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The Alarm

Saving The World Is A Job For Arms, Not Pamphlets

Elsewhere on this page today Miss Dorothy Thompson takes off on a drumming flight reminiscent of her writings of the mid-thirties, when she was pleading with the world for an understanding of the danger that was Hitler. But this time she implores America to wake up to herself, to be done with acting as a fighting ally alone and devote her thinking to a free world.

The Thompson school has it that America should not only be taking world leadership in production of arms, but that it should lead the fight for democracy in every land, now. That school insists that the United States is already failing its responsibility. Well, let's see.

Would the first job to be done by victory in the political victory? Could both be combined in the first phase of a military operation? Would the fascinated gaze of the suffering world be upon us as we searched among the tainted French for a clean-souled general to supervise general Eisenhower's rear? Would the disappointment of this free world be greater if we lost its battle of principles, or its battle of men and weapons?

The United States is again in a position to supervise general leadership, almost world control. But does the rest of the world urge us to assume leadership because we are a sweet-smelling democracy—or because we happen to be the only nation on earth with sufficient credit to swing the deal? In our position, would Great Britain embracing the world with open arms, thinking first of social and moral enlightenment and second of military aims?

Would the France of history, raised to her former position, be first concerned with spreading light in the dark corners? Is there any nation of the earth, except Germany or Japan, whose war aims call for the general annihilation of the enemy and the spreading of a gospel—all in the same breath? For our part, we thought shrewd old Cordell Hull exactly right when he advised excited correspondents to worry less about political intrigue and more about the success of our arms. For, if we do not put the first victory first and let the details of the Fuller life come after, this lady and these gentlemen will have time to make their wild-shaking arguments at leisure, behind barred wire.

Old No. 41

County's Tax Delinquency High, But Debts Are Low

County tax delinquency has ever been a plague upon North Carolina, and its widespread existence in the 100 counties has tempted more than one official to surrender his faith in our entire system of taxation. Since the Legislature of 1933 forgave all taxes for 1928 and prior years, thousands of chronic offenders and average delinquents have left over \$20,000,000 on county tax books, uncollected.

In the list of counties, according to the ratio of their uncollected taxes to the levy of 1940, Mecklenburg stands forty-first. She had, true enough, the second largest levy in that year (topped by Guilford); but Guilford stood in third place. (Stanly County topped the list). Now, however, Mecklenburg's tax machinery is regarded as a model system, often studied by officials from other sections.

Since the County Commissioners set up a department to give its attention to the problem of delinquency, a responsibility shunned by previous boards, great progress has been made. The County may be proud of the record of Collector Jim Delaney as a simple of progress made since 1937 when the office became appointive rather than elective. It may also take pride in the low ratio of net debt to assessed values—2.16 per cent, as against the eight per cent maximum allowed by law.

Mecklenburg's finances, says County Accountant Doug Bradshaw, are in the best shape in history. But he insists that now is the time for a conservative policy. Because Federal taxes are greatly increased, he foresees hard times ahead for tax agencies, and argues reasonably that, "In times of trouble, local taxes are the last thing people

Of Crime

State's Average Prisoner Is Young, Educated And Wet

Look, you, now at the North Carolina in crime, the unhappy spokesman of the State's wayward minority. His ranks are depleted, perhaps by war. Whereas his number was well over 17,000 in 1941, it fell to less than 14,000 during the past fiscal year. Not that he is on his way to extinction, not at all. In what amounted to a poor business year for him, he exhibited new tendencies of viciousness.

The Tar Heel criminal loves his liquor, but not so much as in the past. He was 46 per cent a drunk or violator; 6,402 of his brethren languish in State prisons and reformatory camps. And he is younger, over fifteen per cent of his tribe are under 21, with the ratio growing.

And he has partaken of education. Almost a fourth of the total number of State prisoners are through high school, at least. Among white prisoners, a third are high school graduates. The race between Whites and Negroes, surprisingly, is close, with the Negroes leading slightly (though handicapped with only 30 per cent representation in the total population).

During the past year, however, the whites gained (6,724 against 6,993 Negroes). In the fields of larceny and assault, the Negroes far outstrip their rivals—but when it comes to neglect or non-support of families, the white man is supreme. In that respect, the Negro effort. If you have been waiting for the name of Mecklenburg to bob up, here is your reward: this county, with Forsyth, leads in number of Negro convictions.

