

BRITISH AID

P.J. - Sunoco. Wednesday, Feb. 12, 1941.

We now have a pretty fair idea how H.R. 1776, the bill for help to the British, will be ~~amended~~ amended. The Foreign Relations Committee has agreed to accept all the <sup>changes</sup> ~~amendments~~ made in the House. That means, that among others, the President will be asked to consult with the Chief-of-Staff of the Army and the Chief of Naval Operations before turning over any of Uncle Sam's army and navy equipment.

Senator Vandenberg of Michigan tried to get in an additional amendment which would require the President to have the approval of the heads of the military establishment, but, that was rejected. President Roosevelt said that such an amendment was perfectly agreeable to him as he would consult the heads of the army and navy anyway whether he was required to by law or not.

Another amendment puts a deadline on the special powers granted by that Act, the deadline being June Thirtieth, Nineteen Forty-Three. Still another amendment meets a criticism that has been loudly made, the objection that the bill as it was first presented would virtually give the President such powers forever and ever. The amendment in question provides that Congress can

put an end to those powers at any time by a concurrent resolution.

That means merely a majority, <sup>and</sup> ~~not a~~ two thirds majority.

Still other amendments to which the Senate Committee agreed forbid the use of Uncle Sam's warships for convoys; <sup>and,</sup> ~~also~~ forbid the entry of any American vessel into war combat zones defined by the President. Furthermore, the President is required to report to Congress every ninety days. <sup>all</sup> ~~It is no secret that all~~ these amendments <sup>it is said, are</sup> ~~are perfectly~~ agreeable to Mr. Roosevelt.

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Later in the day, the administration senators tentatively approved still another amendment. It was one designed to meet the objection of opponents that the ~~bill~~ would give the President a blank check. So a sub-committee, headed by the Democratic leader, Senator Barkley, drafted an amendment by which Congress would retain control over any further amounts to be spent for this government in lending or leasing wa<sup>r</sup> material to foreign countries.

## DESTROYERS

No more American destroyers to give away. That seems to be the attitude of the American navy. Wendell Willkie's plea to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations does not fall smoothly on the ears of the admirals.

That is, if you can judge by today's remarks ~~today~~ from Colonel Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy. And the Secretary usually speaks what the admirals think. He was asked whether he agrees with Willkie. His reply was that he would rather not express himself directly on that. But, he repeated emphatically that as the Secretary of the Navy he is against depleting our fleet.

Just how well off is Uncle Sam as regards destroyers? The answer is, we have one hundred and fifty-nine destroyers now in commission, fifteen scheduled for delivery this year, and forty-five for next year. Col. Knox repeated that we have no to spare if we want a balanced fleet. To which he added that the British have not asked our navy for any destroyers or cruisers or submarines, or any other kind of ships.

While he was on the subject of men-o-war, he told

newspapermen how the Navy ~~building~~ program is progressing.

~~Quite nicely,~~ <sup>Sec.</sup> according to Knox, work on all warships is  
~~ahead~~ <sup>ahead</sup> of schedule anywhere from thirty to sixty days. A new  
thirty-five thousand ton capital ship, the NORTH CAROLINA, will  
be in commission in April, considerably ahead of her schedule;  
and a sister ship, the U.S.S. WASHINGTON, will probably be ready  
in July.

An inquisitive reporter then questioned <sup>Sec.</sup> ~~Secretary~~ Knox  
about a charge that had been made by Major Al Williams, <sup>one-time</sup> ~~formerly~~  
<sup>speed</sup> a Navy flyer. Al had stated positively that the Navy was not  
getting any aircraft deliveries at all. To that <sup>Sec.</sup> Knox replied:-  
"I don't know what Williams knows about it." And he added:-  
"Not much, I suppose."

As soon as that statement about destroyers was made  
public, the report was rushed to Wendell Willkie to ask what he  
thought about it. He seemed to be disconcerted. At first he  
didn't want to say anything, but finally he authorized a  
statement, which reads: "I was astonished to read the statement  
by Colonel Knox." Then it continued -- again I quote: "Information

given to me by high authorities in the government after my testimony yesterday confirm<sup>s</sup> my views that we are in a position to give Great Britain immediate, effective assistance with additional destroyers, without any injury to our navy or to our national defense."

