Weekly News Analysis

Nazi, Argentine Trade Plans Threaten American Program

By Joseph W. La Bine

EDITOR'S NOTE—*When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst, and not necessarily of the newspaper.*

Trade

Today's high pressure international salesmanship runs counter to the reciprocal trade program of U. S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Devoted to the cause of low tariffs and "most-favored-nation" pacts, Secretary Hull's idealistic and honest efforts must compete with such devices as the German barter plan and a series of multi-colored trade ideas which emerge annually from congress' halls. This month Mr. Hull saw his beloved program threatened on several fronts:

Argentine. Of all South American governments, that at Buenos Aires is least friendly with the U. S. At Lima's Pan-American conference Argentina spoiled President Roosevelt's "continental solidarity" declaration by charging that the disgraceful policy of "dollar imperialism" was still rampant. But the real roots of this dislike are commonplace things like hoof-and-mouth disease, drouth and depression.

An agreement was reached in 1935 providing for U. S. import of cattle from Argentine sections not infected with hoof-and-mouth disease. But congress failed to ratify it. In 1937 drouth and temporary U. S. prosperity forced heavy imports from Argentina. This business dropped with a thud in 1938's recession, far faster than Argentina curtailed her imports from the U. S. Result has been a trade unbalance and subsequent strengthening of Argentine exchange control against the U. S., encouraged by Germany's increasing willingness to swap machinery for Argentine foodstuffs. This sentiment reached a climax with Argentina's declaration that imports from the U. S. must be reduced to the level of 1935-36. Faced with a 40 per cent slash in exports, Secretary Hull may be forced to dangle juicy trade plums before Argentina's eyes, seriously endangering the rest of his reciprocal program.

ARMOUR'S PRESIDENT CABELL
He didn't want German harmonicas.

Germany. Barter trade like Nazi Germany's is allowed in the U. S. provided it does not interfere with the "most-favored-nation" plan. But artificial currency devices like German payment for U. S. goods with "trade marks" (good only for purchase of Nazi goods) are taboo. Mid-February found U. S. lard prices low and likely to drop still more when the spring hog run starts. Meanwhile Germany hungered for fats. Putting two and two together, German trade experts began contacting midwest packers to swap lard for machinery.

Though the Reich apparently progressed on two deals, most packers turned their backs, uninterested. Recalled was the experience of one firm which arranged a swap deal with Germany several years ago, only to find itself burdened with several thousand Nazi harmonicas. Typical was the comment of R. H. Cabell, president of Armour and Company, who dismissed the bid by simply stating that "the big packing houses are not interested in bartering, but in the sale of products at market rates." Next day packers were pleased to note that lard futures were selling up, but Mr. Hull could not fail to note that the Nazi program had made a mite of progress in his bailiwick.

Agriculture. Crux of the "cost-of-production" farm bill now before congress is that domestically consumed products shall have a minimum price. All surpluses would be dumped abroad for whatever they would bring. Whatever the bill's merits, Mr. Hull presumably regards it as an artificial trade barrier in the field of agricultural trade, which would be reflected in other branches of commerce. If "cost-of-production" fails, the state department must still hurdle a second new farm measure which would extend governmental loans on three major crops (cotton, wheat, corn) equivalent to three-fourths the "parity price"—an amount higher than the current market price. Farmers would then be expected to turn their crops over to the government for the loan price. Domestically consumed products would sell at not less than the loan price. With surpluses the U. S. would attempt to recapture its lost foreign markets.

Significance. Though world economic satisfaction must be a prelude to permanent world peace (an important principle in the Hull program), each nation seeks to further its own admittedly selfish interest with self-preservation as a justification. Still to come is the showdown in which nations will decide whether world problems will be settled via economic treaties, at the expense of selfish aims, or via force, at another kind of expense.

Trend

How the wind is blowing . . .

MOVIES—Historically taboo, motion pictures may now be shown in Vermont on the Sabbath under local option.

KNEES—No clothing which exposed the knees could be worn in Provincetown, Mass., under an ordinance which was passed, then withdrawn because no record was kept of the vote.

