

P.I. - Sunoco. Wed., March 16th, 1938.

ITALY

Today the Duce spoke in Rome.
~~It was an interesting afternoon in the Italian House of~~
Told his story,
~~Deputies. The Duce, clad in his best bib and tucker, told the~~
~~story of Austria's annexation, from his side of it. It was noticed~~
Gave his version.
~~that~~ ~~He~~ put aside his usual rhetoric and shouting; ~~He~~ spoke slowly,
deliberately, in an even tone. Occasionally he emphasized a point
with a bang of his fists on the rostrum. "It was inevitable," he
said, "What happened was destined by fate. ~~to occur.~~"

Italian deputies are not allowed to question the Prime
Minister. Otherwise some of them might have asked: "If it was
inevitable, Senor Duce, "why did we stop it in Nineteen Thirty-Four?"
No such question was asked, so it wasn't answered. (The Duce did
refer to the historic date three and a half years ago when he stopped
the Nazification of Austria. But he referred to it only to say:
"Not a single Austrian thanked me for it.")

All in all, his speech was not merely sympathetic to
Germany. It sounded like a glorification of a brother-in-arms.)
He described *the Austrian annexation* ~~it as~~ as a great political event, and said: "The
Fuehrer has reached his aim." And he said further: "We never
assumed any pledge, either direct or indirect, written or verbal,

to preserve Austrian independence indefinitely."

Then he added something interesting. "I warned Schuschnigg on March Seventh about that plebiscite. I told him categorically that it was a mistake, that it was an infernal machine that would explode in his hand." ^{Then he added: -} "Schuschnigg might have postponed what has happened, but he couldn't permanently prevent the inevitable." ^{Said Mussolini to his} ~~Then he said to the~~ deputies: "The hopes that Italy and Germany might go to war over Austria are simply childish. ^{said he} They're just the hopes ["] of democracy, Masonic lodges, and the Third Internationale."

As for the spectacle of Germans at the head of the Brenner Pass, the Duce said: "This Italy -- meaning Fascist Italy -- is in no way disturbed by things like that. We don't discuss frontiers, we defend them if necessary."

VIENNA

18/1

In Austria, the Nazis have begun their campaign of Schrecklichkeit. Storm Troopers ~~were~~ arresting people right and left, ~~principally~~ principally government officials and prominent Jews. Former President ~~William~~ Maklas is ^{now} under arrest, likewise the Baron Louis deRothschild, member of the famous international banking family. Four ^{Jewish} brothers, owners of a department store in Vienna, are also in custody. An American cameraman is one of those in jail, ~~He is~~ the Paris representative of Acme. ~~Pictures~~ Storm Troopers ^{today} stalked through the ^{once light-hearted} city, posting signs on shops owned by Jews. The signs read: "Do not buy here." When the Viennese continued to buy in spite of the signs, the places were closed. Thousands of Jews are making desperate attempts to cross the frontier^s. Some of them are trying to get into Czechoslovakia even without passports. All foreign legations and consulates were besieged by would-be Jewish refugees. A newspaper publisher and ^a ~~another~~ Viennese financier were taken prisoner at the border.

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Foreign newspaper men, including Americans, are being roughly handled by the Nazi Storm Troopers. The condition they reported throughout Austria is that when Hitler returned to Berlin, what he left behind him is virtually an army of occupation.

HITLER

Immediately upon Hitler's return to Berlin, he convened the Reichstag for Friday. And, he let it be known that he is going to discuss Germany's foreign relations. Of course, he'll first of all gloat over the snatching of Austria.

And Berlin says tonight that he'll make a statement about Czechoslovakia.

PRAGUE

In Czechoslovakia anger, fear and consternation are increasing. There was a violent scene in the Czech Senate today. The leader of the Sudeten Germans started it with an ominous threat. "Czechoslovakia had better declare itself neutral before it's too late," he shouted. "The only safe thing to do is to follow the Swiss example and adapt the Czechoslovakian policy to that of Switzerland and Belgium. Only in such a case will the Sudeten German Party cooperate." Then he added: "We tell you this before it is too late. It is now five minutes to twelve."

Nazi-Prussian words - those!
Meaning of course that the hour is at hand. This became *all the* ~~more and~~
when the more ominous ~~because that~~ Senator ~~had~~ announced he was speaking
for the entire Sudeten Party. He had a good deal more to say than
he was allowed to utter. When he *completed the* ~~got to that part of his~~ threat,
the uproar in the Chamber drowned *his* ~~those~~ remarks.

