

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The Naval Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives today heard testimony by General Marshall, Chief of Staff of the Army. It was a secret session, and we don't know what the General said. Afterward, however, he talked to the newspapermen and made several most significant statements. He said that information available to the Army indicates that the Nazis are preparing to hurl a tremendous spring offensive. "Indications," declared the General, "are that they will launch an offensive on Britain this spring, probably April or May." He predicted the Germans would use all possible elements of surprise, with a tremendous initial blow through the air - to gain sky supremacy.

General Marshall
The Chief of Staff, *General Marshall* was asked whether the British could win the war without our complete aid. He replied with these two words - "extremely hazardous."

And now -- something sensational. It comes from an authoritative source in Washington. We are told that Nazi Germany right now has a sky fleet of some seventy thousand war planes. Eighteen ^{thousand} first line, eighteen thousand reserve. The rest training planes. This source of information also stated that the Nazis are ready to put into the air thirty divisions, each division consisting of twelve hundred planes. That means a total of thirty-six thousand. These - backed up by a reserve force of almost as many. And that Germany has enough gasoline - synthetic and otherwise, to operate that vast air force of thirty divisions. The story from Washington tells us that some time ago the Nazis had forty-two thousand trained fighting pilots. And that the number now is probably many more. As a factor helping to offset all this - the Nazis have probably not produced any new types of pursuit planes in the past three years. And they'll need fighting craft to equal the new types developed by the Royal Air Force.

Well, can Nazi Germany be defeated? Yes, said Thomas W. Lamont today. That notable banker of the House of Morgan stated that it's a myth to suppose that the German war power is invincible. He said - Britain can win, with our aid.

The testimony of the Secretary of the Treasury today was a cold affair of figures and finance. To the foreign relations committee of the Senate he gave a picture of the British situation in terms of money. He said that all the assets the British have in this country are pledged for purchases they have ordered during the coming year. British owned securities, gold and dollars, in this nation, amount to one billion and eight hundred million. Their orders for the coming year commit them to pay one billion and four hundred million. So they can't go on buying, cash on the line. "The British just haven't got the dollars, " said Secretary Morgenthau.

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He revealed that there's a chance for the British right now to order two thousand more planes. Machinery and equipment adapted to the construction of the kind the British want. Not the kind the American Armed forces want. But the British government cannot place this two thousand plane order, which could be filled. ^{Reason: -} No cash.

Senatorial questioners asked - what about Canada? Canadian assets in this country were not included in the list of British resources. Secretary Morgenthau said that London had left the Canadian

resources out for what the Secretary called - "Both political and financial reasons."

Senator Vandenberg spoke of South Africa. He quoted an article in the London Economist, which suggested that South African gold production was a reserve, and that this gold production totalled a billion dollars. The Secretary replied that the estimate of a billion dollars of South African gold did not correspond with *what* information the State Department has.

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What about Latin - America? Senator Vandenberg said it was estimated that Great Britain has four billion dollars of holdings in the Latin - American Republics. Could this not be used for what the Secretary called, "Practical collateral for further loans?" Secretary Morgenthau said yes, British securities in Latin - America could be used, but he wondered how much they would really be worth. He said that the four billion dollar figure represented - "face value." The true value of British securities in Latin - America, he thought, was probably a great deal less. The Secretary reiterated that he believed the figures presented by the British government were on the square. Senator Nye asked him whether the treasury department planned to check the London

- "Balance sheet." Secretary Morgenthau reminded the committee that he had had dealings with the British government during the past seven years, and he added, "I've never known them ~~to~~ willfully ^{to} make a mistake."

The questioning got around to the bedeviled subject of the war debts. The Secretary of the Treasury said he believed the British war debt would never be paid. The statement came about as follows;

"Are you prepared to write those debts off for keeps?, demanded Senator Vandenberg! *Then he added: -* "Anytime" Morgenthau replied. "I did so some time ago - mentally,"

He was asked if he considered Great Britain a good loan risk.

