

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Today Naval district headquarters at Norfolk had intercepted a radio message from Uncle Sam's cruiser TUSCALOOSA. The commander of the TUSCALOOSA was notifying the Navy Department that the big German liner COLUMBUS was being scuttled in mid-ocean and the American cruiser was standing by to take off the crew.

A couple of minutes later came a bulletin, from the White House. President Roosevelt had just received word from the Navy Department and was making public what he had learned. The TUSCALOOSA had come across that thirty-two thousand ton German luxury liner four hundred miles out at sea -- sinking.

When the War broke out, the COLUMBUS was in the Caribbean, with eith hundred American passengers aboard, on a luxury crusie.

She was one of the most expensive vessels of the German mercantile marine and listed as the thirteenth largest liner in the world.

When news came of <sup>the British declaration of war</sup> ~~Germany's invasion of Poland~~, the commander of the COLUMBUS put into the Dutch West Indies. But there the harbor wasn't large enough, so she made for Havana, disembarked her passengers, ~~there~~, and then steamed off at full speed for Vera Cruz. Last week on December Fourteenth, the COLUMBUS weighed anchor, with oil and provisions enough for fifty days at sea. The rumor was that she was bound for Oslo, ~~the capital of~~ Norway.

8  
A later ~~addition to the~~ bulletin brings <sup>word</sup> ~~the fact~~ that the TUSCALOOSA found the COLUMBUS sinking in the presence of a British destroyer. But the Navy Department said further that so far as was known, no violation of neutrality had been committed. The report that she was scuttled by her own men is not definite, merely an inference <sup>so far.</sup> ~~as yet.~~ The guess is that when the British destroyer overtook the COLUMBUS, the Germans gave up hope and opened the seacocks sooner than see the enemy <sup>have possession</sup> ~~confiscation~~ of one of their crack liners.



## FREIGHTER

The folks at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, had a free show today; ~~They got~~ front seats for an unexpected war spectacle.

A German freighter, on her way from Vera Cruz, Mexico, was plowing the deep, when a large warship hove in sight. According to one resident of Fort Lauderdale, it was a British ship and she fired a shot across the bow of the German freighter. The ~~German~~ freighter immediately turned about, putting on the steam until she got within American territorial waters, then anchored and hoisted a flag asking for a pilot boat. The British warship remained at sea beyond the <sup>3 mile</sup> limit. ~~of American territorial waters~~

It later turned out that the German freighter left Vera Cruz at about the same time that the COLUMBUS <sup>sailed.</sup> ~~a big German~~ ~~luxury liner, also sailed.~~ The COLUMBUS evidently had been instructed to take a long chance and make a quick dash across the Atlantic, relying upon fortune and cunning in evading the British sea dogs. So the belief in some quarters is that the British warship, which fired a shot across the bow of that German freighter near Florida, may have thought she had nabbed the luxurious big COLUMBUS.

Later in the day, the proceedings outside Fort Lauderdale became more clear. It was a British cruiser, H.M.S. ORION, which almost nabbed ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> German freighter.



EXETER

In all the excitement over the sinking of the Graf Spee, the British Cruiser Exeter was comparatively forgotten. She was the one driven out of that naval battle, forced to withdraw, limping away from the scene of action.

The British Admiralty made public today a report on the battle from one of His Majesty's Colonial Governors, presumably the Governor of the Falkland Islands.

The Graf Spee's fifth and seventh salvos had scored direct hits, the account said. "The forward turret of the Exeter was struck and eight of a crew of fifteen marines were killed," it continued. "The bridge was damaged, but the captain of the Exeter escaped injury.

"The Exeter then closed in and was again hit three or four times by shells from the Graf Spee. Finally the Exeter came within range of the Graf Spee's five ~~nine-inch~~ <sup>nine-inch</sup> guns and returned shot for shot until only one eight-inch gun -- on the Exeter -- could be fired by hand."

30

"The Exeter's steering gear was damaged and the Captain steered for forty-five minutes by the boat compass from the after control near the mainmast," the Colonial Governor said. "Meanwhile the ship's sides and upper works were riddled."

"Orders were transmitted from the after control to the engine room by a chain of ten sailors until the ship no longer was serviceable as a fighting unit and fell out of action. Numerous fires broke out and the seamen threw burning material off the deck. Fire-fighting parties fought below decks."

(The Exeter limped fourteen hundred miles from the scene of the battle of the Falklands, carrying sixty-one dead and twenty-three wounded.)



FINNS

The latest from invaded Finland is that the Soviet forces in the Far North are now a hundred and twenty miles south of Petsamo. The Bolsheviks have ten or twelve thousand men massed up there in the Arctic Circle. But observers in Norway declare that the situation <sup>really</sup> ~~is there~~ amounts to a stalemate, ~~now~~. The principal thing the Russians have to do is ~~to~~ consolidate, and on the other hand that will give the Finns plenty of time to strengthen their defense lines. Meanwhile, it grows colder and colder in those Arctic regions, making fighting more difficult on both sides.

