

L.T. - GM - BROADCAST

December 27, 1954

(Charles Collingwood substituting)

C.C.: GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY!

FRANCE

The French National Assembly this evening drew one step back from the abyss over which they had poised the Mendes-France government. By a vote of 289 to 251, the Assembly voted to allow West Germany to become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That's a victory for Mendes-France. It does not mean that he has won the whole campaign for the plan to rearm West Germany, but it does mean that he has scored an important initial success. In today's debate the French Premier made clear the meaning of this NATO vote. It would signify, said he, whether or not the French Assembly would reverse itself on the adverse decision of last week, when it voted against German rearmament. Moreover, tonight's issue was one of confidence. If the French legislative body had rejected the NATO proposal, it would have overthrown the Government. So, Mendes-France won - but still ahead are two more crucial confidence votes. A move tonight to delay the whole ratification process. Mendes-

France will fight that, of course. Then, tomorrow or Wednesday the big central question - German rearmament itself. Western observers think they see in tonight's vote the handwriting on the wall, that German rearmament will go through the Paris Assembly.

Down in Augusta, Georgia, where the President is vacationing, the winter White House says the President is pleased, but the White House is cautious. No formal statement until final action is taken by the unpredictable French Assembly. Not so cautious is Chairman Wiley of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He says, "Welcome news for all the free world." Says Democratic Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, "Thank God!"

DEFENSE

It's indicated in Washington that money saved by cutting military manpower may be used in raising the pay of men in uniform. The chiefs of our national defense want to make military service more attractive, promote enlistments and encourage men to go in for a military career.. The pay hike would cost about 600 million dollars a year, which is just about the amount saved by the proposed manpower cut; use the savings to promote morale.

CRASH

There was a spectacular ~~jet~~ air crash today over the mountains of California - two jet fighters in a collision at 30,000 feet; both pilots killed. The flaming explosion of the jets was visible in San Francisco, seventy-five miles away. Fragments of the the planes came raining down on a residential area near San Jose. Here's a vivid eyewitness account, given by William Albee of San Jose: "I was," he relates, "waiting for a bus, watching those high vapor trails in the sky near Mount Hamilton. I couldn't see the planes; they were too high. I just saw the vapor trails. One trail was going counter-clockwise, the other clockwise. I thought, 'my God, they're going to crash'. Then," says the eyewitness, "there was a blinding flash." A tragedy of jet aviation; the vapor trails and the flash.

We have another report from Lowell Thomas tonight, as he flies on to far places. I've done a bit of travelling myself and I know what interesting people you can meet on long journeys. Here's an example in a recording from Lowell.

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L.T.: Charlie, as you know, there isn't much room to roam around even in the largest modern airplane. And tonight this broadcast piece that I am doing for you is coming from a Boeing Stratocruiser. We are about one-third of the way along on a 2,000-mile nonstop flight ~~x~~ right across Europe and the Mediterranean, and already I'm weary. I need a stretch. So, if those of you who are tuned in to our Delco program, if you'd like to come with me, let's take a stroll up the aisle and chat with a few of the passengers. Frankly, I'm always curious to know who travelers are, my companions, and where they are going.

At this moment we are flying at about 20,000 feet. For that matter, we might be somewhere in outer space, bound for another planet, because it's too dark even to see the Alps that, I think, are right below us. So come along!

I beg your pardon, sir, I hope you won't mind my asking you who you are, where you're going and why.

MOSELEY: Oh, I'm a scientist

THOMAS: And your name?

MOSELEY: Moseley. Allan Moseley.

THOMAS: Where from?

MOSELEY: Union College, in upstate New York, And...

THOMAS: Are you an American?

MOSELEY: "Oh, no. I'm English, with Canadian background."

THOMAS: "I see. And where are you going?"

MOSELEY: Oh, I'm going out to Africa just for a quick look at some of the snails.

THOMAS: And why are you interested in the snails in Africa?

MOSELEY: Well, d'you know, I think that snails ^{are most important creatures.} ~~are~~

Well, you see, I often talk to school children in America, in England, perhaps in Africa, and I tell them snails are among the most important animals in Africa. Lions, rhinos, hippos, elephants and so on - they're all sight, you just have to keep out of their way. But snails, the most insidious creatures, the most dangerous animals in Africa. They carry a disease.