*All of which gives*  
That gave rise to wonder what high government authority could have given Willkie such information. Thereupon the reporters who covered his movements in Washington yesterday recalled that the only high government authority whom he visited after giving his testimony was ~~none other than~~ President Roosevelt himself.

Perhaps Mr. Willkie will have something to say about this, tonight, when he addresses the nation - at 10:00, from the Lincoln Day S. O. F. Banquet at the Waldorf.

PROFITEERING

There will be <sup>a</sup> special acts of Congress to make profiteering unsafe. That is, if the lawmakers agree to ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> request <sup>from</sup> of the Attorney General's office. Profiteering on national defense contracts should be punished in the same way as offenses against the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. So says Thurman Arnold, <sup>who is the</sup> ~~the government's~~ Assistant Attorney General in charge of trust busting. <sup>Thurman Arnold</sup> He would like Congress to pass a law fixing special punishment for people guilty of conspiring to raise the cost of goods or services bought by Uncle Sam or of mobilizing the labor and materials necessary to produce them. He wants the maximum fine under the Sherman Act to be raised from five thousand to fifty thousand.

*The assist. Atty. Gen.*

~~Arnold~~ <sup>^</sup> then made a rather spectacular accusation. He

declared that the government had been charged excessive and unreasonable prices for essential war materials. That, he said,

<sup>2</sup> ~~was~~ because of cartels, agreements between American and foreign companies. He also declares there has been collusive bidding on army and navy contracts.

*(Arnold added, went so far as to say)*  
~~Thurman also said~~ <sup>^</sup> that it seemed quite probable that

owing to the arrangements of these cartels, vital military  
information has been revealed to *foreign countries.*

## ALUMINUM

A shortage of aluminum in the United States! ~~That sounds~~ incredible but it <sup>'s</sup> ~~is quite~~ evidently a fact, for the information comes from official sources, from Edward R. Stetténus, Priorities Director for the Office of Production Management. Stetténus put out a statement asking all magnesium producers to give over all their stocks to defense industries. Stetténus also issued a request to aircraft producers to save every bit of aluminum scrap that they can. This, he explained, is owing to the rapidly increasing demands of the defense program, together with other unfavorable factors.

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And it looks as though the prophecy made some time ago is coming true, that pots, pans and kettles will have to be made of some material other than aluminum. Stetténus has asked all the industries that are using aluminum outside of defense needs to make plans for substituting some other metals, and possibly plastics.



DEBT LIMIT

The debt limit bill is now ~~safely~~<sup>swiftly</sup> on its way through the Senate. The measure which the House passed two days ago ~~has~~<sup>has</sup> already been approved by a sub-committee of the Senate, unanimously approved; ~~That's~~ the bill raising the ~~debt~~ limit to sixty-five billions.

While the sub-committee was considering this bill its Chairman, Senator Prentiss Brown of Michigan, brought up the subject of a general sales tax. He said he believed a majority of the people in this country would favor it to help finance the defense program. And he added that in Michigan a sales tax has been quite successful, people have accepted it in good spirit, and it has raised double the amount ~~that was~~ expected. A nationwide sales tax, said Senator Brown, would ~~raise~~ more than a half a billion a year, ~~five hundred millions.~~

A.F. of L.

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United States labor unions in South America! There's an interesting expansion ~~of the labor movement~~. The American Federation of Labor is going to become active in the Latin-American countries. That's a decision made today by the Executive Council of the Federation at Miami.

There'll be no immediate going ahead with any attempt to organize unions in Brazil, Argentina, ~~or~~ Chile, or in any of the other republics. ~~Before that's done, there'll~~ be a survey of the labor situation down ~~south~~ <sup>there</sup>. The Council <sup>s</sup> announced <sup>^</sup> that it will employ some capable man as a representative in the Latin-American countries. (As William Green, the President, put it, the Council feels it is fitting for us to <sup>study</sup> ~~get into~~ the Latin-American labor situation at this time, and he added that the A.F. of L. leaders think they can be helpful to those countries as well as to our own government, by helping ~~to~~ improve labor and social conditions there. That's the way President Green phrased it. ~~And how well are they going to like that!~~

