

Lowell Thomas
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(Dallas Townsend)

CANBERRA

Good evening everybody--A thunderous welcome today for touring President Johnson--in the land "down under." A cheering crowd on hand to greet him at the airport near Canberra. Thousands more lining the street--along the eleven-mile route into the capital.

The President--obviously enjoying himself. Stopping his limousine six times--to talk with anyone close enough to hear him. Australian reporters who covered the arrival--later calling it the greatest reception they had ever seen; surpassing even that accorded Queen Elizabeth--on her visit to Australia in nineteen-sixty-three.

Tonight, in a speech to the Australian parliament...Mr. Johnson declares that he sees success coming up in Vietnam. I believe, he says, that there is light at the end of what has been a long and lonely tunnel. I say this not just because our men are proving successful on the battlefield...I believe it for this reason--there is a widening community of people who feel responsible for what is happening in Vietnam. And of all signs--the President says--this is the brightest.

MANILA FOLLOW PRESIDENT

Secretary of State Dean Rusk--en route to Manila. There to confer with foreign ministers--fo the Six other participating nations; to lay the groundwork--for next week's Asian summit conference on Viet Nam.

In Viet Nam--In Saigon--publication today of weekly casualty figures. Showing nearly a thousand Viet Cong killed last week--along with a record seven hundred and forty eight captured. American casualties--by contrast--down sharply from the previous week.

CAPE TOWN

The man who assassinated South African Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd--today was declared hopelessly insane. At the request of defense counsel--with approval of the prosecution--Demetrio Tsafendas was committed to prison for an indeterminate period; under terms of South Africa's--"Mental Disorders Act."

Chief Justice Andries Beyers of the Cape Town Supreme Court--who rendered judgement--observing that Tsafendas was obviously "deeply mentally ill." Adding: "You can't have feelings of revenge--against such a man."

Congress this afternoon completed action on three of the Administration's high-priority measures--Demonstration cities, school aid, and the war on poverty. All three bills went through the House on rapid-fire rollcall votes...and they'll now go to the White House for President Johnson's signature. The Senate, for its part, approved a number of minor bills...and--over House objections--it approved expanded trade with communist Eastern Europe. That move could throw a roadblock in the path of final adjournment of the 89th Congress on Saturday--the goal of the congressional leadership.

BYRD

In the midst of last-minute rush for adjournment--a sudden hush today in the U.S. Senate; in respect and tribute--to the late Harry F. Byrd; victim of a brain tumor--that forced his retirement from the Senate last year.

Democrats and Republicans alike joining in a final salute --to the one-time "keeper of the nation's purse-strings." Majority Leader Mike Mansfield--calling Byrd "a tower of strength" in government. Acting Minority Leader Thomas Keehil of California--lauding Byrd as "one of Virginia's greatest men."

Senator Pastore of Rhode Island summing it all up--when he said of Byrd: There may have been times "when you disagreed with his viewpoint--but you could never be disagreeable with him."

SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE

Currently in the Middle East--Lowell Thomas recalls tonight an adventure--and a city--from the past. Lowell.....

PETRA

Hello Dallas, Good Evening Everybody:

A colorful battle was fought in World War One - that wasn't important - it was waged in Arabia for an ancient city that had been deserted for a thousand years. Called the "Rose Red City half as old as time" -- carved from red and pink mountains.

The Arabs defended the mysterious city of Petra - against the Turks - they did it in much the same way that the ancient Nabataens defended it against Alexander The Great, trapping the enemy in the same narrow gorge that has been the entrance to Petra for centuries.

I was lucky enough to get to Petra with Lawrence and his army - while/^{we}were not the first, we were among the few who had seen the Rose Red City up to that time in hundreds of years. And Petra remains much as the Nabataeans left it - long ago. There in those red mountains. Until recent years - only the hardiest travellers

found their way to Petra. But the National Geographic Society tells me that this has now ~~xxx~~ changed. Now it's easy to get there, and when you do, you can even rent a cave or a tent for the night.

But what happened to the people of Petra?

According to legend - the Nabataens one day found a door in the rock - leading down into a rich, fertile land.

And like children following the Fied Piper down they went to a subterranean paradise; closing the door behind them - and vanishing forever from the pages of history. So, put the Rose Red City on your schedule if you are heading for the Near East.

Solong,

STOCKHOLM

At Stockholm--the Nineteen-Sixty-Six Nobel Prize for Literature--awarded today to two Jewish writers. Israeli novelist Samuel Joseph Agnon--and German-born poet Nelly Sachs.

DALLAS

The nineteen-sixty-six Nieman-Marcus Christmas Book-- just published today in Dallas, Texas. And as usual--it's packed with Texas-style gift suggestions; for those who care enough--not to care about the expense.

For example--"his and hers" bathtubs--with Twenty-four karat gold fixtures--priced at Four Thousand dollars a pair-- plus freight, installation and tax. The tubs built to be installed side-by-side--says Nieman-Marcus; so that husband and wife--"can jump in at the same time--go right on discussing that late party--or exchanging early morning plans for the day." Or perhaps, Warren, even discussing what to get for Christmas next year, now that they have His and Her bathtubs.

LEWISBURG

From the Federal penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania-- a meaty story about a "Mr. Big" of American crime. Six hundred and forty-seven pound Sylvan Scolnick of Cherry Hill, New Jersey--who was recently sentenced to prison in a half-million-dollar bankruptcy swindle.

Scolnick--age thirty-six--is finding it difficult adjusting to prison life; with the result--he's losing his appetite. Prison doctors reporting Scolnick has fallen off now--to the point where he only eats about nine meals a day. Instead of eighteen--as before.

But then--it may be good practice for Scolnick. The same doctors saying they hope to get him on a diet pretty soon-- to lose a little weight. Say--oh--three or four hundred pounds.