

German High Command Ready To Seek Armistice FALL OF RUHR BASIN APPEARS IMMINENT

Action Delayed As Nazis Refuse To Quit Control

European Reports
Hitler, Army
Leaders Agree That
Germany Defeated

Decatur, Mar. 31—(UP)—German reports said Adolf Hitler and the German high command agreed at a dramatic all-night meeting ending early today that Germany should seek an armistice, but apparently delayed when the Nazis refused to accept the government's immediate offer.

The high command informed the German people that it was prepared to accept an armistice if the government would quit, a dispatch from Tiddings by the Exchange Telegraph agency said.

Staff officers were said to have contended that continuation of the war was impossible in the west and the Soviet threat in the east.

Hitler countered with a proposal to abandon his position as sole leader in favor of a "Fuehrer's council" headed by Marshal Albert Kesselring and Col. Gen. Gerd von Schoerner, commanders on the western and eastern fronts, Tiddings said.

Members of the council under Kesselring and von Schoerner would be Hitler himself, Reich Marshal Hermann Goering, Reich Minister Heinrich Himmler and Admiral Karl Doenitz.

Hitler was said to have told the council that he would negotiate with the Allies while he remained in command.

At the end of the meeting, a Zurich dispatch said, "Hitler's self faced up to the fact that the high command possessed no means to deal with the overwhelming Allied onslaught."

There was no way of ascertaining the authenticity of the report.

(Turn To Page 6, Column 6)

an Annual Clean-Up
Week In This City

Plans are being made for the annual clean-up week in Decatur, Sauer, city street commissioner, announced today.

The designated week will be determined largely by the weather, Sauer said. The city will either designate the week in April or the week in March as the clean-up week.

City workmen and trucks will be employed and anyone who wishes to volunteer as a civic worker will be welcomed, Mr. Sauer said. The city will haul away the winter's accumulation of rubbish, but not the autos. The alleys will be cleaned of old bottles and tin cans, (those processed for the scrap drives), and the unsightly debris.

TEMPERATURE READING
DECATUR THERMOMETER
8:00 a. m. 44
10:00 a. m. 45
11:00 a. m. 48

WEATHER
Mostly cloudy, today with rain ending west by forenoon and east by early afternoon followed by decreasing cloudiness and becoming fair tonight and Sunday. Warmer central today and South Sunday with Monday cloudy and mild.

Seek To Avert Coal Mine Strike

Public Hearing To Be Held By WLB

Washington, Mar. 31—(UP)—The war labor board today tackled the job of trying to avert a soft coal strike less than 14 hours before the midnight expiration of the current contract between the producers and United Mine Workers.

UMW president John L. Lewis and the operators will tell the WLB at a public hearing whether they will abide by an order to continue production under their present contract. They will be asked to agree to make April 1 the effective date for any wage adjustments finally approved, and to state whether they want more time to negotiate a new contract or the WLB to order one for them.

If their answers are a guarantee of uninterrupted production, the government will postpone seizure of the mines. Plans are ready, however, to take over the coal pits if there is no other way to avert a halt in production.

The miners have a policy of "no contract, no work." Should the WLB fail to secure an extension of the old contract, they could be expected to refuse to continue work. However, a general walkout would not make itself widely felt until Tuesday, since few shifts work on Sunday, and Monday is another miners' holiday.

The WLB assumed jurisdiction over the dispute yesterday after secretary of labor Frances Perkins failed to get the parties together on a contract or an extension of the present agreement. Operators earlier in the week also rejected a request by fuel administration.

(Turn To Page 6, Column 7)

Lions Club Sponsors Waste Paper Drive

Local Service Club Aids Monthly Drive

The monthly waste paper and tin can drive next Saturday will be sponsored by the Lions club, Phil Sauer, city street commissioner and chairman of the campaign, announced today.

The Lions club will feed the Boy Scouts and truck drivers at noon at the K. of P. home. The meal will be prepared by Wilson F. Beery and Roy Mumma, assisted by other club members.

Mr. Sauer has his goal set at 10 tons of waste paper and at least a ton of flattened tins. Last month the drive produced about six tons of paper and 1200 pounds of prepared tins.

The Boy Scouts are doing a magnificent job in the drive, Mr. Sauer said. "Without their help we could not gather up the waste paper," he said.

About 20 Scouts are expected to turn out for the city-wide drive next Saturday. Every street will be covered by the city trucks.

Residents are asked to tie their papers in bundles and place the packages along the curb in front of their house. The flattened tins should be placed in a container.

The waste paper is sold to the local junk yard and the proceeds are turned over to the Boy Scouts, Mr. Sauer said. The tins are taken to Fort Wayne, where they are shipped to the detinning mills. The Boy Scouts also receive the nominal payment from the tins.

