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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1942

Hold-Up

Hitler's Air Superiority In Africa Throes Us Back

Our progress over the rough terrain of Tunisia seems to slow perceptibly with every new communiqué. From stories of the blustering defensive position of the Axis forces, the news turned recently to the failure of Hitler's reinforcements to break the Allied ring. In the midst of a big offensive, we have met counterattacks in such force as to stall our advance and display in new perspective the proportions of the task before us in Africa.

What was once optimism over the coming heavy blows at the continent through Italy has now become concern over the necessity to keep lines open and establish an immense base of supplies in North Africa. Hitler apparently has dedicated all available strength to prevent that development, and has thus far been able to hold air superiority by flooding planes into the area from bases in Italy, Sicily and Sardinia.

German attacks upon Allied road convoys appear to have been successful, so that the main strength of the British-American armies has not come into contact with the Axis ground forces. If the enemy is successful in keeping more planes in the area than we can match, we might force an outburst of Tunisia, even by smashing airfield after airfield. That is held as a possibility by military authorities.

Our ground forces are greatly outnumbered, but have been unable to run the Bizerte-Tunis theater because of bad communications and roads. It appears that Hitler can reinforce his troops easily so as to make the Allied problem more difficult when land fighting does occur on a large scale. For the present, however, an umbrella of German planes, outnumbered ground forces are comparatively invulnerable, and will be until large numbers of British and American planes are brought into the battle area.

Thus is our African progress being held up, but only temporarily. In weeks, or months, the balance will tip toward the Allied forces, despite Hitler's advantage of nearby bases. When that time comes we may mop up in Tunisia, but still then our hopes for clearing North Africa are slim. In any event, the quick recovery we expected is not to come. American troops are proving the equal of anything the Axis can offer, but without the planes overhead, they'll be lucky to hold their own.

First Cousin

AAA, Like WPA, Dispensable For These War Times

The abolishing of WPA in the second year of a manpower shortage brings up, academically, the question of another alphabetical agency: AAA—the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Nobody, now, is going to get anywhere with a proposal to do away with that "gentle rain of checks" upon the countryside, unless it be over the dead body of the Farm Bloc in Congress. But at least the Triple A ought to be hauled out and examined periodically and critically.

Like WPA, something is to be said for and against AAA. The subsidy which the Government hands out principally to cotton and wheat farmers represents only a portion of what the same Government has taken away from them by the process of erecting tariff walls around this country. Protective tariffs, the Republicans always called them, and they did afford a highly useful protection to industry. But to agriculture, particularly to cotton farmers who were compelled to sell their produce at a world price and buy at an American price, these tariffs were more destructive than protective.

Likewise on behalf of AAA it may be said that the farmer is a notoriously unscrupulous speculator and a poor merchant, and insofar as the Government can assist him to grow the right produce and to sell it at a profit, it will have bettered his lot at the expense of nobody. In other particular AAA is not at all keeping either with the American

code or the self-reliance which is a farmer's principal stock-in-trade.

It is dreadfully expensive. AAA's benefit payments, even in this year of lush farm prosperity, will run close to half a billion. The Department of Agriculture as a whole requires an annual appropriation of \$1,400,000,000 where, ten years ago, it got by on \$200,000,000. And to administer these vast funds and to write its millions of checks to Hiram Farmer and to maintain its field organization, the department is forced to employ a clerical force which eats the farmer-beneficiary, insofar as he is a taxpayer, out of house and home.

The main objection to AAA and the particular in which it is least consonant with the traditional independence of the farmers is, in a word, politics. For the continuation and the size of the farm subsidy depends upon the favor of politicians, a class of men in whom the citizens of the country, including the farmers, have no notable confidence, and who are popularly supposed to play loose with the public funds as much to keep themselves in office as for any virtuous purpose.

AAA, in all probability, is here to stay in some form or another, and let no one assume for the farmer that he has any qualms in cashing the green checks which are delivered to him. Nevertheless, the system in its present form is susceptible to abuse and a lack of restraint, and it imposes a direct burden upon the whole people for the benefit of a single occupation, and it is unwieldy. Most people would prefer that the farmer get what is coming to him in the prices he receives for his output rather than from Washington.

Weaned!

They're Rationing Liquor, Without Regard To Thirst

We're in it now, mates, up to the guzzet. War at last has begun to pinch a lot of people where it hurts badly. The ABC stores in North Carolina's 25 candid liquor-drinking counties are observing three days of silence, right here at Christmas time, whilst their customers fast and get their ration books.

