

CONFERENCE

L.J. - *Sensco. Tuesday, Aug 10, 1943.*

All the doubts about a possible Roosevelt-Churchill meeting were exploded this afternoon, and the answer is - yes. Tonight Winston Churchill is in Canada, Quebec. And the official announcement of his arrival says:- "Mr. Churchill will attend a conference with President Roosevelt and the combined Chiefs of Staff of the United States and the United Kingdom". And Canadian Prime Minister MacKenzie King will be in on the confab. It isn't clear where the meeting will be held. The Canadian dispatch from Quebec speaks of "an undisclosed location".

The Churchill arrival in Canada immediately follows the trip that the President himself made to Canada - vacation and fishing. He returned only yesterday, and today stated that he had not had any war conferences with important personalities - ~~and~~ he did not mention whether he had any conferences with important fish. There had been some surmise that while in Canada, he might have foregathered with a Kingfish often seen [^] smoking a big cigar - and don't think that a cigar-smoking fish is so ridiculous. Up in the northern woods, they tell many a story of a big mouthed bass that pulls on a Havana ^{Perfecto} ~~Perfecto~~ and likes to blow smoke in the

face of the fishermen. However, the Presidential vacation jaunt was confined to the less imposing variety of fish - not the diplomatic sort. That was made all the more evident today, with the announcement that Churchill had just arrived in Canada.

The Prime Minister is accompanied by his wife and his daughter, Sabaltern May Churchill. This is the first time the two ladies have travelled with him for his meetings with the President and so ~~there~~ there is a social and ~~family~~ family angle - as well as the larger aspects of war.

President Roosevelt this afternoon confirmed the fact that ~~he~~ he will confer with Churchill, and added one important point - concerning Russia. He was asked whether Soviet representatives would take part in the conference, and replied - he did not think so. He said he would be awfully glad to have Russian representatives present, but apparently ~~none~~ none will be there. The talks will be entirely British -American, with nobody else ^{involved} ~~involved~~, said he.

Previous advices from London brought the surmise that there might be what are called - parallel talks. That is, the

18
Soviets might get in on a Roosevelt-Churchill conference in an indirect way - by having a simultaneous meeting between Russia and British or American representatives in Moscow. London noted that perhaps Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden might hold a palaver with Molotov, while Roosevelt and Churchill were confabulating. And the Roosevelt-Churchill views could be conveyed by Eden to Molotov, who would give the Stalin reaction. In other words - it would be the next thing to a Roosevelt -Churchill-Stalin conference, staging it by remote control.

However, all that may be, the fact is that this new Roosevelt-Churchill meeting puts a dramatic focus on the sudden new change in the European war situation - the change made spectacular by the downfall of Mussolini. Undoubtedly the number one theme of the British-American conferences will be the question of Italy - the measures to be taken to get the collapsing Italian nation ~~out~~ out of the war with a minimum of bother and disturbance. Then there are those new developments in Germany, where apparently Hitler has been shoved into the background. This may be a real change, with the German Army taking control. Or it

9
may be some window-dressing in preparation for a peace move. The President and Prime Minister will ~~not~~ need their best wits in figuring out that.

Churchill's arrival today was preceded by the wildest kind of rumors - reports that Stalin was arriving; ^{also} Chiang-Kai-Shek, and, even that Mussolini was being brought over to stand trial.

Everybody in the news game knew that something big was about to happen, and now it turns out that the most ~~not~~ reasonable and conservative surmise of all was the real thing - Churchill arrived.

ITALY

Today's communique from allied headquarters summarized the Battle of Sicily as follows: "Slow and steady progress has been made along the whole front," it says. "Heavy demolitions, rugged country, and the lack of roads tend to slow up movement. The enemy is using every device to hold up the relentless advance of our forces," it adds.

An important key to the whole thing is to be found in the phrase -- "heavy demolitions." The axis forces are indeed using what the dispatch calls -- "every device."

The Nazis are blowing up roads and bridges, which is the usual thing -- and are adding a new dodge. They are dynamiting great cliffs, blowing these down over the roadways in the mountainous country. The easterⁿ_A tip of Sicily, the region of Mt. Etna, is particularly adaptable to that sort of thing. The volcanic country abounds in towering crags, and the highways are likely to run at the base of giant walls of stone, with huge crag^s_X often overhanging the roads. The Nazis plug sticks of dynamite into rocky ledges, and place the explosions so that an entire mountainside may ~~fall~~ pour down over a vital link of transportation.

