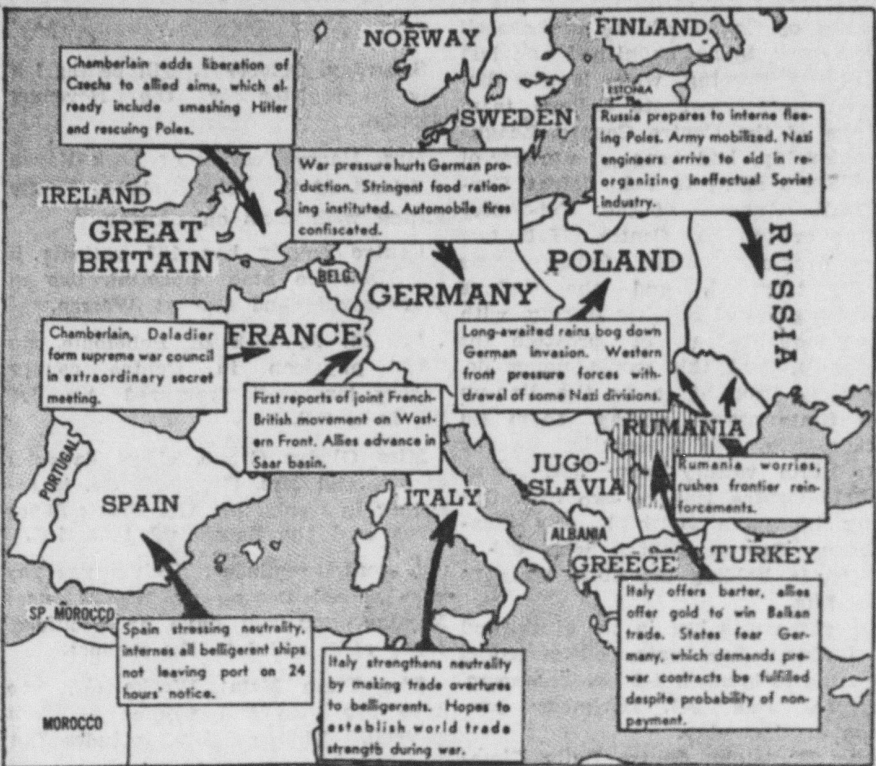


WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS BY JOSEPH W. LaBINE

Conservative Trend Apparent In FDR's Crisis Appointments; 'Permanent' Congress Likely

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.) Released by Western Newspaper Union.



A WEEK OF WAR IN MODERN EUROPE The neutrals were also busy.

CONGRESS: Emergency?

Open for inspection this month is a choice collection of political anomalies. Whether Franklin Roosevelt made third term capital out of Europe's woes was only a guess, but the emergency of war caused strange things to happen.

"Junked," in Secretary Steve Early's words, was the "imaginary brain trust." Solidly whacked under presidential orders were Communists and Fascists. Brought into \$1-a-year emergency posts were more anti-New Dealers than Washington has seen since Herbert Hoover left town.

Big business, the President's No. 1 foe, not only supported his "cash-and-carry" neutrality proposal, but one of its representatives, Industrialist Herbert Bayard Swope, said enthusiastically that "Mr. Roosevelt is going to keep us out of this war." Meanwhile the traditional big business party, Republicanism, was convinced the New Deal's hidden aim is to send American troops to settle Europe's quarrel.

Such Republicans as Ohio's Sen. Robert Taft and Vermont's Sen. Warren Austin plumped for cash-and-carry, as did many a lesser insurgent Democrat who last summer hated all that Franklin Roosevelt represents.

If this looked like harmony, observers had another guess coming. They had not reckoned with North Dakota's Sen. Gerald P. ("Neutrality") Nye, with Idaho's lionish Sen. William E. Borah, or with Missouri's Democratic Sen. Bennett Champ Clark. As the call went out for special congressional session, voices like these were raised in protest and warning. Isolationism again reached the fore.

Far from stubborn, Senator Borah merely wanted assurance of adequate debate on neutrality. He had no desire to "kill time," but was sure cash-and-carry "will inevitably bring us into war."

More alarming was Senator Nye, author of the present neutrality law: "Americans had better talk now before the gags of a declared emergency are placed. I expect that from here on the administration will be contending that every voice raised in opposition . . . is at once a pro-Hitler voice. Be that as it may . . . there will be . . . a complete demonstration to the American people of what the President's wishes will lead America into."

What gags he had in mind, Mr. Nye did not say. But there was every indication cash-and-carry neutrality, without gags, had a chance of getting through congress. Under proposed amendments any goods could be sold to a belligerent who bought it, paid for it and carted it away in his own ships. American ships would be prohibited from entering combat areas.

(Incorporated in New York was an agency through which French and British governments could buy war materials and other goods from their \$7,000,000,000 war chest set aside for that purpose. Planned last spring, the agency replaces J. P. Morgan & Company, who acted in this capacity during the last war.)

One other question facing the President was how to get rid of congress once it had changed neutrality. Quite a case for continuous wartime session could be built from a Gallup poll which showed most Americans feel safer with congress in session. Moreover, special interests began clamoring for

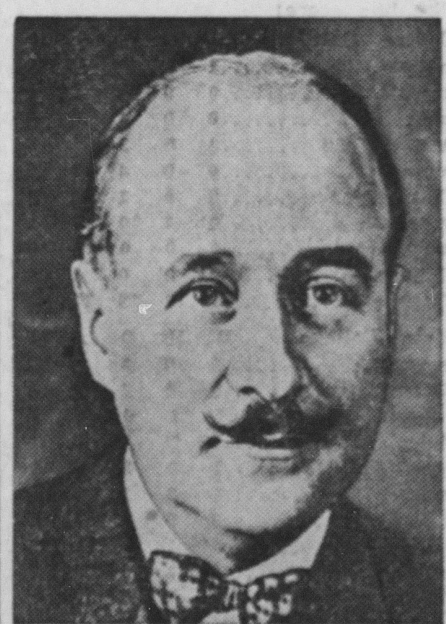
non-emergency legislation. California's Rep. Jerry Voorhis said congress must "correct the injustices of the last so-called relief act." New Jersey's Sen. Warren Barbour predicted passage of his anti-espionage bill. Everything considered, it looked like congress would sit for quite a spell.

INTERNATIONAL: The Neutrals

Biggest repercussion of war in the western hemisphere was the convening of 21 American republics at Panama City to safeguard neutrality, protect hemispherical peace and further economic co-operation. Biggest repercussions in the Far East were (1) shakeup of Japanese army leadership in China and Manchukuo to hasten an end to the Chinese war, and (2) German-inspired efforts for a non-aggression pact with Russia, thus checking the growing Japanese sentiment in Britain's favor. Though the government did not take these efforts seriously, there were expressed desires for a settlement of Russo-Jap border questions.

But the biggest neutral news came from Europe, pleasant and otherwise. Moscow's allegiance to Berlin was more marked than ever. German engineers arrived to aid Russian industry, thus indicating the Soviet will be Adolf Hitler's storehouse. While Paris radio reported all Soviet merchant ships en route to England had been ordered home, thus indicating a coming breach, the Soviet joined hostilities by shooting Polish craft which violated the frontier. Should enough such incidents occur, Russia might take revenge by joining Der Fuehrer in a new Polish partition. Completely mobilized, the Soviet was capable of almost anything.

Most intense activity came in the Mediterranean region. Andre



ANDRE FRANCOIS-PONCET Things happened in Rome.

Francois-Poncet, French ambassador to Rome, allegedly notified his foreign office that Italian neutrality is certain, that Mussolini is angry over Germany's warlike settlement of the Danzig issue, and that all this may eventually work out to the allies' benefit.

Not only was Signor Mussolini making every effort to bolster his world trading position and thus wax rich, but he looked especially at the frightened Balkan states. There he saw puzzled tradesmen seeking any port in a storm, striving to stay neutral while Germany pressed for delivery of goods contracted before the war. This much was certain: Italy had more interest in her own future than in Germany's, and might even consider Herr Hitler a goodly menace should he win control over the Balkans. But if Mussolini could control Balkan trade, if he could meanwhile develop a profitable war commerce with France and Britain, so much the better.

THE WAR: Behind Scenes

"What kind of a war is this? The nation is puzzled. It expected war to mean an immediate clash of arms . . . Instead, there is little news . . . Nineteen out of twenty persons ask therefore this question: Are we making as decisive an attack . . . as our strength allows?"

Day after printing this editorial, Lord Beaverbrook's Evening Standard had more news, not from the front but of carryings-on behind scenes. Secretly, Prime Minister Chamberlain and Lord Chatfield (minister of defense co-ordination) flew the English channel and met Premier Edouard Daladier and French Gen. Maurice Gamelin somewhere near Paris to form a supreme allied defense council. Thus was avoided one of the mistakes those nations made in their last war against Germany.



BEAVERBROOK Well?

Next day Mr. Chamberlain, safely back home, told parliament he left the French meeting "fortified and encouraged." Not only would the allies trounce Germany, but they would rescue Poland and liberate the Czechs.

Significantly silent following Field Marshal Hermann Goering's blast at Britain a few days earlier, Germany was apparently busy pursuing war on two fronts. Food rationing was extended, all auto tires were confiscated and a contraband-of-war list was decreed as a "defense measure" against British blockade. In Paris, smart Premier Daladier formed a 21-man war cabinet which included all parties except Socialist, whose Leon Blum refused to participate.

Western War

England learned for the first time that her troops and planes were fighting in France. With activities still centered in the Saar basin, violent fighting brought conflicting reports. Berlin claimed French advances to Saarbruecken were driven back. French admitted Germany had seized French territory in its



SMIGLY-RYDZ AND WIFE The bald pate got wet.

counter offensive, but said the ground was recaptured and pillows were primed for an attack on the famed German West wall.

Eastern War

After waiting two weeks, Poland's Marshal Edward Smigly-Rydz finally got his bald pate wet. The famous autumn rains started and German advance was slackened while the efficient Polish artillery went into action. Warsaw was variously reported falling and standing. Probably it still stood, but it was evident the Poles were taking losses elsewhere on the frontier to keep their major city intact. On the propaganda front, Poles (and even U. S. Ambassador Anthony Drexel Biddle) reported Germans were bombing everything in sight.

AGRICULTURE: Corn Woes

From 1928 to 1937 the 10-year corn production average was 2,310,000,000 bushels. Last year it was 2,542,000,000 bushels. With 255,000,000 bushels already sealed on farms under government loans, the department of agriculture last month estimated this year's production at 2,450,000,000 bushels. But this month Secretary Henry A. Wallace had to confess: Later figures boosted the estimate to 2,523,000,000 bushels, smaller than last year, to be sure, but presenting a greater problem thanks to the big carry-over. With a carryover of some 450,000,000 bushels, the U. S. will have 3,000,000,000 bushels of corn on hand for the coming season.

Under AAA regulations, Mr. Wallace had to decide whether the indicated supply is more than 10 per cent above normal domestic needs plus export requirements. If so, he had to propose marketing quotas for next year and submit them to corn belt farmers for approval or rejection. If approved by two-thirds, quotas would require farmers exceeding their allotments to store excess grain or pay a penalty tax of 15 cents a bushel.

Biggest factor working against quotas was last spring's abnormally large pig crop, which Mr. Wallace said would justify raising the quota level.

Bruckart's Washington Digest

Crooks Take Advantage of War To Bleed Consumers of Nation

Without Justification Prices Are Boosted and People Scared Into Hoarding; Public Sentiment Is Only Force That Can Correct the Racketeering.

By WILLIAM BRUCKART WNU Service, National Press Bldg., Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON.—My faith in the soundness of the profit system as the basis for people to make a living always has caused me to lean somewhat on the defense of business practices when there had to be a choice between theories. Every fair-minded person knows that business—agriculture, manufacturing, banking, transportation or any other—has had a terrific onslaught of cockeyed arguments to meet in the last few years. To me, it is a distinct tribute to the profit system that we have seen as many businesses survive the last five or six years as there are still operating.

But, calling upon the record of these columns, I have contended without exception that there are crooks in business, and that the present administration ought to direct some of its venom at the crooks, rather than at business as a whole. And, so, this week, I want to write about this situation that has come to the surface as a result of the burst of flame that has engulfed Europe; they have shown again the true colors of their makeup and they have taken advantage of a situation in world affairs, without any justification, to bleed the consumers of the United States.

Almost with the crash of the first gun on the Eastern front, a small minority of business interests rubbed the palms of their hands together and began to count additional dollars they could gain in profits by boosting prices. And to cover up their perfidy, their treachery and their characteristics of a water snake, they have spread a counterpane of lies that will react against all business, including the growers of raw materials such as the crops of the fields. It is so easy to blame things on the war; it is being done by government officials as well as the brigands of business, but the latter class is collecting an unseen (but deeply felt) tax from all of us who buy food to eat or clothes to wear.

Hoarding and High Prices Due to Greed, Crookedness

I have interviewed a lot of people in the field of business in the last few days in an effort to ascertain where the cheating is going on. Moreover, I have investigated a number of business practices with the thought that these would provide a clue to some of the price increases, and reasons for them, with the results mentioned in the paragraph above. There must be added, however, one additional conviction: hundreds of thousands of consumers have become frightened and have started hoarding—buying excess supplies because of fright. I still can not believe, however, that these hoarding tactics are completely responsible for the kiting of prices that has taken place. Ruthlessness and greed, faithlessness and the ordinary, garden variety of crookedness among certain elements of business must accept responsibility; for, from these things together with the campaign of misrepresentation which those elements have engineered come the fright of the average consumer. Hence, hoarding.

In my study of the price situation on the regular purchases of a household, I have sampled quotations and advertising in Washington and Baltimore. Washington is somewhat different than any other city in the United States, but Baltimore is a large industrial area, fairly reflecting normal reactions of buyers. I have observed the prices of chain stores and traced them back to wholesalers and jobbers, and to the manufacturers in some instances. Guilt attaches to a small percentage in the retail lines, the average store. There were instances found where the prices were boosted on commodities that had been on the shelves three months, articles that could not have been affected in any way by any possible change in manufacturing costs, added expenses due to higher labor payments or increases in transportation and distribution. And, incidentally, there is almost no record of any increases in those items of manufacturing and distributing costs. The department of commerce figures do not reflect them, nor do the reports in the hands of the department of labor show them. But the beady-eyed rats behind the counters of a small percentage of retail stores will blantly tell you these things have happened.

Some Wholesalers Are as Guilty as Sneak Thieves

There are certain of the wholesalers who are as guilty as sneak thieves in the night, but, like the retailers, not all of them are resorting to price increases for plain profit. From my own inquiries and from all of the information that has been made available to me, I am inclined to believe there are more wholesalers—a larger percentage of them—who have taken advantage of the perils of the times than can be

shown among the retailers. Instances of actual sales and cancellations of contracts and refusal of deliveries and delays in handling shipments were related, where added profit accrued to the wholesaler or jobber, that almost seemed too fendish to believe. And worse, those fellows were constantly offering new suggestions that had no basis in fact in justification of their acts. We heard every one of the alibis offered during the days of 1917.

And the manufacturers. A flock of those fellows, again, not a large percentage, were found to be hiking their prices on goods already manufactured and ready for delivery. Now, I ask how on earth the prices on a finished product can be influenced by conditions that did not arise until after the work was done. The only answer I obtained to the question anywhere was that replacements would cost more, and there must be an inventory of sufficient stock maintained to meet the demand. In other words, that limited group was taking the profit while the taking was good.

One can not examine the situation, as now presented without considering the stock market—the buying and selling of securities. It is not news to hear that quotations have boomed on every share of stock of a corporation that may sell an added cargo overseas. I believe it is fair to state, however, that this condition is one of pure gambling, and that speculation has added to the fright of consumers whose household budgets are limited.

People Are Frightened And Commence Hoarding

In discussing the situation around Washington, I found another influence, or what might be called another basis for excitement. It is quite unjustified, of course, but people nevertheless were swayed by it.

President Roosevelt has been talking about the dangers that exist, and how we must avoid them in order to stay out of the European cataclysm. Heads of government agencies everywhere have been echoing the sentiment. There can be no argument: this nation must stay out and must help to keep all of the nations of North and South America out of the stream of molten lava that is spreading through the belligerent nations. It may be a necessary evil then, an unavoidable phase of world affairs, that people are frightened and seek to hoard. The tragedy of it is that the unprincipled element I have referred to is in a position to capitalize upon such a circumstance.

But to get down to cases, let me repeat that there has been no increase worth noting in wages, in the costs of raw materials. There has been no increase whatever in transportation costs. There has been no increase in overhead expenses of grower or producer or manufacturer or wholesaler or jobber or retailer. All of these may come, and probably will come some time, but they have not arrived and when anyone attempts to justify profiteering prices, that individual should be asked to show how and where those increases have had their origin. My guess is that, for the time being at least, most of these price increases are due largely to racketeering.

Public Sentiment Is Only Force to Work Effectively

And what will be the result of all of these things? I said early they would react on all business, good business as well as the rats. The government can not do anything about it. Public sentiment is the only force that can operate effectively, and public sentiment ought to exert its pressure.

There will be a lot of talk about government control and there will be half-baked, and even quarter-baked schemes offered in abundance—all with a serious desire to break the grip of the small element that has started this wave of fright, higher prices and more fright. Of course, it is unlikely that there will be any legislation result, because as far as I can find out there is no sound and workable method by which government can reach the scoundrels responsible. Yet, there will be efforts made and there will be investigations, and the demagogues without any more idea of what to do than your runt pig will shout and harrange and create new doubts as to any and every kind of business practice. And having as many crackpots in places of responsibility as we now have in the federal government, you can be sure that those boys will give birth to ideas in quintuplet quantities.

So, when one sums up all of the data, it is made to appear that all honest and fair-minded business men had better get together and use their own type of blackjacks on the elements within their ranks that constitute a cancer on trade.

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Things Are Looking Up

"Good morning, Mrs. Twister," said the vacationist. "I've a room reserved here." "Let me see now," replied the landlady; "which room did I promise you?" "You said it was the room with the heavenly view."

"Ah, yes! Jane, show this gentleman the room with the sky-light."

Obliging Fellow "Does your company allow you to take tips?" "No, lady, but if they asked if you gave me one, I'd lie like anything to save you."

It takes a man, on an average, 10 minutes to buy a hat. A woman may hunt for three weeks before she finds one to suit her. And then—hats being as they are nowadays—it won't.

Willing to Pay It "How much do you still owe on your car?" "Only a grudge against the man who sold it to me."

Wrong Number "Jones isn't too pleased he's got twins. He only wanted one child." "Well, what do you expect? He married a telephone girl."

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