"I do, " he replied. Senator Nye asked him if he thought this in spite of American experience with the war loans of the previous conflict.

"I am not speaking and thinking in dollars," replied the Secretary.

"I am thinking in terms of giving them material aid they need in order to give us time - which we so desperately need to defend ourselves."

Secretary Morgenthau was asked how much he thought we would have to spend under the bill for aid to Britain. He replied he didn't

know - that it was futile to try to make an estimate.

Senator Vandenberg asked - was the money thus to be spent within
~~in~~ the new national debt limit of sixty five billion dollars, or
would the aid-to-Britain-expenditures push the public debt higher
than that? The Secretary replied, ^{that} the sixty five billion dollar
limit would probably take care of the situation until June thirtieth
of nineteen forty two - the end of the next fiscal year.

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The summary point of the evidence was - that Great Britain will
have to have the kind of help provided in the lend - lease bill to
go on with the war. "I am convinced," said ^{the} Secretary of the
Treasury, ~~Morgenthau~~, "that if Congress doesn't act on this bill
there is nothing for Britain to do but quit fighting."

Senator Nye asked whether the British government had stated this.
"Not in so many words," responded the Secretary, "but that's the
situation."

SIR HUGH DOWDING

Even from up here in the White Mountains, at North Conway, I can provide a little additional information on all this, something encouraging that I got at luncheon with Sir Hugh Dowding, Air Marshal of Britain, the man who was in command of the Royal Air Force at the most critical time of all, from the beginning of the war up to a short time ago. The Air Marshal told me that Hitler had already made his desperate attempt to win by invasion of England. And, Sir Hugh Dowding ought to know. He said that last August and September the Germans went all out in the air, in an attempt to smash the R.A.F., and then invade England. But failed - as we know. He says you couldn't tell him that Hitler was fighting then with one hand behind his back. He doubts that the Nazis will try it again. But, if they do, the Air Marshal assured me that the R.A.F. would hold them off again. He was completely convinced that Britain in the end, will win the war. In fact he was certain that John Bull could win without the help of Uncle Sam. But he said aid from us would make a vast difference.

RUSSIAN IMPORTS

It was revealed in the House Commons today that the British government has made formal representations to the United States about American exports to Soviet Russia. The British claim that large quantities of American goods are going to the Bolsheyiks and are there being used to aid Nazi Germany - indirectly.

Minister of Economic Warfare, Hugh Dalton, told the Commons that it isn't so much a case of materials being sent through Russia to Hitler. They're being used by the Soviets to take the place of Russian goods, that Stalin is shipping to the Nazis.

Lord Halifax has just made representations to Secretary Hull about American-Soviet trade -- along the line that our shipments to Russia are really an aid to the Nazis.

NORTH CONWAY -- NO WAR HERE

From where I am in New Hampshire, riding up and down

^{Cr}
Xanmore Mountain on Harvey Gibson's Skimobile, skiing in the
blazing sun, and ~~just~~ looking at the snow-clad White Mountains
all around, it seems harder than ever to visualize what is going
on in Europe, ~~London enduring~~ ^{London today enduring} one of its hardest bombing ~~attacks,~~ ^{sieges,}
~~and~~ bitter fighting amid the snows of the Albanian Mountains; ^{war}
~~in half a dozen parts of~~ ^{in half a dozen parts of}
~~the world,~~ Africa, and submarines playing havoc with British
shipping.

But, here is still another ^{semi-} war item that ^{just} came in to

~~me~~ my vacation headquarters at the Eastern Slopes Inn -- over a
special Western Union wire:-

EMPRESS.

There's a mystery about the great british liner, Empress of Australia. London today reported the twenty two thousand ton vessel safe in port - a west African port. This - following radio messages picked up - that the Empress of Australia had been torpedoed by a submarine and was sinking. A suggestion made late today is that the distress signal may really have been flashed by a German sea raider, with the intention of drawing a response and getting a line on where the Empress of Australia might be.

