

L.J. - Sunoco. Thursday, Sept. 19, 1940.

The Nazi press today was breathing fury against Great Britain. ~~xxxx~~ Still more fury - that is. The Germans are claiming that R. A. F. warplanes bombed a children's hospital - as if the Nazis had not hit any hospitals in London. Anyway, the Hitler newspapers are demanding the most ferocious kind of retaliation - the last word in indiscriminate bombing.

This, however, did not begin today, not according to the official Berlin bulletin, which describes the bombers as aiming at military objectives in London. ~~xxxxxxx~~ However, The ^{of London today} bombing was indiscriminate enough - the Rain of Air Terror that has now become a ruthless routine, day after day.

Last night's bombing was about the most savage that London has suffered, and we have another mournful list of famous places blasted by high explosive. For example, the inner temple and its ancient library - a historic landmark. However, the treasures of manuscripts had been removed. Like the Domesday Book, that world famous inventory of England made by William the Conqueror. The Hall of the City Council was struck and seriously damaged. It's the center of civil services, which, however, are being maintained - in spite of the bombing.

More famous department stores destroyed. Like word that Selfridges was hit, London's best known store.

Both sides are resorting to a secret weapon. British censorship will not disclose what Britain's new instrument of war may be. We are merely told that it's an improved kind of defense against the German air attack and is working.

The new Nazi weapon is what they are calling a "comet" bomb. It is described as exploding a few feet above the ground. The effect is described by the London Dispatch as being like - "a sunburst." Apparently, the purpose is to spray incendiary materials, inflammable oil - and start fires.

The terrific power of the bombs that hit London was graphically revealed in a story that came through today. It related that a huge Nazi warplane loaded with bombs had been shot down in a workers' residential section. And had crashed with an explosion of its cargo of high explosive. The blast blew down a number of buildings, a whole string of them - with heavy casualties. Later on, the story was revised. It was not a whole plane load of high explosive that had done all the damage - just one bomb, a huge one.

The Duke of Kent, brother of the King, had ~~xxx~~ an adventure with one of those Nazi time bombs. He drove up to a barrier stopping people from going near the infernal machine. He was inquiring about it, when the time bomb roared.

Meanwhile, the British are striking back with constant fury at the German invasion bases - blasting all along the Nazi controlled coast.

UNION

Today in the London House of Commons the suggestion was made - a possible union between the British Empire and the United States. The question was taken up in the Parliamentary proceedings. It's all described as academic, with no actual proposal being put forward. Nevertheless, the subject of British-American union is a thing of such significance, such a tremendous and far reaching topic - that it is worth giving some close attention to what transpired today.

48
The story traces back to a British move early last summer - when France was about to collapse. At that time, the British Government proposed that if France would stay in the war and refrain from making a separate peace, Great Britain was prepared to offer a union of the British and French empires. The conditions of such a union were specified. The pooling of the French and British economic systems and their foreign policies, without touching the internal administrations of the two countries.

The proposal came to nothing. The French turned it down - and surrendered. The idea, however, has still remained alive in London - though not with reference to France. Keeping

in mind the same sort of plan that had been offered to Paris, many Britishers have been thinking in the direction of the United States. So much so that the matter today was brought up in Parliamentary debate.

9

It came up in the course of those questions which M. P.'s are privileged to ask of the Ministry. Richard Stokes, a Labor member, addressed a question to ^{Laborite} Clement Attlee, ^{now} Lord Privy Seal in the Churchill Cabinet. The query was ~~XXXX~~ phrased as follows, in very Parliamentary language:- "Whether in view of the approval of the policy of leasing bases to the United States and that of closer cooperation between the United States and the British Empire - he the Prime Minister will give assurance that before any union of the kind proposed to France be put forward, he will give an opportunity of the fullest possible discussion to the House."

From this it might seem that the M. P.'s have in mind the possibility that the Churchill Cabinet might go ahead on their own and propose some sort of British-American union - and the House of Commons wants a chance to discuss it in advance. It may be all in the academic stage - but it's much in mind.

FRANCE

France today announced her determination to defend her colonial empire as well as she can. This was strongly stated by the Foreign Minister of the Cabinet of Marshal Petain.

50
He indicated that France is determined to hold Indo-China, although ready to make concessions to Japan; ~~The Japanese are getting~~ preferred treatment in the commerce of Indo-China, ~~economic privileges - if not control.~~ The Japanese are also demanding the right to send soldiers through the French colony - military forces to attack the defense of nationalist China. Foreign Minister Baudouin admitted that France is negotiating with Tokyo under heavy Japanese pressure.

