

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

By Edward C. Wayne

U. S. Plan for Hemisphere Defense Is Charted by President's Message Proclaiming Full National Emergency; Loss of Big Ships Highlights Sea Battle

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.)
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PLEDGE: From FDR

The war course of the United States was more firmly charted by President Roosevelt's "fireside chat," yet the reactions abroad were considered as more important than that at home, enthusiastic though it was.

For the President went "all-out" on the diplomatic limb for a victory for Britain and China, pledging a continuance of United States' aid to the embattled democracies, and promising wider action when and if needed.

The speech was believed to have settled the convoy question, the strike issue, the use of the navy in furtherance of a British victory, many other questions which had kept the people of this country in a nightmarish condition of not knowing "what was coming next."

Virtually all of the American editorial comment was favorable, though many of the editorial writers took the stand that succeeding events would show how much of the President's talk was words—how much would be backed by action.

Night following Mr. Roosevelt's speech, Sen. Burton K. Wheeler of Montana took the radio to inform the nation regarding the stand of the opposition to the President's policies. He asked the President for a new "pledge of peace."

Rome newspapers cut the Gordian knot and stated that the U. S. "was virtually in the war." German press took a more literal view of the President's speech, referred only to his "freedom of the seas" dictum, called the United States a nation attempting to be dictator of the seas.

German government sources said: "Our ships have been ordered to continue the blockade of Britain, to sink all ships coming within the combat zones, and these orders have not been rescinded and will not be."

Lease-lend ships had been sunk and there was no question about it,

VICHY: Active Again

That Vichy was implementing her German aid was seen in British dispatches which told of the sinking of two French flag vessels in the Mediterranean, one of them a 5,000-ton tanker loaded with oil and headed for Tripoli.

At the same time the British reported the sinking of an 18,000-ton Axis liner, presumably Italian, carrying 3,000 German troops to the same destination.

These dispatches pointed, disquietingly enough, to proof of one of two things, possibly of both. Either there was being planned a strong increase in the battle of North Africa, or the Germans were moving in force to Dakar to create a strong base there.

Either of these was disquieting enough, particularly the latter, from



AMBASSADOR WINANT
His recall was "just part of it."

the American point of view, but the main thing was that it showed definitely that Vichy was becoming active again, this time plainly on the German side.

It was brought to the fore again questions about the mystery of Weyand, where he was, what he was doing, what manner of man he might be. Defections of French troops to the British standard in the Near East—and crossings of the Syrian boundary by various groups to the Free French forces of De Gaulle were in the reports, lending color to the British claim that the Gailani government was about to fall.

The Italians were getting nowhere in their general retreat in Ethiopia, and division after division was surrendering. But in spite of all this news, it was evident that the Petain government, possibly now dominated by Laval and Darlan or one of them, was getting more and more involved in the whole African and Near East campaign.

This might have far-reaching effects, not only on the present situation, but on the future disposition of national power after the war should be ended. Particularly would it affect the diplomatic interchanges going on between Vichy and the United States.

The sudden recall of Ambassador Winant to Washington for a conference with the President and the cabinet was just part of it. Vichy was in the midst of all that was moving on the continent, like a volcano emitting smoke after a long quiescent period.

SHIP: For Ship

Down to the bottom of the Atlantic ocean went H. M. S. Hood, 42,100 tons, with about 1,300 men aboard, victim of an "unlucky hit" from the 15-inch guns of the Reich's great battleship Bismarck.

Three days later, down to the bottom of the same Atlantic went the Bismarck, victim of a "lucky hit" on her propellers from a British torpedo plane.

But the whole Bismarck story, observers generally felt, might change, if it had not already changed, the whole story of naval warfare. It brought the airplane into new prominence, and showed that this arm of present-day navies had not been given the notice it deserved.

Indeed, the plane-battleship controversy got a sharper answer during the past few weeks from the Hood-Bismarck battle and the Cretan encounter of the Mediterranean British fleet with the Stukas that it had thus far in the war.

In both of these battles the planes gave a good account of themselves. The British admitted the loss of two cruisers and four destroyers, in the battle of Crete, and while the ships of war prevented any ship-crossing to the island, it was at terrific cost.

It is true that planes cost a good deal, but it takes around a million dollars to build a destroyer, and anywhere from 10 to 30 millions for a bigger cruiser, and those millions lost in the Crete battle would have bought even more than the "hundreds" of Stukas engaged, and only relatively few of which were lost.

Called to Duty



One of the Roosevelt administration's most outspoken critics, Rep. Hamilton Fish (R.) of New York, has been ordered to active duty in the army. He holds the rank of colonel in the specialists' reserve. Fish will go on duty "with his consent" on July 1, reporting to Fort Bragg, N. C., for training.

