The Washington MERRY-GO-ROUND

By DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN

Washington, D. C.

DONOVAN HAS GLOOMY REPORT

Col. "Wild Bill" Donovan, semi-official observer who has been touring the Near East, brought a decidedly gloomy report back to Washington.

Donovan told Secretary of the Navy Knox and Secretary of War Stimson, the two Republican members of the cabinet who were largely responsible for sending him, that British chances were anything but rosy in the Balkans. The Greeks, he found, were riding the crest of the wave but were successful more because of their superhuman bravery and the weaknesses of the Italians than because of their real military strength. Against a strong, well-equipped foe, such as the Germans, it would be a different story.

The Turkish army, Donovan also reported, is poorly equipped when it comes to modern weapons of war and is worried over Russia.

In North Africa he found that General Weygand was not disposed to act independently of Vichy, and the French in general seemed despondent, floundering in their policy and completely lacking in leadership.

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DEFENSE PRICE POLICEMAN

With the OPM rushing production and the 11-man mediation board handling labor problems, Roosevelt wants a third unit to ride herd on prices.

Head of the new agency will be Leon Henderson, New Deal veteran whose experience as a hard-boiled price policeman dates to NRA days.

Also, as price controller of the old defense commission, Henderson knows the defense picture thoroughly, already has several big scalps to his credit. It was his forceful crack-downing that tumbled the soaring prices of lumber and scrap; also put a lid on second-hand machinery price flurries.

Roosevelt said nothing about it publicly; but privately he did a lot of talking about the new price control unit before he departed on his vacation cruise. The gradual upward price trend, as a result of the expanding priority list, has worried him considerably, and the last thing he wants is a high-cost-of-living problem.

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WIDOW FOR CONGRESS

A very beautiful widow, plus a tragic airplane accident near Atlanta, Ga., is causing political trouble in Maryland which may have repercussions in the axis capitals of Berlin, Tokyo and Rome.

The situation results from the death of young Congressman William Byron, Democrat, in the recent Atlanta airplane crash, which mean an early by-election to fill his Maryland seat in the house of representatives.

Mrs. Byron aspires to take the road of many another congressional widow and go to congress. However, this section of Maryland is normally Republican, and Mrs. Byron, beautiful as she is, would have a hard time defeating a forthright Republican.

Therefore, Democratic leaders are doing their best to persuade her to bow out of the congressional race in favor of the much stronger Preston Lane, Democratic National Committeeman from Maryland. They know that the first election contest occurring after passage of the lease-lend bill will be watched throughout the world as a sign of Roosevelt's popular strength and whether the country is with him on foreign policy.

The fact that Maryland, a relatively conservative state, doesn't care for women in high political places, would cut no ice in the propaganda factories of Rome, Tokyo and Berlin.

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ALUMINUM SHORTAGE

The housewife's pots and pans aren't the only items hit by the shortage in aluminum—a shortage which certain defense officials denied for months, but finally admitted when the OPM put the metal on the priority list. The deficiency is creating some other serious industrial problems. Here is one illustration:

A big bus manufacturer working on an order for some 40-passenger vehicles suddenly found himself unable to get the sheet alnuminum he needed. He complained to the OPM and was advised to use steel as a substitute. But this, he found, would so increase the weight of his buses as to bar them from the roads of several states.

Therefore he must either reduce the size of his buses or prevail on the states to raise their highway load limits to permit heavier vehicles.

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MERRY-GO-ROUND

The house's leading aviation enthusiast, World war flyer Mel Maas of Minnesota, likes to have aeronautical atmosphere around him while he works. In his office are 27 model planes of various types and a score of flying pictures.

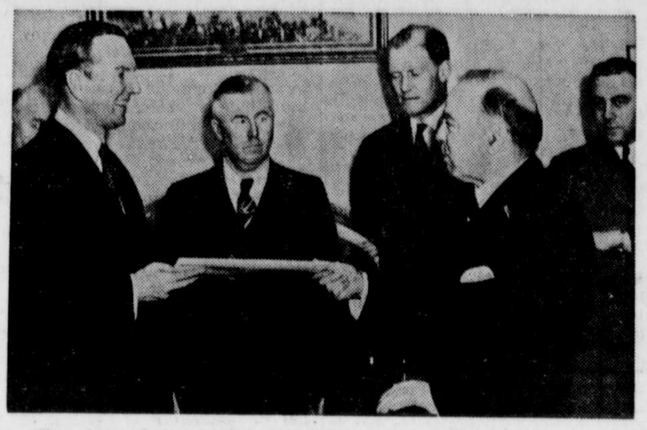
When Senators Tom Connally and Morris Sheppard of Texas get together to gossip about old times, they talk about their joint school-days at Texas university. Sheppard was a Kappa Alpha and Connally still wears his Phi Delta Theta pin.

