

LOWELL THOMAS' BROADCAST FROM PARIS

May 4, 1945

General Eisenhower's announcement here at Supreme Allied Headquarters tonight seems to have put the quietus on any hope that anyone may have had for a V-E Day proclamation this week. But Eisenhower's is a thrilling statement, V-E Day or no V-Day. "German forces on the Western Front have disintegrated!" Those are his first words. "Today, what is left of two German Armies surrendered to a single American division, the 102nd, commanded by Major General Frank Keating."

And then General "Ike" in sentences that sound just like the way he speaks, goes on to say: "In the North the remaining forces in Northwest Germany, Holland, Denmark and the Friesian Islands, including Heligoland -- surrendered to Field Marshal Montgomery!"

That sort of an announcement should be enough to satisfy anyone.

As a matter of fact, after the deluge of news we had yesterday, telling of almost complete chaos

in Germany, most of us expected that this would be a light news day.

But I haven't yet covered all of the Eisenhower statement: It goes on: "In the South the Allied troops under General Devers' Command, and the forces moving north from Italy, joined up. And on the Czechoslovakia border a Panzer division gave up unconditionally to General Bradley's forces." And so it was that tonight the Commander-in-Chief of all Allied Forces on the Western Front told the world of the utter collapse of Nazi military power.

"Any further losses the Germans incur on this Front," says General Eisenhower, "will be due to their failure instantly to quit. They know they are beaten! And any further hesitation is due either to their own stupidity or that of the German government." Finally, he concludes with these exultant words: "On land, sea, and in the air, the Germans are thoroughly whipped! Their only recourse is to surrender!" This means that Norway, and a pocket in Bohemia, are the only remaining parts of Hitler's once vast Festung Europa, that remain to be cleaned up. Or rather, I should say, they are the only two important areas that haven't fallen. There are, of course, a few other spots still in German hands, merely because they have been bypassed: some localities in front of Patton's Third

Army, a few more in front of Patch's Seventh and the French, and the Channel Islands -- (I wonder what the German garrisons out there have been doing all this time to keep from being bored to death?); also the coastal pockets at Dunkirk, St. Nazaire, Lorient, and La Rochelle.

I suppose it's possible that all of these might capitulate within the next few hours. But, it looks as though we will have to wait a few days longer for V-E Day, that is, if you haven't already celebrated a V-Day of your own selection as some have done over here.

Before General Eisenhower gave us his statement over here tonight, I was wondering what I would have, if anything, to talk about tonight, what reason I could have for breaking in on Hugh Gibson. Part of the day I spent at a big Army hospital on the outskirts of Paris, talking to some wounded chaps who had just returned from German prison camps. One of them came in to the city with me. He was a P-38 pilot, who, on his fifty-ninth mission, had been shot down over Germany. He and his pals, that day, bagged twenty-three German planes, with a loss of two American planes. He being in one of them. With his Lightning hurtling along at five hundred miles an hour, he had to leave the flaming ship. When I asked him what he thought would be a good

subject to broadcast about, quick as a flash he replied: "That's easy. Just talk about going home." And I think he's right. There could be no more appropriate note on which to end this particular broadcast from Europe, and switch back to Radio City and Hugh Gibson.

--o--

(Germany)

P. J. Standard, Friday, May 4, 1945.
Sunoco.

(Mr. Thomas) on from Paris 4 mins.

Thank you, Lowell, and Good Evening, Everybody:

3

The surrender of the German armies in the northwestern part of Germany, in Holland and in Denmark, leaves the situation generally as follows: There are only two areas now in which formidable enemy forces are still holding out -- in Norway and in Czechoslovakia. These are ~~what~~ what Admiral Doenitz, heading the battered remnant of the Nazi regime, has to surrender. Insistent rumors continue to tell of negotiations between Doenitz and the Allies for a capitulation, but there is nothing definite about it all. This includes a ~~xx~~ report that the Germans in Norway are about to surrender.

