

L.T. - SUNOCO. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1940.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Tonight there's a special reason for a radio news man to speak those two old and treasured words - Merry Christmas. The reason is - there's no war story to tell tonight - Christmas Eve.

When night fell upon the island of Britain, which was about noon over here, the United ~~Sta~~ Press wire reported - no night raiding as yet, no crashing of bombs in blacked-out cities.

A few hours later, the U.P. dispatch from London came through with this (QUOTE):- "After ten P.M. of Christmas Eve there had been no German activity whatever over Britain." Then the bulletin added this: "The main German radio stations are on the air and audible ~~x~~ in London. Ordinarily," it pointed out, "they cease if R.A.F. planes are over Germany." From that the surmise was that the Germans too were getting Christmas Eve relief from bombing.

The latest that I have here indicates that apparently there is an unofficial air truce tonight - no bombing on Christmas Eve. This in spite of the fact that the British government rejected any proposal of a formal Yuletide Armistice. The night in Europe is not yet over, of course - and the inferno from the air may yet break out in some place or another. Last night it was frightful - in Britain's great industrial City of Manchester. Hitting back the R.A.F. struck at a whole series of possible German invasion bases - last night.

There were widespread rumors in Britain that Hitler would select Christmas, of all days, as the time for the long threatened invasion. But such appears to be not the case. At this moment, a strange air of quiet broods over Europe - a while of peace on the birthday of the Prince of Peace. An unofficial Christmas Armistice, so it would seem. Of course, most of London is spending its Yuletide in air raid shelters, where tonight they're singing Christmas carols and making merry - much the merrier for the absence of the bombs.

And so I say with as cheery a voice as I can that

there's no war news tonight - no violent tidings of deadly battle. What we do have is mostly a case of words.

Italian official sources, as might be expected, are rejecting Prime Minister Churchill's appeal to the Italian nation yesterday - the appeal to throw out Mussolini. Rome reported today that the address of the British Prime Minister would be rebroadcast to the Italian people by the Fascist government - with suitable comment and discussion, no doubt. Of course the official Italian radio will give Mussolini the better of the controversy.

From the German side, we have ominous words. The Nazi commander-in-chief, General Field Marshal von Brauchitsch, made a Christmas address today, but it was hardly in the Christlike spirit, although it did appeal to religion. He said that the Nazi invasion of Britain will occur whenever it suits the German command to give the order. The British channel will protect Great Britain "only so long as it suits us," said he. At any rate, Field Marshal von Brauchitsch very definitely hinted that the invasion attempt was destined to occur.

Another Nazi Christmas talk was made by the Propaganda

Minister, Goebbels - and it was not so cheery from the German viewpoint. Goebbels told of a wholesale evacuation of children from western Germany - to get them out of the way of British bombs. That's an indirect admission of what havoc the Royal Air Force attacks must be making in the German industrial areas.

POPE - FOLLOW WAR

In wartime the common refrain from both sides is - victory. Tonight we hear that same word pealing forth. But with what a difference! The one who issues the call is Pope Pius the Twelfth. He proclaims, in behalf of a stricken world, that this war must end with five victories. Five triumphs -- of morality.

In today's Christmas message the Pope called for a victory over the hatred that divides people -- the propaganda of that which perverts the truth in a false and insulting light. A victory over the mistrust that is caused by the violation of law and the breaking of treaties. A victory over the evil theory that might makes right. A victory over the bad distribution of wealth, the maladjustment of economy which permits some to have much too much, and others much too little. And, a victory over the suppression of liberty, over the cold egotism which impels some to suppress others.

Pope Pius, in his Christmas prayer does not see any likelihood of a quick end of the war. And he speaks in behalf of the kind of peace that should be made when the conflict does

terminate. He calls for - "a new world order." But it's not the kind of new order that the totalitarians talk about. Here are the Pope's words, "It is steaded by some," says he, "that new forces must create a new healthy order of Europe. "We say," he continues, "that peace must conform to the principles of justice."

ROOSEVELT

Also, President Roosevelt at a Yuletide celebration at the White House said:- "Let us make this Christmas a merry one for the little children in our midst." And then added:- "For us of mature years it cannot be merry. But, for most of us it can be a happy Christmas - if by happiness we mean that we have done with doubts, that we have set our hearts against fear, that we still believe in the Golden Rule for all mankind, that we intend to live more purely in the spirit of Christ, and that - by our works, as well as by our words, we will strive forward in Faith and in Hope and in Love."

Salutary Christmas words spoken today by the President of the United States.

## QUAKE

Two earthquakes in a week in the northeastern part of the United States. That begins to sound exciting. Today's tremor was pretty much the same as the one that shook things up a bit last Friday - although maybe over a somewhat wider area. The shaking of buildings, a rattling of dishes is reported from such centers as Toronto, Montreal, Boston, Hartford, Albany, Long Island. In New York City the shock was felt no more than slightly, and only a few people noticed it - describing the tremor as a kind of shuddering of the sidewalk. But on Quaker Hill, in Dutchess County, where I live, both the Quakers, and non-Quakers on Quaker Hill felt the quake. Chandeliers, waved and dishes rattled. And people said:- "Oh dear, what can the matter be?" And a lot more.