POKER—U. S. card manufacturers report more women now play poker, also that it may supplant bridge as No. 1 card game.

MEDICINE—James B. Conant, Harvard president, recommends one eight-year course to replace two current four-year courses for physicians.

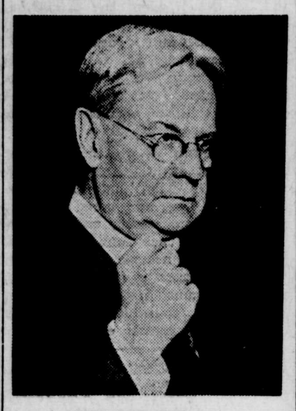
Defense

Last December President Roosevelt's arms expansion program had more foes than friends in the still-to-convene seventy-sixth congress. Two months later it had more friends, thanks to clever White House publicity maneuvers and a lot of saber-rattling in Europe. The house passed 367 to 15 an administration bill to spend $376,000,000 extra on defense the next two years. (Same day, Great Britain voted about $1,000,000,000 more for arms.) Chief features are boosting the army's aviation force to 5,500 first line planes and making the Panama canal impregnable. Certain of passage was the Vinson naval expansion bill to spend $68,000,000 on naval air and submarine bases.

But there was little unity in this new strength. Closely allied to rearmament is the problem of U. S. military alliances with other democracies, since the threat that inspired American rearmament is the same threat that makes France and Britain jittery. After a California air crash revealed U. S. manufacturers were selling military planes to France, after President Roosevelt denied telling a senate military affairs committee that U. S. "frontiers are in France," the White House-congress foreign policy debate came out in full bloom. Questions: (1) Shall the U. S. keep its foreign policy secret? (2) Is President Roosevelt risking involvement in war through secret international deals?

After a week's debate there presumably were no longer any secrets about either the French deal or the administration's foreign policy. Actual cause of the rumpus was apparently removed, but not congressional resentment.

Thundered California's Sen. Hiram Johnson: "No epithets applied to senators or newspapers will relieve the situation of its secrecy . . . There is resentment among the administration that anybody should ask the facts. But if there comes a war it will not be fought by the President alone . . ."



SENATOR JOHNSON
He resented White House resentment.

Facts themselves are startling. Faced with U. S. military orders under the new defense bill, plane manufacturers already have their hands full with export orders. Starting with $25,000,000 in 1936, plane exports have roughly doubled annually, approximating $200,000,000 this year. In the past eight months France and Britain have ordered 1,200 ships. Chief congressional wonder is which orders will get precedence, U. S. or foreign. Meanwhile aircraft firms are reluctant to expand their plants to satisfy production requirements which may be only temporary.

Europe

In modern Europe no month is complete without its crisis. January's crisis was Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's visit to Rome. February's was the fall of Barcelona and its decisive implications. In March the crisis will again center on Spain if three signs mean anything:

(1) Germany and Italy have helped Spain's Insurgents win their battle thus far, France and England siding with Loyalists because they were anti-Fascist. Today, with Loyalists on the run, Britain has granted de facto recognition to Gen. Francisco Franco's Insurgents, encouraging France to fall in line. Obviously a policy of expediency, the Anglo-French overture is accompanied by financial offers to help rebuild Spain. In wooing Franco, Paris and London will positively arouse the Rome-Berlin axis to new wrath.

(2) Combined British home fleets will maneuver around Gibraltar in March, just as Germany completes its most thorough mobilization since last autumn's much-feared troop concentration. Meanwhile Italy is doubling its garrison in Libya (adjoining France's African Tunisia) as an admitted step in retaliation against reputedly increased Tunisian garrisons.

(3) Closer conformation of Anglo-French policy is seen in London's declaration to help Paris in event of war, also in Britain's de facto recognition of Insurgent Spain while awaiting official French action. Such parallel policies, coupled with the bold British decision to spend $1,000,000,000 more on armament, illustrate how Europe's two democracies are drawing closer together and preparing to meet the next totalitarian demands. Probably these demands will be Italian territorial claims against France, coming immediately after the Spanish war.

