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TOP OF THE MORNING

You spoke one day, a cheering word, And passed to cheer duties; It warmed a heart, now promise stirred, And painted a life with beauties.

Two Facts To Be Faced

Hardly a day passes without new and sweeping German claims of losses inflicted on British shipping. On Friday Berlin declared that planes had sunk or damaged 28 ships totaling 146,000 tons.

In a sense there is nothing new in this. From the beginning of the war the Nazis have credited their submarines and bombers and mines with far greater destruction than the British admitted and, indeed, than neutral sources were able to check.

But it seems that recent communiques have been more on the exaggerated side than usual. They have been coming closer together moreover, and they have certainly been louder.

There could be, for it happens that the senate is debating the lease-lend bill and the question of how to get American help to Britain, once the supplies have been produced, bears on the fate of the measure.

But if the Nazis intend to keep the convoy issue before American eyes, which is more than likely, it is just as well. It ought to be recognized now, rather than later, that a policy of all-out aid to Britain may require delivery of the supplies once they have been produced.

Air Line Crashes

In taking time out from the lease-lend bill debate to discuss safety in the air, the senate showed a justified concern over the series of fatal mishaps on American commercial aviation lines since last summer.

There have been five accidents involving loss of life to air passengers in a little more than six months. The Eastern Airlines transport that crashed near Atlanta on Thursday raised the death toll to 52.

It is more than a striking coincidence that the last four transports to crash with resultant fatalities have met disaster just short of their destinations.

How it is to be solved must be left chiefly to experts. But congress has a duty to see that the regulations imposed by governmental authorities include adequate precautions against flying in weather that makes landing precarious and require improved facilities for blind and semi-blind landings that cannot be avoided.

Senator McCarran's assertions that the transfer of the Civil Aeronautics Authority to the Department of Commerce has resulted in "confusion and chaos" in the regulation of air lines deserve to be weighed.

On Watch

It is good news that the house military affairs committee has been investigating army contracts for some three weeks and has already, according to representative May, discovered "several mistakes."

However, this disclosure will not silence the demand for a special congressional committee to keep tab on the whole defense program.

There is a need for a special body to keep watch on the whole program. This is true, somewhat paradoxically, because there never has been a program in the true sense of the word.

It is the business of the executive department to do the planning, of course, but that does not relieve congress of its duty to consider all proposals and then act as its judgment dictates.

Probably the President should take the first step by creating an adequate planning agency to advise him.

FBI Wants Men

The alacrity with which the house committee has reported favorably on the plan for an emergency fund for the Federal Bureau of Investigation is at once a tribute to the excellence of the past work of the bureau and recognition of its value as an agency of national defense.

In times like these, the FBI cannot discuss in detail what steps it is taking to guard against spying, sabotage and other tricks of the Fifth Columnists.

Mr. Hoover has asked for the addition of several hundred men to his staff. This is not an extravagant request and every indication points to early acceptance of it by congress.

Traffic Accidents

That accidents are common on our roads is not to be wondered at, since disregard of the law is prevalent. North Carolina provides no exception in the record of the country as a whole.

They are due chiefly to what a traffic expert in another state calls "dangerous moving violations." A reasonable construction of this designation is that drivers taken into custody were deliberately disobeying the law, and in ways that each must have known were fraught with danger.

on curves past other cars proceeding in the same direction, and some were passing on the wrong side.

It is unlikely that any of the offenders were ignorant of the law or the rules of the road. The assumption is that all who were engaged in "dangerous moving violations" were deliberately taking chances, knowing the risk they were running.

Failure to respect the law and heed its injunctions is liable to bring trouble. Autoists ought to realize that the responsibility for safety for themselves and for all others lies with them.

Editorial Comment

PEERS AND PAY Raleigh News and Observer

Three British peers, including Viscount Halifax, Ambassador to Washington, are serving in the British diplomatic corps without any salaries, according to a white paper issued by the government in London.

In any democracy the dollar-a-year system is wrong as it sets apart as a sort of peerage men who happen to be rich enough not to need pay. That has nothing to do with the value of their services.

Most dollar-a-year men make the most trifling sacrifices in comparison with those of a good many young men who are on the Federal pay roll at around \$30 a month and in the Government's clothes.

Washington Daybook

By JACK STINNETT WASHINGTON, March 2.—This is the tale of Falla, the most famous dog in America today.

Falla is a jet black scottie. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt calls him the "wigglingest bundle of fur you ever tried to lay hands on."

His formal name is "Falla of Murray Hill." It was appropriated from one of the President's old Scottish ancestors.

Falla came to live at the White House something less than a year ago. He was a gift from one of President Roosevelt's Dutchess county relatives.

