

LOWELL THOMAS' BROADCAST

FROM DELHI

May 24, 1945

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:

It's a little difficult to say Good Evening. Because out here where I am it's nearing five o'clock in the morning. Since my last broadcast from Cairo, I have flown over Palestine, Arabia, the ancient land of Mesopotamia, Persia, Beluchistan, and almost half of India. Putting me at this moment nine thousand, five hundred miles from New York, which I left last week. And I haven't been hurrying either. I have been stopping along the line, to talk to people, and to do what broadcasting the facilities would permit.

Tonight I am in the heart of India, at Delhi, capital of the Magnificent Moguls; the British, by the way, have almost equalled the magnificence of the Moguls, Akhbar-the-Great, Shah Jehan,^{and} all the others. There were seven cities, seven ancient Delhis. Now the British, since I was here more than a score of years ago, have built their new Delhi, with a grandeur all its own.

I flew in after dark tonight, so I have only had a glimpse of it by moonlight. Tomorrow I am anxious to see how it compares with the Delhi of Akhbar, where Francis Yeats-Brown, "The Bengal Lancer," and I, spent so much time long years ago, and from where we set forth on so many journeys to Southern Asia and to Central Asia -- beyond the Khyber.

Having flown over India, by night, I'll talk about Baghdad for a few moments before switching back to Roy Chapman Andrews. I wonder if the Regent, Abdul Ilah, the Acting Haroun al Raschid of present day Baghdad -- I wonder whether he and his party have arrived in America, and if so, whether you have heard much about them. The Iraq Regent and a group of his ministers, flew away from the banks of the Tigris, on an American magic carpet -- a C-54 -- a "plush job" as the Air Transport Command boys call it -- day before yesterday. I passed them over North Saudi Arabia, just on the border of Trans-jordania, east of the Dead Sea -- "over Jordan." I had just flown over Jericho, and a few minutes later the royal party from Baghdad was over Jericho. Jericho, Jericho! Sounds like a spiritual.

Now there are some remarkable things about this flight from Baghdad all the way to the New World, this journey through the sky from the Land of the Arabian Nights, to America. And if the genii who rules

this magic thing called radio will give us a clear signal, so my voice can be heard halfway round the world, I will tell them to you.

This is the first time that a member of the Hashimite family has visited either of the Americas -- the New World. And you have to know these Arab countries to know what that means, how startling it is. The Hashimite family are the direct descendants of the Prophet Mohammed, through his only daughter, Fatima. Abdul Ilah, the Regent, as well as the Heir Apparent (the King is a small child) -- Abdul Ilah is the only son of King Ali, brother of King Feisal, who, with T. E. Lawrence, led the Arab Revolt in World War One. Ali and Feisal were the sons of Husein, King of the Hedjaz. Husein was ruler of Mecca under the Turks. He and his sons rebelled. T.E. Lawrence joined them. They threw off the Turks in one of the most spectacular campaigns in history, and the rest you know: how Feisal became the first king of Modern Mesopotamia, Iraq, with Baghdad as his capital. He died. His son was killed. His small grandson is now on the throne. The Uncle, the Regent, now flying to America; may have arrived there today.

My own interest in all this goes back to the days when I was with Lawrence and the grandfather and father of the King of Iraq and the Regent, in Arabia, twenty-seven years ago.

The departure from Baghdad day before yesterday was one of the most extraordinary events in the history of that capital city of the Arabian Nights. None of the tales of the Great Caliph or of Sindbad the Sailor could equal it. Some of the members of the Regent's party had never been in an airplane before, until the American pilot took them up for a preliminary flight. The C-54 in which they have been flying is the largest plane ever to land at Baghdad; When they saw the interior of the huge airliner, with its forty-six spacious chairs; and felt the solidity of the C-54, they were amazed and reassured.

And I must tell you something else: there has been quite a hullabaloo throughout the Moslem world because the French, recently, have been moving troops back into Syria. The people of nearly all the Arabic speaking countries are protesting and demonstrating. In Baghdad I was told that the big anti-French demonstration was set for a certain hour. But shortly before that hour, this immense airplane, with all the Cabinet Ministers aboard, was flown over the city. In fact it buzzed the Great Mosque. It buzzed the main thoroughfare, Al Raschid Street. And great was the roar of its four motors through the bazaars.

As they say in Arabia, you can't talk about two things at once. So, the anti-French demonstrations were forgotten, and the Sa-ids of the city of the Caliphs, and the veiled women too, have been talking of nothing else since then. Naturally, the following day when the Regent was to mount this flying horse and speed through the heavens to America, the whole population was at the new Baghdad airfield. Before the crowd assembled the Queen Mother and the other ladies of the royal household, were shown through the plane -- all arranged by William Moreland, our Acting Minister, in Iraq.

