

Ships-1. L.T. - SUNOCO - WEDNESDAY - May 7, 1941

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The news tonight is that Uncle Sam is all set to commandeer all German and Italian merchant vessels in American harbors, as well as those belonging to the nations now under the heel of the Axis. Meaning about one hundred vessels.

The bill authorizing this was passed by the House today by an enormous majority -- two hundred and sixty-six to a hundred and twenty.

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The representatives who are against intervention tried to ~~xxx~~ copper the bill with amendments forbidding Mr. Roosevelt to turn the ships over to Britain, and preventing him from using the ships to carry munitions to Britain. One after another the amendments were beaten down by the Administration followers. The non-interventionists

made a last final struggle with ~~xxx~~ a motion to send the bill back to Committee. That was beaten, two hundred and twenty to a hundred and sixty. On the final balloting, forty more votes went over to the Government side.

Now the measure is up to the Senate, where the non-interventionist Senators, led by ~~Wheeler~~ Wheeler of Montana and Bennet Clark of Missouri, are all set for a battle royal. But the War Aid Bill passed the Senate as well as the House. And so will this one.

All those ships by the way are already being put into condition by Uncle Sam's Maritime Commission.

COMMONS

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This was a big day in the House of Commons, a particularly big day for Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his entire war cabinet. It was the test, a touchstone debate to decide whether the bellicose Churchill still had his Parliament and country behind him. The result was everything ^{Churchill} he could have asked. Any Prime Minister who gets a vote of confidence of four hundred and forty-seven to three may pretty safely say that he has the approval and good-will of his people. Only three solitary members refused that vote of confidence.

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There was a dramatic debate, with Churchill throwing down the gauntlet boldly, as he used the words:- "I am the one whose head should be cut off if we do not win this war." And he added, "I am very ready that this should be so because most of the members of this House would probably experience an even more unpleasant fate at the hands of the triumphant hun."

Churchill was evidently unwilling to admit any probability of losing Egypt and the Suez Canal, for he said the loss of the Nile Valley, the Suez Canal and Malta would be among the heaviest blows the British could sustain, but he added

they were determined to fight for them with all the resources of the Empire, and he said:- "We have every reason to believe we shall be successful."

~~Then~~ He announced that General Wavell had an army of nearly half a million men. ^{and used these decisive words:} ~~Then~~ he said:- "We intend to defend to the death and without thought of retirement the highly offensive outposts of Crete and Tobruk."

Concerning Iraq, he ^{remarked!} said:- "It may be that the Germans ~~xxx~~ will arrive there before we have crushed the revolt, in which case our task would be greater." But he did not admit that definitely, for he then continued:- "It might be that the revolt went off half-cocked in consequence of our landing of troops at Basra."

There was a particularly dramatic moment when Churchill replied to the criticism made yesterday by the former War Secretary, Hore-Belisha. Particularly his criticism about the shortage of tanks. Churchill remarked ironically that it was easy for Hore-Belisha to be far-seeing now that he was no longer a member of the government. "The British tank corps knew all about

the shortage of tanks when Hore-Belisha was Secretary. But," said Churchill, "my Right Honorable friend did not grasp that importance nor did he mention it to us."

That brought Hore-Belisha to his feet with an indignant cry, accusing Churchill ~~in~~ of indulging in heavy recriminations and saying it was quite ~~an~~ unworthy of something or other. Nobody could tell of what it was unworthy, because the House was in an uproar.

Churchill also paid a left-handed compliment to the criticisms of former Prime Minister David Lloyd George, ~~He~~ who declared that the Churchill Government had not been sufficiently candid with the public, hadn't told them the real facts about the Libyan and Greek campaigns. ^{Lloyd George} ~~L.G.~~ then spoke about us with the words, "If America is going to enable us first to catch up and then go beyond the Germans, she's got to do definitely more than any indication I have heard up to the present." ~~Then~~ Lloyd George added: "In my opinion, the longer the war, the better our chances. There is a dark passage to cross but there is America and thank God for the speech by Mr. Stimson."

Churchill in reply said that speech by L.G. had been unhelpful and unworthy of a great war leader. But he admitted, that, as he put it, "We need a good deal more help from the United States, and I expect that we shall get a good deal more."

STIMSON

On every corner ⁱⁿ of Washington today you could hear people discussing the Stimson radio speech. Of course the reaction was pretty much what one might expect. The isolationists, like Senator Tobey of New Hampshire, dismissed it as a virtual declaration of war. Senator Holman of Oregon said that those who advocate war ought to make sure that at least one member of their immediate family was in the fighting line.

52 { Colonel ~~Frank~~ Knox, the Secretary of the Navy, said his colleague of the War Department had made a forthright, courageous and high spirited utterance. ^{Many} ~~A lot of people~~ are waiting ^{See,} ~~eagerly~~ to hear what Knox himself will say tonight.

Abroad the ^{re-} ~~action~~ was also what you might have expected. Nazi spokesmen and newspapers declared that Stimson ought to be called a "war-monger" rather than a "War Minister." There was no official comment in Japan but the criticism was that Stimson's was the beginning of a series of speeches aiming to win popular support for having ships to Britain ^{re-} ~~convo~~yed by the American Navy.

In Rome the official Italian news agency said Stimson's address would bring grave and sad consequences to the United States.

COAST GUARD

The U. S. Coast Guard is now a part of the U.S.Navy. It was announced today by the Secretary of the Navy that all the sea-going activities of the Coast Guard are being transferred to this Department. President Roosevelt issued the order verbally ~~BY~~ about a week ago; and the switch has been going on quietly ever since. This doesn't mean any change for the men of the Coast Guard. The ships will still have the same crews. But they will definitely be a part of the Navy under naval officers. Lighthouse work, harbor patrols, shore duties such as life-saving, will still be under the command of the Coast Guard officers.

