FORECAST

Rain and somewhat colder today.
Yesterday's Temperatures:
High, 67—Low, 52.

Wilmington Morning Star

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First Army Shells Cologne, 11 Miles Away; Marines Use Iwo Airfield; Gain 400 Yards; Berlin Is Pounded By 2,000 American Planes

Vital Height Is Seized By Leathernecks

Japs Using Every Type Of Weapon To Stem American Drive

U. S. PACIFIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS, Guam, Tuesday, Feb. 27.—(AP)—Iwo Jima's captured southern airfield was put to American use for the first time Monday while doughty U. S. Marines advancing up to 400 yards captured an important hill overlooking most of the remaining Japanese positions.

Adm. Chester W. Nimitz reported today that two-seater Marine observation planes were using Motoyama No. 1 while Third Marine Division elements won most of the second airfield, Motoyama No. 2, in the center of the bitterly-contested island.

Use of Motoyama Airfield No. 1 indicated that fighters soon may be lying off that major airdrome, 750 miles from Tokyo.

Third Division Marines captured Hill 382, east of the central airfield. Militarily, the hill is as great a prize as captured Mt. Suribachi. From it artillery observers will be able to direct murderous fire on Japanese positions.

Opposition to the accelerated American push increased throughout the day. The deeply-entrenched enemy threw a heavy rain of artillery shells and rockets at the advancing Yanks in the eighth day of this fiercest fight of the Pacific war.

All but the northeast tip of Motoyama airfield No. 2, a two-strip fighter field, was in American hands.

The runways on Motoyama No 1 were being rushed into condition to accommodate American fighters and bombers.

Massed Japanese infantrymen, using every type of defense, threw against the advancing Marines probably the thickest hail of rifle and machinegun fire of the Iwo campaign.

Artillery fire and blasts of the huge enemy rockets were heavy, but the high ground of the central plateau finally was won and held by the Third Marines.

The Fourth Marine Division captured a commanding hill near the east coast.

Nimitz said mopping up was progressing on southern Iwo, and "little enemy fire fell on the interior of our beachhead during the day."

Admiral Nimitz made no further mention of the Fifth Fleet carrier plane strike against the Tokyo area starting Sunday. It was possible the task force still was deep in enemy waters.

Mopping up continued south of captured Mt. Suribachi on the southern end of Iwo.

By 6 p.m. yesterday, 3,568 Japanese dead had been counted. Nine enemy prisoners were taken. This was the first mention of prisoners.

Meanwhile, Marine observation planes landed on the southern Iwo airstrip, captured Tuesday. These were the first American aircraft to land on the strategic island only 750 miles south of Tokyo.

The Japanese capital and the entire homeland island of Honshu will be well within range of Yank fighters and bombers flying from Iwo.

Supplies and equipment continued to pour ashore on Iwo's littered beaches. Road conditions were improved.

Liberators bombed Chichi Jima in the Bonin Islands, immediately to the north, hitting oil storage areas and shipping. The Palaus, Yap and Pagan were other targets.

The central airfield on Iwo (Motoyama No. 2) is the first fighter 'drome within reach of Tokyo to be seized in the Pacific war.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Marine Divisions launched an attack Sunday to complete the capture of the field, striking after a bombardment of enemy positions by American warships and artillery.

Supported by naval and land-based aircraft, the Leathernecks overran the east-west runway and about two-thirds of the north-south strip.

Enemy resistance was stiff, as it was all last week in the fight for this field. Heavy fighting raged throughout the day Adm. Nimitz said in a communique early Monday (Sunday night, U. S. time).

U. S. Takes Verde Isle Off Luzon, Mindoro

Latest Invasion Takes Enemy By Surprise and Secures Western End of Shipping Route from Manila to the United States

MANILA, Tuesday, Feb. 27.—(AP) Veteran 24th Division troops, taking the Japanese completely by surprise, invaded small Verde island between Luzon and Mindoro Sunday to secure the western end of the vital shipping route through the Philippines from the United States to Manila.

