

L.T. SUNOCO. MONDAY, JUNE 2, 1941

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The British are making no attempt to minimize the fall of Crete. They admit this means the cutting of an important lifeline, and prevents Britain from sending supplies and reinforcements to the armies of the Middle East through the Mediterranean.

Fighting men of the Imperial Army are still arriving in Egypt from Crete. Many in rags, their wounds covered by soiled bandages, some even without shoes. An American reporter describes them as grim and unsmiling with the memory still fresh in their minds of days and nights of fighting without sleep or food. They thought also of the comrades they had left behind still fighting doggedly in the mountains and with no hope of escape.

They told a story of fields literally littered with dead. One young officer said that Crete now is almost unrecognizable. The villages are heaps of dust and rubble; the valleys, hills and

fields covered with dead bodies. The City of Canea wiped off the map.

The German air borne troops, related the survivors, came by the thousands -- day after day. One soldier declared that the Nazis died like flies, but still they came. Not only the soldiers fought in Crete; truck drivers, cooks, engineers, signal men, even the Air Force ground crews grabbed any weapon they could, even pick or shovels, to fight back the Germans who descended from the clouds.

One Officer reported that the German technique was perfect. That they had every gun position photographed in advance and came over in endless flocks until they had silenced every anti-aircraft gun.

The British Navy, we learn did an extraordinary job in saving fifteen thousand of the soldiers in Crete. And in the face of the fact that the Germans held all the harbors.

BRENNER

soldiers batman
Another conference in the Brenner Pass; Hitler and ~~his boy~~

Benito cooking up fresh war plans. That seems to be the closest guess at the meaning of their meeting in the Brenner Pass today. Officially *is explained* it ~~was interpreted~~ as a conference on the political situation. ~~But~~

A Although it was hedged in by greater secrecy than any similar meeting, it was noticed that not only the head diplomats but the army chiefs were present. The official announcement contained the usual *hokus pokus* ~~trip~~ about a spirit of cordial ~~amity~~ amity and complete agreement on all points taken up by the chiefs of the Axis governments.

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But a political discussion would hardly explain the presence of Field Marshal ~~Wilhelm~~ von Keitel, chief of the Nazi general staff, and General ~~Euge~~ Caballero, chief of the Fascist staff. The official communique ^{*ya*} said that the two generals, on their part, "had an opportunity for a conversation in the spirit of heartfelt comradeship of arms on German-Italian cooperation in the military field."

The conference lasted five hours and apparently the best guess is that Hitler was telling Mussolini what to do now that Crete is in Axis hands. And it's hardly probable that they met without discussing the United States, particularly President Roosevelt's last ~~is in Axis hands.~~ speech.

~~and~~ here's a cable from Vichy, about another conference.

French General Maxim Weygand arrived there by airplane from Africa.

Ostensibly ~~he came~~ to make a report to Marshal Petain on the French

situation in Algeria and Tunisia. But it was rumored around

Vichy that they also ^{talked about} ~~discussed~~ Syria, although Weygand's audience

with his chief lasted less than an hour. ~~Still~~ ^{However} he's expected to stay

in the temporary capital of France for several days.

And that name Syria today took on greater importance

than ever. It is there that the British are expecting the next

smash from the Axis war machine, although this is not announced

officially. It was hinted in a special Fascist communique that ~~the~~

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Germans and Italians will now concentrate on Tobruk, throw in a

crushing blow at the British imperial garrison that has been holding

out there for so long. Messages from ^{there} ~~that region~~ report that

German-Italian planes are battering the defenders of Tobruk

ceaselessly. The Italians claim to have destroyed five small transports

anchored in the harbor and sunk an auxiliary cruiser.

Throughout Great Britain there's a clamorous demand that the

high command should take action in Syria, beat the Germans and Italians to it. That's the spirit which the loss of Crete has aroused in London and the provinces. Critics didn't hesitate to speak their belief that the high command of the Middle East, needs more imagination, ingenuity and initiative. And most of all they need more planes and tanks! For the lack of which Briatin lost Crete.

In the face of all this, the arrival of Weygand in Vichy is considered of great importance. For Weygand is the French government's principal authority on Syria.

The London critics clamor in chorus not only for the occupation of Syria, but the defense of Cyprus, the last island base that the British have in the eastern Mediterranean. Cyprus has no fewer than six airfields and between its two mountain ranges is a wide plain with plenty of room for countless planes.

