

FRANCE

L.J. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1940.

Today, Hitler had a meeting with Laval, Vice-Premier of France. The Berlin announcement states that the conference occurred somewhere in France - Hitler going to the conquered country.

Somewhere near Paris - is the belief. The Nazi ~~comment~~ comment is that today's Hitler-Laval meeting was in the nature of a reply to the plea made yesterday by British Prime Minister Churchill - his appeal to France, asking ~~Britain~~ Britain's former ally not to do anything against Britain in the struggle.

46

The Hitler-Laval conference is the more significant, because it was preceded by reports that the French Vice-Premier had gone to confer with Nazi representatives. This was accompanied by the supposition that Laval's purpose was to negotiate a final peace settlement with Germany - peace to take the place of the present armistice. It was further said that, as part of such an agreement, France would join Germany in the war against Great Britain. Rumor went still further and told of peace proposals ~~with~~ that the Nazis were making. Germany to get Alsace-Lorraine, Italy to get Nice and part of Tunis. France to make some other colonial concessions - and retain a great part of the French Empire. These

terms, considered by the Axis powers as mild, would be accompanied by the entrance of France into the war on the German side. It was reported that the French Cabinet was split on the issue, Laval and other political figures in favor of accepting. ^{with} ~~but~~ Marshal Petain and General Weygand in determined opposition.

Such were the stories that accompanied the report that Laval had gone to negotiate with Nazi representatives. But tonight we find that it was Hitler himself with whom he conferred - today.

What do we hear from the side of the Petain government?

47
An absolute denial of any supposition that France is thinking about declaring war against Great Britain. The report is called - ludicrous. An official statement issued by the Vichy regime reads as follows:- "The French government denies in the most formal manner the report that Laval has gone to Paris to negotiate France's declaration of war against Britain. The report," it adds, "is simply ludicrous." Then this explanation is given:- "Laval has gone to Paris to discuss questions of a general nature concerning immediate Franco-German relations."

With this, we have a report that the negotiations concern a renewal of the armistice signed by France last June.

At today's Hitler-Laval conference, Nazi Foreign Minister Ribbentrop was in attendance. And reports are that he is going on to Spain. The ^{renewed}~~new~~ supposition is, that Spain may join the Axis powers in one way or another. And the echo resounds - Gibraltar.

BOMBING

18
An official dispatch from Berlin confirms the British bombing of Hamburg last night. The Germans tell of heavy damage, and emphasize destruction inflicted on civilian residential quarters. London tells of huge military damage done to the key German port, which was blasted by bombs ^{by} the R.A.F.

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The bombing of London goes on, with a ^{great} poignant story of an air raid shelter hit, the people buried alive inside. Hasty and heroic rescue work to dig open the living tomb and save as many as possible of those within.

The story tells of a face the newspaper men recognized, the face of a burly warden who was doing the hardest rescue work of all. He turned out to be Phil Scott, former British heavyweight champion. (That same Phil Scott who fought a good deal over here in the United States - without so much success. Well, he's now scoring victories of rescue work in the bombing of London.)

SEA FIGHT

The British and ~~the~~ Italians differ in their accounts of a naval clash in the Red Sea. The Italians announce a victory in an attack on a convoy with the sinking of merchant ships and damage inflicted on British war vessels.

49
London counters by telling of the destruction of an Italian destroyer. This craft is described as having battled in a forty minute fight with the British destroyer, the engagement ending when the Italian destroyer ran aground. The British destroyer thereupon torpedoed it. Italian coast guns opened fire and scored a hit, damaging the British destroyer enough to slow down its speed. The ~~damaged~~^{injured} craft nevertheless fired back and silenced two Italian batteries.

Along with this report, the London admiralty announces that two light ships were sunk. They were vessels the British had taken over from the French fleet. This presumably occurred in the same naval fight.

GREECE

Balkan affairs are in the foreground, and the LONDON TIMES comes out with an article urging Great Britain to seize Greek islands such as Crete. The LONDON TIMES frequently expresses the views of the British government, and so its declaration is importantt. The TIMES reasons that if the Nazis invade Greece, Great Britain would have to take the islands - but it might then be too late. So, do it now.

