

LOWELL THOMAS' BROADCAST FROM PARIS

May 3, 1945

News of the chaos in Northern Germany continues to pour into Supreme Allied Headquarters. Apparently there has never been anything like it in all history. Remember when we were hearing that the Nazis would fight it out to the bitter end? Well, look at them now. Hamburg capitulating, the second largest city in Germany, with the German commander actually going out and leading the British Seventh Armored division into the city.

And then, take the way the Germans are now fleeing into the arms of the Americans and British. There is no doubt as to which side they wish to surrender to. But why didn't they think of it a month or so ago when it would have been so much easier?

As for all the Nazis who are not surrendering, they seem to be trying to get away from the Baltic

coast by boat, or, get to Denmark, and then on to Norway. As though that would do them any good. This is best illustrated by the cry of some of the Germans who gave up to the British today. They stumbled into the lines of their enemies, as though throwing themselves into the arms of friends who would save them. They came in crying: "The Russians are coming. Where can we go?" In all kinds of vehicles they came, sometimes three abreast in the traffic. Cars jammed with high officers, privates, nurses, all asking the same question: "Where can we go?" German Generals limping along with non-coms, and civilians. And all saying that with Berlin fallen, the war is over.

Remember when military experts and commentators and editorial writers were saying that the fall of Berlin actually would have little effect on the termination of the war? If you would put that to the Germans fleeing from the Russians, they would

assure you that the fall of Berlin meant to them the end of the war. A quarter of a million prisoners taken by the British and the U.S. Ninth Army in the past thirty-six hours! That's one estimate. Richard McMillan puts it at five hundred thousand, not including the Hamburg garrison. The official newspaper PRAVDA, in Moscow today, printed the first pictures of the fall of Berlin, with masses of unshaven, grimy silent Germans streaming through the Brandenburg Tor, gazing sullenly at the ruins of their once great capital, the world's fourth largest city, destroyed largely by the R.A.F. and General Doolittle's Eighth American Air Force.

One report came in tonight that final negotiations are underway. Some thought Prime Minister Churchill's absence from the House of Commons might be tied in with this. Another report that Admiral Doenitz, self-proclaimed successor to Hitler, is either in Denmark or Norway, conferring with German military leaders, trying to find some way of bringing

it all to a conclusion. Meanwhile, according to the U.P., British troops have just crossed from Germany into Denmark.

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Even if it wasn't so proclaimed officially, unofficially today was V-Day to a good many people. One well-known war correspondent decided it was V-Day, and as a result a certain American General has won a lot of money which is to be delivered to him tomorrow. The whole thing might be called "Taylor's Folly."

Correspondents in this war, thanks to aviation, get around a lot more than they ever did in any other war. In World War One, I happened to be on every front, from the North Sea to Arabia, and was the only one to cover them all. But in this war correspondents fly from continent to continent, and even around the world, and think little of it. Their casualties are a lot higher this time, too. Even so, our correspondents, who in recent days have been meeting their Russian

colleagues for the first time, have been startled to find that among Russian war reporters, casualties have averaged higher than fifty per cent.

But I started out to tell you about Taylor's Folly. Henry J. Taylor, as he has dashed about from army to army, with some narrow escapes, asked every general officer he met to name the date when he thought the war would end, and back up his opinion with five dollars. The scheme being that the man coming nearest to the date would win the whole kaboodle. Everybody wanted to get in on it, with Harry Taylor writing down the dates, and holding the stakes. Some paid him in Italian money, some in Greek, Egyptian, Dutch, Luxemburg, French francs, invasion marks, and so on. He never bothered to change it. Simply stuffed it into a suitcase.

