

L.T. P. &G. FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1948.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Tonight, in the city of New Delhi in far off India, a scene of fantastic and almost terrifying drama was enacted. At a stately villa called Sirla House, a great multitude assembled, men and women. Hour after hour, they jammed forward, and lines of police could hardly hold them. They cried out in grief, in homage, in adoration, and they demanded-a last look-at Gandhi.

They were about to overwhelm the police, about to storm into Birla House -- when the door of the balcony opened. Floodlights played their brilliant beams on the balcony, and all the wailing weeping thousands there in the night could see clearly. They were the audience for a vivid ghostly pageant. Through the door and out on the balcony, brilliant in the floodlights, came several men carrying the body of Mahatma Gandhi. They placed the body in a chair, and the lifeless Gandhi, swathed in a white sheet, faced the multitude of mourners. His brown face, with eyes closed, calm and tranquil in the floodlights.

On the balcony was Gandhi's eighteen year old grand-daughter, Manu, and she now ~~performed~~ ^{performed} the culminating ritual. Among the Hindus, the folding of the hands before the face, is a symbol of blessing. And so Gandhi's grand-daughter folded her own hands before Gandhi's face. That was his last blessing.

Then the huge throng burst into a frenzy of lamentation -- as thus the Dead Gandhi pays his final farewell to India.

The latest news of the assassination brings new details: (The crime stemmed out of Gandhi's recent fast, his penance, the fifteenth during his life. The killer, named Ram Naturam, is a Hindu extremist, a member of a group of fanatics consisting largely on Hindus and Sikhs who were driven out of Moslem Pakistan; survivors of Mohammedan massacre, savagely embittered - they want war to the death against the Pakistan Moslems.

Gandhi's fast was in behalf of peace.) At that time the advocates of war staged demonstrations against him, shouting -- "Let Gandhi die!" But Gandhi won concessions

from the Hindu Government, and broke his fast -- winner of a victory for peace. That enraged the fanatics all the more and one of them threw a bomb a few days ago, but failed to kill Gandhi. Now, however, a second assassination attempt was successful.

(Gandhi was going from Birla House to a prayer meeting in the garden. The seventy-eight-year-old Mahatma walked feebly after his feast, leaning on a long cane.) He was talking to the Deputy Premier of Hindustan -- Patel. The irony is that Vice Premier Patel, himself, belongs to the war party, and Gandhi was arguing with him, pleading for measures that would bring about peace with the Moslems. The Vice Premier had intended to accompany Gandhi across the garden to the prayer meeting, but somebody called him aside to speak to him, and Gandhi went on alone. A group of his disciples were waiting. (He stopped to speak to a friend. Beside this friend was a tall, heavily built man wearing a uniform of military Khaki. His hands were folded together in the

Hindu gesture of greeting. But between his hands was a pistol. He raised it, and shot Gandhi three times.

Gandhi fell and died almost instantly. But before he expired, he was able to fold his hands across his face -- ~~that same~~ Hindu symbol of blessing. He was blessing the murderer, as he died.

The assassin) immediately turned the pistol on himself, but was seized by Gandhi's followers. The bullet he fired merely grazed his scalp. He (was about to be torn to pieces, when police intervened, and took him off to prison.) He is now being held incommunicado and interrogated.

(Thus passes Mahatma Gandhi, the great soul. To all of India he was the Mahatma which means -- Great Soul)

There was an immediate outbreak of violence today - in Bombay. The moment the news of Gandhi's death flashed, rioting began. The meaning of the rioting was not clear -- as the vast majority of India's millions were plunged into mourning. The greatest manifestation of National grief in Indian history.

This dark news from India takes memory back to strange and exciting days of the early Nineteen Twenties. I was in India then, right at the time when Gandhi launched his Non-Cooperation Movement; his first appearance in the world headlines.

