

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The most interesting topic of the day is something that concerns us all or, at any rate, that's going to concern all of us before long:- the spending of that Five billion dollar Work Relief Fund. Well, not exactly five, but in round number we can call it that.

A good many people misunderstand a statement that came from the office of Mr. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior. This announced that under the main P.W.A. organization, there were forty-eight smaller P.W.A's throughout the country, one in every state. From that statement some deduced that there would be a shake-up in the scheme of spending the money. But President Roosevelt says, "No, not at all." The Five billion - Four billion, eight hundred million, if you insist - will be handed out through existing channels. Or I should say:- shoveled out. When it comes to distributing that many potatoes, as they call dollars on Broadway, a fair-sized scoop is needed.

The President tells us that his lieutenants have their sleeves rolled up, ready to shovel out the money. The

information coming from the White House indicates that no delay will be permitted in getting the various work projects started. And the most hopeful part is that the peak of activity in this respect should be reached by November. That's just the time when it will be mostly needed, with winter at hand and work scarce.

The task that's occupying the attention of the White House more intensively now is getting President Roosevelt's program of social legislation through Congress. This includes of course unemployment insurance and old age pensions. That's the idea nearest the Presidential heart, and which he hopes will be his most important permanent contribution to the reconstruction of our social fabric.

However, there are other things the President wants Congress to do. He wants the National Recovery Act extended. He is anxious to get a bill through giving greater powers to the Federal Reserve Board in Washington. Also a measure that will help the government to control holding companies of public utilities.

STORMS

~~Old~~ mother nature is ~~in~~ still ^{in an} ~~more~~ ironic mood today.

While the Atlantic coast states were being lashed by furious rain storms, washing out entire sections ^{of} ~~with~~ gales bringing peril to vessels at sea, the southwest was suffering from disturbances of a directly opposite kind. Yes, ~~the~~ dust storms again ~~are~~ covering vast sections in Kansas, Texas, Colorado, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

These dirt blizzards are by now an old and far too familiar story. They bring with them a threat to the entire country. And one thing is sure. They have settled the problem of over-production on the farms far more effectively than all the A.A.As. and process taxes could ever dream of accomplishing.

Of course this widespread visitation originates in the terrible drought that hit the mid-west last year. The ^{earth} ~~soil~~ became so dried out that every wind that came along lifted the entire top soil off millions of acres, like a giant ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ housemaid ripping off an enormous bedspread. It has ruined wide provinces in the half of the country that used to be called "the grannery of the nation." Kansas, so long famous for its record crops of wheat,

49

STORMS - 2

has been so stripped of its top soil that the farmers say it will be impossible to raise any wheat at all to speak of this year. The only consolation for us as a whole is that the heavy rains in other sections make heavy harvests probable there. So the law of compensation is at work after all.

STRESA

The political chessboard in Europe changes every day. Just as the Italian government had completed all its plans for entertaining the French and British visitors, the news of a new pact between France and Russia looms upon the world. Of course, this had been rumored for a long while. An Alliance between French and Russians is an old tradition. But there is a new angle to this latest reported alliance. And if it's true, it means a complete offensive and defensive union of the two countries.

And that alters the European situation radically right on the eve of the Stresa conference. Unless the French diplomats are able to deny the rumor, and have their denial believed, it makes the problems of the British and Italian representatives exceedingly difficult.

Of course if this alliance has been concluded, negotiations must have been going on for sometime. Whether the news came as a surprise to the British and Italian governments is something we don't yet know.

That alliance with Russia, if it is an accomplished fact, may be regarded as France's reply to John Bull's attitude

of aloofness. Prime Minister MacDonald and Sir John Simon have let it be known that, though they were exceedingly keen on the Stresa conference, they did not intend to bind themselves by anything that happened there. Now, today, they're singing a different tune. If the conference doesn't succeed, they say, war is certain.