GEN. JOSE MIAJA
His 500,000 against 1,000,000.

Meanwhile that war has gone merrily on its way as Gen. Jose Miaja finds himself practically the boss of Loyalist Spain's civil and military branches. With an estimated 500,000 unenthusiastic soldiers under his command, General Miaja recently heard that his friend General Franco was about to charge against Valencia and Madrid with 1,000,000 men.

Labor

In Washington John L. Lewis could peek at the calendar for March realizing it probably held the fate of his Congress for Industrial Organization. At the core of trouble is United Automobile Workers of America, torn during January when President Homer Martin simultaneously resigned and was booted from C. I. O.'s executive board. Reason: U. A. W. underlings thought Mr. Martin was conniving for personal control of Ford Motor company's heretofore independent labor vote, while Mr. Martin thought C. I. O. was turning communistic. Now split in two factions, U. A. W. opens a pro-Martin convention in Detroit during early March, and an anti-Martin parley in Cleveland March 27.

First victory was scored by the Martin faction when property of U. A. W.'s Plymouth local (Detroit) was pulled from court custody and returned to Martin cohorts. Still pending is a replevin suit instituted by anti-Martinites.

To rumors that he might lead U. A. W. into alliance with William Green's American Federation of Labor, Mr. Martin answered with an emphatic negative. Daily winning public support from such Lewis henchmen as Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray, Mr. Martin stands a good chance of emerging not only as undisputed head of U. A. W., but as leader in a C. I. O. conservative movement.

People

In Moscow, Secretary **Earl Browder** of the American Communist party hailed President Roosevelt, Cuba's Col. Fulgencio Batista and Mexico's President Lazaro Cardenas as opponents of Fascism.

● Breaking a bottle of champagne to dedicate an aquacade at New York's World fair, Swimmer **Eleanor Holm** was cut by flying glass.

● One hundred and two years old, Banker **Edmund J. Reardon** of Cambridge, Mass., celebrated his birthday by staying away from the office.

● Having too many other responsibilities, **President Walter S. Gifford** of the American Telephone and Telegraph company, will resign as a director of the United States Steel corporation April 3.

Desert Areas Of West May Yield Plants

Three-Year Test to Determine Feasibility of Certain Crops.

PHOENIX.—An attempt is to be made to conquer the arid deserts of the West, long a symbol of waste, by making them yield products necessary for human welfare.

As a result Dr. J. J. Thornber, professor of botany at the University of Arizona, will know in three years if it is possible to bring the desert under control and make it a boon to humanity. Dr. Thornber said the university will begin next spring to cultivate desert plants with the object of developing them to a point where they can be raised in commercial quantities for their products—which include medicines, rubber and fiber.

"I feel quite sure the desert is going to be of economic value to man instead of waste," Dr. Thornber said, "but it will take at least three years before we know how successful the experiments will be."

Rubber Plant Prominent.

The scientist said that if it is found that plants can be grown commercially the acreage needed for the Guayle plant alone will be "tremendous." The Guayle plant produces rubber.

"The experimentation will be done on the university farm at Tucson, although work on the milk-weed plant, also a rubber producer, may have to be carried to Yuma, where it is not so cold in the winter."

A sample box of a number of the plants was sent to Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace in Washington and the government was interested enough to send two investigators to look into the possibilities of establishing a laboratory for further experiments. The government report has not yet been made available.

First work of the experiment will consist of growing seven plants, several of which are believed to have medicinal properties.

The canaigre plant, which has a high percentage of tanin, is used in the tanning of fine leather, although it is too expensive for cheaper leathers.

The yucca plant, with its fibrous leaves, may prove to be very valuable if the fiber quality stands up under the intense cultivation, Dr. Thornber said.

Try Seeds and Cuttings.

The third plant to be cultivated is the guayule, which is abundant in southern Arizona.

"We intend to plant both seeds and cuttings from these plants and experiment on their cultivation," he said. "They are becoming increasingly important as a possible source of a rubber supply for this country. When first discovered, the plant contained only about 4 or 5 per cent rubber in its stalk, but now after cultivation and care, plants can be produced that contain 23 to 25 per cent rubber.