The quake again was centered in New England and seems to have been focused in the neighborhood of the town of Conway, in New Hampshire. They didn't need any seismographs in Conway to tell them about it. Up in that glorious ski-country, plaster fell from ceilings and chimney tops tumbled. Skiers on Harvey Gibson's snowy Mount Cranmore were tossed about a bit, and took



a few more spills than usual. If it had happened an hour later even the ski maestro, Hannes Schneider, might have made a sitzmark. The clock in the Conway library building struck the hour, although it was only eight forty-three A.M. The bell in the steeple of the North Conway Methodist Church began to peal out a pre-Xmas eve carol - the quake shaking the steeple hard enough to ring the bell.

All of this counts up as nothing much in the way of damage, but it is rather startling to have two earthquakes in a week in this northeastern part of the United States. Are more to be expected? Is the earth-shaking a sign of more to come? Let's consult the geologists. Father Lunch, the seismologist at Fordham, repeats tonight what he said about the previous quake. "Nothing to be alarmed about," says he. He calls today's tremblor the same kind of thing as the other shock of Friday - "a repetition of Friday's subsurface resettlement, says he.

Let's consult the celebrated Professor Mather of Harvard. Last Friday, he said the quake was one of a series - others to follow; and he thought they'd build up <sup>to</sup> a severe shock.

So, hold onto your chairs, folks. Today the United Press got a story from the Harvard Geologist. In it he states:- "It is evident that this morning's earthquake is a continuation of a series of quakes that includes the one felt four days ago."

What about the possibility of the disturbance continuing?

"It may be," says Professor Mather, "that these two shocks together have relieved the internal strain and that the earth will now remain quite for a considerable period." He sees no reason for apprehension of danger from the shaking earth. "New England earthquakes," he says, "occur every few years and are really no cause for alarm. The greatest danger," he added, "is from people who get excited."

The geologists are agreed about the cause of the recent shocks. They put the blame back to a period thirty thousand years ago, the glacial age. At that time the northern part of the United States was covered with a tremendous thickness of ice - an enormous weight that pressed down on the underlying rocks and forced them out of shape. When the glacial age ended, the ice melted, the weight was removed - a relief from pressure. So the

underlying rocks tended to return to their original form.

"Since then," says Professor Mather, "the earth's crust has been returning to its pre-glacial attitude. And that takes a long time," he adds, "and the job is not yet completed."

A long time indeed, Professor, thirty thousand years!

But, in any case, geology is a slow business.

## SLAVES

At Atlanta, Georgia, they're having a Christmas observance that plucks strings of sentiment. Thirty-five ancient negroes are gathered for a reunion, frizzly-heads of cotton white, quavering voices and aged limbs - Old Black Joe. They're one time slaves, negroes who were born to slavery in the Old South. And, they are the only ones left in the Atlanta area who remember the days before the War Between the States. The oldest is over a hundred. Presiding at the reunion is the Reverend G. T. Wilkinson, who himself was born a slave and for sixty years has been Minister of the African Episcopal Church in Atlanta.

Today gifts were passed around. The most gratefully received were cans of snuff and plugs of chewing tobacco bringing a joyful grin to the face of Old Black Joe. Then the ex-slaves sang spirituals of slavery days. And they told stories of old plantation times, when the masters who owned them were quality folks. How proud that makes Old Black Joe. Most touching and solemn of all - the ancient negroes bowed their heads in prayer, they prayed for the souls of the masters who onced owned them, the plantation aristocrats whose slaves they had been - Massa's In the Cold, Cold Ground.

## SILENT NIGHT

Tonight at Oklahoma City, A. R. Daughterty will tell a Christmas story to his eleven year old daughter, Marilyn. He will relate the same tale of Yuletide that he has told Marilyn every Christmas Eve since she was able to listen. It's a yearly ceremony in the Daughterty household. In fact it has been an annual ritual for generations.

Just to mention A. R. Daughterty of Oklahoma City doesn't mean much. Until we're told that he's the sixth lineal descendant of Franz Guber, the Austrian organist who composed: "Silent Night", most beloved of Christmas carols. And the story told tonight will be the quaint old-time tale of how Silent Night was written. The descendants of Franz Guber, ~~the Austrian organist who~~ relate it to their children every Christmas Eve - handing the story down through generations by ~~old~~ oral tradition.

So in Oklahoma City tonight a little girl will be told by her father how Franz Guber was an organist in a little town in the mountains of Austria - way back in the year Eighteen Twelve. At Christmas time something went wrong with the church organ. And Franz Guber couldn't play any music to accompany the

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village choir in the Christmas carol. So he sat himself down to write a song so simple that they could sing it without organ accompaniment. The result was "Silent Night." Later a repair man came to fix the broken down church organ. He was a good musician, and he happened to hear the choir sing "Silent Night." He was so impressed that he recommended the Christmas carol to one of the famous choruses of Austria. They sang it - and it quickly swept the world with the gentle pious refrain - "Silent Night, Holy Night."

## NAMES

And now, let's turn to five New Yorkers who are not celebrating Christmas. They've gone into lugubrious retirement over the Yuletide - sour, disgruntled, completely devoid of the Christmas spirit. The five New Yorkers who hate Santa Claus have the following names:- "Henri Noel, Alfonso Natale, John Karacsonyi, Edward Weinact, and Albert Christmas.

The last name gives the clue to the trouble. All of the five are named:- Christmas - in different languages, French, Italian, Hungarian, German and English. And they are tired of the puns that crackle about their ears every holiday season. You can imagine the jokes that assail Al Christmas when it's time to say "Merry Christmas". And, I'm told that Yuletide puns in Hungarian are still more deadly. So, the five New Yorkers named Christmas-in-one-language-or-another have gone into retirement for the holiday season.

And now before Hugh goes into retirement for the evening let's hear his Christmas Eve message.