

L.T. - Sun. Thurs. Jan. 4 1934.

Flood

The scary word of "flood" flashed again in California today. There might have been a panic but -----.

A United Airline pilot shortly after taking off from Los Angeles, bound for San Francisco, saw what seemed to him ominous signs in the huge aqueduct which supplies the City of Angels with water. One of the largest dams in the world. And the signs were: "a break!" He promptly radioed headquarters that the dam had burst, and was about to go out. With the speed of panic the authorities investigated. Then they started to laugh. So much mud and silt had been deposited in the aqueduct by recent rains that the engineers had purposely made small openings in the dam just to allow a certain amount of water to flow out, to clear up the Los Angeles drinking water. But from the sky that released water made it look as though the dam were bursting.

Budget

Here are some figures that ought to make your eyes pop out, like Eddie Cantor's. It's President Roosevelt's Budget. He sent it to Congress today. And that's no Eddie Cantor matter. In the first place, for the current year ending June thirtieth, Uncle Sam has a nice little deficit of seven billion three hundred and nine million odd dollars. That's minus, not plus. But that's only the beginning. For the following year the President and his councillors expect an additional deficit of another two billion. Wait a minute, there's more to come. To pay all the bills that will be pouring in poor Old Uncle Sam will have to borrow ten billion dollars before July first. However, four billion of this will be for refunding, that is, for replacing short time debts by long time obligations. So there you have a birdseye view of the invoice of what the recovery program is costing.

But there's another side to the picture. Mr. Roosevelt also informed Congress that he expects to have the Budget balanced by nineteen thirty-five, and, by nineteen thirty six

the government will be able to function on the "pay as you go" basis.

There's another bit of good news in this Presidential message. There are to be no new taxes except on liquor, and, no jacking up of the present income taxes. Hence the proposal to borrow ten billion dollars. The President feels that tax burdens are heavy enough. And that ought to bring a cheer. However, he does propose to stop up the leaks in the income tax law which have enabled some rich to escape paying anything at all.

And the President has established co-ordinated control over emergency expenditures. Hereafter, by executive order the Bureau of the Budget will see to it that the boys spend the money in a systematic and harmoniously regulated way.

Another significant fact is that the President evidently expects nothing from foreign governments by way of payments on war debts.

Unlike the optimistic budgets submitted by his predecessor this one leaves out all mention of foreign debt payments.

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Naturally the reading of this message was a breath-taker in both the Senate and the House. Probably a breath-taker for the country.

Both houses adjourned soon after receiving the message. Only a little routine business was transacted. One thing that happened came when the Senate Finance Committee brought in a favorable report on the appointment of Henry Morgenthau, Junior, as Secretary of the Treasury.

Plane Crash

Here's a bit of stout-hearted endurance. It happened to Raymond Cote, a young racing pilot who has pulled many a spectacular stunt in the sky. His license had lapsed and he was making a series of flights at Joliet, Illinois, to get his licence renewed. While he was only a hundred and sixty feet in the air his ship burst into flames. It was too low for him to bail out. So he landed, a flaming coffin coming to earth. And the experts say it was a miraculous landing. To keep the flames from reaching the cockpit he came down in a side slip. Then he jumped out and walked to meet the rescue party. Then he collapsed. The flames had caught him, but there is a chance he may survive. Let's hope he does.

Kidnap

A kidnapping story from Omaha. An eleven year old boy disappeared from an orphanage. The police found him in the company of a man who had abducted him. The kidnapper told a pathetic story of having been so heartbroken since he had lost his own son that he had taken the lad from the orphanage to replace the loss. That's the heart throb. Now for the seamy side of it. The police investigated further and found the man was an ex-convict with a long record. They say he had stolen the boy to teach the lad to rob and make a thief of him. The kidnapper and the boy were out on the first job when the police picked them up.

