

P.J. - Sunoco. Thurs., March 14, 1940.

MUSICA

Two prominent political figures were today mentioned in the trial that harks back to the dramatic story of Coster-Musica. Today's witness was a brother of the ~~mid-time~~^{old-} time swindler, who managed to rise to be the head of one of the biggest and most respected drug concerns in this country. Then was unmasked for giant frauds, and killed himself. ^{TP} Coster-Musica's brother was telling the story in a full confession, and he named two important Connecticut politicians; - one - a former state senator who was Democratic National Committeeman for Connecticut from Nineteen Twenty-Nine to Nineteen Thirty-Six. He was Chairman of the State Advisory Board of the P.W.A. and ~~to~~ a friend of President Roosevelt's. The other politician, is a Connecticut Republican leader, now serving a prison sentence in connection with a political scandal at Waterbury. These two prominent figures today were said to have received money from Coster-Musica, ~~so said the witness today.~~

The brother of the arch swindler told a story of prohibition time alcohol. His brother, after having worked a giant fraud with the purchase of human hair years ago - turned to

hair tonic. From hair to tonic, related ideas. He formed a small

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manufacturing company, and played the simple game of buying a lot more alcohol than he needed for the manufacture of his hair tonic, then selling the excess alcohol to bootleggers. That was so profitable that he bought into a small but exceedingly old and respected company - McKesson and Robbins. ^{TR} Taking charge of the firm, he proceeded to specialize in the manufacture and sale of a mouth-wash. The mouth-wash had a high alcoholic content and was chemically so devised that the alcohol could easily be taken out of the concoction. Bootleggers bought the mouth-wash in huge quantities, taking it away in truckloads ^{-- then} - processing it into alcohol for their illicit hooch. ^{TR} ~~Coster-Musica disguised the large and profitable sales to the rum racketeers by resorting to false bookkeeping which showed the consignments of mouth-wash to have been sold to imaginary & drug concerns.~~ That was the beginning of the huge and intricate system of ^{phones} ~~false~~ bookkeeping by which Coster-Musica created imaginary assets of millions - non-existent millions.

He maintained a slush fund, a secret budget out of which to pay money for dubious purposes. The witness expressed it in these terms today:- "His slush fund," said he, "covered a multitude of

sins." And this was covered by false bookkeeping. Money spent by the slush fund route was entered on the books with various disguises. One item of twenty-five hundred dollars was marked down this way - "Mailing cost re cod liver oil." Another entry specified two thousand dollars for - "Cod Liver oil advertising." It was the kind of cod liver oil that had more than vitamins in it.

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The story of the slush fund today went on to the sensational statement - that Coster-Musica, while operating his giant swindle, paid large sums of money to ^{the} two political figures *so prominent.*

THIRD TERM

Straw votes are an important phenomenon these days - polls taken on this subject or that. And today the straw vote idea assumes a new form - almost official, a straw vote ballot tacked onto a regular legal vote.

This is scheduled to happen in Hamilton County, Tennessee. ^{In} ~~that~~ the heart of Tennessee Valley, site of one of the biggest New Deal projects - the T.V.A. Down there Democratic politicians have ^{decided} on a third term experiment, in connection with the regular Democratic primary. The various local candidates have got together ~~for it~~ and are paying for it - a straw vote ballot to be attached to the regular primary ballot. The straw vote issue being - "Do you want President Roosevelt for a third term?" An unofficial poll in connection with the regular poll - something new!

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Philadelphia certainly must love a fight - with all its brotherly love. You'd think the Republican National Convention would be enough, the battle for the G.O.P. nomination - which is certain to produce a lot of fireworks. But, right along with the convention - Philadelphia may have a Joe Louis fight. That's the gist of a report today which relates that a group of prominent Philadelphians had made an offer to the bomber - a hundred thousand dollars if he'll defend his title in the city of William Penn at convention time. His opponent? ^{Tom Dewey? No -} Tony Galento.

~~is mentioned~~ Tony the battling beer barrel - or any other suitable antagonist.

The idea is of course that convention crowds would be likely to build up quite a gate for a heavyweight championship bout. It isn't difficult to imagine a stream of customers pouring from Convention Hall to the ringside to see Devastating Joe and Two-Ton Tony in action.

The juxtaposition of pugilism and presidential politics suggests interesting possibilities. They might reverse things, and have the rival candidates battle it out in the ring. And they might have Joe Louis and ^{Two Ton Tony} ~~Tony Galento~~ run for president.

OLYMPICS

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Tonight the story of Finland turns to a subject in which the Finns have been so important - Olympic Games. Before the blast of war struck that northern land, we knew the Finns chiefly as athletes, runners, skiers - who made Olympic history. Now, with the war scarcely over, we have a proposal - "Olympic Games for Finland."

The northern Republic was to have had them this year, scheduled for July Twentieth. The thought of athletics was banished by war, but Helsinki never really gave up the games. So why not go ahead with the former schedule and have ~~them~~ the olympics in the northern land that the world has come to admire so much? Of course, the war between Germany and the Allies might make it impossible, but still the idea is being considered.

Today, a member of the United States Olympic Committee spoke up and said - that if Finland decides to hold the games at Helsinki this summer, the United States will participate. However, that depends upon whether the State Department in Washington would permit an American team to go. The State Department has been mighty strict about passports, but the Olympic committeeman today

stated he believed Secretary Hull's department might relent.

It is disclosed that the Secretary of the International Committee, a German, has communicated with the American group and outlined a route that the United States athletes could take and avoid passing through any war zones. He proposed that an American Olympic ship could proceed to Narvik, in Arctic Norway, then east and south to southern Finland. That kind of trip, avoiding the war zones, might induce the State Department to permit American athletes to go.

It's announced that whenever a decision is made about ~~possibilities~~ ^{staging} the games ~~being staged~~ in Finland, the American Olympic Committee will immediately be called into session to consider the possibility of sending an American team.

FOREIGN

The principal development in the European news today concerns the possibility of a military alliance between Sweden, Norway and Finland. This was hinted at during the time when the Finnish-Soviet peace negotiations first began - I mentioned it in this broadcast as one of the things that might be offered to Helsinki in return for coming to terms with Moscow.

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Today, the capitals of the three ^{small} nations were buzzing with reports about a Scandinavian pact that would guarantee the independence of Finland. And what ~~if the Soviets~~ have the Soviets to say about that? There was ^{instant} ~~distant~~ comment from Moscow saying - the Soviets wouldn't mind. Spokesmen in Stalin's capital made the remark that a three-power alliance between Sweden, Norway and Finland might be okay - if ^{it} ~~it were not~~ were not directed against Russia. The Moscow informant pointed out that the Soviet-Finnish peace treaty specifies that neither nation shall make any alliances against ~~the~~ the other. If that clause were observed, the Soviets might not mind if Stockholm, Oslo and Helsinki signed a treaty.

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What would a Scandinavian guarantee of Finnish independence amount to? We've got to repeat that geographically-speaking, the Soviets

have taken the natural defense lines of the republic. It was admitted in Helsinki today that the new frontier will be vastly more difficult to defend than the old one.

This especially applies to the Karelian Isthmus. By annexing that isthmus between the Gulf of Finland and Lake Ladoga, Moscow has got the strong natural defense area upon which the Mannerheim line was founded. Moreover, the Soviet territory now extends all around Lake Ladoga. The boundary is continuous, not split up any more by the huge inland body of water. *for Soviet armies there is*
So now ~~there is~~ a much easier way into southern Finland - the more so because of Hanko.

A Soviet naval base at that ~~dominated~~ ^{ant} point will provide the Red army with another route into southern Finland, a point of attack from the west. Moreover, a Soviet-Hanko-naval-base will control the mouth of the Gulf of Finland, the body of *the Gulf* water that leads to Leningrad. ~~It will~~ now become ^s a Russian lake.

And take that famous Finnish waistline:- By getting a strip of territory at the very narrowest part of the northern republic, the Soviets ~~would be~~ *will now be* in a better position to drive across.

and cut Finland in two. ~~And right across that section~~ ^{And} the Soviet
 railroad line which is to be built - would ~~provide a~~ provide a
 highway for attack. ~~In addition to all this, that Russian railroad~~
~~across the wasteline,~~ ^{Also} is a direct menace to Sweden. ^{A new} ~~it's to~~
~~connect with the Swedish-Finnish railroad system - it's a~~ Soviet
 route to the Scandinavian peninsula. ^{TP Here} ~~And~~ in the Arctic north, the
 territorial concessions that Finland had to make bring the Soviet
 power all the nearer to Norway and Sweden.

So one may well ask - how much might a Scandinavian
 guarantee amount to? How far could an assurance of military help
 compensate Finland for the loss of its ^{natural} ~~national~~ boundaries? Maybe
 a good deal. It might tie Finland in with the general fate of
 Scandinavia. And Scandinavia would be a pretty big slice for Stalin
 to bite into. ^{For example it} ~~It~~ so essentially concerns Nazi Germany, ~~for example.~~
^{even} There's talk that Hitler may give Finland a guarantee, - (and that
 would be important, considering German-Soviet relations. Moreover,
 Scandinavia is much more accessible to the Allies than unfortunate
 Finland ever was. ^{So the} ~~The~~ destiny of the heroic northern republic may
 well be involved in the large complexities of European war and
 politics. ^{all so} ~~So~~ intricate that hardly anything can be foreseen.

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WEATHER

Look out for the cold wave, you people in the north Atlantic states! It's due here tonight - a belated blizzard

sweeping from the west. The weather man predicts icy cold, snow

and driving sleet ^{throughout the Eastern Area} ~~along the Atlantic coast~~. The northern part of

the middlewest is having ^{the} a blizzard right now, and is

heading East just in time for weekend skiers.

ACCIDENT

A frightful truck and train disaster in Texas is one of the ~~worst~~ worst on record. A final check reveals a death list of twenty-five, and seventeen injured - when a passenger train crashed into a truck crowded with citrus fruit workers. Most of them Mexicans, the driver a Mexican. The truck was so loaded with the workers that they were jammed in the front seat with the driver, hanging on the running boards, and ~~were~~ perched on the roof, of the truck.

The route lay along a railroad track and ahead was a sharp turn. It was flat country without obstructions, and it's hard to understand why the driver didn't see the train. But he didn't. He turned sharply across the tracks, right in front of the locomotive.

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How frightful the crash was is told in the words of an eyewitness, a woman who was in a building nearby. "I heard the roar of the approaching train," said she, "and then I heard a tremendous crash. I looked out of a window and saw a sheet of flame in front of the ~~passenger train~~ engine. Through the flame," she adds, "bodies were pitched in all directions. I guess the truck's gasoline tanks must have exploded," said she.

The worst ~~road~~ ^{highway} disaster in the history of Texas!

PLANE

Today in a New York harbor a small passenger plane was cruising idly along, everything in order, no apparent danger, ~~and~~ then suddenly plunged downward and crashed into the water. There were two men aboard. One, a passenger, was drowned. The pilot tonight is in a hospital - injured, dazed, incoherent, telling a strange and frightening story.)

Yet not so strange, though always frightening - an air passenger suddenly making an attack upon the pilot. It has happened more than once - some ~~sudden, strange~~ ^{weird} attack of frenzy, an outburst of crazy ^{high-altitude} violence. The pilot, Joseph Rosemarin, relates that as he was piloting his plane, for an easy jaunt across the bay, he received a sudden, stunning blow. The passenger behind him, for no apparent reason, hit him on the head with a pair of pliers. The half-stunned pilot turned, struggling with the man. And as they fought crazily up there in the air, the plane, out of control - took a plunge. The crazed passenger was tossed out into the water and apparently drowned, but the pilot hung onto the plane, and was picked up - too dazed from his experience to tell who the passenger was.

MAGIC

~~Step forward ladies and gentlemen, and see - "a congress of
cabalistic phenomena, mystery and mirth. Ladies enraptured!
Gentlemen delighted! Children in ecstasies!"~~

~~That's the way an old handbill reads, in advertising a
magic show. It's one of the things on display at an exhibition
of the Magicians',~~
~~of the magicians,~~ art now being staged at the Museum of the City of
New York,
New York. Our old soccerer friend, Wizard John Mulholland,

has assembled for the Museum ~~xxxxxxx~~ a copious collection of
documents and paraphernalia to illustate the history of pulling
rabbits out of plug hats, sawing ladies in two, vanishing elephants
and other masterpieces of legerdemain - the old presto-chango.

There's one fascinating bit of history illustrated in
~~John~~ ^{the} Mulholland show, the history of one of the most famous of
magical tricks. Nearly a century and a quarter ago, in Eighteen
X Seventeen, the great Ramo Samee appeared in the United States,
the first Hindu magician ever to display the miracles of the Orient
in this country. Ramo Samee had the Americans of that period
gasping - when he put in his mouth first some beads, next a long
string. Then, with plenty of presto-chango, he'd take out of his

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mouth - the beads neatly threaded on the string.

Ramo Samee had a smart American manager, who suggested, why not do it with needles and thread instead of string and beads? So Ramo Samee changed his trick to a magical threading of needles in his mouth. He returned to India, and thereafter America saw nothing more of the needle and thread trick.

In India, Ramo Samee taught that bit of magic to his pupils, and so it was passed down the line in the East. At the Chicago World's Fair of Eighteen Ninety-Two, one of Ramo Samee's successors appeared in the India exhibit and ~~he~~ did the needle and thread trick. And once more the Americans were astonished by it. He struck up friendship with a young American magician and taught the stunt to him, - Harry Houdini. And later on Houdini made a hit with it all over the United States. After a hundred years the Oriental thread and needle magic, which had really originated in the United States, came back to this country from India. World travel magic!

And now some New Blue
Magic from Houdini Hugh.