



Your Life TOMORROW

BY DAVID O. WOODBURY

Maggie is Willing

Affectionately known as "Maggie," the world's lightest practical metal, magnesium, is about to make a conquest all her own. Maggie looks forward today to an endless series of opportunities to make the things that move. One third lighter than aluminum and just as rugged in skillfully compounded alloys, she will turn out featherweight furniture, rugged beams for buildings and bridges, sheets for stamping car and trailer bodies, train and airplane seats and fittings, house doors and window frames and kitchen equipment, and machine parts of a thousand varieties. Practically anything now built of metal can be fabricated with Maggie's help, unless exceptional strength or electromagnetic properties are needed. Soon she will be competing with other front-line materials at about the same cost, pound for pound, as aluminum.

Maggie is not a fire risk, for she burns no more easily than aluminum. But unlike her lightweight cousin, she welds perfectly, bet-

ter even than steel. She is ideal for machining, drawing, rolling, punching, extruding, yet whatever form she takes, she is nineteen times stiffer than steel of the same weight.

Some unexpected jobs for Maggie after the war: lawnmowers light as air, bicycle and motorcycle frames, vacuum cleaners, farm machinery, cash registers, ladders, typewriters, auto wheels and artificial limbs. A wheelbarrow of steel weighs 85 pounds, but Maggie will produce one just as rugged at 30 pounds.

Brilliant Colors Will Mean Safety

Everyone knows the stop-and-go symbols, red and green, and obeys instinctively the white lines on the highway. But tomorrow the natural warning values of many other colors will be put to work wherever people handle machines. For the psychological effect of bright colors is far quicker and more powerful than printed or verbal instructions.

Early experiments with six carefully chosen paint hues used as warning symbols show

such remarkable improvements in factory safety and efficiency that nationwide standardization of the color code is being urged. When adopted, a screaming yellow will be employed for marking "stumble hazards"—obstacles like stairways, posts, curbs and protruding parts of machines. Specially dangerous obstructions will be painted with yellow and black stripes, which no eye can miss. Orange, next in order of brilliance, will be used for whirling gears, cutters, hammers, etc., that can nip off a finger or catch clothing. The rollers of a washing machine, for instance, may be finished in orange to keep the housewife constantly aware of the danger. Bright blue will be the symbol for switches, valves, ladders, doorknobs—any control mechanism that must not be operated without full knowledge of the consequences. The triggers of firearms would thus be colored blue.

Red will be reserved solely for fire extinguishers, hydrants and fire-fighting water mains, whether in factory, office or home. Green will always denote safety devices such as first-aid kits and stretchers. And white lines will direct traffic indoors as well as out. In addition, high-visibility buff paint on the main bodies of machines will bring the operating parts into three-dimensional relief by contrast. The frame of a sewing machine, for example, would be buff-painted to give the seamstress a better view of the flying needle head. Color-blind people will find the code equally effective because red and green, which they commonly confuse, will not be used as safety warnings.

New Use for Mud

Erosion control, already so important to the American farmer, will have another equally vital role to play after the war. Virtually every cubic foot of the precious topsoil now washed away from the nation's farm lands eventually chokes up navigable rivers and harbors, and must be dredged out again to keep channels open. By elaborate programs of soil conservation, the government expects to cut in half the country's huge dredging bill after the war.

Dyed on the Vine

Russian scientists, who are among the world's most daring, are growing experimental cotton that is colored when it matures on the plants. So far, they have produced browns and greens, and are well along toward various other shades. This startling result of a closely guarded secret process is obtained by making the plant roots take up the coloring matter along with their regular food.

Cloth made from such cotton won't have to be dyed. The color, being part of the plant structure, won't fade or run. ★★★

Any Week

Continued from page 4

Nuit, Toujours Moi and Stradivari (immortal melody of love from the golden voice of a violin, captured in a glorious perfume to play on the strings of a lady's heart). My postwar plan, however, is to concoct a particularly smelly mess and label it *Stingue*. I couldn't cater to those who prefer *Toujours Moi* but I can see buxom babes buying *Stingue* by the quart, and they'll be sure of what they're getting. P.S. Already making plans for next week's column. Begins with a little piece on drunken astronomers."

OUR Pacific Coast correspondent, Mr. Jim Marshall, reports that he is in Hollywood writing a couple of pieces about senile delinquency. Mr. Raymond W. Porter of Phoenix, Arizona, says that the son of a friend of his told him that he had decided "not to take time off for a proposed midwinter vacation this year, as he had to finish high school so he could get a pension." And Mr. A. E. Holcombe of Portland, Oregon, notifies us that the following classified ad appeared in The Oregonian: "Wanted—Man who gets paid

on Sat. and is broke on Wed. to make financial arrangements with man who gets paid on Wed. and is broke on Sat."

A LADY in Brownsville, Texas, in search of a maid, inquired for a girl named Opie. But Opie's sister said that she wasn't available. "You know," said the sister, "Jim got drafted, and Opie has an allotment. She isn't working." The lady said, "But I didn't know that Opie and Jim were married." Said the sister, "Well, no'm, they ain't exactly married, just doing light housekeeping."

WHILE pondering the manpower situation, we observed an example of time-saving employed by a 3½-year-old friend of ours. When answering the phone he wastes no time with hellos, who-is-its or how-are-yous. He starts right in with the subject at hand. No shilly-shallying. "I'm playing with my airplane," is his salutation to the bewildered caller, "and one wing got broke, but Daddy says it'll be okay, so why don't you come over for a drink because Mommy will be up from her nap pretty soon?" Jimmy Byrnes might want to promote this technique.

ONE of the more important reasons why this war has lasted this long may easily be found

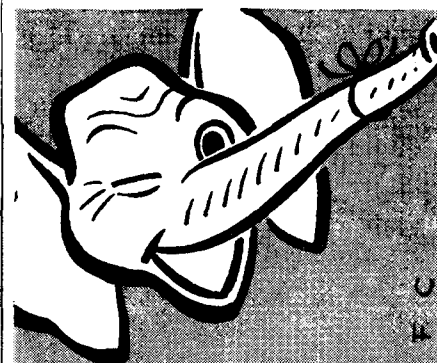
in the following G.I. communication from the U.S. Naval Reserve Midshipmen's School, Northwestern University, to the Chief of the Bureau of Ships, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.—"Subject: Parade Drum—Request for References—(A) U.S. Naval Training Station, Great Lakes, Illinois, Shipment Request No. 1123 (dated April 23, 1944). (B) BuShips ltr. NN3/1123—(SR) (773) dated May 7, 1944 to CO, USNTS, Great Lakes, Ill. QR/NC1/(N)/A15(559-42) Sir: On my stub requisition No. 1123, I requested a parade drum for this NRMS. On May 14th, I received a copy of reference (b) which states as follows: Sir: It is noted that the subject request covers parade drum for the USNRMS at Chicago, Illinois. The Bureau's records indicate that no band has been assigned this activity. In view of the foregoing Ref. 1-a 23459702-A 2-c) the subject request is returned herewith without action. Ind. 2: Sir: For the purposes of assisting said midshipmen to keep in step, I need a drum. I do not want a band but I do want a drum. Even children playing at soldiers use a drum. May I have a drum?" . . . We could go on with this correspondence for some time, the file being voluminous. Has anybody got a drum that he doesn't want? Let's get on with the war! G. W.

Collier's for March 3, 1945



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memory
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A Few Refreshing Whiffs of this handy Vicks Inhaler bring a grand feeling of relief when a cold, dust or bad air stuffs up your nose.

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And Most Important you can use this easy-to-carry Vicks Inhaler anywhere, anytime—as often as needed. Try it.

VICKS INHALER

SOOTHE THROAT
So good because they're medicated with throat-soothing ingredients of famous Vicks VapoRub.



VICKS Medicated COUGH DROPS

Hey lady—STOP!



You don't need all that equipment just to clean a toilet bowl! Hasn't any one told you about Sani-Flush? It's an easy, sanitary way to remove ugly stains and film without scrubbing. Used twice a week, Sani-Flush keeps toilet bowls spic and span, disinfects, destroys a cause of odors.

Sani-Flush is not like ordinary soaps and cleansers. Its chemical action extends to unseen, hard-to-reach surfaces, even cleans the hidden trap. Absolutely safe for all toilet connections and for septic tanks... (See directions on can.) Sold everywhere in two convenient sizes. The Hygienic Products Co., Canton 2, Ohio.



Sani-Flush

REMOVES A CAUSE OF TOILET ODORS

Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping



Freedom Wins Its Wings

Continued from page 24

The cartel idea is usually sponsored by those who are already established in world trade, with their markets set up, their lines of communication and finance working smoothly. The competition idea is usually supported by the have-nots, the fellows who want to break into the game. Thus Britain, to whom cartels are definitely not anathema, and who has always followed the "chosen instrument" policy, would be interested in protecting the prewar airlines to already established bases throughout her vast empire. Thus also, Pan American Airways sided with the British—although this had no direct part in the conference—for Pan Am has long enjoyed a virtual monopoly on U.S. flying over foreign land and water.

There are good arguments for both sides—for the British and Pan Am, and for the Americans and the seventeen airlines which have banded together under the banner of the Airlines Committee for United States Air Policy to fight for free competition and against Pan Am.

Pan Am's position is understandable to old-timers in air transport. Its present world-wide operations are an everlasting monument to the vision of its president, Juan Terry Trippe, who started with a 90-mile route between Key West and Havana in October, 1927, and wound up at our entry into the war with lines to Central and South America, Ireland, England, Portugal, France, Africa, Alaska, Hawaii, New Zealand, the Philippines, China and India. Only the gap between France and India prevented him from having complete world coverage.

In the early days of air-transport development, there was a tacit agreement between the potential operators on the one hand and the government on the other that Trippe's Pan American would stay out of the domestic field, and the domestic boys would stick to the job of developing airlines within the country. The government aided the domestic operators through mail contracts and the establishment of 35,000 miles of lighted and radio-equipped airways, while municipalities in most cases came forward with airports. Pan American was given special foreign air-mail contracts which took into consideration the cost of providing its own navigation facilities and also left it pretty much up to Trippe to negotiate landing rights, return mail

contracts and airport usage along his expanding routes. In all, Pan American negotiated sixty-two agreements for operational rights with foreign countries, including England and France.

Pan American has powerful friends and outspoken enemies. Its friends have saved it on two occasions from serious encroachment on its monopoly. The first time came in September, 1929, when the New York, Rio & Buenos Aires Air Line planned to offer a seven-day service between New York and Buenos Aires. Pan Am, faced with a battle over mail contracts, bought out the competitor.

Again, in 1939, Pan Am was threatened with competition when the Civil Aeronautics Board granted American Export Airlines a certificate to fly across the Atlantic over Pan Am's opposition, in July, 1940. Pan Am took the case to court and lost, but when the matter of appropriating mail payments to Export came up before Congress, Pan Am convinced the Congressional committee that it should not be granted. But American Export was able to operate its Sikorsky four-engined flying boats on contracts from the government because we were getting into the war. Since, American Airlines has attempted to buy the line, but approval of the sale is now before the Civil Aeronautics Board, and Pan Am is opposed to it.

A World-Wide Network

To operate an organization such as Pan American's calls for a sizable force all over the world. A very important part of call on Juan Trippe's world airline network is Washington. From a modest, one-room office in 1928, the Washington organization has spread to suites of offices in three downtown buildings. In addition, Pan American maintains a house on F Street, which became the subject of an attack in Congress by Representative Harry R. Sheppard, Democrat, of California, on February 3, 1944. The congressman characterized it as a "hush-hush mansion" and the most "mysterious" house in Washington. He charged that Pan American was attempting to establish a monopoly in postwar transoceanic commercial flying.

"It is high time," he said, "to bring this whole thing out into the open and show the



Some men are angered, embarrassed, at being thought old because they tire so quickly, get all fagged out. But, isn't there a reason for feeling like an old man at quitting time? Many men do not suspect that constant strain and drag on delicate cords in the "Vital Zone" are to blame. Often the gentle, comforting, firm support of a Bauer & Black Suspensory brings relief.

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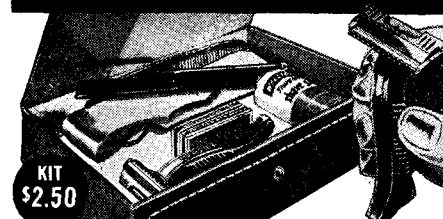
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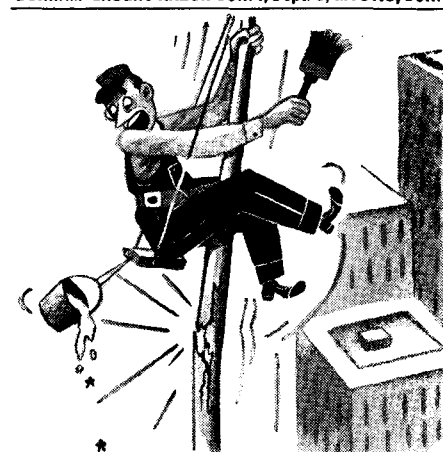
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American public the scheming and backdoor intrigue used by Juan Trippe in his desperate attempt to re-create a monopoly."

The congressman then launched into a roll call of Pan American's directors and their affiliations and other friends of the airline and concluded: "May I add to their number Mr. Trippe's not unknown brother-in-law, Mr. Edward Stettinius."

What Sheppard referred to was that sixteen years ago, Elizabeth Stettinius married Juan Trippe. Today, Assistant Secretary of State Clayton, successor of Adolf Berle, is in charge of international aviation, reporting direct to the President. Mr. Stettinius has let it be known that he has no interest in that section of his department.

As to the house on F Street, Pan American justifies its maintenance on the ground that other big concerns with heavy traffic in company officials to Washington have been forced to lease houses and apartments because of the shortage in hotel accommodations.

Pan American not only is apprehensive over a deluge of foreign airlines to the United States, but it is also opposed to the desire of the seventeen domestic airlines to engage in ocean flying. This opposition to free competition, its enemies say, is only natural for a concern which with British Overseas Airways Corporation, the single, government-subsidized company of Great Britain, could easily divide up the air space of the world and run it as they see fit. Such is Trippe's dream, his detractors say, and they are not going to let him have it—too much power for one man.

But Trippe has made thousands of friends for the Pan Am system through the service he has given American travelers. Pan American boasts that of the sixty-two agreements it made for landing rights, it had to surrender reciprocity to only two—England and France. The State Department, however, contends that should Paraguay or El Salvador, for instance, desire to start a line to the United States and find the bars against them up here, they'd pull the plug on Pan Am overnight and there'd be no more stopping to discharge, refuel and pick up new business in those lands. The American delegation at the Chicago conference went on the theory that if we want our planes to fly to all parts of the world, then we must be prepared to let foreign planes come into this country.

Stokeley W. Morgan, Chief of the State Department's Aviation Division, in a recent speech, declared there was a "small minority" in this country who think we should bargain at every step, "ask all and give little and

proceed on a basis of strictly power politics. Their position merits careful consideration for it is no doubt sincere, and much will be heard along these lines in the near future.