BECK

50

A dispatch from Bucharest states that Colonel Beck, the former Polish Foreign Minister, has been arrested near the frontier - trying to cross. Colonel Beck was an ace figure in the events that led to the outbreak of the present war. As Polish Foreign Minister, he rejected Hitler demands, and this was followed by invasion. With others of the Warsaw government he fled the Nazi conquest, escaped to Rumania - where he was interned. He has been there ever since. The Bucharest dispatch states that when arrested today, he was trying to cross a frontier line with, what is described as - a passport of a third power.

This official news follows ^{a claim} ~~a report~~ from Berlin that the British legation at Bucharest had urged Colonel Beck to escape, and had helped him in his attempt - giving him a large sum of money and a British diplomatic passport.

It's obvious, of course, that Nazi Germany might be glad to get hold of the statesman who was in command of Warsaw foreign policy when the German attack on Poland launched the present conflict. And it's equally obvious that the British might not want him to fall into German hands. He might be a useful pawn in the Nazi game.

51

FOLLOW BECK

As if the Balkans were not having trouble enough,
that area was today shaken by a violent earthquake -- one of the
worst on records for those parts. It centered in eastern
Rumania, ~~near~~ the oil ^{region,} ~~center,~~ Bucharest was in a panic,
as the earth trembled. Reports of damage and casualties are
fragmentary, as yet.

~~Many~~

A significant thing was said today at the ~~annual~~ ^{opening of} ~~the annual~~ New York HERALD-TRIBUNE Forum. Assistant Secretary of War

Patterson was the speaker, and his thesis was - that the paramount issue of the day is national defense. Expounding this, the Assistant Secretary of War made the remark:- "We are trying to do in two years what Germany did in seven."

That sounds like a large order - doing in two years what Germany did in seven. But why shouldn't we achieve it?

^{all of us} After all, let's [^] look at some cold bits of realism. The essential thing in defense, the Number One thing in modern war, is -

production, industrial production. Now, what nation has been the best in the world at production? ^{We all know} ~~What country in the world has~~

~~performed the famous prodigies of mass production.~~ You know as

^{that} ~~well as I do.~~ [^] Whatever may be said about our industrial system,

its principal strong point has been the manufacture of things,

a lot of them and in a big way. The American system of private

industry has ~~certainly~~ shown its ~~ex~~ weaknesses, but these have been

on the social side. Social problems have faced us. But our

industry has not failed on the side of production. In fact,

one of our troubles has been - over-production. It isn't that the automobile industry can't make enough cars, but its danger is more likely to be, too many cars.

Well, ⁱⁿ the last few years the upsurge of military power and the clash of war ^{has} put all emphasis on production. In this crisis, the vital thing is a nation's capacity for making mechanism in the largest possible way. And that precisely is an American strong point. We should be able to match our industrial capacity against the totalitarians, and out-do them easily.

After all, how did Nazi Germany create its shattering power?

Largely by adopting American production methods and applying them to war machinery. All of which would seem to indicate that right now it's the height of wisdom for us to do things the American way.

Keep the American way - and more of it. ~~So said all~~

~~the speakers at the opening~~

That was my thought as I attended the packed opening session of the Her. Tribune Forum at the Waldorf.

ARMY HOSTESSES

54

The army issued a call for volunteers today - but not for buck privates, corpulent colonels or anything like that. The army is enlisting - hostesses. Yep, they're going to have hostesses at the military training camps. They'll not be there to entertain the rookies, won't have the duty of charming them during weary hours after a hard day of drilling. The duty of the hostesses will be to direct social and recreational activities in which women may participate - like dances. They will look after the mixed company phases of conscription, and they'll help to take care of ~~the~~ women and children who visit the training camps. Also, they'll supervise the cafeterias for visitors.

The War Department announced today between twenty-five and fifty hostesses are needed. ^{There will} ~~they~~ be senior hostesses between ~~in~~ thirty and fifty years old. They'll get twenty-one hundred a year. And there'll be junior hostesses between twenty-five and forty-five - sixteen hundred and twenty a year. Ladies in the army.

Talking about ~~the~~ feminine phase of selective service, here's the story of a patriotic lady of Denver. On Registration

Day last Wednesday, there was no conscription call for women to register, no suggestion that the ladies were to be drafted as soldiers. Yet today it comes to light that one woman not only registered for military service - but did it ten times. Yes, patriotic, if not militaristic. It happened in Denver, where the ladies have been known to show that good old fighting spirit.

