

BALKANS

P.T. - Sunoco. Thursday, April 10, 1941.

London describes the state of affairs in the Battle of the Balkans in these words:- "serious but not desperate." This measured expression of British opinion was made, as Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and Chief of Imperial Staff Sir John Dill, returned to London from the Near Eastern area. These two, the Foreign Secretary and the Chief of Staff, were the architects of British arrangements in the Balkans - dealing with Turkey and Jugoslavia and ~~the~~ hurrying of aid to Greece.

"Serious but not desperate" - that seems to be a fair estimate. Tonight the situation is this:- The Nazi German motorized columns have cut clear across Jugoslavia, and have joined forces with the Italians in ^{Albania - -} ~~Libya~~ - at least such is the claim that Berlin makes and repeats. This means the complete separation of the Yugoslav armies in the north from the Greeks and British in the south. The Germans continue to insist that the Greek forces in Thrace, who were cut off by the Nazi drive to Salonika have surrendered. Berlin claims eighty thousand Greek prisoners. Athens, to the contrary, stated ^S ~~d~~ today that the isolated Greek units in Thrace ^{are} ~~were~~ still fighting.

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The British army in Greece has not yet gone into action. The latest report is that it is taking a position along a defensive line, joining with retreating Greek armies. The line extends from just below Salonika ^{— just north of mt. Olympus —} all the way across Greece, to the southern part of Albania - that section which the Greeks conquered from the Italians. ² That [^] defensive front is not too long - it's no great distance across the peninsula which is Greece. The country is wild and mountainous, and difficult for an attack. There the Greeks and British are bracing themselves - awaiting the onslaught of the mechanized legions of the Nazis. ^{As for} The Germans ^{they} ~~themselves~~ are mustering for the attack, for the drive southward. But we don't know much about their movements. The Berlin War Office has again lapsed into silence - according to the blitzkrieg habit of not making announcements until ^a the [^] phase of military operations is complete.

The isolated army of the Jugoslavs is said to be making attempts to break through the wedge the Germans have driven, trying to smash southward and effect a junction with the British and the Greeks. They have been pushing against the Italians, hoping to get

through via Albania. But military opinion is highly doubtful of the Yugoslav chances of smashing the cordon that hems them in.

Instead, it would seem as if the Nazi motorized columns were

slashing
~~smashing~~ deep into ~~XXXXXX~~ various parts of Jugoslavia, (and the

8 { likelihood is that the defending army will be hemmed in the

mountains in the middle of the country, with the possibility that

struggle there) *into*
{ the ~~battle~~ will turn to ~~mere~~ guerrilla warfare.)

CROATIA

Nazi German troops today marched into Zagreb, the second largest city of Yugoslavia. Zagreb is likewise the metropolis of the rich northern Yugoslav province called Croatia. In taking the city, the Nazis met with no resistance. Quite to the contrary. There was fifth column work in a big way.

The Zagreb radio called upon the people to receive the invading army in friendly fashion, and proclaimed what it called - "a free Croatian state." The province separating itself from the Yugoslav kingdom, and declaring its independence. Later, the Zagreb radio called on all Croatian soldiers in the Yugoslav army, no matter where they may be - to swear allegiance to the new Croat *Nazi flags were flying as the Germans marched in.* government. All this was the doing of the Croatian extremist party. The leader of that party is Dr. Ante Pavelich.

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That name, ~~Dr. Ante~~ Pavelich, takes us back in dramatic fashion to the most sensational assassination of recent years - the killing of King Alexander of Yugoslavia in Marseilles in Nineteen Thirty-Four. Most of us, I think, will remember this event with some vividness - largely because of the spectacular and rather terrifying newsreel pictures of the assassination of a

king. My own recollection is particularly vivid - for I recorded the spoken commentary of the Movietone ~~Newsreel~~ pictures, an astounding and historic film. Now let's see what connection there is between the crime in Marseilles ^(seven) ~~five~~ years ago and the crash of war in the Balkans today. In the conspiracy to assassinate King Alexander of Jugoslavia, a dominant figure was Dr. Ante Pavelich, that same political figure whose party in Croatia seized power today and welcomed the Nazi invaders.