The Eighth Army Yanks "went ashore with practically no loss," Gen. Douglas MacArthur said in his communique today.

He termed Verde, which lies midway in the narrow Verde island passage, "the key to the control of the main navigational route through the central Philippines."

With the battle for Manila ended, MacArthur announced that 3,056 Japanese dead had been counted on Corregidor fortress, besides the sealed-off enemy troops who have been blowing themselves up by touching off underground ammunition stores.

Far-ranging American bombers hit Formosa and north Borneo in their relentless campaign against enemy airdromes and shipping.

In the Marakina watershed reservation, First Cavalry and Sixth Division troops driving southeast of Manila easily repulsed three Japanese counterattacks as they encountered "increasing enemy resistance."

Northwest of Manila, 40th Division troops which earlier in the campaign captured Clark air center, went after enemy groups in caves and ravines of the Zambales mountains.

Northeast of Manila across the central Luzon plain, Yanks of the 25th Division, moving toward the Cagayan valley, captured Lumboy on the Balete Pass road. They also took Luna, within three miles of Carranglan. The latter is on a road forking east off the Balete Pass route.

The 32nd and 33rd Division, operating extensively in the surrounding mountains, raided enemy camp areas along Balete road.

Philippines Are Returned To People By MacArthur

MANILA, Tuesday, Feb., 27.—(AP)—Gen. Douglas MacArthur, standing on the steps of war-scarred Malacanan Palace today turned the civil government for liberated areas of the Philippines over to their president, Sergio Osmena(in a ceremony before wildly cheering Filipinos.

MacArthur, after bitterly denouncing the Japanese for wrecking Manila's churches, monuments and cultural centers, lifted military rule from the freed sectors and said the Commonwealth is "at liberty to pursue its destiny in the family of free nations."

Men who fought with him at Corregidor and Bataan clustered around him and Filipino soldiers formed a guard of honor.

Osmena in replying, spoke of MacArthur's military operations as a "crusade," urged all Filipinos to submerge political differences in quickly reviving their commonwealth and expressed the hope that the United States can accord full freedom to the Archipelago this year.

The colorful ceremony, broadcast to the United States and concluded by the playing of the Star Spangled Banner, took place in a fire and bomb ravaged city where even yet a few Japanese groups

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WPB OFFERS PLAN TO SAVE WORKERS

Move Would Keep Some In 18-29 Age Group From Draft

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—(U.P.)—The War Production Board today outlined a program to save the most essential young men in war industries from being drafted.

War industries will submit lists of their occupationally - deferred men in the 18-29 age group. Then, WPB will decide which ones are so vital that they should be deferred. The rest will be up to local draft boards.

The idea is to prevent the drafting of what WPB called the "vital hard core" of war workers. Under the program, WPB hopes to get deferments for 200,000 of the 790,000 wokers 18 through 29 who now are classified 2-A and 2-B.

WPB will weigh the value of workers only in industries for which it is the manpower claimant agency. Such industries include makers of steel, aluminum, tires and components for important munitions. WPB is one of several draftable men through 29 for deferments.

The program was announced two days after Selective Service ordered local draft boards to start inducting a large number of the 1,500,000 deferred men in the 30-33 age group. Hereafter, these men will be deferred only if they are "necessary to" as well as "regularly engaged in" essential work. Previously, the test was whether a man was regularly engaged in an essential activity.

To qualify for certification for a deferment, an employe must:

1. — Be doing work included within the list of essential activities set forth by the War Manpower Commission.

2—Be irreplaceable from within the plant or by recruiting from without.

3.—Not be considered replaceable by a recruit or transferee who can qualify to perform his work by three months of intensive training.

4.—Not be engaged in planning, research, development or production for postwar purposes.

