

DRAFT

C.T. - Sunoco. Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1940.

46
A drama of amazing coincidence was played in Washington today. The concatenation of events would seem to be incredible. You might suppose the whole thing to be the invention of some ingenious contriver of plots. Only - it happened. It happened today at one of the most solemn and important events in the history of this nation - the drawing of the numbers for conscription.

47
The scene, ~~was~~ a stately hall in one of the great government buildings in Washington. The place crowded. On the stage were the instruments for the drawing - and here we find *a note of dramatic* ~~an instant~~ *reminiscence.* ~~note of drama~~ A huge goldfish bowl full of capsules, and each capsule with a number. It was the same goldfish bowl that was used for draft lottery drawing in the World War, the draft that sent millions of young Americans to fight in France. The table on which the bowl stood - also the same as in the World War. The laddle with which the pellets were to be scooped out - a World War relic. And there was a blindfold, the same one which covered the eyes of President Woodrow Wilson when he drew the first number in that previous draft - twenty-three years ago.

The ceremony began today with a brief address by

President Roosevelt, an address which was broadcast to the nation.

47
The President spoke in his crisp ringing style, and he ended with these grave words - spoken to the men who registered for conscription. "You have answered that call, as Americans always have, and as Americans always will - until the day when war is forever banished from the earth." Thus the President spoke.

Then the drawing of the first capsule by Secretary of War Stimson. High officers of the government began the ~~drawing~~ ^{lottery}, the first four numbers picked out by the Secretary of War, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, Attorney General Jackson, and Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. Secretary Stimson was blindfold with ~~an~~ ^{the} historic strip of cloth left over from World War days. He reached into the goldfish bowl, and picked out a capsule.

This he handed to ~~President~~ ^{the} President, Roosevelt, who opened it and read the number. That number in itself was a singular coincidence. ~~Twentyxxx~~

Twenty-three years ago, the first number drawn in the first draft of the World War was - two hundred and fifty-eight. Today

President Roosevelt read the first number in the present draft.

48
His voice rang out - one hundred and fifty-eight! Instantly -

a woman screamed. Her shriek echoed through the great hall. Why? What distraction of nerves? What? Quickly there was disclosed the most amazing coincidence.

48 Mrs. Mildred Bell of Washington, D.C., has a boy of twenty-one, Robert Bell, and Robert would have gone to the drawing to hear at what point his ~~conscription~~ number was called. But he's in school at Baltimore, and so his mother went instead - to hear where her boy's number would be on the list. She screamed when she heard it, heard it ~~announced~~ by the President's voice - ^{very} the first, Number, one hundred and fifty-eight!

The coincidence created a sensation, was remarked everywhere - and put a dramatic focus on the Bell family. Later, the boy's father, Harry S. Bell, came to the hall. He was escorted to the platform, and ~~he~~ drew one of the numbers from the goldfish bowl. He drew forty-nine thirty-three. No coincidence there.

49 But at Washingtonville, New York, the ^{local} holder of that first number, one hundred and fifty-eight, is a man named Woodrow Wilson Butler. Apparently a war baby of the first World

War -- named after Woodrow Wilson.

And that first number hit right at home here in the news department of N.B.C. Evan Wylie, a young fellow who works in here with us, and helps along with news bulletins -- has that first number, one fifty-eight.

There was one thing which certainly was not coincidence.

The numbers tended to run pretty much the same. There'd be a long string in the three thousands, the eight thousands, the four thousands, and so on. Obviously, the capsules in the bowl had not been stirred up any too well, the various thousands tended to come out together.

Ever since noon the numbers have been coming over the wire. Hardly any news for hours -- only numbers. Here are the latest that come flashing:-

6 3 0 5

3 7 5 4

4 3 5 1

8 8 0 8

WILLKIE

50
In the campaign controversy, Wendell Willkie today made replies to the President's charges last night - that blistering Rooseveltian declamation of how Republicans in Congress had opposed armament expenditures. The President ^{quoted chapter and verse and} was especially severe on Congressman Hamilton Fish, his own neighbor up in Dutchess County - blasting at Ham for having been ^{what he called} a defense obstructionist.

Today Willkie made answer by declaring that if the Republicans hadn't kept Congress in session there wouldn't be any defense program at all. The President wanted Congress to go home, said he, and ~~adjourn~~ adjourn during the crisis. If the lawmakers had gone home and stayed there, how could they have passed the immense armament bills that the President so suddenly called for. Thus argued Willkie today.