He said it couldn't be helped. France had to be what he called - "realistic". And that brought up a statement concerning the United States.

Washington is opposed to any Japanese ~~grab~~ grab ~~xx~~ of French Indo-China. But how far will the United States government go? Baudouin said that France had obtained a promise from Washington, but not enough of a promise. France had, in his own words, "never obtained anything more than a

promise that the United States would formally protest to Tokyo if Indo-China were attacked." To this he added:- "Japan today is such a tremendous power in the Far East that verbal protests are insufficient.

He declared that the Petain government was determined to hold the French colonies that are revolting, or show signs of revolt - against the policy of surrender to Nazi German. Force will be employed, said he. He referred to Great Britain, which is sponsoring the group headed by General DeGaulle - the ~~French~~ French element that refused to accept the Armistice with Hitler. Baudouin spoke of a British radio offensive - British broadcasts given in the Arab language and aimed at provoking trouble in French Morocco. Measures are to be taken against this British radio offensive.

Several days ago a French Naval ~~flotilla~~ flotilla steamed through the straits of Gibraltar. The squadron consisted of three cruisers and three destroyers, and it was rumored that they were on their way to Indo-China to check the Japanese. Today, however, the Foreign Minister announced that the flotilla

had gone to Dakar, on the Coast of West Africa, to check the British attempts to stir up trouble.

This news is somewhat surprising - considering the way the British blasted the French fleet at Oran to keep it from going back to France, where Hitler and Mussolini might get hold of it. Why did the British allow three French cruisers and three destroyers to pass through British controlled Gibraltar, when they were on their way to counteract British influence in West Africa?

In London tonight there's comment. The British are aware that the French ships will be used against British moves in West Africa. But the London opinion is that it's better to have the cruisers and destroyers in the Atlantic, where the British fleet can keep an eye on them - rather than in the Mediterranean, where they might pass into German - Italian control.

52

EGYPT

The British are striking hard at the Italian invasion of Egypt - though not with any direct counter-offensive on land. It's a counter-attack from the sea and sky. The British Fleet, steaming along the Egyptian coast, is bombarding shore positions the Italians have seized. Like Sollum and Sidi Barrani. One Italian column striking along the road near the coast, is more or less exposed to long range fire from the sea. The London Admiralty reports that British warships shelled Fascist positions with what London calls - "considerable success."

In the sky, R. A. F. warplanes are raiding the Italian supply bases that serve the Egyptian campaign. ~~striking at numerous points, inflicting heavy damage. London says the purpose is to hamper and harrass the invasion.~~ The British Admiralty reports the sinking of an Italian destroyer by air attack. ~~but this had already been announced by the Italians yesterday.~~

The invading forces in Egypt were comparatively quiescent today, after their rapid advance ^{of some} ~~17~~ eighty miles. Both the British and the Italians agree that the Fascist columns today were consolidating their positions, making ready for a

~~new advance. London points out that xxx there'll be harder
going for Mussolini's legions from now on.~~

The British are organizing their main defense at
xxx Maras Matruh. That's the end of the railroad line to
Alexandria. So the British will have the advantage of railroad
communications, while the Italians will have a long blistering
trail of sand baked desert behind them.

53

Rome is ^{now} attaching all sorts of importance to the conference that is being held by Italian Foreign Minister Count Ciano and Hitler's expert on statecraft, Von Ribbentrop. Rome, in describing the Nazi-Fascist deliberations, uses the term "of vast import."

Ribbentrop's sudden trip to Rome followed conferences in Germany with a ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Number One Spanish big shot, Suneg, ~~the~~ brother-in-law of Franco. This of course gives rise to rumors that Spain is in the thick of some new axis combination. And here Gibraltar is a keyword to mention.

3

Tonight's indications from Rome are that there may be another map-drawing carnival, a changing of frontiers. Rome indicates that the new German-Italian plans include the whole Mediterranean area from Gibraltar to the Balkans. There's a hint that all of this has to do with - peace, rearrangements to be applied to the termination of the war. The war, however, is by no means terminated, not the way Great Britain is battling. However, Rome seems to be gazing more or less confidently into the future. And today's discussions are said to be of such "vast import" that they may lead to another meeting between Mussolini and Hitler. Of still vaster import.

MYSTERY

Today a verdict was given in an affair of mystery at Cambridge, Massachusetts - an official verdict, and yet a touch of mystery still persists.

