# THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

*And Evening Chronicle*

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SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1943


## The Big Stick

### *Only That Can Halt Lewis And Mutinous Coal Strike*

It is encouraging to millions of Americans that the President has ordered the Government to take over the coal mines closed by the selfishness and defiance of King John Lewis and his outlaw strikers. Now the people of this country hope fervently that Franklin Roosevelt means what he says. This is the time for business; for harsh, stern, blunt methods. Now is the time for action—and the time does not cease with the reopening of the closed mines.

Now is the time the people have been waiting for during long months, many of them for longer years. This is the time for the Roosevelt administration to prove before the people its sincerity with them. This order of the President's is a strong move to keep the war effort moving; it could well be used in that proof the people are waiting for—they want to know that we have come to an end of wondering favoritism with Labor leaders who care less than nothing for the general good of the country, in peace or war.

The coal strike, we may presume, will now be satisfactorily settled, but it must not be forgotten that this mutiny may be repeated again and again, unless the President makes use of this occasion to put Lewis, UMW and all defiant Labor men and groups in their places. We trust that Harold Ickes will carry out the order to the letter, and that, when the mines are producing once again, the administration will reflect upon the wisdom of its ways in raising up this monster of defiant stepchild which has come to work against the nation's good.

It is time that the country demanded a new attitude toward these perverse, selfish and hard-headed saboteurs and traitors in our midst—for Lewis is only that—and that treason in such form be stamped out forever. In swift, harsh action, the President might show Labor and its irresponsible fringe that the nation will not tolerate mutiny — he might also convince a great many Americans that he can find it in his heart to mete out stern justice to Labor.

This is no time for a compromise. The coal strikes have endangered the present and future of us all—even to the future of our Allies. That enemy from within, that John Lewis, should pay for his contribution to the war effort of our enemies.

## Late Payment

### *Break With Martinique Is Chance for U. S. Coup*

Now, apparently, we come to a long-postponed time of judgment with rebellious Martinique, an Axis outpost in the Caribbean which has long been infested with enemy agents, working against United Nations shipping in the Axis submarine campaign. Now, at last, we have spoken as a mighty nation should speak with defiant little offspring of the enemy who contribute to our danger. Now we are ready for decisive action.

The virtual blockade of the island was not enough; it imposed great hardships upon the population, but it did not of necessity halt the activities of Axis agents harbored there. Now, with the recalling of our representatives there, we prepare for a sterner course of action. It will be well if we give Admiral Robert the answer he has long awaited with a show of our power. It will be well, indeed, if Martinique is seized as it should have been seized months ago, and a source of intrigue and espionage cleaned out.

We look forward to the day when a general awakening of American policy leads our officials to take action on fronts all over the world; action which has thus far been too meek and mild. In Martinique is an opportunity for a new American diplomacy to begin to assert itself. Too long have we dallied with weaker powers, bending over backward to make the democratic gesture, injuring our own welfare to be big-hearted and open-handed. What we need now, with Martinique as well as with the vestiges of Vichy Government in Africa and in Franco's Spain, is a hard-headed policy.

We are at war, and the sympathies of Martinique, Africa and Spain affect our cause in the same way as do those of our enemy. Now may the State Department forget for a moment its traditional namby-pamby sentiments and give Martinique a up-to-date lesson it will understand.

## First Rumbles

### *Goebbels Makes Rumors Of Nazi Weakness Official*

In the shrill chattering of Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels this week might have been heard the first rumbles of the coming crash of the Nazi war machine. The clever Minister of Propaganda, screaming German confidence and speaking familiarly of war's immediate end, may have revealed new weaknesses of the Third Reich. Perhaps it is too much to hope that the lame little doctor inadvertently broadcast the true state of the Reich for the first time, but there are important inferences to be drawn from his words.

