

Good Evening Everybody!
D-Day. June 6
1944

~~Tonight's~~ ^{Just in} ~~the~~ communique from Invasion headquarters summarizes the news of ^{all the} successful landings. "Allied forces," it ^{says,} ~~says,~~ "have succeeded in their initial landings in France; and fighting continues."

^{HP} The communique goes on with air action, saying that all day Allied planes continued their bombing in what the dispatch calls - "very great strength."

Another bulletin states that a German counter-attack is in the making. It says: "The first German counterattack ~~in France~~ is likely to materialize within the next forty-eight hours.

The latest bulletin in, emphasizes the element of surprise, saying that the Nazis were caught off their guard, in an effective surprise by the Allied forces.

SUBSTITUTE LEAD

*L.I. Standard. Tuesday, June 6, 1944.
Sinnoco.*

The latest in tonight is a thing that we can well believe. It tells how the Germans felt today - on D-Day. A flash from the Swiss frontier bordering Germany describes the German state of mind in the following adjectives: "surprised, bewildered, angered and dumbfounded." Fritz ~~had been~~ inspired to these emotions *by the communique of* his own high command - the news of Allied landings on the French coast of Normandy. Fritz had been ~~so~~ *so often* told about the impregnable and invulnerable strength of the Nazi Atlantic Wall, that he thought that Allied troops would never get ashore - at least not so quickly and easily.

Indeed, we all may be a bit surprised by the first phase of this stupendous adventure, which has turned out to be an easier thing than anybody had dreamed. Tonight's communique from invasion headquarters summarizes in these words: "Allied forces have succeeded

in their initial landings in France, and fighting continues."

One dispatch after another through the afternoon, repeated the fact that in various phases of the offensive the resistance of the vaunted Atlantic wall was not nearly so formidable as had been anticipated. Of course, the landings are only a beginning, and the expectation all along has been that the Germans would depend heavily on mass counter-attacks, so it is not surprising to find a late bulletin informing us that a Nazi thrust is apparently in the making. "The first German counter-attack is likely to materialize within the next forty-eight hours," says the dispatch.

INVASION

The news
~~The latest about the invasion~~ pictures Allied

troops battling in the streets of the Norman city of

~~Kahn~~
Caen. That place is nine and a half miles inland, which

~~represents a drive of that far from the beachheads,~~

~~established early this morning. The Germans report that~~

~~the landing forces are broadening and strengthening their~~

~~positions, and getting incessant reinforcements - new~~

~~masses of troops, new tons of armament pouring ashore.~~

TP
Caen is at the base of the Norman peninsula, which

thrusts northward into the English Channel, and the drive

to the town makes it look as if the strategy were to cut

across the base of the peninsula and force a Nazi

withdrawal from the whole area. The possession of that

peninsula would be a powerful base from which Allied

thrusts could be driven inland, probably in the direction

of Paris.

To the British troops in the Second Front forces

Kahn

that town of Caen represents historic memories - if they have time to think about it. For it was there, in the river, that William the Conqueror in Ten-Sixty-Six assembled the fleet with which he invaded England - ~~in~~ the Norman Conquest; *! Q* And the mortal remains of the Conqueror lie interned in the Church of St. Etienne in *Saint Etienne* the City of Caen.

The latest advices from both sides, Allied and enemy, picture the invasion as concentrated at three points, the mouth of the Orne River, where Caen lies; and forty miles westward along the coast, the mouth of the Vire River, That point too threatens the base of the peninsula. ~~And the Germans report that the Allied troops have cut an important highway still further along.~~

tells us
Nazi accounts ~~report~~ that there have been landings also in the area between Boulogne and Calais, the Dover Straits, across the narrowest width of water from Britain.

The German radio is quoted as saying that Allied air^{borne} troops have seized a flying field in that sector - although there is no Allied confirmation of this.

Still another late report declared that north of Caen the invasion troops have driven thirteen miles inland - that deep into the back of the peninsula.

There is no confirmation of any accounts of landings in the area between Beaugouet and Colleville on Jersey Strait, across the narrow water from Britain. The German radio is quoted as saying that there, Allied air-borne troops have seized a flying field - which may or may not be true. Allied activities place the invasion farther west.

ADD INVASION

The latest enemy report pictures a major assault developing between those two points, with the Nazi statement that Allied paratroopers have ~~cut~~ cut the main road leading from Caen up the coast.

