

Weekly News Analysis

Britain Drops 'Appeasement' But Policy Even Weaker Now

By Joseph W. La Bine



EASTWARD THE MARCH OF EMPIRE GOES
A week's supply of conquests and objectives.

EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst, and not necessarily of the newspaper.

Europe

It is easier to hoot at a boxer from outside the ropes than within. If the average U. S. citizen were an Englishman he would be far less critical of a government which eschews war even if it means loss of prestige. But after eight months of a "foreign policy" which is more concerned with immediate convenience than permanent direction, the most peace-loving Englishmen are now beginning to believe Prime Minister Chamberlain might have achieved greater results with no more risk by holding to a steady course.

From the Czech crisis last September until mid-March, Mr. Chamberlain's "appeasement" cries grew progressively weaker as Britain and France strengthened their defense against possible aggression from Dictators Hitler and Mussolini. By March 1 the two democracies were strong enough to suggest dictating terms to the Reich, whose economic position had grown intolerably weak. Then, overnight, all semblance of "policy" collapsed. The events, in sequence:

- (1) Hitler grabbed Czechoslovakia, whose boundaries were guaranteed last autumn by France and Britain. Mr. Chamberlain said it was no concern of his.
- (2) Two days later Mr. Chamberlain suddenly whipped about-face, accusing Hitler of dishonesty and unwarranted aggression.
- (3) Russia, for 15 years unwelcome in British circles, was asked to join London in a pact to "consult" in case of future German aggression.
- (4) Britain reversed its course again and made no protest when Hitler occupied Memel, whose ownership by Lithuania was guaranteed by British-French signature of the Memel statute.
- (5) Britain backed down on its pact with Russia, refusing any stronger measure than the useless "consultative" treaty.

The substance of these disjointed events is that Britain's "appeasement" policy has given way to no policy at all. It can well be doubted that London sincerely hoped its Russian overtures would have more than a temporary jolting effect on German territorial ambitions. For Britain still wants nothing to do with Moscow; in fact, the fondest Tory hope is that Germany and Russia will eventually lock horns, fighting out the issue of Nazism versus Communism to the ruin of both.

Britain will be happy so long as Hitler drives eastward, confining his ambitions to such objectives as Danzig, the Polish corridor and Rumania, ultimately reaching into the Russian Ukraine to invite war with the Soviet. This conclusion is inevitable because the most concrete result of Mr. Chamberlain's umbrella waving thus far has been a French-British military pact to aid Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium against German aggression.

Congress

Europe's Czechoslovak and Memel crises (see EUROPE) have brought quicker, more definite reaction in the U. S. than most people realize. Last January, when President Roosevelt made timid suggestions that the present neutrality law should be changed, a terrific uproar ensued. The same uproar returned when he asked a special \$358,000,000 defense appropriation a few weeks later. But the new European situation has brought a remarkable show of inter-party solidarity, admittedly temporary, but strong enough to give France and Britain a strong moral support and warn Reichsfuehrer Hitler that he is not wanted on the western hemisphere.

(1) Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles received both Democratic and Republican praise for his diplomatic protest against Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia.

(2) Neutrality legislation expiring May 1 permits "cash and carry" sale to belligerents of anything but war materials. Nevada's Sen. Key Pittman has asked that munitions be placed on the allowed list. Utah's Sen. Elbert Thomas would give the President power to designate an aggressor nation and forbid shipments to it.

(3) Washington's Sen. Homer T. Bone has offered, with bi-partisan support, a bill to tax profit out of war. The plan: Greatly increased tax rates would be imposed in case of conflict, lowering exemptions and imposing surtaxes on highest brackets ranging up to 93 per cent for individuals. Corporations would be taxed 100 per cent on net incomes over 6 per cent of their adjusted declared value.

(4) Within 15 minutes, both senate and house passed the \$358,000,000 emergency defense bill, authorizing 6,000 army planes, stronger Panama canal fortifications, bigger sea-coast and inland defenses, better army equipment and more effective hemispherical protection.

White House

How to raise U. S. price levels is one of the administration's biggest problems. Republican laymen, and many Democrats, contend a retrenchment of federal spending would do the trick. But the White House places more faith in Marriner S. Eccles, federal reserve chairman, and Sen. Key Pittman, Nevada silver advocate. Even these two "doctors" find themselves at odds, however. During a recent public debate they outlined these two opposing paths to the coveted price level.

Pittman. Favors currency inflation, "since government billions have completely failed to raise the price level." Believes federal re-



PITTMAN (LEFT) AND ECCLES
The doctors did not agree.

serve board's periodic increases and decreases in reserve requirements have had a bad effect on business. **Eccles.** Against currency inflation. Partially agrees it would help raise price levels, but fears new money would not be put to use. "Lack of opportunity to get a profit is the principal impediment to recovery today."

Whether the White House could pull a definite monetary program from such an exchange of theories is doubtful. But there are indications that the ideas of Mr. Eccles, famed advocate of spending, hold favor. President Roosevelt told his press conference that he refuses to cut U. S. spending until private enterprise guarantees jobs. Neither will he favor repeal of "deterrent" taxes, apparently, for he has mildly denounced advocates of a slash in the federal budget. But since Mr. Eccles is on record as favoring government action to "remove impediments to the encouragement of private capital," White House and Eccles do not jibe.

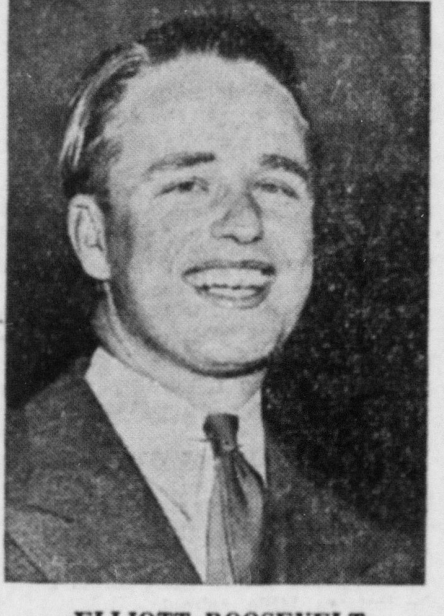
Neither do White House and Secretary of Agriculture Wallace jibe. Defending an unchanged AAA for 1939, Mr. Wallace told the house agriculture committee that industrial recovery was a prerequisite to farm recovery, and that industrial activity should be increased 40 per cent as speedily as possible. Then, he said, farmers will secure their just share of the total national income.

Politics

Smart politicians never count chickens before they hatch. But neither do astute political observers forget that it is a high-well impossible job to bounce a favorite from the saddle. Although more than a year remains before Republican and Democratic parties hold their nominating conventions, New York's Republican District Attorney Tom Dewey and Texas' Democratic Vice President John Nance Garner have emerged definitely as men of the hour.

Garner. Sometimes disgustingly independent to President Roosevelt, the vice president has led a powerful Democratic revolt this session of congress and today controls approximately as many house and senate votes as the White House. Though 70 years old, he holds the favor of Emil Hurja, astute party analyst who has indicated there is little chance Garner can be bounced from favor in 1940. The chief Garner opponent is Postmaster General James Farley, whose vote-seeking efforts have been confined to east and northeast states while Mr. Garner concentrates on the Southwest. Many Democrats can see nothing more natural than a union of these two forces, one for President, the other for vice president.

Unpredictable as his father, Texas' Elliott Roosevelt gave politicians a puzzle by announcing that Mr. Garner is "in the driver's seat, well in the lead as a likely Democratic candidate for the presidency in 1940." That Son Elliott holds White House favor for this remark is seriously doubtful. Franklin Roosevelt prefers not to run again in 1940 but will do so unless the party accepts another man who will and can



ELLIOTT ROOSEVELT
Garner in the driver's seat.

carry out his New Deal philosophy. John Garner would not be apt to do this.

Dewey. New York's district attorney lost the governorship to popular Herbert Lehman by less than 1 per cent of the popular vote last fall, but the mere fact that he lost—and that a few weeks earlier his case against James Hines had been tossed from court—cost Mr. Dewey much popularity. But since last November old guard Republicans have dropped from the picture. More-over, able men like Michigan's Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg have shown disinclination to run. Realizing a candidate must be found soon, G. O. P. voters have unofficially settled on Dewey since he "came back" to convict Hines on the rackets conspiracy charge. Whereas a mid-February poll by the American Institute of Public Opinion gave Dewey only 27 per cent of the popular Republican vote, a month later he had jumped to 50 per cent.

People

Resolved, by Michigan's new Gov. Luren D. Dickinson, that no official business will be transacted on the Sabbath.

Headliners

COL. VLADIMIR S. HURBAN
Though a Slovak, and although Hitler has made Slovaks independent of Czechs, Col. Hurban has so much dislike for Germany and Hungary, and so much pride in the late Czechoslovak nation, that he refused to surrender the Czech legation in Washington to the German ambassador. Born in the Carpathian mountains, he knew Magyar oppression as a S. Hurban child. Becoming a soldier, he went to Russia 30 years ago to accept a professorship in the czar's war college. When the World war broke out he and 70,000 other Czechs joined the Russian army. During the revolution these Czechs made their historic movement to Vladivostok, where the group collected funds to send Hurban to Washington. There he joined Dr. Thomas Masaryk in founding the Czech nation. After the government was established he returned to Washington as Czech military attaché, later going to Egypt as charge d'affaires, to Sweden as minister, and in 1936 back to Washington as minister. His greatest accomplishment here was consummation of the Czech-U. S. trade treaty last year, now abrogated under Hitler's "protectorate" regime.



Col. Vladimir S. Hurban

WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

Bonneville Chief Soothes Hostile Power People
NEW YORK.—When James D. Ross was appointed by the President as chief of Bonneville, the biggest dam in the world, in October, 1937, it was believed in some quarters that his selection would sharpen the disagreement between the administration and the power companies. Today it appears that Mr. Ross has allayed, rather than provoked hostilities. The utilities rate him as "reasonable." Bonneville has been the bete noir of western power development. This writer hears there is now a better chance for two-way appeasement than at any time in the past.

Mr. Ross, for 20 years head of the municipal power development of Seattle, has human traits which perhaps account for his expedient rather than doctrinal trend. No mere doctrinaire would amuse himself by keeping a copper ball in the air with no visible means of support—just because he loves kilowatts and likes to see them work.

He was a consulting engineer for the New York power authority and the St. Lawrence seaway, a consultant for PWA power development and later a member of the SEC before the President made him the Bonneville boss. As a boy, he rode his bike from Chatham, Ont., to New York city, to learn pharmacy. He got a job as an apprentice chemist, but pestling seemed piffing, so he hit the long grind back to Chatham—but he kept on pedaling. He headed up through Edmonton to the Alaska gold-fields, and when dry land failed him, he made his own boat and pushed on. In Seattle, years later, he helped design the first municipal power plant.

Gray Skipped No Step to Fly Air Leviathan
YOUNG America is naturally envious of Capt. Harold E. Gray, who will be at the controls when the Yankee Clipper, huge Pan-American Airways flying boat, takes off for its flight across the Atlantic. It is now trying a few preliminary crow-hops around New York harbor.

Pierson Assists In Nazi Put-Out In Brazil Game
CAPTAIN GRAY, it seems, had a system, in qualifying for this stellar role in aviation. First he became a licensed airplane mechanic; then he qualified as an aeronautical engineer, a master mariner and a radio technician; after all, he took diplomas in meteorology, seamanship, international law, admiralty law and business administration.

That seems to be about par for the lad who would be a skipper on one of these new leviathans of the air. All this, and many years of hazardous flying over the mountain wilderness of Mexico and Central America bring Captain Gray to the ripe old age of 33. He left college in his second year at the University of Iowa and was aloft for the first time at the age of 19. His home town is Guttenberg, Iowa.

WARREN LEE PIERSON, head of the Export-Import bank, appears to rate an assist in the Nazi put-out in Brazil. The big credit deal, to clear the trade ways between the two countries, is widely accepted as a goose-egg for the Reich.

The young and energetic Mr. Pierson, who became head of the bank in 1936, toured the Latin-American countries last summer and fall and returned with a lot of sizzling new ideas about hopping up South American trade, and resisting the totalitarian drive, by deploying credit judiciously where it is needed most to grease the trade run-around.

