

L.I. - Sunoco. Friday, Dec. 15, 1939.

SEA FIGHT

(The Von Spee must leave Montevideo Harbor by Sunday evening. The deadline is -- 6:55 p.m. Eastern Standard time ^{Sunday.} This afternoon the official announcement came through ^{that the} ~~The~~ Government of Uruguay gives the German pocket battleship ^{— 3 days —} seventy-two hours to leave [^] International law provides that a warship of a belligerent power may remain in a neutral harbor for twenty-four hours, or as long as may be required to repair damages and make the craft seaworthy. The Government of Uruguay holds that seventy-two hours is enough time to make the shell-battered Von Spee fit to navigate on the ocean.) Later came an unofficial report that the seventy-two hour period would be regarded as beginning last night when the Uruguay ~~navia~~ naval experts who examined the ship turned in the report that would make the deadline Sunday night [^] ~~at 6:55 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. At that precise hour the pocket battleship Graf von Spee must either steam out of Montevideo Harbor or be interned for the duration of the war.~~)

All of which prolongs the dramatic suspense -- what will the von Spee do?

Today huge steel plates were taken aboard the warship -- plates to be welded, ^{to} ~~and~~ close the holes in the armour where British shells crashed through. This amount of haste in repairing seems like a vivid token that the Von Spee will try to make a dash for it, shoot her way out.

(The British warships are keeping their death watch, steaming back and forth in the estuary ^{of the} ~~of the~~ River Plate -- and they're being reinforced. One report is that the mighty battle cruiser Renown is steaming to ^{join} ~~watch~~ the death watch.)

Another -- that French battleships are hurrying to join. Surely

(the von Spee could hardly hope to shoot her way through the amount of seapower that is gathering.) On the other hand, there are rumors that the Germans are sending seapower of their own

to break the siege ~~in~~ at the entrance to Montevideo Harbor.

U-boats to attack the Allied craft in the deathwatch. And

there are surmises that two other pocket battleships supposed

to be on the loose on the Atlantic may come charging down that

way to battle the British cruisers and open the way for the

von Spee to escape.

(The British Cruiser Exeter which was damaged and put out of action in the fight with the pocket battleship ~~has taken~~ ^{is taking} refuge in an Argentine harbor. Permission has been given ~~the Exeter~~ to dock at an Argentine naval base.)

A drydock is in readiness should the ~~Exeter~~ Exeter need it.

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One of the ship's planes was said to have arrived in Argentina with three gravely wounded men, and it's reported that the Exeter has asked hospital space for a hundred others of its wounded. Just how much damage and how many casualties the ship sustained from the eleven-inch shells of the von Spee is not known. From London the British Admiralty announced the casualties aboard the cruiser Achilles, which was in the fight.

Four men were killed, and one wounded aboard the Achilles.

The Admiralty ~~announces~~ ^{states} that it will make public other casualties as soon as it receives information.

Today in Montevideo was solemnized the funeral of the thirty-six Germans who lost their lives in the sea fight.

A column of trucks carried the coffins draped with swastikas.

Sailors from the ^{German} Von Spee, sailors at Montevideo and Uruguan ^x

troops paid last honors. There were many wreaths of flowers, and one of them bore an inscription in English -- this inscription: "To the memories of brave men of the sea from their comrades of the British Merchant Service." Enemies, yet comrades, the chivalry of the sea.

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PLANES

More air battles in the North Sea area, with the British Security patrol in action. That's the new British ^{sky-}~~staff~~ fighting force, established to strike at German air power near home, before the Nazi ~~air~~ raiders get well on their way to Great Britain. (Royal Air Force bombers ^{today} struck at German island air bases. They aimed their bombs at Nazi sea planes which lay on the water, at their moorings - seaplanes assigned to the job of dropping magnetic mines off the British coast.) The London report says that the British flyers could ^{not} tell how much damage their bombs did.

Another sky battle refers back to the much headlined case of the BREMEN. Remember the British submarine that was reported to have been in a position to torpedo the BREMEN but refrained from doing so because of international rules of war at sea? Soon after, we were told that this conscientious submarine had sighted a German cruiser, but this time the sub did not hold back its torpedoes. A hit was scored, the cruiser damaged.

