

COAL

C.I. - Sunoco. Monday, March 31, 1941.

Conrad

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Barring a miracle, the big coal strike starts at midnight.

Three hundred and seventy-eight thousand soft coal miners will quit work, and cut off eighty-five per cent of the American supply of

bituminous coal. ^{All of which} ~~It~~ will have a ^{our} critical effect upon defense

^{ies.} ~~industry, as everybody admits.~~

The strike will include

~~This will bring out~~ miners in Pennsylvania, West Virginia,

Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Tennessee, Illinois,

Indiana and Alabama. *But,*

will not
The shortage of fuel ~~won't~~ be felt for two or three weeks,

~~as there is a considerable stock on hand.~~

The imminence of the strike brought repercussions in Congress. A California representative introduced a bill making it treasonable to strike against the United States or in defense industries. Congressman Martin Dies took the occasion to announce that if labor unions don't purge themselves of un-American elements, he will offer a law to forbid the certification of unions that include Communists and Nazis.

Troubles reached a crisis in the Allis-Chalmers strike at

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Milwaukee. The strikers ^{there} broke out into violence against the strike-breakers. A mob of three thousand pickets assembled outside the plant, and stopped cars taking strike-breakers into the factory. Thereupon the Milwaukee police drove a six ton armored car into the crowd and sent the mob of strikers to the right-about with tear bombs.

SHIP SEIZURE

Here's the first sequel to the seizure of those Danish, Italian and German ships by Uncle Sam. ^{PWR} ~~The~~ government has issued warrants for the arrest of the Italian and German seamen, seven hundred and seventy-five Italians and about one hundred Germans. The idea is to deport them. The immigration service ~~authorities~~ charges that they have overstayed their welcome, exceeded the sixty day permit to remain in this country which the immigration laws grant them. ^{IT} The officers and sailors of the thirty-nine Danish merchant ships have been left, out of courtesy, aboard the seized vessels. That is, aboard each Danish vessel, six ^{men} ~~marriners~~ are allowed to remain. ^{The others} ~~These~~ have been turned over to the immigration authorities, but it is understood ^{these Danes} ~~that they~~ will receive preferential treatment. The Italians and Germans will be sent back to their ^{respective} countries.

In Portland, Oregon, the United States Attorney has filed charges of sabotage against the fifty-two officers and men of the Italian motorship which Uncle Sam's Coast Guard seized there.

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The master of the Italian freighter seized at Houston,

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Texas, declared that it was the Italian naval attache at Washington who had ordered him to wreck the engines of his vessel. He received those orders last Friday, whereupon his crew with blow torches and files did as much damage as they could, Friday night and Saturday. By the way the crew of that Italian freighter at Houston were tickled to death when they were arrested, said they didn't want to fight and didn't want to go home and hoped they would be interned.

The total number of ships now seized in American harbors has gone up to sixty-nine. Secretary of State Hull made the statement that the government of the United States had taken this action only because the ships were being sabotaged and there was danger of their being scuttled to the detriment of American harbors and navigation. So far, said the Secretary, nobody has questioned the absolute lawfulness of the government's action.

Another question was brought up in the United States today: Will the government next take over the French merchant vessels in our harbors? If so that would include the great eighty-two thousand ton luxury liner NORMANDIE. One French freighter steamed away from her berth in the Hudson River today and anchored off Staten Island. She had received the permission of the State Department to take a cargo

of coal from Norfolk, Virginia to Martinique.

When the President reached Florida today it was given out that the seizure of the ships had been at his own personal request.

A late bulletin from Washington reports that both Germany and Italy have entered a formal protest against the seizure of the vessels. This, in spite of the fact that both Secretary Hull and President Roosevelt clearly indicated that any protests would be rejected.

JUGOSLAVIA

Again all eyes are focused on Yugoslavia. Not in twenty-six years has that country been in such a ferment of excitement.

Bulletins have been pouring out from Belgrade all day.

