

F. R. Plans To Protect U. S. Ships

Indicates Vessels Carrying War Supplies in Red Sea To Be Guarded

SAYS IT IS THE LAW

May Escort Freighters, Establish Patrols or Arm The Merchantmen

WASHINGTON, April 15.—(AP)—In a terse but apparently historic remark, President Roosevelt indicated today that American merchant ships carrying war supplies through the newly-opened Red sea route to Egypt would have armed protection.

He was asked at a press conference whether it was the policy of this government to protect its ships wherever they go, so long as they stay out of the combat zones defined in the neutrality act. He replied that that was the law.

He did not say to what law he referred, but other officials expressed belief that it meant international law which, they said, provided for the freedom of the seas. Although the president refrained from going into details about methods of protecting ships, naval men said several courses were possible if the government should decide upon them.

Escorts Mentioned They mentioned actual escorts by United States naval vessels, assignments of such vessels to patrol specific areas of the sea to see that no harm comes to American merchantmen, the use of airplanes, and the arming of the merchantmen themselves.

The president had told reporters, however, that he knew of no discussion of arming merchantmen, except talk by orators. In the senate meanwhile, Senator Tobey (R.-N. H.) arose to inquire whether his resolution to prohibit the use of the American navy for convoy duty was being "smoothed" by "persons in high authority," such as the White House.

The measure is awaiting action in the Foreign Relations committee. Angriky, Senator Barkley of Kentucky, the democratic leader, replied that he had had no discussion.

F.D.R. PLANS NEW HELP FOR ALLIES

Harry Hopkins Recognized As 'Supervisor' of Vast Lease-Lend Program

WASHINGTON, April 15.—(AP)—With Harry L. Hopkins officially recognized for the first time as "supervisor" of the vast lend-lease program, President Roosevelt today was reported to be planning new moves to aid nations battling the Axis.

Outlays thus far announced for assistance to Britain and Greece were expected to be expanded soon to include help to embattled China. President Roosevelt told his press conference that Chinese needs were being analyzed and that some supplies designed for that country already were being processed. He had conferred during the day with Dr. Hu Shih, Chinese

Night Parking Is Banned On Nut, Water Streets

Enforcement of a city ordinance prohibiting night parking on Nut and Water streets—route of a spur freight line of the Atlantic Coast Lines—and plans for regulating day-time parking on the narrow thoroughfares through city ordinance were announced yesterday by Mayor Thomas E. Cooper.

Effective immediately, parking between 7 p. m. and 6 a. m. on Nut and Water streets between Red Cross and Nun streets will be prohibited. To enforce the existing ordinance, Mayor Cooper yesterday instructed Police Chief Joseph Rourke to have traffic officers arrest operators of cars found parked on the streets during the 11 night hours.

At the same time, Mayor Cooper said he had instructed City Attorney William Campbell to prepare the necessary ordinance to prohibit day-time parking on the west side of Nut and Water streets between Red Cross and Nun. This move, the Mayor explained, was made by a traffic expert retained recently by the city to survey the city's traffic-flow problem.

George Greets Gargoyle



King George, on tour of English coast defenses, must think Orson Welles designs British troop costumes. This weird creature is a camouflaged soldier ready to scare Nazi invaders out of their wits.

Three Buildings Burned, 14 Damaged In Fire Here

BIG AREA THREATENED

Damage From Flames on North Eighth Street Estimated at \$10,000

Fire which for a time threatened to engulf an entire negro section of the city late yesterday afternoon destroyed two homes and a large warehouse, severely damaged three other houses and partially damaged 11 other dwellings in the vicinity of North Eighth street and the railroad tracks.

It was the city's worst conflagration this year, and only work by virtually every city fireman utilizing all but two pieces of the fire department's equipment kept the blaze from razing a much larger area.

Fanned by Breeze The fire started in a negro two-family dwelling at 709 North Eighth street, a frame building, and fanned by a slight breeze, quickly leaped to a similar building at 707 North Eighth street and to a large warehouse building, recently used as a mechanic's shop.

