

L.T. SUNOCO - December 11, 1934.

Good Evening, Everybody:

For days we have been having an overbalance of foreign news -- all because of that crisis between Yugoslavia and Hungary, and the threat of war. But tonight it's different. There's scarcely any foreign news; the tidings are predominantly American. And this foreign silence is the most graphic possible indication that the crisis is passed, -- that when the big powers got together and decided there should be no trouble and pushed their compromise agreement upon the little fellows -- why that settled the European tension in a jiffy.

So we have mostly American things to talk about tonight; and that's a cheery sign.

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A rather puzzling message sputtered over the air today. A pattern of ether waves started out from some icy cold weather, streaked northward through plenty of hot weather -- in the Southern Hemisphere and the tropics -- and ended up here in cold weather again. When deciphered the message said:- "We will break camp and leave for New York the last week in January 1935." It was from Admiral Byrd down in Little America. Yes, he and his expedition are leaving the Antarctic the last week of this coming January.

Now about the puzzling part of it. This is found in the fact that Admiral Byrd's plan all along was to stay down there on the Southern Polar continent until sometime in Spring. So he's leaving a month or two ahead of schedule. Why? Has anything ^h gone wrong? Has ^h the ordeals been too much for the explorers? They've had an arduous and hazardous time of it -- Byrd's long retreat in his hermitage of ice and the battle by dog sled to reach him, and then the explorations by airplane which solved one of the mysteries of the Antarctic continent and resulted in the discovery of two hundred thousand square miles of new, icy land, which Byrd claimed for the

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United States. The only information that we have is contained in that brief message which was received this afternoon by the General Electric Company's short-wave station in Schenectady -- telling that the Byrd Expedition is returning ahead of schedule.

7 The whys and wherefores are merely something for exploration enthusiasts to speculate upon -- something to provide conversation at tomorrow's gathering of the Adventure Society. This is a new organization which is holding its inaugural luncheon at ^{the} Hotel Gotham tomorrow with world adventurers like Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Martin Johnson and Major Anthony Fiala to do the story-telling.

When we gather around the table we ^{no doubt} will be trying to figure out why Dick Byrd is coming back sooner than he expected. And also the greatest adventure of our day is to be picked at this luncheon. I wonder who he'll be?

CRIME

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The big crime conference in Washington, after getting off to a resonant start on the radio last night, continued to-day with further determined declarations - that Uncle Sam is out to crush gangs and racketeering. There was one plainly worded statement of J. Edgar Hoover, the youthful Director of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice. He blamed crime on politics, declared that racketeering flourished because of crooked politicians, and stated roundly that criminal gangs would be doomed if political pressure stopped obstructing the work of the police, and ~~the~~ prosecuting authorities.

I suppose there are mighty few of us who disagree with this, and I for one had the truth hammered home by a story I heard recently. It was told me by Mike Fiaschetti, now Deputy Commissioner of the Markets Department of the City of New York and formerly head of the Italian Squad of the New York Police Department.

Mike relates that he got a confession from a blackmail racketeer in New York. The trail led to another state, where a mob of big shots were rounded up, on the testimony of the New York Blackmailer. Mike heard that big money and political influence were

out to save the big shots.

His prisoner was prepared to testify as the state's witness, having been promised a light sentence in return, five or ten years. On the day of the trial, Mike Fiaschetti appeared in court and found that his prisoner had changed his mind - would not testify. In fact the blackhander was yelling curses, screaming that Mike had double-crossed him.

Yes, money and politics had done their work! With the trial scheduled for eleven o'clock, they had taken the state's witness into court at nine, put him immediately on trial, and sentenced him to life. No wonder he was yelling that he had been doublecrossed. No wonder he refused to testify at the trial of the big shots that followed. With the ^{principal} witness against them thus removed, the big shots went Scot-free.

There ~~was~~^{were} some hum-drum legal proceedings in a small
New Jersey town today. This was a preliminary to what will be
the most widely publicized trial in American legal history.
In the little courthouse ~~at~~ⁱⁿ Hunterdon County, New Jersey, the
lawyers of Bruno Hauptmann demanded that the State of New Jersey
furnish them with a bill of particulars, giving facts about the
case against Hauptmann, points of evidence against him. Supreme
Court Justice Trenchard refused to consider the demand until
Hauptmann was brought into his court. That's the usual custom.
The defendant is required to appear personally, while his plea
is presented. So they brought him into court, the Bronx carpenter
who was accused of the murder of Baby Lindbergh. With these
formalities settled, nothing happened.