In other moves to alleviate the manpower shortages, the Kilgore manpower bill was exposed to its first day of Senate debate today and before the oratory ended, it was both praised as essential to

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Largest Raid In Daylight; RAF Attacks

Railway Stations Blasted; Opposition Termed Very Light

LONDON, Tuesday, Feb. 27—(AP)—Refugee-choked Berlin was the target yesterday for the greatest daylight raid ever made on any city, with nearly 2,000 American heavy bombers and fighters dropping 3,000 tons of explosives, and last night British Mosquito bombers followed up with two-ton blockbusters.

Three of Berlin's downtown railway stations were the primary objectives in the great American raid, in which 16 bombers and seven fighters were lost.

Crews of the RAF Mosquitos said huge fires still were burning in the city when they swept across.

The mighty American armada smashed at Berlin without interference from a single enemy plane. Flak was described as only moderate.

"I never thought I would see the day when we could attack Berlin with so little trouble," commented Capt. Joy Smith of Weeping Water, Neb., pilot of a Liberator.

Maj. Eugene Roverson, Temple, Texas, group air commander, said "it was one of the easiest missions I've flown. The Germans put up no fight and we just breezed over and dropped our bombs. It was as simple as that."

Col. Anthony Mustoe of Bellevue, Pa., who led the first division of bombers spearheading the assault, said "we met some flak, but it was nothing compared to the previous attack (February 3) on the capital. We didn't see an enemy fighter all day."

Mosquitos also bombed Nuenberg during the night.

The German "Achtung" air raid warning service also tracked other formations of bombers over western Germany early in the night and radio stations at Hamburg, Stuttgart and Frankfurt-on-the-main suspended broadcasting. The long-wave Deutschlandsender station which supplies news to most German cities also blacked out.

More than 1,250 Flying Fortresses and Liberators escorted by 700 fighters streamed in a straight line, which frantic German air raid warnings said stretched for 150 miles across northern Germany and made a bee-line for the Reich capital whose population has per-

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County Commission Backs Campbell For U. S. Bench

The Board of New Hanover County Commissioners opened its session yesterday afternoon by endorsing City Attorney W. B. Campbell as candidate for appointment to the Eastern North Carolina Federal District judgeship to be vacated by the resignation of Judge Isaac M. Meekins.

In a telegram prepared for immediate dispatch to U. S. Attorney General Francis Biddle and to North Carolina Senators Josiah Bailey and Clyde R. Hoey, Mr. Campbell, nominated for the Federal bench by the local bar association February 20, was described as "eminently fitted for the said position by reason of his legal learning and judicial temperament" and "a man of the highest character and standing in the community."

Asked by Rep. J. Q. Legrand for clarification of their stand on the abatement of back taxes on the new American Legion home at Fourth and Dock streets, the Board passed a motion combining refusal to endorse tax-forgiveness with a request for legislative authority to make a contribution to the Legion from County funds.

Explaining the group's opinion, Commissioner Louis J. Coleman said, "I would do anything in my power for the American Legion, but abatement of taxes lies outside our authority." Chairman Addison Hewlett, Sr., asking insertion of donation-authority into the motion, said the County's gift to the Legion, if approved, would be made on a "basis of the service they render to returning veterans."

The Board approved the appointment by County Solicitor James C. King of Cicero P. Yow as assistant solicitor, and themselves reappointed Mrs. Tom Gause as their representative on the New Hanover Welfare Board. This was preceded by receipt of notice from the State Welfare Board that it had selected R. B. Roebuck as its member. Mrs. Gause and Mr. Roebuck will decide on the third member.

A notice from the State Highway and Public Works Commission that the 200 block of Park avenue, in the Oleander area, had been approved as a neighborhood road and would be machined probably within the week. In the same letter the Commission described Brandon Road, in Princess Place, as not being part of their system and hence not subject to state improvement. The Board framed a reply requesting that the classification of the street be changed to permit its being worked by State employes.

