

LOWELL THOMAS ( SUNOCO) BROADCAST from ST. JOVITE

Wednesday, January 3, 1940

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Before I give you the highlights of the day's news I would like to describe the place from which I am broadcasting. I am away up here in the Laurentian Mountains. The microphone in front of me has the letters C.B.C. on it, standing for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. But here's what may give you a laugh. I am talking to you from the Ladies' Room of a little railway station in a French Canadian town. But this Ladies' Room almost seems like home to me, for this is the third year that I have given my broadcast from the snowy Laurentian town of St. Jovite. Doug Rattray of the C.P.R., for the third year has been taking down the news of the world as it came in over his special telegraph wire. The only member of our happy family missing tonight is my old friend Fabian Desjardin, the station-master. M. Desjardin has been given a raise this year. He has been promoted from St. Jovite to

LEAD

St. Agathe. But M. Oscar Laundry, Madame Laundry and their lovely daughters Jacqueline and Suzanne, are sitting here beside me in this St. Jovite ladies' room, along with mine host and his lady, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ryan from the lodge at Mount Tremblant, near Lac Mercier, just a couple of miles away, the grandest place to ski you ever saw. But more about that later.

Oh yes, and before I get on with the news, I want to thank my old friend Carveth Wells, the author and explorer, who took my place on the air last night, and did it in such style, and with a Cornish accent that wasn't corny in any way. He wished me a Happy New Year and I want to wish him one two, one that not only comes from the heart, but comes by radio direct from the Ladies' Room of the St. Jovite Railway station!

And here are the principal news items that have come over my special wire this afternoon:

## CONGRESS

The big show opened at Washington today, the session of Congress that may turn out to be one of the greatest and most important in the history of the United States. No wonder all the galleries were crowded. The Secretary to the Doorkeeper of the House received a telephone message before the opening. It was from a mysterious man who asked her to sell him a seat. She replied that she couldn't. Then the man said he would pay a thousand dollars and he was serious too. The answer he got was that he couldn't buy a seat even for a million.

There were a couple of lighter moments in the proceedings after the Senators and Representatives stood to greet Mr. Roosevelt escorted by his bodyguard, secretaries and all. He started his address with the words:- "I wish to each and everyone of you a very Happy New Year."

Later on he came to the part of his message, in which he promised retrenchment, substantial cuts in the cost of running the government of the United States. At that, a lusty cheer arose from the Republican side. Thereupon the President looked up from his manuscript, turned towards the Republicans, and

remarked:- "But you know you can't eat your cake and have it too." At that, the Republicans giggled jovially and the Democrats cheered.

As he entered the House, the President was greeted with cheers, and even rebel yells. But his own tone was serious as he delivered his long message. And there was one glaring contrast in it. Although the President promised retrenchment in his budget, reductions of most government costs, he also asked for heavy new taxes. The Government is going to need money in great slices, untold dollars for the national defense. It is going to need substantial increases in the appropriations for the Army and Navy, but, he added that they are to be based not on panic but on common sense. Therefore, said Mr. Roosevelt, he is asking Congress to levy sufficient additional taxes to meet the emergency spending for National Defense.

Naturally, a considerable part of his address was devoted to foreign affairs, but only because of their repercussion on the people of the United States. In this connection, he said:- "We must look ahead and see the effect on our own future if all the small nations throughout the world have their independence

snatched from them or become mere appendages to relatively vast and powerful military systems.

We must look ahead and see the kind of lives our children would have to lead if a large part of the rest of the world were compelled to worship the God imposed by a military ruler, or were forbidden to worship God at all; if the rest of the world were forbidden to read and hear the facts, the daily news of their own and other nations; if they were deprived of the truth which makes men free.

And he added:- "What we face is a set of worldwide forces of disintegration, vicious, ruthless and destructive of all moral, religious and political standards." He called for national unity and emphasized his plea that those words must not be allowed to become merely a high sounding phrase.

He admitted that the unemployment problem still was unsolved although the number of unemployed has decreased. He said a kind word for reciprocal trade treaties and asked Congress to continue this program of Secretary Hull's. Incidentally, that's going to be one of the major fights in the coming sessions.

The excitement was so great that Representative Pierce of New York had a heart attack - and died.

## EDISON

Our new Secretary of the Navy begins the year by breaking onto page one of every newspaper with big headlines. The first suggestion he makes to Congress is spectacular indeed. Secretary Edison wants the national lawmakers to give the President powers in peace-times such as no other president has ever enjoyed except in the gravest crises of war. If Congress were to take the hint, the White House would be able to proclaim a state of national emergency, and then commandeer factories, materials, ships and sweepingly enough, other resources.

Secretary Edison offered this proposal in a letter to Speaker Bankhead of the House. The plan would enable the President to call upon ship-builders and factories to set aside their normal tasks and start turning out ships and other things for the Government. These orders would be arbitrary, imperative. If any manufacturer refused, the Government would immediately take over his plant.

DIES

Chairman Dies and his committee have turned in their report and it turns out to be a report both calm and conservative. First of all and primarily, the Dies Committee hands out a clean bill of health to John L. Lewis, and to most of the C.I.O. units. ~~On this point the Dies report is emphatic.~~ It says it is unmistakably clear that the overwhelming majority of the members of the C.I.O. as well as its president, are neither Communists nor Communist sympathizers. They are only, on the contrary, sincere American workers seeking to improve their lot in perfectly legitimate American fashion.

Nevertheless, the Dies Committee adds that the leadership of some ten or twelve of the constituent unions of the C.I.O. is more than tinged with Communism. But even in these unions, the rank and file membership have only an exceedingly small proportion, indeed, of Communists and Communist sympathizers.

Having disposed of this part of the Dies report, the Dies Committee then paid its respects to the Deutsch-America Bund and the Communist Part of the United States. Overwhelming evidence indicates that both of these are subservient agents of Germany and



Russia. However, Dies and his colleagues don't appear to be alarmed by either the Bund or the Red Party for they say that these subversive organizations will soon cease to be seriously regarded by anyone in the United States because they are rapidly losing membership and prestige.

The Committee points out that Communist pranks in this country constitute a violation of the treaty signed between Uncle Sam and the Soviets when Uncle Sam recognized the Moscow Government.

The Dies report also furnishes a list of organizations which are false fronts for the Communist Party. These include the American League for Peace and Democracy, the International Workers Order, the American Student Union, the Friends of the Soviet Union, the League of American Writers, the Workers' Alliance, the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, the North American Committee to aid Spanish Democracy, the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the National Negro Congress and the Southern Negro Youth Congress.

## FINNS

Still another Finnish success, that's the report from Mannerheim headquarters. As usual Soviet Army Headquarters says practically nothing. The Finnish report is that their troops, pursuing the Red invaders, north of Lake Kianta, have pushed them back to their frontier along what is known as the Suomussalmi sector. That's where the Russians made their futile attempt to push through to the Gulf of Bothnia - right across the narrow waistline of Finland.

Judging from the names of the places where the Finns say they hurled the Russians back, the fighting in that region is now along the border between Russia and Finland.

This morning we heard that the Bolsheviks had driven the Finns back a few kilometers on the Karelian Isthmus. Tonight the Finns admit that the Reds hit them hard with two powerful infantry attacks, but the invaders were repulsed once again. It is quite evident that Stalin's generals, though they don't seem to make much headway, are not being discouraged. Despite the tens of thousands of men they are reported to have lost, they keep attacking. It looks as though they're trying to drown the Finnish defense in

## FINNS

wave after wave of manpower. And that means no rest for the defenders of the Mannerheim line. (The Finns hit back at their enemies in the air today. A squadron of Finnish airplanes delivered the first attack from their side on the Soviet base in the far north, near Petsamo. People who saw the planes in the distance, claimed that they appeared to be of either Italian or British make.

In summing up the results of the first month of this War, the Finnish high command announces that they've captured no fewer than four hundred Russian tanks, on all fronts, and have shot down at least a hundred and fifty Soviet planes.

NANSEN

With us at the Lodge at Mt. Tremblant, is the son of one of the most famous Scandinavians of our time. There are scores of skiers sitting around me at this moment, people with whom I have been running up and down the many new trails on Mt. Tremblant this week. One of them is Koray Nansen, son of the great Arctic Explorer and humanitarian, Freetyoff Nansen. Koray Nansen knows a great deal about both the Finns and the Russians. Twenty years ago he himself was a Norwegian soldier on skis, in service near Petsamo, the Arctic city that has been in the news so much of late. Then in Nineteen Twenty-Two and 'Twenty-three he was a representative of The League of Nations, helping with Russian Relief. His father, Nansen the Explorer, was in charge of that. So let's ask Nansen what he thinks of the war between the Russians and the Finns and what chances the Finns have. How about it Koray Nansen?

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NANSEN:- My belief is, Mr. Lowell Thomas, that the Finns will go right on whipping the Russians in nearly every engagement, right through the Winter. They will do this no matter how many Russian soldiers are brought up. Because the Finns are better

NANSEN

fighters. Also because the Russians have only that one Murmansk Railway line over which to carry supplies, and it's not much of a railway. From Nineteen Twenty-Three to Nineteen Twenty-Nine I was in the lumber business in Arctic Russia and am well acquainted with that region. The only chance the Russians have is to break the Mannerheim Line, on the Karelian Peninsula. But there also the Finns will hold them back during the Winter. And Spring in those parts is tougher still for an army. And in Summer the Russians will have to fight from Lake to Lake, and that is almost as difficult.

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L.T.:- From what you say, Mr. Nansen, it looks as though the Russians may never be able to crush the stout-hearted Finns - if the Allies give the Finns some help.

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NANSEN:- That's right, Lowell. I'm betting on the Finns.

ERLING STROM

Another famous Scandinavian is sitting here with us, Erling Strom, from Joe Ryan's ski headquarters here at Mt. Tremblant. Strom was once an officer in the King's Guard in Norway. In recent years he has gained fame as an explorer - conqueror of Mt. McKinley, highest peak in North America. And he's one of the world's number one skiers. To watch him ski is like hearing a musical masterpiece from Sibelius. Erling, Bill Knox Denham, ski expert for the New York Evening Post, wants me to find out what the Finnish soldiers can do on skis, what they can carry and how fast they can go. Can you tell us?

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ERLING STROM:- In Norway, in the army, we used to carry just over forty pounds in our pack, and a rifle. The Finns, I believe, are carrying a little more than that. And with that load they can easily average twenty-five miles a day. In fact for short stretches of say two or three or four days they can even travel fifty miles a day. On the other hand the Russians are not skiers, and they can't do anything like the raiding that the Finns can do.

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L.T.:- It would be difficult to find better authorities than Koray Nansen and Erling Strom of Mt. Tremblant, two of Joe Ryan's colleagues. So there are the answers to the questions from the New York Evening Post.

PARIS

The people of Paris last night had an experience they have been expecting for some time. It was the signal that everybody in Europe dreads these days, the signal warning of the approach of enemy planes. A squadron of Nazi fliers was in sight. Their approach promptly threw all the radio stations in Paris into silence. Then there was anti-aircraft fire on the outskirts of Paris. One plane got as far as the suburbs. Apparently no damage done. But this is about the first bit of news of the war touching Paris that we have heard so far.



## UNITY

The most exciting thing reported from England today had nothing or little to do with the war. Carveth Wells referred to it last night. It was the arrival on English soil of the Honorable Unity Freeman-Mitford, daughter of Lord Redesdale, widely rumored to have been in love with Adolf Hitler. Some of you may recall that there was all sorts of gossip about wounds that United Freeman-Mitford had sustained in a row at Munich and that she was supposed to have been shot in the neck. Well, Unity got home today and is being treated in the country of her birth after having been reported to have declared herself pro-Nazi. With her mother and her sister, a nurse and two detectives, she traveled across France from Switzerland, in a hospital train. The first rumors were that she had been shot in the face and of course there were all sorts of conjecture. The people who caught glimpses of her declared that her face showed no signs of wounds, though she did wear a heavy bandage around her throat.

She was landed at Folkestone and wanted to proceed to the countryplace of her father, Lord Redesdale. And that's the latest concerning the Honorable Unity Freeman-Mitford who fell in love with Hitler.

KIRUNA

Radio stations in America intercepted distress signals from the high seas today. They came from a Swedish steamer in mid-Atlantic some seven hundred miles southwest of the Irish coast. A Nazi submarine had appeared and fired on this Swedish vessel. The ship was sinking at the time the radio message was received, sinking slowly.

HANS FAULKNER

Sitting around me here on the floor of this ladies' room are skiers in Canadian, American, Norwegian and Austrian ski clothes. And in every color. Some of them wearing moccasins. Some with hairy reindeer skin shoes. And so on. Along with the Ryans from Mt. Tremblant are the Tome and Harry Wheelers from Greyrocks, Mary Bird Young, the American Olympic skier, and her husband Chris Young, the traveler and lecturer and film expert, Eugene Vidal, aviation authority, decathlon athlete and the only four-letter man in the history of West Point - skiers from England, France and everywhere. One of these is Hans Faulkner, former ski meister of the Austrian ski school at Obergurgl, now of Mt. Tremblant. Faulkner has had a picturesque career, one of the highlights of which was when he rescued August Piccard, the Belgian stratosphere balloonist when he landed on a glacier in the Alps. What date was that, Hans?

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HANS:- May 27th, 1931, when I was living in Obergurgl.

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L.T.:- And how did Piccard get to Obergurgl?

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HANS:- He didn't exactly land in Obergurgl. He had ascended to

16,400 meters, and the winds carried him from Augsburg in Germany, away over to the Austrian Tyrol, and he came down unexpectedly on Obergurgl Glacier. I just happened to be the one to rescue him, and found him sitting in a bit of a daze, high up in some rocks, with his companion, Engineer Kipfer, who was out from Concussion. That ball they were in, the gondola, had rolled over and over down the glacier, faster than we go on skiis. With Piccard and his engineer inside. Going over and over, all mixed up with their instruments.

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L.T.:- And for his rescue Hans Faulkner was thanked and knighted by the King of Belgium. Hans was arrested by the Nazis when they seized Austria. He sent word of his predicament to Lord Londonderry and Ishbel McDonald, who had been in his ski classes, and they protested to Hitler, and got him out. Hans Faulkner of Obergurgl which is just above Untergurgl. And now comes my last gurgle for tonight - from Mount Tremblant in the Laurentians. So let's switch from the ladies' room of this little French Canadian railway station back to New York. But first, Happy New Year to you all -

from all us skiers, - Happy New Year!

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And now from Mt. Tremblant to Radio City, back to

Hugh James.