CHURCHILL

Prime Minister Churchill made a statement to the British Parliament today ~~connected with~~<sup>on</sup> the subject of peace terms. A member of the House of Commons had put the question ~~as to~~ whether there had been any consultation between Downing Street and Washington regarding the peace aims of the British government and reconstruction problems. Churchill made the following statement in reply, using these words:- "So thorough is the common comprehension in the United States of what we are fighting for and of what we stand for that I cannot recall any occasion when the question of peace aims or reconstruction has been mentioned by any representatives of the American government whom ~~or with~~ I have seen or <sup>(with whom I have)</sup> corresponded ~~with."~~

## BALKANS

The war clouds are hanging still lower over Bulgaria. There is a report from Budapest that Hitler has already moved his advance guard into Bulgaria -- some thirty thousand troops. The guessing in the Hungarian capital is that it's only a matter of days before a huge Nazi army marches over into Greece, to bail out Mussolini whose armies have been licked so roundly by the Greeks.

In Yugoslavia it is reported that the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Bogdan Piloff, admitted to the opposition leaders in parliament that the Bulgarian airports are already in the hands of German technicians. Done, he said, in the mutual interests of Germany and Bulgaria.

## FRANCO

All the rumors about General Francisco Franco are coming to a head. It becomes obvious that the Axis Dictators are going to do something spectacular, either in Spain, or with Spain playing a part.

Toward the end of last week there were rumors that Franco and his brother-in-law, the Foreign Minister Suner, were to have a conference with Marshal Petain of France and Herr Hitler. This was promptly and vehemently denied, in fact it was denied that there were to be any conferences of dictators. However, today it became quite positive that Franco had met Duce Mussolini somewhere in Italy. There also comes a report, from Switzerland, that Hitler as well as Mussolini, conferred with Franco. The Swiss report likewise rumored that Franco had a consultation with Petain en route to Italy.

But there's no confirmation to that Swiss report. And it so happens that it is officially admitted that Franco and Petain are to meet tomorrow, somewhere in the south of France, with Vice-Premier, Admiral Darlan, also present.

The Vichy censor also permitted correspondents to report that special police precautions have been made for that meeting. The entire Mediterranean coast of France has been blocked off. All telephone, train, airplane and highway communications will be stopped while the conference is going on. And the city where the meeting will be held will be completely isolated. Newspaper correspondents will not be allowed to leave it.

In Vichy the conjecture is that the food situation in Spain, which is most critical, will be discussed. For some time it has been rumored that Franco was really a figurehead and Suner the real boss, that is, the man who takes the orders from Mussolini and Hitler and who carries them out. The word is that he may succeed Franco.

BREACH OF PROMISE

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The folks of Kansas City, Missouri, were regaled this afternoon by a somewhat unusual suit for breach of promise. The defendant ~~is~~ a Mr. Sawyer, a small town banker of Independence, Missouri. The shapely lady who complains because Banker Sawyer did not marry her is his cashier, Miss Myrtle B. Summers.

Miss Myrtle declared that they have been close friends ever since Nineteen Twenty-Four. After Banker Sawyer's first wife divorced him, he proposed marriage to ~~Miss Myrtle Summers.~~ *to his pulchritudinous Cashier.*

8 1/2  
~~It~~ It took her thirteen years, said the lady, to come to the conclusion that Banker Sawyer did not intend to marry her. Then, she said, he took her by the hand and told her she had a beautiful character. In fact, he intimated that it was too beautiful for marriage. ~~She~~ <sup>He</sup> then explained that his ~~x~~ first wife used to hit him over the head every morning, ~~presumably before breakfast.~~

There was a moment in that trial which recalls <sup>a</sup> ~~that~~ *chapter* famous ~~passage~~, from "Pickwick Papers", the breach of promise trial *[perhaps the most famous lawsuit in English literature.]* of Bardell versus Pickwick. You may recall the passage in which

~~Mr. Serjeant~~ Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz exclaimed so lyrically: "Chops and tomato sauce." Something like that came up at Kansas City.

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Only it wasn't "chops and tomato sauce", it was "champagne and  
lobster." Champagne and lobster for thirteen years, but ~~no~~ that  
was all.  
~~marriage lines~~ Therefore, the lady asks for a hundred thousand  
dollars - a hundred thousand <sup>for</sup> ~~dollars~~ heart balm. Almost  
to make Banker Sawyer faint.  
Now, Hugh.

59 1/4