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)

CAROLINA POWER TO BUILD ANNEX

Plans \$3,000,000 Addition To Cape Fear Plant in Chatham County

RALEIGH, April 15.—(AP)—A second \$3,000,000 addition to the Carolina Power and Light company's Cape Fear Steam Electric generating plant was authorized here today by the firm's board of directors, L. V. Sutton, president and

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)

Legion Orators Compete Tonight

Three High School Students Will Take Part in Sectional Meet Here

The sectional championship of the American Legion National Oratorical contest will be held tonight at the High school auditorium as three High school students, survivors of entries of a dozen southern states, compete for the right to enter the national finals Friday night at Charleston, S. C.

The winner of tonight's sectional here—one of four competitionals being conducted this evening throughout the United States—will represent the south in quest of a \$4,000 college scholarship offered annually by the American Legion to the High school student adjudged the best orator on some subject concerning the constitution of the United States.

Harris Proctor, of Durham, who yesterday afternoon won the five-state regional finals at Charlotte, (Continued on Page Nine; Col. 7)

Nation Is Warned By Dr. Durant

Declares Decadence From Within Is the Greatest Peril to Democracy

POINTS TO THE PAST

Philosopher Cites Need for More Discipline in the Home and School

Decadence from within—not conquest from without—is democracy's most imminent peril. So warned Dr. Will Durant, one of the greatest of modern philosophers, last night to a Wilmington audience at the High school auditorium, speaking under the auspices of the Community Forum.

Drawing striking parallels from the pages of history to force home the sobering reflection that democratic civilizations of the past have crumbled from within before being conquered from without, Dr. Durant decried the declining American birthrate as the greatest single contributing factor to decadence.

Marching Same Path "We are, as a nation, as a people, marching the same path of self-destruction that preceded the collapse of democracy in early Rome, that led the way to the downfall of democratic Greece, that undermined France. Democracy tends to corrupt itself, first politically, then morally. A declining birth-rate is a positive evidence of that corruption."

Of the remedy, the noted speaker was not so sure.

"Perhaps we need less freedom; less freedom morally, perhaps, even, less freedom politically. Certainly we need more discipline; more discipline in the home, more discipline in the school. And above all, we need a return to that religious faith which drives man to ambition—ambition to create his kind, to create a family and to make his world a better one for his children," Dr. Durant declared. "Lessons From History" was the subject of Dr. Durant's highly in-

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 4)

BRITAIN ADMITS LOSS OF CRUISER

Claims New Bomb Hits on Or Near Two Nazi Battlefronts at Brest

LONDON, April 15.—(AP)—Britain acknowledged the loss of one of her newest cruisers tonight, but claimed destruction of a 10,000-ton tanker bound for a Nazi-occupied port and new bomb hits on or near Germany's two 28,000-ton battle-ships Gneisenau and Scharnhorst berthed at Brest.

The 5,450-ton cruiser Bonaventure, completed in the 1934-40 program, was sunk on convoy duty by a torpedo, the admiralty announced. The date, location and the number of casualties were not disclosed.

The Bonaventure was the fifth cruiser acknowledged by the admiralty as lost since the war began. The others were the Effingham, Curlew, Calypso and Southampton.

Other officials acknowledged losses to date in major warship classes are one battleship, two aircraft carriers, 39 destroyers, in-

(Continued on Page Twelve; Col. 6)

Stimson Hints Army May Be Sent Out Of Americas

WASHINGTON, April 15.—(AP)—Secretary Stimson, one of several ranking officials to testify at congressional hearings on defense problems, strongly intimated today that it might become necessary for the United States to wage war, in its own defense, outside the Americas.

"Our forces must be prepared for the possibilities of war in many and varied terrains," he told the special senate defense committee, "it being quite uncertain in what part of North or South or Central America, or even possibly other regions, it ultimately may be necessary to use force in the defense of this country and its possessions."

