

L.I. - Sunoco. Monday, April 24, 1939.

COAL

Here's the latest on
the coal situation in the east here

~~is rapidly getting no better.~~

When the strike of Appalachian miners began, there were about forty-one million tons of soft coal on hand. At the end of last week, it ^{was} ~~is~~ figured that this had shrunk to thirty-one million, three hundred thousand; about enough to last one month, ~~thirty-one days, if it were~~ split up evenly among all the people, ~~retailers, industries, railroads, power plants, and so forth,~~ who need it.

Maybe that estimate is too generous. Here's an ominous dispatch from Norfolk, Virginia. Officials of the Southern Railroad report that there are only twelve thousand, fifty-eight tons of coal on the piers of Hampton Roads. A year ago, there were half a million!

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There's no sign of any end to that deadlock between the miners and the coal operators. There's gossip floating around today that ^{the strike} ~~it~~ has become a powerful weapon in the fight between the American Federation of Labor and the C.I.O. As everybody knows, John L. Lewis, head of the C.I.O., is also the boss of the miners. If he gets the worst of it in the coal strike, it will weaken the C.I.O. ~~And it's believed this is the reason why the government~~

has assigned no less a big-wig than John R. Steven, the head of the Conciliation Service, to try to settle that strike before any damage is done.

Meanwhile, the National Bituminous Coal Commission may have to take a hand. If the supply of soft coal gets any lower, there's danger of prices being put up to sky-high figures. The Coal Commission has the power to fix maximum prices and save the consumers from being charged too much.

REORGANIZATION

Congress is bracing itself for a shock. There's a message coming over from the White House tomorrow, and it's ^{to} ^{be} about the reorganization of the government bureaus. But trepidations in Congress are mild compared to the anxiety among some of the big wigs of those bureaus to be reorganized.

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Washington had some inkling today of what President Roosevelt is putting into his executive order. First he's going to group ^{under one head} all the agencies that lend government money, ~~under one head~~. That would ^{unify} ~~knock together~~ the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Home Owners Loan Corporation, and Federal Housing Administration. Next Mr. Roosevelt proposes a Public Works Agency to combine P.W.A., W.P.A., and the Public Building Department of the Treasury. Then he wants to erect a Security Agency which would merge the Social Security Board and the United States Public Health Service which so far has been under the Treasury.

One of the New Deal big shots who ~~isn't going to~~ ^{may not} like one part of this order is ~~Brother~~ Jesse Jones, Chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. If the R.F.C. is

to be lumped with H.O.L.C. and F.H.A., it will probably be put under the control of the Secretary of Commerce, and that would make Jesse Jones subordinate to Harry Hopkins. And that, it is said, he won't care for.

Of course Congress has something to say about all this. But if it doesn't register any objection within sixty days, the executive order will become ~~law~~ a law.

S.E.C.

As many people expected, President Roosevelt's choice for the new head of the Securities Exchange Commission is Leon Henderson. He has been in ^{the} government service ^{for} five years, a part of the time in the Works Progress Administration. For the past year he has been Secretary of the Joint Committee studying Monopoly. His nomination was sent to the Senate today.

SUN OIL MUST

State legislatures still in session are trying to wind up their work and most of them are struggling with finances. In this connection an interesting bit of tax information is given to me from W. P. Taylor of Harrisburg, Penna. The biggest contribution to state revenues is collected in pennies: the gasoline tax. Last year gasoline taxes, just about a billion dollars, exceeded all wages, salaries and dividends disbursed by the oil industry. Thus the Sun Oil Company in 1938 collected for public treasuries, thirty-four million, three hundred and seventy-five thousand, five hundred and sixty-four dollars, taxes on gasoline and lubricants, while its total of salaries, and wages was only twenty-seven million, two hundred and seventy-nine thousand, nine hundred and fifty-four dollars. These are largely poor man's taxes too, -- some thirty million people pay them, and there aren't that many rich folks by a long shot.

ARCHBISHOP

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The big New York headline today was the appointment of a new Archbishop for the metropolis. And it's a surprise headline. (A Massachusetts prelate, the Most Reverend Francis J. Spellman, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston, now becomes Archbishop of New York.) The general opinion was that the appointment would go to New York's Bishop Stephen Donahue, who has been Administer of the Archdiocese. π Bishop Spellman of Boston has had an brilliant career -- particularly in Rome. (He served in the Vatican under the present Pope when the latter was Secretary of State. As the New York Archbishop, he will undoubtedly get the red hat of a Cardinal.)