The State ABC Board, by reason of the traffic in which it deals, has always been uneasily mistrusted by the Drys. Not only "taste not" but "touch not" the old maxim runs, and it stood to him, son that men who handled rum must, by the very nature of the demon, become addicted to it or somehow overly-familiar with it. It turns out differently. Rationing of liquor-rationing is that of a bureaucrat who never drank a drop.

The town drunk (hic), for example, gets as much as the dear old lady (hic) who likes to mellow her fruit cakes. There are no inquiries about man's consumption as yet, say Christmas and New Year's, 1941, on which to base his allotment for the Christmas-New Year hiatus, 1942. There is no distinction between whisky which is essential to the war effort and simple tipping for pleasure.

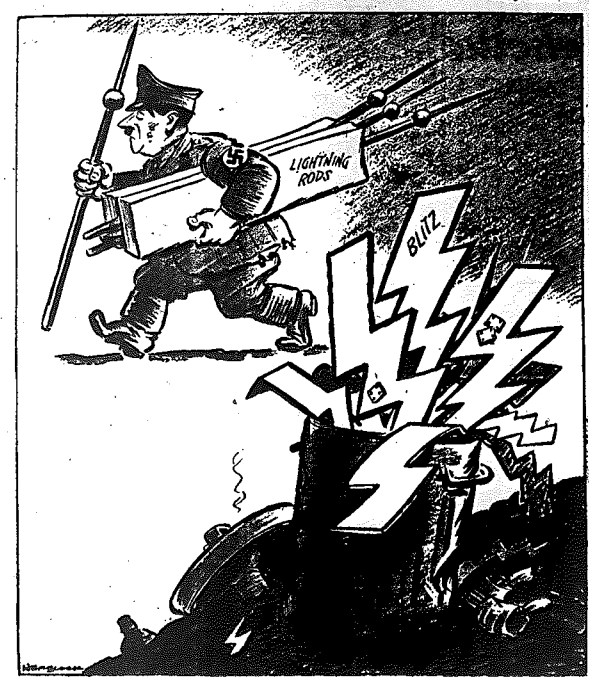
Why, lookee! Even Washington knows what it started to ration gasoline that consumers fell into three large groups: (1) those who would meekly take what they got; (2) those who had to have more; and (3) traveling men. But does the ABC Board make any such distinctions? No, sir. It merely divides the available supply by the number of inhabitants and fixes a quota which is going to make some people hump. Meekness is fortunate, in a way, that it voted down liquor stores. We here can continue to drink up to our notions, not according to a schedule.

Montgomery's men, looking over captured loot in Libya, are surprised to find their own canned corned willy, supposedly lost forever. Well—better luck next time.

Another moment's worth waiting for will be Herr Hitler's day in court, when worried counsel for the accused puts on his only character witness, who turns out to be Laval.

When, in the Winter season, does one see manpower arising in its might as in the Summer seventh-inning stretch?

The New Line



Learning Fast

A Long Year's Journey

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON
We obviously have learned the military lessons of Pearl Harbor. What happened a year ago loomed so forward as if we had been shot out of a catapult.

Within a year we have reached a tempo of military preparation that probably no nation ever equaled in such a period. We have surprised ourselves—as I know from a visit to war industries in the Detroit area last week.

The monumental performance of war industry is matched by the work of the Government in mobilizing an army which must be now around five million. When we criticize the Government for inefficiency, we forget that the raising of this army by the Government is an achievement to match the production of the weapons for it.

One year ago we discovered that this was war, and it didn't take the country very long to rise to the all-out demands that total war makes. If we seemed slow from week to week, the look back over one year gives us perspective to recognize the achievement for what it is.

Will we be as quick and as apt in learning another lesson?
Will we be as quick to learn the lesson that the world is now so small we can't escape the effects of what happens anywhere on the globe? Will we recognize what the heavy bomber means, and what the bigger models that are sure to come will mean? Will we see that the super-bomber, still to come, puts us at the mercy of any other nation that can build in volume? Will we see that the super-bomber also gives us and like-minded nations the weapons to stop future warmakers in their tracks?

Our engineers and our industrialists are smart enough to design and build those bombers, ones that will make the present Flying Fortress look like a snail. Will the rest of us be smart enough to use that production genius to end this crazy business of German or Japanese war mania setting the world afire every time they can accumulate enough powder

to start a war? Will we be so dumb as to have the weapons in our hands and still let them go on doing that to us?

