

June 5, 2020

This Week in History, 75 Years Ago, Mount Carmel, PA

WWII Weekly Front Pages

3 June - 9 June 1945

The Item, Mount Carmel, PA

The first anniversary of D-Day.



PACIFIC

A Japanese spokesman said that the present attacks on the US mainland with pilotless balloons were only the forerunner of larger-scale raids with “death-defying Japanese airmen manning the balloons.” The spokesman complained that the US was not up front about the damage that was being caused, but surmised that the attacks were “creating havoc.”

Tenth Army forces on Okinawa captured most of Naha airfield, drove to within four miles of the southern tip of the island and chopped the last 15,000-odd enemy troops into helpless pockets. Marines of the Fourth Division had sealed the enemy’s fate by way of an amphibious landing on Oruku Peninsula, where the Japanese were expected to make their final stand. Marine and Army troops – four American divisions – were moving in under

clearing skies for a final mopping-up, and fresh landings took place at the end of the week to outflank the last Japanese defense line.

Early in the week B-29 Superfortresses bombed the city of Kobe from end to end, blazing a ten mile trail of destruction through the city with 3,300 tons of fire bombs. On 7 June a 600-plane fleet of Superforts and fighters smashed mile after mile of war plants with 2,500 tons of fire and demolition bombs in Osaka, Japan's largest industrial center, and on 8 June 200 or more American carrier-based planes raided suicide plane bases on the southern home island of Kyushu. The Japanese government announced at the end of the week that the Diet would hand over all rights and powers for the present emergency and more than 5 million Japanese had been made homeless by B-29 raids since May.

American troops seized control of Davao Gulf in the Philippines with new landings on southern Mindanao. This sealed off a means of escape for Japanese forces still on the island. US destroyers supported the landings. Meanwhile, Japanese troops in northern Luzon were being pursued northward by twin drives.

EUROPE

A high level Russian source reported that Hitler's body had been found and identified with fair certainty. The body, smoke-blackened and charred, was one of four discovered in the ruins of an underground fortress beneath the new Reichschancellery after the fall of Berlin.

HOME FRONT

A specially-built Douglas C-54 plane would now be used by President Truman as his "Flying White House." The 4 June edition of The Item carried a photo of the plane which showed the crew and the interior and exterior, the latter adorned with the flags of the 44 nations over which it had flown.

The Solid Fuels Administrator warned that there would be a coal shortage next winter. The consumer stockpile of coal was at its lowest since 1941. He urged consumers to store coal whenever it was available that summer, to install more insulation, and to clean and repair heating equipment.

Inexpensive woolen suits, coats and dresses were promised by the Office of Price Administration for the late fall. Effective 9 June mills were required to return their average prices to 1943 levels.

More meat for the American home was expected as the Office of Price Administration slashed hotel and restaurant rations for July and August. The cut tied in with other government moves to relieve the acute shortage of civilian meat supplies and, incidentally, halt growing criticism of government food handling.

Faced with the greatest transportation crisis in the country's history, the government put in a rush order for construction of more than 2,000 troop-carrying railroad cars and told civilians without important business to stay off trains for the next ten months. Meanwhile, preparations were being made to take over 2,000 Pullman sleepers – half the total – as well as an undisclosed number of coaches for the mass movement of troops from the east coast to Pacific ports.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Mount Carmel Item)