

Barton -
June 21, 1935.

(Mr. Rexford Barton, Guest Commentator)

Amper - Welby

GOOD EVENING ~~EVERYBODY~~:-

It's true that I am just off the boat. But pinch-hitting for Lowell Thomas is much too complimentary a phrase to be used about me. *Anyway,* ~~But~~ here goes, after ten months of zig-zagging round the globe; ~~more than 40,000 miles,~~ watching the old world wag. News from America, out there, was brief. I feel as though I had been on the wrong end of a telescope. It's good to be back: let's see what is happening at home.

ROPER

Of course Washington is the best place to look for news. I see they've been playing the second act of the drama of that Senate Department investigation into the ~~Chamber~~^{Department} of Commerce. The big moment occurred when Secretary Roper took the stand. That was something the country had been waiting for. Mr. Roper proceeded to make his reply to the sweeping charges of his discharged assistant. It was his opportunity and he jumped at it for all he was worth. He did no denouncing. He delivered his remarks in a dry tone. But they didn't leave much hide on Ewing Mitchell. The ex-assistant had been dropped, said Mr. Roper, "in the interests of efficiency." Then he went on to say: "Mr. Mitchell is a man of exceedingly suspicious temperament." ^{and} Then he added: "Mr. Mitchell is one of those men who are inclined to treat every rumor as a fact."

The Secretary of Commerce said he had listened to all his assistant's accusations. Not only that, he had investigated them thoroughly. He intimated that most of them he had found to be, as he described them, rumors. In other cases, said Mr. Roper, "I took action wherever it was justified."

He went on to tell the senators that Mr. Mitchell had been an ~~obstructionist~~ obstructive element in his department. He had refused to cooperate until finally business had piled up to such an extent that something ^{just} had to be done to break the jam.

48 For the rest, the Secretary of Commerce denied all of Mr. Mitchell's charges in detail. In the matter of laying up the LEVIATHAN, he gave the surprising information that some question had been raised as to the safety of that monster ship. Some experts, he declared, had alleged that the LEVIATHAN was a fire-trap. Then he said emphatically that President Roosevelt had not been responsible for the laying up of the LEVIATHAN. He, Mr. Roper, had done it on his own initiative. He also put in a vigorous defense for Eugene Vidal, Director of ~~aviation~~ the Aviation Bureau of the Department. Mr. Vidal, he ^{pointed out} ~~said~~, is a graduate of West Point, an engineer, and a pilot with fourteen years' flying experience. And Mr. Roper emphatically denied that the disaster which caused the death of Senator Bronson Cutting was an accident that might have been avoided if other officials had been in charge.

Before Mr. Roper took the stand, there was a passage of

the accusing
words between Mr. Mitchell and some members of the Committee.

Mr. Mitchell had made the flat accusation that he had been fired because Thomas J. Pendergast, the Democratic boss of Kansas City,

had it in for him. That remark got the goat of Senator Bennett

Clark of Missouri, son of Champ Clark. The Missouri Senator

broadly intimated that Mr. Mitchell was talking through his hat.

Said He: "It was at the personal request of Secretary Roper that

I voted for your confirmation." Then he added: "A few days ago

Mr. Roper asked me whether I would mind if he removed you." Then

came the parting shot. Senator Clark said to Mr. Mitchell: "I

told Mr. Roper that you had been appointed without my consent and

it was all right with me *if* you were removed."

All that is mighty exciting ~~is~~ stuff to an American who
the spicy quibbles that have been
hasn't had a chance of knowing ~~much what was~~ going on in his own
country.

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt went to the boat races at New London and left Washington in a fine state of uproar. The elder statesmen are all hot and bothered about that sensational tax program. They are all in the dark about his wishes. Does he expect to push it through this session or next year? Furthermore the Democratic leaders in Congress are exceedingly worried whether they can put it through. And the Conservatives are already sharpening their axes. "Unfair!" they say. The Progressives, on the other hand are for it. They are organizing for a campaign to put that program through this session. That promises excitement.

In New Guinea where I was last November they have a tax problem too. In that hit country the inhabitants pay a money tax but they have to earn it by working it out on the roads or other public works. They show that they have paid their taxes or done their work, by wearing a metal dog tag around their necks. Any taxpayer who has been careless enough to lose his tag is just plumb out of luck. He has to pay again or do his work over again, and when that happens the New Guineans say: "Oh Gee, there ain't no justice."

And in the president's absence at New London, the Roosevelt policies are up against another snag. That's over the Wheeler-Rayburn Bill, the question of smashing the public utility holding companies. The House has got the bit in its teeth and no matter how the administration leaders crack the whip they are ~~xxx~~ afraid they can't push it through. Most of the Representatives still seem to want the holding company question put under the control of the Exchange and Securities Commission.