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS — By Edward C. Wayne

Soviet Russia Pledges Its 'Neutrality' In Case of Nazi Attack on Turkey; British Lose Tons of Vital Supplies As German Raiders Roam Sea Lanes

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

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)



The above photo was taken in Ottawa, Canada, at the signing of the agreement between the United States and Canada making possible the start of work on the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes waterway project. This agreement must be approved by Congress and then by the Dominion parliament. Above: MacKenzie King, Canadian prime minister, hands over a signed copy of the pact to J. P. Moffat, U. S. minister to Canada.

RUSSIA:
Another Pledge

In World War II Turkey's national interests seem to logically lie on the side of Britain and in opposition to Adolf Hitler. But Turkey has usually been forced from speaking too loudly against Germany. Reason: Josef Stalin and his Soviet Union. For Turkey knows well that she cannot risk armed conflict unless Russia approves.

This condition exists because once the Turkish army is occupied elsewhere the Soviet legions could easily move in and take over the national government. And Russia is interested in Turkey because Turkey controls the Dardanelles, those strategic straits which form Russia's only year-round, warm-water route to the outside world.

With the Dardanelles threatened by German activity in the Balkans and with the Nazis poised in Bulgaria for a thrust at Greece, Russia began to worry. That worry reached the point where Russia decided to sign a pledge of benevolent and helpful neutrality in case Turkey is attacked by Germany. Following the signing of this agreement Soviet troops were reported to have moved up closer to the massed Nazi forces in southeast Europe.

UNITED STATES:
An Axis 'Foe'

It made hardly a ripple in the United States that Italian and Nazi papers were openly listing this country as among the Axis "foes."

Said one Fascist organ:

"The democratic powers wanted the war and now must undergo defeats and ruin. The Italian revolution, begun 22 years ago, is today a world revolution."

A Milan paper said: "The new Europe will not forget at the opportune moment President Roosevelt's action and from now on assign such powerful arms to the duty of liquidating with its victory over the London democracies, also the spurious democratic remnants across the ocean."

These were typical of the other thinly veiled threats that American democracy was to be included with that of England and Greece and China in the general overthrow by the Axis powers, assuming victory to be certain.

Yet little Jugoslavia, even while apparently ready much against its will to sign up with the Axis, was making such a spectacle of the signing that Germany and Italy could have no slightest doubt that it was being done under the strongest duress.

In fact, Jugoslavia held back so long and so obdurately that it was evident she was hoping against hope that Germany would move over the Bulgarian border and that British forces, by engaging the Nazi hordes, would enable the Serbs to do a bit of fighting on their own, along with their friends, the non-Axis neighbors.

There was some talk that Russia was friendly to such an idea and that this was giving the Yugoslavs additional courage to hold out. But hold out they did, even in the vital meeting of the cabinet when the vote for signing up was to be taken.

Jugoslavia might give in, the word went plainly out to the Axis, but she would give in unwillingly.

AIR:
Blitz Serious

The sudden and continued heavy air attacks, not only on London, but on smaller cities and towns, particularly on the eastern coast of Britain proved not only to be spectacular but heavily damaging.

The Germans heralded each of the first raids as "another Coventry," but toward the last they ceased the Coventry references and apparently were content to let the damage and the magnitude of the attacks speak for themselves.

FLEET:
On the Loose

In World War I, the German fleet steamed out of Kiel and was promptly defeated and sunk by the Allied naval forces. In World War II, the German fleet has sailed out of its harbors piecemeal, and has wreaked devastating destruction on the British merchant shipping.

It was with disquieted ear that the United States heard Britain, through Prime Minister Churchill, announce that two of Germany's strongest battleships, the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau, had escaped cordons of British vessels set to intercept them, and were "on the loose" in Atlantic waters.

According to some reports, within a week these two vessels, possibly with the aid of others, had sunk around 244,000 tons of British and neutral shipping, particularly some vessels reportedly loaded with lend-lease aid to Britain.

