

L.T. - OLDS. MONDAY, MAY 8, 1961

ASTRONAUT

I hope you were listening to what went on in Washington today. If so you heard Astronaut Shepard say: "I thought last Friday was thrilling, but this surpasses it." Alan Shepard referring first - to his rocket ride into space and back; and then adding that today topped it - his welcome in the national capital.

First a crowd cheered him at Andrews Air Force base, in Maryland - when he flew in from the Bahamas. Then more of course were on hand as he ~~drove~~ arrived by helicopter at the White House to receive the Distinguished Service Medal - from the President. It was exceedingly informal. Some thought too informal. At the White House, in the Rose Garden, there was a flash of the familiar Kennedy wit. The President fumbled the medal - and dropped it. On presenting it, he said to Astronaut Shepard - "This medal has gone from the ground up." Whereupon the President made the easy-to-make error of handing over the medal - instead of pinning on Shepard's lapel. But, he quickly recovered with his usual aplomb, and with the words -

"Let me pin it on! I'll do my duty!" ~~as well as~~ All of which drew a round of chuckles - from the crowd, ~~also~~ from - the two Navy men involved. ~~That was~~ the President and the astronaut.

~~Next~~ came ~~Alan~~ Shepard's triumphal ride - from the White House to the Capitol, <sup>with</sup> More than a quarter of a million spectators - lining Pennsylvania Avenue, cheering themselves hoarse. ~~Quite a thrill for - a thirty seven year old Commander in the Navy. But no one thinks it was too much for - America's astronaut.~~ As one Washington policeman put it:- "This is the first time we've ever had a visitor from outer space."

## CONFERENCE FOLLOW ASTRONAUT

At his Washington news conference, astronaut Shepard was bombarded with questions - from a room-full of newsmen, and handled himself superbly. For some of the points he made:-

First, he said he and his fellow astronauts feel - that we could have beaten the Russians into space. At the same time, they are convinced that our Mercury project was "well thought out - reliable."

As for his blast-off from the launching pad - he says it surprised him, because it was so smooth. How did he feel - at that big moment? Didn't have time for personal feelings! "Too many technical things to think about."

Then the whole flight - went just as smoothly. No discomfort - even when his capsule began to move at eleven times the force of gravity. As for weightlessness he said he knew he'd be asked that question, and was

ready for it. That during the five minutes of weightlessness - then and there he figured out his answer.

"Quite a pleasant sensation;" that was all.

His remark about the beautiful view came - when he first looked through his periscope. His view along our coast over the Atlantic for some eight hundred miles; obscured in part - by clouds. The rest - "beautiful."

His general verdict - on his space flight? A perfect experiment - pointing toward the day when American astronauts will fly to the Moon and beyond.

RUSK

The American Secretary of State today told his NATO colleagues in Oslo - that the United States can match Russia's nuclear power. Secretary Rusk, pointing out - that we have already sent a man into space; Intend - to orbit a man around the earth before the end of the year; And - have plans for flights across the solar system to Mars and Venus.

The military implication <sup>to all this being</sup> ~~is~~ that our rockets can match ~~Khrushchev's~~ <sup>Russias - that we are</sup> ~~So we are~~ not dealing from a position of weakness <sup>^</sup> when we negotiate with the boss of the Kremlin.

<sup>Hence</sup> ~~That's why~~ we feel free to ~~re~~ reaffirm our solemn pledge - with regard to Berlin. Secretary Rusk, again warning Khrushchev that we will go the limit - in safeguarding our rights in West Berlin.

CUBA

Cuban refugees in Miami say that Castro is stepping up - his summary executions. The dictator, getting rid of his opponents - by quietly sending them before the firing squad. These reports indicate a wave of terror - across central Cuba. Castro's militiamen, rounding up suspects - hustling them off to jail. Then - the fixed trial, following quickly by the death penalty.

*Which may*  
~~Evidently this~~ means that opposition to the Cuban dictator is increasing. *And that* ~~which~~ could be what was in President Kennedy's mind when he informed the National Association of Broadcasters - that the story of Cuba "is not yet finally ended."

RECESSION

The anti-recession bill signed by President Kennedy today - involves two hundred million dollars. That much - for jobless families with children. The money, to be made available to the states - and passed on in the form of grants over the next fourteen months. The number affected - two hundred thousand parents, and half a million children.

## MOUNTAIN

Here's a story from Nepal that has the same title - as a famous book. And - a famous mountain. The story, the book, and the mountain - are all called "Annapurna".

*Remember*  
~~I guess you've all heard of~~ Maurice Herzog's ~~book~~ - *thrilling*  
"Annapurna," *a party of* the story of how Herzog and his French team of mountaineers *one of the wildest peaks?* ~~conquered Annapurna~~ in the Himalayas?

Actually, there are a number of mountains - with that name. ~~ANNA PURNA~~ Annapurna One - Annapurna Two, and so on. Today's Nepal dispatch concerns - Annapurna Three. It announces that this mountain has been climbed - for the first time. An Indian expedition, making the rugged ascent - of almost twenty-five thousand feet. They report that from the summit - they could look out over most of Nepal. A *great* moment for them. ~~because they had closed the books on a feat that has baffled hundreds of mountaineers. Taken - dozens of lives. Now - no longer a problem.~~ The final conquest - of all the Annapurnas.



## PEER

In London, the case of the reluctant peer - took a dramatic turn today. As you know, Anthony Wedgewood Benn - is really Viscount Stansgate, but doesn't want to be. Friday night I mentioned how Benn entered a Bristol election - and won; that is won a seat in the House of Commons. So he thought.

But under British law - peers are required to sit in the House of Lords - if they sit anywhere. Hence, this dramatic episode - today. Picture successful candidate Anthony Wedgewood Benn - walking up to the door of the House of Commons. Running smack into the doorkeeper - blazing in official livery and the gold chain of his office.

Benn, saying - "I have a certificate which returns me as a member for Bristol Southeast." The doorkeeper, answering - "I'm terribly sorry, M'lord, but I've been ordered to keep you out." Benn asking - "Have you been

instructed to use physical force?" The doorkeeper -  
"I have, M'lord." Benn: - "Will you use force?" The  
door keeper - "I will, M'lord."

In London no one argues with the minion who  
guards the portal - of the House of Commons. It all  
ended with Tony Benn, - I mean Lord Standgate  
withdrawing to the gallery of the Commons, where even  
a Viscount - may sit, and ponder over whether he must  
remain a lord.

## WHISKEY

If you're the type who enjoys jokes about the revenooers - you can shed a tear over this item. Whiskey is now legal - in Knox County, Tennessee. Prohibition, ended - by a popular referendum. They say this is creating panic - among the bootleggers in those Tennessee hills. They have only got a few weeks to get rid of their liquor until the legal bars will put them out of business.

Of course you could always get a drink in Knox County. In fact, many Tennesseans, who like their liquor - wanted to keep prohibition. Why? Well, that's explained by a sign on the campus of the University of Tennessee - "Vote dry! We want twenty-four hour service!"

Understand that seeming paradox, Dick? Knox County, Tennessee, home of the still and the revenooer.

## SALE

In Hartford, Connecticut, they claim that there are no salesmen to match - the ladies of St. George's Armenian Apostolic Church. Here's what happened at the church today:- The ladies had a rummage sale. Luring citizens of Hartford into snapping up - everything from hats to carrot seeds. The whole rummage sale - cleaned out in a few hours.

But then one of the ladies - couldn't find her coat. A quick check showed - it had been sold. Also another woman's coat! And - a third! Coats they had left on a bench. Now they've vanished. Sold the able salesladies of St. George's Apostolic Church.