

46
 Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox took the stand this afternoon at the hearing by the House Foreign Relations Committee. ^{He} and began his testimony immediately after Secretary of War Stimson had concluded his own.

The Secretary of the Navy demanded that this nation give Great Britain what he called "unstinted help." He developed that theme in a question-and-answer exchange. Representative Hamilton Fish demanded -- does the United States possess the world's

greatest Navy? The Secretary replied ^{--- yes, the American fleet} ~~--- yes, but I am not sure~~

is unquestionably the strongest in the world. The Congressman tried to draw from the Secretary that even if the Axis powers won, their combined fleets would not be as great as our own. But

47
 Knox would not admit that. He said he foresaw, not so much an immediate and direct danger, as an indirect menace. "No navy,"

said he, "will ^{not} attack our shores at once. The penetration will come in a different way." And he indicated-- by way of South America.

The Axis powers, if victorious, would ^{start making passes} ~~make a pass~~ at the great

continent to the South.

Then came the important question;-- ~~about the power the~~

Omnibus bill to Aid Britain would give to the President ~~the~~
the presidential
power to transfer any part of our navy to some other nation.

The secretary was asked did he believe the strength of our fleet would be impaired if any of its ships were turned over to the British. He replied Yes. He said he thought the navy could not ~~xx~~ afford to give up any of its units. Nevertheless, said Knox, he was against any amendment of the Aid Britain bill which would prevent the President from transferring warships to Britain.


H He said he was opposed to any such amendment unless, as he expressed it, "You will put in an amendment to prohibit the President of the United States from going out on Pennsylvania Avenue and Standing on his head." The reference to ~~"standing on his head"~~ ^{*upside down*} *posture* was ~~xx~~ derived from a statement by the President himself.

48
At his press conference earlier today he ridiculed the idea that he might give away the United States navy. Why prohibit him from doing that? You might as well forbid him to stand on his head, which he has no intention of doing. *H* Secretary Knox declared that no man is more devoted to American defense than President Roosevelt.

He described the Presidential affection for the navy with this figure of speech, "The apply of his eye."

The Stimson testimony which preceded that of Knox, touched upon a number of important points. He stated the President is not trying to get this country into war. And he pointed to the past history of the White House. "History," he said, "show s no President who rushed this country into war."

Secretary Stimson was asked whether Britain, to defeat Germany, would need more man power than Britain has. Obviously meaning -- would American man power be needed? "I'd rather not speculate publicly on that," responded the Secretary of War. Under further questioning he admitted that Great Britain has less



man power than Germany, but refused to concede that a land campaign would be necessary to beat the Nazis.

Then came an important point -- the possibility that Hitler might get the British fleet. Secretary Stimson declared that London has given this country what he called "The strongest possible assurance" -- assurance that the British fleet will not under any circumstances, be surrendered to Nazi Germany.

"But," he added, ^{that} "you never can tell about the future." "I feel it's important," he said, "to prevent Great Britain from being brought to the breaking-point -- where it might violate all law."

One sensational bit concerned a report that the United States might ~~by~~ buy the British navy, if Britain loses. In a pinch we might ~~even~~ acquire the British fleet. Secretary Stimson retorted with ridicule -- ^{that} he'd never heard of any such thing. "I consider that," said he, "a fantastic and preposterous suggestion -- like the suggestion that the President might give away the navy."

The Stimson testimony closed on a grave note -- the statement that the supreme crisis for Britain may come in the next

50

sixty or ninety days. *The Sec. of the Navy has just confirmed this opinion in his own testimony-- crisis within 60 or 90 days.*

The committee had before it a formal statement ^{made} by

John Bassett Moore, the famous authority on international law.

In a letter he told the committee today that the lend-lease program of all-out-aid to Britain would transfer the war-making power from Congress to the President. ^{His} ~~The~~ opinion is put in these words:-

"There can be no doubt," states John Bassett Moore, "that under the guise of certain phraseology, the pending bill assumes to transfer the war-making power from the Congress, in which the Constitution lodges it, to the Executive. This is evident upon its face," he concludes.

