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## Fate Of Rome

### Can Destruction Of Holy City Advance The Allied Cause?

The day of Britain's fear is passed; no invasion looms, and she faces the enemy with a new defiance, certain of victory. Her leadership faces only the huge problems of pushing, with her allies, to the offensive. One of her problems, an old one, re-born in recent weeks, is perhaps the most perplexing of the war: Shall Britain bomb Rome? Beneath the big Lancasters and Stirlings, on any soft moonlit night, the Seven Hills of Romulus and Remus would be helpful targets. In the narrow streets, where little lights before the Madonnas of the shrines have burned unceasingly through the centuries, all would be darkness, but on the cupolas and obelisks without the number the moon would gleam. The great dome of St. Peter's would tower over the Holy City, the 160 sacred acres of the Vatican.

For the big squadrons of destruction, it would be a plucky feat, simpler even than was Coventry for the Luftwaffe, and British leaders turn those thoughts before the world, in Parliament, in shrewd propaganda-styled announcements. The open city, London hints, is being violated by German and Italian. Perhaps its bombing would hasten the breakdown of the shaky Italian morale; at least it would wreck a center of communications. And as for the priceless treasures of the ages, England has lost more than her shepherds. A genuine tribute from Protestant England to Catholic Italy is that the RAF has thus far left Mussolini's capital in peace; and before a determined Stalin loses it, Morgenthau found it would do well to balance the loss of prestige thus suffered against the military advantages to be gained. Now the Italian people are showing signs of great unrest, and only the Germans bring them into a state of numbness of their sacred city, which is not in the true sense a military objective, would give resentment among them, and spread the nation a new will to fight.

In addition, the reaction of the Catholic world is to be considered. The hundreds of thousands of soldiers from Eire in the British Army would become a problem, for Southern Ireland would certainly show resentment over an attack on the seat of the papacy of the Church. The sensibilities of American Catholics would surely be affected, unless it be shown that military necessity demanded such an attack. It is no simple question of revenge for Coventry or of hitting Hitler's Protestant against Italian Catholic, or attempting to divide the Italian people.

Pope XIV, though humiliated by Fascists and Nazis alike and scorned by the Axis Governments, is still Rome's best air raid protection. So long as the Vatican is open to men of all nations, including America's Myron Taylor, there may be little to be gained by turning the bombers upon Rome. It cannot be argued that special consideration of Rome above all English cities follows a policy of weakness. For the only way in which the cause of the United Nations is to be advanced is through pounding the enemy wherever his war industries thunder, his troops gather, or his people may be weakened. If the reduction of Rome to ruins once more accomplishes none of these objectives, then the new flurry of talk in London, and elsewhere, about the crowded old city of blindness should be left to its night under the mellow southern moon.

## No Gas Pains

### Local Courts Let Violators Down Easy the American Way

In Mecklenburg, the OPA Inquisition turned out to be a bit milder than alarmed citizens had expected. When the lights went on in City Hall the other night, the Gestapo was missing. Prisoners were not dragged in, handcuffed and bruised. There was no pouncing judge in uniform, squatting before a flag-draped platform. There was no third degree, and little cause for fear and trembling.

Drivers charged with use of automobiles for pleasure strolled in leisurely, all but one of them, and did business informally with a gas ration board. The sternest justice administered was in the case of the missing lady, ordered to surrender her ration book until she offered an explanation. Of the eight cases prosecuted, five were dismissed. Three men, found guilty, were ordered to give up one coupon, along with a disclaimer-style bureau

cray cost only a few gallons of gas. It was no demonstration of a lost American way of life. It was a simple proof that wartime regulations must be enforced, and that they are being enforced as they should be.

Those of us who cling to the belief that the recent gas emergency was allowed to creep up on the Eastern states through bungling and inefficiency cannot rightly deplore the administration of the new order. If it seems unjust to American to halt drivers and probe into the private lives of their automobiles, it also seems perfectly natural that violators of the regulations should be brought to task.

In this court, unlike others in the city, justice so liberally tempered with mercy is reassuring.

## Not Yet

### In Eastern Mental Hospitals Life Is Still a Sorry Thing

Thousands of the stricken who are dragging out their lives behind the walls of North Carolina's mental hospitals continue to gaze upon their brethren outside with pitiable, accusing stares. For, despite a long and vigorous campaign which is creating its climax, the hospital of the East continue to live under the vicious regime of old.