18 Jap Ships Sunk By U. S. Carrier Force

14 Others Probably Sunk, 15 Damaged At Okinawa Island

Guam, Mar. 31—(UP)—Carrier task forces of the U. S. Pacific fleet sank 18 Japanese ships, probably 14 and damaged 15 near Okinawa island and Kyushu March 28 and 29, Adm. Chester H. Nimitz announced today.

Battleships and light units of the Pacific fleet meanwhile blasted at shore installations on Okinawa as carrier planes hit the main island of Ryukyu again today, Nimitz said.

Besides the 47 enemy ships sunk or damaged, 29 aircraft were shot out of the air, 16 were destroyed on the ground and 42 damaged or destroyed on the ground. Twelve American planes and six pilots were lost in combat during the same period.

Nimitz said the heavy shelling of Okinawa yesterday was made at close range.

"Seawalls were breached by gunfire, and defensive gun positions, airfields and bridges were heavily hit," he said.

Fleet surface units on March 27 and 28 also bombarded tiny Minami Daito island, 300 miles east of Okinawa, and outside the Ryukyu chain, which guards the approaches to Japan, Formosa, and the China coast.

Nimitz reported that a carrier task force of the British Pacific fleet struck at targets in the Sakashima group of the southern Ryukyus, less than 300 miles east of Formosa.

Meanwhile, a strong force of B-29s blasted targets and airfields on Kyushu, Japan's southernmost island. Tokyo said an invasion of Okinawa appeared imminent.

American minesweepers have begun clearing the approaches to Okinawa, a naval and air base island midway between Japan and Formosa, in preparation for landings and a "powerful transport armada" is headed toward the area, Japanese broadcasts said.

An enemy communique reported that battleships and other warships were hurling hundreds of tons of shells into Okinawa for the ninth straight day. The fleet has been reinforced by the arrival of about 15 battleships and other heavy warships, Tokyo said.

Earlier Tokyo broadcasts had

(Turn To Page 6, Column 5)

Offers Plan To Aid Garbage Collection

Suggestion Is Made To Local Residents

Phil Sauer, city street commissioner, offers a suggestion and a plan to local residents who want more efficient handling of their garbage.

Through the cooperation of Ralph Roop, city engineer, a garbage pit has been designed, which Mr. Sauer asks the people to install at the back end of their lot, or within easy access of the garbage collector. Mr. Sauer recently made an inspection trip with the garbage contractor and learned that about half of their time was taken in trying to find the location of the garbage can.

Here is what Mr. Sauer has designed:

Dig a hole 30 inches deep and a little over 18 inches in width, so that an 18-inch tile can be placed in the hole.

Fill the bottom of the tile with six inches of gravel.

Place a layer of brick on top of the sand, so that the five-gallon can will rest on the brick.

Construct a wood cover for the tile, with cleats on the side, so that it cannot be shoved off by

(Turn To Page 6, Column 6)



Three Alleged Bank Bandits Are Nabbed

Recover \$22,745 In Illinois Loot

Springfield, Ill., March 31—(UP)—Three alleged bank bandits, one a 17-year-old youth, were held in Bond county jail at Greenville today following a seven-hour man hunt which saw a posse of 100 trap and capture the trio and recover \$22,745 in cash and other loot.

The trio are Carl Pauls, 26, Detroit, Mich.; Stanley B. Stringer, 31, Hammond, Ind.; and Raymond Boos, Indianapolis, Ind. Federal bureau of investigation authorities said the trio confessed to the robbery yesterday of the Greenville First National bank.

A posse consisting of 50 state police, FBI agents, deputies from bond and Montgomery counties and local law enforcement agents captured two of the trio on a farm southwest of Litchfield. The third member was captured close by. All surrendered without a fight.

State police chief Harry Curtis said Pauls and Stringer were trapped in a cornfield. Boos, they said, was captured on the Henry Stamer farm nearby. The youth, they said, had the bank plunder on him and a 30-30 rifle.

FBI agents said they were investigating other possible crimes by the three including a bank robbery in Indiana and burglary of a Lebanon, Mo., jewelry store. They said they found \$1,500 worth of watches and typewriters in the bandits' abandoned car.

The watches, they said, were stolen from the Reed jewelry store in Lebanon. They said they planned to question the trio at Greenville today. Meanwhile U. S. Atty Howard L. Doyle announced he had authorized issuance of warrants charging national bank robbery.

Police said the three entered the Greenville bank yesterday, herded 25 bank customers into the rear of the building, waited 20 minutes for a time clock to open the bank vault, scooped up the cash and backed out of the building.