"Their chief reason for advocating this course," he continued, "is a fear that our airline industry will be unable to hold its own in competition with foreign operators coming to this country under the reciprocal grant of the so-called freedom. The idea that American aviation must be protected against foreign competition by closing the doors to foreign operators while forcing them open for our own has little support among the people who hope and expect to operate our planes. The American delegation at Chicago was ably advised by a large group of technical consultants borrowed from the air transport industry. No step was taken without their advice, nothing was done without their okay."

While Pan Am was building up its international air routes, the domestic airlines were developing a great domestic system. There was always a bit of superiority on Pan American's side, for its planes flew the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, while our domestic lines, closely guarded with all the known aids to air navigation, stayed close to emergency landing fields, beacon lights and radio beams. Pan Am had nothing like that. Really, they were two separate and distinct types of operation, and each was supreme in its field.

Wartime Impetus to Air Lines

But the war changed all that. Lines like American, Eastern, Northeast, Northwest, TWA and United were given contracts to fly to foreign lands, some over ocean and others in this hemisphere. Vital cargo and people had to be rushed to all corners of the globe.

Eventually the domestic lines, heretofore geared to the Federal Airways System, were flying land planes to everywhere, and they awoke to the realization: "This is easy. We want to do it, too!"

As the desire to develop foreign territory began to spread among the domestic airlines, a committee of seventeen operators was formed to get a cut of the postwar business. United Air Lines didn't join, though its record of Pacific flying for the Air Transport Command is brilliant and it wants to continue commercially after the war. This Airlines Committee for United States Air Policy has its headquarters in Washington with Alexander B. Royce, a Vermonter, as chairman. Royce pulls no punches when he talks

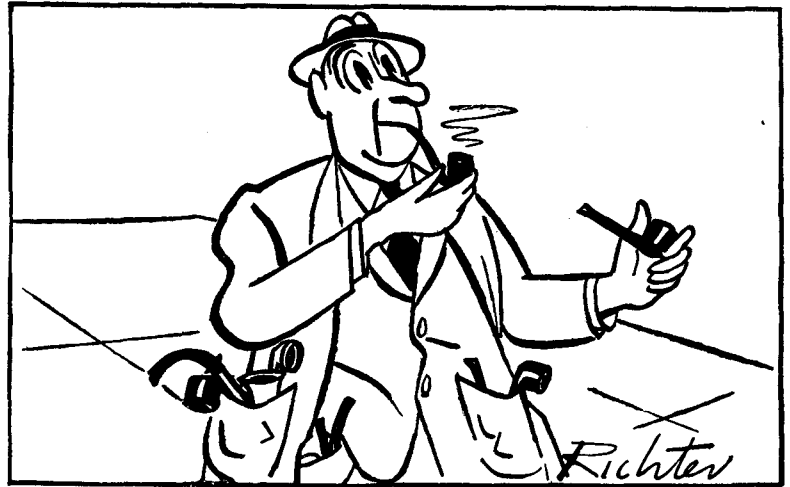


COLLIER'S

"But you've already slept three whole hours, sir—and you must remember that there are others waiting!"

GARDNER REA

PIPE TYPES...by Richter



THE CONSTANT ROTATOR. Can't decide which pipe to smoke when, so pops a new one into his mouth every few minutes. With Briggs in the bowl, he'd stop shuffling his

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Extra Long for
Extra Flavor

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*Why take
harsh
Laxatives—*

**WHEN LEMON JUICE
AND WATER, FIRST
THING ON ARISING,
IS ALL THAT MOST
PEOPLE NEED...**

**AND IS GOOD FOR
YOU...SUPPLIES
VITAMINS C, B₁ AND
P, ALKALINIZES,
BUILDS RESISTANCE**



JUICE OF
1 LEMON



IN A GLASS
OF WATER



FIRST THING
ON ARISING



Most people find that lemon and water insures prompt, normal elimination day after day. And it's *healthful*—supplies vitamins C, P and B₁, helps prevent colds, alkalizes, aids digestion. Refreshing to take. Try it 10 days.

Keep regular the Healthful way!

LEMON and WATER
...first thing on arising



LET'S FINISH
THE JOB—BUY
WAR BONDS



**SOLDIER!
TAKE A TIP FROM ME**

"BC"

