

News Review of Current Events

JAPS GIRD FOR LONG WAR

Mass 30,000 Troops Near Peiping...Wages and Hours Bill Passed by Senate . . . Take Up Low-Cost Housing



Japanese soldiers cremate their dead at Fengtai.

Edward W. Pickard
SUMMARIZES THE WORLD'S WEEK
© Western Newspaper Union.

North China Powder Keg

TIENTSIN, powder keg of the hostilities in North China, was being attacked from many angles as Japan apparently prepared to fight a long term war. Japanese bombers rained death and destruction from the skies, artillery peppered the city with shells and, as if that were not enough, a serious earthquake shook the metropolis' foundations.

A surprise Chinese attack, by three armies along a 95-mile front from Taku (Tientsin's port) to Peiping drove Japan away from three key railroad stations, provoking Nippon's retaliation. In the wake of the bursting bombs, flames engulfed Tientsin's principal buildings, including the central railway station, the militia headquarters, the famed Nankai university and the Chinkiang international bridge connecting the Chinese city to the foreign concessions. In the streets, Chinese and Japanese soldiers fought hand to hand, with entrenchments in some places no more than 100 feet apart.

Chinese troops declared that "Thousands of non-combatant men, women and children were killed or injured" by the airmen.

Russia protested vigorously to the Japanese embassy in Nanking against the "pillaging of the Russian consulate in Tientsin by White Russian ruffians assisted by Japanese." The Japanese denied that any of their countrymen were implicated, and ridiculed the idea that the Japanese planned any future attacks against Russian consulates.

In the Fengtai-Lukouchiao district southwest of Peiping, 30,000 veteran Japanese troops massed for an attack upon five divisions of China's central government army, numbering approximately 60,000. Including the remnants of the twenty-ninth army, driven from Peiping by the Japanese, there were said to be 100,000 Chinese. Both sides were well equipped with airplanes.

Further evidence of Japan's expectation of real war were the sweeping changes in military personnel made after a conference between Premier Konoye and Emperor Hirohito. Four new division commanders were named, as well as a new commander for the island of Formosa. It was regarded as significant that all of the new appointees were soldiers with extensive experience in China. The government was attempting to push through an appropriation of \$115,000,000 for operations in North China.

Japanese metropolitan centers—such as Osaka, Nogoya and Klotok—bristled with war-time enthusiasm. Tains leaving every station were packed with warriors leaving for North China, while vociferous crowds cheered them on their way with frenzied cries of "Banzai!"

It was believed that only a complete capitulation by the Chinese central government at Nanking would avert war. Yet it was not likely that the Japanese would begin any major drive until autumn when the maize and sorghum, in which the Chinese soldier is adept at hiding, would be removed by harvest.

Bill Green Saves the Day

AFTER William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor had been prevailed upon by President Roosevelt to grace the wages and hours bill with an approval slightly less than lukewarm, the senate passed it, 56 to 28. Southern senators, led by Pat Harrison of Mississippi and obviously displeased with the bill, pressed a movement to recommit it to the education and labor committee, but their motion was defeated, 48 to 36.

It seemed certain that the southerners would have enough votes to defeat the measure when the metals and building units of the Federation voiced their dissatisfaction also, while Green at first refused to comment. But under pressure from the White House, Green gave out a statement that, while the bill was still unacceptable to him, he would like to have it passed in the senate and then improved in the house.

As the senate passed it, the Wagner-Connelly bill to regulate hours and wages would create a labor standards board empowered to set minimum wages up to 40 cents an hour and maximum work weeks down to 40 hours a week.

The draft prepared by the house labor committee was far broader in scope than that of the senate. It would extend the limits to permit the board to set minimum wages up to 70 cents an hour and set the maximum working week as low as 35 hours.

In the house, too, there was opposition by the southern Democrats. They objected to the wide latitude given the board. Most of them felt the bill would have a detrimental effect upon the industrial growth of the South.

Wedge to Split Loyalists

AS THE battle of Madrid continued to rage, Gen. Francisco Franco's eastern army was driving an ever-widening wedge into the territory near the junction of Teruel, Cuenca and Valencia provinces 100 miles east of Madrid. His object is to impose a barrier between Madrid and the loyalist government's capital at Valencia.

Government forces all along the

line of advance were reported surrendering or fleeing. Insurgents claimed to have captured large numbers of automobiles and supplies of arms, munitions and clothing.

