

LOWELL THOMAS SUNOCO BROADCAST

June 14, 1932.

Good Evening, Everybody!

(Well, I've had a thrill such as comes once in a
lifetime:- My first sight of a national political convention.)

And what a sight!

I must say the thrills were mostly for the eye rather than for the ear. Perhaps that's not quite doing justice to the magnificent organ in the convention hall. When that instrument started to play - and it has a volume equal to the sound produced by two-thousand musicians - well, when the organist let himself go, it just bowled me over.

But the big thrill was the spectacle inside of that huge hall draped with flags, with all those state delegations with their banners massed on the floor.

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Today they merely went through the opening exercises. (Senator Dickinson of Iowa, the temporary chairman, ^{made} ~~is~~ a handsome keynoter. There is nobody I'd rather watch in action on a platform. As for listening, well, the Senator's discourse was what ~~was~~ ^{is} knownⁿ in newspaper circles as the "grand old wahoo". He held forth on the accomplishments of President Hoover.) He recounted what Mr. Hoover had done for his country and so on. He said nothing to arouse the convention, and he said it very well - in some six-thousand carefully chosen words.

Senator Dickinson looks rather like a character actor in a good stock company. He has a handsome head of bushy white hair and mobile features. When he came to the part of his speech in which he first broke to us a big secret - the name of the man he was praising - Herbert Hoover, there was, of course, the customary cheer. ~~It was~~ ^{It} not a very lusty cheer. In fact, it sounded like a, well, like a dutiful cheer. As though "it's in the bag, so why cheer." Even the blaring of the band merely prolonged it to sixty seconds.

As for the real serious business which the republicans have to settle - it is still up in the air. Nobody knows who is going to be vice-president - nobody really knows what the G.O.P. is going to say about prohibition.

Here is an item that contains almost the only actual news of the day from the convention:-

The job of arranging a platform that the President will accept, is in the hands of four members of his Cabinet. It's a touchy job. Of course it must be a compromise between the growing demand of the Party for a wet plank and the President's wellknown dry attitude.

The four Cabinet Ministers who have this ^{ticklish assignment} ~~touchy job~~ in ~~their hands~~ are Secretaries ^{Ogden} Mills, Pat Hurley, ^{Tim} Hyde and ^{Bill} Doak.

But we will not know until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon what the results of their efforts ~~is to~~ ^{will} be. And when we do know that will be big news.

A lot of us in the Press Gallery were rather tickled by the sense of humor displayed by the organist. While waiting

for the proceedings to commence - which they did a half hour late - he improved the shining hours by playing that well known ditty entitled:- "Between The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea".

WRITERS

There is one bunch of people who are ^{certainly} glad the Convention has started. ~~at last~~. They are the 750 newspapermen - the reporters feature writers, "big suspender" boys, sob sisters, novelists, dramatists, and so on.

For the last few days their principal occupation has been interviewing each other. That is the only way they could get what passed for a semblance of news.

Appropos of this, the G.O.P. Convention has introduced me to a new disease. I happened to observe last night that I was tired. And I didn't remember having put forth any particular exertion.

Don't you know what's the matter with you"? said Ray *Clapper* ~~Tucker~~, head of the ~~United Press~~ Washington Bureau *of the U. P.*

"Why no", I replied. "Huh, you've got "Convention Legs", said he. "*Oh, you mean Convention dogs; says I.*"

One thing ~~that~~ is puzzling ^{all of us,} ~~the newspaper boys,~~ and that is the appearance of so many Democratic Leaders in Chicago during a Republican Convention. For instance, there is Jim Farley, Democratic State Chairman of New York. Jim is also manager for Gov. Franklin D. ~~R~~oosevelt's campaign for the Democratic nomination. He has been seen about the lobbies of ~~the Palmer House and other~~ Chicago hotels, talking earnestly, but privately to Republican delegates.

Another thing that astonishes the newspaper men is that Brother Jim seems to have become suspiciously reporter shy. Back in New York Jim Farley never objects to a little bit of harmless necessary publicity. But now, if he sees a reporter approaching ~~him~~ he ducks.

My Colleague, Heywood Broun, suggests that Farley is lobbying for a dry plank in the Republican platform. What do you mean "dry plank", I replied? Everybody knows that Jim Farley is as wet as Al Smith. "Certainly", replied Broun, "but if both parties have wet planks what good is it going to do either of them?"

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Obviously it is to the advantage of the Democrats for the Republi-

cans to have a dry, or at least a semi-wet platform.

Well, it seems ~~to be~~ plausible, at that.

But there are plenty of other Democratic Leaders
now in Chicago. Wm. Gibbs McAdoo is expected tomorrow to swell *the*
~~the numbers of those already here,~~ *Democratic throng.*

" G E R M A N Y "

But let's leave Chicago for a moment and see what's going on in other parts of the world.