The British are still driving on the Italian province of Eritrea, pushing at the rate of about eleven miles a day. Meeting little resistance apparently. And there's a report of an Italian General surrendering.

The forces of Free France have made a drive into Libya, but not in the North where the British have been pushing the Italians so hard. Far to the South -- in the depth of the desert. The attack came from French Colonial territory, and scored a surprise success. Probably more of a raid than an invasion. A three hundred mile dash across the desert with camels and armored cars.

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London reports a naval success in the Mediterranean, an affair that happened more than two months ago. British navy planes made a torpedo attack on an Italian harbor, which is not named. There they sank two submarines, a destroyer and a supply ship.

In Greece bitter fighting is going on and bitter weather. The Italians have been launching heavy counter attacks which the Greeks claim they have repelled. Attack and counter-attack in snow and blizzard. But the real European weather story comes from Britain.

There they've been having one of the greatest blizzards in years, intense cold, tremendous snow fall. This has been concealed until now, war time censorship forbidding the mention of the weather reports. We can easily suppose that the British blizzard in the past week was the real reason for the halt in the war of the air -- which otherwise was not explained. Today sky activity was renewed.

WENDELL WILLKIE

Wendell Willkie was all over London today, visiting this place and that, this high percentage and that. He picked an exciting time for a whirlwind trip around the British Capital - because London today had its longest daylight air raid since the giant air battles back in September. All day long, the Nazi planes were over. However, most of the bombs fell in the suburbs, ~~of the city~~. And the attack is described as more of a major nuisance affair than any tremendous attempt at devastation.

Willkie attended ^{today's} ~~the~~ session of the House of Commons, where he heard a rather acrimonious debate on the freedom of the press.

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The particular point being - the government suppression of London's communist newspaper, The Daily Worker. A debate on freedom, while London was having an all - day air raid. ^{That surely} ~~it~~ was a demonstration of democracy in war time action. Willkie called it - "Wonderful!"

JUMPING BEAN

Did you ever watch a jumping bean jump? Of course you might answer - - "Why should I watch a jumping bean jump?" To which the reply might be - - "It would improve your eye sight."

This is suggested by a news story from Hollywood today. Two women are on trial charged with giving optometric treatment without a license. They conducted what they called - - "An eye relaxation studio." The relaxation consisted largely of gazing at various moving things. Patients would toss balls into the air and watch their flight intently. Or they'd look for a long time at the spokes of a revolving wheel. But most interesting of all, they'd observe the gyrations of a lot of Mexican jumping beans. That was most optometrical.

Today an impressive list of witnesses appeared to testify to the benefits of the jumping bean system of eye treatment. One witness was Irene Rich, the movie actress. She's famous for being forty and having the figure of a girl of sixteen. However as she testified, her eyes were not that young. She said she had the eyesight of a woman of sixty. ^{or did -} ~~That~~ before she watched the jumping of the jumping beans. "Before I took the exercises, ^{she} ~~she~~ declared

^{the chic Irene} declared on the witness stand, "I wore as many as three pairs of

glasses a day. And my goodness, I had trouble with them. After I took the eye exercises, watching those jumping beans, she concluded, "I never had to wear glasses."

Another witness was Aldous Huxley, the famous British writer, who related that he was nearly blind. But presto chango, or rather presto jumping beano - he now has an eagle eye.

The wife of Jesse Lasky, the Hollywood producer, was there to say the same thing, and so was Billy Burke, one-time stage star and widow of the late and great Ziegfeld. The gist of all the testimony was, the Mexican jumping bean is indeed a sight for sore eyes.

And I suppose it would be okay to say that we are now about to hear a voice that would even be pleasing to sore ears - the voice of our Blue Sunoco spokesman - Hugh James.