

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

By Edward C. Wayne

Threat of German Invasion of Britain And Congressional Lease-Lend Debate Present Grim Picture of War Situation; Italians Continue to Fall Back in Africa

(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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CRISIS:

For Lease-Lend

The real crisis in the lease-lend legislation found a well-defined public response to the antagonistic efforts of the isolationists and the non-interventionists.

The result? The administration called big guns to the support of the measure, and predicted its passage during the week beginning March 3. The schedule called for unlimited debate in house and senate, but there were many indications that this limitation would bring forth tremendous opposition in Republican floor circles and in senate committees as well.

Generally speaking, the public attitude, as disclosed in numbers of polls of sentiment conducted by newspapers throughout the country, seemed to be that the all-out aid to Britain principle was favorably received.

The public, on the other hand, seemed to feel that there was at least a reasonable doubt whether the President should be given as much and as drastic power as the original lease-lend draft indicated.

This was reflected even in the sponsorship of the measure, because Representative Bloom (N. Y.) who was chairman of the house foreign relations committee, scarcely put up any opposition against three or four major amendments, limiting the time for which the presidential powers would be granted, declaring in principle against convoys and other items in which the opposition found fault with the bill.

This showed the administration forces to be in the unusual position of fostering legislation of which they do not approve themselves, at least in part.

Either that, or they were "shooting for the moon," and willing to



REP. SOL BLOOM
Scarcely any opposition.

give and take in order to reach their main objective—of the passage of a bill which would in effect repeal the Johnson act forbidding loans to belligerents who had not paid their World war debts.

INVASION:

Threat Near

As the lease-lend argument reached its zenith, predictions that England was nearing the critical period in the Battle For Britain were legion. Lindbergh had set the most gloomy picture, figuring that Britain could never withstand the onslaught.

One could figure which side of the lease-lend battle the predictor was on by the darkness of the picture he painted. Knox and Stimson predicted a crisis, but gave few details and little soothsaying as to what would be the outcome.

But those opposed to the lease-lend proposal varied widely in what they saw in the future's crystal ball. Most gloomy of all was Von Wiegand, who in a dispatch date-lined Shanghai, purported to report what German and Japanese authorities believed was about to occur.

Six weeks would tell the tale, said Von Wiegand. He envisioned 247 divisions of trained men, 15,000 paratroopers, a score of tank divisions, descending on England, and Hearst papers printed an "artist's conception" of the "Blitz on Britain," which would tear London into shreds—long before American aid could swing the balance.

Every authority who discussed blitzkrieg on London talked of poison gas—new forms, lethal gas for which "no gas mask" has yet been provided.

LABOR:

Raises Its Head

The domestic labor situation became steadily worse during the weeks that the lease-lend bill was "on the tapis" in Washington.

Perhaps the Allis-Chalmers strike was the most serious, affecting as it did not only that single industry, but as Allis-Chalmers was making parts, it meant a serious hold-up all along the line, particularly in planes and tanks.

But the most striking labor development of the week was the statement issued by Henry Ford through one of his industrial lieutenants. Ford authorized this man to say in



SIDNEY HILLMAN

Mr. Ford refused to 'sit down' with him.

his name that the Ford enterprises would never yield to the government demand that defense products be manufactured under union labor conditions.

Ford's rejoinder was that he would never knuckle down to labor's demands, that instead he would lease his industries to the government at one dollar a year, and let the government run them.

Ford agreed in principle with the necessity of America arming in its own defense, and with the principle that in defense work patriotism was the primary urge, and profits had no part.

He therefore offered to give up his industries, and let the government operate them under a non-profit arrangement, producing whatever vital materials were wished for.

The only government answer to this was to refuse Ford a contract on which his organization had been low bidder.

Basis of the dispute had been Ford's refusal to sit down with Sidney Hillman, labor chief of the national defense, and to find some plan by which the Ford interests could operate in the defense scheme—settling the labor difficulty once and for all.

Labor, as personified by the C.I.O., had set as its major objective for 1941 the organization of the Ford plants.

This objective seemed to mean only one thing—abandonment of the Ford plants—of their complete divorce from national defense contracts.

ITALY:

In Africa

The African campaign of the British forces against the troops of Mussolini continued to be a victorious one, despite the fact that it was reported that the Nazi air force had given considerable aid to the Fascist legions.

In succession one port on the Mediterranean after another had fallen to General Wavell's men—Salum, Bardia, Tobruk and Derna. In Libya, none but Bengasi remained to be conquered.

All the cities previously captured, some of them cities only by courtesy, for they were only a few huts huddled together and a small group of embryo wharfs, had been on flat land. In passing Derna the British were moving on the capital of Cyrenaica, and were stepping into a more mountainous territory, the so-called Green Mountains of Libya, where a force of 50,000 Italians were determined to hold out to the last.

The same combination of land attack, backed up by air force and navy shelling from naval craft at sea, was being used by General Wavell in the final phase of the Libyan campaign. There was every belief that with the capture of Bengasi the campaign would end

Public Places 'Censorship' Upon Undesirable News

Opposing Viewpoints Dismissed as False; Government Aims to Increase Trade With Latin America.

By BAUKHAGE

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WASHINGTON.—As emotions rise here over the debate of American foreign policy and America's role in connection with the European war a strange sort of censorship is settling down upon the nation. I can feel it in the mail which I receive from listeners to my broadcasts.

It is not a government censorship. It has nothing to do with company rules and regulations, it isn't even voluntary deletion on the part of writers or commentators. It is a censorship which the public itself invokes and it is quite as effective as the kind imposed by Herr Goebbels. I have encountered it before.

