

P.T. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Apr. 23, 1940.

SWEDEN

There are alarming reports about the imminence of a German invasion of Sweden. The expressions of alarm come mostly from Paris, where the French Government is said to be watching the Swedish situation closely. ^{They} ~~and~~ thinks that a sudden German move in the Stockholm direction may come at any time.

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The Nazi press today opened an attack on Sweden, because of the way the Swedish newspapers have been talking about the Norwegian invasion. One Stockholm paper published a dispatch declaring that German war planes machine-gunned women and children as they fled. That sort of thing has got to stop, shouts the Nazi press. It warns of possible consequences which it describes as "bitterly serious."

There are reports of German troop transports concentrated at an island near the Swedish coast. And other German ~~xxxx~~ military activities are noted such as might indicate an invasion of Sweden.

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The French are convinced that as soon as the Nazis find their position in Norway becoming precarious, they'll try to remedy that by striking through the other Scandinavian kingdom next door. Paris promises immediate aid to the Swedes if they are attacked.

OSLO

It's hard to imagine anything worse than the plight of some Norwegian cities. They're occupied by the enemy - and they are necessary military objectives for their own Allies, ~~marks~~ ^{marks} ~~objectives~~ for bombing. Take Oslo, Norway's capital. It was bombed today by British war planes - a prolonged rain of high explosives. The military airport, from which the Germans are operating, was ~~a~~ ^{the} target - but one bomb fell in the heart of the city.

Yesterday the Allies gave warning, French planes dropping leaflets. These stated:- "We're coming to help you. Evacuate to the country. We will not bombard the city," ~~stated~~ ^{said} the leaflets. "But the attack will be centered at Oslo."

The German authorities in command of the city ridiculed the warning - told the people of Oslo there was nothing to it, just a bluff. And - forbade them to evacuate, told them not to leave the city. ~~Some may have got away in fear of the Allied bombing, but most of them remained.~~ ^{It} And ~~swore~~ ^{enough} today the bombers came, in waves. Formation after formation flew over and for two hours and a half the bombs rained

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down. They blasted the airport - that strategic center of air communication for the invading forces. They smashed the airport with innumerable bombs, but ~~aimed~~ aim from on high is not perfect, and one huge charge of high explosive fell in the downtown section of Oslo, just around the corner from the Continental Hotel. The story we get tells of damage from the explosion, but not of casualties - ~~and~~ apparently there were none.

NORWAY

In the Norwegian war, the chief development is in the southernmost area, where the British have joined forces with the main Norwegian army and are battling against the German advance from Oslo. The official London bulletin states:- "In the south, northwest of Oslo, our troops in conjunction with Norwegians, are resisting enemy pressure." That doesn't indicate any sort of decisive battle, but it is important that the Allies have been able to get into the heart of southern Norway - where the Norse themselves are putting up their chief resistance to the invader.

This section of the British forces operating in Norway landed south of the strategic point of Trondheim. British units had been previously landed north of that place. ^{their point of} ~~the landing~~

⁹ ~~place in that area~~ ^{debarcation} was heavily bombed today by Nazi warplanes,

but the British say the sky attack was ^{too} late, ~~that~~ their troops ^{were} ~~are~~ already on the march inland to attack the Trondheim Germans

^{from} ~~by~~ the north. These, it would appear, are in danger of a

~~nut-cracker movement - the Allies closing in on them from both~~

~~sides.~~ Today's London war dispatch is expressed in these terms:-

"North of Trondheim British troops ^{have} ~~had~~ been counter-attacked and

a sharp engagement ensued." Again - this is no indication of violent or decisive action. The situation seems to be one of jockeying for position - both sides in contact ^{and} ~~with~~ maneuvering to establish themselves as well as they can for the struggle that will determine the possession of the Scandinavian kingdom.

~~Late today the British War Office issued a denial of reports that Canadian units were in the fight near Trondheim. The story spoke of ski units from the Dominion - also forces of engineers. And in veiled terms it mentioned, "a famous regiment of World War days." This, however, is officially denied in London. No units of the Canadian expeditionary force are in Norway.~~

NARVIK

An eyewitness story purported^S~~ed~~ to come from the Arctic port of Narvik, where the German invaders ^{who}~~have~~ seized the port ~~and~~ are now isolated and surrounded - though they still hold Narvik. A Swedish newspaper prints an interview with an American sailor, Patrick King, who says he was at Narvik when the capture ^{— and has been there} took place [^]until now. He declares that the invading Nazis shot the British consul. He states that they searched a house, found the diplomatic official, and executed him. The British say they are unable to confirm this report. They explain they haven't any account of the whereabouts of the British consul who was at Narvik.

