

L.J. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Sept. 17, 1940.

Today Winston Churchill began his speech to the House of Commons under conditions of secrecy, and ended it in secrecy. No word was given out that there would be a session of Parliament, with an address by the Prime Minister. For, though the weather was bad, today was another bombing day in London, and precautions were taken against the German getting information about Parliament. They might send a few sharpshooting bombers to take a shot at the House of Commons, while Winston Churchill was making his statement. During the proceedings, the air raid alarm shrieked out, sending hundreds of thousands ~~xxx~~ of Londoners to the air raid shelters. But the members of Parliament deliberated in their ancient hall.

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Bombs fell again on some of the most famous places in the British capital - Piccadilly, Berkeley Square, Mayfair, Oxford Street, and Bond Street. There were heavy explosions and great damage near Piccadilly Circus, which is London's Broadway and Forty-second Street, - from there all the way to Hyde Park. Fashionable areas, wealthy shopping areas. In Savoy Row, a bomb demolished a four-story building where some of the most famous tailoring establishments in the world were

located - tailors patronized by royalty and aristocracy. It sustained a direct hit and was blown to wreckage - a disaster to ~~the~~ sartorial art.

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Winston Churchill gave to the House of Commons a casualty list. He said that during the first half of September, the Nazi bombs have killed two thousand civilians and wounded eight thousand - four-fifths of the casualties being in London. At the same time, coming from another source, we have an estimate of the property damage in London. It is reckoned that two thousand buildings have been completely destroyed, three thousand seriously damaged, and ten thousand others battered in a less important way. This makes a total of fifteen thousand structures hit. London has a million buildings. So the percentage is not so large. It would take the Nazi bombers a considerable time, at the present rate of air raiding, to accomplish anything that might be called the destruction of London.

Of course, they're keeping at it, and there's more to come - so said Winston Churchill today. He stated that neither Great Britain nor Germany has yet employed more than a fraction

of its air power, and he added that more intensive bombing raids on London must be expected in the future. He spoke of what he called - ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ "the enemy's enormous superiority of numbers." He added that, "crushing inroads" are being made into these superior numbers. He stated that in spite of the terrific German air activity during the past eleven days, the British power of resistance had not been weakened. Enormous damage has been done to the great capital, but not to Britain's system of creating equipment of war - so said Winston Churchill.

What about that invasion? Churchill warned it was likely to come. He said: "The deployment of German barges and ships in preparation for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland continues steadily." And that meant an attempt at invasion.

At the same time, a violent gale was sweeping the English Channel. Making invasion seem less likely. Scattering the ~~fix~~ fleets of Nazi vessels designed for a landing on the British coast. Blasted by the fury of wind, squadrons were sent scurrying to the shelter of safe places. Royal Air Force

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pilots reported that the disposition of German craft along the French coast is being hurriedly changed - in the violent blow of the gale. And England immediately thought of the Spanish Armada, and recalled how a storm that ruined the Armada-attempt-to-invade-England, and destroyed the Spanish Fleet. Later reports today stated that the gale is dying down, with the Germans busy getting their vessels in order once more.

The Prime Minister ended his declaration today with a reversion to - secrecy. Parliament went into secret session on a subject which is raising a bit of a storm among the people of London. It's a question of the air raid safety system, shelters, and so on. Chruchill had things to tell to the M.P.'S. on this subject - what is being done, new arrangements. He explained the secrecy in these words:- "There is no reason why we should keep the enemy informed about the details of our arrangements and thus enable him to inflict maximum injury upon us." Thereupon he repeated the traditional formula:- "I declare to you, Mr. Speaker," he cried, "that casting my eyes about I spy a stranger." The signal for the Commons to go into secret session.

Previous to that the Prime Minister had made a reference to air raid safety and the conditions in which people must live in London under bombing. He used these words:-

"Our whole system of life and labor," said he, "is being adapted to conditions hitherto unknown to modern society."

