

L.I. - Sunoco. Friday, June 7, 1940.

WAR.

The latest war bulletin from France is just in. It states that French advance forces have fallen back all along the battle front. They've withdrawn for limited distances along the line from the English Channel to the Chemin Des Dames in the area of Soissons. German tank columns captured the ridge called Chemin Des Dames. The retirement is along the western stretch of a hundred and twenty miles, where the Germans have been launching their most violent attacks. The French war office declares that the withdrawal was strategic - for the purpose of straightening the line and taking up stronger positions. This latest bulletin came after a day of dramatic war news.

The giant clash of arms was christened with a new name today. The allied Supreme Commander, General Weygand, called it - "The Battle of France." That indicates the supreme importance of the cataclysmic struggle, which now has completed its third day of overwhelming violence.

The earlier Paris reports stated that the power of the German assault ~~has~~ trebled, three times as great as before. This was first taken to mean that the Nazis have hurled three times as many men ~~xx~~ into the battle, which would bring the assaulting columns to more than a million. But a French Army spokesman later explained - it is not the number of men that was multiplied by three, but the power and fury of the drive. Paris said that the French line was holding, intact - though the Nazi legions continued to make advances, Paris explained that the essential idea of the Weygand line was - depth, flexible defensive arrangements. Even if the motorized enemy does thrust in at points, he is stopped - by depth.

The skill and determination of the defense was confirmed by Berlin which stated that the French were offering the bitterest

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opposition and that the new defensive arrangements were ingenious, a problem for the Nazi Commanders. Paris told of huge losses of German tanks, hundreds shot out of the battle. Announcement of a new anti-tank weapon, sky weapon - anti-tank planes, which fire with ~~xxxxxxx~~ cannon and blast the lumbering monsters on the ground. Also - much less German ~~xxxx~~ dive bombing. The belief <sup>is</sup> expressed that the Germans have lost so many of those Stuka planes that the dive bombing arm is greatly weakened.

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In London, the situation at the battlefront was tentatively described in these words - "Pretty good." Yet British military authorities are cautious about the real aim of the German drive. They say they're not sure that the number-one Nazi assault has yet been launched. It may be that the present attack is only a feeling out process. British opinion <sup>is</sup> to the effect that maybe the fighting at the Western <sup>End,</sup> the Channel <sup>is</sup> end of the line, is not the real thing at all. They suspect that the German High Command will launch its major blow on the other side, where the recently constructed Weygand Line joins the permanent and powerful Maginot Line - an attempt to drive along the inside of

that Maginot Line.

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One thing was to be noted about the German military bulletins. They were brief today, said little - and they were the same way yesterday. The German High Command claimed advances all along the front, the Weygand Line penetrated in many places, German columns driving through. But the communique issued by Berlin was exceedingly reticent about naming places. Not specifying points captured, to show how far the advance has really gone. Berlin said that detailed battle reports were not likely to be given out for several days. In fact, the German military report issued today used a phrase that sounds most cautious and tentative. It announced the capture of what it called, "Valuable starting points for future operations." And that <sup>sounds</sup> ~~was~~ the very reverse of anything decisive.

Later came a bulletin from Paris - that a heavy German drive across the River Aisne had been savagely beaten back. The Nazi troops that got across the river - annihilated. And then, finally, this latest, that the French advance=forces have fallen back all along the line, retiring to stronger positions.

ITALY.

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The news from Rome tonight has a flare of drama. With the increasing possibility of war between Italy and Great Britain, an army of fighting men has gathered in the British African province of Kenya, right at the border of Italian Ethiopia. These soldiers, eight thousand of them, are Ethiopians - and they're commanded by Haile Selassie. The King of Kings, driven into exile four years ago, when Fascist Italy conquered Ethiopia. Now, back at the head of a force of his fighting men, ready to attack the conqueror, if war between Italy and Britain should come. The lion of Judah seeking to regain his kingdom. That's the report which flashed in Italy today.

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However, says Rome, it may be one of Haile Selassie's former generals who commands the eight thousand Ethiopians. That's the more likely version, because when the Haile Selassie story broke in Britain today - the information was volunteered that the former Emperor was still in England, at the place where he has been residing all along.

