

Lowell Thomas Sunoco Broadcast

Thursday, April 27th, 1933.

Good evening, Everybody:

More than once since I started my series of nightly news broadcasts I've felt a bit up in the air.

There have been times when I've been rattled. But (this is the first time I've been literally up in the air while broadcasting. And it's the first news broadcast ever to be made from an airplane - so the N.B.C. people tell me.)

Theoretically speaking, I ought to be able to give you a breezy broadcast. There surely is enough breeze here to blow the cobwebs out of the old brain. But to be quite frank with you, another effect of having the cobwebs blown away is that away up here in this Curtis Wright Condor of the E.A.T. Lines, conferences, parleys, conversations, and discussions in Washington, London, Paris or Berlin, wars in Asia, the squabble over those suspended Washington and Yankee baseball players, look - well, look a long, long way off.

Rambling along up here above the clouds, and through

LEAD - 2

the clouds, those clouds of war over Japan and China, and over Japan and Russia, today seem exceedingly remote.

But before I take a nose dive through the days news, I want to tell you about a flight I took some seven years ago in Europe.

SOUND-PROOF

It was in Germany. We were flying in a giant, all-metal Junkers plane. With me were a number of officials of the Luft Hansa, the company, that controls most of the German Air Lines. And there was one other American along. Making his first flight. A man more than eighty years old, long grey hair, long grey beard and the face of a patriarch. His name was Gustav Lindenthal, one of the greatest bridge builders of our time. He built a number of these great bridges down here below me, the bridges across the East River; also some of the tunnels under the Hudson.

We were in a tri-motored plane and the roar of the engine was terrific. Mr. Lindenthal said: "Yes, it's my first flight and everything is marvelous, perfect -- except one thing. In order to talk we have to shout at each other. People will never be entirely comfortable while flying until aviation engineers get rid of all this noise that nearly bursts your ear-drums."

He said he didn't know how they were going to do

SOUND PROOF - 2

it, but he was sure they would, before long. Well, seven years have gone by since I made that flight over Central Europe with Gustav Lindenthal. And now, ~~speaking~~ at last, aviation engineers have solved the problem. Here I am, speaking to you from the cabin of a giant air liner, a huge Curtiss-Wright Condor of the Eastern Air Transport lines. And it's just about as quiet in here as in a closed automobile, or in a railway car. And it certainly does make a vast difference to the comfort of flying.

Captain Thomas Doe, President of Eastern Air Transport, is sitting beside me. Captain would you mind opening the cabin door so we can hear those three Wright Whirlwind Motors ---- Now, the door is closed, and the roar of the motors has vanished. It's done by insulating the doors of the cabin and by new devices for decreasing engine and propellor noise.

WASHINGTON

(Now let's hear how a bit of the world's news sounds, from this altitude. First of all, President Roosevelt denies that he has made any agreement with either Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald of Great Britain, or former Premier Herriot of France on the subject of a moratorium on war debts) pending the world economic conference. ~~Evidently~~ Evidently yesterday's story from Washington on that subject was one of those yarns known in newspaper circles as a trial balloon.

The next thing is that a suggestion has been made for a truce on the tariff war between the various nations, the truce to last for the duration of the world conference.

Another bit of information from the White House is that the President may ask Congress for authority to deal with both war debts and tariffs as he sees fit in order to have a free hand during that world economic conference.

Then there's the question of inflation. The Senators are about through talking and a vote is expected tonight. This vote is practically sure to be another victory for the administration

Incidentally, the cash bonus for veterans has been put aside once more.

Then from Paris comes the information that France is trying to bring about a three way agreement with Uncle Sam and John Bull, an agreement to stabilize the currency and protect the gold franc.

And now let's see -- where do we go from here! Or, perhaps I should say, where are we?

At this particular moment we are flying over the tip of the Empire State Building. Almost a mile above it. New York City from an airplane is one of the sights of the world.

