

L.T. SUNOCO - March 29, 1933

Good Evening, Everybody:-

I am speaking from Washington tonight. And this has been decidedly a Roosevelt day for me: - Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt was in the plane coming down from New York. At the Willard Hotel I encountered my friend Kermit Roosevelt, son of T. R. And then I met the President at the White House.

I was particularly anxious to see how the President was standing up under the strain of this terrific pace, this unprecedented speed that has caused us all to marvel. Not many days ago I had seen his picture on the screen in a newsreel, the signing of the beer bill, and the camera made him look as though he had immense dark circles under his eyes. But the Camera must have been wrong. When I chatted with him this morning at the White House he looked like an athlete, in perfect health. Neither tired nor haggard, but right on his toes. Not worried -- apparently. In excellent humor, ready to smile, ready to laugh -- and ready to be serious too.

I was fortunate enough to be taken straight through the crowd in the outer office. Steve Early, one of the President's secretaries, a tall, handsome, smiling old-time newspaperman, met me and said: "Come straight in and meet the President now." So we walked through a spacious, square, absolutely plain room, so crowded with newspapermen that you couldn't see anything else. I found the President seated behind a plain mahogany desk, in a perfectly circular room, some thirty feet in diameter. On the walls, all the way round, were two rows of colored prints, scenes along the Hudson River, scenes dear to Franklin Roosevelt - incidentally he's a great collector of prints. The ~~sun~~ sun streamed in from the bay-windows overlooking the White House lawn.

The President wore a plain grey suit, dark red necktie, and above that his billion dollar smile. The semi-weekly press conference was just over. Mr. Roosevelt had gone through the ordeal of being questioned by 150 of the crack reporters of the United States and apparently it hadn't phased him. He obviously has a supple mind and nerves of the finest tempered steel. In short, I got the impression that

we have the good fortune to have not only a keen President, but a calm President -- one with a sense of humor.

When you have an interview with the President, that is, just at present, you are not expected to go away and quote him. However, we all know what he has been doing. And I thought you might be interested to know that it doesn't look as though the pace is telling on him.

Men who have been Washington veterans for an entire generation tell me that the feverish rush of activity that has prevailed here in Washington since Mr. Roosevelt's inauguration beats anything they've ever seen. Maybe it was as keen during the war, but certainly it was no keener. The congestion in the executive offices is almost incredible even to the eyes of newspapermen. Hardboiled reporters who have been covering Washington through five administrations tell me that Washington never was so interesting. You can imagine it must be when even newspapermen get excited about it.

I happened to land in the Capital on the very day when official circles had reason to be disgruntled. The reason was, of course, a fifteen per cent flat cut in the salaries of all of Uncle Sam's hired men -- and women. I can't help observing that on the whole, Uncle Sam's employees are taking it in sportsmanlike fashion. When President Hoover put over an "enforced furlough" for them, amounting to a cut of about eight and a third per cent, there was a terrific roar.

But President Roosevelt cancelled the enforced furlough. Instead of it he put over a flat cut of fifteen per cent. And everybody takes it -- and likes it. It's the spirit of the day. It's the change that has come over the country.

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

After I had met the President this morning, I was standing for a moment in the room that was the office of Joe Tumulty, back in war days when Tumulty was Secretary to Woodrow Wilson. I hadn't been in the room since the war. And as I stood there thinking of days gone by, another gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, came out of the President's room, his face wreathed in smiles. I recognized him as a Republican, not only a Republican, but a man who had been a member of the Little Cabinet in a Republican administration before the time of Mr. Hoover. And he said to me:

"The atmosphere of the White House is utterly different than it has been in all my time. I have never seen anything like it." He was referring to the informality. Then he added:- "People come and go, and there seems to be no red tape. There's an air of confidence. Democrats and Republicans alike seem pleased. Yes," said my Republican friend, "Franklin Roosevelt is a leader, and from coast to coast the country is with him."

Before leaving the White House I sat for a moment

on the end of a big mahogany table, looking around at the crowd of newspapermen in the outer office, just a few feet from the room where the President works.

Colonel E. W. Starling, Assistant Chief of the White House Secret Service, who has been there for twenty-one years, came over to me and said: "That table you are sitting on is the one that President Theodore Roosevelt used for his Cabinet meetings, and the spot where you are sitting is where T.R. used to lean and pound his fist. Those dents you see in the table," he added with a laugh, "may have been made by T.R.'s Big Stick."

Then the Colonel told me that there were more newspaper men covering the White House now than ever before, in fact a third more, about one hundred and fifty of them. It is interesting to watch them. There goes the gray-haired veteran, Mark Sullivan, of the New York Herald Tribune. Here comes Arthur Krock of the New York Times -- Ray Tucker and Ray Clapper of the United Press, George Van Slyke of the N.Y. Sun. Over there sits Leroy Vernon of the Chicago Daily News,

scores of famous men whose articles you read every day.
And brilliant men they are. To a man they seem to be
enthusiastic about the new occupant of the White House.

SECURITIES

The President, in the language of the sporting writers, said a mouthful today to the financial world. This was in his message demanding Federal control of the traffic investment securities so as to protect investors. Mr. Roosevelt used these words:

"What we seek is a return to a clearer understanding of the ancient truth that those who manage banks, corporations, or other agencies handling or using the peoples' money, are trustees acting for others."

The President's message was only three hundred words long. Accompanying it was a bill drawn up by his advisors which he said would act to protect investors and depositors. He said furthermore that he would later recommend legislation to correct unethical and unsafe practices ~~of~~ on the part of officers and directors of banks. In effect the ~~SEKIX~~ Securities Bill does away with the old notion ^{of caveat emptor -} ~~that~~ the buyer ^{beware,} ~~has to take care of himself.~~ It puts the burden on the seller of stocks. It means that ^{the} utmost information and publicity must be available whenever promoters try to put over an issue of securities.

RAILROADS

The American railroad man is soon going to be in the same position as baseball players. The railroads are to have their Judge Landis. That is, when President Roosevelt has his way about it.

He is going to suggest that Congress appoint what is called a Federal Coordinator of Railroads. This new official will have quite broad authority to deal with the railway situation in the U.S.A. And under him will be assistants who will control the railroads within various regions.

What this coordinator and his aides will do is to straighten out the railroad situation generally, and particularly as regards duplication of service. They will also bring about consolidations of several lines for the sake of the general efficiency. Moreover -- there will be a readjustment of capitalization and a reduction of fixed charges. In other words what the President wants to have done is to make the railroads of the U.S.A. into one uniform and unified system instead of as at present, a medley of warring and overlapping groups.

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MRS. ROOSEVELT

If ever there was a person who has been libelled by photographers, it is Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt. To say that the pictures of her that have been published don't do her justice is to put it mildly. None of them comes near conveying the exceeding distinction of the woman.

She is exceptionally tall but carries herself admirably. Those who observed her as she came from New York to Washington in an airplane this morning couldn't help being struck by her genuine simplicity, her unaffected avoidance of pomp, ceremony, and official escort. When she goes to and fro between New York and Washington, she does not engage a special machine but travels in one of the regular planes of the Eastern Transport line -- one of those big Curtiss Condors. She knows the personnel of the airports, at both Newark and Washington, and remembers personal details about all of them.

Just to show how little she goes in for fuss and feathers, she arrived at the airport at Newark this morning without any bodyguard. One lone motorcycle policeman was

hovering around, but very much in the background. There was no barrier of secret service men around the President's wife, though she was accompanied by a small troop of female friends. Any one who sees her under such circumstances is bound to realize that here's a woman who lives her life vigorously and completely, and who seems to enjoy it to the hilt. All the way down to Washington she seemed to take her flight in a completely matter of fact way -- as though it were a subway ride to Brooklyn.

GERMANY

There seems no doubt that the treatment of Jews in Germany bears the stamp of Government approval. Here for instance is a statement from Chancellor Hitler. Said he:-

"Jews of the world will have to realize that the war of foreign Jews against Germany will affect Jews within Germany."

He was moved to say this by news of the boycott agitation in the U.S.A., and the mass meetings and radio speeches over here.

Meanwhile a violent demonstration against Jews was going on in several towns in Silesia. In one of them a crowd assembled outside the Court House, demanding that all Jewish judges and lawyers be kicked out.

On the other hand, Jewish shops in several towns which had been closed by Nazi storm troopers were re-opened this morning on orders from Berlin.

The official boycott against Jews in Germany is to begin April 1st. Nevertheless, some of the more zealous of the Nazis have gone ahead of the starting gun.

In some universities Jewish professors were prevented from entering classrooms. The boycott spread even to the schools. Only a small proportion of Jewish children will be allowed to attend the public schools.

CHEMISTS

I saw a man today who declares that by adding lubricating oil to gasoline you increase its efficiency. Before you get ready to criticize I'd better warn you that the gentleman who said this is a chemist, Dr. Egloff of Chicago. The American Chemical Society is holding a convention at the Hotel Willard in Washington, and the corridors of the Willard resound with talk on all sorts of curious subjects. But it interests me to hear Dr. Egloff say that the insertion of a minute quantity of lubricating oil in the gas tank increases mileage from four to eight per cent, and decreases repair bills.

Seeing and eavesdropping on these chemists ~~at~~ *at the Willard* is quite instructive. You may think of chemists as men with long beards and spectacles, pattering around with reports and test tubes. As a matter of fact these chemists are exceedingly practical men who are trying to make cheaper ^{and better} the things you use every day. For instance, one of the things they are trying to do is make telephone receivers out of rayon, and lace out of cellulose. In fact they have a long list of similar ideas.

BEER

Even the passing of the Beer bill doesn't seem to bring much cheer to H. L. Mencken, the famous ~~beer~~ philosopher of Baltimore. Under the new law, he says, beer will be bad and dear. In explanation he declared: "Absurd politicians are proposing to load beer with heavy taxes and raise its price and lower its quality." Then he wanted to know, "Why should beer be taxed differently than any other merchandise?" He answered his own question by saying that it is just because the notion still prevails that the drinking of beer is somehow or other immoral.

I'd like to have been present at that encounter between George Bernard Shaw and Alice Brady, the actress, in Hollywood. G.B.S. was in one of his candid moods. The very first thing he picked on was Alice Brady's hat. Said he: "Why does a girl with such a pretty face as yours wear such a hideous hat as that?"

2 Friends of mine who know Miss Brady ~~will~~ tell me that she rather prides herself on her taste in hats, and also that, impartially speaking, her taste is quite good, that is, for a woman.

The reporters do not tell us what Miss Brady replied. Usually she's a smart and witty person, quite capable of taking care of herself even in an encounter with Shaw, whiskers and all.

When he got back to the liner which is carrying him and Mrs. Shaw on their trip around the world, the Ulster playwright was asked what he had seen in southern California. And he replied: "Oh nothing. Just rocks, grass, vegetables, and Americans."

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ENDING

Oh yes, and I saw President Roosevelt's steam roller in action this afternoon on Capitol Hill, and it was a sight to behold. It moved irresistibly. Nothing could stop it. The Senate convened at noon, but adjourned in less than an hour. All the fireworks were in the House. That's where ~~xxx~~ I saw the President's steam roller. The Congressmen were discussing Mr. Roosevelt's Forest Conservation measure, already passed by the Senate, and a few moments ago the House passed without a record vote the re-forestation bill. Several minor changes will cause it to go back to the Senate tomorrow where it will be rushed through. Did those Congressmen engage in lengthy debate? Not a bit of it. Brevity is in the air on Capitol Hill. There was plenty of opposition. Many Congressmen, a score or more, offered amendments to the bill which shaggy-eyebrowed Representative Byrns of Tennessee, Democratic leader, said would put 250,000 men to work. The Clerk of the House would read each amendment. Then the Congressmen wouldn't let any one make speeches about it. They would shout: "Vote!" Whereupon the Acting Speaker of the House would put

it to a vote, and with a roar like thunder each amendment would be voted down, and each seemed to be voted down more vehemently than the other. And that's the way your representatives on Capitol Hill are backing up the high-speed ~~work~~ work of the new President.

Each time the Acting Speaker of the House would say "All in favor of the amendment say Aye," there would be a few feeble Ayes. Then he would sing out, "All opposed?--"

NO!!!!

And so on and so on -- and So Long Until Tomorrow.