So France is able to enter the pow-wow with an extra chessman and a powerful one at that. For in case ~~xx~~ nothing happens at Stresa, there is this defensive alliance with Moscow. And an alliance with Russia today is a far more important thing than it was in Czarist days, when the apparently formidable Russian army was so crippled with corruption and incompetence that the Russian Bear turned out to be a sorry ally.

Meanwhile, the little town of Stresa on beautiful Lake Maggiore, is putting on its best bib and tucker to receive the distinguished visitors. It has been a considerable job for the Italian government to complete its hospitable plans. As there will be twelve hundred newspaper men along, to say nothing of the diplomats, their yes-men, their hangers on, their secretaries,

their valets and they what-nots, we can imagine how the resources of that town of two thousand souls will be taxed.

Like an Italian Flemington. If any of Uncle Sam's delegates were to be present, they would also have the problem of housing the sisters, the cousins and the aunts, as Americans find it difficult to go anywhere without their womenfolk. And rightly so.

Of course on such occasions there is always considerable anxiety on the part of the government that is playing host that no untoward incidents should occur. Especially no such disaster as the assassination of King Alexander at Marseilles. The Duce has taken the utmost precautions for the safety of all his guests. Nevertheless, it will be a nervous time for the Italian police; so nervous that they've already made a bad mistake. They arrested a young Englishman bicycling in the neighborhood of a fortress near Naples. He produced credentials to show that he was an attache of the British embassy to the Vatican. But the local officials paid no attention to his credentials and kept him in jail incommunicado for two days. It took them all that time to realize their mistake; and then they released the young man with profuse apologies.

SAAR

3

Only a few weeks have passed since there was great jubilation in the Valley of the Saar because the district had once again become a part of the Fatherland. Today some of the people who so jubilantly voted to go back under the German flag are ~~singing~~ singing a different song. At least that's ~~the~~ story that comes from Europe. Of course we must remember that ~~a considerable volume of~~ such tales may be propaganda inspired by anti-Hitlerites for political effect. So when I pass it along to you it's only fair to add that I recommend a pinch of salt.

The story is plausible to this extent: so long as the Saarlanders were ~~outside the Reich and~~ administered by the League of Nations, they had special privileges. But now that they are incorporated once more in the German Reich, they have to take the same medicine as Prussians, Bavarians, Wurtembergers and all the rest. ~~They have the same troubles as other Germans,~~ ^{That is,} they have to suffer from the effects and hardships resulting from the ^{world-wide anti-Nazi} boycott. And that boycott is no joke.

The Saar is largely a manufacturing district like Connecticut. Its inhabitants have to buy food supplies elsewhere.

As long as they were under a commission of the League of Nations, they could buy the stuff for their table from their neighbors in French Lorraine, and buy ~~it~~^{it} cheap. But now they have to replenish their larders from the rest of Germany, where everything is much dearer. On the other hand, they cannot sell what they make as easily and as profitably as ~~if~~ they did up to last January.

So there's the basis for the statement that there is bitter feeling in that picturesque valley. Prices are going up, going up so fast that the cost of living has increased ten per cent. And there hasn't yet been any increase in wages to offset ~~that~~^{it}. They also complain, ~~at least~~ so the story goes, that profiteers are coming into control of both their industries and their agriculture under the Nazi regime. ~~Of course~~ ^{of which} all ~~this~~ is denied by the German government.

54

GERMANY

There was a grim contrast in Berlin today. General Goering, the Reichsfuehrer's right-hand man, was being married to the beautiful Emmy Sonnemann in one part of the city. While in another the headsman, in his traditional black frock coat and top hat, was swinging his axe. The squads of airplane pilots who were dramatically and picturesquely manoeuvring over the heads of the bride and bridegroom, could also see the flash of the blade as it fell, one victim a Jew, the other an Aryan; condemned to death for the murder of the Nazi martyr, Horst

Wessel. I venture to say that not since the tumbrils used to rattle over the cobblestones of Paris to the Place de la Guillotine, has any wedding ever been solemnized against such a grim background.