The President doesn't say from whom and he doesn't say anything about Falla's parents, ancestry or kennels either. The reason is obvious. Many persons would pay fabulous sums and burst with pride if they could say: "My pup is a sister (brother, cousin, nephew, niece) of the dog who lives at the White House."

Jack and Jill, two beautiful brown cocker spaniels that belong to Mrs. John Boettiger, daughter of the House of Roosevelt, have been popular guests, but their tenure never was long.

With Falla it's different. There hasn't been a day that he hasn't wagged his way a little deeper into the President's heart, and if there is any one on the White House staff who has ever thought, "Darn that dog!", it never has been uttered in a whisper any one could hear.

One of the ceremonies of the President's day is giving Falla his evening meal. No one else dares cut in. Mrs. Roosevelt commented recently that Falla is rapidly becoming a one-man dog.

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Another thing about Falla is his rapidly increasing travel mileage. He has been to Hyde Park so many times he knows the trees there as well as he knows those on the White House lawn.

The AFL, in its current issue of the "American Federationist," called upon representatives of industry, technology and government to join with labor "in an intensive and constructive effort to insure America against a post-emergency crisis."

Unless our programs of taxation, public works, housing, factory allocation, employment and training are tested in the terms of our post-emergency requirements and unless every single defense action is tested in those terms, we shall face peace in utter helplessness, unable to shift our entire economy to a sound peacetime basis.

Plans also should be made now for foreign trade, the AFL said, adding that if this was done the United States would be able to provide commodities to other nations suffering "from a lasting handicap of wholesale destruction of their industrial equipment and depletion of their resources."

It would indeed be inconsistent to make the great efforts now underway and contemplated in the U. S. today . . . if they were not paralleled by assistance to our vital communications. —R. H. Cross, British minister of shipping

TRYING HARD NOT TO STEP ON ANYBODY



Man About Manhattan

By GEORGE TUCKER

NEW YORK, March 2.—There used to be a little Frenchman named Herbert (pronounced A-bare) who had a pet shop on Park Avenue and who was a sort of veterinarian on the side.

His ancestors must have been circus ballyhoo artists, for he had a wonderful spiel, and after he lost his shop he used to stand around in front of night clubs and hotels with puppies in his coat pockets and in his arms, giving eloquent oral appreciations of man's-most-faithful, friend and enumerating their qualities.

That was two years ago. Walking through Sixth avenue the other afternoon, near 46th street, I heard a familiar voice and saw a great crowd of men jamming the doors of one of those innumerable "circus" halls that line that section of this somewhat bizarre neighborhood.

When I shoved my noggin through the door and caught a glimpse of a little fellow before a glass cage of insects I easily recognized our old friend of the puppies and the kittens.

Well, Herbert finally dropped out of sight and I didn't see him again until one night about two years ago. To my surprise he had a basket of kittens on his arm, which he swore were full-blooded Angoras and which he was retailing for \$5 per. "one of the discouraging things about life as we live it today," he told me, "is that people cannot, or will not, realize what incomparable companions cats are. They are the kings of the earth. They personify grace. They are not subservient as dogs are. They do not grovel and lick your hands

War Interpretive

By EDWARD E. BOMAR

The British bombing attack on the Rumanian oil fields—if reports of the raid are substantiated—could be the spark to ignite a general Balkan conflagration which Adolf Hitler logically should be eager to avoid just now.

Such an attack would attest a British decision to strike at enemy supplies and communications before the Nazi war machine rolled unopposed into position to bring crushing force to bear on the Greeks, to clobber the Turks, and ultimately threaten Suez.

Limiting factors are so numerous, however, that military leaders likely will not attach as great importance to the move as will the British public. Unless this or subsequent raids should touch off the Balkan powder keg, Britain is in a difficult position to inflict by air alone really telling damage to her foe in southeastern Europe, important and vulnerable as the oil fields are.

Of deeper significance to the course of events in the Balkans will be the first definite indication whether a British army is to be landed in Greece and what Turkey has decided to do about fighting. The Rumanian source of much of the German war machine's fuel is within easy bombing range of the Royal Air Force. From their bases in Greece, British planes need fly less than 300 miles to reach Ploesti, center of Europe's richest oil producing area.

Indications are, however, that the R.A.F. does not have the planes available in sufficient numbers to take full advantage of the situation. Probably 200 of all types at the most have been sent to Greece, with fighters rather than bombers most numerous, neutral reports estimate. On the other hand, military men credit the Luftwaffe with at least an air division of more than 1,200 planes in the Balkans.

