

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Although I am in Chicago, at the Democratic convention, and naturally eager to talk about that the big news tonight comes from France, where

Today was markedd by the most violent battle fo the invasion -- also the greatest clash of tanks. Last night's news of the huge British break-through in the Caen sector was followed by Swift and powerful enemy action. The German Commander, who is described as Rommel, realized instantly the dire threat to his army, with the British pouring through the gap they had smashed open. So he mustered every tank and machie he could, and hurled ponderous forces of mechanism again st the spearhead that was thrusting forward so rapidly. The British met the charge head-on, and that's when the greatest armored battle of Western Europe was fought.

All through last night and on through today the conflict raged. In some places the German's won some ground, this at the expense of too heavy a cost. The armored punches weremet by devastating fire, and finally the huge counter-attack simply wore itself out.

Whereupon, having hurled back the assault, the British resumed their drive forward. This was the state of affairs late today. They pushed new masses of armor through the breach in the enemy front, and kept rolling -- for advances of from four to seven miles. And the latest news pictures the drive as having reached the plain of Calvador, with the most open kind of country ahead for motorized operations -- the road to Paris.

So no wonder British Commander General Montgomery spoke jubilantly of the success of his tactics success that may turn out to be following words. One dispatch from Supreme Allied Headquarters today uses the following words: "News of the highest importancemay be imminent." And still another dispatch says "The outcome of the

battle may determine the length of the European war."

... the capture of the coast of ...
... the other. In such case, the Allies ...
... possession of a good airport.

... on the Atlantic ...
... which in the days of the past ...
... on the Mediterranean ...
... the greater strategic ...
... side of the peninsula, which gives ...
... importance.

American troops today ...
... devastation, with only a ...
... population ...
... Allied ...
... author ...
... well aware of the importance ...
... Allied supplies, ...
... However, ...
... American ...

ITALY

Also today's double success in Italy has an appropriate sound -- the capture on the same day of two historic seaports: Leghorn, on one coast and Ancona on the other. In each case, the Allies acquired possession of a good seaport.

Ancona on the Adriatic is an old and famous port, which in the days of the past flourished richly on the Mediterranean trade with the East. However, the greater strategies of battle are on the Leghorn side of the peninsula, which gives that harbor the more immediate importance.

American troops today marched into a city of devastation, with only a fraction of its former large population wandering amid the ruins. Between constant Allied bombings and methodical German demolition, the harbor works were mere splintered wreckage. The Germans well aware of the importance of the port for future Allied supplies, blew up everything.

However, repairs will be made -- in fact today American engineers had already started rebuilding the

rebuilding the docks. The harbor used to handle seventeen thousand, five hundred tons of cargo a day. It had sixty docks, thirty-five power cranes and twenty-one large warehouses. A busy port -- and it will be that again.

General Clark's Fifth Army is now up against that much vaunted Nazi Gothic Line, which is said to begin just North of the River Arno. And Allied reports are not minimizing the strength of the new enemy battle-front. The country rises to the high Apennines, traversed by passes, and the Germans are said to have fortified every pass with huge pill boxes, some carved into solid rock thirty feet deep.

MUSOLINI

In captured Leghorn, civilians related today that the War-blasted port had been visited several months ago by Mussolini, the fallen Duce. This is told by United Press correspondent Eleanor Packard, who accompanied the American troops when they marched in. She says that during his visit to Leghorn, Mussolini appeared a few times in public, and the people got the impression that he had become feeble-minded.

They said he was thin and emaciated, with hollow cheeks. His eyes were vacant and staring, and he fumbled stupidly with his hands, as if his nerves were shot -- half out of his mind.

The people at Leghorn believe that Mussolini has now left Italy altogether, and is living in seclusion in Germany -- with little or nothing to say in the puppet Fascist Government that plays the stooge to the Nazis.

RUSSIA

The latest bulletin from Russia uses these words: "The most powerful drive ever launched against the Nazi's." This is Moscow's discription of the offensive battering toward the Polish City of Lvov -- one of Europe's great transport centers. Soviet troops are now withing eight miles of the city. The Nazis admit the progress of the drive, and tell of the Russian's forcing the BugRiver to the North of Lvov.

This great offensive is in the South, while in the North the story is much the same. Russian troops are driving forward in the area of the Baltic States, and tonight Stalin announced a twenty-four mile advance with the capture of sevenhundred towns and villages.

NAZI SHOOTING:

A story of crazy violence comes from Greece, an account of a meeting of high German officers at Athens. These top Nazi Commanders gathered at a hotel to discuss military plans, and here is what happened -- according to the exiled Greek Government. As they sat across the conference table, the German officers got into a hot argument. Their planning discussions turned into a savage row, with the hurling of charge and counter-charge. And it came to a climax of pistol fire, with the officers firing at each other across the table. Six were killed in the military conference that turned into a shooting match.

So we are told by the exiled Government of Greece which adds that the Chief Nazi Commander in the Peloponnese escaped from the shooting, only to be killed by Nazi guards at the hotel.

