

P.H. - Sunco. Thurs., Jan. 30/36.

Camen

The news of the world is a great thing, as we all know. But we get a good deal of it these days. So, let's take a look at the news of the underworld. The date line <sup>for that is</sup> ~~is both~~ Minneapolis and Paris. It happens that the American colony on the banks of the Seine, has a new member. His name is Jacob Blumenfeld, but ~~xxx~~ he's more affectionately known as "Dandy" - Dandy Blumenfeld; ~~xxx~~ a gangster. <sup>TP</sup> No, he is not sojourning in Paris because he is in ~~xx~~ any way involved in that sensational Minneapolis murder, the killing of the crusading editor, Walter Liggett. Of course his half brother, Isidor, now on trial in Minneapolis, is accused of that crime. But Dandy is absent from his native land for different reasons. He explains it all in a newspaper interview:- <sup>TP Q</sup> ~~The~~ prominent American gangster ~~was~~ newly arrived in Paris, and that sprightly Parisian journal, LE SOIR, sent a reporter to call on him and ask him how he liked France, French women and French wines. But the interview soon became more serious, as the reporter touched upon the delicate question of why Dandy was in <sup>Say</sup> ~~Paris~~, perhaps some small matter related to the murder in Minneapolis, *ne ces pas?*

## GANGSTERS

"Not at all," said Dandy. He declared he had nothing to do with the Liggett Killing. No, he didn't approve of that cold-blooded underworld assassination. Still, he admitted, you couldn't blame the gang. It was too bad, but Editor Liggett, in showing up the racket, was not reasonable. Dandy described him in these words: "Fiercely honest. And," continued the gangster, "he became ridiculously inconvenient." He was exposing a criminal outfit called the A-Z Syndicate, until finally the syndicate had to shoot in self-defense, said Dandy.

He told these things in a regretful tone of voice, and plunged deep into melancholy when the French reporter persisted:

"True, Monsieur, you had nothing to do with that small affair ~~ix~~ of murder in Minneapolis. But then why is it that you do us the honor of coming to our beautiful Paris?"

Dandy shook his head sadly. "I left the United States," he declared, "because life is no longer possible for gangsters. The damnable federal police interfere with us. And they're dead shots. Deplorable, deplorable," said Dandy, as he rearranged his gardenia.

"Ah, yes," breathed the sympathetic reporter - "those G-Men."

I don't know how much Dandy Blumenfeld and how much French reporter there is in the sprightly interview. But it's an interesting oddity -- the French journalistic handling of an American gangster in Paris.

## DEVILS ISLAND

Escape from Devils Island - that's always a thriller headline! That sinister penal colony in the tropics has stood for many a year as the epitome and apogee of the unbreakable prison. Yet now we hear - escapes from Devils Island for sale; it's a racket!

Yes, an escape ring, a Devils Island racket - that is given as the explanation of highly dramatic bits that we've heard in the news from time to time. I suppose in the last couple of years I've told of half a dozen or more incidents of tropical prison breaking in the Caribbean, convicts getting away in boats and making desperate voyages on hurricane infested waters. And each time - incredulous wonder! The ultimate of the dramatic unbelievable! Yet apparently there's hokum in all that romance. There are cold facts to tell us that escape from Devils Island instead of being the height of the incredibly impossible, is one of the commonest things in the world.

We hear of the ~~xx~~ convict ship LA MARTINIÈRE, now on its way from France to the Caribbean, with seven hundred prisoners

aboard. Some making their third convict voyage. They had escaped, not once but twice, had gone back to France and there had been picked up by the police.

Stories are now told of convicts who escaped and got clear, time after time, as many as a dozen times each. But, like Frenchmen, they couldn't stay away from LaBelle France. Always drifted back to Paris, Bordeaux, or Marseilles, and there were caught.

So many escapes that now there's talk of abandoning the penal settlements.

For it's all a racket. Underworld markets with escapes for sale. Regular contractors, who arrange the tropical prison breaks. Headquarters at Marseilles. Prices quoted - minimum, Thirteen Hundred Dollars.

But the price takes a big jump for a desperate lifer or for a convict who has a wealthy family.

The Devils Island racketeer gang is able to operate because of an alliance with crooked native politicians in the

French penal territories. Moreover the convict colonies are not too well policed right now, a shortage of guards, a shortage of funds. They cost the Paris government two million dollars a year. The Government, in its financial difficulties, thinks twice before slapping an extra Franc on the backs of the growling French taxpayers. That's the basic cause for the Devils Island escape racket.

Remember some months ago, the news flamed with a touch of tropical adventure - eleven convicts beating their way on a wild voyage from port to port? The French police say that that was a mass escape, engineered by the prison break contractors in Marseilles.

An international complication, and the Department of Agriculture takes action, ~~and~~ dismisses from its service - an artist. <sup>A famous one.</sup> ~~Yes, a well-known painter.~~ Diplomacy, agriculture, and art - that <sup>is</sup> making it complicated.

(How does the Department of Agriculture get mixed up with international relations? It's this way. It sponsored an expedition to eastern Asia, to study plants and procure seeds - this for the benefit of the American farmer <sup>in our drought belt.</sup>) The expedition did a lot of research in Japanese-controlled Manchukuo, where international heat runs high. And the agricultural expedition got involved in the bitter rivalries out there, where Japanese, Chinese and Red Russians are at odds.

(<sup>August</sup> What has an artist to do with agriculture? Well, he is Nicholas Roerich, of wide renown.) In New York, on Riverside Drive, there's a special <sup>sky scraper</sup> art museum of Roerich pictures. He has painted three thousand, one thousand of which are on permanent and solemn display in the Roerich Museum. He's a philosopher too, a student of religious mysticism - a man of scientific attainments.

(Much of his painting philosophizes the scientific study he has

done in the course of extensive travel in Asia. That's why  
Roerich headed the Far Eastern expedition on agricultural  
botany. )

The charges against him are stated in the most guarded  
terms. ( Washington explains that officials of Japanese-controlled  
Manchukuo accused Roerich of political activity which they did  
not like. They even said that the head of the mission of ~~the~~  
Department of Agriculture was a spy. ) <sup>TP</sup> It ~~is~~ all very curious.

As a rule, charges like these are made officially from one  
government to another. The accused person is either held under  
arrest or is deported. But in this case the representations to  
the American authorities are in ~~formal~~ "just between you and me".

<sup>And</sup> Washington refuses to discuss the case. Yet, it is known that  
the State Department has expressed its disapproval of the head  
of the expedition sent by the Department of Agriculture. In fact,  
Roerich has been off the job recently.

It all ~~xxxxx~~ becomes public today, because of rumors  
that the artist would resume his expedition work in Manchukuo.  
Today's report by the Department of Agriculture is a denial  
of these reports. Roerich is through as an official plant



investigator.

We can only guess at the details of the charges the Manchukuan government makes against him. If he was fooling around with Far Eastern politicians - how? If he was doing spy work - for whom? For a surmise, we can only look at his past record. Six years ago, the British government refused to give Roerich a passport to visit India - because, said the British, of his associations with Soviet Russia. They said he had Communist sympathies. On the other hand, Roerich once got into trouble in China because of White Russians, anti-Communists, who were in his escort. So, it's a little confusing.

Duranty .

Jan. 30, 1936.

With all the dark funeral pageantry that's been going on in London, I've had occasion to read of another funeral ceremony -- ~~xxx~~ just as imposing, but so very different. What two human beings could be in sharper contrast? King George and Lenin? Conservative London and Red Moscow? I have been reading about Lenin's funeral in that latest book by Walter Duranty that all America is reading now; the book by the renowned Moscow correspondent for the New York Times. It's called: "I Write As I Please." So why not let him talk as he pleases? Walter Duranty is in the studio here, along with Max Schuster, his publisher, and his fellow-author, Frazier Hunt, whose life of the new King Edward the Eighth we are reading too.

I can still visualize that pageant in Moscow as Walter Duranty describes it. All day and all night the crowds flowing to the House of Columns where Lenin lay in state. And it was twenty-eight below zero. Tens of thousands standing in the Square, with banners of mourning. Massed bands crashing out the "Internationale." And Lenin's coffin draped in red, borne by the great men of the Soviets -- Stalin, Kamenev, Zinoviev. Tell us, Walter, tell us about the mystery of that occasion.

WALTER D.: - Yes, Stalin, was there and Kamenev and Zinoviev and the others. But not Trotzky. At that time he was second only to Lenin in Soviet Russia, as you know. The stupendous scenes of the funeral could have been his stage. With his tremendous prestige, his flaming oratory and his magnificent instinct for the dramatic -- he might have dominated. He might have swept the emotional scene. It could have been Trotzky's greatest stage. He might then have captivated popular imagination. But he wasn't there. He stayed away from Lenin's funeral. But Stalin! He was there.

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L.T.: - Yes, I know, Walter, you say in your book, that was the beginning of the downfall of Trotzky. He left the big show to Stalin. Why was Trotzky so blind?

WALTER D.:- That's the mystery, an historical question.

And maybe history will never answer. <sup>Trotsky</sup> Stalin was basking in the sunshine at a resort in the Caucasus Mountains. To be sure, he was ill. He had gone to the Caucasus to recuperate. He claims that Stalin tricked him by sending him a telegram telling him he couldn't get back to Moscow in time for Lenin's funeral. Some think he was too ill to come back. But neither of these explanations seems to hold. Perhaps it was ~~this~~ self-pity, hypochondria, a sick man's neurosis. Trotsky may have been so much wrapped up in his own ailments that it blinded his political shrewdness, blinded him to the political meaning of Lenin's death, to the dramatic meaning of Lenin's funeral. He had his own aches and pains, and maybe they seemed the most important things in the world to him.

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L.T.:- That <sup>seems</sup> ~~sounds like~~ a likely analysis, Walter -- a sick man <sup>'s</sup> and self pity altering the destiny of an empire.

HAUPTMANN

Well, today Governor Hoffman reopened the investigation of the Hauptmann case. He sent a written order to Colonel Schwartzkopf, head of the New Jersey State Police. And in that order he instructed the Colonel to press the search for persons connected with the Lindbergh kidnaping, persons hitherto unfound.

In this there is the implication that others are involved. The Governor had stated that belief right after he issued the stay of execution. And, today he repeated it more emphatically. In his communication to Colonel Schwartzkopf he said he was ordering a new investigation because he believed that the crime had not been committed by one man alone.

Maybe this is all the Governor has up his sleeve, this belief -- plus an investigation of leads that might point to other persons. We'll soon see.

(The President's message to Congress today picks up agricultural plans at the point where they were left by the Congressional Committee. Soil conservation was proposed by the Administration as a substitute for the A. A. A. Pay the farmers to keep part of their land idle and not exhaust the soil. That would be conservation, and it would also give the farmers some money, which is the main thing from the Administration point of view. <sup>But the</sup> Congressional Committee after considering the plan, threw it out -- saying it was just as unconstitutional as the original A. A. A., which the Supreme Court abolished.)

The Committee's objection was based on the fact that the proposed soil conservation program was a Federal Government affair. The Supreme Court knocked out the original A. A. A. because it violated States' rights. So, said the Committee, <sup>let the</sup> soil conservation ~~should be in accordance with states' rights. And it proposed that the conservation~~ be split up among the forty-eight states-- a state government affair instead of a national government affair. And that decision was accepted by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace.

So today what do we find the President saying to

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Congress? He urges them strongly to put through a program of soil conservation and flood control. He argues that the over-production of crops is a national danger, and threatens to exhaust the land. So, let the farmer be paid not to cultivate part of his ~~land~~ <sup>fields.</sup> ~~And~~ <sup>TP</sup> The President tells Congress with emphasis that the conservation program must be a collaboration of state ~~govern-~~ ~~ments~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ <sup>and</sup> national government. That refers to the constitutional problem of states' rights. <sup>TP</sup> The Presidential message today did not mention the Triple A, though the soil conservation plan is a substitute for that thrice repeated letter, ~~which was~~ expurgated by the Surpeme Court.

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BIRTHDAY

The "Moon over Miami" is shining on the "Yellow Rose of Texas", so "Anchors Aweigh" and "Home on the Range." That nonsense is compounded of the names of the President's four favorite tunes, which will blare far and wide across this land tonight. They're the theme songs for the Birthday Ball.

Jimmy Wallington is in Washington tonight, announcing the big birthday ball there. We'll have to switch over to him to hear his commercial. So let's switch over and --

SOLONG UNTIL TOMORROW.