

LOWELL THOMAS SUNOCO WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1934.

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:

First indications today were that the situation in France was almost desperate. Our Ambassador Straus in Paris, had a conversation with our State Department over the trans-Atlantic telephone. The Ambassador was understood to say that martial law had been declared in Paris. This news flashed all over the world. However, a few minutes later, Ambassador Straus telephoned again, explaining that because of atmospheric conditions he had been misunderstood. There is no martial law in Paris.

As a matter of fact everything is quieter along the Seine after a stormy night. This morning the sight of the Republican Guards patrolling the streets with steel helmets and drawn sabres aroused the crowd to a new pitch of fury. The commanding officer of the guard ordered the men to sheath their sabres. Even that did not pacify the mob. And then Parisiens saw the serio-comic spectacle of armed policemen being chased down

FRANCE - 2

the streets by exasperated rioters. In fact, there was a report that the bodies of three of the Republican Guards had been fished out of the River Seine.

A French senator was the centre of one curious episode, a radical Socialist. A large crowd attacked him, knocked him down, tore off every stitch of clothing. And there was that dignified senator running along the boulevard for all the world like an old gentleman in a nudist colony. Finally he was rescued by a squad of gendarmes who modestly covered him with their capes.

Ambassador Straus notified Secretary of State Hull today that no Americans have been injured, or threatened. However, he has advised them all to stay in doors -- keep off the boulevards.

Meanwhile, the first outcome of yesterday's riots was the resignation of the Prime Minister. Mr. Daladier and his entire cabinet, threw up their jobs, saying they would rather quit than use soldiers against their own people. That put it up to the President of the Republic to find a new

FRANCE - 3

Premier. The position was offered to Gaston Doumergue, former President of France. Doumergue at first refused flatly, but after much persuasion, finally consented, so now the former President is on his way to Paris. He will arrive in Paris, early tomorrow morning to consider whether or not to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies.

Mr. Doumergue's acceptance of the Prime Minister job does not mean troubles are over. One thing that may complicate the situation is the threat of a general strike. The Federation of Workers has warned all its members to mobilize and be ready to walk out in all branches of industry. The same instructions have gone out to municipal workers.

One thing that has incensed the mob particularly is the fact that ten civilians were shot down and killed by the police and troops, with more than five hundred and eighty injured.

That seems to be the gist of what is known so far, thanks to the censorship. But they can't keep up the censorship long because it would be too easy for correspondents to

FRANCE - 4

take a boat across the channel to England and give the full news to the world.

But just a moment! Here's still more ominous news.

An entire battallion of infantry has been sent to re-enforce the guard of police and troops now stationed around the Ministry of the Interior. There was another battle between the police and the mob. Several shots were fired and three people wounded. The mob put the gendarmes to flight.

And here's another! All the trades unions of Paris have called a strike, a general strike lasting twenty-four hours. It will start next Monday. And that may mean most anything.

NBC

Lieutenant-
Colonel Stewart
Roddie.

British expert
on disarmament
of Germany.

Re German
Foreign Minister
Walter Rathenau.

Feb. 7, 1934.

INTRO TO COLONEL STEWART RODDIE

The other evening we had Bruce Lockhart, the British Agent, tell us a strange tale of Red Terror in Russia, the attempt to assassinate Lenin. Today I heard another story just as dark and full of tragedy, the assassination of Walter Rathenau, the German Foreign Minister, the Jew who rose higher in the affairs of state than any other Jew since Disraeli.

I had lunch at the Waldorf with Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart Roddie, for seven years British expert in the disarmament of Germany. He told me how he had lunch one day in Berlin with Sir Basil Thompson, Chief of Scotland Yard. There he met a German industrial magnate, who related that his wife, a sister of Otto Kahn, the American banker, was giving a party that night for Richard Straus. The great composer was making his first appearance at the Berlin Opera House after the war. Colonel Roddie went to that party.

He noticed a striking-looking man leaning against the wall, eyes closed, absorbed in the music, - a Brahms Quartette.

"Who is he?" the British Colonel asked the hostess. And then -- she introduced him, to -- Walter Rathenau, German Foreign Minister.

"Colonel Stewart Roddie," the hostess smiled, "is interested in disarmament. Be careful, Herr Rathenau, or he will search you for weapons."

The Foreign Minister reached to his hip pocket and drew an automatic pistol.

"Here, Colonel, do you want it?" He said it in a slow, sad voice. "But before you take this pistol let me tell you something. In this country there are bands of men marching to the rhythm of these words, 'Shoot down Walter Rathenau! Shoot down Walter Rathenau!'"

The Colonel took the Foreign Minister's hand, and closed Rathenau's fingers around the pistol. "Keep it, Your Excellency," he said, "I pray you may never need it." But he did.

A little later the Colonel went to call at the

Foreign Minister's house for dinner. Colonel Stewart Roddie
is here beside me. Let's have him tell it. Do you mind,
Colonel? As I recall, you were accosted by two men. Am I
right?

FOR COLONEL RODDIE

Yes. Two men stepped out of the darkness. They found out who I was, then told me they were Secret Police. I found him in his library -- at the piano, playing, improvising, something dreamy in the vein of Chopin. The room was dark save for the glow of a green-shaded lamp on the piano. It threw curious shadows which gave the man's face the sinister appearance of a death mask. I stopped, startled. Aware of my presence he jumped up, pressed the button, and flooded the room with light. Then once again he looked like a living man.

7

I told him I was glad to find that he was so well guarded. Annoyance came into his face. "I gave instructions for them to stay away," he exclaimed. He went swiftly to the telephone, called the Foreign Office and commanded that the guard be removed. I begged him not to. There were rumors that he might be assassinated. But he only answered in a tone of fatalism:- "Colonel Roddie, when my time comes, I shall be taken, not before."

So the watch of Secret Police was removed. In a way I felt responsible for it.

A few mornings later Rathenau left home in his car, for the Foreign Office. Outside of his house an automobile was waiting. It followed him. In it were five young men. They drew alongside. One leaned out and fired with a repeating pistol, point blank, again and again. Then another threw a bomb into the Foreign Minister's car.

And so happened the assassination of Walter Rathenau, and ever since I have not been able to escape the terrible feeling that in a vague and indirect way I was responsible for it.

FOLLOW COLONEL RODDIE

Yes, that's a somber page of recent history.

It's a story colonel ^{Stewart -} Roddie tells in his book ^{"The} "Peace Patrol"

(6) -- and also in the tales he has been relating on the lecture platform here in America with such astonishing and **unexpected** success during the past several weeks -- somber stories and sprightly ones too.

CONTRACTS

Not one storm, but two storms are brewing in Washington, over government contracts. Cyclone No. 1:- It is claimed that enormous profits were made by companies that sold airplanes and motors to the United States Navy in 1927. So today a sub-committee of the House has ordered a sweeping investigation of the income tax returns of all the companies that sold such equipment to the Navy.

And typhoon No. 2 concerns contractors who have sold supplies to the War Department. President Roosevelt issued an order on this today. He directed that all such complaints be turned over to the Department of Justice. And Attorney General Cummings is instructed to get busy.

RAYON

5

One ~~bit of~~ news from Washington today indicates that the government believes there is a rayon trust. The Federal Trade Commission has signed a complaint against ten of the companies that manufacture rayon silk. They are charged with fixing prices, ~~with~~ limiting production and generally behaving as a monopoly. They not only keep up the prices to the consumer, they keep down the ^{wages} ~~prices~~ paid to the workmen, ~~so~~ ^{declares the} ~~xx so says Uncle Sam~~ Federal Trade Commission.

NBC

LOANS

Anybody who has tried to borrow money will be encouraged by this report from the White House. It concerns the excessive rates of interest charged by money lenders. The President himself is going to do something about it. He doesn't like the huge rates charged by some money lenders. He believes those rates should be cut.