CRETE: Takes Turn

The turn of events in the Battle of Crete was against the British-Greek defenders, and while the news was not decisive, British reports showed that the defenders expected to lose the battle, and the Germans were definite in claiming victory.

The Reich, however, claimed that all would be over long before it was, and seemed inclined to minimize the cost of the fight.

The British attitude, while deploring still another disaster to her arms was that "the fight was gallant, and the troops stood up under constant bombing longer than anyone had expected."

Thus again the airplane was the turn of the battle, for in the fight for Crete the British had the best of it on the sea, sending a reported 5,000 Germans to the bottom, and preventing the landing of sea-borne troops while still landing some quantities of reinforcements themselves.

On land, also, the British at the outset had the superior force, and all forces opposed to them had come in by plane.

This, from the German standpoint, was the highly favorable result of the campaign, that an army, with no land approach, could still be landed and take an island away from occupying forces who had some time to prepare their positions.

The formula? Simply to gain first, mastery of the air; second, to be willing to land men with modern weapons, even light tanks and light fieldpieces, in such ever-flowing quantities, regardless of losses, so that the enemy will finally be outnumbered; third, to keep a relentless bombing of the enemy from the skies during the battle, and an endless supply of ammunition, also from the skies, for the air-borne army.

Data that Hitler's men were able to accumulate included the fact that artillery alone cannot make an airfield unusable, despite the hundreds of shell craters created. Evidently these can be repaired even under fire, and the field still used.

Germans wondered (and British did too) whether this formula for the battle of Crete might not be transferred to Britain, and result in the capture of the British Isles. But the British felt that while the technique had worked in Crete, might it not fail over England, where air-mastery could hardly be won by an enemy willing only to come over at night; where instead of a few thousands of air-borne soldiers, close to a million would have to be sent.

The general British feeling was—let them try it, we are ready—and indeed the enormous British army of defense might well be straining for action, with the Tommies in North Africa, Crete and the Balkans getting it all.

NEAR-EAST: And Africa

The Reich, apparently fearful that American aid to Britain might change the situation, particularly in the Near-East and in North Africa, was speeding up all effort, spearheaded by the Battle of Crete, to gain control of the Mediterranean before the aid began flowing full force.

It might have been for this reason that the British felt fairly good over the Battle of Greece and the Battle of Crete, no matter what the outcome, for they pointed out that Greece and Crete had taken the Germans longer than the entire campaign against Norway, France and the Low Countries.

It was the British feeling that the wider the land battle spread itself, the worse for Germany, and no worse for Britain, because she had to so dispose her forces that all battle fronts were guarded anyway.

There were thousands upon thousands of British troops, well armed and equipped, "sitting on their hands" in England, in Singapore and in India.

So the British were trying desperately to overcome the Nazi-controlled Gailani government in Iraq so as to be able still more to delay the eventual fall of Suez.

The Washington MERRY-GO-ROUND

Washington, D. C.
RAILROAD TEST

For National Defense chiefs, June holds a special significance. It will indicate whether government operation of railroads may be necessary.

In June the nation's railroads will meet their first crucial test of whether they are adequately equipped to handle the enormous increase in freight resulting from the defense program.

When the wheat harvest starts in the Texas Panhandle and continues north, the carriers will be on the spot to prove their determined contention that there is no shortage of freight cars, and that they can cope with the great demands of the defense program without the government taking them over as in the World War.

Railroad moguls are fully aware that they face a decisive showdown, and they are making tremendous efforts to meet it.

Twenty-five thousand cars have been mobilized to handle the Texas crop and a strict rule has been laid down that they must be kept rolling. Cars will not be allowed to be used for storage purposes. If a shipment can't be unloaded without delay, cars will not be released.

Cars will be peremptorily recalled if shippers don't load. Circuitous routing is being eliminated. And the railroads themselves are now distributing the materials and equipment they will need months hence, so that the maximum number of cars will be available in the peak season next autumn. This alone is expected to release 20,000 freight cars.

Mechanized Cavalry.

It took a war in Europe to do it, but the U. S. army is now doing a whirlwind job of replacing cavalry with tanks and armored cars. Even Secretary of War Stimson's aide, Col. Eugene Regnier, has gone in for mechanization.

Commenting whimsically on this the other day, Secretary Stimson said: "After riding horses all his life, Gene is now commanding the first reconnaissance battalion of the First Cavalry division. He rides in a bantam scout car and has armored cars and tanks under his command. I tell him this is strange for a man who has sworn that horses are the only thing in life. But he says it takes the brains of a good cavalryman, to handle a mechanized unit."

