

# WASHINGTON Calling

A Weekly Sizeup by the Washington Staff of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers

(Continued from Page One)

dence in present American and British leadership there, believe Rommel has met his match.

## March Sinkings Feared

SUBMARINE SINKINGS in March may be double the February figure, congressional sources fear, because of spring weather. Destroyers and destroyer-escort vessels, the two chief types of surface craft used in our anti-submarine war, are coming off the ways in good numbers—but the numbers won't be good enough until fall. Conflicts with rubber, high-octane gasoline and airplane programs, over critical materials, slowed down D-E construction.

Meanwhile, conferences of high-ranking American, Canadian and British military and naval men here recently planned for best possible use of available surface and air craft to fight subs during the coming danger season.

House is likely to write a new tax bill of its own on the floor. Now that they've taken a close look at it, Democrats aren't enthusiastic about what their ways and means committee reported. Nor are the Republicans willing to make an all-out fight for the Ruml plan.

Several substitutes are being drafted. Carlson is rewriting his near-Ruml plan. Forand of Rhode Island will offer a compromise between the committee bill and the Robertson proposal "forgiving" 1942 taxes up to 19 per cent. (You'd pay just the same but your payments would apply on 1943 taxes).

This is one time when house debate will really influence votes. Membership, not satisfied with what's before it now, will be looking frantically for something better. Good bets for inclusion in whatever emerges from the melee: Forgiveness of some portion of 1942 income liability; special concessions for service men; 20 per cent withholding tax after July 1.

It's even money now that de Gaulle and Giraud will reach a working agreement when they meet—as they will in a few days—in North Africa. But if you bet, don't bet too heavily. Reason: Gen. de Gaulle's entourage, if not the gallant general himself, is inclined to compromise only one way—its own.

## Argentine Sentiment Explored

AT LEAST 65 per cent of the people of Argentina are pro-ally, says a recently returned official. "But," he adds, "don't take that to mean 65 per cent are for breaking with the axis. Like many Americans before Pearl Harbor, they are overwhelmingly against Hitler but would like to remain neutral."

State prisons and other institutions, dissatisfied with food rationing rules, threaten to raise their own, ignore OPA. And OPA threatens to ask for injunctions.

Rumors about Washington putting a stop to cross-country transportation of food and other products probably came from program, now being worked out, to induce local governments to fill all needs from home industry, cut cross-hauling by that much.

Coal crisis embarrasses congressional plans to repeal \$25,000 salary limitation. John L. Lewis is sure to use it as a talking point of raises for miners. Good bet is that house appropriations committee next week will eliminate \$44,000,000 Florida barge canal item from war department appropriation bill, despite argument that it would ease East coast oil shortage. Subcommittee approved it, full committee refused to approve the bill with it in.

## OWI Faces Going-Over

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION is in for a going-over from house appropriations subcommittee when its budget is taken up, around April 12. Ranking Republican member Taber is still peeved because OWI Director Davis called him a "Simon Legree," is demanding elimination of many OWI activities.

Also slated for the ax: National youth administration. House economists are organizing to kill it off. And farm security seems to have few friends in senate, despite its hopes for better treatment there.

Rexford G. Tugwell's regime as governor of Puerto Rico will get another congressional look-over this spring. House insular affairs committee plans investigation of political situation there as well as social and economic, expects to report on whether the island's governor should be elected or appointed by the president.

Germans are cutting food rations of French, Belgians and other subject peoples lower and lower—and with every cut they put the blame on U. S. If there is hunger, they say, it's because Americans landed in North Africa and grabbed all the supplies.

Vice President Wallace wanted to go to South America incognito, just as a "common man." He was told the president and vice president cannot travel abroad like ordinary tourists, mingle with hostile factions in various delicately balanced nations. Even so, he left here unconvinced.

## British Lift Ban Against Flowers

LONDON, March 20 (G.D.N.).—Under what has amounted to a nation-wide indignation, Great Britain is suspending its unpopular ban against the carrying of flowers and foliage by train.

The cheers which greeted this announcement in the house of commons are echoing throughout the country as the prospect of brighter weather helps dim the memories of the wintry muck and fog.

