

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY!

The White House is keeping the purport of tomorrow's Presidential message a closely-guarded secret, and tonight Washington is buzzing with speculation. It is generally understood that President Truman will give to the joint session of the Senate and the House a report on the Communist crisis in Europe - an alarming picture. There are rumors that the Soviets have demanded military alliances with the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, along the line of Stalin's message to the President of Finland, proposing a treaty. Soviet alliance meaning the status of a satellite. Any such Moscow success with the Scandinavian countries, that surely would put Soviet power on the Atlantic. We hear that President Truman may cite these reports and facts to back him up, alarming indeed; In addition to which there is that election coming in Italy, with openly expressed fear that the Communists may stage a coup d'etat and seize Italy, as they did Czechoslovakia.

Today in Washington, Congressman Joe Martin, Republican Speaker of the House, declared that if the Communists won out in the Italian election, it would mean a Red sweep in Europe. A Communist victory, said the Republican leader, would mean that Communism would rule in the Mediterranean and unquestionably dominate all Europe. It is believed that the President will cite all the ominous facts as an argument for hastening the Marshall Plan, which has been passed by the Senate but is being delayed in the lower House. He is likely to urge Selective Service, too, and perhaps some form of draft to build up the armed forces at once. A move by the army today ties in with this, our top military leaders today asking for a legal ruling in the matter of calling back to active duty a lot of officers and GIs who served in World War II. The army believes that over 1,300,000 officers and former soldiers with reserve connections can be inducted without any special authorization of Congress. And there are rumors that the

President may ask for wartime powers in dealing with the Red menace.

In Congress late this afternoon, Republican leaders moved to provide funds for a huge military expansion, put up enough money to provide the armed forces with what the Republican leaders call "absolutely everything needed for national security." This, on the eve of the Presidential special message.

United States for the Pope. This Mexican proposition, however, is not in accord with printed reports in the United States. These advancing various theories: one is that the Communists should take power in Italy, legal or otherwise, then the Roman Pontiff could stay in Rome, give all assuming the role of martyr, if necessary. Another is that he could take refuge not in the United States but in Latin America - Brazil being mentioned.

In Mexico City, today a leading newspaper published a front-page headline story on a question that has often been asked: If Italy should go Communist, what would the Pope do? The Mexico City newspaper features a report that if the Reds should get control, either thru the election or by a coup d'etat, the Pontiff of Rome would take refuge in the United States. It is known, declares the newspaper, that various North American organizations have offered to provide asylum in the United States for the Pope. This Mexican supposition, however, is not in accord with printed reports in the United States. These advancing various theories; one is if the Communists should take power in Italy, legal or otherwise, then the Roman Pontiff would stay in Rome, Pius XII assuming the role of martyr, if necessary; another is that he would take refuge not in the United States but in Latin America - Brazil being mentioned. All of which provides varieties of material for discussion tonight.

(Communist Bulgaria is going to issue a Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial stamp on the third anniversary of his death, April 12th.) This was announced by the Bulgarian Government today, which would seem to be an indication that (the Reds behind the Iron Curtain have ideas of using the memory of the American wartime President for their own Communist propaganda purposes.)

In Washington this afternoon was issued a report that a strike at the Oak Ridge, Tennessee Atomic Energy Plant would be, in the words of that report, a grave danger to the national safety. An atomic strike at Oak Ridge has been threatened, and President Truman appointed a fact-finding board to look into the labor dispute. So the fact-finding board now reports that there are no signs of any settlement between the Oak Ridge plant and some 800 employees unionized by the AFL. The threat of a walk-out remains, an atomic strike that would be a grave danger to our national safety.

In the soft coal strike, the companies today gave a deadline to John L. Lewis, hitherto the nation's most publicized union leader - he's been the one to hand out the deadlines and the headlines - but now he is given one. The mine operators are allowing Lewis three days in which to join them in an arbitration to end the strike. Ezra van Horn, spokesman for the companies, today sent John L. Lewis a letter proposing that the Federal District Court in Washington be asked to appoint an impartial arbiter to decide on the union demand of an old-age pension for miners. If Lewis doesn't join this move by Friday, the companies will do it on their own, will appeal to the Federal court. Meanwhile the walk-out is continuing to spread - 350,000 miners out today.

PACKING STRIKE

And in the meat packing strike there are intimations that the companies may try to resume operations in some of the plants now closed down, resume in spite of the strike. A spokesman for Armour declared today: "We expect to be operating in a limited way before long." The union says it intends to keep the meat plants closed, and the contradiction may perhaps be an indication of trouble. Today 100,000 packing plant workers were out, and the production of meat was reduced to one-half of normal in this country. Prices increased in the wholesale markets. And if the strike goes on, there may be shortages and higher prices in the retail stores, to the discomfiture of the long-suffering housewife.

