

November 15, 1944

South of the city of Metz, a mile or two away, is a ridge of hills, which today was ~~swept~~ swept by sleet, ^{and} snow, ~~and the blowing of a wintry wind~~. That ridge, inside of the great permanent fortifications of Metz, is the last line of natural defense that General Patton's Third Army has to surmount ^{before} ~~between~~ driving into the city. And the fight for the ridge was bitter today. The Germans ^{held} ~~held~~ it with a multitude of machine gun positions which American artillery shelled and against which American troops drove forward -- through the storm of snow and ~~sleet~~ sleet.

Still other forts of Metz have been captured, strongpoints in the historic ring of defenses that surround the city. ~~The Germans have been trying to~~ belittle the American conquest of the forts, saying that these were old and obsolete, dating back to the Franco-Russian war.

I was talking today to a newspaperman just back from the Metz battle, and he gives an eye witness account of the formidable appearance of the forts of

Metz -- modern, no Franco-Prussian war antiques.

He is Hugh Baillie, President of the United Press, and he told of seeing a German elevator gun which rose out of the ground, fired a shell, and then sank out of sight -- the most up-to-date kind of mechanism of war.

And Hugh Baillie spoke grimly of the stubborn ~~line of~~ fight the Germans were putting up when he was there -- and they are still doing it. Today's news tells how, after Patton's men broke through the ring of forts, the Germans retired and dug in -- on that ridge, for example. And today they brought reinforcements out of the city -- to make the most obstinate kind of battle of it. The Americans believe it's a delaying action -- with the Germans throwing their forces into a savage defense, to delay as long as possible and keep escape highways open. The signs are that they intend a general withdrawal to new lines, and are bent on making it a methodical hard-fighting affair.

~~Signs of withdrawal were evident in eastern Holland, too, where the British offensive, about which~~

RUSSIA

Moscow reports the capture of an important town in Hungary -- thirty-one miles east of Budapest, and fifty other Hungarian towns and villages have fallen into Russian hands. This -- as the battle for Budapest comes to a crisis, ~~increases~~ Today's news tells us that Red Army troops have ~~forced~~ ^{driven} across the Danube south of the Hungarian capital -- swarming across in great strength.

HITLER

Here's a new and baffling one on the subject of what's happened to Hitler. The news wires this afternoon flashed some impressive reports from London, stories emanating from authoritative sources ~~all~~ that Hitler ^{was} ~~is~~ no longer ~~ixx~~ the actual dictator of Germany, and that Himmler, the arch ~~killer~~ of the Gestapo, had taken his place. This -- because Hitler was in a state of mental breakdown, nervous collapse, insanity or something.

It was the most authentic sounding of the ~~plathore~~ ^{plathore} of rumors that we've been having recently about what's happened to Hitler. But here, tonight, along comes another story, throwing the whole ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ thing into a more confusing state of obfuscation than ever. ~~Thixx~~ ~~it's~~ A dispatch from Switzerland ~~that~~ ^{states} that the whole Hitler mystery is ~~ixx~~ the result of Nazi attempts to keep their Fuhrer out of sight, while the Germans ~~try to~~ make a desperate attempt for peace -- trying to get into negotiations. We know, of course, that they

haven't a chance, but they figure that Hitler in the ^{picture} would only make their prospects more sour than ever.

This version ^{goes} ~~is~~ on to say that today's London stories about Hitler being in a state of collapse and replaced by Himmler ^{are} ~~is~~ all a part of the scheme for peace negotiations -- keeping ~~the~~ ^{Der} Fuhrer out of sight.

GERMAN MORALE

A grim and sinister story comes through, a story indicating the decline of German morale. We are told that yesterday in the much bombed city of Cologne, Hitler's Gestapo publicly hanged twenty-one people. This because, in devastated Cologne, they talked openly against a continuation of the war -- speaking in favor of peace.