TRY

**FOR QUICK RELIEF FROM
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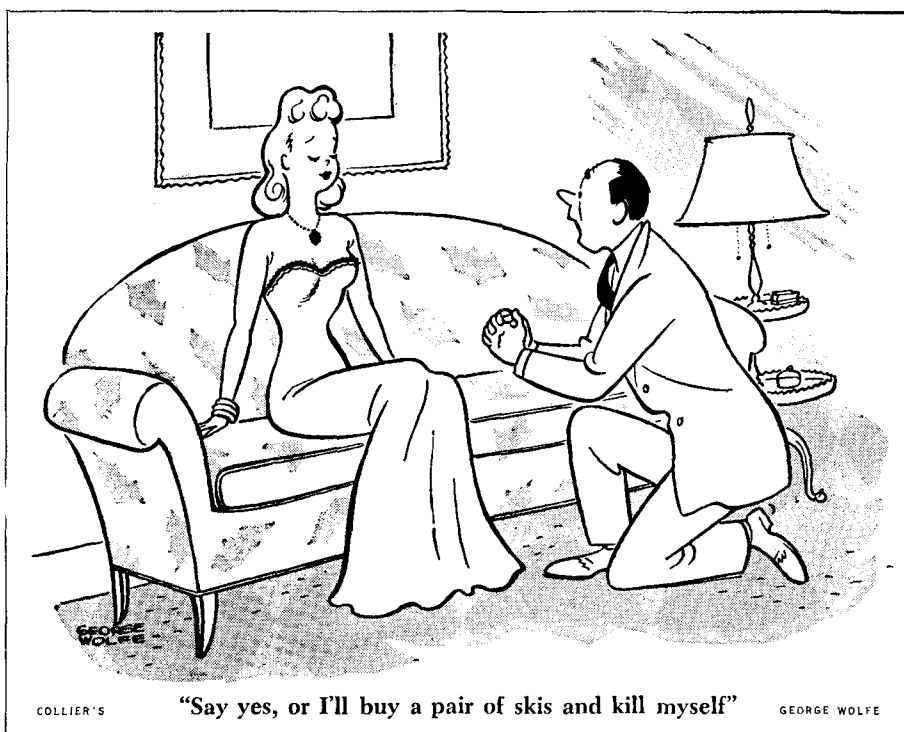
The instant you apply soothing, cushioning, protective Dr. Scholl's Zino-pads on your corns or sore toes, tormenting shoe friction stops; painful pressure is lifted. Separate Medications are included for speedily removing corns. Cost but a trifle.



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about Pan American's monopoly and the right of free competition for his seventeen airlines. He decries the theory that it is in the national interest for a single company or a jointly owned company to negotiate with foreign nations for landing permits and other necessary rights.

"Our Department of State," he declares, "is charged with responsibility in all relations with foreign governments. It is the function of government, not private companies, to negotiate with other governments on international subjects as important as air transportation."

Here it must be said that while Trippe certainly does not want to yield anything he has built, he has taken a stand in favor of a "community company" (he hates the term "chosen instrument") in which all American transportation interests able to contribute would be permitted to participate under an organization plan approved by the government. He says that such a single operation would be strong enough to compete on even terms with the great foreign air-transport monopolies despite their government subsidies.

In expounding this theory, he inferentially endorses the McCarran Bill now before Congress. The bill provides for such a community company, and the seventeen air lines are opposed to it.

"The McCarran Bill should not pass," they declare. "Community company means community management. It freezes the competitive enterprise of the minority."

The seventeen airlines also believe that such a community company would be dominated by Pan American.

Alexander Royce's committee is fortified with government backing in important quarters. The Civil Aeronautics Board has interpreted the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, as being for free and open competition in international air transport. Royce's committee declares that law is sufficient and need not be changed. Another ally on the side of the seventeen airlines is Senator Bailey, chairman of the Commerce Committee, who came out against government ownership of international airlines after he received former Secretary of State Cordell Hull's opinion on the competitive system versus the community company:

"The experience of most other countries which have adopted the monopoly or so-called 'chosen-instrument' policy has been that such a policy, either intentionally or by sheer force of gravity, led to a government-owned system, or else to a system so completely government-controlled as to have all the qualities of government ownership."

Mr. Royce also pulls another trump card in his campaign: The Department of Justice has endorsed the competitive system as against the community company. Further, he maintains that competition will cost both you (the airline ticket purchaser) and the government less than monopoly. And the War, Navy, and Commerce departments have

gone on record as opposed to a single chosen instrument for American international air commerce.

But to return to the Chicago conference: What did happen during its thirty-seven days? An agreement was signed by thirty nations, including the British (and more will come in), that the transport planes of all signatories may fly over their countries and land for fuel and repairs without the necessity of negotiating bilateral agreements. This became known as the "two freedoms," and you can see how many months of dickering it will save. And twenty nations signed a full-out agreement allowing the planes of other signatory nations to bring passengers in from the homeland, take them back to that homeland and pick up business at intermediate points. These make up the other three concessions which are included in the "five freedoms" to which the British so strenuously objected.

And it was the last of these "five freedoms"—the right to pick up and discharge passengers at intermediate points—that bothered the British so much. What they objected to was this: Suppose a U.S. plane was flying a route from New York to Cairo. Under the five-freedom plan, it might stop at London, Paris, Geneva and Rome. At each place it would let off some passengers, pick up others

destined either for Cairo or for other intermediate stops along the way, the only restriction being that it could not pick up passengers at one point in a country and fly them to another point in the same country.

The Americans claimed that if this kind of thing were not allowed, the airline operators would be flying a continuously increasing number of empty seats on long hops, because a certain number of passengers would get off at London, more at Paris, more at Rome, and by the time the plane reached Cairo, maybe only two or three seats would be occupied.

