

# The Washington Merry-Go-Round

DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN  
Washington, D. C.

## WINTER PLANS

As far as can be ascertained, the most important point under discussion between Hitler and Mussolini during their recent visit to the Russian battle lines was a plan by which Italian troops would hold down a sizeable portion of the German front during the Russian winter stalemate.

Naturally, no one outside the Fascist-Nazi high command really knows the details of what happened. However, Mussolini squawked so loudly over Hitler's demands, that their general nature leaked out in Rome—where a lot of army leaders are none too friendly to the Axis.

Hitler's theory, bluntly put, was that the Italians were no good as fighters; so during the winter months when there was no fighting to be done, they could move into the trenches and protect the German lines.

Then Hitler could ship his troops down to Africa, and could clean up the whole of North Africa before spring and good fighting weather returned to Russia. Hitler figured that during the winter he could take over all of French North Africa, Egypt and the Suez canal, then penetrate to Dakar—from which he would have a base against South America.

It has long been known that Hitler realizes he has to move fast in Africa and the South Atlantic, or the United States will be strong enough to block him.

Mussolini's reaction to this plan was anything but enthusiastic. Aside from the ignominy of withdrawing from Italy's proposed field of conquest—Africa—Il Duce argued that Italian troops could not stand Russian winters. They would die of pneumonia in such a rigorous climate.

Whether Mussolini finally agreed is not known.

Note: The Nazi plan apparently is to put 250,000 Hungarian troops in the Russian trenches during the winter; plus 200,000 Rumanians; plus about 50,000 Slovaks and about 500,000 Italians. The German army during the winter would be reduced to a mere skeleton of about 100,000 men.

## NEW IMPRESSIONS

Washington newsmen, after seeing Roosevelt twice a week for eight years, have only dull impressions when they walk into a press conference. A fresh impression comes from Jack Moffitt, ace Hollywood reporter, who saw the President the other day for the first time.

"There was charm in the setting," Moffitt said. "The mementoes on his desk indicate a man of imagination who can extract pleasant memories from past experiences. . . . He costumes well. Hoover's choker collar became a symbol of Tory America. Coolidge dressed like a small town banker. Roosevelt avoids the foppish, but hits a certain suburban ease in his dress which sells quickly to the public."

"He was impressive in handling himself. There was ease and frankness, and a quickness in response to questions. He was at all times master of the interview."

"I was struck by his paleness and the lines in his face, contradicting the smirk I've seen in a thousand cartoons. If I were a casting director, looking for an actor for this part, I'd cast him as a man who is working hard under great strain."

## UNDER WAR SECRETARY

Newsman sat three deep around a long polished table in the new war department building. They fired questions at the man with a sun-tanned face sitting at the head of the table. He was the under secretary of war.

What's a T-6 tank like? . . . Are M-3 tanks available for the maneuvers? . . . Did the French find the 75 mm. tank gun effective? . . . What is the altitude range of the 90 mm. anti-aircraft gun? . . . Is the army in Iceland? . . . What do you think about the Russian resistance?

He ducked the last two questions, but answered all the technical questions with the assurance of a soldier trained all his life in ordnance.

But he isn't a life-long soldier. He is a lawyer, an ex-circuit court judge, who scarcely a year ago was concerned with such non-military subjects as the reorganization of the New York subway.

This was a press conference with the under secretary of war, Robert P. Patterson. A judge in 1940, he is a soldier in 1941, with a complete grasp of the technical information of his job.

## MERRY-GO-ROUND

The President is wearing a black four-in-hand tie these days, as well as the black armband.

Latest addition to Roosevelt's trinket-laden desk is a white porcelain figure of Churchill with a cigar in his mouth.

OPM has a defense job waiting for movie star Marlene Dietrich as soon as her broken ankle is mended. They want to use her glamorous gams (legs) to publicize cotton stockings for women, made necessary by the shutting off of Japanese silk.

# Sportlight

by GRANTLAND RICE

NASHVILLE, TENN.—This is the story of one of the greatest pitchers—and one of the oddest ball players—that ever wore a spike or threw a curve ball.

He started his pitching career here at Sulphur Dell well over 40 years ago—and he is still working out every day at Redland field, Cincinnati.

