

L.T. SUNOCO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1937

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:-

The news tonight is dominated, not by what anybody did, but by what somebody said; that somebody -- the President of the United States. Even before he began his Inaugural address he spoke up -- with a keynote phrase.

"If those people can take it, I can too," said Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

And those people certainly were taking it, the crowd in the plaza of the Capitol. Today the proverbial Roosevelt luck with the weather was in complete reverse. All the old-timers were agreed that the rain was ^{more of a deluge} ~~worse~~ than at the Hoover inauguration in 1929. The only difference of opinion was about the ceremony for President Taft in 1909 -- when the inaugural was a nightmare of snow and sleet and slush. Colonel Halsey, Chief Clerk of the Senate, declared that the weather today was worse ^{today than then,} ~~than in 1909.~~

I was talking to Percy, the doorman at the New Willard, who has routed inaugural carriages and automobiles for twenty-four years. He said no, the Taft inaugural ^{weather} was a shade the worse.

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Anyway, the weatherman was a frightfully misbehaved fellow today. A cold, drenching rain poured down upon ~~us~~ ^{us in} Washington, wind-driven, penetrating. It drove most of the quarter of a million Inauguration visitors indoors, into hotel lobbies, ~~and~~ ^{and the miles of public buildings.} the railroad station. The endless rows of yellow pine stands with their two million feet of lumber were mostly deserted -- the Marines in yellow oil-skins keeping a ~~bad~~ bedraggled guard. Yet in the Square and stands in front of the Inauguration platform, there ^{some} ~~was a crowd of~~ ^{were 34,000} dauntless Inauguration fans. A party of young men, a political group from somewhere or other, broke into a lusty song. "We're singing in the rain," they chanted. It was an appropriate theme song.

The Inaugural stand had a ~~rough~~ roof over it, but that didn't do so much good. A wintry gale swept the chilly

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downpour right into it -- to drench the taking of the oath,
the Inaugural speech and all. So the committee on arrangement
urged the President to change his plan. He ^{had} announced he would
go through with the outdoor ceremony no matter what the weather
was. The committee ^{pointed} ~~pointed~~ out that the rain was worse than
anybody could have expected, and made a last-minute appeal to the
President to take the oath and make his address indoors -- for
the sake of his health. F.D.R. looked out across the wind-swept
spaces. The crowd was ^{there} ~~gathering and growing~~. That was when
he said: "If those people can take it, I can too." And he took it.

So out in the wet, facing sheets of wintry rain blown
by the wind -- Franklin Delano Roosevelt began his second
administration. ~~It~~ ^{It} was observed that ^{for} ~~nix~~ twenty-nine minutes today
the United States was without a President. The term expired
at noon today. The oath of office was administered at 12:29.
Perhaps the weather caused ^{the} ~~a~~ slight delay; and then as Chief
Justice Hughes administered the oath, there was some difficulty

with the Bible that took a brief while. It ^{was} a particularly precious Bible. The President made a special point of being sworn on an old Dutch edition of Holy Writ that has been in his family since the Sixteenth Century. ^{If it} ~~It had~~ got wet ~~and~~ in the rain, ^{it would be} ~~and~~ badly damaged. So at the last moment a transparent waterproof covering was provided. ~~It~~ It was noticed that the Bible lay open at the page, and the President placed his hand on the lines where it says: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol." I don't know if that was by accident or design. But the President couldn't have chosen a better Biblical text for his own rain-swept Inauguration address. His words assumed an idealistic, far-looking tone of charity -- almost apocalyptic it seemed to me. The phrases were telling, picturesque. The feeling seemed to be that of a man who seeks to create new worlds.

There was one phrase of the speech that appears like a commanding theme -- a phrase couched in generalities, but with a significant meaning. ^{in the sweeping rain,} "I assume," cried the President, [^] "the solemn

obligation of leading the American people forward along the road over which they have chosen to advance." And the implication of that harks back to the election. When he mentioned ^{was the} the American people ^{have chosen,} ~~as choosing~~ he meant the way the votes went in November.

So now let's see how the President interprets that.