When Harry woke up here this morning, and read the headlines in the Paris papers: "Germany's War Machine Collapses," "One Million Nazis Lay Down Their

Arms in Italy," "Berlin Falls," "Hitler and Goebbels Commit Suicide," "Von Rundstedt Seized," "Nazi Armies Crack Up From Baltic to Adriatic," when my lively friend Henry saw those headlines, he said: "General Eisenhower and Messrs. Churchill, Stalin and Truman, may take a little time to think it over, but those headlines mean that the Nazis have been crushed, and whoever guessed nearest this date wins the pot of gold."

Who wins? Why, General Alexander Patch, commander of the Seventh Army that now controls Munich, the birthplace of Naziism, and the mythical Hitler Redoubt. General Patch's guess was that the war would end on May 4th. The runner-up? General Patton, who said May 10th. Some of the others' guesses were: General Devers, June 3rd; "Tooney" Spaatz, top-ranking air general over here, said June 28th. And those who missed the farthest were Major General Ralph Smith and Field Marshal Montgomery, who both named August 1st.

"Red" O'Hare, GI General with the 12th Army Group, argues with Harry Taylor and says the date still should be left up to General Eisenhower. For that matter, "Red" O'Hare says the date we won the war was January twenty-six, when it was settled for keeps that Von Rundstedt had lost the Battle of the Bulge; his Ardennes breakthrough had failed; he had thrown in all of Germany's reserves, thrown them in in vain.

Paris is crowded with American soldiers and officers. Unable to find anyone to fight, they are coming in on leave. And they all want to buy perfume to send home. I met one Sergeant in a shop called Guerlain. I asked him when he thought the war here in Europe would be over. His answer was: "There will still be some Boche to shoot, and unfortunately a few of my own pals may "get" it. But with Hitler and Mussolini dying like rats, and their armies giving up, their cities all captured and their generals all taken, Brother, this war is over! And then he

added: "How about coming around the corner and joining me in a salute to the folks back home in Fort Wayne, Indiana?"

And now a salute to all of you, from Paris, and back to Hugh Gibson in New York.

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Hugh Gibson - Standard Thursday, May 3, 1945.
Lynwood.

(Mr. Thomas on trip abroad.)

Thank you Lowell - and

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

This certainly is a week of big news, with the Germans giving up the great port of Hamburg without a fight. Field Marshal Montgomery let it be known that the enemy resistance facing the British Second Army has collapsed completely. Our Allies took five hundred thousand prisoners along with the city, the second largest in Germany.

We ~~also~~ learn tonight that the British have joined forces with the Russians on the Baltic coast, on a twenty-five mile front. Spearheads of Montgomery's armor have struck north of Luebeck and are apparently about to invade Denmark. Headquarters reports that it will be no surprise if the Nazi forces in Denmark either capitulate or evacuate across the straits of Norway.

The British today also got revenge for Dunkirk. The Germans began a wholesale evacuation of the peninsula of Schleswig-Holstein. They used anything they could float and ~~x~~ jammed the roads to the coast. But the British caught them. R.A.F. pilots of the Second Tactical Air Force swooped down upon the refugees and accomplished one of the biggest air massacres in the whole war. ~~That~~ With Spitfires, Typhoons, Tempests and jet propelled Meteors, they strafed the boats and they strafed the roads jammed with German soldiers trying to escape. The pilots shuttled backwards and forwards to their bases. One group spotted a convoy of more than fifty vessels running north from Kiel. Inlets, harbors and ports on both the Baltic and the North Sea coast were swarming with small craft, trawlers, fishing smacks, and ^Ptrans. One R.A.F. pilot reported that the whole sea was dotted with craft. That is a sure sign that the

German will to resist has collapsed on that part of the front, at least, and a British correspondent reports *at any moment* that General Sir Miles Dempsey may receive a general surrender of all the German forces facing the British Second Army. ~~at any moment.~~

53 In the south, George Patton's Third Army forced another entry into Czechoslovakia on a fifty-five mile front. The first consequence of this was that the Germans declared Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, a hospital city. Among the places that ~~it~~ have fallen to the Americans is Braunau. In case you don't remember, it is the place where Adolf Hitler was born. In all the town, the Americans could find only one inhabitant who grieved for the death of the Fuehrer. That one is a policeman. When he told the Americans he grieved for Hitler because he was the greatest German, Germans in the crowd around laughed and jeered at him. The

Reports from Europe agree on just one point.