At the time of the tragedy of ~~King Alexander~~, the news told us much about the state of affairs in Jugoslavia - a kingdom with ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ large discontented [†] minorities. The Serbs were in control, and other elements were in a state of sedition - resorting to terrorism. Among these the two most formidable groups were the Croats in the north and the Macedonians in the south. This fact found a striking expression in the conspiracy to assassinate Alexander. It was plotted by Croat terrorists, of whom Dr. ~~Ante~~ Pavelich was the chief. The actual shooting in Marseilles was done by a terrorist gunman sent by the Croat group - and he was a

Macedonian, ^{who} ~~He~~ had begun his career as a political killer among his own people in the southern part of Jugoslavia, ^{where} ~~who~~ for years ^{they} had been conducting a fierce, under-cover movement of revolutionary terrorism against the Yugoslav government.

Now here's a striking thing to note. In the Balkan blitzkrieg of the past few days, the most important event was the German drive into southern Jugoslavia, which outflanked the Greek army, and separated the Yugoslav forces in the north from the Greeks and British in the south. This staggering Nazi thrust was made precisely through the mountain area inhabited by the Macedonians - those same people who have been in chronic revolt against the Yugoslav government, ^{and} ~~who~~ have waged campaigns of terrorism, ~~and one of whose terrorist assassins actually did the killing of King Alexander.~~ This makes one wonder - could the swift and startling success of the Nazi drive across the mountains have been aided by the Macedonian malcontents of that region - those chronic ~~and~~ revolutionaries? Could there have been fifth column work? ~~The~~ news has given no hint of any such thing. Yet we can't help wondering.

There is no conjecture, however, in the case of the Croats, ~~the Croatian elements in bitter opposition to the Yugoslav government.~~ After the assassination of Alexander, a trial was held in France. ~~The Macedonian gunmen who had fired the actual shots had been killed in the tumult that followed the crime. So~~ the French legal proceedings were against various plotters involved in the affair. One of these, the principal figure, was - Dr. Ante Pavelich, chief of the Croatian terrorist organization. The French court condemned him to death, but it was all - in absentia. Pavelich, the Croatian revolutionary, was in Italy - and Mussolini refused to give him up. ^{TR} The trial proceedings disclosed that the murder plot against Alexander of Jugoslavia had been arranged in Italy and Hungary - by Pavelich and his followers. ~~The chieftain of Croatian terror remained in Italy, continuing his machinations against Jugoslavia.~~ With the coming of the present war, the Croats in Jugoslavia were reported to be pro-Fascist and pro-Nazi. They supported the Yugoslav deal with Hitler - the one that was tossed out and brought on invasion.

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During the past few days, Dr. ~~Ante~~ Pavelich in Italy, issued pronouncements urging a Croatian revolt, in favor of Italy and Germany. And today, with the blows of the blitzkrieg raining upon Jugoslavia, his party seized control in Croatia, welcomed the German army and proclaimed the independence of ^{the} a province.

The surmise would seem to be that, under the patronage of the Nazis and Fascists, Pavelich himself will return to rule over Croatia - ^{this man who was} the chief conspirator in the assassination of King Alexander.

AIR RAIDS

London reports air raids tonight, Nazi bombers over Britain. Berlin today took time out to clear up the wreckage of Hitler's great opera house. It lay in ruins, after last night's visit by the R.A.F. British bombers blasted the heart of Berlin, and today's check-up shows high explosive heavily damaged the Prussian state library, and the ornate Bellevue palace. Moreover, bombs hit the famous Sans Souci Palace at Potsdam - the royal edifice built by Frederick the Great. All this - in addition to the destruction of the Berlin opera. ^{Yes -} Berlin got a large taste of the bombs.

AFRICA

The British in north Africa have lost three of their top-ranking generals, captured in battle with the Germans and Italians. One is Lieutenant-General Sir Richard O'Connor, Field Commander of the Army of the Nile. He was right-hand man to General Wavell, in all those victories against the Fascists. The other two captured British commanders are Lieutenant-General Neame and Major-General Gambier-Perry. These three officers represented the top British command during recent weeks. Commander-in-Chief General Wavell departed from the Libyan theatre of war, to direct the larger scope of Near Eastern operations from Cairo. Next to him was Lieutenant General Sir Henry Wilson Maitland. He went to Greece, and now commands the British Expeditionary Force there. That left General O'Connor in command. And now he, with the two generals next in rank to his own, have been made prisoners.