The warning of Churchill that some German war vessels might be expected to act within American neutrality zone waters was followed dramatically by the announcement that two of the Nazi navy's capital ships were roving the high seas, obviously looking for easy prey in unprotected convoys.

For, under the British convoy system 40 to 50 vessels meet at Halifax or some similar port as far out as possible into the eastern Atlantic, and from there are convoyed some distance from land, after which the pitifully small convoying force returns to port after which the convoy is "on its own" until some point where it is picked up, say, 500 to 700 miles off the Irish coast, by another, also pitifully small convoy.

It has been somewhere between these points, according to Churchill, that the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau, first-line battleships, with which destroyers and cruisers would be unable to cope, that the heavy current sinkings had been done.

SEVEN BILLION:
In the Bag

Approval of the seven billion dollar British aid bill came as both House and Senate passed the measure with top heavy votes. Only the President's signature was needed to start the speed of U. S. supplies to Britain. President Roosevelt was vacationing off the Florida coast and arrangements were therefore made to dispatch the measure to him by airplane.

The President could afford to leave Washington, he felt, and he saw by the house action and by the senate reaction that his $7,000,000,000 plan would become a fact. Long before the house and senate acted on the lease-lend bill, administration advisers, working with the President and British representatives in this country, had formulated a general budget plan, somewhat flexible, but complete and separated into its various items.

In fact, that was one reason, it was generally believed, why the house passed the request by such a strong majority. It could not, in the face of the President's message, be said that the figure was just a "dream amount" hatched in a general way out of the administration's conviction that our aid to Britain and other democracies should be of the greatest possible amount.

Quite to the contrary, the exact division of the amounts and the purposes had been set forth, and even the allowance for shifting from one account to another had been set, showing that the whole plan had been carefully thought out.

It was openly declared by Secretary Knox of the Navy that the first aid to be sent under the bill would be considerable numbers of naval vessels, particularly the smaller ones, including destroyers (over-age in all probability) mosquito boats, trawlers and converted private yachts.

'In the Army Now'

Jimmy Stewart, Hollywood's No. 1 male star, whose name spells glamor to millions of movie-struck girls, is in the army now. He is shown above in his buck private uniform given him by Uncle Sam on his arrival at his induction center.

STRIKES:
Tough Talk

The government rolled up its sleeves and determinedly made plans to deal with two vital defense strikes, both of which threatened to tie up vital plane production.

The one was the Allis-Chalmers walkout, which was hitting not only at plane, but at destroyer and submarine production, and the other was the miniature Harvill strike, which threatened to call a halt to all plane production in the enormous Pacific coast area.

However, the government mediation authorities called from his post as selective service director the versatile Dr. Dykstra, and in this move was seen a determined effort to break these two strikes, even at the cost of taking the plants over.

In fact the move to put Dr. Dykstra into this service was regarded generally as a sort of "last straw" move on the part of the government. Apparently, it was said in Washington, the Hillman-Knudsen set-up, while it might function all right in speeding production, was flopping rather badly when it came to fighting strikes and other labor difficulties.

If the Dykstra substitute should be found not to work, there seemed little doubt but that Uncle Sam would step in, take over one or both plants, and operate them in strike-proof fashion with workers chosen out of the civil service lists.

The clincher was a frank warning issued in the house by Representative Smith (Dem., Va.) who said: "I warn you gentlemen who claim to be friends of organized labor that, if something is not done in the next 30 days, and these strikes keep on, all of us who are real friends of honest organized labor are going to have to stand on this floor and fight drastic legislation that would take away the proper gains of organized labor that it has taken them 25 years to bring about."

Mr. Smith was author of a bill to prohibit strikes on defense labor. Though the bill had been losing out all along the line, it was evident that if the strikes such as the Harvill and Allis-Chalmers walkouts should continue, Mr. Smith's bill might be received with a very different tenor by his fellow solons.

FOOD:
For the Hungry

After much discussion pro and con, evidently with British approval, the state department finally allowed two French vessels to sail from U. S. ports for unoccupied France with flour.

There were positive stipulations demanded by state department officials:

1. These shipments had to be sent solely to unoccupied ports.

2. Every pound of food so sent must be distributed within unoccupied France to its ultimate destination under the direct supervision of the American Red Cross.

3. Not a single pound of similar or equivalent foodstuffs to be permitted to pass from unoccupied France to occupied France.

4. These ships must be ordered to return immediately to the United States.

The state department apparently had been able to win British approval for this plan to succor the hungry in southern France because of the second of these stipulations.