That was the report a legislative committee heard in Raleigh, and it is calculated to be the final appeal before the new funds are appropriated for relief. In Raleigh, Goldsboro and Winston there is still poor food, cooked and served by patients. Of them all, only Morganton has passed from the days of filth and neglect and white horse stables. For only Morganton found a courageous, eloquent voice in Tom Jimison.

Since Morganton's living conditions were revealed to the state, Governor Broughton has acted with admirable thoroughness, and life there is no longer the life of a prison. Food and care were greatly improved, but in the East, patients have continued to suffer. That they shall suffer no more, officials laid their case before the General Assembly.

Under-staffed, with money enough to operate only ten and a half months of the year, the Raleigh institution has been forced to hire patients in kitchens and dining room. The reaction of the committee is sufficient evidence to guarantee that the conditions will not long exist. It is significant that officials themselves presented the case at a time when North Carolina was aroused to action. In the East, because Tom Jimison has spoken, there is no need to wait through years of suffering for another of his kind to bring the message to the people.

## Silly Season

### Something Went Awry, and It's Frozen for the Duration

The Zodiac, having blown a gasket, or the spinning planet, having slipped a differential cog, has brought disaster upon us. For whereas the Silly Season was once content to await its turn in the parade from Spring to Fall and back again, it is now with us always, and there is a knock in the wall to our Galactic System, and we are entered upon a permanent state of pikaillation. A few old-time.

And, lest The Opposition manage to trap us with haste, bureaucracy and war, and saddle the blame upon Washington, we would caution that the madness is upon the whole world, and may be considered quite apart from the war. The signs are legion:

In Winston-Salem a young football player sent a big tackle, at which he lost a bout with the bottle, broke into a strange delirium and crawled into bed with the lady of the house.

In England, railroad engineers went on a strike because there were no "wakers-up" to get them from their early morning shifts, and no alarm clocks could be had.

The New Statistical Abstract of the U. S., a wondrous volume, was sent out, printed upside-down.

## Triumph Of Character

# Lifting Of The Siege Of Leningrad

By Dorothy Thompson

WASHINGTON  
In his fascinating account of the Hitler regime in Germany, from its inception to Pearl Harbor, Mr. Louis Lochner, twenty years ago, a correspondent in Berlin, describes his invitation to visit the Russian front in mid-July of 1941.

"When we were approached in mid-July with a proposal to go to the Russian front by way of Finland, the neutral journalists pointed out that interested as we might be in following the GERMAN armies into Russia, we did not feel justified in going to the Finnish-Russian front, as we were accredited to Berlin. We had no news jurisdiction there.

"If I am correctly informed," the German official said, "the whole purpose in taking you by plane to Finland and thence by car into Russia is that you are to be brought into Leningrad in the wake of the German army."

"A few days later he called me again. 'It is as I told you, he said. You are to be in Leningrad not later than ten days or at most two weeks after starting from Berlin.'"

Under this conviction on the part of the Germans, Mr. Lochner set out in Finland, however, an old friend asked him whether he intended to enter Leningrad by the Russian border.

he intended to enter Leningrad by the Russian border. The Finns understood the Russians better.

That was in Summer, 1941. It was now Winter, 1943. And on Monday the Russians announced the lifting of the siege of Leningrad.

No journalist has the talent to describe what this means. Years from now a novelist with the capacity to write another "War and Peace" or another "The Miserable" will produce for posterity a description of the year and a half siege of Leningrad.

The city of Peter the Great and of Lenin was a city of 2,000,000 people, cut off from the country except in winter over the ice of Lake Ladoga.

Under constant artillery and air bombardment, in a climate bitter in winter and blistering in summer, starving, freezing, sweating, diving, and at the same time, producing their own weapons of defense, this city held out.

Members of families died of hunger, and relatives kept their frozen bodies in their houses, in order to draw their rations and keep themselves from starving. There was no coal for homes. It went in to run the arms factories in the severest winter in a century.



And when the German assaults reached climaxes workers left factories for barricades, and women passed them ammunition. And in the midst of all this Dmitri Shostakovich wrote his seventh symphony. Thus, the banner headline "Russians Break Leningrad Siege" stifles the breath.