THOMAS: Oh, I see. That's the reason why you're going to study them.

MOSELEY: Yes, have a look around. I've been to Africa a good many times the past twenty years, and now I'm just going to have a quick look.

THOMAS: And what disease is it, that the snail carries? And why are you going there this time?

MOSELEY: The disease is something called ~~bilharsiasis~~ ^{Bill Harris.} Or, more simply, ~~bilharsiasis~~. The troops out in Egypt, ~~years ago~~, the last war, used to call it the Bill Harris, ~~bilharsiasis~~ actually an abbreviation or improvement upon ^{bilharsiasis} ~~bilharsiasis~~, a disease carried by snails. No snails, no disease. What I'm concerned with is killing the snails.

THOMAS: What sort of a disease is this?

MOSELEY: Oh, not very spectacular. When people get this disease, they just feel no good, lethargic, lacking in initiative.

THOMAS: How large a part of the earth's surface is troubled by this difficulty that comes from snails?

MOSELEY: Many of the warmer countries. ~~But~~ ^{to a large part} As far as population is concerned, it applies ~~xxxxxx~~ of the human population of the world. Now, that makes it a serious thing, a really serious thing. So, I'm

on the job - one of the ~~xxx~~ scientists on the job.

THOMAS: Thank you very much, Professor!

Well, Charlie, I thought we could at least get around to three or four, but our first fellow passenger proved to be so interesting that I guess we'll have to continue this in our next. So, if you're listening tomorrow night, we'll see if there is anyone on board this plane who can top the professor who is flying to Africa to study snails.

So long!

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C.C.: Now, that was a bit of peak in contrast: fast flying and a story about snails. Lowell, you certainly have a talent for finding interesting people.

SPAIN

In Washington today officials of the State and the Defense Departments are conferring on a proposed agreement between an American military mission and the Spanish Government concerning marriages of American military personnel with Spaniards. We're establishing great air bases in Spain. That sort of thing is always accompanied by wedding bells. Already, half a dozen GI's have married Spanish girls, and that

brings up the problem of religion. In Spain marriages are regulated by the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church, which provides that a church dispensation is necessary for the marriage of a Catholic with a non-Catholic, the children to be brought up as Catholics. Several versions of the agreement have been reported. There's nothing certain about the terms; nevertheless there's already a protest in this country. Yesterday the Very Rev. James A. Pike, Dean of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, denounced the move as "a threat to our religious freedom."

ECUADOR

In Ecuador today the Government made arrests, alleging a conspiracy to overthrow the regime of President Velasco Ibarra. Half a dozen accused leaders were taken into custody, including two Army officers and a former member of the Ecuadorian Congress, a one-time Ambassador to Guatemala. The story is that these officers and the politicians called on President Ibarra and made a demand that the Minister of the Interior be dismissed. Tonight they're in prison, charged with being x traitors to the constitution and the laws of the republic. They're to be court martialed.

INDONESIA

A South Asian conference is on in Djakarta, the capital of Indonesia, attended by the Premiers of India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia. They're discussing ways to reduce the tension of East and West in Asia. Djakarta today was in a gala mood, with flags flying everywhere, flags of the five South Asian countries and also the flag of Red China. The local Chinese Reds are putting on a spectacular demonstration, with a particular political meaning. The five Premiers plan to call a still bigger conference in the spring. One question is whether or not to invite the Chinese Reds. So the local Communists are expressing their opinion - saying it with flags.

FRANCE - MILK

We started our news report with M. Mendes-France. Here's another story involving the embattled Premier of France. (Premier Mendes-France is facing a revolt against his milk-drinking program. Today, in the town of Frignan, the local officials issued a declaration of defiance. The town is the center of a famous wine-growing district. The Government program is to have the school children drink milk - each youngster to get a glass of milk every day - to which

town fathers at Frignan retort, "the schools are there to teach reading and writing"; after which the statement goes on, with fine French irony, "Since, in high places, responsible persons can find money for milk, let them find it also for wine." Well, no one can say that Mendes-France lacks courage. Premier of a nation that detests Germany and loves wine, he's trying to change his country's mind on both at the same time - and it's hard to say which is more ingrained, Hugh, in the French character; distrust of Germany or confidence in wine.