As the bandits left the bank they were seen by two boys, Billy Pierce and Eugene Kneifman, who stared in open mouth wonderment. One of the bandits stopped to jam a handful of money into their hands with the warning "to keep your mouths

(Turn To Page 3, Column 8)

Miss Martha Macy Ill In Washington

Word was received here this morning that Miss Martha Macy, yeoman 2/c, stationed at Navy headquarters in Washington the past 18 months, became ill Wednesday of this week while at work and is a patient at the Naval Dispensary there. Indications are that she will require a several weeks rest and will probably be transferred to Bethesda hospital. The physician in charge reported her condition favorable yesterday.

Church Services To Mark Easter Sunday

Favorable Weather Predicted Sunday

Emerging from the solemnity and sorrow attendant with Good Friday, the church-going population of the community looked forward to the spiritual happiness given in the joyful message of the Angel, "He is Risen," as they planned to attend the Easter services Sunday celebrating the crucified Redeemer's resurrection from the tomb.

Church services will predominate in the observance of Easter Sunday. Services will be held from early morning until evening and large congregations are expected to the various worship hours.

To augment the joyful individuals, the weather forecast is partly cloudy but void of showers. Fulfillment of this prediction will bring out the customary Easter fashion parade, which this year will be more general and sparkingly displayed than usual.

(Easter shopping has been heavy in this city and nearby cities, especially.)

(Turn To Page 6, Column 4)

Cpl. Robert Schweizer Is Freed By Russians

Cpl. Robert W. Schweizer, 27, of Fort Wayne, has been liberated by the Russians from German prison camp Stalag III-C, after seven months of internment. The word was received from the U. S. adjutant general through the war board at Moscow.

Cpl. Schweizer's wife, the former Harriett Linn, is a native at Decatur. Cpl. Schweizer was a rigger with a paratroop unit.

(Turn To Page 3, Column 7)

Great Striking Force Of 3,000 Allied Tanks 170 Miles From Berlin

Japs' Philippines Defenses Crumbling

Two More Islands Invaded By Yanks

Manila, Mar. 31—(UP)—Japanese defenses throughout the central Philippines were collapsing today before American forces which seized control of all but one of the major islands in the Archipelago.

The mounting campaign sent U. S. assault troops swarming over two more islands—Negros, the fourth largest island in the Philippines, and Little Caballo in Manila Bay.

They were the 31st and 32nd islands in the Philippines invaded by Gen. Douglas MacArthur's American forces. Bohol, between Cebu and Leyte, was the only large island still held by the Japanese.

Seasoned veterans of Maj. Gen. Rapp Brush's 40th division landed on the west coast of Negros Thursday after a 10-mile amphibious hop from Guimaras island and in nine hours had established a solid 25-mile long beachhead.

The landing near Bago, just across from Guimaras, was made without opposition although some scattered resistance was met as the troops moved inland under the support of 13th air force planes and naval units commanded by Rear Admiral Arthur Struble.

After securing the landing beach, the troops split into three forces which fanned out along the island's smooth coastal plain. The northern contingent spearheaded 14 miles to the outskirts of Bacolod, capital of the island, and overran the city's airfield with its two air strips, 3,600 and 4,600 feet long.

Easter Bus Traffic Stopped By Strike

Indianapolis, Mar. 31—(UP)—Easter bus traffic was stopped between seven Indiana cities and intermediate points today by a strike of 85 Indiana Railroad line drivers.

Service on Indiana Railroad's routes between Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, Kokomo, Peru, Anderson, Muncie and points on the way, was affected.

Ask Explanation Of Secret Agreements

Roosevelt Advisers Urge Explanations

Washington, Mar. 31—(UP)—President Roosevelt's closest advisers on foreign policy were urging him today to explain NOW any other secret agreements made at the big three meeting.

They were alarmed at the reaction to the secret agreement on world assembly votes made at Yalta and some were frankly describing it, and the policy of keeping it secret for 47 days, as a "colossal blunder."

Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., who also was at Yalta, is expected to talk over the entire problem with Mr. Roosevelt this weekend. They will seek to prepare an explanation of the voting agreement, and will also discuss any other unrevealed decisions.

Stettinius' entire staff of public relations officials are searching meanwhile for a way to repair the damage to public opinion on the eve of the San Francisco conference

(Turn To Page 3, Column 7)

Russian Army Closing In On City Of Vienna

Reds Developing Drive To Capture Vienna From South

London, Mar. 31—(UP)—Red army columns swung north behind Vienna's outer eastern defenses today in a developing drive to take the Austrian capital from the south.

The tank forces were racing toward Vienna under a security blackout after turning the frontal defense line anchored on Lake Neusiedler with a push across the Austrian border at Koeszeg, 50 miles south of the capital.