The confusion in Germany is quite indescribable.

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London believes that it is ^{even} ~~quite~~ possible negotiations for surrender are under way. There was ~~also~~ a rumor on the banks of the Thames that Churchill had gone over to do the negotiating, possibly in conjunction with Eisenhower as well as British and Russian military and political leaders. Apparently the only basis for this rumor was Churchill's absence from the House of Commons today. There are categorical reports that the surrender of the Germans in Holland, Denmark, Norway and Czechoslovakia is being negotiated, and maybe some of ^{these negotiations} ~~them~~ are even concluded. But at least one of those reports is contradicted by an order-of-the-day issued by Field Marshal Blaskowitz, commander-in-chief of the Germans in Holland. He urged his men to keep fighting.

(One index of the ~~chaos~~ chaos prevailing in the

Reich was the failure of the German high command to issue its daily communique. It may even be that they haven't any station to broadcast from, since the capitulation of Hamburg.

55 Speaking for the new Fuehrer, Gross Admiral Doenitz, his Minister of Munitions broadcast over the Danish radio. From that it is inferred that ~~the~~ Doenitz himself is in Denmark. But nothing is definite.

Some people believe that the Germans declared Prague a hospital city because many high Nazis are hiding out there.

Munitions Minister Speer, speaking in the name of Fuehrer Doenitz, urged the Germans not to lay down their arms. But then he added that the only reason to keep on fighting was to save German soldiers running away from the east. Then he said that peace depended

on Allied generosity, to what he described as, I QUOTE: "a vanquished but honorably and heroically fighting opponent." We may presume by that he means the Germans.

Jack Fleischer of the United Press declares that he has found a good German. He adds that this is the only good German that he has met since we invaded the country. That good German is His Eminence, Cardinal Faulhaber, sixty-six year old Archbishop of Munich.

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In all the foul years of Nazi rule, the Cardinal Archbishop never flinched, never knuckled down to the Brown Shirt ruffians, although the headquarters of the Munich Gestapo were right next to the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ arch~~/~~-episcopal palace.

Incidentally, most of that palace is destroyed, but the Cardinal explained it is the only building still inhabited in that street or in the entire district.

What the Cardinal said to Jack Fleischer is worth considering, and digesting. Nazism, he says, has warped the Germans so thoroughly, that it will take years to overcome the evil influence. There will be a

religious revival in Germany soon, he hopes. But it will take a long long while to bring about a political renaissance. He explained that the Nazis had got hold of German youth in the most formative years, and the damage is very, very deep.

Here's a story from Italy that would particularly interest Lowell Thomas. Lieutenant General Sir Bernard Freyberg, leading his New Zealanders, has captured Trieste. That is the same Freyberg, V.C. of whom you've heard Lowell Thomas talk so many times, Freyberg being one of the men he particularly likes and admires, and indeed he is what the British call, a stout fellow. To take Trieste, he marched his New Zealanders two hundred and twenty-one miles in twenty-three days and crossed the Isonzo River, making a complete juncture with the Yugoslav forces of ~~Mussolini~~ Tito Brog. Freyberg also seized the inland city of Gorizia, which both the Italians and the Yugoslavs claim, as well as Trieste.

Having taken Berlin, the Red armies have captured several other cities in fallen Czechoslovakia, including one important manufacturing city on the border. Moscow pointed out today that the Second White Russian Army under Rokossovsky, had raced a hundred and twenty-five miles across northern Germany in less than a week. Since that part of Germany was considered well suited for defense, the so-called northern redoubt that the Nazis talk about, seems to be a myth.