One minor headline today is -- the capture of Berchtesgaden. It was announced this afternoon that the mountain retreat that Hitler established for himself has been taken by American troops -- an interesting place for them to inspect.

HITLER

If Adolf Hitler died in the Reichschancellery in Berlin, as has been stated - the possibility is that his body may have been cremated by the fire that engulfed that German government building. This is indicated from Moscow today - in a story flashed to the Soviet capital by a Soviet war correspondent. He is Lieutenant Colonel Troynovsky, who writes for the official Red Army publication - RED STAR. **T**He tells how, as Berlin fell, he went to the Reichschancellery, and found the building on fire. Nevertheless, ~~xxxx~~ with some Russian soldiers, he made his way in - through halls choked with smoke. They went to the office that had been occupied by the Nazi Fuehrer. "Hitler's office was very hot," writes the Soviet war correspondent. "The flames were sweeping nearer to us. The floors were shaking and about to collapse. The heat was penetrating the thick soles of our boots," And he adds: "Nothing was visible through the smoke and heat."

HITLER : 2

^{They}
~~They~~ had to use gas masks, and were forced to get
out - as the flames roared through the Reichschancellery
~~while~~ that building ~~was~~ being ~~perhaps~~ Hitler's funeral
pyre, perhaps.

Now ---
Let's hear from Standard of California --
and then more news.

AUSTRIA

The Austrian question is developing rapidly -
as an addition to the Polish question. Today the French
government of DeGaulle joined the United States and
Great Britain in protesting against the establishment,
under Soviet auspices, of an Austrian provisional
government. ~~The French say they are sorry that Moscow
has allowed this to happen, because under the agreement
made by the Big Three at Yalta, it was provided that
France should be consulted in the formation of an
Austrian government. Rome says that the Vatican, too,
will refuse to recognize the regime set up in
Soviet-controlled Vienna.)~~

All of this is made the more intricate by the
fact that the German surrender in Italy included a
considerable section of Austria. The Soviets, having set
up a government for all Austria, the Germans surrendered
southern Austria to the Western Allies. And American ~~XXXX~~

troops have been advancing swiftly into western and southern Austria. There was a junction of forces today in the Brenner Pass area, and this was effected by an American column pushing south. Not an advance northward from Italy ^{through the} surrendered Brenner Pass, but a push down through the pass by American units that have been sweeping through Austria.

All of which puts under American-British control a considerable section of the country, for which the Russians have sponsored a government.

~~The attitude of the Austrian people may have some significance with relation to this - an attitude set forth today in a dispatch from United Press Correspondent Reynolds Packard. He is with an armored division of General Patton's Third Army, and writes that the friendliness of the Austrian population is, what he calls - "a minor headache."~~

TRIESTE

5.20

There was more rioting in Rome today - about Trieste, that Adriatic port which has meant so much in the history of Italy. For generations, the Italians struggled to acquire ~~that~~ ^{from} city ~~to~~ the old Austrian empire claiming that the possession of Trieste was necessary for the unification of Italy. The acquisition of the city was a major point in the previous World War - one of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. The Italians got Trieste, and now the Jugoslavs claim it - the regime of Soviet sponsored Marshal Tito.

This has produced agitated protests in Italy - though not protests by the Italian Communists. The Communists in Italy support the Yugoslav demand for the possession of Trieste, and that has brought them into violent collision with other elements of the people - as today, when ~~at least~~ fighting broke out in Rome. At the Roman tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Communists

were set upon by a crowd of students - and a battle of sticks and stones waged all over the place.

The popular turmoil adds a disturbing point to the dispute about Trieste between Soviet sponsored Tito and the Western Allies. The city is actually in the hands of British Empire troops, New Zealanders - who, as German power in north Italy collapsed, swept around the head of the Adriatic and occupied the big harbor. This was promptly protested by Tito, with Tito saying that the New Zealanders had occupied the city, in his words - "without our permission." And today ^a Tito ~~statement is quoted as saying~~ ^{says} that the occupation of the city by the New Zealanders might, in the words of the statement, have unfavourable consequences, unless the matter is settled promptly by mutual agreement."