Another column of Marshal Feodor I. Tolbukhin's - third Ukrainian army group, also moving under a security blackout, was less than 40 miles southeast of Vienna in a frontal advance toward the Lake Neusiedler line.

Marshal Rodion Y. Malinovsky's second Ukrainian army group, on Tolbukhin's northern flank, simultaneously struck out on a 100 mile front from Bratislava, capital of Germany's puppet state of Slovakia and key to the Bratislava gap to Vienna.

South of the Danube, the second army group punched to within 30 miles southeast of Bratislava and 44 miles southeast of Vienna with the capture of Tarno-Kret. Nagy Bajcs, 38 miles southeast of Bratislava, also fell to the Soviets.

Other second army group forces north of the Danube forced the Hron and Nitra rivers, tributaries of the Danube, on a 45-mile front and advanced to within 51 miles northeast of Bratislava.

(Turn To Page 6, Column 6)

Legion To Undertake Grave Registration

Legion Officials To Be Sent Overseas

Indianapolis, Ind., Mar. 31—(UP)—The American Legion will undertake an immediate registration of the 176,000 graves of World War II dead on all fighting fronts and a survey of 30,000 European graves of World War I servicemen.

National commander Edward N. Scheiberling, who announced the program yesterday, said that Mancel Talcott, Waukegan, Ill., chairman of the Legion's national grave registration committee, will have charge of the project.

Talcott said that officials and staff men will be sent overseas to inspect six American national cemeteries in France, Belgium and England.

"Particular attention will be given to graves in cemeteries in areas overrun and held by enemy forces for more than three years," he said. "A full report of this survey will be made public."

Talcott added that plans will be worked out with federal agencies to assure adequate registration and care of graves of World War II dead in 30 cemeteries already established and others planned in former and present Allied battle zones, including the South Pacific.

Scheiberling also announced the Legion is investigating charges that the G. I. bill of rights lacks "flexibility." The organiza-

(Turn To Page 3, Column 4)

Germans Reel Back In Wild Flight For Life As Allies Are Racing To Junction

Paris, Mar. 31—(UP)—The fall of Germany's industrial Ruhr basin and the Weser river stronghold of Kassel appeared imminent today as a great striking force of almost 3,000 American and British tanks crashed through the enemy's riddled defenses within 170 miles of Berlin.

Armored vanguards of the U. S. first army were racing northward from captured Paderborn over the last 40 miles separating them from Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's American and British forces on the Westphalian plain.

Montgomery's men were reported officially 50 miles or more east of the Rhine and going ahead so fast that a juncture with the first army appeared only a matter of hours.

Between the two converging forces, the remnants of the five German divisions were reeling back in a wild flight for life, raked from ground and air by Allied fire.

Ninety miles to the southeast, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's American third army was running wild over the approaches to Kassel, kingpin of the Weser river line where the Germans had planned their next major stand behind the Rhine.

Patton's troops were only 10 miles south of Kassel this morning and all accounts indicated the thoroughly beaten Germans had nothing left to defend the city. Kassel lies 165 miles southwest of Berlin and its fall would leave the Germans no defensible line short of the Elbe river at Magdeburg, 165 miles to the northeast and only 60 miles from the German capital.

A high-ranking German officer captured by the rough-riding third army told his captors glumly that the road to Berlin was wide open.

The officer, whose name was withheld, said no organized German resistance was left in the path of the Allied armies, and he was understood to have volunteered the information that Patton's men could spend Easter Sunday in Berlin if they wished.

London press dispatches quoted the officer as saying that the German army was deliberately letting the western allies through while fighting desperately to hold the Russians in the east.

Only on the U. S. seventh army front to the south were the Allies meeting the fanatical resistance that Nazi spokesmen had boasted would face them on every mile of the road to Berlin.

The seventh army captured the famous university city of Heidelberg with relative ease, but 30-odd miles to the north they ran into a ferocious battle along the Main river in and south of Aschaffenburg.

German regulars, Volksturm units and even teen-aged girls swarmed back into Aschaffenburg, where all resistance appeared to have ended days ago, and fought viciously from house to house against doughboys of the American 45th infantry division.

The motley German defense force also was fighting back hard from a miniature Siegfried line of steel and concrete bunkers east of the Main river just south of Schaffenburg.

Front dispatches said the Nazis had strong artillery and tank forces in action there, possibly to cover a German retreat into the southern mountains of Bavaria.

German women and schoolgirls were reported sniping at the Yanks inside Aschaffenburg with rifles and bazookas, and repeatedly hurled grenades down on the heads of the Americans. One 15-year-old was shot while trying to fire a bazooka at a column of passing American tanks.

(Turn To Page 6, Column 7)