

P.T. - *Junoco*. Monday, Dec. 19, 1938.

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You might have thought that all sensations were exhausted in the weird tale of the late Philip Musica Coster. But another amazing chapter came to light today. Of course it was known that the Neopolitan barber's son bought control of McKesson & Robbins with the profits he had made out of bootleg alcohol. But now the federal government declares that Musica was the biggest illicit alcohol dealer in the country, and that he did a bootleg business that made Al Capone look like small time stuff. ^{and} Musica's bootlegging by no means stopped with repeal.

His gun-running operations were also on a far huger scale than anybody realized. As recently as last May he was working out a deal for the sale of no fewer than two million rifles.

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Incidentally, he told a lawyer engaged in the transaction that the rifles were to be bought by the Standard Oil Company - the English Standard Oil. As a matter of fact, there is no Standard Oil Company of England. There's no company with a name even remotely similar. However, there are several English companies which some people might, in the vernacular, have described as "the Standard Oil Company of England." ~~It is believed that~~

FOLLOW MUSICA

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One follow-up to the incredible story of the Musica swindling is the way an old and honored business institution is meeting the shock of ~~unmerited~~ misfortune. The firm of McKesson and Robbins is going right on, conducting its business and protecting its seventy-five hundred employees and more than fifteen thousand ~~its~~ stockholders. The firm, as it happens, is so organized that it can ^{minimize} ~~weather~~ the blow. Today I telephoned William J. Wardell, a Federal trustee recently appointed for the corporation, and he explained to me that McKesson and Robbins ^{is} ~~has~~ really a merger of a whole lot of companies -- old, conservative and respected. The original McKesson and Robbins Company itself was founded nearly one hundred years ago, and the ^{firms} ~~companies~~ merged with it are of the same sort. They operate in quite independent fashion, though under one corporate name.

Thus it was that the doings of the Musica brothers concerned only the crude drug department. The defrauding president, Philip Musica, alias F. Donald Coster, was in charge of that department alone -- he had no control over various ^{other branches} ~~projects~~ of the concern. For example, he had nothing to do with the manufacturing

end of the business, was not connected with the compounding of McKesson and Robbins drugs. So, I was told today, there's no relevant point in any talk of sub-standard drugs. That's a thing which can occur because of time and deterioration to any any company's products. And it is something the government watches closely.

All of this is part of the story of how a company, because it is organized in more or less autonomous units is able to carry on in spite of the giant swindle that that hit one of those units ~~Swindler~~ *— the Crud Drug end of the business.* ~~and protect employees and stockholders.~~

ENGINE

There'll be plenty of talk in the transportation world over a new type of locomotive. It was developed by engineers of the Union Pacific and the General Electric. This iron horse is a rolling steam turbine power plant. In other words, a steam locomotive that generates its own electricity as it travels. The steam from the boiler is not sent straight to the pistons of the driving wheels. Instead it makes electricity which turns the motors, which in turn drive the ~~wheels~~ wheels.

It was tried out today at Erie, Pennsylvania, and it'll be put to work first on the Union Pacific trains to the west coast. This traveling turbine will be able to pull fifteen standard Pullman cars as fast as a hundred and twenty-five miles an hour. It's supposed to do twice the work of the ordinary engine for each pound of fuel.

SHIPWRECK

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Those eighteen shipwrecked men at Cape Fairweather on the Arctic Coast of Alaska, are today in a worse plight than ever. They started their second week, trying to keep alive in the extreme cold of that polar region. By this time some of them are ill and all are weak from hunger. A gale of wind, a blizzard is still beating around the frigid Cape. As soon as the storm lets up, airplanes will be sent from various Alaskan points to fly the men to safety.

FLOOD

~~The folks in~~ Southern California ~~are~~ facing the possibility of another flood. For many hours, fierce sub-tropical rains have been falling in and ^{near}~~around~~ Los Angeles. In the mountains around Santa Monica and the San Fernando Valley, twelve inches of snow fell over night. The Los Angeles River overflowed its banks and washed out sections of the highway. Elsewhere thoroughfares are under water.

POPE

Another rumor concerning Pope Pius was current throughout the world today. He was supposed to have had another severe heart attack. The moment the rumor was spread abroad, it was followed by an emphatic contradiction from Vatican City. ~~The~~ Rumor ~~was~~ incorrect, said officials of the Holy See. The Pontiff is in excellent health. The fact that he abstained today from any official or ecclesiastical duties was attributed to the custom ordered by his physicians of taking a complete rest every Monday.

FRANCE

Early this morning there was a tense situation facing the French government, the Cabinet of Premier Daladier. A crucial session of the Chamber of Deputies was pending. In many quarters it was expected that the opposition would spring a keen fight on the government.

The most anxious moment occurred when the deputies started discussing the budget of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. That was expected to be the occasion for an attack by the Left Wing. At that dangerous moment, Foreign Minister Bonnet jumped to his feet. In a ringing voice he cried: "The French government is resolutely determined to defend the French patrimony and not allow anyone to wound in any way the dignity and the grandeur of France."

Of course no opposition could stand up against a sentiment of that tenor. The only possible answer was a chorus of cheers. The opposition was drowned out, the debate collapsed, and the budget was passed without a dissenting voice, without in fact anybody even stopping to look at it.

Bonnet followed that up with a peaceable gesture. The recently signed declaration of France and Germany not to go to war, he said, was no empty pose. It was an important political document. And he explained: "No conflict can ever break out in Europe if France and Germany prove their intentions."

He then referred to the question of Italy with the statement: "We've expressed a desire for the same sort of understanding with Italy and proved it by acts, not words. Hence we were most surprised at the recent manifestations in the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

However," he added, "the Italian government declared those manifestations did not express the government's policy." And he said: "We record that answer."

CHAMBERLAIN FOLLOW FRANCE

In the House of Commons, Prime Minister Chamberlain also had to stand the gaff. The long simmering opposition to his policy of appeasement came to a boil today. It was all most polite, but most definite. The form it took was a ~~moment~~^{motion} offered by a member of the Labor Party in the courteous words: "Be it resolved that this House has no confidence in the foreign policy of His Majesty's government." ~~It~~^{That} sounds ~~extremely mild and~~ civil, but it touched off the fireworks. ~~It~~[^] The Prime Minister's defense took a note that had hardly been anticipated. It was a note of dry severity towards the continental dictators. The gist of Chamberlain's attitude was: "We are trying to be friends but the totalitarian governments are making it pretty difficult for us." He used these words: "I am still waiting for a sign from those who speak for the German people that they are prepared to meet their contribution toward peace which would help them as much as it would help us."

^{TP} Then he uttered a warning: "It would be a tragic error to mistake our love of peace for weakness." In other words, "just don't ~~xxxxx~~ crowd us too far! We're better prepared than you may think."

All in all, it was a gravely portentous day in the British Parliament as well as in the French Chamber. There could be no mistaking the intent of the Prime Minister to show a stiffening of backbone. He's still determined to try the appeasement business for all it's worth up to the last moment. But it's notable that for the first time since he started it, he expresses the doubts that others have voiced so loudly, for he said: "Whether this policy ultimately achieves its aims remains to be seen and is a matter that depends not on us alone."

And a most important element in Chamberlain's speech was what you could read between the lines. For he hinted gravely that even he begins to doubt that Hitler and those around him really represent what the great mass of the German people want.

With all this, Chamberlain was taking no back talk from the opposition in Parliament. Said he: "The opposition policy would involve us in war simultaneously with Japan, Germany, Italy and perhaps France. The Commons gave Chamberlain a vote of confidence - usual conservative majority."

POLAND

The cause of Fascism took an unexpected tumble today.

It was in those Polish elections. For months we have been hearing that Poland, outwardly democratic, was inwardly ruled pretty much by the spirit, if not the letter, of Fascism. ^{SM.} Yesterday's balloting in the land of Paderewski was much to the contrary. The Fascists lost heavily in fifty-three states and more than two thousand villages. The elections are still going on, but the trend appears to be as yesterday - anti-Fascist. One dispatch from Warsaw said that in some districts the Fascist movement appears to be almost wiped off the boards. And in all Warsaw, where two hundred seats were being voted for, the Fascists won only two, two out of two hundred.

In western Poland there was a victory for the Left Wing, the Social Democrats, ~~They're not to be confounded with Socialists,~~ ~~they're~~ Socialists who sing the song of Marx in a ~~pretty~~ mild tone. Altogether, the election is considered a distinct victory for both the government and the democratic Left Wing.

CZECH FOLLOW POLAND .

Serious consequences followed the elections in Slovakia.

~~via~~ That country has broken off relations with Hungary. ^{Today} There was
a fight near the frontier in eastern Slovakia, a fight between the
Czechs and a body of Hungarians. These Hungarians are supposed to
have been both soldiers and irregulars. Two Czechs were killed,
hence the breaking off of relations.

ITALY

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Duce Mussolini has at last paid attention to Uncle Sam's questions about the rights of American citizens in Italy. The State Department had notified the Italian government that it expected American business to be properly protected from the anti-Semitic decrees ^{Washington} ~~of the Italian government.~~ The State Department now has word from Italy that the rights of our citizens will be fully observed.

ROOSEVELT

When Congress convenes next month it will of course receive several messages from the President. It became known today what two of them will be about. One will be in regard to the Social Security Act, says the White House. Mr. Roosevelt will urge Congress to strengthen the provisions of that law and give it wider scope.

Another will concern the New Deal's national health program. This was made known by Josephine Roche, Chairman of the Federal Committee on Health and Welfare. She made the announcement after a conference at the White House today. Her committee has urged the President to recommend a federal appropriation of between fifty and sixty-five million dollars. This to be used to extend the public health service, to increase hospital facilities, to help people in the low income groups to get medical care and hospitalization. Also, to insure them against ~~xxxx~~ loss of wages because of sickness. Miss Roche said: "This means a ~~xxxx~~ lot to forty million Americans who have no medical resources and no adequate medical care."

THIRD TERM

The troublesome question of a third term for President Roosevelt broke into the news again today. ~~It was~~ Brought in *this* ^{time} by the Republican leader, Senator Vandenberg of Michigan.

Vandenberg came out today with the statement that the Senate should put itself on record against a third term, ~~for~~ a third term, as he put it, "for any president." ~~I shall vote accordingly.~~

In this, the Michigan Senator disagrees flatly with his colleague, Senator McNarry of Oregon, who is Minority Leader of the Senate. McNarry has said that he doesn't think this question should be dealt with in the Senate.

Washington wiseacres describe this as a political move to embarrass the Democrats. President Roosevelt, they say, knows full well that he could not be elected for a third term. But if he were to come out in the open and say so, he would lose most of his grip on his party.

CARVING

An important official bulletin was issued today by Uncle Sam's government. It comes from Secretary of Agriculture, Wallace, and concerns a most serious and timely topic, to wit -- how to carve the turkey. This bulletin says "The correct position of the turkey is on the platter, back down."

Having settled that the next problem concerns father: Should Papa stand or sit while carving? On this point the New Deal is evidently willing to give Pop his constitutional rights and do that which is most comfortable. However, Secretary Wallace suggests that a tall person had better sit down to it, or maybe a short man might do better on his hind legs, meaning Papa's hind legs, not the turkey's.

Having settled that the next important rule to follow is to keep the turkey on the platter. That's on the principle that a bird on the platter is worth two in grandmother's lap. Of course that depends partly on the condition of the knife. With a blunt knife it isn't always easy to keep a turkey from skating across the table

Secretary Wallace recommends a safety zone around the platter, say six inches, or in extreme cases two feet. The bulletin

adds: "There should be room for a certain amount of struggle.

Chestnuts and cranberry sauce to you Mr. Secretary --

and SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.