

*Common  
MSB*

Good Evening, Everybody:-

I can hardly find a better beginning for tonight than to quote the President of the United States. He ~~surely~~ expressed in a few words what we all feel over the tragic accident that took Will Rogers and Wiley Post away from us. Said Mr. Roosevelt, "I was deeply shocked to hear of the tragedy. Will Rogers and Wiley Post were outstanding Americans who will be greatly missed."

Shocked indeed we all are. Wiley Post, the only man who has flown twice all around the world, and good old Bill Rogers, who started in life twirling a rope and came to the point where he ~~practically~~ <sup>almost</sup> held the position once occupied by the great Mark Twain.

Will was eminently and essentially an American. Perhaps that's why

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he was as popular in London, Paris and Berlin, as in Keokuk or Kankakee, or Claremore - his home. *American indeed - part Indian. He said his ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower. They were on hand to meet the Mayflower.*

A curious circumstance is that in his latest book "Ether and Me," he prophesied his end in humorous fashion. He was talking about the operation that he underwent some eight years ago.

Kidding about insurance. As he then wrote, "My wife, who's the banker, and my insurance man, decided to reduce my policies. They decided to cut down on the accident and disability, but they allowed the straight life to remain." Then he explained, "They figured I would die, but that I would die without lingering." And, sure enough he died that way.

I suppose you've been hearing and reading plenty today about that disaster; how motor trouble and a heavy fog, Ceiling Zero, that wrecked our twice round-the-world flier and our Number One humorist. And he was also our Number One air traveler. As a passenger he had probably more thousands of hours in the air than many professional pilots. He never would go anywhere by train unless the weather was so bad that all planes were grounded. He died with his latest aphorism still hot on the wires. He had just been visiting the colony of immigrants - up there in Alaska - in the Matanuska Valley, and finished up his report with the words, "There's a lot of difference in pioneering for gold and pioneering for Spinach." Shortly before that he had observed,

"As we flew under the Arctic Circle only Wiley had to duck his head to keep from bumping it." And then he remarked, "Wiley and I are flying the way you drive your car. If we see anything we want to see, we just fly over it and look at it." To which he added, "Maybe we'll see Point Barrow tomorrow." But he didn't.

It is remarkable that in this message he used that word "Maybe", an unfamiliar word in his vocabulary. For he never got to Point Barrow, the top of North America, on the Arctic Ocean.

Wiley and Will Rogers were forced down yesterday at Walkpi, a little Eskimo village. Just a couple of days ago Will observed, "Eskimos are thicker than rich men at a convention to save the Constitution." Engine trouble. Wiley made some hasty repairs. Then, with a wise crack or two from Will, they took off.

The Eskimos told the story of what happened to Sergeant Stanley Morgan, of the United States Signal Corps stationed at Point Barrow. It's a brief, tragic story, told with marvelous graphic conciseness by that Signal Corps Sergeant. A right bank, an engine back-fire, a side slip. Crash on the frozen Arctic tundra. The right wing crumples, the engine is forced back into

the plane. Will Rogers thrown clear - never knew what hit him - Wiley crushed to death. His wrist watch stopped at 8:18 p.m., eighteen minutes past eight, Eastern time, last night, hundreds of miles north of the Arctic Circle.

And here's one of the most touching incidents of all. In retrieving the bodies Sergeant Morgan also recovered all the personal effects of both Wiley and Will. He spied a soggy, water-logged piece of paper. It had fallen out of Will Rogers' pocket. It was a piece torn from a rotogravure page, a picture of his daughter Mary, who has been playing leads in summer theatres in the East.

And the tragic coincidence is this:- She's been acting in a play called "Ceiling Zero," story of an air crash. She was rehearsing "Ceiling Zero" when the news came.

