

Good Morning, Friends:

Breathing easier after Rommel's striking force had been checked and then turned back in Tunisia, Washington's whirligig of decisions, problems, controversies moved on.

Perhaps the hottest question in Washington today concerns a situation in the State of Washington where workers in the Boeing Airplane plant, making flying fortresses, are threatening a general strike unless the government grants their demand for an increase in wages from 67¢ per hour to

95 ¢ per hour. Strikes can get members hotter under the collar than most anything that can happen, and rightly so. *It makes many of us fight hot, and for more earnings, and for a better living, and for the boys who are planning to strike in the days who are to come.* The House of Representatives has

repeatedly passed bills on the labor question but they stall in the Senate.

One good Congressman from the State of Mississippi made the statement in the cloakroom yesterday that "Congress wouldn't pass a simple resolution endorsing the Ten Commandments if the country's labor leaders were opposed to it." This is an exaggeration, but it serves to show the intense feeling of many members of Congress regarding ^{such} questions. ~~in which the excesses of organized labor are involved.~~

On tomorrow, the House will consider a bill designed to stop absenteeism in our war plants. Congressman Johnson from Texas, the author of the bill, made a speech on Friday in which he said that we lost more ships by reason of men ~~staying~~ being absent from their jobs last month than were sunk by German submarines. *Another thing,* Farmers all over the country are writing in to their Representatives and Senators complaining that they can not get enough help

to operate their farms. Many factories are not up to their peak in production for want of sufficient labor. Then, there are the aggravating problems of union feather bed rules by which men are prevented from doing a full weeks work. The President's order about the 40-hour week does not seem to have helped much. Paul McNutt, Chairman of the War Manpower Commission, seems to be in deep water, all of which illustrates the vexatiousness of the manpower problem. It shows that long ago, we should have based a law so that everybody could have been told to work or fight in whichever capacity he could render the best service to his country. We may come to this before many months. Democracies ^{themselves} seem never to do anything ^{as soon as it should be done.} ~~quite on time.~~ That is one of the prices we must pay for the privilege of governing ourselves.

On Friday

The House passed a bill appropriating another six billion dollars, much of which was for the purpose of building ships. General Somerville recently said that the war had become a battle of transportation. Ships, ships, ships. Cargo ships, escort vessels, aircraft carriers, battleships, torpedo boats. We need more and more of every kind. An eye witness to the fighting in Tunisia said that the Germans did not break through because ~~our~~ our equipment was not as good as theirs; nor because our men were not good fighters. He said our equipment was good and our men fought well, but that it was just a ~~question of~~ ^{situation of} one good man not being able to whip two good men. Eventually, enough equipment and men were brought together to hurl the Germans back. It was a problem of transportation and maneuver. ^{Unless we are to suffer further,} ~~here~~

More supplies and more men must go to North Africa, must go to Great Britain, must

go to China, to Australia, to Alaska, and eventually to Berlin and Tokyo.

So, we need ships and more ships.

Editorial

Perhaps you noticed in the paper or heard over the radio that the United States Capitol was guarded with wooden guns. That is true only in part. There are wooden guns and real guns. This is an accepted method of camouflaged warfare. For instance, a plane pilot who participated in the landing on Guadalcanal told me that they would dive down to bomb a Japanese gun emplacement only, ~~at times~~, to discover that they had dropped their bombs on a wooden gun used as a decoy, and the real gun would then open ^{fire} up on them, whereupon they would have to turn and go after the real gun. ~~emplacement~~. So, there is no need to be disturbed about some wooden guns being placed in Washington. In fact, the only disturbing element in

it is that a member of Congress would go on the floor and make a haranging speech about it. Most of us have known about the situation all along.

Evidently this Congressman didn't, but if it disturbed him, he could have at least gone to the War Department and gotten the facts rather than to

blurt out
~~make~~ a speech about it.

The food rationing program is more stringent than most anyone expected.

Those of us who had an opportunity to can tomatoes and beans and such last ^{like}

summer and ~~fall~~ ^{didn't do so} are now sorry that we didn't, ~~do so~~. Reports from over

the country indicate that the people have accepted this war-time necessity

cheerfully and with only a very minimum of grumbling. It shows that the

American people are willing to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to win

this war. In turn, however, they are insisting that the government be

efficient, that our production program be on an all-out basis, that dilly-

dallying and temporizing by the Government be stopped. This, the people

have a right to expect. This, the boys in uniform have a right to demand.

This, those who are in authority must vouchsafe or be recreant to their trust.

