

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

There were rather sensational headlines this afternoon, stating that Italian troops in Albania were deserting and crossing the Yugoslav frontier -- and that the Fascist army in Albania was disintegrating, breaking up, I have here what the United Press has to say on the subject -- a U.P. dispatch from Belgrade. It reads as follows: "Frontier reports tonight said that nine Italian soldiers crossed the Yugoslav frontier from Albania today, reporting themselves dissatisfied with fighting in Albania. The soldiers say the dissatisfaction is increasing in the Italian army." So concludes the news dispatch.

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The London Admiralty reports the sinking of four of five Italian ships in the Mediterranean by torpedo attacks. Two of these were Fascist transports crowded with troops. The explosions of the torpedoes," says the British Admiralty,"were followed by a very violent explosion - and it was considered certain that at least one

transport was completely destroyed."

A later British communique announces the sinking of an Italian warship in air attacks on the Albanian harbor of Valona. The warship is described as a cruiser or large destroyer. In East Africa, the British continue to drive on after the successes announced yesterday. So deep are the advances, and there's talk that the Italians in East Africa might ask for an armistice, in preparation for the surrender of the province. This, to save the tens of thousands of Italian settlers, who live surrounded by fierce Ethiopian tribes.

JUGOSLAVIA

In Jugoslavia today, the Regent Prince Paul met with high chiefs of state. They discussed ^{relations} ~~actions~~ with Nazi Germany. Late rumors

say the Jugoslaves ~~will yield~~ nothing more than a compromise.

~~They'll permit German supplies to pass through Jugoslav territory also hospital trains. But they won't allow the Germans to cross in warlike array for a blow at the Greeks.~~

There's a report that British foreign secretary Anthony Eden had another meeting with the Turks - this time at the Island

Cyprus. He is said to have discussed war possibilities with the

Turkish foreign minister. The rumor is that they talked about

ideas of a combined British - Turkish drive against the Germans

in Bulgaria - to forestall the plans cooked up by the Hitler

Generals. A surprise offensive. There's more and more talk about

British forces in Greece - reports of a couple of hundred thousand

empire troops at Salonika.

BOMBING

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London is ^{fiercely} being bombed again, the second night in succession.

It isn't clear whether the air assault just reported on the wires is on as large a scale as last night. London today labored to clear the wreckage and count its casualties, after what is described as the most frightful air raid of this year.

Today the Nazis were boastful. A Hitler spokesman described last night's bombing in these words "The real beginning of the spring offensive." He pointed out that Nazi sky attacks of recent have been concentrated on British shipping centers - Glasgow, Liverpool, Cardiff, Hull, London. And repeated that the air action is coordinated with the U boat campaign at sea. The goal is described in these threatening words "the complete starvation of the British Isles."

The Nazis today continued their boasting with the claim that they have an air superiority over the British of fifteen to one. R

BOMBER.

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Here's a thriller of the war in the sky, a story reported by the London Air Ministry. It relates how a Royal Air Force Bomber was flying over German Occupied Territory. Presently, the British pilot spied a formation of German bombers returning from a raid against England. Did he attack them? No, he joined them. With all the nerve and cheek in the world, he flew in the Nazi formation. They never noticed, as they went winging on to a German air drome. From the flying field a signal to land was given. The German bombers went gliding down. And so did the British plane. The R A F pilot swooped down, as if to land. With his flash lamp he signalled "Heil Hitler".

At the same time he released a shower of bombs³ and blasted the
— planes and hangars,
Nazi airdrome. Then he ~~zoomed~~ zoomed up, climbed high, and flew
back to Britain.

SINKING

One news dispatch today tells us that the first ship ~~lost~~ with
lend - lease armament for Britain has been sunk by a Nazi submarine.
This report comes from a fairly dubious source. An Italian newspaper
which states that it has the news from Algeciras, which in turn
learned it from Gibraltar. ^{IF} Rather roundabout - their tidings that
a U-boat torpedoed the first ship that put to sea with defense
materials delivered to Britain under the lend - lease bill.

