

On the Western Front, the big push began today. And the way the news broke all day long gave an emphatic hint that the new offensive is designed to be the final drive for victory in the West.

Until a little more than an hour ago, the Allied High Command over there was silent - while the ~~xx~~ Germans were shouting that early this morning a great American assault was launched. The Nazi news was that a mighty blow was being hurled in the Rhineland, along the front of the Roer River - a violent artillery bombardment, the river crossed, powerful American forces hammering forward, the drive aimed at Cologne.

Much Nazi news about an American offensive, but from our own side - not a word. Then in mid-afternoon came a break - but not from over there. The word was from Washington, where a spokesman gave out an announcement of the offensive, confirming the German story. There was still no news from the Allied command on the Western Front.

The silence was portentous. Sometimes, in the case of a great event, an Army Command holds up the news - until things have got well under way.

Then came the dispatch. It reads: "The United States ~~F~~irst and Ninth Armies opened a powerful offensive this morning, ~~xxxx~~ streaming across the Roer River. The drive is pointed at the Rhine".

The dispatch tells us that in forcing the river barrier, only light opposition was encountered.

That may be explained by the violent artillery preparation, described as the heaviest American bombardment of the war. The Americans drove ahead, advancing everywhere along the line of the new Rhineland offensive. The latest is that enemy opposition is increasing - in the first phase of what appears to be ~~R~~Eisenhower's big push.

SUBSTITUTE END WESTERN FRONT

Late dispatches tell of a stupendous artillery bombardment before dawn -- two thousand guns thundering in the heaviest barrage that American cannon have hurled thus far. It was bright moonlight - "weirdly bright" says the news dispatch. And the red flame of gunfire was added to the silvery beams of the moon. Next the river crossing - American soldiers swarming across in assault boats and then over bridges, which were ~~xx~~ swiftly laid. The Roer River was flooded and in some places was nearly a quarter of a mile wide, flowing swiftly. River flood in the brilliant moonlight - with the attacking troops pouring across at the crack of dawn. Resistance was light -- which is to be explained by the violent artillery preparation. And at last reports the Americans ~~xxx~~ were pushing across the level plain in front of Cologne - ~~through~~ ^{though} German resistance was increasing.

FOLLOW WESTERN FRONT

From Washington we hear that about a third of Germany's trained military manpower has been knocked out of the war in the past two months. On both the eastern and the western front the Nazis have sustained casualties estimated at ~~one~~^a million, eight hundred thousand men. And that amounts to one-third the number of efficient first line soldiers that Hitler had two months ago. As a result, the Germans are being ~~xx~~ compelled to dilute their crack divisions with ~~xxxx~~ second rate soldiers - some hardly more than poorly trained civilians.

RUSSIA

The news from the Russians tonight tells mostly about besieged cities - Poznan for example. That important place in Poland, far behind the Soviet lines, has been captured - after a siege of a month.

Poznan was engulfed in the great Red Army rush that carried right on into Germany, and thereafter was held stubbornly by a German garrison. Now it has been taken - together with ~~xx~~ twenty-three thousand prisoners. This opens an important supply route to the eastern front, and releases a large besieging force for the offensive against Berlin.

And Moscow reports the capture of another besieged ~~city, this is one~~ ^{point - -} a strongly fortified place thirty-nine miles southeast of the great Baltic seaport of Stettin. The German garrison, surrounded, held out for fifteen days. Today, the Russians crushed all resistance, and took that ~~town~~ ^{too.}

Still ^{story} Another siege in the news today ^{tells about} ~~is that~~
~~is~~ Breslau, the capital of ~~lower~~ Silesia - ~~another~~
~~place~~ ^{now} far behind the Russian lines and stubbornly

defended by the Germans. Moscow announces the seizure of twenty city blocks ^{there,} in bitter street to street fighting for shell-torn Breslau.

As for the Russian offensive aimed at Berlin, the Germans ~~report that~~ ^{say} the Russians have broken into two key strongholds southeast of the German capital - those fortresses of Guben and Forst on the Neisse River.

DECLARATION OF WAR

Turkey today declared war - proclaimed a state of hostilities with Nazi Germany and Japan.

However, it must not be thought that any sudden war fever hit the Turks, and any embattled enthusiasm that impelled them to push into the global conflict. *oh*
fact it's
~~It is~~ not too much to say that they were pushed in.

Turkey declared war in response to an ultimatum from the Big Three. As a result of the Stalin-Churchill-Roosevelt conference at Yalta, the Turks were informed that they had better draw the sword right away - or else. If they didn't, they wouldn't be granted any place whatever in the forthcoming pow-wow of the United Nations at San Francisco. That was a convincing argument, and today the Turks worked up as much as they could of the fervor of battle inherited from their conquering ancestors - the mighty sultans of the past, like Suleiman the Magnificent.
~~Magnificent~~

However, the Turkish declaration of war seems to hint at some slight annoyance, as if the Turks

were not altogether pleased by the ultimatum from the Big Three; as if they didn't quite enjoy the way they were elbowed into the global conflict. Their Declaration of War is pre-dated -- dated ~~for~~ March First. That was the deadline given to them by the big three:- in the war by March First, or else. So the Turks yielded exactly what was demanded, not a day more. They are in the war as of March First.

