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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1942

Ninety Little Minutes

The Big Switch Was Sudden

By Robert Humphreys

WASHINGTON
BETWEEN noon and 1:30 P. M., Tuesday, Oct. 21, three men were shot in Pittsburgh, the Navy launched two new destroyers, the Government limited car owners to five tires, and the Japs approved a setback in New Guinea, but an event far more basic to the American way of life occurred within those 90 minutes that has not yet been recorded.

To evaluate just what happened, the clock first has to be turned back a few hours.

On the morning of that day, Senate Republican Leader McNary, appointed Senate Democratic Leader Barkley, pointed out that on the previous evening, President Roosevelt had said that draft of 18 and 19-year-old youths would be necessary, and asked if this would come before the necessary action, Barkley asked "No."

Yet it is a matter of record that at 1:30 that afternoon, Speaker Rayburn suddenly summoned reporters to his office and, with May joining the statement, announced that leadership had decided to start hearings on an 18-19 draft bill the following day, and pass it by Saturday. What happened to make Rayburn and May change their minds in 90 minutes?

If there are two men in Washington who have been fired by criticism of Congress, it has been Rayburn and House Democratic Leader McCormack. What has particularly got under their skins has been the complaint that "Congress never does anything."

When the House met at noon last Tuesday, Rayburn and McCormack compared notes on the draft question.

Within the space of a few minutes they came to a decision. They would sound out members of the Military Affairs Committee, to see if they would support a bold stroke to place Congress

squarely on its own feet. Committee Chairman May was summoned and told that there was no reason to wait for a direct request on Congress from President Roosevelt to lower the draft age—Congress should take the initiative and take it before election day, not after it.

Would he agree to start hearings the next morning, Wednesday, report the bill two days later for House passage Saturday? By 1:15 all key members of the committee had been queried, with only a few dissenting to the plan. May moved over on the side of Rayburn and McCormack.

Speaker Rayburn personally hunted down House Republican Leader Joseph Martin Jr. and told him the strategy. Martin agreed. Rayburn directed a secretary to summon the press. Fifteen minutes later the nation had the news that Congress had decided to do its own pitching on the draft issue.

Truth is that this draft question had been one of the most ticklish subjects in Washington for months. Until Mr. Roosevelt broke the ice with his broadcast to the nation, there had been a parade of callers to the White House arguing furiously both pro and con.

As far back as last March General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, had urged the draft of 18 and 19-year-old boys. By June he was demanding it. At the same time, Secretary of War Stimson was taking every opportunity at his press conferences to make statements supporting such a step.

On the other hand, members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, were wary of the issue and they were a path to the White House demanding that the President not request such legislation until the elections had been decided. As late as the Thursday preceding Mr. Roosevelt's broadcast on Monday, the President had heard a prominent Congressional leader insist that the subject be left dormant for at least another month.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Roosevelt's decision to tell the nation that draft of 18 and 19-year-old boys would be necessary, came as a complete surprise to Congress, and without consultation with members of that body.

Which Will Really Represent You Best?

—By Herblock



White House Hostility Newspapers Were Suckers?

By Raymond Clapper

A VERY nice newspaper friend of mine, who has not been one of the professional Roosevelt-haters, writes me that he is disturbed about one aspect of the President's current feud with the press.

He says he regrets that the President apparently fails to realize that no one of us is strong enough to go it alone. Another quote: "He seems to overlook the fact that no one, not even he, has a monopoly of thought on what is the best policy in this crisis."

During his prewar years in office, Mr. Roosevelt was opposed by many newspapers, and eventually by a majority of them. He certainly had a right to fight back. A good deal of the time I thought he was right. I still think he was right on most of those policies and I think it was a good thing for the country that he fought it through. If it is different story now, it has been throughout the war. Many of the newspapers who opposed him on domestic policy supported his foreign policy long before we had a chance. They have served repeatedly as icebreakers, helping to open the way through public discussion for the war measures that he had to take. Now the tide does not seem far away. It will certainly not wait for Spring.

has slipped some opportunities to do what he could to discredit newspaper publicly.

One incident occurred Labor Day. Newspapers had forecast that the President would set up an economic administrator to control wages, salaries and prices. Some dispatches named Justice James F. Byrnes among those considered for the post of economic administrator. The dispatches had forecast that an executive order providing for this arrangement would be issued Labor Day.

When President Roosevelt instead told Congress either to pass legislation giving him authority by Oct. 1, or he would use his war powers without legislation, he made no reference to the economic administrator. Newspapers printed the greetings he sent to the press in the phrase "Hello suckers!" The inference was that the dispatches were all wrong.

But today we have an economic administrator and his name is James F. Byrnes. The dispatches were wrong on the time but not on the essential fact that the newspapers backed up the President, pointed the obstruction far lobby editorially, helped the President get his legislation, and then saw the President take the action which he had said they were suckers for forecasting.

A newspaper man was in the crowd at the Kaiser shipyards in Oregon when the President made his formal appearance off-the-record trip. The President made a little speech to the throng of workers, and told them that nobody knew he was ever there. The newspapers picked up the word "cheered"—most of them, an exception being the editor who at the direction of the Government had kept every hint of the President's visit out of his newspaper.

Side Glances



"Listen here—you'd better read up the law and learn what I can fine people for besides speedin', or the town treasurer will be asking for a new cop!"

It's The Bunk Drinkin' Likker

By W. T. BOST
In Greensboro Daily News

EDITOR Joseph Daniels,
Raleigh, N. C.
Dear Chief: "Arthur Gore is right," precisely as you say. You are right, everybody is right about liquor. It is the bunk including all its friends and enemies.

Mr. Gore tops his bunk list with the promise of ABC store advocates to lessen drinking and crime and temperance is right. Twenty-five ABC counties selling \$1,943,000 worth of liquor in one month cannot be promoting temperance. They may be distributing this glad heart medicine to more Americans than any man done under better conditions, but the sum total isn't temperance.

But you and Mr. Gore as spokesmen for the saints are due a season of debunking. Remember 1908? Of course you do. In that year of the Lord the saints set their faces toward a salubrious commonwealth, a liquorless nation, and an expurgated population that never would know how to recover the forgotten art of alcoholic manufacture. We got dry North Carolina then, dry United States.

Old Al Smith was nominated and you went to Albany to read his ancient speech. You told him he was speaking the bunk when he advocated repeal, that it would take 75 years to get an amendment submitted and 150 to get it ratified by the several States. You wrote in your paper that no man living in October, 1920, would survive to see the 18th amendment repealed. You wrote again that prohibition is a religion with North Carolina and the Southern States, and they never would consent to a man who advocated the repeal of that amendment. The state chose two repealers for the United States Senate, not for your vote, then Mr. J. W. Duke and Mr. Roosevelt the Repealer. What record did Roosevelt have taken him over. You broke the record for speed in declaring for the Great Repealer and North Carolina broke records in piling up the majorities for the despoiler of the state's religion.

Everybody is right about liquor talk. It is all the bunk. It was sanctified, but none the less stupid bunk, which made the salubrious nation of the next generation a nation of men eating liquor making and drinking had become extinct. Instead we got a population in which drinking by men, women and children, got previously close to universality. In five years after you debunked old Al Smith we had universal repeal and the next year it had universal popularity. The Great Repealer Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Arthur Gore is right; you are right. It's the bunk, and the way to make the other guy forget your bunk is to keep his ever before him.

Platform Of The People Save Languages

Editors, The News:
This year the Department of Public Instruction of North Carolina has proposed certain requirements for high school graduates.

Recently I canvassed a group in the Duke and Carolina colleges, members of the Legislature and other leaders, and with a few exceptions they all favored the compulsory study of foreign languages in the high schools especially Spanish. Among these leaders were Joseph Daniels, J. W. Umstead, W. Duke and a number of the graduates school of the University of North Carolina, and Earle Gosbey of Greensboro.

Last Summer Duke University had a nationally advised Spanish Summer School with a faculty that included the celebrated poet, Juan Ramon Jimenez. The University of North Carolina was the Summer home of the Linguistic Society of America, an association known all over the world. For several weeks the ears of linguists from every great university were more tuned to Chapel Hill because of the many distinguished language teachers attending the Duke and Carolina sessions, along with one other Southern linguist, were given \$25,000 in grants for the purchase of Hispanic-American books. North Carolina will soon become a national center of Hispanic studies.

Corroboration

OWI Report on U. S. Planes Proves De Severy's Point

When Major Alexander P. De Severyy returned to the United States after his brush with the Victory Through Air Force he may have been, as some authorities said, six months behind the times. But despite rapid development of all types American warplanes, the OWI report stands as vindicated today by the Government. The report of the Office of War Information substantiates most of his criticisms.