He spoke of invincibility and invulnerability:

*"Invasion of the European continent is absolutely impossible. The majority of Europe is firmly in our hands. Gigantic fortifications on all endangered borders enable us to operate on the Eastern front at liberty.*

*"What on earth entitles the British to hope for our defeat? We are practically invincible, unless we should voluntarily and without any reason give up fighting. That this will never be the case will not be doubted by anyone."*

He was apparently straining, in order to reassure his people. He spoke as a man attempting to bolster a dangerously weakened morale. What would be the need of such language in a nation confident of its arms? He refers to "all endangered borders," in itself an admission of a certain military weakness—because no fortifications can be stronger than the weakest point in the line. At any unfortified—or weakly fortified—spot, the maximum Allied power might be thrown, and the entire system would collapse. His reference, of course, was to the borders of Europe, and not Germany.

He denied also that peace feelers had been put out in neutral countries, and claimed that the chances of total victory were now better than ever. And why should there be an occasion for such explanation in Germany, where the people are uninformed and misinformed by Government censorship? Are the rumor-mongers busy in the Reich?

He spoke of the effects of British bombing upon Germany—and added that it was balanced by U-boat warfare—but failed to mention American bombing at all. There is no reason for American resentment of such an oversight—the Third Reich woos America and would create the impression that the U. S. does not hope for the German collapse. The Goebbels picture was one of the Reich caught between the Eastern Front and British bombing—and doing very nicely, thanks.

He pictured the end of the war, as if it were coming tomorrow:

*"If the war should suddenly be concluded the Axis powers would have gained ten times more than even the most optimistical optimist would have believed at the beginning of the war. Britain, however, would have lost ten times more than even the most pessimistic of pessimists on the British side would have believed in September, 1939. If the British, having scored so insignificant successes of relative character only, have courage to believe in their final victory, how much greater are our chances of victory?"*

To whom is Goebbels explaining these gains and losses? Is he simply furthering the ancient campaign of German Sovereignty, of *Deutschland Uber Allies?* If so, how does he expect the driven German people to swallow his tale, that the war might end suddenly with a German victory, that Germany is invincible, and that Germany seeks no peace? Does he expect the average German to believe the growing might of the United Nations indicates that the enemies of the Reich might be ready at this moment to accept the view of "most pessimistic pessimist" and sue for peace? No, the doctor loses his magic touch. He needs a new line—or a victory.

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"Except for browsing through a few of these post-war plans," said the voice on the bus, "I don't have the time for escape literature."

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We don't know why Hitler goes on conferring with the Duce, but perhaps it's too late now to break in a new listener.

*He Was A Rake Among Scholars, And A Scholar Among Rakes.*—MACAULAY.

*Grisly Fancy*

# Nazi Horror Tale

*By Dorothy Thompson*

WASHINGTON

THE conditions in the Smolensk territory are such that no valid investigation of the Nazi story of finding thousands of Polish officers, slaughtered and buried by the Russians, is possible. The territory has been for two years—since July 1941 — in German hands. They have had every opportunity to plant any kind of atrocity story they want.

But the story they tell is simply incredible. They claim, just now, to have found the common grave of these officers, through stories told them by Russian peasants, who for two years have kept silence. The officers, dressed in their uniforms, with their medals, and with identification papers, letters, and diaries in their pockets, are said to have been found in a common grave, atop which grew three-year-old trees. This fixes the date of the slaughter, before the German occupation.

The bodies were, of course, not embalmed, and have been decomposing for three years in the Smolensk climate, where the ground freezes to a depth of eight or ten feet in Winter, then thaws, becomes mud, freezes again, and hardens and blazes with heat in Summer. Yet these bodies are in such a state that Nazis could even identify bayonet wounds in the legs, as "Russian" by the width of the blade cuts.

Their papers were legible. Everything was identifiable. And on the basis of this the whole of Poland is being set ablaze with wrath against Russian assassins, who, according to the Nazis were Jews and OGPU men. I have consulted a number of physicians and also the office of the Chief Medical Examiner at the Bellevue morgue.