Anybody who has flown over the oceans and continents, as many have done now, and anybody who has a glimpse of imagination about the kinds of airplanes that are to come, knows what Anthony Eden, British Foreign Minister, means when he says that after this war the world will be one village street from Edinburgh to Chungking. Anybody who starts using his shooting-irons anywhere along that street endangers all who live on it. Like the Chicago Loop, it is no place for gangsters to be allowed to play with machine guns. The street of the world must be made safe for civilized people to go about their business.

Also, we expect to have a lot of business to be about after the war. War production has built up American manufacturing capacity that will need markets all over the world. We will have an enormous shipping fleet and airplane carrying capacity for passengers and high-value goods. We want markets abroad.

We also want to relieve ourselves of the heavy cost of modern war. Even to keep in the state of preparedness for total war that would be necessary if the world slipped back into the condition it was in after the last war would be so costly that our standard of living would have to go down sharply. By every requirement of our security and our welfare, we must have a steady world around us.

I was not an isolationist before Pearl Harbor but it was before the fall of France. Events since then have convinced me that we were all wrong in our belief after the last war that we could escape another one by keeping our heads down. We tried that. We have it a thorough lesson. It didn't work. We know that policy will only bring us back again to another one of these wars. It is not even a risk. It is a certainty.

Pearl Harbor brought the war to us a second time. It ought not take three lessons to teach us what is so clear now after the second lesson.

Introducing Sam Grafton:

He'd Rather Be Right

BEGINNING this week Samuel Grafton, a brilliant newcomer, will bring his widely-read column, "I'd Rather Be Right," to THE NEWS editorial page. To our readers we hasten to introduce Mr. Grafton as one of the ablest of all nationally-syndicated writers, a man whose forte is originality of presentation and view. For years, as a star reporter for the New York Post, he has held the attention of a vast reading public.

Colorful and outspoken, Samuel Grafton does not fear to lambast anything or anyone on the national scene, and never hesitates to choose his own ground. In a wide search for a top-ranking writer which resulted in the selection of Mr. Grafton, The News found a man who often takes a point of view with which it may not agree, but one who never fails to be enlightening and entertaining. We believe he may be placed upon the same level with our veterans, Raymond Clapper and Dorothy Thompson, and that he has a whiff of the old Heywood Brown in him.

Because Mr. Grafton, as a crusader, belittler, campaigner and forthright critic has won the admiration of people in all walks of life, we believe you, too, will welcome his sincerity, his fairness, and his ability to cut deeply with a light-touch. We have selected a few comments from famous personalities who spoke their minds on Grafton and his work:

"Samuel Grafton, through his column, 'I'd Rather Be Right,' has become one of the most important writers in our country. He speaks

simply, clearly and with the power of a man who is fearless in his determination to tell the truth."

ROBERT E. SHERWOOD.
"Samuel Grafton hates humbug and loves people. His principal motive in writing is the pressing urge for extension of American democracy beyond the political to the social and economic spheres. His columns are forceful, witty."

RAYMOND GRANT SWING.
"Samuel Grafton's articles are a new force in journalism. They represent principles, not prejudices. They have a wide horizon, not a narrow view. They are human and direct, not academic and remote. To me he is 'required reading.'"

HERBERT BAYARD SWOFF.
"I consider Sam Grafton one of the top-notch journalists of the day. His ability to see the 'whole picture'... and his facile presentation make me a Grafton fan."

WYTHE WILLIAMS.
We make no attempt to urge any writer, new or old, upon our readers, and our columnist will continue to present their own views without the endorsement or suppression of the editors. We simply hope that readers of the editorial page will enjoy Samuel Grafton as we have. If so, we will not have sought him out in vain.

His first column will make its appearance here tomorrow, and thereafter he will take his place as a regular, interpreting the dizzy swirl of the world's news as he sees it. We trust you will make him welcome.—Editors, THE NEWS.

For The Future Home Freedom

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON
ALMOST exactly a year after Pearl Harbor, Mr. Donald Nelson made a report to the "National Association of Manufacturers War Congress of American Industry" on the organization of America for total war. In the course of his speech he made revelations which indicate that the sleeping forces in this nation, awakened by Pearl Harbor, are no innumerate that once properly organized for the national use they will not only win the war, but, if we take account of the lesson, will usher us into a new world of well-being.

Let us, in the midst of this war imagine that Mr. Nelson is making this speech in peace, that we have defeated the enemies and are now out to make a permanent conquest of peace in the United States. We have had a year of mobilizing production to do it. Now, listen to Mr. Nelson:

"This nation possessed an aggregate of resources, energy and national wealth substantially greater than the aggregate possessed by any other nation on earth... our big job was to turn our latent strength into actual strength."