Secretary Knox was then questioned about the radio speech by Secretary of War Stimson last night. Was the Navy ready to carry out the job urged by the War Secretary, to see that the munitions made over here really reached Britain? Knox replied with an emphatic "yes." The United States fleet, he said, is always ready, but now readier than ever.

SINKINGS

A peculiar contribution to the news was made today by Admiral Emory S. Land, Chairman of the United States Maritime Commission. According to Admiral Land, the Nazis have not sunk nearly as many ships carrying munitions to Britain as everybody supposed. Land wrote ^{so} ~~as much~~ in a letter to Senator Vandenberg of Michigan, and Vandenberg made the letter public today.

Chairman Land asserted positively that out of two hundred and five vessels that sailed for British ports from this country, between December Thirtieth and April Thirtieth, only eight had been sunk. And the whole world over, ~~only~~ the Nazis have bagged only a hundred and fifty-eight vessels with a total tonnage of some *in four months.* seven hundred and eighty-one thousand tons. If this is true, it is quite different from what we have been led to believe from the announcements of even the British Admiralty. In fact it contradicts a remark that Land himself made on the Ninth of April. He then said that the British were losing ships at the rate of five million tons a year. If the total tonnage sunk in the first four months of this year is only some seven hundred and eighty thousand, the British are losing some two million three hundred and forty thousand tons a year.

RED CROSS

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Over a million dollars' worth of relief supplies from the American Red Cross are at the bottom of the Atlantic. This was made known today by Norman H. Davis, the Chairman. That

doesn't mean that the Nazis have sunk ships flying the Red Cross

Red Cross shipments were
flag, but some of the ~~stuff was consigned abroad~~ on ships that *flew*

~~had~~ no Red Cross flag, ~~in~~ vessels that carried other supplies in

addition to the ^{*in*} Red Cross cargoes. And eleven of them were sunk.

SEAMEN

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Little by little the Government is clamping down on German and Italian nationals in this country. You may recall that yesterday crews of the vessels that were seized in American ports were removed from Ellis Island and taken to an internment camp somewhere in the west.

Today immigration officers and policemen carried out a swift series of surprise raids in seven states of the Union. When they were all over, the Department of Justice had a hundred and sixty German sailors in custody. They are charged with having out-stayed their welcome, their permits to remain in the ^{U. S. A.} ~~United~~

~~States~~ ^{one} All of those hundred and sixty were formerly members of the crews of oil tankers. They had been dismissed by the oil company that employed them at the outbreak of the war, but had failed to go back to their Fatherland when their permits expired.

STRIKES

It's the Congress of Industrial Organizations - the C.I.O. - that is responsible for most of the strikes in national defense plants. So says William Green, President of the A.F. of L. Green was testifying before the Judiciary Committee of the House which is investigating strikes. Ninety per cent of the labor walkouts that have crippled defense production Green puts at the door of the C.I.O. ~~His~~ His own A .F. of L. said Green, was concerned in only five per cent of all the vital interruptions to work.

A.F. of L. President Green added that those were not his figures, but had come from the Office of Production Management in Washington.

TAXES

You may have to pay a lot more for your new car, if one influential New Dealer has his way: Leon Henderson, Administrator of Price Controls.

Henderson was a witness today before the House Committee on Ways and Means. He wants a twenty per cent federal excise tax on new automobiles - not only new ones but used cars too. And he wants a whopping federal tax on refrigerators - and washing machines. Probably he's a bachelor. Anyhow he says that motor cars and electric ice boxes and washers are competing with tanks, airplanes and cannon.

Leon Henderson wants those astronomical taxes not only to raise revenue, which they probably wouldn't do, but to prevent a lot of people from buying. If Congress were to listen to Price Control Administrator Henderson, an eight hundred dollar car would cost you nine hundred and sixty dollars. And even a five hundred dollar used car would cost you six hundred.

Our prime necessity, says Henderson, is to out-produce Hitler. Meaning that we must not only catch with with the Nazis in production, but, we must produce more - and in overwhelming numbers, more planes, ships and tanks.

CAROL

An American ship is bringing across the Atlantic two of the most notorious figures in contemporary European history. The great lovers, Ex-King Carol ~~and Ex-Queen~~ of Rumania and the once beautiful red-head Magda Lupescu, are on the EXCAMBION, bound for American waters. However, it is understood that they are not going to honor us. Some South American country - presumably Chile - is to have the privilege of affording them an asylum. They will leave the EXCAMBION at Bermuda and go to South America by way of Cuba.

The fleeing couple, we hear, are passing the time aboard ship, playing bingo, and the horse race game, and the slot machines in the ship's bar. The ex-King isn't a bit standoffish, chats with the other passengers; and in the bar they say the King takes nothing stronger than the foaming brew.

SECRETARIES

What does a secretary really think of her boss?

That's a secret lots of people would like to know. Perhaps it's a wise boss who refrains from knowing. Perhaps it's all the better for him if he doesn't know what she really thinks.

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But maybe we'll be able to find out from a dinner that's going to take place tonight, ^{when} the private secretaries of some two hundred tycoons are meeting to eat, drink and exchange compliments. Among them will be the private secretary of Wendell Wilkie, Herbert Hoover, of Tom Dewey, and of the Right Honorable Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain. It's the First Annual Dinner of an organization called the Seraphic Secretaries of America, organized by the volatile

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F. Darius Benham, the same Benham who organized the Circus Saints

Freddy's always organizing something - his motto is, "anything but silence"
and Sinners Club. Maybe the secretaries will tell the truth

In the meantime let's have
tonight, ~~and let us know what they really think of us. What do,~~

~~you suppose, Hugh?~~ *some truths from*
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you, Hugh.