

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN

Washington, D. C. MEDITERRANEAN MIX-UP

Inside story on General Wavell's transfer to India, as told in diplomatic dispatches, is that Wavell had been quarreling with Churchill and had opposed political-military moves such as the campaign in Greece and Crete and the expedition to Solum.

More important from the American point of view, Wavell had favored the evacuation of all British forces from the entire Mediterranean area. And U. S. military experts agreed with him—in fact, urged it.

So although in a sense General Wavell is being demoted, yet in other respects he will be in a position to command British forces from an area to which he had urged that British forces retreat.

For some time General Wavell had contended that Britain's position in the Mediterranean was indefensible. The British force of only 400,000 men in the Near East faced a combined Axis total twice as strong—400,000 Germans and Italians in Libya, plus 600,000 Nazis in Greece, Bulgaria and Rumania.

The latter figure has been partially diminished by transfers to Russia; but Wavell argued that the Nazi-Fascist armies could concentrate attack in one place while British troops had to spread out over a far-flung line from Libya to Syria and Iraq. Therefore he disagreed with Churchill on all military moves which had a political motive.

U. S. Worried Over Atlantic.

U. S. military and naval strategists sided with Wavell, were strong for the idea of a complete British withdrawal from the Mediterranean. The strategy behind this was twofold:

1. The British have lost 40 per cent of their original Mediterranean fleet. The losses at Crete were much worse than officially admitted, and even in the Syrian campaign naval losses were considerable. Therefore, American naval men, facing the probability of having to help the British fleet in the Atlantic, did not want the fleet further weakened.
2. The United States is more interested in what happens on the bulge of Africa around Dakar (opposite Brazil) than it is in the Mediterranean.

To this end, both General Wavell and U. S. strategists favored the idea of withdrawing British forces from the Mediterranean entirely and establishing a new line of defense across the very center of Africa—from Port Sudan on the Red sea to Freetown on the Atlantic ocean.

This line of defense meant that about 1,500 miles of the hottest desert in the world would be between the Nazis and the British lines. Over such a desert it is difficult for tanks to operate without heating up; also it is difficult for the average bomber to carry a load over such distances. So it was expected that the Nazis would exhaust themselves in the deep, hot deserts of Africa.

Part of the plan contemplated a highway straight across equatorial Africa from Freetown and later from Dakar to Port Sudan.

Churchill Says No.

However, Churchill was flatly opposed. So were many other British leaders. They felt that the shock of withdrawal from the Mediterranean, traditional sphere of British influence, and from Suez which had been identified with the British empire for years, would be too much for the British public.

This debate occurred before the Nazi attack on Russia and before the British march into Syria. But after the slowness of Wavell's success in Syria, all these factors culminated in his transfer to India.

There Wavell can concentrate on defense of the most important part of the empire—if the Nazis creep up on the Indian border in South Russia. Also, he will not be in the Mediterranean, for the defense of which he had no great enthusiasm.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

It was a breathless day in Washington. The only breeze was kicked up by the little subway car running between the senate office building and the Capitol. Passenger Hatie Caraway, senator from Arkansas, clutched at her flying strands of hair.

Curly-haired Sen. Berkeley Bunker of Nevada, who succeeded to the seat of the late Key Pittman, never misses a senate session and is assiduously studying parliamentary procedure. Vice President Wallace has called him to preside during his absence more than any other senator.

United Service Organizations have had some big gifts, but none more touching than the savings brought in by one Harry Katz, who emptied on the desk 512 pennies, 44 nickels, eight dimes, and one quarter.

Displayed in the department of agriculture lobby are four practical pamphlets: "Cockroaches and Their Control," "Bedbugs: Causes and Cures," "House Ants," and "How to Control Fleas."

The President has on his desk a new leather briefcase, fastened securely at one end with a steel padlock.



WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON (Consolidated Features—WNU Service.)

