

L.T. - SUNOCO. TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1935.

*Chambers
MSC*

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

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May I whisper in your ear this evening? Now don't think there is anything particularly wrong. I just feel sort of confidential tonight, in a whispering mood. I happened to spend Saturday and Sunday, all day, both days, out in the snow, skiing with some small boys, doing nose-dives into snow banks, and making both a snowman and a monkey of myself. Direct from that I went to the stuffy, suffocating, germ laden atmosphere of the Flemington court room. And some little bug parked on my vocal cords. Otherwise, I feel as fit as a prize-fighter. But, I thought I'd better explain before you decided I was about to ~~pass~~^{haul} out.

All of which is most unimportant. And now, let's get on with the news!

Everyone, or nearly everyone, has been asking the same question today: "Did Hauptmann break down on the witness stand? Did he confess? How did he behave, this central figure of the most sensational trial of our time?"² The answer is: He did not break down. And, although muddled and confused, in some respects, he ended the day far from a beaten man.

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And, The Hauptmann cross-examination is over. Late this afternoon Attorney General Wilentz concluded his hammering attack. He turned the Bronx carpenter over to his own lawyers for redirect examination. So the day ended with Defense Attorney Reilly beginning his question-and-answer task of getting Hauptmann to explain the damaging points that the cross-examiner had scored against him.

~~Hauptmann~~ emerged from the cross-examination unshaken.

This morning somebody asked the Attorney General:- "Do you expect to get a ~~ix~~ confession out of him by four o'clock?" Wilentz replied with a grin:- "If anybody's confession is heard, it will be mine."

And that turned out to be an accurate prophesy. Not that the Attorney General did any confessing, though Hauptmann followed his ^{tactics of} yesterday ~~tactics of~~ indicting his prosecutor, accusing him of telling lies, making things up.

Instead of breaking down today Hauptmann was further from it than he was yesterday. He was calmer, without any of the wild outbreaks. Yet he was frequently involved in contradictions,

inconsistencies, ~~xxx~~ improbabilities. He got out of corners by doggedly pushing out, with steady denials, bald admissions that he had made contradictory statements, confusedly insisting that he had been confused when he had said this or that. When pressed with an inconsistency he would explain calmly:- "Why, I said that to make a long story short." ^{Huh!} When confronted by some ~~xxx~~ damaging thing in his own hand-writing, he would wriggle out of the predicament by exclaiming:- "If I should explain ~~xx~~ everything in that letter I would write a book."

The picture changed abruptly in the afternoon -- the picture of the Bronx carpenter, a simple ignorant man stumbling along in broken English.

Hauptmann's place was taken for a few minutes by a witness who had been engaged in the task of translating ~~fx~~ some of Hauptmann's letters into English. He was no garden variety of interpreter, but Dr. George Madison Priest, Professor of German Literature at Princeton University, distinguished in scholastic achievement and distinguished in personal appearance -- a small but stately professor with a white mustache and a short pointed white ~~beard~~ beard. He spoke in the clear cultivated voice of

Princeton - of Old Nassau.

~~an exceedingly educated man~~, Yes, that did change the picture. ~~and~~, there was ^{another} change just as striking as the

Professor proceeded to read a series of Hauptmann's letters to the brother of the dead man he is accusing, Isidor Fisch.

The letters presented a new portrait of Hauptmann. In the German text and the Professor's translation, the simple and ignorant Bronx carpenter seemed not at all simple and not at all ignorant.

In his own language Hauptmann ~~had~~ expressed himself fluently and sympathetically. And he displayed a shrewd and ~~comprehensive~~ comprehensive grasp of figures and business details.

And that ~~hears~~ ^{bears} sharply on the question of whether Hauptmann as a witness was confused because of dullness and an ignorance of English, or whether it was defensive ~~strategy~~ strategy.

In a letter written shortly after the death of Isidor Fisch, Hauptmann wrote to the brother that the trunks Isidor had left behind contained nothing of value. In none of the letters to the Fisch family in Germany, so far as produced in court, did he say anything about the fourteen thousand dollars in ~~ransom~~ ransom money which he claims Isidor Fisch left in ^{his keeping.}

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~~his keeping.~~

The proceedings brought into sudden pertinence the presence ~~presence~~ of Fisch's relatives in this country as possible prosecution witnesses. And it looks as if they could tell from the witness stand a most uncomfortable story for Hauptmann.