Kahn

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GEOGRAPHY

It so happens, that the coastal battlefield is one of the most familiar stretches of ground on earth -- the French Channel shore from Cherbourg to Le Havre. For many years ~~it has been~~ one of the commonest routes of travel for American tourists visiting Europe. They often landed at Cherbourg, ~~the northern end of the Norman peninsula that reaches up into the Channel, and then~~ ^{and then} the railroad to Paris took them along the coastal lands. ^{TP} I myself, have made that railroad trip many a time, and have seen the coast from the water side. It's flat country, with only slight rises of ground, from the beaches, (Cherbourg, itself, on a tall ^{rugged} headland ~~that's a natural fortress,~~ ^{has} a strongly fortified harbor. And around Calais and Dieppe, there are cliffs, like the white Cliffs of Dover, across the Channel. ~~But in between the Calais and Dieppe area of Cherbourg,~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{that} beaches are broad and flat; and the level ground extends on inward -- a water-level route to Paris. ^{TP} And so, any of the thousands of travelers who have made the railroad

trip will appreciate the statement in the invasion news that the most favorable stretch of coast was selected for the second front landings today.

thousand ships and thousands of lesser craft. The greatest army ever to strike at a hostile shore advanced by sea and machine, tens of thousands of men and hundreds of thousands of tons of supplies before it is over. And the greatest air battle ever delivered.

Before the day began, in the hours of darkness between midnight and dawn, thousands of British planes landed more than 100,000 tons of bombs on the Nazi fortifications. Then came the American heavy bombers in the night, and soon the total tonnage of bombs was more than seven thousand. From midnight to

the total tonnage of bombs dropped in this one day of invasion was greater than the German tonnage of bombs during the entire war.

AIR WAR

The events of today were studied with records. The greatest fleet of ships ever to set sail - four thousand ships and thousands of lesser craft. The greatest army ever to strike at a hostile shore - that vast force of men and machines, tens of thousands of men increasing to hundreds of thousands, millions before it is over. And - the greatest air assault ever delivered.

Before the day began, in the hours of darkness between midnight and dawn, thousands of British planes hurled more than five thousand tons of bombs on the Nazi fortifications. Then more than a thousand American heavy bombers took up the assault, and soon the total tonnage of bombs was more than eleven thousand. ~~From midnight to eight A.M., planes of the United Nations flew seventy five hundred sorties.~~ ^{And} British air officers remarks that the total tonnage of bombs dropped in this one day of invasion was greater than the amount the Germans hurled on Britain during the ^{entire} six months of the great blitz.

ADD AIR WAR

And tonight's official Allied bulletin continues the theme of air action, saying that all day long American and British warplanes continued their bombing in what the dispatch calls - ~~their~~ "very great strength." Which is an expression not at all to be applied to Nazi air action. Just what has happened to the Luftwaffe is none too clear. Hitler is supposed to have seventeen-hundred-and-fifty-fighter planes in the west, but today only about sixty enemy planes were seen, and they didn't try to do anything much.

PARATROOPERS

The most colorful news of the day concerns the paratroopers. A United Press correspondent who witnessed invasion scenes from the coast of England, describes the night sky as looking like, what he calls "A Christmas tree with colored lights strung out in long lines. These," he goes on, "were the running lights of the planes carrying air borne troops. The lights were to identify them to anti-aircraft batteries in Britain. Wave after wave of these air borne fleets," he relate," passed over the coast in a steady stream--their colored lights beaming and finally vanishing as they disappeared over the Channel in the direction of France."

After that Christmas tree illumination, the breaking of day was ^a stupendous thing of sound. "The sky was alive with the roar of fighters and bombers. Formations of all types appeared, from long single lines of heavy bombers to tight formations of fighters.

In the first wave of paratroopers was an outfit which reminds you of American history of times gone

PARATROOPERS - 2

by--Indians, wearing their tribal scalplocks. They restrained their tribal war whoop, however, while descending silently, parachuting to earth. Then all of their ancestral stealth was needed, as they spread out over the country. Their job needed the stealth of the braves of times gone by, for these Indians, Yaqui and Cherokee tribesmen, were demolition engineers whose task it was to sneak in and blow up enemy installation

One of the paratroopers to jumptoday was Robert Hillman of Hartford, Connecticut, who felt an especial secutiry. This story is wired me by an old friend, Ted Shane, of the Black Watch, author of a book called ----->

Shane

"Heroes of the Pacific." ^{Shane} ~~He~~ tells how, recently, Private Hillman said to a colonel at inspection: "I know my chute is okay, because my mother checked it. She works in the Pioneer Parachute Company in our town, and her job is giving the final once over to all the chutes."

Prime Minister Winston Churchill's formal report on ^l
~~the date~~ ^{D-Day} was given in tones of measured optimism ^{today}.
~~Churchill made two statements to the House of Commons,~~
~~the first of which~~ ⁱⁿ ~~and his second~~ ^{of which} recited the progress of events up to
~~mid-afternoon. Sober and factual tones made his~~
~~disclosures all the more encouraging.~~

"This operation", said Winston Churchill, is ^{Then he went on!}
proceeding in a highly satisfactory manner." Many
dangers and difficulties ~~xxx~~ which last night seemed
to be extremely formidable are behind us. Passage of
the sea," he explained, "has been made with far less loss
than we apprehended."