The Belgrade government is taking the strongest measures to defend the country against a Nazi invasion. Prime Minister General Simovitch issued a proclamation to prevent the Yugoslav armies from being hampered by such waves of refugees as contributed to the defeat of the French. For a while there was a quick rush of people from Belgrade and other places near the frontier to points in the interior of Serbia. So General Simovitch proclaimed that the interests of the state demand that everyone

keep to his house and if necessary die at his own door for the good of country, king and people. To which he added, "the army, air force and navy of the kingdom are ready to fulfill their duties." He also commanded all government officials, particularly municipal authorities and priests, to stand by. The responsible ministers, he added, will permit only such evacuation as has been planned, and only on written order. All meetings not in harmony with the present situation are forbidden, no large crowds allowed. Yugoslav troops tonight are concentrated on the borders of Albania, Greece and Hungary.

The Nazi Minister to Belgrade is leaving for Berlin, and the Yugoslav Minister to Hitler has already returned to Belgrade.

Nazi newspapers have been bubbling over with accusations that Germans were being mistreated in Yugoslavia. Of course the world has taken those accusations with a grain of salt ever since the Czechoslovakia business. But some color was given to the charges in this instance when the Belgrade government issued a communique expressing regret for recent incidents involving Germans.

It is reported unofficially that General Simovitch has offered Hitler a non-aggression treaty instead of the tripartite alliance with Germany, Italy and Japan. As a matter of fact, the government of Prince Paul, the Regent, tried to come to just such terms with the Nazis but were turned down. Hitler wouldn't hear of it.

General Simovitch still has the knotty problem of the Croats. The latest word from Belgrade is that the Croats have promised to support General Simovitch, with the leader of the Croats as Vice-Premier, although last week he refused to cooperate.

Almost as many bulletins have been coming out of Berlin as from Belgrade. A story from the Nazi capital is that relations between Germany and Jugoslavia are getting rapidly worse. The Nazis complain that in spite of promises, the anti-Nazi demonstrations in Jugoslavia are increasing. A phrase used in Berlin is that the Hitler government is maintaining an attitude of ice cold observation.

The Berlin side of the story has its comic aspect. One phase is that the Nazi generosity some day must come to an

end. Yes, those are the words - "Nazi generosity."

They also complain that the demonstrations in
Jugoslavia seriously endanger the prestige of the German Reich.

TURKEY

A surprise note from Turkey. The Turkish Ambassador at Washington made inquiries at our State Department today, urgent inquiries. The question is, bluntly -- what are the chances for American aid to the Turks? They consider themselves entitled to help, both because of their position as Allies of Great Britain and because they have professed their ~~inf~~ firm intention of resisting any aggression.

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That puts the Balkan crisis in a somewhat different light. There ^{has} been considerable guessing that Turkey might ^{finally} yield to Nazi pressure, ~~if brought face to face with invasion and conquest.~~ But those questions asked by the Turkish Ambassador at the State Department today make ~~it~~ it clear that the Turks are in earnest, and the episode brought up conjectures of political and ~~political~~ military cooperation between Turkey and Yugoslavia. It even points to the possibility of an ~~anti~~ anti-Axis Balkan Front -- Yugoslavia, Greece, Britain and Turkey against the German^s, with the Italians tottering, ~~so badly that they don't~~ present any serious danger. Turkish newspapers today were ~~talking vigorously about~~ ^{discussing} an alliance between Turkey and ~~Yug~~ Yugoslavia.

VICTORY

A message went out today from His Britannic Majesty's thirty-six thousand ton dreadnought WARSPITE, the flagship of the Eastern Mediterranean fleet. It was radioed by Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the fleet, and it was one of the shortest messages on record. It was addressed to the officers and men of the fleet, and contained just two words - "Well done!"

After smashing the cream of the Italian navy, King George's battlefleet returned to harbor without a scratch and without a casualty! Yes, after one of the spectacular naval victories of modern times. So it appears as we add up what Admiral Cunningham and his sailors did: they sank three of Mussolini's ten thousand ton cruisers, and two destroyers. They also inflicted heavy damage on one of the two thirty-five thousand ton capital ships that the Italians have, and, more casualties are listed among the possibilities. The British believe that a third Italian destroyer went down, also a five thousand ton cruiser. And several other Italian men-o-war were damaged.

Some thrilling details came to light today. (The

Italians were sighted by the British light cruiser, H.M.S. ORION, a seven thousand ton scout. The ORION was then fifteen miles away from the Italian fleet. This was early on Friday.