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There is complaint that the Ministry of Safety has not provided the right kind of air raid shelters for the bulk of the population. There are protests that the rich are faring better than the poor. There's indignation about the number of people compelled to sleep in the underground under conditions of great discomfort, though ~~xxxx~~ London is learning the art of making the best of life in a subway. The Communist newspaper, the Daily Worker, is carrying on a campaign and today the Minister of Home Security received a delegation of Communists. A late announcement is that the British Government has made moves to take over rich homes to house the slum dwellers driven from their homes by the bombings.

And here's a late one - some of the slum dwellers moved into rich homes will be sleeping on royal beds and sitting on royal chairs. Queen Elizabeth today ordered suites of furniture to be taken from Windsor Castle and sent for the use of poor

people whose homes have been destroyed. The furniture includes
stately old pieces that have been in Windsor Castle since the
early days of Queen Victoria.

EGYPT

Prime Minister Churchill, in his address to the Commons, stated that the Italians were advancing in Egypt where there was sharp fighting between armoured vehicles. He said British forces were being withdrawn, and that the Italians were still some distance from the main line of defense of Alexandria and the Suez Canal.

Cairo today announced the Fascist capture of Sidi ~~Exxxri~~ Barrani, the Oasis where the motor road to Alexandria begins.

This Cairo statement admits an Italian advance of about seventy-five miles.

Tonight's bulletin from Rome declares that Mussolini's battalions have continued to push on at a rapid rate and are now ~~xxxxxx~~ approaching the fortified lines of Marsa Matruh, which is seventy miles further along the coast. That's the main British fighting line, and there the first real battle of the Egyptian campaign is expected - the defense of Alexandria.

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Rome dispatches tell of a new weapon being employed - desert sledges. These are said to consist of machine gun nests

mounted on four great balloon tires, which are said to be puncture proof. The chassis is described as only one foot above the ground. On it a machine gunner lies, firing a stream of bullets in an attack. They say these desert sleds are able to do fifty miles an hour on the deep sand.~~they~~ They are especially designed for rapid maneuver on the burning wastelands of Libya and Egypt.

BIG GUNS

Nazi sources in Berlin hint ^{tonight} that the Big Berthas on the French coast near Calais may be bombarding London;- may ~~be~~ be. If so, it would mean the biggest of Big Berthas firing further ~~than~~ ^{than} even the one that bombarded Paris in the previous war. There is no official Berlin statement on the subject, it's merely apparent that the Hitler propagandists don't mind having the story circulated. The British Government ridicules the idea. The story was based on the finding in London of fragments of what obviously were shells, and the British authorities point out that London has been showered with shell fragments - the result of the barrage of anti-aircraft fire.

MUNITIONS PLANT

The day has passed without anything unusual at the Remington Munitions Plant at Bridgeport, Connecticut - nothing unusual save the number of guards that went ~~xxxx~~ swiftly on duty, the vigilance, the precautions.

This afternoon, the Empire Boulevard Police Station in Brooklyn got a telephone call. A man on the other end of the wire spoke, and said he had information that the huge arms plant at Bridgeport would be blown up today. The man refused to give his name, and hung up. It all sounded alarming - after the frightful explosion of the Hercules Powder Plant in New Jersey, with sabotage suspected. The Remington plant is one of the nation's largest manufacturers of rifle and machine gun cartridges. It turned out millions of rounds of ammunition during the previous war, and right now is working on a six hundred and ninety million dollar contract for the Government.

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The Brooklyn police notified the Company and the Bridgeport authorities, whereupon police guards were rushed to the plant. They were placed on duty twenty-four hours a day, with a ~~xxxx~~ special guard kept over the powder reservation - where the explosives are manufactured.

There's no guess about the origin of the telephone
XXXXX warning. Maybe it was from someone who did have some
information, and maybe it was a hoax. (Anyway, nothing
happened at the great munitions plant today - save the posting
of a heavy guard.)