Meanwhile: Before the house naval committee, Secretary Knox opposed anti-strike legislation but spoke favorably of action to require a "cooling off period" between a strike call and the actual walkout. Robert P. Patterson, the under-secretary of war, following Stim-

Germans Drive Deep Into Allied Front And Reach Siatista Pass; Report British In Full Retreat

NAZIS BOMB BRITISH

Planes Attack Greek Coast As Transports Move in And Out of Harbors

GERMANS AT LARISA

Reich Paper Hints That Balkan Hostilities May Be Terminated Soon

BERLIN, April 16.—(Wednesday)—(AP)—German reports early today pictured British forces in Greece as in full retreat with some commentators declaring it was a "rout" under terrific bombardment of the Nazi air force.

The Greek coast was bombed relentlessly, the Germans said, as British transports move into and out of harbors, and German pressure was increased on the Greek-British defense line running from Albanian corner to the Aegean sea.

REACH LARISA

The Columbia Broadcasting system's Ankara correspondent broadcast last night that German tank squadrons had broken through the defense line to reach Larisa and that Greek forces admitted their southward withdrawal would continue.

The correspondent, Winston Burdette, also said "it appears that British calculations have already been upset and it is reported that eight empty transport ships left for Greece yesterday from Alexandria, (Egypt)."

MAY TERMINATE FIGHTING

While authorized sources would give no details on developments of the North African campaign, they described the situation there as "not unfavorable to us."

The commentary Dienst Aus Deutschland, which has close foreign office connections, dropped a hint that Balkan hostilities may be terminated within a short time.

Commenting on what it termed the British withdrawal from the Greek front, Dienst observed that "the effects of this step may soon become noticeable."

The fate of the Greek army also will be greatly influenced by the (Continued on Page Nine; Col. 5)

COUNCIL TO TAKE OFFICE ON MAY 31

Campbell Expresses Opinion Terms of Commissioners End on That Date

City Attorney William B. Campbell said yesterday that he had written a letter to H. G. Carney, chairman of the city board of elections, stating that in his opinion, the terms of office of the three city commissioners would expire on May 31, and that the councilmen elected on May 6 will take office on that date.

His letter to Carney follows: "You have requested me to consider and give you an opinion upon the following questions: "1. When will the members of the council be elected under the

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 4)

Food For Unoccupied France



At a Staten Island, N. Y., pier, flour is loaded into the hold of the French liner Leopold, which will carry one of two cargoes for unoccupied France. The sending of more food may depend on how these two cargoes are distributed and utilized.

Mexico Shaken By Quake; Heavy Casualties Feared

COLIMA IS IN RUINS

Damage at Capital Estimated at \$1,000,000; Huge Fires Started

MEXICO CITY, April 15.—(AP)—The city of Colima was reported half in ruins tonight with prospects of a large casualty list as the result of an earthquake that shook the south half of Mexico today and inflicted damage estimated at \$1,000,000 in fires and other destruction here in the capital.

The destruction in Colima, about 375 miles southwest of Mexico City, was reported to the government press office in wireless messages saying many of its 15,000 inhabitants were injured.

Dead In Ruins

These reports, coming from the Colima State Military Garrison, said it was feared numerous victims were dead in the ruins. President Avila Camacho immediately ordered military and civilian planes to hasten tonight and tomorrow morning to Colima with medical supplies and doctors.

The forests around Colima were reported burning and a dam at the city's water plant collapsed. Colima was in darkness, the radio dispatches said.

Troops have been rushed from zone headquarters in the Pacific port of Manzanillo to reinforce Colima police.

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 5)

CHANGE IN DRAFT AGE CONSIDERED

F.D.R. Says No Decision Reached, Matter May Be Taken Up in June

WASHINGTON, April 5.—(AP)—President Roosevelt told reporters today that War department and congressional committees had under study the advisability of changing the draft ages later in the year. Any change would be predicated on a showing that the present range of 21 through 35 had provided sufficient man power and adequate technicians.

The President said no decision had been reached and the senate and house committees might take up the matter in early June, so there would be plenty of time for legislation if any is deemed needed.

These observations came in reply to a question whether the minimum age would be lowered to 18. The President said both ends of the age limits might be changed, indicating that if adequate man-

(Continued on Page Six; Col. 4)

PASS HUGE OBSTACLE

Nazi Forces Invade Vlachoklissura Pass During Earlier Operations

ITALIANS ARE TAKEN

British Holding Line on the Right Throw Back Nazi Mechanized Forces

ATHENS, Greece, April 15.—(AP)—German troops smashing deep into the allied left and center on the northern Grecian battle front reached the western outlet of Siatista pass today, the Greek government spokesman announced to-night, and thus surmounted a formidable obstacle in their thrust to the south.

The pass, which is at the town of that name some 50 miles within Greece, provides an opening in a 6,000-foot mountain range beyond which lies a stretch of considerably easier country.

(The spokesman's language indicated what was not expressly stated: That the Germans had traversed the pass and were free beyond it.)

Occupy Pass

In earlier operations, it was added, the Nazis had occupied the Vlachoklissura pass, which lies some 20 miles to the north of Siatista.

The Greek command said "ordered movements of our troops towards new positions" were carried out in Western Macedonia, that local Italian offensives in Albania were thrown back with serious losses, and that 10 enemy planes were shot down during the day.

The Greek spokesman said four officers and 100 men were captured by the Greeks following the German-Italian operations in Northern Greece and in Albania. He said the Italians were repulsed in attacks north of the Aous

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 6)

ACL REPORTS BIG NET INCOME GAIN

All Officers and Directors Are Elected at Meeting Of Stockholders

RICHMOND, Va., April 15.—(AP)—The Atlantic Coast Line railroad company reported a gain of \$1,019,462.50 in net income for 1940 over 1939, at the meeting of stockholders and directors of the railway here today.

The road's 1940 net income amounted to \$1,823,536.82, compared with \$804,074.32 a year ago. Operating revenues in 1940 were \$50,087,983.60, as against \$47,099,287.24 in 1939, a gain of \$2,986,696.36, while operating expenses totaled \$39,567,508.55, or 2,895,728.40 more than the 1939 total of \$36,671,780.15.

The road reported that tonnage moved over its line in 1940 was 20.91 per cent above the 1939. There was a gain of 14.73 per cent in passengers carried and 220.8 per cent in revenue. Officers and directors were re-elected.

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)

BRITISH AND AXIS FIGHT FOR SALUM

English Stave Off Attacks by Destroying 22 Planes And 15 Tanks

CAIRO, Egypt, April 15.—(AP)—A wide-open battle rocketed back and forth through the Egyptian border village of Salum tonight while, 80 miles to the west in the beleaguered Libyan port of Tobruk, the British announced they had staved off ferocious attacks by destroying 22 Axis planes and 15 tanks.

The road reported that tonnage moved over its line in 1940 was 20.91 per cent above the 1939. There was a gain of 14.73 per cent in passengers carried and 220.8 per cent in revenue. Officers and directors were re-elected.

The road reported that tonnage moved over its line in 1940 was 20.91 per cent above the 1939. There was a gain of 14.73 per cent in passengers carried and 220.8 per cent in revenue. Officers and directors were re-elected.

Officers and directors were re-elected. (Continued on Page Five; Col. 1)

(Continued on Page Five; Col. 1)

WEATHER

FORECAST

North Carolina: Mostly cloudy; showers and cooler in north and west portions Thursday and in the mountains Wednesday afternoon or night.

(By U. S. Weather Bureau)

(Meteorological data for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m. yesterday.)

Temperature

1:30 a. m. 67; 7:30 a. m. 64; 1:30 p. m. 80; 7:30 p. m. 73; maximum 89; minimum 61; mean 75; normal 62.

Humidity

1:30 a. m. 71; 7:30 a. m. 65; 1:30 p. m. 33; 7:30 p. m. 45.

Precipitation

Total for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m. 0.00 inches. Total since the first of the month 1.98 inches.

Tides For Today

(From Tide Tables published by U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.)

Wilmington High 1:20a Low 8:37a

Masonboro Inlet 1:43p 8:54p

Sunrise 5:40a; sunset 6:44p; moonset 9:51a.

Cape Fear river stage at Fayetteville on April 15, at 8 a. m. 15.98 feet.

(Continued on Page Twelve; Col. 5)