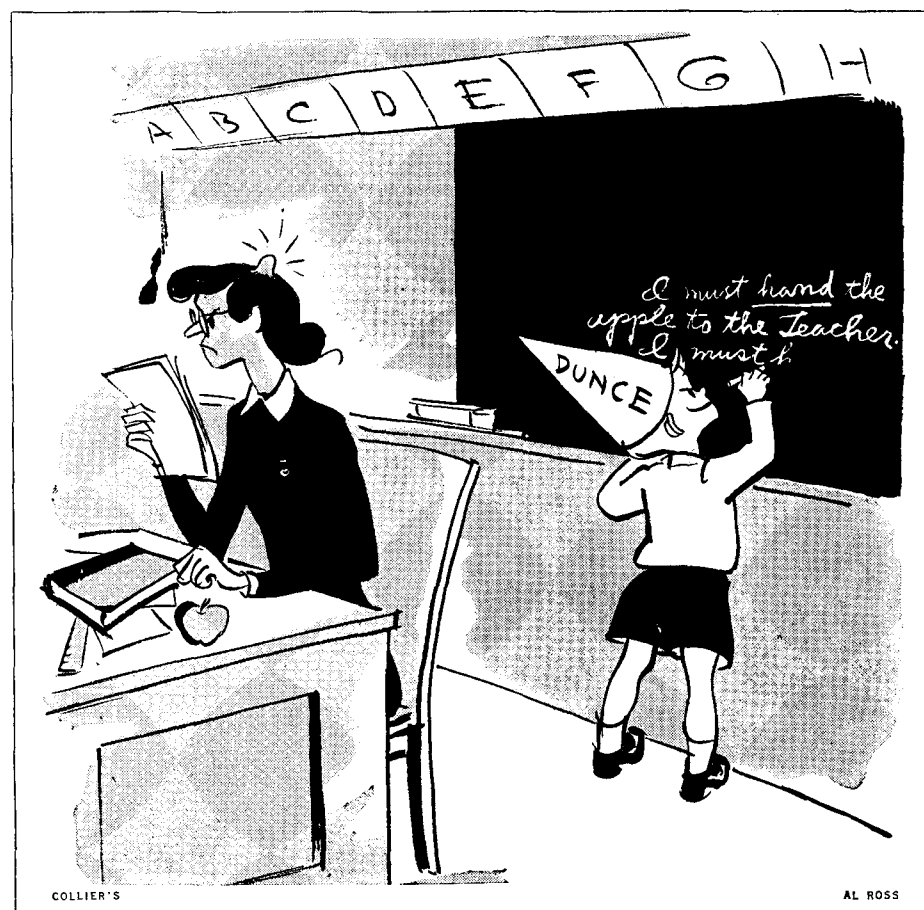
The British objection, on the other hand, is understandable enough from their point of view, because England is such a small place that almost never would passengers travel from one point to another within the country; almost all travel would be from country to country. So that if English airlines are to live at all, they must get business from other countries.

More nations are expected to come in later on the five-freedom agreement, but some of them will hold back until they are satisfied that we in America are going to support our delegation's work. For if Congress feels that the American group went too far in making international commitments, it can throw out the policy altogether and insist on a return to the old method of making bilateral deals.

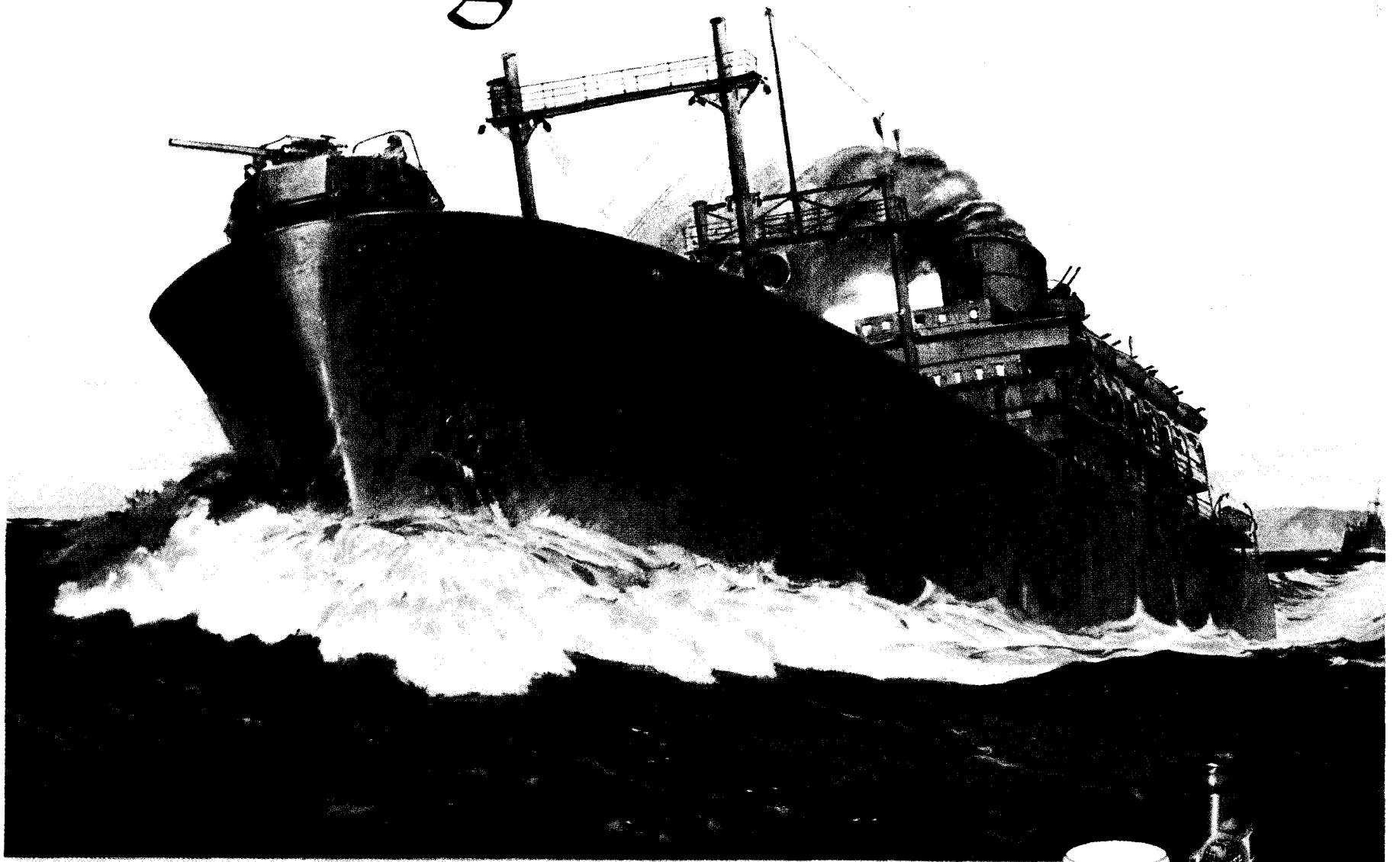
In this event, your postwar global planes will be delayed. For there are some who hold that while we may obtain all these freedoms to operate around the world, in return we have guaranteed the same to all other nations party to the document. How much of a deluge of foreign airplanes and air routes will result for the United States and its possessions is a guess that has a wide range—from a whole lot to little or none. The American delegation to the conference believed there'd be very little we'd actually give up, and that our dominant position in equipment and operating procedure would give us a head start we could always maintain.