WILLKIE

The Willkie campaign is really swinging into action. After a rather sleepy period of little action, the Republican election effort is gathering the speed that Willkie was supposed to give to it. He was nominated partly on the assumption that his campaign would be a whirlwind. Today he was in Texas, one of the major strongholds of the Democratic party - and he seems to have stirred up plenty of interest down there in the Southwest. Amarillo has a population of fifty thousand. It was ^{that} double today. The Democratic Mayor of Amarillo estimated that the crowds jamming the streets to hail Willkie numbered some forty thousand, and Elmwood Park, where he spoke, was jammed to suffocation.

Battling in the Solid South Willkie's major theme today was - Third Term. It was an argument to tradition. He began with a reference to the southern tradition of voting Democratic. But how about the American historical precedent concerning a third term? "The people of the South today," cried Willkie, "are faced with a conflict of traditions." He said that in order to follow the tradition of voting Democratic this year, they must abandon the tradition about a third term.

Then he appealed to the Texans specifically, ~~xxx~~ by citing a point in the history of their own state - when it was an independent republic, the time between its independence from Mexico and its joining the Union. He said that in the Constitution of the Republic of Texas, ~~there~~ there was a provision for rotation in office - a provision included at the instance ~~instance~~ of Sam Houston, ~~hero~~ hero of Texas independence.

Willkie got a great hand down there in ~~xxx~~ Solid South, with his appeal to southern tradition - and to Texas tradition.

HURRICANE

Eastern Canada's hurricane is blowing itself out tonight. Late reports indicate that the wind has dropped to from forty to forty-five miles an hour - which would seem to be blowing hard enough. ^{ff} But maritime Canada felt the blast of a gale that swept with a violence of ninety miles an hour. It wasn't a hurricane proper, but the backlash of a tropical twister ~~xxx~~ sweeping northward from the Caribbean.

Missing most of the ~~xxxxx~~ coast of the United States, the ninety mile gale blasted with full fury upon Halifax, the great wartime harbor, tied up operations and did plenty of damage. Ships in distress far and wide, vessels everywhere driven to cover. Communications disrupted, power lines down, and the backlash of the hurricane did huge damage to crops, especially to Nova Scotia's famous apple orchards, ^{— Evangeline Land.} But today the wind died down a bit - to the relatively calm level of forty or forty-five miles an hour.

ST. AUGUSTINE

All roads south, this year, lead to St. Augustine, oldest city in the United States. This year marks the Three Hundred and Seventy-Fifth Anniversary for St. Augustine. With its fine old Spanish buildings, St. Augustine is a place that every American should visit.

THANKSGIVING

Today we learn about Thanksgiving Day - a little bit ahead of time. Last year President Roosevelt, in a blaze of controversy, advanced the traditional date one week - the next to the last Thursday, instead of the last Thursday, of November. So what about this year?

Well, it is somewhat early for most of us to bother about that, but such is not the case with Alice Margaret Hodges of Syracuse, ^{her friend} and Herbert Shanks. They're engaged to be married, and they've been planning to have the wedding on Thanksgiving Day. You understand the sentimental idea - in the years to come they can celebrate their anniversary on the Feast of Gratitude, an appropriate day to give thanks that they had got married. Of course, it might turn out to be a little awkward if they didn't find matrimony any cause for such deep ~~xxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxx~~ thanksgiving, but then it would be only a sour cynic who would quibble about that.

Anyway, Alice Margaret and Herbert had a real interest in the question - when is Thanksgiving Day? In other words, when do we get married? That was up to the President of the United States. One of those extensions of executive power, the

Administration having authority to say - when to get spliced, etcetra. Faced with this problem of presidential prerogative, the young fiances consulted their employer, and he wrote an inquiry to President Roosevelt.

Today the reply came - from presidential Secretary Steve Early. It states:- "The President xxx proposes to designate Thursday, November Twenty-first, as Thanksgiving Day this year." That's the next to the last Thursday in November. The presidential Thanksgiving once again is set a week ahead of the traditional date. So now Alice Margaret and Herbert know when they'll get married - an important bit of information for an engaged couple. *Are you interested Hugh?*
And solong until tomorrow.

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