As soon as the crew chief started warming up the motors, a business that goes on for some little time, the crowd began cheering and waving: pashas, sa-ids, sheiks of the desert in their robes, beggars, silver workers and rug merchants from the great bazaar, children, waterboys with their goat skins -- it's unlikely a greater crowd has been out for any event in this part of the world since Noah took all that crowd on the Ark to escape the Flood!

It was a one hundred percent Iraqui-American event because the Regent and his party were flying to America, to visit the President of the United States, making the journey in an American plane, with American Air Forces and Legation people in the role of host, acting for the President, on direct orders from Washington.

I would like to mention the names of all the members of the party. But you will see and meet them, either in person, or through the press and radio. However, I do want to mention one of the Regent's companions. His name is General Nuri Pasha es-Sa-id. When I knew him he was a young and dashing officer with Feisal and Lawrence, playing an important part in the revolt in the desert. Lawrence liked Nuri, particularly. And apparently he wasn't wrong, for General Nuri has been one of the builders of his country during the past twenty years, and perhaps it's best known Prime Minister. Incidentally, he speaks excellent English.

Several times I had written him, urging him to visit America. And it seemed ironic the other day, to pass him in the sky, he flying to my country, I flying to his -- after all these years.

At the Legation, Mr. Moreland told me an interesting story about how this visit came about. The Regent was originally invited by President Roosevelt. The date of departure was set for April 14th. When the President died, the trip was given up, until another invitation came from President Truman, who will entertain them at the White House.

A week after President Roosevelt's death, a mail pouch arrived at the American legation in Baghdad,

by air. In it, a letter to the Regent, from the American President, dictated and signed April twelfth, the day Mr. Roosevelt died. Apparently it was one of his last acts.

Only one thing more: Iraq, whence come these distinguished guests, as we all know, is the Biblical land of Adam and Eve -- of the Garden of Eden. In the time of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, back in the days when Senacharib, Nebuchadnezzar, and Darius were the rulers in Babylon, it was the most powerful country in the world, and the richest; with a large population; today it is one of the poorest, and with a small population. With a little help -- in education, mainly in agricultural and technical subjects -- it can again become one of the rich countries of the world.

In the past, few Americans have come to Baghdad. We do have an American Boys School there, of which Ambassador Hugh Gibson, Sam Pryor of Pan American Airways, Frank Mason, one of the heads of the National Broadcasting Co., and a few others are trustees. It is run by Dr. and Mrs. Calvin Staudt, who have been there for eighteen years. The Doctor and his remarkable wife have long needed help. They need it now. These two have made a great personal contribution to Baghdad and the Middle East. And on their rather small and

unpretentious beginning could and should be built a fine, modern technical institution to train the young men of Iraq so they can develop their country.

True, Iraq is a part of Britain's sphere of influence, and probably long will be. We Americans recognize this. But, along with the British, we now have vast oil interests in the Middle East. And it seems to me that we as a nation, and the oil people, of course, should build, in Baghdad, an American College or University second to none. Why not?

The idea appeals to me for many reasons. What a grand time one could have with the architectural plans, drawing upon ancient Babylon and ancient Baghdad. How about an Arabian Nights Auditorium; a building in honor of Adam; and one in honor of Eve, the Mother of us all; and so on. Baghdad is going to be at the crossroads of this New World that is upon us. I can just see Roy Chapman Andrews in Adam & Eve Hall, delivering the first series of lectures on his favorite topic: "On the Trail of Ancient Man." Meanwhile, someone should help the Staudts with the present American School for Boys in Baghdad.

And now -- So Long, from Delhi, India, as I turn you all the way back to New York.

HIMMLER

L.J. - Sunoco. Thursday, May 24, 1945.
(Dr. K.C. Andrews on from New York
L.J. on from New Delhi, 11 minutes.)

Heinrich Himmler is dead. The infamous Gestapo Chief killed himself last night by poison. He was being held in a villa at Lueneburg in Northwestern Germany by the British. The news is official all right. It comes from Headquarters of the British Second Army, and Allied Supreme Headquarters at Paris confirms it.

That makes one ~~trial~~^{trial} unnecessary. Von Ribbentrop, Hitlers almost equally infamous Foreign Minister, is now the only top ranking Nazi still at large. That is, assuming both Hitler and Propaganda Minister Goebbels really died in Berlin.

When the British captured him, Himmler was disguised with pearl colored horn rimmed glasses. He was going under the name of Hitzinger. He shaved off his little mustache and over one eye had a black patch.

A British physician examined him last night, wanted to make sure he had no poison about him. He even looked into Himmler's mouth and appeared to be satisfied. Then a second thought struck him. The doctor made Himmler approach closer to a light and put his

finger in the Gestapo Chief's mouth. At that, Himmler jerked his head back and bit on a little phial concealed in the back of his mouth containing cyanide of potassium. He died fifteen minutes later.