~~The cross examination kept concentrating on the dead man, on whom Hauptmann places the blame.~~ The Attorney General tried hard to make Hauptmann admit he was ~~trying to~~ cheat ^{ing} the heirs of his dead friend. But the Bronx carpenter, denying everything, denied this also. His claim is that of the money Fisch left in his care, he was merely taking out enough to reimburse himself for the cash he had lent to Fisch, ^{and he} intended to send the remainder of the ransom bank notes to the Fisch family in Germany. ^π The ~~main point~~ ^{main point} that Wilentz scored was

a cross-examination picture he painted of Hauptmann's sudden transformation at the time of the ransom payment -- from a poor carpenter to a man of money and leisure. This came in admissions he forced Hauptmann to ~~make~~ make: that he quit his ^{job} ~~work~~ immediately after the date the ransom was paid; and at that same time he

began to buy expensive things, like a four hundred dollar radio. — *one of those elaborate all-wave sets.*

Now what did the cross-examination achieve? The Attorney General did not maneuver Hauptmann into any admission that in itself would mean conviction. But in those many hours of question-and-answer he undoubtedly built up an impression that Hauptmann was a stubborn, cautious, wary and defensive witness, who was making the best of a story woven ^{*full of*} ~~with~~ contradictions and improbabilities.

WORLD COURT

Last week there was a particularly dull moment in Congress. The subject of the World Court was open. Flocks of senators and representatives arose with a bored air and walked out for a smoke and a chat in the cloak rooms. American entrance into the World Court - it seemed a wearisome subject, a promise of onerous and tedious debate. But something seems to have changed this suddenly. ~~Here~~^H at Rockefeller Center last night, in the N.B.C. studios, there was quite some excitement as five nationally known figures appeared and asked for time on the air, to deliver messages about the World Court. The time was granted. One speaker was Father Coughlin, Detroit's renowned radio priest. Another was Mons^g~~enior~~_x Ryan of New York, a leading scholar and enthusiast.

^H Father Coughlin spoke against American entrance into the World Court. Mons^g~~enior~~_x Ryan ~~xx~~ argued for it. The sudden rush of the debate to the radio signifies vividly that, instead of being a pompous, tiresome theme of vain idealism, the World Court is stirring up all sorts of popular interest.

Yet many of us are frankly puzzled to know what it's all about. The World Court, sitting at the Hague in Holland, was

established by the League of Nations, which now selects its judges and finances it to the tune of half a million dollars a year. Its purpose is to settle disputed questions of international law, and to mediate and hand down judgments in disputes between such nations as may seek its arbitration. The court may also act in an advisory capacity to the League of Nations Council. It may formulate an opinion on a certain international problem and pass it along for the guidance of the League Council. One of its most important actions right along this line, was when the court decided a few years ago that a close customs union between Germany and Austria was illegal, and contrary to the peace treaties. The Court handed down the opinion to the League Council, which accepted it and enforced it, and the German-Austrian customs union was off. ~~xxxxxxxthat~~

In all that international idealism, there does not seem anything particular to get mad about. Yet over in this country that tribunal for world harmony has been like a red flag waved among a herd of unusually ill-natured bulls. It all goes back to the old League of Nations squabble. Advocates of the Court point

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out quite justly that if we join up and become a member of the Court, it will not in any way bind us to observe the decision and regulations of the League of Nations. President Roosevelt emphasized that in his recent declaration calling for our entrance into the court. But the opposition believes that if we join the court we are on the way to joining the League - on the principle that if you fool around with a deck of cards at all you'll soon be playing stud poker. *- or should I say bridge?* Hence, the slogan that - "entrance into the World Court is getting into the League of Nations by the back door."

The history of the controversy relates that in nineteen twenty-six, the United States Senate voted to join up - subject to a few brief reservations. But the League of Nations refused to accept the reservations, because one of them proposed to give Uncle Sam a veto power in the Court, which no other nation possessed. All we'd have to do would be to say: "No" to something, and our negative vote would stop the decision. So we did ^{not} join up. But by way of compromise we ~~x~~ have been represented all along by unofficial members. American judges have been sitting with that

international tribunal in a sort of advisory capacity. The first American judge to take his place at the Hague was John Bassett Moore, the second Charles Evans Hughes, now Chief Justice of the United States. Our present member is Frank B. Kellogg, former Secretary of State and Nobel Prize winner.

