

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN

Washington, D. C.

F. D. R. VIEWS AID TO YOUTH

During the week before his Caribbean cruise, the President held a series of private conferences which were of prime importance in connection with his plans for the new congress. In them he disclosed that he is doing a lot of thinking about domestic problems along two lines—

1. Youth.
2. Old-age pensions.

Democracy can resist subversive ideologies, the President held, only by convincing youth that it does have a stake and a future in the existing system.

The President indicated that he had no particular program in mind. In fact, he asked for suggestions and ideas.

On old-age pensions, Roosevelt disclosed that he has made up his mind as to what he wants. His idea is to change the existing system of widely divergent state contributions to one of uniform federal pensions, beginning at a lower age than the present 65.

Roosevelt also voiced sharp criticism of the moguls of the social security board who have so vigorously opposed liberalization of the law. He declared that they have been a big obstruction to reform and that the time had come to overrule them. It was significant that the President had not discussed his plans with them and was proceeding independently.

Note—Since January 1, when the amended law became operative, 190,000 applications for old-age pensions have been approved by the social security board for a total outlay of \$4,109,000 a month. With the \$7,048,000 paid out in lump sum claims to survivors, the total old-age pension outlay so far is around \$28,000,000. The average pension is \$22 a month. In his conferences, Roosevelt talked of placing 5,000,000 oldsters on federal pensions within a year.

NO MASS PRODUCTION

One of the big complaints of defense chiefs is lack of machine-tool facilities. Yet there are many small plants of this type around the country that have been literally begging for orders and not getting them. One company with 150 lathes has been advertising for business in trade journals for months.

Also there is strong evidence of a lack of vision or initiative or both in making the best use of mass production facilities. The blame for this goes right back to high defense quarters.

The gigantic resources of the auto industry, for example, have been practically untouched for defense output. New plants have been ordered that will take months to build, when by a co-ordination of the great auto factories, parts of planes, tanks, guns, etc., could be turned out in carload lots daily and assembled at central points.

William Reuther, young official of the United Auto Workers, long ago proposed such a plan for a daily output of 500 all-metal pursuit planes of the most powerful type in the world, and at one-third their present cost. But the matter is still "being discussed."

Other industries could be used in the same way for similar short-cuts on other armament needs, but they are not. Meanwhile, defense output drags along, and precious weeks and months flit by.

BRITISH DAMAGE

Confidential military estimates of Nazi bombing damage to Great Britain are that British industrial production has fallen off about 30 per cent.

While this is a very serious crimp in the output of British planes, anti-aircraft guns and shells, it is not as bad as the pictures of shattered Bristol, Coventry, and Southampton would indicate.

Reason damage to British industrial production has not been greater is (1) that the British more than a year ago began scattering their plants in small units throughout Scotland and northern England, which are hard to locate and hard to hit after they are located; (2) that those big plants which do remain are protected with a virtual forest of anti-aircraft guns.

Far more serious is the damage to British navy yards. These cannot be broken up into small units, and they have been so heavily damaged that the repair of British shipping is very materially retarded. In many cases, British warships have been repaired at sea.

This, plus the tremendous increase in the sinking of merchant vessels, is what makes the British shipping plight so desperate at present.

CAPITAL CHAFF

Irony of diplomatic fate is that when Mussolini marched into Albania, the U. S. state department actually condoned it. Instead of registering a protest as in the case of other occupied countries, the state department dropped the Albanian minister from its diplomatic list. Meanwhile, the diplomatic representatives of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, still are listed. But if the Greeks keep on going they will win back Albania for the Albanians.

They Seek 12,000 Flying Students



Lieut. W. Wittie Jr., assistant recruiting officer for the Philadelphia flying cadets, is shown (left) going over plans for the procurement of applicants with Lieut. Lawrence Semans, of the U. S. army air corps. Lieut. Semans is advance agent in a drive to get 200 Philadelphians to make up part of 12,000 flying cadets needed in the expansion program.

23rd Recipient of Donor's Blood



Mrs. Leslie Watts cheers her mother, Mrs. Hazel Farmer, victim of staphylococcus septicaemia, who will be the twenty-third recipient of the blood of Mrs. Rose McMullin, of Washington, D. C. Mrs. Farmer, whose home is in Oklahoma City, was brought to Chicago to await the arrival of Mrs. McMullin, whose blood has saved the lives of 22 persons.

Off to Caribbean



President Roosevelt waves from the deck of cruiser Tuscaloosa at Miami, Fla., as he starts on his cruise to the Caribbean to inspect new military bases. He said the voyage was strictly for business.

Here From Britain



Sir Frederick Philips, undersecretary of the British treasury, shown on his arrival in New York. He came to America to straighten out dollar exchange "technicalities."

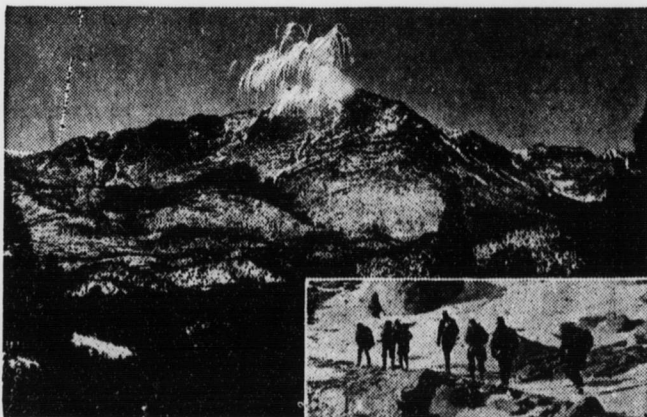
Pre-views

Select America's Champion Liar



Number 1 Liar of America will be proclaimed December 31 by the Burlington Liars club, of Burlington, Wis. Lower left: President O. C. Hulett at his desk reading some of the 17,000 lies entered in the contest. Several club members seem a bit dubious as he swears on a stack of dictionaries that the tall tales are true. A medal is awarded the club prevaricator.