FOLLOW ROOSEVELT

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However, on another issue President Roosevelt won an absentee victory. The House passed his Two hundred and twenty-five million dollar deficiency appropriation bill. But ^{that} ~~it~~ has still got to go through the Senate. The important thing is that it went ~~through~~ through without a change. It had to run the gauntlet of some attacks. Representatives who don't like the Tennessee Valley Authority tried to throw in a clause which would prevent any of that Two hundred and twenty-five million Dollars being used on T.V.A. projects. But those elements were out-voted. At any rate, this is significant because the bill is the fourth on the list which the President sent to Congress with the comment "Must".

At New London, Connecticut, Mr. Roosevelt had another disappointment. He looked on while Harvard's Junior Varsity Team on which his son Franklin, Junior, was rowing, was licked by Yale. In fact, Harvard took two ~~more~~ defeats. Yale also won the Frenchman race handily. That leaves only the big event, ~~and~~ ~~you'll hear all about that in a few minutes.~~

HOLT

Here's a bit of news that will give a kick to all young politicians. There's been quite a squabble over the youthful Mr. Rush Holt of West Virginia. He was elected before he had reached the constitutional age of thirty. He celebrated his birthday the other day and came to Washington saying, "Here I am, thirty years old." Some of the stalwarts in the Senate tried to keep him out because he had been elected before he was thirty. But young Mr. Rush Holt is a Democrat, and of course the Senate majority is Democratic. So, by a vote of sixty-two to seventeen, the Senators accepted their new young colleague. He is the youngest man ever to sit in that august body since the historic Henry Clay.

EDEN

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This must have been a tough day for Captain Anthony Eden, King George's Ambassador-at-Large. He had the ~~tough~~ job of smoothing down the ruffled fur of the French over that naval agreement between John Bull and Hitler. It isn't quite clear whether he succeeded or not. After the conference was over, Premier Laval said: "We talked quite frankly and our relations were friendly." But the conference broke off remarkably early and that gave rise to a flock of rumors.

Furthermore, France's Prime Minister made one thing clear. France still doesn't like that naval agreement between England and Germany. At the same time ^{Laval} he was at much pains to talk about ~~the~~ friendship.

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Captain Eden's next jump is to Rome. He seems to be the Patsy for all the tough diplomatic jobs. Primarily he is going to explain to Mussolini just what that naval treaty with Germany means. That was the original purpose of his visit. But several things have come up since it was planned. He has got to pacify the Duce about John Bull's attitude toward the Ethiopian question. Mussolini has said emphatically that if the League of Nations doesn't decide that argument to his liking, he'll get out of the League. That's a climax that England emphatically does not want. So it's up to Captain Eden to make Italy's Premier see the light.

Meanwhile, the black shirt ruler continues his warlike preparations against the kingdom ^{once ruled by} of ~~RezerexJehny~~ the Queen of Sheba.

ABYSSINIA follow Eden

But Il Duce will have a hard time of it moving European troops across those blistering ribbons of desert and boosting them over the sheer precipices that guard the highland empire of the Conquering Lion of Judah. I have visited the dusky Ethiopian in his home land. He is a fine fellow -- when you're on his side. But in battle he is a maniac. For 3,000 years he has repulsed every invader, including the religion-crazed Arabs who swept the whole of north Africa before them and even penetrated Europe.

His Imperial Highness Haile Selassie, King of Kings of Ethiopia, the Conquering Lion of Judah, and the Elect of God, feels that he is being picked on. He is a serious, well educated, intelligent little man. He is sincerely interested in the welfare of his people. And he is actively on the job twenty hours a day. Practically ~~all~~ all the affairs of state rest on his slim shoulders, and yet he finds time to edit his own newspaper! I have dined with him in the royal palace -- from a golden service -- I have chatted with him unofficially. Above all he wants to be left alone behind the barrier of his purple mountains -- left alone until he can lift his people from the traditions of the middle ages to the ways of the

modern world. He can do it, too, if he is given time.

If Mussolini does turn his threats into action, my guess is that Il Duce, in spite of all his expensive preparation, will discover that Haile Selassie holds some good cards up his flowing sleeve.

Those winning trumps are likely to be deserts, rugged mountain passes, fevers, and fanatic fighting men.

SPADA

There was a gruesome, almost medieval scene in the little town of Bastia in Corsica this morning. It was gruesome, but the populace made it a gala day. For there had come from Paris an individual in top hat, black frock coat and black gloves. His name was Henri Deibler. His nickname is "Monsieur de Paris". He is the official executioner. He had arrived to build his famous guillotine and chop off the head of Corsica's most famous bandit. Dressed in his ceremonial clothes, plus a black mask he pulled the cord, the knife fell, and off went the head of Andre Spada, the last of his line in Napoleon's little island.

Spada was celebrated among the Corsicans as a bandit with a sense of humor. He was of the Robinhood type. He robbed the rich and gave to the poor. The result was the cops had a hard time catching him. The poor were on his side to a man and always tipped him off when the police were coming.

Whenever he robbed anybody, he had a joke to fit the occasion.

The authorities said: "Fun is fun. But fourteen murders is too many, - even in Corsica." Actually, they suspected him of some two and a half dozen homicides. But they only convicted him of four. His countrymen didn't take his killings seriously because they were all vendetta affairs. But the French Government, which

rules Corsica, doesn't recognize the vendetta.

56 They say that one time, while police were searching for him, Spada masqueraded as a French general. He ordered all the troops in the garrison out for a review just to please his girl friend.

For years he evaded the police. Finally an enterprising French newspaper man went to the island and got an exclusive interview and pictures. When this story broke in Paris, the police became furious. They said the joke had gone ^{just} too far. But it wasn't until they sent eight hundred gendarmes from the mainland to Corsica that Spada the Bandit was captured. That ends a picturesque if sanguinary career.

When I was in French Somaliland, the guillotine hadn't got that far. It's a little ~~bit~~ too elaborate ^{for that desert country.} ~~a machine to build in those parts.~~ When the French law has to execute anybody in Somaliland, they just stand him up against the wall and ^{shoot} ~~him~~.

AUZELLO

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I heard a story in the Waldorf this afternoon that amused me. It was told by Claude Auzello, one of the leading hotel men of Europe. In fact, he's Director of the Hotel Ritz in Paris. The Director of the Paris Ritz is stopping at the Waldorf. It is his first visit to America in ten years. He observed: "Hotels have changed since I was last in this country." Twelve years ago M Director Auzello was breakfasting with a friend in a small hotel in Pennsylvania. He ordered his breakfast, which included eggs. His companion said to the waiter: "I'll take the same, but eliminate the eggs." The waiter, a negro, said: "What kind of eggs was that you said, boss?" The guest replied: "I said eliminate the eggs." The waiter went to the kitchen, then came back, saying: "Sorry, boss, you'll have to eat some other kind aw eggs. De Chef don bust his eliminator."

BLOODHOUND

Ever since the days of Uncle Tom and his Cabin, we've ~~be~~ been taught to look upon the bloodhound as a ferocious beast. Even his name sounds fierce. The officers of the law in Oklahoma have just learned a lesson which makes them think the bloodhound has not earned his reputation.

They were looking for a couple of public enemies, a man and a woman who are supposed to have committed several robberies. So they set the bloodhounds on the tracks. For three days they waited but found no sign of the people they wanted, *or the blood hounds either.*

58 Finally, a man and a woman strolled calmly into a restaurant in Pomona, Missouri. They were followed by an unusual looking but exceedingly amiable and gentle dog. The animal ~~squatted~~ *hunched* down and watched them while they ordered breakfast. Just as they were beginning to eat their scrambled eggs, in ~~walked~~ *walked* the sergeant of the Missouri highway patrol. He promptly arrested the man and woman. They were the couple so badly wanted by the law in three states. The dog ~~was~~ *was* one of the bloodhounds that had been set on their trail. The man told the policeman: "Why, we thought that was just some farmer's coon dog. He was so friendly, we took him along."

As a matter of fact, dog experts tell me that every owner of bloodhounds resents the reputation that has been given to the breed. The bloodhound is an exceptionally gentle animal. His

only qualification for chasing criminals is his extraordinary^{i/} keen

sense of smell.
~~scent.~~

Whenever you hear of a runaway being attacked by bloodhounds, you may be sure that they are really a cross between bloodhounds and mastiffs, #specially trained to ferocity.

ENDING

59 Now, my time's up. There are just a few seconds left, just long enough for me to say that I appreciate the honor of being asked to pinch-hit for my friend Lowell Thomas down^{here} in ~~the~~ Maine tonight casting a trout fly into the ripples of a wooded brook. And let's hope he's catching the big ones that usually get away.

He'll be here to tell you about it himself on Monday. And he'll have a bag full of tall stories, too, that he's heard from those yarning Maine guides. So, as the little, brown men of Java put it, "Moong iku kandaku," which mean's

59 1/2 THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW.