

LOWELL THOMAS BROADCAST

Monday, October 17,

1949

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

I feel I should be singing this, if I could sing -- ~~and you know the song.~~ There's more music than ever for me in those words -- Home Sweet Home. Tonight I am broadcasting, not from the Himalaya^s ~~Mountains~~, not from the middle of the Brahmaputra River, not from the Forbidden City of Lhasa - but from the old home studio.

Lhasa, the capital of ~~forbidden and far off~~ Tibet, is the most extraordinary place I've ever seen. The court of the Dalai Lama - like the incredible fantasy ^{of a weird} ~~for a gorgeous~~ dream. ^{start this} ~~Monasteries and red robed~~

~~lamas, yaks and tribal nomads - Shangri-la, living~~
~~and real, and altogether fabulous~~ } But, after an
~~ordeal of~~ being carried on a litter through and over
the Himalayas - well, you can imagine how it felt to
come in over the Atlantic Ocean and look down on good
old North America from our Pan-American Strato-cruiser.

That was yesterday. And today it was equally
wonderful to get to the news wire again.

Ever since we plunged into the lost world of
the Himalayas, more than two months ago - we were away
from any news. Cut off from the world as though we
had gone to another planet. In fact there are only a
few people in that strange land who even know there
is such a place as America. Which will give you some
idea of how completely we were out of touch; while you
folks of course were being kept right up to the
minute on the news. Today here on the press wire there

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have been dispatches about things I hadn't heard of.

So what can I contribute? I guess nothing but a

fresh approach. Tonight the news all seems brand

new to me. [I feel as if I had just come back to

earth. Back from another world.]

And here is some of that news: - etc. etc.

NAVY

In Washington today, the ~~M~~arines had their say. The commandant of the leathernecks, General Cates, and former commandant General Vandergrift ^{- both of} Second World War fame - told ^{a congressional} ~~the~~ committee that, under the unification of the armed forces, an attempt is being made to cripple the ~~M~~arines.

~~While we were in Tibet, of course, we had no news whatever about the battle between the Navy and the Air Force. But that feud has been going on for a long time, and today I had little difficulty in surmising pretty much what the admirals have been saying about the B-36. There must have been some mighty bitter wrangling.~~

The leatherneck version, today, charged that the Army has been demanding that the marine corps be limited to Fifty or Sixty Thousand men, with no increase during wartime, and that the Army ~~shall~~ take over amphibious warfare - those famous landings on hostile shores, for which the Marines have long been famous.

~~SUBSTITUTE FOLLOW NAVY.~~

Air Force

The Air Force won a victory tonight, thanks to the House of Representatives. A joint committee of the Senate and House agreed on the budget for national defense amounting to fifteen billion five hundred million dollars - and the bill provides for an air force of fifty-eight groups. President Truman had insisted that forty-eight ^{groups} were enough, and the Senate had agreed. But when it came to a showdown ~~it~~ in the Joint Committee, the upper house gave way. Technically, the President would not necessarily be compelled to spend that extra air force money, which is merely made available. But the Congressmen say they expect him to do it.

~~FOLLOW FOLLOW NAVY~~

Farm Bill

The Congressional joint committee trying to draw up a farm bill reports -- deadlock. The Senate group announces that it cannot agree with the House. This makes it appear ~~xxx~~ as if there can be no farm bill in the present session. Congress is rushing to an adjournment, and the farm bill may have to ~~wait~~ wait until the next session in January.

LABOR

And Here's a story I had to inquire about - a dispatch stating that William Green, President of the A F of L, calls for a merger of all labor, under the banner of the A F of L. That is last a condition for accepting the proposal made by John L. Lewis. I didn't know about the Lewis proposal, but *find* that the mine union chief suggested that the entire union would back up the C I O steel workers, who are on strike for a pension - insurance fund. Lewis, though chronically on the outs with the C I O, called for the formation of a strike fund of Two and a Half Million Dollars a week. The A F of L was invited to contribute its share, **B**ut now President Green says that would be possible only if all the labor organizations were to united under the leadership of the A F of L.

ISRAEL

From Tel Aviv the Capital of Israel, come what are called - "The grim facts." American leaders of the United Jewish appeal are being shown that Israel is faced with bankruptcy. The economy of the new state is not expanding fast enough to take care of immigrants to Israel, ~~is running out.~~

They say the main reason is that foreign investments, on which Israel was counting, have failed to materialize. Measures are being enacted to attract foreign capital, and something will have to be done to increase the flow of money from Jewish contributors in America - if the "Grim Facts" are to be overcome.

FRANCE

In Paris, Premier Jules Moch resigned tonight - although he was hardly at all in power. Nominated to head a new cabinet, he struggled for days to put a ministry together, but now has had to admit failure. Earlier in the day he seemed to have succeeded, but at the last minute found that new quarrels had broken out in his own party - the Socialists; so, instead of proclaiming a ministry, he handed in a resignation. Sounds like France!

