

The latest news from the Western Front tonight is a surprise. <sup>It pictures</sup> ~~Pictures~~ the crossing of the Rhine and an advance beyond the east bank of that river with almost no opposition. Let us note, however, that this Rhine crossing has been accomplished by troops of General Patton's Third Army. They got across the Rhine in assault boats in bright moonlight, and thereafter pushed inland -- with the Germans merely trying to get away, or surrendering.

This Patton Third Army front ~~has~~ has not been regarded in the news of today as the sector that really counts. In fact, the almost unopposed drive across the Rhine occurs at a place that 'seems, according to the news, ~~to~~ to be relatively unimportant, because ~~of~~ all focus has been on the northern part of the Western Front, where British, Canadians, and the American Ninth Army are prepared and poised for what would seem to be a decisive stroke of the war. *And*

*↗* The news from those parts is under a veil of blank concealment. ~~There's~~ *a* news blackout of such sort

that we don't get any details of real consequence even from the Germans -- even they don't know. It is common enough for our side to ~~mask~~ <sup>mask military moves with heavy</sup> ~~moves of military~~ censorship, and we get from the enemy the first news of what's going on. But now even the enemy doesn't know -- at the point where, apparently, it counts most. Not only is there a news blackout, but also a barrier to keep the Germans from seeing ~~xxxxx~~ anything of importance. Berlin tells again of that immense bank of artificial fog, for sixty miles along the northern length of the Western Front -- a kind of supersmoke screen that blanks everything out. There the all-out blow is massing, an assault to be hurled across the Rhine by British Field Marshal Montgomery.

~~Thxxxx~~ That was the news picture for the day.  
Now tonight we hear of Patton's men, away to the south of the news-blackout-and-the-veil-of-artificial fog, striking across the Rhine -- against almost no opposition. One <sup>might</sup> ~~would almost~~ suspect that the Germans, with their attention concentrated on the tremendous

development to the North, have neglected the Third Army crossing of the Rhine.

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Air action today ~~gives a mighty plain~~ <sup>le</sup> indication that the critical sector is that part of Germany just across the Rhine from the British, Canadians, and ~~an~~ American Ninth Army; ~~That is~~ -- the Ruhr, ~~one of~~ Germany's <sup>no one</sup> ~~greatest~~ centers of industrial production. Today thousands of Allied planes continue the air assault against the Ruhr Valley, which now has been battered in stupendous fashion for three days in succession. <sup>And that's</sup> ~~That is~~ -- the area into which British Field Marshal Montgomery will hurl the armies of Britain and Canada, and the United States Ninth; <sup>and it's now</sup> ~~Army -- is~~ being almost obliterated; -- ~~and it's Germany's greatest center of war production.~~ Thousands of tons of bombs today ~~continued the work of~~ turning the entire Ruhr into scorched ruins. <sup>TP</sup> The weather was beautiful, typical Spring weather, and

thousands of planes assailed targets with every weapon of the air -- bombs of every calibre, streams of lead from machine guns, and salvos of streaking rockets.

One returning pilot says: "The Ruhr is all messed up, all a ruin. The hearts of the cities are dead. I don't see," he adds, "how they can get anything out of there except by horse and buggy at night." <sup>R</sup> Still another airman put<sup>s</sup> it in these words: "Everything on the other side of the Rhine is burning. Every time I looked, ~~and~~ there were more bombs raining down and more smoke and fire coming up."

Such is the prelude from the air, as the news blackout and a sixty-mile <sup>artificial</sup> ~~artificial~~ fog hides the massing of the forces on the ground.

BRADLEY - WESTERN FRONT

We have some comment from General  <sup>Omar</sup> Bradley, ~~commander~~ of the Twelfth Army Group, on the appointment of a new German commander for th<sup>e</sup> ~~the~~ Western Front. As we heard yesterday, von Rundstedt has been replaced by Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, hitherto commander of the German forces in Italy. General Bradley says he thinks that the change was made because of the success Kesselring has had on the Italian front - his exploits of defense among the Italian mountains.  <sup>This</sup>  ~~These~~ might help to restore confidence in the badly battered German armies along the Rhine.

That's General Bradley's explanation of Kesselring's appointment, to which the General adds, "He arrives at a bad time."  <sup>R</sup> How bad that time is for the  ~~new German commander on the Western Front~~  <sup>enemy</sup> is expanded by Bradley. He states that the destruction of the German forces west of the Rhine has now been completed, and

nothing can prevent the Allies from crossing the river as they please. The <sup>force</sup> crossing of the <sup>Rhine</sup> river can be accomplished, in General Bradley's words - "almost anywhere and any time."