Note—Colonel Regnier deserted his swivel-chair job in Washington for El Paso, Texas, where Gen. Innes P. Swift commands one of the most active army posts in the country.

Conscientious Objectors.

Announcements that 1,100 conscientious objectors will report to non-military training camps in the next few weeks are a lot of hokey. Real fact is that only 201 draft registrants have even been classed as genuine religious objectors.

Out of the 6,000,000 questionnaires received from draft eligibles, less than 2,500 sought exemption on the ground of religious scruples. Of this number, 201 have been OK'd so far. They will train in eight camps as follows:

Fifty at Camp Patapsco, Elkridge, Md.; 14 at Grottoes, Va.; 12 at Lagro, Ind.; 32 at San Dimes, Calif.; 10 at Richmond, Ind.; 40 at Marietta, Ohio; 32 at Colorado Springs, Colo.; 10 at Cooperstown, N. Y.

While operated by the government, the camps are financed by private funds, supplied chiefly by the Quakers, Mennonites, and United Brethren. In some instances the men pay their own costs, at the rate of \$35 a month.

Australian Opinion on War

Prime Minister Menzies of Australia held some very important conversations with high Washington officials during his recent visit. In these talks he expressed every confidence that Britain would win the war, but he was hard-boiled and realistic regarding the time necessary for a victory.

Coming from Australia, which has a detached and unbiased view of the situation, his opinion is important.

"During 1941," he said, "all of Britain's effort must be concentrated on defense."

"During 1942 we can really begin to concentrate our efforts on building up a real war machine."

"And in 1943—with America's help—we can take the offensive, and we will win the war."

MERRY-GO-ROUND

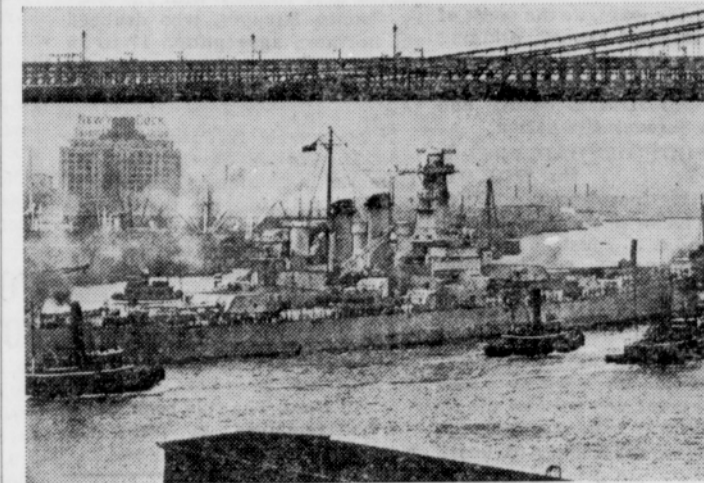
The appointment of ex-Senator Sherman Minton of Indiana to the U. S. court of appeals makes the third judicial reward for a member of the famous senate lobby investigating committee, whose sensational exposés of utility lobbying led to the holding company law. Hugo Black of Alabama, chairman, is a Supreme court justice, and Lewis Schwellenbach is a federal district judge in Washington.

President Makes Momentous Radio Address



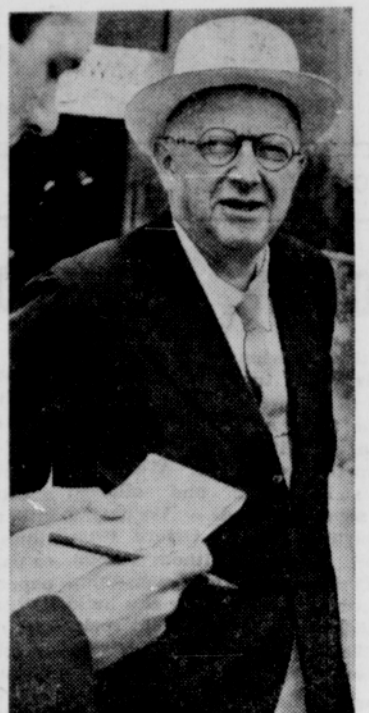
Soundphoto showing President Roosevelt as he delivered his momentous "fireside chat" to the nation from the East room of the White House. He declared the existence of "an unlimited national emergency." His listeners in the White House were cabinet members, diplomats of the Americas and other democracies and their families.

U. S. Giant of Deep Leaves New York



View of the 35,000-ton superdreadnaught "North Carolina," mightiest of the warships in the United States navy, pictured as she slipped down the East river, beneath the Brooklyn bridge, bound for the open sea. Her destination was veiled in mystery. The ship is able to fire a broadside of 20,000 pounds for 20 miles.

