

C.I. - Sunoco. Wed., Aug. 30, 1939.

46

There are just two men in these United States who have an accurate idea about what Adolf Hitler wrote to Chamberlain, just two men whose knowledge isn't confined to guesswork and rumor. They are the President and the Secretary of State. Secretary Hull today let it be known that the government of the United States has received accurate information about at least the general outline of Hitler's latest proposal. Unfortunately, for the curiosity of the rest of us, that information is ~~secret~~ and confidential. ~~So naturally~~ Washington is not telling. But the Secretary of State added that, ~~based upon this confidential and exclusive information,~~ the situation in Europe looks sometimes better and sometimes worse.

Since that is what Secretary Hull concludes from his ringside seat, what can the rest of us make out of ^{today's} ~~the~~ medley of contradictory facts?

For instance, it was said by a high London authority that Hitler had consented to accept the good offices of Britain in his dispute with Poland. To that one asks the question, "What high London authority?" Then again, we hear that the Fuehrer

was reported to have asked for a reply in twenty-four hours.

Reported by whom? It is said that Hitler demanded that the Polish government send an envoy to him by tomorrow, an envoy empowered to hand over Danzig and the Corridor ~~to the Reich.~~

47
~~The mystery is,~~ ^{But -} "Who said ^{it?"} ~~that?"~~

~~Then let's take a look at the news from Rome. It was stated that these interminable notes passing backwards and forwards between Hitler and Chamberlain, afforded the last chance of a peaceful settlement. When we come to inquire who made that statement, we find it was an Italian editor. To be sure, he's the editor supposed to utter with authority the views and attitude of Mussolini himself. But in the last analysis, when there's anything definite and decisive to be said, is Mussolini ever backwards in saying it himself?~~

There we have the closest approach to an analysis of the news from Europe; it is reported, "it is said," a high authority reveals, and "a prominent editor writes." As our sometimes over-quoted friend, Hamlet, has remarked, "Words, words, words," Horatio."

From Paris we do have one definite bit of news, a decree promulgated by Premier Daladier under the extraordinary powers voted

him by the French Parliament. Under this decree, all the railroads in France are placed under military authority.

Trains carrying troops, artillery and munitions of war have the right of way ^{over} ~~of~~ all others. (Trains carrying civilian passengers

or freight for any other than military purposes are suspended either entirely or in part. In other words, they move only when the officers of the army find it convenient to let them move.) ~~And even these trains which are allowed to start are~~

~~liable to be stopped at any point.~~ ^{And} The railroads are not to be held responsible for the arrival of either passengers or freight.

POLAND

18
(An official order of mobilization was proclaimed today in Poland.) An army of one million eight hundred thousand men had already been called to the colors, but in a more or less round-about fashion. The Polish government wanted to avoid using the word "mobilization", ^{which is} ~~always~~ considered an aggressive act. However, today the Polish cities and villages were placarded with big pink posters, with large black letters announcing, "The President of the Republic has ordered general mobilization." ^{It still} ~~However,~~ there seems to be a string even to this. It is officially explained that ^{it} ~~this~~ does not mean a real general mobilization. But under Polish law there's no other term for the summoning of so many troops to the colors. The order is described as merely a security measure.

In the streets of Warsaw both men and women were laboriously digging ditches. Some of them were being dug behind the official residence of the United States Ambassador, Anthony J. Drexel, Jr. Mrs. Biddle, looking through her windows, observed that several of the women diggers had blistered hands. She ordered beer for them, though ~~presumably not to wash their~~

hands in.

49

And the Polish government used the radio today to issue a warning to shipping in the Baltic. Specifically, to ships approaching the mouth of the Vistula. There is a danger point about three miles off the coast outside the Gulf of Danzig. Ship masters are cautioned to make use of Polish pilots from the Polish seaport of Gdynia. The inference is that the Poles have planted mines in those waters.

50

...the Polish frontier. The rest of them is that the commanders of the German army have been given the power to take over all authority in these frontier areas. They will rule as set by law but by decree. In other words, there is virtually martial law in these regions.

