

April 17, 2020

WWII This Week in History - The Public Opinion, Chambersburg, PA

WWII Weekly Front Pages

15 April - 21 April 1945

The Public Opinion, Chambersburg, PA

The "Soldier's Best Friend" was lost.

GOOD EVENING
This week's issue is extra big. It has 16 pages, including the special "Do You Know?" page.

PUBLIC OPINION
Franklin Repository

CHAMBERSBURG, PA., THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1945

PRICE FOUR CENTS

U. S. AND SOVIET FORCES DRIVE FOR JUNCTION

DEPT BEGINS SHIPMENTS TO PACIFIC PORTS
Direct Shipments Made To Reduce Time of Delivery to Coast
SAVING IN FREIGHT COST ALSO EFFECTED

ERNE PYLE AT HOME
ERNE PYLE, author of "The Matter of Life and Death," is shown with his family in a photograph on the front page.

POLISH ISSUE MAY REACH BIG THREE COUNCIL
Foreign Ministers Will Seek Solution Before Security Meeting
TRUMAN INDICATES HE'LL STAND FIRM

Nazis Put Up Fierce Resistance
Berlin Places One Red Spearhead 40 Miles From 3rd Army
316,930 PRISONERS CAPTURED IN RUHR

HOUSE LEADERS EDUCATED NOTED FORESEE PASSAGE OF TEACHER BILL
BY SMITH HEAD

ERNE PYLE DIED OF TEMPLE WOUND
Nazi Atrocities To Bring Warning

U. S. CASUALTIES FOR RETENTION PLACED AT 7,988 IN OKINAWA AREA

BOARD ABOLISHES QUARANTINE TAG
Placards No Longer Required But Infectious Diseases Still Quarantined

WHY MORE PLANNING
SOLDIER MISSING SINCE DEC. IS HELD PRISONER

Weather Forecast

THE RISK AND LOW A YEAR AGO

Do You Know?

Weather Forecast

THE RISK AND LOW A YEAR AGO

Do You Know?

WESTERN EUROPE

Climaxing a roaring drive from the Elbe River, General Patton's Third Army were within 80 miles of a junction with the Russians who were approaching the Spree River. On 18 April Third Army forces entered Czechoslovakia, splitting Germany in two. To the west, more than 300,000 German prisoners had been taken

from the Ruhr pocket, with prospects of 50,000 more before the day was out. Meanwhile the US Ninth Army had thrust to within 45 miles of Berlin, where they were engaged in violent tank battles. They had established a bridgehead across the Elbe and were beating back German counterattacks there.

Prime Minister Churchill indicated that the announcement of V-E Day would come jointly with the Soviets. He refused to say in the House of Commons when victory might be proclaimed. He also described the matter of German atrocities uncovered in captured prison and concentration camps as “one of urgency,” and announced that a letter received from General Eisenhower said new discoveries at Weimar far surpassed anything previously disclosed. The Buchenwald camp was located there.

ITALY

A significant British-American victory was announced in Italy as Bologna was captured. The city was a road hub blocking the mounting Allied offensive against the Germans in the north. Once again the Germans were on the move northward, their major Po Valley defensive position lost to them.

PACIFIC/ASIA

American troops pressed for quick conquest of Ie Jima Island, three miles west of Okinawa, so its three-runway airfield could be put into operation for stepped-up bombing of the Japanese homeland. Until several days previously, the Japanese had used Ie for persistent but unsuccessful aerial assaults on Okinawa invasion forces. On Okinawa, Americans had killed over 9,000 Japanese troops and took nearly 400 prisoners through midnight of the previous Friday. The last report was 2,695 American casualties, including 432 killed. Late in the week came a powerful US offensive, supported by terrific naval and artillery shelling, against the Japanese defenders of southern Okinawa in an effort to break a deadlock.

On 18 April famed columnist Ernie Pyle was shot dead by Japanese machine gun fire on Ie Jima which had been seized by not completely cleared of enemy troops. He was killed instantly while observing the advance of 10th Army troops who had invaded the island on Monday. In a statement President Truman said “No man in this war has so well told the story of the American fighting man as American fighting men wanted it told...He deserves the gratitude of all his countrymen.”

EASTERN FRONT

Adolf Hitler declared that the Russians, Germany’s “arch enemy” had launched their final, long-expected offensive on the eastern front, and exhorted his soldiers to beware of treacherous officers. Soviet armies had set a massive onslaught in motion along a front of more than 100 miles. A Nazi broadcast said that there were 2.5 million Russian troops on the drive to Berlin, supported by 2,500 field guns and 1,600 mortars which in 24 hours had fired a half million rounds. At the start of the week, the Russians were reported breaking through German defenses and smashing to within 25 miles of Berlin. Late in the week German central reserves were thrown into the “murderous battle at the gates of Berlin,” as Russian spearheads were reported threatening strongholds from four to seventeen miles northeast and east of the smoking capital.

Relations among the Big Three were returning to a basis of firm cooperation. They had dipped sharply less than two months after Yalta. Diplomats were hopeful that Stalin’s cooperative attitude toward Truman would mean a break in the two-year-old Polish dispute which was coming to a head when FDR died.

HOME FRONT

One day after the burial of FDR, Harry Truman made his first address to a joint session of Congress. He promised that the grand strategy of the war would remain “unchanged and unhampered” by his accession to the

presidency. He declared that this nation, along with its allies, must shoulder the “grave responsibility” of making secure future peace. He also reaffirmed the United Nations’ unconditional surrender policy.

President Truman was being urged to delay a meeting with the heads of major Allied states until the San Francisco conference had acted on a world peace-keeping organization. It was felt that his meeting could lead to the important work being done in the San Francisco meeting taking a back seat.

Food rationing would continue beyond V-E Day. War Ration Book Five was already being prepared. It was expected to be good for two years; meat, dairy products, canned fruits and vegetables and sugar would remain scarce after Germany’s defeat.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Chambersburg Public Opinion)