The American sailor states that the German troops in the beleaguered port are faced with a shortage of food and the kind of clothing needed in that northern latitude. They've been confiscating all sorts of Norwegian clothing.- He tells of Nazi soldiers seen walking about the streets wearing the garments of women - anything to keep warm. They picked up a lot of Norwegian uniforms and put them on. Whereupon some of them were shot by their own patrols, who opened fire ^{on}~~upon spying~~ uniforms of the Norwegian army.

DUFF COOPER

The Allies began the war with the theory that they were fighting Hitler and the Nazis - but not the German people. ~~In~~

~~the bitter months of conflict, that notion has been vanishing.~~

- that is it was

Today the assumption was just the contrary, in statements made by former Cabinet Member Alfred Duff Cooper, ^{who was} ~~He~~ ^{ing} substituted for First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill in an address before the Royal Society of St. George. That fact gave his declaration something of an official aspect. He said the Allies were fighting the German people - to the death.

Duff Cooper used these words:- "Hitler says ^{all of} ~~the entire~~

To which Duff-Cooper
Germany is behind him," ~~said he, and~~ added: "I, for one, am

prepared to take him at his word." ~~Then he added this slogan:~~

"We must defeat the German people in battle," *said he.*

BUDGET

The war in terms of money was placed graphically before Great Britain today. Sir John Simon, Chancellor of the Exchequer, submitted to the House of Commons the biggest budget in the history of Great Britain. It comes to over ten billion and six hundred million dollars, money to be spent during the British fiscal year - which began on April First. Of that immense total, eight billion dollars goes to the cost of the war against Nazi Germany. Twenty-one million dollars a day for the struggle! Fourteen thousand, five hundred and eighty-three dollars per minute.

For the individual Britisher, the greatest war budget will come home in the form of heavily increased taxes. The basic income tax rate will stay what it is - thirty-seven and a half per cent. But surtaxes will be boosted. And there'll be a ~~much~~ *stiff levy* ~~heavier level~~ on a whole series of commodities like alcoholic beverages, tobacco, telephone, telegraph and postal rates. Moreover, there's to be a general sales tax. In Britain they call it - a "purchase tax."

Even with all the taxation, there'll be a deficit - amounting to five billion, ~~and~~ seven hundred million dollars, this

EARTHQUAKE

A late dispatch tells of another violent earthquake in Turkey. The bulletin is fragmentary and merely says terrific shocks occurred in the eastern part of Asia Minor - the same area which had that other frightful ^{upheaval} ~~earthquake~~ some months ago. Many lives are believed to have been lost in today's disaster - though few details have reached us from that remote area.

ROOSEVELT

Today all possible emphasis was placed on the statement that the visit which Prime Minister MacKenzie King is paying to President Roosevelt is of no political or international significance whatever.

A statement issued through presidential Secretary Hassett, declares:- "Mr. King and the President are very old friends, have known each other for thirty years. Every spring, when the Canadian Parliament is in adjournment, Mr. King takes a trip south just for a rest and a holiday, and he always comes to see the President. There has never been anything of political significance in these visits, and there isn't in this one."

The newspaper men wanted to interview the Canadian Prime Minister, but the presidential declaration goes on this way:- "It would not be good for the American position for Mr. King to give out any statement or be interviewed while he was on a purely vacation trip." Well, well - "purely vacation trip." That doesn't seem quite up to the usual White House standard of purely good English.

PLOT

At New York's great conspiracy trial, there was some lively testimony today about a cannon. The sixteen defendants charged with a plot to overthrow the government were accused of planning to steal a field gun - artillery.

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It has been said that the alleged plotters were members of the Christian Front. Today, however, they were represented as belonging to another group - working against the Christian front; and ~~not so complimentary about it. In fact, the story related that they~~ wanted to beat the Christian front to the cannon.

An F.B.I. witness told how he listened through a dictaphone to a conversation and overheard one of the defendants talking - a man named Viebrock. The testimony went this way:-

"I heard Viebrock say that if he could get the three-pound cannon at the marine armory for his own group and beat the Christian Front - it would be a good idea. He said," testified the special agent, "that letting the Christian Front get the cannon is like giving pearls to swine." ~~is~~ Not so complimentary.