24
4

Last Monday they found the body of Montfort Schley Variell. He was a grandson of Rear Admiral Winfield Scott ~~xxxx~~ Schley of Spanish-American war fame - that same Admiral Schely under whose command the United States fleet won its victory over Spanish Admiral Cevera in Cuban waters. The father of Young Montfort Schley Variell was likewise a man of distinguished renown - a famous doctor, a world authority on the dread disease of leprosy. The youth himself was wealthy. He was a music student, training for the career of a concert pianist.

His body was found in the tiny kitchenette of his studio. No sign of violence, or any apparent cause of injury. There was a gas stove in the kitchenette but no trace of gas was found. Moreover the jet of the stove was turned off. And finally the local utilities company stated that no gas had been used.

The police investigation disclosed a singular episode.

On last Thursday evening Young Variell had a party in his studio at which he entertained his fiance and several friends. The piano student regaled them to a concert of phonograph records - a musical evening. In the midst of the feast of ~~sxx~~ symphonic tone, Variell spoke up suddenly and asked a question. Strange words. "If you were going to be executed," he cried, "what music would you like to ^{have} ~~be~~ played?"

"Executed," a strange word. The others paid not much attention to it, and discussed the ~~Mac~~ macabre question lightly. Young Variell settled it definitely. The Ninth Symphony of Beethoven would be the thing, said he. Later, when his body was found the police noted that on the phonograph in the apartment was a record -- a record of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Today the story is told that Young Variell was disappointed - disappointed with his career in music. He felt that he had failed to become a great pianist. The coroner's verdict reconstructs the following account. Last Friday, Friday the Thirteenth, Variell turned on the gas in the kitchenette of his studio, then went out, closing the door - and let the small room fill with the deadly vapor. In the living room he put

7
I
Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on the phonograph and played it,
listened and listened. Then he went into the kitchenette, shut
off the gas so that it would not go on escaping indefinitely.
And he lay down. During the three days that intervened before
the body was found the gas seeped out. Such was the ~~XXXXXXXX~~
coroner's verdict today, ~~B~~ but one point of mystery still remains:-
the statement of the gas company that no gas had been used in
the apartment -- gas that might have made an end to the son of
a world authority ^{on} ~~of~~ leprosy and a grandson of Admiral Schley.
X

COLOMBO

At Los ~~xxx~~ Angeles lives an aged woman, feeble, half blind. On Tuesday, a daughter of hers succumbed to illness, died. Should they tell the mother, break the news to her? That question was debated until today. It may seem a strange question - until we know the identity of the aged woman.

7

She's Mrs. Nicholas Colombo, mother of Russ Colombo - the brilliant radio and motion picture star who six years ago was killed in an accident with a gun. At that time the mother was ill, so ill the doctors said she would never survive the shock of the death of her son. So they never told her of Russ Colombo's untimely end. They kept up a fiction that he was alive - was away, and kept busy by his radio and motion picture jobs, and was unable to get home. He could only write to her: she got letters from him - regularly. Others of the family wrote the letters, supposedly from Russ Colombo to his mother - they sent one every week. That strange fiction has continued to this day, has never stopped - for six years.

Then on Tuesday last a daughter died. So, you see the question. Should they create a deception in the case of the daughter, too? Pretend that she also was still alive? That

might seem to be too much in the drama of a mother's illusion. The problem was considered for two days, and today the doctors gave a verdict. They said that the mother was now well enough to receive the news of her daughter's death, well enough to stand the shock.

But what of Russ Colombo? Ah, that is something else. They will not break to her that sad news of six years ago. Russ Colombo will still remain alive - so far as his mother is concerned. She will retain the illusion. Her remaining children will continue to send her the weekly letter supposedly from him. The ~~xxx~~ deception will be continued as long as she lives.

NEWSPAPER

Today the Portales, New Mexico, Daily News ~~printed~~ printed an apology -- and no wonder. It was a profound apology, a humble apology -- and rightly so. The editor begged pardon for a story he published recently -- a story about a wedding. Two young people of local social prominence got married, a local society wedding. The Portales Daily News published a dignified account of the ceremony. That is, it was dignified right until the last paragraph, which read as follows:- witnesses to the pretty ceremony were -- yearling, choice stock, steer calves. Yes that was unfortunate - getting the livestock report mixed up with the story about the society wedding. Some printer just ^{got} ~~got a couple of paragraphs~~ ^{some lines} of type mixed up. The names of the wedding guests were included in the livestock report to make things worse. So no wonder the Portales Daily News printed a profound and humble kind of ~~apology~~ apology

today ^{after saying about the wedding:-} witnesses to the pretty ceremony were -- yearling, choice stocks, steer calves! As Graham McNamee would say: Oh! Boy! -- and so long until tomorrow.

1/2

9

9 1/4