PEACE FEELERS:

Reports of Nazi peace moves persist, and one story comes along in considerable detail. It relates that recently Hitler's outfit tried to get in touch with the Soviet's to open negotiations for a separate peace with Russia. This report comes from London and states the unsuccessful Nazi attempt was made in Stockholm by a group of German tourists. That is -- they pretended to be tourists but in reality were officials of the Berlin Foreign Office, headed by Dr. Paul Schmidt, a principal aide to Hitler's Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. In Stockholm these tourists tried to get in touch with Soviet representatives there, but the Russian's wouldn't bite, wouldn't see them.

CONVENTION

As you would expect, Chicago is a hotbed of rumor today -- this first day of the convention. At the moment it looks as though Vice President Henry Wallace has lost out, and that Harry Truman of Missouri will be No. 2 man on the slate. How come? Well, one story is that the White House feels that Wallace had four years in which to make good -- and that he didn't hence, he is now on his own.

Another rumor concerne the President, and where he will be when ~~the~~ makes his speech of acceptance. I could tell you something about that. But, with a war on, we are not talking about the whereabouts of the Commander-in-chief.

The buzz of gossip certainly has been on the hum here in Chicago, every since the news came about President Roosevelt's address to the Convention, that he will speak by radio tomorrow night -- instead of Friday night, as had previously been expected. No reason is given for the change in plan, and everybody is wondering.

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There has been unending speculation about the possibility that President Roosevelt might make his speech to the Democratic Convention from some point overseas -- in a war zone. Nothing is really known about this -- publicly I mean -- but that doesn't keep jaws from Wagging. And today's announcement about tomorrow's presidential radio address to this gathering of the Democrats is just the sort of thing to increase the buzz of gossip to something like a roar.

For one thing, the news brings about a change in the Convention schedule. The plan was to have the balloting tomorrow night -- with the president's radio address to follow on Friday night. Now, however, the time for the balloting has been advanced -- tomorrow afternoon, so as to make way for the president via radio tomorrow night.

In the battle for the Vice Presidency, the name spoken everywhere here in Chicago is -- Truman. This follows inevitably the events that occurred today. First as you know, Byrnes withdrew. Yesterday, conservat

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tive Democratic opinion was concentrating on the War Mobilization Director -- in opposition to Vice President Wallace, the darling of the New Dealers. Today, however James F. Byrnes of South Craolina made a formal request that his name be kept out of the Vice *residential competition.

In a letter to the Chairman of the delegation from his own state, South Carolina, he stated that he was withdrawing -- "In deference to the wishes of the President." Those were Byrnes' own words -- indicating that the White House was movint him out of the picture.

The meaning of it all became clearer when it was announced that President Roosevelt was giving support to Senator Truman of Missouri. This was stated by Democratic National Chairman Hannegan, who is quoted by the United Press as saying: "The President has indicated that he will be happy to run with Senator Truman and that he thinks Truman would Strangthen the ticket.

All of which is taken to indicate the White House belief that Vice President Wallace cannot be re-

nominated. The President had expressed his preference for Wallace, though not in any dictatorial way, and now he was switching with an okay for Truman. If he can't have Wallace, he will take the Missouri Senator. That's the logic, as propounded here in Chicago. And the belief is expressed that Senator Treman will get the Vice Presidential nomination perhaps even on the first ballot -- though the Wallace forces still seem to be full of fight.

In the rise of Truman we seem to sense a compromise intended to pacify the angry Southern Conservatives. They'd prefer a Southerner for Vice President -- like Byrnes of South Carolina, who has withdrawn, however, in deference to the President. Truman is on the Southern fringe, Missouri being one of the border states. And he stands high in public esteem -- after his work as head of the Truman Committee looking into the war expenditures.

However, the Southern revolt is still much in evidence. Various delegations from Dixieland have pledged themselves against a fourth term, and have

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declared in favor of Senator Byrd of Virginia for President. And today the news came that the Texas delegation had voted to line up for Senator Byrd. As for the Vice Presidency, the Texans left the open. They will decide tonight on their choice for second place on the ticket.

Of course, there are two rival sets of Texans, one group pledged for a fourth term. The other was left uninstructed, and now has joined with other Southern insurgents in favor of Senator Byrd of Virginia. It isn't clear what all these Dixieland maneuvers will amount to, but certainly they won't affect the nomination for the Presidency.

Here is the latest -- a statement by the Vice President. At Convention Headquarters here in Chicago, he declared this afternoon that he'll put up a fight to the finish for renomination. He referred to the President's letter endorsing him but not insisting and said it was exactly the kind of letter that he himself wanted. "I did not suggest the letter," said

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Wallace, "I told the President that, in justice to himself and myself, there should be nothing in the nature of dictation to the convention."

His intention to battle it out for the nomination was expressed in these words: "I am in this fight to the finish." And he added: "I will put up the very best fight I nowhow." All of which is a Vice Presidential promise of a slam-bang contest.

ADD CONVENTION

Fate, or somebody, fixed my headquarters at the Blackstone Hotel in the suite adjoining National Democratic Chairman Hannegan. And I wish you could sit with me, in my room, with the door open, and watch the stream of Democratic bigwigs and bosses as they go in and out of the Hannegan suite. It sort of makes you wonder whether the convention is being held at the hotel, on the seventh floor, or out at the Stadium. At any rate, the keynote address will be delivered at the stadium, and not in Chairman Hannegan's room -- so, now ~~at~~ I'm heading for the Stadium, while I transfer this broadcast back to Hugh James in New York.