ANNENBERG

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A plea of guilty was entered today by ^{Moe} ~~M.L.~~ Annenberg, the Philadelphia newspaper publisher. It's an income tax case, and Annenberg admitted the evasion of more than a million, six hundred thousand dollars due the government. ^H The publisher of renown far and wide came to this country an immigrant boy from Germany. He sold newspapers on street corners - the classic newsboy beginning. In the course of years, he built a great fortune - largely by the distribution of information about horse race betting - a nationwide service for people who play the ^{bang tails,} ~~horses.~~

~~The income tax case against him is one of the most complicated in the history of American courts. ^{Moe} Annenberg and a whole ~~string of defendants~~ were indicted. Originally, the government demanded five and a half million dollars in evaded taxes, interest and penalties, but today accepted the guilty plea to the tune of more than a million and six hundred thousand.~~

The publisher explained his ^{guilty} plea with this statement:-

"Any alternative would involve years of trying and expensive litigation." The statement issued in his behalf declares that there was no moral turpitude on his part. He explains it in these words:- "Maybe my business outgrew my bookkeeping," says M.L. Annenberg.

MURDER

New revelations about Murder, Incorporated, continue with new grizzly melodrama. One story tells of two ^{New York} Italians who got into trouble with some kind of labor racket, and knew they were marked for death. They lived together in a barricaded apartment, and would admit nobody - except women. They had a peep hole and could see outside. If it was a man - no admission. Murder, Incorporated, was hired to solve the problem, and today's story tells how one of the professional killers disguised himself as a woman. He went to the flat of the two marked men. They noted the fluffy hat and billowy dress, and opened the door. In pushed the supposed woman, another gunman behind ^{him} her. And two more assassinations were chalked up against Murder, Incorporated.

One of these two criminals figures in still another almost incredible story, which is revealed today. He is called Fat Gurino. And the police were looking for him on a charge of murder. An alarm was issued to eight states, calling for his arrest. A few hours after that ^{alarm} Fat Gurino went to a New York jail and was permitted to see one of the prisoners - a gangster who was

expected to confess and give state's evidence against the mob.

In the cell Fat Gurino terrified the prisoner, threatening him with certain death if he should squeal. Then he calmly left the prison - as the police were ~~searching~~^{looking} for him in eight states.

This happened recently, and the jail-keeper of the prison has been dismissed, as a result of the Fat Gurino exploit.

LONGEVITY

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Here are a couple of news items about that always interesting phenomenon - longevity, great age.

At Columbia, Pennsylvania, today it was recalled how back in Eighteen Sixty-One George Nissley volunteered for service in the Civil War. He was plenty old enough to fight in the Union army - twenty-one. But he was rejected - because of ill health. Today, Columbia celebrated the One Hundredth Birthday of its oldest citizen - that same George Nissley. His health, not so good seventy-nine years ago, is excellent now - as he reaches the century mark.

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At Bethlehem, Connecticut, a census-taker asked the familiar questions of Farmer Neal Benedict. He gaped when he heard - forty-two years old! No, not the farmer's age - his horse's ^{and that's} that old. ~~It's~~ something for all you horse owners to talk about. Farmer Neal Benedict claims that his horse Ned is the oldest in the country, at the advanced equine age of forty-two.

PUBLISHING

When a poet becomes a publisher, it's quite natural that he should solemnize the event in verse. Wilfred Funk is a well known author of sprightly lyrics and jingles. At the same time, he has a publishing heredity, His father was a founder of the ~~publishing~~ house of Funk and Wagnalls and the old LITERARY DIGEST. It's all rather close to me personally, for the LITERARY DIGEST was my sponsor for a year and a half - before I joined up with the Sun Oil Company and Blue Sunoco.

Now Wilfred Funk is following the paternal footsteps in association with Spencer Armstrong and the old DIGEST, and

Frank Henry, who for years was ^{a top executive for} ~~Sales Manager for~~ Doubleday Doran.

8 1/2 ~~And I~~ ^{And I} had plenty of association with Frank in the days when

he was doing a salesmanship job with my book, "County Luckner The Sea Devil," ^{and a half a dozen others,} And Frank Henry sure did sell 'em.

The new firm is starting business with ambitious plans, and Wilfred Funk celebrates by producing a ditty which might well serve as a college song for the publishing trade.

It reminds one of apples and doctors, and goes like this:

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"Better buy a book a day
It will keep the blues away
In a ~~worried~~ worried world. And it
Helps us publishers a bit."

And now I bet that Hugh James feels like echoing:

A tankful of Blue Sunoco a day
Keeps you merrily on your way.

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Eh, Hugh?