

# Review of the History-Making Events of the World

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

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## General Strike Threatened in General Motors Plants

GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION flatly refused to consider collective bargaining in its 69 plants except through local management.



Edward F. McGrady

Whereupon 300 delegates from those plants in ten cities met in Flint, Mich., and granted to a "board of strategy" power to order a general strike. The board is headed by Homer Martin, international president of the United Automobile Workers of America, one of the Lewis C. I. O. unions. Ten of the corporation's plants already were closed by sit-down strikes and walkouts, and 37,000 of its employees were idle.

Edward F. McGrady, assistant secretary of labor, who has spent three months in futile effort to stop the maritime walkout on the Pacific coast, hurried back to Washington to take a hand in the General Motors strike. After reporting to Secretary Perkins, this chief mediator held a conference with John L. Lewis. Miss Perkins already had discussed the situation with Lewis, seeking data on which conciliation could be recommended, though she said this would not be undertaken a once.

The auto workers in their Flint meeting, besides creating the board of strategy with power to call a strike, approved of eight demands on the corporation ranging from recognition of their union to higher wages and shorter hours. They also appointed a committee to negotiate with the corporation.

William S. Knudsen, executive vice president of General Motors, declared the company never would agree to collective bargaining on a national basis and, despite strikes, would continue to produce automobiles as long as possible.

The prime object of the C. I. O. is organization of the steel industry, and the crisis in the automotive industry was not expected by Lewis and his associates or wanted at this time. However, they are giving the auto workers their full support, morally and financially.

In the Youngstown district the number of idle steel workers rose to about 1,000 when the Youngstown Sheet and Tube company suspended operations in its strip mill because of "stop" orders from automobile customers.

## Milburn L. Wilson Gets Rex Tugwell's Place

MILBURN L. WILSON of Montana, who has been serving as an assistant secretary of agriculture, has been made undersecretary of the department to succeed Rexford G. Tugwell, resigned. Wilson's post was given to Harry L. Brown, a dirt farmer who rose from herdsman on an Iowa hog farm to be director of Georgia's agricultural extension service.

William H. Moran retired as chief of the secret service with the close of the year and was succeeded by Frank J. Wilson, whose detective work was largely responsible for the conviction of Al Capone on income tax evasion charges.

Charles T. Fisher, Jr., resigned as a director of the Reconstruction Finance corporation to become banking commissioner of Michigan. He had been with the RFC since its creation.

## Herbert Hitchcock New South Dakota Senator

TOM BERRY, before retiring from the governorship of South Dakota, appointed Herbert Hitchcock of Mitchell, S. D., to fill out the term of the late Senator Peter Norbeck. The new senator is Demo-

cratic state chairman and his appointment brings the Democratic membership of the senate to 76, the highest party total in history. The Republicans now number 16.

Mr. Hitchcock was born in Maquoketa, Ia., in 1867 and was educated at Anamosa, Davenport and Chicago. He went to Mitchell in 1894 and was admitted to the bar two years later. He was president of the school board in his home town for ten years and state's attorney four years. He served as state senator in 1909, 1911, and 1929.

## Naval Treaty Expires; Building Race Is On

AT THE close of 1936 the Washington and London naval treaties expired, and a great naval construction race started among the powers. Great Britain got off well in the lead, for on New Year's day she laid the keels of two huge battleships, the George V and the Prince of Wales. The British program calls for the building of 78 new vessels at a cost of nearly a billion dollars. The British also are understood to be planning to rebuild the Hongkong and Pacific bases.

According to Jane's Fighting Ships, authoritative naval yearbook, the United States has 83 warships under construction or planned; Italy, 66; France, 43; Germany, 39; Japan, 38.

Though no figures were given for soviet Russia, it is known the Reds are planning to launch a sea program which will bring their naval strength up to that of their land forces, now the largest in the world.

Information in Washington says the United States has and will have under construction 95 warships. It expects to increase its personnel by almost 10 per cent and build up a strong naval reserve. The ships will include light and heavy cruisers, destroyers, and submarines.

## President on Child Labor and Starvation Wages

ELIMINATION of child labor, long working hours and starvation wages is a necessity, and must be carried out by the federal government since it cannot be done by state action. So declared President Roosevelt in his press conference. He warned the correspondents not to say he was planning to revive the NRA and insisted all he could say at present was that something should be done to fix maximum hours and minimum wages.