Adjustments were outlined in answer to a number of tax-assessment complaints and juries were chosen for a civil session of State Superior Court, scheduled for March 12 and a criminal session scheduled for March 19.

Marines Hoist Flag Atop Volcano on Iwo Jima

U. S. Marines of the 28th Regiment, Fifth Division, hoist the American flag atop Suribachi volcano on Iwo Jima island after battling the Japs to the crest of the extinct crater. (AP Wirephoto).

Sees Iwo Landings

Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal, his eyes glued to the binoculars, watches Marine assault troops hit the beach at Iwo Jima. Marine Corps photo.

U. S. PRESENTS ECONOMIC PLAN

Delegation Confident Of Support On Hemisphere Stability Move

MEXICO CITY, Feb. 26.— (AP) — The United tates laid before the Inter-American Conference today a broad economic and social program aimed at promoting free trade and private enterprise in the Americas.

The U. S. delegation expressed confidence that support will be forthcoming quickly from the other 18 nations represented here.

At the same time, Ecuador prepared to introduce a resolution which would enable Argentina to adhere to all the acts of the conference in the event the Argentine problem remains unsolved when the session ends.

(In Buenos Aires, Col. Juan Peron, vice president of Arguentina, declared today he desired full restoration of cordial relations with the United States and Russia but said the possibility was unlikely that his country would find tottering Germany's behavior sufficient cause to declare war against the Naizs.)

The core of the economic program came in a resolution entitled "An Economic Charter For The Americas" which was described authoritatively as a fundamental expression of United States foreign policy throughout the world.

Tied to the economic charter were several specific resolutions

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Foe Announces New Battle Along Oder, Neisse Fronts

LONDON, Tuesday, Feb. 27.—(AP)—German broadcasts said last night that heavy battles had erupted on a 100-mile front along the Oder and Neisse rivers facing Berlin and Dresden and declared that Red Army flanking forces to the north had speared to within 23 miles of Stettin, Pomeranian capital and Baltic port at the mouth of the Oder.

Moscow did not confirm the Nazi Transocean agency's report of spreading tank and infantry actions on the main front—possibly a prelude to an all-out Soviet offensive by upwards of 1,000,000 Russians veterans in the crack First Russian and First Ukraine Armies.

Transocean said the First Ukraine Army now had reached the Neisse "everywhere" along a 60-mile front south of the Oder confluence, 50 miles southeast of Berlin, and that German and Russian armored forces were locked in a "Merry-go-round of death" as the Soviets attempted to force the river.

A brief Soviet communique, announcing capture of five localities in East Prussia during slow one-mile gains, and the seizure of 15 more blocks in besieged Breslau, did not mention any fighting on the main front inside Germany. Dispatches from the Soviet capital, however, told of heavy reconnaissance and the usual activities preceding a major offensive.

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COMMONS MAY GET BIG THREE FACTS

Churchill Expected To Divulge Results In Confidence Debate

LONDON, Feb. 26.—(U.P.)—Prime Minister Winston Churchill, opening a three day debate in Commons tomorrow, is expected to give the world the first full account of the Big Three Crimea conference by one of the principals.

The debate will be based on Churchill's motion: "That this house approves the declaration of joint policy agreed to by the three powers at the Crimea Conference and in particular welcomes their determination to maintain unity of action not only in achieving the final defeat of the common enemy but thereafter in peace as in war."

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Lewis Hints Of New Strike By United Mine Labor

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26. — (AP) — John L. Lewis opened his 1945 campaign for more pay for coal miners today by serving formal notice that a strike of nearly 400,000 miners may be just around the corner.

Lewis acted under the Smith-Connally Act, which requires 30 days' notice and a Government poll of workers prior to a strike The act, which Lewis denounced today as "a grotesque slave statue," was passed over Presidential veto in July, 1943, amid a wave of reaction to United Mine Workers strikes that year.

Hurling charges that government officials and operators are engaged in a "conspiracy" against the UMW, Lewis and his policy committee served the formal notice that a labor dispute exists and a strike may occur in 30 days.