For weeks, since the oil fields were put under full Nazi military control, the Germans have been preparing for raids by establishing air bases and setting up anti-aircraft guns.

A further consideration is that the Rumanian oil fields have developed into far less importance than they were credited with in the earlier stages of the European conflict. Actually, only about a third of the production has gone thus far to Germany, it is believed, largely because of transportation limitations.

More needed by Germany than Rumania's gasoline is lubricating oil from South Russia, which is shipped through Poland over a route beyond the range of mass bombing. Altogether there is no likely reason to believe the Nazi juggernaut is in peril of being brought to a complete halt for the time being because of raids on its Balkan fuel tanks.

There is plenty in the way of general harassment for British bombers to carry out, nevertheless, as long as they are based in Greece, or in Turkey, should the Turks enter the war. The battle of Britain has demonstrated forcefully that night bombing can not be stopped and a single

Fair Enough

By WESTBROOK PEGLER

The Star wishes its readers to know that views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and may not always harmonize with its position.—The Editor.

WASHINGTON, March 2.—Although some of the soldiers of the new Army and some of the young Navy flat-hats are setting new standards in bearing and dress which follow the influence of the Sloppy Joe Army of France, the high-ranking officers of the staff are in no position to pull any snoots at any of them.

In a way these officers, of whom it seems that there are some huge number in the capital and in New York, recall the stories of Adolf Hitler's tourist invasions of Norway and Rumania, in which swarms of Nazis masqueraded as salesmen, buyers and fugitive intellectuals, and suddenly emerged from their hotel rooms attired for the fray.

Cappy Wells, the press officer who made football publicity for West Point in the days when it was decided to let the public know that those young men in gray were cadets and not letter carriers, has been brought on from Louisville, where for several years he exercised his rank of major over two enlisted men and a lady civilian clerk.

Boasted to Lieutenant colonel now, the Cap still goes around in mud, and, now that I think of it, I believe the only time I ever saw him with his stuff on in all these years was one day at General Smith's garden party in June week, when the general noticed a spot of powdered sugar on the tip of his nose and inquired genially, "been in the flour barrel, Capt. Wells?"

How do you suppose that infantry soldier got powder on his nose?

Well, June week is a festive time at West Point, and did you ever cap your bill into a tall frosted glass of refreshment containing mint leaves dusted with powdered sugar? That was how, as I can safely tell you, now that the statute of limitations surely must have run against a solemn violation of a warrior's oath truly and faithfully to preserve and defend the United States constitution, including the foul amendment.

Philip B. Fleming, graduate manager of sports at the academy then, is a brigadier now, but serving in wages and hours, so perhaps he may be excused for not putting on his gear and clanking as he walks. But the Colonel Robert C. Richardson, who was commandant of cadets in now a major general and director of the Army's bureau of public relations, and he wears a black suit and looks as if he were fixing to clear his throat; and say, "brethren, let us bow our heads in two minutes of pious meditation."

General Tooley Spotts of the air corps, recently back from London, goes around wearing some twenty things that he picked up over yonder, and the town is full of rank and importance, and anyone less than a major is practically an okie. But they all go around pretending to be geographers, morticians and veteran clerks at the department of commerce, and the odd part of it is that, although they look pretty imposing in their soldier clothes, Army officers in multi, as a rule, look as if they had just crossed the continent by day coach in a slow train and hadn't undressed for a week.

They say the main reason for this is that they don't want to give congress the jumps strutting their rank around the government buildings, and the second reason given is that they like to be able to drop in for a dram at the hotels without creating an impression that the whole United States Army has no occupation other than just that.

There is a little more truth to the second excuse than to the first, but the real reason, as this keen, trained observer has discerned, is that a muffer they can go baggy or half shaved and don't have to suck it up and pull in their ears as an example of fine military bearing to the lady and the enlisted personnel.

But that is life for you, ain't it? They fret and grind through school, and eat their hearts out for glory, and get up there they go around posing as suburban taxpayers and leaders of the P.-T. A.

flaming tank or well is sufficient to light up targets for showers of incendiary missiles. South of Ploesti and even closer to Greece is the Danube Port of Giurgiu, where oil normally is loaded into barges for transport up the Danube. There is the Iron Gate Gorge of the Danube where the shipping could be damaged or demoralized from the air.

Oil from Germany likewise is transported by rail lines and these are vulnerable at many points. Aside from these, the pontoon bridges across the Danube and the railways and mountain passes over which Nazi troops poured into Bulgaria are natural military targets.

What the R.A.F. needs just now for really telling blows in this part of the world are hundreds of bombers and the fighters to protect them— which Britain does not hope to be able to spare from the home front until next year.