Traveling about India at that time, suddenly we began to see Hindus, mostly in Bombay Province, Bengal, and the United Provinces -- particularly in such cities as Cawnpore and Lucknow -- we saw them wearing little white caps -- the Gandhi cap, which soon became a familiar article of attire - all over India, made of homespun cotton cloth -- symbolizing one aspect of the Gandhi movement, his doctrine of home-weaving, the idea that the people of India should make their own cloth in their households, and thereby stop buying textiles from Britain. Strike a blow at the great mills of Lancaster and Nottingham.

That original non-cooperation campaign had all the curious aspects of others that were to follow; Hindus by the millions adopting Gandhi's idea of non-

violence -- refusing to move, refusing to turn a hand; even staging such singular demonstrations as lying flat in the streets, by the hundreds, to stop traffic.

There was violence too, right from the beginning, as there always was, in those Gandhi crusades of non-violence - the irony of which now culminates in such fearful dramatic fashion, the great apostle of non-violence dying by the violence of pistol shots.

In those days, the early Nineteen Twenties, I have never heard of Gandhi. But during a two year journey I was making with Francis Yeats-Brown, the Bengal Lancer we came upon Gandhi, at the city of Poona, in jail. The British had just locked him up, for the first of many times.

And there it was that I learned just how all this had come about. It was a strange story he told; the cause of his animosity towards the might British Empire; how he happened to embark on the career that was to make him the Mahatma, the Rebel Saint, a sort of mystical Messiah for the teeming millions of Hindu India -- and a

world figure as well.

Gandhi was born into the Hindu caste of merchants, -- neither of the highest cast, or of the lowest. He was not a haughty twice-born Brahmin; nor was he a Lowly Sudra. He had had English schooling, ^o In India; then he went to England, where he studied law, and was admitted to the Temple Bar -- which gave him first rank status as a lawyer in London.

During The First World War, he served with the British Army in France, as a stretcher bearer. Then he returned to India, and set up as a lawyer. Thus far Mohandas Damachand Gandhi -- that was his full name -- was like a host of other westernized Hindus, and he seemed likely to make the normal progress of an English - educated Hindu Lawyer, rising to high legal position in the British Raj.

What turned Gandhi from the career of a lawyer to that of saint? He said it all happened in East Africa, where, numbers of Indians had immigrated -- during World War I, -- settlements of Hindus in East and South

Africa. And they were complaining of the treatment they were getting, only partial citizenship, discriminated against -- so they said. So they were appealing to the South African Courts. And they hired lawyers; one of them Mohandas Kamachand Gandhi.

According to the story he told there at Poona, Attorney Gandhi was taking the case in his legal stride, until one day in East Africa he boarded a train. I believe it was at the city of Dar Es Salaam. He got into a coach, a first class compartment, for which he had the ticket.

The train was crowded, and, a few minutes before it was to pull out along came a British Colonel, servants carrying his baggage. The Colonel had no compartment; and wanted one. Walking along and peering into the windows, railroad coaches are built that way out there, he looked into one compartment after another. Finally he came to the one that Gandhi occupied. The Colonel noted the little dark Hindu; he was never very prepossessing -- he pointed with his walking stick, and

told his servants to "get that fellow out."

The servants obeyed the command and lawyer Mohandas K. Gandhi, member of the London bar, was unceremoniously ejected, bag and baggage. The British Colonel took over the compartment, while Gandhi climbed humbly into some crowded section of the train.

That he said was what caused him to turn against the British Raj. At any rate that was the story he told that day at Poona. The Colonel, and railway incident transforming him into the arch-enemy of the British Empire.

But of course the legal fight he was waging for his own people in East Africa, that may have been the real turning point -- what actually put him against the rulers of India -- those modern successors to Clive and Lawrence and all the others who created Britain's fabulous Empire in Hindustan.

Gandhi reverted to his ancestral Hinduism, which, with its mystical philosophy, prevented him from becoming a warlike enemy.

