

EDITORIAL PAGE

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ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT
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Limitation of Construction May Be Blessing in Disguise

THE decree of the Supply Priorities and Allocations Board, forbidding the start of public or private construction calling for use of critical materials needed for defense or for public health and safety, was to be expected. It will cause postponement of many undertakings; but it is not surprising, since it is precisely the purpose for which the S. P. A. B. was set up.

The materials listed as "critical" include steel, copper, brass, aluminum and bronze. Other materials may be deemed critical a little later, if not now. The decision will rest with the S. P. A. B.

The decree is specific as to public as well as private construction. Both are under the ban except as directly essential for defense or for the health and safety of the civilian population. This cannot be construed as obstructive to private building, especially home building, in areas of congested population. It should not stand in the way of necessary street and sewer improvements, nor of other local public works, the occasion for which cannot fairly be questioned.

Very definitely, however, the S. P. A. B. is clamping down on those miscellaneous undertakings which the country has come to speak of as "projects." For more than eight years, federal money—actually taxpayers' money—has been spent by billions of dollars on almost any kind of project promoters could cook up.

In the lavish and at times inexcusable use of major purposes now held to be essential for the major purposes of the emergency, the federal government itself has been by far the worst offender. Private concerns and individuals, naturally looking for safety in investment and some return on money invested, are not disposed to be wasteful of any materials, using no more than required for purposes in hand.

On the whole, then, the decree of the S. P. A. B. may be regarded with some encouragement, rather than with dismay. Certainly it comes closer to the "brass tacks" level than any of the previous conflicting and confusing ultimatums issuing from the heterogeneous array of boards, authorities and agencies which are supposed to be dealing with the emergency.

Assuming that the S. P. A. B. is to be reasonable, fair and just in dealing with priorities, the method outlined in its decree should be effective, first of all, in curtailment of non-defense expenditures by the government. So far no voluntary concessions toward economy in the cost of non-defense activities have come from any branch of government. All concerned have been eager to forget the statement of Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau that at least \$1,000,000,000 a year could be saved. Practical restraint by the S. P. A. B. seems in order.

DISCUSSION is protracted as to whether the United States is at war or not at war. Then an unexplained explosion shatters an underground powder magazine at Sitka, Alaska. A \$13,000,000 fire sweeps through a big rubber plant at Fall River, Mass., destroying thousands of tons of crude rubber. These incidents multiply. If we are not at war with anyone, the suspicion deepens that someone is at war with us.

LAND of Their Birth THIS is the kind of news one enjoys reading these days. A young American-born Japanese is serving in the United States Army in a California camp. The camp seemed a little barren and dreary. The youth enlisted the aid of members of a California Japanese nursery association. They provided 6,000 shrubs and plants to beautify the camp.

There are 3,000 American-born Japanese youths in that camp. We venture the belief that the very great majority of those young fellows are equally loyal to this land of their birth. The fact is, we have not read of any other native son doing a stunt like that.

ON Land, Vichy May Cringe to Nazis, but Not on Sea DESPITE a policy of collaboration with the German conquerors of France, the Vichy government so far has spared the former allies of the fallen republic in one respect. The bulk of the French fleet, remaining under control of the Vichy government, has remained inactive.

Only a relatively small part of the French armada can be regarded as at the disposal of the Free French forces. Flying the flag of Lorraine, the Free French tri-color, are two battleships, one new cruiser, two heavy destroyers and two submarines. Both submarines have been damaged in action, and one has been under repair at the Portsmouth, N. H., Navy Yard.

Immobilized for the time being in harbors of the West Indies and at Alexandria, Egypt, are one French battleship, five cruisers, an aircraft carrier and one mine layer. Remaining under Vichy control, if reports are to be credited, are seven battleships, an aircraft carrier, five heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and a large number of older destroyers and torpedo boats. Two of the battleships and the aircraft carrier have been severely damaged.

The Vichy fleet has not been reported at sea in any capacity. But it represents a formidable reservoir of naval tonnage that could be employed against Britain. The remarkable thing is that up to this time, the Petain-Darlan government has apparently succeeded in blocking any use of the French warships against the former allies of France. But on the other hand, it may be that this considerable naval force is held in reserve and being prepared for some new invasion attempt or for some other stab at the British Empire yet to come.

