

LT in
Greenville,
Ohio.

Sept. 23⁷
1938.

L.T. - SUNOCO. FRIDAY, SEPT. 23, 1938.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Never have I given my evening broadcast under quite such unusual circumstances as tonight. One night some years ago I gave you the news from an airplane circling over New York City. Another night from the bottom of a coal mine in West Virginia. Also from Rome while on a visit to Mussolini; from London during the Coronation; and, from ships at sea. But tonight I am in the midst of a sea of humanity. In a great stadium with some twenty thousand people around me. The occasion? The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of what historians call The Ordinance of Seventeen Eighty-Seven. And also to celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Greenville by the Indian Chiefs and Mad Anthony Wayne. And where would all that be happening? Why, I am in Greenville, the county seat of Darke County, in Southwestern Ohio, just north of Dayton. I am at the site of Fort Greenville, famous in the Days of the Battle of Fallen Timbers, the battle in which more Indians bit the dust than in any other

battle in American history.

The big news out here in the heart of the Middlewest tonight is not what happened today in Europe concerning the fate of Czechoslovakia; nor is it the hurricane and flood story from the North Atlantic Coast. The big news here tonight is that today marks the opening of the Northwest Territory Sesquicentennial. And the historic city of Greenville is packed with all people - all here for the celebration, people who believe that this site of the signing of the Treaty of Greenville is as sacred as Plymouth Rock, because the Ordinance of Seventeen Eighty-Seven and the treaty signed by Mad Anthony Wayne changed our nation from the Thirteen Colonies to the United States of America -- bringing under the Stars and Stripes the vast Northwest Territory which we now know as Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and -- part of Minnesota.

There may be some in our regular Sunoco Radio audience, there may be some who are listening right now by short wave in distant South America, or in Africa, or in the Far North, or on ships at sea, and who are wondering at this moment, wondering whether

I am really standing in the midst of an audience of twenty thousand people. So just for their benefit, and just for the fun of it, before I go on with the day's news, I'll ask all twenty thousand of these Greenville, Ohio, folks and their visiting neighbors, to give a shout, a celebration shout, or a shout for Mad Anthony Wayne. Anyhow a shout. Are you ready? Let 'er go!

(Shouts)

And that was the roar going up from twenty thousand voices! A shout to announce that Greenville, Ohio, is celebrating the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the taking over of the vast Northwest territory, the celebration starting today and lasting until next Tuesday.

More about that later. Now ^{for} ~~from~~ the news from the rest of the world.

EUROPE

There's grim news tonight. (War in Europe seems closer than ever.) The tension had relaxed somewhat. We were all saying:- "Chamberlain and Hitler will fix things up today." To which many added: "Poor ~~Europe~~ Czechoslovakia!." Then came startling news:- The meeting between Hitler and Chamberlain called off!

A later announcement was a trifle more reassuring. (Chamberlain ^{had} written Hitler a letter and the Fuehrer ^{is} meditating his reply.) The contents of that letter were not made public, they were only hinted at. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say guessed at. At any rate, it was believed all over Europe that the ever-increasing demands by the Nazi leaders had unexpectedly stiffened the Chamberlain backbone - plus those inflamed and threatening editorials in Germany's official newspapers, and the reports that the Sudetens had already invaded Czech territory.

(The gist of the British Prime Minister's letter is that he demands a written promise from the German Chancellor, a positive guarantee that the Germans won't enter those Sudeten areas while negotiations are still going on.)

In Paris the rumor is that Chamberlain also demanded that

Hitler modify some of his most drastic demands. For among other things, the Fuehrer insists that twenty-five full divisions of the Czechoslovak army shall be withdrawn to the east, far away from the German front line. Into the bargain, he demands that those twenty-five divisions shall be demobilized. His next condition is that the Czechs throw out their new so-called military government.

Those demands were not officially announced. Just unofficially reported. So it is also unofficial that Chamberlain's letter asks that Hitler go easy on the Czechs, not be so sweeping.

(A semi-official spokesman for the German government made an ironic comment on the Chamberlain letter. Said he: "How can such a letter be answered? How can we promise not to march into a country where such conditions prevail?) And, it was through these ironic questions that the correspondents at Godesberg guessed the nature of Chamberlain's letter.

But, (the meeting between Hitler and Chamberlain is not off altogether, merely postponed. They will get together tonight.) In fact, they're probably conferring at this moment. And Chamberlain will fly back to London tomorrow. On top of all this, soothing words

were uttered by a spokesman for the French Foreign Office. He admitted that the situation at Godesberg was delicate but he added that it was not entirely hopeless. "An accord can still be reached. Nothing is lost yet. Nothing can be judged until tomorrow."

Elsewhere we find indication of how delicate and dangerous the whole business is. A report from Geneva today showed that the English have by no means entirely abandoned the idea of fighting. And -- Soviet Dictator Stalin may still take a hand. The head of the British delegation at Geneva, asked today what the Soviets would do in case the negotiations at Godesberg collapse completely. To which Litvinov, the Moscow spokesman, replied: "I told you all that last Wednesday. Soviet Russia will make good on her treaty obligations to the Czechs -- if France also keeps her side of the treaty."

(And here's startling word from the Prime Minister of France. He says tonight:- "France has gone the limit in concessions to Hitler. She will go no further."

Daladier's announcement was, that if Germany carries out a stroke of violence in Czechoslovakia, France will fulfill her commitments.)