When it came to Brazil, he got eager attention from both the state department and the administration, as Brazil is an important consideration of naval geography as well as trade. Shouldering far out into the Atlantic, with the new fascist threat to the Canary Islands, it would, if hostile, pinch us in a narrowing seaway, with Argentina, on the whole not so clubby with the U. S. A., away down under. For both strategic and commercial reasons, Brazil is our entrepot to South America, if we keep on being neighborly.

In Harvard law school Mr. Pierson was obsessed with foreign trade and directed his studies to practice in this field. Practicing law in Los Angeles, his opportunity came in 1934, when he was appointed general counsel for the Export-Import bank. In 1936, there was, for him, a timely New Deal row, which resulted in the resignation of George N. Peek as head of the bank and the upping of Mr. Pierson.

Consolidated News Features. WNU Service.

Star Dust

★ Ties That Don't Bind
★ Gene Charms Royalty
★ Listed for a Beating

By Virginia Vale

JOSEPH BENTON NORTH has performed fifty-two marriage ceremonies, and not one of them had any lasting effect. He can recite the marriage rituals of forty-seven varieties of religion, ranging from the voodooistic ceremony to that of the Church of England, but he uses a mixed ritual which he made up himself. As you've probably suspected by now, he is a minister without portfolio, one who officiates only in the movies.

Of the many screen players whom he has "married" North reveals that Claudette Colbert exhibited the most nervousness; he thinks that was because she is the most religious. The calmest person, he says, was Rochelle Hudson; she took two of his ceremonies in her stride, and



CLAUDETTE COLBERT

apparently thought they were amusing. Laura LaPlante cried, and Marlene Dietrich kept arranging her hair and dress.

His most recent appearance on the screen as a marrying man was for "Wuthering Heights." Merle Oberon and David Niven were the bride and groom, and he used the ritual dictated by the period.

The Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, of England's royal family, were asked recently to name their favorite motion picture star. Ignoring Norma Shearer, Janet Gaynor, Clark Gable, and the other top-notchers (including Shirley Temple) they replied "Gene Autrey."

When Billie Burke broke her ankle she was considerate enough to pick a perfect time in which to do it. She tripped as she was leaving the "Maiden Voyage" set, and snap went the ankle. Being a seasoned trouper, her first thought was of the picture, and the delay that might be caused by her accident.

But it happened that all of her walking shots had been made. She was due just to sit in the rest of the picture anyway.

How'd you like to look ahead to taking a beating? That is what Walter Pidgeon has been doing. For "Six Thousand Enemies" is slated as his next picture, and the script calls for him to be soundly beaten by one of the six thousand—with a husky pugilist selected by the casting department for the role. Pidgeon has been using his spare time between scenes of "Penthouse" to practice up a bit, but he is none too optimistic about his own skill, even though the script does put a limit on the amount of damage that is to be done to him.

Fred Allen is one of the few radio stars who does not own a farm. He hasn't a car, either; he prefers to live in a hotel and ride in taxis. Most of the big-time radio stars feel that they can't get along without a country home. Frank Black, Paul Whiteman and Benny Goodman have farms in Pennsylvania; Lanny Ross and Lowell Thomas each own acreage in New York state; Tommy Dorsey's place is in New Jersey, and Morton Downey's in Connecticut. And if you don't believe that they really turn into farmers whenever they get a chance you ought to hear them talk!

Those radio introductions are likely to go haywire, as did one in which Pat O'Brien was involved the other day. He went to the midget auto races in Hollywood with Norris Goff, who is "Abner" of radio's famous "Lum and Abner" team. Barney Oldfield, the former auto racing champion, introduced them as follows: "Norris Goff, better known as 'Abner' on the radio, and Pat O'Brien, who plays 'Lum.'"

ODDS AND ENDS—The reason that movie studios aren't more lavish with their screen tests is that the average test costs \$10,000. . . . The death of Ernie Hare deprives radio of one of its most beloved old-timers. . . . Looks as if the "Castle Walk" would oust the "Lambeth Walk" as the most popular dance when RKO releases "The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle" with Rogers and Astaire. © Western Newspaper Union.

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