COMMONS

Hot words passed in the House of Commons this afternoon. Even the stolid Prime Minister Chamberlain became annoyed. It wasn't the first time ~~that~~ labor members ~~had~~ got the prime ministerial goat. But this time it was the leader of the opposition, Clement Atlee, who annoyed the Premier. The labor leader had been bull-doggedly trying to get some positive statement out of ~~Mr.~~ Chamberlain. "The country wants to know what you are going to do?" he cried. All ~~Mr.~~ Chamberlain would say was that the government will fulfill its responsibilities as a member of the League of Nations. Then said the labor chief: "I am not asking for a statement. I want the Prime Minister to remember that there's great anxiety in the country over the spectacle of a government without a policy." The Prime Minister retorted: "Don't you deliver ultimatums to me!"

Then up spoke another labor member: "Wouldn't you rather have ultimatums from a leader of the opposition than from some foreign power?"

All through the afternoon the situation in both Austria and Spain kept the ^{London} government on the defensive.

Somebody asked: "What about those colonies," And Mr.

Chamberlain replied: "After the latest events, nothing further can be done in that direction."

~~At the same time, the House of Lords were hearing from the Foreign Secretary. Said Viscount Halifax: "We must recognize that Austria is no longer an independent entity because it has been absorbed by Germany." And he added: "Nothing but war could change that situation."~~

LONDON

Yes, British Prime Minister ~~Neville Chamberlain~~ today refused to tell the House of Commons what His Majesty's government would do. He merely announced what they would not do. They will not intervene in Spain no matter what happens. Only by keeping out of that mess can John Bull avoid burning his fingers. And the Prime Minister declined to say anything whatever about Czechoslovakia.

A somewhat similar story comes from Paris. France and Britain have agreed not to intervene in Spain unless -- unless there is proof of those reports of mass shipments of soldiers and war equipment from Germany and Italy. And what will they do in case there is such proof? Then they will reconsider. When you compare that to the positive statements uttered by both Hitler and Mussolini, you will realize fully just why the world is in ~~xxxxxx~~ a turmoil, so full of doubt and anxiety.

There is just one positive note in the statement from Paris. Neither France nor Britain will tolerate any foreign influence in Spain after the civil war is settled. Neither

German, Italian, Russian or any other foreign control will be allowed either in Spain, the adjacent islands, or Spanish Morocco. But again, nothing is said about what France and Britain will do to stop it.

FOREIGN MARKET

The markets abroad flopped in a new direction today. The big fall was in British stocks, stocks that had been hitherto gilt edged. ~~The dumping of these British securities inevitably brought a lot of money back to England. The result of that was that~~ The Pound Sterling took a dive and Uncle Sam's Dollar went up. ~~up, even more.~~ The London Stock Exchange was in a turmoil all day. The cause? ~~of it all is attributed to the~~ Bear that the Chamberlain government ^{may} ~~might~~ start a conscription of industry. ^{The Prime} ~~Mr. Chamberlain~~ Minister hinted as much yesterday.

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POLAND

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Trouble today on the border between Poland and Lithuania. A special conference called in Warsaw at the palace of Poland's president. It has been stated openly that there is a crisis in the relations between the Poles and the Lithuanians. There was a clash between Lithuanian customs officers and Polish police on the frontier. That frontier has long been in dispute. It is even being rumored that there have been movements of Lithuanian troops inside the frontier, but that was denied. At any rate, the calling of that Polish Cabinet conference is taken to signify an ominous situation.

If Hitler connived with Poland at the grabbing of Lithuania, that would give Poland an outlet on the Baltic. And, that might be his way of settling the difficult question of that Polish Corridor between Prussia and East Prussia.

SPAIN

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When people talked about Spain today the question was -- Are those reports true that Hitler has sent thirty thousand troops to General Franco? It seems incredible. For one thing, it would take ~~at least~~ many troopships to carry that number of Germans, troopships with convoy. Such a fleet would inevitably be spotted passing down the Channel. As for the rumor that the thirty thousand Germans travelled overland across Italy, that's also a trifle doubtful. It would tie up railway traffic throughout Lombardy for two entire days -- and scare the Italians pink!

There's another weird announcement: - The Spanish Leftwingers claim to have received reinforcements of both men and munitions -- huge reinforcements from what is described as "a nearby power." With those soldiers came experienced staff officers and masses of heavy artillery. And these are pointing out weak spots in General Franco's line. Ah, but what nearby power? That's the joker.

From another source we learn that Franco today is consolidating his gains, on the Aragon front. His attack has slowed up. Barcelona claims Franco has been checked.

