

INTRODUCTION

Hugh Gibson-Sunoco Wed., June 23, 1943.

At this moment, Lowell Thomas is in an airplane flying down the State of Florida - on his way to South America. He received a sudden call to take a quick flying trip, visit a number of Latin-American countries, ~~and take a look at things down that way.~~ He will have a chance to pick up some first hand news, and get a ~~visual~~ glimpse at that important and thrilling operation of war - the Trans-Atlantic bomber ferry service from South America to Africa. During the trip, whenever he is at a place from which he can broadcast at this hour, Lowell Thomas will come in on this program - his familiar spot on the air. Whenever possible, he will cut in and give us a bit of news, ~~from the~~ ~~locality where he happens to be,~~ some significant ~~bit of~~ information or a colorful story. So, for some days to come, we will be expecting those Lowell Thomas news flashes from the South. And, meanwhile, let us see what the tidings of the world are today.

## ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt has just announced a move that he is making in the coal mine Labor situation. He states that he will ask Congress to raise the top limit of the draft age, raise it to sixty-five, this to facilitate the drafting of strikers. The President explained that this measure had been planned while the coal mine strike was still on. And he added that he will go ahead with the idea -- notwithstanding the fact that the miners have been ordered back to work.

Right now the upper limit of the draft age is forty-five, although in actual practice the army is not taking men above thirtyeight. Under the President's plan, strikers up to sixty-five could be drafted for non-combat service -- ~~xx~~ just taken into the army without any notion of using them in battle. The raising of the age limit would ~~provide~~ provide the Government with a weapon that could be applied not only to the miners but also to any other workers who might go on strike.

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The President in making the announcement late this afternoon sternly denounced the action of John L. Lewis and the Union in calling three strikes.

He said that this was -- "intolerable."

One immediate supposition in Washington is that the President will veto the anti-strike bill that is now before him. Observers interpret the raising of the draft age as a substitute for the bill outlawing strikes.

COAL

This afternoon the operators of the soft coal mines lodged a formal protest, complaining about the terms under which John L. Lewis sent the coal miners back to work. Lewis called off the strike until October thirty-first, with the proviso that the miners were working for the government - and not for private owners. ~~It~~ <sup>He</sup> stated that if the mines should revert to the control of the owners, the strike would be ~~on~~. ~~The strike would~~ automatically start all over again.

49 The coal operators point out that, <sup>by</sup> discontinuing the strike on those terms, John L. Lewis defied the order issued by the Labor Board, which decreed that the Union should renew its previous contract with the owners - this with some small modification. The W.L.B. yesterday appealed to the President to compel the Union to obey and renew the contract.

The operators lodged their protest with the

Labor Board, and pointed out that they had declared themselves willing to obey the order issued by the Board, and were being penalized - by being deprived of the ~~entire~~ control of their mines. On the other hand, Lewis and the Union, who had defied the Board, were being rewarded. Lewis has declared all along that the miners would work for the government. Hence, if the government retains control, Lewis will have won the victory. The operators put their complaint in the following words: "We have been punished by having our mines taken away from us. Mr. Lewis, on the other hand, has been rewarded for his defiance of the government by being allowed to put the miners back to work under his own restrictions, he having ordered the government to keep the coal mines." Their attitude is that the termination of the strike does not alter the question of whether or not the War Labor Board is to be obeyed. And they believe that the

President still must act on the Board's request that he do something to make the Union yield - and renew the contract with the mine owners.

Meanwhile, the coal miners are going back to work, but they are said to be none too well satisfied. Reports from the coal fields tell of resentment among the miners - because Lewis has ordered them back to work without any substantial increase in pay. However, though the miners may grumble, they are virtually certain to obey the Union order. One Union official in western Pennsylvania stated today that there was a wave of protest among the men, but added that he did not anticipate much trouble in getting them back on the job.

However the latest news is that the miners are very slow in going back to work.