NEW YORK.—A few years ago, Anita Loos' maid used to deliver to her every day a dash of gopher dust from Harlem. We haven't heard whether she still goes on, but the charm seems to be still working. All goes well as "Blossoms in the Dust" gets warm, almost fulsome from the critics. Miss Loos did the screen play for Ralph Wheelwright's story. It taps deep founts of tears and ranges far from Miss Loos' "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," and its Lorelei Lee, the alluring and unabashed gold digger of 1925. It's one of those "where are they now?" stories, with Miss Loos sitting pretty, literally and figuratively, as a deft, swift, workmanlike story adapter, scenarist and remodeler in Hollywood—one of the best.

The pint-size girl with bangs—weight 87 pounds, height four feet, eleven inches—was riding on the train from California to New York in 1925, considerably bored. She started writing up this gold digger Lorelei, with a soft-stub pencil, in big, round letters. The manuscript strung along clear through Kansas and Indiana and on to New York, and was almost as big as Miss Loos, what with those big rope-trick letters, when she landed here.

It brought her something over \$600,000. It was translated into virtually every language except Eskimo and pigeon-talk, and in England its sales passed those of any other American book. She later wrote "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes."

Her talent for humor may have been inherited from her father, a country newspaper publisher and humorist of the Bill Nye school, of Sissons, Calif., where Miss Loos was born. She was a shy, quaint little thing, hanging around the newspaper shop, helping polish up a gag or feed the flatbed. When she was 14, she sent a story to the New York Morning Telegraph. They printed it. A year later David Griffith sent for a girl who had sent a scenario which had set his assistants to whooping joyously.

"What can I do for you, my child?" he asked when the tiny girl with bangs and pigtailed came in. The Loos girl showed him her summons to Hollywood. There she was and is. In the years between she had become a pretty good actress, appearing in San Francisco and other California cities.

JUST a year ago, Roger L. Putnam, go-getting mayor of Springfield, Mass., was much in the news with the Putnam plan to break bottlenecks in industry. He caught the nation's attention by his success in achieving co-operation among the city, industry and labor, the most important detail of his formula being the training of labor by the city, to fit specific needs. He's in the news as Springfield's defense director with some snappy suggestions about the swift and effective integration of civilians and officials, and private and public facilities. His successful battles with two floods and a hurricane give weight to his words.

He's Harvard, 1915, did a P.G. stretch at M.I.T., worked at engineering and was in the navy in the World War. In the navy he learned to crochet cord belts, an art which he still practices, and Putnam-made belts are in great demand among his friends. He is the father of three boys and three girls, 48 years old, stocky in build, but quick-moving both in person and speech. He is president of the Package Machinery Co.

More and more management, as above, is coming to the top, as against finance. Note James Burnham's new book, "The Managerial Revolution,"—malign over there, still benign over here.

A WIZARD in electrometallurgy is Dr. Francis C. Frary, who explains the exact uses to which aluminum pots and pans may be put in expediting defense. Since 1918 he has been director of the research laboratories of the Aluminum Company of America at Keystone, Pa. His work made possible over 2,000 uses of aluminum.

He was schooled at the University of Minnesota and the University of Berlin. He then taught for seven years and became an industrial research worker in 1915.



IT HELPS SOME

"The Aga Khan has been compelled to cut his racing stable down to one horse."—News item)

If you've been hard hit by the war—
If you have felt its frightful touch—
If you are getting more and more
To feel your lot is not so much;
If you're enveloped in the blues—
If daily by some blow you're hit,
Here is some rather soothing news—
The Aga Khan is feeling it!

II

If you are prone to knit your brows
And worry over what's ahead—
If you've a tendency to grouse
About the way that you've been bled;
If you're complaining of the mess—
If every broadcast makes you blue,
This thought will help a bit, I guess—
The Aga Khan is scrimping, too!

III

If Europe's war has burdened you
And made you go a little slow
In making any outlays new
Or being careless with your dough;
If you have felt war's bitter sting
And think that you've been put upon,
This item may be comforting—
All's not so well with Aga Khan.

IV

If your life isn't what it was—
If you must count your shekels now—
If day by day the conflict does
Its best to sink you by the bow;
If you are cutting down on gas
To make each dime the limit go,
This ought to help you let it pass—
The Aga Khan is low on dough.