The female of the prison species does not change. Again she (to the number of 371-197 white and 197 Negro) was sent to prison chiefly for sex crimes. And she, also, was young. Of 25 numbers, 224 were between 18 and 25 years of age, the majority high school graduates. There goes the failure of a state responsibility: young, educated, liquor-loving and heedless of their world.

Comeback

Return of Sub Pack Warfare A Nazi Threat For '43

If it seems more than passing strange that United Nations spokesmen, in a time of the first flush of victory, continue to issue warnings that the battle of the Atlantic is not being won, then it must be accepted that this new pessimism is based upon hard fact. The first revelation of specific details was that German U-boats are being built at the rate of one every day—twice as fast as they are being sunk. That indicates the direction of Hitler's 1943 offensive.

Convoys in widely separated areas of the Atlantic have been hounded, night and day, by relays of submarine packs, and the rising rate of sinkings has caused real alarm in London and Washington. Increased protection by escort vessels and lighter-than-air ships means only a partial answer. The sub menace barges right into the shippings, throwing a shadow even over our production miracles.

Last week, a strange chain of circumstances led to a light in the South Atlantic, revealing a dangerous gap in our line of defense against Hitler's raiders. These bits of incidental military intelligence form a pattern:

1. A Brazilian Air Force plane was shot down over the coast by shell fire from a German submarine. The plane, a Superfortress, was carrying 2 U. S. Airmen. Ingram announced that Allied forces in the South Atlantic had bagged five more subs, and many survivors of German subs had been captured recently. Ingram also stated that 100-odd persons were killed in the mysterious crash of a U. S. transport plane on the Brazilian coast.

It is unthinkable that Brazil would have allowed Axis agents to set up anti-aircraft batteries in isolated spots on her coast where they would remain undetected by patrols. But it is apparent that in the South Atlantic, as well as in the waters near England, we are failing to cope with the sub menace. The long line of American defenses must be stretched far to the South immediately, or supply of our troops abroad will be cut off.

Cut The Army? We Can't Stop Now

By Raymond Clapper

A PROPOSAL that the United States limit its armed forces, and supply munitions and food while leaving our Allies to provide the bulk of the soldiers, has been tossed in for consideration in Congress.

This suggestion is sponsored by Senator Bankhead of Alabama, one of the leaders of the farm bloc. It is receiving sympathetic interest from farm-bloc members, and Senator Wheeler, the chief pro-war isolationist, indicates interest and concern at the rate men are being taken out of production into the Army.

Senator Bankhead's idea, as he explains it to the Senate, is that we have seven million men in uniform and that to continue to draw, perhaps at the rate of 400,000 men a month, will endanger war production, both agricultural and industrial—although he is especially worried about the loss of men from the farms. Senator Bankhead has offered a resolution calling for a study of this situation by the Senate Appropriations Committee with a view to considering fixing a limit for the armed forces. He offers the suggestion that Russia and China are populous countries and are in contact with the enemy, so that they could well furnish the bulk of the soldiers instead of our sending troops thousands of miles across the ocean. The United States would concentrate on sending munitions and food.

If there is any public encouragement for such a proposal it is likely to gain strength in Congress. Among other things, the shortage of farm manpower provides a very real incentive for some restriction.

This general idea also feeds on the feeling of some in the war agencies that we are raising a larger army than can be supplied abroad. Then there is another line of talk from some of the United Nations people to the effect that the isolationist movement is a new form of military isolation and that the War Department is thus eating up equipment at home when we would

be doing more against the Axis by mobilizing fewer men and releasing more equipment to send abroad. So there are numerous paths to the same direction.

The Army's answer to all this is blunt and simple. It is that those who want to cut down or hold down the size of the Army are in effect suggesting that the Army defeat the Axis with smaller forces than it considers necessary to do the job. The Army officers say that in their search for the most direct ways to defeat Germany and Japan they must consider manpower, shipping, war production, best practical estimates of what is needed and of what can be done. They argue that the Army is soliciting all these questions—and with more complete information perhaps than others possess. It makes sense.

The slogan of Leningrad, and what the Russians are doing, suggests that we have hardly begun to tap our real reserves of manpower and grinding effort at home. We are doing nothing compared with what the Germans are doing, or the British, in utilizing our labor resources. We are still homebound with jobs as usual and life as usual.

The submarine menace is as great as ever. Almost ahead of everything else for the time being should come escort ships, and all that goes with anti-submarine warfare. But the Army people know that. They know that their air force will be grounded unless gasoline is tanked across the ocean in sufficient quantities. They should be as much interested in striking a practical balance as any civilians in the Administration or in Congress could be.

These matters, and how much army we should raise, are questions that public discussion can raise but cannot hope to answer. Congress may ask questions and serve some useful purpose in forcing officials to double-check their programs. But Congress can't answer such questions.

Side Glances



"Beefsteak? Oh, no, dear! I'm afraid while you're home you'll have to put up with a few civilian hardships!"

War Sacrifice

What's All Out? By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK

HOW far all-out is all-out? In Moscow this Winter (according to Mr. William Chappin) all-out means that not a single house has heat, but hospitals and iron hutsacks are warm. All-out means high taxes. In England friends have gone so high that Mr. J. B. Priestly tells us of a friend who considers it more patriotic to buy whisky (which it can be had than war stamps) because of every \$4.50 purchase of whisky the government receives \$2.10 in revenue, with no need to repay or to pay interest on same. All-out means a slim pocket.

There are other sacrifices as measured by the scale of individual sacrifice. In England, almost all milk is given free to mothers and children who cannot afford to buy it. It is sold at reduced prices to others, under Government subsidy. All-out means protecting the national health.

English dietitians have testified that when scientific rationing began, children of the poor sometimes had to become used to larger meals than these they were accustomed to, they suffered initial upset.

Here we get our first glimmering of a possible larger meaning of all-out: it is not only a general doing-without, a sum of sacrifices, a total of minuses; all-out may mean a national plan for maximum efficiency, not necessarily less food for each individual, but the most efficient use of the total food reserve, possibly more food for many mothers and essential workers than they have had before.

We have hardly begun to penetrate to those higher meanings of all-outness. Two conceptions of how to go all-out on the food front are heard of today in Washington. One by H. W. Parsons, director of food production, called for giving more equipment, credit and help to small and struggling farmers, on the ground that their production can be increased while that of the larger, better units cannot be; maintaining prices rigidly, and using food stamps and subsidies to improve the diet and health of consumers. This, as appears, has been killed. Mr. Parsons is out, but present plans for going all-out on food seem to call only for higher prices and less food per capita. This program is such in sacrifices for many; it has the hard edge of a deal to be made. It meets the traditional conception of all-out, but one questions whether it is as genuinely all-out as a proper national farm-and-diet plan.

Now Mr. Herbert Hoover comes along and urges that we remove retail price ceilings on food, letting food prices climb as they will, to encourage food production. This has a great air of all-outness about it. It evokes a vision of activity, stir, confusion, big effort, lack of peace, and many people who have all the material means of all-outness. Yet, if we look closely at the plan, we shall see that Mr. Hoover proposes only that we do in war precisely what we did in peace only with more noise and bustle, that we put our faith on automatic processes and let nature and economics take their course.

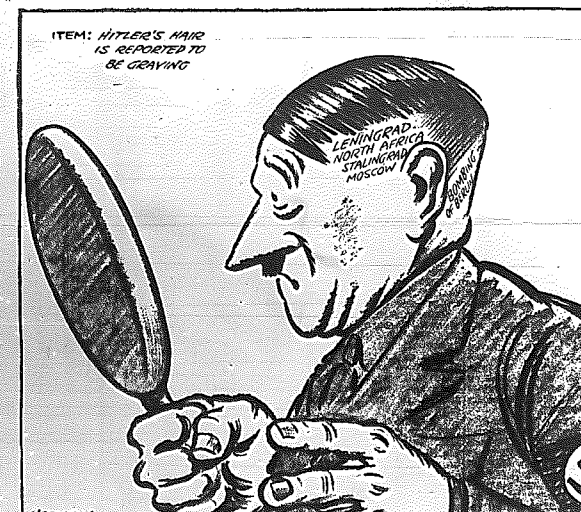
Mr. Hoover's plan means that the dollar becomes more important than the ration ticket in the food market; it means less food for essential workers and more food for non-essential workers and for non-workers who happen to have the price. The only all-out element in the plan is the element of sacrifice.

But we must learn to separate from genuine all-outness its incidental elements of confusion, dislocation, sacrifice, hardship, noise and bustle. In going all-out, but they do not, they themselves, prove that we are all-out. Here we have a second glimpse of what all-outness means: it means a plan or it means nothing.

It means a plan, or it means nothing. Russia showed her all-outness when she blew up Dniepropetrovsk, but without that she sent industries back to the Urals. Russians showed all-outness, not when they died at Stalingrad, but when they planned and launched a counter-offensive from Stalingrad. England showed all-outness when, by the skinny menu of the Stovoy, but by the nourishing one-billing means in the chain of Government factory restaurants. We still have a great deal to learn. We shall win this war not by our pains alone, but by our planning.

There Goes Another One

By Herblock



Wake Up, America! Brown Gravy's In Danger

Baltimore Star Editorial

A S proof that they are about to say it of solemn import, we will state at the beginning that we got this dope straight out of the Wall Street Journal. We found in the Journal's commodity column a three-line commentary on the meat shortage, to wit: That the food value of bread-and-gravy is being "promoted" in the Middle West.

Surely there is something wrong with a civilization in which it is necessary to promote the virtues of bread and gravy! America regards itself as an enlightened nation, fairly bursting with education. When the draft disclosed a certain number of grown men who could not read and write, everyone remarked that it was hard to believe such people existed. And yet, in 1943, there are thousands of people—many of whom like to think of themselves as good, solid American citizens—who know next to nothing about gravy. Has education failed?

The so-called standard cook-books are shockingly inadequate. We have consulted a stack of them, some of which do not even contain the Macaroni-Fanny recipe. In a recent batch of practical guides, given a recipe which will pass, but

it evidently is intended for people who expect to make brown gravy from a dollop of butter or a couple of tablespoons of bacon fat.

When we think of brown gravy we think of brown gravy made from the drippings of a roast, fowl or any kind of meat that is juicy and dripping when it is being cooked. One popular Southern cookbook, written in a sort of "possum dialect from which we fear to quote, doesn't mention gravy either the author assumes that Southern people are born with the knowledge of how to make brown gravy (which used to be close to the truth), or else he is a dandy.

The ignorance of housewives constantly amazes us. The best cooks follow recipes fairly closely, but, like great pianists, they "interpret" to a certain extent. Some of the really gifted kitchen performers play by ear, so to say. A generation ago it wouldn't have been necessary to tell any Southern cook nor most Middle Western cooks, how to make good gravy. They didn't need any recipe; perhaps couldn't read it. The nation has made progress in some things, but it has gone backward in others. There are plenty of people today who can read but don't know much.

The American Uncertainty

We're Wonderful Allies, Poor Uplifters

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON

BOTH in Britain and here the responsible political authorities are refusing to answer questions from the press regarding the situation in North Africa and the appointment of the new Commander-General of Algeria, Secretary Cordell Hull, according to the news reports, "advised the American public to pay more attention to the serious and factual questions there."

Now the American public is not even informed about the war situation in North Africa, and is therefore unable to pay any intelligent attention to the news reports of German newspapers, there are more pictures and more stories from North Africa than there are in our own, and it certainly do not consider them a reliable source of information. But a fog of censorship hangs over our operations there. It is well that Robert E. Sherwood has been sent to study up this matter, but the fact that it is necessary to send him indicates—well, it indicates that it is necessary.

expediency: we will fight the war now and make the peace later.

This second viewpoint has been set forth by Mr. Kingsbury-Smith in the last issue of the American Mercury, as the official State Department attitude, and apparently was supported by Mr. Hull in his last press conference.

I submit, that these two viewpoints are completely incompatible; and that if we continue to try to slip on two horses at the same time, we are in for a bad fall. Furthermore, the contradictions in our policies are confusing our Allies. The confusing of our Allies has a direct bearing on United Nations morale. And the persons who are concerned about this are the people who are most concerned about the war, not those most indifferent to it.

A major question in planning the strategy of this war is speculation regarding the future role of America in the world. As the war approaches its climax, this question will overshadow all others.

The war, as military action, is not isolated from a political history. It is the result of political history, and the war is a continuation; and the continuity will extend into the future after the war. To declare, therefore, that we have no political policy during the war is to declare that we have no political policy at all. And that obliges our Allies to make their own policies regardless of America's.

Speculations on American policy—as a continuity—will determine the Russian military attitude toward Europe and toward the Far East. It will determine the war, as military action, is not isolated from a political history. It is the result of political history, and the war is a continuation; and the continuity will extend into the future after the war. To declare, therefore, that we have no political policy during the war is to declare that we have no political policy at all. And that obliges our Allies to make their own policies regardless of America's.

The truth is that America is a wonderful military ally and a very dubious ally in matters involving the reconstruction of the world.