The present World Court proposal was formulated in

Nineteen twenty-nine by Elihu Root, Uncle Sam's elder statesman.

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~~It~~ It has been pending ever since, ^{and today it came} ~~now~~ up for a decision ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} Senate voted it down.

~~Tomorrow the Root proposal to join the World Court will be up~~

^{This time} ~~for a vote in the Senate. And~~ the lawmakers ^{did} ~~will~~ not wave their

togas wearily around them and stroll out for a smoke and a chat

in the cloak rooms ^{either.} The World Court had become a subject for

vehement debate, as ^{was} ~~is~~ indicated by the five nationally prominent

speakers who last night clamored for N.B.C. time on the air.

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POLAND

The new form of government that goes into effect in Poland today takes us reminiscently back into the pages of history. The Nineteen thirty-five constitution that begins its career in Warsaw reminds one of that ancient constitution that Poland had in her former days of glory - it's so different, so much a matter of contrast.

In those historic times when the chivalry of Poland swept to battle and victory, the Polish system of government was one of the most peculiar ever known. It was an elective kingdom with a peculiarity called "^{the} Liberum Veto." That meant that any policy the king wanted to follow had to be confirmed by the great Council of the Nobility. And the consent had to be unanimous. Any one member of the Congress of ~~the~~ Nobles could stop everything by casting his single solitary veto. That of course made the king virtually a figurehead, and spoiled any possibility of a strong central government. For that reason, Poland fell, and ~~then~~ her neighbors divided her possessions, ^{and} Poland did not rise as an independent nation again until the World War.

Now Poland seems determined not to repeat that old mistake of having a ruler without any power. The new constitution gives virtually absolute power to the President, makes him legally a Dictator. The President can assemble or dismiss parliament as he likes. He may appoint and dismiss cabinet members without consulting the legislators. He has the personal power to declare war or peace and make foreign treaties. The President will appoint the Commander of the Army and the head of the Supreme Court. And more extraordinary still, only two-thirds of the Polish Parliament is to be elected by the people. The remaining one-third of the members are appointed by the President.

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The President will keep his office ~~xx~~ of absolute power for seven years. Then he will have the right to name a candidate to succeed him. A council of electors will also name a candidate. If the two agree, why that candidate becomes President. If the President and the electoral council do not agree, why then there will be a public election to choose between the two candidates.

So today Poland passed legally under the power of a

President-Dictator. Who is he? Why Marshal Pilsudski, of course. He's been Poland's Dictator for a long time now, and the new ~~policy~~ Polish constitution merely confirms the autocracy of the old warrior with the walrus mustaches.

RESCUE

And now we see a rescue airplane flying over snow covered hills and snow filled valleys. The pilot drops two parachutes with great heavy sacks of food. And so from the sky salvation comes to a marooned family, imprisoned by great snowdrifts and in danger of starvation.

No, that didn't happen in Alaska or along Hudson Bay. New Jersey is the scene of the story, a section a little more than fifty miles from New York and only five miles from the great United States ^{Naval Air} ~~Aeronautical~~ Station at Lakehurst.

The Myers family, living on a farm, were snowed in by the big blizzard last week. And they are still snowed in right now. They tried vainly to break through the towering snowbanks that surrounded them. They ate all the food they had, and were in desperate straits. A neighbor several miles away tried to get through with a basket of provisions, and he almost lost his life in the snow and zero cold. He went to the state troopers to get aid for the marooned family. The troopers tried to dig their way to the snowbound farmhouse. They dug Saturday and Sunday, but they had to give it up as a hopeless task. As a last resort, the troopers went to the

Lakehurst Air Station and sought aid by the sky route. Commander Rosendahl, dirigible expert in ~~charge~~^{charge,} ordered out a plane. The Aeronautical Station was so badly snowed in that the sailors had to make an improvised runway for the plane by cutting through the ~~snow~~ drifts. Then Pilot W. S. Wiley risked his life taking off from that perilous landing field. ~~But~~ Today he flew over the snowy

prison ~~and~~^{of} the Myers family and dropped two big bags of food right in front of their door. *Not on Great Slave Lake on the Arctic Circle! — Just over in Jersey, where I picked up this whisper — this last whisper of s-l-u-t-m.*

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