Will Rogers was our Number One humorist. But at heart he was essentially a serious-minded person. He was perhaps the only humorist in the show business who never used a gag-man. He worked hard at some of his jokes. He read thousands of words in newspapers every day. As he would tell you, "All I know is what I see in the papers." But he saw plenty. It was about twelve years ago that he became a national commentator on politics. He always had an apt word to fit every occasion. His humor was American in the tradition of Bill Nye and Artemus Ward. Perhaps his favorite role to which he appointed himself was that of unofficial collector of Uncle Sam's debt. Only recently he observed: "I hear England paid us ninety million. But it's only hearsay as far as the unemployed are concerned."

He was fond of boasting that he had no education. He used to say: "I spent ten years in the Fourth Grade." As a matter of fact his father was quite well-to-do and Will was sent not only to a good private school in Missouri but to a military academy.

He was one of the few men I've known who achieved huge success without arousing the envy of any single soul. And so far as I've been able to discover, everybody liked him. And yet he was anything but the professional "good fellow." He seldom bought a drink; nobody ever saw him drink anything stronger than beer, one glass at a time. He never splurged or threw spectacular parties. His clothes always looked as though he'd had them pressed in a wrestling match.

In his later years he would tell you, "as an actor I'm a punk. I can't act at all." It isn't generally remembered that when he first went into the movies fifteen years ago he desperately tried to become a pathetic actor and would insist upon being allowed to weep into the camera lense. He acknowledged it when he'd bitten off more than he could chew.

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His candor was refreshing. A friend of mine once asked him, "How'd the act go last night, ~~W~~Will?" And he replied, "Boy, I took that audience like Richmond took Grant." Then he volunteered the information, "When I'm licked I'm licked. I'm yellow." Of course he was anything but that.

It's a singular circumstance that Wiley Post should have been the man with whom Rogers went on his last flight. ~~ax~~ For there was a marked sympathy between the two. To the reporters who met him Wiley was a matter-of-fact, phlegmatic fellow. He never really opened up except when in company with people of his own craft. To them he was a dry homespun humorist of the Will Rogers type. He never flashed his humor in interviews. But across the table you would find Wiley a great guy to spend an evening with. *And both were Oklahomans.*

Just as ~~W~~Will Rogers got his start in medicine shows, carnivals and three-wagon circuses, Wiley Post started in the flying-circus game. He was one of the few men of the barnstorming era who contrived to accommodate himself to the present age of scientific highly-mechanized flying. In private conversation he

was full of what is called barnyard logic. Up in the air he was an artist at the controls. Completely immune to what was below him, with his one eye, his broad face, and imperfect hearing. He always flew as one entirely removed from the earth. His celebrity did not affect him at all.

Vince Burnelli tells me that one time Wiley was dining at the White House with President Hoover. The President directed the conversation to the subject of fishing. Wiley listened for a while to Mr. Hoover's remarks about reels and casting and flies. Then, adjusting the patch over his blind eye he observed, "Mr. President, I can't get no place fishing. My work is fishing." Such were Will Rogers and Wiley Post.

The first plan today was for the Coast Guard cutter Northland to bring back the bodies. But the latest from the Army Signal Corps station at Point Barrow is that ice barriers are forming, and the ship Northland can't get through. So Wiley and Will will be brought back to their last resting places by airplane. A Pan American plane is on its way there now. Lindbergh supervising. Number One air passenger, and Number One world flyer coming home by air.



ROOSEVELT

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It was at his Mother's estate on the banks of the Hudson that the President received the tragic news from Alaska. Mr. Roosevelt reached Hyde Park this morning in order to celebrate the coming of age of his second son, Franklin D. Jr. Though ~~he is~~ hoping to get some rest and fun while ~~he is~~ away from Washington, <sup>Mr. Roosevelt</sup> ~~he~~ has a couple of jobs to consider. One of them is selecting men to run the National Labor Board, as established by Senator Wagner's bill. It is known that the President has invited another professor to become Chairman, Dr. William Orville Douglas, ~~Secretary~~ Professor of Law at Yale. They say his name was suggested by Madam Perkins, Secretary of Labor. <sup>TP</sup> Dr. Douglas hasn't accepted yet, but he's thinking about it. He is a young man for the job, only thirty-six years old, born in Yakima, Washington. He's a member of the New York Bar, and taught law at Columbia before going to Yale. ~~He's also eminent as an authority on corporation management and finance.~~

Washington believes that one of the other members of this three-<sup>man</sup>~~part~~ Labor Commission will be Edwin S. Smith, who was on the old board.

## HUMPHRIES

Millions of sport fans the country over have heard the stentorian tones of Joe Humphries. And they'll be sorry to learn that the reports from his sickbed are not encouraging. In fact the doctors say he may not live the night out. So it's sad but probable that the huge prize ring voice that could almost have been heard from coast to coast without the help of radio may be silent forever. Tonight it's down to a whisper.

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## HOPSON

The mystery revealing - Hopson's income. He told the House Inquiry today that last year he had made between three hundred and five hundred thousand dollars.

## BIRTHDAY

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., isn't the only celebrity who is having a birthday feast. There's a youngster on the little island of North Haven, off the coast of Maine, who is celebrating his third birthday. He is probably America's most famous baby, Jon Lindbergh - next to Shirley Temple, who isn't a baby. The Lindberghs have, by design, kept him out of the limelight so far as possible. He's probably the most carefully watched youngster in the world. In addition to a human body-guard, a husky and especially trained German Shepherd dog follows little Jon wherever he toddles.

ETHIOPIA

The dark fate that hangs over the heads of the Ethiopians gets nearer every day. One interesting symptom of the situation can be read in a bit of information from Lloyd's in London.

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Lloyd's, as you ~~doubtless~~ know, is the world's greatest exchange for insurance underwriters. Under pretext of insuring you they'll lay you a bet on almost any possible eventuality. For instance, if you want to bet on a war between Japan and Russia, you can get odds of 20-1 at Lloyd's. If you want to bet that Uncle Sam won't go to war against any first-class power, Lloyd's will lay you 100-1. But <sup>H</sup>today it was announced that, so far as betting about war between Italy and Ethiopia, all bets are off. Lloyd's refuses to offer you any odds whatsoever.

This bit of insurance news or gambling news, if you prefer, is significant. The boys at Lloyd's seldom go wrong. It's their business not to go wrong. <sup>So in</sup> ~~And that's~~ their opinion ~~of~~ <sup>there is not much</sup> ~~the~~ chances of success for the Peace Conference between Italy, France and England.

French Premier Laval has a plan for averting the war.

It is similar to the plan that was proposed when the League of Nations was arguing with Japan over Manchuria -- a neutral zone to be policed by European troops under the mandate by the League of Nations. It was a flop in the case of the Manchurian row, which ended in Japan's quitting the League. The chances of its succeeding now are, well, you've heard what the insurance sharks think of it.

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British military experts also decline to take the Peace Conference seriously. They have it all doped out that the war will ~~probably~~ *— soon after the arrival of Lawrence Stallings* start in six weeks. But it won't be over in six weeks nor in six months. It will last four years *say they.* But for the rainy season, hostilities could begin now. The Duce has assembled in Somaliland and Eritrea the most superbly organized, superbly equipped military machine that has yet been seen. The first ~~fighting~~ fighting, say John Bull's soldiers, will be short and sharp.

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Though the principal rainy season ends in October another one ~~next~~ begins in a different part of the country shortly afterwards. The Italian generals have no illusions as to the length of time it will take to subdue those fierce African tribes. They are prepared for those long hard dangerous four years.

Manifestly nothing short of a miracle can avert this unfortunate war. Premier Mussolini has curtly brushed aside the concessions offered by the Emperor Haile Selassie. The Duce announces that "the only guaranty Italy can accept will be a complete military occupation of the country." And, if Ethiopia's ruler gave in to that, allowed Italian troops to walk in without striking a blow, he himself would have to say to his throne something more than I'm saying now -- SO LONG UNTIL MONDAY.