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Raid

Chicago, exciting Chicago, kicks in with a swift moving thriller tonight. A gang made a raid on the officers of a coal company. The head of the concern declined to be held up. He pulled a gun out of a drawer and got the drop on the robbers. Two of them sprinted out through the back door and one dashed out of the front. The first two saw the other one running towards them. They mistook him for a cop. Bang! Bang! They shot him. When he was down they realized their mistake. They pulled him into their car and went speeding away.

Sun Men At Placid

I am in here at a gathering of Sun dealers. They're clustered all around - the men who provide you with Blue Sunoco in the north-eastern part of the country. They've been having a great time with a bit of music. And the old country fiddler is sitting there in the corner.

Voice: Say, Lowell, there ought to be some pretty good hunting around here for Hadd Fuller of Oswego County.

L. T.: You bet there is -- in season. The trouble is, you never can tell what you're shooting. I was over at a remarkable taxidermist shop in Saranac today. The taxidermist is Charlie Dickert and he told me about a hunter who on his way home saw a game warden. He called the game warden over and said proudly, "See what I got."

"Oh yeah?", said the game warden, "Come along with me! It's agin the law to shoot an elk."

"I didn't know it was an elk," said the unfortunate hunter. "Something just went streaking by and I took a shot at it. I thought it was a deer." So -- he had to pay a fine.

And then Taxidermist Dickert told me about a neighbor of his who called excitedly on the telephone and said he had shot a great white duck.

"Well," drawled the expert who stuffs animals, "It might be a swan."

And that's what it was. The hunter had fired into a flock of geese and killed a swan. So, he had to pay a fine because there is no open season for shooting swan.

So, you fellows had better be careful.

Voice: Oh, these fellows are alright, they couldn't hit anything! Especially Del Heiser! (laughter)

Another Voice: That's right, all we can do is fall down on the ice. (laughter)

L.T.: Yes, I did see some of you fellows spinning in a few dives on skates this morning. But, don't let that discourage you, The best of skaters take a spill now and then.

Albert E. Potts, the figure skating professional here at Lake Placid, tells me about a recent grand ice carnival over in London.

All the skating champions in the world were there -- and so were the King and Queen. That was the trouble! Not that King George fell down on the ice. Neither did Queen Mary. It was the skating champs that fell down, landed on their ears and slid on their noses. The royal presence made the wizzards of the ice frightened and nervous, and one after another they fell down.

The grand triumph was scored by an American girl figure skating champion. She went cavorting through a bewitching series of sliding figures. Then her feet flew out from under her and she sat down. It was as spectacular a sit-down as has ever been seen on the ice.

What did she do in that embarrassing moment? Sitting there on the ice, the American girl champion made a charming curtsey to the King and Queen. She bowed, posed her arms gracefully and smiled. Then she coolly got up and went through

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the rest of her act. The British skaters, who had also fallen down before the King and Queen, made acid remarks about -- Yankee cheek.

Voice: Well, the King and Queen should have seen Pete Cragin here when he sat down on the ice this morning.

France

Uproar in France. A financial uproar. Bank busted.

Bank President missing. It's the Municipal Bank of Bayonne, and it blew up to the tune of a quarter of a billion francs.

The most important sequel to this today is that the French police have asked Scotland Yard to look for the missing Bank President.

He is a Russian, Alexander Stavinsky. Like other European financial magnificos whose operations have ended in big crashes this Stavinsky is described as a mystery man. He arrived in France from Russia several years ago and became a French citizen. The Gendarmes believe that London will be his first stop. A mystery to me is how these mystery men become heads of great banks.

Mussolini

Those important conferences between Mussolini and Sir John Simon in Rome are still being kept secret. An official statement gives us the illuminating information that the two statesmen had a cordial colloquy. However, the Fascist newspapers give us a hint of what is going on. They declare that it is useless to try to persuade the important nations to disarm in a big way. The best that can be hoped for is some reasonable adjustment.

Wreck

Another heavy fog over European waters. Off the hook of Holland a German steamer collided with a British ship. The German vessel sank. The chief officer was lost. The rest of the crew was saved.