...but a spokesman for Dr. Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda, made a statement which seems to offset some military provisions. In spite of these provisions, the German Government is to be shown by the civil authorities to be a regime half civil and half martial.

MARTIAL LAW

Here's an interesting bit of news from Germany which has escaped general observation. It happens to be one of the few real bits of news today. Colonel-General Wilhelm von Brauchitsch, Commander-in-Chief of Hitler's armed forces, has started issuing proclamations. They were published in all parts of Germany where the armies of the Reich are already concentrated. That includes the Rhineland, where German troops ~~is under arms~~ facing ^{the} the French, also in Silesia, and Slovakia on the Polish frontier. The gist of them is that the commanders of the German Army have been given the power to take over all authority in those frontier areas. They will rule not by law but by decree. In other words, there is virtually martial law in those regions.

50

But a spokesman for Dr. Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda, made a statement which seems to offset those military proclamations. ~~In spite of those proclamations by the German Commander-in-Chief,~~ the Authority is to be shared by the civil authorities ~~of the soldiers~~. The idea of the Nazi civilian rulers is for a regime half civilian and half martial. ~~But the~~

~~proclamation of the Commander-in-Chief reads that the army
commanders are authorized to make laws and regulations of all
kinds, and to punish those who break those laws and regulations.
by court martial.~~
by court martial

Since everybody is busy making conjectures, let's have a shot at one ourselves. What will this do to the power of the Nazi Party of Germany if war breaks? That's a question that has been asked before. Those military proclamations are definite. And it's a known fact that many of the officers of the German army have no stomach for ~~taking~~ ^{by} interference ~~from~~ Nazi leaders. It is to be remembered that for the last two years of the war that started in Nineteen Fourteen, the power and authority of the Kaiser had virtually evaporated, and that the real ruler of the country was General Ludendorf.

SWITZERLAND

21

The federal assembly of Switzerland was summoned to an emergency meeting today at Berne. The object, of course, was to take measures for the protection of the republic. In peace-time the Swiss army has no commander-in-chief. So the Assembly elected a chief of staff, a sixty-five year old officer who *has been* ~~in peace-time is~~ commander of the First Army Corps. He was notified of his election in this message, sent to him by the President of the upper chamber, which read:- "We confide in you the protection of the country which we all love passionately and which we will never under any pretext surrender to an invader."

VATICAN

Pope Pius has recalled all those of his diplomats who have been on vacation. They have been ordered to return to their posts immediately to continue efforts for peace in the capitals of the world.

And for the first time in history, gas masks were distributed to the Swiss guards, the papal gendarmes and all other ~~attaches~~ ^{functionaries} of the Vatican. ~~The Pontiff had conferences with~~ ^{What an odd}

~~all foreign envoys in Rome.~~ ^{sight - those}
Michael Angelo uniforms of
the Swiss Guards - and gas masks.

TOKYO

52

Japan's new Prime Minister, General Abe, called the first meeting of his new Cabinet today. And that first meeting had to hear news unpleasant to Japanese ears. More fighting on the frontier between Manchukuo and Outer Mongolia. Soldiers of Nippon and of Soviet Russia have been ~~embattled~~^{ing there} for weeks. But General Abe and his new Cabinet learned that the latest outbreak of hostilities is on a larger scale. The interpretation is that the Hitler-Stalin alliance has released more Russian troops for fighting in the Far East.

CANADA

Repercussions in Canada from the European war scare:-

The Royal Canadian Navy has posted warnings to people living in Halifax, Nova Scotia, The Atlantic squadron of the Canadian Navy is going through battle practice for the next three days right off the mouth of Halifax Harbor. Therefore, Halifax citizens should not be alarmed.

Here's another from Toronto:- Employees of the Ottawa government who enlist are assured that they will not lose their jobs if they have to go to war. Neither their jobs nor their seniority, which is almost as important.

SHIPS

63

Uncle Sam's customs officials must have made a prodigiously complete job of inspecting those foreign liners in New York harbor. The examination was not complete until this afternoon. It was done with the utmost impartiality. The British AQUITANIA and the French NORMANDIE were searched as thoroughly as the German liner BREMEN. The vessels could have left this afternoon but they waited until this evening for a favorable tide. All other foreign vessels will be treated in the same manner by order of President Roosevelt himself.

