

L.T. - SUNOCO. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1939.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

I might have a weather story tonight about the cold wave in the eastern part of the United States -- frosty temperatures for days. I myself have an especially good chance to observe the ways of old man Winter up here at Lake Placid, in the heart of the ski country, up here where snow is an important commodity in Winter. And there is plenty of it this year.

But so far as tonight's news is concerned, the important weather story is from Finland. Tonight's report is that a violent snowstorm is sweeping over the small Republic, blinding flurries of white blasted by a high bitter wind, icy temperatures, below zero in the tempestuous Arctic. And that's a boon for the Finns, for in that war-stricken land Old Man Weather has been raised to the rank of a General.

Up here at Lake Placid, blizzard and now, of course, mean skiing -- and so they do in Finland, only in a more important sense. War skiing there, and astonishing stories of dazzling action by the Finnish ski patrols against the hosts of the Red Army. Once more today Helsinki reports that its swift moving units are still driving Soviet troops in retreat on the northern and eastern fronts.

Today's Finnish communique tells us that now the Finns have pushed the Red battalions across the frontier at three points, and are fighting on Russian soil in two different places -- just north of Lake Ladoga, where the Soviet troops might outflank the Mannerheim line; and further north at the narrow waistline of Finland, where only a few days ago the Reds were threatening to cut the country in two; the ~~story~~ story of these advances by the Finns puts constant emphasis on the ski troop, the northern patrols dressed in a camouflage of white, who glide to the attack on their sliding runners.

More surprising still are (insistent rumors today that the Finnish ski patrols have actually cut the vital Murmansk Railroad, the only line of communication the Soviets have in the North.) An

official Finnish statement declares that fighting parties on skis have reached an important Russian rail junction, and emphatic reports from Scandinavia declare that they have cut the line. Of course ski patrols could hardly hold a position and keep a railroad line blocked, but it is astonishing if they have been able to get there at all, and do what damage they can. The reports say that they are badly handicapping the Soviet Transport of men and munitions - the northern Red forces short of supplies, hungry.

This afternoon I received a telegram from Bill Knox, who runs a ski column in the NEW YORK POST. He points out that since I am up here in ski country I might be able to pick up some interesting information about the methods of ski fighting developed by European nations; in the Alps and in the Far North, and in Finland in particular. He asks me technical questions like this:- What types of ski do the Finnish soldiers use? What kind of poles and binding? Do they use sealskins? How far can they operate from ~~the~~ base? Those are interesting queries, and would have to be answered by a ski expert who has had experience in the military

branch of the art. Maybe I can find a skier up here who has played a part in the training of ski battalions for war. If so I'll get what interesting and significant information I can and relay it along to Bill Knox of the NEW YORK POST - ski information bearing on the astonishing story of the successes of the ski soldiers of Finland.

FOLLOW FINLAND

Today's reports from the Russian side indicate that Red Dictator Stalin is rushing huge new masses of troops to the battleline. All the indications are that Stalin feels he has got to do something drastic to retrieve the Soviet setbacks thus far - setbacks that are making mock of the Red Army throughout the world. So the Finns expect a new and more dreadful trial by fire in their icebound land; huge mass attacks by overwhelming numbers which the Finns will have to beat off with their first class equipment, their skill, their courage - and their scanty man-power.

One report mentions a sinister name - the OGPU. Stalin is said to be sending powerful forces of OGPU troops to the fight in Finland. Of course that notorious outfit with the ugly name of OGPU is the dreaded Secret Police; but, it's decidedly military in character. It includes large military units, such as Stalin has used to crush opposition. When mere police raids have not sufficed. The OGPU regiments are regarded as crack troops, the best the Soviets have, fanatically Communistic and devoted to Stalin. It will be drama indeed when and if the soldiers of the OGPU clash with the Finns, the military power of the secret police terror, launching storming attacks to carry the day for Stalin. And there are

plenty of people in this world who will rejoice in the idea of what they hope the Finns may do to the OGPU.