"There can be no era of good feeling," ^{said he, as the rain} ~~said the President, "said~~ ^{drops came pelting -} "There can be no era of good feeling among men of good will." In his next paragraph he used the

phrase -- "the moral climate of America." There's the idealistic tone. Speaking of the present improved economic conditions he said, "Shall we call this the Promised Land, or shall we continue on our way?" There's the attitude of ^{perhaps,} far-looking, apocalyptic,

~~It seems to me~~

^{in the drenching downpour}

Then take this passage which Mr. Roosevelt spoke with all his fervor: "Comfort says -- tarry awhile. Opportunism says -- this is a good spot. Timidity says -- how difficult is the road ahead." Then the President went on to say his own say -- something very different. "Have we found our happy valley?" he asked.

And he went on to imply that we will find a valley still happier.

He used what can be accurately called a ~~via~~ visionary
turn of rhetoric ^{with the} -- repeated words "I see."

"I see a great nation upon a great continent.....

I see a United States that can demonstrate that under Democratic ~~me~~
methods of government, national wealth can be translated into a
spreading volume of human comforts hitherto unknown."

That was a characteristic flash of the Presidential
vision ~~in~~ in which he foresaw the end of poverty and the elimination
of what he called the "cancer of injustice."

~~The rain was teeming as the~~
~~And in his peroration the~~ President closed with that
same note of idealism. These were ^{the} ~~his~~ final words ^{of his peroration...} -- "to give
light to them that sit in darkness and to guide our feet into
the way of peace."

The inaugural parade that followed the ceremonies was probably the wettest procession you ever saw. Not for an instant did the downpour let up or even soften the cold and shock of that celestial shower bath. The unhappy crowds that lined Pennsylvania Avenue stood there shivering with an expression that seemed to say, "We might as well stick it out, we can't get any wetter." Even so, they didn't suffer the cloud-burst to drown out their voices as the President passed. They cheered and cheered.

As for Mr. Roosevelt himself, he showed that he was right when he said; "I can take it if they can." His aides urged him to ride in a limousine, but he waved their suggestion aside with scorn, and insisted upon making the entire trip, a mile and a half, from the capital to the White House, in an open car. The hat that he waved in answer to the cheers looked more like a fur-lined water-bucket than a presidential topper. By the time he reached the White House, that unfortunate chapeau was a wreck, but the Roosevelt smile was intact.

As for his consort, who stuck bravely to his side for that long watery ride, there never was such a thoroughly drenched First Lady of the Land.

STRIKE

Soon after the procession was over, a government car went to the Union Station, there to meet four important gentlemen. They were visitors from Detroit, Alfred P. Sloan, William S. Knudsen, Donaldson Brown and John Thomas Smith, the high command and board of strategy of General Motors. They were arriving in Washington upon Madam Perkins' invitation to get together in a discussion, friendly if possible, with John L. Lewis, head of the Committee for Industrial Organization. Governor Murphy of Michigan and the heads of the Labor Department will try to negotiate the difficult road of peace-makers.

Naturally, reporters were anxious to question the General Motors chiefs. But Madam Perkins' chauffeur hustled them into her car so quickly that the news gatherers did not

have a chance. He then contrived to lose the pursuing press cars in the tangle of Washington's inaugural traffic.

The conferences apparently are to be conducted in the strictest privacy and not in the Department of Labor.

After Mr. Sloan and the other G.M. heads reached Washington, John L. Lewis sent a message to Detroit for Homer Martin, President of the Automobile Workers, and summoned ^{him and} his assistants to come to the capital at once and join the party. The meeting began soon after the news had arrived that the Buick plant at Flint and the Fisher Body plant at Baltimore had been obliged to close. The workers of those factories did not walk out, they were thrown out of work by a shortage of materials. The figures tonight show that altogether a hundred and thirty-five thousand employees of General Motors are out.

However, there's one encouraging note from the field of labor troubles. The strike of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass workers is settled after three months. For a while that

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one threatened to force even more automobile factories to close.

The Pittsburgh strikers won a compromise victory. They gained an increase in wage but no closed shop. Six thousand of them will go back to work before the end of the week.

SPAIN

How much is a soldier worth, in terms of dollars and cents? During our own Civil War, some of the Northern states set the value as high as a thousand dollars. That was the bounty paid in some regions to men enlisting in the Union Army.

