

L. T. Sunoco - Tues. Dec. 29, 1936.

NEUTRALITY

Pity the poor neutrality boys in London. For long perplexing weeks the statesmen of the Committee for Non-Intervention in the Spanish Civil War has been baffled and bewildered by the problem of Germany, Italy and Russia. The Fascist powers sending aid to the Spanish Fascists, Soviet Russia sending aid to the Spanish Reds - most distressing. But now crops up that other affair -- military material bound for Spain. It's the United States. And the headache in London becomes splitting.

We heard last night about three million dollars' worth of aircraft to be sent from the United States to the Spanish Civil War. Today it turns out that it's being shipped to the Left Wingers of Madrid. And today we likewise hear of the sensation this news has made in Europe. The British and French governments, backing up non-intervention, are astonished and disconcerted.

The one nation the European powers don't want to fool around with is the United States. They were nervous and full of misgivings about Uncle Sam at the time of the Ethiopian

crisis -- when the League of Nations put those sanctions on Italy. The question whether Washington would stop oil shipments to Italy was of critical importance. Now, the same sort of thing turns up in a most peculiar way: The United States flying in the face of the non-intervention embargo.

But, of course, we all know that your Uncle Sam doesn't want to do any such thing. (We, more than any other nation, are dedicated to neutrality. We have a Neutrality Law with a munitions embargo. And we haven't the slightest desire to rush to the aid of the Left Wingers of Spain.

But, as explained last night, there's a loophole in our Neutrality Law.) It specifies nations at war, but says nothing about a civil war. So we have an aggravating situation, but it's one that is not likely to last long. Great Britain, France, and the other non-interventionist nations in Europe have little to worry about.

(Today, Senator Key Pitman, Chairman of the senate Foreign Relations Committee, announced that he would propose an amendment to our Neutrality Law. The amendment would expand the munitions embargo and make it include not only war

between nations but also civil war within a nation.) That will put a quick stop to any consignment of war supplies to Spain. President Roosevelt, in his press conference today, backed this up by saying the Neutrality Law should give the chief executive power to deal with questions of armament shipments and civil wars. He criticized the way the government was forced to issue those permits for sending aircraft to Spain.

Meanwhile, we have some soft words from the American shipper, who turned the trick. He is Robert Cuse, head of the Company that applied to Washington for the shipping permits -- and got them. He explains that the stuff being sent is not suitable for use in war - not war planes, but second-hand aircraft for commercial use. That paints an interesting picture, the Spanish Left Wingers, in their present embattled position, going in for civilian aviation, passenger flying, commercial airlines!

SOLDIER FOLLOW NEUTRALITY

In addition to the problem of foreign war material going to Spain, (there's also the question of foreign warriors - fighting men from other nations, enlisting on either side of the Spanish trouble. Here too, there's an American angle - those American aviators who are flying in Spain as soliders of fortune.)

Tonight, one of the flying fighters of the Yankee squadron is in Spain no longer. He's in Paris - and he tells why. He's Hal Du Berrier, and he says the civil war in Spain is no place for a solider of fortune -- it's too tough. One might suppose that things never get too tough for those hardy adventurers of battle. Hal, however, explains it convincingly.

The story refers back to the fact that it isn't so much death in battle that's dreadful in Spain. It's death by execution -- the firing squad.

Suppose the aviator is shot down, and lands alive. What will happen to him? Suppose he lands behind the enemy lines and is made a prisoner. But that isn't the worst of it -- that isn't the perilous contingency. Suppose he's shot

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down behind his own lines? Then he's in the hands of friends, his own army. That's just the trouble. Hal Du Berrier says that even then he stands a chance of being shot by his own side -- just for wrecking the plane. A Red court martial may find him guilty of that familiar Red crime called sabotage - and stand him before a firing squad.

All of which makes it exceedingly tough, too tough for even a soldier of fortune.

GERMANY

Americans in Spain, however, are merely a picturesque detail. It is the Russians and Frenchmen on the Left Wing side, and the Germans and Italians on the Fascist side, that count, that are dangerous.

