

L.T.-OLDS. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1962

(L.T. on South Sea Islands, Antarctica, Asia,
Europe trip. Bc. given by Doug Edwards of CBS.)

GOOD EVENING :

Thank you Dick, and good evening everybody.

Starting off - Nassau, the Bahamas. There's a report
President Kennedy, in conversations with Prime Minister
Macmillan, has agreed tentatively to supply Polaris missiles
to Britain -- provided an independent British striking force
eventually becomes part of the North Atlantic Alliance nuclear
deterrent. The Polaris would take the place of the disputed
Skybolt, which the U.S. apparently has decided to stop
producing because of its poor record so far. Mr. Macmillan is
described as being highly pleased with the solution in this
matter which has put a thorn in British-American relations.

CUBA

Over here, the American Red Cross says it has both the supplies and the ships, ready to go to Cuba, and bring back the eleven hundred thirteen Bay of Pigs prisoners. If Attorney James Donovan successfully completes his negotiations with Fidel Castro, which are continuing in Havana tonight. Thousands of pounds of food, drugs and medical supplies have been pouring into Florida to be used as ransom.

INTRO. TO L.T.

Time now to hear from Lowell Thomas, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if he's still down there, as far south as anybody can go. Am I right, Lowell? Where are you now?

SOUTH_POLE #2

I'm still at the South Pole, Doug. You may think I am slightly mad when I say that I'd like to stay here, under the ice, for a week or two. But for a year? - - I'm not so sure. If it was my job, something interesting to do, studying cosmic rays or whatever probably so. There are twenty-two young men here for a year. Eleven scientists; the other eleven Navy personnel including the Seabees who maintain this place down here in the ice. Not on top of it.

On the surface here at the Pole, it's much too cold and too windy, but down in this tunnel, in the ice, it's warm - even with your coat off. But there above us, on the ice, the temperature drops to as low as one hundred and forty degrees below. And winds sweep across this white continent at from a hundred to two hundred miles an hour.

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So the boys - nearly all of them in their twenties - live in great tunnels deep in the ice. This year, the Mayor of South Pole Village is a doctor: Navy Lieutenant Dan Bessinger, officer in command at the Pole. He has a first name that could cause confusion. His second happens to be "Dan". His first name is "Colonel". But how could you address him by that in the Navy? When your plane lands you here on the ice, you see no evidence of human habitation, except gasoline drums, a radio antenna, and some mysterious looking small wooden structures that mark the shafts where you descend into the snow tunnels. As far as you can see, only snow and ice, and snow in every direction to the horizon.

By the way, these tunnels are not that, when first cut. At first they are great trenches carved out by huge machines manufactured in

Switzerland, each machine weighing twenty tons, powered by General Motors diesel engines and propelled by a system of hydraulic pumps and motors that are difficult to explain. They are flown here in sections and then assembled. With one you can cut a swathe nine feet wide, four feet deep and three hundred feet long, that is, in half an hour. So each trench that becomes a tunnel is the result of a series of such cuts, the machine milling the snow and hurling it seventy feet or so in the air. When the trench is from twenty-eight to thirty-six feet deep. the whole thing is covered over with eight guage galvanized iron segments, and snow is packed on top, so on the surface you can walk over a tunnel or drive a weasel over it, and not know it is there.

Where a tunnel is only used for communications purposes - going from one area to another - it is a

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great circular metal tube, from fifteen to thirty-six feet in diameter. In the tunnels are wooden buildings, pre-fabricated structures, in units, large enough so that each may have four or five rooms, mess hall, offices, laboratories, sleeping quarters, and so on. These structures are shoved into the tunnels. They are several feet narrower than the tunnel, so there is room for a walkway on either side; a space that also keeps the heat in the buildings from melting the walls of the snow tunnels. And they are built several feet off the floor. One tunnel down here where I am is eighteen hundred feet long - more than a third of a mile.

The whole thing is so ingenious you have to see it, or a picture of it, to appreciate what the seabees have done to make it possible for scientists to work here in the heart of the most

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desolate region on earth, where there was no life at all until they came. Penguins, seals and whales along the coast, but no living thing across the thousands of miles of this great white continent, in the heart of which I am at the moment, right at the South Pole.

So long!

FOLLOW L.T.

Well, Lowell, we've had some cold weather in New York recently -- makes me almost wish I were there too. So long, and we'll be hearing from you again soon.

FOLLOW L.T.

So long, Lowell, it was good to hear from you and we'll be hearing from you again soon.

MERGER

Two of the nation's biggest overseas air carriers are planning a marriage. Directors of Pan American World Airways and Trans-World Airlines have approved plans to merge into a globe spanning system that would exceed in assets the proposed joining of American and Eastern airlines.

However, there are many hurdles ahead. The shareholders of Pan Am and TWA must approve. So must the Civil Aeronautics Board, and President Kennedy. In addition, TWA's domestic competitors also may object with heavy fine.

NAME

There's a young lady sophomore at Texas Technological College in Lubbock, Texas, who says that the trouble with her name is that people expect her to be jolly all the time -- although she admits she has her bad days just like everyone else. Her family name dates back to her great-grandfather and she's spent her life convincing doubters she isn't kidding when she introduces herself. But, she admits it always gives her something to talk about, especially at this time of year. Her name? Mary Christmas.

And now, a fella who has No-el -- in his name.

ODDITIES

Richard, three items, the first from Dickinson, North Dakota, where the police chief says a patrolman was more surprised than irritated when he saw a fifteen year old girl back up her car on a state highway, stop for a red light and then -- continue backing up. The little lady told the officer she had put too many miles on the car and was trying to take them off, before returning to her parents.

Number two - from Wales, where railway officials wondered what to do with a consignment of live goats that ate their cardboard destination labels.

Number three - from Racine, Wisconsin. Young man named Hank Lem - age nineteen - arrived from China only a few days ago - wasn't sure how to mail a letter. But he tried. He went to a downtown street corner, saw a box and pulled the lever.

Ten fire trucks roared to the scene. Roaring to our scene right now with a message, Dick Noel, and I'll be back tomorrow.