And he went on to say that the bristling batterie
of Nazi guns across the Channel had been greatly
weakened by air bombing and the fire of Naval artillery.
And he emphasized in these words, "Landings and follow-
ups are proceeding with very much less loss than we
expected".

"However," Winston Churchill went on with his

usual note of realistic caution. "All this, although a very favorable and vitally essential first step", said he, "can not indicate what may be the course of battle in the next few weeks, because the enemy will endeavor to concentrate in this area. And in that event, heavy fighting will soon begin and will continue without any end so long as the enemy can push troops in." "This is, however," he concluded, "the most serious time, and we enter upon it with our great Allies, all in good heart and good friendship."

ADD CHURCHILL

And he went on to say that the bristling batteries of Nazi guns across the Channel had been greatly weakened by air bombing and the fire of naval artillery. And, moreover, he mentioned the element of surprise - a fact that is stressed in the latest war news that has just come in. According to this, it would seem that the Germans did not expect the assault to come where it did - between the heavily defended ports of Le Havre and Cherbourg. - Another thing to account for the lightness of resistance. And Churchill put emphasis on the following: "Landings and follow-ups," said he, "are proceeding with very much less loss than we expected."

In Washington, President Roosevelt stated late today that up to noon we had lost two destroyers and one escort vessel - which is in contrast to the usual Nazi propaganda accounts of losses inflicted by their forces - they claiming a cruiser at sea, not to mention large

captures of air-borne troops on land.

All in all, the Allied leadership would seem to have reason to be jubilant at the success of the first step of the invasion. However, "caution" is the word. Today in talking to Parliament, Winston Churchill spoke in his familiar vein of realistic prudence. He described today's operations as - "a very favorable and vitally essential first step. But," he added, "it cannot indicate what may be the course of battle within the next few weeks, because the enemy will endeavor to concentrate in this area."

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ROOSEVELT FOLLOW CHURCHILL

And President Roosevelt this afternoon added his own warning against over-confidence. He pointed out that it is one thing to land successfully on enemy beaches, and another to drive the long hard miles to the heart of the enemy country. ^A The President said that the decision to launch today's blow was made last December, at the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin conference

in Teheran. It was then decided that the Second Front would ~~be launched~~ ^{get under way} toward the end of May, or the first

days of June. No exact date could be fixed, because that depended on accidents of weather. ^{The President} ~~he~~ added that

he himself had known the exact date ~~Tuesday, June~~ ^{So he} ~~Sixth~~ only during the past few days. ~~he~~ ^{he} knew it

last night when he was on the radio. The President

^{says} ~~states~~ that while he was on the air making his broadcast

on the fall of Rom^e, he was aware that the invasion

^{already} boats were on their way across the Channel.

EISENHOWER

One of the tense turns of drama was enacted today in a motor trailer under a tent somewhere along the southern coast of England. The trailer - the headquarters of General Eisenhower. From this he will direct the onslaught, until the Allied command crosses the Channel and sets up headquarters on French soil.

So early this morning there was the ruddy-faced and ordinarily smiling Eisenhower, But he was tense now in the moment of his great decision. It was for him to give the order for the hurling of the Second Front. Was this the time? Should he set the whole vast offensive into operation?

That was a question of - weather. It had been noticed that during the past forty-eight hours the usual Eisenhower posture had been - head cocked up, looking at the sky. ~~The~~ D-Day had been scheduled for yesterday, but no, ~~it did not take one of these~~

~~Eisenhower looks at the sky to see~~ The weather was bad, stormy, bad for flying, impossible for paratroop operations, the Channel too rough for the efficient handling of boats. ~~And The General's glances upward were a quest for signs of clearing, harbingers of better weather.~~ th ^{so} what were the prospects for today?

Eisenhower and the top ranking commanders studied the weather reports - the weatherman ^{being} ~~was~~ the real commander-in-chief for the declaration of D-Day. The meteorological reports turned out to be good enough, but the weather today was by no means perfect. Not too good for bombing fleets of the sky, ^{though} ~~for~~ these did a huge and devastating task. The Channel was quieter than yesterday, though still choppy - that turbulent strait whose sea-sickness-producing antics are a legend.

~~For the air-borne assault the question of, weather was most critical of all. Things have got to be~~

~~just right for dropping paratroopers in that dim break
between darkness and dawn. There should be not enough
light for the gunners on the ground to stop them readily,
but there should be enough to pick ~~their~~ objectives.
Today, as it happened, the sky over the coast of Normandy
was heavy with clouds, but this was such as to enable the
fleets of paratroopers and planes to come in concealed by
the overcast, and then get under and pick their objectives
clearly.~~

Well, all of these chances were a weighty burden on the mind of the Commanding General, who had to decide - go ahead or delay again. Eisenhower has ample heart and courage for making a decision, and he gave the fateful order - D-Day!