But should Congress regard the deals made at Chicago as "executive agreements" and not treaties, the most optimistic predict that by late summer provisional routes will be laid down for American-operated airlines, and regardless of whether victory comes this year or next, everything will be ready for air transport to play its expected role of speeding up the reconstruction of the world. Already we have signed agreements with Sweden, Denmark and Spain, and more are in the mill with other nations for early settlement.

THE END



Every fourth bottle
of Schlitz
goes overseas



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Winged Javelin

Starting in a screaming dive at 8,000 feet this P-51 Mustang pilot is hurling his winged javelin at a Jap artillery position. Right now he is travelling so fast that anti-aircraft guns cannot even follow him. He is in an

80 degree dive. His pull out will be at "rhubarb height." This is one of the most accurate forms of bombing. The strain on both plane and pilot is terrific, but the P-51 Mustang can take it like American pilots can dish it out.

BONDS bought these
planes.
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GASOLINE flies them.
WILL YOU help deliver
the next squadron?

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PLANES THAT MAKE HEADLINES... the P-51 Mustang fighter (A-36 fighter-bomber), B-25 and PBJ Mitchell bomber, the AT-6 and SNJ Texan combat trainer. North American Aviation, Inc. Member, Aircraft War Production Council, Inc.

SMALL BOY

BY ELEANOR SHOEMAKER

SMALL BOY plodded confidently along the deserted road. Occasionally he shifted the pack on his back although, actually, pride carried the load for him. When he straightened his thin shoulders the contents of toothpaste, cigarettes and fountain pens grumbled. The sound unfailingly brought a grin to his wide flat face and lighted his slanting roguish eyes.

He had no doubt that he would pass safely through the Japanese blockade between Free and Occupied China but he must avoid being stopped for inspection on the way. There was always the chance that the sentry might confiscate a few cigarettes and then the hard earned co-op bank note, carefully rolled inside, would go up in smoke. Such loss of face was not only unthinkable for Small Boy personally, but for those who had entrusted him with this mission.

Sniffing the twilight wind, Small Boy knew that frost was in the air. By dawn the barren land would glisten, and even the black, bare trees would be beautiful. He began to look about for a place to take his early sleep. He must awake by midnight and cross the blockade line when men slept heaviest. On the edge of the road a solitary clump of bushes caught his eye and he decided on its feeble shelter. Small Boy cast an anxious glance over his shoulder. Satisfied, he dropped the pack and examined the broad ditch that fell off sharply behind the bushes. Then he sat down and burrowed the earth with his rump.

At eventide one's personal, separate universe of existence had a way of magnifying individual isolation. Overfatigue and undernourishment warred in his empty rumbling belly, but vying with these aches was a greater gnawing that came from a dim yearning for some atavistic security. Accustomed to hunger, he associated this with a like cause, for in all his eight years of life, he had never known the cure, but had experienced only the mute, unanswered needs of loneliness.

His attention was abruptly arrested by a faint stirring near at hand. Turning, he located the sound beneath a small flat stone. His eyes sparkled with interest and, snatching off his cap, he pounced it securely over the stone. Carefully, he explored beneath the cap and felt a crusty animation tap against his fingers. He cupped his hand and drew the object out, then opened his palm slowly, and gazed at his captive. Two gently waving antennae tickled his fingers investigatively. Small Boy laughed aloud.