Latest news from the Madrid front indicated that a rebel attack in the Usera sector southeast of the city had been repulsed by machine gunners and dynamiters.

Taking inventories of their forces in the Madrid conflict, the government and the insurgents disagreed; each claimed the other's losses had been greatest. Rebels reported the government had lost 300 fighting planes and had had 30,000 casualties. The government declared Franco had lost at least 100 planes to its 20 or 30, had lost 20,000 to 25,000 men, and had consumed \$15,000,000 worth of war materials.

New Court Bill Drafted

FOUR important provisions were contained in the new court "reform" bill reported out of the senate judiciary committee, but none of them involved any changes in or additions to the personnel of the Supreme court. The new bill provides for:

(a) Direct appeals to the Supreme court from decisions in the district courts involving the constitutionality of federal statutes.

(b) Intervention by the Department of Justice in all suits involving the validity of federal statutes.

(c) Trial of all suits to enjoin the operation of federal statutes by a court of three judges—one judge from the circuit court of appeals and two district judges.

(d) Reassignment of district court judges by the senior circuit judge of each circuit, wherever additional help may be needed to relieve congested dockets. Judges sitting away from home would receive \$10 a day additional pay.

Women Hear War Cry

ONE of China's chief agitators for war was Mme. Chiang Kai-shek, Wellesley-educated wife of the dictator. She urged women to fight Japan "according to their ability," citing the fashion in which the women of Spain are occupying the fighting lines.

"In the World war the women of every country gave their best," she declared. "The women of China are no less patriotic or capable of physical endurance."

"China is facing the gravest crisis in its history. This means we must sacrifice many of our soldiers, masses of our innocent people, much of the nation's wealth and see ruthlessly destroyed the results of our reconstruction."

El Caudillo Is the Boss

INSURGENT Spain has a "head man" and also has a name for him now. In Germany things are bossed by "Der Fuehrer," and Italians scurry to obey "Il Duce." Now Rebel Spain has dubbed Gen. Francisco Franco "El Caudillo." Throughout the realm on walls and fences are signs bearing the motto, "Homenaje el Caudillo"—"Obey the leader." And the people salute him by raising the right arm.

Franco's followers are protesting that he is not a fascist, but he has never announced just what form of government he will propose for the nation. There is said to be a scheme afoot to shape it along the lines of Portugal's corporative government. Since he openly declared on July 19 that he believes the restoration of a monarchy is vital to cohesion of Spain, it is believed that this is what he will eventually effect. Prince Juan, third son of the former King Alfonso XIII, is the likely candidate for the crown.

Ambition in Bloom

CONGRESSMAN SOL BLOOM of New York, who, it is said (by Congressman Bloom), is the "spittin' image" of George Washington, and once posed for a bust labeled "The Father of His Country," sponsored a brief bill in the lower house, but unfortunately (for Congressman Bloom) it was rejected—in fact it never even came to a vote.

It provided that a book be given, at the government's expense, to

each naturalized citizen with his citizenship papers. The book, exhibited in the house, is a handsome affair, all done up in blue and gold. The cover contains, in large letters, the inscription: "The Story of the Constitution, by Sol Bloom. Copyright, by Sol Bloom."

U. S. Weighs Embargo

AS THE conflict in North China blazed into open, if undeclared, warfare, the United States prepared to declare that a state of war existed between China and Japan and to place an embargo upon the shipment of arms to the two countries, under the neutrality act. The President, who has the power to declare that a state of war exists, kept in close touch with affairs in the Far East, assisted by Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

Proclamation of an embargo prohibits the sale of arms, ammunitions and implements of war to the belligerent countries. It forbids loans or the extension of credit to either of them, and makes it illegal for Americans to travel upon the ships of the belligerents.

Secretary Hull said that conferences had been held among embassy attaches, commanders of foreign troops in Peiping and others, to lay plans for removing Americans and other foreign nationals from the danger zone.

It was reported that there were 223 United States military personnel and dependents and 403 American civilians registered in Tientsin, in addition to 750 American officers and men.

\$700,000,000 for Housing

HAVING disposed of wages and hours legislation, the senate took up the Wagner-Steagall low-cost housing bill. This would authorize the flotation of a \$700,000,000 bond issue by a

United States housing authority. To meet operating expenses of the program's first year, \$26,000,000 would be appropriated immediately. The proposed bond issue was cut from \$1,000,000,000 as a compromise with the Treasury department, which objected to so high a figure.