It is reported that there are strong concentrations of not only British but Free French troops in Palestine and Transjordan. And now the Britons at home are crying out that their own most urgent need is to prevent the Germans from getting a land base on the eastern side of Suez, which would enable them to carry out the pincers

operation in concert with the Axis forces in Libya.

If Hitler moves into Syria and Palestine, he will be more and more following the road marched twenty-two hundred years ago by Alexander the Great.

SYRIA FOLLOW BRENNER

Here's a later dispatch from Cairo. It reports that the authorities in Syria have cut off all wire communications with Egypt, both telephone and telegraph. That is, all private communications. Mail services have already been suspended but only for five days so far.

And here's another item in the same line, which comes from Beirut. The headquarters of General DeGaulle's Free French forces in that area have been established at Haifa, in Palestine. *Which* ~~That~~ gives the Free French an ideal strategic jumping-off place for a dash into Syria.

NEVILLE

I heard some rather surprising things about the Near East situation, heard them at luncheon today. The New York Daily newspaper, P.M., brought a group of us news people together with a couple of foreign correspondents. One of them -- Bob Neville, just back from a trip to the Near Eastern war areas -- where he *had been for many months* -- ~~gathered news~~ for P.M.

War correspondent Neville told us that the Suez Canal is closed -- has been closed since January. They do open it now and then for brief intervals and get a few ships through, but then the Nazis sow up the canal once again. How? By mining it.

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Bob Neville told how German planes fly over, skim at low level above the canal -- and drop mines into it. He said they used three kinds -- the most effective of which was a delayed mine. This infernal machine lies on the bottom of the shallow Suez Canal, and is set off by the vibration of ships passing above it. But the first ship does not necessarily touch it off, or the second or the third. The delayed mine is so constructed that any one of a series of ships may touch it off -- the delay part making it extremely tricky. You can't tell when they'll blow up. The P.M. correspondent said that it took much time to sweep and clear the hundred miles of Suez Canal

NEVILLE

of these treacherous devices -- so much time that the canal can be opened only at rare intervals, especially as the Germans keep on sowing the mines at night.

Then how do the British get supplies to General Wavell and his army? The P.M. war correspondent says that war materials do not pass by ship through the Canal. Coming up the Red Sea, they are unloaded near the entrance of Suez, - at Port Tewfils -- and are carried overland.

But how about the British fleet? Neville answered that the British Eastern Mediterranean Fleet is trapped -- so far as Suez is concerned. The mining of the Canal is so easy that war ships, if they tried to escape by that route could not make it, in his opinion. Their only exit would be to fight their way through the Straits of Sicily and then through Gibraltar. They might have a desperate battle getting through Gibraltar, if the Nazis should launch a blow to close the Straits.

All in all, the British situation in the Near East is one of great peril -- this according to the American newspaper correspondent who has just arrived from that area.

IRAQ

The radio at Baghdad spoke today, spoke in a very different tone from the broadcasts we had been hearing about of late. It called upon all the people of Iraq to cooperate with the army in maintaining order while a constitutional ministry is being set up.

But the curfew rule still was enforced. From Cairo comes word *and my old friend Nuri Pasha* that Prince Abdul Illah, the regent, ~~is~~ [^] now engaged in organizing *and*

the new Iraqi government, which will be pro-British. The next *- Nuri again they think -* premier ~~is one who~~ [^] has held that office before; a strong partisan

of the British. The boy King Feisal is also back in Baghdad.

British headquarters report everything returning to normal again in Iraq, but the Nazis claim ~~they~~ ^{to} still have control of the Mosul oil fields.

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PRIORITIES

The great industrial machine of the United States of America is now on a war basis. This happened today when President Roosevelt at Hyde Park wrote his name to a new Act of Congress, the Priorities Bill. Making it compulsory for factories and plants the country over to give their first attention to making the things the Government wants. And with no alternative.

Hitherto, priorities applied only to army and navy contracts. But the signing of that bill gives government officials the power to issue priorities to anything which may be necessary for either the defense program or the Lend-Lease program.

This power is vested in the Priority Division of the Office of Production Management. There was a good deal of argument over the bill before it was passed. The House amended it to give this authority to the High command of the War Department and the Navy. But the Senate revised the measure and the power now rests with the O.P.M.

