONERS

It is stated tonight that five German prisoners of war have been sentenced to death in this country. They are five Nazi non-commissioned officers who killed a fellow prisoner of war at Camp Tonkawa, Oklahoma. This is related by the Magazine Newsweek, which says that the prisoner done to death had given information to the American^s which had aided in the bombarding of Hamburg. And for this he was beaten to death by fellow prisoners .

The five put on trial were given every legal protection. The court martial exerted itself to be fair -- going beyond the rules of the Geneva Convention for the treatment of prisoners of war. For example, in addition to American defense counsel, the defendants were permitted to choose a German lawyer from among their fellow prisoners to plead their cause. They were defended vigorously.

They were also given ~~privileges~~ privileges under the American bill of rights, and were informed that they could refuse to testify against themselves.

They rejected the privilege and insisted on giving sworn testimony in which they admitted their part in the killing of the fellow prisoner whom they considered a traitor to his country. They gave this testimony proudly, and the court martial had no other alternative but to sentence them to death for murder. They now await execution.

The Magazine Newsweek also states that at another camp, two other Nazis prisoners of war have been found guilty of murder for the same type of crime, (the killing of a fellow prisoner whom they considered to be a traitor.)

WAR INCIDENTS

Down in Texas, the Brock triplets grew up surrounded by considerable attention - they were so much alike. Even their names - Floyd, Lloyd and Boyd. They joined the army at the same time, and went overseas in the same regiment - to the Western Front. There they distinguished themselves in battle, and now all three are reported as casualties within five days of each other. On November Sixteenth, Boyd was seriously wounded. Three days later, the Nineteenth, Floyd was killed in action. The next day, the Twentieth, Lloyd was reported miss.

The story from Luzon tells of an incident in the sector along the eastern flank of the MacArthur advance, where the Japs have been putting up their only real fight. This one is a variation on the familiar theme of the heroism of medical aid men, who risk their lives in going to help the wounded. In this case there wasn't any wound - it was a toothache, and the hero was the dentist.

Captain John Egenberger of Omaha, Nebraska, the regimental tooth puller, heard that one of the soldiers in the foxholes up ahead had a bad toothache. That was sufficient reason for the soldier to return to the rear - and get the aching molar fixed up. But the way back was too dangerous - a half a mile under heavy sniper and mortar fire. So the dentist, since the patient couldn't come to him, decided to go to the patient. He took the risk of the half-mile trip through the sniper and mortar fire, and made his way to the foxhole where the soldier under fire was holding his jaw. In addition to war - also toothache!

The dentist administered novocaine. There was no fancy filling and drilling in that foxhole at the front. He just yanked the tooth. After which he went back through a half a mile of sniper and mortar fire - his tooth-pulling-duty having been done.

POST WAR PRODUCTION

Everybody is asking - how will things be after the war? Will there be jobs or unemployment? Will there be a depression or a boom? On these questions ^{5 we} have some expert opinion today from an economist of Harvard - Sumner H. Slichter. And his verdict is - jobs, a boom!

The Harvard economist reveals the result of studies that he has made, studies concerning one factor of which we are all aware - the post-war demand for civilian goods which we are now not able to get. ~~He says that a survey shows that six hundred articles, all the way from household washing machines to factory equipment, have been out of civilian production for almost three years, and these will be purchased at a rate twice as high as in nineteen forty.~~

~~Americans right now have twenty one million Automobiles and these are growing old. when the war is over, the total of cars operated will probably rise to thirty four million. Radio sets right now are virtually unobtainable, and the economist estimates~~

Seven million couples have been married during the war, and most of them have yet to buy their furniture. Also, the couples will want houses and apartments. There is a shortage of eight hundred thousand living places.

That's an expert's picture of the post-war demand for civilian goods, and the next question is - will people have money to buy? The economist says that in the past four years Americans have saved, in War Bonds, as much as they would have saved in fourteen ordinary years.

All of which leads the Harvard economist to predict that for at least two years after the war, American industry will have to employ just about every worker it can get. "The returning servicemen won't have to look for a job," he predicts.

FALA

The White House doesn't seem to have much luck with dogs - and we now have a painful misadventure befalling the presidential pooch, Fala. That black ~~scottie~~^{scottie} was quite a personality in the Presidential campaign, and didn't do so badly - the President featuring Fala with sprightly effect in a couple of lively twists of electioneering. I suppose that it was felt that Fala deserved a reward for his political service - politics having a way of bestowing rewards on faithful party workers. Take the case of Henry Wallace - the President himself saying that Henry ought to be made Secretary of Commerce because of his loyal support of the fourth term cause during the campaign.

Anyway, Fala was sent to the country, a couple of weeks ago and Mrs. Roosevelt said: "We hope he is having a wedding." Today the word is that Fala, instead, got into a fight with the lady dog, and was badly bitten. The presidential pooch is said to be in a hospital considerably chewed up.

All of which must be deeply humiliating to that famous canine of the White House, who was a headline in the political campaign and then was introduced to a dog named Betsy or something -- with such sad results -- a fight, painful bites, and so on.

And so on to you, Hugh.