In seventy years the price has gone down somewhat. The Spanish government is now giving out a bounty for deserters from General Franco's armies, and we learn that the estimated worth of a Spanish Rebel is fifty pesetas. In United States money that means three dollars and fifty-five cents.

Deserters of another class we hear are crossing the Pyrenees in large numbers, going from Spain to France. They're not Spaniards fleeing from the Civil War, they are Frenchmen returning home. When the World War was declared in Nineteen Fourteen, some eighty thousand of these, men liable under French law to compulsory service in the army, left their ^{La Belle France} ~~country, taking~~ ~~all their moveable possessions with them~~, and slipped across the frontier into Spain. There they established themselves in business, many of them prospering handsomely. ~~They were young~~

Today they return home to escape being caught between the upper and lower grindstone of the ruinous Spanish Civil War. Both the Valencia government and the Nationalist rebels are drafting every able bodied man regardless of nationality.

The French authorities are treating them quite leniently. Most of them are getting off without punishment on condition that they serve out their terms in the army. But they probably won't have any too soft a time at the hands of the sergeants and corporals who were in the World War.

Internationally speaking, the most interesting European news comes from the Isle of Capri. There Hitler's chief lieutenant General Hermann Goering of the iron fist and his recently married wife, have been taking a brief vacation, after conversations with Mussolini. The Prussian general gave an interview to foreign correspondents and said: "I want to declare that certain reports of the foreign press are false, the reports that the Italian government is attempting to influence the German government to abandon its policy in Spain." There was emphasis in his words when he said: "Italy and Germany cannot countenance any further establishment of Bolshevism

in Europe -- at any cost." That might imply even at the cost of another World War.

And General Goering's words were echoes in Rome. Not by Mussolini nor by anyone speaking for public consumption. But high officers of the government declared privately that Goering had spoken correctly, that neither Italy nor Germany would permit Bolshevism in Spain.

The Council of the League of Nations will meet tomorrow at Geneva but no Italian will be there. The reason for that, of course, is the League's attitude on the Ethiopian question. But that wasn't all. It was noticed today that the Italian newspapers preserved a deafening silence about the Italian merchant vessel seized by the Spanish government. This silence of course is the result of specific instructions from the Chigi Palace. No mention of that seizure is to be made until further notice, which means until Mussolini sees fit to declare what he is going to do about it.

POPE

The Vatican today is the scene of a most dramatic human struggle: ~~is~~ the conflict between the illness of the Pope and the consummation of his fondest hope, an agreement with the German government. The most alarming reports heard yet concerning the Pontiff's health were made public today by his staff.

"It is no longer possible to disguise the fact that his condition is critical," they admitted. As the news of his relapse became known throughout Rome, huge crowds flocked to the plaza in front of St. Peter's and even into the grounds of Vatican City. Premier Mussolini ordered extra details of Carabinieri, the Italian police, to keep the multitude within bounds.

In spite of the protest of his physicians, the ~~the Pope~~ ^{Pope} ~~public~~ ^{his} did not allow ~~his~~ failing strength or the acute pains in his right legs to prevent him from receiving the German cardinals. The thing nearest the heart of the seventy-nine year old Pontiff is that his last act may be a solution of Roman Catholic problems in Nazi ruled Germany.

FLOODS

The piercing rain that brought discomfort to thousands in Washington brought misery and suffering to thousands in other parts of the country. The story of the untimely floods in the Middlewest begins to assume serious proportions. In Indiana, in Kentucky, in Illinois, in Western Pennsylvania, in Ohio and West Virginia families either have been driven or are now fleeing from their inundated homes to take refuge from the fast-rising waters. The total number of flood refugees in those five states is already estimated at ten thousand, and the total is growing every hour. As the Ohio, the Mississippi and their tributaries continue to swell the rain continue to pour.

From just one region there's a note of cheer. In Western Pennsylvania, the Ohio and the rivers that converge to form it are beginning to recede. The worst suffering is in Indiana, particularly Evansville where the White River joins the Wabash. In addition to the Ohio and the Mississippi, the White, and the Wabash, -- also the Kaskaskia in Illinois, the St. Francis in Missouri, and the Tennessee in Kentucky, are sweeping over their banks, in some cases bursting the levees. Floods! A wet ending for a wet inauguration day. And among those all wet was yours truly -- And --

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.