I would like to close this broadcast by reading a little poem which

is over one hundred years old. Perhaps many of you share with me the joy

of reading ~~the poet~~ ^{103 years ago} Tennyson. In 1840, he wrote a prophetic and beautiful

in the poem which is as follows:
he envisioned the airplane, the battles in the sky and the coming of world peace in the parliament of man. I hope his prophecy of world peace is as accurate as his vision of navies of the sky.
The poem reads as follows:

The Vision of 100 Years Ago

*I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;
Far along the world-wide whisper of the southwind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;
'Til the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in universal law.*

— Tennyson 1840

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WEDNESDAY... February 24, 1943

Army and Farm

It is not quite clear whether use of troops to harvest Arizona's crop of long-staple cotton is to meet a real emergency caused by shortage of other farm labor or whether it is to meet an emergency caused by the repeated attacks from farm Senators on the size of the Army.

Decision to use troops to pick Arizona cotton was announced yesterday while Lieutenant General McNarney, deputy chief of staff, was telling a critical subcommittee of the Senate's Agriculture Committee that in emergencies the Army would use troops to help farm production. But Department of Agriculture officials obviously were surprised that the Army would pick cotton in Arizona, where laborers had been sent at Government expense during the winter. Some of these laborers, it was indicated, had left the State for lack of work.

Whatever the reasons for the Army's move, and whatever the need in Arizona may be, the situation again underlines the confusion and uncertainty over civilian manpower policies, or lack of them; it emphasizes again the danger to development of a fighting army, when its size becomes a matter for debate in the Committee on Agriculture and when its training is threatened by moves to make up farm labor shortages at the expense of the armed forces.

More men have left the farms to take well-paid jobs in war industries than have been drafted into the armed services. Selective Service estimated that 20 per cent of the Nation's registrations would come from the farms; they have amounted to between 12 and 13 per cent. Estimates of the number of men who have left the farms for industry, as compared with the number going into the services, vary from 60 to 80 per cent. General McNarney testified yesterday that 364,000 farmers already had been deferred as essential workers and that such deferments would reach 3,000,000 by the end of the year.

Yet the Army, especially, is being blamed primarily for the farm labor shortage and there is a growing disposition at the Capitol to make up the shortage from the Army. Why is there no effort, from these critics, to make up the shortage from other sources? We already have that curious inequality of treatment, under which one class of men is sent to battle, while another class, at home, is paid high wages, shown every favor and consideration and permitted to work—or stop work—voluntarily in war industries that basically are as essential as the military forces in winning the war. And now we propose to go a step further, by using the men selected for the armed forces as farm labor, at Army pay and under Army discipline, to make up the shortages caused, for the most part, by men leaving the farms to

discipline themselves as rigidly as may be required of them. Their obligation to their country and to civilization at large is to keep well—sound of mind and body, cautious of needless injury and suffering.

Battle of the Seas

The sinking in mid-Atlantic early this month of two fairly large American ships with a loss of nearly 900 lives is a grim reminder of Germany's intensified U-boat campaign. Those vessels were not technically troop transports. They were what is known as combination passenger-cargo ships, ~~presumably not as speedy as the converted liners which are packed with thousands of soldiers.~~ Nevertheless, the torpedoed craft carried many members of the armed forces, together with civilian passengers on official business. Apparently they were eastbound for North Africa. The sinkings, four days apart, were both at night, the favorite time for U-boat "wolf packs" to stalk their prey.

There can be no question that the submarine is Germany's most dangerous weapon, which will be used to the uttermost. Recently, General Brehon Somervell declared that the problem of overseas supply lines had priority over all else. To any reflective person, this is self-evident; for only by maintaining the sea lanes can our armies, equipment, and food-stuffs reach the fighting fronts and aid our Allies. This the German high command knows only too well, and the entire shipbuilding facilities of Nazi-dominated Europe are being concentrated on building U-boats to the tune of nearly one per day, a rate considerably faster than they are being sunk. A month ago, the German Navy was placed under the supreme command of its greatest submarine expert, Admiral Doenitz, who publicly pledged that a U-boat offensive would soon be launched with an intensity comparable to the Luftwaffe's mass attacks upon Britain two years ago. Since climatically the spring season is best adapted to submarine operations in the North Atlantic, the peak of Germany's U-boat campaign may be forecast during the coming months.

While the prospect is serious, undue pessimism is not justified. In the First World War, the U-boat menace was reduced to minor proportions by anti-submarine devices which have been much improved in the present conflict, albeit the submarine of today is more formidable than was its predecessor a quarter-century ago. We ourselves have just had a sad example of the effectiveness with which convoys can be guarded by the recent sinking of the U. S. S. Argonaut while stalking a Japanese convoy off New Britain. The Argonaut was the most powerful submarine in our service, and probably the largest in the world since the sinking of the giant French submarine Surcouf a year ago. Yet the danger to even well-guarded convoys is likewise illustrated by this tragic episode, because only two hours after the Argonaut perished it was avenged by another American submarine which sank two transports just outside the Japanese base at Rabaul and got away. This entire operation thus illustrates the delicate balance between attack and defense in undersea warfare which exists today. The pressing problem of the submarine is by no means solved. We can only hope that it may be on the way to a speedy solution.

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