( However, he gives us the usual caution against over-optimism. ~~But~~ "I don't think", he says, "that we should write too glaring headlines that the war is over or anything like that. It may be almost over, or it may last a long time to come. How much resistance the enemy can put up, still remains to be seen." )

## PRAYERS

Here's a message from the Western Front to a family down in Texas. The message says, "Keep right on praying."

A few days ago at an American airfield somewhere in Germany, Fighter Pilot Lieutenant Harold McNabb of Waco, Texas, got a letter from the folks at home. They wrote - they were praying for him. And that was in his mind when he took off on a dive bombing and strafing mission. <sup>Waco Hal</sup> He was attacking six German tanks at a crossroads on the other side of the Rhine, when he dived too low, and the <sup>tanks</sup> German guns got him in their sights. Bullets ripped through the wings of his plane and into the engine. Black smoke poured out, and oil from the engines blinded him. It looked as if he would have to try to make a crash landing, in German territory - and become a prisoner. <sup>remembering</sup> But he kept <sup>praying</sup> - the folks at home were praying for him. And that encouraged him to do

an almost incredible thing - get back across the Rhine and into American territory. His pals, in other planes, guided him - giving him directions by radio telephone. In his crippled plane he had to land at a hundred and thirty miles an hour, and the wheels had been smashed by German bullets. The plane skidded on its belly, and turned a half-somersault, burying its nose in the ground. But out came McNabb of Waco, Texas. And then what he had to say was this: Tell the folks at home, tell his father, his mother and his wife - "keep right on praying." *It works.*



EASTERN FRONT

From the Eastern Front likewise, there is little that is definite - virtually a ~~blank~~<sup>blanket</sup> ~~xxxxx~~ on the Russian side, and some rather ambiguous word from Berlin. The Germans declare that the Russians have opened an offensive at the point where they are closest to the Nazi capital, and <sup>have</sup> broken through. We are told that Soviet forces scored an advance that took them to a town five miles west of the captured fortress of Kuestrin, a point thirty-~~three~~<sup>two</sup> miles from Berlin. The Germans follow this up with claims of having repelled the Russians, but admit <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ Red Army smash through the first lines of German defense.

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Before I give the rest of the news,  
Hugh, have you anything on your mind?

## PLOTS

We have a melodramatic story about an attempt to kill Goebbels, the Nazi Propaganda Minister. It comes via Stockholm - and, if true, would indicate a line of Allied communication right into the heart of Nazi affairs in Berlin. <sup>TR</sup> The story is that Goebbels has a private air raid shelter in the suburbs of the German capital, and in ~~this~~ <sup>it</sup> a time bomb was planted. This, we are told, was in connection with an Allied air raid - the idea being that the approach of attacking planes would send the Nazi mouthpiece to his air raid shelter, and while he was dodging the air bombs down there, the time bomb would explode.

Obviously, the whole thing would appear to go right back to Allied headquarters. The attempt to get Goebbels is ascribed to German anti-Nazi saboteurs, but these would have to know when the Allied planes would arrive. <sup>TR</sup> The plan went awry, and missed Goebbels by

half an hour. The reason was that, while the German saboteurs had correct word about the schedule of the air raid, something happened to delay it for half an hour. So Goebbels was not chased to his shelter in time, and the bomb exploded before he got there. When the Allied planes approached, <sup>and</sup> he went dashing for a trip to the shelter, ~~and~~ he found the place a wreck. The bomb had blown it to bits and killed several lieutenants of Goebbels - they having been in the shelter as a safe place, just in case.

Still another story tells of an attempt to assassinate the Nazi overlord of ~~xxxx~~ Vienna, Baldur von Schirach. That arch Nazi, we <sup>hear,</sup> ~~are told,~~ drew a fusillade of bullets because of a statement that he made. With the Russian armies driving through Hungary and on the road to Vienna, he issued a <sup>declaration</sup> ~~statement~~ that the ancient Austrian capital should be defended to the last, ~~with~~ <sup>by</sup> street to street, ~~fighting~~ although the city might be reduced to

ruins. That was answered by threatening letters in the mail, and then by bullets. The Nazi overlord, we are told, just managed to save himself by throwing himself flat in the street, as a killer opened fire. Several of his aides were <sup>shot down,</sup> ~~killed~~, but the big time Nazi escaped - groveling in the dirt.

PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines American troops have . seized an air base within twelve miles of Baguio, summer capital of the Philippines and now a stronghold of the Japs. In the advance on Baguio, MacArthur's troops hurled back four Jap counter-attacks.

In the air, the action is such that the Japs have every reason to fear that they will soon lose their grip on the three remaining large islands that they hold -- Cebu, Negros and Bohol. American planes have been ranging those islands with heavy attacks, and they are likely to be invaded soon.