Vice-Admiral Whipple, in command of the light forces of the British fleet, promptly notified his Commander-in-Chief, and the main fleet promptly proceeded under forced draft, steaming towards

the Italians.) Vice-Admiral Whipple, whose ~~flagship~~ flag flew aboard the ORION, then had a difficult task. It was his job to

act as a decoy, keeping on the horizon, luring the Italians on, and dodging the heavy long distance fire of the one first class

battleship ~~the~~ with the Italian fleet. British naval officers

believe that the capital ship was the VITTORIO VENETO, which was hurling its huge shells at the ORION from sixteen miles away.

By nine o'clock Friday evening Admiral Cunningham ordered his fleet to

close position. At ten twenty-six P.M., the British flagship sighted

a number of darkened ships on the starboard bow. There were three

cruisers and two or four destroyers. On the port beam, the fleet

was ~~charged~~ ^{challenged} by another ^{Italian} vessel. A few seconds later, one of the

British destroyers switched ^{her} ~~on~~ searchlights ^{on} and revealed one of the

ships in the enemy line as an eight inch cruiser, the FIUME.

Thereupon, ~~the~~ the terrific fifteen inch armament of the WARSPITE

opened at close range. The first broadside struck home and the

Fascist cruiser ^{Fiume} became a mass of flame from bridge to stern.

The WARSPITE then switched its fire to the next Italian ship in

line, the ZARA.) Again one salvo set the Italian cruiser ablaze.

(By now, Sir Andrew Cunningham's entire battlefleet was in action.)

But Mussolini's cruisers seemed to be ideally placed for a torpedo

attack against the British. The Italians turned and fired their

tubes. But Admiral Cunningham altered the course of his fleet

and engaged with his main and secondary armaments. Cunningham

then ordered his destroyers in to finish up the burning cruisers,

which they did with their torpedoes, sinking three cruisers and two

destroyers.

(When two great modern fleets join battle, the fighting doesn't last long. One side or the other is quickly finished.

The relics of Mussolini's armada were in full flight soon after

midnight,) not much more than an hour and a half after the powerful

WARSPITE had let loose her first salvo. There were scattering

engagements here and there throughout the next day, British men-o-war chasing the Italians.

(Some nine hundred Italians, officers and men, were rescued and made prisoner,) including the captain of the cruiser POLA. He told the British that the Italian battleships so heavily damaged was the VITTORIO VENETO, but Admiral Cunningham doesn't quite believe him, thinks it might be a ruse. Whatever that Italian battleship, she was delivering all she had until struck by three British aerial torpedoes. Whereupon she turned and fled at reduced speed. The British are sure she was seriously ~~damaged, and~~ damaged, and might even have gone down before she could get back to harbor. Even if she didn't sink the British Admiral believes it will be months before she will be able to put to sea again.

British naval experts today are declaring that this Italian defeat was due largely to the fact that Mussolini has refused to build airplane carriers. The Duce didn't believe in them.

The Italians, obviously, steamed into a trap, unaware that the more powerful British eastern Mediterranean battlefleet was in the offing. Good air scouting from an airplane carrier, would have given them full information as to the whereabouts of Sir Andrew Cunningham's ships.

As the score now stands, Italy has only one-third of all her battleships left; two-thirds of her lighter six inch cruisers, less than half her eight inch cruisers, less than seventy-five per cent of her destroyers, and not more than sixty-five per cent of her submarines.

In Rome, the Fascists admitted they have lost five men-o-war. As the Italians describe it, there were three medium tonnage cruisers and two destroyers that went down. And, they claim to have sunk one British cruiser and damaged two other units. All of which is denied by the British who insist that their battlefleet returned to harbor unscathed and without one single casualty.

AFRICA FOLLOW VICTORY

Here's news concerning the Duce's crumbling empire. Cairo reports that the South African troops invading Ethiopia are pushing right onto Addis Ababa. The railway line has been cut, the famous line from Addis Ababa to Djibouti, about which we heard so much during the Italian conquest of Haile Selassie's country. The Africanders have occupied Diredawa, on top of seizing Harar, second most important city in Ethiopia.

This news on top of the British naval victory has led to a highly optimistic prediction in London. British experts are going so far as to discuss the possibility that these defeats might bring about Mussolini's complete withdrawal from the war.

And now Hugh.