## RAILROAD WAGES

In Washington today there was a rejection of the recommendation that the non-operating railway employees be granted a pay boost of eight cents an hour. The recommendation had been made by the group that President Roosevelt appointed to consider the case of one million, one hundred thousand employees. The rejection comes from Stabilization Director Vinson. He tells the recommending group to revise their finding, and suggest something else. The reason for this action is not given, but it is understood the Stabilization Director believes that a pay increase of eight cents an hour would violate the Little Steel Formula for a ceiling on wages.

## AIR WAR

Today's bombing news rounds out one solid month of unending air assaults against the industrial heart of Nazi Germany, the Ruhr Valley. In four weeks, ten thousand tons of bombs were dropped on the hundred and sixty square miles of concentrated war plants. The month of bombing ends with a climax - three mighty air raids against the Ruhr in twenty-four hours.

Last night's target was the City of Mulheim, Germany's great steel center. Mulheim was hit nearly as hard as the city of Krefeld had been on the previous night, and Krefeld was assailed with two thousand tons of bombs. The R.A.F. bomber losses continue heavy. Last night thirty-five failed to return. The war planes flew through a maze of searchlights, anti-aircraft fire and German fighter planes. All along the sky route to Mulheim, hundreds of searchlights swept the sky, and veteran bombing crews described the anti-aircraft fire

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as being as hot as anything they <sup>had</sup> ever encountered ~~before~~.  
Mulheim was left a scene of devastation from fire,  
flame and explosions. "Two explosions," relates an  
R.A.F. pilot, "lighted up the whole sky until it was like  
daylight."

Throughout the month of bombing, the nightly  
plane losses of the R.A.F. show figures ranging from  
eighteen to forty-four. Two hundred and fifteen bombers  
and some fifteen hundred flying men, failed to return.  
That was the price paid for the month-long assault which  
has virtually paralyzed Germany's most important  
industrial area.

On the south side of the Nazi European fortress,  
the bombing of Italy continues. Here the figure is four  
major air raids in twenty-four hours, the latest ~~hitting~~  
target having been <sup>south</sup> ~~at~~ Selerno, thirty miles <sup>south</sup> east of Naples.  
~~at~~ Selerno were heavily damaged.

Reconnaissance by air today give a clearer picture of the havoc wrought at Naples by the heavy assault launched yesterday. The Number One target there was the royal arsenal, and this is shown to have been laid in ruins to the extent of forty per cent. Three direct hits were scored on a torpedo factory. And air photographs show an aviation plant virtually blown apart.

In London today, comment was made on a question that England is discussing - the possible bombing of Rome. An official of the Royal Air Force stated that the Allies have no scruples about bombing Rome, and <sup>that</sup> air attacks would not be withheld because cultural monuments might be near military targets - and might be hit. The R.A.F. official said there was a distinction between the Christian shrines in Rome and the monuments of Pagan antiquity like the Colisseum and the Roman Forum. And this, of course, points in the direction of

the Vatican - which nobody wants to bomb. One military target might very well be Mussolini's headquarters, the Palazzo Venezia. Note the distance between that place and the Vatican - about a mile and a half. The R.A.F. spokesman added that if the Italians wanted to keep Rome from being bombed, they should declare it an open city, which would mean that all military activity such as troop movements, war manufacturing and freight shipments of military supplies would be halted. He added that the Germans too could declare open cities, and thereby preserve them from bombing. To do so, they would have to allow Allied observers to investigate and make sure that nothing of military use is being done in any places declared - "open."

SPAIN

From London we have some comment about the letter the Spanish Pretender, Don Juan, wrote to <sup>Generalissimo Franco</sup> Franco. Don Juan, son of the late King Alfonso, is heir to the claims of the Spanish royal family, and there is plenty of sentiment in Spain for the restoration of the monarchy. It has been ~~rumored~~ <sup>reported frequently</sup> repeatedly that Franco planned eventually to give Spain a king once again. But now Don Juan has sent ~~to~~ the Generalissimo a letter in which he states <sup>flatly</sup> that he would refuse to accept the throne, ~~so~~ long as the Spanish Falange remains in power - that dominant party which is Fascist in character. And Don Juan, moreover, demands ~~that Franco change his~~ <sup>of</sup> policy toward the war. The Pretender ~~to the Crown~~ <sup>demands that he</sup> calls ~~for~~ <sup>present</sup> "real neutrality". He holds that the ~~present~~ government leans toward the Axis enemies of the United Nations, and this he wants changed.