On the southwest coast of Finland, Russian bombers made a raid, setting fire to the <sup>famous old city</sup> ~~town~~ of Abo, ~~a port on the southwest coast,~~ <sup>harbors</sup> one of the most important in Finland. It's ninety miles west of Helsinki, and used to be the capital of the country and is still the third largest city. The famous humanitarian bombers of Stalin also made a raid on Viborg, but there, it is claimed, they had <sup>not</sup> much success. ~~and in~~ Six Red aircraft were shot down. On the Karelian Isthmus, the Soviet Army launched further heavy attacks but were repulsed. They suffered severe losses of men, and numerous tanks were destroyed.

2

The Supreme Allied War Council ~~made~~ met in Paris today and received advices from Helsinki. No announcement was made after the meeting of the War Council. But (there's a reliable report that the Finnish Government had advised Great Britain and France that the Finns could hold out all winter provided they got some help.) And ~~there was another string to that optimism,~~ Provided also that the usual heavy snows fall on and after Christmas.

One piece of Finnish news originates in America.

(Ex-President Herbert Hoover sent a cable to the Prime Minister of Finland; ~~It was~~ quite a useful cable, for it remitted a hundred thousand dollars, just one part of the first week's receipts of the Finnish Relief Fund. *being raised over here.*)



AMERICAN PLANES

(The Finnish Government will soon get a shipment of  
forty-four <sup>American</sup> fighting <sup>planes</sup> ~~American airships, new ones at that.~~ <sup>Planes</sup> They  
~~was~~ originally put together for Uncle Sam's Navy. <sup>The Navy</sup> ~~Uncle~~ took  
delivery of ten of them. But meanwhile an improved model of the  
same plane was devised. So the Government consented to the other  
forty-four of that consignment being sent to Helsinki. (The sale  
was approved today by the joint aeronautical board of the Army and  
Navy.)

Extra

President Roosevelt was back in Washington today, and the newspaper men asked him about that House investigation of his National Labor Relations Board, what did he think of it. Mr. Roosevelt replied, he was ashamed to say he hadn't read all the testimony.

They asked him about his forthcoming message to Congress, what was he going to say? Was it true he had made drastic cuts in the budget? To this Mr. Roosevelt would not reply definitely. He said he would rather put it this way, that a lot of government departments and agencies think the cuts he has made are most drastic. (He also told the public that one good guess about his message is that he'll remind Congress about a pledge it did not keep, a solemn promise to raise five hundred and fifty million dollars in taxes to pay for farm benefits.)



LABOR BOARD

The investigation into the National Labor Relations Board furnished some more drama today. On the stand was Nathan Witt, Secretary of the Board, the official who was put on the pan by Board Member Leiserson last week. Today's proceedings brought to light one action by Secretary Witt which was interesting, to put it mildly. It happened back in Nineteen Thirty-Seven, when the Little Steel Strike was in the air. Secretary Witt went to the help of the C.I.O. strike leaders -- advised them how to obtain a ruling from the Board.

This became known through a memorandum that Witt wrote to the General Counsel of the N.L.R.B. That memorandum was read to the Committee today. The Congressmen asked Secretary Witt about this. Congressman Halleck of Indiana wanted to know whether this memorandum did not show that he and other officials of the National Labor Board were laying down a strategy to set a trap for Inland Steel Company. Secretary Witt replied that he didn't like the word "Strategy". Then the Committee's counsel jumped into the fray and asked him if he would prefer the word "conspiracy".

That word touched off the fireworks. Everybody present decided that it was not a private fight, and almost everybody started talking at once and in their loudest voices.

FARM AID

Secretary Wallace's boys at the Department of Agriculture are working out a new <sup>idea.</sup> ~~gag~~. It's a plan to help the farmers without inflating the budget. In other words, the farmers are to get more money, but it won't come out of the taxes. That is, if the plan is adopted.

~~I can hear farmers who are listening in, demanding to know at this moment, "Then what is the gag? Who is to be the goat?"~~

~~The answer is that~~ The extra money is to come out of the pockets of the consumer, ~~or, putting it crudely, the consumer is to be the goat.~~ And here's the way it works:- Let's assume you're a wheat farmer. The parity price is a dollar and twenty-five cents a bushel. The market price is only a dollar. How then is the farmer to get his dollar and a quarter? Before he takes his wheat to the mill, he gets a certificate from the Department of Agriculture worth a quarter for each bushel of wheat. <sup>Whereupon</sup> ~~so~~ he takes his wheat to the mill together with his ~~xx~~ certificate. The miller pays the farmer a dollar for the wheat and a quarter for the certificate. The miller then in turn, when ~~z~~ he sells the flour, sells the certificate along with it, and whoever buys the flour has to buy the certificate too. Thus all along the line that extra quarter a



bushel for the farmer's wheat is passed along to the last purchaser. He can frame the certificates and hang 'em on the wall.