It is pointed out that while city mortgages run from five to six per cent, in some of the rural districts borrowers must pay as high as ten percent. Bonuses are demanded, and there are other arbitrary charges. Which means that the rates run up to more than ten per cent. So the President is getting ready to act.

RAILROADS

About a year ago all the railroad workers in the United States took a ten per cent cut in wages. ~~They were persuaded to do this by the government and by arbitrators because of existing conditions.~~ It was understood that this ten per cent cut was to be only temporary, lasting until June.

4
A story in the Wall Street Journal today indicates that it may last much longer than that. The Journal has learned on good authority that all the railroad executives are going to get together and try to make that temporary ten per cent cut permanent.

NBC

TAXI STRIKE

There are taxicabs on the streets of New York once more. The great taxi strike has been settled. That is, in the Bronx and Brooklyn. Some drivers in Manhattan are still out, and there have been fights between strikers and strikebreakers.

The settlement sounds like an odd piece of diplomacy. It all hinges around the five cent tax which the Tammany Administration imposed on taxi riders. The tax has been pronounced illegal, but not before some hundred and fifty thousand dollars had been collected. So the question arose of how to return that illegally collected tax to the people. And here's the peculiar arrangement that has been made. On three successive Mondays, anybody who takes a taxi ride in New York City will pay only two-thirds of what the meter says. It is estimated that in this way the hundred and fifty thousand dollars will be returned to the public, even if not to those individuals who actually paid the tax. The drivers will get their full commission on what the meter reads. Thus the taxi companies will pay the money back to the public. And, the money that was

collected by the tax is going to be split fifty-fifty

between the drivers and the owners. And ^{after next week} ~~from now on~~ that

five cent tax ^{will be} ~~is~~ no more. -- you won't have to pay it in

~~the future.~~

MILK WAR

Another milk war in Chicago. Bombs ~~had~~ thrown, windows smashed in nine cut-price milk stations. Those are places where Chicagoans can buy milk, if they carry it home themselves -- the price only seven and a half cents a quart. Regular stores charge ten cents for delivered milk. Apparently the rough house is just a bit of commercial rivalry.

PLANES

2

High flying news from Great Britain. It all came out in the House of Commons today, in the course of a debate on disarmament. It was shown that phlegmatic Old John Bull has planes of a kind nobody has ever heard of, planes that will shoot straight up into the air like rockets; climb twenty thousand feet in nine minutes.

Psst, p-sh-sh-sh, and there you are, four miles high.

WRESTLER

Here I am being called down again. The other night I expressed the opinion that there were no women wrestlers in the United States. Miss Cassie Hopkins of Westport, Minnesota, asks: "Where do you live?" Then she adds the information: "Out West in Minnesota (where women are women) lady wrestlers are as thick as flies."

What's more, Miss Cassie Hopkins sends me her own muscular photo to prove it. Sis Hopkins is a woman wrestler, and, as she puts it, open to all comers, at a hundred and twenty-five pounds. She makes me a libelous offer, saying: "I will wrestle one of your black women from Hindustan if you can get them over."

Well, I haven't any from Hindustan or anywhere else. I am not in the wrestling business, but I might think it over.

Cassie Hopkins.

PARTY

(1)

One of the most curious parties ever given took place in Chicago yesterday. It was the ninth anniversary of Mr.

and Mrs. John Factor, otherwise known as ^{Mr. and Mrs.} Jake-the-Barber.

The curious part of it was that there were more police than guests. In addition to the police, there were a machine gun, a riot gun and pistols galore. Mr. Factor happens to be the state's star witness in the trial of the gang accused of having kidnapped him. He is also under sentence of extradition

to England, where the authorities ^{are planning a welcome} ~~have been anxious to see him~~
^{party.}
~~for a long time.~~

NBC

DOG

Here's a story newspapermen have wanted these many years. A man in San Francisco, waiting for a street car, took shelter from the rain on the porch of a house. A large and well-equipped bull dog objected. The dog grabbed him by the leg, pulled him down; had him on his back. The only way the man could get free was to bite him on the nose.

There's your perfect news story:- "Man bites dog."

And here's my imperfect ending -

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.