It awaits the treatment worthy of it—a saga of inhuman heroism and resistance.

Nor does it stand alone. For each event on the Russian front overshadows its forerunner. The swaying back of Stalingrad, the liberation of half the Caucasus, the break-through to the approach of Moscow, the capture of one German headquarters after another—Vielkie Luki, Millerovo, Sosokol, and finally, on Monday, Kamenka, is the story of seven offensives in two months, all of them successful, all of them breaking the elite of the German troops, and all of them accomplished after terrible defeats.

These campaigns will fascinate military historians for centuries. The story is of the triumph of idealism over prestige. It is a triumph of character. For the Russians acknowledged every defeat, and drew the full consequences of every defeat. It is not easy for a man to be beaten and beaten. Yet, he did it. At no point is there an sign of his seeking to soothe his prestige. Generals have been shifted but not one of them has been purged as a scapegoat in sharp contrast to Hitler's policy.

And because he did not look for prestige, but for victory, the pres-

tige of Stalin and the prestige of Russia have risen day by day amongst the peoples of the whole world. And this is the most important political fact of this war to date.

Two decades of Russian isolation are now over. It is impossible for now on to divorce Russia from the rest of the world. It would even be impossible if Russia wished it. And this fact requires realism and change on our part. It requires that we acknowledge the fact of a great people, with great leadership, with a modern and great industry, with an indomitable will to live, and with a sense of the future that is grand.

If we combine our forces with Russia, in war and in peace, we will live on the side of the future. This does not mean that we accept Russian doctrines. It means that we acknowledge certain Russian facts and reconsider past views. It means that we pursue a political policy, not identifiable with Russia, but acceptable to Russia. It means that we do not play hand in glove with Russia's sworn enemies in the future.

Mr. Willkie understands this, and what he is saying in this connection makes sense.

## Big Putsch

By Herblock



## Elusive Truth

# Not In Africa

By Samuel Grafton

NEW YORK  
A "truth, truth, what is truth? Truth is what the Senate of the United States is keeping a vigilant watch on our diplomatic performance is shown by its hand-rubbing warm-up for the investigation of Ed Flynn."

The truth would seem to be that the Senate of the United States is determined that whoever represents us abroad must represent the best in American democracy. It is a high standard.

Ah, truth, truth, but the Senate has yet to say a word about another American minister, Mr. Robert Murphy, who represents us in North Africa, and who has shown such a high tolerance for Vichy collaborators that he has earned a large part of the world to rumbling with displeasure. Truth is that the Senate of the United States becomes much more excited about paving-blocks than about Ed Flynn.

Yet truth that shy wanton, if cornered, might be heard to say that we would have been better off had we been represented in North Africa by a man who was up to his ears in paving block, but hated collaborators, than a man who was up to his ears in collaborators and hated paving blocks.

A truth, truth, she is a raffish jade—The other day she heard the Republicans planning to hire a special group of 100-billion-dollar war budget. Sitting on the railing of the Senate press gallery, and leaning her slipper gaily from a shapely leg, she said, "It was all in the point of view. Some people worry, she said, about how many pennies can be saved out of 100 billions, while others prefer to think about what sort of world we are going to get for our 100 billions."

While a number of members considered a motion to expel her from the chamber, she added that some minds just seem to focus best on pennies and paving blocks. And, she continued, if you find a penny or a paving block close enough to your eye, it can hide all of North Africa.

Couple of days later, she turned up in one of the cloak-rooms, where she was discovered hanging by her instep from a chandelier and humming a song about how when Willkie came back from his trip last Fall and said that some of our diplomatic representatives abroad were insufficiently excited about the proper aspirations of the Chinese, etc., not a Republican turned a hair, and nothing was done.

Not that she's for Ed Flynn, she giggled, but what is this magic in paving blocks that at last gets the Congress aroused about the quality of our diplomatic personnel?

Ah, truth, truth, what is truth? Can the truth be that the opposition Senators, in spite of their warm feeling against the President, have avoided all prior arguments over our diplomacy because each of these involved taking a more liberal, a more generous, a more United-Nations sort of position on world affairs? To argue against Mr. Murphy in North Africa, or against the uninspired quality of our representation in China, you would have to stress for more democracy, more brotherhood of man, and thus, in spite of the openings presented, the opposition has kept its lips resolutely buttoned.