~~C. J. Sumner~~ Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1939.

ELECTIONS

Here's a guess of the Republican Party's chances next year as seen by a big-shot Democrat. Senator Bert Wheeler of Montana has been swinging the circle through the west for to see what he could see and to hear what he could hear, and probably mend ~~met~~ a couple of political fences or so on the way. He returned to Washington today, and notified the newspaper men he had something to say. But he wouldn't say what they most wanted to hear, which was - "What about your own candidacy for the Democratic nomination?"

"Nothing doing on that," said the Montana Senator, <sup>who</sup> ~~sent~~  
~~President Roosevelt's intentions become known. He then~~ went on to  
<sup>declare</sup>  
~~say~~ that the national tendency out west is towards the Republican Party. And if the Democrats nominate a conservative, the voters will stick to their G.O.P. They'll vote for a Republican rather than for a reactionary Democrat. But, he added, he thinks a liberal Democrat would win the west. He declined to say which  
<sup>or what a liberal democrat was or even</sup>  
liberal Democrat, ~~and he declined even to~~ hint that such a Democrat  
should come from Montana, <sup>or that his name begins</sup>  
with W.



ENCLEBERG

In a Brooklyn department store a <sup>woman</sup>~~man~~ was buying toys, ~~not only a normal but a laudable occupation for this time of year.~~ While she was doing so she let drop some remarks and mentioned the name "Haas." Something in those remarks and the name attracted the attention of the sales girl <sup>who</sup>~~in that Brooklyn department store, who~~ happened to be an avid reader of newspapers. She tipped off the police. The ~~police~~ followed ~~up~~ the lead ~~which led them~~ all the way to Canada. They ~~took with them photostats of fingerprints, the fingerprints left by a killer.~~

~~The cops picked up the trail in Toronto.~~ And there today <sup>arrested a man,</sup> they ~~had a man under arrest,~~ a former pugilist whose names are Ernie Haas and also Walter Kaehler. They arrested him, they say, because his fingerprints corresponded with those left behind him in the room where Dr. Walter Richard Engleberg was found dead on December Sixth. Yes, Engleberg, <sup>the</sup> First Secretary of the German Consulate General in New York. And, say the cops, they have a confession from this Ernie Haas, the boxer whom they arrested in Toronto.

57  
<sup>all because of</sup>  
~~a suspect arrested through~~ a couple of casual careless remarks dropped in a department store. ~~there's food for a philosopher or a fiction writer.~~

EXTORTION

And here's a tale that some sentimental people would find it difficult to believe. The vice-president of an Philadelphia insurance company in ~~Brooklyn~~ received an extortion note. It notified him to leave ten thousand dollars in a certain spot on a certain date, ~~and~~ on pain of dire happenings.

The insurance vice-president turned the note over to the police, and the cops laid a trap for the writer of <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ note. A decoy package was planted at the spot designated in the letter, ~~a spot~~ near a hospital. Thirteen detectives, ~~thirteen huskies~~ disguised as hospital orderlies, physicians and other persons, were lying in wait. Presently along came a man who picked up the decoy package. He was one of the orderlies at the hospital. He was arrested, held without bail, questioned, and according to his own account, ~~treated with the utmost roughness~~, given the third degree.

In the midst of the <sup>third degree</sup> ~~torture process~~, the police, <sup>got a</sup> ~~received~~ ~~from somebody else:~~ a confession. A couple of schoolboys, one of them, the son of a clergyman, had written that extortion note to the insurance vice-president, <sup>and did it</sup> ~~plotted a crime~~ for the thrill of it. When they heard that an innocent man had been arrested, however, their

58



EXTORTION - 2

conscience pricked them, and they told their parents. The clergyman father promptly went to the police. The innocent hospital orderly was released. The schoolboys were taken before the presiding judge of the Philadelphia County Court. And they say it'll be a long time before they forget the remarks made by that presiding judge.

BYRD

8 1/2  
Here's the latest from Admiral Byrd and his ~~latest~~ expedition to the South Pole. They have just figured out that they probably won't be able to celebrate December Twenty-Fifth. The reason for that is, that they won't see December Twenty-Fifth, there will be no such date for them. As the Byrd flagship, the NORTH STAR, is going now, she'll probably cross the international dateline on the Twenty-Fourth. So doing, everybody aboard automatically loses a day. The Byrd expedition thus will jump clear out of December Twenty-Fifth into December Twenty-Sixth. *They lose Christmas.*

59  
~~But the friends or relatives of the men with Byrd need not be anxious on that account.~~ <sup>H</sup> The Rear Admiral's radio message says <sup>that</sup> even if all of Christmas Day is lost, Christmas packages will come out of the hold just the same and there'll be turkey and fixings on the table regardless of what the calendar says.

59 1/4  
*And what do you say, Hugh?*