This archepiscopal appointment brings to me an odd reminiscence, a broadcast reminiscence. In my first year on the radio I got into hot water, and was saved by those two prelates -- Donahue and Spellman. It was in the Spring of 1931, when for the first time a Pontiff of the Church of Rome gave a radio broadcast. My sponsor then was the LITERARY DIGEST, and they had a rule against ^{reporting} ~~mentioning~~ any other broadcast event --

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on the assumption that people would already have listened to it. --
talks about something on the radio that has just been on the radio?
Obviously however, the first Papal broadcast was something

exceptional. After due deliberation it was decided that I should not tell about the Pope's broadcast on the evening after it occurred, but should wait and get some human interest sidelights for the following night. So I went on the air, and said nothing about the broadcast by Pope Pius the Eleventh.

Then came the deluge -- of denunciation. I was hit by a thundering barrage of telegrams and letters of protest. And I knew I had made ^{quite a} ~~my biggest~~ mistake.

Well, I could only go on with the original idea of giving human interest sidelights on the following night. Luckily the human interest was there, and here's what I was able to say. Let me read a bit of broadcast that I gave eight years ago.

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The English translation of the Pope's address (I ^{said}~~told~~)
was spoken into the microphone at the Vatican by Monsignor Francis
Spellman, of Whitman, Massachusetts. Then there was a bit of
private radio talk between one of the radio experts at the
Vatican and Monsignor Stephen Donahue, in New York. Millions of
people (I related,) listened in to that brief snatch of dialogue.
Monsignor Stephen Donahue, in New York, said to the Vatican
expert, 'And by the way, will you tell Monsignor Spellman that I
was asking for him?' ^oThen over the air (I continued) broke in
another voice, 'I'm HERE, STEVE.' It was Monsignor Spellman
speaking, and Monsignor Donahue told him, 'We just telephoned to
your mother, Frank, and she heard you fine.' That was true, (my
story went on.) Up at Whitman, Massachusetts, two old people,
Mr. and Mrs. William J. Spellman, sat and listened while their
son, a prelate in Rome, broadcast the Pope's message for the
English-speaking peoples of the world. (My radio story concluded
with the statement:) Monsignor Spellman, by the way, used to be
the star shortstop on the Whitman High School baseball team."

That human interest bit saved the situation, and I got
a flock of telegrams and letters, taking back the scholding I had got.

BARTER

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It looks as though Uncle Sam were going to take one leaf out of Hitler's book. We seem to be about to go into the business of foreign commerce by barter. Our ambassador to London, Joe Kennedy, has been dickering with the British government to trade American cotton and wheat for British rubber and tin.

Nothing has been settled yet, just preliminary conversations.

Some questions were put to Secretary of State Hull in Washington about this today. He admitted that negotiations were going on and said he was even considering similar discussions with the governments of Belgium and the Netherlands. The idea is to try to get rid of some of our big cotton and wheat surpluses. Also to get materials that might be cut off in case of a war in Europe.

JOHNSON

The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations heard some outspoken opinions today. They had summoned as a witness our colleague General Hugh ^{crack 'em down} ~~Fin-Rants~~ Johnson. He was testifying to help the Senators make up their minds about changes in the ²Neutrality Act. And he said: "We learned in Nineteen Eighteen that democracy can wage war against dictatorship only if that democracy transfers itself into an even more ruthless dictatorship."

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77 Hugh Johnson ought to know, he drafted the Draft Law and was right in the thick of things at Washington!

The Senators asked him about the suggestion that the President should be permitted to name nations that broke treaties and apply sanctions against them. ^{Gen. Johnson} ~~The office~~ replied; ~~then~~ "Congress has no right to stake so great a hazard on the judgment of any single individual."

The General then said something we should all remember: "You can't have free speech or free press in modern war." And he added: "Perhaps my friend, Mr. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, will regiment what is written and published,"
and Mr. McNinch, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission,

~~will rule what can be said over the air.~~ And he explained: "I

~~use these names only as symbols.~~" And he continued: "It has

been suggested by the highest authority that ^{what} I am saying gives
such aid and comfort to the enemy as will gain for ~~me~~ ^{them} statues

in Berlin and Rome. That comes close to calling free speech

~~barbed the General.~~
treason," ^{he} "I don't want any statues in Rome or Berlin," said ~~Johnson~~ ^{Johnson}

"but I don't want any in London or Paris either. I would rather

have one in Okmulgee, Oklahoma," ~~said~~ "Crack 'em Down,"

~~He~~ ^{He} then spoke his mind on our pet ambassadors,

Joe Kennedy and Bill Bullitt, ^{he} suggested they be investigated; ~~in~~

~~these words.~~ "It would be a good idea" ^{he roared,} "to inquire whether we

haven't got another one of those things ~~at the Court of St. James's~~

~~right~~ like Walter Hines Page at the Court of St. James's right now."

Then he explained: "The dowagers and the duchesses, not to mention

the debs, are a potent pill." ~~And while we are about it,~~ he added,

~~"we might take a careful look at our other ambassador in Paris."~~

One Senator then said: ~~"Well, what have you got to~~

suggest?" Johnson replied: ~~"Let the statute lay down the rule~~

~~that ships or goods or even lives of Americans must proceed at
their peril, that under no circumstances will we go to war to
protect or avenge them."~~

Gen. Johnson had a good time
in Washington today.

