

Radio Talk, September 7, 1941

Delivered in person, W.S.M.

Good Morning Friends:

After two years of visible conflict the second World War has brought active hostilities to nearly thirty nations. Gradually the invisible conflict, which had been in progress for several years before Sept. 3, 1939, has become clearer in its outline and meaning. One by one nations have found themselves forced to take sides. One by one they have found themselves forced to submit to or resist the forces of insane violence and aggression let loose upon the world by Hitlerism.

Though the full meaning of the attack upon the United States destroyer, Greer, by a German submarine can not yet be determined, the United States may now be face to face with the same fateful decisions which these other nations have faced one by one. Our government is worried - deeply worried.

Germany admits the attack upon our destroyer by one of her submarines but gives the explanation and makes the charge that the United States destroyer first fired upon the German submarine and that the submarine justifiedly fired upon the destroyer in self defense. The German government further charges that President Roosevelt had ordered United States naval units to fire upon German craft in order to incite the American people into war against Germany. The German government reports that their submarine fired two torpedoes.

Our naval report, which can be relied upon as being accurate, shows that the engagement took place on the route to Iceland. It shows, contrary to the statement of the German Government, that the German submarine fired first upon the United States Destroyer and fired not two but six torpedoes.

Obviously the German government does not know the secret orders issued to the United States Navy by President Roosevelt and their charge that he had secretly



issued orders to the United States Navy to fire upon and provoke an engagement with German naval units is designed for propoganda purposes in this country - designed for and aimed at the Isolationist and anti-war sentiment in this country and to appeal to the opponents of President Roosevelt and his foreign policy.

It has not yet been clearly determined whether the submarine ascertained the nationality of our destroyer by use of its periscope or whether it blindly fired its torpedoes by use of beneath the surface sound detectors.

President Roosevelt and the State Department are taking a grave attitude indeed toward this incident. President Roosevelt will speak to the Nation by radio tomorrow night, from the White House in what is officially described as a speech of major importance. Let us examine some of the background.

With a desire and a determination to stay out of war, Congress, in keeping with the recommendation of the President and Secretary Hull, made it unlawful for United States Marchant Ships to enter certain combat areas to be designated in proclamation by President Roosevelt. In passing this law, the United States did not surrender or abrogate its traditional policy of free seas. For the sake of remaining at peace, the United States simply by this act determined that it would, as strictly a domestic policy, prevent its merchant ships from going into the war zones where they would likely be sunk thereby creating provocative incidents which might be calculated to incite our people to war.

It will be recalled that Germany some months ago announced a blockade zone around Iceland, reaching to the three mile limit of the shores of Greenland. Some months later, U. S. troops and naval units occupied Iceland and upon invitation of the Icelandic government made of Iceland a United States defensive outpost.



Simultaneously, the United States announced to the world that we would keep open our communication lines between the United States and our troops in Iceland. We also warned the world that we would insist upon our traditional policy and right of the freedom of the seas.

The Robin Moor was sunk by action of a German submarine. The United States bristled and issued stern diplomatic remonstrances. Germany has not molested an American Craft since then until the attack on the Destroyer Greer. Does this mean that Germany has launched a program of unrestricted submarine warfare in the Atlantic? That is one of the grave questions about which the leaders of the United States government is deeply concerned this morning.

After repeated sinkings of American vessels in 1917 and repeated diplomatic protest by the United States, Germany decided upon and began a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. This decision by the German government was not made public at the time the decision was reached. The United States government, however, concluded from events that such a decision and determination had been made by the German Government. When the records became later known they proved that the United States guessed correctly. By launching upon her unrestricted submarine warfare of 1917, Germany hoped to blockade the Allies and win the war before the United States could become a material or decisive factor in the conflict.

Now, things are not going so well for Germany in her war upon Russia or at least she is a way behind her blitzkrieg schedule. The United States is making well of the time and is becoming the arsenal for all nations against whom Hitler is fighting. The United States is swiftly organizing her unparalleled productive



might and genius for the mass production of ships, planes, guns, tanks, armored cars, ammunition, and this is a mechanized war which means that in the final analysis it is a war of production.

Unless Germany can win in the immediate months ahead, the United States, with her great wealth and genius, will weigh more and more heavily against Germany. Unless Germany can win this year, she faces a more difficult situation next year. Can it be that Germany is now launched upon the classic German act of casting her full might and strength in one desperate final effort to win with an immediate crushing force because she is faced with an unfavorable turning of the tide, in which time operates to her disadvantage? Can it be that Germany has decided to cast her full might in one desperate attempt to blockade and crush Great Britain before United State aid to Britain and other nations fighting Hitler's barbaric wave of aggression brings about the certain defeat of Germany?

When we issued such a stern warning over the sinking of the Robin Moor, Germany desisted from attacks upon our ships.

The destroyer Greer is attacked, a ship requisitioned for American flag is reported overdue, survivors are reported rescued from a raft. Germany has a blockade zone around Iceland which is now under American possession with American soldiers stationed there. Yes, one by one, nearly 30 nations have had to decide whether to submit to or resist Hitlerism. War clouds hang heavily over the United States and appear to be darkening with transpiring events. May we not all pray on this Sabbath Day that we may be spared the horrors of modern warfare, that the outlaw element loosed upon the world be soon consumed by its own hate and ungodliness.



We have tried to avoid war. We hope and pray that war may yet be averted.

But if come it must, then let the storm rage, let the tempest roar, we will not prove unworthy of our destiny.