And that gave rise to a good deal of military gossip in the French capital. Generals of the army admitting that they had been investigating that famous new Hitler-Siegfried line of defense on the Rhine. They say they have information that it is by no means invulnerable. And they believe if worst comes to the worst John Bull and France will be victorious. The only domain in which Germany is tops, they say, is in the air. But they have hopes that the Soviet air corps, which is a somewhat mysterious factory, may be even stronger.

Furthermore, it is no secret that French troops tonight are moving toward the German frontier. Trenches are being dug in the Vosges mountains near Strassbourg, to reinforce the Maginot line. Machine guns have been set up at the heads of all the bridges over the Rhine. Horses and trucks have been commandeered in all the regions near the frontier.

(On the other hand, here's a dispatch from Vienna. A report that there are extraordinary movements of troops towards the frontier of Czechoslovakia and what used to be Austria. In other words, Hitler is preparing to attack Czechoslovakia - on two sides.)

But wait a minute, here's something from London, the most ominous message yet. The conference between Chamberlain and Hitler is a definite failure. Negotiations are all off. There's an authentic note to this bulletin which gives cause for great alarm. The authority for it is a diplomat in close touch with the Foreign Office. Said he:- "Tonight's meeting between Hitler and Chamberlain will be just in the nature of a ceremonious farewell.

The British Prime Minister has called a meeting of his cabinet for tomorrow and after that it is reported, Parliament will be convoked on Monday.

And there we have it. It's still unofficial. But it sounds like war!

(Here's a late flash:- the President of Czechoslovakia has ordered the Czech Army to mobilize. Two ~~thun~~ million men are at this moment getting ready, jumping into their uniforms.)

STORM

And now let's come home where the news also is none too happy. (The truth about that New England storm is even more tragic today than it was yesterday. While relief workers were helping the sufferers trying to clear up the wreckage, another gale swept down upon them.

The total of dead, those actually known to be dead, in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts, has risen to four hundred and seventy-eight. But almost as many more in all those parts are reported missing.)

Here's an analysis:-- The biggest tragedy is Rhode Island's two hundred and twenty dead, three hundred missing, five thousand homeless. Massachusetts a hundred and thirty-eight dead, many others missing. New Hampshire thirteen dead; Connecticut fifty-four dead; New York forty-nine dead; three killed in New Jersey; two in Vermont; two in the Province of Quebec.

Governor Cross of Connecticut called on the National Guard to protect post offices. One company is stationed in Hartford, another at Rockville, other troops are being held in readiness to rush to Hartford in case the dike gives way along the Connecticut River. That tumultous torrent approached the crest

today, a crest even higher than that of Nineteen Thirty-Six.

After the Nineteen Thirty-Six inundation, Springfield, Massachusetts, built itself a dike that cost two million dollars. Today it gave way with a crash and thirty-five hundred families had to rush for their lives.

All around the Connecticut valley W.P.A. workers, national guardsmen, volunteer C.C.C. boys, are hot at it day and night piling up the sandbags.

As for today's gale it swept most ferociously on Westhampton, Long Island, that resort of the well-to-do which was almost a complete wreck yesterday. Today its condition is even worse.

In New York State the danger from floods is somewhat abated, waters receding. But in northern New Jersey, the Passaic River, the Rockaway, the Pompton, the Ramapo and the Pequannock overflowed their banks.

TELEGRAPH

Telegraph officials in Montreal were up against a unique situation today. Wednesday's hurricane blew down the wires to Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Montreal offices teemed with urgent communications for Halifax. We were taught in school that a straight line was the shortest distance between two points. The Canadian Telegraph people had to fall back on another old maxim that the longest way round is sometimes the shortest way home. So telegrams for Halifax were sent from Montreal first to Vancouver, British Columbia. Thence they were sent by radio to the cable station in Australia. At that point a series of relays was used to send them all the way back around the world to Nova Scotia.

From Montreal to Halifax it's less than six hundred miles as the crow flies. But to cover that distance, those telegrams today - because of the hurricane - had to travel nearly thirty thousand miles. And they did it in less than a minute.

GREENVILLE

And now to return to where I am tonight -- for a moment. The other day I received a large scroll, made of wood, inviting me to come out here to the Middle West today. When I unrolled the scroll I found that it was actually over a hundred feet long. And on it were the bona fide signatures of four thousand, four hundred and nineteen people -- all of them inviting me here to The Northwest Territory Celebration. Many of them, my relatives. Because my people followed Mad Anthony Wayne out here in those days of long ago. My parents were both born here in Darke County; and so was I.

Today Greenville put on one of the most unusual parades ever staged anywhere. Many of the shops along Broadway had their fronts decorated like back in Frontier Days; as fur trading posts, and saloons. The old town hall where I once went to dances, it was all dolled up to represent a stockade-type of fortress. Tens of thousands of people lined the streets to watch the floats.

I had the fun of riding in the parade and then of reviewing it from the town hall balcony. There were Mound Builder floats, Indian drags, covered wagons drawn by oxen, endless horses and surreys, many pioneers in coon-skin coats. And the float

that took my eye was one with a tree on it. In the tree a live racoon. And at the foot of the tree a couple live houn' dogs barking their heads off.

Many of the people in this throng of twenty thousand are dressed in old style long-tailed coats and plug hats. Two such are my guard of honor, standing here beside me, Doc Sarver and Major Frank Clear.

FRANK:- We're here to keep you out of trouble, Tommy, Old Boy!

L.T.:- Or, get me into it, which? And now I wonder if we can get these twenty thousand to give our Sunoco radio audience a farewell Greenville Celebration shout?

(SHOUT)

Meaning -- So Long, So Long Until Monday.