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The latest is that today the damaged cruiser was sighted by British war planes, while the crippled warship was being towed by other German vessels. The British planes went

speedily to the attack. They were met by German planes, and an air battle was on. At last reports the damaged Nazi cruiser was still being towed.

FINLAND

(Finland today appealed to Soviet Russia to resume negotiations.) While the war raged on, Finnish Foreign Minister ~~W. A.~~ Tanner, made the proposal by radio, speaking in Russian and directly addressing Soviet Foreign Commissar Molotov. It was an earnest ^{exhortation} ~~exhortation~~ to try for a peaceful settlement.

"Why should blood be shed?" demanded the Finnish Foreign Minister, "so long as there are other possibilities still unexamined?"

Talking to Molotov on the air, he argued that the present bitter struggle would lead to frightful loss of life. "Are you prepared to resume negotiations?" he asked. ~~(And he concluded with this warning: "If no answer comes, or if your answer is negative, then the whole world will know what value to set on the Soviet Union's principles and promises.")~~

While appealing for negotiations for peace, the Finns continued to fight desperately. They've lost the extreme northern tip of their country, their nickel mining section, but are resisting bitterly as the Soviet mobile battalions try to press south across the icy Arctic waste. More menacing for the Finns, is the continued Red army advance to cut the country in two at the middle, Finland's

narrow wasp waist. And Moscow announced today that the Red steam-roller had broken through the Mannerheim Line, and was swinging around to the rear of the Finn forces there. This, Moscow has announced on previous occasions, and there's no confirmation of the new claim today. On the contrary, reports from Finland are that the Mannerheim Line is untouched, the Soviet attack in a deadlock.

And further north, on the upper end of Lake Ladoga, the Finns claim more slashing success - Soviet troops driven back, forces of Red soldiers isolated, heavy set-backs for the Red war machine. (~~And this had better be so for the Finns because that's the critical part of their line - so long as the Mannerheim fortifications hold out.~~)

Today the Helsinki Government called its last reserves to the colors. Every man of fighting age summoned to battle. And still the army of Finland will be pitifully small in numbers. What the Finns lack most of all is - manpower.

FINNISH DEBT

Here's a recurring story of which in times past I've remarked ^{that} it isn't news. Not news, that Finland had paid its debt instalment.

Today the tidings have a moody ring. Finland battling for its life against the hordes of the Reds, in as desperate a situation as any nation has ever found itself. (Today to the Treasury Department of the United States came the Finnish Minister, and laid on the line ~~a check~~ for the regular semi-annual instalment of the Finnish debt, a check for two hundred and ~~thirty-five~~ thirty-four thousand, six hundred and ninety-three dollars.

Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau accepted the check with these words:- "As you know," said he to the Finnish Minister, "the President has directed me to hold this payment in a suspense account until he can recommend to Congress that this money be used for the benefit of the Finnish people."

Finland pays, but will get the money back.)

MRS. ROOSEVELT

Today the White House social calendar was cited in the argument between Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and members of the Dies Committee. Congressman J. Parnell Thomas of New Jersey has been charging that the First Lady of the Land has entertained at the White House leaders of Youth organizations ^{accused of} ~~charged with~~ being dominated by the Communists. But ~~he concluded his accusation;~~ members of the Dies Committee have not been invited. In fact, they've been socially snubbed by the White House.

Today this was denied by Mrs. Roosevelt's social secretary, Mrs. James M. Helm. She produces records of the White House social bureau, records which show that the Jersey Congressman and his wife had been invited to the White House on the occasion of the Congressional Reception, and the Army and Navy Reception for three successive years. ~~And Mrs. J. Parnell Thomas was invited to a garden party which Mrs. Roosevelt and the Cabinet ladies gave for the wives of congressmen, other members of the Dies Committee were also invited to White House receptions. No, there was no snubbing, says Mrs. Roosevelt's social secretary.~~

KILLING

The tragic memory of the Lindbergh kidnapping is revived in a killing of a house painter today at White Plains, New York. It seems almost like some kind of fatality reaching down the years with the hand of death.