REORGANIZATION

The fight on ^{the New Deal} ~~President Roosevelt's~~ Reorganization Bill in the Senate is still hot. ~~Senator~~ Hiram Johnson of California took up the cudgels today; ~~he~~ called it an infamous bill, ~~and he~~ went ~~further than that.~~ He wanted Congress to do more than reject ^{the} ~~this~~ ~~particular~~ measure. Said he: "Take back the power that we already have surrendered to the executive branch!" ~~I speak for the~~ ~~retention in Congress of the powers it has."~~

WAGE - HOUR

There has been an impression that the Wage and Hours Bill before Congress was practically dead. But it showed signs of life today. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor called at the White House. When he came out, he said: "The Federation is going to work tooth and nail with the President and Congress to get a Wage-Hour Bill through this session."

He said he
~~Incidentally, he let it be known that he~~ called at the White House
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at the President's request.

INCOME TAX

Uncle Sam is raking in dollars by the shovelful, no matter what others are experiencing. Income tax payments are pouring in at a bigger rate than ever. In the first fifteen days of March, Uncle collected almost six hundred and sixteen million dollars; ~~That's~~ eighteen per cent more than in the same period last year. At that rate the income tax returns for the year will come up to President Roosevelt's estimate.

ROOSEVELT

Politics is in the air again, campaigns are starting.

One of the first, is a pro-Roosevelt ^{one}~~campaign~~ in Massachusetts.

But it isn't for the President. It's for son Jimmy.

The movement is to have him be nominated for Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts. Headquarters have been established already in Boston.

Of course young ~~Mr~~ James Roosevelt is no new-comer in Massachusetts politics. He did some exceedingly active campaigning for Papa in Nineteen Thirty-Six. And his champions say it was effective, ~~that he was in a large measure~~ ~~the~~ responsible, ~~for Massachusetts being in the Democratic column.~~

COOLIDGE

Here's a bit of history -- a Calvin Coolidge story. It comes from Joe Fountain of the New Haven Railway, the Central Vermont and the The Canadian National. Joe was up here working for the Associated Press when Mr. Coolidge got the news of President Harding's death. There wasn't any telephone in the Coolidge home at Plymouth. The Vice-President, accompanied by Joe Fountain and a United Press man and another reporter, walked across to the store to use the only phone in town, to call up Washington and get the exact form of the oath so old John Coolidge could swear in his son as President of the United States.

While they stood there waiting for the call to come through, Vice-President Coolidge said:- "Well boys, would you like to have a drink?" They allowed as how they would. So Mr. Coolidge asked the girl behind the counter to serve sasparilla all around, sasparilla for all four. After they had all finished their drinks Mr. Coolidge took out his little round wallet, unlaced it slowly, took out a nickel, and put it on the counter, and paid for his own drink. And that's the story.

MERRILL

A new name was added today to the list of crack pilots, ^{winners} ~~who~~
^{of} ~~won~~ the Harmon Trophy; ~~that's~~ the ~~win~~ award given to the man
acclaimed as the outstanding pilot of the world during the previous
year. The winner is named not in this country but by the International
League of Aviators. Last year, you will remember, Howard Hughes, the ^{millionaire}
speed ~~merchant~~ ^{flyer}, took it. This year's winner is Henry T. Merrill,
popularly known as "Dick." ^{He won it for} ~~He got it for his feat in~~ flying with
Jack Lambie, to London and back, during the coronation of King George.
~~last year~~ The trophy was presented to Dick Merrill by President
Roosevelt, at the White House today.

MOLASSES

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In America we put molasses on our pancakes. In far off India the government is thinking of putting it on the highways. The Imperial Institute of Sugar Technology has been studying the idea. And it seems they've developed a means of ~~putting it on~~ ^{syruping} the roads so as to produce a surface as hard as asphalt and at about one-third of the cost.

That conjures up an interesting picture. Can't you hear mother saying at breakfast: "Oh dear, I forgot to order any syrup. Johnny, go out on the road and chop up a bit of highway."

~~But it seems that the scientists know a trick worth two or three of that. They mix the molasses with coal tar and acids. That might not taste so good on hot waffles.~~

~~And s-l-u-t-m.~~

SQUIRREL

In Kansas City, Missouri, a lone red squirrel has created what is almost, a public problem. It is stealing American flags from the grave of a soldier in the cemetery. It takes the flags and uses them to pad its nest.

When the mother of that dead war veteran missed the flags, she thought at first it was the work of pacifists. In fact she had to put eleven flags on her son's grave before she caught the squirrel in the act. The cemetery officials wanted to take harsh military measures against the squirrel. Hold a Moscow trial. But the lady is a lover of animals and wouldn't hear of it. So she tried camphor. Still the flags disappeared. Then she sprinkled oil of citronella, but the squirrel didn't care a hoot. and today she announced "I still don't want any harm to come to that dear little squirrel. Maybe Mr. Squirrel wants to save the flags and bring them out on the fourth of July," said she. And SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.