Truth is an impudent beggar, indeed. While the shocked Senators grazed here, she came down from the chandelier, reeling back off her stockings, and with a peal of girlish laughter said it was very funny thing, but the Flynn case, about which the brightest diplomatic personnel controversy has been raised, is actually the least controversial.

It's only about paving blocks she said, winking her toes, while the fatesmen, blushing suddenly, looked the other way.

Ah, truth, truth, it is almost as if they had been waiting for a meaningless issue, in foreign affairs, to arise, before they would make an issue of foreign affairs. They of all the ones incident which, had as it was, couldn't possibly make any difference in the writing of the peace or the shaping of the century.

They found a way, at last, to attack our diplomatic policy treacherously way that fitted well into the irrelevant politics of an obscure time.

## First In 50 Years?

# Ed Flynn Is Big Trouble

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON  
NOT in 50 years has the Senate rejected a diplomatic appointment. Seldom does it even act on questions.

For ten years President Roosevelt has been making diplomatic appointments. It must mean something that suddenly, after all this time, a furious controversy should break out over the appropriateness of one such appointment. The controversy cannot be treated as the Democratic National Committee attemp-

to obscure the President's blunder by denouncing the critics as being guilty of an unpardonable, un-American attack on the Commander in Chief. If that is to be the technique of the new management of the Democratic National Committee, then the job of the Administration will be more difficult than ever—and it won't be easy under the best of conditions.

This Administration is in severe danger of becoming isolated from the American voter. Farmers have quite generally turned against it. Democrats count almost nothing in the Middle West. Labor isn't securely held.

The Administration's best appeal now is in behalf of its ideals for a better world after the war, and its ability to turn those ideals into reality. It has partially sold the country. The world ideals for which Henry Wallace has been most vocal and for which the President, Secretary Hull, Sumner Welles and the New Deal generally stand have a deep appeal. They voice the revolt against war, the determination to make this the last war.

But all of that takes a rough job when the President makes a critical appointment like that of Ed Flynn to one of our most important and difficult assignments.

Mr. Flynn was under so much fire that his value as Democratic National Chairman on the eve of 1944 has been seriously reduced. Some regard to see a diplomatic post so important to our international relations and based on a payoff for a political manager who had become an employment problem.

Also it is depressing to see us importing into North Africa, under the banner of the Four Big Nations, a man whose record shows that he has been under fire for a few days ago and has been made Governor of Algeria. His membership allows few facts about political conditions in North Africa, in French or American public, but Ed Flynn's recent dispatch about snakes in North Africa is enough to prejudice me. As James M. Barrie once said, you don't have to eat all of an egg to know it is rotten.

Between the Flynn appointment and the importation of Vichy Frenchmen to help us run North Africa, American isolationists are being handed a fine lot of ammunition free by this Administration.

## Side Glances



## Visitin' Around

There Were Ninety And Nine  
Bridle-town Item.  
Morganton News-Herald

A sizeable crowd was at Silver Creek Church Sunday afternoon, but no preacher didn't come.

On Rationing, Of Course  
Old Ball-Court News-Record

We were also glad to have the Mrs. M. G. B. (News-Record) Coffee with us. Mr. Coffee made a wonderful talk.

Those Tiresome Details  
Silver Hill Item.  
Lexington Dispatch

Miss Helen Starr spent the holidays at home with her mother and family. Helen Starr once said, you don't have to eat all of an egg to know it is rotten.

How To Stretch Your Coffee Ration  
Big Laurel Item.  
Morganton News-Record

Miss Lucy Rice took dinner Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Earl Rice.

You Mean To Say That's News?  
Hot Springs Item.  
Marshall News-Record

Mrs. Tip Nanny reminds about the quality of our diplomatic personnel.

Give Us The Details—She Gonna Get Bridges Or A Plate?  
Porter Knob Item.  
North Wilkesboro News-Record

Mrs. L. P. Bentley is having several letters extracted.

"One more hand—that's always the way—and after that you probably won't have enough money left to buy our next pound of coffee!"