The Turks were not alone in the Big Three ultimatum. Other non-belligerents friendly to the Allies were included - a total of nine. The others are, Egypt, Iceland, and six Latin-American countries. They, like the Turks, were informed that unless they declared war, they would be out in the cold at San Francisco. The six Latin-American countries, Chile, Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela - lost no time in complying. They are in the global conflict already - having declared war in the last two weeks. That is, since the receipt of the ultimatum.

Argentina was not included, the nation that

has been recalcitrant all along. However, word has been drifting in from Buenos Aires that Argentina is likely to declare war on Germany and Japan in the near future - even without an ultimatum.

Other countries not included are the neutrals like Sweden, Switzerland, and Ireland. Presumably they are not expected to declare war - or have any place in the United Nations conference at San Francisco.

— 0 —
Now a message from Stan.
of Cal. and then the latest news
from Iwo Jima, and a lot more

SUBSTITUTE LEAD IWO

The latest from that scene of bitter conflict, Iwo Jima, is news that the Marines have seized ~~the~~ one tip of the flying field at the center of the island. The southern flying field was occupied immediately after the landings and that left the one to the north as the next major objective -- and now the Marines have seized a foothold.

This was accomplished only after the most ferocious fighting. The Japs hurled incessant counter-attacks, veteran American officers says they never saw so many counter attacks. Most were by night. During the day the Marines hammered forward. The going was slow, yard by yard, even foot by foot. The Jap counter-attacks at night gained some ground, but the Marines during the day gained more. And that result was favorable to them, and they reached the central flying field.

Earlier in the day they captured the volcano - the mountain called etc etc

On Iwo Jima the Marines have captured that Volcano - the mountain called Surabachi, at the southern tip of the island. That is - they raised the American flag on the dominating summit today, although there are still Japs in ~~mountain~~ ^{some} caves on the mountain. These will have to be cleared out, and the Marines are doing it with flame throwers.

The Japs put up their usual bitter fight for the volcano, and employed every tricky device they could think of: - They rolled hand-grenades down the slopes at the on-coming Marines. They sent expert swimmers to infiltrate behind the American line - Jap athletes who swam their way and got ashore, only to be wiped out. The difficulty of the battle for the volcano is illustrated by one detail - the Marines, faced by sheer cliffs, had to use scaling ladders to get at Jap positions.

~~On the northern half of the island, where the bulk of the Japs are, the battle is obstinate. The enemy has the advantage of the terrain, in steep slopes~~

SBSTITUTE END IWO

The conquest of the volcano eases things greatly for the hard-pressed Marines - helps their supply line. getting equipment across the beaches of deep coral sand has been a terrifying task - under violent enemy fire. Most of the Jap shooting came from gun positions high up on the mountain - and these ^{now} have been eliminated.

Still another island in the Philippines has been seized by American troops - this one called Biri, at the entrance to the straits of San Bernardino. The island taken yesterday was along that ~~the~~ same channel, and the purpose of both conquests was the same -- to clear the waterway for American shipping to Manila. The Straits of San Bernardino are part of the sea route for ships crossing the Pacific to the Philippine capital.

SUBSTITUTE CONGRESS FIGHT

It looked as if yesterday's fracas in Congress had ended in apologies. Both contestants did apologize -- Congressman Rankin of Mississippi and Hook of Michigan, who got into a fight because of charges of Communist Associations. However, right after both gentlemen said they were sorry - the fued between right wing and left wing elements in Congress assumed new life when a southern legislator entered a resolution to censure Congressman Hook. Whereupon a Michigan Congressman countered by announcing that he would enter a resolution censuring Rankin.

GIRL

For three years Mrs. Joseph W. Keyes of Pittsburgh, has been trying to communicate with a girl named Anna Marie Connolly, who lives in Brooklyn. She is all the more anxious now than ever to get in touch with Anna Mariæ, because Mrs. Keyes expects her son Joe to return home at any time. He is one of the prisoners released in the Philippines, an Army Corporal, a veteran of Bataan.

Corporal Keyes, before he was sent out to the Philippines, was stationed at Fort Slocum, ~~xxx~~ near Brooklyn, and that was when he met Anna Mariæ, whom he kissed goodbye and said he wouldn't forget while he was far away - far across the Pacific. He arrived in the Philippines just in time for war. He fought through the bitter defense of Bataan, and when the tragic end came the corporal lost all his possessions - including the memorandum on which he had marked the street address of Anna Mariæ in Brooklyn. He couldn't remember it, ~~and in the Jap prison camp,~~ ~~when he had a chance to send letters home, he could~~

~~only write to Anna Marie Connolly, Brooklyn, no street address. He knew Brooklyn was a pretty big place, and didn't have much hope it would reach her.~~

He wrote to his mother, and every one of the letters that she got from him said: "Keep in touch with Anna Marie". Before leaving for the Philippines, he had told his mother about Anna Marie,, and had sent her a picture of the girl. But he had merely said that she lived in Brooklyn - no address.