These experts tell me that an unembalmed body after three years is normally in such a state of decomposition that flesh has liquified and part from bits of skin nothing is left but bones. If buried atop each other, the decomposition process is accelerated. Paper also disintegrates, and clothing. Only teeth are identifiable—to the man's own dentist.

The Nazis, at first, did not try to explain the preservation of the bodies. Now they are doing so. They say the bodies were buried in clay (Ton-Erde) which preserved them. Experts know of no such clay. They say hundreds of bodies have been disinterred from clay in the same state as if disinterred from ordinary earth. There are records of bodies being preserved by disinfectants in the soil. One stack was found in a salt well in Salzburg. Another was once found in a peat bog. Mummified corpses have been found in deserts, and frozen ones in glaciers. But no one knows of any found in clay.

The relative moisture of the soil hastens or retards decomposition. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines clay as "a substance very soft, more less coherent, when dry retentive of water and often plastic when wet."

The grave in which the Polish officers were "discovered" is 22 feet by 56 and deep enough to take twelve layers of men. That is an enormous pit. We are asked to believe that Russian assassins chose just such soil, very hard to dig, easy when wet and brittle when dry, in which to bury these bodies. We are also asked to believe that the OGPU laid them out with their documents, diaries, and everything else.

We are asked to believe, furthermore, that these papers were preserved by the "fat from the corpses." Again, experts I have consulted, say that animal fat, organic substance, would also decompose and be no such preservative. Only mineral oils would perform that function.

The bodies were not discovered because carefully hidden by a three years' growth of trees. In other words, the Russians tried to camouflage the grave after leaving every possible identification with the corpses.

But if the grave was made in 1940, the trees were only a year old when the Germans first came and the spot therefore visible. And, of course, everyone knows three-year-old trees can be transplanted. And, finally, trees do not flourish in clay.

This fancy tale looks to me more like German thoroughness than like Russian ruthlessness. It reminds me of the case of Van der Lubbe, in the Reichstag fire, caught red-handed, with a Communist Party card in his pocket.

I don't believe this tall tale. I don't believe these corpses are three years old. But I do think there are important reasons why the Nazis launch the story, and about these reasons I will speculate in another column.

### *A Lot of Help He Turned Out to Be!*

—*By Dorman Smith*

*Permanent Break*

# Russia Vs. Poland

*By Samuel Grafton*

NEW YORK

SOME political realities: The Soviet note is not a mere break with the Polish government-in-exile. It is an attack upon the Polish government. It is not only a complaint against what the Polish government has done. It is a complaint against what the Polish government is. It does not charge merely that the Polish government has offended Russia. It charges that the Polish government has joined Hitler.

It is later than we think. The issue is not whether relations between Russia and Poland can be patched up. The issue, in Soviet eyes, is probably whether the other United Nations will continue relations with the present Polish government. The plain truth is that the Poles has served notice she will not tolerate an anti-Soviet government of any kind or variety on her Western frontier.

This alone can explain Russia's failure to address an open appeal to all the United Nations, asking them to exert pressure against the Sikorski government, persuading it to alter its attitude. Such an appeal, an obvious move, would have mobilized sentiment throughout the Allied world. Pressure against the Sikorski government would have been prompt and powerful. The Soviet Union is not interested in changing the mind of the Polish government. It is interested in changing the Polish government.

Let us not be children. We may be sure that every one of the consequences of this rupture of relations was foreseen in the Kremlin. The break was made, not in spite of these consequences, but but to bring these consequences about. Russia wanted these consequences. That is why she made the break. If she had not wanted the consequences, she would not have made the break. The immediate consequence is to raise the question: Who speaks for Poland, now, with Russia?

The Soviet action, therefore, throws into doubt the continued existence of the Polish government-in-exile. For if Poland does not have a government which can speak with Russia, she hardly has a government. To "speak with Russia" is the major task of Polish statesmanship for the next generation. The Soviet note, by denying to the Polish government-in-exile the right and power to "speak with Russia" has, to that extent, cut away the base of the Sikorski government's power, even in Poland. That is what is involved, and we had better look it full in the face.

