

WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS BY JOSEPH W. LaBINE

## Congress, Like Entire Nation Not Certain of 'Best' Course To Preserve U. S. Neutrality

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.)  
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### CONGRESS: Admonition

"I have come back to Washington with an open mind. Whether I vote for repeal of embargoes or retention of them, my vote . . . will be for the means which I believe best calculated to keep the United States out of war. That we must do."

Illinois' Sen. Scott Lucas, a middle-of-the-road Democrat, was held enough to admit publicly what most of the nation's 531 legislators admitted only to themselves: That no man could stamp his foot and say there was only one way to keep the U. S. out of Europe's war. But a few who took their seats in Franklin Roosevelt's third special session (and the nation's twenty-fifth since 1797) were highly opinionated, 100 per cent positive that only the arms



ILLINOIS' LUCAS  
Like many, he didn't know.

embargo they pushed through congress three years ago could keep America neutral. Among these few were Idaho's Borah, North Dakota's Nye, Michigan's Vandenberg and Missouri's Clark.

But national leaders, being merely men, were confronted with the same confusion as the nation: The more they thought about arms embargo vs. "cash and carry," the more they argued about straight international law vs. specific neutrality legislation, the less positive they were about everything save one fact, that the U. S. must keep out of war.

Day before congress opened, politics found itself "adjourned" for 85 minutes. To the White House went Republicanism's 1936 standard bearers, Alf Landon and Col. Frank Knox, to talk with Franklin Roosevelt, John Nance Garner and congressional leaders of both stripes. Even the President was apparently confused, for there were rumors he had decided to supplement straight "cash and carry" (whereby belligerents could buy, pay for and haul away arms in their own ships) with old-fashioned international law. His thesis: One principle of international law never disputed is that belligerents have the right to purchase anything they need in neutral countries.

Only concrete results of the conference were the platitudes everyone expected, announced by White House Secretary Steve Early:

(1) "The conference with unanimous thought discussed the primary objective of keeping the U. S. neutral and at peace.

(2) "There was complete accord that . . . the whole subject . . . be dealt with in a wholly non-partisan spirit."

Next day, at 2 p. m., the assembled houses of congress heard Mr. Roosevelt's recommendations:

"Let those who seek to retain the present embargo position be wholly consistent and seek new legislation to cut off cloth and copper and meat and wheat and a thousand other articles from all the nations at war.

"I seek a greater consistency through repeal of the embargo provisions and a return to international law . . . I give you my deep and unalterable conviction that by the repeal . . . the United States will more probably remain at peace than if the law remains as it stands today . . ."

"May you, by your deeds show the world that we of the United States are one people, of one mind, one spirit, one clear resolution, walking before God in the light of the living."

### NOTABLES

#### In the news

**DUKE OF WINDSOR** was named major general of British expeditionary forces and planned to go back to France.

**CHARLES M. SCHWAB**, native of Loretto, Pa., who rose to control billions of dollars in the steel industry, was buried at New York.

**KERMIT ROOSEVELT**, son of the late President Theodore Roosevelt, reportedly renounced his U. S. citizenship and became an Englishman to join the British ministry of shipping.

When the President left the floor, so did 17 isolationists of the Borah-LaFollette-Nye-Clark school. Ringing in their ears was one presidential admonition: "Let no . . . group . . . assume exclusive protectorate over the future well-being of America . . . Let no group assume the exclusive label of the peace bloc. We all belong to it."

After the 17 met, California's crusty Hiram Johnson made an announcement: "We are ready to fight from hell to breakfast."

### ASIA: Mystery

Amazingly brief was Japan's reaction when the U. S. abrogated its 1911 trade treaty last summer. One reason was the immediate upsurge of interest in Europe's dog-fight. But one thing led to another, Japan made peace with Russia, and British-French interests in the Orient were left to fall under Japanese influence. These problems settled, pugnacious Nippon dusted off the U. S. treaty abrogation, mixed it with America's decision to reinforce her Pacific garrisons, and concocted from these ingredients a puzzling diplomatic issue.

Something was in the air. On three successive days Tokyo newspapers carried what were obviously government-inspired editorials which said things like this:

"Should the U. S. strengthen her present policy it can be supposed that Japan would be compelled to assert her right to existence."