~~And from Italy we hear that courtmartials in a German infantry division have increased by five hundred percent because of what the dispatch calls -- " a declining belief in victory." We are told that the enemy command in Italy has ordered German officers to get busy in the biggest kind of way, and try to restore the belief of their soldiers that the Nazis are going to win the war.~~

The news today began to mention -- the V-3/
The Nazis are talking about it now -- another freak
of Hitler terror. German sources in Switzerland are
reported to be saying that the V-3 is the real big-
time secret weapon, which the Germans have had in
mind all along -- the V-1 and V-2 being mere
preliminaries. According to Nazi accounts, the V-3
is piloted by radio -- a wireless controlled rocket
of some sort, apparently. It is said to weigh fifteen
tons and can carry half that weight of explosive --
according to the distance it has to travel. ^{Nazis}
^{in Switzerland} Swiss Nazis are saying that the Hitler engineers hope
to give the V-3 a range ^{that} ~~they~~ will enable it to cross
the ocean and strike the United States -- ^{with} ~~and be able~~
~~to carry~~ three or four tons of explosive.

We don't know how much fancy nonsense there
is in this V-3 talk -- but we do know that the V-1 and
V-2 are realities.

ROCKETS

The news about the Nazi stratosphere rockets that have been ~~xxx~~ hitting England, the V-2s, has inevitably brought forward ideas for peace time use of rockets -- for civilian purpose. For a long time ~~there have been rocket enthusiasts who have predicted that their favorite form of projectile could do valuable tasks in ordinary life.~~ And now we hear from Doctor F. K. Teichmann, ~~fm~~ of the Guggenheim Aeronauti^{cal} Institute -- ~~was~~ ^{who is} one of ~~the~~ leading authorities on rockets. He tells us that the time will come when the whizzing missils^l will be used for ^{a super-high speed} ~~xxxhighxxx~~ ^{for} transportation of freight.

He points out that the Nazi V-2 is a hastily improvised affair, and argues that, from so primitive ^{a beginning} ~~an affair~~ highly developed rockets will be perfected. And

that they'll be able to carry cargoes via the stratosphere -- almost instantaneously. New York to ~~Chicago~~ ^{San Francisco or Los Angeles or Seattle} in ~~five~~ minutes. And, the rocket aimed

at Portland)

~~at Chicago~~ won't land in ^{Salt Lake} ~~St. Louis~~ -- because ^{it will} ~~they'll~~

^{an} have automatic pilots governed by radio beam control.

Also -- ^{it} ~~they~~ won't smash to smithereens, hitting at

the blinding speed of a rocket. Controlled by radio

^{it will} ~~they'll~~ go into a glide when near ^{its} ~~their~~ destination --

and slide ~~in~~ smoothly into a landing field.

Will the rockets carry passengers? Will we be

shot into the stratosphere at New York and arrive in

~~San Francisco in 6 minutes?~~

~~Chicago in three minutes?~~ The professor thinks --

no. He says he sees little possibility of passenger

transportation by rocket. *Thank you, Professor.*

CHINA

The bad military news from China continues with the Chinese informing us that the Japs are moving against the railway city of Ishan, which is forty five miles east of Liuchow, which places the Japanese captured a couple weeks ago. The Chinese say the enemy seems to be lunging in an effort to strike all the way down to Burma -- to, the city of Kunming, ^{the} a big China base near the Burma frontier. The Japs claim that their drive is meeting with little opposition and announce jubilantly that yesterday they completed their plan of cutting China in two. Tokio tells of a northern and southern army establishing contact, thereby establishing a solid line from north to south which severs the China coast from the western part of the country, controlled by the Chang-Kai-Shek Government.

The latest from MacArthur tells of the trapping of a full Japanese regiment. To all practical purposes between three thousand and four thousand Japs were surrounded today by a double encirclement. Forces of the Twenty-Fourth Division drove from ~~east~~^{east} and west against an escape corridor by which the Jap x regiment might have escaped to Ormoc. The regiment is now in a net. This is the enemy force that held the town of Limon in hard and bitter fighting.