The news wires this afternoon brought a brief dispatch from Tokyo which told an interesting thing and made one want to know more about it. I might as well read that dispatch just as it came in: Tokyo, March 16th, the newspaper Yomiuri today urged Emperor Hirohito to become a Christian. The newspaper said the spread of Christianity into Japanese life is important and probably will narrow down to a question of whether the Emperor as a symbol of the nation should become a Christian. I took a look at the telephone and I wondered, well, whom can I call for information about this. Then I thought of Dr. Dan Polling (2), who might be expected to know about church affairs in almost any country. During the war he had a global job, a roving chaplain, and he's been roving ever since. He still is a roving chaplain, also editor of the Christian Herald and head of various other things. And I called Dr. Polling at his church in Philadelphia and told him about the news dispatch, the Tokyo newspaper urging Hirohito to become a Christian and did he have any

information on it? Dr. Polling replied: "That's interesting. I just had lunch with Dr. Henry Smith Leaper (?), and we were talking about the advance of Christianity in Japan." Well, what about Hirohito, I asked. He replied that, according to his information, the Japanese Emperor has been studying the great Christian epic, "The Scriptures as Applied to World Problems". And then Dr. Polling told me of an evangelizing movement now sweeping Japan, led by Kagawa, the most prominent Japanese Christian, Kagawa holding huge meetings all over that country. Evangelism in the old American style of Moody and Sankey. Moreover the Christian Endeavor Movement is spreading rapidly in Japan; hundreds of new societies organized; everywhere there's great religious activity, Protestant and Catholic, too. But as for Hirohito, Dr. Polling told me that I'd better call Dr. Leaper with whom he had just had lunch, Dr. Leaper knowing more about the personal

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matter of the Japanese Emperor than almost **anyone**.

I phoned Dr. Leaper. He immediately gave me some significant facts. He said that Hirohito recently procured a five-volume series of books published by the World Council of Churches and has been studying these - volume that present the application of Christian faith and morals to the desperate problems of this world today. What scriptural teachings have to offer to the nations of the postwar world - Hirohito is studying that. To that he added a highly significant detail, saying that in court circles in Tokyo the question has been discussed much: what to do with the Shinto shrine in the imperial palace if Hirohito becomes a Christian? Right now the Japanese Emperor goes thru the ceremonies of traditional Shintoism as a part of his official duties, tho he has no belief in Shinto doctrines, which until recently taught that Hirohito himself was a god. He never believed he was a god. Now, under the regime of MacArthur,

he has fewer illusions than ever about Japanese Shintoism. But at the same time there's a great shrine in that palace - and what to do with it if the Emperor becomes a Christian? There does seem to be something immediate about that, if there's discussion about how to dispose of that sanctuary of Shintoism.

Dr. Leaper went on to say that the real authority to give me some first-hand information about it all was Dr. John Decker, just back from Japan; after having had talks with Hirohito about Christianity, Dr. Decker could tell me more - right up to the moment. Sounded most promising, but it was growing late this evening; news wires were hot. And I put that call off to Dr. Decker to ask him about his talks with the Japanese Emperor about Christianity, delayed until a broadcast later on. I, for one, am exceedingly interested in the Emperor of Japan, the ex-god- turning Christian.

Tonite (in a distant, barbaric city there's a usurper king chained to the wall of a dungeon cell. He's Abdullah El-Wazier, who seized that throne of the Yemen, southwestern Arabia, after the murder of the old Priest-King Imam Yahya.) In the story we had some days ago, Abdulla El-Wazier was described as a coffee importer, the Yemen in southwestern Arabia being the great kingdom of coffee. It's also called the ancient realm of the Queen of Sheba. And the coffee importer sat himself on the modern version of the Queen of Sheba's throne. But tonight in the walled city of Sana, he's in an ancient prison, chained to a wall. The news comes via Cairo, the dispatch telling of a siege at the fortress of Sana. When Imam Yahya was murdered, (the tribesmen of Southern Arabia rallied to his eldest son, the Crown Prince Ahmed and they marched on Sana, which they besieged for eight days, during which the ~~coffee~~ usurper was deserted by his followers.) They left him

in droves when the Moslem priests championed the cause of the son of the old Imam. (The citadel of Sana was taken by storm, Abdulla El-Wazier remaining in the Imam's palace until the besiegers were breaking in, whereupon he tried to escape with a few partisans but was captured.)

He will now be tried for treason and complicity in the murder of Imam Yahya, who, it is now revealed, was shot down from ambush while traveling with his royal retinue thru those sun-baked mountains of the Yemen.)

If you like news with a surprise angle, here it is. In Palestine today another battle was fought between Jews and Arabs, and the dispatch from Jerusalem begins the story as follows: Dozens of Arabs and Jews battled with snowballs in the streets of Jerusalem today. Snowballs in Palestine are distinctly unusual. But last nite the Holy City had a snowfall of four inches, an event so novel and

exhilarating it transformed the war between the Zionists and the Moslems. Princess Mary Avenue in Jerusalem is a dividing line between Jewish and Arab sections, and it was there that young fellows of Haganah got into a snow fight with Arab youths. Too bad that the whole Palestine feud can't be settled with snowballs.

The London story about Princess Elizabeth is founded on a series of signs and portents, for one thing. The heiress to the Crown, married last autumn, is gradually withdrawing from public appearances. Hitherto she has kept herself busy with the usual sort of royal chores, appearances at those public ceremonies the British love so much. But now the social calendar of the Heiress Presumptive shows only five official engagements until the end of the year. Another thing, Elizabeth and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, will not go on the Royal Family tour of Australia and New Zealand. The King and Queen and the younger Princess, Margaret Rose, will visit those two great dominions below the Equator, but not the young royal newlyweds. Moreover, Elizabeth and Philip had been expected to visit Canada and maybe the United States, but that journey to the New World has been cancelled. All of which indications, together with court gossip, are signs and portents of what can be stated in that

old-fashioned way, "a visit by the stork" expected in October. If this should happen, how would you state the rank of the new arrival, boy or a girl? What would you call the heir or heiress of the Heiress Presumptive?

Of course, you could just say Baby, couldn't you, Nelson?