PRIVATE LIVES

By Edwin Cox

GADGETS BY GERTIE
NO WONDER GERTRUDE LAWRENCE HAS SUCH AMUSING JEWELRY—SHE DESIGNS IT HERSELF, INCLUDING THAT CHARM BRACELET WITH A COMPLETE TOILET SET IN MINIATURE.
'I'M FROM UTAH' WHEN MOST OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES WERE SCARCELY OUT OF SCHOOL, MARRINER ECCLES, NOW FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD CHAIRMAN, WAS TOURING SCOTLAND AS A FROCK-COATED MORMON MISSIONARY!
TWO BLACK CROWS BEST-LOVED PETS OF THE LATE ELECTRICAL WIZARD CHARLES STEINMETZ WERE THESE LUGUBRIOUS BIRDS NAMED JOHN AND MARY.

Germans Take the Honors for Best Spies Only to Have Goebbels Mess Things Up

By JAY FRANKLIN

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, Oct. 14.—The smartest piece of intelligence work pulled by any spy service in this war was the Nazi job in getting the text of Roosevelt's letter introducing Harriman to Joseph Stalin, its publication in garbled form by Dr. Goebbels is, however, an evidence of stupidity which goes far to balance this big coup.

There are also in England quite a few Tory remnants who are opposed to British help for Soviet Russia and there are without question plenty of individuals in the United States, Canada and England who would base their hostility to Stalin on religious grounds.

THAT the leak could have been in the White House itself is unthinkable. Yet it cannot be doubted that Washington also contains a number of astute Nazi agents. However, it would require the cooperation of one of the confidential members of the White House staff to get a copy of such a letter and it seems highly improbable that anyone of the President's assistants is involved even to the degree of carelessness in handling confidential papers.

AS for the daring spy who got the goods, he has earned the respect of the world's intelligence systems. That means, unfortunately, curtains and a hearse if he is caught by the British, or years in a prison cell if he is F. B. I. land him.

Even Under Cloak of 'Military Secrets' Bungle Boys Cannot Hide All Errors

By BRIG.-GEN. HUGH S. JOHNSON

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, Oct. 14.—"Sudden" is the word, for S. P. A. B. cracking down on non-war construction was clearly in the cards. It was the object of a major division of the 1918 War Industries Board which planned its work long in advance with ample notice of its intentions.

MR. HILLMAN was playing some kind of union politics which, a cryptic remark of John Carmody suggests, was in part due to a possibility of widespread strikes by A. F. of L. in other parts of the country against the defense housing effort.

WHY? So far as is known only because Mr. Hillman wanted a contractor who uses A. F. of L. labor instead of one (such as this low bidder) who uses C. I. O. labor. Another angle was that A. F. of L. objected to this contractor because his houses are, in part, prefabricated on modern mass-production methods.

IT is becoming more apparent daily that the un-planned priorities effort has been botched and bungled and complaints of sufferers throughout the country are rising like a tide.

SENTENCE SERMONS

- NO ONE IS SO—
—Helpless as the man who will not help himself.
—Right that he cannot afford to listen to his critics.
—Wrong that the refusal to change will not make him worse.
—Ignorant as the man who will not learn.
—Popular as the one who tries to be something else first.
—Strong that he cannot be upset by forces within himself.
—Badly fooled as the man who fools himself.

Maybe the Duchess Thought Adolf Had Come for a Visit

By HENRY McLEMORE

NEW YORK, Tuesday, Oct. 14.—If you ever seek an interview with a grand duchess be sure to be accompanied by a St. Bernard dog with that little cask around his neck, because the chill you'll get will require a stimulant of the most drastic sort.

I speak strictly from experience. I sought to gain admission to the presence of Grand Duchess Marie of Russia and the brush-offsky I got was so cold that four days later I was wearing a hot water bottle for a watch fob in an effort to raise my temperature to a point where I wouldn't be mistaken for a penguin.

SO I went straight to my apartment, put on my best shirt (the one that has the little celluloid tabs in the collar to give it that smart appearance and make it wearable for four days (hand running), gave a lick and a promise to my shoes, and went down to the duchess' apartment.