The main Japx Army of thirty-five thousand is strung along the Ormoc Valley. Apparently enemy Commander Yamashita expects to make this a major stronghold in the battle for the Philippines. The Japs have established themselves in caves, those familiar caves of war on tropical islands. Some of the caverns have camouflaged openings from which the Japs hurl surprise bursts of fire. The word is that it will take a long and costly battle to route them out.

The conflict is mounting, and casualties are growing in what is described as the bitterest fighting of the Philippine campaign thus far.

JAPAN

The long-range plan of the Japs in the battle of the Philippines is discussed in a story given us by the Chinese. ~~They~~ ^{They} say they have private advices about a statement the Tokyo Premier made to a group of prominent Japanese industrialists. He is said to have told them ~~that~~ the battle of the Philippines represents ~~Japan's~~ Japan's last chance to gain a compromise peace -- something better than unconditional surrender. ^{TP} The argument made by enemy Premier Koiso was as follows: Japan must make the hardest possible fight for the Philippines, must resist the MacArthur invasion with the most bitter tenacity; -- the battle for the Philippines must be made so long and costly that the United States and Great Britain will be willing to accept something less than unconditional surrender.

In other words, the Japs' one hope is to drag out the Philippine campaign over such a long period that Tokyo may be able to hang on to some of its ill-gotton gains -- some of the conquests the Japs have made. Such is the Japanese interpretation of the Philippine

{ ~~Battle~~
congratulatory attributed to the Tokyo Premier.

Another item reminds us curiously of former times -- when the Japs were absorbing western ways from the Americans. The Tokyo announcement says that because of the seriousness of the war situation, the Tokyo government has stopped the game of -- baseball. It is well known how eagerly the Japs, years ago, took to the American national pastime, and they've been continuing to play ball ever since. We'll recall how American planes in the Doolittle bombing of Tokyo flew, at one point, over a Japanese baseball game in full swing. But now the war strain has become such that the Tokyo government has cancelled what the news dispatch calls "all games in the Japanese baseball league."

_____ o _____
I have some Amer. news
Hugh; but first let's hear
from Stan. of Calif.
_____ o _____

B

ELECTORAL COLLEGE

In Congress moves are being made to do something about the American political institution, which has been the subject of much discussion this presidential election year -- the Electoral College. In the Fourth Term victory we had another vivid illustration of how great the discrepancy can be between the popular vote and the Electoral Vote -- ~~the~~ ^{Roosevelt} President winning by a small margin of the popular vote and by an overwhelming majority in the Electoral College.)

Of course, our school books ~~will~~ tell us how it all began -- the founders of our Constitution providing that a body of electors chosen by the States should get together and pick what they consider the best man to be the President. Then, ^{with} the development of the party system, the electors chosen by the States were committed to one candidate or another -- and since then, the Electoral College has been the mere survival of an abandoned theory.

In Congress today Democratic leaders called

for a change. Congressmen Lea of California and Worley of Texas spoke up for a Constitutional amendment to revise our electoral system before the next presidential year comes around. They called the present electoral vote business "grotesque and outworn," and they say their plan has the approval of President Roosevelt.

I suppose most people would say -- why not abolish the whole thing altogether and choose a president by straight popular vote. However, Congressman Lea ^{is} sponsoring legislation that would be a compromise - not so drastic a change as a straight popular vote. His measure provides that electoral votes would still be retained, but each state's number would be divided according to the division of the popular vote in the state.

For example, Oklahoma has ten electoral votes. At present, as in the last election, if Oklahoma chose a Democratic majority, then all ~~the~~ ten votes ^{would} go to the

Democratic candidate. Under the system proposed by Congressman Lea, it would be different. Suppose, for example, Oklahoma gave sixty-one and three-tenths to the Democrat and thirty-one and seven-tenths to the Republican. Then its electoral vote would be ^{so} split that the Democrat would get six and thirteen-one-hundredths of the vote and the Republican three and ~~eighty-seven-one-hundredths~~. If ^{his} that system had been applied in the recent election, President Roosevelt would have got a fraction more than three hundred and five of the nation's electoral votes, while Governor Dewey would have received a fraction more than two hundred and twenty-five. And that, of course, would have been more in accordance with the popular vote.