The report on our planes is unique and engaging in itself, taking as a detached viewpoint that it might almost have been prepared by a foreign government. It tells the story of U. S. plane performance by listing their defects as prominently as their superlatives. And above all it deprecates those types powered by Allison liquid-cooled engines. That, if you remember Devery's book which ran so warmly in *The News*, was the critic's stubbornly and without apparent reason, he reported, American military leaders put their trust in Allison motors, preferred to incorporate air-cooled types into their program. As a result many of our fighters (P-40, P-39, P-51) were handicapped by the handicap of low operational ceilings, were at a disadvantage.

It is worthy of note that a great late-model fighter, the P-47 Thunderbolt, a great Navy carrier fighter, the Grumman Wildcat, and all of our bomber planes had these air-cooled engines. And these are the planes which have won themselves the respect of all warring nations. Of these planes there has been no real complaint by our own pilots or foreign observers.

Thus, on the basis of a complete and unbiased Government statement, Devery has scored a big point. Had we earlier our situation would doubtless have been better today. The final airing of the argument, however, has not changed.

Devery's conclusion was reached by Devery, OWI and the OWI. That U. S. planes, as a whole, are the world's finest assortment of weapons in the air. That, we believe, is what counts and will continue to count.

Hard Times

Moonshiners Hit by Shortages Of Labor, Metal, Sugar, Grain
Back in the brush, where the smell of rumour mash once perfumed the clear air and a sweet-burning wood fire meant that a home-made copper retort was about the illicit business of distilling. They need, hard times have come. These days, they find the signs of war's devastation. When they make reports, they sound even a little sad, like pioneer huntersmen who once found game disappearing with the approach of civilization.

At the stills, they say, they find an occasional woman. Most of the men and boys are gone, either by the draft or in high-paying war work. Sugar is hard to come by. And copper, unless the clandestine plant is already built and in order, is out of the question.

Second Hunch

Signs Again Point to Allied Drives in Immediate Future

We are not to be held accountable if we seem to be struck by weekly premonitions of coming storms in the war zones. It's only the interlocking communiques. Together, they make a picture puzzle of soon-to-be openings to the Near East, in fact, meditation lead one to surmise that big action within a short time is highly likely. It looms. Unwilling to stake the soot-sighing reputation of the Ivory Tower on a single throw of the dice, we merely spread the indications for you all to see.

Remembering that Integrated Allied action on half a dozen or more fronts now seems more likely than a land drive in Europe, consider the latest signs.

The British Generals, Auchinleck and Alexander, are newly active. The Auk recently returning to the Near East, Alexander striking in Egypt. . . . Hint of an attack on the Japs from India in Burma. . . . Intensified action over besieged Malta. . . . Rommel back on the desert. . . . A recent report, ominously stating that the Afrika Korps would feel the heavy weight of American steel in the next major contact.

Reports from Dakar to worry Vichy. . . . A German report of a French airman shot down over West Africa. . . . Scattered reports, slipping out before the censor, indicating that the British and British troops are at bases in Liberia, Senegambia and other points on the African hump. . . . German reports of the biggest British war games by all forces over and around Gibraltar. . . . The lack of combat news from Britain, particularly concerning the U. S. forces under General Spaatz.

Just now major fighting flames at only two points: around Stalingrad and in the Solomon. After the passing of those phases, which way will the war turn? Of the past-integrated decision, it seems not too bold to suggest that the war may be won by drives from Africa, up through the Balkans, out through the East and Burma. The major action in the Solomon will probably pass within 30 days. The post-Stalingrad decision is up to Hitler and the Russian Winter.

Through the Summer we have not made progress toward the winning of the war, as our military situation is not so good as we had to reason to fear it might be. Now that the war of the tide does not seem far away. It will certainly not wait for Spring.

"Well," said the all-out donor of scrap, as he removed the fenders from his sedan, "here's mud in my eye."

But in recent weeks, for no reason that I can find, Mr. Roosevelt has repeatedly indicated an irritated, if not hostile, attitude toward the press. He

Madame Roberto

Prophetic Senator Reynolds Warned Us—Against Russia
If the free press is America's life blood, one hardened artery in that system is *The American Vindicator*, the vindictive little three-year-old paper published by Senator Robert Rice Reynolds in Washington. In its latest issue it sets forth an American parable, that is, a half-fiction, which is worthy of notice because of its unbridled praise of the Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee.

The little table tells of a man who built a magnificent mansion, designed