

No. 7

DATE July 9, 1941.

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DID YOU KNOW

That the occupation of Iceland is closer to Europe's war than it is to defense of the Western Hemisphere?

OUR ICELAND OUTPOST.

"I repeat again that I stand on the platform of our party; we will not participate in foreign wars and will not send our Army, Naval or Air Forces to fight in foreign lands outside of the Americas except in case of attack." (President Roosevelt, in campaign speech at Philadelphia, on October 23, 1940).

"The President made something of a joke of attempts to define the Western Hemisphere rigidly. When some one recalled that the President himself had marked the area on a previous occasion, and that his line then left most, if not all, of Iceland in the Eastern Hemisphere, the President repeated, with a chuckle, that it all depended on what geographer one talked to last." (Report of President's press conference of July 8, in New York Times of July 9, 1941).

"But these things cannot be done, Iceland cannot be guarded indefinitely without shooting; of this there is no doubt." (Hanson W. Baldwin, military expert, in New York Times, July 9, 1941).

NOW IT CAN
BE TOLD

On July 7, 1941, a special message from President Roosevelt informed Congress that U.S. Naval forces had that day landed at Iceland, under an agreement secretly concluded six days before between the President and the Prime Minister of Iceland (New York Times, July 8, 1941). Congress was advised that the step had been taken to forestall possible occupation of Iceland by Germany, which would constitute a three-fold threat to the United States: a threat against Greenland and the northern portions of the North American continent; a threat against all North Atlantic shipping; and a threat against the steady

flow of munitions to Great Britain.

REACHING TO-
WARDS EUROPE

To call the occupation of Iceland a "defensive" measure is equivalent to making "a joke of attempts to define the Western Hemisphere rigidly", and to repudiating earlier solemn pledges that American armed forces would not be sent "to fight in foreign lands outside of the Americas". Iceland's capital and chief port, Reykjavik, is only 670 miles from Scotland, and only 915 miles from Norway, both of which are within the combat zones proclaimed by the President in November, 1939, into which American vessels and citizens may not travel. All of Iceland is within the war zone proclaimed by the Nazis on March 25. American troops stationed there are 950 miles closer to Europe than are the troops stationed in Greenland, which is outside the Nazi war zone, and 1950 miles closer to Europe than the troops stationed at our base at St. John's, Newfoundland. Iceland itself is 3200 miles by air from New York, and 2834 miles by the most direct sea route.

IN THE SHOOT-
ING RANGE

There is no doubt but that Reykjavik will continue to be used by the British as a naval and air base (Hanson W. Baldwin, New York Times, July 9, 1941). In that case, Iceland will be subject to attack. Merchant ships have been sunk in Iceland's waters. The Nazi battleship "Bismarck" sank the British battleship "Hood" just south of the Denmark Strait between Greenland and Iceland. The press already has reported reliable predictions that American ships will carry goods for Britain to Iceland, under convoy by the U.S. Navy, and that the American naval patrol will operate from there almost to the coast of Scotland (New York Times, July 9, 1941). Rear Admiral Yates Stirling (retired) admits that the occupation is "a long step nearer to 'shooting war'" (Washington Post, July 8, 1941). Hanson W. Baldwin's remark that the Iceland occupation marks "our definite participation in a 'shooting war'" is amply justified (New York Times, July 9, 1941). Columnist Mark Sullivan, who supports the Roosevelt foreign policy, admits that the "American force in Iceland will have the same function the British had. The function of the British force was war." (Washington Post, July 9, 1941.)

U. S.
OFFENSIVE

The circumstances surrounding the agreement with Iceland scarcely support the theory that the occupation was necessary to protect that island against Nazi invasion. It is 915 miles from Nazi bases in Norway - too remote to be another Crete. Were there any real danger of such an attack, the British troops who have been stationed there would not be removed; especially since they are trained troops, better acquainted with the island's defensive problems than our own troops (Hanson W. Baldwin, New York Times, July 9, 1941). The President's message failed to state any known danger or likelihood of attack, and at his press conference of July 8, he refused to state whether he had acted upon information of any projected attack (New York Times, July 9, 1941). The implication was clear that he had acted upon his own theory of an "offensive defense".

WHOSE IDEA?

The agreement itself indicates that our own request may have brought it about. It is presented as originating in Reykjavik. Yet in the Icelandic Prime Minister's note requesting U.S. occupation, it is clear that the island republic had been given the idea by the British Minister to Iceland, who

who found that the British troops garrisoned there were required elsewhere (New York Times, July 8, 1941). If Hanson W. Baldwin's estimate that the British troops number no more than a third to a half of the 60,000 to 80,000 supposed to be there is accurate, (New York Times, July 9), there is no "elsewhere" in the war where they could be so urgently required that other British troops from England could not replace them. In Washington, many believe that the idea actually originated on this side of the Atlantic (Arthur Krock, New York Times, July 8, 1941).