His name is Noodles Hahn. Noodles Hahn, a slender left hander, set a record of 16 strikeouts for the revised National league. This was back in 1901 with the Reds. He floated his dinky-dinks by hostile bats year after year, back in the forgotten days.

But last fall I saw him working out before the first World series game in Cincinnati between Reds and Tigers.

"I haven't missed a day's work out for 40 years," Hahn told me. This means that Hahn, out of baseball for at least 25 years—still puts on the old uniform and takes over the day's warm up with the Reds. "I haven't missed a work out in this same park since 1915," he said again. That's some sort of a record, whatever it means. For 1899 wasn't Lefty Grove yesterday. And you'll still find Noodles Hahn working out with Bucky Walters, Paul Derringer and other Red pitchers who were born long after Hahn set his 16 strikeouts mark.

Hahn was a left hander who belonged to the Herb Penneck, Eddie Plank school. He lacked the blazing speed of a Grove or a Rube Waddell, but he could tie up batters into more knots than 10 sailors could untie in a week. And you could see the seams on the ball as it came floating up.

## Great Left Handers

Who are the greatest left handers baseball has ever known? Rube Waddell and Noodles Hahn, perfect opposites, were two of the best, dating back to 1900. Each held a strike out record of 16.

To this pair, covering the last 40 years, you can add Eddie Plank, Nap Rucker, Rube Marquard, Doc White (the left hander who always baffled Ty Cobb), Herb Penneck, the star of the stylists, Carl Hubbell and Robert Moses Grove.

From this list Rube Waddell and Lefty Grove undoubtedly had the big edge in physical stuff—which largely consists in speed. Speed—and a fast curve. Waddell had the fastest breaking curve ever thrown.

On the right handed side this distinction belonged to Dazzy Vance. Waddell and Vance could start a fast curve for your Adams' apple and have it kick up dust in front of the plate.

So could Nap Rucker—minus the speed. I happened to swing a few bats against Nap Rucker around 1903—swinging shoulder high—only to see the catcher take the pitch ankle high.

Toad Ramsey, one of the greatest, goes on back beyond the 40-year span. Toad had a curve ball you couldn't hit with two planks. His record was phenomenal. But that was too far away and too long ago.

## How They Rank

Here's the left handed ranking I'll give you since 1900—all in order—

1. Lefty Grove; 2. Eddie Plank; 3. Rube Waddell; 4. Herb Penneck; 5. Carl Hubbell; 6. Nap Rucker. And Hubbell might be moved up into third place. A great pitcher.

From this list Grove and Waddell had the physical stuff. Waddell was

the greatest genius of the lot—but too much on the erratic side. The Rube would rather fish or act as bartender than pitch a World series game.

Grove and Plank, both under Connie Mack's direction, were the two greatest combinations of brilliancy and consistency.

They won the most games—which is a big part of the answer.

More than a few have ranked Herb Penneck as the top left hander of the long parade—for brains, control, style and the rest of it. Penneck was Bill Hanna's nomination—and Bill Hanna knew his share of baseball.

We'll still string with Grove, Plank, Waddell, Penneck, and Hubbell, in that order. Grove, at his greatest physical peak, was still learning how to pitch. I've seen him strike out six of the first nine Yankees and be hammered from the box two innings later. When Grove got to be canny and cunning he was almost unbeatable. For example 1931—when he won 31 and lost 4. That's what you might call pitching. Compare this to any 1941 record—I mean Feller or any of the others.

# The Once Over

by H.I. Phillips

THE VEGETABLE SEDAN  
Henry Ford has just turned out a car with a plastic body made largely from vegetables. It is part salad and part automobile.



It marks the triumph of the vegetable over the steel industry.

Henry has been experimenting with the idea for years. He is a man who always looks ahead. And wipes his own windshield.

A farm boy, Hank always nourished the notion that the "Man With the Hoe" could do anything that could be done by the "Vice President With the Blueprint." And after all there was nothing so fanciful in the idea of making an auto out of vegetables. Henry had been making spinach out of automobiles all his life.

Henry's first problem was to find out which vegetables would go best in automobiles. He could dismiss the cucumber at the start. Too many people won't have anything to do with cucumbers.

He then considered onions, but dropped them quickly. After all, he was making a car, not a hamburger.

Lettuce and tomatoes were suggested, but vetoed after the opening debate. Mr. Ford did not want the public to get his car confused with a reducing diet.