It is simply a flat refusal on the part of the individual to believe anything he doesn't want to. He puts it into operation with a twist of the dial when he hears something he doesn't agree with on the radio or by tossing the newspaper into the corner when his eye catches a sentiment of which he doesn't approve.

But let me give you some striking examples of this "audience" censorship—of how the public will believe only what it wants to.

The Athenia was sunk while I was in Berlin. Shortly thereafter, comment of a high American official was cabled to German papers. This official in Washington had referred to the "torpedoing" of the ship with the implication that the Nazis did it. The Germans with whom I spoke (people who couldn't have known any more about what really happened than I did) were astounded.

"Even if we wanted to torpedo a ship full of Americans," one of them said, "we wouldn't be quite dumb enough to do that when the last thing we want is to get the United States into war. If it was torpedoed at all the British did it to get you in on their side."

When I got back to the United States I found that it was accepted without argument that the Germans had done it.

To the best of my knowledge it has never yet been determined just what happened to the Athenia.

British Fliers Interviewed.

I'll give you another example. While I was in Germany I had a chance to interview the first three British airmen shot down in raids over German territory. To be perfectly frank I found them, even the two who were laid up with injuries, extremely satisfied with their treatment. Naturally they had a good deal of attention being "firsts." And in those days the feeling wasn't so bitter.

I did report the factual things they told me—I interviewed them with no Germans present and we all spoke freely.

But did the British public believe it?

I should say not. An International News Service dispatch from London to American papers the next day quoted "diplomatic circles as being concerned" and stating that "one spokesman labeled the broadcast an obvious fake."

But no Englishman at that point wanted to believe what those boys said about their treatment or their personal feelings toward their captors.

Broadcast Cut Off.

The third experience was the most amusing.

I was broadcasting from Berlin and I wanted to get over the idea to my American listeners that while I was well treated I was under censorship and that if I departed from my censored text I would probably be cut off. So I said this:

"It is very much as if I were in the office of a man whose whole future is suddenly at stake, still he is kind and courteous to me. He offers me his hospitality. He let's me use his typewriter and now he pushes his busy telephone across the desk to me to let me talk to you, right before him."

And right there I was cut off the air. The American listeners knew what I was driving at and immediately surmised that the Germans had cut me off because I was criticizing the censorship. But a few days after the event I was summoned to the German foreign office and questioned at length by a highly suspicious underling.

"Why," he asked haughtily, "did the National Broadcasting Company

cut you off when you were praising the Germans?"

Meanwhile I had been notified of what had happened and I explained, truthfully that I had been cut off because I had reached the end of a period and that had I continued, it would have interfered with a regular commercial program. But did my Nazi accuser believe? Did my American friends believe when I returned? Definitely not!

That is the censorship which is growing as the nation is stirred over the debate on the lend-lease bill. And not only do pros and antis defend their cause with patriotic fire but each is ready to declare that the other who disagrees must be silenced for the good of the Republic. That is the kind of individual censorship against which no protest, however powerful, can prevail.

Seek to Improve Latin American Market

"Good fences make good neighbors."

I once quoted that line from a New England poet to a Dakota farm son and he flew into a rage. He said it was typical of the unneighborliness of the Yankees. Well, being prairie-born myself with a long line of New England ancestors I am inclined to sit on that fence and look both ways. Perhaps we ought to say that there is nothing unneighborly in a good fence so long as it has a gate.

And Uncle Sam feels the same way about the "Good Neighbor" business as it applies to South America. The farmers on both sides of the international fence, the Latin-American farmers and the North American farmers, while they are all for unity, economically, politically and culturally, are a little wary about competition.

That is why the department of agriculture talks so much about "complementary" or non-competitive products in its program for developing trade with Latin-America. We want to sell goods to South America. We have lots of things they want. But in order to buy our goods they have to have American dollars. They can get the dollars if they can sell their goods to us. Many of the things they would like to sell us we already have—especially agricultural products.

Therefore certain questions addressed to the department of agriculture are pertinent. Here they are along with the official answers:

Principal Imports.

What are the principal agricultural products we now import from Latin America?

"Our agricultural imports from Latin America are of two general types," says the office of foreign agricultural relations.

(1) "Complementary or non-competitive agricultural products, consisting for the most part of coffee, cocoa, bananas, sisal, henequen, special types of wool, spices, essential (volatile) oils, and tagua nuts. Such products are normally imported to meet the whole of our requirements since they are not produced at home."

(2) "Supplementary or competitive agricultural products. These include cane sugar, vegetable oils, seeds, cattle hides, unmanufactured tobacco, meat products, vegetables and vegetable preparations, dutiable wool, goat and kid skins, and linseed, to mention the more important."

How does the department of agriculture propose to increase trade between the United States and Latin America?

"By developing in Latin America for United States consumption the tropical and semi-tropical products which are not competitive with our agriculture."

Does Latin American co-operation mean increased imports into the United States of supplementary or competitive agricultural products?

"No, that is not the aim of the department's program."

What are the complementary or non-competitive products of Latin America, the imports of which can be increased?

They consist of crude rubber, cinchona bark from which quinine is made, abaca or manila fiber, valuable for the making of ropes for the navy, rotenone-bearing plants extremely valuable for insecticidal purposes.

Gems of Thought

THE hum of the wind in the treetops has always been good music to me, and the face of the fields has often comforted me more than the faces of men.—John Burroughs.

The firmest friendships have been formed in mutual adversity; as iron is most strongly united by the fiercest flame.—Colton.

He who embraces unity of soul by subordinating animal instincts to reason will be able to escape dissolution.—Lao Tze.

There is nothing which makes men rich and strong but that which they carry inside of them.—John Milton.

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