The word from London is that Don Juan's letter

is in line with recent activities of the Spanish Monarchists. These have approached the Allies with the idea of a restoration of the ~~royal government~~ <sup>monarchy</sup>, a regime that would put an end to ~~the~~ pro-Axis policies.

~~.....~~. The Spanish army is known to be royalist but its officers take an attitude of caution - they are afraid a change ~~of government~~ <sup>of government</sup> might unsettle things ~~and cause disturbances~~, and give the Spanish Republicans a chance to seize control. The Republicans, who were defeated in the civil war, are still active on the quiet, and might be able to take advantage of the confusion.

~~One thing that seems to be quite clear is that~~ <sup>London seems to think</sup>  
Don Juan's denunciation of the  ~~Franco~~ <sup>government</sup> policy puts an end to the ~~supposition~~ <sup>possibility</sup> that Franco himself may restore the monarchy.

On the other hand, there is ~~xxx~~ always a possibility that Don Juan's letter <sup>have been written to</sup> may afford Franco a

good pretext for a house-cleaning, which would make

possible a restoration of the monarchy.

## RUSSIA

The suspense along the warfront in Russia was sharpened today by an official Soviet declaration. With the world wondering about the likelihood of a summer drive, launched by either the Germans or the Red Army, ~~the~~ the Moscow radio today stated: "The hour of decisive events is approaching." And that would seem to indicate that the expected summer offensive is at hand. "The hour is not far off," the Moscow radio continued, "when our great Fatherland will again breathe freely." And that would seem to hint that the drive will be launched by the Russians. At the same time, Moscow continues ~~in~~ its appeal for a second front -- urging an Allied invasion of the Nazi fortress of Europe.

We hear of an interesting visitor to Moscow, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker. He arrived at the Soviet capital several days ago, but nothing was said until the Soviet News Agency mentioned the fact today.

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Moscow states that Captain Rickenbacker is in Russia  
as -- a representative of the War Department. It is  
believed that he is on another observation tour for  
Secretary of War Stimson -- the same kind of tour that  
~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> was making in the South Pacific when his plane  
was ~~is~~ forced down, and he and his companions had that  
memorable adventure ~~ix~~ on the ocean -- ~~the harrowing~~  
~~ordeal of drifting in boats,~~ so graphically  
described in his recent book.



## JAIL

The town of Harvard, Nebraska, is in a curious predicament. Harvard might make you think of a university, but the trouble concerns a jail. It appears that a sixteen year old boy bought the jail, and is now the owner of the town lock-up.

The mix-up occurred when Robert Pinckley, son of the town physician, bought four lots that were sold for taxes. Robert intended to plant victory gardens on the lots, and then to his surprise found that one of them was occupied by the town jail. The lock-up is an ordinary sort of small building, and this a long time ago, it develops, was leased to the town. ~~Whxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Without anybody quite realizing what it was all about, the lot and the building were put up for sale for delinquent taxes, and it went for a song. The sixteen year old lad claims he ~~xxxxxxx~~ paid six dollars for the jail.

He is willing to sell it to the town fathers,  
but seems to have quite a business head - he wants  
sixty dollars for the jail, and ~~the~~ town fathers won't  
pay that much.

So now everything is ~~tangled up~~ in a <sup>tangle</sup> ~~dilemma~~,  
with the boy threatening to sue for trespass - because  
of the presence of prisoners in his jail. I suppose  
that legally he could evict the prisoners, which  
probably would not displease them at all. Altogether,  
it's one of those amusing bits of Americana that help  
to lighten these heavy days of war.

58<sup>30</sup> And now here's Hugh James -

Speaking for Lowell Thomas

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.