

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

This is a day of jubilation for the heads of state in two of the world's great capitals. In Rome, of course, they were celebrating Marshal Badoglio's victory over the Ethiopians. In our own capital, the Democratic moguls, (all the adherents of President Roosevelt, were rejoicing over the decision of the Supreme Court. At last they have one to rejoice over. Eight to one - that's a victory in any man's court, and the effect of the ruling is nationwide. Partisans of the New Deal declare that it does more than uphold the constitutionality of the Tennessee Valley Authority. They say it clears the road for all of the President's other similar power experiments:)- Fort Peck, Grand Coulee, Bonneville and so on. So the Democrats are looking at the Court and saying: "A Daniel Come To Judgement."

The nine Justices certainly had us guessing! As we had occasion to observe last week, the long delay in the handing down of this ruling led to all sorts of violent conjectures. Wiseacres declared that it meant the nine wise gentlemen were having a hard time making up their minds. But that eight-to-one vote shows something else.

The only dissenting opinion was that of Mr. Justice MacReynolds.

The four liberal members of the Bench, Justices Brandeis, ^(Roberts,) Stone and Cardozo, took an even more extreme position. They ~~were far~~ ^{went} beyond declaring the T.V.A. ~~to be~~ entirely lawful. They said the stockholders of the Alabama Power Company, which had brought the suit, ~~had no right to do it,~~ had no right to question the constitutionality of the T.V.A.

It took almost an hour for Chief Justice Hughes to read the decision. Boiled ~~down~~ to its essence, here are some of the principles it lays down. First of all, the government had a complete right to build the Wilson Dam, ~~That's~~ the key structure of the T.V.A. Then - and this is the crux of it - the government is entirely within its rights in selling any power produced at such dams. It also is justified in building transmission lines to carry that power to the place of market.

One point that had been questioned by opponents of the project was not mentioned. In fact it was not at issue. That was, ~~the question~~ whether the government has the right to finance rural or municipal power plants. It is possible that another suit will be brought testing this phase of the question. We haven't heard the

end yet by any means.

The dissenting opinion by Mr. Justice MacReynolds was one of the most scorching that has ever been read in that court. In strictly legal but vitriolic terms, the Justice from Tennessee expressed the arguments that have ~~made~~ against ~~xx~~ such projects denounced as Socialistic. "There is no room for reasonable doubt," said Justice MacReynolds, "that the primary purpose of the T.V.A. was to put the government into the business of distributing and selling electric power throughout certain large districts, to expel the power companies which had long served those districts and to control those markets."

The T.V.A., as has been so often said, is an attempt to make a white elephant serve as a beast of burden. For if ever there has been a white elephant in American politics, this is it. That huge nitrate plant built at Muscle Shoals during the World War has been a thorn in the side of every administration. The chief trouble with it was that it seemed to be too big for practical use. Such a gargantuan monster was beyond the resources of private enterprise, it was said. But, several

industrialists, including Henry Ford, made offers to take it over, offers that were always rejected.

It was Senator George Norris of Nebraska who functioned as a watchdog over Muscle Shoals. It was he who led the opposition to all attempts to farm it out to private enterprise.

The Tennessee Valley was the present Administration's attempt to solve the problem. It is unquestionably the biggest, the most comprehensive project ever undertaken by the American or any other government. The electric power feature of it, with its reaction on public utilities, has somewhat obscured the scope of the T.V.A. There's far more to it than just the production of electric power. Let's take a look back and consider some of the objectives of the scheme:-

First, the development and control of water resources. The system of dams is designed not only to produce power but to provide better facilities for navigation. Just as important, the idea of preventing floods and erosion. In other words, three of its' alleged objectives were navigation, flood control, soil control. The production of power was the feature to

which the public utilities shareholders objected.

Aside from all this, is the matter of national defense. Muscle Shoals was originally constructed as a nitrate plant, nitrate being a vital ingredient in the making of explosives. But that isn't the only use of nitrates. They are not only the sinews of war, but the life-blood of agriculture. They are essential to the making of good fertilizers. Consequently, one of the jobs planned for the T.V.A. is the building of research laboratories, to provide material for scientific farming.