FAR-OFF
ISLANDS

The President coupled the occupation of Iceland with defense of the Western Hemisphere by announcing that American forces had been sent to our bases in Trinidad and British Guiana, in the south, to forestall any Nazi attempt to seize strategic points in the Atlantic. Manning these bases, clearly in the Western Hemisphere, is one thing. But his reference to strategic points "in the Atlantic", rather than "in the Western Hemisphere", justifies the conclusion that he is laying the ground for future occupation of the Azores (2750 miles from New York, but only 786 miles from Portugal), the Cape Verde Islands (about 3400 miles from the tip of Florida, but only 300 miles from the coast of Africa), and Dakar (3750 miles from the tip of Florida, on the west coast of Africa) - by seizure should negotiations with Vichy, Spain and Portugal prove impossible.

POLITICS

The implications of a move into Africa or the Atlantic islands will be discussed in a subsequent study, but it should be said here that the possibility of such a move explains the recent request (New York Times, July 2, 1941) by Chief of Staff Marshall for legislation removing the 12-month limitation on the training period for draftees and National Guardsmen (which the President has approved) and the prohibition against their being sent outside the Western Hemisphere (upon which the President refused to comment - (New York Times, July 9, 1941). General Marshall's request cannot be considered as involving merely technical military questions. Whatever his personal beliefs may be, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army holds an appointive position which is partly political in nature. He cannot oppose policy publicly, but can only announce and execute it. Removal of the ban against using draftees and National Guardsmen outside the Western Hemisphere is entirely a matter of foreign policy, not military policy. Lengthening the period of military service (is largely a matter) of foreign policy, not military policy.

ICELAND-EASTERN
HEMISPHERE

Men will be needed to man these "island outposts" if the foreshadowed policy is carried out. So far as Iceland is concerned, as the British forces gradually leave, there will be calls for units of the U.S. Army to follow the soldiers and marines already there. Under present law, draftees and National Guardsmen could not be sent to Iceland. While it is theoretically possible to consider the Western Hemisphere as including a small part of Iceland, the Official Geographer of the United States pointed out some time ago that the normal conception places Iceland in the Eastern Hemisphere (Congressional Record, June 10, 1940). Certainly, that is the historical and common understanding. The other "island outposts" are unquestionably in the Eastern Hemisphere.

PRESIDENTIAL
"DEFENSE"

The President's theory of "offensive defense" might be better styled a theory of "elastic defense". Its logic must now compel him to seek further bases as a protection for Iceland. We secured a base at Newfoundland to protect us against Nazi bases on Greenland. Then we secured Greenland to protect us against Iceland. Now that we have occupied Iceland, must we now occupy Ireland, or Norway, or Scotland, to protect Iceland? If we occupy the Azores, must we not then occupy Portugal to protect the Azores? If we occupy the Cape Verde Islands and Dakar, must we not then occupy portions of the African coast to protect those outposts?

ANOTHER
A. E. F.

That theory leads inevitably to a second American A. E. F., which British General Wavell and his successor, General Auchinleck, have both stated recently would soon be needed (New York Times, July 5, July 8, 1941). In addition, we face the possibility of "shooting" in many parts of the Atlantic, since the President also announced in his Iceland message to Congress that he had ordered the Navy to take all necessary measures to keep the seas clear between the United States and Iceland and our other "strategic outposts". As Mark Sullivan has pointed out, the implications of the President's theory transgresses "what the public understood when it was told we would confine ourselves to defense of the American Hemisphere" (Washington Post, July 9, 1941).

ICELAND
NO CRETE

But was hemisphere defense the main reason for the occupation of Iceland? The President stated that German occupation of Iceland would be a threat to the flow of munitions to Britain, which were being sent under a policy approved by Congress. Nazi occupation would be a threat if Iceland could be occupied by the Nazi's. But Iceland, 915 miles from Nazi bases in Norway, is not Crete (which was assaulted from air bases only 100 miles away). The Nazi's would like to take Iceland, but Britain controls the surrounding seas. The British never intended to abandon the island without arranging for American replacements. The real reason for the occupation is the shipping of lease-learn aid to Britain.

CONVOYS

Obviously, the occupation of Iceland is another evasion of the convoy issue. By keeping open the sea route to Iceland, the U.S. Navy, in effect, will be convoying British shipping (if it is not already doing so), up to Iceland. Press reports already indicate that American ships may be used to carry lease-learn products up to Iceland for transshipment to England (New York Times, July 9, 1941). The President has therefore used the lease-learn law to justify the use of convoys. This is unmistakably contrary to the intent of Congress, which wrote into the law a specific statement that "nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize or permit the authorization of convoying vessels by naval vessels of the United States" (Section 3d).