The hearings of the Foreign Relations Committee continue to be punctuated with bickering and argument -- controversies among the members. This is a ~~fixer~~ sign of the tenseness with which Congress regards the bill which ^{would} ~~will~~ permit the President to lend vast armament to Great Britain.

51

DIPLOMATS

In Washington there has been a lucky break for the Inaugural; a ticklish problem is solved -- automatically, by sheer luck. The problem arose out of the fact that the entire diplomatic corps will be there when President Roosevelt is inaugurated for his third term. The diplomats of the nations at war will be together -- this for the first time since the outbreak of the conflict in Europe.

They will be in the stand reserved for the diplomatic corps. So what if the Acting Head of the British Embassy should find himself sitting next to the Nazi Charge d'Affaires on one side -- and the Italian Ambassador on the other?

Of course, you'd think the answer would be simple -- juggle the seating arrangements. Avoid placing belligerent representatives next to each other -- envoys of the Axis power and Japan, and Britain, and the conquered nations and Greece.

Unfortunately, however, you can't do anything so plain and sensible -- because of diplomatic tradition, protocol. Rigid custom governs the seating of diplomats -- order of seniority. The one longest in Washington has the first place, the second longest has seat number two, and so on. So that might tangle the belligerent diplomats altogether with the grave peril of what the White House so

expressively calls "unhappy incidents."

Such was the ticklish situation that confronted the protocol experts of the State Department, -- when the lucky break was noted. It just so happens, by sheer coincidence, that if you list the diplomats in the order of their seniority in Washington -- no two representatives of rival powers of war come next to each other. In seating them strictly according to protocol, the hostile envoys will be separated from each other by at least one neutral diplomat, from some South American Republic, Afghanistan or Persia.

WAR

In the Mediterranean the British report a heavy bombing attack against the ~~island~~ island of Malta. The Nazi dive bombers at work again. Berlin claims that this air raid on Malta included ^{a second} another bombing of the aircraft carrier Illustrious ^{--- the one} -- we had a rather brief bulletin about ~~this~~ last night. According to the Berlin version the ~~was~~ Illustrious damaged by air attack at sea, took refuge at Malta. The Nazi dive bombers went after the big ship again and Berlin today maintained that the Illustrious was out of action for the rest of the war, beyond repair.

The Royal Air Force hit back with another raid against ^{the} a German dive bomber ~~base~~ base at Catania in Sicily. A bulletin from Cairo states that Nazi war planes, in their Mediterranean operations have lost heavily. The R.A.F. destroying some sixty of the dive bombers, ^{many} ~~many~~ of them on the ground. — trading blows for the mastery of the Mediterranean.

London charges today that when the British captured the Italian airdrome of El Adem in Libya they found a number ~~of~~ squares of canvas marked with the identification signs

54 { of the Royal Air Force. From this it is inferred that the
Italians intended to use the Royal Air Force markings on
Italian planes -- making them appear to be British, during
air raids. Such a practice is ~~is very~~ definitely not according
to hoyle.

SIAM

In a remote corner of Asia there's a war, which we ^{have} almost lost sight of -- over-shadowed by the larger events of the European conflict. The French in Indo-China are fighting what appears to be a bitter and determined struggle with Siam. This has been going on for some time, and now appears to be developing into a sanguinary affair. Today's story tells of ^a Siamese ~~xxxx~~ cavalry charge against machine guns. The Asiatic horsemen rushed at a gallop in old-fashioned style, while the French machine-gunners cut them down. In ~~xxxxxx~~ spite of the deadly hail of bullets, the Siamese cavalry troops kept on

coming. *on. The charge of the Siamese Light Brigade!*

We're told that French warships yesterday sank two Siamese fighting craft. Siam has a couple of modern cruisers in addition to various smaller ships of war. We are not told of what sort were the two that were ~~sunk~~ sunk.