There are many sights on this planet that fairly take my breath away. One is standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon, another is from Tiger Hill looking toward the highest mountains on earth in the Himalayas. Another is flying over ~~the skyscrapers of~~ Switzerland. And this one, flying over the skyscrapers of old Manhattan Island and over the shipping of the world's busiest harbor.

ASIA

But let's see where do we go from here in our flight, our flight with the days news.

There's more trouble brewing in the Far East. Observers on the Chino-Japanese front had been somewhat puzzled because a considerable number of the Mikado's troops have been withdrawn from the region they had occupied south of the Great Wall. It now turns out that they've been withdrawn from there in order to be sent to the Russian frontier. While Jap forces are being concentrated in Eastern Manchuria, divisions of the Soviet Army are being massed on the Russian side of that border.

There have been differences of opinion for several months between the Mikado's government and the Soviet. Moscow today is charging Japan with conspiring to grab the Chinese Eastern Railway. The Russians declare that the Japanese have been disorganizing traffic on that line, interfering with its business to the extent of practically stopping all freight shipments on certain divisions, divisions owned by the Soviet Government. The Russians claim the government of Manchukuo has been playing Japan's game by grabbing rolling stock which

belonged to the Soviet. On the other hand, officials of Manchukuo have accused the Russians of doing the same thing, So far the arguments have been carried on in diplomatic fashion. But today the situation is reported as being full of dynamite. Russian newspapers which are government organs, are expressing alarm and accusing the Japanese of encouraging intrigues against the Soviet in Manchukuo.

So there's a new Far Eastern scrap to follow in your daily paper.

LONDON

Prime Minister Ramsay McDonald is far out at sea tonight - too far out for me to see his ship even from up here. But here's the news:-

Mr. MacDonald seems to be in for plenty of arguments when he gets back home. The ship with his party aboard had hardly got beyond our shores before news came of grave dissension concerning his conversations with President Roosevelt. British politicians and newspapers are finding fault with what the Prime Minister did before they are even sure what it was he did.

In short, the folks in Britain are all up in the air, though not exactly in the same way I am. Raymond Gram Swing in a cable to the New York Evening Post and the Philadelphia Ledger describes the state of mind over there as a strong undercurrent of feeling that Mr. MacDonald has subscribed to more than the British will be willing to deliver at the forthcoming world economic conference. For example, a program of public spending is something that the British Tories will

never agree to. Then, too, the Bank of England would never consent to cooperate in any radical sort of credit expansion.

While the Prime Minister's home folks don't believe he has made any pledges that he should not have made, they are inclined to be decidedly critical of the joint statement issued by Mr. MacDonald and President Roosevelt.

So even from where I sit up here in this speeding plane I can see that Britain's Prime Minister is in for a lot of tall argument when he gets back home.

EARTHQUAKE

Wup! What was that? An air bump? Nope, it's an earthquake - an earthquake in the day's news, and in one of the last places you'd expect it, a region too far for me to see from up here even with the most powerful telescope. An earthquake in Alaska.

The quake was serious enough to send people flying in terror out of their houses in the towns of Anchorage, Seward, and Cordova, towns where I spent many days in years gone by. Chimneys toppled from house tops, and thousands of dollars of damage was done to property. But there were no casualties.

All communication was cut off from the outside world except by means of radio.

Alaska, parts of it, is a land of flaming, spouting volcanoes. I described them as seen from the air once in a book about the First World Flight.

CYCLONE

Look out! Here comes a terrific storm. I mean in the news:-

Down south the folks have been blowing themselves to a cyclone. In Texas buildings were torn up and cotton plantations wrecked over an area of several miles. The cyclone was followed by heavy rains which washed out roads. A number of people were killed and injured. You'll find the story in tonight's papers.

Similar news comes from Louisiana where the wind was so strong that it blew motor cars all over the streets, and also caused quite a lot of damage, but no casualties.

Where do cyclones come from? This very day scientists have been discussing the question, members of the American Geophysical Union, meeting in Washington, D.C.

One of the eminent geophysicists says cyclones are born in the polar regions. There are two main cyclone factories: One over Greenland, the other over the Antarctic region. Many other scientists believe that what goes on in those two places influences the weather of the rest of the world.

And by the way that's why my friend Sir Hubert Wilkins goes to the polar regions--to try and solve these weather riddles.

ALCOHOL

Away off in the distance I can see the mountains of Pennsylvania and here's an item from there. The Senate and House of Representatives of Pennsylvania -- in Harrisburg -- unanimously passed a Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to reject any legislation that would compel the blending of alcohol with gasoline for use in airplanes and automobiles.

ISHBEL

Before she returned to England with papa, Miss Ishbel MacDonald, the daughter of England's Prime Minister, said some interesting things about the differences between English women and those of the U.S.A. "English women," said Miss MacDonald, "like running around picking up things for men. American women, on the contrary, expect to have things picked up for them."

Then she said further: "We spoil our boys, and you spoil your girls."

Of course, there will be indignant people who get up on their hind legs and deny vociferously that American girls are spoiled. They will hear nothing against the American girl, who by tradition, is supposed to be faultless. And far be it from me to quarrel with popular traditions, even if I am up in the air.

HARRY FRANCK

Harry Franck, the traveler, who has spent most of his life roaming up and down the earth, and then writing interesting books about it, has just been telling me about his next journey. He will be gone about a year and his party will include two or three college men. He hasn't picked his men yet. They must be unmarried, able to use a typewriter, and of other qualifications. Their expenses will all be paid, and they will see many countries under the most unusual circumstances, in company with one of the most famous travelers of our time. The trip will include most of the countries of Europe: North Africa, the Near East, Persia, Baluchistan, India, Burma, Siam, the Malay States, those great tropical islands, Sumatra, Borneo, and Celebes, also the Philippines, China and Japan.

It sounds like such an unusual opportunity for young men that I am glad to pass the information along. You can reach Harry Franck either in care of East Aurora, New York, or his home at New Hope, Pennsylvania.

STOKOWSKI

I happened to be in Philadelphia this morning and ran across an interesting bit of information in the Evening Bulletin. It concerns Leopold Stokowski, the colorful and temperamental director of that famous Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

The moment the symphony season ends next week, Mr. Stokowski will start on a unique trip. He's going to Mt. Athos where that famous monastery perches on top of a steep cliff near the Aegean Sea. The monks of that monastery at Mt. Athos have been famous for centuries for their learning. They have one of the most extraordinary libraries in the world. And in that library are thousands of priceless old volumes and manuscripts many of which deal with music, music that is unknown to music lovers who fill modern concert halls.

Dr. Stokowski is looking for the bizarre, the unusual in music. He believes that there's a great deal of musical lore which is forgotten except by those mentioned at Mt. Athos. At any rate, it is unknown to modern musicians. So on Mt. Athos Dr. Stokowski is going to hunt for some of the curious forms and

strains that people used to listen to thousands of years ago.

In order to reach the monastery on Mt. Athos you have to be hauled up a steep cliff in a basket. That's the only way of getting into that monastery or getting out of it. You can't even go there in an airplane like this. The monks won't let you.~~in~~.

PIGEONS

I have two live pigeons here in a box beside me -- also a small boy, a nine-year old youngster who is going to release them. These homing pigeons are from a friend of mine, John Mattick, a foreman in an anthracite colliery over at Swoyersville, Pennsylvania, where all that superior Wyoming anthracite comes from.

I've written two messages to John, and attached one to the leg of each pigeon. We want to see whether they will find their way home or not when they have to take off from a plane that is travelling at the rate of 150 miles an hour.

All right, Sonny, let them go! They're off! There they go out the window! I hope they don't get hit by the tail.

And now I'll let these Wright Whirlwind motors send a final message to you. Here they are:- (Roar of motors)

What they said was: "Solong until tomorrow."