The situation was rather that of a man who makes a loan to a good friend whom he knows is a bad risk on the theory that if it is not repaid, then the lender will have a good excuse not to lend again.

British advisers to the state department had warned the U. S. of this type of shipment that the probable result would be that German authorities in occupied France would grab considerable amounts of the foodstuffs themselves, or else would demand the release of larger quantities of raw materials suitable for munitions manufacture in lieu of the food itself.

Whether the Red Cross officials would be able to detect such a latter move was much of a question. But, apparently, the British were resigned to this eventuality.

GRASSROOTS

by WRIGHT A. PATTERSON

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

AMERICAN FARMER STILL MINUS WAR TRADE

THE AMERICAN farmer is not profiting to any large extent from the European war, from our preparations for war, or our aid to England. It is the Canadian and Australian farmers who are being called upon to feed England, not those of America. Our January exports of farm products were the lowest for that month since 1869, only $22,000,000. It leaves the farmer in a tight place and facing still further decrease in cotton, wheat and corn acreage this year.

The government can force prices up, but to do so would result in a wail from American consumers. It can grant larger subsidies, but that would add to the government appropriations and the government debt.

Of course government might encourage American farmers to produce a sufficient quantity of some 60 items which can be raised in America, but which we are now importing to the extent of a billion and a half dollars a year. That amount paid to American farmers would certainly increase farm income.

That would be paying the farmer for doing something which would appeal to him. But evidently no one in Washington has thought about such an idea.

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HONEST WAY IS TO MAKE ALL OF US TAX CONSCIOUS

TAXES PAID is a part of the cost of doing business and is included in the price of the merchandise. The consumer pays it, and it is known as "hidden taxes."

Congress must consider a heavy increase in government revenue to pay a part, at least, of the terrific preparedness and aid to England cost.

A plan is being talked of to tax wages and collect it as the social security tax is now collected—the employer to take it out of the employee's pay each payday.

That would be more sensible than an added tax on business, which must be passed along to the consumer if business is to continue to operate.

The quickest and surest way to create a demand for governmental economies in this country is to make the mass of people tax conscious, to collect from them a tax they know they are paying.

Close to 30 per cent of the national income is paid to the tax collectors—municipal, county, state and federal. The man who earns a salary of $30 or more a week pays his share, but he does not realize that he pays. It is a part of the price of everything he buys.

The honest way would be to let him know what he pays by leaving his tax direct, instead of covering it up in the price of the merchandise he buys. Then if he preferred less government at less cost, he would say so.

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OWNERS OF BETHLEHEM STEEL

WHO OWNS American industry is evidenced by the fact that Bethlehem Steel company has 140,000 stockholders. One hundred and forty thousand Americans have invested their savings in that one company and by doing so have provided the tools for the employees of that company to work with. There can be a simple accounting system which will determine definitely just how the revenue from each industry is distributed. With such a system in effect, it would be easy to determine fair wage scales and other items of distribution of revenue. The guess method may break business, but that will not solve our industrial problem.

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NONE ESCAPES

SENATOR BYRD of Virginia tells us that before the end of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1942, our national debt will be not less than $75,000,000,000. Just to pay interest of two per cent on that sum will cost each American—man, woman and child—about $12.30 each and every year, more than $61 a year for each family of five. Directly or indirectly, we all pay. No one escapes the penalty. Where do we go from there?

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THIRD PARTY

THE GENERAL public represents a third party whose interests are involved in every strike. The consumer pays for increased wages, shorter hours and decreased production. But that greatly interested third party is not considered in the settlement of disputes between labor and capital. It should be.

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FILIPINOS NOW NEED US

THE LITTLE brown brother in the Philippines is not now so anxious to pull away from the protecting arms of Uncle Sam as he was a few years ago. He has even asked that the United States army spend some $20,000,000 of rebated sugar taxes on island defense, instead of turning the money over in cash. Certainly the little brown brother is really frightened. Uncle Sam looks mighty good to him now.

PATTERNS

SEWING CIRCLE

PERFECT for slim, young figures, this flaring frock has a tiny corselet waistline, and bodice gathers to round you out a bit. With the bolero, it serves as a "little suit" for street wear. Make this of gay silk prints, or flat crepe, plain or with lots of braid in bright contrast.

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Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble, at a touch; nay, you may kick it about all day, like a football, and it will be round and full at evening.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

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