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There was a battle in the desert, as German motorized columns helping the Italians made their swift advance, forcing the British back for many miles. In the clash of arms, the Germans claimed they captured five British generals. Today London

says - three. The Nazis announce that they took two thousand
prisoners altogether. London today says, "this figure would not

^{im}
be possible." *Mebbe true.*

SHIPS

President Roosevelt asked Congress today for legislation to enable him to take over all foreign ships that are now in our harbors and ~~are~~ are immobilized by the war, ~~staying in our harbors.~~

In a special message, the President pointed to the shortage of shipping because of the German campaign of sinkings in the North

Atlantic. (He used these words:- "It is obvious that our own ultimate defense will be rendered futile if the growing shortage of shipping facilities is not arrested.")

55) Under the powers, ^{of} the President asks Congress ^{he will} ~~that~~ ₁ ~~we~~ be permitted to take over the ships and pay the owners - reimburse them for the value of ~~the~~ vessels. This will include the sixty-nine Italian~~s~~, German and Danish craft that were taken in ^{recent} the seizure of ~~the~~ ships. Also - the French vessels tied up in our harbors. There are eighteen of these, including the eighty million dollar super-luxury liner - NORMANDIE. A few other nations have ships here, Esthonia three; Lithuania one; Belgium two; Rumania one.

Today's presidential request for authority to requisition ships has its bearing on the convoy question.

By acquiring the idle vessels in our ports and transferring them to Britain, we might ease the shipping situation in the North Atlantic -- ease it sufficiently to put off the problem of convoying supplies to Britain. This was intimated by White House Secretary Steve Early. Speaking of convoys and the special message, he said:- "I wouldn't be surprised if you found the answer right there."

STRIKES

The Ford Company and the Union accepted peace terms today. The program for a settlement ~~was suggested by Governor van Wagoner of Michigan.~~ ^{It} provides that an election shall be held under the auspices of the National Labor Relations Board -- an election to decide who should represent the workers for collective bargaining. All the strikers are to return to work without prejudice.

The walkout[^] ^{was} precipitated by the dismissal of eight Union men. The agreement provides that five of these are to be taken back to work and their cases are to be submitted to arbitration. The settlement, late today, followed charges of sabotage within the Ford plant. Tools and machinery damaged, to the amount of three hundred thousand dollars; so it is said.

In Wisconsin, a Legislative Committee declares that the Allis-Chalmers strike was planned and directed by Communist leadership. They say they have evidence to show that the long and violent labor battle was caused by the Reds. The Wisconsin Legislative Committee states that Harold Christoffel, the strike director, has been identified as a member of the Communist Party -- and other strike leaders too.

GREENLAND

The action which the United States Government has taken with regard to Greenland promises to be of the largest significance, an American protectorate for hemispheric defense.

The White House statement points to the fact that Nazi planes have flown over Greenland recently, and gives this as a reason for establishing the protectorate. Moreover, we are told that in the past year, ships proceeding from German-occupied Norway have arrived at Greenland -- ostensibly for commercial or scientific purposes. But actually to make weather observations to help the meteorology of the German campaign in the North Atlantic. The parties that landed were eventually expelled.

President Roosevelt revealed today that an agreement with the government of Denmark was signed yesterday. That was timing it, because yesterday was the First Anniversary of Nazi seizure of the Kingdom of Denmark. In point of precise fact, the agreement was made between the President and the Danish Minister at Washington. In speaking of the Danish Minister, he uses this phrase:- "who acts in behalf of the King of Denmark." Now the Danish King, as we all know, remains in Denmark -- which is under Hitler control. So one wonders whether that monarch had any actual party in the agreement.

The statement issued by the President makes this observation:

"Under the present circumstances," it says, "the government in Denmark cannot, of course, act in respect to its territory in the Western Hemisphere." True -- the Danish Government is not a free agent, and perhaps took no part in today's announced creation of the Greenland protectorate.

The United States undertakes to guarantee the status of Greenland as a Danish colony. The sovereignty of Denmark is not impaired. On the contrary, it's assured. "We propose," says the President, "to make sure that when the German invasion of Denmark has ended, that Greenland will remain a Danish colony." This is in accordance with the recent interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine a Pan-American decision that no European possession in this hemisphere shall be acquired by any non-American power.

In the protectorate agreement, the United States acquires the right to establish bases in Greenland, military airports, naval stations, and armed fortifications. These to be built promptly thus rounding up the system of hemispheric defense that the United States is creating.

And SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.