The soybean had begun to poke its noggin up and attract attention for some time. Of all vegetables, none has gotten ahead in life like the soybean.

The jelly bean, the string bean and the lima bean were better known, but never got anywhere industrially. (Once in October, 1928, a string bean did succeed in getting into the reception room of Mr. Ford's offices, but it was kept waiting so long that when the word finally came, "Mr. Ford will see you now," it had gone stale.—Ed note.)

But it was soon found that almost anything from a harmonica to a trailer could be made from the soybean, and Henry always liked a bean that was ambitious and full of get-up and go.

In 1932 somebody suggested that automobiles could be made from hay, but word came from Detroit that Mr. Ford was satisfied to keep on making hay from automobiles.

Anyhow, Henry has succeeded in his experiments, and in the priorities crisis has found a way to make a flivver almost entirely from the vegetable garden. The plastic material has 10 times the strength of steel in resisting a blow. It's the iron in the vegetables.

Of course, the government can throw a monkey wrench into Mr. Ford's car by putting the soybean and other vegetables on a priorities list. Anyhow, good luck to the idea. But we hope we don't get another one of those tire jacks made out of mashed potatoes.

## THE CALL

("OPM wants Marlene Dietrich's legs for use in drive to popularize stockings made from silk substitutes."—News item.)  
Hark, Marlene!  
The OPM's  
Calling for  
Those famous stems

Listen, kid—  
Your country begs  
For the right  
To use those legs.

All must make  
Some sacrifice;  
Give those legs!  
They will suffice.

Ankles such  
As yours, Marlene,  
In a war  
A lot may mean.

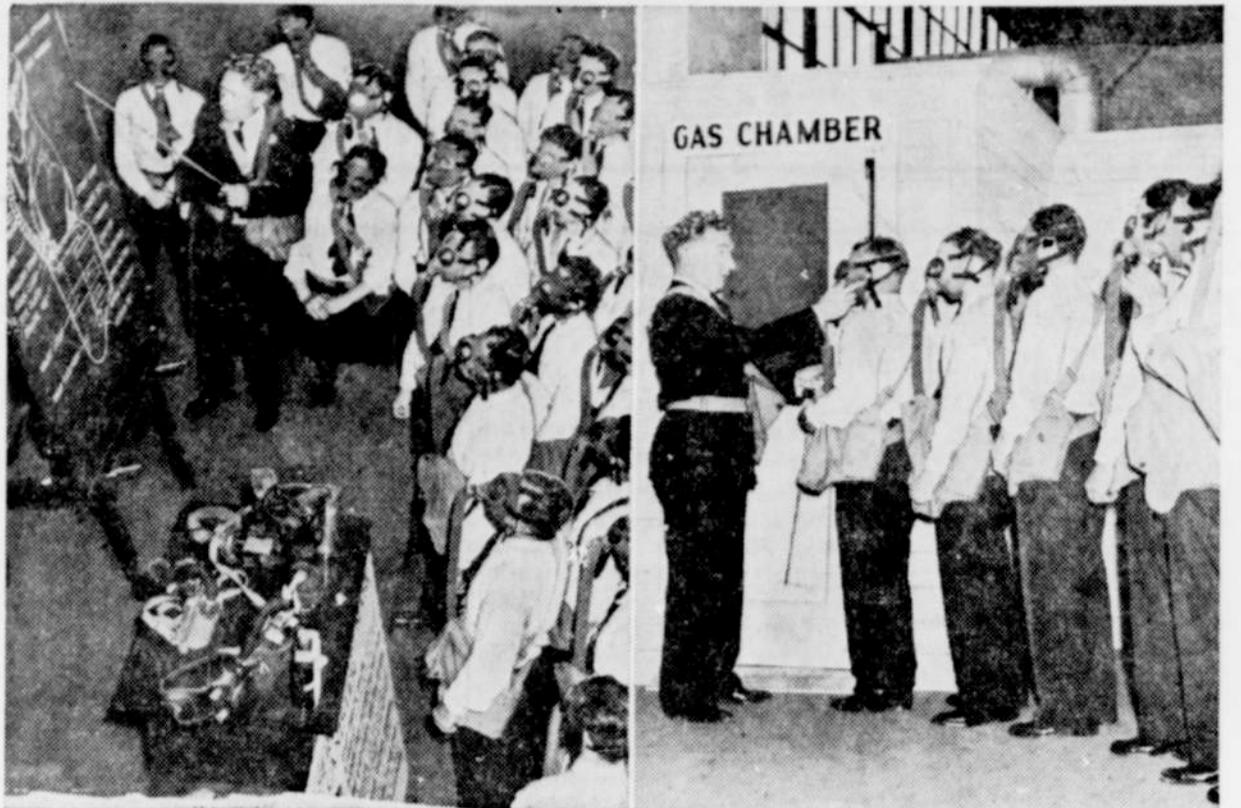
Forward, then,  
With calf and knee—  
In the cause  
Of victory!