The United States did not violate the agreement made at Yalta by President Roosevelt to repatriate Soviet prisoners of war. Of course, nobody seriously believed that we did, although Soviet Colonel General Golikov made the charge last Monday. The state Department, in its reply, said the allegations of General Golikov were "unfounded." That's the word a ^{sometimes} diplomat has to use when he ~~means somebody's a damn~~ ^{he would prefer to} ~~lie. And now I am no longer in the service, I don't~~ ~~mind admitting that sometimes the word sticks in a~~ ~~man's throat.~~ ^{use more adequate language -}

The State Department went on to say that American authorities have done everything in their power to repatriate Soviet citizens with the utmost speed in spite of extraordinary circumstances along the Western Front. One of those ordinary circumstances is that four thousand, three hundred men who were capt

in German uniforms turned out to be Russian citizens. Being in German uniforms, they were brought to prison camps in the United States along with thousands of other German prisoners of war.

One of the charges made by Golikov was that we were holding eight hundred officers of the Red Army in the United States. The United States authorities have no knowledge of the alleged presence of eight hundred Red Army officers here, but there are a hundred and eighteen Soviet citizens who were captured fighting Allied forces. Those hundred and eighteen did not want to be repatriated to Russia. They specifically claim the right to remain as German prisoners.

Good night

From the War Department we learn today that by the time the European war ends, the total American casualties in combat for all theatres of war will reach the one million mark. The Army lost a hundred and seven thousand, four hundred and seven killed, while more than five hundred and twenty thousand have been wounded, eighty thousand missing, and some seventy-seven thousand prisoners. However, it is ~~not as~~ ^{less} bad ^{than} ~~as~~ it sounds, for more than half the wounded have returned to duty.

The Navy casualties amount to a total of a hundred and two thousand, three hundred and eighty-three.

Incidentally, Secretary Stimson revealed today that, he also is convinced Adolf Hitler is really dead. Presumably he has the same sort of information as the President.

Here is a nice easy job for some girl who wants employment. The City of Boston offers a position to a woman who is, I QUOTE: "familiar with the history of Boston since Sixteen Thirty; who has a working knowledge of the resources of the city's public and private libraries, historical and ^{antiquarian} ~~antiquated~~ societies, and other repositories of original manuscripts. She must also be full of information relative to Boston, both ancient and contemporary." Her job will be to file and catalogue public documents, supply data for speeches, answer questions from any part of the ^{world} _^ for information concerning Boston's monuments, statues, works of art, historic structures and sites pertinent to Boston's history.

For doing this, she will be compensated in the munificent sum of thirty-two dollars and sixty-nine cents a week. The line forms on the right.

12 Hugh James, don't you know ^{some} anybody that wants that job?

policeman explained that they are glad he is gone because they think now they may have peace.

In truth, they treated the American tanks and infantry not as conquerors, but as liberators. They welcomed them with flowers and cheers. Not a shot was fired to defend the birthplace of the man who brought about all this carnage.

Here's an interesting story from London worth bearing in mind. A group of aircraft specialists have been shuttling around the Western Front, inspecting the air equipment which the Allies captured from the Germans. Their verdict is that the Allied victory in the air was won by an exceedingly narrow margin. They say, and these are presumably both British and American specialists, that the Germans had attained a higher inventive level in aviation and in aircraft building than any of the Allies. At the time they were defeated for lack of oil, they were turning out faster fighters, which could climb quicker and were more heavily armed than ours. In the development of heavy bombers, they were also advancing technically.

BURMA

Good evening, everybody -

Victories have been building up today in the ~~Today we even have victorious news from Burma,~~ southeastern Asia theater, and I mean victories on a ~~big scale. The British have~~ huge scale. The British have taken Rangoon. This is quite a surprise, because most accounts from southeast Asia have led us to expect the enemy would give our side a tough run for their money.