"One of our important jobs will be to determine if Indian wheat, whose seed is identical insofar as medicinal properties are concerned to psyllium, can be grown in commercial quantities. We already know how to gather it mechanically in a clean condition and we have been assured that tons of the seed could be used if a steady source is found."

Another species of milkweed, Dr. Thornber said, has medicinal qualities which the Indians say counteracts poison snake and insect bites. One company is now experimenting to determine what chemical in the plant acts upon snake venom.

Another plant produces the jojoba, similar to the coffee bean. It can be used for making perfume.

PRE-CANNED FISH

All ready for canning is this "drum fish" seined by four Seattle men in the northern part of Puget Sound. The finny adventurer had apparently gotten into the milk bottle when small, and being of a retiring, thoughtful nature, remained too long. When he tried to get out he found that he was too big. The fishermen turned it over to the Seattle aquarium.

This Man Still Prefers to Drive Horse and Buggy

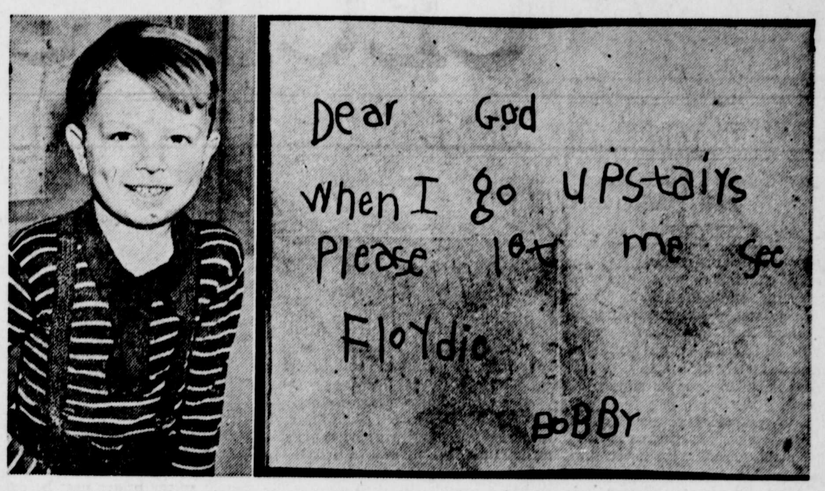
NORTH EASTON, MASS.—This modern world has the automobile, the streamlined train and the super-speed airplane, but George W. McLauthlen, 88, still lives in the horse and buggy age.

For 30 years, up to a few months ago, he drove a horse and buggy six days a week to Brockton. Up to 10 years ago he was a shoe plant superintendent. He retired but still made the daily trips. Now, however, he goes to Brockton every other day.

His horse is "Hollyrood Blackstone," a one-time record trotter, who did a mile in 2:10.

In the last 30 years McLauthlen figures he has driven his horse and buggy about 150,000 miles.

Playmate Gone, Six-Year-Old Writes to God



Bobby Lewis of Minneapolis, six years old, attended the funeral of his four-year-old playmate, Floyd Highstrom, and talked with Reverend Emil Heuhardt, who told him that Floydie had gone on a long trip to see God. Returning home, Bobbie addressed a letter "To God. In Heaven, Up in the Sky," asking that he be allowed to see Floydie when he went "upstairs."

Incidentals Help to Brighten Otherwise Colorless Rooms

By BETTY WELLS

"Way last spring we did some remodeling," writes Mrs. C. W. H., "and we're just now getting around to the painting. Now though, we expect to get everything done fresh: walls, woodwork, floors. Would be so grateful for your advice about colors.

Some sunny pictures to brighten up the effect.

"On either side of the fireplace there are built-in bookcases with windows above. What would you suggest about curtains? Should the book cases be painted to match furniture or woodwork? My furniture is caneback mahogany with good figured blue velour cushions.