I rang her doorbell. A maid answered the door. She gave me a look that all but wilted the little celluloid splinters in my collar. I explained all. I was a newspaper man. I lived on the floor above. I was tremendously interested in Russia and would the grand duchess be gracious enough to grant me an interview. It wouldn't take long, only a few moments.

Through the door I could see the duchess. Rather, I could sense the duchess. She was seated behind a low screen, not ten feet from the doorway.

The maid retreated to the screen, leaned over, and explained what was happening. I could hear her every word. The duchess sent the maid back for a second helping of information.

JUST who was I, for whom did I work, what papers ran my column, and just exactly what did I want? I am quite sure that, if I hadn't interrupted, the maid would have demanded my hat size, wanted to know whether it made me sick to ride backwards in a train, what was my best bowling score, and did I know anything good in the sixth at Belmont.

I bared my life history once more. Back went the maid, this time after giving me a look as if I were wearing stripes and held a bloody hatchet in my hand. The maid and the duchess talked about me. I could hear every word. It was all I could do to keep from saying, my dear grand duchess, if you will only peek around that screen, we can talk without any trouble and I will be able to tell you exactly what you want to know.

The two of them discussed me and my business at length. It was obvious that the grand duchess was not terribly impressed by a call from a South Georgia McLemore.

BACK came the maid. This time, following instructions that I had heard the grand duchess give her, she asked me to write out all the facts I had explained earlier. These would be given the duchess and, after a careful study of them, she would decide whether or not she would see me.

This would be only a matter of a week or two, the maid explained. She needn't have taken the trouble because I heard the duchess explain it to her. I had been out in the hall so long by this time that I had voting and squatter rights. If I don't get out of here soon, I thought, the Russian winter will have passed and I'll have to ask the duchess about the spring and summer in Moscow.

Then the door closed. I shivered. I haven't heard from the grand duchess yet. I'm pretty hurt, too.

No Musical Sense Whatever, But She Gets \$1,250 a Week

By DALE HARRISON

NEW YORK, Tuesday, Oct. 14.—When the late George Gershwin wrote "I Got Rhythm" he couldn't have had little Carolyn Lee in mind, even if she'd been born then, which she wasn't. Carolyn "ain't got" rhythm.

In her newest picture, "The Birth of the Blues," which will have its world premiere in Memphis, Tenn., Carolyn has one bit where she is supposed to go dancing off, swinging her little shoulders rhythmically like a true little rug-cutter. Carolyn's mother, Mrs. Evelyn Copp, told director Victor Schertzinger: "She can't do it. She has no sense of music or rhythm."

The director replied: "Everybody has rhythm. Leave it to me. I'll have rhythm in her feet in a jiffy."

HE was wrong. He struggled long, and Carolyn was as unrhymic at the end as she was at the start. He sent her to Paramount's head man of the dance, and he had to give up after long and valiant effort. It was the first time he had ever seen anyone with absolutely no musical sense whatever.

As a result, 7-year-old Carolyn Lee lends no rhythm whatever to "The Birth of the Blues," leaving such matters up to Bing Crosby and Mary Martin.

I WENT up to see Carolyn the other day at their apartment in the St. Moritz, overlooking Central Park and its ducks which the child likes so well. As she grows older, Carolyn is becoming a bit more impish. I had no more than seated myself than she appeared with a ball of twine which she used to tie me to my chair like the Indians. When I was firmly fastened, she got a glass of water and poured it without compunction down my neck—very amusing, I understand, to children; very annoying to me.

AFTERWARDS, and very sweet she was, she pulled my head down so she could croon into it like it was a microphone, and showed me how Bing Crosby sang "Melancholy Baby" to her in the picture. Knowing she hadn't a note of music in her, I was amazed that her voice was really sweet and pleasant.

The only trouble was that she didn't sing "Melancholy Baby." She had the lyrics right, but the tune could have been anything—anything but what she intended it to be.

NOW that she is in the \$1,250 a week income bracket, I asked her if she still belittled the value of a dollar. She told me she was now anxious to make a lot of money. And why?

"I want to have plenty of money so I can get married when I want to. You see, I might fall in love with a poor boy, and maybe he couldn't get a job, and I wouldn't want to wait to get married just because he was poor. So if I have money, we can get married."

THE NEIGHBORS

By George Clark



"They tell me that model's going to be hard to get next year."