From Moscow comes an official announcement that censorship is to be clamped down on stories sent out by all foreign correspondents. In recent times, the Soviets have had no formal censorship, and maybe that's why even the dispatches sent out from Moscow about the Finnish war have not been so favorable for the Red Army, rather the reverse. Indeed, they've been hinting that there's some discontent in the Soviet Utopia, because of the poor success against Finland thus far. Now a tight censorship will be clamped on beginning Friday.

ROME

(Pope Pius the Twelfth today paid his much heralded visit of state to the King of Italy, it was the first time in history that a Pontiff of the Church of Rome went to call on an Italian sovereign, and immediately afterward it was announced that Mussolini in the near future will officially call on the Pontiff at the Vatican.)

The significance of all these formal courtesies is obvious. For one thing, they reemphasize the end of the old historic quarrel between the Papacy and the Italian kingdom, the quarrel that began when the Italian nation took Rome and the Papal States away from the government of the Pope.)

The important part of today's news refers to the war situation in Europe. Pope Pius has come out strongly for international action on behalf of a just and reasonable peace. In this he is in joint collaboration with our American President. We've been told that Mussolini's government too is leaguuing itself with the Pope for parallel action to accomplish an eventual war settlement. So today's historic visit by Pope Pius the Twelfth to King Victor Emanuel is of large significance along the line of joint labors for a sound and enduring peace settlement.

Of course it was all very solemn and majestic, Papal and royal, as the Pontiff was received by the King and Queen. And in all the ceremonious expressions of courtesy and friendship, the theme of peace prevailed. Pope Pius called upon the Italian Government, headed by Victor Emanuel as King, and by Mussolini as Duce, to exert itself for a settlement of the war. Expressions to this effect were so prominent throughout the event as to leave no doubt that the visit was intended as a gesture in behalf of peace.

In the address the Pope made to the monarchs, there's one flight of papal eloquence that harks back to historic figures of speec. "The waves of the Tiber ", said the Pope, "have buried in the Tyrrhenian Sea the murky past and made olive branches bloom on its banks. The two statues of Peter and Paul at the entrance of this palace, "he continued, "seem to rejoice, as if they had seen the dawn of new times." The news of the visit was accompanied by a report that the Pontiff had expressed the desire to be visited by Mussolini. And soon afterward came the official report from Rome that the Duce will make a formal call at the Vatican of January Fourth, to pay his homage, to the Pope -- and you may be certain, to talk up ideas of peace.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Here is news that may interest many of you.

Word from Washington tells of work at top speed in what is described as the world's biggest bookkeeping plant. It's the Social Security establishment, which right now is getting ready to send out the first batch of old-age pension checks - the beginning of incomes that aged persons will receive for the rest of their lives.

The Social Security Board keeps account of fifty million people, who under the law may participate in the payments for old-age and unemployment benefits. Of these, nine hundred and twelve thousand will be entitled to receive payments during the course of next year, payments for a total of a hundred and fourteen million dollars during Nineteen Forty. The first checks will go to a hundred thousand persons. Forty thousand have already certified and applications are coming in right now at the rate of three thousand a day. The first payments will be made about January Twenty-Fifth. Payments of pensions of from ten dollars to forty-one dollars and twenty cents a month per person.

These old-age benefits under the Social Security Act take

no account of whether a person needs the money or not. Any one qualified under the law will get the money, rich or poor, millionaire or penniless.

DIALECTS

A couple of university professors conducted a test of the dialects spoken in the United States. Today in Chicago they gave the results to the Convention of the National Association of Teachers of Speech. The test consisted of playing phonograph records before large groups of students, each record illustrating the accent prevalent in some sections of the U.S.A. The students listening were required to answer several questions: and one question was this - Which of the American dialects do you prefer? Which sounds the best and most beautiful?

Here is the result:- the place found to talk the best English. Where is it? The answer - Lancaster, Pennsylvania. And that should make the folks at Lancaster go around this evening, talking and chattering - showing off their lovely English.