Since the day of the NRA, said Mr. Roosevelt, there has been a steady decline in child labor, grueling hours and starvation wages by 90 per cent of American business. As for the other 10 per cent, he said, they were still failing to live up to the best standards since the death of the NRA.

Attorneys for the American Federation of Labor were reported to be about ready to submit to the President a bill designed to restore labor protective features lost in the death of NRA. It provides that congress catalogue unfair "conduct" which would be forbidden to employers and assure workers adequate protection. Violations would be punishable by a fine. The federation is expected also to back federal licensing of interstate corporations as provided by the O'Mahoney bill.

## Chang Gets Ten Years but Is Pardoned

MARSHAL CHANG HSUEH-LIANG, who kidnaped Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, dictator of China, and then repented, was court-martialed at Nanking and sentenced to ten years in prison. However, the government listened to Chiang's plea for mercy and agreed to give Chang a full pardon. The government rejected for the third time Chiang's resignation of his military and civil posts.

There was much speculation in

Shanghai on probable political readjustments. One newspaper predicted the early dismissal of six so-called pro-Japanese officials of the national government and the appointment of a number of left-wingers including Mme. Sun Yat-sen, widow of the "Father of the New China." She has advocated a communist regime and alliance with Moscow.

## Robinson Wants Federal Law on Basic Pay

UNLESS Joe Robinson is wrong in his predictions, congress will at this session adopt a constitutional amendment to provide for the regulation of wages and hours of work either by the states or by the federal government. The Democratic majority leader of the senate promised that this would be done, and at the same time he bitterly attacked Supreme court decisions which, he said, now make such regulation impossible. The senator was especially severe in his comments on the decision in the New York state wage case, declaring:

"It is simply incomprehensible—it is ridiculous—that there should exist no legal means for protecting a woman or a child from working as long as anybody can extort money from them. I don't hesitate to say that the Supreme court opinion in the New York case ought to be reversed and the American bar by a great majority supports that viewpoint. That opinion was bad law."

## Mellon Offers Great Art Collection to Nation

ANDREW W. MELLON, Pittsburgh multimillionaire and former secretary of the treasury, has offered to present to the nation his magnificent art collection, valued at \$23,000,000, together with a \$9,000,000 building for its housing in Washington and a fund for its maintenance and increase. The offer is made through President Roosevelt, with whom Mr. Mellon has been in correspondence and conference on the matter. It will be submitted to congress with the President's favorable recommendation.



Andrew Mellon

The Mellon collection, part of which is stored in the Corcoran art gallery in Washington, includes many paintings of highest importance and some fine works of sculpture. Lord Duveen of Milbank, head of a celebrated art firm, says that its actual value is more than \$50,000,000 and that it is the "greatest collection ever assembled by any individual collector."

## Nebraska's Unicameral Legislature Opens

AS NEBRASKA'S unicameral legislature, unique in the United States, was about to begin its first session, Gov. R. L. Cochran declared politics was out. He discouraged party caucuses among the members and said he would have no spokesman in the legislature.

The governor pointed out that the constitution provides that the one-house chamber shall be non-partisan and that the voters had done their part by electing, on a non-political ticket, 22 Democrats and 21 Republicans.

## Ten Millions Asked for Wisconsin Farmers

FINANCIAL status of American farmers may be much improved, as reports of governmental agencies say, but some of them still appear to need a lot of help. Senator F. Ryan Duffy of Wisconsin asked federal officials to allot \$10,000,000 to aid the Wisconsin farmers who are suffering from the effects of the drought.

"This would be \$200 per farm," he said, "and considering the high

price of hay and other items of feed, it would be difficult to make a smaller sum cover the needs which would develop during the winter season."

Duffy estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Wisconsin farmers would need assistance in purchasing live stock this winter. He said at least 35,000 farmers in the drouth area and from 10,000 to 15,000 outside the drouth districts were in need of aid. In addition, he said, between 30,000 and 40,000 farmers would need government aid in purchasing seed for the 1937 crop.

## Britain and Italy Sign Mediterranean Pact

GREATER BRITAIN and Italy signed a treaty concerning the Mediterranean that is of the highest importance, Italy first pledging itself to keep hands off Spanish territory. In the public declaration are these three leading statements:

The interests of Britain and Italy in the Mediterranean do not conflict but on the contrary are "parallel."