On the one hand we have in Berlin's ancient City Hall the burly and dignified burghermeister, also clad in a sombre frock coat, saying, "I pronounce you man and wife." On the other hand, in the yard of the Ploetzensee Prison, medieval execution!

Horst Wessel, the ~~great~~ martyr of the Nazi revolution, was a poet and composer, the author of the now famous ~~Horst Wessel~~ song which Hitler's Brown Shirts sing upon all occasions. ^{He was} ~~Horst~~ ~~Wessel~~ a young Storm Trooper, ~~was~~ killed by four young men way back in Nineteen thirty, a time when it was thought impossible that Hitler should ever come ^{into} ~~to~~ the power he enjoys today. After the success of the Nazi revolution, the Brown Shirts revived the case. They claimed that the killing of Wessel was a political murder, that his slayers were Communists.

There's another side to the story, according to which version the leader of the band who killed ^{the poet} ~~Wessel~~ was the disappointed suitor of the pretty blonde fraulein, with whom the poet was living at the time.

It probably never will be decided which actually is the true version. The two victims who lost their heads today said in their defense that they thought they were helping Horst Wessel's landlady evict him for not paying his rent. The man who actually fired the bullet that killed him died in jail long ago.

56

SPIES

A new spy scare is certain to affect the ~~xx~~ chronic case of jitters with which Europe is afflicted. It has even affected the usually placid Swiss. Of course their agitation -- and you can't blame them -- arises out of the kidnapping of a German refugee by Nazi agents on Swiss soil. The sturdy little republic has protested and demanded the return of this prisoner but without avail. Imagine how we would feel if such a thing happened to an American citizen.

As a result of this unfriendly performance the Federal Council in Switzerland which is the body that runs the works, has decided to ask Parliament to allow them to organize a special political police force. Its vocation will be to run down and chuck out foreign agents working in Swiss territory.

Historically and politically ~~these~~ this is more sensational than it sounds. For centuries the sturdy Schweizers have boasted not only of their own liberty but of the liberty they accord and guarantee to everybody inside their borders. Switzerland has been an asylum for political refugees from other countries throughout the ages. This has been preserved at the cost of considerable expense, sleepless watchfulness and annoyance. ~~During~~ During the war

57

Switzerland became a stamping ground for spies, or speaking more politely, the intelligence agents of seven nations. Nevertheless the tradition was upheld. But the kidnapping of that refugee newspaper man by Nazi agents seems to have blown things up. The Swiss seem determined that their normally happy country shall be no longer a rendezvous for the spies of all nations.

The establishment of this political police force was proposed a year ago, but the Swiss in a referendum voted it down. Now, the latest events have changed public opinion completely. One symptom of this change was shown in the municipal elections in the border city of Basel. Anti-German feeling ran so high there that the Socialists were swept into office by a considerable majority.

Another spy story comes from Paris. The police have arrested a German who is believed to be one of the aces of the intelligence service of the Fatherland. And in the sea-port of Brest the authorities found a good-looking German girl named Lydia Oswald in possession of complete plans of France's newest battle cruiser. These stories sound lurid but they appear to be on the level.

AQUITANIA

Something always seems to be happening in Southampton, I mean Southampton, England not Southampton, Long Island. People will begin to wonder if there's a jinx on that famous harbor. Passengers on the Aquitania coming home from a trip to Egypt got an unexpected thrill. The great liner was ploughing into port when suddenly there was a slight jar and before you could say "Lady Cunard" there was the big monster stuck in the mud of Southampton's harbor.

No harm done, nobody injured in the slightest, except the feelings of the pilot and the ship's commander. Nine tugs came bustling along and huffed and puffed but couldn't move the keel of the great ship from the groove she had cut in the bottom of the bay. There's a wild gale blowing. So the passengers are to be taken ashore in tenders and the ship's officers will have to wait until high tide which is three o'clock this morning and will probably have to get all the tugs within calling distance to float her once more. And they'll be getting the tugs to float me out of here if I don't hurry and say --

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.