"Following the decreasing Anglo-French influence in the Far East . . . the U. S. is threatening to come forward and . . . protect its rights and interests in China, thus giving rise to a greater likelihood of Japanese-American friction."

"Neither Japan nor the United States seeks war . . . We desire to judge the situation coolly . . ."

Trying to figure out this uncalculated-for war talk, the Chicago Daily News' A. T. Steele radioed from Tokyo that he thought the Japs were being prepared for "any future drastic American move." To others, it sounded like Tokyo was making a propaganda buildup to justify anti-American moves in China.

### LABOR: Peace in Wartime

Taking his eyes a moment from Europe's bloody picture show, Franklin Roosevelt glanced at domestic affairs and suddenly realized that October is U. S. labor's big month. At Cincinnati the American Federation of Labor was ready to convene. John Lewis' Congress for Industrial Organization planned to meet in San Francisco October 10. But there was no sign of peace between these two warring factions, and internal warfare is bad business in a time of world war.

Soon, however, there were indications the White House would move for peace, as it has done the past two years. The President conferred with A. F. of L.'s Daniel



MADAME PERKINS  
What can you do?

Tobin, a leading advocate of labor unity. At his press conference he assured reporters he would address a message to the A. F. of L. convention, and that "it would be a good guess" to say the message probably would mention peace.

Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins also did a little campaigning. She told how both factions have asked representation on the new war resources board. Her quandry: If you appoint a representative of both factions, will they carry their fight into the board? Or can you appoint only one representative and say that he truly represents all labor without bringing protests from the other groups?

### MISCELLANY: Thanksgiving

Because President Roosevelt proclaimed Thanksgiving on November 23, and because Gov. George A. Wilson designated November 30, the Clayton county, Iowa, board of supervisors proclaimed a third date, November 16, "so as not to conflict with the dates set by the President and the governor."

### THE WAR: Words

Guns still boomed at a nearby Polish outpost when Adolf Hitler rode triumphantly into Danzig.

"We greet you . . . The city is decked for you," shouted Albert Forster, who is Der Fuehrer's latest Konrad Henlein.

"I am happy to greet you, my faithful gauleiter," answered the man whose armies were even then wiping up the spilled blood of Poland. Then he launched into a speech which the British ministry of information shortly called "full of the crass misstatements which usually fall from his (Hitler's) lips." Typical "misstatements":

"The Duce (Mussolini) made proposals which Germany and France accepted but Britain refused."

"Poland chose war because the western powers stated that the German army was worthless, that the German people were low in morale and that there was a breach between the German people and its leadership."

"Britain should be happy that Germany and Russia reached an agreement. They are now relieved of . . . uncertainty."

Next day, as the New York stock market boomed in hopes of a long war, Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain answered him: "Among the many misstatements . . . I wish to refer . . . to the statement that the French government agreed to Italian mediation while His Majesty's government refused."

"Our purpose . . . is to redeem Europe from perpetual and recurring fear of German aggression. No threats will deter us or our French allies from this purpose."

On the third day French Premier Edouard Daladier had his inning, tracing step-by-step every broken promise that litters Adolf Hitler's trail from the reaffirmation of Locarno to the rape of Poland. Then:

"Germany already has prepared the dismemberment of France. Maps showing France amputated have been printed . . . But France has arisen . . . We will end the war only when we can ensure the security of France."

### In the East

Completed was Russia's valiant "rescue" of 11,000,000 white Russians and Ukrainians (plus several million Poles) who were "left to their fate" when the Polish state col-



BELGIUM'S WORRY  
Will history be repeated?

lapsed under Germany's invasion. Nazi and Soviet chiefs conferred in Moscow on Poland's new partition, presumably deciding to leave a small, hamstrung buffer state. Lithuania and Slovakia were each given a small slice of the Polish pie.

But as war ebbed in Poland, other eastern nations grew fearful. Rumania's neutrality was threatened outside and inside: (1) on the north by Russian-German proximity; (2) on the east by an expected Turkish-Russian pact which might close her Black sea outlet; (3) internally by violence, illustrated in the assassination, presumably by pro-Germans, of anti-Nazi Prime Minister Armand Calinescu.

Meanwhile Der Fuehrer's fast-growing eastern empire suffered growing pains. While millions of sullen Poles presented a constant threat of rebellion, London and Paris heard insistent reports of uprisings among Czechs and Austrians.

### In the West

For the moment, fighting died down along the Saar front while both sides took time out to move up fresh troops. But France was fearful on two counts: (1) about 70 Nazi divisions were being moved from Poland to the western front; (2) Aachen, the town from which Germany jumped into Belgium in 1914, was evacuated of civilians and became a concentration point for Herr Hitler's troops. Was history about to be repeated?

### At Sea

As the British airplane carrier Courageous went down, its 578 dead boosted Britain's sea toll to 761. Prime Minister Chamberlain reported 31 allied or neutral ships had been sunk by U-boats, also that the allies have sunk seven or eight German subs.

Comparison: In April, 1917, peak month of the World war's sea fighting, average British tonnage loss per week was 127,000, or 39 ships. For the week ending September 19 in the present war, Britain lost 45,000 tons, or 13 ships. Biggest U. S. concern in the sea war: Several American cargoes had been confiscated by Britain; at least one American steamer, the Wascosta, had been stopped and searched by a German sub.

### Bruckart's Washington Digest

## War Really Between Two Groups With Utterly Selfish Motives

Time Has Come When Citizens of United States Must Examine Facts of International Situation; Debates In Congress Should Be Enlightening.

By WILLIAM BRUCKART

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WASHINGTON.—With congress reassembled in special session for discussion of, and action on, President Roosevelt's request for modification of our so-called neutrality policy, the time appears to have come when citizens of the United States must examine the facts of the international situation. Whether we like it, or not, we can hardly ignore those facts any longer. It is Europe's mess, but that mess is having an influence here and will have more influence on our national viewpoint. A decision must be taken. A decision must be taken.

Mr. Roosevelt has requested repeal of the section of the present law that prohibits export of arms, airplanes and some other implements of war to all nations engaged in declared hostilities. It will be remembered that he made the same request in the last session, but the senate committee on foreign relations said, by its action a few days before adjournment, that it would have none of the plan. Conditions have changed since that time, however, and the President is now insisting upon repeal of the controversial section and the substitution; in its place he is asking for legislation which will permit any and all foreigners to come here and buy the embargoed war munitions if they pay cash for them and take them away in their own ships.

That, succinctly, is the crux of the modification which Mr. Roosevelt seeks. He has plenty of support for his theory. And there is plenty of opposition, too. Some of the isolationists—men who fought Woodrow Wilson and his League of Nations plan—men like Senator Borah of Idaho and Senator Johnson of California—are still in the senate. Their numbers have been augmented by fighters of the type of Senator Bennett Clark of Missouri, and Senator Nye of North Dakota, and Senator Vandenberg of Michigan. I think the vote will not be taken at once, in view of the promised discussion. And it probably is well that there will be much debate, for the country will learn more about the two sides to the question.

### Unseen Factors Involved Is Our Present Concern

But while the discussion on the so-called neutrality question is important, although the question in my opinion is simply whether we will open the gates for the export of anything we can sell, I am quite convinced our concern should be about the underlying and, at present, unseen factors now involved. It is said that we are extending passive aid to Hitler by refusing to allow the British and the French to come here for thousands of planes and millions of odds and ends usable in war. It is said, too, that unless we extend help to the British and the French, our nation eventually must face the onrushing tide of totalitarianism and dictatorship. It can be, and is being, said that unless the arms embargo is lifted, we will have to go in ourselves sooner than otherwise would happen.

All of these things can be said and are being said with reference to both sides of the line of fire in Europe, but none of the argument has changed my conclusion which has been reached after talking with scores of people who are in a position to know the facts abroad. My conclusion remains, and is going to continue to be, that it is Europe's war. I add to that the further thought that our energies should be directed to maintaining peace in North and South America, south of the Canadian boundary.