NEWSPAPERMEN

In Berlin today, for the first time, an American was permitted to see the United Press correspondent who has been jailed by the Nazis on charges of espionage. Richard Hottelet was visited by the American consul, Lloyd Yates. The interview took place in a waiting room of a prison of gestapo. Richard Hottelet is quoted as telling the American Consul that he's Okay, is being treated well enough, and that he expects an early trial which will clear him of the accusation of espionage.

UTILITIES

The securities and exchange commission today took action against Commonwealth and Southern, the company formerly headed by Wendell Willkie. The recent Republican candidate for the Presidency first became prominent, got into the newspapers in a big way, when he led the fight of Commonwealth and Southern against the Government's Tennessee Valley power project. The point at issue

~~now is the death sentence clause of the public utility holding~~

act - that number one new deal law of a few years ago. Time was

when all sorts of controversy raged around that death ^{sentence} ~~senate~~

clause which required that holding companies in utilities must be broken up. Today the S E C ordered proceedings to begin on

April third, proceedings to dismember Commonwealth and Southern.

^{TP} The death sentence clause required that utility holding companies ~~shall~~ limit their operations to a single integrated system.

Commonwealth and Southern has a wealth of ramification, including holdings in various Northern States - as well as Sothern. ^{Now} These ramifications will be abolished if the S E C has its way -

taking action against the Company that Wendell Willkie made famous.

WRECK

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Today in-to the story of the disastrous train wreck of Sunday night appeared fifty-three russian engineers and ~~diplomats~~ diplomats. The wreck was caused by sabotage, spikes deliberately withdrawn from the rails - so the locomotive and cars went off the tracks and plunged into the Ohio river. Five killed, more than a hundred injured. The fifty-three soviet engineers and diplomats however were not on the ill-fated train. They were aboard another, the manhattan limited, ^a ~~this~~ fast passenger express *which* passed along the tracks just eighteen minutes before the succeeding train was wrecked.

Today, at Pittsburgh, at an inquiry into the disaster, railroadmen expressed the belief that the sabotage was intended to derail, not the train that came to grief, but the one aboard which the Soviet party was riding - they occupied three special cars. In other words - an attempt on the lives of the men from Moscow. If so, the attempt must have miscarried because of a mistake. When the manhattan limited passed, the tracks were all right. The criminals must have withdrawn the spikes from the rails shortly after. They must have picked the wrong train for the wrecking outrage. No suggestion is given of why anybody should

have made the train-wreck-attempt against the Russians. It's
all pretty mysterious.

WALLACE

The Vice-President of the United States is sometimes referred to as a mystic. But even a mystic, no matter how mystical, eats lunch once in a while. So the story is -- that Henry Wallace was at lunch. That's how the Roosevelt administration lost a contest in the United States Senate today. The F.D.R. forces haven't been losing somany congressional battles of late, so today's defeat is all the more noteworthy. How was the lunch, Henry?

The Senate, in all its majesty, was considering a question of international importance - an affair of consequence to National Defense, democracy, dictators, and ledn-lease. An amendment to the Naval appropriations bill. Putting up three and a half billion dollars to build a two-ocean navy.

ADD WALLACE

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Time and again there has been wrangling because meat products from the Argentine have been consumed in some branch of government service - the congressional farm forces declaring that this hurts the American farmer, foreign competition for the growers of American beef. In the case of the present history - making bill, the navy wanted to procure some argentine canned beef. The Amendment said "No". It was passed by the House, and the question was - - should the Senate take it out? The administration wanted it out. A powerful group, headed by the senators from the midwestern farm region wanted it in. When the vote came, there was a tie - thirty two to thirty two. So where was the Vice President?

It's in the constitution of the United States that when there's a tie in the senate, the Vice-President can cast the deciding vote. Otherwise he doesn't have any vote at all - - only in the case of a tie. So today the administration could have won a senatorial victory, if the Vice - President had been there to break the tie. But he wasn't. So the vote of even - stephen stood, and so did the amendment against Argentine beef. It's definitely in the bill. Which may or may not have all sorts of

international repercussions.

