

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Britain's war story tonight brings us a drama of radio. Imagine -- a program is on the air, then suddenly air bombs crash upon the radio building with tragic destruction. Today London released information of an event that occurred recently -- the bombing of British Broadcasting headquarters in London. The same building from which I gave this broadcast at the time of the Coronation. The high explosives hit with shattering devastation, and seven members of the B.B.C. staff were killed -- control technicians mostly.

A broadcast was on the air -- Bruce Belfrage speaking. He's a well known British commentator whose voice is familiar in the British Isles and throughout the British Empire -- on the wings of short wave. He was in the middle of a sentence when the bombs hit and the building shook. Belfrage paused for an instant. Then a voice whispered to him -- "it's all right" -- someone who knew that the whole building was not coming down. And Belfrage went right on. There was a situation for any broadcaster -- radio evidence of the staunch spirit of the British under the bombs. One of the men injured in the blasting of the B.B.C. headquarters was

Fred Bate, British representative of the National Broadcasting Company. He was only slightly hurt.

Today London had the now unusual experience of a daylight raid, and it was the second largest that the British capital has had. Only once before have such numbers of Nazi bombers come over ^{the} in/daytime, and that was last September -- when the initial German air assault was at its height. After the way the R.A.F. beat them off by ~~xx~~ day, the Nazis resorted to night bombing. And that's been the story ever since -- until now. Day raiding was resumed today -- because of the weather. Britain was covered with low-hanging clouds and heavy fog-- making it difficult for the R.A.F. planes to go aloft. The air raiders took advantage of that and came over -- in large numbers but not in large squadrons. They were individual raiders mostly, ~~on and on. They did a good~~ deal of ~~B~~ombing at London, and other places, but it was no devastating ~~blitz~~ blitz -- few casualties, and comparatively little damage. The attack seemed more of the nuisance variety, though on a large scale.

If Today's air raid was an exception for London; so is tonight's lack of one. At last reports there was little or no

bombing -- once more because of the weather. It would appear that the skies are now so muggy that the Germans have called it off for the night.

Britain had encouraging word today in the form of figures for submarine sinkings, the smallest in several weeks.--

In North Africa the British are near the Number One Italian base at Tobruk. That is sixty miles East of Bardia, which the British captured over the weekend. That's fast going. In fact, British patrols were pushing toward Tobruk while the siege of Bardia was going on. The Italians have abandoned their air base at El Adem, which is only fifteen miles from Tobruk. British forces today seized that airport and there found forty Fascist planes which had been disabled by British sky attacks -- planes that had been bombed while on the ground.

The fall of Bardia, of which the Italian people have now been informed, is being taken by them as decidedly bad news. But today Mussolini and his Council of Ministers issued a pronunciamento proclaiming unchanging adherence to the alliance with Nazi Germany.

One interesting bit of comment is made by an ace Fascist war commentator who writes in

Mussolini's own newspaper. He says the Italians know that the British General Staff has a four-point plan for winning the war -- a plan that includes American intervention. Mussolini's journalist states that Point One is victory in the Mediterranean during this winter -- putting Italy out of the war. Point two, concentration of British forces in the North Sea to balk a Nazi invasion in the Spring. Point three, deal ~~ix~~ with Nazi threats in Africa and the Near East next winter. Point four, ~~and~~ in the Summer of Nineteen Forty-two -- an invasion of the German-controlled continent via the Balkans, invasion with the help of the United States, an American Expeditionary Force. Such is what the Italians believe the British ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ are planning.

DEFENSE

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A picture of the lag in national defense was presented to a Congressional Committee today, by Rear Admiral Towers, Chief of Naval Aeronautics. One of the striking things he told the Committee was that during the past year, Nineteen Forty, the Naval air force had acquired only four hundred and forty-five new war planes. The Naval Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives is holding an inquiry into the delays that have beset the armament building program, and Admiral Towers today was the first witness. He said that (on January 1st of last year, Nineteen Forty, the Navy had two thousand, one hundred and forty-five planes in all.) During most of the year the deliveries were exceedingly small. Nearly all of the new planes were acquired during the last three months to bring the total ^{deliveries} up to four hundred and forty-five.