Starting next Thursday "for the summer months" train passengers again can carry flowers without fear of heavy fines and commercial florists can obtain railroad space, conditions warranting, without resorting to the ingenious subterfuges which followed the ministry of war transport's order against carrying flowers.

For the summer, at least, Britain's highly developed racket of flower smuggling is at an end.

## NITTI ENDS LIFE; \$1.14 IN POCKET

Kingpin of Capone Empire Takes Easy Way Out of Extortion Charges.

CHICAGO, March 20 (U. P.).—The remnants of Scarface Al Capone's once mighty empire of crime crumbled today with the suicide of its ruler, Frank "The Enforcer" Nitti, and there were whispers that the higher-ups, the men who controlled the gangsters, would be next to fall.

Nitti committed suicide late yesterday when he learned that a federal grand jury at New York indicted him and eight others, six of them his henchmen, as a result of a \$2,500,000 labor union extortion.

U. S. District Attorney J. Albert Woll said a grand jury would convene here within 30 days to pick up where the New York grand jury left off.

Nitti, who dealt death to underworld enemies with a shrug of indifference, was driven to a drunken suicide when he found the federal government too tough an opponent. He was the first big-time Chicago gangster to take "the easy way out."

Federal agents said he had "pleaded guilty" by sending a bullet into his brain. Shortly before his death, they said, arrangements were made by an attorney to surrender him to the U. S. marshal's office. Government attorneys said they knew he would plead guilty, "but not that way."

Nitti killed himself in a drunken stupor. His suicide was witnessed by three trainmen on an Illinois Central switch engine. The trainmen saw him reeling down a sidetrack as their engine approached.

## First Two Wild Shots

Then, they said, he drew a pistol and fired two wild shots. The trainmen ducked as a bullet sped in their direction. They were not sure whether he had fired intentionally at them or not.

Stumbling in a heap, Nitti sat propped against a fence, pressed the pistol to his temple and fired. The third shot ended his life.

The man who had controlled millions reaped through liquor, gambling and extortion, died with \$1.14 in his pocket. Police found the 32-caliber pistol—less powerful than those habitually used by gunmen—clutched in Nitti's stiffened hand.

A few hours before his suicide, Nitti was indicted by the New York grand jury with eight associates, six of them former Capone henchmen, on charges of mail fraud and violation of anti-racketeering laws. They were accused of milking millions from motion picture executives through threats of strikes.

## CARIBBEAN U-BOAT THREAT IS REVIVED

WASHINGTON, March 20 (U. P.).—The Germans may be sending some of their submarines into waters far away from the north Atlantic in an effort to divert allied escort strength from the vital convoy routes to Britain, Russia and North Africa.

That possibility was suggested today by the appearance of an enemy submarine in the Caribbean area for the first time in more than three months. A small Honduran merchant vessel was sunk there during the first half of this month, the first in that area since December.

Why a submarine should be operating in the Caribbean at a time when the main hunting ground appears to be in the North Atlantic aroused speculation over the possibility that the enemy is feinting.

The Caribbean already is the graveyard for 154 merchant ships sunk by submarines since the start of the last year. Of this number, 71 were sent to the bottom during May and June.

The German submarine campaign appears to be gaining momentum. Elmer Davis, director of the office of war information, in a radio address last night said that the bombing of submarine bases and submarine factories continues, "but there are still plenty of U-boats at large and plenty more in reserve, and they are going to keep on giving us a lot of trouble."