LIQUOR

Tonight we have an old story -- in reverse, the other way round. In Prohibition days the bootleg ^{way} ~~was~~ was to smuggle liquor from Canada into the United States. ~~It has~~ a long grim history, whiskey smuggling southward across the border. But things have changed since then, and changed so much that now the story is -- rum-running from the United States to Canada.

56

Today at Detroit the Federal Grand Jury indicted thirty-three persons, members of what is called the biggest bootleg ring the Midwest has ever had, bigger than any ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ the darkly legended days of Scarface Al Capone. In the seven months of operation they are said to have defrauded the United States out of taxes in the amount of two-and-a-half million dollars, not counting the taxes out of which Canada was defrauded. The Canadian taxes are the key to the whole thing. The wartime levy on liquor in the Dominion is so high that these latter-day rum runners, found it fabulously profitable to do a wholesale smuggling job. The indictment today charges that the liquor was manufactured ^{and} by illicit stills in Chicago, [^] was run across the border into Canada by a fleet of thirty-six ~~gx~~ trucks on the roads,

and four vessels on the Detroit River. Prohibition days in
reverse -- the other way round.

CHINESE

China town has many a tale to tell, but none more ^{oblique} ~~bleak~~ and slant-eyed than one we have this evening. Yesterday there was a disastrous fire on Doyer^s Street, in the heart of China town. Two buildings burned down, rookeries of old. The police say the buildings were more than a hundred years old -- ramshackle fire-traps. They were swept by flames, and three lives were lost. It was a case of arson, the fire deliberately set. Today the crime was confessed by a Chinese named George Lowe, whom they also call "Charlie the Bum."

~~It was~~ odd for a Chinaman to be called -- the Bum.

57
The slant-eyed Celestials of Chinatown may gamble at fantan and fight Tong wars, ^b ~~But~~ bumming and pan-handling are ^{not} ~~among~~ their faults. They said Charlie the Bum had gone white-man -- because he begged on the streets and slept in hallways. Chinatown regarded that as something reprehensibly Caucasian. So Charlie the Bum was not popular. Last summer, as a story in the New York Evening Post tells us, he took to sleeping in the hallway of one of the shabby buildings on Doyer^s Street. The Chinese who ran the tenements

chased him away. Again and again Charlie the Bum curled himself in a dark corner to sleep, was rudely aroused, and driven out. with abuse in fluent Chinese. It made him angry and bitter. As time went on he nursed ^a ~~the~~ grudge, and determined to have his revenge.

Last Monday he set a fire in the hall of the building from which he'd been ousted repeatedly. The blaze was promptly discovered, and extinguished. Yesterday Charlie the Bum tried it again, and this time succeeded with such flaming effect that tonight he is a ~~prison~~ prisoner charged with arson and homicide.

Here's something to catch the fancy -- the wildest of the love letters of George Bernard Shaw. It appears now that they will at last be published. In London today the will of Mrs. Pat Campbell was made public. In it the celebrated British actress directs that a volume be printed, a book to be called - "The Love Letters of Bernard Shaw to Mrs. Patrick Campbell." It is known, of course, that Shaw, the Irish master of mordant wisdom and irony, wrote sentimental letters to the actress who starred in many of his plays. Some of them were published in the memoirs of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, written shortly before her death.

Here's an example of the Shavian unshaven romantic at his most fluent, "I hope you have lost your good looks," he wrote to ~~her~~ the actress. "For while they last any fool can adore you, and the adoration of fools is bad for the soul." Said Shaw:- "Give me a ruined complexion, a lost figure, sixteen chins, a farmyard of crows' feet, and an obvious wig. Then you'll see me come out strong," so wrote George Bernard Shaw. Of course the Roman poet Catullus said the same thing long ago. Then, when she published those few epistles shortly before she died, Mrs. Pat

Campbell wrote: "His wildest letters I do not give." But in the will published today she directs -- that those wildest love letters of Bernard Shaw shall now be given. Give all. Tell all. And now, Hugh James will give all, tell all.