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The line-up for and against the Lea bill is about as follows: The airlines and the aviation manufacturers are in favor; the railroads and some states and municipalities are opposed. The opposition of the railroads stems largely from the fact that the Lea bill does not change provisions of the existing law which bar their entry into the aviation field. The states and cities are raising a hue and cry about the federal government's interference in local matters.

It seems to us that both of these arguments are putting a lesser good ahead of a greater good. It is of greater consequence to the country that aviation develop to the limit of its possibilities than for the railroads to profit from it. The relation between the surface carriers and the airlines is sufficiently complex that any changes in the present situation would better be treated as a separate problem, unencumbered by any other issues.

The argument for states' rights has a good deal of the ring of pre-Civil War days to it. It attacks the Lea bill on the general grounds that any deposit of power in the federal government over local matters is bad. It stands for state regulation as against federal regulation. Generally, we're in favor of that principle, but would these same champions of states' rights want railroad regulation turned back to the states . . . or the control of radio placed in state hands? Clearly not.

For the same and better reasons, civil aviation ought and must be controlled by the federal government. Everyone knows of the mess that state regulation of the trucking industry has brought. If states cannot make a success of setting up laws for the slow-moving truck, how can they be expected to set up wiser rules for the airplane?

If the Lea bill can be improved by amending specific details, let that be done. But its basic intent of concentrating control over civil aviation in one authority should not be discarded. If local pride has to be butted, let it be done in some other way not at the expense of the country's aviation future.

## English Language

### World Alphabet Should Wait Until English Is Simplified

Former Senator Owen of Oklahoma has devised a global alphabet of 33 letters by means of which any of the languages of the world can be learned by pronunciation. This learning would take much less time than now required to master each language's own alphabet and spelling system. Senator Owen didn't estimate his chances of converting the nations to his scheme, except by implication: He sent copies of the universal alphabet to President Roosevelt and the State Department. However, we can tell him that he won't get very far.

Before any progress is to be made in standardizing the languages of the world even in one small particular, there is the preliminary task of simplifying the English language, especially the spelling. English has an alphabet of 26 letters, and of these, the letters "c," "q" and "x" have no sound of their own and so contribute nothing to the job of pronunciation. That leaves 23 letters to do the work of representing the sounds of the language.

But in English there are approximately 47 pronounceable sounds, a fact which gives English speech a variety which many other languages cannot match. However, this fact also creates difficulties, the main one of which is that one letter—like "a" or "e" or "i"—can stand for more than one sound.

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This year no community-wide birthday ball is to be held for obvious reasons, and so the drive is dependent on the contributions of individuals and the receipts from small social events that are organized. Personal contributions may be mailed to Dr. Joseph I. Linde, treasurer of the fund, Department of Health, City Hall, New Haven. In the main stores and public buildings, coin boxes will be placed so that smaller contributions may be made.

The 1943 epidemic of polio caught 12,500 victims, many of them in Connecticut and New Haven. With funds raised in the past, all of these were provided with the best of care. However, the reserve has been depleted below that normally maintained, and the officers of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis wish to see the fund replenished to take care of any emergency that might come in 1944 or thereafter. Surely the generosity of New Haveners will respond to this call.

## Peacetime Service

### Knox Pleads For Universal Military Training In Peace

The United States has had plenty of experience in the last 30 years in testing out the hypotheses of isolation and unpreparedness. Together they were thought to keep us out of wars abroad. But two wars within that 30-year period have, or ought to have, discredited those so-called preventives. However, it is too early to be sure that the fallacy of unpreparedness has been abandoned. Not until our enemies have been disarmed and the peace path ahead extends in unbroken line to the horizon will we know whether the American people have given up this particular quackery.

Thus it is encouraging to hear Secretary of the Navy Knox pressing the idea that every boy of 17 or 18 should be required to serve a year's military training. The proposal has been set forth before, but it needs continued presentation to the public lest it be discarded when the pressure of war emergency is over. Secretary Knox emphasized the benefits to the youths as well as to the country.

The end of the war will find this country with thousands of training camps and much equipment on its hands. There will be available many officers and instructors. The time to get peacetime military training started is immediately after the war closes, not at some indefinite period in the future.