Passive resistance is an old idea in the Orient; and, soon after Gandhi formulated his doctrine of non-violence - as a way of rebellion, as a way of rebellion -- even as a way of life. From then on he opposed violence with non-violence, preaching his gospel of Swaraj -- peace.

His weapons were fasting, prayer, penance. These he used with tremendous effect against the British.

When Indian independence was achieved he started using it against the blood-thirsty hatred of Hindu and Moslem. The British still locked him up from time to time; and now one of his own people, a Hindu has killed him.

So, the drama of Gandhi has ended. The Saint of Hindu India has fallen at the hands of an assassin of his own race and religion. And tonight India is in flames again. While right round the globe men speak with wonder, respect and even awe, of that world figure known for so long as the little brown man in the loin cloth.

In Washington today President Truman issued a

statement calling Gandhi's death: "A tragic loss to the whole world."

In London, the Archbishop of Canterbury led in manifestations of grief for the loss of so great a religious leader in that land of strange religions -- India, the teeming sub-continent.

Of all the worldwide expressions, the sharpest comes from, well from where you would expect -- from George Bernard Shaw. Commenting on the assassination of Gandhi, Shaw today remarked: "It shows how dangerous it is to be too good."

From stunned India tonight an announcement by Prime Minister Jawaharal Nehru that Gandhi will be cremated on the bank of the Holy Jumna River, tomorrow, his body placed on a burning ghat behind the sacred river in the manner traditional to the Hindus.

The body of the Mahatma borne by his close friends and draped in Free India's new tri-color flag. The flag for which he was largely responsible.

From Karachi, capitol of Pakistan; Mohammed Ali

Jinna, head of the new Moslem Dominion in expressing his sorrow said: "Whatever our political differences Gandhi was one of the greatest of men." In London, Prime Minister Attlee made a special broadcast hailing Gandhi as "one of the outstanding figures of the modern world. London Moslems, aghast at the crime, are urging Premier Ali Jinna of Pakistan to act immediately; do something to keep the ~~ass~~ assassination from doing serious harm to Hindu-Moslem relations.

At Lake Success Byron Price Acting Secretary General of the United Nations ordered the U.N. flag to be flown at half-mast for three days; and he further ordered that the flags of the fifty-seven member nations be hauled down during that time. Said Gromyko of Russia: "Gandhi left a deep mark on the history of India and her peoples." Zafrullah Kahn of Pakistan told the Council that Gandhi's death meant the removal of the keystone of peace. And as a further tribute to Gandhi the United Nations Security Council adjourned.

CRASHES

From France, word of a U. S. Army C-47 wrecked in the French Alps, twelve aboard. A B-17 with ten aboard went in search for the missing plane, reported that the wreckage had been sighted, and then the B-17 crashed in the mountains, with only one survivor.

And in the Atlantic, an airliner is missing, with British Air Marshall Sir Arthur Coningham aboard. The plane is believed to have been forced down at sea, four hundred miles east of Bermuda, with thirty aboard. Sir Arthur Coningham, in the recent war, was commander of the allied tactical air forces.

This has been a dark broadcast indeed. But here's one lighter item:-- The one-time babe of the movies is now a mama. Today at Santa Monica, California, Shirley Temple's husband, John Agar, was told "It's a girl." Shirley, now nineteen, though it seems only yesterday that she was the clever little miss of the motion picture screen. And now the onetime symbol of childhood has a child of her own.

It's always wise to be born into good circumstances - as the ragamuffin said to the young prince. And Shirley Temple's little girl arrives into an abundance the like of which no princess has ever enjoyed - an abundance in one respect at least. When Shirley, herself, was the baby darling of the movies, fans from all over the world sent her a total of fifteen hundred dolls and she must have plenty left. Shirley, as the child star, lived in a doll's house, and now she'll take her baby there - and the romance of childhood will be played all over again.

Now, Nelson, what from you?