Before it gets through, the T.V.A. will have built five huge dams. Five in addition to Muscle Shoals and the Wilson Dam, which were built in war time. Two of the others are already finished. You have probably seen them in the newsreels: The Norris Dam, a thirty-four million dollar affair, and the twenty eight million dollar Wheeler Dam. Three more still to be constructed.

Really, the T.V.A. project is such a huge one that neither words nor even pictures can give us any idea of its immensity.

It's a government experiment covering seven states. ^{TP} Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Kentucky, will all be affected by the ramifications of the work set afoot in the valley of the Tennessee.

Apparently the fight about the dam part of it is over for the present, but not all the fight in the whole question of government and electric power.

STOCK MARKET FOLLOW LEAD

One feature of the decision had ~~curious~~ consequences, ^{big} consequences ^{on the stock market.} ~~unfortunate for some speculators.~~ For the first few minutes after Chief Justice Hughes began to read, it was not quite clear that the Court was upholding the T.V.A. Indeed, some listeners took the contrary impression. The deduction got around that the Justices had pronounced against it. And this was misinterpreted in many quarters. The ~~result~~ result was that traders rushed into the market, buying utility stocks in huge blocks. When the gist of the ruling became clearly unmistakable, the confusion on the stock exchanges was spectacular. The bulls, naturally, rushed to cover, and the exchange buildings reverberated with cries of, "Sell, sell, sell - sell a thousand, sell two thousand, sell five thousand!"

It wasn't long before the ticker was five minutes behind. Some utility shares dropped as much as three dollars a piece in less time than it would tak^e you to say, "Boo" to a goose. ~~(in case you should ever want to say "Boo" to a goose.)~~ And that was only one of a series of drops. By the time the market closed almost four and three quarter million shares had changed hands in the stock exchanges. ~~It was~~ The biggest day of trading for two years.

ITALY

(If you had been anywhere in Italy today, you would have seen and heard huge cheering crowds. Throughout every city and village in the peninsula rang the cries of "Viva Badoglio!" For if ever there was a hero, it is the sixty-four year old square-jawed Sicilian. That sweeping victory at Amba Aradam has swept the iron faced old Marshal right to the pinnacle of popularity.)

A colorful soldier, this Generalissimo. The principal feature of his stern face is a singularly deep set pair of eyes. The correspondents say they seldom see him smile.

Throughout his career in the army he has been famous for his courage. It was displayed at the disastrous battle of Caporetto. Badoglio, in command of an Italian army corps, protected that appalling World War retreat under most difficult circumstances. He fought a desperate rear guard action, and prevented the route from being worse than it was. Subsequently, it was Marshal Badoglio who signed the Armistice on the Austrian front as Italy's representative.

He showed his courage again quite recently. He did a

thing that demanded so much moral hardihood that it puts any mere physical bravery into the shade. For one of his first acts after assuming command in Ethiopia was to send home Count Ciano, the son-in-law of the great Duce himself. And maybe you think that didn't take nerve!

Strange to say, Marshal Badoglio is not a member of the Fascist Party. Nevertheless, he has rendered invaluable services to the Fascist cause. It was a tough assignment that he took over when he went to Africa. The amiable white-whiskered General deBono had ~~got~~ things into pretty much of a jam. At any rate, for all the tremendous expense and for all the highly mechanized modern equipment that Mussolini had assembled, the armies of King Victor Emanuel were getting nowhere in a hurry. Thus the Duce replaced the Fascist deBono with the non-Fascist Badoglio. Politically speaking, it was also a crucial time for Italy. They were fighting the Ethiopians in Africa and the entire League of Nations at Geneva. The sanctions clouds hung low over the peninsula. What was more, the so-called "little rainy season" was ahead. And Mussolini's order to his new Generalissimo was, "Action, give me action!"

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That was easier said than done, for in January the "little rainy season" started with a vengeance. Dry gullies became rushing torrents. Streams of water roared over Ethiopia, washing out camps, roads, projects. All through January and most of February, that condition endured. Then the old Marshal sent a message to Rome. "I have got to have more troops, soldiers, ~~who have been~~ trained to mountain fighting." And he got what he asked for. Mussolini sent him the crack division of Alpini, the ace mountain fighters of the world. And ~~last week's~~ ^{the} victory ^{reported today} is the first tangible consequence.