Surely, he had enough to occupy the mind of any one man, enough to monopolize every thought in his head. And yet I wonder whether his fancy did not stray,

at least for a brief moment, to this side of the ocean.

I wonder, did

~~Did not~~ he stop and think for a moment of a tall bluff

on a broad river, a height crowned by stately buildings?

Did

~~did not~~ he think of West Point and his wife and son?

For it is a moody coincidence that this Invasion Day,

which Eisenhower marked down in history, ~~was~~ also

Graduation Day at West Point! ^{and} His son John was one of

the graduating class. His mother was there to see him

get his diploma, while his father was over there —

commanding on D-Day.

RUSSIA

In Soviet Russia, the invasion news was announced with all the military fanfare that attends the proclamation of a great Red Army victory. ~~And today's Moscow dispatch tells us that the Russian people exploded with an outburst of joy greater than they usually accord their own triumphs.~~ Everywhere in Moscow the hope was expressed that the war would end quickly. *And* the Red Army seems about to do its own large bit toward that happy consummation. The word is that the Russians will launch another big offensive of their own within twenty-four to forty-eight hours, almost certain ^{*ly*} before the end of the week. - The Second Front to be supported by a new big push on the First Front.

ITALY

The war news from ^{of course} Italy is eclipsed by the much greater even ^{to} along the English Channel. We may note that yesterday's action still continues - the Fifth Army driving rapidly forward, with the Germans in full retreat

~~For a brief while the battlefront was along the historic River Tiber from Rome to the sea. But, with only the briefest pause, British and American troops were across the Tiber which, for all its venerable reputation, is no great stream, according to American standards.~~

~~From the river, the advance pushed on along a seventeen mile front, and it had trouble catching up with the Germans - so fast were these going. They left only rear guards to give scattered opposition, and in some places the Nazi withdrawal was a rout. There is still no sign of where the Germans intend to make a stand - what they plan to do in Italy, with the giant Allied invasion on their necks along the coast of France.~~

ADD ITALY

There is still no indication of where the Germans intend to make a stand - what they plan to do in Italy, with the giant Allied invasion on their necks along the coast of France.

One of the additions is the fact that at 3:00, that night, the gambling houses closed town.

around the land there were demonstrations of patriotism. At Philadelphia, the Liberty Bell rang, that symbol of America's freedom. And in New York

REACTION

The nation today took the D-Day news with a feeling of earnestness and hope. Everywhere people were soberly repeating the exclamation of a sergeant as his boat pushed off this morning: "They can't stop us!" *Said the Sergeant.* Many an amusement feature was shut down, because of the feeling that it wasn't appropriate to the news that was flashing. Typical was a Marine Corps sergeant at Hollywood in the early hours of the morning. He had just won a jitterbugging contest in a night club, and was beaming. Then he heard the news, and said sheepishly: "I feel kind of silly."

One of the oddities is the fact that at Reno, *Nevada* that wide open town, the gambling houses closed down today.

Across the land there were demonstrations of patriotism. At Philadelphia, the Liberty Bell rang, that symbol of American freedom. And in numberless

churches the bells pealed out, calling people to prayer. Over in England, the appeal to Divine Providence was led by King George, whose prayer concluded with the solemn cadence; "We shall not ask that God may do our will," spoke the King, "but that we may be enabled to do the will of God."

And in this country, ^{the} President ^{has just} ~~Roosevelt~~ leads the nation in prayer - tonight, in a countrywide

broadcast. And ^{now} ~~meanwhile~~ let us switch to Washington to hear a voice that can ^{also speak} ~~speak an~~ appeal with singular

appropriateness, ^{Chaplain} ~~General~~ Brigadier General William R.

Arnold, Chief of the Chaplains ~~corp~~ of the United States Army.

Prayer by Chaplain Brigadier General William R. Arnold
(from 40-45 seconds)

ALMIGHTY and Eternal God, we thy humble servants are on our knees this fateful day to adore thee and to implore thy help. Thou who knowest the weakness and the frailty of our nature have shown us through the sufferings and sacrifices of thy beloved Son how to be brave and strong and victorious.

As our fathers, sons, and brothers on distant battlefields fight valiently for our liberty and for thy truth and justice, shed the light of thy countenance upon them and sustain them by the power of thine unconquerable will. Send angels of thy heavenly host to lead them on to a glorious victory for thy honor and glory. Amen

END

From Chaplain Gen. Arnold

And on that solemn note we conclude one of the

1/2
greatest ~~most~~ days ^{in the} ~~of~~ ^{of man} history ¹ - a day meant to mark the

turning point of the global war. In years to come, the

world and its history will ^{tell again and again} ~~keep the memory~~ of this day,

this June Sixth - D-Day, Invasion Day.

1 And so long until tomorrow.