I'd have the book cases painted the same color as the woodwork—how would the idea of a very pale shade of gray-blue appeal to you? It would seem very fresh and pleasant to live with. Then have plain sheer white voile curtains hung straight and plain, but finished across the top with a flowered swag valance, something flowered on a white ground and perhaps lined with red sateen. This window treatment would be nice for the problem windows over the book cases and would also do for the other windows in the room.

Make a couple of slip covers for incidental chairs in this same flowered material—don't be afraid of the light color because you can get chintzes that wash now without fading, shrinking or losing their sheen. If you like, you might add lamp shades made of this same chintz—you could make these yourself for bases that you already have. Repeat the note of red in odd cushions, in accessories or in a few pieces of pottery for the mantel.

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Mite, Smallest Meadow Mouse, Plans to Run Away From Home

By THORNTON BURGESS

Alas! Alack! Sad is the day
When heedless children disobey.

IT IS sad for father and mother and it is sad for the child, and this is just as true with the little people who wear fur or feathers as with boys and girls and their fathers and mothers. Ask Danny Meadow Mouse. He knows all about it. He says that being a father is the most re-spon-sible job in the world, but Nanny Meadow Mouse says that this is no such thing, because being a mother is the most re-spon-sible job in the world. But they both agree that heedless children who disobey can make more worry and sadness than anybody ought to have to go through with.

He made up his mind to run away and see the Great World.

Now, of their four children, Teeny, Weeny, Midget and Mite, the last was the smallest. He was also the quickest and smartest. He never had to be shown twice how to do a thing. He could outrun and outdodge his brothers and sisters. He was forever finding new hiding places in which they never thought to look for him. He had even fooled his father that way when the latter was looking for him to punish him. As for fooling his mother, Nanny Meadow Mouse, he did that continually. Yes, Mite was smart, and he knew it. Yes sir, he knew it. That was at the bottom of all the trouble. He knew he was smart, and he thought so much about it that at last he came to believe that he was a little smarter than anyone else—even smarter than his father and mother.

Now, when children get to thinking that they are smarter than their fathers and mothers they are preparing the way for all sorts of trouble and often sadness for themselves and for those who love them. That was just the way it was with Mite. He thought himself so smart that it was not necessary for him to obey. He and his brother and sisters had been charged over and over again that they must never, never so much as poke their noses out from under the pile of old corn stalks in the middle of which their home was. They could play in and under the pile of corn stalks as much as they pleased, but they must never climb up on top or run out from underneath lest some watchful, hungry enemy should see them and gobble them up.

Now, Mite didn't approve of that at all. He was sure that he was altogether too smart to be caught.

"There's nothing to be afraid of," said he. "They just tell us there is so as to scare us and keep us home. I'm not afraid, and some day I'm going out to see the Great World. I'm getting tired of this old pile of corn stalks, and I want to see what is going on outside."

Of course, his brothers and sisters were terribly shocked, and told him that he mustn't think of such things. But little Mite was very headstrong. One day while Danny and Nanny were away looking for something for dinner Mite disobeyed and darted out into one of Danny's little private paths that led away through the tall grasses. He was out only a minute and then darted back again. No one told Danny or Nanny, and the very next time he got a chance he tried it again. He kept on doing it, each time going just a little farther. It was very exciting. No harm ever came near him, but there was always the chance that Danny or Nanny would catch him doing it. Several times he got back just in the nick of time. At last he made up his mind to do something. What do you think it was? Why, he made up his mind to run away and see the Great World! Yes, sir, that is just what he made up his mind to do, and it is just what he did do very early one morning. Danny didn't discover it until he had been gone as much as a whole hour, which to a Meadow Mouse is a very great deal of time.

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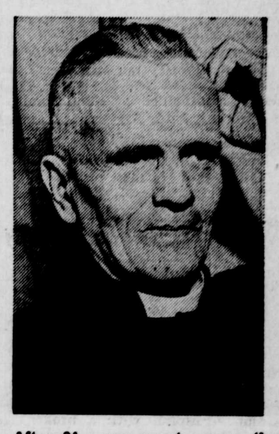
TAUGHT CANNIBALS



After 34 years spent among the cannibals of the Solomon islands where he was the first white missionary to penetrate the native fastnesses, Father Joseph Griswold, S. M., is a guest of the Marist Fathers in the French church of Notre Dame des Victoires, San Francisco, renewing acquaintance with civilization.