The break is not likely to be patched up. There is nothing to patch up. The Soviet Government will insist on a friendly government on its Western border. It will not be satisfied with less. German propaganda scored a brilliant victory, only in the sense that it accelerated existing anti-Soviet trends within the Polish government-in-exile, and made them visible, as the Poles ran to the Red Cross to confirm a German story. The break itself may turn out to be far from victory for German propaganda. It may turn out to be punishment, harsh, prompt and effective, for those who instantly credited the German story about the 12,000 murdered Polish officers. If the break leads to the creation of a Polish government which refuses to believe German stories, then the break may turn out to have been the most carefully conceived of all possible answers to German propaganda. That is the reason for the break. It was not petulant. It was studied.

The affair is tragic, for Sikorski is the best leader the Poles have had in a long time. Russia's action is a summons to him to remove some of the people near him, and it is a final statement that she will not tolerate anti-Russianism to the West.

That has now become one of the clear facts of the war, like the weather. It comes with a shock, like a dash of cold water. We have all talked about, and most of us have agreed on, the need for an "understanding" with Russia. It now turns out that this is not mere talk, that Russia insists on this, that the war is a serious war, for serious purposes, and that little games are out.

The question is not one of getting the Polish government to revise its actions in connection with the disputed murder. It is a question of getting the Polish government to revise its attitude, and of whether that can be done without revising the Polish government. Those who approach the issue on a lesser basis might just as well approach it by stroking a four-leaf clover.

## Visitin' Around

**Wake Up, You, Before th' Johnson Grass Takes th' Garden**
(Shady Grove Item, Lexington Dispatch)

Glorious April! Flowers blooming, birds singing, leaves peeping, hen clucking, biddies cheeping and lads and lassies hearts turning to love.

**Come on, Fred, You Know th' Ground's Dry Enough to Plow**
(Silver Hill Item, Lexington Dispatch)

Fred Starr, who spent the week-end at home, is suffering with a strained back. We hope for him a speedy recovery.

Side Glances

"Henry wouldn't miss turning that program off for anything!"

*Trip Over France*

# Tail Gunner

From "London Calling"

I WAS feeling very hot and uncomfortable in my turret. I was sitting with my hands resting on the control column. The sun was pouring in and I felt as if I were melting like butter. I usually feel very cold when I am flying—I am used to night bombing. This was the first time I had been on a daylight raid and I was wearing too many clothes. However, it was my fault and I had to grin and bear it.

I had a wonderful view all around me. The sides of my turret were made of perspex so there was nothing to stop me seeing out. We were over the sea. It was a wonderful blue. It was sparkling as though there were hundreds of little lights down there winking up at us. There had been silence down the intercom for some time. Then it was broken by the navigator saying: 'Another fifteen minutes'll see us there.'

'Keep a very careful look-out, everybody!' added the pilot.

We were nearer the French coast now, and I could just make out the fields and the woods. I should have liked to be able to look longer. This was the first time I had flown near France in the daytime . . . but I had to search the sky above, below and all around me. My eyes ached, staring into the blue of the sky. If there were fighters about we should soon see them, as we were very near our destination.

Suddenly the front gunner said one word down the intercom . . . 'Fighters.' Although I had been expecting to hear it for some time, it gave me a sort of prickly feeling down the back of my neck.

They were too far round for me to see them . . . but in a few seconds I saw three others, flying in formation several miles away well above us. They were not closing in. They were flying from the port round to the starboard quarter, and I gave their position and range to the pilot.

'There are some climbing up,' I again heard down the intercom. Evidently they did not intend to attack until they were up in full force; they seemed to be sizing us up and wondering how formidable a target we should be. Well, they were soon to find out!' More fighters were climbing to join those already up there. I could now see three formations of three, and then six more joined them. They were all above four miles away, and still they showed no signs of coming in. The front gunner said he could see twelve more from the nose flying across our track. All a long way off. Still they did not come in to attack. Evidently they didn't consider themselves strong enough even yet. We were within a few minutes of the target, and the navigator said he could see it quite clearly. The rest of the formation got into position behind us, ready to drop their bombs.