"Foolish one, why aren't you safe and warm in the earth? Frost comes tonight." His pleasure was voiced in tones of dignified superiority.

Warmed by the hand, the cricket gave an experimental chirp. And for Small Boy, the friendly, living noise filled the solitary world. He brought the cricket up to his face, peering at it in the last faint light. The long, awkward, yet graceful legs bespoke prowess. "I shall call you Jumper," he murmured.

Newly christened, Jumper fixed its bulging eyes in space. Any warmth was a cause for joy, and obligingly, the toothed fiddlestick bow sawed against the wing covers, setting up a vibrating song of gratitude.

Small Boy dug into his pockets in vain for a crumb left over from his one meal of the day. He knew with despair that it was useless to search for an edible root or leaf for the peasants had long since stripped them



The powerful searchlight was sweeping its way from side to side. Small Boy was desperate. He must not be caught now!

away. Troubled, he looked anxiously at the cricket, reassuring it with promises and words of encouragement. If only it would not die before he could secure food. As much to sustain himself as his new-found friend, Small Boy thoughtfully related the wonders he would perform on Jumper's behalf.

He would feed Jumper on fresh lettuce and build a fine bamboo cage. If his luck was good, he would one day edge the cage in jade, like those of the old emperors' crickets. Wasn't a cricket worthy of the best? Everyone knew that only the cricket was astute enough to be trusted with an emperor's life. Trained to chirp at the slightest vibration in the palace, the small insect bodyguard warned of stealthy footsteps that escaped a dozing sentry, a dog bribed with a bone or a chamberlain deafened with gold. But the heart of the cricket was incorruptible. For a lettuce leaf a week, the emperor was safe.

As he talked, Small Boy's sense of well-being swelled anew. Added to the unparalleled trust bestowed on him in his mission, he now owned his own private and personal cricket. Surely nothing dire could befall them in all these bounteous happenings. For all Jumper's improvident staying above ground in the face of frost, the insect's legs were strong, its wing covers were a healthy jet black, and the solid helmetlike head was a proud symbol of its warrior ancestors. If Jumper turned out to be a fighter . . . why, then their fortune was made! Coming from a race of inveterate gamblers, Small Boy had instinctive comprehension of box office. A good cricket fight was a poor man's sport,

and already Small Boy saw himself the owner of a much lauded champion.

He reached out a gentle finger in wordless feeling, and the cricket crouched under the slight pressure, reducing its song to a *mezza voce* of contentment while Small Boy propounded the immediate problem of Jumper's housing. Presently, breaking off a few short bush twigs, he plaited them, dome-shaped, like a hat. Putting Jumper on the ground, he covered the cricket with his thatched work. Jumper continued to chirp, and Small Boy stretched out on the ground with a sigh.

He had never owned anything in all his life, and the expanding reaction was like sunshine seeping into the pores on an autumn day. It was what he had always imagined a full belly was like. He was replete with warmth and glowing from within, and he could not resist sticking his finger through Jumper's house once more. Jumper twiddled his antennae over the bony flesh. As Small Boy's drowsy feelings flowed out toward the cricket, he felt somehow, mystically united with this small spark of breathing animation in a brotherhood of living.

IT WAS warm and dark where he was and he had no wish to give in to the senses that would awake his body to the cold wind. He held his eyes tight shut, determined to let himself be lulled back into the dark world of sleep. But the sound, insistent, excited and somehow alarming, beat in on his brain. Suddenly he recognized it. He sat up. Beside him the cricket hopped up and down, the five hundred prisms of its bow lashing fortissimo fury in its cry of warning.

Up the road the powerful Japanese patrol searchlight was feeling its way from side to side. The next swing to the right would put Small Boy in full view. With a sweep of his hand, he sent the pack rolling into the ditch and pitched himself after it. As his body sank noiselessly into the ooze, Small Boy realized that Jumper was imprisoned in the hut on the road. He clenched his fists, but the cries of the soldiers were close, and Small Boy knew by the tone that the Devils from Beyond the Sea were drunk. The machine-gun-mounted truck careening from side to side substantiated the knowledge. He shivered. If caught, his wits could not save him now. He must not be caught! Desperately he tried to send Jumper a telepathic message to cease chirping. But Jumper had turned scatter-brain with fright, and Small Boy dare not reach up to snatch the cricket to safety.

In this spell of suspended horror, Small Boy heard each twig of the plaited covering he had built for Jumper crush separately under the heavy wheels of the patrol truck. And the short, half note on which the cricket ended its song echoed in his head as Small Boy struggled with his wrenching stomach. The truck lurched forward in the din of its exhaust and the inane laughter of its occupants.

Small Boy crawled out of the muddy ditch and adjusted the pack on his back. Fortified by his responsibilities, he leaned over the broken twigs. His stiff, grubby fingers gently excavated the squashed mass. Then he wrapped it tenderly in a strip torn from his jacket and buried it in a tiny grave beneath the bush. With the patrol out on the road, this was the moment to slip safely over the blockade line. His face was screwed up in a paroxysm of heartbreak but no tears came as Small Boy walked stolidly along the road toward Free China.

a short short story complete on this page

ILLUSTRATED BY C. C. BEALL