Australian Envoy



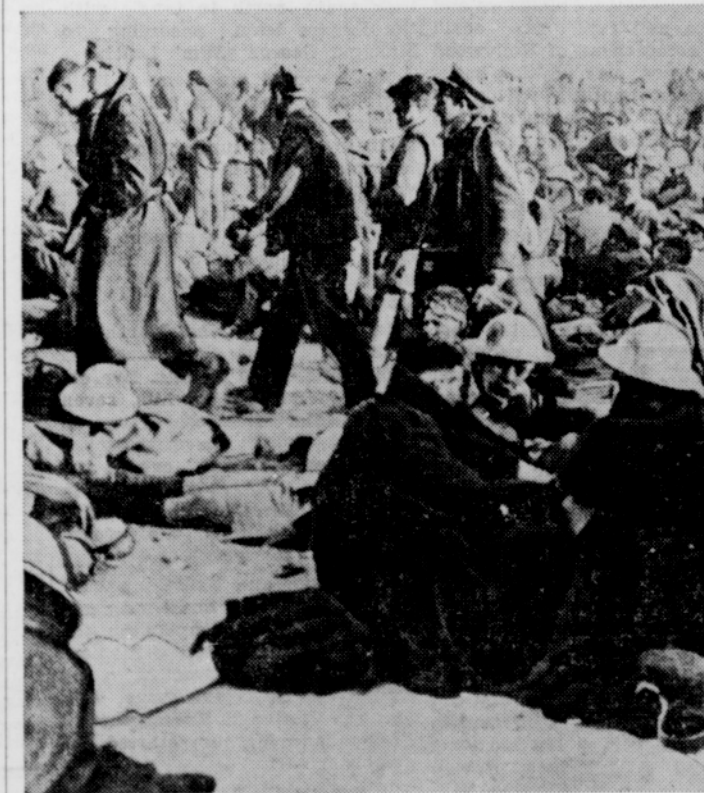
Nelson T. Johnson, retiring American ambassador to the Chinese Nationalist government, and new minister to Australia, shown on arrival in San Francisco. He left at once for a conference with the President before leaving for Australia.

Bridges on Stand



Harry Bridges, shown as he took the stand in his own defense, in San Francisco, to escape deportation on charges of alleged communistic affiliations.

British Captives of Nazis in Africa



This picture, taken somewhere in Africa, shows a group of British soldiers fresh from the fighting lines of the see-saw battle of the dark continent. They are shown in the prison camp to which they were removed after they were captured by the successful Nazi and Italian forces campaigning in Africa.

Testifies



Mary Spargo, before Dies committee in Washington, testifies that 150 government employees attended an American peace mobilization in New York as official delegates. She said these employees have been supporting the Communist APM.

Ford Employees in Detroit Vote C. I. O.



Using secret ballots, more than 83,000 workers of the Ford Motor company in the Detroit area voted overwhelmingly in favor of the U. A. W.-C. I. O. to do their collective bargaining with Ford for them. Photo shows workers at the Ford River Rouge plant being checked in by Police Captain Don Leonard as the balloting began.

Economic Advisor



Isadore Lubin, commissioner of labor statistics, who has been called in by President Roosevelt as his economic advisor on the \$7,000,000,000 lend-lease program.



SENATOR WHEELER
Asked for a new "peace pledge."

whether they had been patrolled or conveyed by U. S. naval ships or not. But so far no American flag ships had been sent to the bottom, for they had been keeping out of combat zones.

But that they would be sunk in the future no one seemed to doubt, and America interestedly, rather than anxiously, looked for that day to see what action would be taken.

The first shots to be exchanged between American-flag naval vessels and German planes, surface raiders or submarine were still to be fired, but most observers expected that, following the President's talk that this firing was just a matter of time, and that it might not be long.

The British reaction to the presidential address was prompt and jubilant. They accepted the pledge of American aid of a more complete and vigorous type than heretofore with enthusiasm, though the British "man in the street," not conversant with America's problems and political battlings, was rather befuddled by it all.

OPM'S: Report

Following a year of OPM functioning, Knudsen gave the country, at about the time of the President's epochal address, information which was more encouraging than anything that had come before.

Mass production, said Knudsen, was really now beginning to roll, with planes in April 1,300, in May 1,600, and similar increases, some of them more spectacular, all along the line.

The use of Cataline planes in the Bismarck battle showed that there were few British encounters now in which American-made equipment was not functioning.

Then along came the President's speech, asking for doubling of this, tripling of that, and three billions for planes—and in spite of the pressure which his demands put on the industrial situation, it began to be possible for Americans to visualize 50,000 planes, 10,000 tanks, and some of the other goals this country had set itself.