

LT in
West
Virginia.

Mar. 17
1934.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Lets look at the world from a mountain top. This evening
I am in the heart of the Appalachians - on the top of a mountain
in West Virginia. In the distance, in every direction, are the
shadowy outlines of far away hills. And beyond the circle of those
hills the events of the world are occurring.

AFRICA

In Africa the indication is that the Nazi movement has spread all over the world, wherever German speaking people are to be found. It has evidently become a serious problem in southwest Africa, the part which used to be a German colony. It is now being administered by John Bull, under a mandate. But the Nazis have been conducting intensive propaganda down there. The legislative body known as the Southwest African Assembly has just passed a drastic ordinance prohibiting the existence of any organization considered detrimental to the interests of the territory. It also prohibits the wearing of badges and uniforms without the permission of the Administrator. Obviously that means the Brown Shirt and the Swastika. Of course it is an avowed part of the Hitlerite program that Germany's former colonies should be restored to Germany.

FRANCE follow WAR

Meanwhile the rumor that the Doumergue Government is about to increase and modernize her war forces corroborates an opinion that has been widely stated, that John Bull's attitude of neutrality in the Austrian problem has caused alarm in LaBelle France. So France is cementing alliances and trying once more to get closer to Russia.

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A curious angle is the French idea of equipping fire engines with machine guns. Marshall Petain, the war hero who is now Minister of Defense, believes that in war time all fire engines will be special targets for enemy air craft. That is because of the expectation of cities being bombed from the sky,--bombed and on fire. So a scheme is being perfected by which the entire civilian population will be formed into one vast anti-gas and fire-fighting brigade.

And in Germany the same idea. Hitler is preparing to conscript everybody for one years service in the fire birgade, everybody between the ages of eighteen and sixty.

All this fire engine business strikes in the imagination phantasmal pictures of problematical wars in the future.-- and the farther in the future the better !

REINDEER

— the one I didn't have time to tell last night.
Here's one from Carl Lomen in Washington. ^ It concerns

the epic story of that reindeer herd the Lomens are sending from the shores of Bering Sea in Alaska to the Canadian Far North; one of the longest migrations of animals in history.

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The herd of over two thousand reindeer has been on its way across the continent, up there near the Pole, for about three years. Last Christmas I mentioned that the herd was nearing its destination. But it seems that unexpected complications have arisen. Carl Lomen says that he has just heard from the Arctic, via the Danadian Department of the Interior. The news is that the ~~Canadian~~ reindeer herd, driven by Andy Bahr and his Laps, started across the delta, at the mouth of the MacKenzie River. They got part way across, then the reindeer changed their minds. In spite of everything the Laps could do the big herd turned and stampeded. Back across the snow and ice they charged, with lowered horns. And they kept going for many a mile until they got to a former feeding ground, a place called Shingle Point. Now those men of the North have something to complain about. And that holds up the show once more. So the march of the reindeer under the Aurora Borealis still goes on.

TRIAL

The scene of this next story is a court martial at an army post in Texas. An officer, Major ^{Bill}Ocker by name, stands before the military court accused of insubordination and the use of improper language to a superior officer.

Well, some of the ^{strangest}~~oddest~~ episodes in history have been told in the summary proceedings of those tribunals called courts martial. They are curiously vivid in their directness, swiftness and the trappings of military formality. In this case a singular story is being told as the army trial progresses out in Texas.

Twenty-five years ago, when the Wright Brothers were still in the experimental stages of their monumental development of flying machines, there was a corporal in the Army named William Ocker. He was constantly pestering the Wrights to give him lessons in flying. He became a mechanic, then a pilot. One day he flew upside down and became so dizzy that it started him working on an instrument to prevent vertigo. Later he invented a gadget to make blind flying possible. It was so good that Congress appropriated \$1,000.00 to buy it.

He rose to be a major and was stationed at Kelly Field.

An accident occurred. There was an investigation, in the course of which Major ^{Bill} Ocker's eyesight was tested. ~~It~~ was found defective, and he was grounded for weak eyesight.

~~That didn't satisfy him at all.~~ ^{Well,} The man who had been a corporal and who had pestered the Wrights for flying lessons was not satisfied. He went to another field and there took an eyesight test. He passed it with flying colors. Thereupon, he went back to Kelly Field and accused his commanding officer of having conspired to ruin his flying career. He claimed that the commanding officer had worked in collusion with the surgeon, who had declared his eyesight defective.