So there is soothing word in a late report that tells of Germany and Italy offering to agree to stop their citizens from going to Spain to fight for Franco. They'll do this if France will keep Frenchmen and [^]Soviet Russia will keep Russians from joining up with the Madrid Socialists.

51
On the ship question the
~~The~~ Spanish Left Wingers have given in to Germany, [^]
~~They~~ ^{have} yielded to the sharp demand made by two German warships that steamed into Bilbao. "Release the German ship that you seized!" - was the mandate backed by the frown of naval guns. So today the Left Wingers set free the vessel they had captured, the German freighter PALOS.

They said they were turning the ship loose but holding the cargo and a Spanish passenger. They claim that the cargo consists of war material for Franco's Rebels. They say the passenger tore up his papers, indicating perhaps

that he was on a Fascist mission.

To all of this the Germans repeat their full demand, backed by those two warships. They call not only for the release of the ship but also the cargo and the Spanish passenger.

POPE

2
Today words of joy were spoken in the Vatican, spoken by Pope Pius the Eleventh. The Pontiff's illness continues, he is no better, his pain has increased. The Vatican is depressed, without much hope for the Pontiff's life and health.

Of all this Pope Pius himself spoke today -- spoke cheerfully. His voice is described as full of quiet joy, a solemn joy.

"If God wills it, " he said, "then we are content."

KIDNAP

Once more in a kidnap case we have that sinister object - a ladder. Remember how the ladder figured in the Lindbergh ^{crime?} ~~kidnapping~~. Today in the snatching of little Charles Mattson of Tacoma, Washington, a clue points to a nearby house - the home of Mr. and Mrs. George T. Franklin. Oddly enough, that house was formerly occupied by the grandparents of another kidnapped boy - George Weyerhaeuser, who was ^{taken} ~~snatched~~ for a two hundred thousand dollar ransom. It is revealed now ~~that~~ there was a recent attempt to kidnap a child from the Franklin home. It failed. A ladder was left as a clue.

53
The police tonight are working on the theory that possibly the ^{would-be} kidnapper who ~~failed at the Franklin home and~~ left the ladder, is the same as the one who ^{carried off} ~~snatched~~ Charlie Mattson. That seems to be as far as the detective work has got up to now.

The search for the boy is at a standstill. The authorities seem to feel that an intensive hunt might endanger the lad's life. The stricken parents are waiting. There's

always that frightful word in these hideous crimes - waiting!

They expect ^{a message} ~~word~~ from the kidnapper, ^{a message} ~~word~~ that may enable them to get their boy back.

MORAN

Let's have a quick little detective story, a brief bit of crime sleuthing -- let's tell it in honor of William H. Moran, who is retiring as chief of the United States Secret Service. Chief Moran was scheduled to retire two years ago. He was seventy then, the age limit. But President Roosevelt persuaded him to stay on -- until now. Today, at seventy-two he steps out of the job of bossing one of the most quiet and efficient bureaus of crime detection in the world.

Back in 1900 Operator Moran broke a case that put him on his way to the top of the secret service. There was a leak in the Department of Agriculture. Somehow a group of speculators in cotton was getting advance word of reports on the cotton crop. For weeks the department officials tried to find out how the secret information was transmitted so swiftly and promptly.

Operator Moran was put on the job. He found that the leak in the Department of Agriculture was worked by a

couple of employees on the inside, who signalled to watching confederates in the street. ~~He~~ They signalled by raising and lowering the shades in the windows of the department. They had a regular window shade code, which signalled the cotton report information as fast as it came in. *But Moran broke that up.*

Yes, that's a fitting little detective yarn to tell on the day that Chief Moran retires from the Secret Service. But maybe it isn't so fitting -- because one peculiarity of the chief is that he heartily dislikes detective stories. Never reads them, snorts at them -- this master sleuth. But what does he like? Hymn-singing -- that's his amusement. He's a deacon in the Presbyterian Church, where he has sung hymns for many a year -- like: "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood." But maybe that sounds too much like a detective thriller, blood and thunder.

FOOTBALL

Football was booted around a bit today. In other words the National Collegiate Athletic Association in its meeting took up the subject of the gridiron in a lively way, and as usual the gridiron was put on the fire.

Dr. J. H. Nichols of Oberlin University, Oberlin, Ohio, kicked in with that good old-fashioned word -- professionalism. He said that football in some universities was so professional that the halfbacks and tacklers have to be liars and cheats as well as ball-totters. They have to be masters of phoney compromise. And all of this because, while they're really professional, they have to maintain their amateur standing. Guards always on their guard lest they give away the truth.

Today's conference was further enlivened when Dr. Nichols denounced conference -- not the one they were holding. He meant the kind of football conference which consists of colleges whose teams play each other, and have a sort of pigskin league. If the conferences were abolished, said he, it would help a lot -- because they are nothing but setups to establish local championships. This championship kind of

rivalry puts pressure on the coaches, makes them more eager to win victories, and steams up professionalism. So said the doctor, while Fielding Yost, veteran coach, said just the opposite. Instead of kicking the football, Hurry-Up Yost, caressed it with soothing words -- and no wonder, it's been his first love and meal ticket all his life.

There was more verbal high-jinks when the volley of abuse was aimed at those sacrosanct dignitaries, the officials at football games, those eagle-eyed judges who call the penalties and get blamed by everybody. Chet Wind of the University of Kentucky, declared that football movies show that the officials are often wrong. As judges they make up their minds in advance about which team is going to win, and then when there's a hair-line decision they call it in favor of that team -- sort of subconscious decisions.

Altogether, it was the annual story of loud declaration about what's wrong with football -- plenty wrong, nearly everything. It's been that way every year as long as you can remember. You'd think that football could never survive all that stern condemnation -- and

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you've noticed how the game has been dying out, less and less popular all the time -- in a pigskin's eye!

TALL STORY

We hear today how at Maumee, Ohio, William Kindberg was walking through his living room when he accidentally spilled some hair tonic. He spilled it all over a bearskin rug, and at once the hair began to grow. It grew right up to the ceiling, and filled the room. Bill got lost in that ~~xxx~~ jungle of hair, and it took him three days to find his way out. Now he uses a lawnmower to keep it down, about knee deep. Bill expects that one to win ~~for~~ the prevaricating crown at the

Burlington, Wisconsin, liars contest *which succeeded our own tall story contests of several years ago.*

For some time now ~~the~~ Tall Story Club has been absent from this broadcast. I've rather wondered why. It was a lively feature for a long while, with the tall talkers sending in their whoppers by the hundreds.] I suppose that after several years we just about exhausted the crop of traditional American high and lofty fabrications from the tall timber. The supply seemed to run out, no new ones, just the same old *— sometimes in new regalia.* classics over and over. It was too bad - so today I find a reminiscent feeling in the news dispatch about the Wisconsin liars contest. It was interesting to note some new ones -

at least they were whoppers that I hadn't heard before. ^{So} The boys can still tell 'em tall.

58 1/2
There's Milton Kingsley of Rochester, who tells of a man frying hot dogs on a griddle. A blizzard blew, and the snow came down so fast that it piled up on the broiling griddle ^{on those} and sizzling hot dogs. He had to hire two men to shovel it off.

In Montana, there's a winding stream, and in the stream there's a mighty trout. Nobody has ever succeeded in landing that fish. Because - when he grabs the bait he just hooks his tail around a bend of the winding stream, and the fishermen can't budge him.

59
There's another place, where the mosquitos are so big and fierce that they live by eating eagles. The eagles are almost extinct in those parts.

In Texas, the sunlight was so hot one day that the shadow of the telephone post burned a groove across a concrete highway.

59 1/4
Yes, those extraordinary occurrences bring wistful memories of the Tall Story Club - and SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.