

L.T. - SUNOCO. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1941.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Wendell Willkie is going to hurry back to the United States. He will return sooner than he had expected to, and for a definite purpose. It is more than hinted that his purpose is to testify at Washington - testify on the bill to aid Britain. That's the latest from London. Willkie had intended to make a fairly extended inspection tour of Britain. But, he's going to cut it short. He was rushing round all day today, hurrying from conference to conference, and from one inspection to another.

One sight he saw today was decidedly not on the program. He was lunching at the Savoy, when suddenly a woman gave a signal and several other women rose at the tables where they were sitting and began a demonstration. Some sixty of them, staged a public protest against the food policy of the government. They carried banners and shouted slogans. The gist of their complaint was that the poor in Britain were being rationed, but the rich were getting all they needed.

Many of the demonstrating women wore fur coats and hats in the latest mode. But when the reporters looked at them closely they recognized many of them; recognized them as women who had formerly taken part in Communist demonstrations. One was a reporter on a Communistic newspaper until the paper was suppressed.

British military experts today were discussing anxiously and publicly the coming invasion of Britain by Hitler. One group of them believes that before the actualy attack, the main attempt, that the Nazis will swoop down on Iceland or Ireland, or both. The idea of that, they think, would be to distract the attention of the British defense forces.

Military circles in London are talking quite calmly and realistically about what they regard as an inevitable attempt at invasion. The ferrying of German troops across the Channel, they describe as not easy but they admit neither is it impossible.

The deliberations of these British military experts as published today bear out what we heard yesterday, only with considerable more detail. That the English are calculating that

Hitler has around two hundred and twenty-five divisions, almost four million men available for an attempt to invade Britain. The British believe that they'll try to come straight across the Channel with a terrific withering air attack first, an attempt to wipe out the Royal Air Force. After what we heard yesterday about the thirty-six thousand first line fighting planes that Hitler has, it can be seen that the Nazis could perhaps afford to sacrifice ten of their planes for every single British plane, if by so doing they could knock out British air power.

The British of course are looking all this right in the face. They figure that in addition to invasion they may expect an attack on Gibraltar through Spain, or a German march through the Balkans. And their military sharks declare that in the Mediterranean the situation from the British angle is now much, much tougher than it was. The sending of those Nazi dive bombers from Germany has begun to tell. And the British admit that the movement of much traffic through the Mediterranean in the face of German dive bombers is becoming increasingly

difficult.

When all these expert opinions were published in Berlin today a Nazi spokesman retorted that when the next blitzkrieg is begun it will start as unexpectedly and suddenly as the attack on Belgium and Holland.

## AFRICA

In spite of those German dive bombers now operating from Mediterranean bases, General Sir Archibald Wavell's army of the Nile is forging ahead towards the Italian stronghold of Benghazi. So far none of Goering's planes have put in an appearance in African skies. But the military observers assert that General Wavell realizes his army may have those dive bombers to contend with at almost any moment. So he's hurrying his push toward the capital of Libya.

News from Cairo today is that R.A.F. long range bombers have just made another heavy attack on the airport at Naples, also setting fire to the yard and railway junction at Naples.

GREECE

Decidedly there is glamour in the circumstances that surround the death of General John Metaxas, Premier-<sup>and</sup> Dictator of Greece. To be sure his country still is in the throes of a desperate war and in grave danger. But death came to ~~him~~ <sup>Metaxas</sup> while the armies he had built were in the swing of a brilliant victorious campaign, an amazing campaign. For three months, General John Metaxas led his country through a series of triumphant battles that have astonished the world including Mussolini and Hitler.

There was irony too in the position of Metaxas before<sup>d</sup> he died.

When he became dictator of the Hellenes, the first thing we learned was that he had acquired his military training in Germany. <sup>Which</sup> ~~So that~~

led to the rumor that his rise to power meant the inclusion of Greece in the Axis. <sup>Q</sup> ~~of course that~~ <sup>that was 100% wrong</sup> ~~notion was just as wrong as it~~ <sup>as you know.</sup>

~~could be~~ The Metaxas coup, as the world now knows, was approved and supported by Great Britain. In fact, it brought the Hellenes

more firmly than ever into the British orbit. <sup>R</sup> Anybody can remember that when Mussolini first swooped upon little Greece, it seemed

likely that the <sup>Greeks</sup> ~~Hellenes~~ would pay dearly for their friendship with the British. Instead of that, Greek armies are <sup>now</sup> on the Adriatic and

Mussolini's forces are battling hard to keep their hold on <sup>part of</sup> Albania.

## GREECE

The passing of Metaxas means no change in the war situation. Alexander Corizis, who succeeds him as Premier, has kept the Metaxas cabinet intact. His first act was a proclamation that he'll carry on the Metaxas policies or, as he ~~waxed~~ worded it - "under the leadership of the king and with the aid of the Greek people who are fighting with great success."

Corizis is a banker by trade, head of the National Bank of Greece, also of the Vanderbilt Relief Fund, and has never taken any part in politics. Years ago he was a close friend of Greece's grand old man, the nine-times Premier, Venizelos. Corizis went to Jerusalem on a secret mission for Venizelos, but outside of that we are told that till now he has stayed away from politics. The successors of Pericles and Alcibiades and Xenophon now led by a banker!

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Today's principal witness on the British aid bill was Colonel Stimson, Secretary of War. The foreign relations committee of the Senate made a point of asking him about the problem of having ships to Britain convoyed by Uncle Sam's men-o-war. Stimson replied it would be very unfortunate if Congress wrote into the bill any clause which specifically forbids the president such a move. He pointed out that as it is, the constitution gives the President unrestricted control over the movements of the army and navy. If Congress now introduces a provision which restricts that control, even by implication, power of which has existed untrammled for a hundred and fifty years, that, said the War Secretary, would be bad, bad even if the provision were void. And he added that it would not contribute to unity.

On the question, "Can Britain win?", Stimson echoed his colleagues in the Cabinet. He is convinced she can, provided she can survive the coming spring and summer and get full help from the United States. Therefore he said, this bill offers us a chance to buy time to rearm, to buy it from Great Britain, the only nation that can sell it. And so, his argument went, <sup>that</sup> we aren't really lending

all those planes, tanks, ships and munition<sup>s</sup> to the British, we are  
Just buying time — time to get set for



whatever the future may hold for us. The Secretary of War also told the Senators that the Axis is beginning to weaken. There are definite signs of it, he declared. Creaks in the high powered war mechanism that can be heard in Italy, Rumania, and Norway. Italy is in grave straits, he said, and he added that Japan's economic situation has been strained for a long time.

ADD CONGRESS

In the house, a most important step <sup>has just been</sup> ~~was~~ taken on that British aid bill. The foreign affairs committee gave it's approval to an amendment which would limit the President's authority to a little more than two years, that is up to June thirtieth, nineteen forty-three. It is also understood, though there is nothing definite on it, that the Committee has agreed to an amendment requiring the President to report regularly to Congress on his actions under this bill, and another one which would prohibit him from convoying any vessels to Europe with Uncle Sam's warships. *And - here's news: -*

A later message reports that the President has agreed to accept those three amendments.

ADD CONGRESS

A still later bulletin from Washington tells us that on that convoying business the President won, the Committee killed the amendment, the one to forbid convoys by Uncle Sam's warships.

## BONDS

Government bonds for everybody, that's the latest plan of the Treasury. Everybody who has money, everybody who has a job, to buy bonds, just as in the last war. There'll be drives and other organized campaigns just like the Liberty Bond drives of Nineteen Seventeen and Nineteen Eighteen. This information comes direct from the Secretary of the Treasury, who today was telling the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives all about it. In fact it's the next thing the government will ask Congress for - authority to sell stamps and small bonds, to help finance national defense and aid to Britain out of the savings of everybody.

DEFENSE LABOR.

Strikes in factories producing for the defense program. One of them ~~broke~~ at Uncle Sam's Army Aviation experiment<sup>al</sup> center near Dayton, Ohio. Some four or five hundred workers affiliated with the Building Trades Council at Dayton walked out. The explanation is that they ~~are~~<sup>are</sup> striking because one firm is employing non-union men. Workers also struck at the Largest factory of<sup>the</sup> International Harvester<sup>Co. in</sup> at Chicago, a factory turning out heavy tractors for the army. Elsewhere three large industrial plants and a shipyard are standing idle, all because of labor troubles.

One of the most significant moves in this field was a new bill introduced in Congress. Its author is Representative Carl Vinson, Chairman of the House Committee on Naval Affairs. ~~It~~<sup>It would</sup> requires all labor disputes in plants making defense material to be mediated, — no striking. And it forbids any attempt to enforce the closed shop<sup>idea.</sup>

~~There is a bill which is going to arouse a lot of argument.~~

## PLATE CONFERENCE

Something happened in South America today which bids fair to be of importance in the history of the entire western hemisphere.

At Montevideo, Capital of Uruguay, five south American countries are holding a conference, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Bolivia

and Paraguay. It's <sup>called</sup> the first river plate regional conference, a congress of the powers centering around <sup>the great Rio de la Plata.</sup> ~~that river~~. The meeting

had hardly come to order before the representatives of Argentina

sprang a surprise. <sup>They propose a</sup> ~~They offer a~~ five - power economic bloc, a So. Am.

customs union. Indeed, it goes further, for it proposes that

those five nations shall exchange trade concessions in such

fashion as to cement themselves into one economic unit. Those

trade concessions would not be granted to any other nation.

<sup>PP</sup> It is not yet known what washington <sup>thinks of this.</sup> ~~has to say to that.~~ The idea

has been mooted before, but has always been protested by Great

Britain. ~~You might ask,~~ <sup>W</sup> What business would it be of Britain's?

The answer is that both the British and the United States have

treaties with Argentina, known as "Most favored nation treaties"

and that customs union of the five River Plate countries would

nullify the most favored nation treaties.

## CINDERELLA.

There was a sad little girl in Washington last night, Ann Skleplovich, thirteen years old from Gary, West Virginia. Her parents some time ago came from Poland.

Ann's birthday is the same as the President's. So she wrote Mr. Roosevelt a nice little letter of congratulations. In due time a letter arrived at the Skleplovich home, on the stationery of the White House, thanking thirteen year old Ann for her nice letter. But Ann has a brother and he steamed open the envelope and added a postscript which read; "We would like to have you come to the White House and meet the President."

When Ann read the letter, both she and her parents thought the whole thing was genuine, including the postscript.

Ann's father a mechanic, scraped together the necessary cash, Ann's mother dressed Ann in her best Sunday go-to-meeting bib and tucker, and so they sent her to the White House.

When she called at that Mansion on Pennsylvania Avenue, the little girl couldn't even get near the President. Instead, she saw Secret Service Agents who talked to her and realized the cruel hoax. They took Ann to the City Receiving Home, where she spent the night, in tears.

CINDERELLA - 2

This morning Mr. Roosevelt heard all about it. He promptly sent for the girl, arranged to see her before any foreign diplomats or high dignitaries of government were admitted. In fact, the first name of the formal calling list <sup>at</sup> of the White House today was that of thirteen year old Ann Skleplovich of Gary, West Virginia. So Ann did get to see the President after all. What was more, George Allen, former commissioner of the District of Columbia, was there and invited the young lady to take part in tomorrow night's celebration in Washington as his own special guest. When she murmured that she didn't have any proper clothes, he told her not to worry about that, a dress would be provided for her. So Ann will be there at the President's Birthday Ball, shining among some of the brightest of the stars of Hollywood. There's a Cinderella story for you in real life! As the President said to Ann, the joke ~~down~~ on her practical joking brother.

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NORTH CONWAY

I wish I had time to tell you of the crowd of young ~~was~~ women from The Sargeant School, a part of Boston University, who are jammed around me tonight, <sup>— as well as a lot of other interesting</sup> But, there <sup>people.</sup> isn't time. My press wire has been humming with world news this afternoon, of which I have given you the highlights.

And now Hugh, it may seem like a long long way from the studio in New York City where you are at this moment, to North Conway in the White Mountains, where I am. But, it isn't really far. I mean it isn't far if you fill up your car with Nu-Blue Sunoco.

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