Later on there was an explanation from the Vice - President's

office saying why he was absent from the senate at the critical

moment. Henry was having lunch. I don't know what he was eating -

maybe it was Argentine beef. *If so it probably was good beef. Because they raise superb beef in the Argentine.*

MOSQUITOES

National defense is preparing to cope with a formidable enemy, and the enemy's name is quadrimaculatus. Which sounds like a ferocious foe indeed -- a menace to democracy, a threat to our way of life. Sounds like a dictator, a combination of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, or worse -- this quadrimaculatus. Who is this totalitarian tyrant? He's an enemy in the national defense of New Jersey - the old and familiar New Jersey mosquito which some New Jerseyites deny exists. The pesky critters may not be as big as horses, as report declares they are. They may not fly away with army tanks, and, maybe you don't have to shoot 'em down with anti-aircraft guns. Nevertheless, we can't be the arsenal of democracy that we should be unless we wage war on the Jersey skeeter.

This national defense idea was propounded today at Atlantic City, before a meeting of the New Jersey Mosquito Extermination Association. So there are some Jerseyites who admit the existence of quadrimaculatus. The scientists who did the propounding pointed to the various New Jersey army camps - Fort Dix, Fort Hancock, Camp Raritan and the naval base at

MOSQUITOES - 2

Camp May. Not to mention the numerous factories of the defense industry. He said that they are all in areas threatened by the familiar mosquito. But he called the skeeter that brings chills and fever by its scientific name - the name quadrimaculatus. He declared that there is danger of an epidemic of malaria transmitted by mosquitoes. So something must be done - a drive against quadrimaculatus, that enemy of national defense, of democracy and of our way of life.

VERMONT

The Vermont Legislature held a joint session today. It was in a way, an equivalent of an old-fashioned town meeting. Held today, in honor of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Vermont's entry into the Union -- Vermont the first state after the Thirteen Colonies to become a part of the Union. But this is Sesqui-Centennial year and the Vermonters are going to celebrate all year and they hope that Americans from all over the Union will help them celebrate -- by visiting these beautiful Green Mountains. The Speaker of the day, Ex-Congressman Pettingill of Indiana said, "In Seventeen Ninety-One Vermont joined the Union. In Nineteen Forty-One the Union should join Vermont."

SPRING

One of the spectacular features of the big spring Inter-Flower Show in New York this year is a Biblical Garden of plants and shrubs mentioned only in the Bible. It includes a house built of bricks made of clay and straw just as the Old Testament Israelites used to make them. Also there's a genuine Cedar of Lebanon, a tree that you seldom see anywhere nowadays. Then there's a specimen of the authentic plant used when soldiers of Pontius Pilate pressed down a crown of thorns on the brow of the Saviour. This Biblical Garden too has bulrushes like those in which Pharaoh's daughter found the little infant Moses. All this is an exhibit of the Brooklyn Botanical Garden at Grand Central Palace in New York this week.

By the way, in about half an hour from now, seventy twenty-one P.M., the sun will cross the plane of the earth's equator. And in the northern hemisphere the days will begin to grow longer than the nights. That, scientifically speaking, is the beginning of Spring. The weather man during the past few days seemed to have forgotten the important astronomical event. Now, however, he has

recovered his senses somewhat. For the past day or so the weather man has been chasing the icy cold wave out of this fair land of ours, and today nearly everywhere in the country temperatures were reported to be rising except up here at Mt. Mansfield where we are buried under a new fall of powder snow. Old Man Winter rallied strongly right at the very end. But the word comes to me over my special wire that Spring, gentle Spring, is here.

DRAFT

Talk about coincidence - here's one. At Albany today, a man received his number from the Draft Board. Now remember, the assignment of draft numbers is strictly a matter of chance, luck. The man's name is Christopher Columbus. ^{and} His number ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{it's} fourteen hundred and ninety two! Whereupon the regiment will rise and sing;

"In fourteen hundred and ninety two
Columbo sailed the ocean blue."

To which we might add: -

To sail the highways use M-Blue
And now we'll switch to good old Hugh

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