And here's a further step in the same direction. The War Department has asked Congress for a bill to authorize the President to commandeer any property whatsoever that is considered necessary during the national emergency. Owners of such property will be given what is described as "fair compensation."

LONDON

Ex-Governor Landon of Kansas today added his bit to the volume of comment on President Roosevelt's fireside chat. He told the graduates at a middlewestern college that the President manifestly has not made up his mind about the war. The best trained reporters, Landon said, cannot agree as to the meaning of the President's ^{address} ~~speech~~ or what he added in his press conference the next day. Therefore, said the Ex-Republican Candidate, we are forced to the conclusion that Mr. Roosevelt still believes we can help England without getting into the war. But, he added, the war party of America is trying to read into ^{the} ~~that~~ presidential speech ^{things} ~~actions~~ that are not there.

HIGHWAY

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More highways, more bridges are needed, says President
And he asks
Roosevelt. ~~He asked~~ Congress for a hundred and twenty-five millions
to build access roads and bridges in military, naval and industrial
regions, roads which the Federal Works Agency considers vital to
national defense. A hundred millions will be spent on the access
highways, twenty-five millions to strengthen bridges and widen
existing roads. The Federal Works Agency reports that there are
two hundred and ^{four} areas in which these highways and bridges are of
importance to national defense. The government has already found
means of building one thousand and ninety miles of these roads.
The hundred and twenty-five millions he asked ~~for~~ are to construct
some fifteen hundred more.

HOUSTON

One hundred and ten years ago, a ~~very~~ famous American took his oath as United States Senator from Texas. His name was Houston, General Sam Houston.

Today another Houston took his path as the junior senator from the Lone Star State, ~~It was~~ Andrew Jackson Houston, eighty-seven year old son of Sam. ~~He took~~ ^{taking} the seat made vacant by the death of the late Morris Sheppard. ~~Andrew Jackson Houston said~~ ^{So} he won't be senator long: pending the election of a successor to Sheppard. It was an interim appointment, ^{When Vice-President} Wallace repeated the words of the oath to him, Senator Houston, for all his eighty-seven years, replied with a firm "I do" that could be heard all over the Chamber. ^{So this Junior Senator} ~~He~~ is now the oldest member of the United States Senate.

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He announced in a statement to the newspapers that he's thoroughly in accord with the foreign policies and program of President Roosevelt. He will support the President in his efforts for adequate and complete preparedness.

SUPREME COURT

For some years Governor Phillips of Oklahoma has been engaged in a fight with the federal government. The New Deal wanted to build a government dam on the Red River. Governor Phillips wanted to stop it. He said that a hundred thousand acres of good Oklahoma land would be sacrificed to that dam, much of it being valuable oil and agricultural acres.

We've heard about this fight from time to time. Once the Governor even called out the state troops to stop the federal men from going ahead with the power project. But, today the United States Supreme Court ruled against him. Saying that Uncle Sam has a perfect right to build a power project on the Red River. The opinion, written by Associate Justice Douglas, laid down a new principle which will be of importance all over the country. "We now add," said Justice Douglas, "that the power of flood control extends to the tributaries of navigable streams."

PROHIBITION

The prohibition forces are on the march again, ~~with~~
~~a vengeance.~~ They are using the same strategy and tactics as
~~they did~~ twenty-four years ago, taking advantage of war threats and
conscription to put over legislation against the sale of liquor.

it appears
The heads of the army and navy are not in sympathy.

The House has already passed a bill forbidding beer

8/2 and liquor near military areas. *And* That would cover a huge lot of

ground, since we have two hundred and four military areas. ~~When~~

In ~~it got to~~ the Senate, *it has been* ~~it was~~ blocked by ~~senator~~ Bob LaFollette of

Wisconsin. *Both* Secretary of War Stimson and Acting Secretary of

the Navy Forrester are opposed to it. Stimson pointed ^S~~ed~~ out to the

Senators that the revival of prohibition laws would make a tough

problem for the army authorities, compel them to cope with

bootleggers once again. Acting Secretary Forrester of the Navy *says*

9 ~~said~~ that instead of having the beneficial effect expected, these

prohibition laws would tend to raise an adventure-seeking curiosity

in the young men of the army, which would more than offset any

possible benefits. ~~The existing regulations as enforced by the army~~

Hugh, you tell us of some
~~are quite satisfactory, he added.~~

1/4 possible benefits.