At the same time, there is word that in the neighborhood of Trieste fighting has broken out between

the Jugoslavs themselves - between Tito's Communist-
led partisans and the Chetniks of that one-time highly
acclaimed Yugoslav hero - Mikhailovich. ~~Time was when~~
~~Mikhailovich and his Chetnik irregular guerrilla~~
fighters were hailed as the staunchest of patriots
against the Nazis. Mikhailovich was named Minister of War
by the exiled Yugoslav government. Then, another
anti-Nazi power arose in Jugoslavia, Tito's partisans
backed by the Soviets. It was a three-cornered fight,
the parties to it being Tito's organization, the
Chetniks and the Nazis. Tito won out against both the
Chetniks and the Nazis, and now is in official control -
with the new complications becoming even more intricate.
The ~~call for~~ ^{quarrel about} Trieste - the parties to it being Soviet
supported Tito, the Western Allies, with New Zealanders
in Trieste - and the Chetniks in the picture again.

RUNDSTEDT

A late story tonight gives us an interview with Nazi Field Marshal von Rundstedt, now a prisoner of war. He commanded the futile Nazi offensive through Luxembourg and Belgium -- the one that led to the final German collapse, ^{it} But looked exceedingly dangerous to the Americans at the time. One thing von Rundstedt had to say concerned the always interesting question of the reason the enemy commander gives for the defeat of his own side. Von Rundstedt, talking of the victorious drive of the Western Allies into the heart of Germany, cited a reason that will surprise nobody -- Allied air power. He said the tremendous American-British air superiority paralyzed the German war machine. ~~Nazi communications were paralyzed by air attack.~~

Von Rundstedt declared that the American-British D-day invasion of France was successful because air superiority prevented the Germans from bringing up their reserves, except slowly at night. ~~Except for that, he intimated, the invasion would have been smashed.~~

As for his own offensive through Luxembourg

and Belgium -- the same story. The blasting of German railroads by Allied war planes was such that, in von Rundstedt's words -- "we couldn't cross the Rhine on a single rail line." ~~He said he was proud because his forces had been able to surprise the Americans and British, but~~ everything failed because Allied air power prevented the bringing up of ~~reinforcements and supplies~~ -- especially ^{gasoline} ~~gasoline~~ for German armor.

~~From our side we have repeatedly heard that Allied power was strangling German armies on the Western Front - and now we have it from the top enemy commander.~~

On Okinawa, the marines made an advance today, driving to within a mile of Naha, the capital of the island. It was not a major advance, a mere two hundred yards against fortifications, the power of which is indicated by today's bulletin from the headquarters of Admiral Nimitz. "Some of the pill boxes," says the dispatch, "are known to have concrete walls four feet thick. And," the story goes on, "it is believed that the enemy pill boxes might connect with ^{tunnels} ~~channels~~ leading all the way to Shuri, two miles to the south."

~~That sort of thing is what makes the going slow, as the Americans on Okinawa prepare for a final decisive assault. These preparations are reported by Tokyo, which states that the invasion forces are now mustering for what Tokyo calls - "the final offensive."~~

FOLLOW OKINAWA

The latest is -- Jap landings behind the American lines in southern Okinawa. Six hundred enemy troops sneaked around along the coast and got ashore. This happened at night -- and it was futile. By daybreak Jap landing parties had been either driven off or surrendered. ³⁰ Tonight's late bulletin also tells of new Jap suicide attacks against American ships, and these scored some success. Admiral Nimitz tells us that five light American surface fx vessels were sunk and others damaged. The assaults were made not only by suicide planes, but also by suicide boats.

~~And now - Hugh James~~

The Burma campaign is at an end. That's the official announcement from Lord Louis Mountbatten, commander of the India-Burma theatre of war. After the capture of Rangoon, without resistance, the reconquest of Burma from the Japs is now complete.

1/2 And now. Hugh James

Speaking for Lowell Thomas.

So long until Monday -