"By the end of next year—1943—America alone will produce almost as great a volume... as all the rest of the world combined... To get that crushing superiority we must stop up production much further... We must bring friction, lost motion and waste down to an absolute minimum; we must make the best possible use of every resource we have..."

"In the direction of this program, the principal task was to get a fairly accurate tabulation of the requirements of the National stage, then, was the stage of great expansion... Tremendous effort went into the work of increasing the nation's capacity... Plans were formulated to convert the entire economy... All the strength we have—strength in men, strength in machinery, strength in raw materials and strength in organization—all of this must be used so as to produce the maximum impact... No more of the old way of planning and organizing is still going on, and will not end until victory is won."

"We shall have, in the end, the full knowledge of what we can really do. And I submit to you in all seriousness... that that knowledge will show us that nothing—literally, nothing—that we really want to do is going to be impossible to us."

These words Mr. Nelson spoke on Friday about war production. On the same Friday, Mr. Roosevelt dissolved the WPA. Yet there are some people still alive and kicking who hope that after this war we will go back to that form of economy that is no good for war and results in WPA's in peace.

I submit we won't. I submit that at no distant date after this war is over some future Donald Nelson will arise and say to the National Association of Manufacturers, who by that time will have gotten over the shock:

"Gentlemen, I am pleased to report that we have within the last twelve months abolished one-third of all the slum areas and rural in the United States. We are behind our program, however, and are not yet using our resources to the fullest."

"Our program for the next year includes the perfection of a hospital network that will not leave a community without the most modern facilities for medical care. The decentralization of industries, with a view to bringing the factory to the farm, instead of the farm to the factory, is making great progress."

"I thank you, and the American farmer and worker, for the splendid vision and co-operation that began the day after Pearl Harbor and has proceeded uninterruptedly ever since."

An American

Away Down Under

Letter From A Soldier In The Christian Science Monitor

WHEN we first saw the land 'down under' it was while going through the passage... I remember coming out on deck, it was night and the moon had not come out. The only light was from the stars and the phosphorescent lighting up our walk on the deck. We were in the rugged coastline stood out like a great black barrier. Word went through the ship like wildfire: We would be in port in the morning. Oh boy! To have a fresh-water restaurant and have a glass of milk. To be on dry land and see trees and flowers and talk to a girl or two.

The ship isn't moving any more, the sun is out. What's that in the haze? A church spire, yes. There are some buildings, too. Land at last and a city... Well, off the ship we came in record time; the dock was blacked out and it was so dark you could just about see the man in front of you. Where was his city paper the streets were empty, but soon the noise of feet on the pavement brought people to their windows and to our sides.

"Hi, buddy, we are glad you're here! Thank God we're not alone any more! Good luck, Yank."

There's a mother crying, her son's somewhere in the Near East. I have someone welcomed him when he arrived.

"Do you know my cousin Jack Smith? He lives in Oakbrook!" "Come around and have a cup of tea." "What's that song you've all been singing? Australia never heard of it. Sing it again!" Wonder why they pulled us off the boat so fast? Didn't I hear they expected an air raid? Sure enough, in the middle of the night the sound of ack-ack fire woke us up; the air was full of searchlight beams and the flash of the guns. We were at war.

We rolled our stuff in the early dawn and marched back to the dock where we boarded a train such as I've never seen before: the engine was about the size of a circus elephant and the cars were wooden and divided into compartments, with two doors for every section. The seat-backs were of wood and the seat itself was covered with a cushion. The cars were about half the size of ours and their color was red. I sort of felt like I was back in the 1880's.

One thing that impresses us all is that all the railway stations and embankments and switches are planted with shrubs and flowers neatly trimmed, which is something we could learn.

The deeper we get inland the flatter and dryer the country becomes. The train makes good time. Before we knew it we are at our destination, it's nighttime when we line up in front of the station. The sun is hot and we are perspiring under our tin helmets.

Some little boys and girls are following us. They ask all kinds of questions. A little fellow wants to carry my gun. I take it off my shoulder and give it to him.

He smiles, but the smile soon wears off as I let go and he has the whole weight and height of the gun and I can see by his eyes he's cured of wanting to be a grown-up soldier, and I reach over and take the gun back from him once again, and I tell him "It's too heavy for such a hot day. Here's a five-cent piece from America."

Side Glances



"He's almost impossible since the North African invasion—he kept saying that's where it would be, and he's sorry he didn't write his views to the newspaper so he'd qualify as an expert!"