## OHIOAN KEYNOTER OF TOWNSEND RALLY

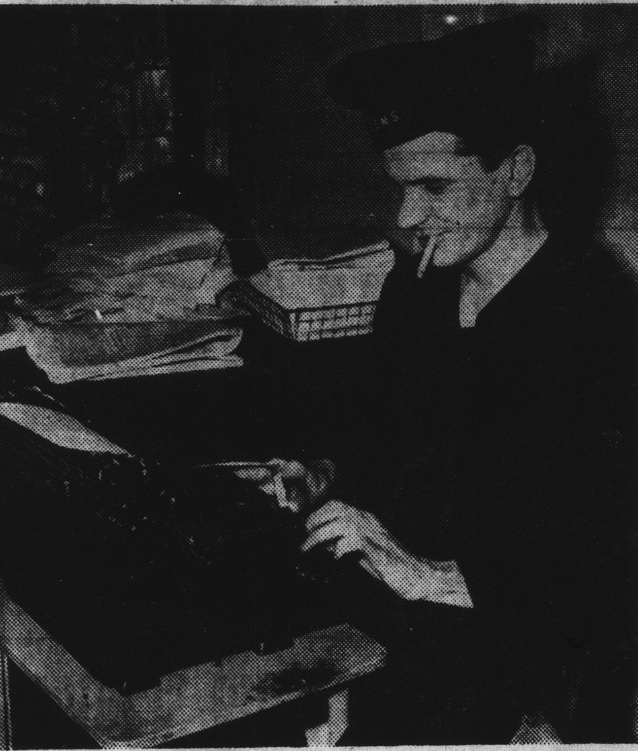
Charles W. Wettermann, Cleveland, O., will be the keynoter for the eleventh district Townsend club convention, Odd Fellows hall, at Hamilton ave. and Washington st., tomorrow. Mr. Wettermann is the Ohio Townsend plan manager. Delegates from Marion county clubs will select a district council. George Beard, president of the eleventh district council, temporary chairman, will open the convention. Indiana state manager, Arthur E. Baker will serve as permanent chairman. The Fountain Square Townsend club choir, directed by Mrs. W. E. Williams, will sing.

WOMAN, 103, DEAD  
FT. WAYNE, Ind., March 20 (U. P.).—Funeral services were scheduled for Monday for Mrs. Caroline Strasser of Ft. Wayne, who, last November, celebrated her 103rd birthday. She died last night.

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## Fremont Interviews Self



Fremont Power, former Times tomato editor, interviews himself.

## Times Tomato Editor Home On Merchant Marine Leave

By FREMONT POWER  
This is what happens when you try to practice a few of the social niceties around this joint. Drop in to say howdy to the boys and they put you to poking the same old decrepit typewriter you wrestled with before going off to save America.

That, of course, is the way city editors are. They can't be nice more than a couple of minutes before they come forth with some screwball idea that a guy should sit down and start to work.

## GERMAN NERVES ON RAGGED EDGE

Goebbels' Admission on Luftwaffe Decline Seen As Symbol.  
By HARRISON SALISBURY  
United Press Staff Correspondent  
LONDON, March 20.—Widening Nazi nervousness regarding allied offensives for 1943 was indicated today despite the momentary lull in big news from the active fighting fronts.

The concern does not appear centered on any single theater, but is diffused in the form of fear of events to come, not only in Tunisia, the air offensive in western Europe or in Russia, but for the whole outcome of the war.

It was typified by the signally significant declaration of Dr. Joseph Goebbels in Das Reich, wherein for the first time since some years before the outbreak of the war the No. 1 Nazi propagandist conceded that Germans no longer hold first place in air power and admitted allied superiority in that vital factor of modern warfare.

Indications that the Nazis—probably at Hitler's personal bidding—now place the chief reliance for defending themselves from the allied offensive upon submarines also was implied by Goebbels, who attempted to assert that Nazi dominance in submarine warfare balanced allied air superiority.

The strain of Nazi nervousness is cropping out constantly in German propaganda. It is notable that the Nazis never have indicated to the home folk any hopes of permanently defending Tunisia.

It also is noteworthy that they have not beaten the drums, as on former occasions, in connection with their recapture of Kharkov. They also have betrayed lack of confidence in holding off the allied invasion of Western Europe with repeated inspections of their western sea forts and warnings to the populations of occupied countries of what they will do to them when, as and if the allies land.

## CHURCHILL TO WARN SATELLITES OF AXIS

LONDON, March 20 (U. P.).—Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in a forthcoming radio address, may tell the axis satellite nations that there still is time for them to get off a sinking ship and save themselves from drowning. There never is any information available in advance on what Churchill will say and the hour of his broadcast is closely guarded for security reasons.

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## CLAIM THREAT ON HOSTAGES

Bern Reports Nazis Warn Alsations of 10-to-1 Reprisals.

LONDON, March 20 (U. P.).—The Nazis were reported today to have announced that they would shoot 10 hostages for every German soldier killed in the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, where sabotage and acts of violence against occupation forces were on the rise.

Swiss reports said a military court in Strasbourg had sentenced 13 Alsations to death and 14 to prison for maintaining "united nations connections" and plotting to overthrow the new order.

A Strasbourg newspaper reacting to Bern, Switzerland, said all the plotters had German names. They were said to include a prominent district court counselor, a Nazi government counselor, a police secretary and "prominent members of other influential professions."

## Say Many Youths Arrested

Radio Dakar broadcast a report that the Germans have mobilized 45,000 Frenchmen from Alsace and Lorraine and scattered them through several German regiments on the Russian front. Other Alsations were said to have been forced into war industries in the Ruhr.

Radio Morocco, reporting from Bern, said the patriots entrenched in the Savoy Alps still have not acceded to Vichy's demand that they lay down their arms.

A great many youths, according to the Morocco radio, have been arrested while attempting to join the patriots.

Some patriots were said to be returning singly and in small groups to their homes in Haute Savoie. The only new development reported in the Swiss press was the posting of German announcements in Haute Savoie towns declaring that in case of an allied landing in Europe all able bodied men would be placed in concentration camps.

Nazi and Vichy announcements insisted that the trouble had been "grossly exaggerated," claiming no lives had been lost and that there had been no violence.

Radio Paris, however, said the largest police raid in history was made in Tarbes, about 30 miles from the Spanish frontier. Paris did not give the reason.

## Savage Soviet Thrust in Donets Slows Nazi Drive

MOSCOW, March 20 (U. P.).—A savage Soviet counter-attack wiped out a German advance in the seesaw battle of the upper Donets river today, but the Germans were stepping up their assault in a desperate bid for bridgeheads on the north bank before the spring thaw.

Tens of thousands of axis troops and hundreds of tanks were battering the Soviet lines in continuous waves, seeking to force the Donets in strength and drive the Russians back toward the Don river.

The Germans hurled 3000 infantrymen and 25 tanks against a single narrow sector of the front today and, at heavy cost, drove the Russians back slightly, the mid-day communique reported. The Soviets then regrouped and drove the enemy back to his initial positions in a counter-attack.

Nearly 500 German dead, five wrecked tanks and seven anti-tank guns were left on the battlefield, the communique said.

However, the Russians yielded two hamlets to the Germans yesterday in their second withdrawal in 24 hours.

Mud and slush was slowing the Soviet drive toward Smolensk on the central front, but field dispatches reported that the Russians now had reached the east bank of the upper Dnieper in the entire region north of the Vyazma-Smolensk railroad and had pushed another six miles along the railroad itself from Ideshkovo to within seven miles of Dorogobuzh, 48 miles east of Smolensk.

Marshal Semyon Timoshenko's northwestern armies stormed into another town and smashed a German stronghold in a continuing advance toward Staraya Russia, axis bastion south of Lake Ilmen.

## Electronic Lab Employees Taking 'Vitamins for Victory'

(Continued from Page One)

prime importance. And it seemed that most of the employees were working too hard and too long to take time to balance their menus or soak up too much of nature's vitamins through fresh air and sunshine.

But he thinks the daily vitamin pills will solve the problem nicely. Mrs. Blanche Jackson, plant nurse, puts up the capsules in packages of seven each, one for each day of the week including Saturday and Sunday. Each Thursday the week's supply is distributed, and most of the workers take theirs during the morning rest period.

The project is on a purely voluntary basis, but so far the employees are 100 per cent vitamin-treated. One day there was a slight delay in distributing the vitamins, and employees kept the office phone wire hot as they anxiously waited for their week's allotment.

The company is engaged in 100 per cent war work. A pioneer in the engineering of "black light" in aviation, it has supplied American airplanes since 1938 with this fluorescent lamp for airplane panel lighting.

In addition its specialty is the

## CULVER FLIER DIES IN LOUISIANA CRASH

BATON ROUGE, La., March 20 (U. P.).—Second Lieut. Ralph W. Thornburg of Culver, Ind., was killed yesterday when his plane crashed into a swampy section one mile north of Harding field here.

Lieut. Thornburg was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph D. Thornburg of Culver.

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## EXHIBITS

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