

LOOKING AT WASHINGTON

By Hugo S. Sims, Washington Correspondent

125,000 Airplanes. Doubling On Defense. Planning For 1944.
A program drafted in terms of "what it takes to beat Hitler" envisions a tremendous new program, to provide the United States and the rest of the anti-Axis world with about 125,000 planes, including from 25 to 30 thousand four-engined, long-range bombers and tens of thousands of tanks by the end of 1943, or early in 1944.

According to preliminary reports the goal is to provide this country and Axis opponents, including Great Britain, Russia and China, with twice as much military material as they had been expecting in 1942 and a similar amount in 1943. The intention is to be ready for a final showdown in 1944.

According to some observers, the present defense and Lease-Lend program will be doubled. Production will be speeded to secure twice as many of nearly every item of military equipment, with special emphasis on airplanes, especially four-engined, long-range bombers, capable of blasting the Nazi lines of supplies on the conquered continent of Europe. Tanks in unbelievable numbers are contemplated.

The program, as this article is written, has not been officially approved but it is generally assumed, in view of the situation in Europe, that there is every intention of putting the plan into action although no details are available because of the element of military secrecy involved.

It should be noted that the Supply, Priorities and Allocations Board, headed by Vice-President Wallace, is acting vigorously to conserve needed defense supplies. The order affecting non-defense construction indicates the extent to which the Board is ready to go to keep the supplies of military material up to schedule.

Donald M. Nelson, executive director of the SPAC, is likewise known to be an official, ready to assume responsibility and take the consequences, but like the Vice-President, determined to secure results. He has said that the national defense schedule should be doubled since the nation faces the choice of enduring "terrific shortages for the next two years and getting the job done quickly" or of living for the next fifteen or twenty years in an armed camp. The way to avoid this, he says, is "to go all-out now and finish it quickly."

Neutrality Issues. Republicans Divide. Landon Attacks.
The fight over neutrality legislation in the Senate took a new turn last week when three Republican Senators—Bridges of New Hampshire, Austin of Vermont, and Gurney of South Dakota—introduced an amendment providing for the outright repeal of the entire Neutrality Act of 1937, which amended the law of 1937.

As readers will recall, the President's message to Congress, urging changes in the Act, asked only for the immediate repeal of Section Six, which barred the arming of American merchantmen. While the President suggested that Congress give consideration to revisions of other sections, which, he said, were "crippling" the Government's effort to furnish aid to the nations fighting the Axis aggressors, the Chief Executive did not demand immediate consideration.

The general impression is that the President attempted to avoid an all-out battle on the Neutrality Act, which, he had been advised, would be precipitated by an effort to repeal the prohibitions against American ships calling at belligerent ports and entering combat areas. Congressional leaders, somewhat impressed by the isolationist sentiment in some sections of the country, said that outright repeal might not win in the House and that a long fight would develop in the Senate, or that the legislative aim might be secured by such a close vote as to weaken the prestige of this Government abroad.

The three Republican Senators, however, took the initiative after the House, by a vote of 259 to 138, had passed the ship-arming resolution. Their action was followed almost immediately by a similar amendment, introduced by three administration stalwarts—Senators Lee of Oklahoma, Greene of Rhode Island, and Pepper of Florida—asking the repeal of Sections Two and Three of the existing act, which forbids American vessels to call at belligerent ports or traverse combat zones.

The maneuver of the Republican Senators emphasizes the split within the Republican Party over questions of international policy and follows closely along the line of action advocated by Wendell L. Willkie, who has consistently and aggressively given enthusiastic and unlimited support to the present foreign policy of the Government but with the criticism that the Administration is not moving fast and efficiently in the defense of this country.

Alfred M. Landon, Republican presidential nominee in 1936, continues his vigorous attack upon the President's policies, insisting that the "politics and disorganization within the White House" is obstructing maximum production of war equipment. Mr. Landon says that a small

group "are using the national defense emergency as a smoke-screen for their attempt to build a collective state," with the small business man being the first victim in order to concentrate economic power in a few hands in order to make it easier to proceed with the establishment of a collective state.

While polls of public opinion indicate that many Republicans, if not a majority, are behind the foreign policies of the nation, the record of the Party in Congress indicates that congressmen are either playing politics, as they see the situation, or that a majority of them are in accord with Mr. Landon and the isolationists rather than Mr. Willkie.

Upon repeated occasions, including the vote in the House on the repeal of the prohibition against arming merchant ships, the majority of the Republicans voting went on record against proposals to implement the national defense policy of bringing about the defeat of Hitler and his Axis satellites.

New "Incidents." Our Ships Attacked. Public Reactions.

The incidents that occur in the Atlantic Ocean, where German torpedoes have attacked American merchant ships, and also U. S. warships, can be avoided only if the United States acquiesces in the order of Hitler to keep our ships out of the way of his U-boats and airplanes.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull says that the incidents come about through the known and confessed effort of Hitler to get control of the seas as well as the continent through which he is passing.

All nations have been notified to keep all ships out of an area 1600 by 1500 miles, covering a large part of the North Atlantic. Any ship found in the area will be sunk without warning and without trace, according to the German blockade warning.

Mr. Hull points out that Hitler seeks to drive other countries off the high seas by intimidating or frightening them and that this is a part of

his plan of conquest by force.

It may be said in passing that the German blockade is entirely illegal, according to accepted international law. The tactics of German submarines are also in violation of an international agreement, accepted by Germany some years ago, regulating submarine warfare.

Of course ships carrying contraband are subject to seizure but the definition of contraband has been widely extended during the First World War and the present struggle. So far as we know, the United States has never officially accepted either the British or the German definition of contraband.

While American merchants hips are not permitted, under our neutrality legislation, to carry supplies to belligerent ports, there is nothing in international law to prohibit such trade. The proclamation of Germany, setting up a blockade of Great Britain, does not conform to international law, but the U-boats and airplanes seek to discover and destroy all ships carrying supplies to the British. This is the avowed purpose of Hitler, in his effort to starve out the British Isles.

The conflict between Germany and the United States in the Atlantic arises from the German determination to cut off all supplies to Great Britain and the equally determined decision of this country to provide the supplies. Neither nation is expected to recede from its present position. The result will be numerous incidents, such as those which have already occurred and, possibly, the sinking of German raiders and the destruction of German warplanes by the American forces operating on the Atlantic.

Some speculation results from the present situation, with many persons wondering when Germany or the United States will declare war as a result of the incidents. Apparently, neither country intends to make such a declaration, both apparently preparing to shoot it out on the present basis rather than to become involved in a full-fledged war.

The Germans insist that they are fighting the British and that the ships of other nations should stay away from the prohibited area. Americans insist that they are defending the rights of this country on

the high seas against the piratical acts of a gang of international high-seasmen.

Public reaction in the United States due to the loss of life that occurred as a result of the submarine attack upon the Destroyer Kearny has been amazingly calm. It was much the same when the Japanese bombed the Panay in Chinese waters.

There are quite a few Americans who take the view that ships of this country, including warships, assume certain risks when they go into belligerent areas and that if they are attacked, they are, to some extent, to blame for the incident.

Others apparently in the minority, believe that the assault upon an American warship, involving loss of

American lives, should be met by prompt retaliatory action and that the nation should assert its sovereign rights upon the high seas.

"Jane can't hold her head up since she got back from that nudist colony."

"Is she a marked woman?"
"Yes, the insects were terrible."



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