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The story goes back to one of the maids at the Lindbergh home, a girl who added another element of dark mystery to the kidnap story - when she killed herself. This maid, Violet Sharpe, related that on the night when the Lindbergh baby was abducted, she was out on a date with a man whom she only knew as - Ernie. She identified a picture and said - that was he. It was a photograph of a man named Ernest Brennan, who proceeded to give a complete alibi. The police dismissed him after he had shown conclusively that he had not been in the company of the Lindbergh maid at the time of the kidnapping. Some while later, with the case at fever heat, the maid committed suicide.

Today fatality reached out to this same Ernest Brennan. He'd been working as a house painter. He got into an argument with another painter over a hundred dollar debt, and was shot and killed.

BYRD

I ~~have~~[^] just received a radiogram from Admiral Byrd, who, as you know, is on his way back to the South Pole, getting about as far away from this war-torn world as a human being can get without boarding a rocket ship for Mars. Dick Byrd wirelessly:- "Wish you were with us on this peaceful cruise across the Pacific. We have just ~~crossed~~^{bumped over} the Line. Father Neptune and Davy Jones came aboard and initiated all who had not previously been over the Equator." ~~and~~^{then he adds:-} "two of our ablest explorers have been going around ever since with blistered backs and battered noses."

The Admiral ~~then~~^{also} sends a personal ~~message~~^{hello} to Roy Chapman Andrews and Colonel Roosevelt, who with Commander Felix Riesenbergl, the explorer who died several weeks ago, sat with us for so many weeks on the board of governors of "The Order of Adventurers." Admiral Byrd wires that down there, in the South Pacific, on their way to the ~~Arctic~~^{Ant} Continent, they are listening to this Blue Sunoco broadcast every night. Judging from Byrd's radio dispatch, they are listening tonight. So here ~~is a message~~^{are a} couple of ~~night letters~~^{news items}, for them to ~~that may be of particular interest to them~~ mull over during those long hours at sea.

REWARD

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Today at Los Vegas, New Mexico, Carl Myers spoke up and said:- "The Carnegie Medal for Heroism? What do I care about the medal - Harry is alive, isn't he?" Yes, Harry Reid ^{is} alive, and that's ^{my} reward enough for Carl Myers.

They both are miners, and they planted eleven charges of dynamite in an eighty-five foot shaft. They cut the fuses long enough so they'd be able to climb up to a higher level, where they'd be safe from the blast. Then they lighted the fuses and ran. Carl scampered up the incline of the higher level. But before Harry could do it, ^{one} charge of dynamite went off prematurely, and hurled him down, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ unconscious, hundreds of splinters piercing his legs. Carl yelled to him; no response. And there were those other ten charges of dynamite, fuses lighted and spluttering! If they exploded with Harry down there, that would be the end of Harry.

Carl took a jump down the incline. The fuses were ^{burning} ~~spluttering~~ short, the dynamite might go any minute. Carl picked up his unconscious pal, flung him across his shoulder, and started up the twenty-five foot incline. It was a muscle-breaking effort -

he had to go mighty fast. Just as he got to the top to safety,
he dumped Harry down and fell exhausted - the dynamite roared.

~~and thundered~~

Today the word is that they're going to recommend
Carl Myers for the Carnegie Award for Heroism, but Carl just
growls:- "Doggone the medal. Harry is alive, isn't he?"

SWINDLER

In Chicago, the United States postal inspectors today arrested ^{what they} ~~a gentleman who can only be described as gaudy and resplendent. They describe him as~~ ^{characterize!} "a gaudy swindler who has had a most resplendent career." The police say that in his time he has sold three Chicago loop buildings and all the yachts on Lake Michigan, ^{without making delivery.} A dozen years ago he was convicted for complicity in a three million dollar mail robbery. Since then he has figured in various affairs, both top-lofty and nefarious. His arrest now is for his part in a Mexican oil deal. In this he figured as a geologist for the British Imperial Oil Company, ^{of} London. He geologized so imperially that one victim lost four thousand dollars. So say the cops.

Arresting him, they found him living in a swagger, expensive apartment. Outside stood his sleek and shiny limousine. Inside they discovered fifteen suits of clothes, everyone with a London label, twenty hats, a dozen pairs of shoes, and twenty pairs of spats. A gentleman gaudy and resplendent indeed! When they ~~it~~ led him away, his landlord appeared and asked plaintively, who would pay the bill for six hundred dollars of back rent, which the gentleman owed?

Hugh, what from you?

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