Now, there are those who say—and they are numerous—that repeal of the arms embargo will result in revival of business in the United States, as, indeed, it already has started. A business revival would be well. Nobody doubts that. But the things like planes and powder that go abroad have to leave our shores. It strikes me that sale of anything, whether planes or powder or wheat or cotton and corn, is likely to bring the war much closer to our shores. It makes me believe that we would be better off if we sold nothing at all. That is, why not modify the policy by placing an embargo on everything that goes to the warring nations and let them fight it out.

### Utterly Selfish Motives Behind the War in Europe

To begin with, there is no moral issue in this war. No one ought to let themselves be kidded about that. The war in Europe right now is a battle between two groups of people with utterly selfish motives. Hitler and his gang have determined to regain that which the British took away from the German people in the World war of 1914-1918, and the British and the French are determined not to let him accomplish it.

Hitler calls it justice; Chamberlain and Daladier call it brigandage. Back in 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was written, the Germans shouted brigands and other epithets as the French and the British over-ruled Woodrow Wilson and took what they wanted. Not only did the winners in that war, excepting the United States, take what they wanted, but they parceled out other parts of the German empire.

Where did the United States finish in that war? It helped win a war to make the world safe for democracy, which turned out to be a sham. And it was left holding the bag. It still is holding the bag, because little of the eleven billion dollars loaned to the allied powers ever has been repaid. Only little Finland has kept her promise to pay back the loans.

Stripped of all of its jungle of words, therefore, the question thus seems to shape itself. We have nothing to gain, so why not make over our neutrality into the policy of an isolationist? Why not stay out by keeping our stuff here at home? I know I will be rebuked by those who say we cannot afford to close down factories and let cotton and wheat and corn remain unsold. Notwithstanding all of this, there surely is ground for belief that it would be cheaper in the end, cheaper in money, if you want to deal only in the materialistic side and cheaper in blood, because it may come to that.

### 'Ocean Patrol' Called by Some a Dangerous Step

There are a good many people who believe that the President has taken a potentially dangerous step in ordering what is called an "ocean patrol" while hostilities are on. He has placed ships of the American navy as far as 200 miles at sea, as he explained, that they may obtain information as to what is going on out there. The patrol looks like an invitation to some German U-boat to take a shot at one of our ships. Of course, they would not do so deliberately; they would "mistake" a United States ship for one of the enemy, or that would be their excuse. And would we be in a dither! There would be cries for a declaration of war that would rock the dome of the Capitol.

Mr. Roosevelt said that the patrol program amounted to a steel warning to the belligerents to stay on their side of the railroad tracks, or words to that effect. Those who dislike the plan say, however, that we, as a nation, cannot lay claim to the sea as our very own beyond a minimum distance from tide fall. To get back to the neutrality policy, as it is called, I have found many persons who have difficulty in reconciling Mr. Roosevelt's present request of congress with his action respecting enforcement of the provisions in the three-year-old law of the Japanese in China. The law gives the President discretionary power in proclaiming its operation, except that it becomes effective almost automatically where there has been a declaration of war by a foreign power.

### Boldest Propaganda Now Is Flooding the Country

In the meantime and as the fighting progresses in Europe, we in America are being flooded with the boldest and the boldest propaganda that can be conceived. From Berlin and other points under Hitler domination, we are being fed so-called news that is as putrid as politics used to be under Pendergast in Kansas City or Penrose in Pennsylvania. It is amazing that any one believes it.

From British and French sources, and from their sympathizers in this country, comes "news" that is censored and controlled and inspired. It tells only the things that the French and the British would have us believe. We know just as little about the real underlying facts of the controversy from them as we do from the Germans. It is well to remember that we never have known what kind of an agreement was reached at the Munich conference in September of last year. We have absolutely no knowledge of what kind of a sellout was arranged between Hitler and Stalin. Nor do we know what has happened insofar as Mussolini is concerned.

More important than any of these things, however, are conditions within the United States. I would like to see our congress use some brains and take action that will get us out of the depths of a nine-year depression. It is quite evident that all of the theories that have been tried still remain theories. I am among those who fear that entry into another world war will mark the end of our form of government here unless our home conditions are far better than at present. It seems to me to be more important to solve our troubles rather than those of Europe.

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