## LAMENT

Baby fingerprints to poets  
Are sweet and quite a thrill;  
Methinks they've never washed 'em off  
A grimy window sill.  
—Beatrice Gittleman.

The Chrysler company is turning out scores of tanks per week. Of course it had the advantage of still retaining the designs for that model it turned out about 10 years ago with both ends alike.

# London? Not a Bit! This Is Gotham!



No longer does New York lag behind densely populated metropolitan areas in the ways and means of combating possible gas attacks. New York firemen are given courses in such technique at the fire college in Long Island City. Picture at left shows assistant chief of the fire department, James Quinn, instructing the men how to put on the gas masks. At right men with the masks on go into the gas chamber.

# Kids Stand Ready to Defend National Capital



The spirit of national defense has permeated the children of Washington, D. C. At the right an anti-aircraft gun crew of the Washington junior home defense battalion is ready for action. The "gun" is a piece of pipe. Picture at left shows group treating a member who has become a "casualty" during a "raid." And in the center, equipped with binoculars and megaphone, a tot is all ready to do her bit for the city's defense.

# Morgenthau's Son Naval Reserve Graduate



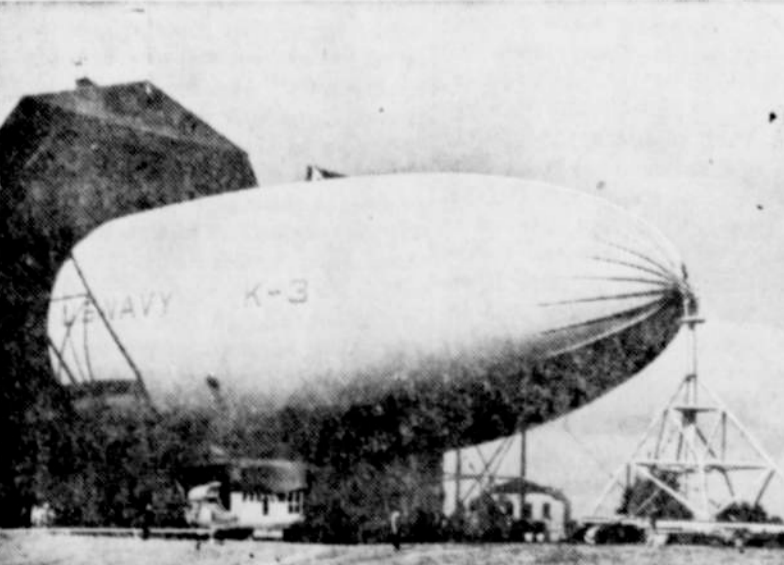
Three generations of Morgenthaus are pictured at graduation exercises of the U. S. naval reserve midshipmen on board the U. S. S. Prairie State, anchored in the Hudson river. Left to right, Henry Morgenthau, secretary of the treasury; his son, R. M. Morgenthau, who is graduating, and Henry Morgenthau Sr.

# Succeeds Wavell



Now that General Wavell has been transferred to Syria, the command of the potential "hot spot" in Africa goes to Gen. Sir Claude Auchinleck (left), shown with Maj. Gen. H. B. W. Hughes, in Egypt.

# World's Biggest Non-Rigid Airship



The world's largest non-rigid airship, the K-3, which was described by naval commander C. S. Knox as satisfactory, following a test flight at Akron, Ohio. After acceptance by the navy, the 246-foot, \$325,000 blimp will be equipped with machine guns, torpedoes and depth charges.

# His Ship Sunk



Capt. J. D. Halliday of the S. S. Steel Seafarer, bombed and sunk in the Red sea. Captain Halliday and his crew of 35 were saved by a British warship.