The Germans were howling about taxes under the Bruening government, but they are ^{now} going to have far more to howl about under their new cabinet. The Von Papen government of feudal landowners and generals is boosting the taxes higher than ever. This government has things its own way for the time being. Having dissolved parliament, they don't have to get anybody's consent. The new taxes were increased ^{today} by an emergency decree. It increased income taxes and extended the sales tax to affect even the small shopkeeper.

With the same gesture the doles were reduced. The emergency tax decree was signed ^{today} by President Von Hindenburg.

" HAUSNER "

I got quite a kick out of the ^{final} ^{just in} account of the rescue of Stanislaus Hausner, the trans-atlantic flier who tried to fly from New York to his home city, Warsaw, ^{Poland.} The U.P. Dispatch sent to the Kansas City Journal ~~and~~ Post conveys the story ^{of a just} ^{related by} Captain Wilson, master of the vessel that rescued Hausner. ~~It~~ states ~~that~~ Hausner's first words were "Thanks very much, captain; I have been waiting for you ^{for} eight days." Having said that, he collapsed on the deck of the ^{Captain Wilson's} ship. ~~that saved him.~~

Hausner had been drifting around for a week in his disabled plane. But his first thought when the crew of the American ~~ship~~ vessel rescued him, was "Save my ship".

Captain Wilson said ~~that~~ they had had an uneventful voyage until they got about 650 miles off the coast of Portugal, ^{At that point his} ~~when his~~ chief officer attracted his attention to what looked like a buoy on the starboard bow about four miles away. "Its peculiar top markings induced me to make a closer investigation by telescope,"

said the captain. Then he perceived that what he thought was a buoy was an airplane one-third submerged, with the tail sticking up in the air.

"We were amazed to see a figure which seemed to be lashed to the machine," said the Captain. "We blew the siren; the figure moved and waved frantically."

Then the lifeboat was ordered away with a crew of eager volunteers under the second officer. Unfortunately they could not save his plane because the sea was running too high. Captain Wilson adds that Hausner is recovering.

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ASCOT

Depression, or no depression, you can't deprive John Bull of his pet sport. When all is said and done, there is no sport ~~which is~~ more popular in England than horse racing.

This is one of the important weeks of the year to all the sons of John Bull. It is Ascot Week. This is the King's own ~~own~~ party. The track is on the King's private estate. The royal family always attends ^{with pomp and circumstance.} ~~in state.~~ With outriders and an escort of the crack life guards, the King and Queen and Princes drive to the race meet from Windsor Castle.

There is an interesting account of it in a U.F. dispatch sent to the Detroit News. Ascots has many peculiar customs. For instance, there is an unwritten law that no woman may appear in the same frock twice. The men dress in white top hats, grey or black morning coats and white spats. Invitations to the royal enclosure are sent out by the Lord Chamberlain. The public attends of course, in large numbers and are not allowed to go inside the enclosure. While the ^{big wigs, the nobe} ~~nobe~~ drink their champagne the ^{nobe} ~~public~~ have quite as good a time on beer. A fashionable person would as soon appear on Piccadilly in his underclothes as ~~not appear at Ascot during Ascot week.~~

PERSONALS

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But, as for me, which do I prefer, Ascot in Old England or the National Conventions in Chicago? Well, I prefer Chicago. Rather,

On all sides I heard the remark today: "I am bored stiff. This is the deadliest convention I ever attended."

Followed by groans. Well, maybe the rest of the boys felt that way about it. But I didn't. Why? ~~Well, it is~~ ^{Just because it's} my first.

~~National Convention.~~ I haven't any other to compare it with.

The whole session only lasted about an hour and a half this morning, and I enjoyed it - every minute of it. But I am not

referring to the speeches. They sounded ^{like, well, you know,} ~~perfunctory~~. The only one I bothered to listen to was the short crisp speech delivered

by one of the most powerful men in America who has never run

for an important office. I mean that internationally famed

lawyer, former President of the American Bar Association,

ex-President of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, and one of the

grandest men I know - Silas H. Strawn.

While the keynote speech was in progress, Roy Howard and I started out to see if we could spot the most beautiful woman in that vast convention hall. Roy was interrupted by so many friends that he fell by the wayside. I persevered.

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(Personals - #2)

And I found her, a lovely, dainty, exquisite creature. She was a blond. She wore a stunning tan suit with a cape trimmed in red fox, around the bottom of the cape, not around the collar. Who was she? Well! Her name was Catharine Vitts, and she was with her mother, Mrs. George Vitts, wife of a committeeman from Wisconsin. I pointed her out to various eminent journalists who did not seem to be paying any attention to the keynote speech and they all agreed. Grove Patterson, editor of the Toledo Blade, beamed enthusiastically. So did that word wizard from Kansas, William Allen White.

Senator Fess had to interrupt the keynoter and ~~po~~and violently and then called ^{down, bawled out} the delegates and the others present for not paying attention. I am afraid I was one of the culprits.

Part of the time I sat chatting with Frank Gannett who owns 18 newspapers in the East. Mr. Gannett is widely known as a "dry", an able publisher, and a charming gentleman.