## Opinions Elsewhere

### Winter on the Toboggan?

(New York Herald Tribune)

Robert D. Edwards, who has the chair of aerology at Colgate University's Naval Flight Preparatory School, has made some predictions based on study of weather cycles which seem particularly timely. When hundreds of buildings in New York are without heat, and just as the last chocolate masses of snow are being sluiced into the sewers, Mr. Edwards announces his belief that the worst of the winter is over. He follows this with a declaration that we may even see some "unseasonably mild" weather between the end of January and the middle of March.

Conditions underfoot having been what they were lately, New York would receive any such upset of what is ordinarily the toughest season of the year with profound calm. Should Mr. Edwards's aerological studies, which include phenomena of the free air, prove accurate guides, the public will be disposed to follow him further. He foresees "a downright hot spell" for the period from June 5 to June 15, counterbalanced by sub-average temperatures for the last half of 1944. Peering further into the future we get the unpleasant prognostication that the winter of 1944-'45 will rival that of 1933-'34, when the mercury at Hamillon, where Colgate is situated, dropped to 54 below zero. In 1945 there may be a bad drought. When the end of this month arrives we shall be able to test the earliest of Mr. Edwards's prophecies. It will then be time enough to know whether we should worry about the rest, or look forward to their fulfillment with intense anticipation.

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## KNOX FIGHTS FOR UNIVERSAL

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MONDAY, JANUARY 17, 1944

Lea Aviation Bill

Opposition of Railroads and States a Hazard to Aviation

Colonel Roscoe Turner, president of the National Aviation Trade Association, has announced that his group is opposing the pending Lea bill which proposes to extend federal control over civil aviation. The Lea measure was reported on favorably by the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee about two months ago, but since then it has been blocked in the House Rules Committee. Colonel Turner says that his association is drafting a substitute bill and will offer it to Congress.

The Lea bill is a measure amending the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938. It aims to accomplish two things: To present a complete codification of civil aviation law; to give the federal government the authority to supervise civil aviation and to enforce the provisions of the revised act. One specific feature of the Lea bill that has attracted a great deal of attention is that relating to the zoning of airports. It provides for the clearing and protecting of the approaches to airports through regulation of the height and location of structures and objects in the vicinity of airports.

The line-up for and against the Lea bill is about as follows: The airlines and the aviation manufacturers are in favor; the railroads and some states and municipalities are opposed. The opposition of the railroads stems largely from the fact that the Lea bill does not change provisions of the existing law which bar their entry into the aviation field. The states and cities are raising a hue and cry about the federal government's interference in local matters.

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Further, letters have to be used in combination—like "ch" or "ou" or "zh"—to represent a sound which is unlike the sound of the individual letters in the digraph. The result is that English spelling is a hodge-podge of the sort that makes the language a nightmare to adult students learning it for the first time, and a considerable problem to native-born Americans who wish to extend their vocabulary.

Some simplification of English is badly needed. It should endeavor to make the sounds and the letters show some consistent relationship to each other. Most desirable would be for each sound to have its own distinct letter.

Those people most opposed to such a change are not the President and the State Department but rather the scholars, who know English very well themselves and, being confirmed traditionalists, see no reason for changing the language to benefit somebody else.

All of which is intended to suggest to former Senator Owen that he tackle the problem closer home. We can't promise him that he will get very far in trying to remodel English, but the job awaits some man with courage and persistence.

Polio Fund Drive

Funds Called For to Fight Infantile Paralysis; Give!

A cause that will appeal to every giver and every purse is the 1944 appeal for funds to fight infantile paralysis. The campaign is now in full swing and will run through Monday, January 31. Technically the giving is in honor of President Roosevelt's birthday, which comes on January 30, but in a larger sense it is a humanitarian effort for the relief of thousands of stricken boys and girls.

This year no community-wide birthday ball is to be held for obvious reasons, and so the drive is dependent on the contributions of individuals and the receipts from small social events that are organized. Personal contributions may be mailed to Dr. Joseph I. Linde, treasurer of the fund, Department of Health, City Hall, New Haven. In the main stores and public buildings, coin boxes will be placed so that smaller contributions may be made.

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