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~~NOTE FOR Mr. Thomas: This, I think, is not worth using, even for the Pacific Coast.~~

The Senate today turned down Aubrey Williams, as Rural Electrification Administrator. He was attacked on grounds of religion and on <sup>a</sup> charges of Communism - which charge he sharply denied. The fight against him was led by Democratic conservatives, and Republicans joined it - with the result that today it was fifty-two to thirty-six, rejecting the President's appointment of Aubrey Williams.

## MESSIAH

In the desert wilderness along the border of Texas and Mexico, a family of fourteen from Missouri has arrived - led by a Messiah. He is a fourteen year old boy, and his father and mother, brothers and sisters are the disciples who followed him. The fourteen year old <sup>Messiah</sup> says he has received a heavenly message which directed him to lead his family to a Promised Land along the Rio Grande, where he is to preach new revelations.

Their name is Denham, and they come from Independence, Missouri, where they were a prosperous farm family. Life was comfortable and ordinary for them, until a short while ago - when the boy began to have visions. He announced that he was the Messiah, and bade the family to give up their worldly possessions and follow him to the Promised Land. "We were used to a comfortable life," said the mother today, "and had all we needed. It wasn't easy to give it all up."

But they did, and started out in farm automobiles.

Directed by the fourteen year old Messiah, they traveled down to the <sup>R</sup> Rio Grande valley - which, he said, had been revealed to him as the Promised Land.

There they are now - with some earthly trouble to <sup>bother them</sup> contend with. The Draft Board is interested in an <sup>one disciple, an</sup> elder brother of the Messiah, who was deferred as an essential farm worker, but now is being called for military service. And the Rationing Board is asking - how did the family of the fourteen year old Messiah get its gasoline for the trip to the Promised Land on the Rio Grande?



## CIRCUS

It's the oldest of chestnuts to say that Spring is here, and with it comes the Circus. Every year at this time circus publicity gets onto the news wires, the press agent for the Greatest Show on Earth doing his stuff. So today we have some lyric prose from that mighty man of plugs and blurbs, Beverly Kelly, Poet Laureate for Ringling Brothers And Barnum & Bailey. Have we anything new from him? Well, yes and no. The oldest wheeze in circus ballyhoo is that useful part of speech - the adjective. Circus <sup>whoop-la</sup> ~~ballyhoo~~, since Barnum's day, has featured resounding superlatives like prodigious, colossal, gargantuan, tremendous, stupendous. Adjectives are old, but today Beverly Kelly gives us some new ones.

The United Press reports that his latest blurbs, in describing the Greatest Show on Earth, call it: "Transcendental, splendent, refulgent and brobdignagian." That last one -- brobdignagian, <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ so surprising that the United Press news dispatch misspells it.

END

In telling this next bit of news, I want to explain - that I had no intention of horning in on Hugh James.

Although - it may seem as if I might be reciting a <sup>Stan.</sup> ~~Sun~~ <sup>of Cal.</sup> commercial. That's how good those <sup>Stan. of Cal.</sup> ~~Sunoco~~ commercials

are - an important statement from Washington sounding like one. It comes from J. A. Krug, Chairman of the War Production Board. He urges that we lubricate our home machinery, and tells us the following - and doesn't it sound like Hugh James?

"It is urgent that every precaution be taken to protect and lubricate home front machinery - to keep it running until victory comes. Every ball and roller bearing, every small part," declares War Production Chairman Krug in his best Hugh James manner, "must continue to function. Most of our automobiles, trucks, and buses, and farm machinery, have seen their better days. Yet they are still essential cogs in our

victory machines. They must be kept rolling."

And now, Hugh, what is your <sup>closing theme</sup> ~~subject~~ for tonight -

lubricating oil?

## SPRINGFIELD PLAN

I have received a goodly amount of protest about a bit of news I passed along the other night -- concerning five Japanese-American girls and the Springfield Plan. The story told how at Springfield, Massachusetts, they have a plan for inculcating racial tolerance, and the five Japanese-American girls were sent there. Now, however, said the news report, the Japanese-American girls were leaving Springfield, because during their stay in the city they had found unfriendliness <sup>and</sup> hostility.

People in Springfield protest <sup>this -</sup> -- a statement by the Mayor of the City, and an editorial in the Springfield Union being typical. The story first appeared in a local Springfield newspaper, and the Japanese-American girls themselves were quoted. Later, I am informed, they denied they had ~~said~~ said any such thing.

The whole thing, it seems to me, boils down to something of a paradox. The Springfield Plan is a classroom program of inculcating racial tolerance in school children. The effect of war propoganda, on the

other hand, is to instill hatred of the Japanese.

So you have one thing pulling against the other, and it would take a miracle for <sup>any</sup> ~~the~~ racial tolerance plan to ~~have~~ abolished wartime feeling in the case of ~~the~~ Japanese-American <sup>S.</sup> girls.