

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:-

There's little information about what occurred in Greece today. Yesterday the Nazis jubilantly told of cracking Thermopylae, smashing the British defense of that historic pass -- with Panzer units plunging through. Today the German high command announced that the British defenses at Thermopylae had been -- "penetrated." Obviously, there's some discrepancy.

London says that the British and Greeks are fighting a stubborn rear guard action, blocking the road to Athens. Behind this rear guard action, presumably, the British are embarking their troops, saving what they can. Berlin continues to tell of German bombers blasting transports, and gives huge figures for sinkings. The German reports say that the British, in evacuating, are ~~XXXXXX~~ resorting to the small ports -- departing in small boats.

Later: London says the British are still holding Thermopylae ~~awaiting~~

In London, Prime Minister Churchill again today refused to go into a discussion of the British defeat in Greece.

He told Parliament that the time was not ready for a full airing of the affair - that would come a little later. Britain is burning with complaints about the failure. The press is demanding to know why the British expeditionary force to Greece was not larger and better equipped. Some are questioning why Britain should have gone into the Balkans at all. The central object of complaint seems to be, not Prime Minister Churchill, but Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. He it was who made arrangements for the Balkan operation - in his trip a short while ago to Greece and Turkey.

78

The sharpest discontent is expressed by the Australians - a crisis for the Australian government. The Labor Party in the land below the Equator is attacking - with accusations that there was blundering in the campaign in which Australian troops played such a brave part. (The cabinet of Prime Minister Menzies is making proposals that the Labor Party participate in the government - ~~a~~ ^{an Australian} coalition cabinet. But it is believed that the suggestion will be rejected.

Here's a late dispatch from London - giving us a rumor that Germany now has permission from Franco to send several divisions of troops across Spain for an attack on Gibraltar.

The British Government today bestowed a decoration, an award which confirms previous stories that R.A.F. planes had hit the two big Nazi battleships, SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU. The pair of sea giants were lying in harbor at Brest. Today's London citation honors Pilot Grahame Robert Ross in these words:- "Flying over the target area at a low altitude, Ross finally located his objective, and, in the face of intense and concentrated anti-aircraft fire and searchlights, descended to one thousand feet -- scoring a direct hit on one of the ships with an extremely heavy bomb."

WAR CABINET

President Roosevelt today had a session with what is being called - the War Cabinet. ^{To} ~~They~~ considered the state of affairs that has resulted from the defeat of the British in the Balkans, the collapse of the campaign in Greece. Also - the war at sea.

The White House made comment on a declaration by Mayor LaGuardia of New York. In Canada he stated that the United States and the Dominion together would defend the western side of the Atlantic Ocean - for a thousand miles off the American coast. Referring to that, White House Steve Early said: "I don't see anything very different in what LaGuardia said, and what has been said here from time to time." He referred to proposals in Washington that we protect this side of the Atlantic "well out to sea." ^{Early} He made clear, however, that this does not apply to convoying. "I'm speaking exclusively of the neutrality patrol, not of convoys," said he. ~~Meaning~~ under the Pan-American neutrality plan, we make a large part of the western Atlantic safe for ships carrying aid to Britain.

50
The ~~Washington~~ discussion of convoying or some other
plan~~t~~ to block the Nazi sea war is made all the more intense
by reports that are circulating in Washington. One report, for
example, is that forty per cent of American war supplies sent to
Britain are being sunk.

A decision by the
Government is expected soon.

TAXES

The administration plan to raise money for national defense and aid to Britain ~~tax~~ was formally presented by Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau today. He placed it before the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives. The secretary's recommendations come under two headings -- raise taxes and cut down non-military expenditures.

The tax proposal presented the figure that we've heard before -- three and a half billion dollars to be raised by extra taxation. Secretary Morgenthau said that this will be a small price to pay for the defense of national freedom. He declared that the public is willing to accept the new burden -- the heaviest tax bill in American history.

51
The principal feature proposed is a drastic raise of income taxes -- which also is according to information that we've had previously. The basic four percent income tax to remain the same, but surtaxes to be put on every dollar of income -- a surtax *beginning at eleven per cent - on all of eleven percent.* ~~The treasury plan is outlined today with work incomes.~~ like this -- in the case of a married man without children who has an income of three thousand dollars a year. Suppose that with

Secretary Morgenthau pointed out that extra taxes amounting to three and a half billion dollars would take only four percent of the national income, which is rising rapidly. The proceedings brought out the fact that the new taxes added to those already in effect would consume twenty-four percent of the national income. The Secretary of the Treasury went on to argue that the new taxation would have the ~~new taxation~~ beneficial affect in keeping down prices of the ordinary goods of life. Because, after paying the taxes, the American people would have less money to spend.

Another argument that came up in the committee hearing was this -- that even after paying all the taxes, the average citizen would be much better off financially than the men called into the army and navy. Because they are giving up a year of earning and get a basic rate of pay of only thirty dollars a month. In other words - they have given up a lot more than the taxpayer is called upon to do.

The drastic tax plan proposed by the Secretary is not the only one under consideration. Congressional leaders have formulated still another one -- not nearly so stiff. Something that would bear ^{not} down so heavily on the people with the small incomes.

As for cutting down non-military expenses, Secretary Morgenthau told the congressional committee that a billion dollars a year could be saved. He said there should be no cut in necessary relief money. He declared that the government must continue to provide for those in want -- those in urgent need of relief. He suggested that large sums of cash could be saved by cutting the budgets of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration which already are scheduled for a total of six hundred and seventy million dollars during the ~~next~~ ^{next} year. "All those items ought to be re-examined," said the Secretary of the Treasury."

The Secretary also thought that the money paid to the farmers should be cut. The present budget originally called for a two hundred and twelve million dollar farm bill. Congress raised that to four hundred and fifty million. That's one place where a lot of money could be saved, said the Treasury head.

