

L. I. Success, Thursday, Jan. 3-1935

Justice, Trial day

Clemens
D. I. L.
1935

At precisely noon today, Vice-President Garner rapped
with his gavel in the ^{United States} Senate. It was one minute past twelve
when the gavel rapped for order in the House of Representatives.

TP And so the Seventy-Fourth Congress got ^{under way.} ~~going~~ The new lawmaking
session is distinguished by one predominant fact. Never has any
other President been so strongly in control as President Roosevelt
is in this Congress. He was strongly in control when the session
began. And still more strongly when the day ended. He started in
with a Democratic majority of two hundred and ten. He still has
the same overwhelming majority -- plus a shut-off rule, which was
swiftly adopted. This rule provides that two hundred and eighteen
Congressmen must sign a petition before a vote can be forced on any
anti-administration bill. And that does boost the ante. The
previous rule required the petition to be signed by a hundred and
forty-five members.

The Republican minority action came when Republican Leader
Snell offered a new program for recovery. It is a twenty point
plan for legislation, which Representative Snell would like to
put into effect as against the recovery program of the Administration.

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LINE

A good deal more important than this new plan will be the event tomorrow, when President Roosevelt, at twelve-thirty, will deliver his message to Congress, which will be heard on this network. It is said the President's message will run to more than four thousand words, and will cover the main points at issue in the new Congressional session.

All in two days, two ordinary court sessions -- the opening of the case, the selection of the jury, the testimony of Mrs. Lindbergh and this, the second day ending with Colonel Lindbergh on the witness stand.

Why? Why the speed? How does it compare the law in this case, this most sensational of trials, is taking such a rapid course? I've heard that discussed. And the fact suggested has a chilly ring -- suspense, nerves. This undoubtedly important trial here at Washington is shaking the little New Jersey community large as life. It is not a rich community not a wealthy county, with the complexities of taxation. The heavy coat of the trial is a great drain, and the longer it lasts the more expensive it will be. Delay means nothing.

INTRO

No cunning play-producer ever paced a stage play with a more overwhelming swiftness than the breathless rush of drama in the Hauptmann trial. Yet swiftness is a word so alien to our concepts of the law that we are accustomed to think of slowness and of deadly dragging in connection with legal proceedings. Yet here we have, all in two days, two ordinary court sessions -- the opening of the case, the selection of the jury, the testimony of Mrs. Lindbergh and this, the second day ending with Colonel Lindbergh on the witness stand.

Why? Why the speed? How does it come that the law in this case, this most sensational of trials, is taking such a rapid course? I've heard that discussed. And the idea suggested has a chilly ring -- expense, money. This overwhelmingly important trial here at Flemington is costing the little New Jersey community large expenditures. It is not a rich community not a wealthy county, with fat surpluses of taxation. The heavy ~~extra~~ cost of the trial is a real drain, and the longer it lasts the more expensive it will be. Delay means outlay.

Certainly, the saving of taxpayers money is a laudable thing. I've never before known that principle to have anything but an inspiring sound. Yet there does seem to be something cold about the notion that the incredible and emotional swiftness of the drama at Flemington owes its pace to the consideration of expense and economy.

Yet it is well that there are no delays. A long dragging out of legal quibbles would be an intolerable prolongation of suspense for the young couple that were on the witness stand today. Mrs. Lindbergh's testimony was sheer pity. She merely established what was publicly known, save for pathetic little details of her life as mother of the ill-fated babe. Prosecuting attorney Wilentz questioned her about her child's appearance and infant ways. She was in tears as she identified the sleeping garment found with the body, and there was an epitome of pity when emotion choked her and she could not speak in answer to a ~~my~~ question about the toys of Baby Lindbergh.

When Colonel Lindbergh came to the stand a point of logic in the prosecution's case promptly made its appearance.

The world's most famous aviator told of the events of that illomened night preceding the discovery of the baby's disappearance. The prosecutor asked ~~if~~ him if he had heard any unusual sound. Lindbergh replied, "Yes", a noise as of something falling outside. And he declared that it was a sound such as might have been made by a falling ladder. And this came flashing in support of the prosecution's theory of the crime -- that there was a fall from the ladder, and that the child was killed by that fall.