All of which leaves France without a government again - but France is used to that. What I heard about French politics while on the Roof of the World, was an absolute zero. But we know the old story of the frequent fall of ministries in France. We know about post-war economic difficulties, devaluation of currency, rise in prices, threat of inflation. Enough to overthrow any French government.

Even Tibet is affected by devaluation - because of its next door neighbor, India.

RUSSIA

Soviet Russia has had another mass deportation - thousands of people torn from their homes and herded into Siberia. In Washington, the State Department says it has word that all foreigners have been taken out of the Caucasus - mostly Greeks, together with Turks and Persians, who have been living in the land along the Caucas^{us}~~ian~~ border, ~~land~~. The Greek government has protested against the deportations - which have been attended by all the usual horror, masses of people taken away suddenly, transported into bleak Siberia, and dumped into desolate places to face the Siberian winter.

NORWAY

A dispatch tonight from Norway^s_^ states that in the recent election, the Communists lost their last place in the Norwegian Parliament. At first the Reds, ~~who took an awful beating,~~ seemed to have elected one member -- their own Communist party chairman. But the vote was so ~~xi~~ close that there was a re-check, and ~~ix~~ this reversed the decision, the Communist party chairman los^o_y out - to a midwife, a more useful member of the community.

UNITED NATIONS

From the United Nations we have a report of -- no settlement in the controversy over Greece. The President of the General Assembly, General Romulo of the Philippines, presented a conciliation plan and he had high hopes of being able to bring about an agreement to end Red Guerrilla activities in Greece. But the word tonight is - deadlock. Things, we are told, are snarled up in the bitterest kind of wrangling over the question of who shall be named to a seat left vacant on the Security Council. Shall it be Red Marshall Tito's Yugoslavia, the puppet that rebelled? Or Czechlovakia, the satellite that remains faithful to Stalin? That seems to be the real point at issue, with the guerilla war in Greece left dangling.

CHINA

The Chinese Reds have captured Amoy - the big port on the China coast just opposite the island of Formosa, on which island Chiang Kai-Shek and a large part of the Nationalist government have taken refuge. There was heavy fighting in Amoy, before the city fell.

~~In India we heard of the fall of Canton last week, after having been away from the details of China was news.~~ ^{Up In Tibet,} ~~there were few~~ ^{we did hear} ~~definite facts~~ ^{much about China,} but among the officials of the government of the Dalai Lama, there ~~was~~ ^{is} plenty of awareness of the Red sweep through China, and what ^{it may} ~~that could~~ mean to the land of lamas, ~~and monasteries~~ ~~on the roof of the world.~~ They are much alarmed about it.

LEOPOLD

King Leopold of Belgium speaks - the exiled monarch giving his version of what happened when he surrendered his army in the Second World War. Belgium, it seems, is having another crisis over whether or not to bring back King Leopold to his throne - a plebiscite proposed. So Leopold now makes a statement to the United Press, defending himself - after having kept silent until now.

The background reverts to the news of the days of Dunkirk, when the British evacuated an army. Both ~~British~~ Winston Churchill and ~~the~~ French Premier ^{Raymond} declared bitterly that Leopold never notified his Allies of his intention to surrender. But now Leopold comes forward with a denial of this. He says he did notify his Allies, and declares that it was the British who failed to notify the Belgian command - when they started withdrawing their troops for the Dunkirk evacuation.

This withdrawal, he claims, was why the Belgian army had to surrender.

~~Conclusion:~~
~~Conclusion:~~

As I mentioned when I went on the air a few minutes ago, the refrain of this program tonight is - "we're thankful to be home." And to that I want to add a few inadequate words of thanks to ^{a number of} ~~a lot of~~ people. Including a group of my old friends who took over and did this radio job for me while I was ~~roving~~ ⁱⁿ ~~around~~ Central Asia. I wish I had time to tell you something about each one of them: my neighbor and radio colleague Ed Murrow; Heavyweight Champion Gene Tunney, scientist and explorer Roy Chapman Andrews; ~~Manager~~ ~~fixin~~ Dodger Manager ~~the credit~~ Branch Rickey; New York Boxing Commissioner Colonel Eddie Eagan, C B S's brilliant Washington correspondent Charlie Collingwood; literary critic, author and Information Please M.C. Clifton Fadiman, and Senior Editor of the Reader's Digest Fulton Oursler.

It would be difficult to assemble a greater array of talent than that list. All top flight men! To whom I am much indebted.

Our Tibetan trip was slowed down considerably when I was thrown from a horse. An incident that wouldn't amount to much here at home. But on the Tibetan plateau, one of the most remote spots on this planet - well that's different. Today, for the first time I learned how my friends here at home tried to reach out across the world and lend us a hand. An exceedingly difficult thing to do when you are in far away Tibet.