On the contrary, it was all over inside of twenty-four hours. British shock troops went ashore in a beautifully executed amphibious operation on both sides of the mouth of the river, twenty miles below the city. In that fashion, the British commander contrived to ~~trap~~ ^{trap} thirty thousand Nipponese in the southern tip of the peninsula.

All the escape routes to the north are held by the British Fourteenth Army. When they entered Rangoon, the victors found that all senior Japanese officers and Burmese government officials had run away to escape capture. That is the first time such a thing has happened in the war.

24 Much excitement in Dutch Borneo too. We may hear at any moment that Australian fighters have captured the town of Tarahan from the Japanese. The diggers are working fast. Since they landed, and consolidated their beachhead yesterday, they have already come close to an important airfield and two big oil fields. Tarahan is in the center of a rich group of oil wells. Once our Allies have captured that part of Dutch Borneo, it will lift a considerable strain on our own oil supplies. The success of the Australians is all the more dramatic because they met with a remarkably tough defense of the beach. / They were unable to effect a surprise; as their commanding general said, they had to go right through the ~~enemy's~~ enemy's front door.

PACIFIC

And here is the latest from the Pacific.

Our superforts based on air fields in the Marianas

have bombed Japanese air bases on the island of

Kyushu for the eleventh time in seventeen days.

They report good results on six of those air fields,

24' the air fields from which the Nipponese were launching

their suicide attacks against American units on

Okinawa. On the southern tip of Okinawa the U. S.

Tenth Army ~~is~~ renewed attacks against the strong

Japanese positions. They met stiff opposition and

made only slight gains but of course the enemy there

can accomplish nothing but a delaying action.

HITLER FOLLOW PACIFIC

It seems to be definitely true that Adolf Hitler, the poisonous little wretch who started this carnage is quite dead. American tanks and infantry today captured Braunau where he was born. Correspondents travelling with the American troops report that just one inhabitant of Braunau lamented ~~his~~ ^{the} passing of the Fuehrer, a policeman. The rest of the populace greeted the Yanks with flowers and cheers, welcomed them as liberators.

From Munich tonight comes a story that plump little Eva Braun, the Fuehrer's lady-friend, died with him. ~~One of her principal titles to fame is that she cured him of wearing long nightshirts.~~ The only fact to corroborate this story is that Eva left Munich for Berlin a month ago. ~~The theory that she sacrificed herself, like Brunnhilde on the bier of Siegfried,~~ is merely speculation on the part of a couple of Eva's friends in Munich.

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CONFERENCE

Nothing out of San Francisco tonight except what many listeners probably heard this afternoon — that the American delegation wants amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks Charter. This ~~is~~ news came from Commander Harold Stassen of Minnesota, speaking for the American delegates. They want to keep the forthcoming international ~~is~~ organization ~~is~~ in line with the principles of justice. They want the language of Dumbarton Oaks clarified to provide that the organization ^{shall} adhere to the principles of international law and help in developing the principles. They also want the development and safe guarding of human rights. They ~~also~~ want the international organization to be flexible enough to provide for a peaceful change of conditions. They ~~also~~ demand a definite system of trusteeships which is just another name for mandates. Perhaps one of the most important things of all ~~is~~ for which they ~~will~~ will strive is a reorganization of the world court as an ~~integral~~ integral ~~part~~ part of the international organization.

President Truman today exercised his right of veto,

for the second time

And it is not good news for the farmers, who have to raise the food. The President disapproved a joint resolution of Congress designed to stop the drafting of farm workers necessary to agriculture.

The President's reason, as he stated it, was that it would be unfair to those who have already been inducted or are about to be inducted. In his opinion, no group should have any special privileges. The sole test under the law is whether an individual can better
28 serve his country in the armed forces or in essential activity in support of the war effort. This bill, he added, would single out one special class of citizens.

The resolution, as a matter of fact, was introduced by Representative Flanagan of Virginia, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture. He offered it as a measure to cope with the food shortage and a critical lack of manpower on the farms.

And now Hugh James