A National Labor Relations Board spokesman said a poll on the question of striking probably would be held in 30 days. It would be the largest such poll the board has undertaken.

The UMW contract with the bituminous operators expires March 31, and negotiations between Lewis and the operators begin Thursday. A month later the anthracite contract will come up.

Lewis has not divulged what wage demands he will make, but it is generally believed he is considering something like a 25-cent general increase in the present basic rate of $1 an hour, plus other concessions.

Lewis voiced his criticism of the Smith-Connally Act in a letter to Secretary of Labor Perkins, to whom the strike notice was sent. He quoted President Roosevelt with whom he fell out after the steel strike of 1937, as saying the act would "provoke strikes in vital war plants which otherwise would not occur."

German Lines Seem Broken At Ruhr Basin

Von Rundstedt Seeks To Rally Disorganized Forces

PARIS, Tuesday, Feb. 27. —(AP)— The U. S. First Army drove within 10 1-2 miles of Cologne last night and pounded it with heavy guns while the Ninth Army on the north achieved gains which a field officer said appeared to be a breakthrough six miles from the Ruhr Basin.

With four Allied armies on the offensive on a 200-mile front, German Field Marshal von Rundstedt sought to rally his disorganized forces in an order of the day calling on them to defend the Ruhr's approaches to the last man, saying that otherwise all was lost.

Front dispatches said the U. S. Third Army appeared to have achieved a second breakthrough 60 miles south of the First Army, where in a seven-mile surge, tanks and troops broke across both the Pruem and Nims river and were swiftly enveloping the enemy's Eifel mountain stronghold of Bitburg.

The Canadian First Army resumed its offensive on the north flank and behind a mighty barrage fought three and a half miles southeastward within a dozen miles of the Ruhr and cracked into the bitterly-defended town of Calcar

Gen. Eisenhower's big push from the west was shifting into high gear. Four armies were threatening to overrun all Germany west of the Rhine and north of the Moselle river, an area 200 miles long and as much as 80 miles wide.

Flowing 30 miles into the Reich, the First Army drove two spearheads nearly 10 miles east of the Roer river, and a front dispatch said a battalion of self-propelled Long Toms had opened fire on Cologne.

The Ninth Army on the north toppled the key road and railway town of Erkelenz and sent a column on two miles northeast to within six miles of the western Ruhr foundries at Muenchen-Gladbach, and 18 miles from Duesseldorf.

Both armies were driving toward the Rhine and at four points were one to four miles from the Erft river, last natural line of defense before the Rhine, which is seven to 13 miles farther east.

The Ninth Army sped on beyond the last minefields, seized one division headquarters so swift was its rush, and was overrunning even anti-aircraft positions, rarely captured in battle.

Field reports from both armies said the German positions were deteriorating rapidly, American casualties were surprisingly light, and a Ninth Army officer declared: "There is no organized line in front of us and it appears we have a breakthrough."

The front now was 40 miles wide beyond the Roer. At least 38 German towns fell during the day.

The Americans were hurdling the anti-tank ditches, the zig-zag trenches of the type used in the First World War and other fortifications which civilians had dug hastily in hope of stopping the Americans before the Rhine.

Pilots spotted heavy road and rail movement speeding westward beyond the Rhine toward Cologne, which could be used for a stand like that at Stalingrad.

Fighting with rising speed through the fortified towns and industrial slag heaps, American troops and tanks were fanning out from Dueren and one column lanced beyond Drove, five miles southeast of Dueren, cutting in behind the tough Roer defenses south of that fallen citadel.

Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's Ninth Army had a Cologne-bound column nine miles north of that of the First Army, and these forces were only three miles from the Erft river after seizing Oberembt, seven miles northeast of Juelich.

At least four divisions had been identified in this northernmost push which not only was rolling toward the Rhine but was within artillery range of the western Ruhr's factories.

One force captured the commu-

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