Rome reports that on both sides of the Kenya-Ethiopia frontier, military forces are gathering, directed by the British

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on the one side <sup>by</sup> and the Italians on the other. The soldiers are mostly natives, trained by Europeans. The Italians have twenty thousand, mostly Askaris, the same black troops who aided Italy to conquer Ethiopia, Also - a contingent of native Ethiopians. These are commanded by Ras Hailu. That name too is of reminiscent memory - the ~~great~~ chieftain Ras Hailu who was the ~~bitter~~ enemy of Haile Selassie. When the King of Kings fled from his realm, Ras Hailu took command at Addis Abada on a night of terror - just before the Italians arrived. Yes, dramatic - the picture of Haile Selassie seeking to regain his kingdom through the turmoil of the present war, and his old enemy Ras Hailu there to oppose him.

Whatever these romantic sidelights may be, the fact is that there's tension on the border of the two British and Italian colonies - armed forces facing each other. And Rome thinks that some hostile incident there, some clash, might ~~xxxxxx~~ provoke the entrance of Italy into the war. Some incidents have already been reported - such as might be used as a Fascist pretext.

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Tonight there are new signs that Mussolini is about to take the jump - there have been increasing indications of this day after day for weeks. Egypt reports that the population of the great seaport of Alexandria is to be evacuated, beginning tomorrow. Egypt ~~of course~~ would be the focal point of conflict if Italy should join Hitler against the Allies.

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At New York, the Manager of the Italian Line announced today that the Government at Rome has ordered all ships in neutral ports to stay there - and all Italian vessels on the high sea<sup>s</sup> are directed to sail to neutral ports. A number in the Atlantic and Pacific are told to go to harbors along the coast of the United States. All Italian shipping off the high seas - that does sound like war.



ARMAMENT.

More than fifty naval airplanes of the United States fleet arrived in Buffalo today - for delivery to the Allies. They're to be passed along to Great Britain and France in a two-way transaction. The Navy is trading-in the planes to the Curtis Company and will get newer types of skycraft in return. And the Company will sell the traded-in planes to the Allies. The word is that in this fashion Britain and France will get several hundred United States Navy and Army aircraft, *at once.*

President Roosevelt today took cognizance of the two-way aviation deal, and stated that he <sup>is</sup> going to ask Congress for authority to do the same sort of thing with surplus army artillery and rifles. He ~~explained~~ explained that under the law he has a right to trade-in airplanes and ammunition, but he can only sell guns for cash. He'll have to have a Congressional enactment to permit the trading-in of cannon and rifles.

The President explained that the army has a huge lot of old guns left over from the World War. He said that hitherto there has been no large demand for such deteriorating war material. Now, however, the desperate state of affairs in Europe has produced a



market - the Allies willing to buy. The President made no mention of the angle of helping Great Britain and France. He took the attitude that the trading-in of surplus military equipment for resale to the Allies - was a good business deal.

These arms transactions provoked a flare-up in Congress today, with Republican legislators declaring that the United States is being taken into the European conflict. Said Congressman Curtis of Nebraska:- "This country is being ~~irreparably~~ plunged toward war." And this sentiment was ~~vigorously~~ echoed by ~~sundry~~ other lawmakers.

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The arms transactions were just as vigorously defended by administration supporters. Democratic Representative Faddis of Pennsylvania shouted at the Republicans:- "Anybody," he cried, "who reads the newspapers and his mail knows that sentiment is overwhelmingly behind the ~~statement attributed to~~ President <sup>!"</sup> ~~Roosevelt~~ ~~that the frontiers of this country are on the Rhine."~~

MILITARY TRAINING.

Today, the attention of President Roosevelt was called to an editorial that appeared in the New York Times this morning. The President said he had read only part of the editorial, and added that he liked what he had seen of it. He specified that he had read the first paragraph - and liked it. So let's see what was in the first paragraph of today's editorial in the New York Times.