Right now the Navy has an air fleet of twenty-five hundred planes. How many of these are up-to-date sky ships ready for modern air war? Admiral Towers said -- "Very few."

He intimated that the Navy was not satisfied with plane production under the National Defense program. "I am very impatient about it," said he. He was asked -- has the Navy failed

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to get planes because any other nation had got priorities?
Meaning -- had the Navy had to wait while the British got theirs
first? The Admiral replied -- yes, but only in a small and
unimportant way, only to the extent of the delivery of five planes.

What about labor ~~xxx~~ troubles? "Strikes," replied
Admiral Towers, "have not been a serious factor so far."

"Have you any evidence of Fifth Column activity in the
production of Naval aircraft?" he was asked.

"No," responded the Admiral, "there have been some cases
which seemed like sabotage, but which were shown to be carelessness."

Then
~~And~~ why the lag? The Chief of Naval Aeronautics cited --
a shortage
~~xxxxxxx~~ of machine tools. This causes no surprise. It is well
known that in war plane production ~~xxx~~ machine tools have been what
they call -- a bottleneck. As another cause of delay Admiral
Towers mentioned the ammortization problem -- that technical affair
of taxation which affects the way a company may expand production
by building new plants.

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How about ~~ix~~ the future? The Navy expects to get
four thousand new war planes during the coming year, and build its

total up to something like sixty-three hundred planes by the first of next year. And first-rate, Grade-A sky craft.

Admiral ^Towers told the Congressional Committee about a report made by the Naval Air Mission which recently returned from Great Britain. American officers went overseas and studied plane performances in the air battles of Britain. They state that the newest American models that the British ^{have} acquired are tops. The new American fighters surpass the British fighters ^{in fire power --} ~~in fire~~ number and weight of machine guns. So our new sky fighters are indeed first-rate -- Grade-A. But the same could not be said of earlier planes that the British got from the United States. Admiral Towers said that these ~~previous~~ previous ships lacked fire power -- didn't have enough machineguns or machine guns heavy enough. This fits in with stories of some while past that the fighter planes that Britain got over here were not up to the standards of the Battle of Britain.

Here's a late dispatch, ~~from London.~~ Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding stated today that the Royal Air Force is using four types of ~~American~~ American planes, three types of bomber and one type of pursuit ship. The Air Marshal summarized the quality of

of these planes by saying that they were being used with what he called -- "most valuable results."

President Roosevelt today created the new super agency to run the armament program. It is called -- the Office of Production Management. It's the same as previously announced; — consisting of Industrialist William S. Knudsen, and Labor Leader Sidney Hillman, Secretary-of-War Stimson, and Secretary-of-the-Navy Knox. The responsibility will be concentrated on Knudsen and Hillman. Will Knudsen have a higher authority than Hillman? President Roosevelt refused to answer that question. He merely stated that the two will act jointly. Theirs will be the task of putting ~~AMERICAN~~ America's peace-time economy on a war-time basis.

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The new Super Control ~~Board~~ for Industry promptly issued a proclamation. It states, in brief, that to transform the United States into an arsenal for democracy ^{will} ~~would~~ require the cooperation of every person in this country. "Everything in our national life must be subordinate", are the words ~~he~~ used.

The United States today released a number of war planes
to Greece -- exactly how many we are not told, but it's less
than a hundred. This is prompt action following the Presidential
message promising ever-increasing aid to the Democracies.

MRS. ROOSEVELT

The reception that Congress gave to the Presidential message yesterday was the subject of some comment today by the First Lady of the Land. Mrs. Roosevelt first wrote the comment in her daily newspaper column -- MY DAY. Then she spoke it in a press conference. She says that yesterday's Presidential message event gave her what she describes as -- "a profound shock."

The cause of the shock ^{was} ~~was~~ the fact that statements made by the President before Congress were not applauded by the Republicans. Mrs. Roosevelt noted that most of the Republican ~~xxxxx~~ lawmakers failed to clap their hands even in approval of the Presidential four-point program for a just settlement of world affairs.