Another of the questions answered by the test was this:- Can you tell the place a person comes from by the way he talks? Can you ~~lex~~ listen to him and say he's from Arkansas, or Iowa, Florida or New England, the Pacific Coast, or Baltimore, Texas or up in the Adirondacks? The test was not at all conclusive. It indicated that in most cases you couldn't tell. There were two large exceptions, two kinds of dialect that were readily picked out -

the South and New York. Well, it's not surprising that the Honey Chile kind of Dixie eloquence should be a quick give-away. And then of course the English language in New York has qualities all its own, especially the good old Brooklyn elocution, with its choice of woids.

English as she is spoken, always the fascinating topic, especially to those whose job is speaking.

I'll ask Hubert Stevens, the Olympic Bob Sled Captain if the natives up here speak with any accent. Do they? Do you, Hubert?

HUBERT:- No, I should say not. We speak pure limpid English with no accent at all.

Sterens -
Dec. 28, 1939.

RUBBISH

Two distinguished New Yorkers are sitting here beside me, Bob Kelley, of the New York Times and Harry Cross of the New York Herald Tribune. Here's an item that may interest them, mildly. It's about - rubbish!

How merry was Christmas this year, how much Yuletide cheer? Those are questions suggesting charm - the sentiment of the happy season. At least that's the way it is up here at Lake Placid. However, the answer we get is not framed in terms quite so charming or sentimental. It's from New York, and it tells us that Christmas this year was merry indeed, much more yuletide cheer than last year.

This pleasing information comes from the New York Department of Sanitation, and is expressed in terms of truckloads of rubbish. New York Sanitation Commissioner William F. Carey, informs us that his department has an invaluable way of calculating the amount of holiday gladness. How much extra rubbish do the sanitation trucks collect from the streets - Christmas gift wrappings, turkey bones, fragments of Christmas trees, tinsel and so on.

This year Christmas was merrier than last to the extent of five thousand tons of tinsel and so on. And Commissioner Bill Carey goes into all the festive details, concerning - rubbish!

LIARS

If you were listening last night you may recollect that I sent out a call for all liars to rally round. The annual Liars competition is on at Burlington, Wisconsin, to select the champion liar of America. And the news of the doings out in Wisconsin came over the press wire, yesterday. And that inspired me hurriedly to arrange a rival contest up here at Lake Placid.

But our Liars contest here in the Adirondacks is not intended to cut-in-on or undermine the contest at Burlington, Wisconsin. Theirs is a national contest. Ours is international. That's the difference. We cover more of the world with our competition in the universal art of prevarication. Therefore, our lies should be bigger and better -- big enough to be announced in the big Olympic Arena here at Placid. Yes, surely Lake Placid, scene of the Olympic Games, is the logical home for an annual meet of Olympian Liars.

All today lies have been pouring in to me by wire and by mail. This year's contest closes tomorrow noon. I'll announce the winner tomorrow night. There is still time for you to get yours in -- by mail, or wire, or fill your car with new Blue Sunoco and bring your lie in person. Even the Adirondacks

flatten out if your car is full of that Nu Blue, Hugh has been telling you about these past weeks.

All day today I've been hunting for honest men, truthful men, to act as judges. And I've found them. In fact the judges are sitting right here beside me tonight.

Some two hundred skiers, hockey players, and dog team drivers are also in the room and they will vouch that these are truthful men. They are:- Dr. George C. Owens, Mayor of Lake Placid; Harry Cross, sports writer for the "New York Herald-Tribune", Alexander F. Osborn, of Buffalo, N.Y. Mr. Osborn, by the way, is the Osborn of the famous advertising firm of Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn -- a partner of Bruce Barton; Robert F. Kelley, sports expert, for the "New York Times"; and then to emphasize the international angle, the fifth judge is George H. Townsend of Westmount, Quebec, who is a dead ringer for Raoul Amundsen, and that's no lie. Are these honest mne?

SHOUT:- Sure!

And that's no lie.

So, hurry up and send in yours, and maybe tomorrow night you' will be proclaimed the Olympian of all Liars.

And now, Hugh, what from you?