

PM

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Soviets Win Third of Berlin, Reach Elbe; U.S.-Russian Junction to to Be Solid Link-Up Red Armies Form Pincers on Nazi Capital

By KEN CLARK

The Red Army is reported fighting in the Wilhelmstrasse and on Unter den Linden, exploding the heart of Nazidom, while 50 miles to the south at Muhlberg (*see map ➤*) it has reached the Elbe and is within a shout of junction with the Americans at Wurzen.

The armies of Zhukov on the Berlin front and Konev on the Dresden front in an offensive as sharp and massive as any in history have seized Germany's waist in an iron embrace. They are shaking the teeth out of her.

It is almost certain that Konev's advance motorized Cossacks have by now encountered the advance patrols of Hodges' 1st American Army. On the map it can be seen that the Russians who took Muhlberg on the Elbe are less than 20 miles from the 1st astride the Mulde at Wurzen. At Falkenberg the Russians are 26 miles from the 1st Army men fighting in the streets of Eilenburg.

Some 40 miles still separate Simpson's 9th U. S. Army from Konev's north-reaching spearheads which have raced below Berlin to reach its southern suburbs and, according to unconfirmed reports, already have Potsdam.

Annihilation

Berlin itself is under close and shattering attack, in process of disintegration as the pounding legions of the 1st White Russian and 1st Ukrainian armies sweep in accustomed figure around its outskirts, at the same time driving dozens of tank and storm troop javelins toward its heart, the Alexanderplatz and the Potsdam station.

The battle of Berlin is as confused by rumor as it is in its street fighting. For example, Russian tanks are reported as rumbling beneath the lime trees on Unter den Linden, but there is no confirmation of Soviet penetration to this famous boulevard. The French news agency, quotes Radio Luxembourg as saying the Red Army has completely surrounded the German capital.

Red Armies Hard Facts

This much is definite and official in Stalin's orders of the day:

The Red Army has penetrated the city proper to a point four miles northwest of its center, and drawn a siege arc within its limits to the north and east about nine miles distant from its center.

¶ The Red Army has flanked the city to the north by the capture of Oranienburg, site of the infamous concentration camp, and an advance to the Havel River.

¶ It has penetrated the outskirts on the southwest. (Radio Luxembourg's report of capture of Potsdam, ancient seat of German imperialism, is unconfirmed.)

¶ Altogether the Soviets hold 21 of Berlin's metropolitan districts—116 square miles—one-third of its area.

Stalin's orders of the day reported two tremendous blows since the beginning of the Berlin drive a week ago. Zhukov has taken Frankfurt-on-the-Oder and advanced anywhere from 37 to 62 miles. Konev, to the south, moved massively forward on a 105-mile front for from 50 to 100 miles, his northern wing smashing into Berlin on a front of 25 miles, his southern battering to within 10 miles of Dresden.

To the north Rokossovsky's 2d White Russians, according to the Germans, have crossed the Oder below Stettin.

Radio Berlin, its transmitters moved outside the immediate battle zone, reports that the main line in the battle for the capital goes right through the city. It says Hitler has taken personal command and a Hitler Free Corps, including women, has been formed. It says Hitler has thrown into the struggle, "all the military power available in Germany," that German troops are being rushed from the west front to join with office workers, Volkssturm, Hitler Youth commandos and the garrison in desperate defense.

Agency reports from Moscow are full of confidence mixed with a feeling of triumph. They describe how Russian commanders are now directing operations from the quiet of deep air raid shelters, dug for far different purposes by the Berliners. The Red Army is using a new type of heavy artillery, firing shells up to one ton in weight. These missiles are thrown from monster guns mounted on caterpillars and their effect is to reduce districts "to dust."

The Germans are experiencing a new kind of air attack—Soviet midget planes flying at roof-top level, depositing their loads with such accuracy they can pinpoint buildings surrounded by the Soviet assault troops.

Flags of two new kinds are flying in the city—white flags displayed by the panic-stricken populace, and the first Soviet flags which, Reuter says, are hoisted over what tall buildings are left within the captured districts. Three Soviet guards sergeants carried a blood-soaked banner 2000 miles from Stalingrad to Berlin. *Pravda* says the

Red Armies

soldiers kneeled and kissed the flag and then raised it over a ruined building.

Reports from Stockholm quote one of the last air passengers out of the doomed city, as saying Berlin is in a state of partial anarchy. According to the United Press, he said civilians were hunting down Gestapo agents. BBC says German soldiers are being fired on by civilians from houses, that thousands of terrified citizens attempting to flee, threw wounded soldiers from trains and trampled them on the platforms, that the police are making no attempt to restore order.

Radio Stockholm reports that in the district of Neukölln (southeast of the center of the city) slave workers who staged a revolt coincidentally with the Russian attack, have seized control.

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