ENGLAND

Most of the gossip in England today was about the return of the British Ambassador, Sir Neville Henderson to Berlin. Questions were asked about it in the House of Commons. They were answered by Prime Minister Chamberlain himself, who said it didn't mean anything important, ~~a denial which of course nobody believes~~. The Prime Minister also said ^{this} ~~that it~~ doesn't mean that Great Britain has complacently swallowed its disappointment over Hitler's annexation of Czechoslovakia. Sir Neville Henderson, he ^{pointed out} ~~said~~, was in the first place called back to London merely to report and is now going back to his post "in the normal course of duty."

Somebody asked him whether he had decided to recognize the fact that Albania had been absorbed by Italy. "The government," he said, "has not yet decided."

But an anonymous spokesman for the Foreign Office threw ~~mixxiight~~ a different light on Sir Neville Henderson's return to Berlin. He said the British Ambassador was taking back with him a message from the Chamberlain government which he described as - "a forthright message." It's worth noticing that this

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message was delivered in Berlin so as to give Chancellor Hitler ample time to digest it before he makes that long expected speech to the Reichstag next Friday. Here's the gist of the message as the government spokesman outlined it:- first of all, it repeats Chamberlain's belief that all the quarrels in Europe can still be settled by peaceful negotiations. It also refers to President Roosevelt's plea and gives Hitler a hint that there ^{is} his chance for peace. The Chamberlain government hopes the Fuehrer will think long and well before he categorically turns it down. The British Ambassador also warned the Nazi government that England won't stand for any attempt to crack the whip over Europe and is ready to resist by force. He also reminds Hitler that an increasing number of Englishmen are calling for conscription. If this popular feeling grows any stronger, the British government might find it difficult to resist.

That seems to leave the Chamberlain attitude summed up by an olive branch in the left hand, weapons in the other.

PARIS FOLLOW ENGLAND

And France follows suit. It is admitted today that Premier Daladier is about to send his ambassador back to Berlin, almost certainly before Hitler delivers his Friday speech.

One news agency said that the Ambassador, in fact, had started for Berlin tonight.

At the same time, the Polish ambassador to London hurried out to the Croydon airport and took an ~~airplane~~ for Paris. There was no inkling of what his business was except that it was urgent.

DENMARK

Hitler got an answer today from Denmark, a reply to his question whether the little Scandinavian kingdom in the north was afraid of German aggression. Said the Danish Foreign Office: "No", and it added that the Danish government had not authorized President Roosevelt to mention that country's name.

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MOWRER

The Mowrer ⁵~~family~~ of Chicago are ~~quite some~~ ^{sturdy} newspaper men. ^{whom I used to work with,} Paul Mowrer is editor-in-chief of the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS. Edgar Mowrer, his brother, the foreign correspondent, ^{did his} worked so well in Berlin that the Nazis threw him out, which is considered ^{the same} ~~quite~~ ^{as a knighthood by} ~~a distinction for~~ newspaper men these days. Editor Paul Mowrer's son, Richard, is a correspondent with the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS in Rome. And, he's following in his uncle's footsteps.

Today Mussolini gave ^{Richard} ~~him~~ the heave-o, told him to get out of the country by May Fifth. The CHICAGO DAILY NEWS correspondent before Mowrer was Frank Smothers. He got the gate from the Fascisti last November. ~~Some of these~~

One of these days there'll probably be a small and exclusive club of American reporters in Europe who did not get kicked out by any government.

~~Incidentally,~~ The foreign editor of the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS says: "Italian propaganda authorities were unable to cite any specific instances of falsity in Richard Mowrer's dispatches." And he adds: "The course of events in Italy to date has borne out the soundness of Mowrer's interpretation."

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BOLIVIA

So Bolivia goes totalitarian! The President of the Republic, Lieutenant-Colonel Busch, has abolished all law codes, suppressed Congress, cancelled all elections to fill vacancies in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. He has also revoked constitutional guaranties, cancelled the Constitution, and frankly established a financial political dictatorship. However, says a spokesman for the Bolivian President, "this has no connection with the Rome-Berlin Axis." And President Busch himself said: "The government is adhering neither to the extreme right nor the extreme left. It's just Bolivian." *Just an Andean Axis.*

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LAMPS

Englishmen were saying some caustic things about the Home Office today. The brass hats had ordered an air raid drill in a couple of the northern counties. There was to be a black out in the northern part of Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire, just to exercise the inhabitants in what they have to do in case Hitler's bombers swooped down upon them. But at the last minute orders had to be cancelled. For the carrying out of this drill, the Home Office had supplied two thousand hurricane lamps. All of a sudden somebody discovered that all those hurricane lamps were marked "Made in Germany!" + e-l-u-t-m.

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