The testimony of the Lone Eagle of the Atlantic then ended on another high point. Telling of how they found the crib empty, he identified the ransom note left on the window sill. And much of the fate of Bruno Hauptmann will depend upon that ransom note -- that same Bruno Hauptmann who, hearing the sobbing testimony of the bereaved mother, and the self restraint of the father, preserved the same pale impassiveness of face.

SHIP

The latest check-up on the ship disaster in the East River at New York reveals all passengers safe, but five of the crew missing. This follows all sorts of reports of casualties, from none, to a great many; reports that began to flash when the tramp steamer 'Jane Christenson' hit the coast-wise passenger steamer 'Lexington'. The accident happened in the East River, between Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, in the shadow of the renowned New York skyline. The Lexington had just left her pier with an ample passenger list, when the freighter crashed into her and cut her in two, literally in two. Within two minutes, she was a water-logged wreck. Tonight her shattered hulk is still floating on the murky waters of the river.

There are reasons for all the confusion about casualties. The Lexington was bound from New York for Providence, Rhode Island. And on a short voyage like that passengers are not so carefully checked as they are on a trans-oceanic liner. Moreover, as the boat was just pulling out of dock when she was hit, the purser had only begun to check up the passenger list, and the list was lost with the ship.

However, it appears now that five of the crew are missing, while a hundred and seventy-five passengers and crew were saved. If that had happened at sea, with the cutting in two of a crowded passenger ship, it would have been another major maritime disaster.

VATICAN

The reason why the Vatican now has a dictator is found in the immense scope of public works in that small bit of territory known as "Vatican City". It is a mere fraction of the City of Rome, but, is one huge bulk of historic edifices -- beginning with St. Peter's. In fact Vatican City is an incalculable treasurehouse, crammed with many of the greatest works of art on this planet.

The present ~~Rome~~ Pope Pius is doing a huge task of keeping the historic buildings in sound structural condition and in preserving and arranging the wealth of art works, manuscripts, and relics of the past.

So, he has appointed the Marquis Camillo Serafini, given him full power for the reorganization work in the Vatican. He will control the budget and the civil administration -- everything but the religious side. That's why they call him -- dictator.

Another report of the possible dethronement of a king comes along. And this time it concerns King Boris of Bulgaria. Last May there was a sort of coup d' etat at Sofia, and Kimon Georgieff became Premier and virtual ruler. King Boris has been a figurehead ever since. And now it's rumored that a revolt is being stirred up by one of the Georgieff's right-hand men. They say another coup d' etat is probable. This time they won't take any power away from Boris. He hasn't any left. All he has left is his crown, and they'll take that -- so the story goes, the rumor.

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GERMANY

Officials in Berlin are refusing to admit that there is any such terrific importance to that sudden mass-gathering of Nazi leaders. But these denials are not dissipating the cloud of mystery and nervous wonderment. Why should Hitler call such a swift and unexpected congress of all the big shots among the Nazis?

He summoned them from all parts of Germany to come with the utmost haste, by airplane, if necessary, and gather in the Berlin Opera House. And the circumstances of the meeting only added to the tenseness of mystery.

Ordinarily, Hitler and Goering are open in their movements. Nazi gatherings are commonly staged with theatrical ceremonies. Not this time! The utmost secrecy surrounds the Nazi proceedings in the Opera House. Hitler and Goering, instead of making triumphant tours through the streets, with Nazi pomp and circumstance, arrived at the meeting secretly, with their movements hidden.

So let the Nazi officials make scoffing denial of the rumors, the Berliners don't believe that Hitler called this hurried congress merely to celebrate the early days of the New Year. They are convinced that something serious is brewing. Perhaps some crisis or

some sudden Nazi stroke. Has it anything to do with the Saar Valley and those disturbances reported as the election on the thirteenth approaches? Or is it concerned with what we have been hearing about the possible suppression of monarchist activities? There is no hint to the answer, only the inescapable recollection that the last time Hitler called any sudden and unexpected meeting was on the thirtieth day of last June. Yes, there were unexpected gatherings and the most unexpected events, the execution of the storm troop leaders.

