

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1945

# The Merry-Go-Round

By Drew Pearson

## Allies

A crowd of U. S. soldiers encountered a crowd of U. S. soldiers one night and got to bawling. They mixed it up furiously. After while, the story goes, one soldier who had been knocked winded (in the Army version the prostrate fellow was a sailor) raised his head and cried "Say, ain't we boys allies?"

Judging by the contradictions between policies of the War and Navy Departments, there is some doubt of it. So acute is the Army's need for youngsters in the 18-20 age group, prime fighting material, that new draft regulations have been drawn up giving the Army first call on all such draftees. However, a law dated state his preference of services and be granted it without in certain percentage limits. But a safer deal was to sign up the Navy ("live like a king and die like a dog") just before he became eighteen, thus frustrating the Army and leading directly to the present shortage of replacements in this age group.

It must have taken a real emergency for the admirals to cede the generals a monopoly on the young drafters. But note that the Navy's recruiting of boys under eighteen is to be continued (the Army long ago did away with enlistments except for specialized service). Draft boards expect a rush of post-war draftees signing up in the Navy, thus neatly making for the blue the manpower that is needed in khaki.

Since Pearl Harbor a good deal of the stubborn and noncooperative rivalry between the services has been done away with, with both have performed magnificently where there was fighting to be done. But we think that when the whole record of the war has been reviewed it will show conclusively the need for two changes:

1. A single over-all department for the armed services.
2. A single portal through which all men must enter, thereafter to be classified and assigned to duty for which they show competence.

## Millennium

A tax court has denied two N. C. Supreme Court justices income tax deductions for traveling expenses. The justices have appealed. News item.

To one and all it's worth a thrupence

To see a judge get his come-uppance

And told, "See here, mister, this ain't no law."

By the Bureau of Int. Revenue.

## An Expedient

Wayward Argentina, living under a dark cloud in these days, is still getting along comfortably. She shows no sign of bettering her ways, past a few frowns at the declining Axis, and she's still able to wring some precious goods from the United States despite the official cold shoulder she has presented. The State Department is allowing the shipment of several thousand tons of coal to Argentina monthly—and there appears to be no stopping it.

Some 50,000 tons of coal is shipped down the Mississippi and to the Florida coast monthly, where Argentine ships are waiting. The official explanation is that this is low-grade coal which is not needed in the immediate vicinity of the mines—and that in return for it we get some vital materials among them flaxseed necessary to the manufacture of paint.

Because the Argentine is struggling with an acute coal shortage, we are able to exchange strategic materials in exchange for flaxseed, and New Orleans, who see the coal shipments going out regularly, can't understand this, there have been protests. There is a theory that we should be shipping goods to friendly nations, rather than supplying coal to Axis-loving Argentina.

There's apparently no helping this situation, for we are forced to make the trade for Argentina's goods—even though American producers of flaxseed are trying to keep out of the Argentine produce in pre-war years, because of competition. In this case, the State Department is the one to blame.

## Statesmen At Work

(Serious, facetious and comic excerpts from the Congressional Record.)

IN SENATE debate on the Missouri Valley Authority:

Mr. BAILEY (N. C.) I will yield for Mr. Bailey. I do not wish to stand here and hear the Senator read the Congressional Record.

Mr. MURRAY (Mont.) I wish to call attention to the fact that the bill we have before us today is like the bill to which Senator Norris was referring in the debate which took place on the floor of the Senate on June 3, 1937, when the question of the appropriate reference to that bill was under consideration.

Mr. BAILEY. I want to keep the Senator's position. That is an illustration in logic from Montana. Because this bill is the bill which created the Tennessee Valley Authority, it must go the same way. I was just showing how the bill in the third bill had started as a fertilizer proposal. The Senator would have some basis for his reasoning.

Mr. MURRAY. Let me interrupt the Senator for a moment. This bill does contemplate the development of fertilizer on a huge scale.

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partment has had to swallow pride and principle, and dicker when and where dicker was going.

We've made the same kind of bargains with Spain—and even with Germany herself, through indirect channels. Could it be that Argentina, knowing well enough that Uncle Sam is bound to accept this state of affairs, pursues her own course with tongue in cheek, safe in the knowledge that we won't crack down on her for our own good?

## The Meddlers

Mitchell County is solidly Republican, but leave us not fritter away our time in bemoaning. For it has a Republican background of many generations, and is likely to hold to its line for years to come. It comes by its politics naturally, and as one of a handful of opposition counties exerts a healthy influence upon state politics. But it is now in the hands of the Philistines.

Mitchell's members of the General Assembly are Republican, sitting with the tiny minority. And when the omnibus Board of Education proposed an all-Democratic slate of many members, Mitchell, these Representatives related. One of them wanted to substitute one Republican, saying that, on a strictly non-partisan basis, he was qualified to serve his county schools better than a Democrat, who had been named. And that solution was presented in an amendment.

In the Senate, however, Democrats bucked. They tackled on new amendments forcing the Democratic ticket down Mitchell's throat. They said, in effect, that the controlling party must have the spoils, in any county whatever. And if the gerrymandering job hadn't been done perfectly, why they'd fix that. So it looks as if Republican Mitchell must take its medicine.

Here is petty meddling. Here is capricious use of partisan politics, injected into the field of education where it has no business whatever. If Mitchell, be it Republican, Democratic, Communist or Free-Will Baptist, desires to exist as a political entity, it has the right of control over its own school affairs. The Senate Democrats, ruling otherwise, prove themselves unworthy of the absolute political control which resides in the hands of their party.

## Last Verse

If there's anything to the story of the new German peace feeler—and it has the faintest of things to it—the nature of the enemy is unchanged. Hitler and his black company, by the record, are surely among history's shrewdest hoodlums. They have made the most diabolical use of propaganda to stun victims, assembled on the world's great fighting machines under terrible handicaps, and in their heyday led to historic conquests. But they are, essentially, the dulllest and most obtuse of fellows-at-war.

They were never able to fathom the British mind, and the American mind. Not only did they err fatally in underestimating our power to arm and produce the goods for war; they took a dim-witted line in judging our national will to fight, and the American ability to see the facts of life in a troubled world. And the same blindness which led to their present desperate state still exists—if that peace feeler is genuine.

For the proposition was the same old story of political maneuvering again. It appealed to British-American credulity. Only the most naive and mute-dumb of men could have accepted any such note as this. That the Nazis could have proposed it in all seriousness was an absurdity. That they had been plotting with the Nazi Party still in power as the only force able to control Germany; that they could argue once again that they alone could stem the Bolshevik menace, is incredible.

And yet, if such words were really in that peace feeler, they were not unusual at all. That is the way the Nazis have peered out at the world from the start. Even in the hour of utter ruin they could change. They only put up the useful face of a ham actor to their conquerors.

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WASHINGTON

ONE Nazi question mark which U. S. Army observers have watched with greatest wariness is: When, if at all, will Adolf Hitler use poison gas?

His pre-tem conclusion is that he will not— for two reasons. He figures the Allies have an even more potent gas than he (regarding which he is probably right); and second, he probably knows that some U. S. war chiefs are itching to use gas because of the tremendous advantage it would be to us.

In the Pacific, Hitler probably knows that the war would be over in 12 weeks if U. S. troops landed on the gas-lake for instance, 200 Jima where U. S. Marines have battled inch by inch, suffered heavy casualties and, as this is written, are still trying to get stubborn Jap troops from caves and tunnels. If gas were permissible on 200 Jima, the Marines would merely drop a couple of tons of gas on the island and then wait for the results. They would not even need to land a man.

Likewise on the main Jap island, Gas, too, could level Tokyo off in no time. No invading troops, no costly handling operations would be necessary.

Meanwhile, the United States, not being a series of islands, and now being too far away for successful airplane bombing from Japan, would be virtually immune from gas attacks.

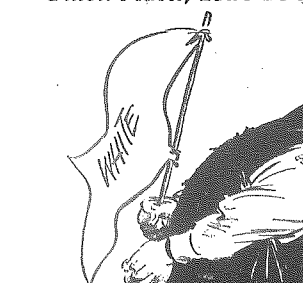
Earlier in the war when it was feared Hitler might use gas, and when the Japs did uncock gas twice against the Chinese, all these things were carefully considered by U. S. war chiefs. But they also considered the fact that gas would have terrific repercussions against the British Isles, for exactly the same reason that they would on the Japanese islands.

Though these factors are carefully studied, gas will never be used by the U. S. Army despite its advantage in the Pacific, unless the enemy uses it first. However, an up-to-date, anti-chemical warfare service is probably one good reason Hitler has never uncocked his chemicals.

## Munitions King

Appropos of Swedish industrialist Axel Wenner Gren's attempts to get off the black list, a report by U. S. Ambassador George S. Messersmith is significant. Messersmith, when U. S. Consul to Berlin, later minister to Austria, was the first U. S. diplomat to warn the State Department of what the Nazis were up to.

## "C'mon Adolf, Led's Be Zenzible, Votta Yuh Say?"



## The Plight Of Greece

By Marquis Childs

ATHENS  
THE estimate given for the cost of restoring the Greek economy to something like working order is \$600,000,000. The question that follows immediately is who is going to pay for it? For small countries whose ports were at best menager for the war?

The country today is almost at a standstill. Under a formal agreement to go into effect in April, UNRRA is coming in to try to supervise the rudimentary task of getting food and clothing to the people.

Already more than a hundred UNRRA employees are working in Greece, and shipments of food are coming in. Greece is the first country to issue an invitation to the United Nations organization, which, under its charter, can operate only on the request of a government desiring assistance.