C.B.S. passed the word along to Sam Pryor, Vice-President of Pan-American. Sam in turn told Defense-Secretary Johnson and Air Secretary Symington. Whereupon they ordered an Army bomber to be sent to the nearest point on the Tibetan border - it being impossible to fly into the Himalayan wilds. No landing fields there.

RECOGNITION - 3

And against Lhasa policy to allow any airplanes in that Shangri-la.

On this end the rescue task was assigned to Major General William F. McKee, and Colonel Fred Pillet.

Also in the background of all this was our American Ambassador to India Loy Henderson, who had been largely responsible for our getting to Tibet - and his State Department colleagues in Delhi and Calcutta, headed by his number two, Howard Donovan and Consul General Charles Derry.

Years ago travelers used to marvel at the way the British Foreign Office looked out for, and in every way helped British subjects in foreign lands. Well, that couldn't have surpassed what Uncle Sam does nowadays for Americans. The State Department rescue team that crossed the Himalayas to meet us said it was just a routine thing for them. They insisted that it was.

My gratitude to these folks is unbounded.

I don't remember too clearly all of what happened on that journey across the Himalayas, sixteen days carried on a litter. What I remember mostly is the song of the Tibetans who were carrying me. It was a weird chant, repeated over and over - endlessly, hour after hour, day after day. Translated it went like this: "Oh Lord Buddha lighten our load!" Which didn't sound so reassuring. For their load would have been lightened a lot by just one false step on that narrow trail.

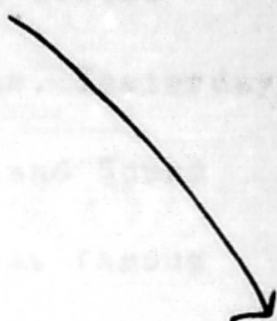
My son lost twenty pounds on the ~~the~~ return journey. Lost it, I suspect, just watching them bounce me along the canyon walls and through a hundred rivers and streams. I know he was as pleased as I was to see those American faces - and Major A.K. Bose the Indian Army surgeon, when we met them in Tibet, to days beyond the border of India. How about it, Lowell?

L.T. JR.

That struggle back over the Himalayas to India was one I'll never forget, and an experience I certainly hope you never have to undergo again, Dad. I know there were many times, especially during those first few days after the accident, that you couldn't see how dangerous the going was - places where the trail narrowed to a bare thread, rock-cliffs going straight up on one side, and on the other -- plunging down for a thousand feet or more. If just one of them, had slipped -- well, they didn't.

The Tibetan gods were good to us. There were no slips during those sixteen days that you jounced slowly along in your stretcher and later, in the improvised sedan chair. Now that we know your hip was broken, Dad, and not just badly spained, it is easy to imagine what might have happened if you'd even had a slight fall. Those bones might have been jarred apart, and probably we'd have had to spend Christmas in Tibet. Actually, though, I'm glad we didn't know the extent of your injury, for I'm sure that if we had we wouldn't have

tried to move you out so soon. Instead, we would have waited up there in Gyantse. And that's where our State Department rescue party would have found us -- the joint American-Indian team that met us at Yatung, Tibet, just over the Himalayas. They were the first people from the outside world we had encountered in two months. Roy Bisbee, a young ball of fire from the U.S. Embassy in Delhi, led the party -- accompanied by the Embassy nurse, Emily Bateman, and an able Indian Army surgeon, Major A.K. Bose, who carried all the necessary surgical equipment for a major operation. The Tibetan government in an unprecedented move had granted permission for this India-U.S. rescue team to penetrate that mighty Himalayan curtain of rock and snow, and to do everything in their power to get us ~~xxx~~ back to civilization.



Together we travelled, rescuers and rescued from Yatung across the last great pass -- Nathu-la -- down the southern slope of the Himalayas and ~~we~~ out onto the plains of northern India.

At Siliguri we were picked up by a U.S. C - 47, belonging to our Air Attaché in Delhi, and flown the last few hundred miles to Calcutta.

~~After~~ After two months of travel by mule and litter in the highest, most rugged and most remote land in the world, that hop with our Air Attaché, ^{Captain Huffman (?)} was one of the most welcome experiences I've ever known -- after more than six hundred miles of travel at one and two miles an hour to race through the sky ^{again} at close to two hundred -- that was really a treat.

Yes, I too can hardly believe our long ^{and} journey is over, [^] It will be some days yet before I'm sure that being back home isn't a dream. Yesterday, ^{Pan American} as our [^] clipper brought us in over Long Island Sound and when we caught our first glimpse of that famous sky line, it seemed to me that while Lhasa may lie at

one end of the rainbow, New York is the other end of that rainbow.