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THE WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

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PRESIDENT'S TIMING OF WORLD PEACE PLANS CHOSEN AFTER MUCH THOUGHT; HE ACCEPTS WELLES IDEA OF IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY LITTLE NATIONS; U. S. EXPERTS SEE NAZIS CLEVER IN SELECTION OF ANTI-INVASION TRIO; AIR ACE DE SEVERSKY BRINGS LAUGHS TO WOUNDED WITH ONE-LEGGED JIGS.

WASHINGTON -- White House insiders say that the President gave a great deal of thought to the timing of his permanent world peace plans.

Here are the factors which caused him to launch his plan at this particular moment:

1. The Republican National convention will now have to endorse the general thesis of world cooperation or else face the charge of heading the country toward another war. If F.D.R. had waited much longer, he might have been accused of springing the plan too late for the Republicans to consider things properly prior to the meeting in Chicago, June 26.
2. F.D.R. saw his old chief, Woodrow Wilson, wait until Europe no longer needed U.S. support to win the war, no longer needed food and relief. In contrast, the United States is at the peak of its war contribution, also at the peak of its bargaining power for peace-for-future machinery. The President decided to use that bargaining power when it had the greatest leverage.
3. Churchill's recent speech in Parliament proposing world rule by the Big Powers, also helped precipitate announcement of the plan. The President some time ago accepted the Sumner Welles thesis that the little nations must play an important part in the post-war set-up and it was considered a good idea to remind Churchill of this.
4. U.S. prestige with European nations --- Sweden, France, Yugoslavia, Spain, Ireland---is at a low ebb. So it was considered a good time to remind them that the U.S.A. is still a friend.

NOTE ---One difference between Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles which led to their break-up was post-war peace planning. Welles long had argued that the time to develop the peace machinery of the world was now -- before the war was over.

Mr. Hull, up until he went to Russia last fall, had informed Senators that future peace machinery should be put off until after the war and left entirely to the State Department to decide.

GERMANY'S SMART CHOICES

U.S. experts who have studied the Nazi military set-up to resist invasion figure that Hitler -- or whoever did the picking for him --- was smart in his selection of German military leaders. Three of the best men in the German Army have been given the job of combating what the Nazis know is the death thrust at Germany.

No. 1 is Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt, considered the best strategist and over all commander in Germany. Field Marshal. Erwin Rommel, immediately under him, is the best man for lightning moves and panzer tactics.

Finally, Colonel General Heinz Guderian is considered the best tank commander in the German Army.

U.S. experts, who believe in looking facts in the face, classify these three as among the top military brains of Europe.

However, what size and caliber of troops they have been able to spare from the Russian front may be more important than generals.

### CAPITOL CHAFF

Crack Air Ace Major de Seversky has been doing something besides design new planes lately. He has been dancing jigs before one-legged U.S. soldiers in hospitals to show them what a one-legged man can do if he has to. Seversky had his right leg shot off in World War I, but he says it was a godsend because he was able to smuggle \$50,000 out of Russia in his wooden leg. His visits have given a lot of cheer and hope to one-legged veterans.....Ranting Representative Rankin of Mississippi says he has it all set so Presidential electors will not vote for Roosevelt in the Electoral College but pass the buck to the House of Representatives where he plans to have Harry Byrd elected President....Jim Farley is reported to have helped hatch the plan to have the Electoral College revolt against Roosevelt. Apparently Jim did it during his soft drink migrations around the country....Congratulations to Lt. Harry B. Paul Barnhart for bringing laughs to the boys in the South Pacific with his Army show "Stars and Gripes". .... Governor Willis of Kentucky is getting the reputation among Kentuckians of veering toward petticoat influence in the Palace. Mrs. Willis seems to have quite a bit of influence.

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SPECIAL FOR STATES INTERESTED -- Available to All Subscribers

GREEN LIGHT FOR 28 AIRPORTS

The President doesn't often loosen up on funds for municipal projects these war days, but it now looks as if 28 new airports in 17 states would get the Presidential green light, despite the fact that they had been stopped by the Airport Approval Board.

If so, a group of legislators who called on the President recently -- Democratic Senator Gillette of Iowa, Republican Senator Burton of Ohio, Democratic Representative Randolph of West Virginia, Republican Representatives Stevenson of Wisconsin and Tibbott of Pennsylvania -- will get the credit.

The President had prepared some advance ammunition when they arrived---a letter from the War Department telling of the detailing of all the airports authorized for the country. He proceeded to read it in order to discourage his callers even before they got started.

"I'm glad you brought that up, Mr. President," said Congressman Randolph of West Virginia, "because that's just the opposite of what we have here. In this case, these communities had been approached by the government and urged to build airports for war uses. The communities did not take the initiative. But when urged by the government, they then cooperated 100 per cent. Men went on personal notes to borrow the money until bond issues could be floated. Land was purchased, buildings razed, \$4,000,000 was spent by these communities. And then suddenly they find that someone in Washington has changed his mind."

Here Representative Stevenson of Wisconsin picked up the argument.

"Take the city of La Crosse," he said. "The people of La Crosse went to extreme lengths to cooperate with the government. They condemned land and actually forced families to move from 40 parcels of land in order to clear the airport site. And when a school refused to move, the people of La Crosse got the Wisconsin legislature to pass a new law making it possible to condemn the schoolhouse.

"Then, after all this trouble -- after tearing down buildings, and when the contractor had all his machinery on the spot ready to start -- your order of March 9 comes through, ruling that the airport is not a military necessity."

"Yes," interrupted Senator Burton of Ohio, "your ruling had the effect of saying that those communities which had put their shovels in the ground could go ahead with their airports, while those with shovels suspended in mid-air could not."

The President agreed that his order had been too strict in differentiating between airports that had already started work and those with their land all ready to start. Meanwhile, Representative Stevenson went on to tell about the La Crosse project and how only a few weeks ago an Army bomber, enroute from Minneapolis to Chicago, was forced down on what was to have been the airport and nearly wrecked.

"A colonel had to come up from Madison, Wis., to get the plane out," Stevenson said.

"Only a colonel?" interrupted the President. "And after I've signed so many commissions for major generals. I'll bet he was a major general by the time he got back to Madison."

In the end, the President seemed much impressed.

"It would seem that the government has a moral obligation to the people who have done all this work," he said, and promised to re-examine the whole matter.

Word has since leaked out of the White House that the result probably will be a green light for the following 28 airports: Alturas, Calif; Winter Haven, Fla; Decatur, Quincy and Springfield, Ill.; Dubuque and Waterloo, Iowa; Lawrence, Mass; Pellston, Mich.; Bemidji and Duluth, Minn.; Springfield, Mo.; Dansville, N.Y.; Greensboro, N.C.; Jamestown, N.D.; Canton, Mansfield and Springfield, Ohio; Johnstown and Wilkes Barre, Pa.; Denton and Georgetown, Texas; Danville, Va.; Martinsburg, Parkersburg, Wheeling and Wiley Ford, W.Va., and La Crosse, Wis.

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