It reads this way:- "The time has come when, in the interest of self-protection, the American people should at once adopt a national system of universal compulsory military training. We say this," adds the Times, "as a newspaper which has never before believed in the wisdom of such a policy in time of peace. We say it because the logic of events drives us remorselessly to this conclusion." So reads that first paragraph which the President says he likes.

The editorial goes on to survey the violence of Nazi war power in Europe and points out that Hitler has repeatedly declared himself to be the sworn foe of what he calls "Pluto-Democracies." Of these Pluto-Democracies, remarks the Times, "we are the largest,

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richest and softest."

This is the latest in a demand for compulsory military service, a demand which has been heard in various places. The day before yesterday, the New York Herald Tribune advocated the same thing - have this country adopt the European system of training every young man for army service. And now - the President gives an informal okay.

Col. Tobin of the famous old 7th. Regiment tells me that his regiment has just been changed to the 207th Anti-aircraft, to defend Manhattan Island and Father Knickerbocker.

SECURITIES.

In Washington today Secretary of the Treasury, Morgenthau signed what is called - "Contraband control over securities." Postal and customs authorities are ordered to be on the lookout for stocks and bonds that Nazi Germany seized in the conquered countries - Norway, Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Luxembourg. It is believed that the Nazis are trying to ~~sneak~~ sneak into the United States valuable paper <sup>that have</sup> they grabbed and turn it into cash over here. The Government doesn't propose to allow this to be done. So today's order establishes inspection over all imported securities. Any sent over here from the five captured countries will be impounded - held for future disposition.

WAGNER ACT.

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The administration sustained a defeat in Congress today, when the lower house voted on changes to be made in the Wagner Act. The House decreed a series of alterations, including one of key importance. This concerns the present National Labor Relations Board. Abolish the N. L. R. B. and substitute a new agency to take its place - a body deprived of the administrative power which the present board enjoys. Those powers - which have been much under attack. The administration forces in Congress battled hard against the changes, and so did the C. I. O. But the advocates of revising the Labor Law won out.

All of this, however, <sup>still</sup> may be a little academic. The bill must now go to the Senate, where there's little chance of any action. (The Senate is almost sure to put the whole thing over until the next session - unless, because of the war emergency, Congress stays in Washington through the summer.)

LOCUSTS.

This is Seventeen Year Locust Year, and many parts of the country are due for a swarming visitation. They appear every seventeen years, and are about due now. The south, the east, and part of the Middlewest will see millions upon millions - and will hear them. That's the point emphasized today by Dr. Frank Lutz, <sup>American</sup> Curator of Entomology at the Museum of Natural History. He points out that the Seventeen Year Locust is one of the most audible of insects, with a loud singing tone. The noise the myriad millions make has caused people to think that they're very destructive - and do a lot of damage to trees and plans<sup>t</sup>. But that's an illusion. The Entomological Curator says that recent studies have revealed that the harm done by the swarms of the <sup>m</sup>~~Seventeen Year Locust~~ is very little - negligible. So don't be alarmed when they ~~begin~~ <sup>swarms of 17 yr. locusts</sup> start coming out of the ground and <sup>when they start ing</sup> swarm over fences and trees - as they're scheduled to do any day now. ~~And while we are waiting for the 17 yr. locust~~ ~~And now for something~~ ~~something~~ ~~about sun oil from Hugh.~~

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BRANDING.

At Salem, Massachusetts, the police are trying to check up on one of the most fantastic stories ever told. It's a wild one related by a man whose head has been shaved and whose body has been branded with curious symbols.

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His name is Fred Stiles, and he's sixty-one years old. He states that last night two men and two women in a car kidnapped him, and drove him for a couple of hours to an isolated farmhouse. There they stripped his clothes off and branded him with the initials T. S. A. Also - U. S. A. And with the figures - eighteen seventy-six, <sup>1</sup>nineteen forty. Then they shaved his head, compelled him to shave the head of one of the women. After which they made him go through a marriage ceremony with the woman whose head he had shaved.

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They kept him all night, but today he contrived to escape, and made his way across the fields. As he had no clothes, he borrowed some from a scarecrow. He got back to town and told the police his story, which they are now trying to fathom. It seems unfathomable. *Can you fathom it Hugh?*

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