V

If you can't live the way you did
And must add water to the soup;
If it's been months since you were rid
Of all the cares that 'round you swoop;
If you must now economize—
If you've cut out the fresh meat course,
This fact may help your spirits rise—
The Aga Khan's on his last horse!

HOME-GROWN STUFF

"U. S. Searches for Substitute for Rubber."—headline.

"Has any chemist ever gone deeply into New England clam chowder for the solution?" asks J. L. Collins.

"The bandits wounded the policeman in the left hand. A checkup revealed that a few of the policeman's bullets had gone wild, shattering eight bottles of liquor, fortunately of an inexpensive brand."—New York Herald Tribune.

There you go being a stern materialist again!

FAIR QUESTION

Sometimes I think my fate is far,
Far worse than I deserve;
Why must I meet THAT other car
On every single curve?
Avery Giles.

From the sound of the names of those cities and towns taken in Africa this looks more and more like a war to make the world unsafe for proofreaders.

THERE'S A LIMIT

The thoroughbreds race neck and neck,
And storm-tossed ships are cast aground;
The cars collide in tangled wreck
And bombs explode with fearful sound;
The bathing beauties strut their charms
And boxers battle, toe to toe;
The firemen race to three alarms
And workers shovel record snow,
I yawn, I fidget and I sigh—
To me it's all an utter bore;
I say to blazes with it, and why? ...
I've seen THIS newsreel twice before!
—Richard Armour.

PEST NO. 1,607

A plague on him
Who always snatches
My remaining
Book of matches.
—M. R. De Sena.

Ed Wynn used to say that the world was going to the dogs but that the dogs wouldn't take it, and the gag never sounded more convincing than today.

A big man in the defense program fell while skating and was injured the other day. This proves what we have always contended: There is no defense against an urge to cut a figure eight.

CALL BY DICTATORS

Join our gang and have some fun
Double-crossing every one!
—S. H. Dewhurst.

The Most Terrible Nightmare: Dreaming that Hitler is making one of his typical speeches and that you are in the front row where you can't miss a word.

Irma Dodo says that "Gone With the Wind" at 35 cents is almost as good as when it was being shown for \$2.

Berlin Offers Photo as 'Proof'



With communiques giving varied reports on the progress of the Russo-German war comes this radio-photo from Berlin which purports to show Nazi heavy tanks rolling through the White Russian capital of Minsk. It was not definitely known the Nazis had pushed this far—but this would seem to be "proof," says Berlin.

Milk Trouble on West Coast



Difficulties with the A. F. of L. International Teamsters' union forced milk producers such as these (above), in the Los Angeles area to pour 28,000 quarts of milk a day down the drains. This was asserted by Clarence Smith, co-operative dairy head. His firm was the sixth dairy to be picketed, and their milk listed as "hot cargo."

Last Honors for Paderewski



A view of the funeral of Ignace Jan Paderewski, renowned Polish patriot and pianist. The casket, draped with the national flag of the Polish Republic, was borne on a gun carriage flag by an honor guard of the U. S. Army. Until it can be taken to Poland, the body will rest in Arlington cemetery.

Mexico Makes Land Expropriation Payment



Mexican ambassador Dr. Don Francisco Najera (right) hands acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles the Mexican government's check for \$1,000,000, in payment of the amount due on account of the claims of American citizens whose lands in Mexico have been expropriated since August 30, 1927, under the Mexican agrarian program.

Sees President



In his first visit to the White House since July, 1939, Constantin Oumansky, Soviet ambassador to the U. S., laid Russia's problems before President Roosevelt in an hour's conference. He is shown leaving the White House.

New Post



Sen. Carter Glass, 83-year-old Virginian, is shown with raised gavel just after he was unanimously chosen president pro-tempore of the senate.

Leaves for Duty



Rep. Hamilton Fish of New York, leading house isolationist, and a colonel in the Specialist Reserve, is pictured in his uniform in his office in Washington shortly before leaving for a month's active duty at Fort Bragg, N. C. Rep. Fish saw active service in World War I.

New RFC Chairman



Charles B. Henderson, 68, of Elko, Nev., appointed chairman of \$10,000,000 Reconstruction Finance corporation, to succeed Emil Schram, new head of New York Stock exchange.