

L.T. - Sunoco. Wednesday, November 13, 1940.

The British have a new hero today. The whole country tonight is cheering the name of Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, D.S.O., Knight Commander of the Bath, and Commander-in-Chief of the British Mediterranean fleet. It is he who is responsible for the "Go in and get 'em" attack on Mussolini's navy, an attack that has ^{if not smashed} crippled ~~Mussolini's navy~~ the Italian battle fleet.

On Monday night the air arm of Cunningham's fleet swooped down on the Italians, who were ~~lined~~ ^{holed} up in Taranto harbor. And before they returned they left Mussolini minus two battleships, two ~~—~~ ^{maybe more.} cruisers, and two auxiliary craft; With that the Italian navy has left that are only three battleships fit for service.

In addition to this, a light squadron of the British fleet caught an Italian flotilla in the Straits of Otranto, sunk one supply ship, set two others on fire, and seriously damaged a fourth. It is across the Straits of Otranto that the Italians have to send provisions to their forces in Albania for the war on the Greeks.

Ironically enough, Mussolini's mouthpiece, Virginio Gayda, announced today that it was up to Italy to bear the brunt of the naval warfare with Britain. He revealed that the Italian and German

fleets were for the first time being combined for joint action in the North Atlantic.

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(Before that raid at Taranto, the Italian fleet was superior to the British naval forces in the Mediterranean.) But the Italian heavy men-o'-war wouldn't come out, stayed in that harbor of safety, or so they hoped. But more than a hundred years ago, a famous British naval officer laid down the principle - "If they won't come out, go in and get 'em!" The man who said that was Lord Nelson. That was the principle Admiral Cunningham followed. He couldn't send his submarines in, because the shore defenses at Taranto were known to be impregnable. And, it's a curious harbor. I was there a number of times during the first World War. The harbor is really a basin which can be closed just as you ~~can~~ would close the door of a room. But it's not locked if you come by air. So (it was with bombing planes taking off from an airplane carrier that the British swooped down on the heavily-guarded Italian fleet hiding there in what they once regarded as an ideal refuge. And here's the score reported by the British Admiralty:- One 35,000-ton battleship with her forecastle under-water, listing heavily to starboard; one 35000-ton battleship beached with her stern under water, listing heavily to starboard; another battleship of the same class damaged, but details withheld pending further investigation) (on;

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two cruisers listed to starboard, surrounded by fuel oil;
two auxiliaries with their sterns under-water.)
This report is made by the Admiralty on the basis of photographs
to prove the British claims. And that's why (tonight the British
Empire is acclaiming Sir Andrew Cunningham as an Admiral after
its own heart, an Admiral in the true Nelson tradition.)

As Prime Minister Winston Churchill entered the House of
Commons this afternoon, it was obvious that he was in an unusually
cheerful mood. He was also seen to be carrying two or three sheets
of paper. Everybody was agog with tension as the Prime Minister said:-
"I have some news for the House", and he added: "It is good news."
Thereupon he read that communique from the Admiralty.

As might have been expected, the House rose to its feet and
cheered the Prime Minister. Then he went on to tell them that the
result of the Battle of Taranto affects decisively the balance of
naval power in the Mediterreanean, and he went ⁴⁰ as far as to say that
it also carried with it reactions on the naval situation in other
quarters of the globe. Presumably, he meant that with the Italian
fleet thus crippled, the Admiralty would be able to release some
of the warships concentrated in the Mediterranean for service
elsewhere. Churchill also remarked that it reflects the greatest

credit on the admiralty and on Admiral Cunningham and the whole Mediterranean fleet.

Churchill got another cheer out of the House when he talked about the officers and ship's company of His Majesty's ship JERVIS BAY. You may remember that last week we heard reports of a British convoy being attacked by a Nazi raider in the North Atlantic. She was a Nazi raider presumed to be of the pocket battleship class, the same kind of man-o-war as the ADMIRAL GRAF SPEE. Berlin claimed triumphantly that the attack had been successful and that the entire convoy had been sunk. The truth of that now comes to light: what Churchill announced was corroborated from other sources. The convoy was attacked but it consisted of thirty-eight vessels, not fifteen or twenty, as the Germans claimed. The man-o-war protecting the convoy was a converted merchantman, H.M.S. JERVIS BAY. She really was nothing more than an armed liner. Against the Nazi raider she didn't have a chance. But she stuck to the fight, firing futile shots which against the ~~Heavy~~ armour of the Nazi man-o-war were about as useful as so many peas.