The Republican candidate made special reference to the President's ^{excoriation of those whom F. D. R.} ~~denunciation when he spoke of what he called~~ "those who in these perilous days are willing recklessly to imply that our boys are already on their way to the transports." That of course referred to Willkie's own way of asserting that the President is going to get

51
us into the European War. Did Willkie today take his words back?
Not at all. He said them all over again. QUOTE "If the third term
candidate does not keep the pledge of Nineteen Forty any better
than he did that of Nineteen Thirty-Two, the boys had better get
ready to get on some troop transport to go to a foreign war."

Such was the Willkie blast, said all over again.

Wendell Willkie today referred
to his hoarse voice strained after
several hundred speeches. Said
he huskily: - "my voice is
cracked; but so is the Liberty
Bell!"

KENNEDY

They say there's some mystery about what Joseph P. Kennedy, United States Ambassador to Great Britain, will say on the radio tonight. At the same time, they add - that he'll talk on a program sponsored by the Democratic National Committee. "The time has been reserved for him personally," Democratic Publicity Director Charlie Michaelson said today. And Charlie isn't arranging time for the G.O.P.

52
All of which would make it appear that the Ambassador is going to speak in favor of the third term. It's hard to see just where the mystery may lie. But anyway, there has been a rumor that Kennedy is going to resign his diplomatic post, that he has broken with President Roosevelt on the score of foreign policy, and that he is going to come out against a third term. No, my dear Alphonse, not with the Democratic National Committee sponsoring his speech! Not with Charlie Michaelson hovering in the background.

Here's an interesting angle: Republican-Eastern-Campaign-Manager Sam Pryor points out today that with the return of Joe Kennedy, Uncle Sam is no longer represented by an Ambassador

in any of the belligerent countries. His remark on it was --

No one of high enough rank to keep in touch with the heads of
the Governments at war.

INVESTIGATION

Mayor Hague of Jersey City testified today ~~after first~~
~~before a~~
~~declining.~~ A Senate sub-committee investigating election frauds,
summoned the Democratic political leader of Jersey City, saying
they'd like to ask him some questions about fake election
registrations, burning of election records, and so on. In
response, the big boss of Hudson County sent the Committee a
letter saying he wouldn't come, and denouncing the charges made
against the political system of his bailiwick. The Senate Committee
thereupon issued a subpoena for His Honor of Jersey City, and that
made him appear - at the hearing in Newark.

The ~~Hague~~ testimony that has come on the wire thus far
is somewhat less than illuminating. It centers around a number -
forty thousand. The Republican Commission of Elections of Hudson
County had told the Committee that there were ~~four hundred~~ ^{forty} thousand
illegal registrations in the Hague domain. Asked about this, the
Mayor declared that illegal names on the registry lists were the
responsibility of the Commissioner of Elections, ~~himself~~.

He was asked whether there had been opportunities for
fraud in the elections in his area. To which Hague answered:-

"I won't say there's an opportunity for fraud. I don't understand what you mean." And he went on:- "I don't know what you call fraud." I suppose they might have gone to a dictionary and looked up the definition of the word, but apparently they didn't bother and His Honor of Jersey City went on with this enigmatic declaration. Speaking of the Republicans, he said:- "They put a blacklist with forty thousand names on it. There," he added, "you have forty thousand people if you want to vote them."

It may be algebra, it may be Sanskrit, or maybe it's just Hudson County politics. *It's not Journalese; it's Hagueese.*

GREECE

54
The Italian invasion of Greece is shrouded in doubt and rumors ~~denied~~ ^{tonight}. The word "rumor" is important - because of one bit of interpreting ^{ation} that we have from London. This concerns ~~reports~~ ^{word} that the British navy has occupied such strategic Greek islands as Crete and Corfu. The warning is that such rumors of swift British action may be - propaganda. Not British propaganda - but of the Nazi-Fascist variety. A London informant explains that word of this sort may be passed out by Berlin and Rome for the purpose of creating disappointment, when the stories are found not to be true. London states that the British fleet in the eastern Mediterranean is taking action. Merely that - there are no details.