The latest story of an American girl in jail in Germany ends with a shade of difference. In the previous similar case, the American girl, Isobel Steele, was taken out of jail and put right on a boat and deported back to ~~the~~ the United States. But the Nazis are not quite so summary with Miss Elsa Sittel, who has been in jail ever since the day before Christmas on a charge of insulting Hitler. She was released this afternoon, but they say she will be allowed to visit her parents, who live in Germany, She was on her way to spend Christmas with them when she seems to have had something to say about the Reichsfuehrer. After the visit is completed, however, she will be on her way back to the land of the Free, no doubt with considerable relief.

MINERS

The outcome of that Polish miners' strike we heard about last night is peculiar. The wailing wives are breaking the suicide strike. The miners' women did so much pleading and begging and sobbing down the mine shaft that the death strikers began to give in. One after another they've been emerging from the black pit which they had vowed never to emerge from unless their wage demand was met.

At ~~last~~ last reports ~~thirty~~ thirty had come to the surface and gone home. That left fifty more as the seeping water was rising high and they were having trouble keeping above it. And their wives were wailing down the shaft, persuading the men to give up the death strike.

PARTIES--1

The news tells us about an amazing party out on the Pacific Coast, which reminds me of another party in New York--the two are so different. The New York affair is the grand social event of the year--the Peacock Ball, tomorrow night. This is not only pre-eminant for the blue blood elite, but it is one of the biggest charities in this country. For the Peacock Ball at the Waldorf-Astoria, with the young society leader, Miss Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly as Chairman, donates the large sum of money it raises to the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. And ~~that~~^{it's} one of the oldest charities in the United States. It has raised millions upon millions of dollars for the needy in the more than ninety years of its existence.

The Peacock Ball at the Waldorf is one thing. The Lieutenant-governors party in the State of Washington is something entirely different. Lieutenant-Governor Victor Aloysius Meyers is holding the festivity in his own Seattle night club. Yep, he owns a night club in addition to helping run the state. There'll be just one hundred guests, the kind of guests that mean much in a man's life. The place cards will be certified checks, each made out to the person who occupies the place. For the guests are the lieutenant-governor's

creditors, and it's a paying off party tonight.

This comes as a climax to a diverting series of political events. Lieutenant-Governor Meyers is sometimes called "your Honor", but more often he's just "Vic". He was famous as a jazz band leader long before he achieved high office.

And hearken unto the story of how "Vic" first entered politics and became the Mayor of Seattle.

He presided over Club Victor and was the pal of Seattle newspaper men. Three years ago when the time came to elect a mayor, one of the city editors had a bright idea. It was a dead news day. So why not let "Vic" provide a little news, which would give him some welcome publicity. The city editor said: "Vic', run down and file for mayor and I'll give you a banner-line in the last edition."

"Vic" saw it was about a thousand dollars worth of publicity for him and his night club. Being broke he went out and borrowed the fifty dollar filing fee and registered as a candidate for mayor. He got the banner headline. The humorist on the paper wrote

the story: "Vic' for mayor. He promises blonde hostesses on all street cars, beer at public drinking fountains and brand new magazines in doctor's offices." The readers laughed themselves sick. "Vic" for mayor was a comic hit. So the newspaper humor department had a steady campaign job. Pictures were taken of "Vic", in Gandhi's loin cloth costume, complete with the goat. He was a baby-kissing candidate--shown kissing twenty year old babies. That was the best idea of all.

And "Vic" lost the election, overwhelmingly defeated. The only thing it did was to give him the political bug. As the election of last November approached "Vic" ran for Lieutenant-Governor on the Democratic ticket. Presumably he was just running for the funny papers, because the Democrats couldn't expect to win. But you remember the election. It was Roosevelt year and Roosevelt year swept "Vic", the night club jazz leader, into office as Lieutenant-Governor Victor Aloysius Meyers.

And did "Vic's" creditors prick up their ears? He had a neat

flock of them, an even hundred. Vic said: "Okay boys." And as no Lieutenant-Governor is ever broke, tonight's the pay-off party. Certified checks at each guest's plate. What a grand way that would be to say, SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW!