

LT in
Washington.
VFW
banquet.
Mar. 27 1937

L. T. - SUNOCO - TUES. MARCH 2, 1937

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He's my neighbor in the country.

Oh yes, and over here is Congressman Ed Issac of San
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RETAKE

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GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

I am addressing you from a banquet table tonight -- in Washington. With the exception of two or three of us all the others around the table are either Senators or Congressmen -- those members of the present Congress who served in the World War. And there are 98 of them -- eight Senators and 90 members of the House. I've just this moment come in and here beside me I see Senator Neely of West Virginia, on the other side Senator Steiwar of Oregon. Senator Hayden of Arizona. I've got an item from Arizona, Senator. Congressman Hamilton Fish in front of me. He's my neighbor in the country.

Oh yes, and over here is Congressman Ed Issac of San Diego, a medal of honor man.

This banquet is an annual affair. The host being the genial Jimmy Van Zandt, National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. No politics. No speeches. Just an annual gathering of Veterans who survived the greatest of all wars and who now continue to serve their country as Senators and Representatives.

STEEL

The news tonight links two subjects -- steel and the Navy. That seems reasonable enough -- since warships are built of steel. The connection goes on to connect the labor developments in the steel industry with today's events in American naval expansion.

The prospect ^{is} that there will be no steel strike. The giant industry has agreed to negotiate with the John Lewis C.I.O unions. *Which of course is* ~~That's~~ a huge reversal of policy. For many years steel has consistently refused to deal with outside bargaining agencies. *This is being hailed today* ~~Now, a~~ reversal ~~and that's~~ a major victory for John Lewis.

Today, the corporation chiefs were conferring with the union chiefs. And the C I O group predicted that a contract would be signed. This would eliminate the possibility of a strike in the steel industry -- a strike that would constitute one of the gravest industrial events in this nation's history.

Today, the ^{word is confirmed} ~~announcement comes~~ that Carnegie Steel has fallen in line with the policy of more pay and shorter hours; Carnegie ~~is~~ the biggest subsidiary of United States Steel, and its schedule

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will be a minimum wage of five dollars a day for common labor, and a basic work week of forty hours. The other subsidiaries of United States Steel are expected to declare themselves to the same effect -- so that the whole industry will be put on a basis of five dollars a day ^{and the} ~~with~~ forty hours ~~a~~ week.

That's where the steel labor news ties to the United States Navy. The Navy department has been up against a dilemma. The program is - - build warships. The steel industry failed to bid on contracts. The reason for this was the Walsh-Healy Act, which forbids the government to buy products manufactured under a work schedule of more than forty hours a week. In the steel industry, work ran up to forty-eight hours a week. That's why bids for Navy steel contracts were lacking, and our sea armament plans were delayed.

^{here}
Today [^] in Washington, the Appropriations Committee handed a report to the House of Representatives -- a report to appropriate five hundred and twenty-six million dollars for the Navy. This vast sum is to maintain and strengthen the fleet in the program of making the American Navy second to none. A hundred

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and thirty million dollars will be used to begin the building of new warships -- two new mighty dreadnoughts, three ponderous aircraft carriers, eleven swift heavily armed cruisers, forty-eight charging destroyers, and sixteen torpedo shooting submarines.

Altogether eighty-one battle craft are to be completed or under construction by July of Nineteen Thirty-eight. Sea power for the U. S. A., sea power second to none, and it certainly takes steel to build it.

That's where the new wage and hour policy of the steel industry comes to the point today. Steel, by adopting the forty-hour week conforms to the law. It can ^{now} enter the Navy bidding, and the dilemma is solved. The Navy is starting the bidding again, offering to buy steel and asking for bids.

Government armament plans continue along a line that remind us of another event in Washington today -- the presentation of a trophy. President Roosevelt, in the presence of high Army and aviation personalities, presented the Harmon Trophy to Howard Hughes. That's not surprising, after those flashing speed records made by Millionaire one-time motion picture producer ^{Hughes.}

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On top of that, comes the word that the International League of Aviators, representing twenty-one nations, has selected Howard Hughes as the outstanding flyer of the world for Nineteen Thirty-six. An American aviator takes world primacy.

But what about American planes and flying equipment ? That's where the government armament plans comes in again. The Navy calls for the scrapping of two hundred and fifty-one fighting aircraft that have become obsolete. These will be replaced by new ones, and a hundred and four more will be added. A naval air force of nearly two thousand planes is planned, eighteen hundred to be in operation by the summer of Nineteen Thirty-eight.

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ARMAMENT

If Uncle Sam is arming, he's only following suit.

(Word today indicates that Germany is building fighting aircraft faster than had been expected. German Armament industry is running ahead of schedule, London learns today that Germany now has at least two thousand up-to-the-minute war planes -- of a most modern sort, and that by next year Hitler may have as many as five thousand.)

Italy as we know is in the armament race with plans for more ships and faster ships, in the sky and on the sea. And today Mussolini and the Fascist Grand Council issued a decree for man-power -- ordering every Italian male from eighteen to fifty-five to keep fit and in trim for military service, if war should come.

Mussolini is out to answer the challenge of Britain's vast rearmament program. Everybody is out to answer the challenge, somebody's challenge -- you build and we'll answer by building. The old vicious circle of the armament race. I wish these 98 Senators and Congressmen sitting here with me tonight could tell me the answer. It sounds like a dizzy word indeed! Even here in Washington today on Capitol Hill I kept hearing about -- armament.

ROOSEVELT

I suppose I might as well be brief with this item, because the President was brief about it. He sent to Congress today his shortest special message -- only four hundred words. Yet it concerned one of the most controversial affairs, the defunct N R A., the deceased Blue Eagle.

Talking about the N R A., the President merely suggested that there should be laws to regulate the wages and working hours of labor -- as they were regulated under the Blue Eagle. The Presidential message was brief all right, a mere four paragraphs. But it accompanied a report that was a good deal longer -- a report by a committee that for the past year and a half has been making a study of the N R A., trying to size up what it did while it was in power.

The report puts its okay on the Blue Eagle for increasing wages and for bettering the condition of labor. It declares that the trouble of the N R A was it tried to do too much and do it too swiftly. Even though it did help labor, the N R A tried ways that wouldn't work, made things too complicated. Its methods were

too intricate even in such matters as minimum wages and minimum hours. The attempts to stabilize prices, says the report, didn't work out right -- because of the attempt to do too much too fast.

The ~~ix~~ gist of the report is that the N R A helped things along, but would have helped a lot more if the Blue Eagle had flapped its wings a little less and more slowly.

Wonder if any of the 100 Senators and Congressmen sitting here at this banquet table would like to say a few words about the Blue Eagle.

Shouts of "yes, yes, I would!"

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O bright Gentlemen, I suggest you make your speeches in the Halls of Congress!!

SPRING

Excuse me if I break into a yawn. It's as warm down here in Washington as a balmy day in May. When I went to the White House, I found the President had deserted his desk and gone motoring. So I followed his example. And I am ashamed to admit that not until today had I visited Mount Vernon. Arthur De Titta of the White House Correspondents drove me. Washington is starting to get green. They've started to mow the White House lawn, and the trees along the Potomac are turning as though this were April. Harry Somerville of the Willard tried to lure me into the Hook Line and Sinker, a new fisherman's club. And, I understand the President may get out his hook line and sinker and go fishing in the Gulf of Mexico in about ten days,

LIE DETECTOR

It seems a shocking thing to say -- that today a man went to the electric chair, and this ~~lx~~ reminds me of a jolly, mirthful evening I enjoyed half a dozen years ago. Yet in telling today's story of a sister's vain attempt to save her brother's life, I can only hark aback to a happy evening aboard a yacht moored at the dock in Chicago in 1930. A party of us watched a demonstration of the truth and falsehood machine. It was staged by Professor Keeler aboard Commander Gene McDonald's yacht, Mizpah. Col. Frank Knox - remember him? He was along. And Governor -- then Judge Horner -- who is involved in today's story.

They put us through the test -- a doctor's blood pressure gadget was tied around your arm. And this connected with a bit of mechanism, an indicating needle that drew a line on a roll of paper. The needle wiggled back and forth with the pulsation of your blood. Would the instrument react and reveal, when you came to a lie? Yes it did. It certainly worked.