British sources explain that the Italian push against Greece is probably merely a part of a much larger scheme, ~~merely one angle of a combined German-Italian attempt to thrust down the Near East line and get at the Suez Canal. The Italians may have an idea of drawing the British forces up into Greece, while the Germans strike through Turkey.~~ ^{says} London ~~reports~~ that the Nazis have a striking force of seventy divisions, almost a million men - ready

for a Near Eastern blow. ~~The British are taking a broad view of the situation, not limiting their eyesight merely to Greece.~~

The Greeks themselves seem to be full of fight. There were wild demonstrations in Athens today, with a tumultuous ovation for Greek King George. ~~Athenian crowds were shouting for war and victory.~~ Throngs were cheering in front of the British Ministry, and were waving British flags. Also ~ American flags. The American flags were an interesting feature of the Greek war demonstration.

At the town of Patras, there's a threatening situation for numerous Italians that live there. ~~(Patras has the largest Italian colony in Greece, and is precisely the place where the Fascist air force has bombed most severely.)~~ ^{air raid} There were funerals of victims today, with menacing shouts against the Italian colony. And Greeks are demanding that the British bomb Rome, in reprisal. However, Athens has not been bombed, although Italian planes did blast the harbor of Piraeus. The hope on both sides is that neither Athens nor Rome will be bombed - those two cities of such great fame in the ancient times of our civilization.

Rome reports that the Fascist forces have cracked the Greek fortified line, facing southeastern Albania. ~~(They say it took thirty hours of fighting to open a way, and then motorized units poured through.)~~ Rome claims an advance of ten miles.

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The Greeks ~~reports~~ an Italian repulse, and again say that Albania is in revolt against its Fascist rulers.

GENERAL

Today in New York the Japanese General made a ceremonious bow to each of a party of United States Naval Officers, and with grave Far Eastern courtesy -- thanked them. He spoke his gratitude for their part in an episode -- a dozen years back, (an episode in which a United States battleship saved the life of the Japanese General's daughter.) In November of Nineteen Twenty-Eight the Coronation of the Emperor of Japan was staged with solemn splendor. One of the proudest positions in all Japan was that of -- Commander of the Imperial Guard at the coronation. The lucky soldier was the same general. His name was Haraguchi -- then a colonel. *In that hour,* ~~then~~ amid the Imperial ritual and in the proudest time of his life he received a tragic message.)

His daughter had recently married -- bride of a Japanese Major. The young couple were ~~at~~ on their way to South America, where the young officer was to take his post as a military attache. They sailed for New York, and took the Westris, ^{remember the Vestris?} -- That ill fated British liner which was lost in a terrible sea disaster a dozen years ago? So the news flashed to the officer in command of the Imperial Guard at the Japanese Coronation. The liner had sunk, *he*

57
was informed -- with frightful loss of life. A tragic blow to the proudest soldier in Japan. He sent a cable to a friend in America - to General ^{Leslie} Kincaid of world war reputation who is now the President of the American Hotels Association. General Kincaid in turn communicated urgently with ~~the~~ naval officers ^{ials.} And presently he was able to dispatch a message to the commander of the ~~Imperial~~ Imperial Guard in Japan -- a message telling the story.

Some of the most heroic work in the rescue of the survivors of the Vestris was done by the battleship WYOMING. (The sea was stormy, and putting out small boats was a risky affair.) A life raft was sighted. On it three young women were clinging, and one of them was holding the body of a man who had perished -- her husband. ^{And she} ~~this~~ was the daughter of ^{the Commander} ~~that man~~ of the Imperial Guard who was presiding at the Coronation of the Mikado. A life-saving boat from U.S.S. WYOMING put out into the raging sea, was almost swamped. But the sailors and their officers made the rescue.

58
So today in New York General Haraguchi of Japan gave a luncheon ^{at the Commodore} for a group of officers who served aboard the WYOMING at the time his daughter was saved. After a dozen years he has been able to take a vacation from ^m military service, and ^{he came} ~~come~~ to the United States on a mission of gratitude.

There's a denial from Cornell, a denial of yesterday's accusation of football signaling. I had a telephone call today from Lou Boochever, Cornell Director of Information, and he tells me the charge of signalling made by Ohio State is just a case of misunderstanding. The Ohio State story was that Cornell Coach Snavely signalled football players by making motions with a cylinder of white papers, which he would move around and open up. The Cornell story is that Coach Snavely never goes into a game without a sheaf of papers, which contain a list of substitutions, a diagram of plays, sequences and strategy. The Coach refers to those pages constantly and then rolls them up. And he wasn't signalling, he was just looking at the documents.

Here are some more numbers: -

2 4 2 9

1 5 0

2 0 6 8

2 7 6

7 1 6

8 3 8 4

4 2 2 2

6 8 2 3