But the ship's company stuck to their guns, continued to give battle

for an hour until the ~~ship was sunk~~ *Jervis Bay went down with colors flying.* While they kept up that suicidal

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most of
engagement, the convoy escaped. Twenty ~~five~~ ^{four} of the thirty-eight
vessels have been already reported safe. *And -* Six more arrived in port
tonight. *Also* ~~the~~ survivors from the JERVIS BAY were *today* landed in Canada
by a Swedish merchantman.

That's the second story that Prime Minister Churchill told
the House of Commons as the members cheered with lumps in their
throats.

GREECE

Here's a new explanation of Mussolini's apparently untimely attack upon Greece. It has puzzled a lot of people, partly because up to now it hasn't accomplished anything, partly because there didn't seem to be much point to it. The explanation comes by way of Bulgaria, from the Greek Legation at Sofia:- That Mussolini thought he had things all set for a revolution in Athens -- to break out the moment Rome announced the invasion. Grazzi, the Italian Minister to Athens, is reported to have had precise instructions. The Fascist theory was that one-half of the Hellenes, were pro-Italian and the rest of them Republican, against the King, against the government. The government was to collapse instantly. A swift military move against the frontiers then would paralyze the civilian population and hamstring the efforts of the Greek army to mobilize by interrupting communications. Then all would be over but the shouting, Mussolini would appoint Italian administrators in the various provinces, and Greece would be as effectually a part of the modern Roman Empire as Albania. The Greek Consul at Porto Edda in Albania actually witnessed Italian functionaries leaving in groups. They were the Italian officials appointed to

administer Greek territory. And the Bank of Italy was getting ready to send funds to Janina for the use of those Italian officials.

Mobilization in Greece was carried out with enthusiasm.

But it didn't work out that way Mussolini's generals had sent crack Italian divisions, expecting a walk-over. And that, say the Greeks, makes the Italian defeat all the more disastrous. The Third Alpine Division, the cream of the Italian Army, is destroyed. Nothing remains of it, according to the Greek official communication. It was a general rout, with the Italians abandoning arms and munitions and giving themselves up. Women, children and old men had joined in the ~~job~~ job of helping supply the Greek troops. In some villages unarmed peasants joined in the battle with stones, axes, shovels and pick-axes.

Of course this comes from the Greek side of the fence.

And Rome is trying to tell a different story.

GREECE

A late dispatch from Yugoslavia reports that the Italians in the center of the Fighting Front have been forced back into Albania. And an apparently authentic message from Albania brings the tidings that the Albanians are now loudly refusing to take any part in the fighting against the Greeks.

MOLOTOV

From Berlin the news tonight is just words, words, words. Hitler and Russian Prime Minister Molotov talked. Air Marshal Goering and Molotov talked. Deputy Fuehrer Hess and Molotov talked. There were all sorts of ceremonies, banquets and luncheons and compliments, food and flattery.

But a few hints have leaked out about the subject of those conversations. First of all, and this appears to be obviously true, they discussed closer relations between Nazi Germany and the Soviets. Also, the collaboration of Stalin in the sweeping plans of the Axis for the revision of the international order. ~~The report is that they also discussed Turkey and the Balkan situation. Then, almost the most important of all, the relations between Russia and Japan.~~ Unofficially, it is again prophesied that Molotov's visit will result in a quadruple alliance of Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia.

London today seems inclined to make light of the whole business. The British ~~press~~ believe that the Axis powers persuaded Molotov to come to Berlin because they needed the outward appearance of a diplomatic success to offset the depression in

Germany and Italy, particularly in Italy, after the Fascist failure in Greece.

BOMBSIGHT

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For several months there have been rumors that the government had turned over to the British the secret of our precious bombsight, ^{that} ~~XXXXXXXXXX is rare and~~ ingenious gadget which enables our bombing planes to deliver their deadly loads with ~~extraordinary and~~ unholy accuracy. Hitherto, questions about those rumors have been either evaded or answered in the negative. Today it was divulged that there is a basis of truth for them. The United States has released the blueprints of the bombsight to help the British out in their fight against Goering's raiders. This was officially acknowledged today, ~~But~~ it was rather like one of the gifts which William Shakespeare bequeathed to his wife. You may remember that the Bard of Avon left to Mrs. Shakespeare his second-best bed. We've given the British our second-best bombsight. It's of an obsolete type, quite good, but not as good as the one now being used on both our army and navy planes. ^{we are told that even the} However, ~~even that~~ second-best bombsight is better than anything the British had. ^{And maybe they'll} get the best - before long.

DIES

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The Dies Committee on UnAmerican Activities has to settle for itself a knotty problem, the problem of Hitler's consuls in America. Six weeks ago, the Committee turned over to the State Department evidence about the behavior and particularly the propaganda of those consuls. Chairman Dies advised Secretary Hull that if he thought the publication of this evidence would embarrass the State Department, he would not bring it out in the open, would not hold public hearings about it. The State Department referred that evidence to the Department of Justice for prosecution. But the Department of Justice has done nothing about it. So Chairman Dies telegraphed Secretary Hull, asking him what's what, ^{because} The Dies Committee goes out of existence January Third, and has to act promptly.

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Secretary Hull today revealed that he had politely but firmly replaced the baby on the doorstep of Chairman Dies. The tycoons of the State Department declare that it is no part of their job either to investigate or prosecute anything or anybody. So it's up to the Dies Committee itself to decide whether or not to hold public hearings about the shenanigans of Hitler's representatives in the United States. All this was conveyed to Chairman Dies in a

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telegram brimming with expressions of southern and official
courtesy. "After you, my dear Secretary!" "No, No, my dear
Chairman, after you!"

LABOR

Peace in the labor world! That'll be the text of ^a~~the~~ message
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from President Roosevelt, not to Congress but to the Convention of the
American Federation of Labor at New Orleans next Monday. This isn't
official, but a prediction forecast by William Green, President of the
Federation. He was at the White House today, had a conference with
Mr. Roosevelt, at which he and the President had a brief discussion
about ending that five year old squabble between the A.F. of L. and
the C.I.O. Green said he had told the President that the Peace
Committee of his Federation will be glad to talk turkey with the
C.I.O. in an honest and sincere effort to settle it all.

Reporters asked ~~him~~ Green whether the resignation of
John Lewis would make reconciliation easier. And Green replied that
Lewis would
it would if ~~he~~ go one step further and remove himself entirely
as the dominating influence in the C.I.O. For the C.I.O., he pointed
out, is dominated by the United Mine Workers of America and so long as
Lewis remains President of the Miners, he'll dominate the whole C.I.O.

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THANKSGIVING

Plymouth, Massachusetts, is the place where they held the first Thanksgiving and Plymouth has no use for the modern streamlined celebration, as proclaimed by the President, the celebration a week ahead of the traditional date. Plymouth is going to carve its turkey on November Twenty-Eighth^{~~Proved~~}. And it has asked the Governors of the forty-eight states to contribute food, the kind of food for which each state is most famous. But Plymouth won't celebrate merely with eating. It will also hold a pageant in three scenes, showing the signing of the Mayflower Compact, the landing of the Pilgrims and, most picturesque of all, the first Thanksgiving.

WEATHER

That premature outburst of winter was a ~~minor~~ disaster for many folks in the middlewest. But it also means bad news for housewives everywhere. That is, bad news for the Thanksgiving Day budget. For the ~~freez~~ fierce winds that swept across the prairie states killed ^{1 somewhere between one and two million} ~~something like two hundred thousand~~ turkeys. That's the tidings from the Mercantile Exchange in Chicago, where the wholesale price of the national bird is established. Until this weekend, there were so many gobblers on hand that it looked as though they'd be ~~pretty~~ cheap this year. But today the wholesale price went up a cent and a half a pound, ~~and there'll be repercussions from that all over the map.~~

Uncle Sam's Coast Guardsmen on the Great Lakes had ~~hard~~ gruelling work today. They are still looking for victims and survivors from that storm which sent to the bottom at least six able ships. So far the toll is "eighteen lake sailors dead, sixty-seven missing." And there is reason to fear that many or all of those may have perished. Not only lifeboats but one of the Coast Guard airplanes joined in the search over Lake Michigan. It is reported that big freighters anywhere from two hundred to six hundred feet long

were piled around the shores of the big inland sea, smashed like so many sticks. Others were ground to pieces on the rocks. The bodies of twelve of the victims were found on the Michigan shore of the lake, frozen stiff.

The Weather Bureau reports that a blanket of cold air is creeping over the entire country. The bitterest temperatures are in the west, particularly Montana and North Dakota. In Chicago, twelve degrees of frost; New England ~~in~~ and the Middle Atlantic states *are supposed to be* ~~are~~ in for it tonight. For instance, New Yorkers are warned to expect the thermometer to drop twenty degrees in twenty-four hours. ~~and that~~ *my teeth are chattering, Hugh.* ~~will mean a real frost.~~

9/14 Will you take over.