I talked with UNRRA officials here who expressed the fear that the American people had a false concept of the situation. They pointed out that they cannot provide the machinery and equipment necessary to get the local system going again. Their aid is primarily one of relief and rehabilitation on the level of basic needs.

Roy Hendrickson of UNRRA, who signed the recent agreement, has just made a tour of the provinces, in the course of which he saw some small signs that trade was beginning again. Farm produce was being offered for sale in the markets of small towns at prices that were not too exorbitant. At least they were not as bad as prices in Athens, where the fantastic inflation initiated by the Germans as part of a deliberate economic sabotage is far from being under control.

Boys on the street offer ten million drachmas for one cigarette. That is money printed under the Germans and now invalidated. It is, however, one of the confusing and disrupting legacies left behind by master saboteurs.

Other inheritances are perhaps less tangible, but no less troublesome for the future. The hatred fanned by the German dictatorship goes very deep. Extreme poverty, with famine as one of the chief weapons, was practiced against the working classes. By contrast, many in the upper and middle classes did well under the Nazi rule, and not all of them have been removed from positions of authority, by any means.

Then, in the ELAS uprising, many people of property lost their lives or suffered terribly. Hostages who were not tortured and killed suffered fearful hardships. Therefore, quite understandably, the hatred of those on the political right is now directed at Leftists who killed their relatives and friends.

Among the British, who had the unpleasant job of repressing the rebellion, there is deep resentment of the attitude expressed by important sections of the press both in America and England. If I heard one officer talk about "armchair theorists" thousands of miles away, I should know what they were talking about. I heard a dozen.

## The Quick-Trigger Republicans

By Samuel Grafton

CONGRESS is willing to spend any amount requested for Lend-Lease for war. The outlay to date on this heading runs well above \$35 billion. But the House of Representatives has just passed a bill restricting on Lend-Lease, preventing the use of appropriated funds for such peace-time purposes as "post-war relief, rehabilitation or reconstruction." Billions for war, not a penny for peace, in other words; that is the emotional content of the restrictive amendment.

The amendment was sponsored by five Republican members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. It expresses the GOP's great desire to have us return to normalcy as soon as the last gun ends its roar.

WASHINGTON

though for a long time they wouldn't believe him. Regarding Axel Wenner Gren, Ambassador Messersmith later reported from Mexico City in 1943: "I had known of Axel Wenner Gren's close connection with the Nazi government in Germany as early as 1933."

Undoubtedly he had this close connection with several of the highest officials of the Nazi government including Air Marshal Goering. It was notorious at that time that Wenner Gren was playing with these people. His association with high officials of the Nazi government was well known and there was no endeavor to make any concealment.

There is no doubt whatever that Wenner Gren was convinced that the Nazi government would be able to carry through the domination of at least eastern and southern Europe.

## Both Political Houses

One of the first jobs of new Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace will be either to pick a new undersecretary of Commerce, or let the old Undersecretary, William A. M. Burden remain on.

When Wallace dips into the matter he will find an interesting situation. Burden, a member of a Democratic Administration in a hot Presidential race, contributed \$10,000 to the Dewey campaign fund. In fact, to make things absolutely equal he contributed \$10,000 to both the Republican and Democratic.

Burden wanted to show himself absolutely neutral. However, when you are in the middle of one of the hottest Presidential campaigns in history, and you are a member of the Administration in power, it isn't smart politics to remain absolutely neutral—unless you do so as Secretary of War Winston did, by contributing no money to either party.

However, there is another unique angle to the Burden contribution. He explains that before he made the GOP gift he consulted his boss, Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones and that Jesse advised him to make the contribution.

To White House insiders this confirms what the President suspected all during the last campaign, that Jones was riding both political horses. Jesse's cousin, George Butler, was chairman of the Democratic convention in Texas which put an anti-Roosevelt slate of electors on the Texas ticket. Meanwhile, Jesse was telling the White House that he couldn't control his nephew.

F. D. R. never believed Jones' protestations about his nephew, and today Jesse's advice to Burden now makes it look as if the President was right.



## City Hall Today

By Dick Young

Eighty-five years ago of age by no means a bad thing for B. Skinner of Lynnfield Center, Mass., father of Chief Safety Inspector B. Skinner, in the acceptance of an invitation from Ernest F. Dixon, secretary of the Department of Public Safety, to take an airplane ride, Mr. Skinner, who was accompanied by a step-mother who had been visiting him in the city, was killed.

Mr. Skinner is a licensed pilot, offered to take them on an aerial spin over Chelsea. He accepted. And the 85-year-old father, who was as chipper as a youngster, was killed.

He had already secured train reservations he would have flown back to Lynnfield when he was killed. "I'm going to fly," Mr. Skinner said. The aged man, who readily endeared himself to the employees of the city, was a cheerful and active and is still at work as superintendent of cemeteries of one of these receiving towns that he home was to be visited, showing that the one in ten principle was being accurately followed.

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"These old buses are getting so jolly that sometimes I almost think I'll try to finish dressing at home!"

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