

L.S. - Sunoco. Wednesday, April 10, 1940.

BATTLE

Most of the world would give ^{a great deal} ~~its ears~~ to know the truth right now about that ^{naval} battle ~~that has been~~ raging in the Skagerrak. All we know for sure is that British and German warships have been fighting.

Here's an optimistic report which comes by radio from Stockholm. According to this, the British have forced the Skagerrak and are in the Kattegat, and ^{have} even penetrated Oslofjord, the bay outside Oslo. And the report goes further that the British have sent an ultimatum giving the Germans ^a definite time in which to evacuate Oslo before the city is bombarded.

That report is partially confirmed by a short wave broadcast of the British Broadcasting Corporation, ^{which} ~~which was~~ ^{TP} ~~picked up over here.~~ That ^{went} ~~even goes~~ so far as to give details, ^{TP} ~~says~~ The British ~~joint~~ joined battle with ten ^{German} ~~British~~ warships and troop transports, trapped the warships, sank two of the transports and one German battleship. ^{TP} However, ^{that news} ~~we have to remember this is~~ not official. We also ^{must} ~~have to~~ remember that reports emanating from Stockholm during the Russo-Finnish War were inclined to be what most people wanted to hear, accounts of Finnish victories

and Russian defeats. ~~So in considering the story of that British~~
~~naval victory in the Skagerrak, we have to keep our salt shakers~~
~~handy.~~

True or not, that naval battle is the ~~most~~ most important
in the whole war so far, whichever way it turns out. On the
failure or success of Britain's navy in that Skagerrak engagement,
may depend the outcome of the entire conflict.

The Germans have admitted the loss of two big
warships, a ten thousand ton heavy cruiser, and another cruiser
six thousand tons. But on the other hand, the Nazis claim to have
put two British battleships and two heavy cruisers out of action
with direct hits from aerial bombers.

*TPQ third German
cruiser the Emden was sunk by
Norwegian coast artillery.*

HALIFAX

Reports were current all day that the Norwegians were ~~about to surrender~~ ^{completely.} The Government was driven out of Hamar, to which the Cabinet had fled when the Germans marched in and occupied the town. The ministers then took refuge in Elverum, seventy-five miles from Oslo, not far from the Swedish border. The rumor was that they had communicated with the Nazi Government, asking for peace terms. But there was no confirmation of that.

^{still}
There's another report that the German Ambassador called on King Haakon and presented a demand from the Nazi Government. He ordered King Haakon to appoint Quisling, the Norwegian Nazi, as head of his Cabinet. Quisling, ~~you will remember~~ is the fellow whom the Germans set up as a puppet

Prime Minister. The report is that King Haakon refused the German demand, ^{because his ministers told him the entire population of Norway was apposed to ^{any such} surrendering.}

And when this was reported in London, the British Foreign Secretary took occasion to state the position of the Chamberlain Government. No peace negotiations will alter the purpose of the British. They will try to drive the Germans out of Scandinavia no matter what ~~the~~ desperate measures ~~to which~~ the

Norwegian Government is forced *to*.

Viscount Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, not only made the statement in Parliament but at a luncheon of the Committee of National Defense. He said even if the Germans contrive to consolidate their ~~x~~ grip on the Norwegian and Danish coasts, the Allies will try to drive them out.

49
Halifax took this opportunity to throw out another invitation to the small neutrals of Europe, an invitation and a warning to join the Allies. Plainly, said the British Foreign Secretary, this war is not merely a struggle between the belligerents nor will the issue affect them alone. It is more and more plain that on this issue hangs the fate of not only those now at war but of all peoples who wish to preserve their independence.

Somebody present interrupted to ask him what about declaring war on the Soviet Union? It was a rather pointed question since the ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Russian ambassador was present at that luncheon. So Halifax replied with a caustic remark about what he called the ~~XXXX~~ Soviet Union's wanton attacks on Poland and Finland, But,

he added, we must consider this question in the light of our principal objective, the defeat of Germany. And he continued:-
"The future of our relations with Russia must depend on the degree of effective help which she may, for whatever reason, wish to give to Germany."

And in Paris Premier Renaud got cheers from the French Senators when he told them that all ~~the~~ German Warships in Norwegian waters ^{are now} ~~are now~~ bottled up. And he added that the Allies would carry the war in Scandinavia to the bitter end, and that not one ton of iron or Swedish ore would quit Narvik for Germany.

50

The little Norwegian army continues to put up a fight, - this
in spite of all rumors that the Cabinet is negotiating to surrender.
Land battles were reported in two places. One was ~~only xxxviii~~
near a village called Scoglund. That's at the foot of a mountain
pass where the Norwegians are strongly entrenched. That position
commands the defenses of Tromsø, the only sizeable port still
held by the Norwegians. If the Allies move swiftly, they could
land troops there. But they'd have to work with exceeding speed.
The German attack at Scoglund today was repulsed by the
Norwegians, but the defenders can't hold out long if the Germans
are reenforced.

The other important land battle was at Narvik.
The Germans, it is said, have only fifteen hundred fighting men
there. The British tried to force the harbor with a squadron of
destroyers, five British men-o-war against six of Hitler's latest
vintage. The British were driven off, - One destroyer sunk,
another ~~was~~ ^{was} aground and wrecked, another seriously damaged and
evidently out of action. Only one German destroyer, a large
sixteen hundred ton fighter, was torpedoed.

51

On land, the Germans in Narvik fought off all attempts to recapture the harbor. Aside from it's being a seaport, Narvik is important because anybody occupying it can control the Norwegian northern railways into Sweden.

BELGIUM

It's not surprising to hear of another state of alarm in the low countries. There was an extraordinary session of the Belgian Cabinet in Brussels. After it was over, all army officers were ordered on the job immediately, all leaves cancelled. The Belgian Government ^{for the present} sticks to neutrality.

SHIPPING

Another interesting question is, What will happen to the shipping of the Scandinavian countries? Norway, for instance, has the third largest merchant marine in the world. Her freighters are plying profitably all over the Seven Seas. A large portion of Norway's population makes its livelihood in Norwegian shipping. If Norway becomes in fact a German vessel, will Great Britain seize her ships, which the British easily could do?

All ships flying the Danish flag in British ports are being held, of course.

DENMARK

We now have some details of the way the Nazis seized Denmark. On the border in Schleswig-Holstein quite close to the Danish ^{frontier} ~~border~~ there was a concentration of troop trucks, armoured cars, ^{and} airplanes, while ^{ferries and} ~~ferry~~ ~~ships~~ ships were waiting nearby. Shortly before dawn ~~of the fatal day~~ three white rockets shot up into the sky. One second later there was a sound of motors starting up, and the procession started pouring over the border into Jutland, the Danish peninsula. The people of Copenhagen didn't know what had happened until they were awakened by the roar of German airplanes soon after dawn.

53

Today Denmark is apparently quiet, the occupation complete. It is officially reported by the German High Command that the troops the Nazis used for the invasion of Denmark came from Austria and southern Germany. The inference is that they were third line troops. Incidentally most of the equipment ~~that~~ they used for that occupation was of comparatively ancient vintage, but the airplanes were the most modern the Germans have. The one resistance that Hitler's Nazis met was in the

Royal Palace. The Royal family evidently knew nothing about the Government's agreement to surrender the country. Young Prince ~~Valdemar~~ ^{WALDEMAR,} son of the Crown Prince, led the Palace Guard in an attempt to fight back the invaders. There was a sharp skirmish, but it was soon over. Three members of King Christian's Palace Guard and four civilians were killed in the palace yard. Thereupon Prince ~~Valdemar~~ ^{Waldemar} was ~~xxx~~ put under arrest. However, it is announced that in all Denmark only twelve Danes were killed. There was a certain mystery today about one regiment of the Danish army. The ~~second~~ ^{Third} Royal Hussars, it is said, have disappeared and cannot be found. Another regiment ^(of Hussars) started to put up a resistance before they knew that the Government had given in. But when they were notified what had happened they gave up the futile attempt to fight.

54

ICELAND

Today

News from Iceland! There was a special meeting at
Rekjavik, the capital of the Icelandic Althing. That's what the
Icelanders call their parliament, which is incidentally the oldest
in the world, as it dates from the Ninth Century. After the Nazis
had overrun Denmark, they announced that they would claim authority
over both Iceland and Greenland. The answer made by the Icelandic
Parliament was to announce a secession, a ^(severance) ~~secession~~ from the Danish
Crown. Here's the resolution that the Althing adopted:-

"Whereas present conditions make it impossible for the King of
Iceland, Christian the Tenth, to exercise his powers as King of
Iceland, as empowered by the Constitution, the Althing declares
and authorizes the Icelandic Government for the present to exercise
the King's powers." By the same token, the Althing authorized the
Government to take over the diplomatic representation of the country.