COAL

At ten o'clock tomorrow morning in Washington, a conference of the utmost importance will begin. The coal mine operators and the union will gather with the Defense Mediation Board - official action to settle the strike in the soft coal mines, which has lasted for twenty-four days. Today the Board summoned the companies and the miners, to appear at ten A.M. tomorrow.

The strike assumed graver aspects than ever today. Secretary of the Interior Ickes reported to President Roosevelt that the nation has now only a two week supply of soft coal. White House Secretary Early gave out a statement that the shut-down is reaching a point where it may menace production for national defense.

And the War department raised its voice -- stating that the coal strike is already slowing down defense production -- seriously. The lack of soft coal is especially bad in the production of steel, ammonia and textiles.

LABOR

Here are some words which I find it impossible to repeat
whithout deep feeling -- in fact with impassioned fervor. You know -
that catch in one's throat. So ~~xxx~~^{it is} with what Congressman
Dirksen had to say today about the Vinson Bill. I can feel a thrill
as I utter the words with which he described it. He called it -
"a circuitous, cumbersome, unexpeditious and labyrinthine approach."

Yes, I feel that catch in my throat -- just because of
those big words.

CRIME

A violent affair of crime occurred in New York today. Three gunmen invaded the New York Athletic Club, and tried to break into a room. In the room ^{half a dozen} ~~four~~ men were gathered. The result was slugging and shooting - and the suicide of one of the gangsters.

55

The room attacked was that of Frank Erickson, a personage of some renown ^{hereabouts} ~~in New York~~. He's a racetrack bookmaker, one of the best known - a handler of large money bet on the horses. From time to time, for several years, Erickson has appeared in the news, thanks largely to Mayor LaGuardia. His Honor, ~~the Mayor~~, has been ambitious to drive certain personalities out of New York, men whose activities have not found favor with LaGuardia. Number One on the list, ~~is~~ Frank Erickson. Repeatedly the Mayor has announced that he would make New York too hot to hold the big bookmaker. But LaGuardia was never able to make it stick, and Erickson has stayed on - plying his racetrack business.

Today he was in his room on the ninth floor of ~~the~~ ^{his club} New York Athletic Club. With him were several other ³ ~~men~~ men.

Three thugs entered the Athletic Club without arousing suspicion, took the elevator to the ninth floor, and went to the door of the Erickson room. They had with them lengths of wire and cord.

Also, ready-made gags - for silencing. The police believe that the motive was - robbery. They surmise that the men in the room with Erickson were bookmakers' runners, and that money for racetrack betting was being passed among them - the gunmen intending to rob them, and bind and gag them *all*.

At the Erickson door the thugs punched the bell, and knocked - but nothing happened. For some reason, possibly caution and suspicion, the men inside refrained from responding to the doorbell ring and the knocking.

56
Just then a maid in the Athletic Club came along, a Mrs. O'Brien. The gunmen turned on her, pistol in hand, and demanded that she give them her pass key - so that they could get into the room. Mrs. O'Brien, believing that they were about to kill her, murmured a prayer - then hauled off and socked one of the bandits with her fists. Immediately she was slugged over

the head with the muzzle of the pistol, and fell - screaming.

The gunmen fled, and forced an elevator man to take them to the ground floor.

They dashed out. But the alarm had been given - and Columbus Circle is always well supplied with traffic cops, ^{who} ~~They~~ closed in, as the bandits tried a get-away down the street. There was a blaze of gunfire, and one policeman fell with a bullet in his leg. The gunmen scattered. One jumped into a nearby automobile, and forced the driver to start the car. ⁵⁷ But ^a ~~the~~ policeman was close behind. The gangster put his pistol to his head, and killed himself. Meanwhile there was a wild chase down the street, as another was captured. He has been identified as a man who was convicted in ^{that} a four hundred and twenty-seven thousand dollar Brooklyn hold-up some years ago - but was freed by the court. ~~The~~ third gunman escaped.

~~In the turmoil, the ace bookmaker, Frank Erickson, and the men with him, stole out of the Erickson room unnoticed, and vanished. They haven't been seen since. And tonight the police are investigating the ramifications of the bold gangster attempt at the New York Athletic Club.~~

PIGEONS

Today in the heart of New York, a large crowd gathered, and applauded ^{the} a flight of birds. That was something unusual - the multitude handclapping and cheering the arrival of pigeons. They were homing pigeons - playing their part in a novel experiment conducted by the United States Army.

It is known, of course, that even in mechanized modern war, pigeons are still used to carry messages. When all other lines of communications are down, a last resort is the homing bird - which wings its way straight and true. At Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, the Army has a pigeon center. It was decided to have a try-out with relation to the defense of New York. Suppose the needs of strategy called for pigeons to bear messages to a central point in the metropolis. Would the birds be able to find their way through the maze of lofty buildings and tall towers. That was the question to be answered.

^{here} So in the Plaza at Rockefeller Center, ^{in front of my window,} an army

detachment set up its pigeon headquarters, and six birds were taken by subway to outlying points - as far as ten miles away.

^{58 1/2} ~~We're all familiar with the miracles of homing that pigeons~~

This was done today, and it remained to be seen how the pigeons would get along. A crowd gathered in Rockefeller Center -- around the mobile pigeon loft. There was a while of waiting -- and then one homing bird was seen weaving its way among the high buildings of Radio City; struggling in the complex air currents set up in the streets of canyons, battling its way among spirals and eddies of air, coming home. Another pigeon appeared, and then another -- all six! And the crowd burst into applause, as each homer arrived, and fluttered to the perch. A military bird experiment that was picturesque and a thrill.

Now Hugh, you give us a thrill.