One wonders if it might not be better to consider merely the popular vote -- although I suppose there may be some sound reason for retaining the modified form of the Electoral College.

But why not make it by straight popular vote?

CIGARETTES

The great cigarette question is agitating Americans in the European War Zone, as well as smokers over here. A dispatch from Paris tells us that G.I. Joe is facing the same kind of shortage as the folks back home. At military posts there are signs reading: "No ^{cigars,} ~~cigarettes,~~ or tobacco of any kind until further notice." And in France there is a black market, much the same as in Detroit or Minneapolis -- only more so. In Paris the G.I.s have to pay as much as \$2.50 a pack for American cigarettes.

With that kind of shortage over there, Joe is amazed and perplexed by word from home which states that the shortage in the United States is because of the abundance of cigarettes that have been sent to the troops overseas. One American newspaper reaching Paris ran a story saying that the home front was going without smokes because ~~the~~ each soldier in France was getting five cartons of cigarettes a week.

It is all very puzzling, and the troops behind the lines have their own explanation. They say the

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shortage is because of the abundance of cigarettes that are sent to the combat troops in battle. That, however, seems to be another ^{wrong} ~~long~~ guess, because word from the fighting line is that the combat troops ~~themselves~~ themselves are having a shortage. ~~The~~ Time was when soldiers were rationed a pack a day, but now the front line soldier is lucky if he can get three packs a week. And this week there were no cigarettes to ration.

It all adds up to a mystery, and you might have to smoke up a couple of packs while figuring it out -- if you could get them. *Hughes*

KILLER

The Los Angeles police announce that they have arrested the fiend that murdered two women today--- two horror crimes, ~~xx~~ each in a hotel. City detectives ^{teel} told how they picked ^{the killer up a} ~~him up a few~~ few doors away from one of the hotels. --- where ^{calmly} he was having a glass of beer. They say he ^{been} was identified by a hotel clerk ^{that} and his finger prints match those found at the scene of the murder. He is a man of thirty-two ^{Jack the ripper} ~~charged~~ with ~~having being the killer~~ in two of the worst atrocities of crime that Los Angeles has ever known.

DICE

The secret of the big ~~New York~~ crap game in New York was revealed this afternoon ---- with a publication of the identity of the movie star involved. The story, as it originally came out, merely told that an airplane company executive had complained to the police that he had been gyped to the tune of eighteen thousand five hundred dollars in a crooked dice game, and that the money had been won by what he called "a top flight movie star". ^R The airplane executive ^{related} ~~told~~ how in the game, the screen actor rolled thirteen straight passes, ~~and that with each pass, the losses of the aviation man increased until he had~~ ^{with} ~~lost~~ ^{that} ~~with each pass, the losses of the aviation man increased until he had~~ ~~lost~~ ^{eighteen thousand five hundred dollars.} He took it at the time as a mere matter of bad luck, but ~~XXXX~~ says he was later informed by the wife of one of the men in the game that the dice were crooked. ^R The ~~XXXXXX~~ session with the galloping dominos was held at the apartment of Leo Durocher, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers--but Leo wasn't there at the time, didn't know

anything about the game. He had loaned his key to a Broadway friend who invited the boys up for a session with the ivories. ^{TR} The account, ~~was~~ published in New York, failed to reveal the identity of the "top flight movie star". But a later dispatch from Hollywood fills in the gap. He was George Raft, ^{that} number One performer in many a gangster thriller. Raft himself, however, does ^{not} make the disclosure. It comes from his chauffeur who admits that the screen actor was in the game, but hotly denies that the dice were ^{phony} ~~crooked~~. "It was just luck", he declares, "that Raft rolled thirteen straight passes." Well, the movie actor is a great believer in luck, because we are told, he wears silver charms on his underclothes to guard himself ~~again~~ against ill fortune -- with the dice or otherwise. ~~So~~ I suppose, when you have your undershirt loaded with silver good luck charms, you don't have to use loaded dice.

1/2
And now Hugh with what are you loaded.