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Monster

Great Britain is still talking about that mysterious monster seen in the waters and on the banks of Loch Ness, in Scotland. Even the historic House of Commons has taken up the subject of sea serpents because of it. In reply to a question His Majesty's government stated that it was skeptical of the existence of the creature.

But, a serious investigation was conducted recently by a retired officer of high rank in the Royal Navy. He did not see the monster himself, but he questioned over fifty witnesses who had seen it, several of them highly educated people. This ex-navy officer's conclusions are published in all seriousness in no less a journal than the "London Times." He believes the wierd giant creature does exist, but he's not prepared to say whether it is a pre-historic monster or what.

The Aberdeen Scotland Weekly Journal goes even further. It publishes a photograph of the monster as snapped by a subscriber. The photographer is an employee of an aluminum factory nearby. He swore to its authenticity before a magistrate. I have on my

desk a copy of the Aberdeen Journal showing a reproduction of this photograph. It shows what seems to be a huge animal. The body is something like that of a gigantic tortoise but with more of a hump in the middle. The neck is short. The head is something like that of reproductions we have seen of pre-historic creatures. It is stated that the negative was examined by photographic experts who agree that it bears no trace of having been faked.

The member of Parliament for the district where the animal was seen proposes to imprison it in Loch Ness, by putting

- a barrier -
a crib_^ in the outlet from the loch. That's how serious they're taking the Scottish sea serpent, which may be a relic of some primeval era of great serpents -- or, on the other hand may be nothing more than the masterpiece of one of our Scottish friends of the Caledonian Tall Story Club.

Admiral Byrd

A radiogram has just come in from Admiral Byrd. The Admiral of the two-poles says that he has just completed another flight in his big seaplane -- -- evidently a hazardous one. Here is the way part of it reads:--"There was no sun, and we had to depend entirely upon the magnetic compass. But," adds Byrd, "We were so close to the South Magnetic Pole that our compass had an error of 55 degrees."

He says he had to fly low most of the time because whenever he went above 400 feet clouds and snow drove them down. One hundred ten miles south of his base, which is still the good ship Jake Ruppert, he came to the largest floe he had ever seen-- an ice floe some 20 miles wide.

Then the Mackey radiogram from the Admiral continues "After we crossed the floe, we were headed south when suddenly the whole southern horizon went black with a snow squal. We didn't want to press our luck too far so we swung north. On the way back we had

a tough time of it. We ran through a couple of snow squalls and around two or three more. Then ice began to form on the wings and the air speed indicator froze on us." Byrd says they saw one iceberg twenty-five miles long and four miles wide.

Almost sounds like a tall story.

But the biggest news from that hazardous flight is that it makes an important contribution to Geography. Admiral Byrd notifies us that he is now convinced that some two hundred thousand square miles which used to be described on the maps as an unknown area "Can now be definitely designated as Pacific Ocean". Not a vestige of land could be observed. Not a foot of ground or even a snowbank through which to drive those dog teams that he has taken south this time.

LT in
Adirondacks.
Jan. 4, 1934.

Byrd Ending

I feel a little -- just a little -- like Admiral Byrd tonight, myself. It isn't as cold here in the Adirondacks as it is in the Antarctic, not quite. But I've been tearing around over the hills by dog team, three dog teams, two from Lake Placid and the third belonging to a husky chap named Felix Leser, (Layzer) took me into the city of Saranac. (Layzer) Felix Leser has ten dogs in his team, and all of them are related to the dogs that Byrd has along on his expedition. As we raced along over the ice, and down the hills into Saranac Felix shouted his commands in Eskimo language. His Eskimo dogs seemed to understand him perfectly. When he wanted them to go left he'd sing out "radder!" To turn right, just in time to miss a car or telephone pole he'd shout "ouk-ouk" To go ahead hut hut. When he wanted to say whoa and stop them he would call out: "Har! Har!"

(Shouts of "Har! Har!" from the crowd).

Adirondack,

These Sunoco boys sitting around me are not Eskimos, but
their shouts of "Har! Har!" seems to be my cue to whoa. So,
so long until tomorrow.