In the course of charge and countercharge, hard words were spoken and as result - a court martial in Texas, and Bill Ocker, known to every aviator in the army, is before the tribunal.

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Let's take a look at the small feminine figure that bulked so large at the N. R. A. hearings in Washington--Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, the wife of the Governor of Pennsylvania, who told General Johnson and his cohorts that the N. R. A. has been:- "a grizzly farce." She denounced the whole program as a failure because it has not given the workers a square deal.

As I remarked she is small and feminine. She is also red-headed. She was born in well-to-do circumstances, but all her life she has been fighting for the under dog. Whenever there is a strike she believes in, she rushes to the scene in her limousine and takes her place in the picket lines. She has been so active in behalf of the labor unions that she now carries a union card ~~exhibited~~ presented to her by the Hosiery Workers of America.

On day last fall she declared that any one could live of sixty-five cents a day for food. "Can you?" she was asked.

"I certainly can"--and she did. At the Executive Mansion in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, she put into practice a regime of sixty-five-cents-a-day-per-person-for-food.

She also fought ardently for prohibition, but didn't

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succeed in proving her case quite so convincingly. With this
back ground it is ^{not} astonishing that the little red-headed lady
from Pennsylvania denounced the N. R. A. for being not nearly
radical enough. She said it with such blazing energy that even
General Johnson and his assistants broke into applause.

LINDBERGH

It is pretty well known that the father of Colonel Lindbergh was a man of liberal and even radical leanings. He was a Representative in Congress from Minnesota. And some called him a "red." A book of his has just been published, entitled:- "Your Country at War," with the sub-title:- "What happens to you after a war."

That volume was printed in the spring of nineteen eighteen and it was such hot stuff that it was promptly suppressed. Agents of Uncle Sam pounced upon it and destroyed the plates. It seemed radical, even revolutionary then. Today many people claim for it prophetic genius. Among other things the father of the Lone Eagle wrote sentences like these:- "Regardless of who wins the World War, the major portion of mankind if spared, will be reduced to industrial slavery." And he pleaded for "a planned society in which workers will gain a fair share of the wealth created by their labors." Today that might be taken as a dim, early hint of what the New Deal would try to do.

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The other night we heard that Congress was doing something about the plight of the American diplomatic representatives abroad who, because of the decline of the value of the dollar, can't make ends meet. We have heard some painful things about what the fall of the dollar caused among them-- suicides and, they say, cases of insanity. Promise of government action seemed to settle that matter-- but the workings of Congress are slow. The raise in pay, to enable diplomatic representatives abroad to live decently, is still surrounded by a lot of talk.

Meanwhile, as result of all the debating, the men in the Consular service in eleven countries have had no pay at all for the entire month of February.

The efforts to bring relief seem to have got things into a tangle, which has made matters worse than ever.

Whose face is red today? Ask the secretaries at the White House? People who make it their hobby to watch for typographical errors, the comma hounds ~~and the nice nannies~~, have been pounding on the text of a letter which was sent out from the Executive Mansion. It was the letter to Speaker Rainey, of the House, in which the President said: "I do not care who you tell this to." The precisians even called up the great lexicographer, Doctor Vizetelly, and asked him about it. I can just imagine the tone in which good old Doctor Viz replied: "Of course he should have said whom and equally, of course, it was a slip of the typewriter." Other people took occasion to remind the White House that a preposition is a bad word to end a sentence with. ^{Like that,} My reply would be let he who never has split an infinitive cast the first dictionary.

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BECKLEY

Yes, history is being made in Washington, and this mountain top where I am ^{tonight} ~~now~~ recalls all sorts of American history. The town is called Beckley, perched on a high crest. A logical place for a city in these parts, because these Appalachian mountains are mountains of coal. But the name of Beckley is also prominent in the early history of the American government. John Beckley was Clerk of the first Congress of the United States. His son, Alfred, a General of the Virginia Militia, settled here. If that doesn't sound exciting I might add that the county is named for Sir Walter Raleigh, ⁻⁻⁻ he who spread his cloak in the mud for the Queen to walk on and planted the first colony where folks from the old world might have the privilege of becoming Virginians.

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Now, if you think that ^{'s} is enough local history for one evening* you are ~~entirely~~ wrong, because it would be like paying a compliment to a lovely lady and saying nothing at all to her equally lovely girl friend. Beckley's particular girl friend is Mount Hope. Not that Mount Hope is jealous, or anything like that. Mount Hope doesn't have to be. It's the metropolis of Fayette County, named after General LaFayette. They have the gorge of

the New River; then Mount Hope has a Hawk's Nest and a Lover's Leap - - dizzy crags, both of them. I suppose you might say the Hawks are nesting and the lovers are leaping.

The important part of it all is that conditions down here in the West Virginia mountains are right~~w~~ in line with reports^{of}_λ better times all over the country.

CENSORSHIP

Here's something about Hollywood -- when Hollywood gets to India. What happens? The editor of the Illustrated Weekly of India tells me what the Indian censor and his big pair of shears have done.

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In the case of "The Private Life of Henry the Eighth" the censor didn't clip out anything in particular. He snipped out the whole works. Henry the Eighth was banned in the land of Hindustan, because the beheading of wives might put British royalty in an embarrassing light.

The big pair of scissors in another case snipped out the love scene between an Egyptian and a European girl. It spoiled the picture, but white women are supposed to be frosty vestals so far as natives are concerned. And the censor's shears resounded with a loud snip-snip when in a picture an Oriental was shown striking a white woman with a whip. A scene of British officers having a good time with some doubtful ladies was banished because British officers are supposed to preserve the full decorum of British respectability -- that is, in front of the Hindus.

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The problems of religion and caste make things complicated when the masterpieces of Hollywood are brought to the land of the Brahmins. If the movies were to show a Hindu Girl embraced by a Moslem, or vice versa, there would be a riot. Or if in some screen drama a respectable Hindu woman in Purdah were shown with her face unveiled -- a young revolution might break out. If Hindu audiences were to suspect that in a banquet on the screen ^{the} banqueters were eating beef there would be a howl of protest -- for the cow is a sacred animal.

Hollywood isn't so careful about the complex sensibilities of India. So the censor takes care of that.

L.T.

DOLL

Now a bedtime story, about the little girl who ate her doll. She's a seven year old Miss, in Brooklyn, who a year ago went to her mother and said: "Mummy I've swallowed my doll."

"Your what?"

The child repeated her strange statement. As nothing seemed wrong with her, mummy thought it merely a childish tall story. But after a year, the child had a wild attack of coughing and was rushed to the hospital. An ex-ray showed that the young lady had not been romancing. For there in her windpipe was a metal doll about an inch and a half long. Thanks to the instrument known as the bronchoscope the obstruction in the girl's windpipe was restored to its proper status as a doll. Both the young lady and the doll are doing well.

ACCIDENT CHAMPIONSHIP

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Let's have a nomination for the accident championship, of the world. Any one who has had a lot of mishaps and personal injuries is eligible. ~~I nominate~~ Hank Shafer of Eldora, Iowa, *is hereby* *nominated as* ~~as the~~ accident champion of the world. Hank is eighty-three years old and he has just had his sixteenth ^{major} accident.

The championship record is most impressive. He was struck by lightning three times, another time a coal mine caved in and buried him alive. And that was almost as bad as the time he was buried under two tons of clay. His most thrilling accident came when he was blown into the air by a cannon. He lost an arm and eye that time. Not so spectacular but plenty damaging was ~~the time~~ ^{when} a horse dragged Hank through a barbed-wire fence. It broke three of his ribs and a collar bone. Among Hank's minor accidents was a fall from a high tressel, also a fall from a high cliff, also a fall from a bob-sled in which he fractured his skull. When he was eighty he had an attack of double pneumonia, and when he was eighty-one he had a paralytic stroke. Things like that don't bother him particularly. Along

ACCIDENT CHAMPIONSHIP - 2

about that time a horse kicked him and when he was eighty-two a horse and buggy ran over him and broke a few bones. He was in an automobile accident that same year and now at the age of eighty-three Hank is in the hospital again. He fell on the ice and broke his hip. But they say he is coming along nicely, and will soon be ready for another accident. If he isn't accident champ, who is? If any of you ambitious fellows want to beat Hank's record, go ahead.

Prosper.

Well, that is the way the world looks from the top of
 this mountain in West Virginia, and now its time for me to start
 out and see what's on the other side of the mountain-- ^{over toward Bluefield--} and so long
 'till to-morrow.