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(Personals - #3)

Bob Scripps, one of the heads of the Scripps^{Howard} chain of papers, was laughing because we were joshing him about his luxuriant beard, ^{It was} the noblest beard in the Stadium, ^{It was} only approached in splendor by the spinach of a colored ge'lman, ~~the~~ a delegate from the South.

Will Rogers seemed to be the most attentive person in the audience. He sat at the edge of the press inclosure and many stopped to speak to him. Each time he impatiently turned away and cupped his ear in order not to miss any of the oratory. *I wondered why.*

Arthur Brisbane seemed to be much more interested in reading a newspaper than anything else.

Henry Allen of Kansas, former governor and senator, did not seem a bit bored. He told me he was enjoying it tremendously. Apparently he and William Allen White have made up that ancient quarrel of theirs because they were breakfasting together this morning.

The best place to get a bird's eye view of the

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(Personals - #4)

whole show was from behind the glass of one of the broadcasting company booths where I sat for a time with my old friends,

Rloyd Gibbons, Frederick William Wile, Ted Huesing and Ed

Thorgesen. From there it was one of the greatest human spectacles

I have ever seen. *It reminded me of the time I watched*
~~comparable in impressiveness to watching~~

10,000 Mohammedans going through their prayers in unison at the

Jamma Masjid Mosque in Delhi, India. ~~or watching the Hindus~~

~~bathe in the Ganges at Ben Ares.~~

~~And watching~~ The show in the corridors was equally

interesting. Many of the Republican leaders were paying no

attention to the proceedings in the Stadium. They were button-

holing delegates. Everywhere I went, I collided with cabinet

officers, Secretary of Agriculture Hyde, Secretary of War Pat

Hurley, with a cigarette drooping rakishly from his mouth and

a soft Stetson cocked over one eye. Secretary of Labor Doak

told me it was also his first national convention. He said

he had been a delegate ~~to~~ ^{to} several others but hadnot attended

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(Personals - #5)

for fear he would be bored stiff. But ^{we both} ~~he and I~~ agreed ~~that~~ it was a great show, ~~a grand vision and that even if all ran smoothly and quietly today there might be~~ ^{with a promise of} plenty of excitement tomorrow.

~~All the talk and in the corridors and in the press inclosures and on the floor among the delegates and in the glass booths of the radio people was to the effect that there are two major things to be settled: that Wet Plank matter, and the selection of a Vice President.~~

it.

^{Roosevelt}
Alice Longworth is here of course. Wherever you see Mrs. Longworth you see an admiring crowd, a crowd from which she finds it difficult to escape. The newspaper people, men and women, adore her. It's unanimous. Alice, if I may be so free with her name, is almost as good copy as her ^{unforgettable} ~~memorable~~ father T.R.

Mrs. Longworth is here, she says, just as a spectator. Of course we all know she is one of the most influential women in Washington. She plays politics. She has no axe to grind. She wants nothing out of politics. But you can't stop a Roosevelt.

There is another prominent lady visitor stopping in a suite near me at the Palmer House, I mean ~~Mrs.~~ Dolly Gann. Dolly makes no bones about what she wants. She wants Brother Charley back on the job as Vice President. I saw her on the floor of the Convention buttonholing delegates right and left.

From all accounts she is not having any too easy a time. Which presents a situation rather unique in the history of the Nation. Usually it is difficult to get anybody to take the job of Vice President. Today the political map has changed so that there is keen competition. Chicagoans, are all shouting for General Charles G. Dawes, and they say he's going to get it.

RUTH

Another interesting visitor was Mrs. Ruth Hanna McCormick Simms. There was quite a stir when she appeared in the Convention Hall ~~and~~ with her new husband. Mrs. Simms and Mr. Simms have at least one thing in common. They are both entitled to call themselves "former congressmen". Mr. Simms was representative in the House from New Mexico once upon a time.

Of course, the reporters rushed up to Mrs. Simms for she has always been a conspicuous figure in Chicago and elsewhere. They asked her whether she was going to run for Congress or the Senate.

"I have a job", she replied, looking at her husband.

"Well, was her husband going to run for the Senate" she was asked.

She replied, "My husband will go to the senate only over my dead body".

~~Well~~ That makes it definite at any rate.

It interested me to observe the extent to which

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the Convention preserved customs which have long since become antiquated and for which there is really no further reason. For example, Senator Dickinson of Iowa was elected temporary chairman by acclaim. Now Mr. Dickinson has known for weeks that he was to be temporary chairman. It took him weeks to write his speech. It took him more weeks to have it corrected. These long speeches have to be o.k'd not only by the National Committee but by the White House. So, as I say, Senator Dickinson has known for weeks that he was to be temporary chairman. Nevertheless, Senator Fess had to appoint a bodyguard of two governors and a general to notify Mr. Dickinson that he was temporary chairman and escort him to the platform.

And three announcers, two vice-presidents headed by Frank Mason, and four control engineers are waiting with clenched fists to lead me away from the microphone. So, so long until tomorrow.

June 15, 1932.
Chicago
conventions.