FORMER HOBBY NOW VOCATION FOR RAILWAY CLERK

FORT WORTH.—The life of J. E. Stamps of Fort Worth, who for the last 35 years has repaired and built violins for great contemporary masters solely as a hobby, is changed now.

He has quit his job as a railway mail clerk and set himself up as a violin repairer and builder at his home.

Many secret dramas important to the world of music have occurred in the little workshop at Stamps' home.

An artist, in a fit of temper, smashed his $50,000 violin. The instrument — a Stradivarius — was brought to the stout, beaming, bespectacled amateur, Stamps, for repairing. Within a few weeks it was returned to the musician and still is in use.

Stamps has worked on the Stradivarius, valued at $100,000, of Francis MacMillan. He handled another famous instrument owned by the late Nicholas Longworth.

"And hundreds of people have come with violins which they hoped I would identify as Stradivarii," Stamps recalled. "But almost invariably they were disappointed."

He argues that violins 200 years old are not sweeter in tone, necessarily, than cheaper and newer ones. "Fifty years of seasoning is enough to give a violin a perfect tone," he said, and pointed out that several radio artists and symphony violinists use instruments he has made.

Stamps' favorite is the Guarnerius violin, although he seldom plays one himself. "It is more fun to make them," he explains, "and besides—I do that better."

Stamps imports seasoned maple from Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Asia's Clouded Leopard Termed Most Beautiful

One of the rarest, as well as one of the most beautiful, members of the cat family is the clouded leopard of Southern Asia and the East Indies. The Field Museum of Natural History, in Chicago, possesses a specimen. Probably not more than seven or eight such specimens are to be found in all the museums of the United States, and probably not more than 15 in the museums of the world, says Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, chief curator of the department of zoology.

The clouded leopard is shy and inhabits the depths of heavy forests, usually in regions difficult of access to hunters. Even in the wild its numbers are limited. Strictly speaking, it is not a true leopard, and is somewhat smaller than the ordinary leopard. Its tawny body is marbled with black markings in pattern distinct from those of most of the cats.

Rust-Proof Steel, No Nickel

Development of a new process for producing a high-grade corrosion-resisting alloy steel containing no nickel is expected to make Japan independent of nickel producers in other countries. The new process was invented by Dr. Masayoshi Tagaya, assistant professor at Osaka university. It is claimed the stainless no-nickel steel he produces will be as widely used in the manufacture of munitions and other products as the present metal.

Young Man Conquers All Handicaps to Be Artist

LONDON.—Side by side with Augustus Johns and Wyndham Lewises in the New English Arts club's exhibition hangs a Canadian scene called "Prelude." It is the work of a 19-year-old Russian-born Canadian boy who endured many hardships on a 6,000-mile trip across land and sea to realize his dearest ambition.

Two years ago Eric Freifeld, who lived with his family in Alberta, determined to become an artist. Self-taught, he won two scholarships which enabled him to continue his studies.

During the last year he held three exhibitions, but London was his goal. Months ago he started to hitch-hike across the continent to Montreal, where he got a job on a cattle boat sailing for London.

On arriving here he submitted his work to some of the London galleries. To his joy, a picture depicting a scene in Vancouver was accepted by the New English Art club.

U. S. Compels 18,553 Aliens to Leave During 1938

WASHINGTON.—James L. Houghteling, commissioner of immigration, said that 18,553 aliens were forced to leave the United States last year.

Houghteling's annual report to Secretary Perkins said 9,275 were deported on warrants and 9,278 others, who had been adjudged deportable, left at their own expense. The total leaving in 1937 was 17,617.

During the year ending last July immigration officers barred 8,066 aliens from entering. Immigrant arrivals numbered 67,895, compared with 50,244 in 1937 and 36,329 in 1936. The total was far below the quota of 153,774. Houghteling said.

Germans and Austrians, totaling 17,199, led a classification by races in the report designated 11,917 of the Germans as Jews.