The judge put off the matter until next Thursday, when the
arguments will be heard. Then the court will decide whether Haupt-
mann's lawyers are to get the bill of particulars which they demand.

It was just one of those preliminary ~~skirmishes~~ skirmishes.

FIRE

The very factor that makes the Michigan fire so tragic, may also have caused the outbreak of the flames. As for the tragic aspect, it was only yesterday that the Michigan Legislature gathered at the capital city of Lansing. It was a special session, called to consider a recount of ballots cast in the November election. So naturally the city was crowded and a considerable portion of the legislators put up at Hotel Kern. The hotel was alive with activity, jammed with guests, and dignified by the presence of a host of assemblymen, state senators, and other political leading lights.

It does seem like a tragic coincidence that the disastrous hotel fire should have flamed that night -- at day break. Yet there is a logical connection that may be inferred. The meeting of the Legislature made it a festive night at Lansing, with festive doings at Hotel Kern, where so many Legislators gathered. Is it possible that the fire may have been started by some late jovial party in a room? That question is being asked - investigated.

The fact that the hotel was so old, forty years old, accounts for the calamitous swiftness of the blaze, which in mere minutes turned the place into a burning inferno. Guests and hotel employees had only the briefest time for swift escape - if they did escape. Many were trapped, with a list of casualties that makes this one of the most disastrous of hotel fires. After a day of searching in the blackened, frozen ruins, it is still uncertain just how many were killed. The police said at first that the death list might reach forty. Now it seems as if it might be worse than that. And on that list of casualties are various members of the Michigan Legislature.

It was the old pitiful story of people trapped in rooms by flames, perishing by smoke, and fire, jumping from windows. And the bitter cold weather made it all the worse. The Grande River flows through Lansing. The hotel stood right on the river bank. On one side its windows looked down into the water. Many of the trapped guests leaped from these windows into the river, and some were drowned in the frigid benumbing water.

BOAT

On the Pacific Coast it's a case of tragedy averted. San Francisco Bay is a great place for ferry boats, huge flat barge-like boats that carry crowded hosts of passengers between San Francisco and the showy cities that line the great curve of the Bay. If one of those Golden ~~Bay~~ ^{Lake} ferry boats with a full cargo of humanity aboard were to sink, that would be a major catastrophe. It nearly happened today. A coastwise steamer, the Ruth Alexander, hit a crowded ferry boat. With the heavy impact, the jammed commuters were knocked down, ~~and were~~ ^a sprawling mass of human bodies. The ferry boat got much the worse of the collision. It narrowly escaped being sunk. As it was, a swift bit of wholesale rescue work had to be put on. The steamer came alongside. Ropes were stretched between the two craft, and the passengers, clinging to the ropes, climbed from one boat to the other.

DEBTS

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December fifteenth is the day when instalments on the War Debts fall due. And Uncle Sam is due to get a lot of money. That sounds like news, doesn't it? But it really isn't. December fifteenth is also pay-up time for John Q. Public when he has to kick in with the final instalment of his income tax. So Uncle Sam will get plenty of mazooma from John, not from the foreign debtor nations.

This of course was to be taken for granted - but just to make it official, here's word from London, saying that Great Britain will default on her War Debt payment ~~and~~ once more. According to the books, John Bull should fork over a hundred and seventeen million dollars on the fifteenth, but today, from across the water, comes a brief message saying that England will not pay up. A few days ago France made a similar declaration concerning her own War Debt.

It is always a good bet to predict that Finland will put the money on the line. ^{She will!} ~~And this time it's a better bet than ever.~~

Because the little northern republic has taken advantage of her paid-up promptness to borrow some money over here, and would hardly do any defaulting with a loan in prospect.

RUTH

Let's think of several words that begin with "B". There's Baseball, also Babe and likewise Bambino. With the two big Leagues staging their annual meetings in New York, there are various important matters to be discussed. But right in the middle, pops that irrepressible phenomenon, Babe Ruth.

When the baseball season ended several months ago, it didn't seem as if there'd be much of the Babe Ruth problem. We all know the familiar figure of the rather portly gentleman with the small feet and spindly ankles, the honest, open but by no means beautiful face. The Babe is frank in admitting that his pins are not as good as they used to be. Everybody knows that the home-run hammer man is on his way out. Just how far out - that was the question. The Babe announced that he wanted a job as a manager, and, if he couldn't get it, he would retire from baseball. Whereupon there was no wild scurrying among the magnates offering the big fellow a managerial job. It is quite apparent that the bosses of baseball had no flaming belief in the Babe as a manager. Maybe they think he's too good-natured. Maybe they think he hasn't the sharp drive needed for a field marshall in

pennant races. Anyway, the greatest baseball player of them all seemed to be headed for ancient history - no flaming urgent problem to tax the mentality of the magnates. It seemed certain that the highest paid player in baseball had seen his last season in the big money.

But during the months since the end of the season, there has been a flashing change. How come? Well, because of that Far Eastern Asiatic baseball tour. Maybe they were ready to count the old fellow out over here, but in Eastern Asia he swept to greater triumphs than he ever experienced before. The Japanese went off the honorable nut over the Babe. To the Millions in Nippon he is the greatest American. They packed the ball parks with immense crowds to see the Babe's team in action. And when the great American himself was not scheduled to play, the attendance fell off remarkably.

And now, the word is that a Japanese Syndicate has been formed, a Nipponese Baseball Syndicate, the object of which is to take the Babe back to the land of the Rising Sun and keep him there. They want him to take charge of a star Japanese team,

manage it, play in the outfield and hit home runs for the delectation of the Far Eastern fans. And they are willing to pay him plenty of money - scads of yen - to do so.

Yes, that's the sort of thing our own Big League magnates understand. They know that the Babe is still a big drawing card, and now they're confronted with the fact that the Japanese may take him away from them. That's what has tossed the Babe Ruth problem like a flaming bomb into the meetings of the two Leagues. Right now the big bosses of the National League, gathered at the Waldorf, are mulling over the fact that they themselves would like to take the Babe over from the American League and have him bring his dash of fame and color into their own circuit. And as for the American League magnates - why, headed by Colonel Jake Ruppert, the Babe's owner, they've been startled to a new realization of the potentialities of the old boy who made the home run a national institution. So the problem they're wrestling with is - what to do about the Babe? The boys were a little premature in counting the Sultan of Swat out of the big money. He'll have at least one more season in the large salary ranks - even if its yen and not dollars.

JAPAN

Now for our very meagre bits of foreign news:- There is of course that day to day theme, the naval situation. We have a pattern of contrast. The Japanese Privy Council was in session today, called by the Emperor Hirohito. It met and drafted a message to the United States. This message announces that Japan is calling off the Naval Treaty now in force. The formal letter will be sent to Washington about December nineteenth.

Meanwhile, the first trans-oceanic telephone radio service between the United States and Japan has been opened. It was officially inaugurated when Secretary of State Cordell Hull spoke to Koki Hirota, the Japanese Foreign Minister in Tokyo.

Said Mr. Hull to Mr. Hirota: "By further exchange of ideas and of commerce, radio telephone service will be of mutual benefit to our people."

Said Mr. Hirota to Mr. Hull: "I feel confident that this system of communication will prove to be a means for promotion of understanding and good-will." In other words Mr. Hirota raised Mr. Hull's flowery ante.

SAAR

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Foreign correspondents with Sherlock Holmes tendencies have figured out an angle on the Saar question. They have deduced that *Great Britain considers the* January election ~~as~~ exceedingly important. This they have arrived at by inferring that London, in contributing British soldiers to police the election, is going to send one of England's crack regiments, probably the Scots Guard, now on duty at the Tower of London.

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The Sherlock Holmes correspondents picked up a clue in an admission by the British War Office that the ^{to be} groups sent to the Saar would take along full dress uniforms, the traditional British red coats. These newspaper detectives started meditating on the fact that the common ^{line} ~~man of soldier~~ of ~~the~~ British regiment does not go in for those fancy full dress uniforms. The only ones that do are the household cavalry, the life guards, assigned to protect the King and the royal family - and also the famous Scots Guards at the Tower of London. They reason that England would not send the King's own soldiers, so it must be the Scots ~~with~~ that are getting the election job.

So that's the Sherlock Holmes deduction of the foreign

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correspondents - Britain sending one of her most famous regiments
to the Saar election, the braw Scots in their fanciest ^{waving} kilts
supervising the battle of votes between the Nazis and the anti-
Nazis.

~~Of course there will be other troops than the British,
Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, announces that several
hundred soldiers from Holland and Sweden will do election day
duties~~

Yes, that's all the foreign news for this broadcast,
tonight. No ~~waz~~ alarming report about any Balkan crisis.

We can all be thankful about that, and

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.

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