In spite of these delaying tactics, the Allies are making steady headway, and today captured the key point called Randazzo. This is a highway junction at the center of a line, and was the goal for a double thrust by Americans and British. The Americans cut eastward from the captured town of Troina. The British launched their push from Bronte, which they had previously captured. And today the two forces joined at Randazzo.

Their double sweep was a trap that cut off numbers of Nazi troops. Just how many of these have been encircled is unknown at the moment, but they are a sizeable force.

On the north coast, the Americans are within five miles of Cape D'Orlando, which is one of those headlands thrust out to sea which dominate a section of the shore. Their thrust toward Cape D'Orlando was of course speeded up by the amphibious landing operation about which we heard yesterday. We are now told that this amphibious blow resulted in the capture of fifteen hundred prisoners.

From the Italian peninsula, we continue to get word of new peace demonstrations -- the latest in southern Italy, at the city of Bari. Here again we are told of troops refusing to oppose the crowds. One military unit definitely refused to obey orders

to fire, and had to be replaced by other soldiers -- who finally were able to disperse the throngs of people demanding the end of the war.

And the ~~big~~ northern city of Milan is again in the grip of riots. London hears that these followed the big R.A.F. raid on Saturday night. In addition to bombs that blasted the city, the British flyers dropped hundreds of thousands of leaflets, calling upon the Italians to ~~make~~ compel the Badoglio Government to make peace. The result was that, after the thunder of the bombing ceased, and while great fires were still raging in Milan, groups of people staged a leaflet demonstration. They marched through the streets waving ~~the~~ the pamphlets the planes had dropped, and shouted -- "We want peace."

Switzerland gives us a ~~veridical~~^{picture} of what the Badoglio Government is doing -- trying to find a way out of the war, but not willing to surrender ~~unconditionally~~ unconditionally.

At the City of Verona, representatives of Badoglio are in conference with high Nazi officials, headed by Hitler's foreign minister Von Ribbentrop and the chief of the German High Command, Field Marshal Keitel. It is understood that Badoglio feels that he

has got to deal with the Germans because he can't accept unconditional surrender, but he has told the Nazi chiefs that Italy will get out of the war, if the Allies will offer more lenient terms.

At Verona, the Italian representatives are said to have ~~in~~ informed the German leaders that any arrangement they make cannot be considered final. It might be called off if new developments should make it possible for Badoglio to get better terms from the United Nations.

An interesting sidelight on the likelihood of Italy getting out of the war fairly soon is shown in a newspaper appointment made today. The United Press named a head of its bureau in North Africa. The veteran correspondent Reynolds Packard gets the job, and the dispatch says he has orders to arrange for reestablishing the U.P. bureau in Rome. Packard was the United Press bureau manager before we got into the war and the fact that he is ordered to get ready to return to his old post shows what the American newspapers think about Italian prospects.

RUSSIA

The Russian news tonight is dominated by the names of two important cities - Kharkov and Bryansk.

Kharkov, in the southern sector, is in imminent danger of capture by the hard driving Red forces, ^{that} ~~they~~ are hurling the Germans back on a fifty mile front, and at last reports were said to be within eleven miles of Kharkov. In today's fighting they staged ^{another} a push of seven and a quarter miles. The Nazis are in retreat, and in forty-eight hours abandoned a sufficient number of tanks to equip a Panzer division.

Bryansk is to the ~~north~~ north facing Moscow. There the Soviet advance is being slowed down by immense forests. In front of Bryansk lie the darkest and densest woodlands of European Russia. So the Red Army faces a forest barrier as well as the immense fortifications the Germans have built to defend the key point of their line ~~in~~ in central Russia. Nevertheless, Red Army troops are advancing, and the latest dispatch from Moscow tells of the capture of a railway station forty-four miles east of Bryansk.

JUGOSLAVS

Today in London the cabinet of the exiled Yugoslav Government resigned. This -- because young King Peter insisted that a dclaration of Democratic policy be issued.

There is understood to be a good deal of dissension in the exiled regime, all centering around the fact that Jugoslavia consists of various racial elements -- like Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. And these are at odds about the control of the country when it is liberated. We hear that the crisis came when King Peter presided over a meeting of Serb, croat and Slovene representatives -- and demanded that democratic views must prevail. The cabinet split, and today resigned -- it had been formed only six weeks ago.