I sat, keyed up, waiting. Sitting waiting to be attacked was a great strain. When were they going to come at us? We kept on, getting nearer the target every second. The fighters flew around us in a ring now about two miles away on all sides. There were dozens of them there. They were flying round in twos and threes. It made me think of seagulls round a fishing boat before the nets are hauled in.

Suddenly the puffs of smoke appeared as if from nowhere. They were the shells bursting . . . round, solid, and neat at first, then bigger and bigger as though they were swelling. Then they would become ragged at the edges and turn into grey cloud. There were dozens of them all around, and, as we moved, fresh ones followed us.

Occasionally I actually saw the shell on its upward flight, looking like a silver streak soaring to the sky. Suddenly it would stop and give place to one of these large puffs. They were never alone—always surrounded and followed by others. I wasn't watching out for the shell bursts—though I could see them and hear them and feel them all the time—I was looking around for fighters . . . watching those I could see, and searching the sky for any more. The sky behind us was getting thick with fumes and smoke of bursting shells. They were firing all they had got right at us, and as hard as they could.

The crump of the shells around and below us was continuous. Many times I was blown hard against the side of my turret, or off the seat, yet I hardly noticed the barrage! I was waiting . . . waiting to be attacked, waiting to defend our airplane from the fighters flying around and above us. They were still holding back. The sky was getting very thick with smoke, and it was difficult to see. I couldn't see very clearly any more. It was rather like looking through a fog or a thick haze, with fresh clouds appearing continually.

And then, suddenly, the fighters were among us. They no longer seemed to be hovering at a distance, but were very near and very active, like seagulls when the catch begins. For the moment our plane was left alone and those behind were getting the brunt of the attacks.

I saw one fighter burst into flames, roll over on its back and dive down toward the sea leaving a trail of black smoke behind it. Almost at the same time I saw one of our own planes diving down with smoke pouring from two of its engines, and with three Germans on its tail. I couldn't tell which one it was or who was in it. I did not stare to watch it for long as I couldn't keep my eyes fixed in one place for more than a few seconds: I had to keep on looking around me, peering through the smoke clouds, turning my turret first one way and then another.

Through all the medley and the noise of shell-bursts I heard the navigator giving directions to the pilot. We were on the bombing run-up now. He didn't seem to notice at all the commotion of flak and shell-bursts around him; only the target below. As I heard him giving his directions of 'left,' 'right,' and 'steady,' I could feel the airplane turn and check as the pilot made the corrections. 'Bombs gone!' he finally said . . . then, almost immediately: 'I got a weird sight.'

Almost as soon as the navigator had said: 'Bombs gone' I saw a fighter diving down on us. I immediately called through to the pilot: 'Fighter diving down port quarter up!' I started giving him directions for turning. At the same time I elevated my guns and got him in my sights. As we turned, the fighter passed over our heads. Then he was out of my range of vision. As soon as I lost sight of this one I saw another one climbing up at us, and again I called through to the pilot: 'Fighter starboard quarter down.'

The fighter started firing at us almost as soon as I spotted it, and I saw the flashes from his guns and the tracers streaking past us. I opened fire, although he was at extreme range, hoping to put him off—I had plenty of ammunition and could afford to use it. He came steadily in, firing in bursts, and I replied with my guns. He still came in, getting nearer . . . and I continued to fire back. I could hear and feel his shells and bullets striking the fuselage just behind me. Still he came in, nearer and nearer. I felt no antagonism, but was calm yet determined to shoot him down.

I had no feeling of fright . . . only of amazement that I had not shot him down. We seemed to have been shooting at each other for so long. I was also amazed that I had not been hit, as the bullets and cannon shells were pouring all around me continuously. Perhaps I had been hit and didn't know it . . . I would look around afterwards.