The two powers announce they recognize their respective maritime rights in the Mediterranean, meaning that Italy will have a free access to the oceans by way of Gibraltar and the Suez canal and that Britain's imperial trade route to India will remain free and inviolate.

Britain and Italy announce to all the world that they favor preserving the status quo everywhere in the Mediterranean.

## Deal for Export of Planes to Spain Is Annoying

GOVERNMENT officials, from the President down, were anxious to prevent the export of American airplanes to Spain, license for which was given perforce by the State department to Robert Cuse, a Jersey City airplane broker. Cuse proposes to send \$2,777,000 worth of planes to the Spanish loyalists, and his action was criticized in Washington as "legal but unpatriotic." Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, chairman of the foreign relations committee, assailed the Cuse deal as improper and dangerous and said it might embarrass not only the United States but also other nations in their efforts to enforce the hands off policy toward the Spanish war. Congress may be able to rush through prohibitive legislation before the planes are shipped. Meantime pressure was being brought to bear on Cuse to cancel the deal.

## James Roosevelt Joins the White House Staff

AS WAS predicted recently, James Roosevelt, eldest son of the President, now becomes a member of the White House staff of secretaries, nominally as a clerk and at a nominal salary. He says: "I will do whatever father wants me to do."

James will occupy the offices recently vacated by Early, who took over those of the late Secretary Louis McHenry Howe. James will have as his secretary Howe's former secretary, Miss Margaret Durand.

## Mayors Ask \$77 Million for Relief Work

THE United States conference of mayors reported to the President that at least \$877,000,000 of work relief funds is needed by the country for the last five months of the fiscal year ending next June 30. Mr. Roosevelt's previous estimate was \$500,000,000, and the mayors conducted a survey which, they said, showed this was far too low. Their own estimate was based on the belief that there will be 2,700,000 on WPA rolls from Feb. 1 to June 30. At a cost of \$65 a person the cost would reach the amount fixed.

The report, which was also delivered to WPA Administrator Hopkins, put the conference on record

against any demands of the federal government for direct relief, holding the care of unemployables to be a state and city problem. The conference reaffirmed its belief that work and not the dole is the American way of providing relief for able bodied persons.

## Bru Plans Settlement of Cuban Obligations

FEDERICO LAREDO BRU, the new president of Cuba, proposes to settle all Cuban obligations in the United States and is expected soon to invite the bankers and bondholders concerned to enter negotiations to that end. Credit for inducing Bru to do this is given to Col. Fulgencio Batista, who appears to be largely in control of affairs in the island.



President Laredo Bru

The obligations include about \$75,000,000 owed to many Americans who invested in public work gold bonds which were issued during the administration of President Gerardo Machado.

The new constitution which the Cuban congress recently voted originally prohibited any such negotiations as those contemplated before 1940, but when it appeared in the official gazette that article had been radically altered. It now orders the government to find a satisfactory way to settle all debts to the United States before 1940 and authorizes the president to open negotiations immediately.

This "error" in the gazette's composing room is supposed to have been ordered by Colonel Batista, and though congress has the power to correct it, a majority of congressmen, after reading the article in the gazette, gave it their approval. So President Bru, it seems, is free to go ahead with the negotiations.

## Spain Plans to Resist German Aggression

GERMAN warships continued to halt Spanish steamers, in reprisal for the seizure of the Nazi freighter Palos by the Basques; and the Spanish government made ready to resist such action to the best of its ability. Foreign Minister Julio Alvarez del Vayo said: "We are firmly resolved, come what may, not to permit another single aggression from the German fleet and to reply as soon as they occur with all the means at our command."

The Valencia government announced through its Paris embassy a flat refusal of a German offer to cease molesting Spanish shipping if the cargo of the Palos and a Spanish passenger were returned.

Fascist planes rained incendiary bombs on Malaga, setting fire to many buildings and killing or injuring hundreds of men, women and children. The loyalist forces were reported to have recaptured Almadrones on the Guadalajara front after three days of heavy fighting.

## States Get \$200,000,000 for Road Improvement

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE WALLACE has just apportioned \$200,000,000 to the states for road improvement. Of this sum \$125,800,000 will go toward improvement of the federal-aid highway system, \$25,000,000 for improving secondary or farm-to-market roads, and \$50,000,000 for grade crossing elimination.

The fund is for use during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1937, and funds for improvement of roads must be matched by the states. Grade crossing elimination funds need not be matched. Highway projects selected, contracts and specifications are subject to federal approval after designation by state commissions.