

L.T.-OLDS. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1960.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

I am coming through to you from Alaska tonight. I hope I am. I am at Fairbanks, in the Yukon Valley, only a short dog sled run from the Arctic Circle. The time here is one forty seven, just two minutes after sunset. I am in the same time zone as Hawaii. As the sun drops behind those cold ice-capped Alaskan mountains lets take a look at the news coming in from other parts of the world. After all it comes by electric impulse and I can get the news here as quickly as I can at CBS in New York. So why not spend Christmas up here in the Arctic where Santa Claus lives?

CUBA

The Dictator of Cuba threatened to wreck the world sugar market. Fidel Castro, furious about the American boycott, is attempting to sell most of his sugar crop behind the iron curtain; but is still stuck with two million tons. consumer goods, up. Military

He says that if he can't sell his surplus he'll dump it on the international market. Attempt to drive prices down - and create a panic among the nations that grow sugar. The Dictator in Havana, apparently not caring - how Cuba's own sugar prices are affected.

What about his deal with Russia? Khrushchev is offering to help break - what Castro calls "America's economic blockade of Cuba." But Washington economists point out that Castro may end up getting from Moscow a lot less than he expects; because under this barter deal - Moscow can rig the cost of whatever is sent to Cuba. And that's what the Russians have done in the past-with under-developed nations that went to them for aid. ^

MOSCOW

The current Soviet budget just released in Moscow - looks rather good; that is, if you don't examine it too closely.

We are told that the Russian economy is running ahead of schedule. Consumer goods, up. Military spending, down. More jobs - with higher wages, and so on.

Well, western experts on the Soviet Union - are not stopping at this budget. But they point out a few things that Moscow doesn't mention. To begin with, consumer goods are still so rare in Russia that it's not hard to increase the figure. Certainly, the cost of Soviet defense is still so high it outruns the American appropriation for the armed services. Moscow simply juggling figures - to make it appear that we spend more on defense.

Finally, this Soviet budget doesn't refer to one

conspicuous failure; Khrushchev's scheme for a spectacular increase in grain production. The Khrushchev plan, working so badly, it had to be kept out of the budget.

Lieutenant O'Grady, accused of negligent homicide. He was the executive officer of the Howitzer unit that fired an over-loaded shell during maneuvers; the shell, exploding, over the target, landing in a bivouac area, wiping out a group of his fellow soldiers.

The defense lawyer argued that his client could not inspect every Howitzer shell, or order someone else to do it, because he was under-manned at the time.

The court martial, accepting the argument, finding Lieutenant O'Grady "not guilty".

LIEUTENANT

An American court martial, sitting in Frankfurt, West Germany, deliberated for only twenty minutes today. But it was the longest twenty minutes in the life of Lieutenant George O'Grady, of Arlington, Virginia; Lieutenant O'Brady, accused of negligent homicide. He was the executive officer of the Howitzer unit that fired an over-loaded shell during maneuvers; the shell, arching, over the target, landing in a bivouac area, wiping out a group of his fellow soldiers.

The defense lawyer argued that his client could not inspect every Howitzer shell, or order someone else to do it, because he was under-manned at the time. The court martial, accepting the argument, finding lieutenant O'Grady "not guilty".

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KENNEDY

Today's news conference in Palm Beach - covered the obvious problems: planks of the Democratic platform - in the last election; minimum wage, medical care for the aged, federal aid to depressed areas, and so on. President-elect Kennedy has been discussing these problems with his top advisors in Congress; working out a common approach with Lyndon Johnson, Sam Rayburn, and Mike Mansfield.

Today, Mr. Kennedy told his news conference, He's not setting up legislative priorities. He simply wants to get the key items under debate, on Capitol Hill. Then draw up his strategy, when he sees which have the best chance of passing.

But the President-elect admitted he's particularly concerned about the national economy. And he hopes Congress will act on his program quickly to counter-act unemployment.

FIRE

The Secretary of the Navy today entered the smoking wreckage of what would have been one of the finest ships ever built. Secretary Franke flew into New York - for a personal investigation of the "constellation". The Secretary, more anxious than anyone to find out about the fire that took some fifty lives. One question that has come up concerns the use of wood scaffolding. When the inflammable fuel tank exploded yesterday - flames raced along the scaffolding for the length of the flight deck. The blaze, erupting with such fury that many men were trapped below. Some are saying tonight, that steel ought to be used for this kind of construction.

CRASH

The President of United Airlines called the head of the federal aviation agency "out of order". President Patterson, challenging a statement by General Elwood Quesada, with regard to the air tragedy in New York. Quesada said yesterday that a preliminary investigation indicates - the United Air Lines plane was off course, and apparently had not followed the usual procedure of circling for instructions from the field.

Patterson termed the Quesada remark "out of order." The head of United Air lines argues - that the facts about the crash are not yet clear. He feels even the head of the FAA has no right to speculate about what happened when the planes collided above New York, and thundered to earth in flaming wreckage.

WOLVES

From Alaska let's run over to Lapland - for a moment. The word is that in Lapland, wolves running in packs are killing reindeer by the hundred.

There's been so much snow in Lapland this year, the reindeer are being forced off the mountain, down into the valleys where they are being ambushed by wolves hidden in the timber.

In one place, a Lapp herder found thirty of reindeer dead - victims of wolves. And that, says the dispatch is happening right across Lapland.

Stockholm's reports the worst slaughter of reindeer since the Swedish government began keeping official records. This, a staggering blow to the Lapp economy, which is based on the great herds that graze across the Tundra. For the villain of the piece, the executioner of the north, the Lapland wolf.

STORM

The Midwest to have a white christmas. That's the best you can say about the blizzard now raging across the heartland of America. Twelve inches of snow have already fallen - from Missouri to the Dakotas. Hardest hit, Chicago. The city of the Mid-way obliged to close down two airports. Streets clogged with snow and bandoned cars; trains and buses - running late; pedestrians - almost blown into Lake Michigan by those famous gales of the Windy City. Moving in with the blizzard - frigid weather. The thermometer plummeting far below zero.

Sounds like Alaska, where I am. But here at Fairbanks zero-warm weather. It was around fourteen below when we flew in today.

Let's see what's happening in New York. Are you there, Dick Noel?

FINAL PIECE

I haven't been in Alaska long enough to comment on mid-winter up where I am tonight in the heart of our largest state. My wife and I flew here today from Seattle. To anyone accustomed to visiting Alaska - and I have been coming here off and on for some forty-six years - the speed with which we made it this time is incredible. We covered the 1600 air miles from Puget Sound to Anchorage in a Pan Am jet in three hours. I can remember on some previous journeys it took me two weeks - in summer - by steamer up the Inside Passage, then by rail over White Pass, and finally the long jaunt via stern-wheeler river boat down the Yukon and up the Tanana. In Winter - almost impossible to make it at all!

This, by the way, is December 20th. Tomorrow will be the shortest day of the year. Today up here daylight for three hours and forty minutes. How would you like a twenty hour night? Now until tomorrow - the shortest day - from KFRB, Fairbanks, Alaska, S-L-U.T.