(The big battle just ended, is the climax of the first phase of Badoglio's campaign. The interpretation of the news is that it was fought not so much with the objective of gaining territory, as for the destruction of the most formidable of the Ethiopian armies.) It was for the moral effect rather than the actual gain of terrain.

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It is characteristic that the telegram congratulating the old Marshal came not from his sovereign, King Victor Emanuel, but from the Duce. "The soul of the Italian people vibrates with pride and exultation," wired the Black Shirt Dictator. To which he added:

"My fervent praise and the gratitude of the country." Apparently, not a word of felicitation came to the front from the reigning head of the House of Savoy.

The casualty list of that five days' battle is a formidable one. Twenty thousand Ethiopians dead or wounded, with only four hundred Italians killed and five hundred injured. This afternoon's reports from the front indicate that Marshal Badoglio has achieved his main objective. From the accounts of eyewitnesses, the Ethiopians are thoroughly demoralized, rushing to cover.

When it was all over, the Italian Generalissimo cynically remarked: "You can bet that the ^{Negusti'} Negus ^{in a cave} is at this moment [^] writing a communication ^m [^] claiming an Ethiopian victory." Well, he was pretty nearly right. For the claim from Addis Ababa is, "The Italians have not won any major victory." Nevertheless, the official Italian statement is pretty soundly corroborated by the eyewitness reports of foreign correspondents.

SPAIN

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We don't know exactly what is going on at this moment in Spain. But the strict censorship that has been clamped down makes us sure of one thing. A great deal is happening that Madrid's government doesn't want the world to learn at present. The only sure thing is that the descendants of Don Quixote have been voting with bullets as well as ballots. Six killed and more than forty people injured. That, say the Spaniards, makes it the quietest election since King Alfonso, with the big Hapsburg jaw, took a walk.

However, it is quite definite that (riots are raging all over the Iberian peninsula. The Republic officially is in what is known as "a state of alarm". That's the next step to martial law.

In some respects, the election resembles those in many other countries. Every leader says, "We have won". The Rights, the Conservatives, claim the victory in the provinces. In Madrid and Barcelona, strongholds of the Radicals, the Red flag is flying.)

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In picturesque Cartagena, there was a general jail delivery at the prison. Nine hundred convicts rebelled, ~~and~~ set fire to the buildings, killed one warden, and held two others as hostages.

The Spanish Prime Minister, Manuel Portela, has offered to

resign in the hope of putting an end to the rioting. So far, President Zamora has refused to accept his resignation. But if the claim of the Left Wing is true, a new cabinet will be inevitable.

However, Senor Robles, the chief of the Right Wing and Center Parties, won't admit that he is defeated. Robles, in his short thirty-six years, has earned the nickname of "the iron man of Spain". The people of the Left object to him because they say he is at heart a Royalist. Independent observers tell us that this brilliant young lawyer is the strongest and most capable man in the country. They are prophesying that he is bound to become the next dictator. ~~in Europe, in fact in the world.~~

(Spain perhaps in wild revolt
But it's all behind the veil of
censorship.)

LEAGUE

This is moving day on the banks of Lake Geneva. The League of Nations started to take possession of its new home overlooking the lake. All day long caravans of motor trucks proceeded through the streets of Geneva carrying secretaries, documents, files, still more secretaries.

Correspondents occasionally remark that this magnificent palace is the only harmonious thing about the League. A tough job for architects it was. For they had to blend building materials from sixty countries. The exterior of the buildings is Swiss and French limestone, and Italian granite. On the inside sixty staircases of many colored Italian marble strike the eye. The rooms devoted to New Zealand and South Africa are panelled in native woods. Elsewhere you see paintings from Holland, furniture from Sweden, rugs from Persia, draperies from India - all battling with each other, architecturally, decoratively - and peacefully. The heating system has been provided by Germany no longer a member of the League. Not even there to turn on the heat.

The buildings altogether cost about eight million

dollars. Among the contributors were two American individuals, John D. Rockefeller, Junior, and the merchant-economist Edward A. Filene of Boston. The Woodrow Wilson Foundation kicked in too.

It has taken five years to complete the League's new home. Moving day for the League. And moving minute for me. And,

SOLONG UNTIL TOMORROW.