Time and again Mrs. Keyes tried to ~~buy~~ obey her son's repeated injunction - "keep in touch with Anna Marie". She wrote, addressing letters to Brooklyn - and they were all returned, insufficient address.

Now, prisoners of Bataan have been released, and scanning the lists eagerly Mrs. Keyes saw the name of her son. After her first blaze of joy, she thought - but what about Anna Marie?

Today she said: "I expect him home soon and I'd like to let her know, but if I don't find her, I

GIRL - 3

know what will happen anyway. Just as soon as Joe
has had a chance to kiss his Dad and me, he'll be
off to Brooklyn, ^{to hunt for} ~~to find~~ Anna Marie".

RUSSIAN TELEPHONE CALL

The story of the Russian telephone call to Berlin is a turn of humor that would have delighted the soul of the great Russian writer of comedy - Gogol. He was a master of the absurd mix-up.

In the current Soviet offensive in Germany, Red Army forces swept into a small town so suddenly, that the Germans didn't know what was going on. A railroad train pulled into the station, where a Russian major was waiting as an entertainment committee. The conductor of the train jumped down onto the platform - and failed to recognize the Soviet uniform.

"Unhook the locomotive", commanded the Russian in excellent German. "This is the end of the run so far as you're concerned".

The conductor thought it was a joke. He was a pompous individual who didn't relish unseemly humor. He told the Red Army officer - quit this funny business, he'd complain to Berlin.

The Russian, with an excellent sense of humor, said: "All right, we'll telephone to Berlin".

They went to the telephone in the station, where the Soviet officer picked up the receiver. The line was still open - the capture of the town that much of a surprise. The Major, carrying on the joke, put in a call to Berlin. And, lo and behold, he got the Nazi capital.

"I want to talk with the burgomeister," he said.

"The Burgomeister is out of town", replied Berlin, "who is speaking?"

"I am the Commander in this town", the Russian replied. "How are things in Berlin?"

"Not so good," responded the voice from the other end. "And how are things with you? They say the Russians are quite near".

"With me," responded the Major, "everything is fine. Everything is splendid. The Russians have captured the town".

The Berlin voice came back sternly: "Stop these stupid jokes or I'll put in an official complaint".

"Complain to anyone you like", laughed the Russian. "Complain to Hitler".

"Who is this on the phone? asked Berlin indignantly.

The Russian responded: "I am the Soviet commander who just captured the town. We will be in Berlin soon, and then you and I can continue this conversation". And he hung up.

The conductor of the train, ~~meanwhile~~ meanwhile, was collapsing.

Yes, it sounds like Gogol. I wonder whether it is Gogol.

*And now Gogol or no Gogol,
here's Hugh.*

CONGRESS FIGHT

(Taken from early bc.)

Yesterday's unseemly fracas in Congress was redeemed today - with formal ceremony. It was indeed undignified, when two legislators, Congressman Rankin of Mississippi and Hook of Michigan, got into - not a fist fight, which would have been bad enough - but a hair pulling match, as the news dispatches call it. All because of charges concerning Communism. Tempers cooled during the night, and today all was dignified and stately - majestic and solemn, in fact. ~~There was talk yesterday about an official rebuke for the two gladiators, and demands that they be expelled from Congress. But here is what happened today!~~

The proceedings began with a prayer by the House Chaplain, ~~the Reverend James Shera~~ ~~Montgomery~~, whose supplication ^{was much} ~~had a significant~~ ~~sound~~ to the point. In his invocation he said: "In all situations, enable us to acquit ourselves like men and be worthy of the calling and dignity that our country has bestowed upon us".

~~Yes, that was to the point.~~

~~Next, Congressman Cox of Georgia undertook to act as peacemaker. He gently called upon the two participants in yesterday's brawl to offer apologies. "I have always believed", proclaimed the Congressman, "that the most beautiful line in the Lord's Prayer is "forgive us our trespasses".~~

~~This plea was not in vain, for Up stood Congressman Hook of Michigan. With grave steps he walked to the rostrum, and spoke words of dignity. "High tempers", quoth he, "are unseemly in the consideration of great issues. It is to my great regret that I lost my temper, and so on, ~~and circumstances which will, I ask and hope, receive some attention from the generous members of this body~~".~~

~~That apology was graciously accepted in by the house, and then Rankin of Mississippi offered his. ~~He was too was stately, although you might have sensed a slight lingering trace of rancor in Rankin. "If I were to apologize to anyone", said he, "I would~~~~

ADD CONGRESS FIGHT

~~The~~ The hope was that the whole thing had ended, ~~and would be forgotten.~~ But here is the latest - a southern legislator has introduced a motion to censure Congressman Hook. And a Michigan Congressman counters by announcing that he will enter a resolution censuring Rankin.