The bill would aid low-cost housing projects in two ways. It would make loans to the full amount of contracted projects, aiding the repayment of the loans by direct grants if the sponsors kept rents sufficiently low; or it would make direct grants not to exceed 25 per cent of the cost of a project. Under this latter method, the President would be authorized to make an additional 15 per cent grant from relief funds, to be used only for the employment of labor. Sponsors would be required to contribute at least 20 per cent of the cost.

The housing authority would also be permitted to spend \$25,000,000 on demonstration projects to illustrate to communities the benefits of eliminating slums and providing adequate housing at low cost. The projects would be sold "as soon as practical" to local housing agencies.

Under the first plan the housing authority would be given power to enter subsidy agreements totaling \$20,000,000 annually.

Sugar Bit for Il Duce

IT WAS hinted that the British government would soon recognize officially the Italian conquest of Ethiopia as a bit of sugar to sweeten Mussolini, with a view to obtaining another "Locarno pact" as a guarantee of peace in western Europe. The London Daily Telegraph's diplomatic correspondent reported:

"I learn that Mr. Chamberlain (the prime minister) personally is desirous that Britain's position should be clarified fully this autumn so as to remove one of the most important obstacles to any practical advance toward European advancement." He added that if the League of Nations would place on record the fact that the Ethiopian state has ceased to exist "the governments of

all the league states presumably would come away from Geneva feeling they were free to recognize the new situation de jure whenever they thought it fit to do so."

'Pack the White House'

WITH a roll call vote of 260 to 88, the house of representatives voted to give President Roosevelt six new secretaries at \$10,000 a

year each. The debate on the bill provoked some quaint comment. Republican Dewey Short of Missouri offered an amendment providing that the six new positions should be given to Elliott, Franklin, Jr., and John Roosevelt, sons of the President; Mrs. Anna Boettiger, his daughter; and "Sistie" and "Buzzie" Dall, his grandchildren. It failed to carry.

Democrat Ross Collins of Mississippi offered an amendment that would provide a new secretary for each member of congress. "The President may need additional secretaries," he said. "How about the overworked members of congress? We need extra help also."

If the bill became law, it would raise the total of the President's \$10,000-a-year secretaries to nine, for he already has three—James Roosevelt, Stephen Early and Marvin McIntyre.

India Has More People Than the United States

India accounts for more than two-thirds of the population of the British empire. It has nearly three times as many people as has the United States, though its area is only a little more than half as large. But the more than 351,399,000 Indians crowded into the triangular peninsula that juts out from Asia are far from unified—culturally, religiously, or politically, according to a writer in the Chicago Tribune. The land is a crazy-quilt of presidencies, native states, provinces, protectorates, tribal areas, and even a few foreign owned patches. Some parts have been governed by modern British law; others by native princes ruling with Arabian Nights splendor, holding the power of life and death over their minions, maintaining their own armies, and subject indirectly to the king.

India is usually thought of as entirely British, but France and Portugal keep tiny toeholds on the edges of the huge British domain. Of these remnants of the days when all three powers were competing for Indian trade and riches France has about 200 square miles of colonies along the east and west coasts, while there are 1,461 square miles of Portuguese territory on the western side of the peninsula.

Only Unhealthy Oysters Are Producers of Pearls

Oriental poets used to say that pearls grew from dew-drops swallowed by the oysters. Actual fact proves that only unhealthy oysters produce pearls; essentially those with crumpled shells, writes Edward Samuel in the Illustrated Weekly of India. The growth is the result of grit, sand grains or splinters being driven into the mantle or flap of skin in the oyster. The foreign substance becomes coated with mother-of-pearl.

The pearling industry is a double-headed one, pearls and shells—with shell as the main item and pearls as subsidiary. The first shell in Australia was gathered by natives at low tide, and when this supply was exhausted, they waded and dived for it. Still later, they dived from boats in two or three fathoms of water, and early profits were enormous.

Forty or fifty feet was the limit for native divers, but the shell went much deeper. The Japs adopted close-fitting goggles, but over fifty years ago regular diving dress was adopted. Fully clad in this suit, with glass-fronted helmet and air-pipe, down goes the diver. On arrival at the bottom the "Safe Down" signal is jerked on the guide rope.