I tried my best to beat it, tried to give not the slightest indication. But I couldn't beat my blood pressure. Something inside of me reacted; something that I couldn't con-

trol. And the yacht rang with laughter at my futile attempts to get away with ~~it~~ a lie. It rang even louder with laughter when Frank Knox proved to be an successful liar.

But I never guessed that the evening would come, when I would recall that session of truth, falsehood and laughter -- recall it in telling of a mournful, tearful tragedy. A sister trying to save her brother's life.

Yesterday Rose Rappaport went to Governor Horner of Illinois, and made her plea with tear streaming eyes. Her brother, Joseph Rappaport, had fifteen hours to live -- convicted of the murder of a drug dealer who had been an informer a stool

pigeon. "He is innocent," she implored, "He didn't kill that man."

The Governor replied that he had delayed the death sentence on Rappaport five times already. No new evidence of innocence had been advanced. So, on his conscience he could not grant still another reprieve. The girl still sobbed and begged.

In talking to her and consoling her, the Governor mentioned the

Keeler lie detector, said he had a good deal of belief in it. *He too had tried to beat it that night on MacDonald's yacht when it caught me.*
A sudden new ray of hope flashed upon Rose Rappaport.

Or, call it that straw which a drowning man grasps. She hurried

to Professor Keeler. Would he make the test? Yes. ^{But} She had to get a court order for the experiment to be made. She got it from a judge.

Then, the culminating scene in ^{the} death cell in the Cook County jail. There they brought the truth and falsehood machine. Professor Keeler fastened the blood pressure gadget around the arm of the condemned prisoner.

The test began with random questions- - to show the range of the prisoner's blood pressure-response to truth and falsehood,

to see how the indicator would behave when he told a lie.

"Is your name Joseph Rappaport?" asked the Professor.

The prisoner answered "yes". And the recording needle made a slight wavering movement [—] the truth. Each time his answer was true, the indicator made that same slight move.

Then suddenly, "Did you kill Max Dent"

"No."

The needle did a wild jump.

"Do you live in Cook County?"

"Yes", a slight wavy move by the needle.

"Do you know who killed Max Dent?"

"No"

Once more the violent movement.

Over and over the same thing, with question after question, and always the result came out the same. Every time the prisoner denied the killing, the needle went wild.

When the long test was over, Professor Keeler telephoned ~~ed~~ to Governor Horner. "The test indicates," he said, "that the prisoner is guilty."

So today, Joseph Rappaport went to the chair.

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QUAKE

Late word from the Middle West about that earthquake. The tremors were felt throughout Ohio, Indiana, Northern Kentucky and West Virginia, severe enough to shake buildings and startle the inhabitants. And -- it's something to scare anybody when the ground begins to shake.

A late check up this afternoon shows that in Cleveland the big buildings rocked a bit with shocks lasting for several seconds. At Indianapolis, government meteorologists report two distinct shocks. Objects on shelves rocked and rattled; and plaster cracked. Chimneys fell. Streets were littered with broken glass.

The center of the disturbance was at Belfontaine, Ohio. In that section they've had slight quakes twice before years ago. Scientists can't seem to account for those minor misbehaviors of the earth's crust out there -- because the rocks of Ohio are exceedingly old and quite inactive, settled down to stability ages and ages ago.

From Arizona the story tells not of the earth shaking,

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but of the earth having a sinking spell -- at the town of

Jerome. Folks out there ~~are not alarmed,~~ however, ^{are} ~~They're~~

used to the weird behavior of the ground beneath their feet.

It's a common thing for water mains to break, for sidewalks to

separate from the houses they're next to, for buildings to

split in two. Geologists explain that the ground on which

Jerome stands is moving down toward Verde Valley. The town

stands just above the Valley, which slopes down steeply for a

thousand feet. The sinking is going on at the rate of three-

eighths of an inch a month, and people have noticed it for the

last thirteen years. In that time the town has slipped nearly

four feet. It still has some distance to go, ~~quite a long time~~

before it slides ^{over} ~~down~~ into the Valley. So the ^{are not} ~~folks aren't~~

alarmed by the sinking spells. Still it's a weird story.

To live in a town that's on the move.

And it's time for me to be on the
move and s-l-u-t-m.

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