My wife is a Denver girl.
~~I know, because my wife is from Denver.~~

55
Anyway, Mrs. Mattie Iler registered ten times for military service. It was like this. Mrs. Iler was a member of a registration board. She asked questions and filled out forms. In doing so, she made a mistake - ~~she~~ made it ten times. She signed her name in the wrong place, signed it in the space where the man registering for service was supposed to sign. Legally, that made each card her own registration ~~card~~, and when it was all through, Mrs. Iler had signed up for conscription ten times. So that's the story of the patriotic lady of Denver.

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And here's ~~the story of~~ the ingenious young man of Manhattan. The National Foundation for American Youth, of which Gene Tunney is Chairman, staged a discussion with several expert

LEWIS

One leading political question is - what will John L. Lewis say, on Friday? The Labor Leader with the shaggy eyebrows stands in the role of an enigma tonight, ^{an} enigma that will be solved in the widest possible fashion three days hence. There's an insistent rumor that he's going to ~~give~~ come out for Willkie, and give the third term a blasting. But nothing is certain. All is mystery - a portentous mystery that will be unveiled with flourishes on Friday night. There's to be a broadcast - and the ^{broadest} ~~biggest~~ possible.

56
C.I.O. John Lewis is buying time on all the networks. His half hour on the air will cost ~~him~~ some sixty-five thousand dollars, and according to his present plan he will have a hook-up of over three hundred radio stations with a potential audience of from twenty-five to thirty million people. And that's just about the biggest radio audience possible. All to disclose the secret of whom the C.I.O. chieftain will back for the presidency.

It appears that Mayor LaGuardia will not have to face prosecution and stand trial for the clash he had in Detroit yesterday. Today, Benjamin Owens stated that some people have suggested that he should swear out a warrant for assault and battery against the New York Mayor. But he says he won't do it. "It's too small a matter to bother with," he explains. (He states that LaGuardia did not strike him, ~~but he~~ just shook him. Nothing so very violent, or cruel. In fact, it might seem that if there was any cruelty, Heckler ^{Ben}~~Benjamin~~ Owens was guilty of it himself. This may be inferred from his own story of the incident yesterday.

57
Mayor LaGuardia, campaigning for President Roosevelt, made a speech on the steps of the Detroit City Hall, a speech ardently defending a third term. Benjamin Owens, an employee of a bus company, was standing near. And he was impelled to ask a question. He explained his impulsion today by saying that not so long ago he lived in New York. And he adds:- ^{"I then} read all kinds of stories about LaGuardia calling Boss Flynn names when he was running for Mayor." Yes, those were the days - when LaGuardia, running for Mayor on the Fusion ticket, had the most unkind things to say

about Democratic political leader Flynn of the Bronx - who is now the Democratic National Chairman, ^{now} ~~he is the~~ director of the campaign in which LaGuardia is taking so large a part. Heckler Owens today continued his story with these words:- "I just wanted to find out for myself if he had really changed his attitude toward Flynn." That's what made him call out to LaGuardia - "Who sent you here, Boss Flynn?"

(The LaGuardia response was electrical. It is not for nothing that he is called the "Fiery Fiorello".) Heckler Owens today described the events in these words:- "LaGuardia just got ^{mad} ~~me~~ and jumped at me," he relates. "He grabbed the front of my shirt and almost pulled off my tie. Then he shook me, shouting - 'Take that back you, you!'"

Ringside accounts of the battle describe the two contestants as not unevenly matched in point of age. Heckler Owens is fifty-one. LaGuardia must be about the same. The heckler was ^{even,} ~~is~~ taller, but the Mayor was chunkier. Weight -- probably about ^{the} Biceps about even. LaGuardia chest measurements a little bigger. ~~XXXXX~~ ^{even,} Heckler Owens didn't put up much of a fight. In fact,

kept his hands in his pockets all through the shaking.

LaGuardia's version of the fracas given to newspaper men today, doesn't differ materially. Speaking of what the heckler said about Boss Flynn, the Mayor today uttered the following:- "He came up to me and said it. So I did - this." To illustrate the meaning of "this", LaGuardia seized a reporter by the lapels of his coat, and shook the daylights out of him - or something like that.

This political incident conveys a warning - and a lot of warnings are being conveyed in the presidential campaign. The wise injunction is this - when talking to LaGuardia, don't mention Flynn, don't mention the Democratic Chairman. For it seems to be like a red flag to a bull. And So Long Until Tomorrow.