AdAmAn Club to Scale Pikes Peak Again



To usher in the New Year properly 17 members of the AdAmAn club, which includes some of the nation's best mountain climbers, will scale the 14,109-foot Colorado peak on December 31, to set off fireworks. The club has been making this trip for the past 17 years, adding a member each trip (hence the name). Pictures show last year's "hike" and fireworks.

Rail Prexy



William White, who succeeds John M. Davis as president of the Delaware, Lackawana & Western railroad on January 1, will be the youngest railroad president in the East. He is 43 years old.

Scientist



Dr. A. F. Blakeslee, president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, who is presiding at the annual meeting in Philadelphia—from Dec. 27 to Jan. 2.

GENERAL HUGH S. JOHNSON
Says:

Washington, D. C.
DRAFT PRINCIPLES

The attempt to have all New York city policemen and firemen exempted from the draft, if successful, would weaken popular confidence in the fairness of the selective system. The underlying principle of the draft is that each man's case shall be considered on its own individual merits and under exactly the same rules governing the selection of all other men. If he has dependents, he is not exempted. He is merely deferred after establishing dependency in his particular case. Occupation deferments are determined in the same way. A man can be deferred for his occupation only if it is shown in each individual case, that he is indispensable to some necessary industrial enterprise.

Some particular fireman or some particular policeman might be shown to be indispensable to a city police or fire department, and so deferred, though it is difficult to see how. That is exactly the rule in New York city now, but it is not what New York's mayor wants. He wants to say to the national government: "You can't take any fireman or policeman." A man's badge ousts the board from even considering his case.

This is what is called a "blanket exemption"—automatically lifting out of the selective service systems two entire and very numerous classes of men. It couldn't be done without changing an established national policy of the draft. If it is permitted in New York, it must be permitted everywhere throughout the nation—in some cases with grotesquely absurd results.

This is old stuff. The first six months of the 1917 draft were a continuous battle to prevent the system from being discredited and impaired with "blanket" exemptions pressed for by some of the most powerful influences. This case of policemen and firemen came up first. Equally strong pressure was brought to exempt locomotive engineers and firemen, brakemen and finally all railroad employees as a class, for reasons here stated and, for another reason, we successfully resisted.

The other reason was that we feared that the creation of blanket exemptions would create loopholes as broad as boulevards for wholesale draft evasion. And so it proved, for finally we gave in on one case—a blanket exemption for the Emergency Fleet corporation.

DEFENSE PROGRESS

Recent promising official utterances giving dates when we shall have ready specific numbers of army divisions, navy ships and army and navy fighting planes are something like the earlier way of reporting armaments "on hand or on order."

Progress has been commendable. Most officials in the armament effort have done the best they could under present handicaps of faulty organization, planning and insufficient authority. But it is a mistake to make promises of performances so far ahead and especially to do so in terms of "airplanes," "divisions," or "men under arms." They are too general in their meaning. They do not paint the true picture to people who are not familiar with just what the words mean. They are apt to paint too rosy a picture.

A survey of all the utterances of the war department, for example, over the past few years, would generally indicate a continuing satisfactory state of affairs—at least up to the spring of this year. A glance at our present predicament, in comparison, would indicate how mistaken and misleading they have been.

The phrase "5,000 army airplanes" in estimating future production is not very informing. It doesn't tell whether they are fighting planes or transport planes or bombers and that lack of specification is confusing enough. But there is an even greater confusion.

One airplane isn't a good unit of measure.

One airplane means at least one and sometimes three or four extra engines. It means a crew aloft of one or more highly trained pilots and sometimes as many as eight other more or less expert technicians. It means an adequate mechanical ground equipment and a ground crew of skilled mechanics as numerous as the flying crew and sometimes more numerous. Even more significantly it means armament—cannon, light and heavy machine guns, torpedoes, bombs and, for all these, sometimes tons of explosives and incendiary material in the racks or in reserve storage on the ground.

Of many of these things our present supply is a trifling quantity. Preparations are being pressed to get them on principal units. Some of the published reports and estimates are fairly clear. But of others, like cannon, trained personnel and ammunition, the difficulties of getting into production from a near-zero point of existing capacity have been so great that it is almost certain that they cannot be delivered in step with the air force that requires them without a time lag of from one to two years.

New Date Frock In Princess Style

YOU'LL need an extra pretty afternoon frock, with many parties coming on, and teas. A frock that will make your figure look particularly slim and supple, your face fresh and appealing! That's just the kind of frock you can make for yourself with design No. 8826, in velveteen, chiffon-thin wool, spun rayon or flat crepe.

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That clever skirt detailing in front is a perfect way to achieve the smart "concealed fullness." The draped bodice is not only an important fashion point, but also very becoming to slim figures, because it tends to round out the bosom. Make it of lace, or contrast or, as shown in the small sketch, of the frock fabric.

Pattern No. 8826 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Size 14 requires, with short sleeves, 4 1/2 yards of 38-inch material without nap; long sleeves, 4 1/2 yards, 1/2 yard lace. Step-by-step sew chart comes with your pattern. Send order to:

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