"I thought," she said sadly, "that anybody could applaud those four principles on which to base a future peace." And then the First Lady went on to express this philosophy about the G.O.P. failure to applaud, "I really feel that that was something that went very deep," said she. "I don't know," she added, "whether the Republicans have a policy of not applauding a Democrat."

Yes, my dear First Lady, they sometimes have. It's one of those eternal truths -- that Republicans don't usually applaud Democrats and vice versa, Democrats don't usually applaud

Republicans.

Mrs. Roosevelt was asked about why she withdrew her membership from the American Rescue Ship Mission, which has been advocating a plan to help the Spanish Loyalist refugees in France. The idea was to finance a rescue ship that would fetch the Left-wingers of the Spanish Civil War over here and procure entrance for them into this country. The scheme is now being denounced as a Communist affair -- ^{Just} ~~with~~ a false face to mask the doings of the Reds. The charge is made that ~~xx~~ money collected by the use of names of prominent members, has been spent strictly for purposes. Communist ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Mrs. Roosevelt said today that she has not looked into the ^{accusations} ~~accusions~~ of Red Radicalism. She said she withdrew her membership because she found that the Spanish Loyalist Rescue Ship affair was trying to do something that is being done more effectively by other organizations -- a duplication of effort. That's why she stepped out.

The American Rescue Ship Mission was today defended by Helen Keller, world-famous heroine of the blind. She described the Spanish Leftist exiles in France as -- heroic people who

~~we~~ ^{tonight} we hear of an astonishing scheme to sell men
guarantees that ^{they'll} ~~they would~~ not be drafted into the army. ^{at} ~~a man~~
^{Cleveland,} ~~named~~ Alonzo Clippinger was today sentenced to a year in prison
for operating what he called "The World Justice Foundation."

He advertised that anybody who joined this foundation would never
be conscripted for military service. How's that for cheek?

A member had to pay ten dollars, and the guarantee provided that
if he happened to be drafted he would get a cash bonus of five
thousand dollars. Clippinger explained to the Court that his
plan was to recruit so large a membership that the United States
Government would not attempt to enforce the Selective Service
Act. Amazing what ~~xx~~ schemes the human brain can devise!

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MONEY

Today on a New York street-corner a man stood soliciting funds for a gospel mission. He held out a tamborine, for passersby to drop money into, and he rattled the tamborine occasionally to attract attention. Business, however, was not so good. There were only a few small coins in the tamborine.

Then a man approached and the collector for the gospel mission jingled the tamborine suggestively. The response was amazing. The man ~~xxxx~~ stooped, and took ^{he} off one of his shoes.

Then he took off the other. Out of the shoes he produced two rolls of bills -- ^{one roll} ~~one~~ from each. And into the tamborine he tossed the two sizeable bankrolls. When counted they amounted to a hundred and seventy-nine dollars. Then he continued down the street, without his shoes. *Guess he tossed them in also.*

Now that, ~~xxxx~~ you'll admit, is a strange series of events -- goofy in fact. A policeman's attention was attracted. He went to the gospel mission man who, in a daze, was counting the ~~two bankrolls~~ ^{money.} The cop confiscated the cash and then went after the extraordinary individual who was plodding along without shoes.

"What's it all about?" demanded the cop.

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"I'm walking my last mile," the man responded -- which made it more weird and perplexing than ever. *His last mile - in his sock. - on the cold cold pavement*

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He wouldn't say any more. At the stationhouse they gave him back his ~~two bankrolls~~ *double roll of bills* - but he still refused to elucidate,

leaving the affair to remain one of those ~~freakish~~ freakish

fantasies that occur in every-day life, like a scene out of some

comedy of madcap nonsense.

HUSBAND

In Detroit today a man appealed to the police, asking them to find his wife. He related how Wifey had left him, vanished. ~~in~~ Why did Wifey abandon her hubby? That was made clear by a promise he asked the cops to relay.

"Tell her I won't do it again," he said fervently, and explained, "I'll admit I was making eyes at the lady next door. But I promise I won't do it again. I won't even glance at that lady next door." It's a pathetic story, and to make it completely heartbreaking we must add this one detail. Hubby and Wifey are of the same age. Both are seventy-one.

Top that Hugh.

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