KING

Just a few minutes ago the wires brought in a piece of news from Washington. (King Victor Emanuel of Italy replied to the appeal for peace sent to him by President Roosevelt. The Italian King thanked the President for his efforts and added the information that the Italian government is doing everything possible to bring about peace with justice.)

The new Ambassador from Great Britain had his first interview ~~xi~~ with President Roosevelt today. Lord Lothian presented his credentials at the White House, and there followed the usual exchange that has become an important part of diplomatic intercourse.

Said the President to his Lordship:- "The principal task of international statesmanship is to effect peaceful and constructive solutions of controversies between nations and thus obviate the folly of war which unhapily seems to overshadow the world today."

BYRD

There's one American project that no amount of war scares will be allowed to prevent; the United States government expedition to the Antarctic. Admiral Richard E. Byrd, declared today that preparations are going ahead without regard to events in any other part of the world. Byrd will sail by the end of October.

And here's one about the Admiral's trans-atlantic and Antarctic pilot -- Brent Balchen. He comes over from Norway to become technical advisor to our Air Line Feeder System, a new series of sky routes. He has been running an airline in Norway.

Commander Donald MacMillan arrived in Newfoundland today, returning on the Schooner Bowdoin from his latest expedition to the Arctic. He will reach his home port Boothbay, Maine, on September 10th.

STRIKE

It looks as if the United States is going to be up against another one of those strikes in which the employers ^{will find themselves in the middle of} ~~are the goats for~~ a fight between rival unions. A nationwide strike of actors ~~■~~ seems to be inevitable beginning next Monday. It'll tie up every theatre, that is, every theatre in which live actors appear, and every movie studio. It's a fight between the actors and the stagehands. Neither of them have any grievances against the producers. The actors ^{say} won't work with the stagehands and the stagehands ^{say} won't work with the actors, and there you are. ~~(It's a continuation of the row that was supposed to have been settled by the American Federation of Labor at Atlantic City settled but not settled.)~~

56
The latest this afternoon is that all the actors and actresses have been instructed to get together both in New York and Hollywood on Sunday night and vote whether or not they should strike. The tone of everything that was said today was emphatically in favor of striking. ~~However, the actual outcome depends upon that ~~the~~ ^{next} voting Sunday night.~~

MOVIE

The police of Hollywood started something new today. They made a talking motion picture of crime and propose to use it in the trial of the criminal. This is an innovation which is sure to be fought vigorously by lawyers. I remember when I was covering the trial of ~~Branco~~ Hauptmann at Flemington there was some talk of introducing a phonograph record. One of Hauptmann's lawyers objected vigorously, saying:- "I can't cross-examine a phonograph record."

And that typifies the attitude of the bar towards all similar modern mechanical inventions. To be sure, they might say the same about a typewritten documents or even a printed document. They might protest that they could not very well cross-examine a linotype machine.

The Hollywood police have a prisoner, a twenty year old youth, whom they accuse of a long string of crimes, including at least one murder. The cops claim that he confessed, that he wishes to plead guilty, and ^{that he himself} says he deserves whatever he ~~will~~ get. So today, the police captain got a complete film company unit, had the cameras and sound track set up on a campus at City College, where the murder is supposed to have

7
taken place. The young fellow accused of the murder ^{acted} ~~played~~ for
the camera and the microphones, ^{acted} the part ~~that~~ he is charged with
having ^{in the murder of} played with a young blonde Russian dancer, ~~who was murdered~~
on that same spot last February. ~~The young prisoner not only~~
^{He} acted the principal role ^{and} ~~but~~ served as his own director. A woman
newspaper reporter played the part of the murdered Russian dancer.
She walked before the camera, which was set up in front of the
shrubbery on the campus. As she did so, the prisoner crept up
behind her and slugged her over the head. Only, instead of a
club used in the actual murder, he hit this woman reporter with
a rolled-up newspaper.

And that's what will appear on the grizzly film and
sound track which will be shown to the grand jury of Los Angeles
County to get indictments against ^{him.} ~~this young prisoner~~