So far as Greenland is concerned, the Nazi pretentions
raise a point interesting to ourselves. Greenland is of course
definitely in the Western Hemisphere. This, it would seem, makes it
subject to the Monroe Doctrine. We've heard a good deal of that
Monroe Doctrine in the last two years, and today I was curious enough

53

to polish up my memory and investigate the exact language of that famous document. It's too long to give all of it now, but the first passage of the Monroe message includes ^a ~~the~~ phrase
" that the American continents are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. "

That would include not only Germany but Great Britain.

In the second passage, the Monroe Doctrine says:-

"We owe it to candor and the amiable relations existing between the United States and European powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety."

Of course, at the present moment this may seem academic. But history moves with such swiftness at present that we can't tell how soon those words might not become timely and urgent.

~~L.T. - SUNOCO. WEDNESDAY, April 10, 1940.~~

White House

~~GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY.~~

~~Our war news tonight begins appropriately with an~~

56
~~American piece. It's~~ Here is (the) proclamation we've been expecting from the

White House, ~~the proclamation to help keep the United States out of~~

~~the conflict war~~ The President establishes an additional part of the European

map as waters which American ships shall not enter. He makes a

new definition of the combat areas that he first proclaimed

November Fourth last. It will keep all vessels flying our flag

from any European seas north of Portugal. Until today, they were

allowed to sail to Bergen, Norway, and all points north of there.

That is now a closed region. They are also to ~~keep away from~~ stay out of the

White Sea, which means the Arctic Russian ports of Murmansk and

Archangel. ~~It includes for instance the Kola Peninsula.~~ At one

point the line goes above the seventy-fifth northern parallel.

Way up in the Arctic there's an island called Svalbard, which we

almost never hear about, but it happens to belong to Norway. And

White House - 2
~~LEAD - 2~~

the southern tip of that island is the extreme northern limit
of the area now forbidden to American ships. ^{For the present} all that is left of
Europe for our merchant ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ mariners ~~now~~ is
Portugal plus the Mediterranean.

There are ~~now~~ three American ships in Norwegian ports;
~~but, we may be sure~~ ^{and} they will be hurrying ^{home, no doubt.} ~~back as soon as possible.~~

7
There are some three thousand three hundred Americans
in Norway, Denmark and Sweden now. The State Department will make
quick arrangements to bring them back home as soon as they ^{desire.} ~~want~~
But so far our foreign office has been able to do nothing because
of the lack of information from Scandinavia, that is, official
information.

Almost everybody I ran into today was upset, seething with distress or indignation over the ~~savage extremities that have~~ ^{fate that has overtaken}

~~befallen~~ the Scandinavian countries. From the pen of a sports

^{Yes, even sports writers}
writer comes a word of sanity on this subject. ~~Our old colleague,~~
^{abandoned their sports today.}

Bill Corum, sporting expert of the NEW YORK JOURNAL-AMERICAN and

other Hearst papers, put out a thought ^{that expressed the} ~~so tragically true that I~~
^{views of many.}

~~thought we might all do well to bear it in mind. So here I quote~~

~~just two of his sentences. Wmxxxxxx~~

^{said Bill}

"What is happening in Europe today" ^{is} a horrible

nightmarish thing that must twist and hurt something inside us all.

But horrible as it is, it is not ours, and the surest way for us

to ~~skip~~ help stop it is to stay out of it, now and always.

"If we defend here sanity and civilization, some day they will turn to us to learn again the lesson of peace and good will to mankind that was taught on the Cross."

~~Bill, you've got something there~~

POLITICS

Now for some home news. Even in Washington the political tycoons took time out from reading war bulletins, time to study the primary returns from Illinois and Nebraska. ^{and — they are not} ~~They aren't~~ complete ^{as} yet. ^{are} But they ~~are~~ ^{to be} considered reasonably conclusive.

58/12
On the Republican side there was no contest in Illinois, so all the G.O.P. votes went for Dewey. And the leaders say that's the reason why there were three hundred thousand fewer votes cast by Republicans than Democrats. They attribute it to the struggle between Roosevelt and Garner, a struggle that leaves the President ahead by a margin of more than sixty-one.

In Nebraska, it was the other way round: no Democratic contest ^{but} ~~with~~ the Republican vote split between Dewey and Vandenberg. ^{apparently} ^{there} The New York District Attorney has ^{apparently} beaten the Michigan Senator. ^{by} ~~a slight lead.~~

59
But ~~The~~ Republicans are pointing with pride to an entirely different conflict. In the First Congressional District of Nebraska, there was a ~~by~~ ^{there} election, and the Republican now has a definite lead over his Democratic opponent. And that, they say, means that in November the Republicans will ^{take} ~~get~~ Nebraska away from the Democratic column. ^{And now,} Hugh James.

9/4