The exiled Yugoslav Government has been preparing to move from London to Cairo -- in the expectation that the allied Mediterranean campaign will soon strike for the liberation of Jugoslavia. Now, the business of moving is complicated, with disputes and resignations.

JUGOSLAVS

Today in London the cabinet of the exiled Yugoslav Government resigned. This -- because young King Peter insisted that a dclaration of Democratic policy be issued.

There is understood to be a good deal of dissension in the exiled regime, all centering around the fact that Jugoslavia consists of various racial elements -- like Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. And these are at odds about the control of the country when it is liberated. We hear that the crisis came when King Peter presided over a meeting of Serb, croat and Slovene representatives -- and demanded that democratic views must prevail. The cabinet split, and today resigned -- it had been formed only six weeks ago.

The exiled Yugoslav Government has been preparing to move from London to Cairo -- in the expectation that the allied Mediterranean campaign will soon strike for the liberation of Jugoslavia. Now, the business of moving is complicated, with disputes and resignations.

BOOK

In Washington today, there was a denial that the O.W.I. intervened to hold up the publication of a book about Jugoslavia. This volume is by Ruth Mitchell, sister of the fabulous General Billy Mitchell -- prophet of the war of the air. Ruth Mitchell had adventures of war in ~~the Balkans~~ ^{the Balkans, - in Serbia -} and her book celebrates the glory of the Chetniks -- led by General Mikhailovich.

All of which would seem to put the volume in the category of patriotic war literature, but Ruth Mitchell claims ~~that~~ ^{there} was interference by Chester Kerr, chief of the Book Bureau of the O.W.I. She states that he made representations to her publisher, and induced the publisher to hold up the book -- delay its appearance for a month. The accusation is that this O.W.I. interference was because of Communist tendencies.

The Jugoslavs, fighting against the Nazi conqueror, are divided into factions, with General Mikhailovich and his Chetniks on one side, and the Communist partisans on the other. All along, the influence of Communism has been bitterly against Mikhailovich. That, charges the sister of General Billy Mitchell, is why there was O.W.I. opposition to her book. And she adds that publication was delayed until the state department gave its own okay, assuring

the publisher that it had no objection to the praise of
Mikhailovich and the Chetniks.

Today in Washington, Chester Kerr said -- "Absolutely no
truth whatever." (He stated that Ruth Mitchell's publisher had sent
a set of galley proofs to the O.W.I., to get an opinion. "We did
our best to help them out," says Chester Kerr. He denies that he
tried to interfere with publication, and adds that he has no
authority to censor or suppress books.)

KIDNAP

The kidnap sensation at Albany, Oregon, was solved today, and the explanation turns out to be pretty much as might have been anticipated. The infant, Judith Gurney, was stolen from a hospital by a woman who longed for a child. The kidnapper is an army wife, twenty-six year old Mrs. Caroline Wright, whose husband is a sergeant in a regiment at Camp Adair.

"I just had to have a baby," said Mrs. Wright today. ^{it} She lived only a few blocks from the maternity hospital so she just strolled over, sneaked in, and took one.

As for the sergeant, he thought the kidnapped child was his own -- his wife had told him so. She had taken the little girl to him and said it was theirs.

After eight days of mystery, the case was solved, when the police found tiny blue-eyed Judith in an automobile with the sergeant and his wife. The ~~small~~ child was in excellent condition, having been well cared for at the home of the Wrights. Mr. Wright insisted the baby was hers, even though little Judith wore a baby identification bracelet marked with her family name -- Gurney. Under persistent questioning, however, the truth came out -- just another case of maternal impulse leading to a kidnapping.

ADD KIDNAP

Here's a late bit ~~xx~~ of news that gives the story a curious twist. The kidnapping is blamed on a mental quirk caused by the explosion of a Japanese bomb at Pearl Harbor. This was stated by the sergeant, the husband of Mrs. Wright. He told the authorities that at the time of the Jap attack, his wife was a teletype operator in the airfield administration building at Hickam Field. A bomb hit the building, and she suffered a brain concussion -- which kept her in the hospital for four months. The sergeant thinks that the injury caused by the Japanese bomb was responsible for the disorder of mind which led his wife to steal the child.

And now to New York, and
Hugh James.